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Marco Frauchiger - Portfolio

Biography and Vita

Exhibitions (selection)

2026

Metron-Haus, Brugg, (Upcoming)

Kornhausforum, Echo)) (Upcoming)

Junkere 11, Bern, (Upcoming)

2025

La Nef, St. Ursanne, Cantonale Bern Jura, (Upcoming)

Kunsthaus Interlaken, Cantonale Bern Jura, (Upcoming)

Photoforum Pasquart in Biel, Swiss Photo Month 2025

Centre Photographie Genève, Swiss Photo Month 2025

Journées photographiques de Bienne, Biel, Juraplatz

Journées photographiques de Bienne, Biel, Rue Basse

WIP Salon, Zurich

2024

Prozess Raum Bern, Swiss Photo Month 2024

Pool Collective Summer Show, The Great Adam Brody, Zürich

2023

Cantonale Berne Jura 2023/24, Kunsthaus Pasquart Bienne

BelleVue, Ort für Fotografie, Basel

Ausstellungsraum Klingental, Basel

cerco Kollektiv, Zwischennutzung Hardturmstrasse, Zurich

Musée d'art de Pully, du Nil de Leman

2022

Prix Photoforum 2022, Photoforum Pasquart, Biel/Bienne

Kunstraum Dreiviertel, Bern

2021

Cantonale Berne Jura 2021/22, Kunsthaus Langenthal

Noorderlicht International Photography Festival, Groningen, NL

Prozess Kulturraum, Bern

ARFF International Film Festival

2020

Whiteout, Kunstmuseum Thun, Cantonale Berne Jura 2020

Publications

2023

Atlas of Aspect Change, Tine Melzer

WOZ, Newspaper Article (German), 26.01.23

Neue Wege, Magazine Article (German), January 2023

2022

Der Bund" Newspaper Article (German), 01.12.22

TeleBielingue, TV Interview (French/Swiss German), 04.12.23

2020

Review on SARN (Swiss Artistic Research Network)

Awards, Grants (Selection)

2025

Visarte Switzerland, Studio Grant, Cite Inter. des Arts, Paris

Focus Photo, Pro Helvetia

Metron Förderpreis

2022

Prix Photoforum winner 2022

2021

‹Continuer› Research Grant of the Canton of Bern

Travel and Research Grant of the City of Bern

Education

2024 — 2025

CAS in theory and history of photography, Universität Zurich

2018 — 2020

Master of Arts in Contemporary Arts Practice,
Bern University of the Arts

2014 — 2015

Masterclass Anzenberger, Wien

2004 — 2005

GaF, Gruppe Autodidaktischer Fotograf*innen, Bern

Vita

Marco Frauchiger (*1976) is an artist based in Bern, Switzerland. His artistic practice engages with socio-political questions, with a particular focus on Switzerland's global entanglements. Since 2009, he has worked independently on documentary and conceptual projects.

He is a self-taught photographer. From 2004 to 2005, he was a member of the group of self-taught photographers (GaF). In 2013, a grant enabled him to spend an extended working stay in Laos, where he developed a personal body of work and collaborated with NGOs. In 2014, he attended a one-year masterclass in Vienna.

From 2018 to 2020, he completed a Master's degree in Contemporary Art Practice (CAP) at the Bern University of the Arts (HKB). In 2025, he completed a CAS in Theory and History of Photography at the University of Zurich. His work has been exhibited both in Switzerland and internationally. In 2022, he received the Prix Photoforum in Biel/Bienne Switzerland for his project *how to dismantle a bomb.*

Artist Statement

In my artistic practice, I engage with socio-political questions, particularly the global entanglements of Switzerland and the visual politics of war and violence. I am interested in how conflicts are visually constructed and in the power relations that inscribe themselves into photographic and cinematic narratives. Working with documentary images becomes a critical space of reflection in which I question the representational promise of the medium and expose the ideological framings embedded in journalistic and war-related imagery.

Central to my work is the question of how war can be made visible without reproducing images of violence or reinforcing the aestheticisation of trauma. I work with forms of abstraction, materiality, and media-internal disturbances to make the structures and consequences of violence perceptible without placing spectacle at the forefront. Rather than replicating scenes of destruction, I seek visual strategies that reveal the mechanisms of representation themselves and assume responsibility in dealing with what is shown.

My practice operates in the tension between documentary precision and aesthetic seduction. Colour, composition, or the supposed beauty of an object can distort perception—an ambivalence I address consciously. My work not only investigates how images of war, memory, or geopolitical power structures are produced, but also asks whether cameras are capable of depicting the invisible, the unspeakable, or the traumatically overlaid.

By working with photography, video, installation, and self-built apparatuses, the medium itself becomes an object of inquiry: its materiality, its narratives, its limitations, and its responsibilities. My works open spaces for decelerated seeing and for reflection on how we produce, share, and interpret images—within a world in which visual regimes fundamentally shape our perception of reality.

Machinery for Crisis Management

Trading Island, 12 monitors with real-time market data; 12 monitors with historical price time series

Format: Video installation, 2025
Media: 12 monitors with real-time stock market data;
12 monitors with historical price time series (2015–2025);
algorithmic visualizations; multi-channel video; monitor architecture

Machinery for Crisis Management is a series of 12 minimalist video loops and 12 real-time stock-market data streams that visualize the price and profit developments of major international arms companies—including Rheinmetall, Lockheed Martin, Elbit Systems, BAE Systems, General Dynamics, Caterpillar, and STMicroelectronics—over the period from 2015 to 2025, while simultaneously displaying their current live prices.[1]

Each graph is presented as an individual video object, formally identical yet shaped by geopolitical events. The line itself becomes an image: a silent, neutral, yet deeply charged temporal trace of economic interests. The work reflects abstract structures of violence and the visibility of military economies. The videos are shown in an installation in which visitors navigate between individual "economic portraits."
For the exhibition, a reduced, minimalist interpretation of a so-called trading island is built—an architectural reference to the trading stations used at the New York Stock Exchange. The installation is not a reconstruction or replica, but a free, essentialized adaptation. The iconic function of the trading island as a site where financial flows become visible serves as the formal and conceptual foundation for the presentation of the work.

The installation consists of 24 monitors arranged in a circle, divided into two horizontal rows of 12 screens each. This formation creates a kind of control room without control: a pulsating yet silent ring of data surrounding the visitors.

Upper row – 10-year price histories
The twelve upper monitors show the historical stock prices of selected global arms companies over the past ten years, listed on various exchanges worldwide. The graphical timelines reveal how dramatically these prices have risen over the past three years—reflecting geopolitical tensions, rearmament cycles, and the accelerating militarization of international politics.
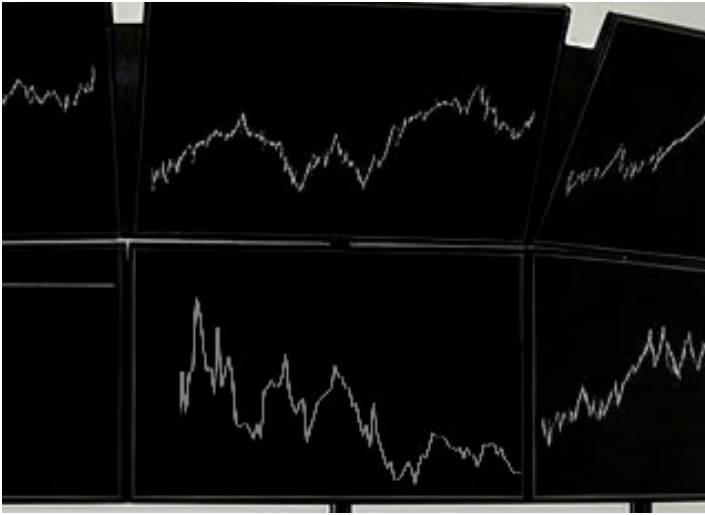
Lower row – Live prices
The twelve lower monitors display the same companies, but as real-time live tickers. As long as the respective markets are open, the prices shift continuously: spikes, tremors, standstills. When trading is closed, the line freezes into a static stroke—the visual stillness of an industry that only comes alive again when the markets reopen. In this way, a rhythmic interplay emerges between stasis and movement, past and present, archive and real time.
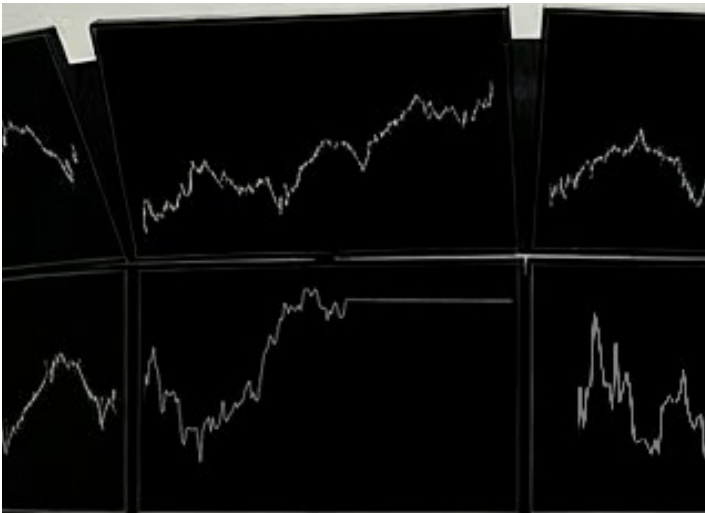
Upper row: Ten-year price histories.
Lower row: Live prices of the same defense company; as soon as the market closes, a straight line appears.

Trading Island New York Stock Exchange

Upper row: Ten-year price histories.
Lower row: Live prices of the same defense company during open trading hours.

[1] Major Swiss arms companies such as RUAG and Pilatus Aircraft are not publicly traded.

Video (example of a defense company)
Click to view the video.
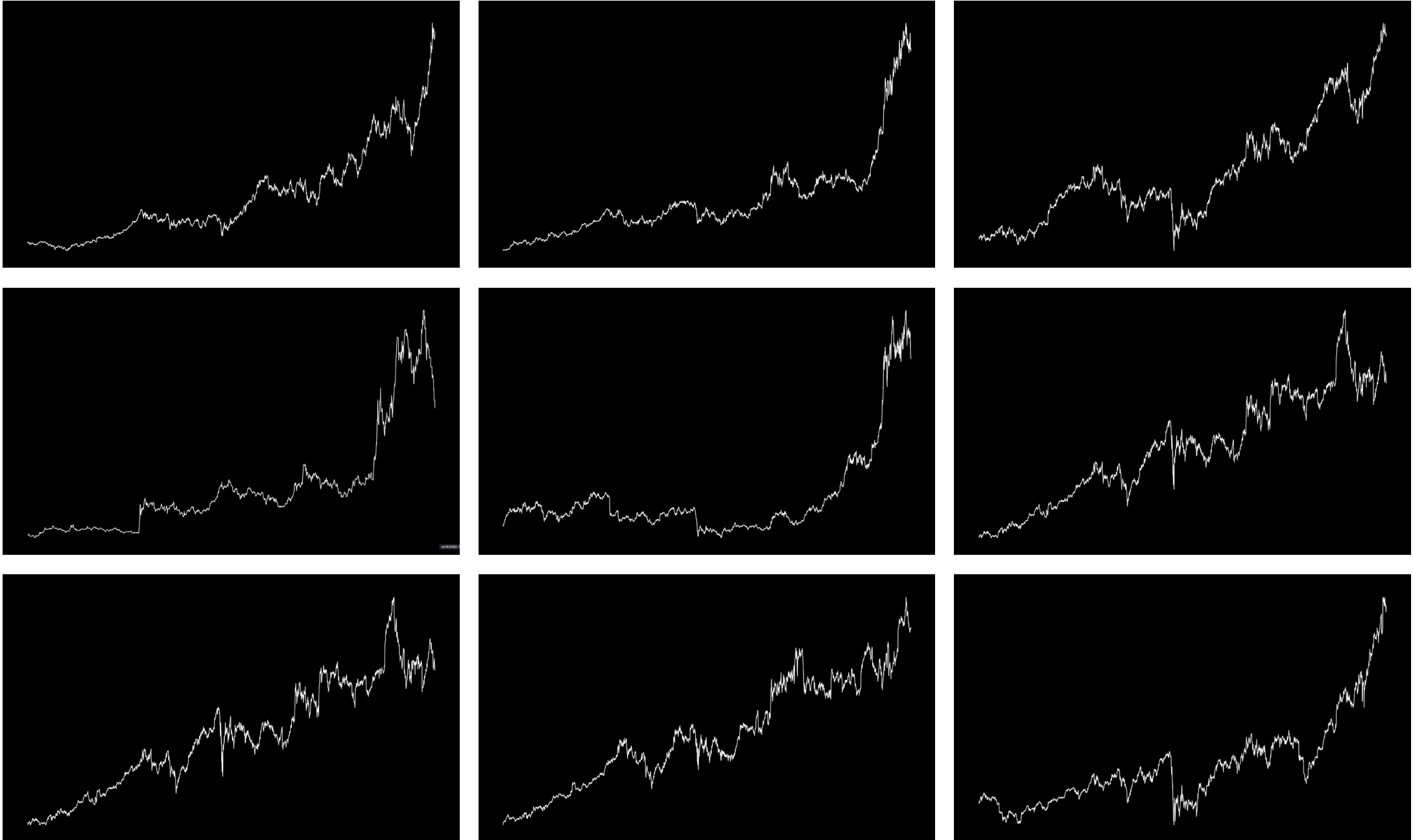
Frames from generated video loops based on historical price data: ten-year stock price developments of selected defense companies.

The War Movie, video (digital master version, TV edition, 4:3 format, shown on an analog CRT TV), 720×576px, b/w, sound, 2025, 68 min.

Installation views: La Nef, St. Ursanne, 2025

Video, HD,b/w, sound, 2025, 68 Min.
Click to watch the video.

1862	Dakota War of 1862
1862	Dungan Revolt (1862–77) Muslim Rebéllion
1863	Ecuadorian–Colombian War
1863	Battle of Shimonoseki Straits
1863	Bombardment of Kagoshima Anglo-Satsuma War
1863	Shimonoseki Campaign

1989	United States Invasion of Panama
1989	First Liberian Civil War
1990	DHKP/C Insurgency in Turkey
1990	Eelam War II Part of the Sri Lankan Civil War
1990	Gulf War
1990	Rwandan Civil War

| 2021	2021 Afghanistan–Iran Clashes
2022	Chittagong Hill Tracts Conflict Part of the Terrorism in Bangladesh
2022	Russian Invasion of Ukraine Part of the Russo–Ukrainian War
2022	M23 Campaign (2022–present) Part of the Kivu Conflict
2022	2022 al–Shabaab Invasion of Ethiopia Part of the Somali Civil War

Filmstills from The War Movie, 2025

The War Movie is an image-less video that presents a complete list of all wars since the industrialization of warfare, beginning with the American Civil War of 1861 and continuing up to October 2025, formatted in the style of end credits. The soundtrack consists of a heavily distorted version of the U.S. national anthem, "The Star-Spangled Banner."

The work references, among other things, key questions in image politics: how violence and war can be represented without reproducing them.

▶ Video, Video, HD, s/w, Ton, 2025, 68 Min.
Klicken Sie, um das Video anzusehen.

Photographs Camera Obscura Type I, 2020
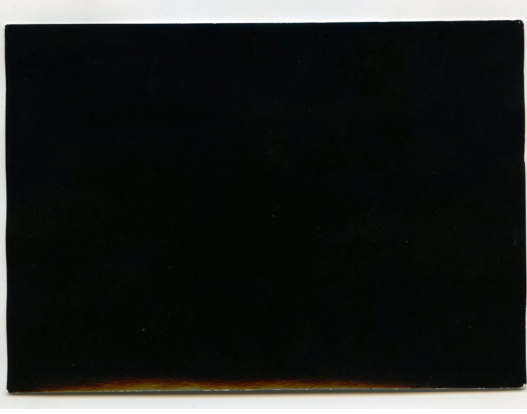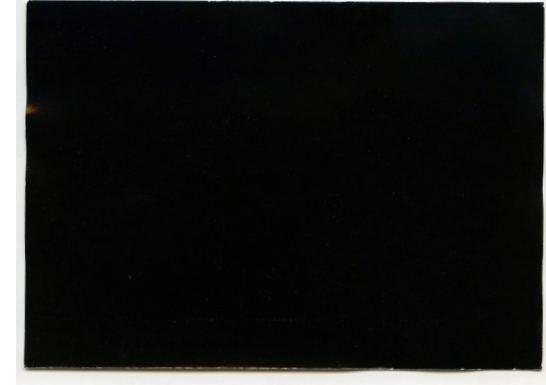
In Laos, the first camera type was built from bomb debris and used directly on site for image production. This working method reflects an artistic practice that plays with control, chance, and material limitation. The photographs were exposed directly onto 13×18 cm direct-positive baryta paper and developed analogously, making each image a unique object.

This process also produced photographs in which nothing seems visible at first glance. These apparent voids are understood as an integral part of the project and are read as a

visual reference to the "Secret War" in Laos. The images depict historical sites, including the runway of Long Tieng, the former CIA head-quarters.

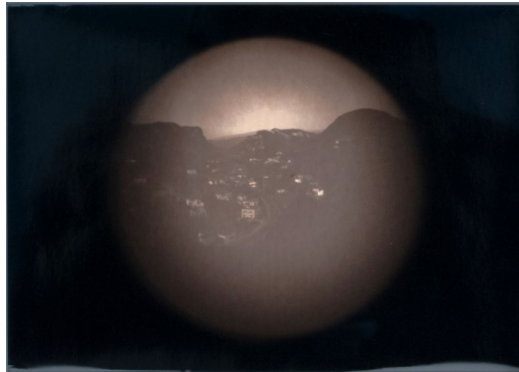Through backlighting, landscapes and traces of the war gradually emerge from within these dark pictures upon closer inspection. In doing so, they point to the invisibility of this conflict and bring light into the darkness—both meta-phorically and literally.

-> Winner of the Prix Photoforum 2022

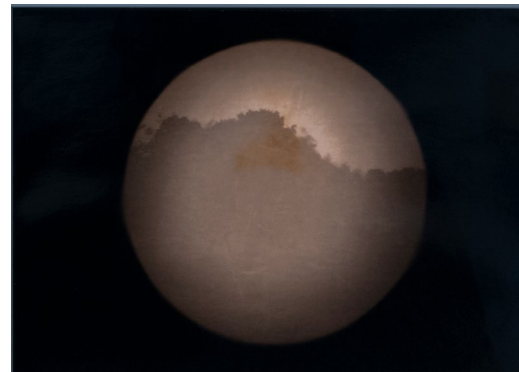Silver gelatin print uniques, 13×18 cm, February 2020, images of historical sites and former war zones

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## Camera Obscura Images - Pictures from Historical and War Sites

1   Pile of clay jars in a field in the Plain of Jars, Phonsavan, Xieng Khouang, Laos, February 12, 2020.
2   View from the karst mountains towards the former headquarters and airstrip of the CIA in Laos, Long Tieng, Xaisomboun, February 4, 2020
3   Rice field with cows, a typical Lao landscape, Nak Ho, Xieng Khoung, Laos, Feb. 12, 2020
4   A tree growing out of a bomb crater, Pakheo, Xieng Khoung, Laos, February 13, 2020.
5   Burnt soil, Phonsavan, Xieng Khoung, northeastern Laos, February 12, 2020.
6   View from inside a 400-pound bomb crater with a diameter of 30m, Ban Khangthat, 1st visit, Xieng Khoung, Laos, February 4, 2020
7   Bomb crater with tree in Plain of Jars, Phonsavan, Xieng Khoung, Laos, Feb. 12, 2020
8   Scenic view of Plain of Jars, Phonsavan, Xieng Khoung, Laos, February 12, 2020.
9   Tree in the foreground of a Phatet Lao cave (Revolutionary Movement hiding place) in the Plain of Jars, Phonsavan, Xieng Khoung, Laos, February 12, 2020.
10 View from inside a 400-pound bomb crater with a diameter of 30m, Ban Khangthat, 2nd visit, Image II, Xieng Khoung, Northeast Laos, February 13, 2020
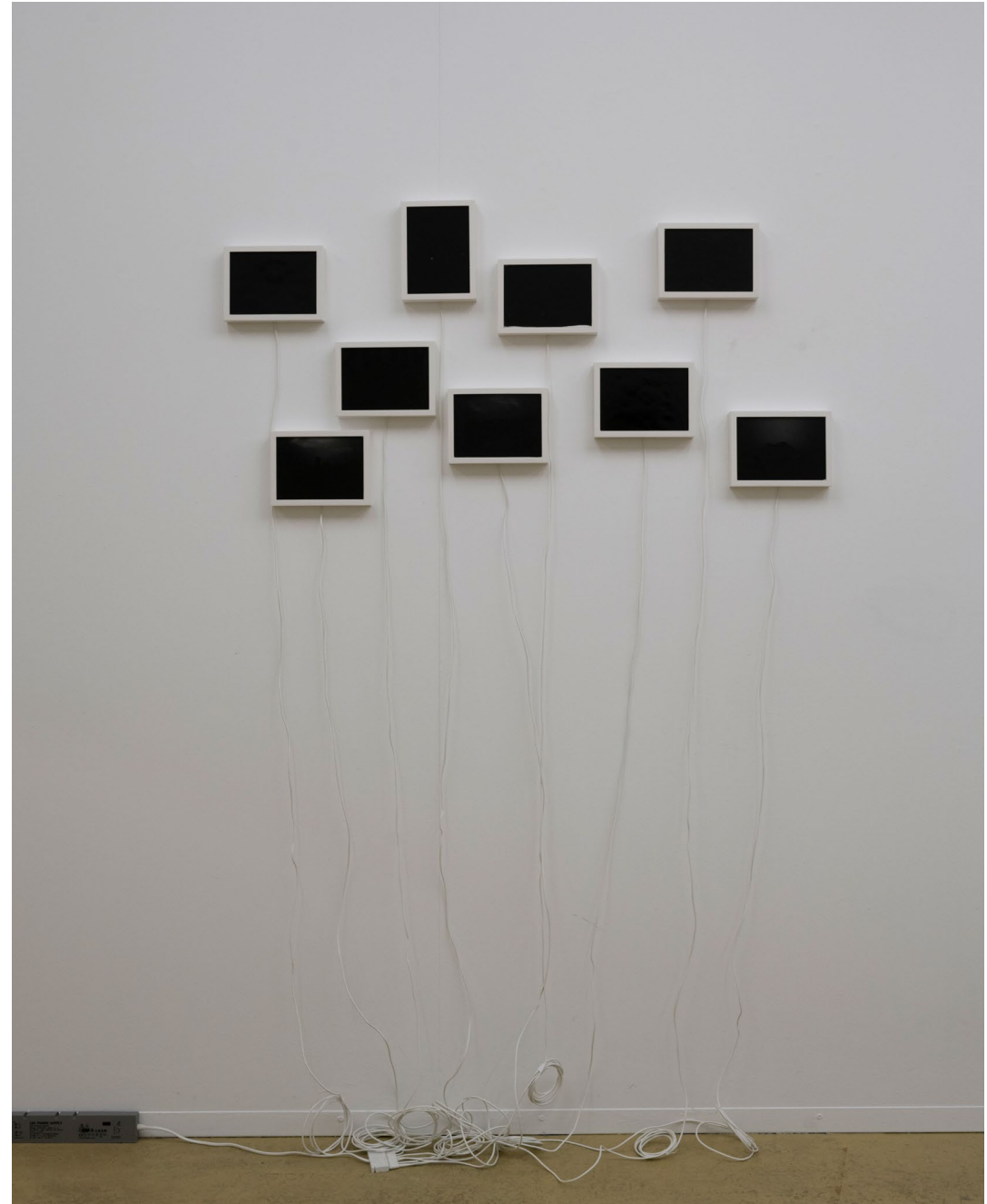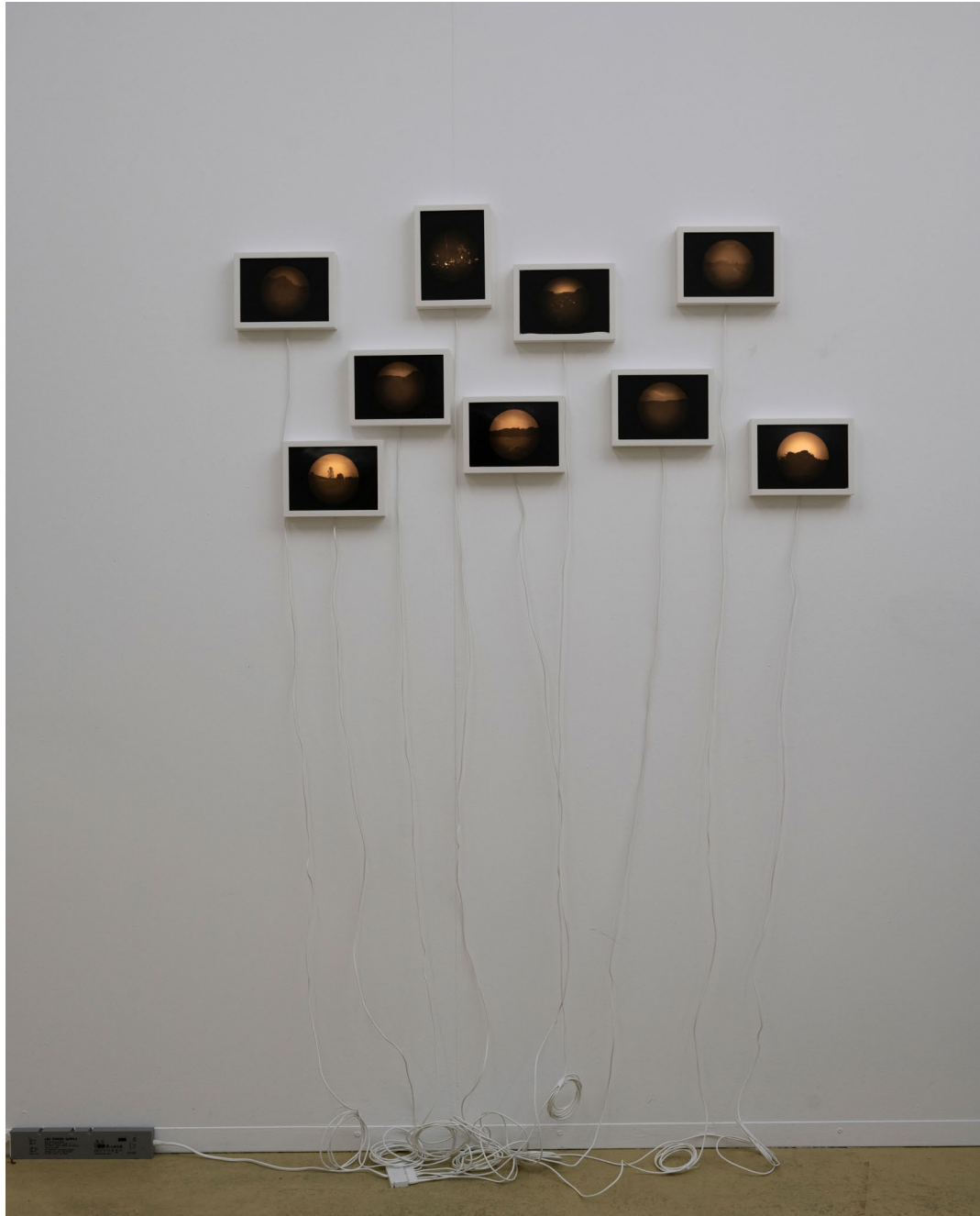
Installation views: 9 framed uniques, 13 × 18 cm, installation with light and timing device, *Austellungsraum Bellevue, Basel 2023*

Digesting History, Performance / Installation (2025)

Digesting History is a site-specific, performative work that negotiates material history, memory culture, and global entanglements through a quiet yet precise gesture. During a shared meal, each person receives a spoon – discreetly exchanged by me at a decisive moment – that has been crafted in Laos from melted bomb fragments. The metal originates from the casings of U.S. cluster munitions dropped on Laos during the "Secret War."

At the center of the work are spoons produced in a small workshop in northeastern Laos. Such spoons are still in everyday use in affected regions and testify to a remarkable material transformation: remnants of violence are turned into ordinary tools.

The performance transfers these spoons into a new context – Switzerland. At a long, simply set table, during a meal or reception, Khao Piak, a traditional Lao noodle soup, is served. The guests begin eating without knowing, until they gradually become aware of what the spoons are made of. The act of eating thus becomes a quiet, bodily encounter with transformed war violence.

665 Spoons from Laos
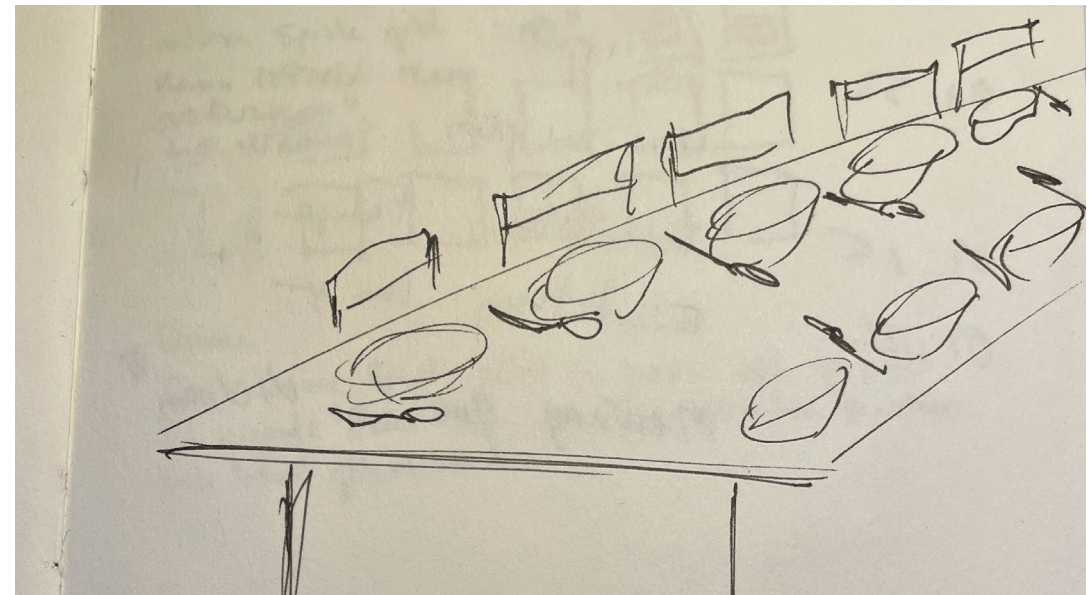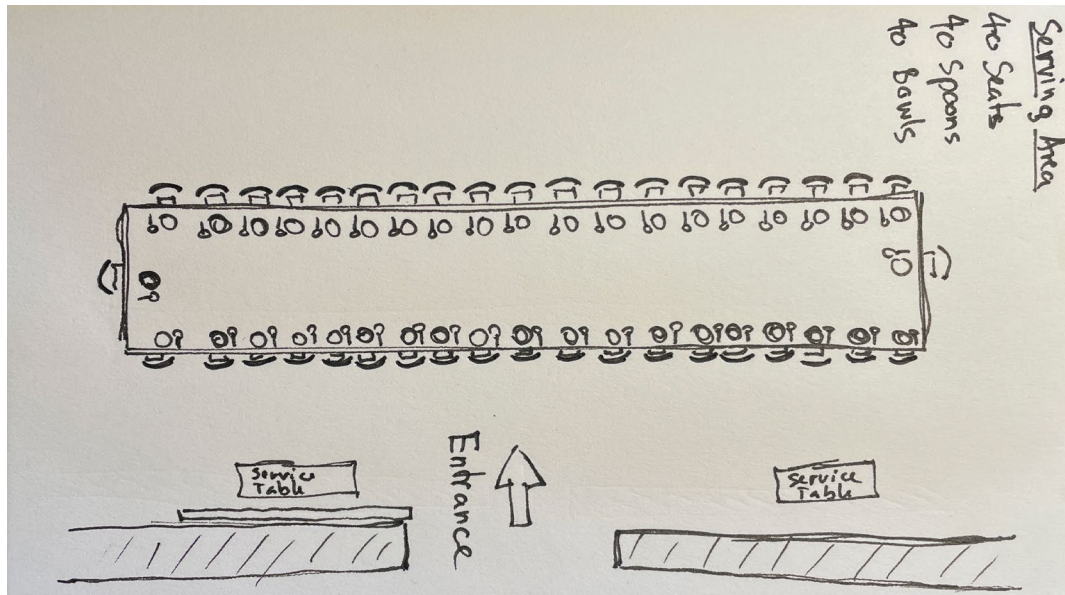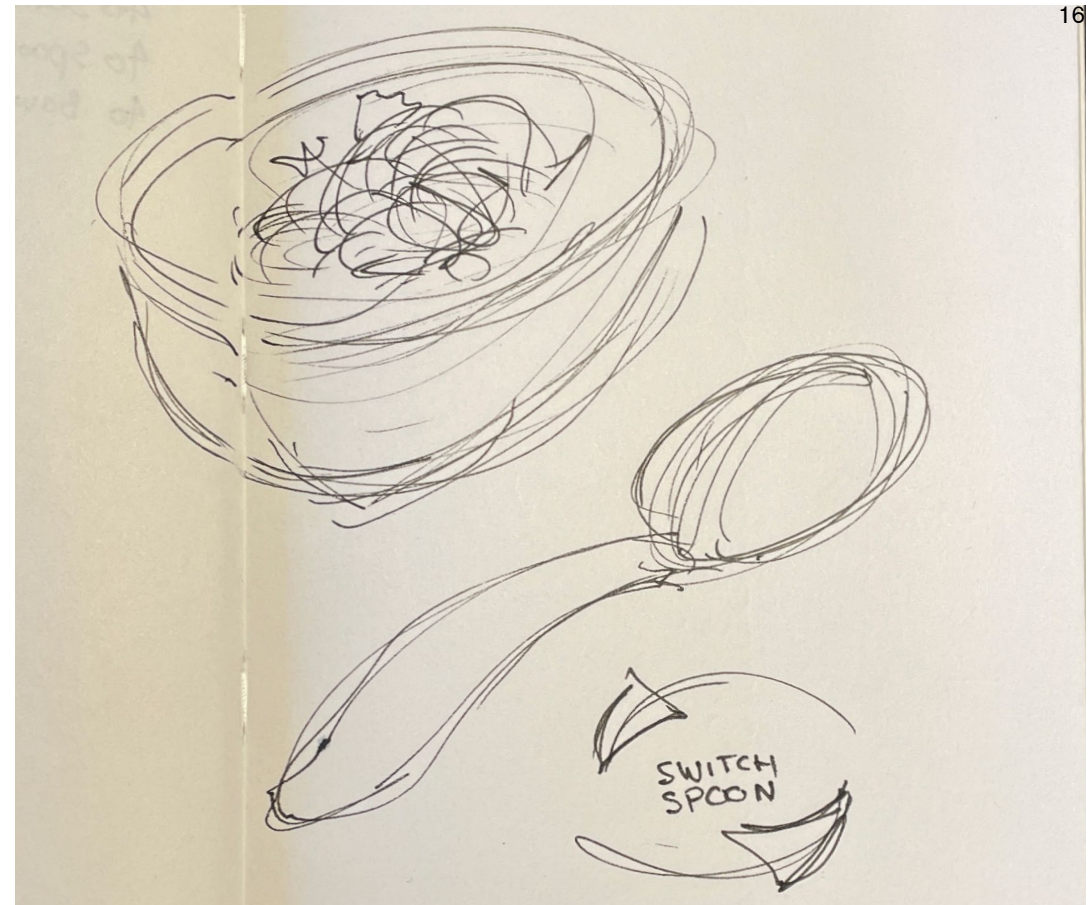
Cameras Typ I–IV (2020–2024): Material Studies in Recycled War Aluminium

In my artistic practice, I build cameras—not because there are none, but because I understand the photographic image as an object that is more than merely the result of an imaging device. For me, the camera is not only a technical instrument but an integral part of the artistic process—and ultimately part of the work itself.

I take full control of the image-production process, yet I allow material imperfections and disruptions to surface—those that arise from the limitations of the methods and materials. These "errors" are not flaws but often the very elements that bring the image to life. It is an attempt to locate the magical within the technical—in the mechanics of the camera, in the materiality of the paper, in the moment an image comes into being.

In Laos, four camera types have been developed and built so far. These devices are made from recycled aluminium sourced from remnants of warfare—including parts of aircraft manufactured in Switzerland and used by the CIA during the "Secret War" in Laos. Transforming this material into image-making instruments forms a central aspect of the project: relics of military destruction become tools for seeing, reflection, and remembrance.

Over the years, both the formats of the photographic papers and the technical and conceptual requirements of the devices have evolved. Insights from earlier research and experiments continuously informed the development of subsequent cameras. Each new iteration carries traces of its predecessors—both as a continuation and as a response to its specific environment and material conditions.

▶ Video, 0'44" -> Click hier

Camera Obscura, Type III, Large format 40x50cm, year of construction 2024

Construction drawings, large format Camera Obscura, 2024

Camera Obscura, type III, year of construction 2024
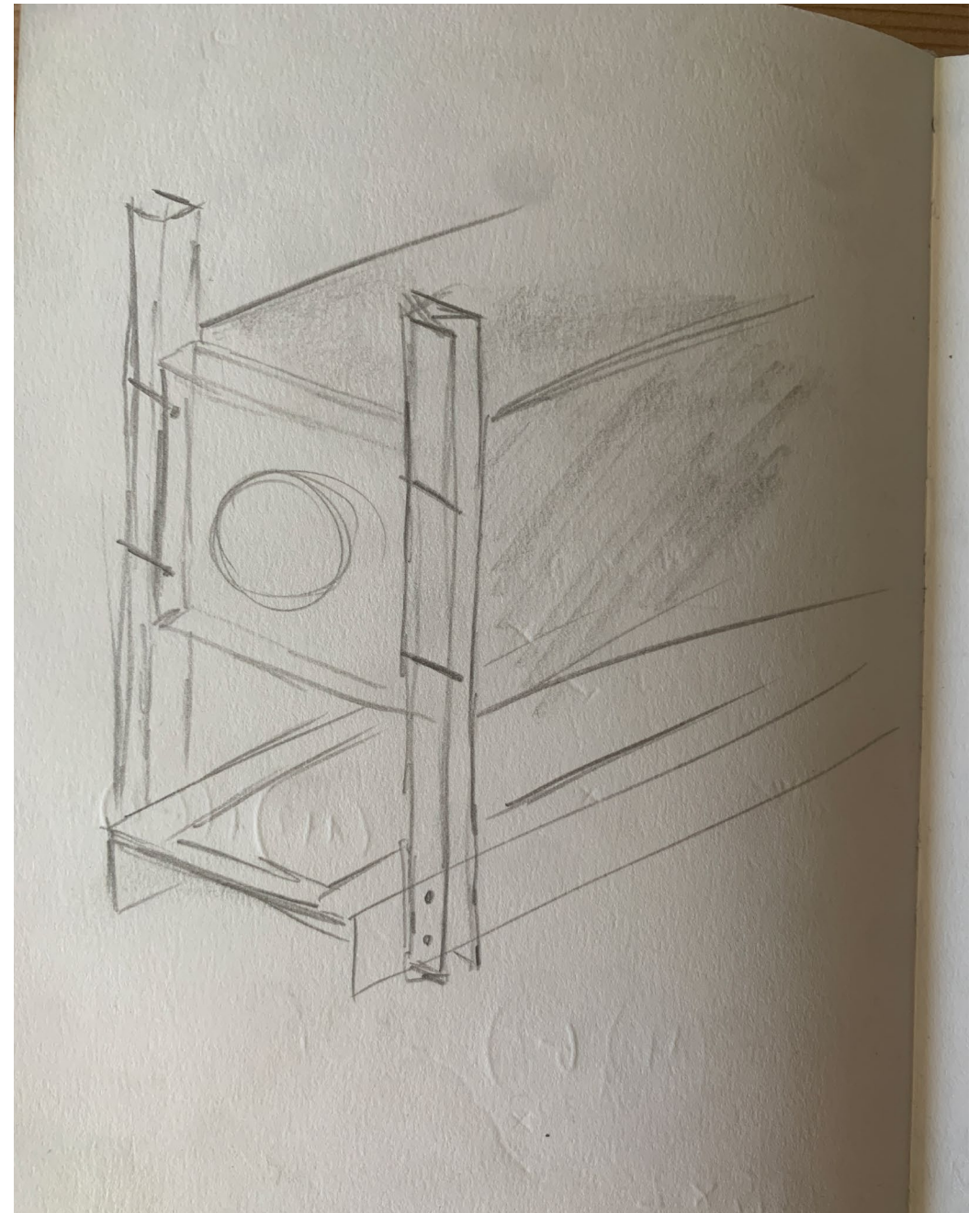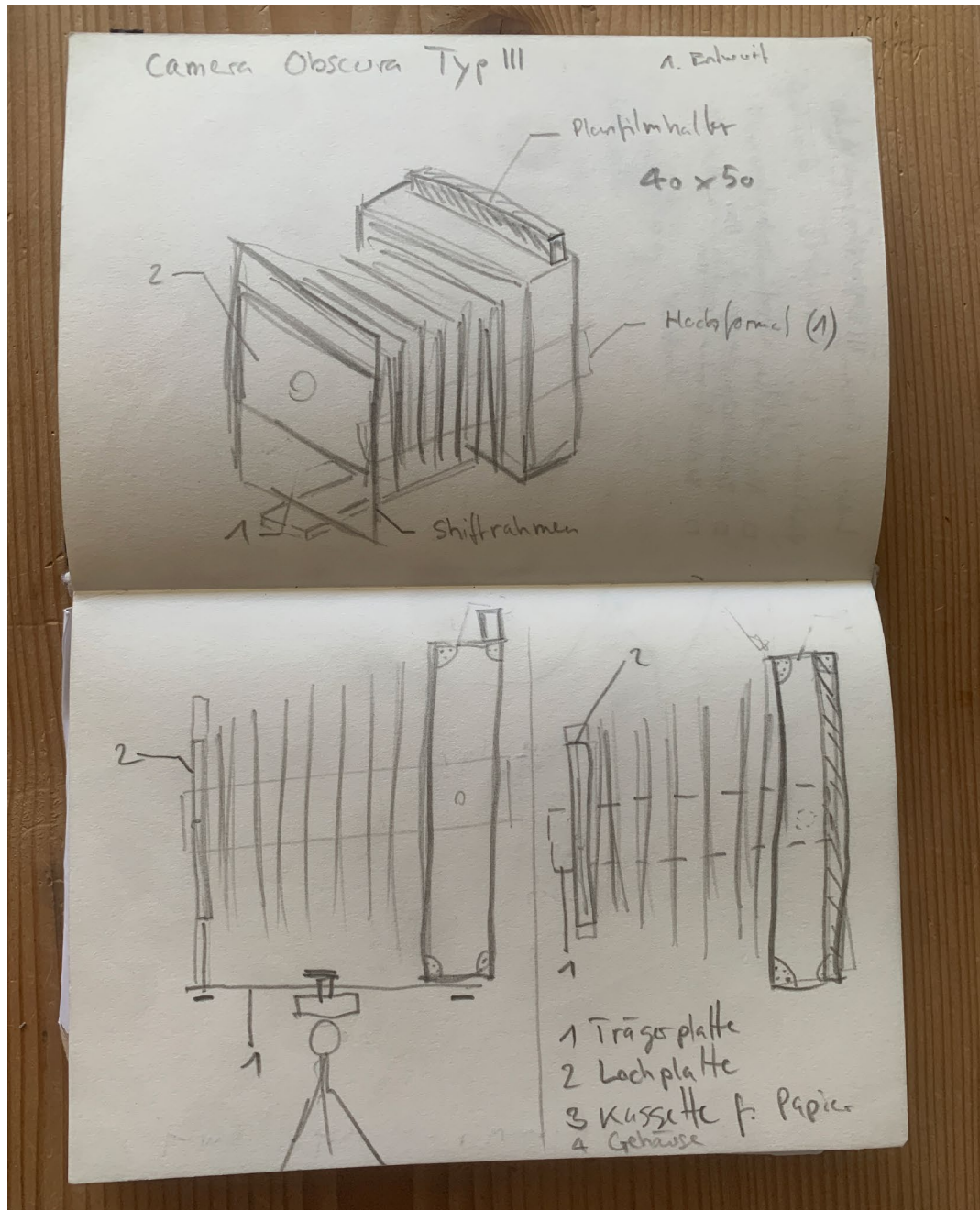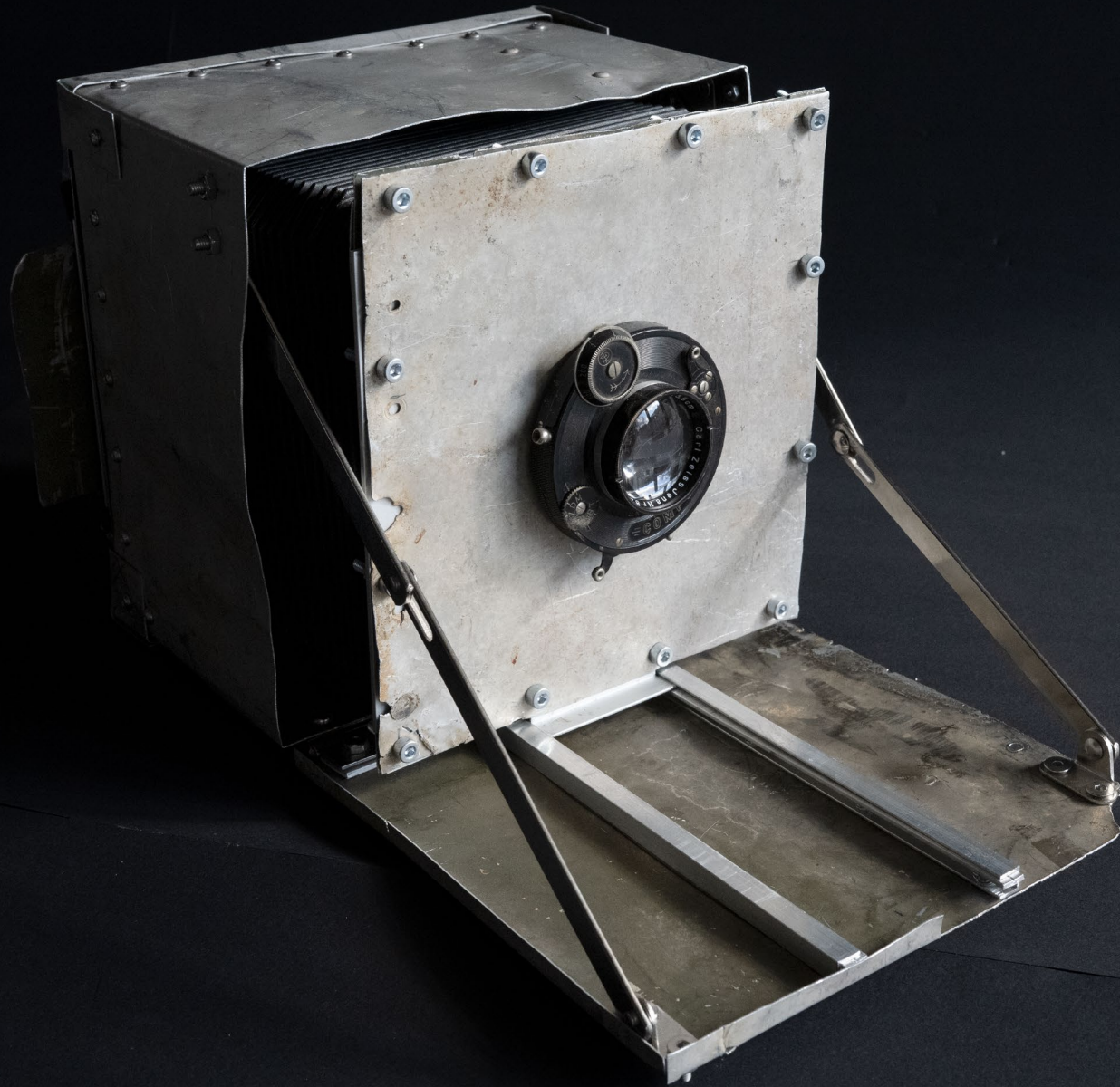
Camera Obscura, type II, year of construction 2023

Camera Obscura, type I, 13x18cm, year of construction 2020

Puzzle (6090 pieces), 2021

Installation View: *Noorderlicht Fotofestival Groningen, 2021*
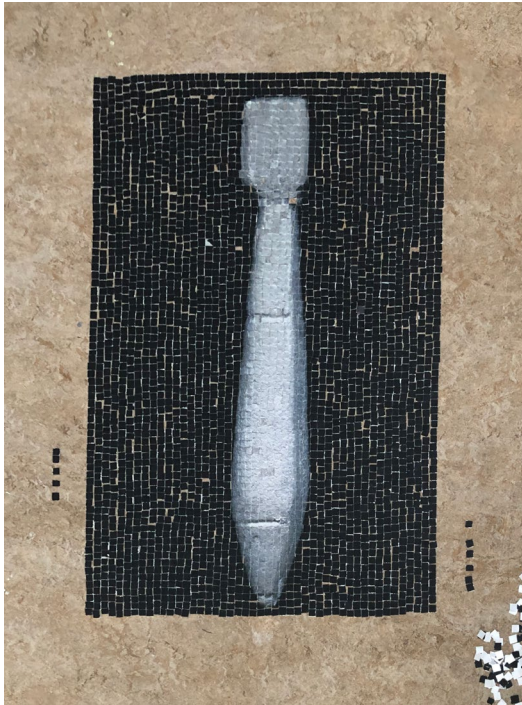
The large-format image (70 × 87 cm) consists of a total of 6,090 puzzle pieces, each with an edge length of 1 cm. It is presented flat on the floor of the exhibition space and is not protected by markings or barriers. The exhibition area is deliberately left open – it is expected that visitors may accidentally step on the puzzle. This potential disturbance of the work is an integral part of the artistic concept: the destruction does not occur intentionally, but inciden-

tally – making the fragility and mutability of the image visible. As the puzzle pieces disperse within the space, the work expands beyond its original form.

At the center of the image is a bomb-shaped figure composed of exactly 665 puzzle pieces. This number, along with the material of the print – aluminum – refers to a specific type of cluster bomb used in Laos, which was also made of aluminum.

The work combines conceptual rigor with material reference and explores the interplay of violence, memory, and visual representation.

The phases of decay. Installation view: *Noorderlicht Fotofestival Groningen, 2021*

Artifact Typologies, 2020–2025

This work is dedicated to the documentation and archiving of a specific typology of artefacts: everyday objects crafted by the Lao population from the remnants of bomb material. From fragments of war emerge cutlery, tools, pieces of jewelry, or decorative objects—testimonies to an inventive yet fragile engagement with the material burdens of the past.

The objects were systematically grouped, and their respective functions were precisely recorded. In doing so, a material as well as social archive takes shape, one that reveals both the creativity and the historical and political inscriptions embedded in these items.

The project understands itself as an attempt not only to document these processes of transformation, but to take them seriously as a cultural practice: as an act that translates destruction into function and renegotiates it within everyday gestures.
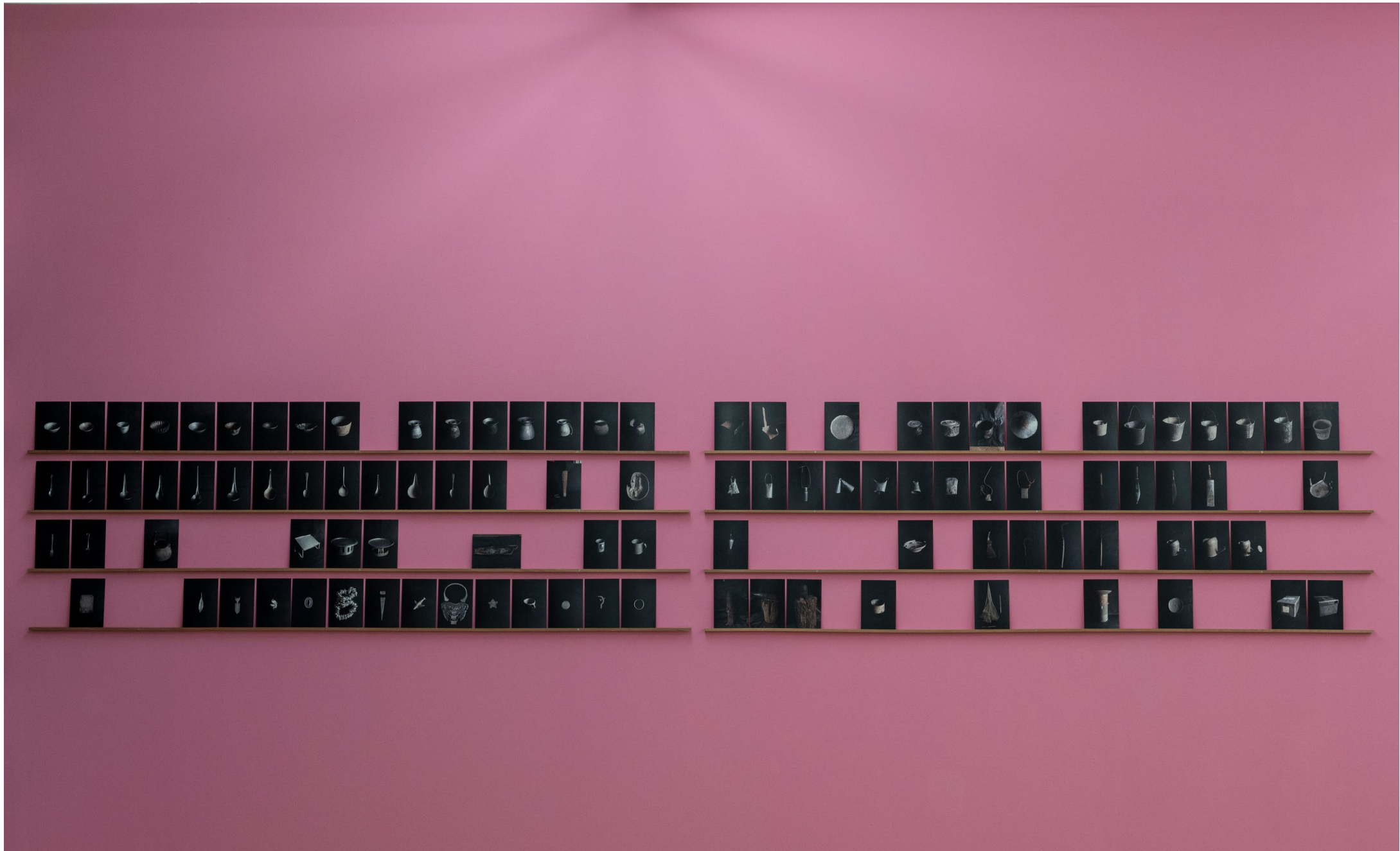
Installation View: 100 Artifacts, *Austellungsraum Bellevue, Basel 2023*

Installation View: (Audio, Photography), *Austellungsraum Bellevue, Basel 2023*

Installation View: *Bieler Fototage 2025, Rue Basse*

Video, 3'20" -> Click here

Set on the former CIA airbase in Long Tieng, Laos, Kite Studies is a three-minute video that interweaves archival footage from the 1960s and present-day images shot at the same location in early 2025. The historical material includes images of Swiss-manufactured aircraft in Long Tieng—an operational hub during the so-called "Secret War."

In stark contrast, today's footage captures local children running freely along the same runway, flying a handmade kite constructed from remnants of military material. Camouflaged on one side and reflective silver on the other, the kite becomes both artifact and metaphor—rising, faltering, and crashing back onto the same ground.

Installation View: Screening Photoforum Pasquart in Biel, Swiss Photo Month 2025

03:30

03:35
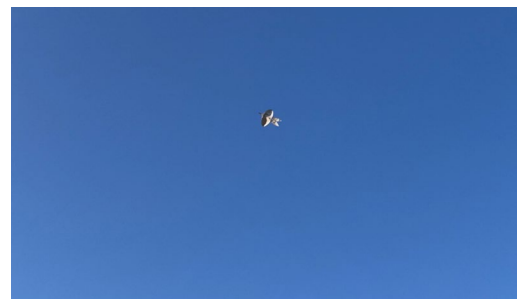
03:59

04:04

04:31

04:45

04:56

05:31

05:41

06:12

06:44
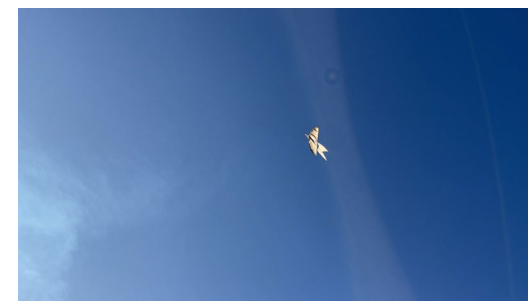
07:10

07:32
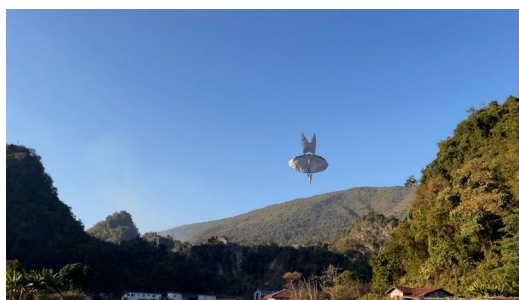
07:58
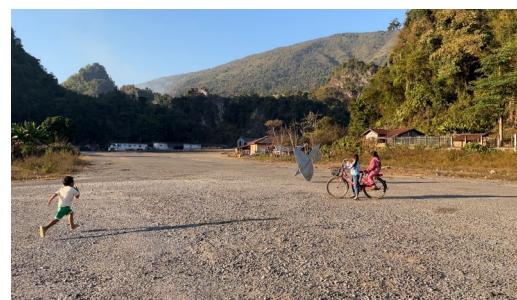
10:47

13:46

Building a Future, newspaper, 12 images, 12 slogans, 2025

"Building a Future" evolves from my series «Pink Landscapes» and responds to a world shaped by geopolitical uncertainty, the global rearmament of armies, and the enduring material legacies of conflict. The work reflects on how futures are constructed—politically, physically, and imaginatively—amid systems of violence and extraction. Through the transformation of war-related materials into photographic tools and images, it questions what it means to build hope from the remnants of destruction

At first glance, the photographs show idyllic landscapes bathed in colourful light, appearing almost utopian—promising happiness and harmony. The images depict wounded terrains and historic sites in Laos—remnants of the U.S. secret war. Shot on expired film, they produce a distinctive palette of faded, unpredictable colours that deepen memory and loss. On their reverse, advertising slogans from global arms corporations and institutional users—such as intelligence agencies and military forces—are revealed. Phrases like "building a future we can all trust," or "be all you can be" come from weapons manufacturers' marketing rhetoric. Stripped of context, they resemble self-help or motivational quotes—harmless, even uplifting. This ambivalence is intentional: the softened language of war collides with an ostensibly happy surface.

These companies often use images and slogans evoking a safe, optimistic future. Landscapes and calm colours reinforce messages of protection and peace—concealing the violent reality behind the products. Building a Future contrasts this sanitized aesthetic with underlying power and militarization. All slogans appear in original wording but unified typography. Like newspaper headlines, they are set in bold, compact sans-serif fonts. I chose Franklin Gothic, a typeface common in U.S. newspapers, to reinforce the link to public messaging and mass communication. These slogans are printed on the reverse of the images on thin, translucent newsprint. The mirrored typography shimmers subtly through the fragile paper like ghostly traces, becoming partially legible yet fragmented, and inviting viewers to decipher the hidden layer beneath the polished surface of beauty and bliss.

This is not cynical, but a critical reflection on the interplay of image, language, and ideology. Researching this piece, I was struck by how often future appears in slogans and brochures of global defense firms. It's loaded with positive connotations and used to sell a violent reality as visionary hope. «Building a Future» exposes this rhetorical strategy—confronting it with a multi-layered, ambiguous visual language.

Building a Future, Newspaperprint, 2025

To be seen @ Cantonale Bern Jura 2025 @Kunsthaus Interlaken, 7.12.25 - 25.01.2026

Building a Future, Newspaperprint, 2025

Installation view: Building a Future, Newspaperprint, 2025, Kunsthaus Interlaken

Pink Landscapes, 2025

Due to improper storage and the passage of decades beyond their expiration date, the chemical components of slide films begin to degrade. The layers start to deteriorate, with cyan and magenta often persisting the longest. As a result, less information is retained in the image. Using this method, I photographed wounded landscapes, destroyed cultural monuments, and former war zones in Laos.

A central theme of my work is the ambivalence between documentation and aestheticization in the depiction of conflict. Seemingly beautiful images can unconsciously draw us into problematic representations. My work questions whether images are truly capable of adequately capturing war, trauma, and devastated landscapes. By using expired film material, I aim to encourage reflection on how aesthetics influence our perception of destructive events.

Installation view: *Biel/Bienne Festival of Photography 2025, Juraplatz*

Bani Na
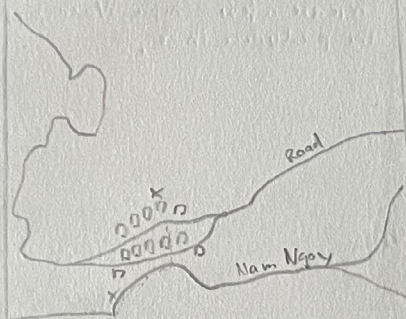
Multiple River Power stations along the Nam Ngoy River.

Road

Nam Ngoy

12.01.25
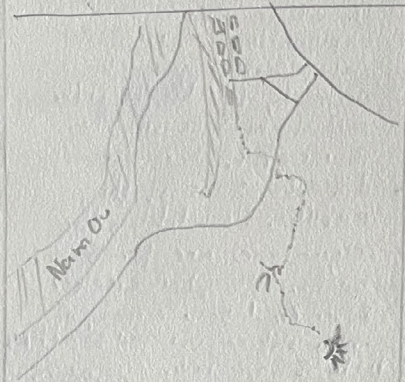
Climbing up the Phu Bam Hill, the viewpoint. Very rough way, steep with ladders and ropes.
But on the Hill top you can overview the whole Nam Ou river valley and in the Nam Ngoy valley.
This part of Laos was also hit hard by the bombings, thus because of the local Phatet Lao bureau and propably, because it had and direct acess Road to Vietnam.
13.01.25

Nam Ou
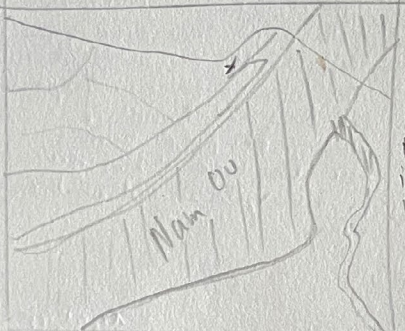
Nong Khiaw
Back in Nong Khiaw, there are still traces of War Material in town. Just exhibited not active of course. The little Museum 3 km outside town is carefully and interesting made.

Nam Ou

13.01.25

Today I travel from Nong Khiaw with the Minivan to Luang Phrabang and then with the Train to Kasi. Apparently there was american activities in this dusty small town. No signs tough. I tried to find traces and found out there are non. Can I take pictures of a symbol of the war traces? Kasi is a dusty truck town along a heavily used truck Route and crossing the train over a huge Bridge.
14.01.25

Road

Nam

Nam

Kasi

Road N3

Hi Speed Train
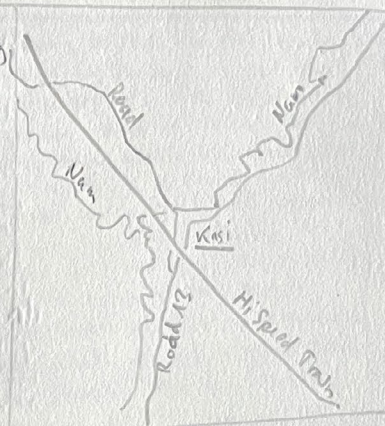
Good to see Yang again. He is so helpful.
We went to Muang Khoun, the destroyed Buddha statue and a few other things and then I got invited to have lunch at Mr. Peths House. I bought some e. metal as usual. Took some photographs in Ban Napia and discord that the people in that town started to setup little museums such as this. The plea to build at Mr. Peths Workshop.
15.01.25

Bad News from the Front. We can not go to Phu Pha Pi since the CIA is looking for their bones. They closed the Road to the mountains. What I heard. So there is the question. Now do I deal with that situation. I cannot take pictures of? Start speaking about images I didn't take?

16.01.25

16.01.25

Contact prints of the Pink Landscape series

Videobook, 2020

Video, 16:9, 16:10, stereo.
Click to watch the video.

03:30

03:35
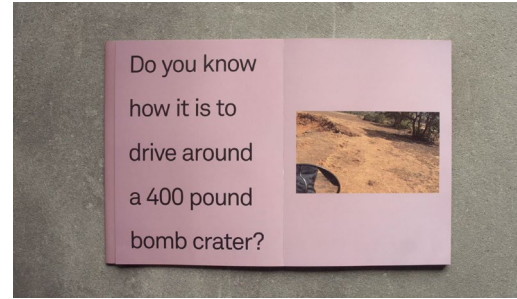
03:59

04:04

04:31

04:45
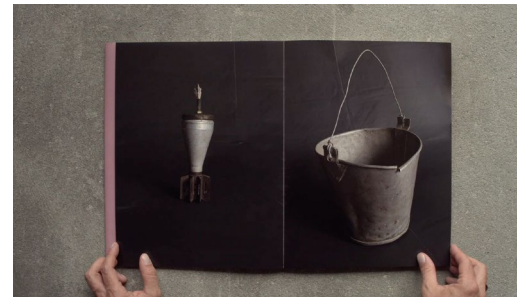
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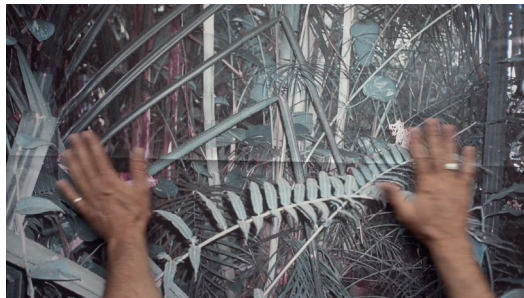
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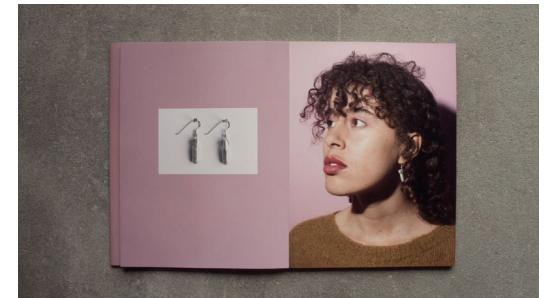
07:10

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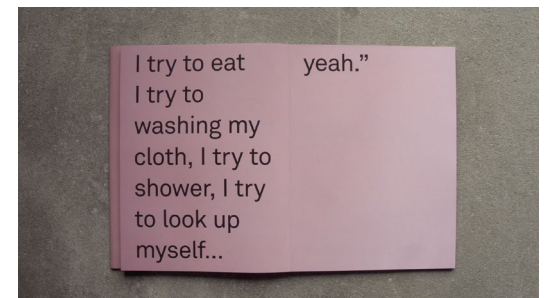
13:46

«Traumata kannst du nicht mit der Kamera erfassen»

Ausstellung: Prix Photoforum Der Berner Fotograf Marco Frauchiger macht Kriegsmaterial zu Kunst – eine Napalmbombe wird zur Kamera.

Helen Lagger

«Laos ist voller Kriegsmaterial», sagt Fotograf Marco Frauchiger. Dabei handle sich um Bomben der CIA, die während des laotischen Bürgerkrieges abgeworfen wurden, aber nie explodiert seien. Der Krieg in Laos, der zwischen 1953 und 1975 stattfand, wird auch als der «geheime» Krieg bezeichnet, da er im Hintergrund des Vietnamkrieges stattfand und bis heute wenig im Bewusstsein der Weltbevölkerung verankert ist.

Zum ersten Mal reiste Frauchiger vor acht Jahren nach Laos – dank eines Stipendiums. Dieses wird von der Journalistenschule MAZ und der Direktion für Entwicklung und Zusammenarbeit DEZA vergeben, üblicherweise eher an die schreibende Zunft. Anfangs begleitete er dann auch Journalistinnen und Journalisten und versuchte deren Arbeit zu dokumentieren. «Ich fand es schwierig», so der 46-jährige Berner. «Auch weil gewisse Journalisten lieber selbst fotografieren, da sie damit zusätzlich Geld verdienen.» Schliesslich kontaktierte er verschiedene NGOs, die vor Ort Hilfsprojekte realisieren, und stiess auf das Thema des Kriegsmaterials.
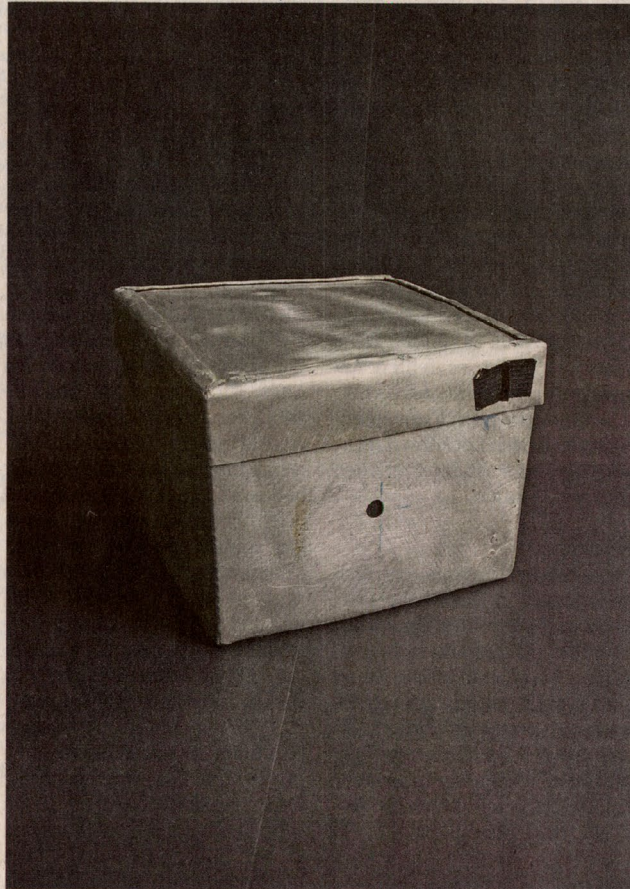
Um aus Überresten einer Napalmbombe eine Camera obscura zu bauen, engagierte Fotograf Marco Frauchiger einen lokalen Handwerker. Foto: Marco Frauchiger

Frauchiger fotografierte für die Serie Bilder von historischen Kriegsschauplätzen – hier im nordöstlichen Laos. Foto: Marco Frauchiger

Frauchiger, der sich unter anderem bei der GAF (Gruppe Autodidaktischer FotografInnen) hatte ausbilden lassen, wollte ursprünglich Fotojournalist werden. Doch 2018 geriet er in eine Krise. «Ich hatte viel zu viel Bildmaterial.» Der bereits etablierte Berufsfotograf suchte nach einem anderen Weg und begann ein Masterstudium an der Hochschule der Künste in Bern, in Contemporary Art Practice.

Das Projekt «how to dismantle a bomb» – auf Deutsch «wie man eine Bombe entschärft»

führte ihn 2020 erneut nach Laos. Für das Teilprojekt «Bringing light into the dark» hat er nun den mit 5000 Franken dotierten Prix Photoforum erhalten. Die Arbeit kann Frauchiger nun im Rahmen einer Ausstellung mit anderen von der internationalen Jury berücksichtigten Positionen zeigen.

«Marco Frauchigers Arbeit konnte die Jury besonders überzeugen, da sie einen kollaborativen Umgang mit der Fotografie entwickelt hat und die Fotografierten sowie die Betrachtenden

in den Produktionsprozess mit einbezieht», so Jana Johanna Haeckel, Jurymitglied und Direktorin am Photoforum Pasquart. Tatsächlich suchte Frauchiger vor Ort nach Artefakten, die aus Bombenmaterial hergestellt wurden. Frauchiger stiess auf Schmuck, aber auch auf Alltagsgegenstände wie Reiskocher.

Uralte Technik

Er beauftragte für seine Fotoserie einen lokalen Handwerker, der ihm aus eben solchen Bombentrümmern eine Camera obscura baute. Diese uralte analoge Technik zwang Frauchiger, langsam zu arbeiten. Durch ein Versehen gerieten seine Landschaftsbilder gänzlich schwarz. Erst wenn man die Aufnahmen von hinten beleuchtet, erscheinen geisterhafte Bombenkrater und verletzte Landschaften.

Diese Arbeiten sind schön und schrecklich zugleich und lassen die Betrachtenden bewusst ein wenig im Dunkeln tappen. Denn zu Frauchigers Thema gehört auch eine subtile Kritik am Fotojournalismus. «Traumata kannst du nicht mit der Kamera erfassen.»

Vernissage: Samstag, 3. Dezember, Photoforum Pasquart, Biel. Ausstellung bis am 15. Januar.

"WOZ" Newspaper Articel (german) Switzerland, 26.01.23

SAMEDI 3 MAI 2025

Marco Frauchiger, de la série «Pink Landscapes & Transformational Objects», 2020-2024. (Marco Frauchiger)

Anastasia Mityukova, de la série «Quiet neutrality», 2024-en cours. (Anastasia Mityukova, 2025)

Ahmed Khirelsid, «Under Control», 2024. (Ahmed Khirelsid)

Photographie
Ces horizons incertains

La 28e édition des Journées photographiques de Bienne présente le

Les Journées photographiques 2025 proposent 18 expositions présentant dans 10 lieux de la cité bernoise les réflexions de photographes contemporains sur un paysage géographique social politique et économique

taire et personnel, objectif et subjectif et avec une indéniable dimension journalistique, *Quiet neutrality* est un projet qu'il sera passionnant de suivre. De même que les images de la photographe romande sont majoritairement dénuées

dans un office postal désaffecté et transformé en lieu artistique alternatif par REBL – célébrant dans la tradition de la *street photography* un espace urbain et ses habitants.

Sur des murs historiques de la rue Basse, ce ne sont pas des paysages que présente le Bernois Marco Frauchiger, mais une série d'objets en grand format – une cuillère, un seau, une tasse... C'est au Laos, le pays le plus bombardé au monde, qu'il a réalisé entre 2020 et 2024 la série *Pink Landscapes & Transformational Objects*. Fabriqués à l'aide de restes d'obus, les objets qu'il dévoile symbolisent la résilience d'une population transformant en ustensiles utilitaires des outils de destruction. Un peu plus loin, à Juraplatz, il montre des photos de ce paysage laotien bombardé prises à l'aide d'une *camera obscura* qu'il a lui-même conçue, et qu'il expose également. Comme il utilise des pellicules périmées, ses images sont désaturées, et incarnent parfaitement ces horizons incertains qui servent de fil rouge à cette édition stimulante des Journées photographiques de Bienne. ▬

**«Journées photographiques de Bienne»,
du 3 au 25 mai.**

"Le Temps" Newspaper (French) Switzerland, 05.05.25

Région 7

Une cuillère qui raconte le retour à la vie après les obus

Bienne Les Journées photographiques ouvrent ce vendredi ses 18 expositions. Elles trônent d'ores et déjà aux quatre coins de la cité seelandaise, avec un photographe bernois en bonne place, à la rue Basse.

Alexandre Wälti

«Qu'est-ce que cette immense cuillère fait à la rue Basse?» Cette question saute littéralement aux yeux quand on entre dans la vieille ville de Bienne par la rue du Collège. Il est impossible de manquer les photographies grands formats en noir et blanc, signées par le Bernois Marco Frauchiger et exposées sur fond de roche blanche, dans le cadre de la 28e édition des Journées photographiques.

Quand on connaît l'histoire de ces tirages, l'ensemble prend une signification insoupçonnée. Ces toiles emmènent même à l'autre bout du monde. «Les objets photographiés sont fabriqués par les Laotiens pour une utilisation quotidienne, en récupérant des obus métalliques de guerre qui ont envahi le territoire», explique Sarah Girard, directrice de la manifestation pour la dernière fois, après sept ans à sa tête. «Marco Frauchiger a passé beaucoup de temps au Laos. Il questionne notamment la capacité de l'image à raconter la guerre et les traumatismes qu'elle génère.»

La manifestation s'ouvre officiellement avec plusieurs allocutions, vendredi soir à 18h, au Photoforum Pasquart. Elle se prolongera jusqu'au 25 mai. Autour de la thématique «Horizons», il y aura 18 expositions, dont six premières mondiales et quatre au niveau suisse. Elles sont éparpillées sur 10 sites de Bienne.

Saine reconstruction

Les photographies du Bernois, diplômé en ferblanterie et installateur sanitaire, forment la première partie d'un travail qui se conclut à la place du Jura. Ici, l'artiste expose notamment un grand appareil photo fabriqué avec des pièces d'anciens avions de fabrication suisse retrouvées au Laos, également construit à l'aide de dé-

Marco Frauchiger
Photographe bernois

> Quand on reconstruit des objets à partir d'armes usagées, la résilience est vraiment très grande.

Cet objet du quotidien a été fabriqué à partir de détritus d'obus par les Laotiens. Il s'expose dans la vieille ville de Bienne.   Marco Frauchiger

chets d'armement, comme il le précise Marco Frauchiger.

À l'intérieur du ... d'exposition ... pose de ... sés ...

explique-t-il. «Quand on reconstruit des objets à partir d'armes, la résilience est vraiment très grande. C'est particulièrement beau avec le Laos, qui reste, à ce jour, l'un des pays les plus bombardés au monde, alors que les affrontements dans cette région ont été passés sous silence.»

Alors en formation à l'Institut de journalisme et de la communication (MAZ) de Lucerne, Marco Frauchiger atterrit au Laos pour un stage grâce à une bourse. «Les choses ne se sont pas passées comme je le souhaitais. Je me suis ensuite rapidement intéressé au recyclage d'armes de guerre pour en faire des objets quotidiens», détaille-t-il. S'ensuit une collaboration de longue durée avec plusieurs organisations non gouvernementales sur place. «J'ai mis de côté le photojournalisme pendant un moment, car j'ai trouvé davantage de liberté dans l'expression artistique.»

Cette volonté de raconter l'histoire ou l'actualité se re-

sitions. C'est notamment le cas dans les locaux du Photoforum Pasquart, avec le travail d'Anne-Marie Filaire.

Influence des terres excavées

Dans «Terres, sols profonds du Grand Paris, 2018-2021», la photographe française s'intéresse aux transformations du paysage aux abords de la capitale de l'Hexagone. L'artiste a observé pendant quatre ans l'extension des limites de Paris, un chantier gigantesque qui modifie notre perception du territoire urbain», remarque Sarah Girard. «Plus de 22 millions de tonnes de terres sont extraites chaque année. À terme, 45 millions de tonnes s'y ajouteront à la suite du creusement des 200 km de lignes du futur métro.»

La plupart des photographies montrent des immenses béances du paysage. Sur les crêtes, des camions de plusieurs tonnes chargent la matière première ou déchargent les terres d'excavation des chantiers pa-

contrastes donne une puissance toute particulière aux images. Tant les bâtiments des alentours que les véhicules de chantier paraissent minuscules», insiste Sarah Girard.

Ailleurs, les photographies se font toutefois davantage joueurs. C'est notamment le cas avec l'exposition «Déjà vu», d'Alexander Jaquemet. Dans le bâtiment Neuhaus et le jardin du Nouveau Musée de Bienne, le citoyen de Cerlier (Erlach) s'amuse avec l'espace.

Un mur comprend, par exemple, l'avant d'une maisonnette penchée, tandis qu'un autre présente l'arrière de la baraque. «Les visiteuses et visiteurs doivent chercher les pairs par leurs propres moyens entre tous les clichés exposés», détaille Alexander Jaquemet. «Il en résulte des jeux de mémoire visuels auxquels chaque personne de passage participera.»

Info+: Programmation complète ...

"Le Journal de Jura" Newspaper (French) Switzerland, 01.05.25

Introduction

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ships demonstrate shifts of meanings exemplarily. The great pleasure and challenge of discourse in art contexts and the examination sense and sensations lies in the crossover between non-verbal impli meanings and their verbalisation. ☉ Words influence our perception they point out certain aspects to other language users in that th refer to different details of a jointly viewed thing or artwork. Ca ful wording and an awareness of shifting meaning play a key r in wording aspect change; it is important to know the mechanis of the language-games we play when we communicate, also in arts and its discourse. 23 Language-games are at the core of langu use and they intrinsically allow for novelty and change. Here th different yet complementary lines of thought on shifting meanin Wittgenstein importantly points out:

> "While you can have complete certainty about
> someone else's state of mind, still it is always
> merely subjective, not objective, certainty." –
> These two words point to a difference between
> language-games. 24

The Austrian-American literature critic Marjorie Perloff formula the arts' capacity to create new realities as follows:

> the enabling concept here being that of *defamil-*
> *iarization* or *making strange* (ostranenie), the ability
> of the artistic construct to slow down percep-
> tion and make the audience see the object in
> question as if for the first time. 25

At the same time an apple can be viewed from several angles, and is common knowledge it was fatal for Snow White to take a bite fro the wrong side. The desire to view the obverse side of an object fact is a sign of curiosity for anyone who experiences the dilem of always being in only one place at a time.

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HOW TO PEEL AN APPLE?

How to create a proper projection of any sphere into maps, onto a surface? An apple is a more or less spherical shape, just like the pla Earth, although geographers describe it as shaped more like a pota ☉ Similarly to a modern geographer being aware of the issues crea by methods of map projections, what we envisage here is a proble that stands metaphorically for all images and contexts which try present a complete view of the described or shown situation.
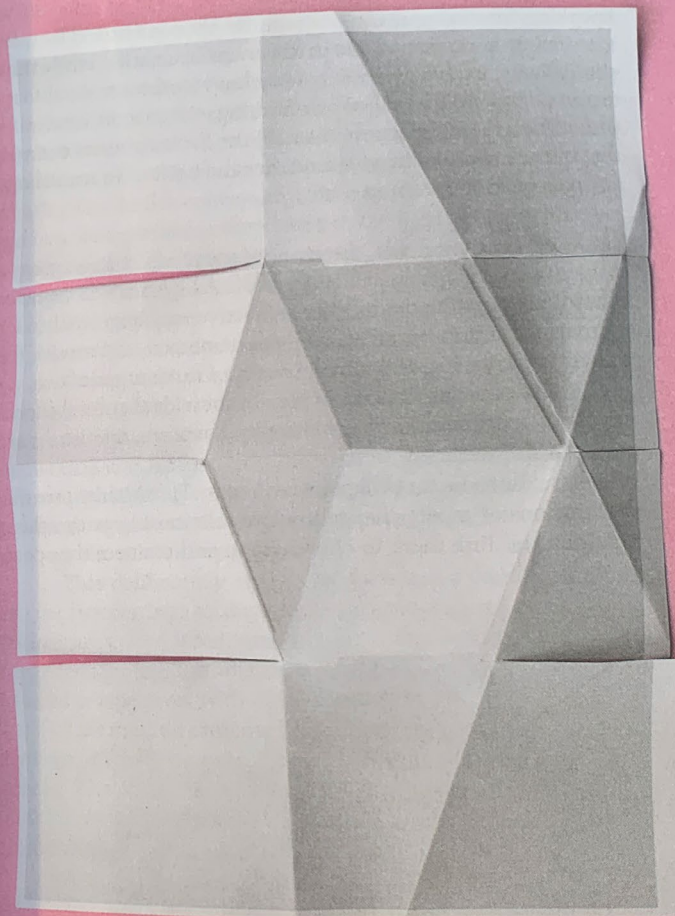
Marco Frauchiger, HOW TO DISMANTLE A BOMB, 2020

"Atlas of Aspect change" Tine Melzer, Switzerland 2023

Zu den Bildern von Marco Frauchiger

Der Berner Fotograf Marco Frauchiger kam vor acht Jahren zum ersten Mal nach Laos. Dank eines Stipendiums der Schweizer Journalist*innenschule MAZ und der Direktion für Entwicklung und Zusammenarbeit (DEZA) des Bundes reiste er durch das Land, deren Bewohner*innen zwischen 1953 und 1975 im grossen Zusammenhang des Vietnamkriegs unter einem furchtbaren Krieg litten. Das Imperium USA nahm keine Rücksicht auf Verluste. Der Krieg, der auch ein Bürgerkrieg war, gelangte nie richtig ins Bewusstsein der Weltöffentlichkeit, obwohl die USA über Laos pro Einwohner geschätzte 2,5 Tonnen an Sprengsätzen abwarfen und das Land damit zu den am schwersten bombardierten Ländern der Welt zählt.

2020 kehrte Marco Frauchiger nach Laos zurück. Ihn interessierten für sein Projekt *How to dismantle a bomb* – «wie man eine Bombe entschärft» – Alltagsgegenstände, die aus transformiertem Bombenmaterial hergestellt wurden. Einige davon sind in diesem Heft zu sehen. → S. 2, 10, 22, 38.

Die Reise selber dokumentiert er in seiner Fotoserie *Bringing light into the dark*. Frauchiger beauftragte einen lokalen Handwerker, dafür eine Camera Obscura aus Bombenresten herzustellen, um analoge Aufnahmen zu produzieren. Die Ergebnisse zeigen kaum erkennbare historische Schauplätze des «Geheimen Krieges» in Laos. Für diese Arbeit hat er den mit 5 000 Franken dotierten Prix Photoforum 2022 in Biel erhalten.

Marco Frauchiger (*1976) entzieht sich dem Versprechen des klassischen Fotojournalismus, gerade in einem Kriegsgebiet Wirklichkeit zu illustrieren und zu dokumentieren. Mit seiner Arbeit stellt er uns als Betrachter*innen Fragen: Wie kann ein Krieg dem Vergessen entrissen werden? Wie können diejenigen, die unter einem Krieg leiden oder gelitten haben, ihre Geschichte erzählen? Wie kann Kriegsmaterial zu Kunst werden und gerade in dieser Weise Information transportieren?

○ marcofrauchiger.com und marcofrauchiger.ch
○ *Bringing light into the dark* ist im Rahmen der Ausstellung zum Prix Photoforum 2022 bis am 15. Januar im Photoforum Pasquart Biel zu sehen. 2023 wird *How to dismantle a bomb* im BelleVue, Ort für Fotografie in Basel zu sehen sein.
photoforumpasquart.ch

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"Neue Wege" Magazine Article (German) Switzerland, January 2023