

Marco Frauchiger

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Marco Frauchiger - Portfolio

Exhibitions (selection)

2027

Deichtorhallen, Hamburg (DE) (upcoming)

ISSP Gallery, Riga (LV) (upcoming)

2026

FOTODOK, Utrecht (NL) (upcoming)

Pyxis, Lausanne, Shortfilm screening (Upcoming)

Kornhausforum, Echo)) (Upcoming)

Junkere 11, Bern, (Upcoming)

Fotomuseum Winterthur, Shortfilm screening

2025

La Nef, St. Ursanne, Cantonale Bern Jura

Kunsthau Interlaken, Cantonale Bern Jura

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, Kunsthau 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, Kunsthau Langenthal

Noorderlicht International Photography Festival, Groningen, NL

Prozess Kulturraum, Bern

ARFF International Film Festival

2020

Whiteout, Kunstmuseum Thun, Cantonale Berne Jura 2020

Common Ground, Kunsthau Pasquart Biel, Diploma Exhibition

Institutional acquisitions / collections

2026

Cantonal Art Commission of Bern, acquisition

2021

Bern University of the Arts, acquisition

Cantonal Art Commission of Bern, acquisition

Awards, Grants (Selection)

2026

Grant for Fine Arts from the Canton of Bern

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

Pro Helvetia, Global research Grant

2025

Focus Photo Grant, Pro Helvetia

Metron Förderpreis

2022

Prix Photoforum winner 2022

2021

«Continuer» Research Grant of the Canton 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

Camera Obscura Typ III, Work in Progress (Preview)



Video, 0'44" -> [Click here](#)

Camera Obscura, Type III, 2024

Large format camera (40 × 50 cm) made from aircraft wreckage

The project investigates Switzerland's entanglement in global conflict through the material remains of Pilatus PC-6 Porter aircraft used during the Secret War in Laos. It begins with a local practice of transforming war debris into everyday objects. Building on this, I construct cameras from aircraft wreckage and use them to photograph sites where little or no visible traces remain.

A key moment is the return of the camera to Switzerland, where it is used to document the sites of its original manufacture. This movement connects places of production and destruction, linking distant geographies through the material itself.

The work combines field research in Laos with archival research in Switzerland, bringing together fragments such as objects, photographs, found footage, and documents. These material and visual traces function as unstable archives, mediating between past and present.

By assembling these fragments, the project develops a non-linear form of historiography that reveals gaps in historical records and reflects on the conditions from which these traces emerge.

Aircraft Fragments

Stack of found material in Laos originating from the wreckage of shot-down aircraft.



To be seen 2026/2027
 @FOTODOK, Utrecht (NL)
 @Deichtorhallen, Hamburg (DE)
 @ISSP Gallery, Riga (LV)





Camera Obscura Photograph

Large format direct positive on silver gelatin paper (40 × 50 cm)
Former Oerlikon-Bührle production site, Zürich Oerlikon.



Camera Obscura and Photograph

Camera Obscura, Type III, presenting a large format photograph in the artist's studio in Bern.



Working space in the artist's studio with the Camera, photographs, notes, and sketches related to project in progress.

A selection of contextual material from the research process.

A selection of contextual material from the research process.

Presentation proposal



Video viewing box with photograph, 0'17"

Exhibition try-outs

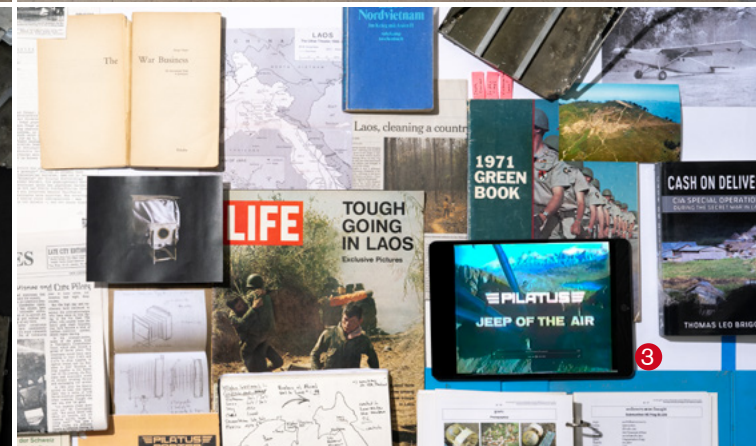
This project has not yet been exhibited, and therefore no installation views exist. Instead, I propose several possible exhibition ideas, illustrated by studio work-in-progress images that show how the materials are currently arranged and examined.

One possible approach is to place the reconstructed camera as a central object in the space, around which the different materials of

the project unfold. The installation could combine industrial image films from the aircraft manufacturer, found photographs and footage of the aircraft in Laos, historical documents, and fragments of aircraft material. Through this exhibition structure, the different elements form associative fields, allowing connections between images, materials, and historical fragments to emerge. Parts of the research material may be presented directly in the exhibition — for example arranged on white paper on the floor —

making the investigative process visible.

The installation also includes the large-format photographs produced with the camera in Laos and at sites in Switzerland connected to the aircraft's production. These photographs may be presented in black viewing boxes that visitors look into individually, creating focused encounters with the images. Additional elements include a newspaper composed of historical press articles, printed as a larger edition and made available to visitors.



Exhibition try-outs II

Camera Type III, open at the back, containing one of the photographs produced with the camera.

Table installation combining moving images, Images, newspapers, camera prototypes, and aircraft material. Moving images are presented on different devices: images exchanged with a collaborator in Laos appear as a video loop on an iPhone ①, while a screen ② loops photographs made with the camera, accompanied by audio from The Red Report (1960s), an American anti-communist propaganda film.

Photographs produced with the camera, shown as a floor installation, alongside process images presented as wallpaper and framed prints. The number of photographs varies according to the available space. Depending on the configuration, selected research materials may also be displayed on the floor on a white backdrop. Including the Found footage from the aircraft manufacturer's promotional film is presented on an iPad ③.



1861	American Civil War (1861 – 1865)
1861	French Intervention in Mexico – Also known as Franco–Mexican War (1861 – 1867)
1862	Dakota War of 1862
1862	Dungan Revolt (1862–77) Muslim Rebellion
1863	Ecuadorian–Colombian War

1914	Haitian Civil War
1914	Blayong's Uprising
1914	Peasant Revolt in Albania
1914	Truku War
1914	World War I
1914	United States Occupation of Veracruz Part of the Banana Wars
1914	Bluff War

1938	1938 Greek Coup d'État Attempt
1938	Sudeten German Uprising
1939	Hungarian Invasion of Carpatho–Ukraine
1939	Slovak–Hungarian War
1939	Maquis Insurgency
1939	Italian Invasion of Albania
1939	World War II
1939	1939 Ondonga Uprising

1989	Mauritania–Senegal Border War
1989	KDPI Insurgency (1989–1996) Part of the Kurdish Separatism in Iran
1989	Insurgency in Jammu and Kashmir Part of the Kashmir Conflict
1989	1989 Philippine Coup d'État Attempt
1989	Romanian Revolution
1989	United States Invasion of Panama
1989	First Liberian Civil War

	Part of the Yugoslav Wars
2001	2001 Bangladesh–India border Clashes
2001	2001 Special Operations Unit Mutiny
2001	Islamist Insurgency in Iraqi Kurdistan
2001	War on Terror
2001	Taliban Insurgency Part of the War in Afghanistan (2001–2021), Afghanistan Conflict (1978–present) and War on Terror
2002	Operation Enduring Freedom – Philippines

2025	2025 Cambodian–Thai border crisis
2025	Iran–Israel war Part of the Iran–Israel conflict (2024–2025)
2025	Southern Syria clashes (July 2025–present)
2025	2025 U.S. military campaign against cartels
2025	2025 Afghanistan–Pakistan conflict

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, -> Click here





seen
@Fotomuseum
Winterthur,
shortfilmscreening
11.04.26





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.



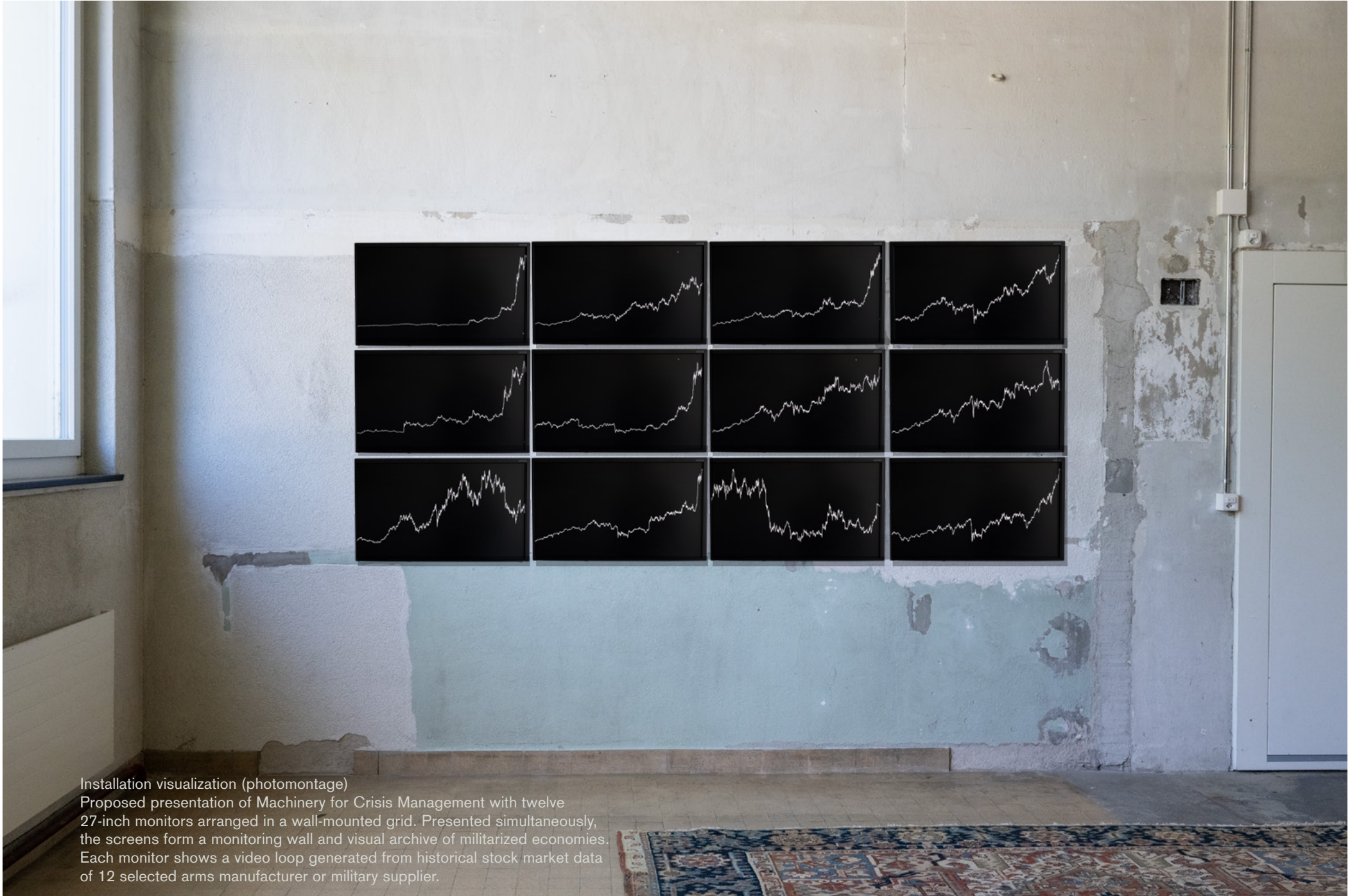
Installation View: Screening Fotomuseum Winterthur 2026



Machinery for Crisis Management

12 Historical Stock Market Graphs from the Global Arms Industry, 2016–2026

18



Installation visualization (photomontage)

Proposed presentation of Machinery for Crisis Management with twelve 27-inch monitors arranged in a wall-mounted grid. Presented simultaneously, the screens form a monitoring wall and visual archive of militarized economies. Each monitor shows a video loop generated from historical stock market data of 12 selected arms manufacturer or military supplier.

Machinery for Crisis Management is a series of 12 minimalist video loops that visualize the price and profit developments of major international arms companies¹—including Rheinmetall, Lockheed Martin, Elbit Systems, BAE Systems, General Dynamics, Caterpillar, and STMicroelectronics—over the period from 2016 to 2026.

The video loops are generated from actual historical stock market data and are not simulations or symbolic representations, but visual translations of recorded market activity.

The selected decade encompasses a period marked by renewed global rearmament, escalating geopolitical tensions, and a significant increase in military spending.

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.”



Prototype display of a single video work. Documentation of one video work presented on a monitor. Each graph is generated from historical stock market data of a selected defense-related company and functions as an autonomous moving image.



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



Documentation of all twelve video objects displayed sequentially on a single monitor. The video demonstrates the visual language, rhythm, and formal structure of the installation.

“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.



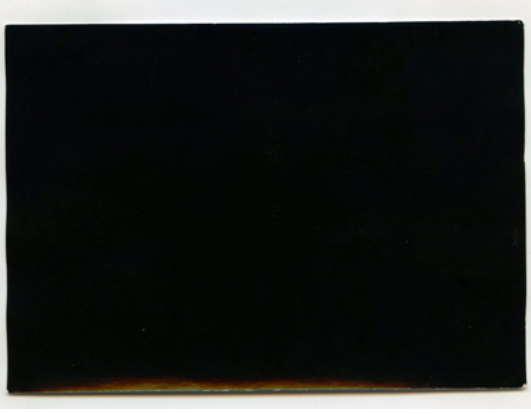
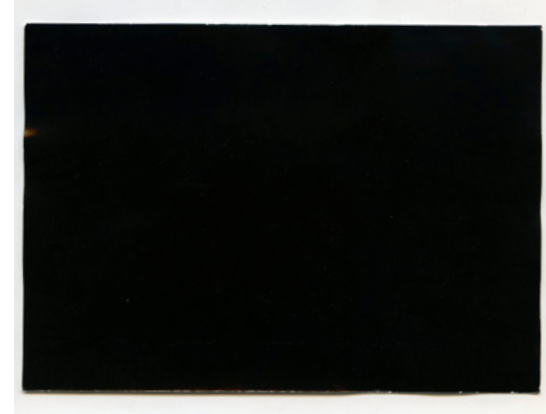
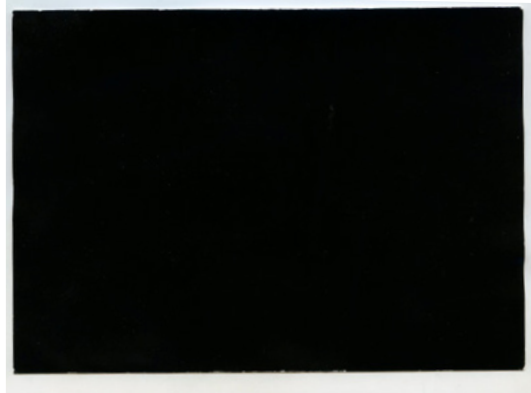


The camera obscura Typ II was commissioned



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





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 headquarters.

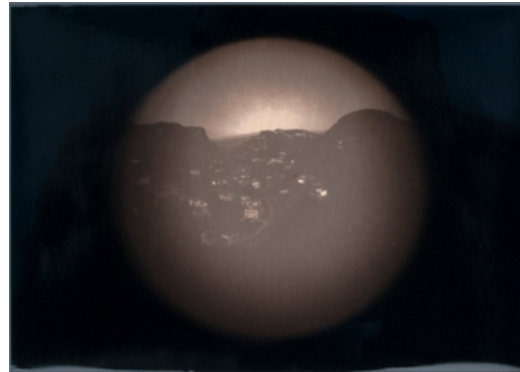
Through backlighting, landscapes and traces of the war gradually emerge from within these dark pictures upon closer inspection. In doing so, they point to the invisibility of this conflict and bring light into the darkness—both metaphorically and literally.

-> Winner of the Prix Photoforum 2022





1



2



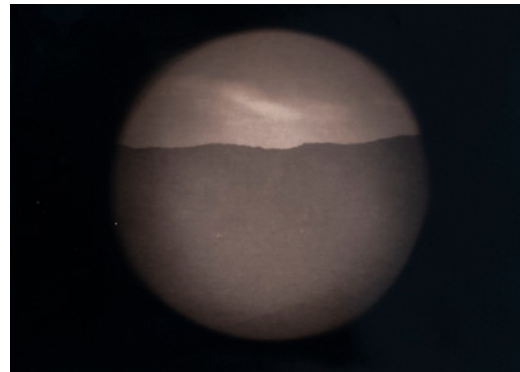
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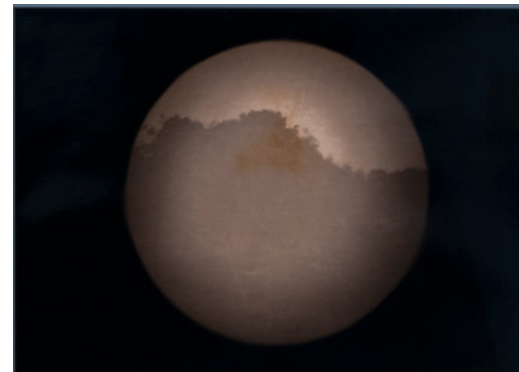
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6



7



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Camera Obscura Images - Pictures from Historical and War Sites

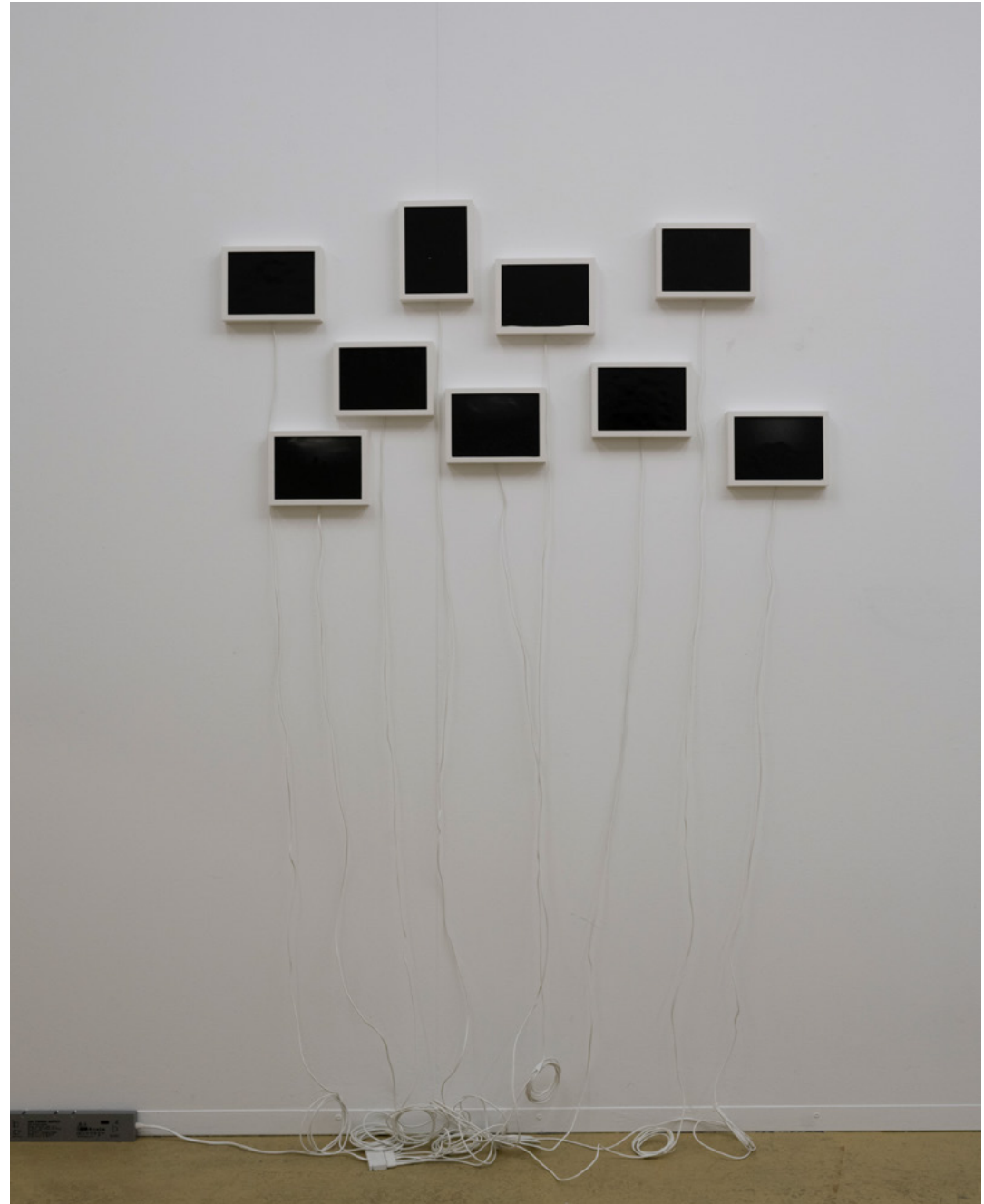
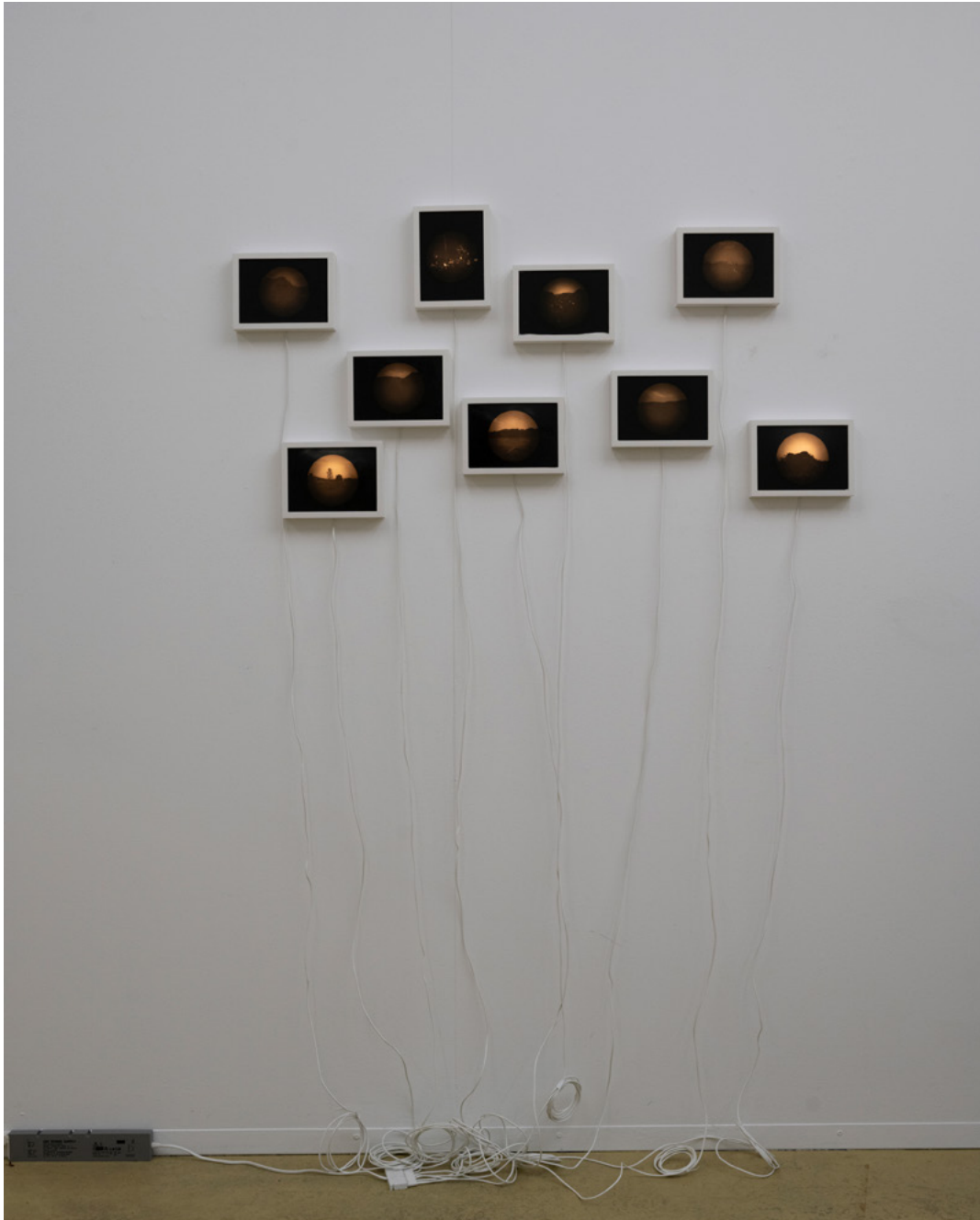
- 1 Pile of clay jars in a field in the Plain of Jars, Phonsavan, Xieng Khouang, Laos, February 12, 2020.
- 2 View from the karst mountains towards the former headquarters and airstrip of the CIA in Laos, Long Tieng, Xaisomboun, February 4, 2020
- 3 Rice field with cows, a typical Lao landscape, Nak Ho, Xieng Khouang, Laos, Feb. 12, 2020
- 4 A tree growing out of a bomb crater, Pakheo, Xieng Khouang, Laos, February 13, 2020.
- 5 Burnt soil, Phonsavan, Xieng Khouang, northeastern Laos, February 12, 2020.
- 6 View from inside a 400-pound bomb crater with a diameter of 30m, Ban Khangthat, 1st visit, Xieng Khouang, Laos, February 4, 2020
- 7 Bomb crater with tree in Plain of Jars, Phonsavan, Xieng Khouang, Laos, Feb. 12, 2020
- 8 Scenic view of Plain of Jars, Phonsavan, Xieng Khouang, 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 Khouang, 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 Khouang, Northeast Laos, February 13, 2020



9



10



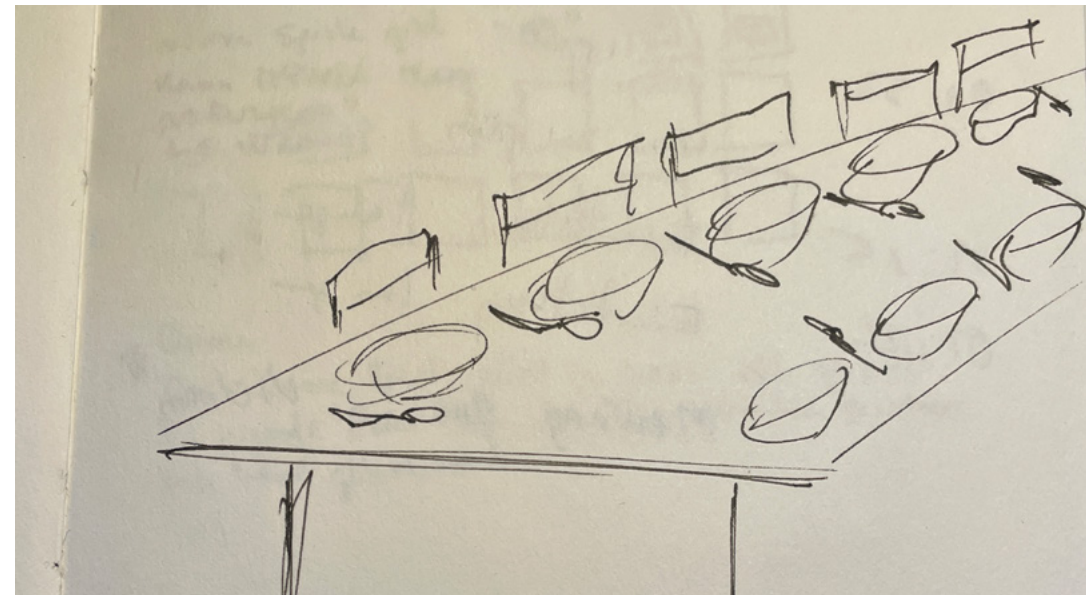
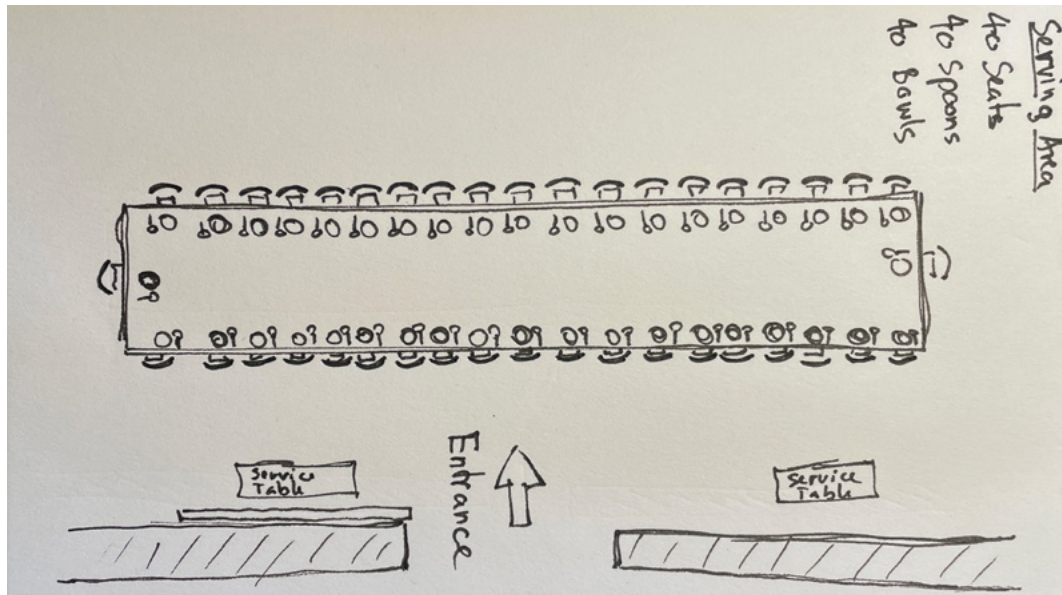
Installation views: 9 framed uniques, 13 x 18 cm, installation with light and timing device, *Austellungsraum Bellevue, Basel 2023*

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.





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

28

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.

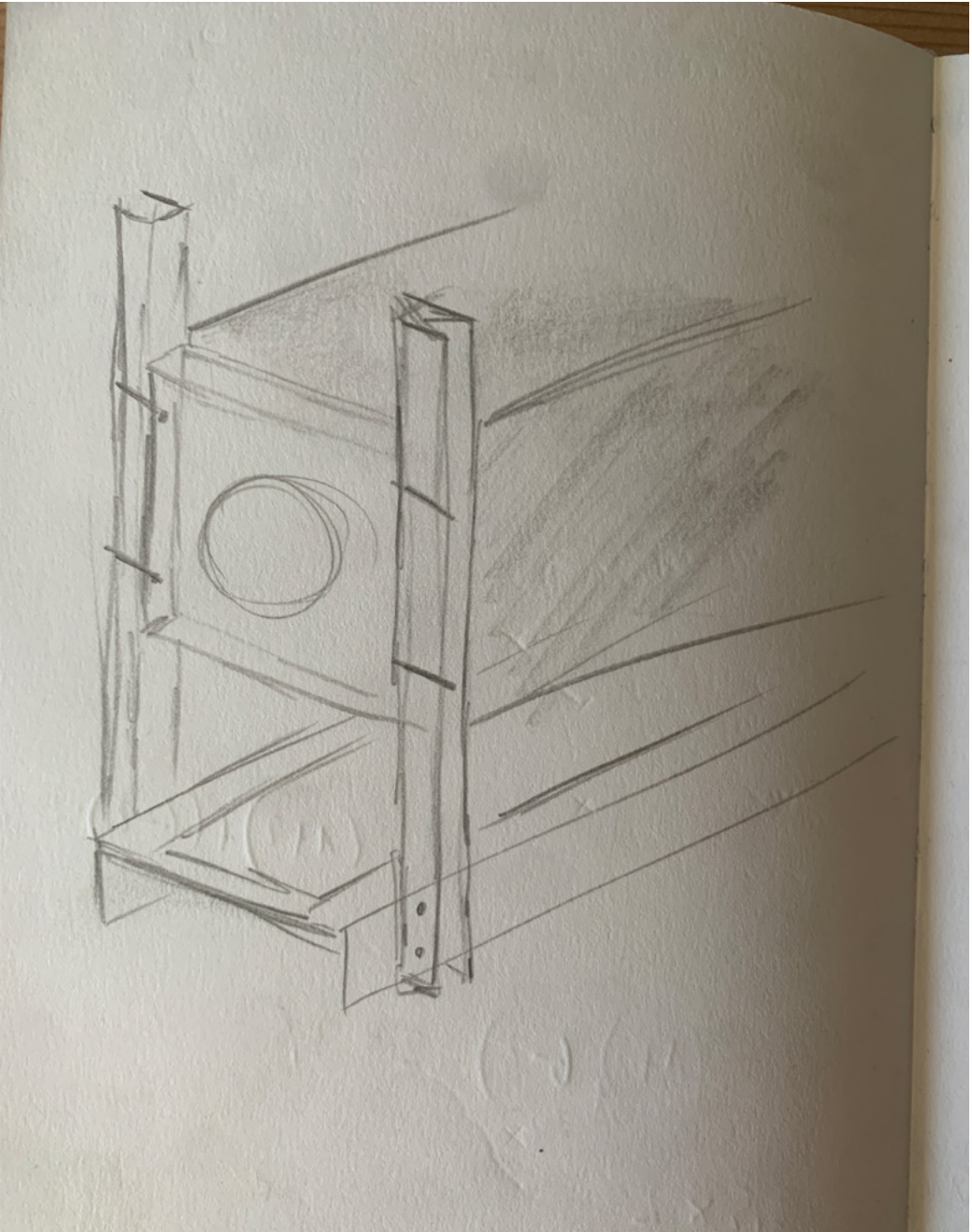
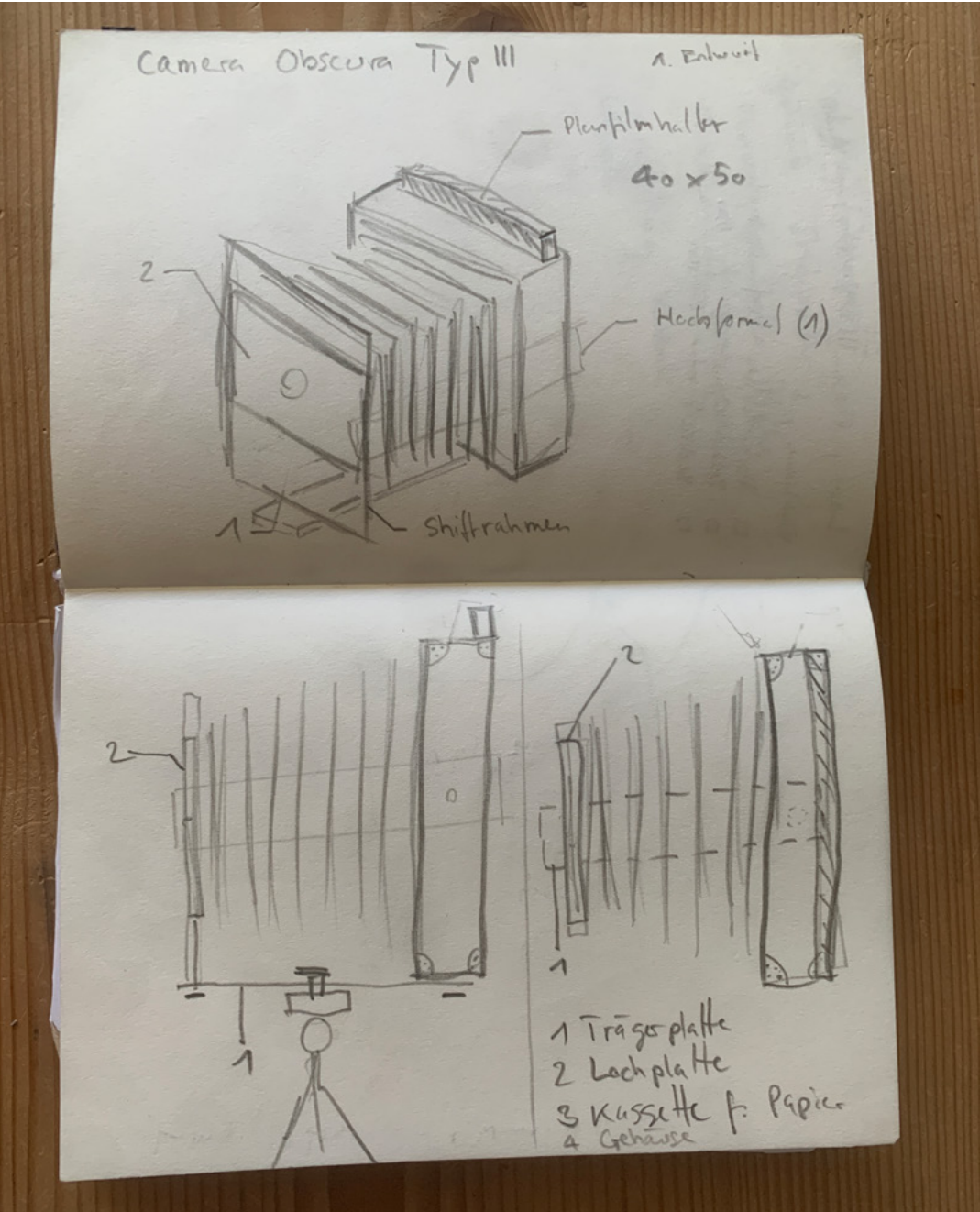
I take full control of the image-production process, yet I allow material imperfections and disruptions to surface—those that arise from the limitations of the methods and materials. These “errors” are not flaws but often the very elements that bring the image to life. It is an attempt to locate the 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.

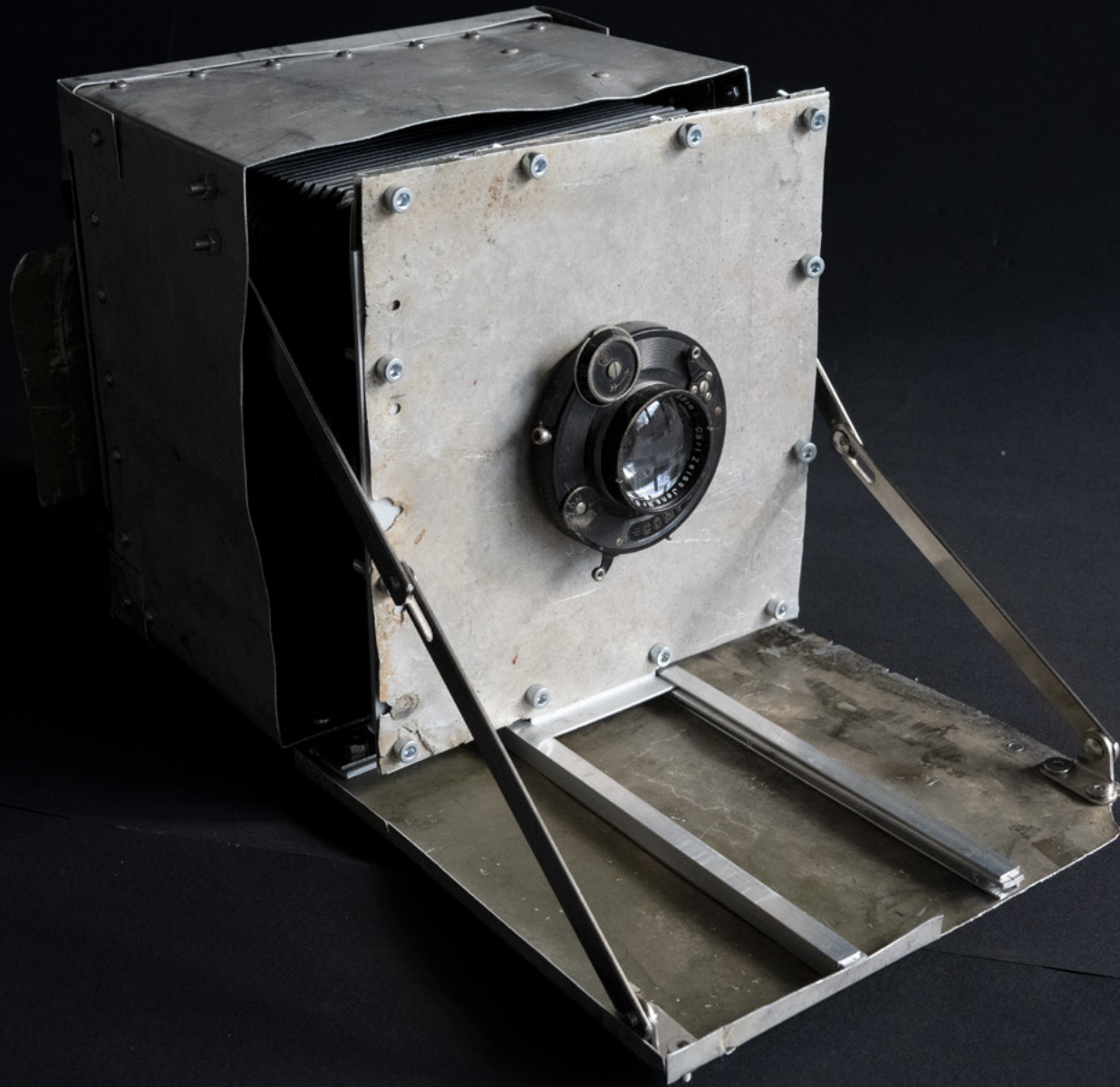
Over the years, both the formats of the photographic papers and the technical and conceptual requirements of the devices have evolved. Insights from earlier research and experiments continuously informed the development of subsequent cameras. Each new iteration carries traces of its predecessors—both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



Video, 0'44" -> Click hier



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



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.



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*

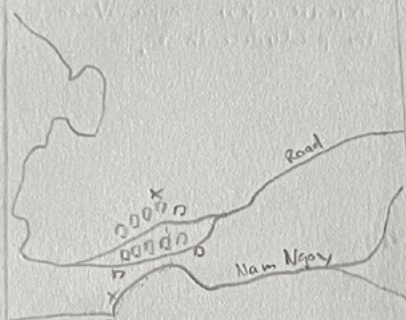


Due to improper storage and the passage of decades beyond their expiration date, the chemical components of slide films begin to degrade. The layers start to deteriorate, with cyan and magenta often persisting the longest. As a result, less information is retained in the image. Using this method, I photographed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

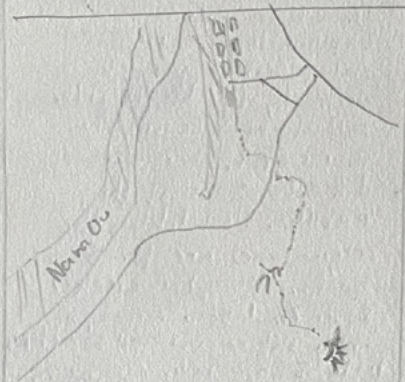


Ban Na



Multiple River Power stations
along the Nam Ngoy River.

12.01.25

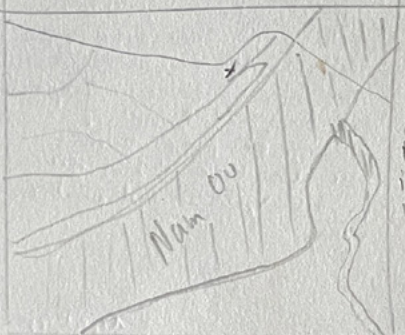


Climbing up the Phu Ban
Hill, the viewpoint. Very
rough way, steep with
ladders and ropes.

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 Phut Lao bureau
and probably because it had
and direct access Road to Vietnam.

13.01.25

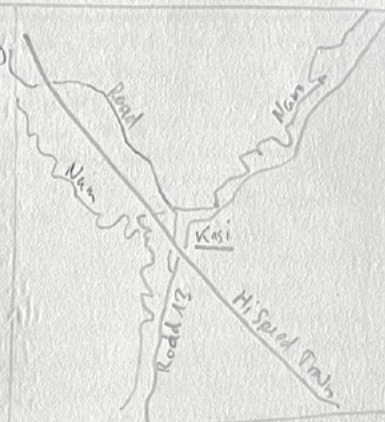


Nong Khaw
Back in Nong Khaw there
are still traces of war material
in town. Just exhibited not
active of course. The little
Museum 3km outside town
is carefully and interesting
made.

13.01.25

Today I travel from Nong Khaw
with the Minivan to Luang Prabang
and then with the Train to
Kasi. Apparently there was
american activities in this
dusty small town. No signs
though. I tried to find traces
and found out there are
none. Can I take pictures of
a symbol of the war here?
Kasi is a dusty truck town
along a heavily used truck
Route and crossing the train
over a huge bridge.

14.01.25



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. Peth's House.
I bought some metal as
usual. Took some photographs
in Ban Napia and discovered
that the people in that town
started to set up little museums
such as this. They plan to build
at Mr. Peth's Workshop.

15.01.25

Bad Views 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. How
do I deal with that situation?
I can not take pictures of?
Start speaking about images
I didn't take?

16.01.25



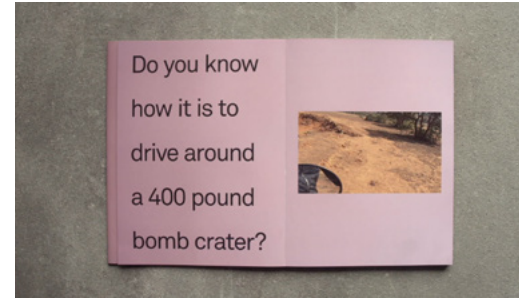




03:30



03:35



03:59



04:04



04:31



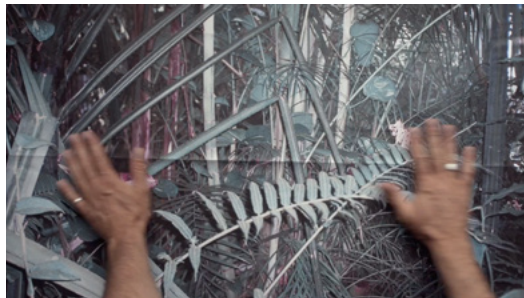
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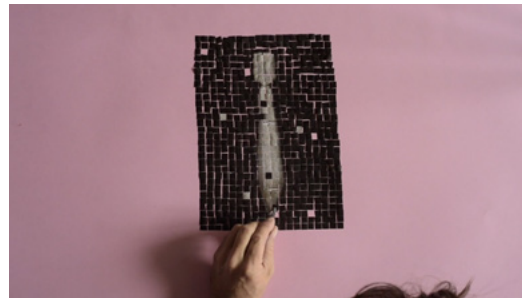
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05:31



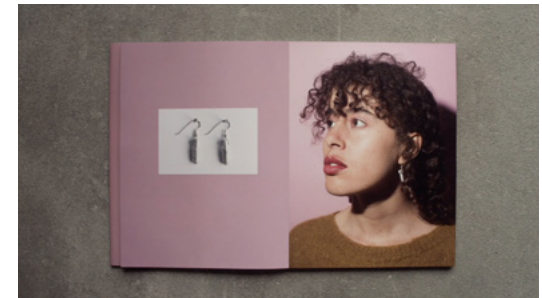
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06:12



06:44



07:10



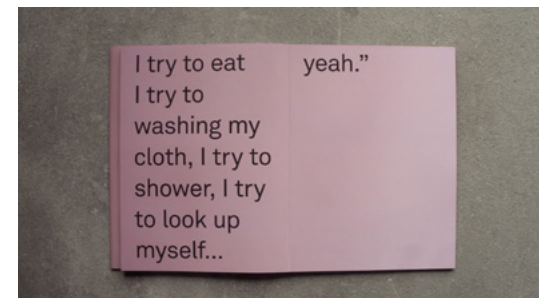
07:32



07:58



10:47



13:46

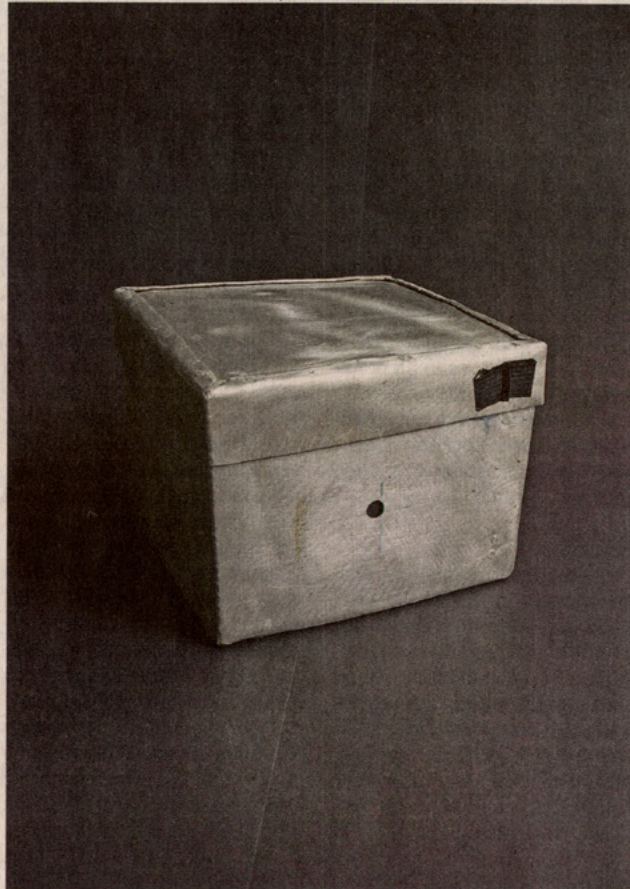
«Traumata kannst du nicht mit der Kamera erfassen»

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 Auto-didaktischer 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.

20 Kultur / Wissen
WZV Nr. 4 16. Januar 2023Kultur / Wissen 25
WZV Nr. 4 16. Januar 2023Kultur / Wissen 21
WZV Nr. 4 16. Januar 2023Die einfache Loch-
kamera, gebaut aus
einem alten Nagel-
brett, und die
Fotografie Mar-
co Frauchiger in Laos
mit ihr aufgenom-
men hat.

FOTOGRAFIE

Kunst als kontrollierte Explosion

Mit der ältesten Fototechnik der Welt auf der Spur eines vergessenen Kriegeres: Marco Frauchiger verstrickt die Altlasten der Bombardierung von Laos in eine vielschichtige fotografische Auseinandersetzung.

VON DANIEL JANISER (TEXT) UND MARCO FRAUCHIGER (FOTOS)

Die auf Abenteurer auf-
gegründete Fotogra-
fische Werkstatt als
Museum. Im Laufe einer Ausstellung
bringen die Besucher:innen
die Teile immer mehr durch-
einander.

Schwere zu fliegen, Spinnse zu fischen, so steht es in der Bibel. Lautliche Landbe-
ratern werden bei solch frommen Wip-
schen wohl eine einmal überlassen. Wip-
Kling gut – aber bei uns ist auch das Fliegen
und Müssen lebensgefährlich. Nach wie vor to-
gen Millionen von Flüchtlingen im Boden der
südostasiatischen Länder, eine mörderische
Hinterlassenschaft des Flächenbombardements
durch die US-Armee in den 1960er und 1970er
Jahren. Wer in Laos brachliegende Agrarland
betritt, ist in Gefahr, ein Auge oder
die Luft zu verlieren, ein Auge oder
das Leben.

Und doch: Schwere zu fliegen, Spinnse zu fischen,
Bomben zu Suppenlöffeln. Mit
den verstrickten Sprengkörpern
hat sich in Laos ein Internet
der Altkriegsmaschinen entwickelt.
Auch heute noch werden
die Bombenfragmente weiter
verworfen. Man schmeißt sie zu
Kuchengarn, zu Weitzangen, gar zu Schmuck-
stücken für die Touristen. In solch
alltäglichen Gegenständen holt der Bombenkrieg
einmal, einmal aufgehoben, eingetrennt in eine
gewöhnliche brennende Realität.

Getroffene Eruchtung

Das ist der himmlische Hintergrund, der jede
Wortwahl zu einer diamantenen Bombe, der mal-
turalistischen künstlerischen Arbeit des Bremer
Kunstlers Marco Frauchiger. Auch er sucht jene
Formen, die die Bombenfragmente
inszenieren nach Wegen, wie die alten Bomben
entschieden gemacht, wie die Gewaltgeschichte
aus dem Vergessen ein Stück weit greifbar
bleibt und in eine Zukunft überliefert werden
kann.

Die Bombe auflösen

Ein anderer Teil von ihm ist die Bombe
die auf Abenteurer aufgefunden zum Ma-
schinellen Fotografierte einer Strahlbombe
der Teile, die die Bombenfragmente
zurück zum Bombenmarkt. Die Anzahl
eigentlich der Anzahl der sogenannten heimlichen
Ausstellungen liegt Frauchiger dieses Museum auf

Inspiriert von der praktischen Gegen-
stände, die in Laos aus Bombenfragmenten ange-
fertigt werden, hat Frauchiger bei einem ein-
maligen Handwerker eine Lochkamera bauen –
Camera obscura, das Kunst und ständliche Ka-
meramodell der Fotografierte, montierte
er auf ein Stück und fragte: Woher kam die
schöne, Menschen, auch Bombenbrücken.

Id die Lochkamera von heute ganz kün-
stlich von der Vergangenheit eingeklebt und über-
lagert. Frauchiger nennt einen Ka-
meramodell, der die Kamera
einstrahlt Licht in die dunkle
Kammer – Licht fällt durch ein win-
ziges Loch ins Innere der dunklen
Kammer und projiziert dort die
Ansicht zu dem Loch auf die Rück-
wand – liefert die Metapher. Aber
die angestrichene Kinnung wird
dabei gleich wieder gebrochen.

Was kann
eine Fotografie
wirklich
einfangen und
vermitteln, was
bleibt verborgen?

den Boden, die Bombenbrücken bringen es mit
der Zeit, das Besondere, manche nehmen ein-
mal die Kamera mit nach Hause – auch das eine
Art, die Bombe symbolisch aufzulösen.

Der Fotograf als Bombenbrückenbrücke, seine
Werkzeuge als eine Reihe kontrollierter Ex-
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DER GEHEIME KRIEG

Bombenterror bis in die Gegenwart

200 Millionen Tonnen Sprengkörper fließen
zwischen 1964 und 1973 auf Laos. Das ist mehr
als die Menge aller Bomben, die während des
Zweiten Weltkriegs über Europa abgeworfen
wurden. Fast genauso wurde das südostasi-
sche Land damals von der US-Luftwaffe bom-
bardierte. Durchaus ähnlich wie die Bomben
eine Bombe auf den Nachbarstaat von Vietnam.
Das verdrängte Ziel der Verengungsweg
der Vision zu einem in einem der vielen Trü-
cken verstrickten Krieges den Kommunisten.

Die neun Jahre andauernde Bomben-
regung ohne Rücksicht auf zivile Opfer, wie
von der CIA beabsichtigt, vor der Öffentlichkeit
waren 1971 ein Licht auf das geheime
Kriegs. Offiziell gab die einstige französische
Kolonie Laos für die USA wie auch für Vietnam
als neutral.

Zu den Verstrickungen und den Trü-
cken des als «verdeckte Operation» getarnten
Bombenterror kommen verlorene Spätkrieg
denen. Die abgeworfenen Sprengkör-
per sind nicht explodiert. Sie lagern zum Teil in
Laos, doch die Kinder schwer verletzt oder ge-
tötet. Auch unter der Erde lauern nicht deaktivierte

der bleiben jedoch ungenutzt. Inge-
nieur, der auf dem Boden der Bombenbrücken
nach Hause – auch das eine
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Vor Alltagsgegen-
ständen, die in Laos
aus verschrottem
Sprengkörpern gefertigt
wurden, ein Lafer-
ein Messerschiff, ein
Reinheits und eine
Pfeilstrahlung.

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)

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 photographie mondiale sont métastabiles et déstabilisantes.

L'édition de 2025 sera présentée par le CAP de Bienne, pour de nombreux visiteurs et pour de nombreux visiteurs et pour de nombreux visiteurs.

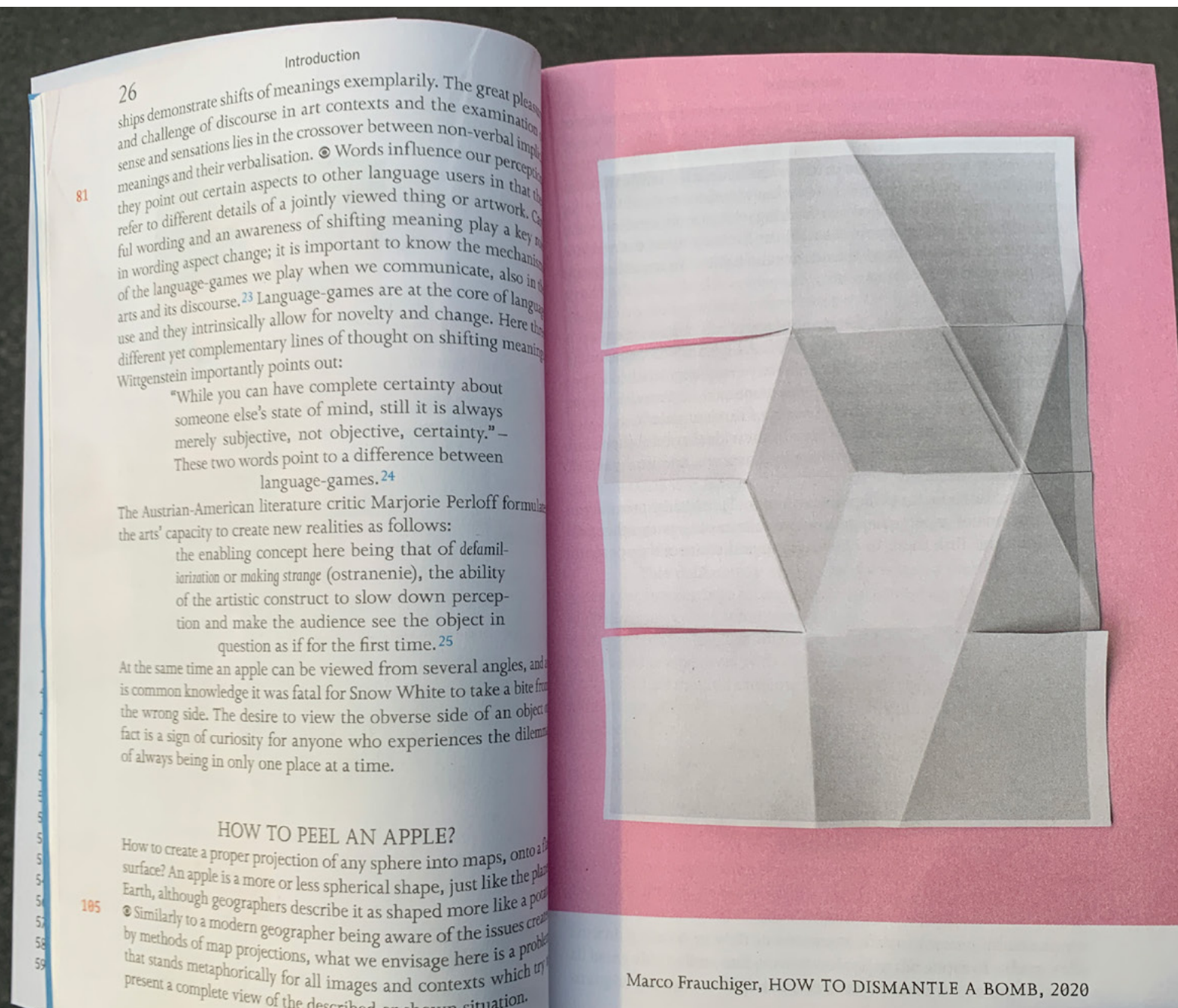
Dans un office postal désaffecté et transformé en lieu artistique alternatif par REBL – célébrant dans la tradition de la *street photography* un espace urbain et ses habitants.

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. ■

photo-avec

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







Biography

Marco Frauchiger (*1976) is an artist based Bern. Working primarily with photography and video, his artistic practice investigates image politics, particularly in relation to Switzerland's global entanglements.

From 2004 to 2005, he was a member of the group of self-taught photographers (GaF) in Bern, Switzerland. In 2013, a grant enabled him to undertake an extended working stay in Laos, where he developed a new body of work and collaborated with NGOs. In 2014, he attended a one-year masterclass in Vienna, followed by further education programs and workshops in photography.

From 2018 to 2020, he completed the Master in Contemporary Art Practice (CAP) at the Bern University of the Arts. In 2022, he was awarded the Prix Photoforum for his work *how to dismantle a bomb*. Through his nomination by Danaé Panchaud (Centre de la photographie Genève) and his participation in the Futures Photography mentoring programme, he was selected with *Camera Obscura Typ III*, the work proposed here, for exhibitions at FOTODOK (Utrecht), ISSP Gallery (Riga), and Deichtorhallen Hamburg.

Marco Frauchiger is a member of NEAR – Swiss Photographers, the Pool Collective, Visarte Switzerland. In spring 2025, he completed the CAS Theory and History of Photography at the University of Zurich.

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.