

Jeff Weber

## Camouflage

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### PRESS RELEASE

The idea of documentation is in some way a crucial point of departure for what I am trying to articulate, that is to say the tension between a documentary/objective status of a photographic picture in relation to the object depicted and the subjective take on the world through the eye/mind of the artist. I feel like a lot of my work is anchored in that tension, and this is the concern of *An Attempt at a Personal Epistemology*. In that body of work, I attempt to define the paradoxical place of the artist. The artist, in his operations, is always located between objective knowledge and personal experience. I approach art as an empirical method that works on images themselves (with the tool of photography), and it is through this labor that ideas crystallise and emerge...the image is the materialisation / concretisation of that process of formation.

I always have preferred artists that used photography along with or in conjunction with other practices, like Josef Albers, Raoul Hausmann, Nasreen Mohamedi, Sigmar Polke or also Jef Geys and Dan Graham, whose work I adore. I prefer this to a unidimensional tendency, which is in a sense an American modernist construct (based on the discovery of Eugene Atget's work) around the notion of documentary photography.

And I particularly appreciate the imagination (and freedom) that often comes along with such an approach, where documentary photography, in a contemporary context, often seems characterised by a lack of imagination, or/and reveals as some kind of (contemporary) mannerism.

My feeling has always been that artists, like Polke for example, who deal with photography more on the periphery of their own practice are more apt to deal with that kind of tension and even instrumentalise it. Rather than approaching documentation straightforwardly, they often approach the idea of documentation through the mimicry of reportage (or referring to the mode of reportage) in order to build up a certain distance in how they relate to their own work. Such distance can be very helpful for coming up with new ideas, images, work etc... Furthermore, this distance doubles the gap that opens up between the seemingly transparent appearance of a photographic image or print and how this transparency serves, in turn, to conceal at the same time that to which it points or refers. By addressing this gap, the photograph can then emphasize the idea of something being taken for what it is not, or vice versa...

- Jeff Weber

