**org is an online platform, collecting, describing, presenting and generating documents of all sorts. It documents documents.**

**Your path through the collection lead along** Salle Polyvalente, Introduction to Epidemiology, Mustard, Ulcer, Dobermans, Residu, Pauli, Subtractive Writing, Nap, May 7th, 1992, Starry sky, long exposure, Sandersleben (Saxony-Anhalt), 14 April 2023, Interviews with residents of Sandersleben, no specific location, 2023 [2], Interviews with residents of Sandersleben, no specific location, 2023 [1], St. Mary’s Church, Sandersleben (Saxony-Anhalt), 2020, Detail of a wall, Salzmünde (Saxony-Anhalt), June 2023, Red Skirt Popular on the Street, A Single Spark, Huang Baomei, United Until Tomorrow, A String of Pearls, Invalid Testament, 2024, Temporary Photograph, 2017, Double Reward, 2024, Collaborators (portraits), 2023, Selling Public Domain, 2021, A Transparent Forest, In Her View, Beyond the Sky’s Limits, (Un)Touching Ground, Frame of Accountability, A DONNER, Calacatta, Swarms, Garage Paul > Garage Robert (collection of 2023), Negative sheet 21, negative 24, negative 24,5

**What constitutes a 'document' and how does it function?**

**According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, the etymological origin is the Latin 'documentum', meaning 'lesson, proof, instance, specimen'. As a verb, it is 'to prove or support (something) by documentary evidence', and 'to provide with documents'. The online version of the *OED* includes a draft addition, whereby a document (as a noun) is 'a collection of data in digital form that is considered a single item and typically has a unique filename by which it can be stored, retrieved, or transmitted (as a file, a spreadsheet, or a graphic)'. The current use of the noun 'document' is defined as '*something* written, inscribed, *etc*., which furnishes evidence or information upon any subject, as a manuscript, title-deed, tomb-stone, coin, picture, etc.' (emphasis added).**

**Both 'something' and that first 'etc.' leave ample room for discussion. A document doubts whether it functions as something unique, or as something reproducible. A passport is a document, but a flyer equally so. Moreover, there is a circular reasoning: to document is 'to provide with documents'. Defining (the functioning of) a document most likely involves ideas of communication, information, evidence, inscriptions, and implies notions of objectivity and neutrality – but the document is neither reducible to one of them, nor is it equal to their sum. It is hard to pinpoint it, as it disperses into and is affected by other fields: it is intrinsically tied to the history of media and to important currents in literature, photography and art; it is linked to epistemic and power structures. However ubiquitous it is, as an often tangible thing in our environment, and as a concept, a document *deranges*.**

**the-documents.org continuously gathers documents and provides them with a short textual description, explanation, or digression, written by multiple authors. In *Paper Knowledge*, Lisa Gitelman paraphrases 'documentalist' Suzanne Briet, stating that 'an antelope running wild would not be a document, but an antelope taken into a zoo would be one, presumably because it would then be framed – or reframed – as an example, specimen, or instance'.**
**The gathered files are all documents – if they weren't before publication, they now are. That is what the-documents.org, irreversibly, *does*. It is a zoo turning an antelope into an 'antelope'.**

**As you made your way through the collection, the-documents.org tracked the entries you viewed. It documented your path through the website. As such, the time spent on the-documents.org turned into this – a new document.**

**This document was compiled by ____ on 23.10.2026 19:25, printed on ____ and contains 35 documents on 76 pages. (https://the-documents.org/log/23-10-2026-6929/)**

**the-documents.org is a project created and edited by De Cleene De Cleene; design & development by atelier Haegeman Temmerman.**

**the-documents.org has been online since 23.05.2021.**

**Notes**

- De Cleene De Cleene is Michiel De Cleene and Arnout De Cleene. Together they form a research group that focusses on novel ways of approaching the everyday, by artistic means and from a cultural and critical perspective.
  www.decleenedecleene.be / info@decleenedecleene.be
- This project was made possible with the support of the Flemish Government and KASK & Conservatorium, the school of arts of HOGENT and Howest. It is part of the research project *Documenting Objects*, financed by the HOGENT Arts Research Fund.

**Sources**


- Briet, S. *Qu'est-ce que la documentation?* Paris: Edit, 1951.
- Gitelman, L. *Paper Knowledge. Toward a Media History of Documents.* Durham/ London: Duke University Press, 2014.
- *Oxford English Dictionary Online*. Accessed on 13.05.2021.




Built in 1969, the *salle polyvalente*[1] in La Grande-Motte[2] was the first venue where the residents – back when there were only 700 of them – could gather. Jean Balladur had envisioned an open-air theatre covered by a removable stretched canvas, adjacent to a single-storey multipurpose hall. The load-bearing structure, Balladur explained, consists of anthropomorphic columns sculpted by Albert Marchais: “My friend the sculptor, painter, poet and man of the theatre, Albert Marchais, devised the design for a sliding formwork that made it possible to cast the columns… they line up on either side of the hall in patterns that free them from the strict constraints of matter. This freedom is the joy of all sculpture.”[3]

The geometric forms that make up the hands and arms of these figures are today strung with cables carrying electricity and data.

**Notes**

1 Jean Balladur was never fond of the term ‘salle polyvalente’, he preferred ‘salle commune, dédié à la fête’ – a communal hall, dedicated to parties. Since 2019 it is officially the Centre Culturel Henri Dunoyer, after a former mayor.

2 La Grande-Motte is a seaside resort created by the Mission Racine, the state programme for the development of the Languedoc coastline in southern France. Intended as a holiday destination for the middle class in the 1970s, it is the work of architect Jean Balladur (1924–2002), who was tasked with designing the entire urban layout and architecture of the new town. He drew inspiration from pre-Columbian pyramids and from modernist architecture in Brazil, especially the work of Oscar Niemeyer. At a time when large housing complexes were going up all over France in the form of tower blocks and slabs, Balladur’s solutions were different enough that La Grande-Motte was a success from the very beginning.

3 « Mon ami le sculpteur, peintre, poète, homme de théâtre, Albert Marchais, a imaginé le dessin d’un coffrage glissant qui a permis de couler les poteaux… ils s’alignent de chaque côté de la salle dans des … la matière. Cette



On market days, the parterre of the open-air theatre serves a a car park for the vendors’ vans and cars.

**Sources**


- François, Michèle. *Jean Balladur et la Grande-Motte: l’architecte d’une ville*. Duo. Monuments historiques et objets d’art du Languedoc-Roussillon, Direction régionale des affaires culturelles, 2010, p. 41-42.

# Salle Polyvalente



| type | date | filename | size | author |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| photograph | 23.09.2026 | MDC_LGM_005.psd, MDC_LGM_006.psd | 254,42 MB, 256,43 MB | Michiel De Cleene |

category
architecture, hand, parking, sea, technology

**18:25:32**

the-documents.c



18:25:32

Today I was supposed to give an introduction to architectural photography. I had listed several approaches I would briefly touch on, showing work by Joel Sternfeld, Stephanie Kiwitt, Lynne Cohen, Thomas Ruff, Jeff Wall and Candida Höfer. I wanted to stress that the essence of architectural photography – and of photography as a whole – is to make the space outside the picture larger than the space within it.

The students never showed up. The secretary had forgotten to put my introduction on their timetable. While I was waiting in the empty auditorium, a colleague's introduction to epidemiology in the auditorium next door suddenly boomed from my speakers.

# org Introduction to Epidemiology



| type | date | filename | size | author |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| photograph | 22.09.2026 | IMG_3546.jpg | 4,2 MB | Michiel De Cleene |

category
architecture, interference, medicine, mistake, technology

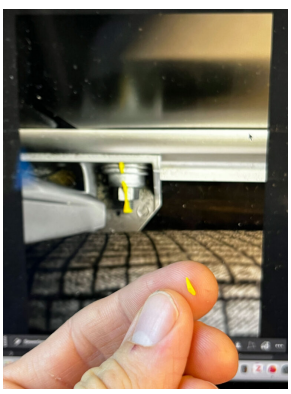
**18:25:39**

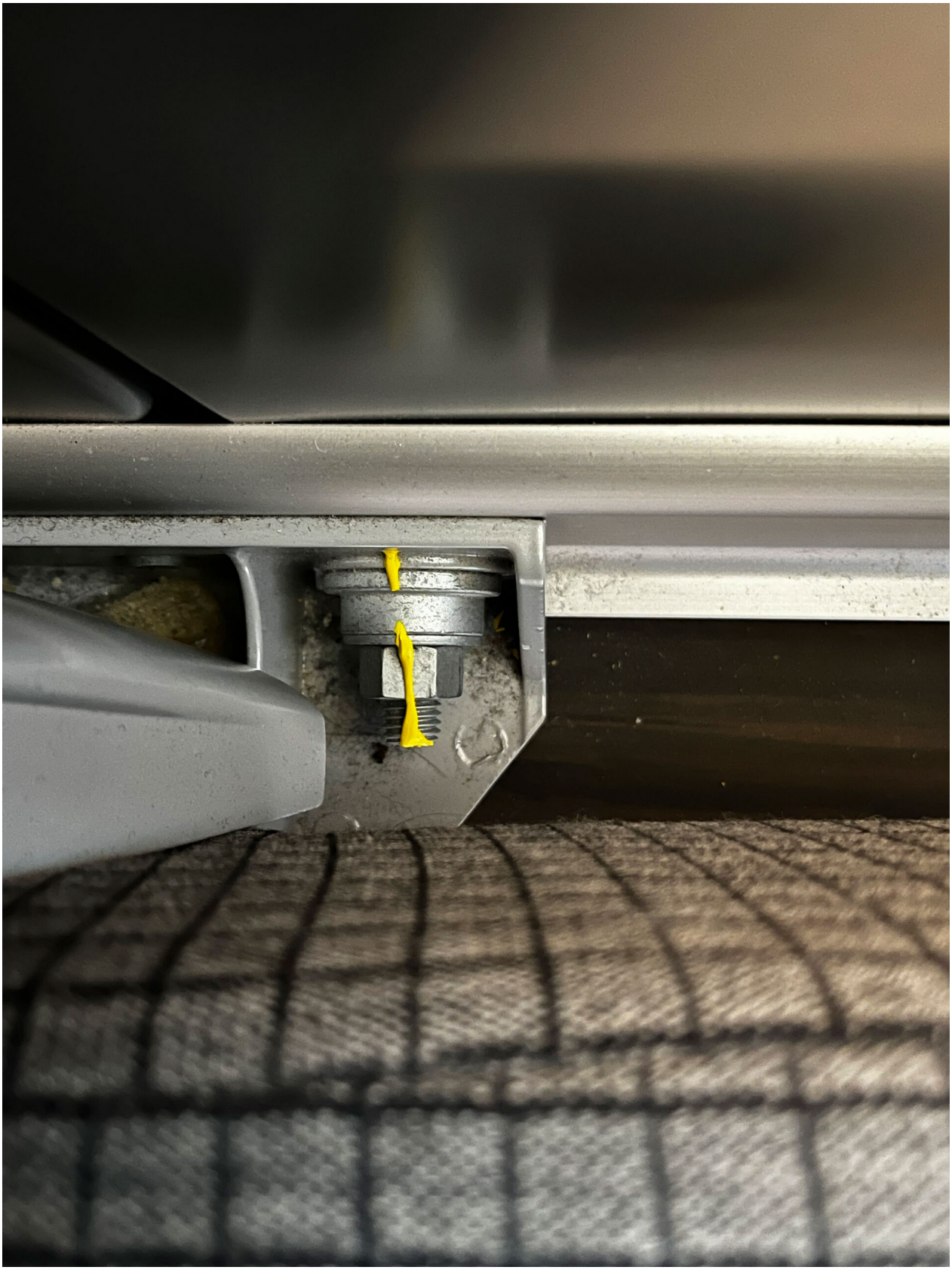
On the train between Brussels and Leuven someone appears to have spilled bright yellow mustard in a straight line onto the bolt, washer and nut that attach my seat to the structure of the carriage.

Hours later, on the train home, a similar bead. The mustard is hard and somewhat brittle[1] beneath my index finger.

I search the internet for ‘lijntje verf op bout en moer’. Torque seal is a brightly colored paste applied across a tightened nut and bolt to provide a quick visual check of whether the fastener has moved or loosened due to shock, vibration or tampering. According to the same search, DIY enthusiasts often use nail polish.

**Notes**

1 



| type | date | filename | size | author |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| photograph | 21.09.2026 | IMG_3546.jpg | 4,2 MB | Michiel De Cleene |

category
crash, factory, impact, sign, technology

**18:25:39**

In Zaffelare, young men who were called for military service but could not be missed at home were advised by the local doctor to swallow a small ball of aluminium foil an hour before the examination. In the X-ray, a gastric ulcer appeared. They were rejected for service. It is uncertain whether the increased incidence of gastric ulcers among young men in Zaffelare was a cause for concern.

the-documents.c

# org Ulcer



| type | date | filename | size | author |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| scan | 26.02.2026 | 20240402-SC17.tif | 43,47 MB | Michiel De Cleene |

category
conflict, government, medicine, rural area

**18:25:39**

‘Exit at the dock and kill some rats. Go around the building to the left, killing the guard and his rats before flipping the switch. Another guard arrives kill him too, taking the medkits from both your victims. Enter the now open front door and kill the guard on the balcony and his friend who appears on the ground floor. Grab the shells from your second kill then shoot out the window and kill the Dobermans who jump through when you get too close.’

the-documents.c

**Sources**

- *Tomb Raider II. The Complete Guide to the Dagger of Xian*. Downloaded from http://www.the-spoiler.com on 4 August, 1999, at 15:03.



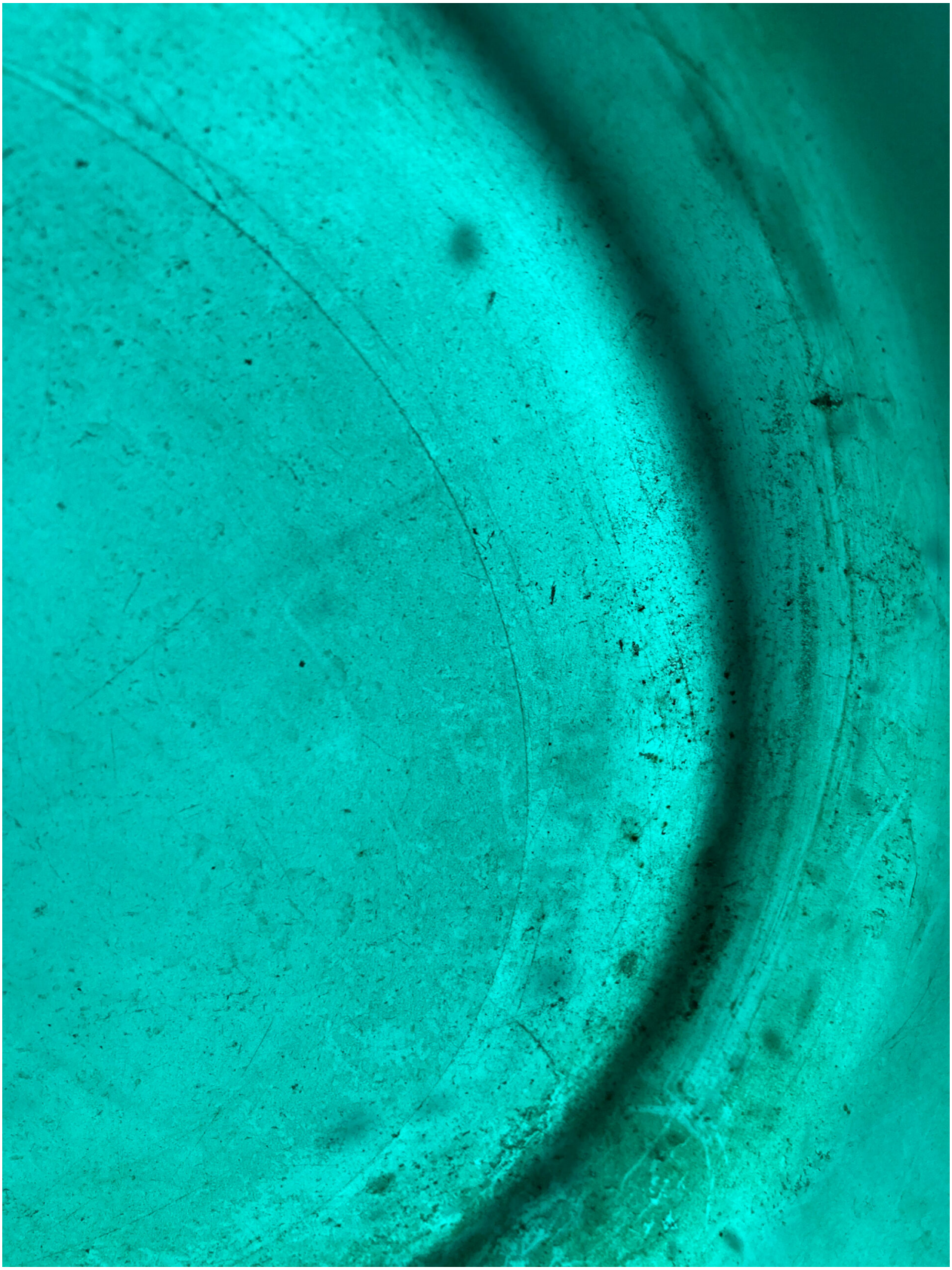

| type | date | filename | size | author |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| scan | 14.12.2025 | walkthrough.jpg | 1,9MB | Arnout De Cleene |

category
animal, encounter, leakage, manual, precipitation

**18:25:39**

The last couple of days have been dry. Rain is expected for the weekend. The office buckets are in place and are empty, except for some residue. Dirt, sand, a few hairs. Some particles must have come along with the drops when they made their way through the roof.

the-documents.c



| type | date | filename | size | author |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| photograph | 07.08.2025 | IMG_5108.HEIC | 3,3MB | Arnout De Cleene |

category
architecture, collecting, data storage, precipitation, leakage

**18:25:40**

At the office,[1] a gray and a green bucket are meticulously positioned on the floor to catch the water dripping from the ceiling.[2] It has been a very wet few months.

Perpendicularly above the green bucket is the office's smoke detector, which, when it rains, could be mistaken for a sprinkler. The gray bucket is positioned perpendicularly beneath the electric line leading to the smoke detector. The lamp doesn't leak.

The nineteenth-century building was designed by the renowned architect Adolphe Pauli.[3] The offices of my former employer were also housed in a Pauli building. Over there, it was a mop that was used to evacuate water from the recurrently flooded ground floor hallway.

**Notes**

1 the-documents.org HQ
2 The reason for the leaks is said to be the use of screws that cause an electrolytic reaction.
3 Shortly after documenting the above, the roof came down. The buckets only partly catched the plaster.



| type | date | filename | size | author |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| photograph | 06.08.2025 | IMG_5104.HEIC; IMG_5106.HEIC | 2,6MB; 2,6MB | Arnout De Cleene |

category
architecture, fissure, precipitation, roofing, trompe l'oeil, leakage

**18:25:40**

the-documents.c



18:25:40

In an attempt to make it his own, Gino – it might also be Dino – has taken a can of bright pink spray paint to his hard hat and – as the paint was drying – dragged his gloved finger from top to bottom. G – or D –, I, N, O. In the dust on a demolished floor tile, someone has written 12,10. Perhaps a measurement, a quantity, a position, a date, a reference.

Subtractive writing is not uncommon. With the tip of a passer-by's index finger 'WASH ME' is subtracted from the dust on a dirty car. In freshly poured concrete, a name is embedded forever with a twig. In hot and soft roofing drawings and obscenities are scratched. Styrofoam lining a brand new elevator gets impressed with names, jokes and knuckles.

In the twenty-third canto of Ariosto's Orlando Furioso (1516), Orlando comes across the name of his love and another man, carved in the bark of a tree. He doubts. But that night, a gossiping shepherd tells him he's seen Angelica and Medoro together. Orlando returns to the forest, and in a four-day frenzy, he uproots every tree and pollutes the rivers forever.

CXXXI
*For he turf, stone, and trunk, and shoot, and lop,*
*Cast without cease into the beauteous source;*
*Till, turbid from the bottom to the top,*
*Never again was clear the troubled course.*
*At length, for lack of breath, compelled to stop,*
*(When he is bathed in sweat, and wasted force,*
*Serves not his fury more) he falls, and lies*
*Upon the mead, and, gazing upward, sighs.*[1]

**Sources**

1 Ariosto, L. *Orlando Furioso*. Translated by William Stewart Rose, Echo Library, 2006, p. 267.



| type | date | filename | size | author |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| photograph | 05.08.2025 | IMG_8280.jpg | 1,70 MB | Michiel De Cleene |

category
architecture, construction site, dust, sign, waste

**18:25:40**

It’s time to have a nap. I tilt the window over its middle axis to let the butterfly out. A breeze ruffles the drapes. Now, it sits on the glass and throws an enormous shadow on the yellow cloth.

the-documents.c

# Nap



| type | date | filename | size | author |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| photograph | 06.01.2025 | _MG_9406.JPG; _MG_9429.JPG | 6,1 MB; 10,2 MB | Arnout De Cleene |

category
animal, cloth, decoration, encounter, family, scale, wind

**18:25:40**

the-documents.c



On May 7th, 1992, an anonymous photographer records the ice cellar, a stone’s throw from my parents’ house. It’s a beautiful day in spring. Quite a bit of wind, it seems. A Thursday. Surely, I am at school. Third grade kindergarten. It houses bats.

The photograph is part of an online heritage inventory, maintained by a government department. On the same day, the photographer took a photograph of the orangery, the entrance gate to the allotment, and the castle.

**Sources**

- https://id.erfgoed.net/afbeeldingen/264680

May 7th, 1992



| type | date | filename | size | author |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| photograph | 26.12.2024 | Wachtebeke_Puyenbrug_5_ijskelder_full.jpg | 565 KB | Arnout De Cleene |

category
architecture, archive, family, government, wind

18:25:40

A constant, dependable presence. With the camera focused on the North Star for an extended period, the rotation of the Earth becomes visible. Nearby, in the municipality of Wiederstedt, the geologist, poet and philosopher Friedrich von Hardenberg (better known by his pen name Novalis) spent his childhood years between 1772 and 1784. A quote of his is engraved on a stone bench in the park surrounding the chateau where he was raised: “The human being does not speak alone – the universe also speaks – everything speaks – infinite languages.”

**Notes**

- From *S. Anders Leben. Eine Handlung in Gesprächen/S. Anders Leben – Living Differently: An Act in Conversations*
- Stephanie Kiwitt (1972) is an artist based in Halle (Saale), Germany. Utilizing a large number of images, various perspectives and also textual elements, she is known for her insightful photography that explores spaces emblematic of contemporary phenomena. Over the past three years, she has focused on evolving habitats in rural areas, photographing traces of transformation and conducting interviews in Saxony-Anhalt, the region she moved to in 2020. From 2018 to 2020, Kiwitt was a guest lecturer at the LUCA School of Arts in Brussels.
- In spring 2024 the-documents.org and Trigger co-publish a series of online articles with a focus on the meeting ground between photography and the document.

# Starry sky, long exposure, Sandersleben (Saxony-Anhalt), 14 April 2023



| type | date | filename | size | author |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| photograph | 14.06.2024 | Bild 003_mk.jpg | 73 MB | Stephanie Kiwitt |

category
astronomy, literature, Trigger

**18:25:40**

Freely adapted from interviews with residents of Sandersleben (Saxony-Anhalt). Three-act play. The first two acts take place in the present day; the third is set in the future.

From Act 2 ‘The Inhabitants’, Scene 5, ‘Living Differently’.
Characters: MR DUNST club member I, MR WINDORF amateur astronomer

**Notes**

- Stills from text animation *S. Anders Leben. Eine Handlung in Gesprächen/S. Anders Leben – Living Differently: An Act in Conversations*
- Stephanie Kiwitt (1972) is an artist based in Halle (Saale), Germany. Utilizing a large number of images, various perspectives and also textual elements, she is known for her insightful photography that explores spaces emblematic of contemporary phenomena. Over the past three years, she has focused on evolving habitats in rural areas, photographing traces of transformation and conducting interviews in Saxony-Anhalt, the region she moved to in 2020. From 2018 to 2020, Kiwitt was a guest lecturer at the LUCA School of Arts in Brussels.
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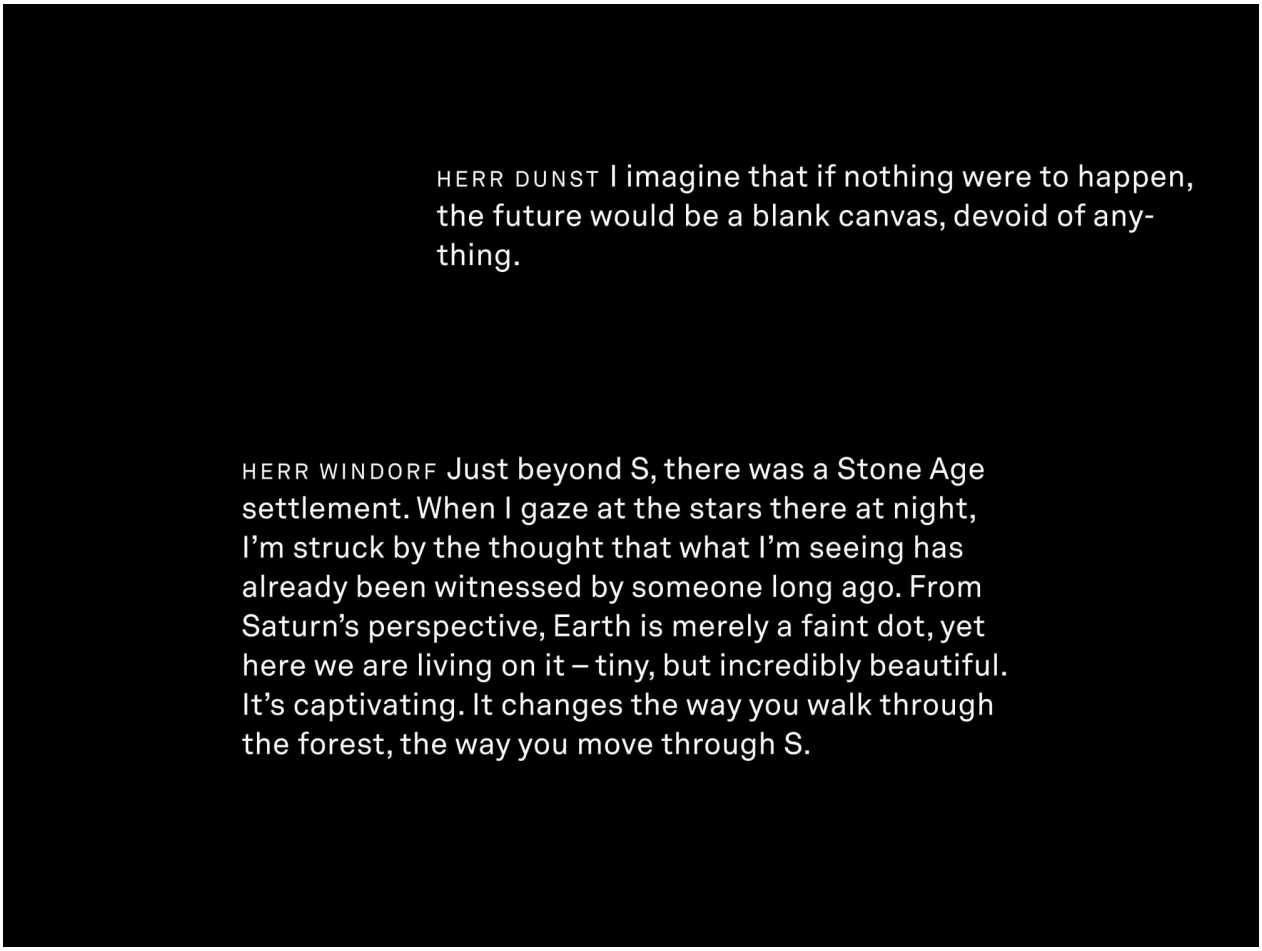
# Interviews with residents of Sandersleben, no specific location, 2023 [2]




| type | date | filename | size | author |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| collage | 14.06.2024 | 2-Stone Age.jpg | 108 KB | Stephanie Kiwitt |

category
archaeology, astronomy, encounter, landscape, Trigger

**18:25:41**

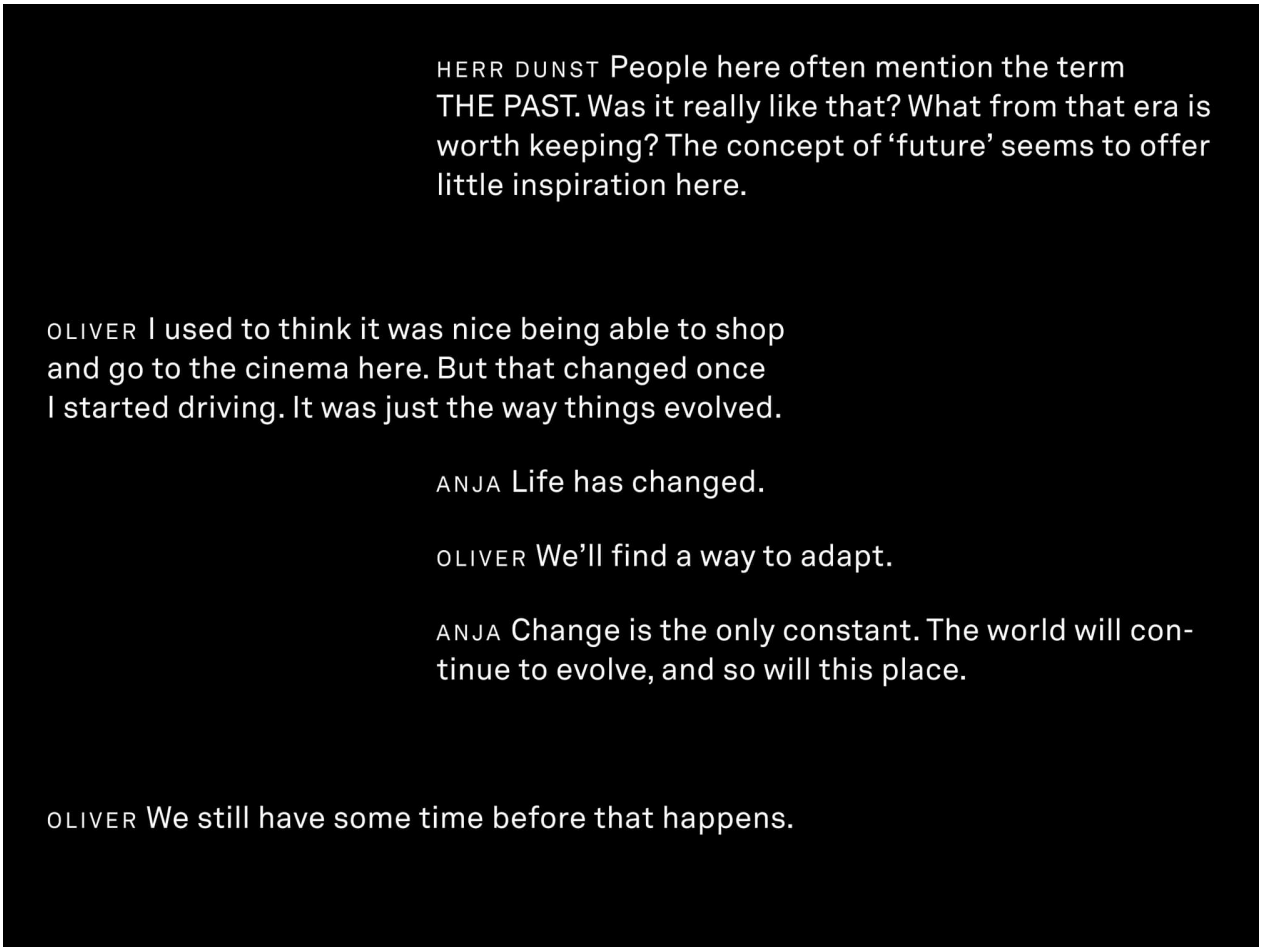
Freely adapted from interviews with residents of Sandersleben (Saxony-Anhalt). Three-act play. The first two acts take place in the present day; the third is set in the future.

From Act 1 ‘The Town of S’, Scene 2 ‘The Past’. Characters: MR DUNST club member I, OLIVER club member II, ANJA young mother

**Notes**

- Stills from text animation *S. Anders Leben. Eine Handlung in Gesprächen/S. Anders Leben – Living Differently: An Act in Conversations*
- Stephanie Kiwitt (1972) is an artist based in Halle (Saale), Germany. Utilizing a large number of images, various perspectives and also textual elements, she is known for her insightful photography that explores spaces emblematic of contemporary phenomena. Over the past three years, she has focused on evolving habitats in rural areas, photographing traces of transformation and conducting interviews in Saxony-Anhalt, the region she moved to in 2020. From 2018 to 2020, Kiwitt was a guest lecturer at the LUCA School of Arts in Brussels.
- In spring 2024 the-documents.org and Trigger co-publish a series of online articles with a focus on the meeting ground between photography and the document.

# Interviews with residents of Sandersleben, no specific location, 2023 [1]




| type | date | filename | size | author |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| collage | 13.06.2024 | 1-The PAST.jpg | 301 KB | Stephanie Kiwitt |

category
economy, encounter, rural area, Trigger

**18:25:41**

“… the late-Gothic St Mary’s Church in Sandersleben … was consecrated in 1519, just two years after Martin Luther published his Ninety-five Theses. After extensive renovation, part of it is still home to Sandersleben’s Protestant community. The building spans the historical period encountered throughout this region, the various stages of which continue to resonate today. Parts of the church predate the Reformation and the Peasants’ War; its tower, for instance, was initially a city tower before its subsequent role as a watchtower. The contemporary folding glass barrier inside the church is a nod to the future. Since 2013, this feature has enabled the church to host secular events, as it separates the choir from the nave. The significance of a structure or place is derived from its function. If it ceases to serve a purpose or meet a need, it loses its societal relevance. This lack of societal meaning becomes evident in its dilapidation and, ultimately, in its decay, removal or demolition. Lesser-known structures that haven’t been captured in photographs or documented can thus vanish completely, leaving no archaeological footprint, especially when replaced by new constructions. They leave no vestiges behind, not even a trace, which is usually an indicator of the presence of nothingness …”[1]

**Notes**

- Sequence of images from *Flächenland/Sprawling Region*
- Stephanie Kiwitt (1972) is an artist based in Halle (Saale), Germany. Utilizing a large number of images, various perspectives and also textual elements, she is known for her insightful photography that explores spaces emblematic of contemporary phenomena. Over the past three years, she has focused on evolving habitats in rural areas, photographing traces of transformation and conducting interviews in Saxony-Anhalt, the region she moved to in 2020. From 2018 to 2020, Kiwitt was a guest lecturer at the LUCA School of Arts in Brussels.
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**Sources**

1 Jonathan Everts, ‘A Long Farewell to the Present’, *Flächenland (2020–22)*, Stephanie Kiwitt, Spector Books, Leipzig, 2023

# St. Mary’s Church, Sandersleben (Saxony-Anhalt), 2020









| type | date | filename | size | author |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| photograph | 12.06.2024 | _MG_7230-1.jpg, _MG_7229-1.jpeg, _MG_7220-1.jpg | 35 MB, 34 MB, 33 MB | Stephanie Kiwitt |

category
archaeology, architecture, Trigger

**18:25:41**

Bricks and stones of various origin (aerated concrete blocks, clinker bricks, quarry stones).



**Notes**

- From *Fortlaufend/Ongoing*
- Stephanie Kiwitt (1972) is an artist based in Halle (Saale), Germany. Utilizing a large number of images, various perspectives and also textual elements, she is known for her insightful photography that explores spaces emblematic of contemporary phenomena. Over the past three years, she has focused on evolving habitats in rural areas, photographing traces of transformation and conducting interviews in Saxony-Anhalt, the region she moved to in 2020. From 2018 to 2020, Kiwitt was a guest lecturer at the LUCA School of Arts in Brussels.
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# Detail of a wall, Salzmünde (Saxony-Anhalt), June 2023



| type | date | filename | size | author |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| photograph | 11.06.2024 | CF015874.jpeg | 54 MB | Stephanie Kiwitt |

category
architecture, brick, fissure, repair, rural area, Trigger

**18:25:41**

Set in the fictitious Shanghai-based Dafeng Cotton Mill, *Red Skirt Popular on the Street* (1984) follows the story of an enterprising model worker as she navigates the challenges of young adult life, from workplace conflicts to choosing what clothes to wear on her days off. In the reflection of the emerging consumer consciousness of the Reform era, many of the film's key moments happen not on the factory floor, but in the changing room where the workers seek to express themselves through their choice of dress. To this end, the film can be regarded as a document of the fashion trends being introduced into the country at the time, as best observed in the spellbinding array of colours on display as the workers leave the factory at the end of a day's work.

The textile mill used as the setting for Dafeng Cotton Mill is Shanghai No. 1 Cotton Mill. Originally occupied by the no. 13 and 14 mills of the Japanese-owned Naigaiwata Company, the mill was formally established as the China Textile Construction Company Shanghai No. 1 Cotton Mill after the Second World War. It was located at the T-shaped intersection on Changshou Road, with the gate facing Jiaozhou Road. At that time, the area on the north side of Changshou Road extending from No. 1 Cotton Mill formed a continuous industrial zone encompassing many other factories and warehouses, all of which have since been converted into the private residences and creative parks.

**Notes**

- Ho Rui An is an artist and writer working in the intersections of contemporary art, cinema, performance and theory. Through lectures, essays and films, his research examines the relations between labour, technology and capital across different systems of governance in a global age.
- In spring 2024 the-documents.org and Trigger co-publish a series of online articles with a focus on the meeting ground between photography and the document.

# Red Skirt Popular on the Street




| type | date | filename | size | author |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| collage | 05.06.2024 | redskirt.jpg | 4,89 MB | Ho Rui An |

category
architecture, conflict, economy, factory, fashion, Trigger

**18:25:41**

Gu Eryi's Shanghainese opera film *A Single Spark* (1959) dramatises a violent confrontation between indentured labourers and their managers at the Japanese-owned Naigaiwata Company No. 7 Cotton Mill in 1925. The film's protagonist is Yang Guiying, a peasant who moves to Shanghai to join her daughter only to find her at her last breath on the factory floor after being brutally beaten by her supervisor. The incident sparks protests among the workers at the factory, eventually resulting in one of them, Gu Zhenghong, being killed by a gunshot fired by a guard in the heat of the moment. This further escalates the unrest to a citywide scale, catalysing the May Thirtieth Movement.

The scenes of workers striking were filmed at Shenxin No. 9 Cotton Mill, also the location for another worker-themed film, *United Until Tomorrow* (1951). Those of Yang Guiying taking to the streets in support of anti-imperialism and patriotism were filmed at the Bund and the area surrounding Waibaidu Bridge. As for Naigaiwata Company No. 7 Cotton Mill where the events depicted in the film actually took place, the enterprise was merged with No. 5 and No. 8 Cotton Mills after the war and nationalised as Shanghai No. 2 Cotton Mill. Today, the site once occupied by the mill is a residential area where a statue of martyr Gu Zhenghong, first erected in 1959, stands before a memorial hall that was established in 2008.

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# org A Single Spark




| type | date | filename | size | author |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| collage | 05.06.2024 | asinglespark.jpg | 1,20 MB | Ho Rui An |

category
architecture, conflict, economy, factory, family, Trigger

**18:25:41**

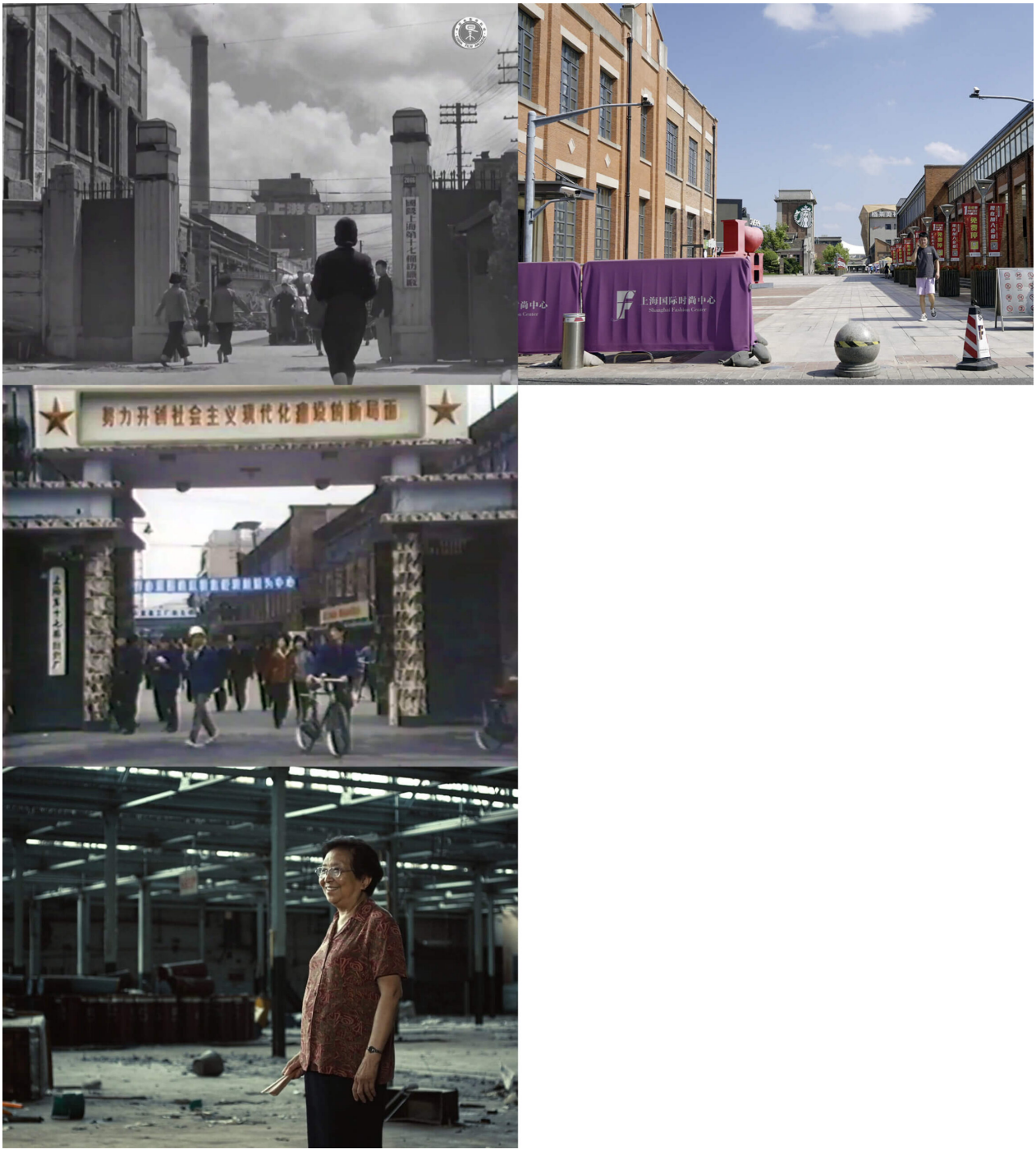
Directed by Xie Jin, *Huang Baomei* (1958) is a docudrama based on the real-life experiences of the national model worker of the same name, who also plays herself in the film. Reflecting the economic priorities of the day following the launch of the Great Leap Forward—a far-reaching and ultimately devastating campaign that sought to replace the prevailing Soviet-style expert-managerial system with workers' self-organisation and mass mobilisation—the film focuses on the challenges faced by machine operators as they strive for a technical breakthrough while working with their aging machines.

Located at No. 2866, Yangshupu Road, Shanghai No. 17 Cotton Mill, which had its origins in the Japanese-owned Yuho Spinning Company, was one of Shanghai's best known cotton mills. The launch of China's economic reforms opened a new era for the mill, as reflected cinematically in *No. 17 Cotton Mill Shanghai Blues* (1984), a British documentary that attests to the vibrant workers' music scene blossoming within the factory walls. In 1992, the state-owned enterprise was restructured as one of the first batch of joint-stock companies in the Reform era and renamed as Longtou Company after the brand name of a fabric manufactured by the mill. Following the relocation of the mill's original machinery to Jiangsu in 2007, work commenced to redesign the entire complex and relaunch it as the Shanghai International Fashion Center. In Jia Zhangke's *I Wish I Knew* (2010), an elderly Huang Baomei is seen walking amidst the ruins that are all that remain of the cotton mill as it awaits refurbishment.

**Notes**

- Ho Rui An is an artist and writer working in the intersections of contemporary art, cinema, performance and theory. Through lectures, essays and films, his research examines the relations between labour, technology and capital across different systems of governance in a global age.
- In spring 2024 the-documents.org and Trigger co-publish a series of online articles with a focus on the meeting ground between photography and the document.

# Huang Baomei




| type | date | filename | size | author |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| collage | 05.06.2024 | huangbaomei.jpg | 2,44 MB | Ho Rui An |

category
architecture, economy, factory, government, Trigger

**18:25:41**

*United Until Tomorrow* (1951) is based on the real-life events that took place at Shanghai's Shenxin No. 9 Cotton Mill where workers led a factory-wide strike in 1948 to protest salary arrears against the background of escalating inflation. Shot at the original location of the strike, the film shows the entrance of the cotton mill transformed into a literal and ideological battlefield where workers gain class consciousness and fight to reclaim their rightful place as owners of the factory. In one climactic scene, the workers even seal the factory gate from the outside to prevent the products of their labour from being expropriated by Kuomintang forces.

Located at No. 128, Aomen Road, Shanghai, Shenxin No. 9 Cotton Mill belonged to the system of mills managed by Shenxin Textile Company, a private enterprise founded in 1915 by Wuxi-bred industrialist brothers Rong Zongjing and Rong Desheng. Following the Communist takeover of Shanghai, the cotton mill was nationalised in the 1950s and placed under the management of the Shanghai Textile Industry Bureau. With the subsequent launch of the economic reforms, the bureau was restructured into a holding company in 1998 amidst the deindustrialisation of the city. While many iconic buildings in the Shanghai Bund area today can be seen in the film, little remains of the original architecture of No. 9 Cotton Mill where the Shanghai Textile Museum is now located.

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# United Until Tomorrow




| type | date | filename | size | author |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| collage | 05.06.2024 | uniteduntiltomorrow.jpg | 4,37 MB | Ho Rui An |

category
architecture, economy, factory, government, strike, Trigger

**18:25:42**

A classic of Republican-era cinema, the 1926 silent film *A String of Pearls* follows the trials and tribulations of a middle-class Shanghai couple after a pearl necklace borrowed by the husband to please his materialistic wife is stolen. In order to pay for a replacement, the protagonist resorts to embezzling public funds and consequently ends up in prison. After working as a weaver during his sentence, he becomes a worker at Zhenhua Cotton Mill following his release. In an obvious homage to the Lumières' seminal film, a scene in the film shows workers, including children, entering the factory to begin a day's work.

Even though the precise location of the factory gate in the film cannot be determined, it happens that the first enterprise that attracted the investment of Rong Ruixin—a relative of cotton magnates Rong Zongjing and Rong Desheng—was called Zhenhua Cotton Mill. Established in 1905, Zhenhua Cotton Mill was not fully mechanised, which would correspond with the appearance of a hand-operated loom in the film. Today, a residential community sits on the original site of the cotton mill.

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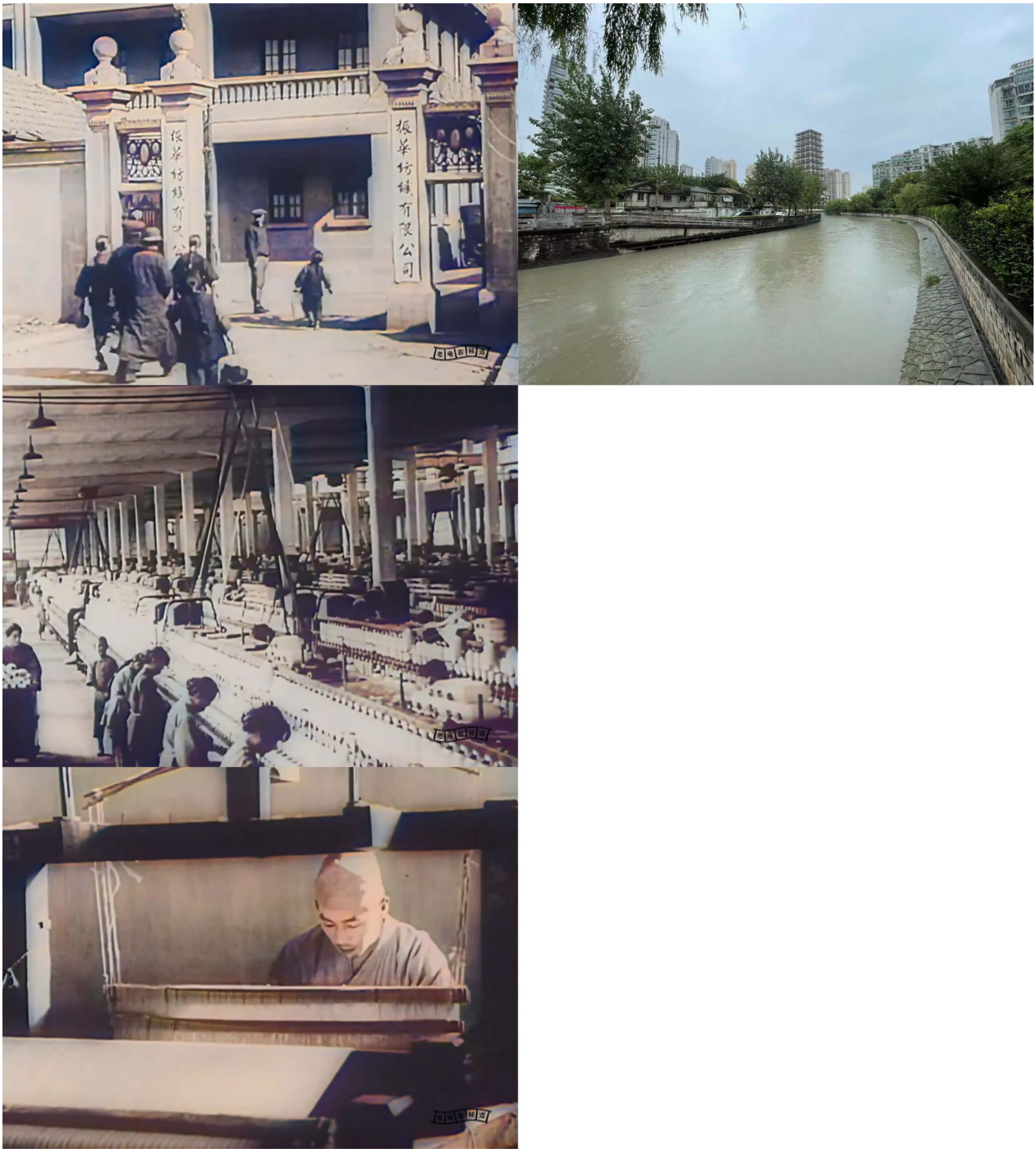
# A String of Pearls



| type | date | filename | size | author |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| collage | 05.06.2024 | astringofpearls.jpg | 2,59 MB | Ho Rui An |

category
architecture, economy, factory, hand, Trigger

**18:25:42**

The invalidity of this official document is caused by the fact that it is produced by a machine. Unlike a photograph, the authenticity of this document relies on direct contact between hand, pen and paper.



**Notes**

- Max Pinckers (°1988, BE) and Victoria Gonzalez-Figueras (°1988, CA) are based in Brussels, Belgium. They have been working together for the past ten years on documentary photography projects. Victoria works in the cultural field as a researcher and producer. Max is a speculative documentarian, teacher and occasional writer on photography. They are married, in love, and have a son. Victoria has consistently assisted Max in his projects as a production manager, but they have recently been making new work together as co-authors. “Double Reward” is the first such project.
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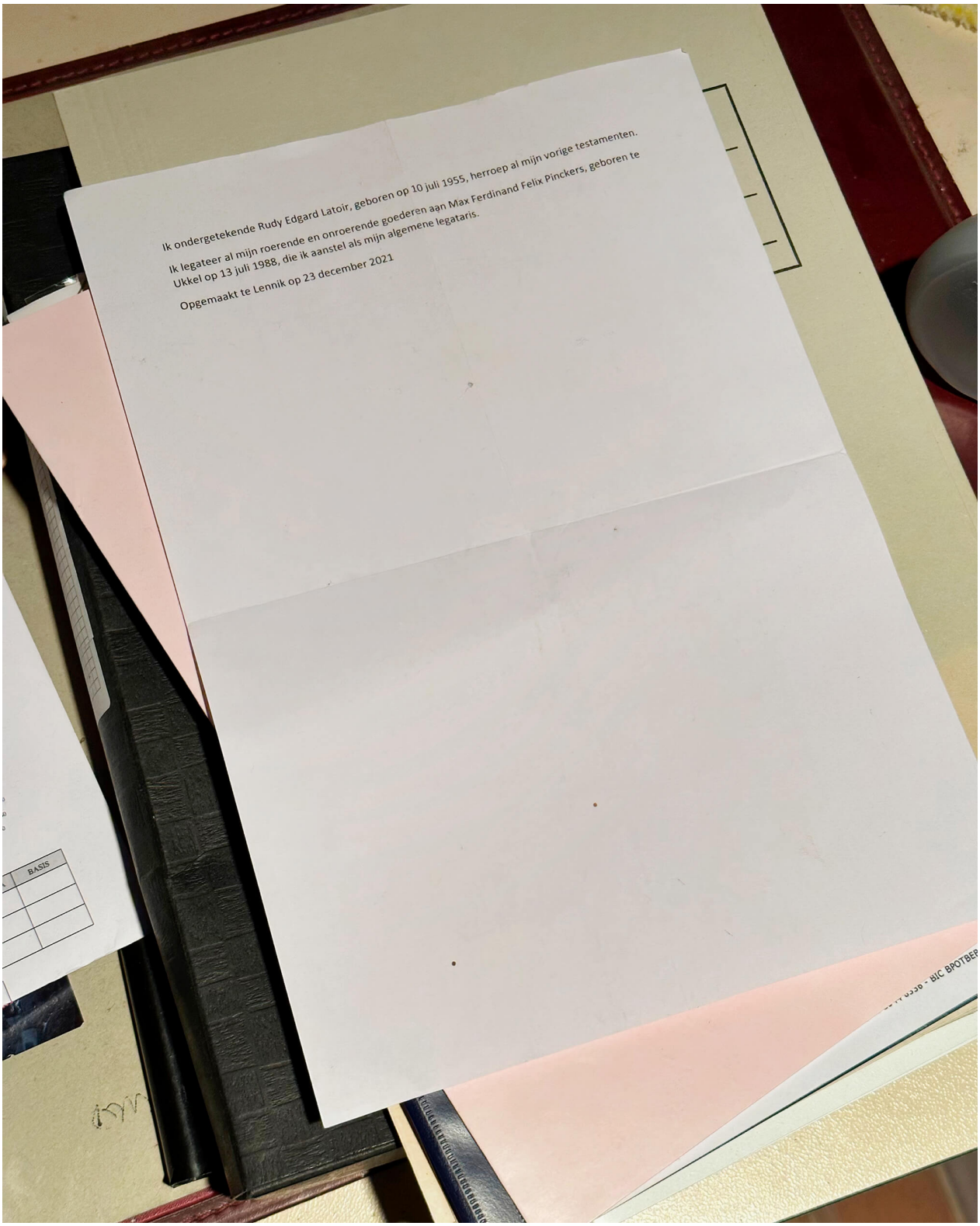
# Invalid Testament, 2024




| type | date | filename | size | author |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| photograph | 30.05.2024 | Testament.jpg | 4,4 MB | Max Pinckers |

category
government, hand, technology, Trigger

**18:25:42**

The bartender didn’t remember the passcode, so he pointed out where I could find it: on the bottom of the router box. Instead of trying to read the tiny numbers on the router label in the dark, while at the same time awkwardly typing it into my small, cumbersome smartphone keyboard, I decided to photograph the label. This allowed me to retreat back to my seat, zoom into the image and easily enter the code into my phone. The photograph immediately lost its value the moment this action was completed.

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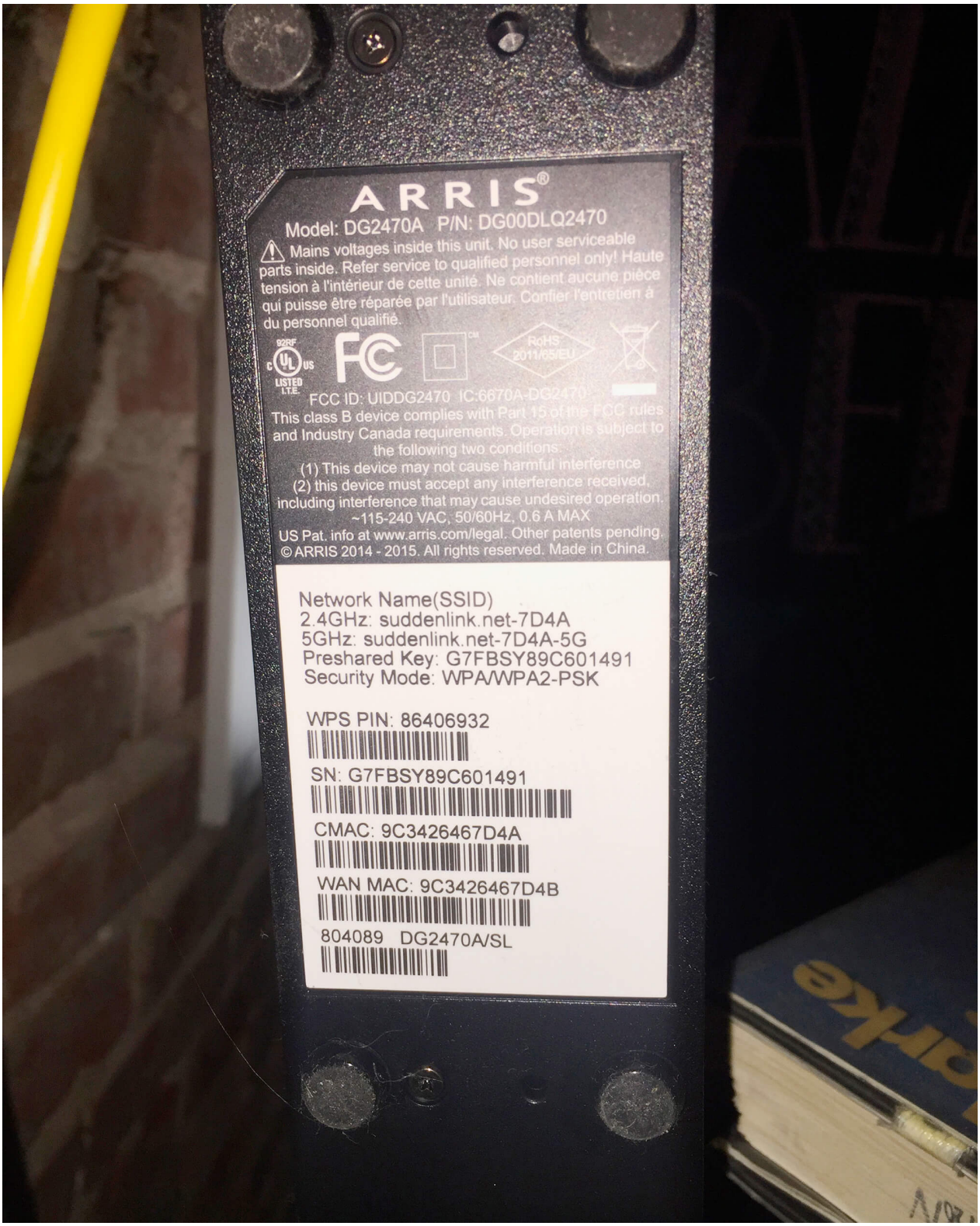
# org Temporary Photograph, 2017




| type | date | filename | size | author |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| photograph | 30.05.2024 | IMG_0058.jpg | 3,8 MB | Max Pinckers |

category
technology, Trigger

**18:25:42**

In the world of *National Geographic*, white people overlooking a landscape are not uncommon. “The Red Shirt School of Photography” was a label used to describe National Geographic photographers who allegedly brought red clothing and props with them on assignment to put on their subjects in order to make better photographs when working with Kodachrome film, which is famous for its capability of rendering rich colors. Overlooking a landscape wearing red, the observer asserts dominance over the land. They glorify it, seeing a country that is beautiful, rich in resources, and therefore “worth taking”.

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# Double Reward, 2024




| type | date | filename | size | author |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| scan | 29.05.2024 | Double Reward (with Victoria Gonzalez-Figueras).jpg | 13,9 MB | Max Pinckers & Victoria Gonzalez-Figueras |

category
archive, landscape, Trigger

**18:25:42**

When discussing the sensitivities around viewing British propaganda photographs from the 1950s with Mau Mau veterans in Kenya, it became clear that it was not the graphic photographs of atrocities that would trigger the veterans emotionally, but a series of straightforward portraits of men who had pledged allegiance to the British colonial administration. These portraits were catalogued along with the men’s names and another photograph of each one of them signing a declaration of collaboration. I was advised by the representative of the veterans’ association that it would be too dangerous to share these photographs with the veterans.

**Notes**

- 22 superimposed portraits from the file *CO 1066/7: Kikuyu Loyalists* at The National Archives (UK) depicting Kikuyu loyalists after signing a declaration of collaboration with the British on 27 January 1954.
- From the series *State of Emergency*, Max Pinckers et al. (2024)
- Max Pinckers (°1988, BE) and Victoria Gonzalez-Figueras (°1988, CA) are based in Brussels, Belgium. They have been working together for the past ten years on documentary photography projects. Victoria works in the cultural field as a researcher and producer. Max is a speculative documentarian, teacher and occasional writer on photography. They are married, in love, and have a son. Victoria has consistently assisted Max in his projects as a production manager, but they have recently been making new work together as co-authors. “Double Reward” is the first such project.
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# Collaborators (portraits), 2023



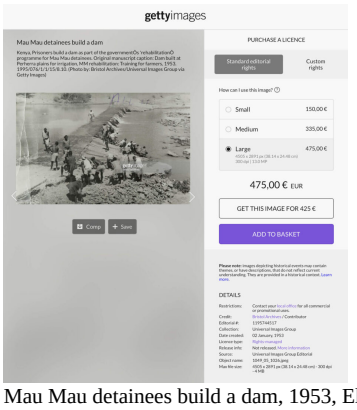
| type | date | filename | size | author |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| photograph | 28.05.2024 | Collaborators Fade #1 (portraits).jpg | 3,4 MB | Max Pinckers |

category
archive, government, Trigger

**18:25:42**

Getty Images charges a fee for the use of a 1953 image depicting Mau Mau detainees building a wall. Working together with the Bristol Archives in the case of this collection, Getty claims to sell services such as “image search tools” and “research support”. These images are public domain and in fact available for free but as long as Getty does not charge the fee as a copyright claim, there is no legal obstacle to charging money for images to which they hold no copyright.

**Notes**

- 

- Mau Mau detainees build a dam, 1953, Elspeth Huxley (1995/076/1/1/15/8.10). British Empire & Commonwealth Collection, Bristol Archives, UK Public domain
- Max Pinckers (°1988, BE) and Victoria Gonzalez-Figueras (°1988, CA) are based in Brussels, Belgium. They have been working together for the past ten years on documentary photography projects. Victoria works in the cultural field as a researcher and producer. Max is a speculative documentarian, teacher and occasional writer on photography. They are married, in love, and have a son. Victoria has consistently assisted Max in his projects as a production manager, but they have recently been making new work together as co-authors. “Double Reward” is the first such project.
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# Selling Public Domain, 2021



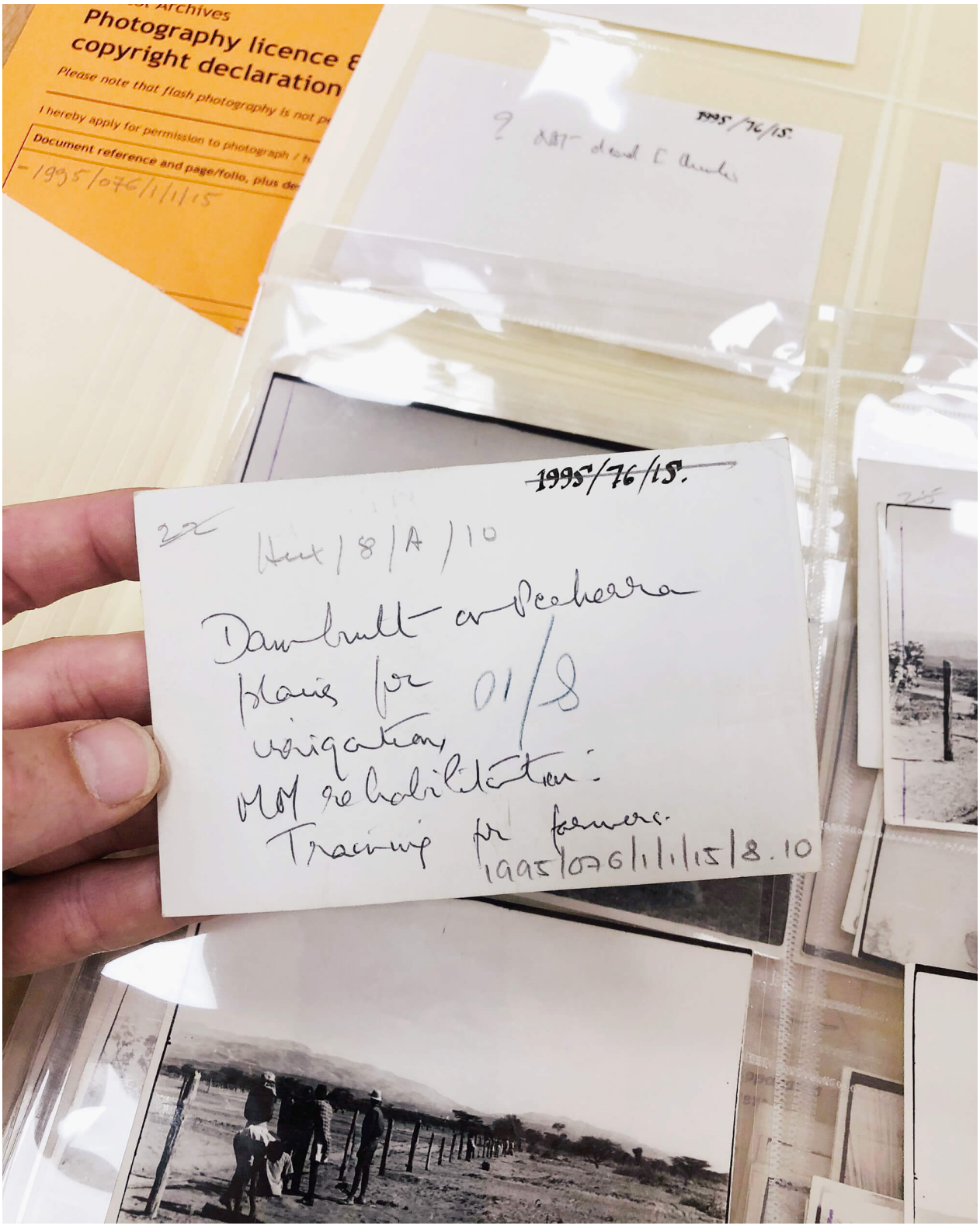

| type | date | filename | size | author |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| photograph | 27.05.2024 | getty_Bristol Archives_1.jpg, getty_Bristol Archives_1.jpg | 4,9 MB, 4,8 MB | Max Pinckers |

category
archive, collecting, copyright, data storage, economy, Trigger

**18:25:43**

the-documents.c

org Selling Public Domain, 2021




18:25:43

During the second half of April 2018, passers-by complained on Twitter about the massive chopping of trees and bushes in the area of the park site in Ranst, Belgium, along the E313 highway, in close proximity to the city of Antwerp.

Initially, the Department of Road and Highway Maintenance answered on Twitter that no pruning activities had taken place. They wouldn't want to disturb breeding birds. But soon after, they admitted to the pruning. Their argumentation took a turn: 'These are pruning activities in the context of the transmigration-problem on parking lots, as requested by the Police Department and the State Governor, so that transmigrants will no longer be able to hide. In the future, we will take up this discussion in our pruning policy for the upcoming breeding season.'

Upon closer investigation (an inquiry by Nature Inspection), the scale of the chopping became clear. The trees closest to the highway and the parking lot were chopped, while other trees were pruned at the bottom. Species such as European black elderberry, maple tree, sorbus, hazel, English holly, wild black cherry and breaking buckthorn disappeared. Rare species, only found in ancient forests, such as Solomon's seal, were severely damaged.

These activities resulted in what the investigators described as a 'transparent forest' – a forest without density at lower levels, which is ecologically speaking not valuable. It has no 'forest feeling'.

**Notes**

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# A Transparent Forest



| type | date | filename | size | author |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| image | 27.05.2024 | DCDC_ranst_2_039.psd | 1,03 GB | De Cleene De Cleene |

category
automobile, botany, conflict, government, landscape, parking, Ranst, tree

**18:25:43**

*‘No consent was given for the photograph to be taken. The capture of my body in this way is a form of torture.*
*The photograph is evidence of the entitled authority and fundamental corruptions of the male soldiers and the occupying military forces.’*

Screenshot from film chapter *In Her View* which engages an archival document revealing the sexual exploitation of an anonymous woman by occupying Australian soldiers fighting for the Allied forces in Lebanon in 1941. The film moves through the archival evidence to sense, trace and position her encounter as a formation of poetic testimony. The image shows extracted noise, levels, focal length and balance from the archive image to generate a 3D model of its violent points of interaction, this is without showing the image itself. A technique developed with Anabel Garcia-Kurland on human/non-human modelling in the making of the film.
*Frame of Accountability*, 01:00:00, Helene Kazan, 2024.

**Notes**

- Helene Kazan is an artist, writer and educator. Her work investigates ‘risk’ as a lived condition produced through the conjoined violent effects of capitalism and conflict. This is observed in the colonial roots of international law and its material formation of the lived-built environment. In response, she uses decolonial, feminist, poetic and critical-legal approaches in her work, which explores ways of dismantling the ongoing effects of neo-colonial violence towards wider frameworks of accountability and justice.
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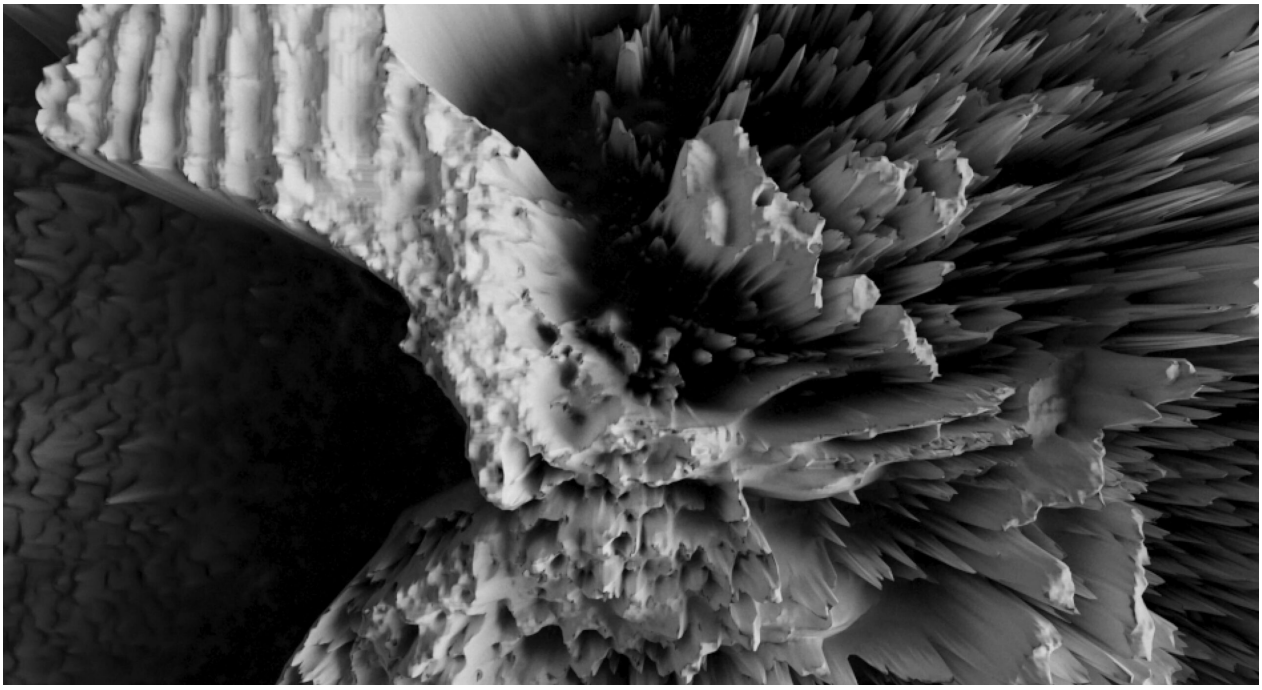

| type | date | filename | size | author |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| screenshot | 27.05.2024 | HKazan_Img8.jpg | 2,28 MB | Helene Kazan |

category
archive, conflict, scale, technology, Trigger

**18:25:43**

*‘In the human design and use of weapons, natural elements are harnessed and deployed as a destructive technology. In this engineering, there is a break, fissure, and crack whereby the human and non-human entity, having been elastic, on impact becomes plastic, and forever changed from its original self.’*

Screenshot from the film showing the calm shoreline situated close to the International Criminal Court (ICJ) in the Netherlands.
*Frame of Accountability*, 01:00:00, Helene Kazan, 2024.

Film chapter *Beyond the Sky’s Limits* narrates law as a consciousness coming to terms with its own failings: the speculative voice of a feminist, queered, decolonial international law. Unravelling this complex non-human subjectivity, it narrates the drafting of the Rules of Air Warfare in 1923. A filmic study of the legal archival document reveals how these international laws of war become corrupted by the self-interests of the strong states and colonial powers involved in their making: their ambitions fail quickly and critically.

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| type | date | filename | size | author |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| screenshot | 26.05.2024 | BSL_001.jpf, BSL_002.jpf | 59 KB | Helene Kazan |

category
architecture, fissure, landscape, sea, technology, Trigger

**18:25:43**

*‘These attempts to dismantle occur amidst timeless acts of protest and resistance.’*

Screenshot from film chapter *(Un)Touching Ground* where archival images that document a history of protest and resistance movements in Lebanon are put through a process of data-moshing. The disruption of the image in this pixelated moment in the film, forms to highlight the mass of people that make up these movements for intersectional revolution.
*Frame of Accountability*, 01:00:00, Helene Kazan, 2024.

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| type | date | filename | size | author |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| screenshot | 25.05.2024 | FrameofAccountability_HKazan_2023_002.jpf | 517 KB | Helene Kazan |

category
archive, government, technology, Trigger

**18:25:43**

*‘Dust particles flew off the box, disturbed by my opening. Adding to the sense that this archival material was vibrating under the weight of its unknown importance. Amidst the boxes of ‘Top Secret’ British governments documents, I find a map labelled ‘Syria’ 3.6.41.’*

Screenshot from film chapter *(Un)Touching Ground* . A decolonial audio visual translation of an archival map reveals the effects of the Allied military campaign into Lebanon and Syria in 1941. *Frame of Accountability*, 01:00:00, Helene Kazan, 2024.

Through film, installation, writing and public engagement *Frame of Accountability* investigates ‘risk’ as a lived condition, produced through the co-evolution of capitalist systems and violent conflict. The project focuses on the effects across Lebanon and Syria, with a view to understanding the wider regional and global consequences. Using poetic and critical-legal methods, the work explores ways of dismantling violence perpetrated through colonial mechanisms of governance, towards wider frameworks of accountability and justice. The work is produced in multi-part, non-linear formation.

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| type | date | filename | size | author |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| screenshot | 24.05.2024 | HKazanFoA_001.jpg | 952 KB | Helene Kazan |

category
archive, government, Trigger

**18:25:43**

A snow-covered stainless steel and glass shelf has a note, written in red marker, cello-taped to one of the steel supports: ‘A DONNER’.

Now a park, the Place Marie Janson – colloquially called *Carré Moscou* or *Carré Monnaies* – used to house *L’Hôtel des Monnaies/het Munthof*. For a century, the coins of some twenty-two countries were minted in this building.

**Sources**

- hotel_monnaies_nl.pdf

# A DONNER




| type | date | filename | size | author |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| photograph | 03.04.2024 | _44A8275.dng | 52,46 MB | Michiel De Cleene |

category
card, decoration, dusk, precipitation, sign, waste

**18:25:44**

When we bought our house more than a decade ago, we were told it was listed as architectural heritage.[1] The house used to be part of the Heynderyckx Foundry, in part designed by architect F. Dierkens. When submitting the planning application in the run-up to the renovation, it was therefore mandatory to include a report from the city's heritage conservation department. They asked for plans of the proposed changes, as well as plans and photographs of the situation as it is.

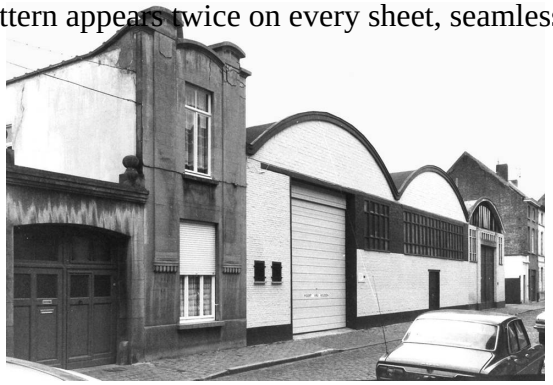
The department's advice came a few weeks later. 'With the exception of the fireplace with its marble mantelpiece in the room at the street side on the ground floor, this building has lost many of its architectural features. The façade rendering with faux joints, the vertical pilasters with their capitals, the central curved façade finish and the joinery are elements that defined the façade and have been removed. The new design is therefore acceptable subject to the following comments:

– preservation of the marble fireplace on the ground floor.'

We replied: 'Unfortunately, the marble mantelpiece on the ground floor is not original either. We suspect that the original fireplace disappeared along with the façade, sometime in the seventies. The mantelpiece you can see in the image is an approximation of, and a reference to, what we imagine it might once have looked like. This replica is made of sheets of MDF with a layer of Formica F3460 – Calacatta Marble.'

Formica still produces these sheets.[2] They measure 3,05 × 1,3m. Similar to wallpaper, the same marble pattern appears twice on every sheet, seamlessly.

Notes 1





**Sources**

1 https://inventaris.onroerenderfgoed.be/erfgoedobjecten/18442
2 https://www.formica.com/nl-be/products/laminate/F3460

# org Calacatta



| type | date | filename | size | author |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| image | 20.03.2024 | Formica F3460 Calacatta Marble full sheet.jpg | 459 KB | Michiel De Cleene |

category
architecture, decoration, government, house, marble, mistake, replica/copy

**18:25:44**

July. Our eight-month-old son has a fever. We have a hard time getting him to drink enough. The tally marks on the back of a tortellini-box keep track of the diapers he wets and the millilitres of milk and electrolytes he’s able to hold down.
Stuck inside with worrying parents, a sticker-book about a farm is his brother’s favourite pass-time. Tired of having to go back and forth between the pastures and the sticker-filled sheets we decide to use my arm as a repository for animals that share a habitat.



| type | date | filename | size | author |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| photograph | 23.01.2024 | IMG_6467.jpeg | 1,66 MB | Michiel De Cleene |

category
collecting, family, hand, sticker

**18:25:44**

A year ago I moved into Solange’s appartement. From the balcony, I see half the parking lot and the adjacent high rise. On the mailbox, I haven’t replaced her name for mine.

1. GARAGE PAUL, (+32) 0489. 764 540 / recto-verso NL/FR
2. CASH 24, (+32) 0466 15 32 16 / recto-verso NL/FR
3. GARAGE NADIM (+32) 0470 606 474 / recto-verso NL (1)
4. GARAGE NADIM (+32) 0470 606 474 / recto-verso FR (2)
5. GARAGE GABRIEL (+32) 0489 76 45 40 / recto-verso NL (1)
6. GARAGE GABRIEL (+32) 0489 76 45 40 / recto-verso FR (2)
7. MAGNUM’s (+32) 0492 92 70 70 / recto-verso FR
8. GARAGE ROBERT (+32) 0492 92 70 70 / recto-verso FR (1)
9. GARAGE ROBERT (+32) 0492 92 70 70 / recto-verso FR (2)

I don’t know whether Solange owned a car.

**Notes**



- Bieke Criel, lives and works in Gent (BE). Intrigued by landscape, movement, light and the poetics of what lies in between. Does not own a car, loves to drive one. Part of 019.

# Garage Paul > Garage Robert (collection of 2023)




| type | date | filename | size | author |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| scan | 17.01.2024 | biekecriel_scan_6MB_jpeg_Doc.1_.jpg | 6 MB | Bieke Criel |

category
archive, automobile, card, collecting

**18:25:44**

A malfunctioning of the camera leading to a double-exposed negative. The car is decisive in establishing the relationship between the superimposed photographs. In the middle of the image, we see it parked in front of the house. Slightly less visible is the same car, repeated but further away. This makes it possible to deduce that the dark outline of the house, with the roof and the chimney, is also the same house as in the other photograph. This time, the house is photographed relatively frontally (the slightly angled point of view allows to bring the shed at the back of the house in the line of sight), and from nearby. At the bottom left, the lines that make up the street help to see the continuity of the one photograph, while the electric wires at the top right aid to comprehend the other one.

The camera malfunction speculates on a future addition to the plot. The dark, outlined shed's scale is realistic with regards to the scale of the house and itself (the shed) in the other photograph. Its position with regards to the other buildings seems logical. It imposes itself as a possible second shed for the owner to build in the next few years. In that future shed, the car, now standing in front of the house, could be comfortably parked.

# Negative sheet 21, negative 24, negative 24,5




| type | date | filename | size | author |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| scan | 25.10.2023 | 021a_14.jpg | 1,29 MB | De Cleene De Cleene |

category
architecture, archive, automobile, house, panorama, parking, scale

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