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Fax from the Library (since 2013)
A project by Katja Stuke and Oliver Sieber

Katja Stuke and Oliver Sieber's photographic work is image production in an understated mode. No photographs of decisive moments; not even any that search their surroundings for major events or specifically original motifs. Rather, it is casual photography: serene, attentive, more at a walking pace than that of lightning speed; a photography of process, oriented as much to time as to space.

The relationship between this photography and the individual image, which is still the unit of measurement for conventional photographic publications and exhibitions, is inevitably a sceptical one. Stuke and Sieber work in series and sequences; they layer and mix material, take pictures of screens and posters, build rows and constellations, they shift motifs back and forth between different media and apparatuses. When individual prints do appear in their oeuvre, they are immediately parcelled out, such as in the split close-ups of 'Supernatural', or they are set in relation to a collection, such as in the two prints taken from the stack of images in 'Fax from the Library'.

Just as the photographic image here does not exist alone, so does photography in these works not exist in isolation from other pictorial media and apparatuses. 'Fax from the Library' is a sequential presentation of images that are choreographed being drawn into a fax machine; Stefanie Diekmann, A photography of process, Gießen 2019



Fax from the Library — exhibitions

- 2019 »Fax from the Library, Japan Edition«
as part of: »Sequence as a Dialogue, Kunsthalle Gießen
- 2016 »Jo volia ser fotògraf« [G] Fundació Foto Colectania Barcelona
- 2015 »Fax from the Library — Do you never feel the need to be another« Temple Paris
- 2015 »Do you never feel the need to be another« Projektraum Fotografie, Dortmund
- 2013 »Fax from the Library« Kunsthalle Bremen
- 2013 »Fax from the Library« Enocojima Art Center Osaka

Time and Sequence is something we are very interested in when thinking about photography and images. Moving images frequently appear in our photographic practice – sometimes as a source for images in Katja's CCTV-series, sometimes as the topic for a series like »O.i.F./Movie Locations«, sometimes as a projection of found footage in projects like »Japanese Lesson« or, again, »O.i.F./Movie Locations«, sometimes as juxtaposed projections for »一無所有, Nothing to my Name« (bringing together »Imaginary Club« and »National-feiertag«) which also included sound.

»Fax from the Library«, a recent project, started as a tumblr blog. »A blog about role models, idols, admiration and a copy machine – and the best way to get to know your books.« To figure out the complex structure of our photobook library we copied one page at a time from other artists' photobooks and „faxed them into the internet“. We followed the question »Do you never feel the need to be another?« selecting mainly portraits and found interest in images sometimes different from the interest we had when we bought the books. At first we published a zine in a small edition including some of these copies. Later we decided that the sequence in the blog was something quite crucial for the whole project so we chose to create a video which allows to determine time and sequence – so we could control the way people see, follow our associations and understand our implications. In two 6 min. videos we use 99 copied images disappearing into or appearing from a fax-machine.

For one second only you can see the whole image, then it disappears and a new one follows. This and the rhythm of the sound of the machine have a compelling influence in how you look at images, how you connect different images and how you understand images; the video and the sound visualize the process of „faxing“ and adds a new way of perception. The publications can be touch and read as long by the audience – as long as they want and in the direction they want. The huge black and white copies of our own photography and the way we present them emphasizes the idea of an installation. Each piece includes different images, each element presents photographs in a different way, adds a new approach to photography. (In: *Photobookreview, Aperture Foundation, Summer 2017*)



»Fax from the Library«

exhibition-view Projektraum Fotografie, Dortmund

incl. two one-channel videos (forward / backwards), each 6:37 min



»Fax from the Library«

exhibition-view »Jo volia ser fotògraf« [G] Fundació Foto Colectania Barcelona
incl. two one-channel videos (forward / backwards), each 6:37 min



vimeo.com/132006377



