

#55

foam

international photography magazine

PHOTOGRAPHY
MAGAZINE
OF THE YEAR.
AGAIN!
— Lucie Award

20
YOUNG ARTISTS
SHAPING THE FUTURE
OF PHOTOGRAPHY

TALENT

DOUGLAS MANDRY
Monuments

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Mandry also started making colour photograms of parts of the glacier that were melting away. After a visit he took bits of broken off ice back with him in a coolbox to his home city of Zurich. There, in the darkroom, he put the ice in the enlarger. As the ice melted and dripped onto the photo paper, so that a physical piece of the glacier in its frozen form slowly but permanently transformed, the aura of the glacier appeared in many colours on the paper. Mandry then reproduced the photograms on a glass plate and presented them with the printed geotextile.

Although it was not the original intention, *Monuments* has become in part a project about climate change—not radical and insistent, but subtle and poetic. 'There is a lot happening in the world. My work is basically a digestion of it, a way to cope with things that happen without being too political. When I started this project three years ago, climate change was not such a prominent theme in visual art. It is now a real trend. The concern is very important but it is almost getting to be a commercial strategy. My series is still in progress and I don't want it to look opportunistic. I try to avoid alarmist content by using naive pictures from one hundred years ago.'

As the project evolves, Mandry will go to several different glaciers and use a variety of geotextiles. He is also building a huge, mobile camera obscura which will enable him to create photograms on location. The influence of natural elements will increasingly appear in the image. 'I can hardly go back to classic photography if it is not really meaningful for the project. For the disappearance of things, especially concerning the landscape or nature, it is important for me to use the ephemeral materials themselves.' This will ultimately produce an index of the vanished glaciers of Switzerland, an index of frozen time, of geological processes that take an eternity, captured by the principles of photography, the perfect medium for recording time and for preserving sometimes nostalgic memories.

— Text by Kim Knoppers

This text has been written after a Skype conversation that took place in October 2019.

All images from the series *Monuments*
© Douglas Mandry, courtesy of the
artist and Bildhalle Zürich

DOUGLAS MANDRY (b. 1989, CH) is an artist and photographer, graduated from ECAL University of Arts and Design in Lausanne. His work aims to question photography as a medium evolving within the digital era. Focusing on process-based interventions, he explores the possibilities of representation and our relationship to reality through photography. Douglas is based in Zürich and Paris.

KIM KNOPPERS is an art historian graduated from University of Amsterdam, and curator at Foam. Since 2011, she has worked on solo and group exhibitions, most recently *Back to the Future: The 19th Century in the 21st Century* (2018). She has contributed to various magazines including Foam Magazine, Unseen and Aperture and has written catalogue texts for Jaya Pelupessy and Sylvain Couzinet-Jacques, amongst others. She is also a lecturer on the MA Photography at ECAL in Lausanne where she initiated and developed the course Do Not Disturb—Curating in Progress.