

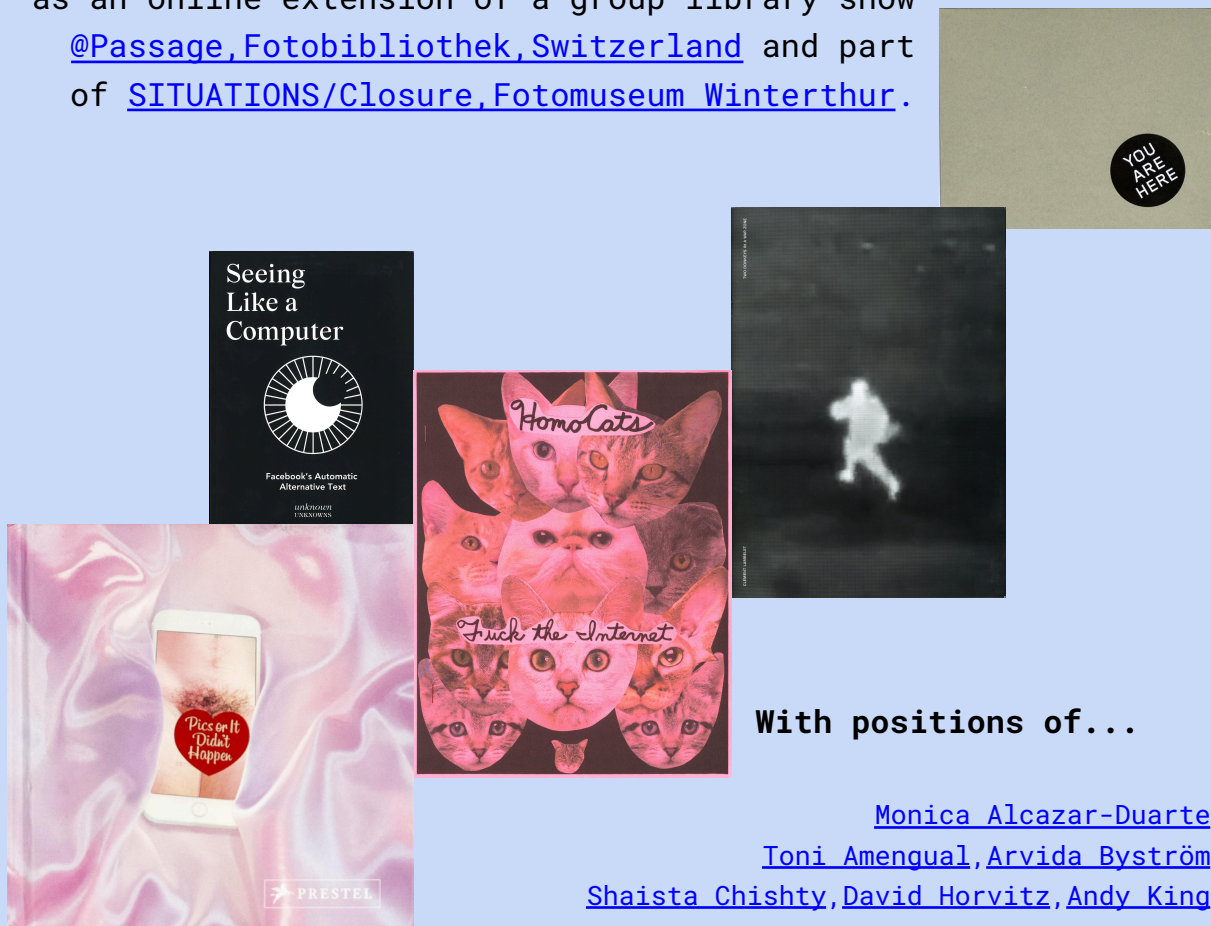
[GERMAN]



Publishing Post-Photography

is a digital, interactive space exploring artistic publications that reflect our increasingly image-based, networked society; curated by [Mona Schubert](#)

The project was launched in 2021 as an online extension of a group library show [@Passage, Fotobibliothek, Switzerland](#) and part of [SITUATIONS/Closure, Fotomuseum Winterthur](#).



With positions of...

[Monica Alcazar-Duarte](#),
[Toni Amengual](#), [Arvida Byström](#),
[Shaista Chishty](#), [David Horvitz](#), [Andy King](#),
[Clément Lambelet](#), [Ruben Lundgren](#) & [Matjaž Tančič](#),
[Molly Soda](#), [Felicity Hammond](#),
[Roc Herms](#), [Annija Muižule](#), [J. Morrison](#),
[Matthias Müller](#), [Omiros Panayides](#) & [Theopisti Stylianou-Lambert](#),
[Philipp Schmitt](#), [Silvio Lorusso](#) & [Sebastian Schmieg](#),
[Penelope Umbrico](#), [Angie Waller](#)



How does our relationship to the photograph as a tangible object change when we no longer see it in a picture frame or photo album but encounter it instead as a data file on a screen? How can we materialise elusive image data and the screen-based communication practices associated with it? Does digital image content still rely in any sense on a physical form like the photo book, and if so, why?

The (online-)exhibition *Fleeting Media. Publishing Post-Photography* presents artistic publications that not only reflect on the visual practices and aesthetics of an increasingly networked society but also examine its cultural, political and economic implications. Equally, the works on display constitute playful experiments with the changing visual vocabulary and the multitude of formats and distribution channels in the post-digital age – be it via more conventional print media like books in various formats, postcards, zines and printable PDFs or apps and algorithms that augment and support the process.

The exhibition also points to a radical shift in the art book trade: the increasingly digitised infrastructure and the resulting democratisation mean that artists are becoming less and less dependent on publishers, printers and bookshops. It is now possible for people to negotiate infrastructural and canonical obstacles by using print-on-demand platforms, which allow photo books and zines to be printed at affordable prices and shipped on request, or by producing limited editions and marketing them via their own websites, social media channels or self-publishing companies. The classic idea of the photo book – as a physical object that is edited and promoted by a prestigious publisher – is being increasingly prised open by digitisation and networking. This unstable situation offers unprecedented scope for unconventional, artistic ideas to prosper, even though in many cases an object still constitutes an easier way into a museum collection. Moreover, the process of committing to a book's organisational system makes it possible for the networked image to be held fast, capturing and containing its hidden mechanisms and the constantly changing forms in which it manifests.

Fotomuseum Winterthur's experimental exhibition and research format SITUATIONS (2015–2021) has enabled numerous post-digital formats to enter the photo book collection at Fotobibliothek Schweiz and the museum's collection of ephemera: these formats have been supplemented in the current exhibition by new works acquired between 2017 and 2020. As an adjunct to the exhibition, this online platform has been developed to provide further information about the works and make research material available, creating opportunities for the exchange of ideas and opinions.



Shaista Chishty, *The Daily Veil*, London: [self-published] 2017. Fotobibliothek Switzerland.

The tabloid newspaper *Daily Mail*, which has one of the largest readerships in the UK, is known for its right-wing conservative tendencies and the discriminatory depiction, or outright exclusion, of PoC (People of Colour), in its reporting. British artist and Muslim [Shaista Chishty](#), who is part of the Pakistani diaspora, lampoons the paper in the fake magazine *The Daily Veil*.

All the pictures show portraits of women wearing a so-called [niqab](#). For years the face veil, which is prevalent in certain strands of Islam, has sparked political debates centring on feminism, religious freedom and integration. The footage harvested from social media, coupled with an additional [screenshot](#) video, shows Muslim women with niqabs in everyday, political, and business scenarios, ironically subverting the discrimination practised in the daily press and online on the basis of gender and religious affiliation.

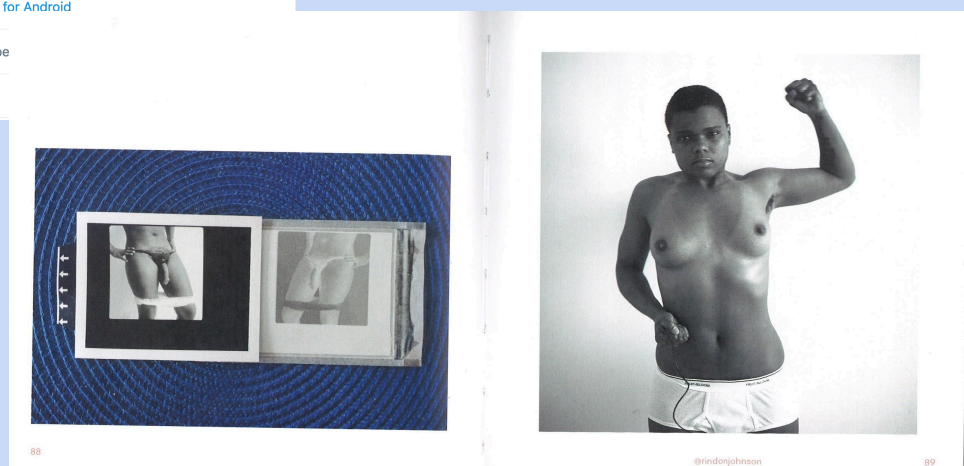




Arvida Byström & Molly Soda, *Pics or It Didn't Happen: Images Banned from Instagram*, Munich: Prestel 2017. Private Collection.

[Molly Soda](#) and [Arvida Byström's](#) collaborative work *Pics or It Didn't Happen* shows Instagram images that have been deleted by [Facebook Inc.](#) for breaching the online community's guidelines. Besides images of female nipples and menstrual blood, these often include shots of the [LGBTQIA+](#) community.

The self-empowering, collaborative project has its origins online: when Byström, out of frustration, put out a call in a Twitter post for "a ceremony" for the lost photos that have been banned, Soda commented that they should turn the idea into a book. After an online appeal to their followers, the artists were able to bring together a wide range of censored images documenting Instagram's attempts at normalisation and exposing discrimination based on gender identity and sexual orientation.



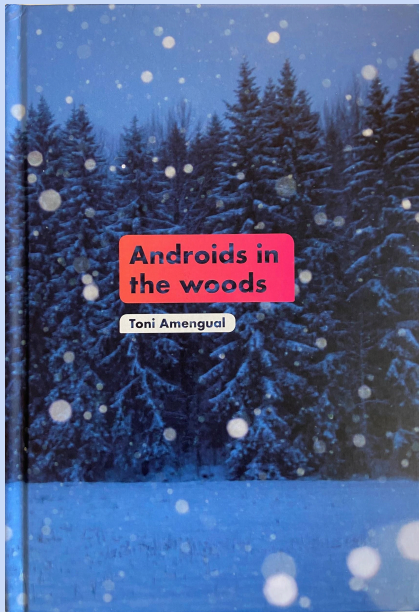


J. Morrison, *Fuck the Internet, Join the Resistance, Save Us*, from: HOMOCATS Zines, New York: [self-published] 2015-. Fotobibliothek Switzerland.

Funny cat images and videos, so-called [lolcats](#), are shared, viewed and edited millions of times a day by people all over the world. Queer New York artist [J. Morrison](#) mounts these darlings of the internet on top

of naked torsos, giving them laser eyes and inscribing each image with a message to draw attention to homophobia, cultural stereotyping and social inequality. Operating at the intersection of activism, design and internet culture, the angry figures on velvety paws and the slogans that accompany them are designed to be circulated on the streets and online – via zines, on T-shirts, cloth bags and as posters. In 2020, the [HOMOCATS' Kittens against Trump](#) and [Kittens against Corona](#) campaigns made headlines in the hustings for the US election and at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.





Toni Amegual, *Androids in the Woods*, Mallorca: [published by consell de Mallorca] 2019. Fotobibliothek Switzerland.

Androids in the Woods by Spanish artist [Toni Amegual](#) centres on the popular dating app [Tinder](#) and its use amongst Finland's sparse population. During a period of several months he spent in the country, Amegual created a profile and met up with his matches.

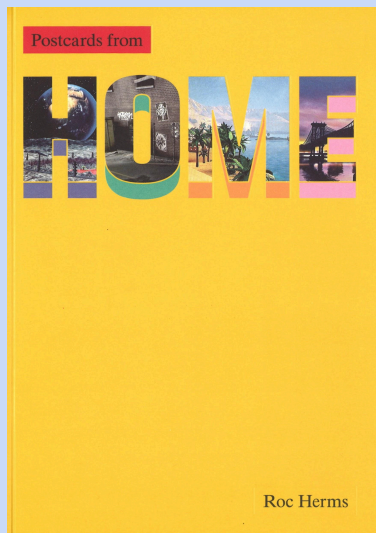
The discrepancy between the dating profile, which is often full of sexual stereotypes and carefully stage-managed, and the person's real appearance is brought out by the book's juxtaposition of the two identities. For this



purpose, Amegual combines [screenshots](#) captured with the app and printed on transparent paper with portraits that he took himself during their first meeting in person, coupled with shots of the Scandinavian landscape in winter. These are interwoven by a poetic collage of the text messages they exchanged.

Androids in the Woods holds up a mirror to the fleeting relationships of our networked culture and the hopes and expectations pinned to them.





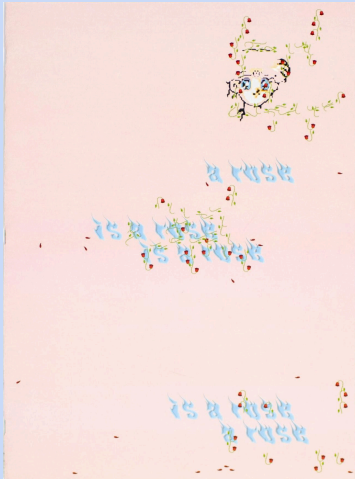
Roc Herms, *Postcards from Home*, Barcelona: Terranova 2015. Fotobibliothek Switzerland.

What does “home” mean in our post-digital society? Video games and virtual worlds, which have enjoyed an unprecedented boom since the COVID-19 pandemic began, create expanded spaces for us to inhabit, arenas in which we can exchange views and feel at home. The [PlayStation Home](#) online community was one such world. Here, gamers could hold parties, run photo studios and meet new people.

Spanish artist [Roc Herms](#) was actively involved in the community until its termination in 2015.

Postcards from Home is his homage to his best friend, whom he repeatedly captured on camera in a series of screenshots taken between 2011 and 2015, a commemoration of the games they played together during that time: these memories are portraits of the different worlds they moved in and records of the conversations they shared. The publication also presents the vocabulary of virtual photography, so-called [in-game photography](#), while suggesting the transience of digital friendships and communities.





Andy King, *a_rose_is_a_rose*, Berlin:
[self-published] 2019. Fotobibliothek
Switzerland/Private Collection.

[Andy King's](#) cute collages of emojis, old hardware and details of plants only reveal themselves at second glance as a balancing act treading the line between digital fetish and sexism.



King's simply stapled photo book *a_rose_is_a_rose*, which can be turned into A3 posters, is full of *hentai*, pornographic anime and sexualised Disney characters, and photos of young, female celebrities leaked in 2014 in the wake of a hacker attack. Inspired by romantic stories and quotes circulating on the social networking forum [4chan](#) – and in particular on the [imageboard /b/](#) – *a_rose_is_a_rose* presents morally dubious digital practices.

The ambiguous, often obscure mechanisms of online subcultures are also reflected in the [glitch](#) aesthetics of the collages, which King produced in analogue form using an aquarium and the reflections of screens against the water.



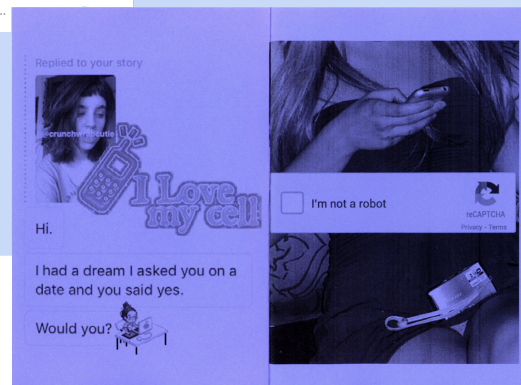
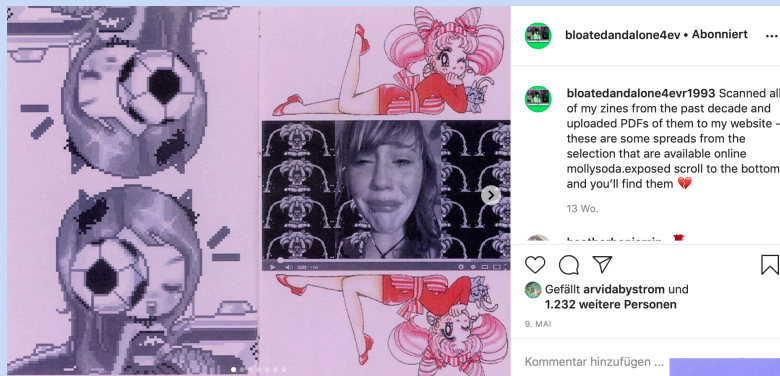
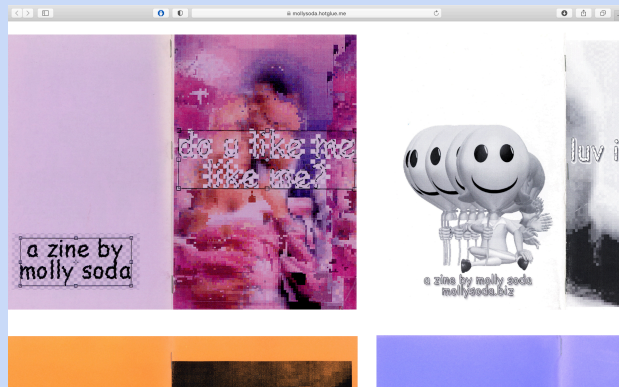
Molly Soda, Zines, New York: [self-published], 2013–2019.

<https://mollysoda.hotglue.me/?Zine+Archive>, May 2020.

In May 2020, Puerto Rican internet artist [Molly Soda](#) made her magazine archive available on her website in the form of PDFs. The zines, which were originally privately printed and sent by mail, focus on our networked culture, digital forms of communication and online aesthetics of the 2010s:

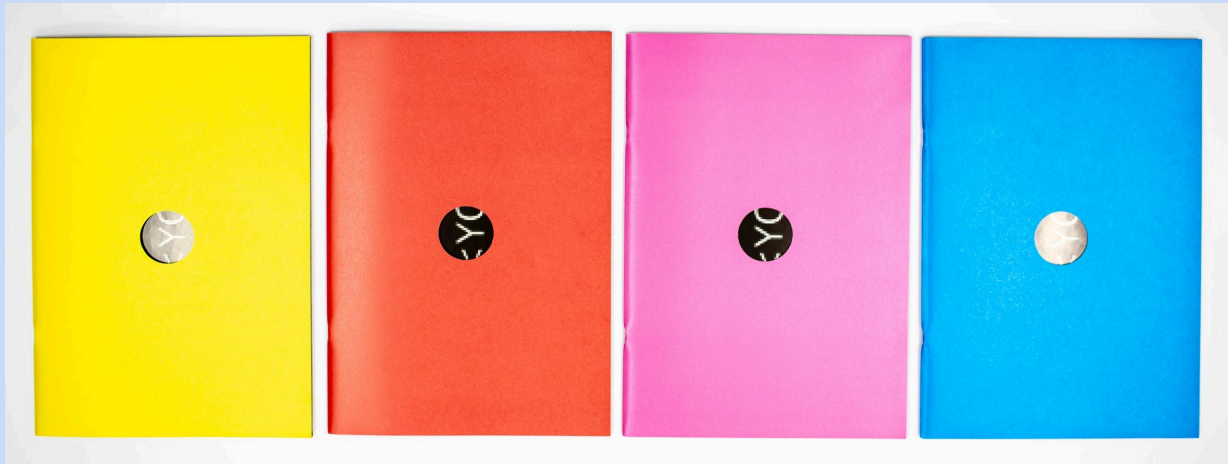
sexist [MySpace](#) glitter graphics, [Tumblr](#) content, bizarre chat-room dialogues, selfies and hate-filled comments on social media come together in the zines to delineate a world that moves between cupidity, fetishisation, self-presentation and online bullying.

The collages can thus be seen in many ways as a portrait of [Generation Y](#), which grew up with the early social media platforms and the transition to [Web 2.0](#).

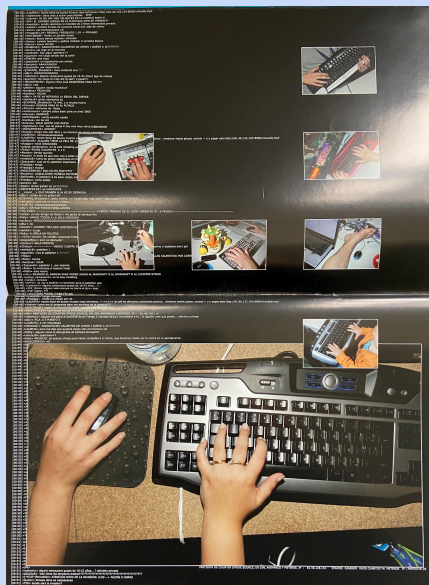


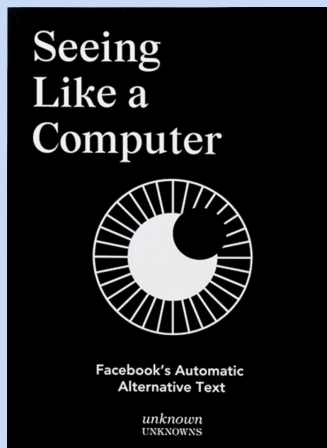
**Roc Herms, <Yo> <Yo> <Yo>, 4 Zines, Barcelona: [self-published] 2015.
Collection Fotomuseum Winterthur.**

[Roc Herms](#)'s <Yo> <Yo> <Yo> zine focuses on users whose lives centre on networked computer technologies, which act as an extension of their identity and social milieu.



Using desktop views and souvenir photos, Herms paints an alternative portrait of a subculture that lives first and foremost through the screen. In doing so, he draws on his own experience as part of the LAN party scene in Valencia. Every year, the [Campus Party](#) technology festival is organised there, with thousands of young adults – software developers, gamers, hackers, internet activists and artists – gathering to spend an entire week together in a 24/7 network.

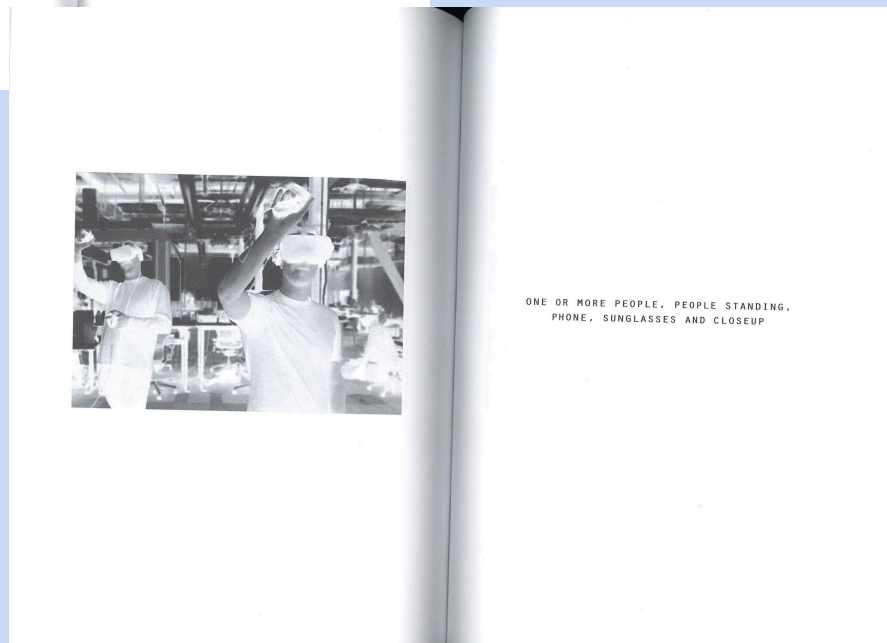
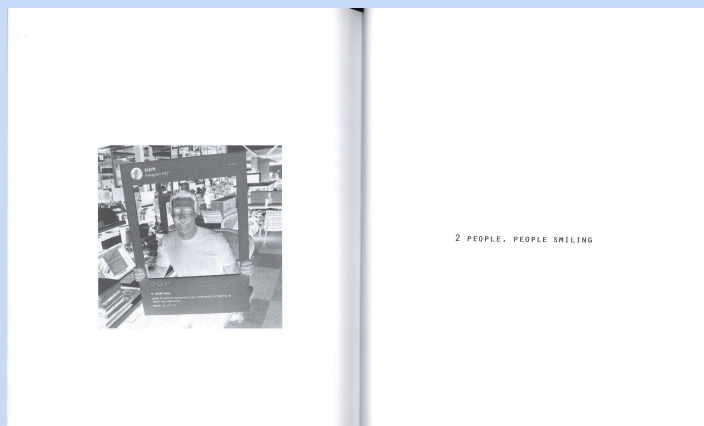


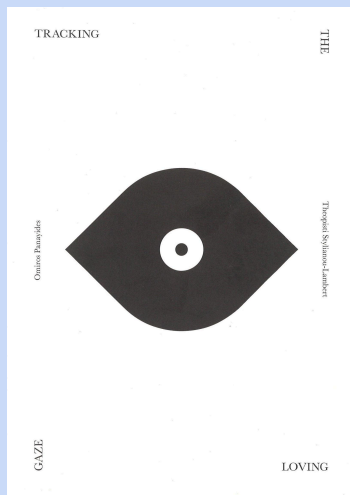


Angie Waller, *Seeing Like a Computer. Facebook's Automatic Alternative Text*, New York: Unknown Unknowns 2018. Fotobibliothek Switzerland

[Automatic Alternative Text](#) is an object-recognition technology made available by Facebook for captioning purposes. The texts generated with this technology are hidden within the HTML code of a website or app and are used to provide image descriptions for visually impaired users who rely on screen readers that allow them to interact with web applications.

The photo book *Seeing Like a Computer* by New York artist and designer [Angie Waller](#) takes an ironic approach that highlights the limited vocabulary and high frequency of error in automated captions by performing a black/white inversion on a selection of images from the Facebook wall of the company's founder [Mark Zuckerberg](#) and setting them alongside the automatically generated descriptions, which often stray into absurdity.



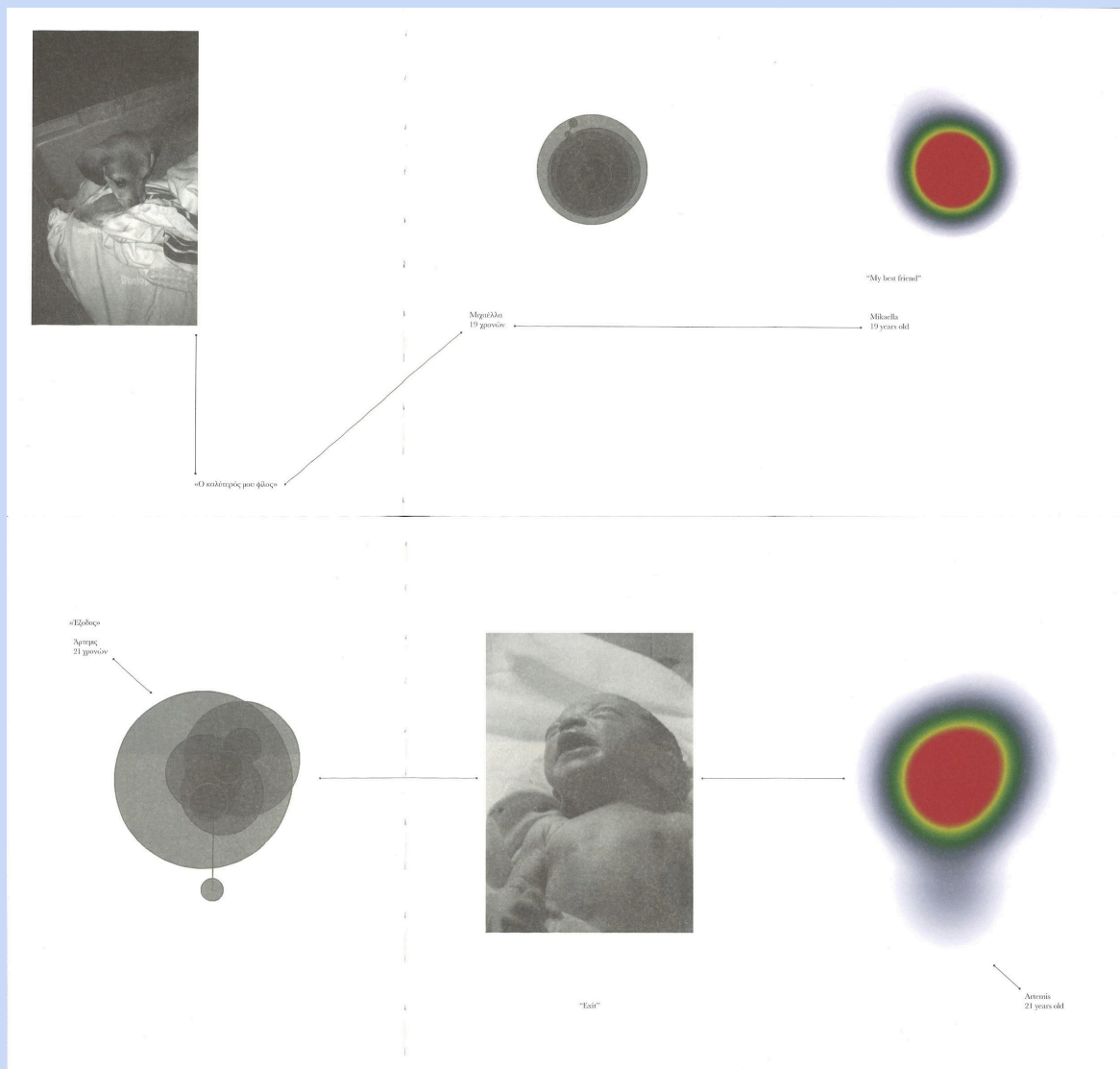


Omiros Panayides & Theopisti Stylianou-Lambert, *Tracking the Loving Gaze*, Limassol: [self-published] 2019. Fotobibliothek Switzerland.

The project *Tracking the Loving Gaze* – a collaboration between Cypriot book artist and designer [Omiros Panayides](#) and Cypriot artist and academic [Theopisti Stylianou-Lambert](#) – is an in-depth examination of [eye tracking](#), i.e. the recording and analysis of eye movements. The authors asked thirty people to look at a personal photograph they particularly cherish and recorded how much time the participants spent

focusing on different parts of the image. The book sets up a dialogue between the visual data acquired in the process – scanning paths and mappings of heat and focus – darkroom prints and the original grayscale image sources.

Tracking the Loving Gaze demonstrates an alternative concept of seeing that uses algorithms to analyse and visualise the feelings triggered by the viewing process.

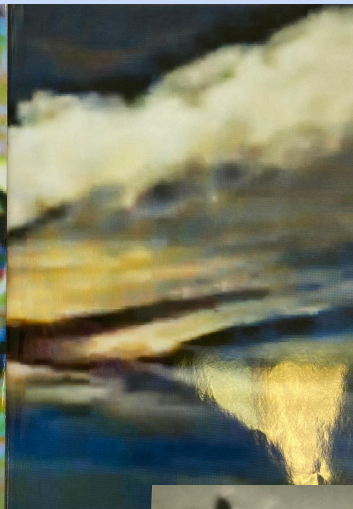
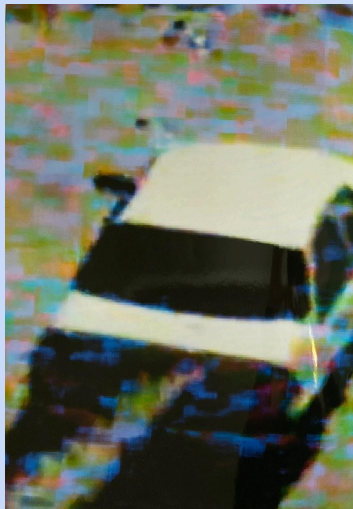


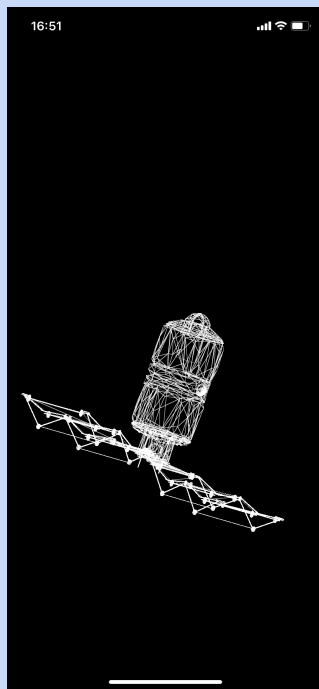


Clément Lambelet, *Two Donkeys in a War Zone*, Paris: RVB Books 2017. Fotobibliothek Switzerland.

The publication *Two Donkeys in a War Zone* by French artist [Clément Lambelet](#) is predicated on a drone video showing a US army attack on an [ISIS](#) camp that can be seen on YouTube. For a brief instant, in the interval between a brace of explosions, the [infrared camera](#) picks up two donkeys.

Seeing this video prompted Lambelet to sift through drone videos shot by the US, Afghan and British armies, looking for ordinary moments or details that played out in the immediate vicinity of military combat. Lambelet's [screenshotted](#) footage, which has a slight mirroring effect, gives the conflict an intensely human tone, even if it has an abstract quality as seen through the operational eye of the drone. As viewers, we start searching for traces, on the lookout not for military infrastructure but rather for signs of human life.





Monica Alcazar-Duarte, *The New Colonists*, London: Bemojake Books 2017. Fotobibliothek Switzerland.

The New Colonists by Mexican artist [Monica Alcazar-Duarte](#) addresses the colonisation of space. It takes as its starting point the small US town of Mars, Pennsylvania. Enigmatic scenes from everyday life in the West, scattered signs of technology and a dark lighting scheme evoking a science-fiction setting alternate with sequences of images that focus on research approaches to colonising Mars.

With the help of an accompanying [augmented reality](#) app readers can bring to life additional audiovisual material embedded in the photo book, including 3D animations of spy satellites and audio reports from researchers.

The New Colonist not only introduces a future scenario that draws on one of the last challenges confronting science and projects such as [Tesla's SpaceX](#) but also extends the visual vocabulary of the two-dimensional photo book with computer-generated elements.





Matthias Müller, *You Are Here*, box with 100 postcards, 2016. Collection Fotomuseum Winterthur.

The 100 postcards in German artist and film-maker [Matthias Müller's](#) *You Are Here* edition show [screenshots](#) of private webstreams, that are not protected by a password and openly accessible. The connecting element is a series of geographical maps – city maps, regional maps, details from atlases

– that users have hung on the walls of their offices and flats while away from home. The abandoned spaces reflect a double-edged sense of longing, of wanting to be somewhere else or, conversely, the desire to feel located. On another level, they expose the ubiquitous web-based mechanisms of voyeurism and surveillance that we reproduce as we view the [found-footage](#) material. Thus, the spectral postcards can be understood as a metaphor for the networked society per se, where the line separating the physical and virtual worlds is becoming increasingly blurred, along with the distinction between data exchange and data theft.





Silvio Lorusso & Sebastian Schmieg, *Five Years of Captured Captchas*, Berlin/Rotterdam: [self-published] 2017. Collection Fotomuseum Winterthur.

The *Completely Automated Public Turing Test to Tell Computers and Humans Apart*, or [CAPTCHA](#), is an automated test that may pop up when you are

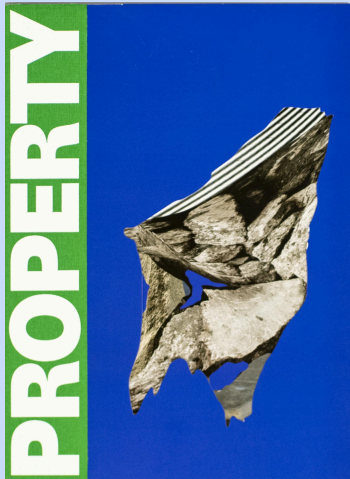
logging in to a site or buying something online to check if a human or an automated [bot](#) is interacting with the website.

The puzzles, which are typically based on images, usually involve a challenge set by the system, which the user is required to negotiate by typing and submitting the solution. For five years, artists [Silvio Lorusso](#) and [Sebastian Schmieg](#), who are based in Rotterdam and Berlin respectively, took [screenshots](#) of the CAPTCHAs they had solved.

The archive, published in [five leporello volumes](#), makes it clear that the CAPTCHAs, which were originally designed as a security measure, are increasingly being misused by companies like Google Inc. as free [digital labour](#) in the process of digitising knowledge, improving their online services and even training [AI](#) image-recognition software.



Images: Library of the Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen



Felicity Hammond, *Property*, London: SPBH editions 2019. Private Collection.

[Felicity Hammond's](#) *Property* project focuses on the practice of architectural [renderings](#) – computer-generated visualisations of future building projects and of our increasingly networked and technologised environment.

Using a combination of analogue and digital [found footage](#), including billboards and architectural drawings, the British artist creates urban dreamscapes that she amplifies with her own photographs. These collages are punctuated by

light-green and blue elements, a reference to [blue-screen or green-screen techniques](#). These inserts are placeholders for the image editor, making it easier to add in content later: they are commonly used in the advertising context.

Property thus raises the question of whether renderings are really about optimistic visions of the future or whether they are, in fact, more concerned with projecting capitalist, political and ideological interests.

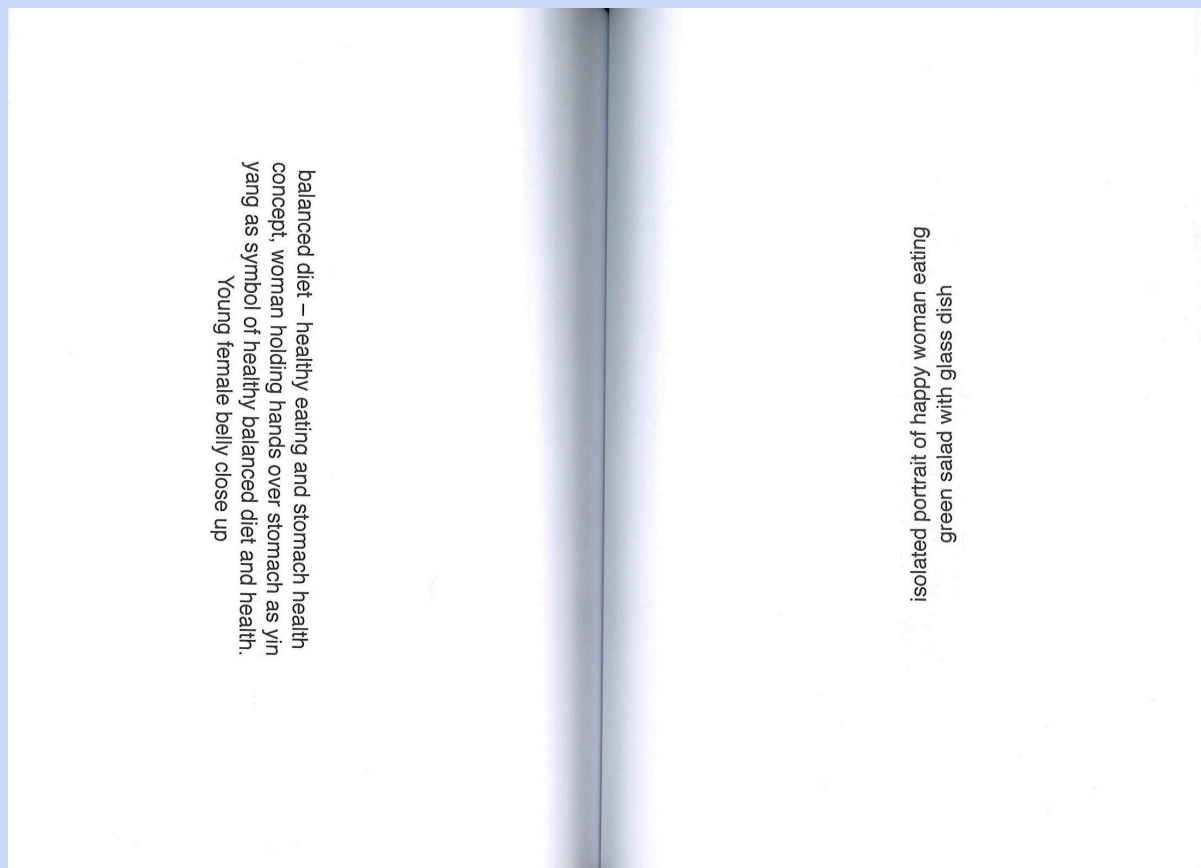




Annija Muižule, *Joyful Businessmen Throwing Paper and Having Fun in the Office*, lulu.org [self-published] 2019.
Fotobibliothek Switzerland.

Joyful Businessmen Throwing Paper and Having Fun in the Office by Latvian artist [Annija Muižule](#) looks at the phenomenon of [stock photography](#) – cheap ready-made photos that can be downloaded without fuss from professional image databases and used for invitations, advertising and social media messaging. These are often tagged with simple keywords, and their scaled-down visual language can cater to numerous stereotypes.

Although the use of stock photography has come to be taken for granted, Muižule questions this practice by printing the [Shutterstock](#) captions on their own, without the images, on blank sheets of white paper. The artist uses a low-key visual vocabulary to make her point, not only bringing home to us the sales mechanisms of an image industry that is deeply embedded in our everyday lives but also revealing the absurd and biased nature of its motifs.

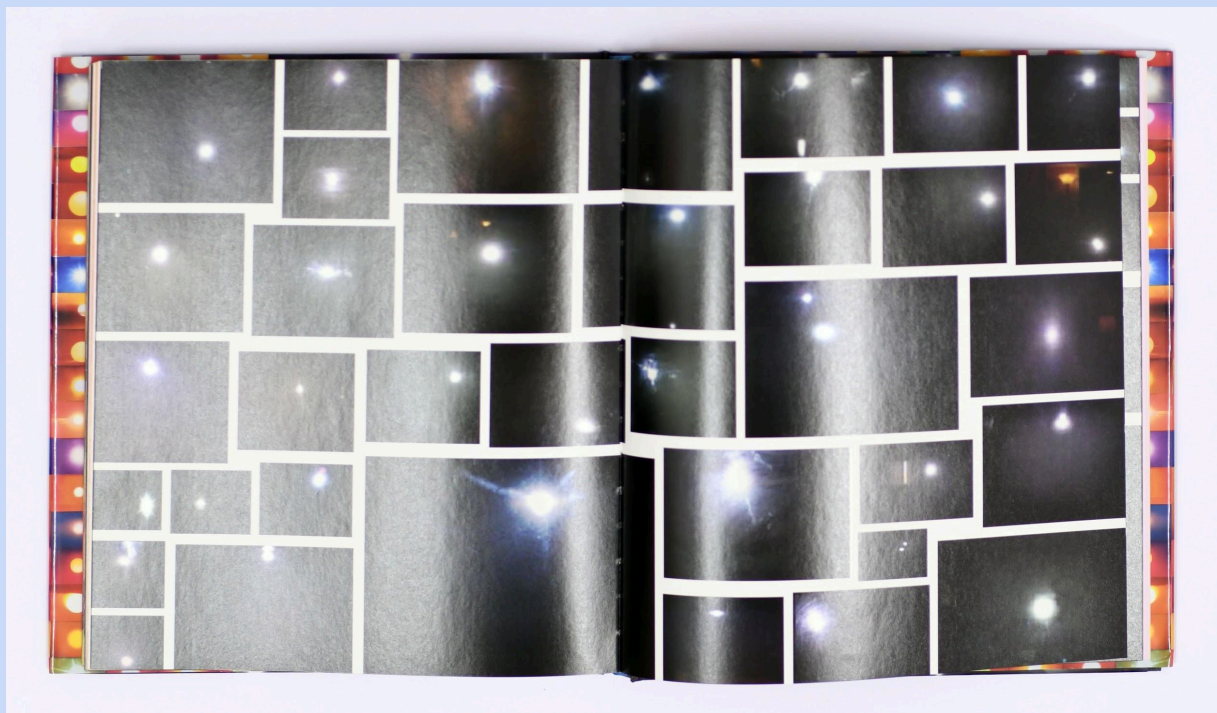


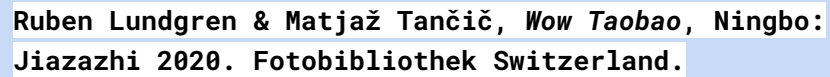


Penelope Umbrico, *Photographs*, New York: Aperture 2011. Fotobibliothek Switzerland.

Photographs by US artist Penelope Umbrico centres on the myriad [found images](#) that circulate in mail-order catalogues selling consumer products, in brochures advertising travel and leisure activities and on websites like [Craigslist](#), eBay and [Flickr](#).

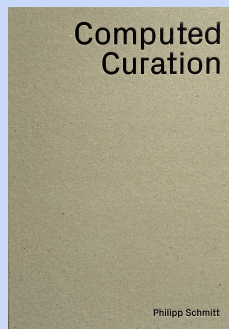
Here you can find everything from shots of sunsets to pictures of second-hand monitors being sold online complete with the reflections of the sellers, which they unintentionally included when taking the photos. Arranged in collages, the [screenshots](#) reveal a consumer culture that is increasingly organised online and driven by photographic content. *Photographs* appropriates and recontextualises these images, questioning how we use photos to communicate, how they influence our shopping habits and how, in the end, we deal with this massification of images.





The publication *Wow Taobao* shows a selection of product images picked out by artists [Ruben Lundgren](#) and [Matjaž Tančič](#), who grew up in Europe and now live in China. Designed as a sticker album, *Wow Taobao*

[illegible]



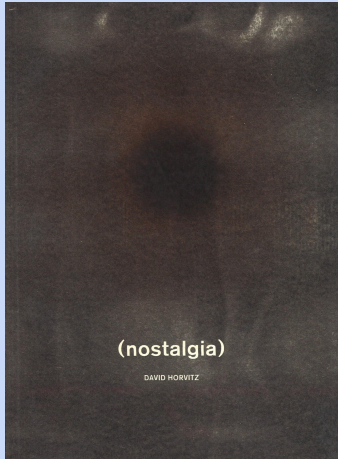
Philipp Schmitt, *Computed Curation*, Hong Kong: Bromide Books 2017. Fotobibliothek Switzerland.

Although the photographs in the *Computed Curation* project (2013–2017) are the work of German artist and interaction designer [Philipp Schmitt](#), the content on display and the sequencing of the images are generated through a process of machine learning, with the tagging and titling carried out by a computer.



To achieve this, Schmitt used Microsoft and Google [image-recognition](#) services to analyse the composition of his images in terms of colour and content and to train two [algorithms](#): one to map the images on the basis of similarity and the other to string together images with visual matches so that they would sit nearer one another in the page sequence. This frequently throws up strange, even poetic constellations of images, tags and signatures. Unexpected as these groupings are, we are nonetheless challenged to decode the logic determining their arrangement so as to see the world through the eyes of an algorithm.

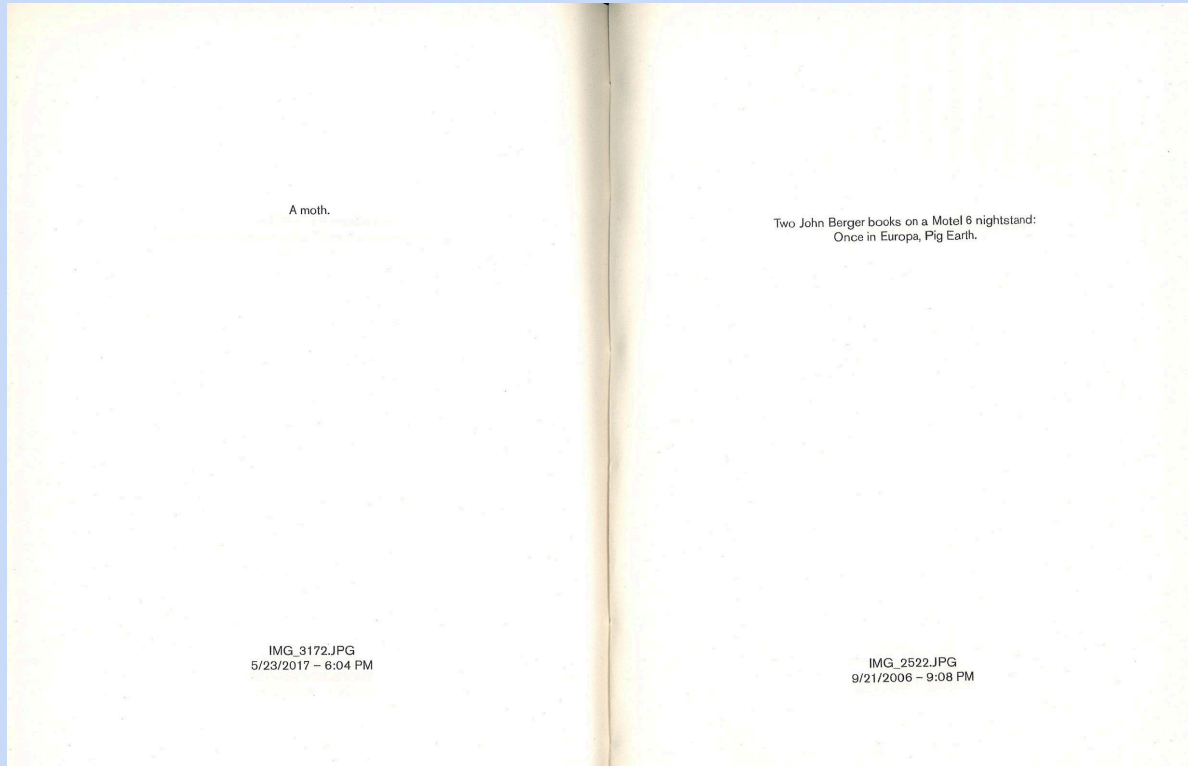




David Horvitz, (*nostalgia*), Mexico City: Gato Negro Ediciones 2019. Fotobibliothek Switzerland.

Drawing on Hollis Frampton's 1971 [film](#), in which the artist put analogue photographs on hotplates and watched them slowly burn – [David Horvitz's](#) publication (*nostalgia*) is a subtle meditation on what it means to delete a photographic image in our networked culture. A seemingly endless sequence of cheaply printed pages shows no more than a brief description of the image and the date and time it was shot, revealing the "metadata" that, without our really being aware of it, is logged as additional information in the digital images we create.

In its simplicity, (*nostalgia*) challenges viewers to use their imagination to fill in the gaps: this picks up on the often-generic formulas of networked images, while also highlighting the lost status of the photograph as a physically transmitted object.





[Monica Alcazar-Duarte: The New Colonists \(2017\)](#)



[Shaista Chishty: The Daily Veil \(2017\)](#)



FURTHER READING

Grace Banks «Pics Or It Didn't Happen: reclaiming Instagram's censored art», in [The Guardian](#), 10.04.2017.

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Markus Hartmann, «Past, Present and Future of the Photo Book», in [Still Searching...-Blog](#), Fotomuseum Winterthur, (15.09.-31.10.2014).

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Volker Pantenburg, «Matthias Müller. While You Were Out» in *Camera Austria International*, No. 136, (2016), 33-40.

Clayton Purdom, «A people's history of PlayStation Home» in killscreen.com, 02.09.2016.

Markus Schaden, «Here Comes the Digital Photobook!», in *European photography. The independent art magazine for contemporary photography and new media*, Vol. 34, No. 93 (2013), 70-73.

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Mona Schubert, «The sum of all photographs is the ruin of the world'. Felicity Hammonds dystopian utopias», in *C/O Berlin Zeitung*, Vol. 10, No. 27, (September 2020).

David Senior and Sarah Hamerman, «Screen Life and Shelf Life: Critical Vocabularies for Digital-to-Print Artists' Publications», in [Art Libraries Journal](http://artlibrariesjournal.com), Vol. 41, No. 5 (July 2016).

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