

SZABÓ Dezső**Fekete-fehér / Black&White**

15 September -9 October 2015

Black&White is a series composed of photograms. It can also be regarded as a useful by-product of my research in image theory and of my photographic works of recent years.

Historically, the photogram as a genre and technique conjures up the modernist and avant-garde world of the early 20th century (Man Ray, László Moholy-Nagy). In my case, the thematic of the series has evolved from my works depicting modelled structures, with my choice of image making method consistently following from this. In essence, I used this procedure to document mock-up objects which have served as aiding devices in the construction of the structures. For these photograms, I often used commercially distributed objects manufactured by the toy industry. These plastic and metal toys are miniature replicas of the environment that surrounds us and are usually the product of significant engineering and technical achievements. Most of these mock-ups are composed of pieces that can be assembled; the components of the three-dimensional objects are cast on a slab. As a spatial "laying out" of sorts, they call to mind the aesthetics of constructivism and cubism. This, however, is only one of the reasons – and possibilities – behind my changing these objects into pictures.

One of the fundamental characteristics of a photogram is that the recorded object must, by necessity, enter into a physical relationship with (or must be in close proximity to) the image surface, which, in itself, is a unique and original piece of artwork. This may simply be referred to as a print. Insofar as the essence of photography is depiction in accordance with the law of optics, photograms do not fall into this category. Utilising the camera obscura phenomenon and a (usually) flat, light sensitive surface that can capture the image are two important requirements for creating a photograph. While the photogram satisfies only one of these conditions, the physical and chemical phenomenon whereby light (as energy) leaves a mark and, thus, creates information can make a powerful impression on the viewer (and the creator of the work). This fundamental experience is rather absent from current everyday practice. Electronically created information conceals its own essence. We cannot understand how it works; this type of understanding would require a high degree of scientific and technical knowledge. The analogue photographic image – in other words, a real photograph – also has other characteristics that are suitable for drawing attention to essential phenomena (or concepts).

It is these questions that I ask, or present, through my exhibited works. These include: 1) Positive-negative opposites as a photographic concept – or, from a different perspective, presence and absence. 2) The two-dimensional – or abstract – plane (surface) – or the relationship between four-dimensional spacetime and the image abstracted in two dimensions. 3) Light as something whose existence we experience only indirectly and is remembered by pictures as an imprint.

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