

Diana Artus

WORKS



Cover image: **Drop out building**, laser print with cut, yellow poster paint, 30 x 24 cm, 2015

The big other, xerox print, 84 x 116 cm, 2015 (from the series **Urban Characters**)



The big other – new cut, xerox print, 84 x 116 cm, 2015 (from the series **Urban Characters**)

History repeating

About the work of Diana Artus

A city as a public space fulfills plenty of demands. Buildings tell stories of ever-changing uses, functions, architectural styles or materials. These aspects visually express societal human values which alter over generations. The appearance of a city reveals this process; edifices decay, are demolished, knocked down, or restored. Façades are scratched with graffiti or carefully remodeled. The process of a city's transformation resembles the individual recollection process. Our memories change. Our attitudes change. Our self-created surrounds visually reflect these alterations.

The artist Diana Artus detects urban and mundane sites that symbolize the relationship humans have with their self-created surroundings. She deals with the current state of cities but also abandons her own contemporary perspective to trace back to architectural witnesses of former times. She examines different cultural contexts by traveling to many cities around the globe. There she photographs specific architectural sites that visually epitomize the changes. These cityscapes form the basis for the process of her artistic work. Printed out, the works undergo crucial analog physical treatment which is often not fully comprehensible in the final work.

Diana Artus superimposes, cuts, crumbles or rolls on the photos. Paper strips hang down from façades; houses are removed or broken off. Some photographed buildings seemingly collapse in their frames. The artist repeats the process of cities' architectural change. She turns the flat images of architecture into three-dimensional objects again. With the process of photographing architectural sites as a symbol of agreed concurrences and then remodeling their visual appearance, Diana Artus creates a new version of the cityscapes to point to the gap between individual and societal processes of recollection and memory.

Tina Sauerlaender (art historian, curator and writer; peer to space)

KOREA WORKS (2015)

The three-dimensional image objects on the following pages are results of a three-month artist residency in South Korea in spring 2015. They comment on the specific atmosphere of Seoul between “excitement” and “exhaustion”, “attraction” and “tiredness”. My research was inspired through the reading of texts by South Korean philosopher Byung-Chul Han, who referred to his country as “fatigue society in final stage”.



Installation view **Korea works: There is tiresome, but attractive**, solo exhibition, Uqbar, Berlin, 2015



Dropout, latex print on blueback paper with cut, 180 x 135 cm x 15 cm, 2015



*Installation view **Korea works: There is tiresome, but attractive**, solo exhibition, Uqbar, Berlin, 2015*



Elegantly successful, xerox print mounted on cardboard and leaning against the wall, 100 x 75 x 40 cm, 2015



Shop till you drop, xerox print mounted on cardboard and leaning on polystyrene, 60 x 75 x 100 cm, 2015



Business card of a Full Body Sandwich Man, Deluxe business card with pink color seam, 8,4 x 5,5 cm, 2015



Businessmen waiting for green, xerox print mounted on cardboard and resting on beeboard, 100 x 75 x 20 cm, 2015



Businesspeople rushing through rain, xerox print squeezed into an aluminium frame
40 x 60 x 10 cm, 2015



Businessman checking smartphone, xerox print squeezed into an aluminium frame, 40 x 60 x 10 cm, 2015



The cigarette break, xerox print molded with wallpaper glue and hanging over polystyrene,
100 x 80 x 20 cm, 2015

There is tiresome, but attractive

Review of Diana Artus' same-titled solo show at Uqbar, 2015

On the flip-side of the contemporary demand for hyper-productivity lies an insidious and often untreated chronic exhaustion. This is true worldwide, but artist Diana Artus explores the problem within the South Korean context, as she observed it during a three-month residency in Seoul.

Artus' exhibition reflects on a cultural context in which being busy is a prized virtue, and the business card has become a part of nearly every adult social interaction. Her photographic series *Dropouts* suggests the near-impossibility of failure and the mark it places on one's social credibility, as a global neoliberal phenomenon. The curation of the show mimics the exhaustion Artus seeks to bring out: her black and white images of Seoul's architecture slouch and droop off the wall, the buildings themselves suffering from a certain malaise. As in her other photographic work, Artus experiments with unusual forms of presentation, bending and scrunching her prints until they take on new three-dimensional lives. The photos become sculptural objects in their own right.

Drawing on philosopher Byung-Chul Han's characterization of South Korea as "the fatigue society in the final stage", *There is tiresome, but attractive* considers the nearly untenable position held by much of Seoul's population, polarized between constant stimulation and a deeply-felt exhaustion. Artus reads the material traces of this cultural dynamic through the architecture and urban landscape of the city.

Alison Hugill (art critic, editor and writer; Berlin Art Link)

URBAN CHARACTERS (since 2011)

The narrative images and image objects of this work series take up and reflect the specific atmosphere of different cities by taking into account the condition of the surrounding and highlight the question how this condition affects urban design and how in turn this influences people's mood and behavior. In a playful and humorous way the *Urban characters* draw direct connections and analogies between human attitudes/feelings and the shape and appearance of architecture/urban space. Different buildings and street situations are reinterpreted in an allegoric way, representing a certain "personality" or mood. Architectural bodies reveal their inner character and appear as the protagonists of the proverbial "stage" of the city.



Slowseller, white acrylic paint on laser print, 30 x 21 cm, 2015



Diva, xerox print, 84 x 116 cm, 2015



*Installation view **Urban Characters**: When thoughts are replaced by moving images, group show, Ausstellungsraum Klingental, Basel, 2015 (Photo: Nici Jost)*



Original photograph **Late riser (building in pyjamas)**, New York, 2008



Late riser (building in pyjamas), xerox print, sunk down in frame, 115 x 65 cm, 2011



***Big Eddie**, pigment print on silk, 200 x 100 cm, 2013*



***Little Eddie**, inkjet print, partly teared off, in vintage frame, 21 x 15 cm, 2013*



Installation view **Eddie: The broken telephone** – Diana Artus: Karin Fisslthaler, Galerie Raum mit Licht, Vienna, 2015



Big Eddie (waving), details of the printed silk



Original photograph **Autistic building**, Istanbul, 2007



Autistic building, pigment print on packing paper, 180 x 100 cm, 2012



Daydream Relict: Autistic building, inkjet print on packing paper with traces of use, 40 x 32 cm, 2012



Autistic building #2, inkjet print on packing paper with water traces, 30 x 21 cm, 2013



Original photograph **Condo**, New York, 2012



Condo, pigment print on packing paper with cut, 180 x 100 cm, 2012



Bump #1, xerox print, molded three-dimensionally on MDF with wallpaper glue, 90 x 60 cm, 2012



Bump #1, detail of the image, standing out of the frame



Bump #2, xerox print, molded three-dimensionally on MDF with wallpaper glue, 90 x 60 cm, 2012



Installation view **Bumps**: Multi-dimensional images and pictographic objects, group shw, Bethanien, Berlin, 2015 (Photo: Gonzalo Reyes Araos)



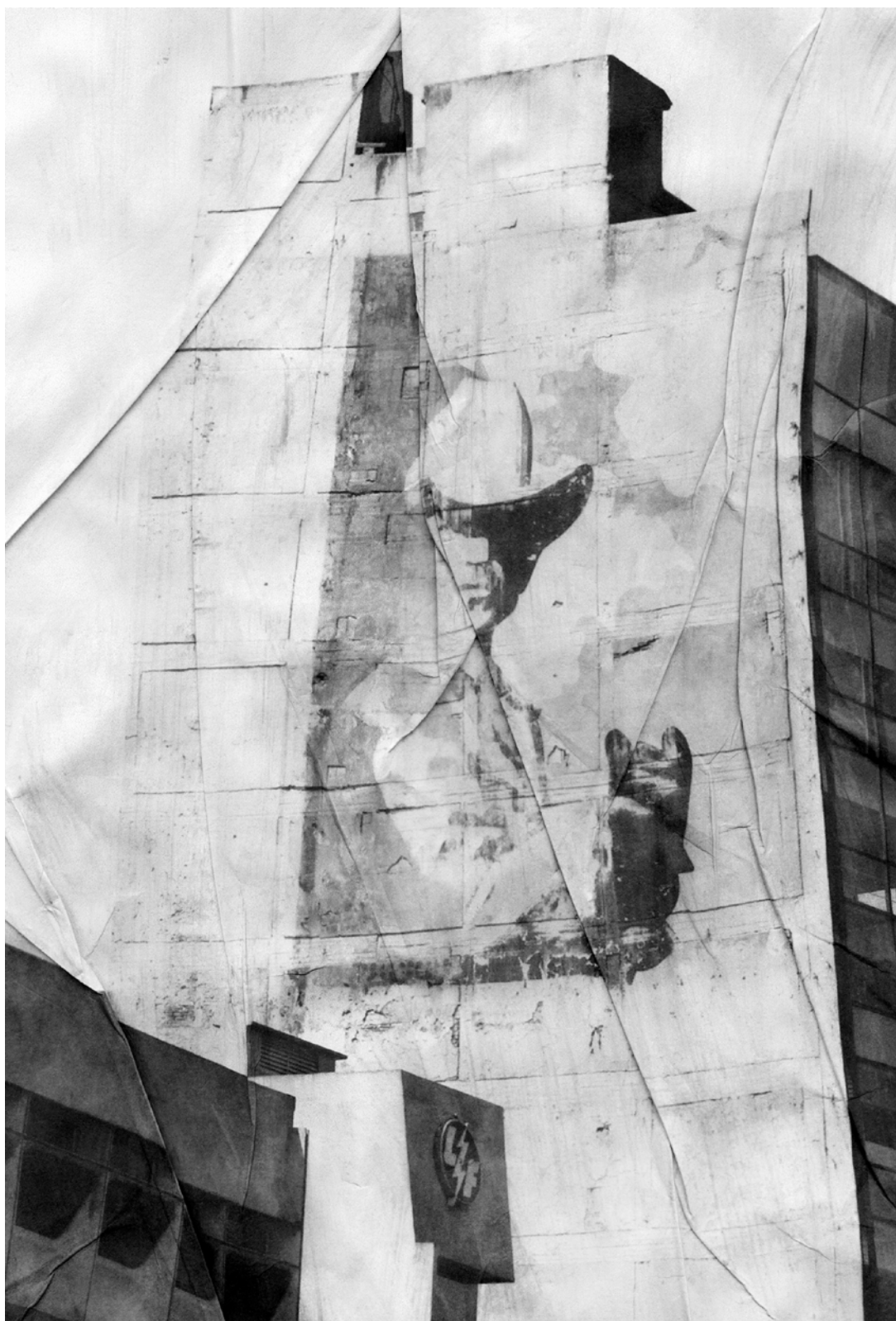
Mexico City Verso #1 and #2, backsides of inkjet prints, molded three-dimensionally with wallpaper glue, 38 x 30 cm, 2013



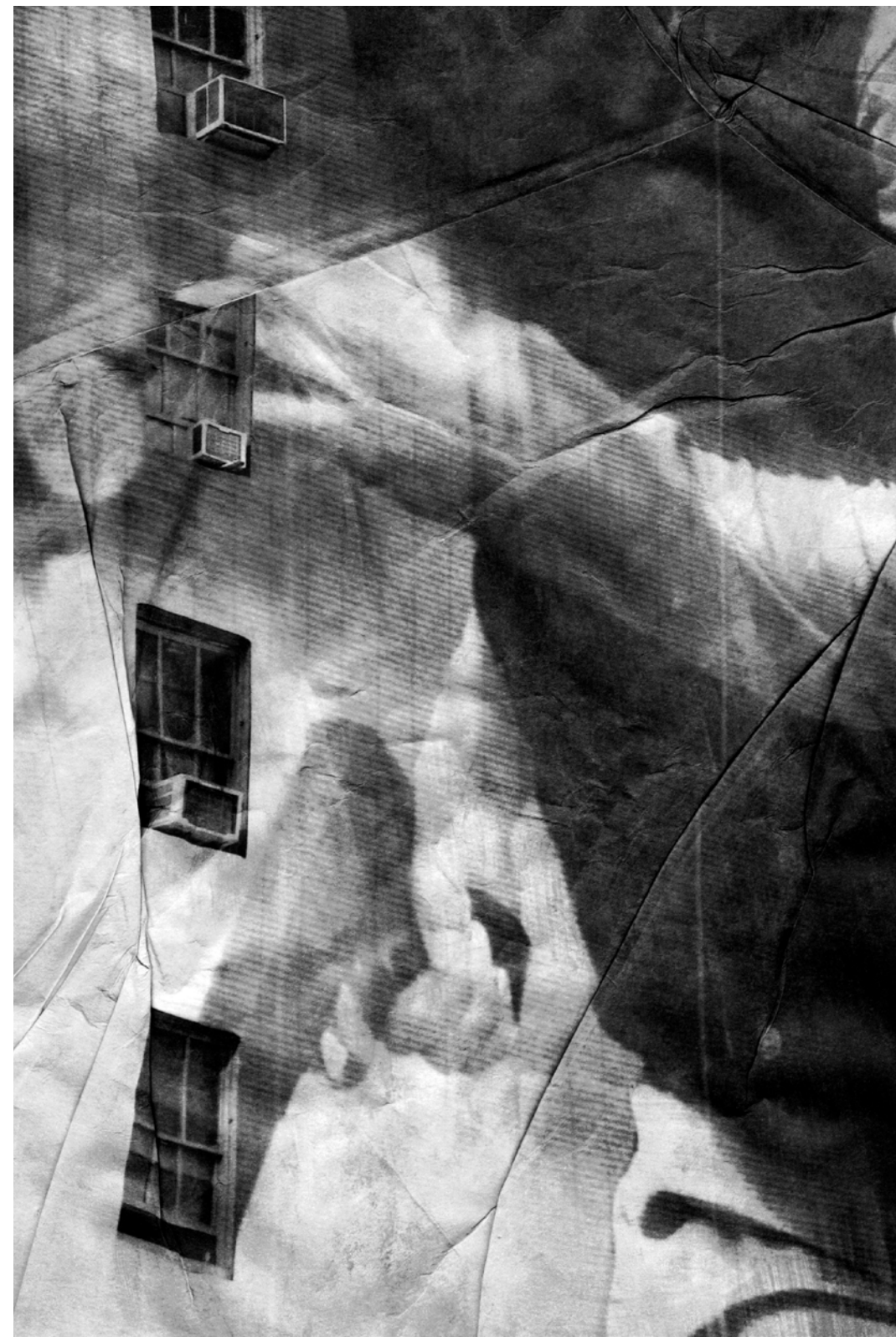
Mexico City Verso #1



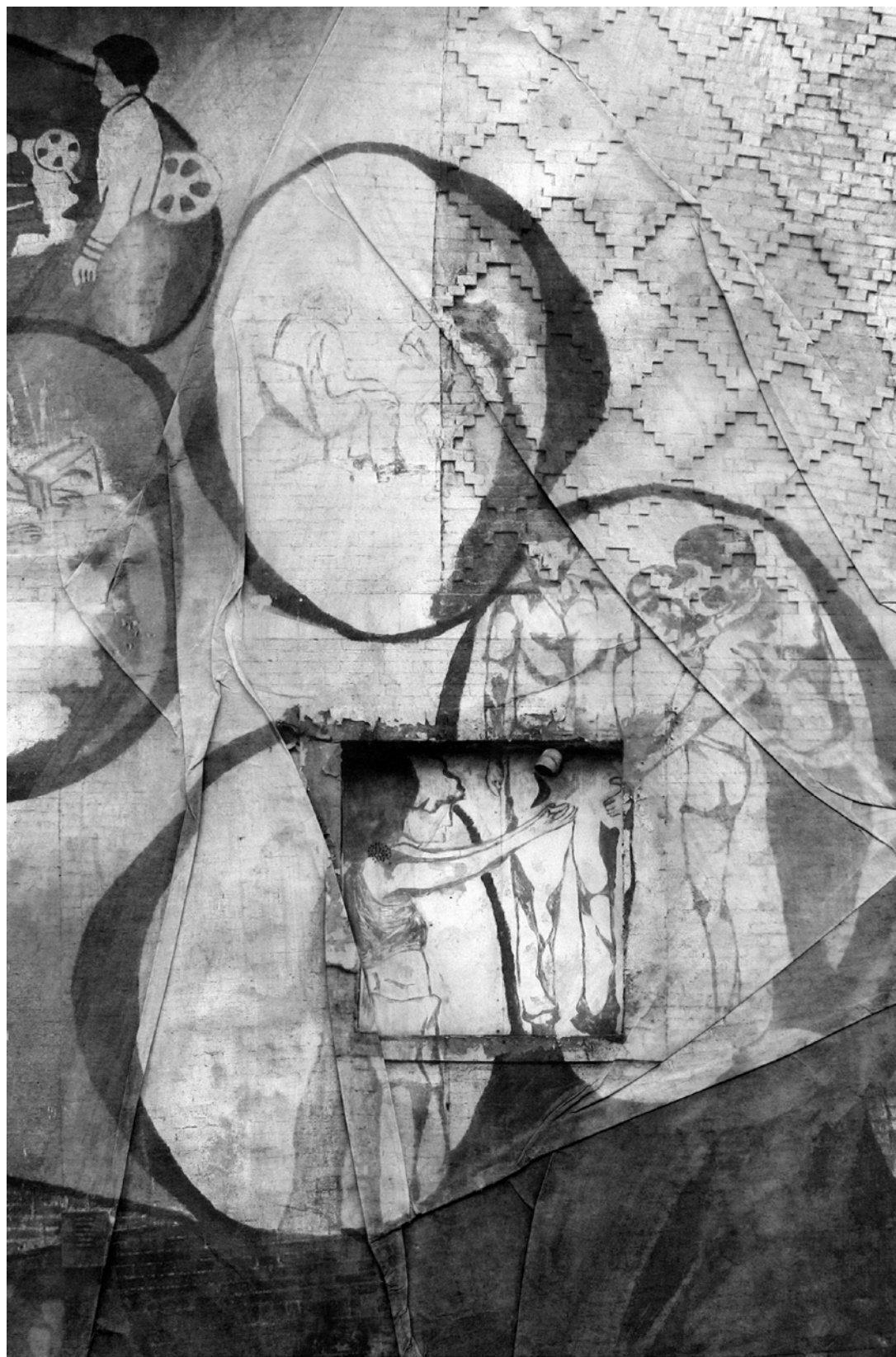
Installation view **Mexico City Verso #1 and #2: Fugacity** – Diana Artus:Jan Mammey,
Kunstraum Michael Barthel, Leipzig, 2013



Cowboy, pigment print on fine art paper, 71 x 50 cm, 2012



Gun, pigment print on fine art paper, 71 x 50 cm, 2012



Pipe, pigment print on fine art paper, 75 x 50 cm, 2012



Installation view **Cowboy/Gun**: Avenida del progreso, solo show, Galerie Metro, Berlin, 2012



Installation view **Avenida del progreso**: solo show, Galerie Metro, Berlin, 2012

Avenida del progreso

Review of Diana Artus' solo show at Galerie Metro, 2012

Diana Artus' black and white photographs of cityscapes and architectural façades have a spectral, haunting quality from the start. Yet her technique of creasing, folding, reproducing and adding dimension to her recent works intensifies this element, making the buildings protrude and furrow into uncanny forms.

The title of Artus' current exhibition *Avenida del progreso* (Avenue of progress) – showing at Galerie Metro in Kreuzberg until July 20th – plays ironically on the decay of utopian industrial sites and, simultaneously, reflects her own process of production. As the viewer passes through the gallery's central boulevard, they can experience the many layers and stages of her works' development.

While the photographs could stand alone in their excellent composition, she does not stop there: Artus' body of work is decidedly process-based. The series of photo reliefs, entitled *Bump*, attest to this most poignantly: the architectural subjects of her photographs undergo radical reconstructions in the course of her work.

Alison Hugill (art critic, editor and writer; Berlin Art Link)

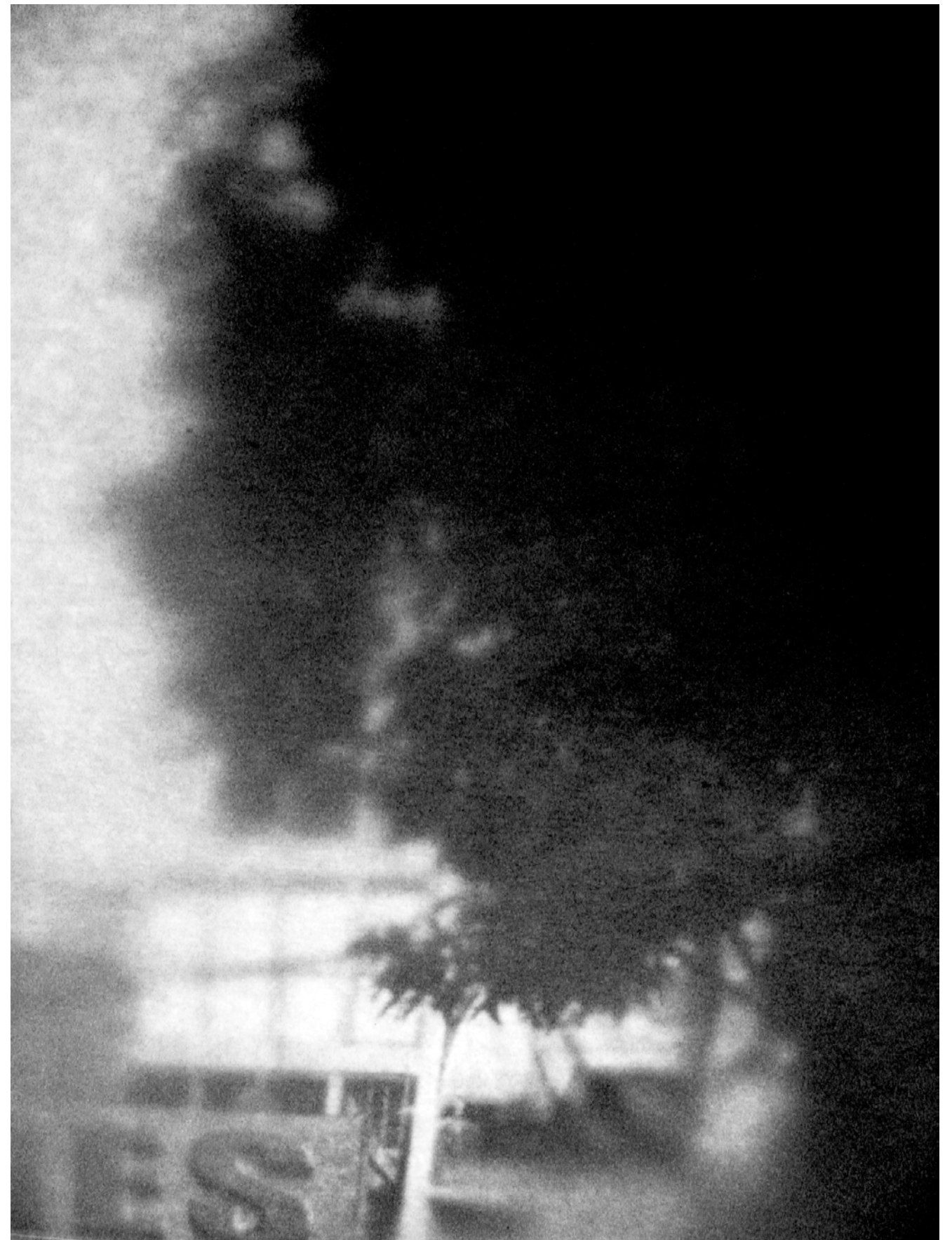
THOSE AREN'T YOUR MEMORIES, THEY'RE SOMEBODY ELSE'S (2011)

Spectral Photography

Review of *Visual Noise* – Diana Artus:Ornella Fieres at Lage Egal, 2014

Diana Artus is known for her hazy black and white photographs of façades and buildings, often rendered in 3D by her technique of cutting and folding along architectural lines. In this exhibition she shows selections from her series *Those aren't your memories*, which give the impression of a scene observed from outside, the edges obscured by a murky, almost ghostly fog. In the backdrop we see the contours of buildings but no objects are ever solidified. The irresolvable nature of the images is unsettling and reminiscent of dream memories, powerful in terms of affect yet partial and ambiguous.

Alison Hugill (art critic, editor and writer; Berlin Art Link)



From the series *Those aren't your memories...*, laser prints, variable dimensions, 2011







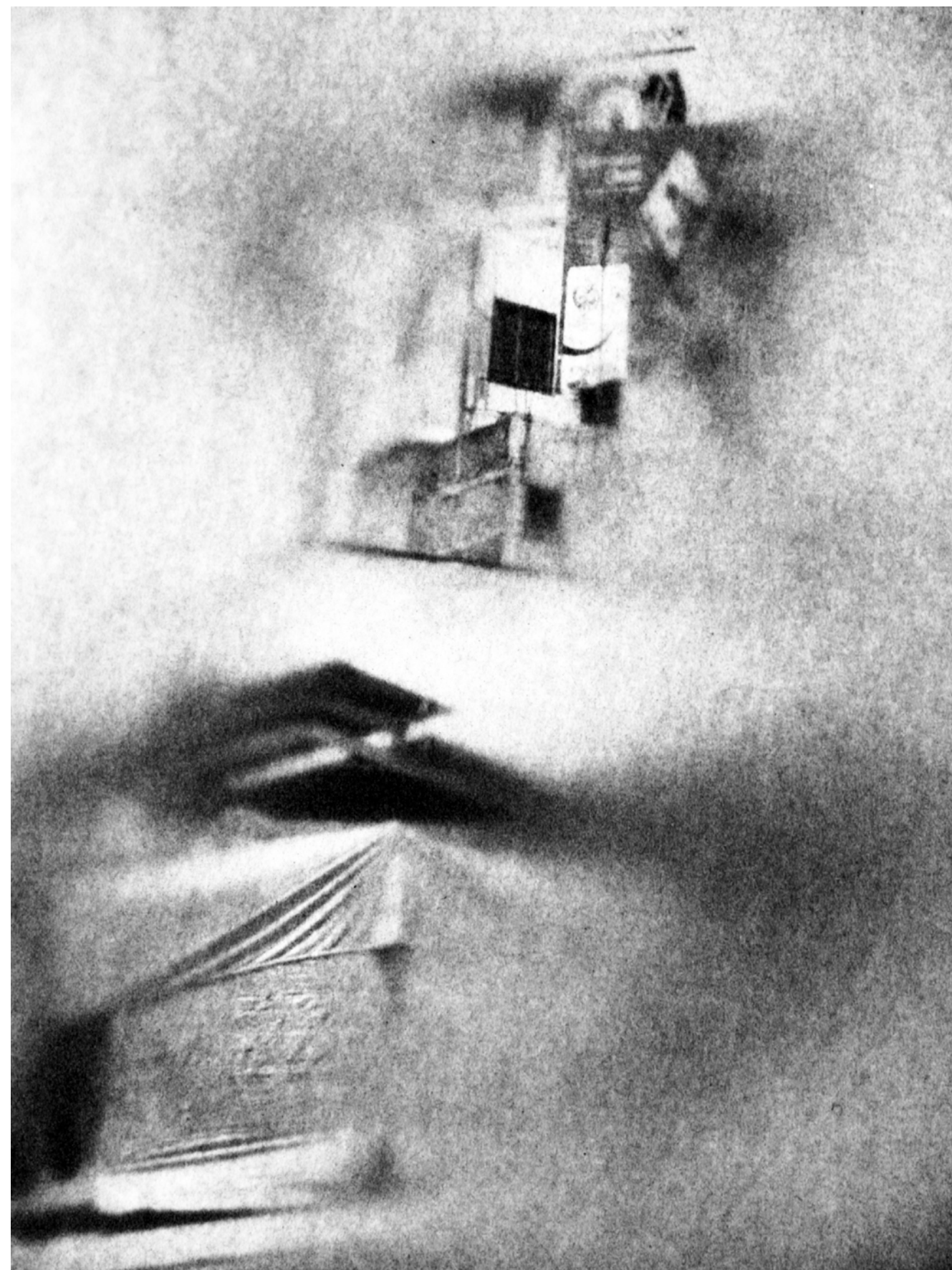
*“Those aren’t your memories, they’re somebody else’s”, says Deckard to replicant Rachael in a movie scene of **Blade Runner**, when she tries to convince him that she is human by arguing that she has memories. **Blade Runner** is a cinematic vision of a future where human clones called replicants are used to serve in Earth’s off-world colonies. In order to better keep them and their ambitions under control, replicants are equipped with artificial, implanted memories.*



*Installation views **These aren’t your memories...** (from left): Visual Noise – Diana Artus:Ornella Fieres, Lage Egal, Berlin, 2014; Urban Noise, group show, Bethanien, Berlin, 2011; Fugacity – Diana Artus:Jan Mammey, Kunstraum Michael Barthel, Leipzig, 2013; Leporello artist book, limited edition, 2012*



Grain Rustle, pigment print on fine art papier, 160 x 120 cm, 2011





Magnifier #1, xerox prints, wallpapered, 300 x 225 cm, 2011
 (Installation view: *I strongly believe in weakness*, solo show, Galerie Metro, Berlin, 2011)



Magnifier #2, xerox prints, wallpapered, 300 x 200 cm, 2011
 (Installation view: *Urban Noise*, group show, Bethanien, Berlin, 2011)



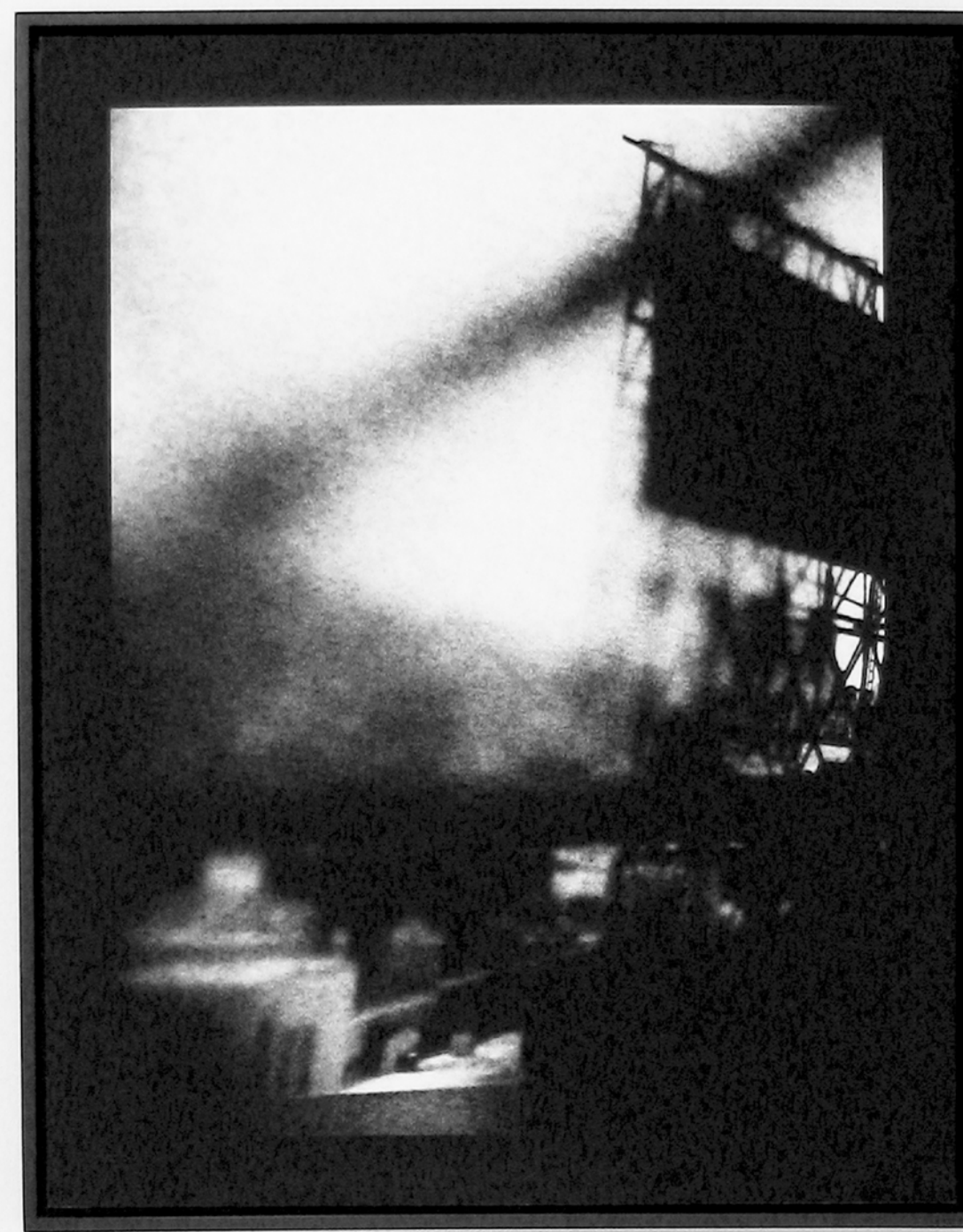
***Crumbling melancholy**, xerox print, treated with white acrylic paint,
water and wallpaper glue, 88 x 68 cm, 2013*



***Crumbling melancholy** (motive)*



Little Magnifier, pigment print on fine art paper, 80 x 60 cm, 2011



Trou Positif, pigment print on fine art paper, 80 x 60 cm, 2011



Installation view *I strongly believe in weakness*: solo show, Galerie Metro, Berlin, 2011

The Politics of the Imagination

About the work of Diana Artus

Diana Artus uses reality and photography in equal measure as a means of manipulation and fictionalization. Her works have a characteristic style that suggests documentary, and their serial structure and the black and white of their images are reminiscent of an archive. Yet the artist always works with the feeling of instability instead of favoring bureaucratic composition. The images are blurred, reproduced, and scratched; presented on loose sheets and sloppily pasted or wallpapered directly onto the wall. The precise depiction of documentary photography is annulled and only acknowledged as a reference, for the objectivity of the technical images was always illusory. (...)

She stretches, filters, obscures, and masks the objectifiable facts. Her visual worlds are imaginative and politicized and subject reality to a visual test: ego is not someone else, ego is an image. The world is an imitation: the copy more real than the original.

Maik Schlüter (curator and writer)

SCRATCHINGS (2010)

Degrees of Separation

Press Release of the same-titled solo show at Galerie Metro, 2010

The artist mainly deals with the surface of the photographic material, exposing the image as a product of desire. Artus is taking the gaze of the flaneur to extremes: with pleasure she disassembles details of images into even smaller fragments and reassembles them to new images commenting on their own illusionary status – in the sensual as well as in the sentimental meaning of the word.

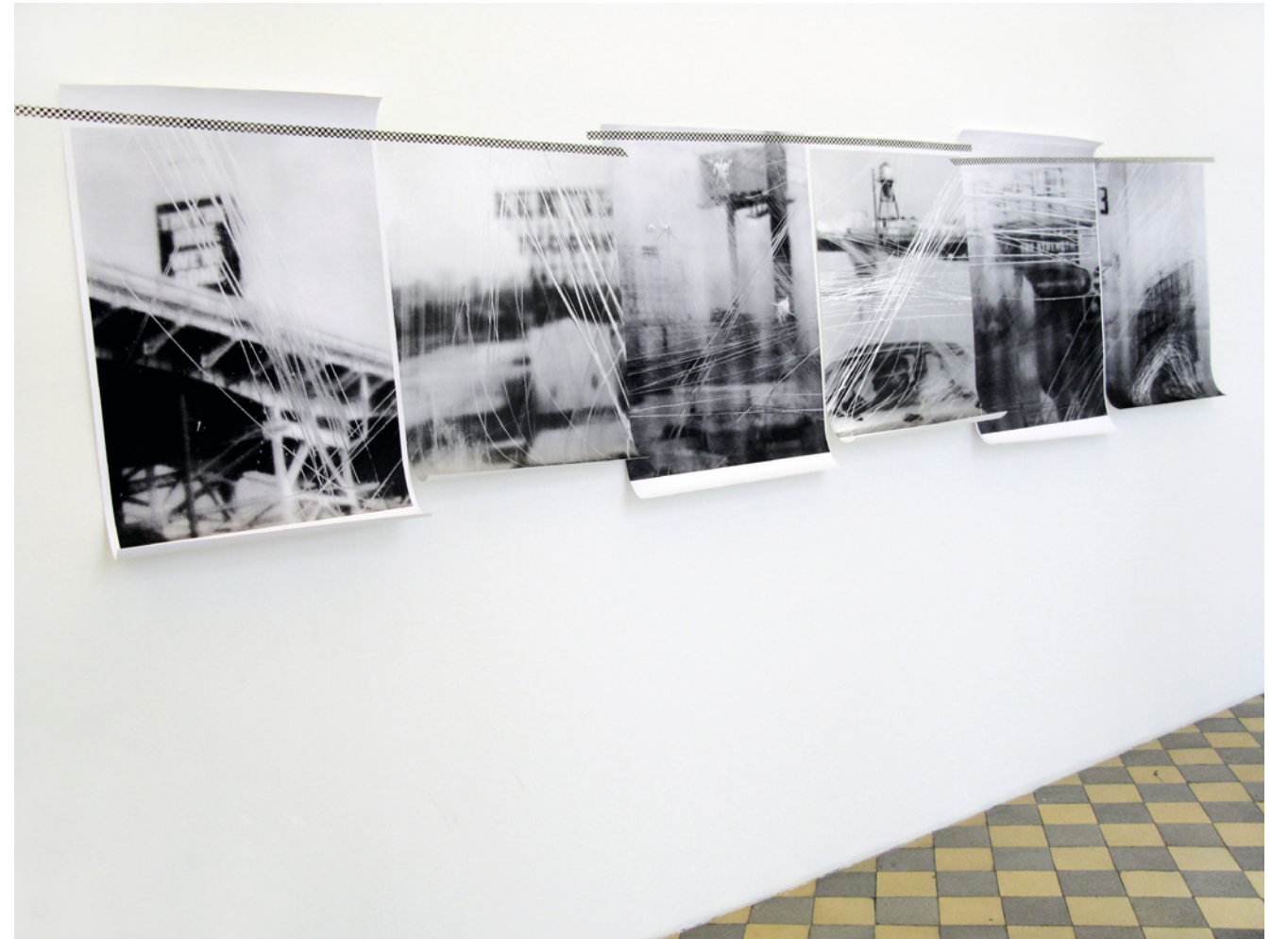
The dystopic urban landscapes of the series *Inner Outer Space* are photographs of photographs and taken through a surface, that was scratched by the artist before. The illusionary space of the picture extends and the beholder feels like being transferred to the other side of the scratched surface – so to say within the “interior” of the picture.

Hannah Beck-Mannagetta (curator and manager of former Galerie Metro)



From the series *Inner Outer Space*, xerox print, 60 x 80 cm, 2010





Installation view **Inner Outer Space**: Meisterschülerausstellung, HGB Leipzig, 2010



Installation view **Inner Outer Space: Degrees of separation**, solo show, Galerie Metro, Berlin, 2010

Photographic Sculptures

A studio visit with Julia Hartmann, 2013

We were talking about Diana's career path as an artist, which started with a degree in German linguistics. After a trip to Paris, where she was wandering the streets like a flâneur in the 19th century, shooting whatever came in front of her camera, freezing urban banalities, fugitive moments and ordinary phenomenon, coincidence lead her into photography, though. (...)

Finally, February 2013, Diana and I were sitting in her studio reminiscing about her large body of works that already consists of numerous series of photographs, of which the image stays the same, its materiality is altered consistently, however. Thus, the picture is only the starting point of her works (...) she prints out the image on normal paper, wrinkles, draws over, squashes and pastes it and repeats these processes until the point of perfection is reached, creating black and white paperworks representing deconstructed facades that are melting down or aging like wrinkled skin.

Another great series of Diana's works is called *Scratchings*. They resemble the views out of the subway that are always momentary, blurry and distorted.

Julia Hartmann (curator and writer; 21er Haus - Museum of Contemporary Art Vienna)



From the series ***The Other***, C-Prints behind acrylic glass, 30 x 22,5 cm, 2010



Installation view ***The Other: Degrees of separation***, solo show, Galerie Metro, Berlin, 2010



*From the series **Everyday Encounter**, seven pigment prints on baryta paper, hung in line, 30 x 22,5 cm, 2010*

Everyday Encounter

I work in a suburb. When I'm in the morning shift, I have to get up early.
At 7 o'clock trains are packed with people like me, we are called commuters.
This is the only connection between us. We commute, but don't communicate with each other.
We sleep or read newspapers or stare into space or through the windows.
I always try to get a seat next to a window. I like watching how the city unfolds outside like a movie. It makes me forget that I'm on my way to work.
In winter it's a film noir. In summer it's somewhat brighter.
Although it's always the same suburban landscape I cross by train, I never get tired to look at it.
I'm used to get used.
Furthermore, it's never pure repetition.
There are minimal shifts from day to day, week to week. I sit in different trains, next to different people, I am in different moods.
And even if nothing else seems to be changing, there remains the shift between shifts, morning, afternoon or night.

*Text accompanying the series **Everyday Encounter**, variable dimensions, 2010*



Installationview **Everyday Encounter**: When thoughts are replaced by moving images,
group show, Ausstellungsraum Klingental, Basel, 2015 (Photo: Nici Jost)

FOTONOVELAS AND INNER STORYBOARDS (since 2008)

This body of work results from an appropriation and recontextualization of found image material, mainly taken from old photo novel magazines published between the 1960s and the 1980s, which I collected during the last years at flea markets in Istanbul, Barcelona, Beirut and Paris.

The strong and pathetic visual language of this once very popular “dime novels” affected me in an ambivalent way: On one hand I was attracted by their sublime drama and the unintended but charming humor; on the other hand I was struck by the strong visualization of clichés and role models of a past era that we thought to have overcome by now. Nevertheless such ideas and imagery have not ceased to haunt the collective subconsciousness. The protagonists of this novels thus appear to me like spectres of the past who do not become tired to perform their absurd theatre in the dark corners of our minds.

The stories of this novels are similar and illustrate patriarchal concepts of love, passion and power. Furthermore, an updated reading reveals a world full of narcissists, permanently boycotting themselves and acting against each other instead of trying to get together. The works of my series *Fotonovelas and Inner Storyboards* thus comment not only on questionable concepts of love and desire, but also on the contemporary ideal of the ‘autonomous, free individual’ - in the truest and loneliest sense of the word.



Lover no. 1, white acrylic paint on found image (book clipping), 30 x 24 cm, 2015



Dreamer no. 1 (The mirror), white acryl paint on found image (book clipping),
30 x 24 cm, 2015



Lover no. 4, white acryl paint on found image (book clipping), 30 x 24 cm, 2015



Necklace, white acryl paint on found image (book clipping), 30 x 24 cm, 2015



Installation view **Lovers and dreamers: The broken telephone** – Diana Artus:Karin Fisslthaler,
Galerie Raum mit Licht, Vienna, 2015



Circling around objet petit a: Over and out, inkjet prints (reproduction from a turkish photo novel, combined with one of my city photographs), partly painted over with black permanent marker, 40 x 26 cm, 2015



Circling around objet petit a: Friedrich's fortress, 2013



Circling around objet petit a: Mind the gap, 2015



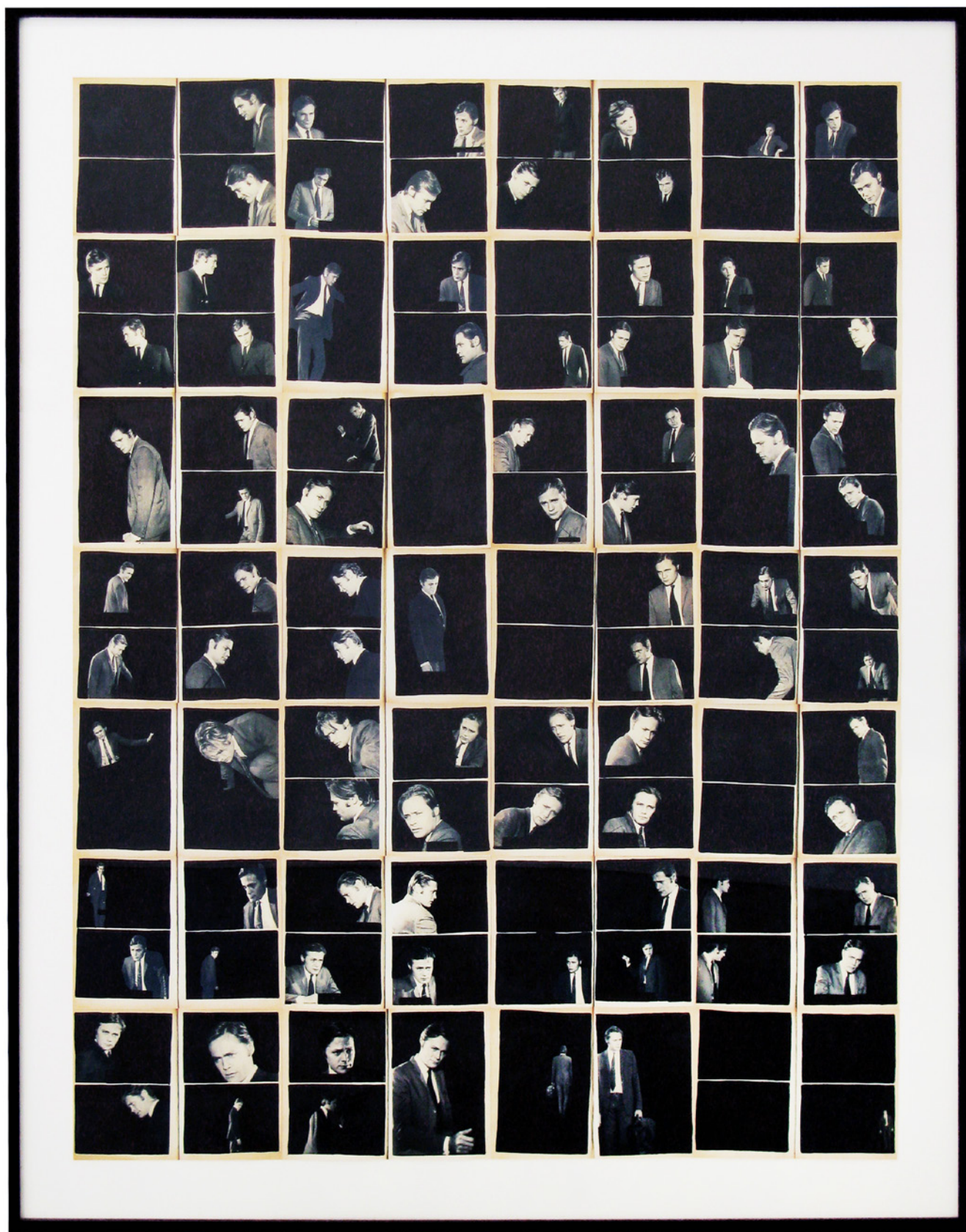
*Installation view **Circling around objet petit a: The broken telephone** – Diana Artus:Karin Fisslthaler, Galerie Raum mit Licht, Vienna, 2015*



Installation view **Lovers and dreamers, Circling around objet petit a, Double delusions: The broken telephone** – Diana Artus:Karin Fisslthaler, Galerie Raum mit Licht, Vienna, 2015



From the series **Double delusions**, inkjet prints (reproductions from a spanish photo novel, new arranged), partly painted over with black permanent marker, 35 x 50 cm, 2013



Gizli Arzular (Secret desires): Man, inkjet prints (reproductions from a turkish photo novel, new arranged), partly painted over with black permanent marker, 124 x 100 cm, 2008



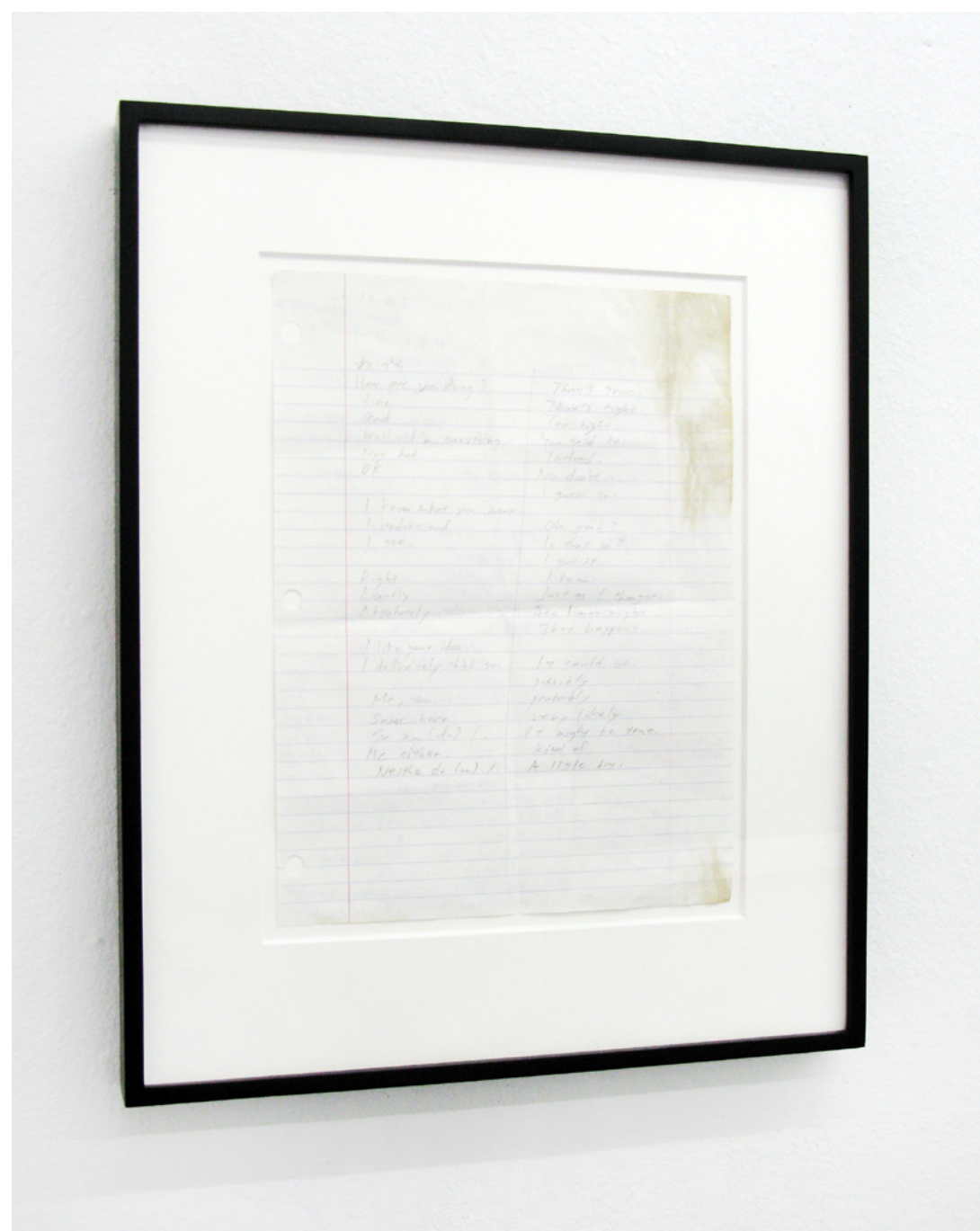
Gizli Arzular (Secret desires): Woman, inkjet prints (reproductions from a turkish photo novel, new arranged), partly painted over with black permanent marker, 124 x 100 cm, 2008



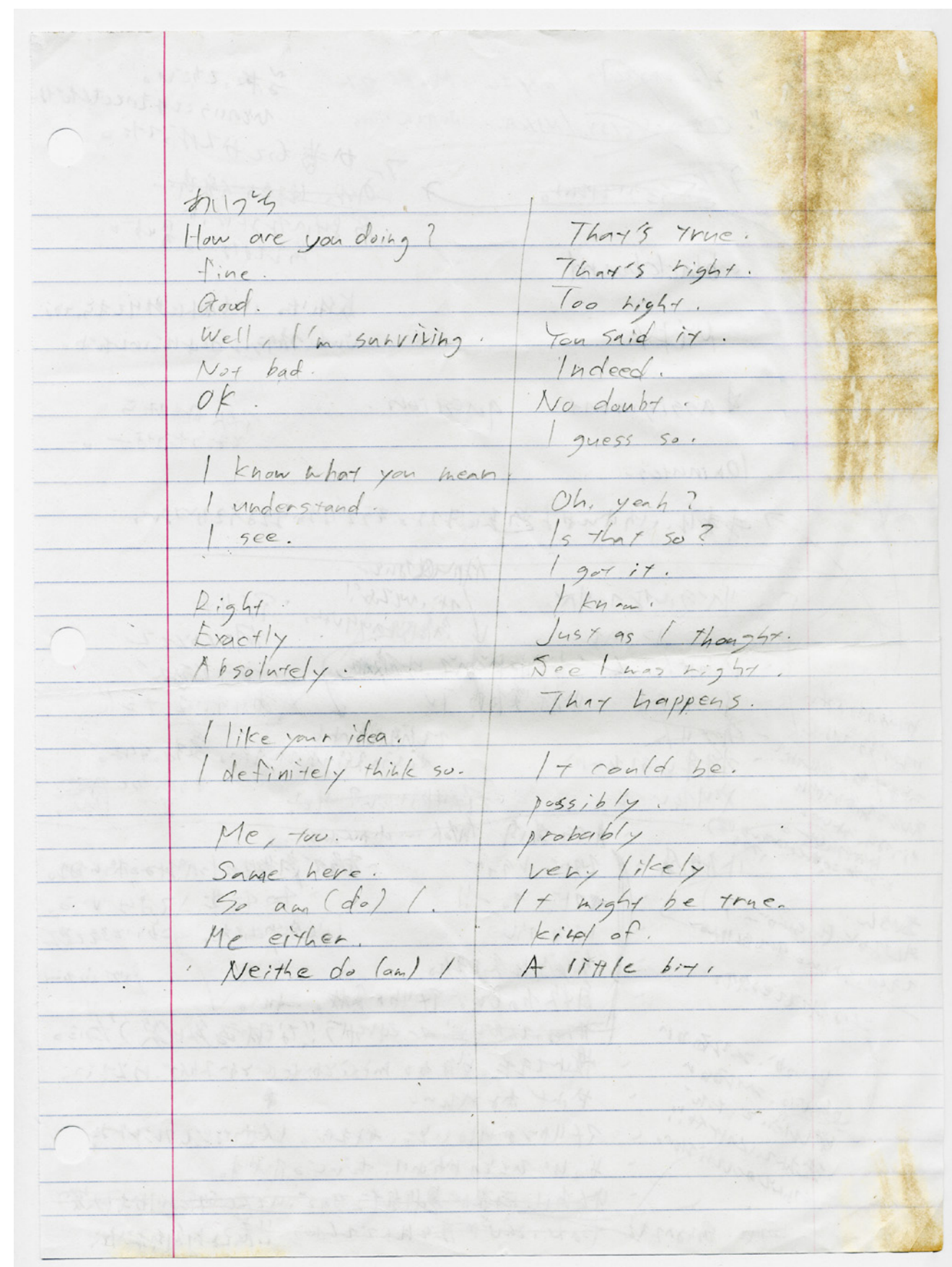
Installation view **Gizli Arzular (Secret desires)**: The white under the red,
group show, Galerie Metro, Berlin, 2009



Installation view **Double delusions: Chronicle. Narrative, history and subjectivity**,
group show, Fabra i Coats Center of Contemporary Art, Barcelona, 2014
(Photo: Eva Carasol)



Monolog, piece of paper with English pencil notes and coffee spots,
found on a table in a coffeehouse in New York, 40 x 32 cm, 2010



Background

Diana Artus studied photography and visual arts at the Academy of Visual Arts in Leipzig. In 2007 she received her master's degree, and in 2010 the title 'Meisterschülerin'. Prior to this she completed a master's degree in German literature and history at the University of Leipzig in 2000.

The topic of her master's thesis was the perception of the city through the eyes of the flaneur, which she investigated taking Franz Hessel, a Berlin-based writer and flaneur of the 1920s, as an example. While doing related research in Paris, she also became influenced by situationist writings about *dérive*, *detournement* and *psychogeography*. During this time she took her first photographs in the outskirts of Paris. Ever since the perception of the flaneur and an allegoric-metaphorical gaze on cities as well as on found image material are the starting points of Diana Artus' works, which especially deal – always based on photography – with the interdependence of city and mood, with individual and collective imagination and patterns of behavior as well as with a psychogeographic experience of urban space.

The artist received several grants, amongst others a six months studio grant at ISCP New York in 2008 and a six months working grant in 2012, both awarded by the Culture Foundation of Saxony, as well as a three months travel grant for South Korea in 2015, awarded by the Senate of Berlin. Since 2003 her works are nationally and internationally shown, recent exhibitions include Galerie Raum mit Licht Vienna, Fabra i Coats Center of Contemporary Art Barcelona, Ausstellungsraum Klingental Basel, Galapagos Kunsthalle New York, Galerie Alexander Levy Berlin, Galerie Metro Berlin and others. Exhibitions at Hectoliter Brussels and Kunsthalle Exnergasse Vienna are upcoming in 2016.

In addition, Diana Artus published several artist books, which were presented in the context of photobookshows in Peking, Florenz, Beirut, Helsinki, Tokyo, New York and Brighton.

www.dianaartus.de