

New Release

## Tatiana Lecomte: Dissolution

Edition Camera Austria  
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**Tatiana Lecomte  
Dissolution**

Graz, 2011

With texts by  
Reinhard Braun and Manuela Ammer

108 pages, German / Englisch  
22 cm x 28,5 cm  
20 colour, numerous bw-illustrations  
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Tatiana Lecomte's photographic oeuvre is certainly among the most wilful and challenging from a younger generation of artists in Austria. She mainly makes use of found images or existing reproductions, which she enlarges in an analogue procedure and processes. In this way, she brings the grid pattern of the original reproduction, the surface of the objects and the grain of the enlargement into an oscillating relationship, in which object and reproduction virtually coincide. In addition, the reproductions she uses refer again and again to (traumatic) historical events (war, annihilation, people and society as a laboratory for power and violence), the significance of which is essentially unrepresentable and which cannot be reduced to replicable elements of reality. For this reason, Lecomte's work has to be read as more political than aesthetic: as querying photographic representation, as doubt in the appropriateness of visualisation, i.e. as image politics undermining the codifications of meanings. Where is the boundary of photographic representation to be set, what happens between image and reality? Hardly anything in Lecomte's work is to be seen as a trace of reality, but everything has to do with traces of this reality—as the result of a photographic praxis itself.

“Dissolution” is the first book of the artist, published on occasion of the presentation of recent works in an exhibition at Camera Austria from January to march 2011.

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Manuela Ammer

**Withdrawal Symptoms. On Tatiana Lecomte's Photographic Investigations** (excerpt)

“Yet when a medium that has been regarded since its beginnings as an inscription of the real mixes this real with the visible traces of its own mediality, this touches on the question of the truth of representation in its core,” writes the photo historian Peter Geimer in an article investigating the interplay of image formation and image disruption based on the example of the history of photography. (1)

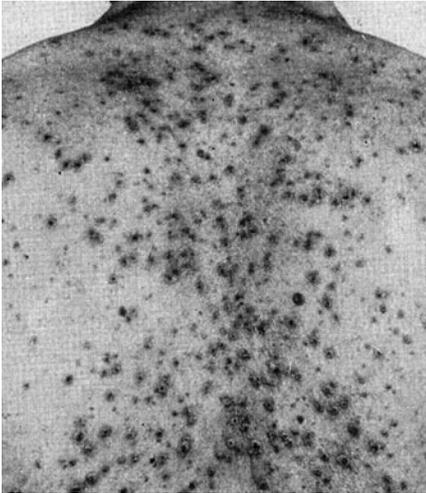
In conjunction with Tatiana Lecomte's most recent work, I find this quotation productive in several regards. Indeed, these works demonstrate stagings of exactly this “mixing” of what is represented and the medium of representation, which according to Greimer touches on the core issue of photographic representation: its relationship to the real and thus to truth. For this, Lecomte makes use of existing images, which she either finds at flea markets or takes from books and print publications. In other words, she produces no photographs, but rather reproduces them, using the means intrinsic to photography—enlargement, focus/blurriness, exposure and movement—to essentially challenge photographic representation. This challenge often assumes the character of an image disruption: what is represented appears fragmented, gridded, blurred, too bright or too dark, is driven to its boundaries, so to speak, and even beyond. Lecomte purposely works with an aesthetic of withdrawal or of controlled access, which forces the gaze to grasp the “inevitable incompleteness of the image”.(2)

The photographs that are put to the test in this way have nothing in common at first look. They come from different contexts of time and geography, are black and white or in colour, show people

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Tatiana Lecomte, o. T., 2010.



Tatiana Lecomte, from: Oradour, 2007 – 2009.



Tatiana Lecomte, from: Still, 2010.

or not, have a private or official character. Their only connection is that they—presumably or assuredly—more or less obviously, more or less directly have a connection to the historical period that poses probably the greatest problem to representation (and its critique): the period of National-Socialism. No other regime conducted a politics of images more purposely; no other regime pursued more systematically a politics of annihilation. Lecomte's artistic project undertakes no large-scale attempt to seek to clarify what this interrelationship means for images in general. However, against this backdrop it certainly does make single, specific images speak.

1) Cf. Peter Geimer, *Bilder aus Versehen. Eine Geschichte fotografischer Erscheinungen*, Hamburg 2010, p. 15

2) Cf. Georges Didi-Huberman, *Bilder trotz allem*, Munich 2007, p. 73 [*Images In Spite of All*, University of Chicago Press 2008].

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