



**ALFREDO RAMOS FERNÁNDEZ**  
General Overview 1998-2018



### ***IMPRESSIONS***

**Series of 15 images, silver-gelatine on paper,  
1998-2001**

This series shows impressions of a city at a time of day when the crowds have withdrawn from public spaces and those left behind are confronted by their solitude and loneliness. They become part of the landscape, merging into it.

The visibility of the film grain was important from a formal aspect for me. Its significance in the context of the overall image is a metaphor for the importance of the individual in a society, and the relationship between humans and inanimate matter.





Untitled, from the series *Impressions*, silver-gelatine on paper, 50 x 70 cm, 1999



Untitled, from the series *Impressions*, silver-gelatine on paper, 50 x 70 cm, 1999





Untitled, from the series *Impressions*, silver-gelatin on paper, 60 x 50 cm, 2001



Untitled, from the series *Impressions*, silver-gelatine on paper, 60 x 50 cm, 2001



## **CONTACTS**

**Slides / Mixed Media, 2000**

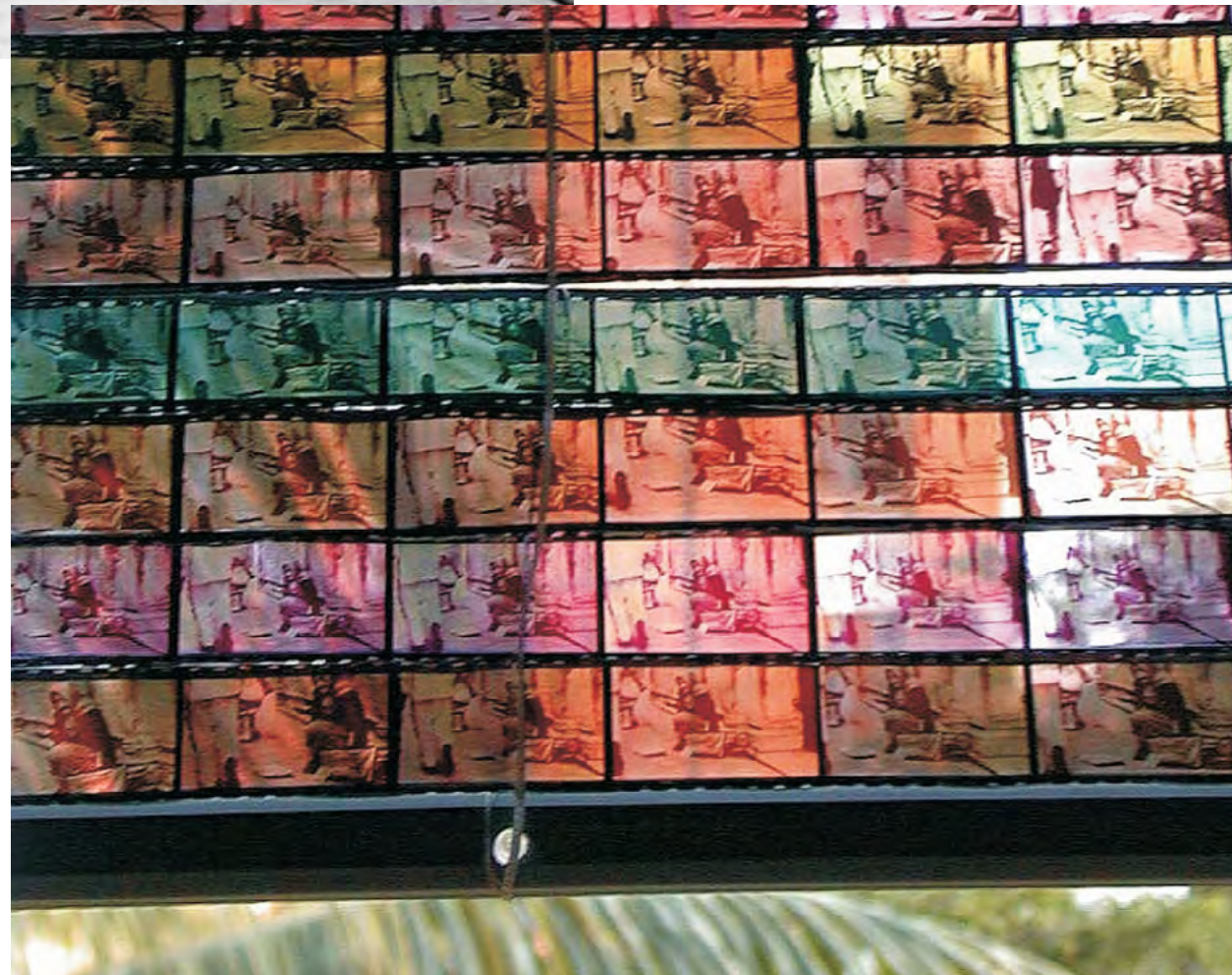
This work was conceived for an exhibition held in a private house during the 6. Havana Biennial.

I wanted to respond to the specific exhibition situation and created a curtain which at first sight appeared to be part of the room decor. The idea was an ironic commentary on the usual function of a curtain, namely to avoid looking at what is behind it.

The work consists of differently coloured transparencies of the same photogram which shows an elderly woman begging for money in the street. The series is not to be considered an exploration of the subject of urban poverty in this context, for which reason I chose not to use a photo taken in Havana, but in Venice.



Untitled, silver-gelatine on paper,  
50 x 60 cm, 1998



*Contacts*, slides / mixed media, variable dimensions, 2000

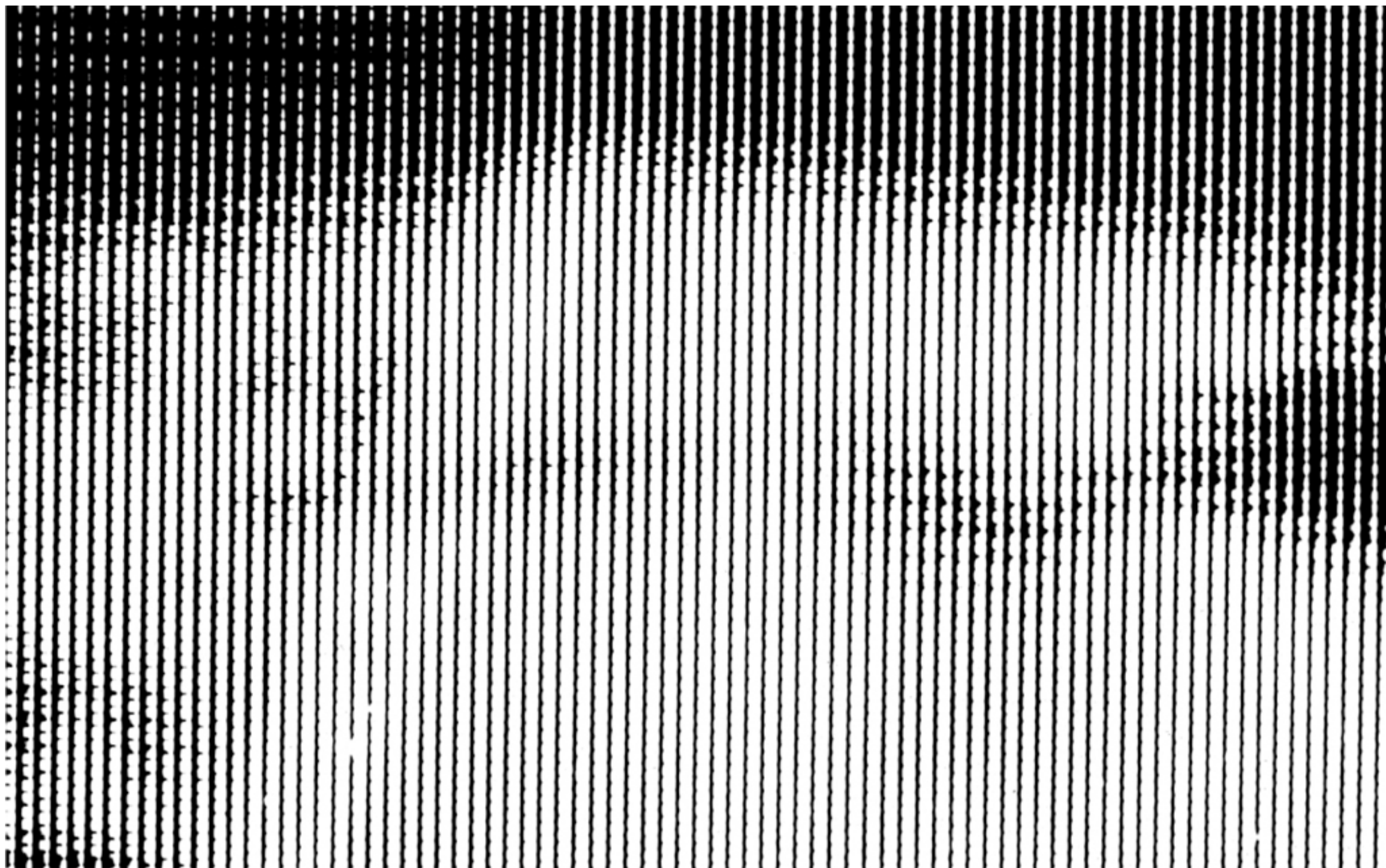


***MI CIELO***

**Silver-gelatine on celluloid, 2002**

*Mi Cielo* means “my heaven” in Spanish, and is a common term of endearment, equivalent to “my darling”. For this work I took a photograph of a television screen showing a sky. Since the photo is an extreme close-up, the screen grid became the dominant element of the image.

The work is prompted by a reflection on the influence of mass media in determining how their consumers view the world, as well as the question of what happens when people’s reality is replaced with a generic image of it. The title plays with the paternalistic attitude of mass media towards their consumers.



*Mi Cielo*, silver-gelatine on celluloid, 150 x 240 cm, 2002

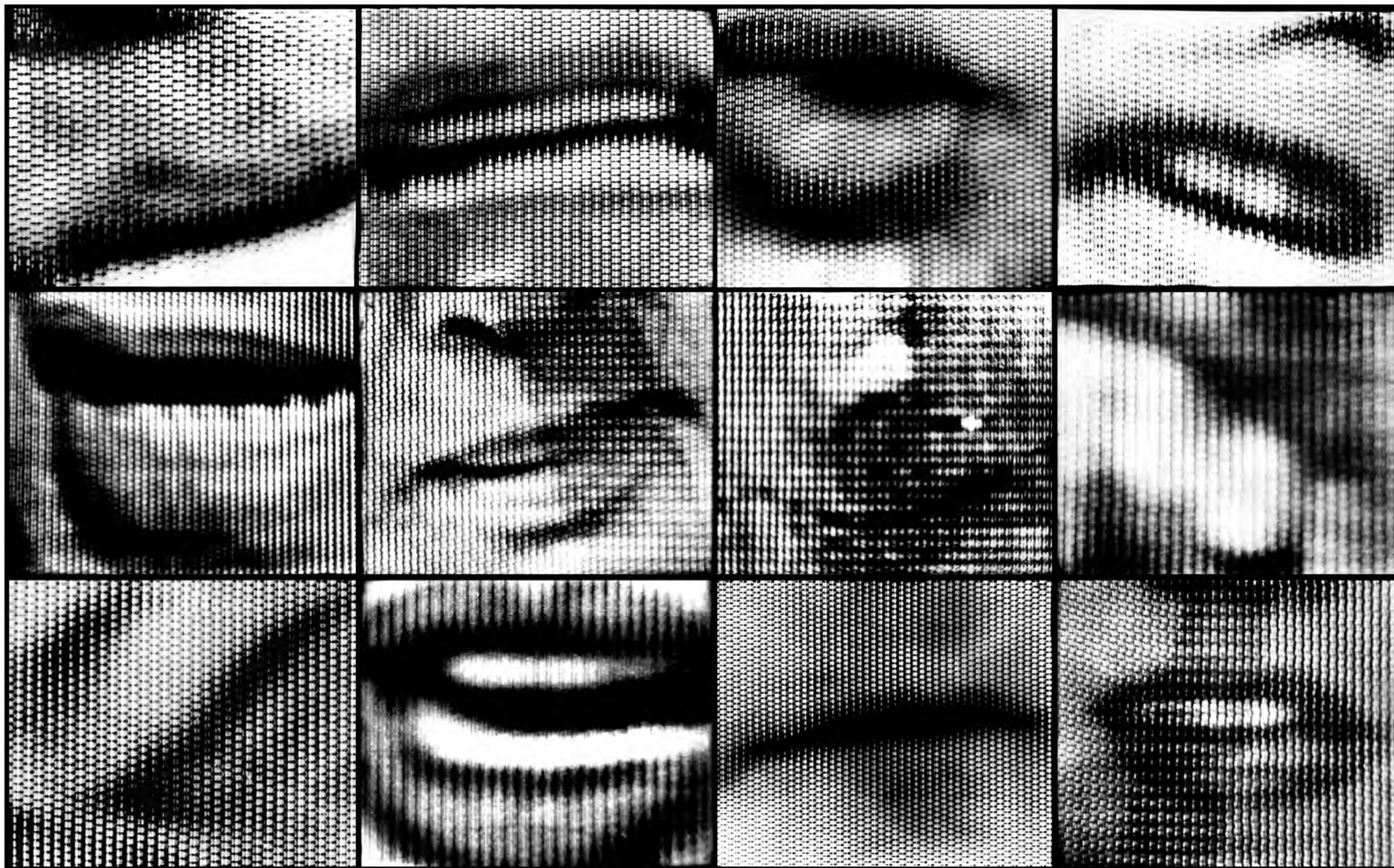


**WORDS**

**Series of 12 images, silver-gelatine on celluloid,  
2001-2006**

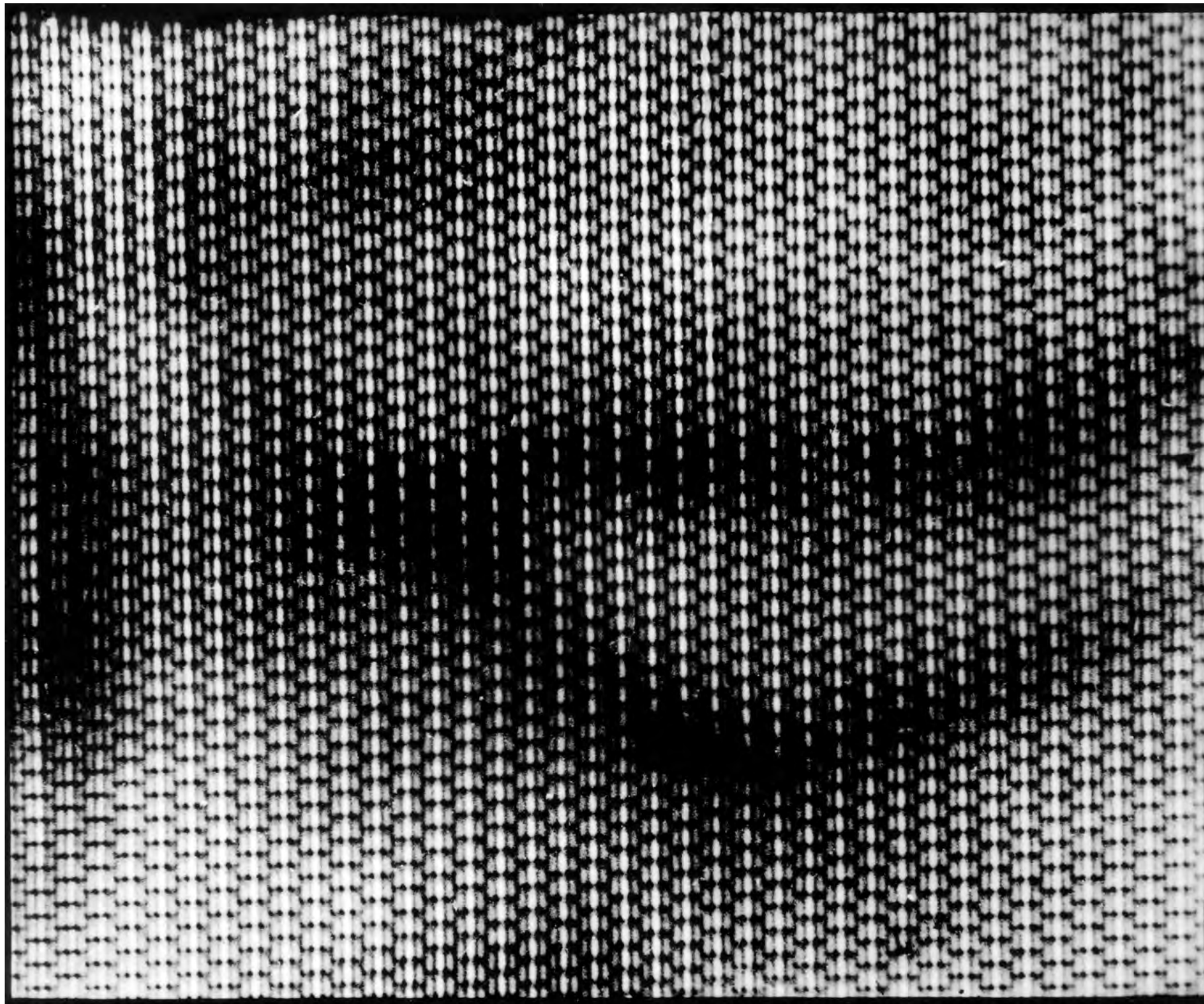
*Words* consists of photographs which were taken from the television screen during transmission of a program of political propaganda. They are close-ups of the faces of functionaries who participated.

The idea was that their faces were captured in the process of communication and reproduced by grid pixels in a manner just as abstracted, fragmented and simplified as the content of their speech.

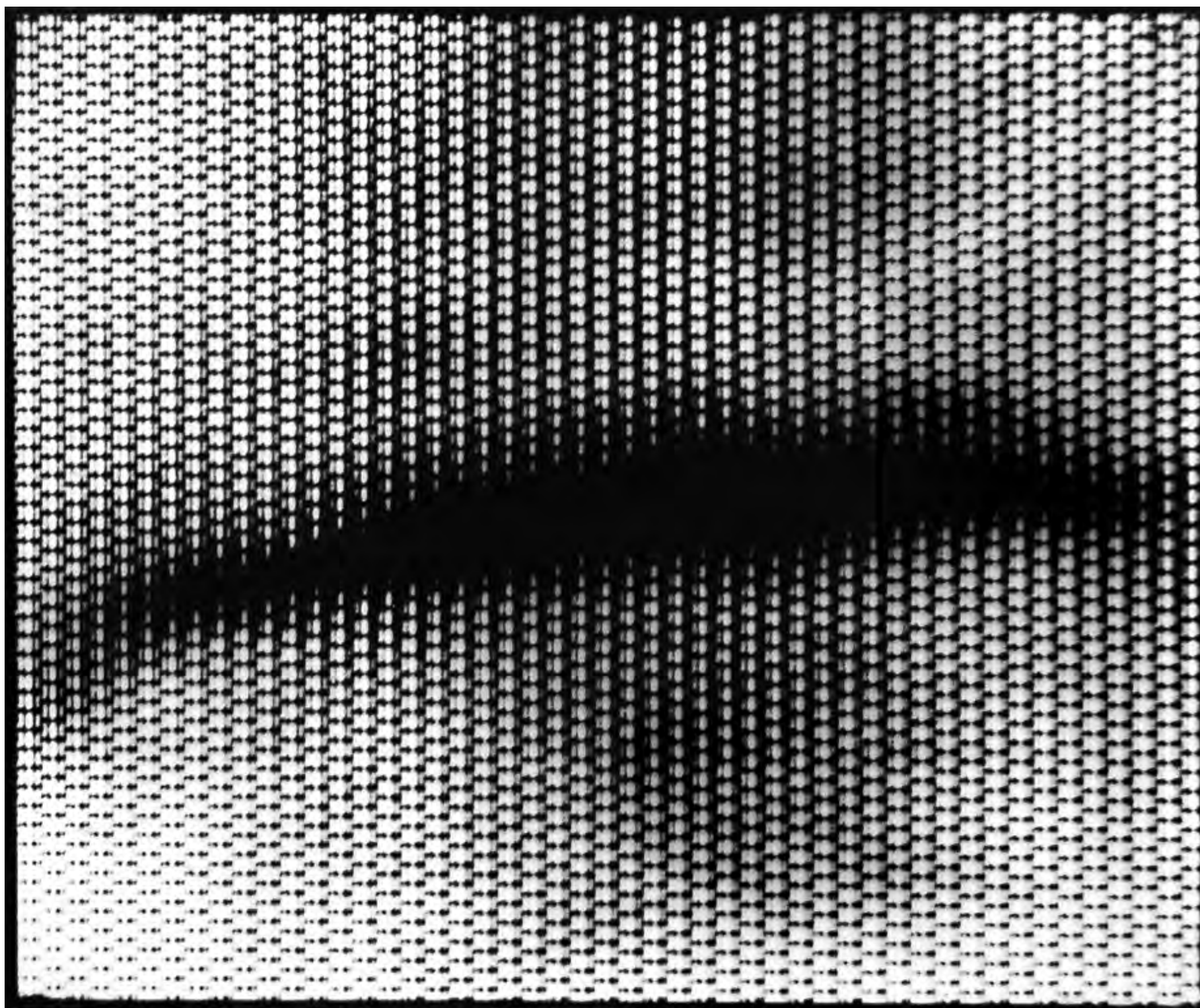


*Words*, silver-gelatine on celluloid, 12 images, each one 60 x 50 cm, 2001-2006



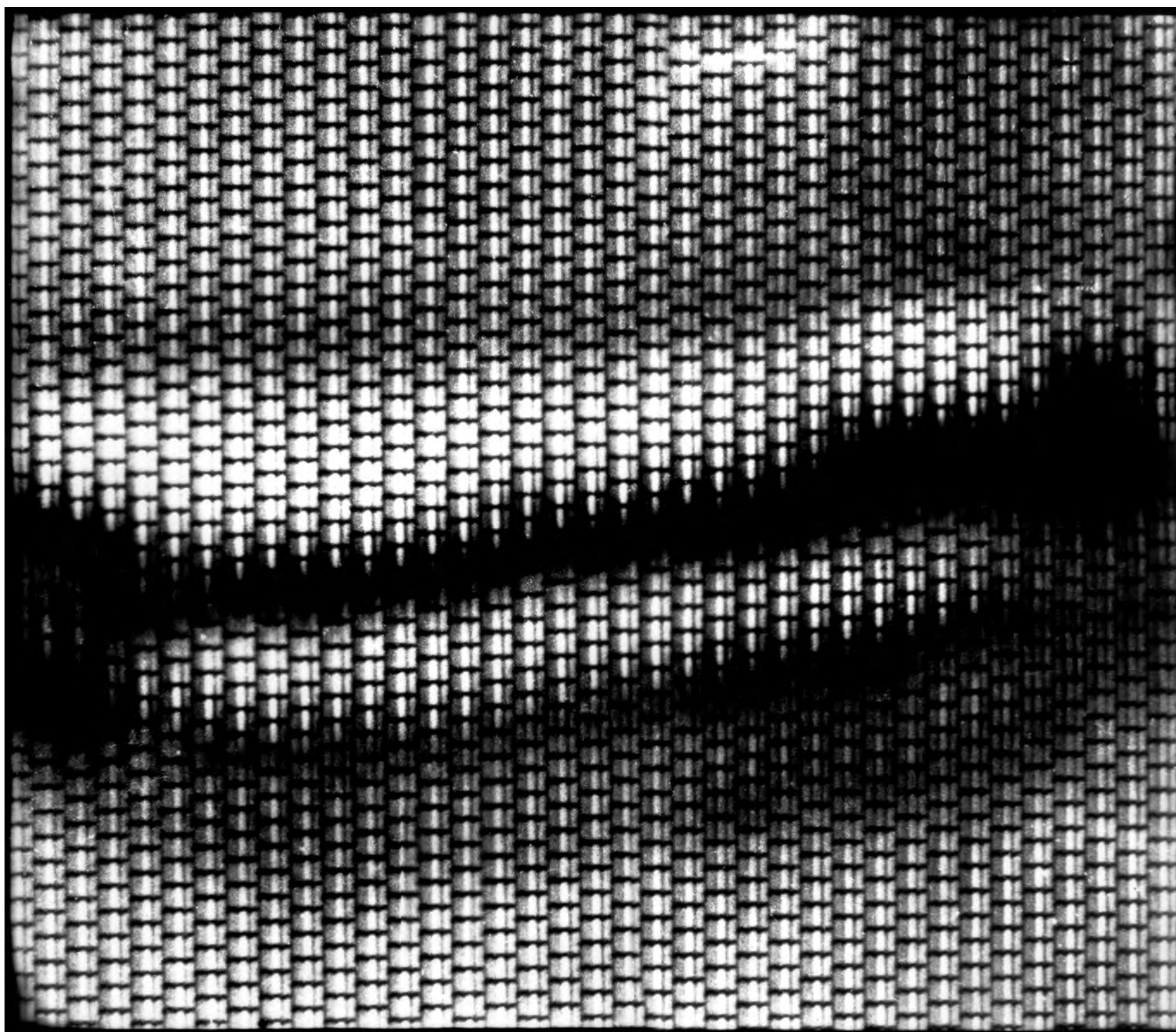


Untitled, from the series *Words*, silver-gelatine on celluloid, 60 x 50 cm, 2006



Untitled, from the series *Words*, silver-gelatine on celluloid, 60 x 50 cm, 2006





Untitled, from the series *Words*, silver-gelatine on celluloid, 60 x 50 cm, 2005

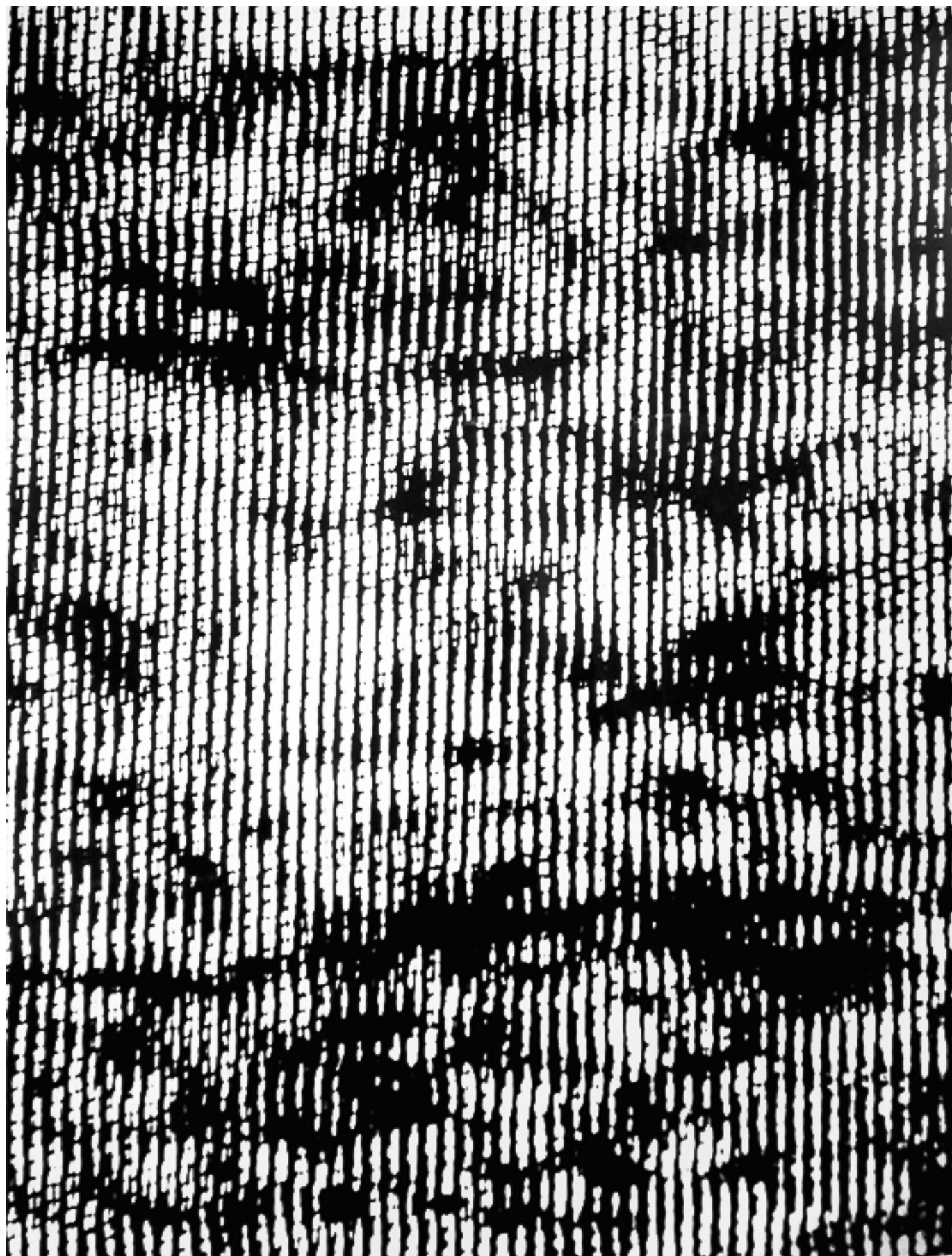


***CLOSED CAPTIONS***

**Series of 4 images, silver-gelatine on celluloid, 2003**

*Closed Captions* shows the faces of TV presenters from Cuban television programs for the deaf. As with all television programs in Cuba these are strongly ideological in nature.

As in the series *Words* I exploit the composition of the TV image in order to emphasize the fragmentary and abstract nature of the transmitted content. On this occasion I added distortion of the TV signal, which serves as a metaphor for the ideologically misformed image of reality represented, as well as the distortion of meaning which occurs when content cannot be meaningfully decoded.



Untitled, from the series *Closed Captions*, silver-gelatine on celluloid, 150 x 180 cm, 2003



Untitled, from the series *Closed Captions*, silver-gelatin on celluloid, 150 x 180 cm, 2003



**WORDS II**

**Silver-gelatine on paper, 2001**

This photograph was the instigation for my work cycle on *Traces*. It shows the names and marks sprayed, written and scratched onto a wall.

I am moved by the human need to proclaim one's identity by leaving a name in a public place. I see it as a (perhaps unconscious) awareness of the transitoriness and irrelevance of one's own existence, and as proof of the need to transcend this condition and make contact with one's fellow man.



Words II, silver-gelatine on paper, 100 x 120 cm, 2001

***OTHER WORDS***

**Series of 6 images, silver-gelatine on paper /  
32 slides in lightboxes, 2006**

*Other Words* was conceived for the Havana Biennial in 2006, the theme of which was the urban environment. The work exhibited there consisted of 6 large format black-white photographs and 32 light boxes holding transparencies.

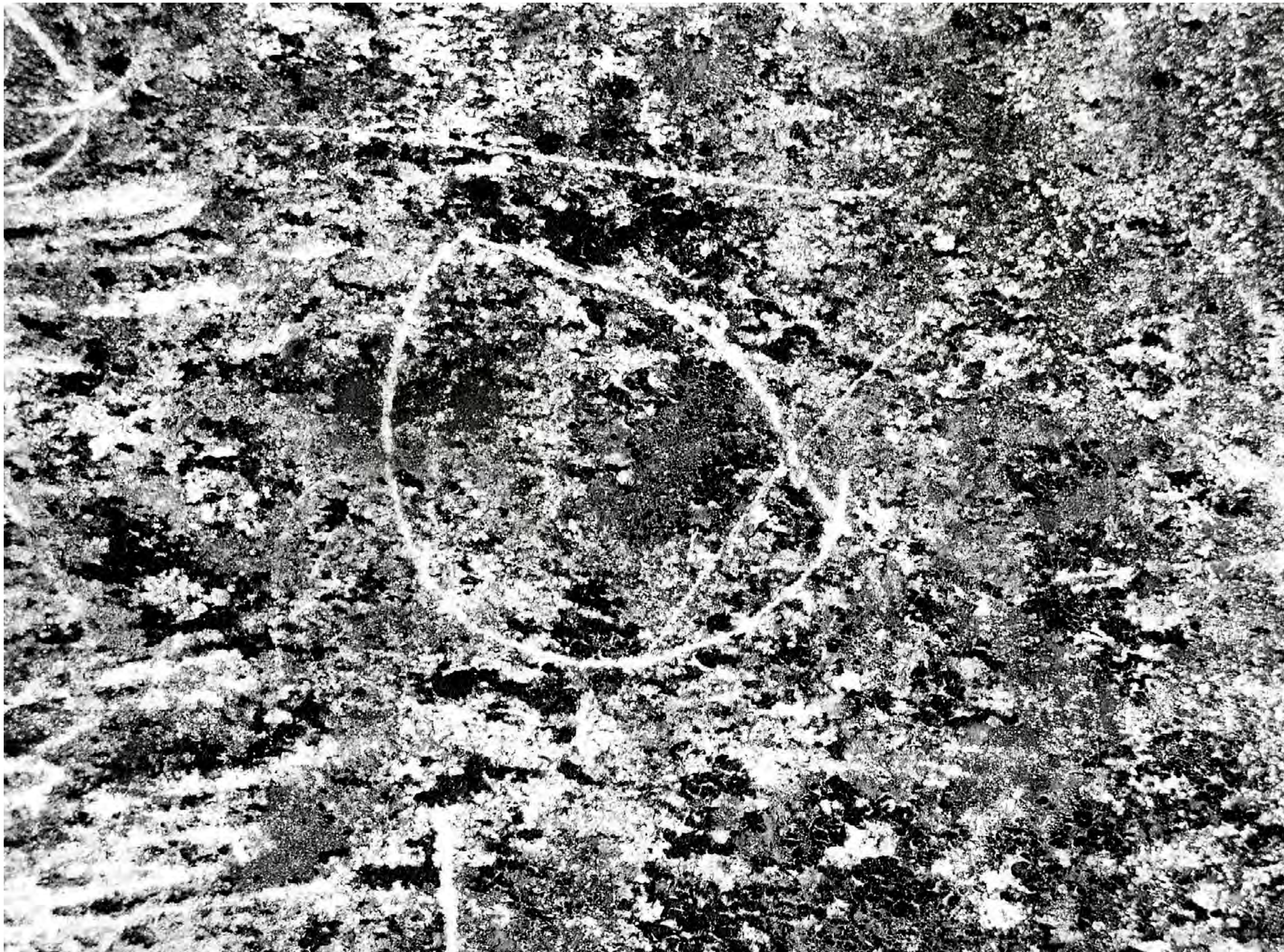
The images pick up the leitmotif of *Words II*. They are concerned with the human need to proclaim one's existence by marking one's name in public spaces, thereby leaving a record of one's existence. However this series focuses on the futility of such attempts inasmuch as most of the graffiti photographed is in the process of being erased by various external factors and the inexorable march of time.





Untitled, from the series *Other Words*, silver-gelatine on paper, 100 x 120 cm, 2006





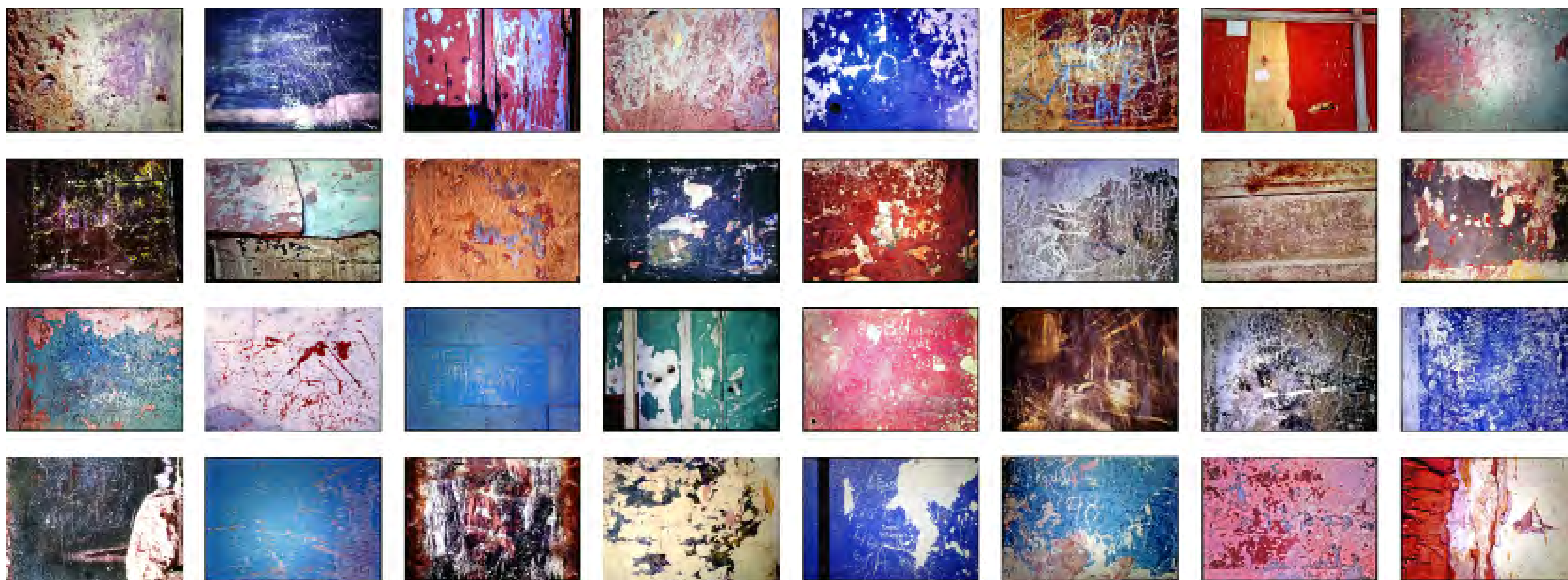
Untitled, from the series *Other Words*, silver-gelatine on paper, 100 x 120 cm, 2006





Untitled, from the series *Other Words*, slide, 13,5 x 18,5 cm, 2006





*Other Words*, 32 slides, each one 13,5 x 18,5 cm, 2006

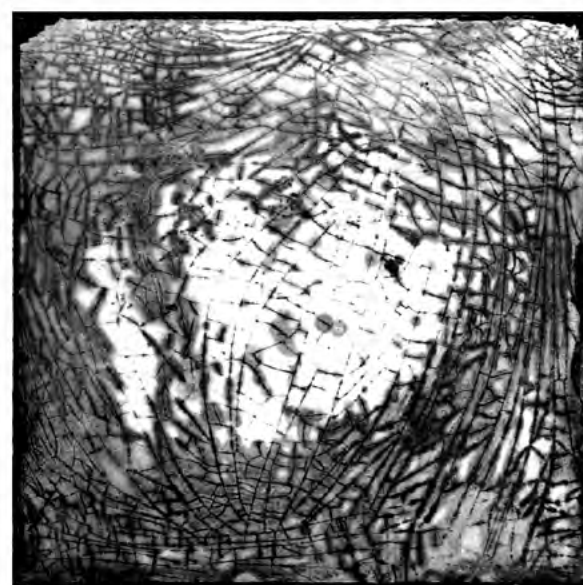
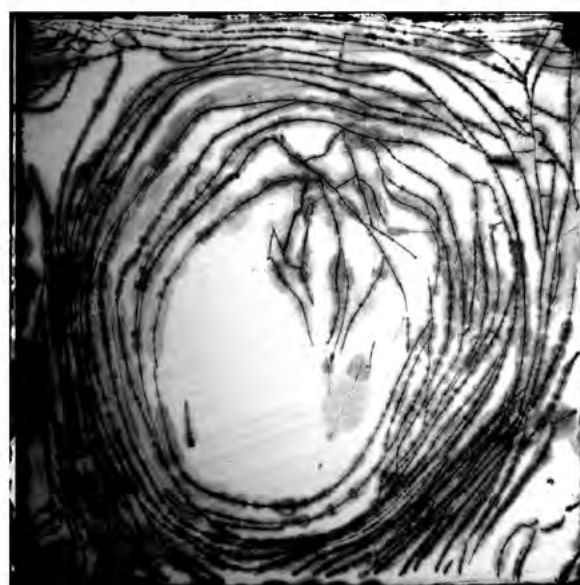
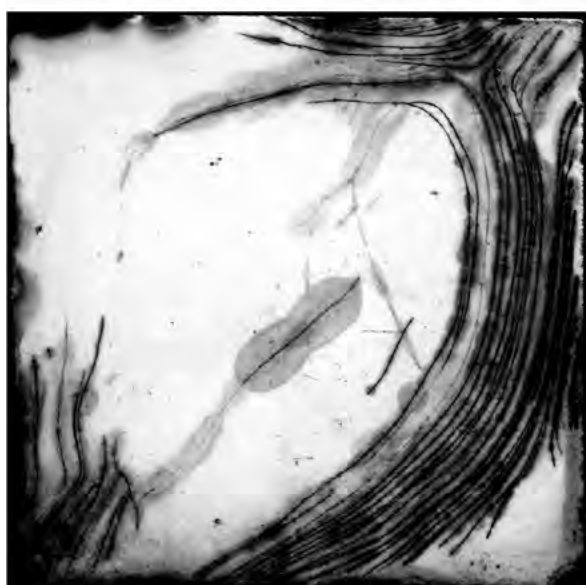
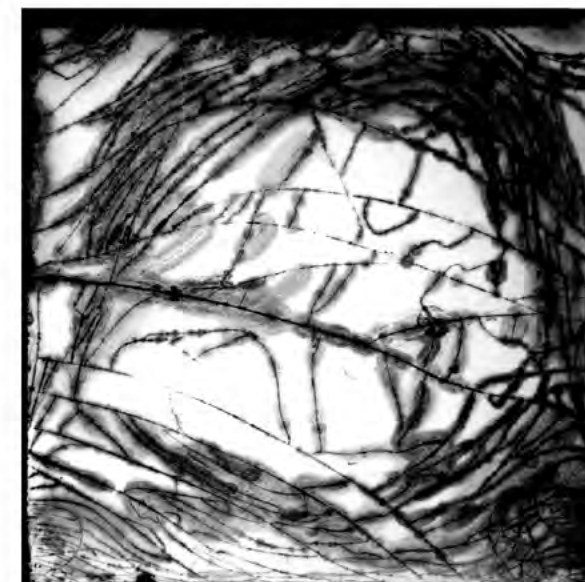
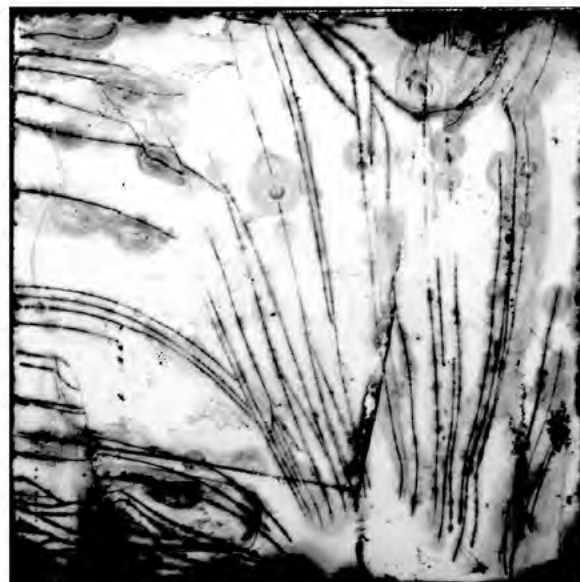
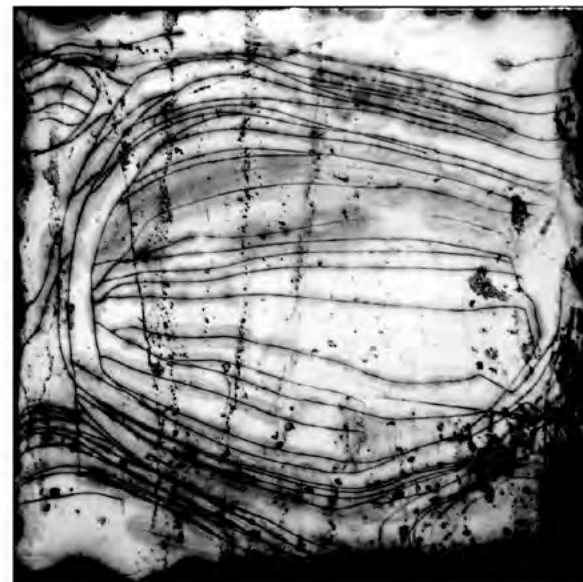
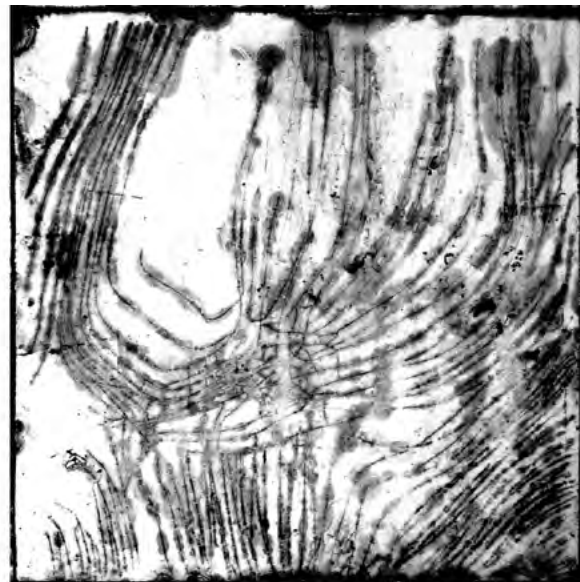
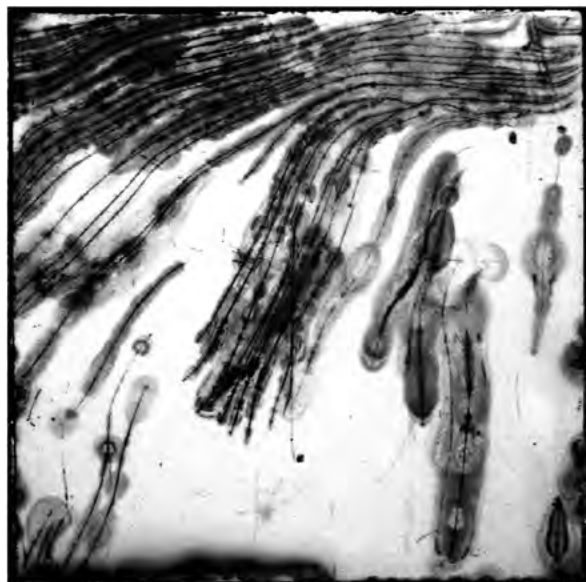
***VESTIGES***

**Series of 12 images, silver-gelatine on paper, 2005**

*Vestiges* is the third part of the work cycle on *Traces*. It consists of pictures of the wall tiles in my bathroom and darkroom.

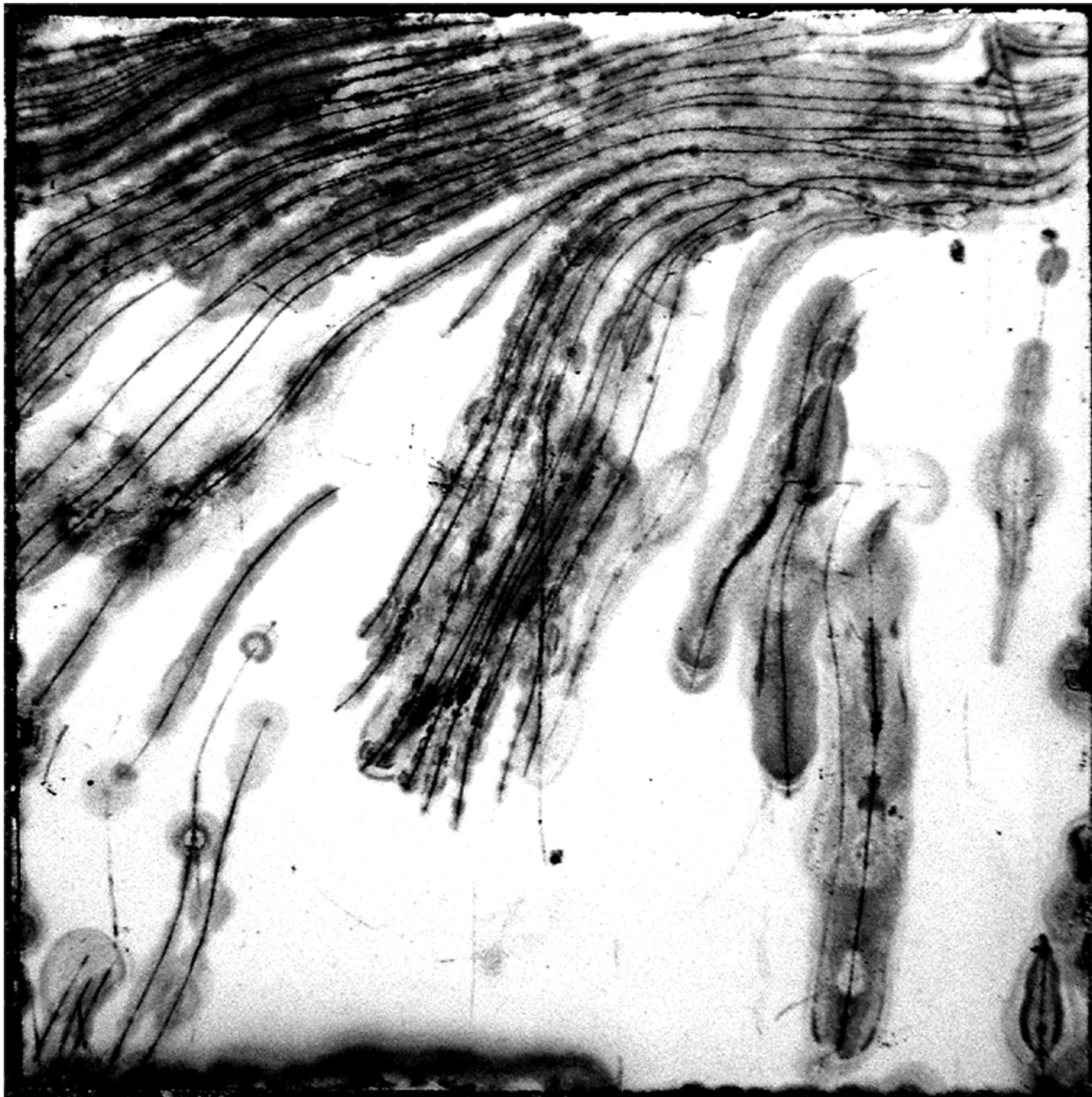
For many years I have been in the habit of sticking the prints of photo proofs on the wall, with the result that the chemical salts have eaten into the tiles and together with cracks in the tiles' glazing created abstract drawings.

For me, these are the traces of my own constant effort to overcome the limitations of human existence through artistic endeavor.

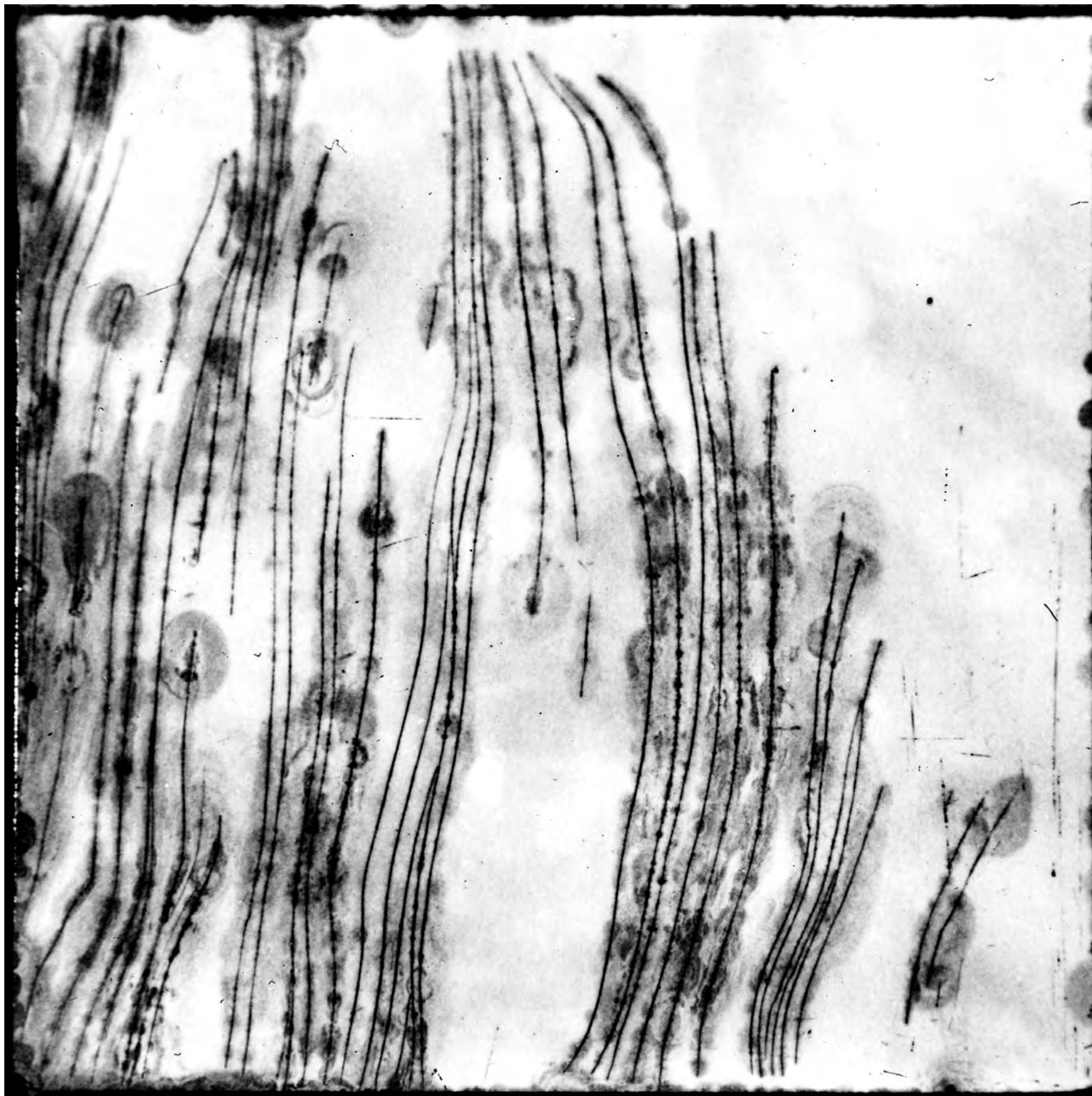


*Vestiges*, silver-gelatine on paper, 12 images, each one 78 x 78 cm, 2005





Untitled, from the series *Vestiges*, silver-gelatin on paper, 78 x 78 cm, 2005



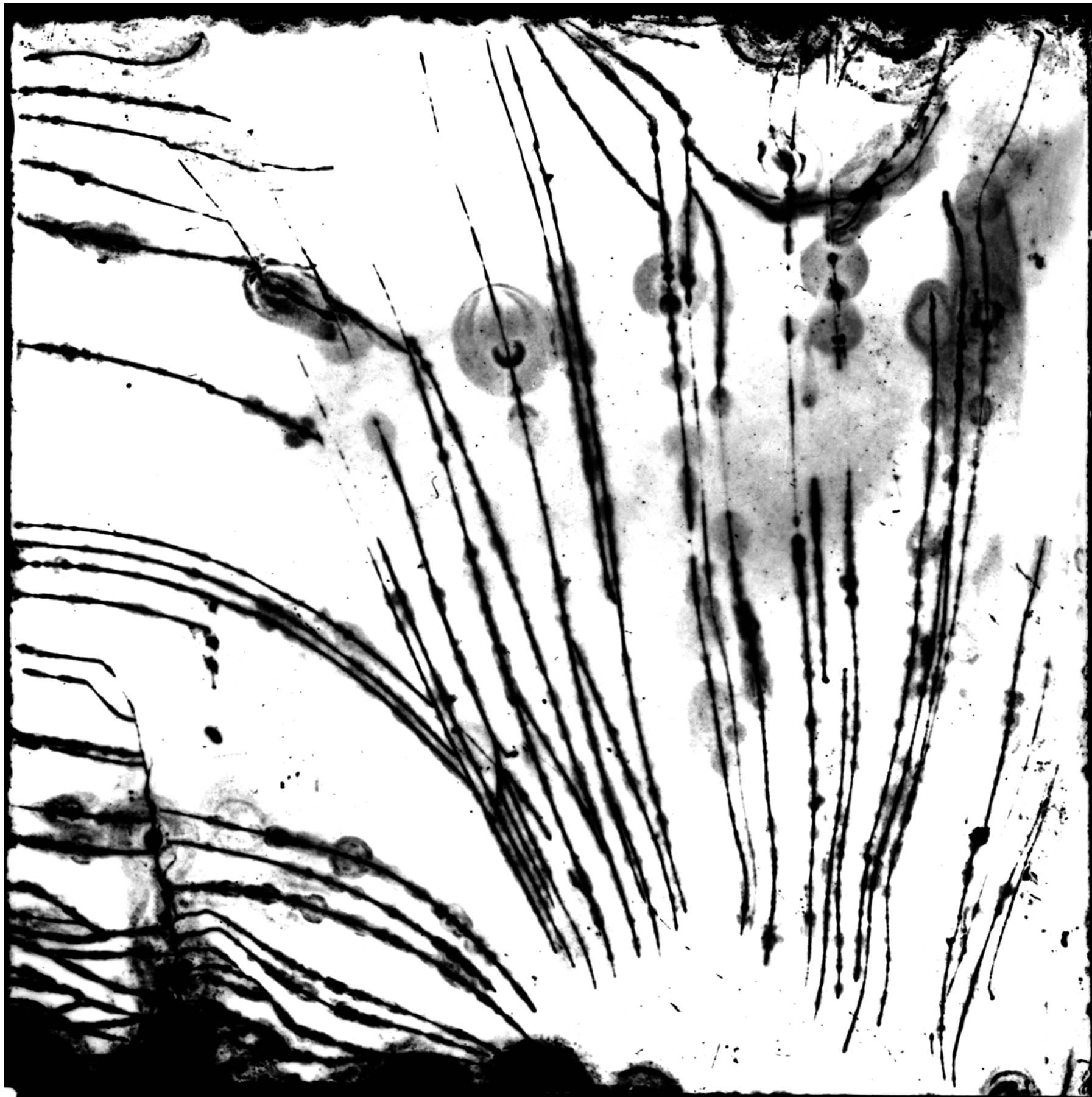
Untitled, from the series *Vestiges*, silver-gelatine on paper, 78 x 78 cm, 2005





Untitled, from the series *Vestiges*, silver-gelatine on paper, 78 x 78 cm, 2005





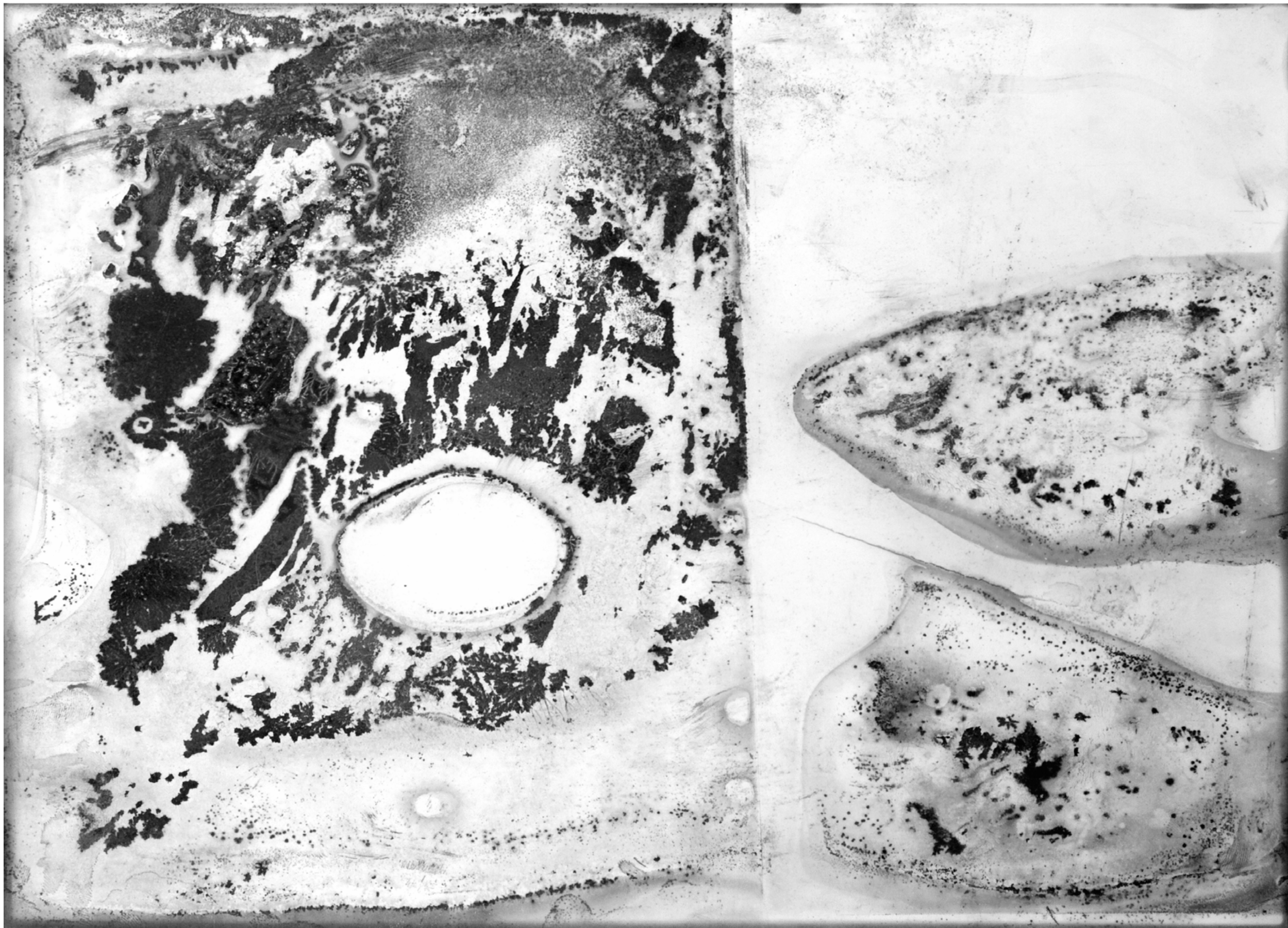
Untitled, from the series *Vestiges*, silver-gelatine on paper, 78 x 78 cm, 2005

***STUDIES FOR VESTIGES***

**Series of 25 images, inkjet-prints (black and white) /  
series of 20 images, c-prints, 2008-2011**

*Studies for Vestiges* consists of photographs of scraps of paper which accumulate during work in the darkroom. They are leftovers of discarded prints or proofs which by chance have come into contact with photochemicals. As they were never fixed, they are in a continual process of change, and thereby became an inexhaustible fund of images in which forces and elements organize themselves in autonomous universes.

Within these scraps of paper I discover landscapes which reflect my perception of the world as a constant flux of energy.



Untitled, from the series *Studies for Vestiges*, inkjet-print, 55 x 80 cm, 2009





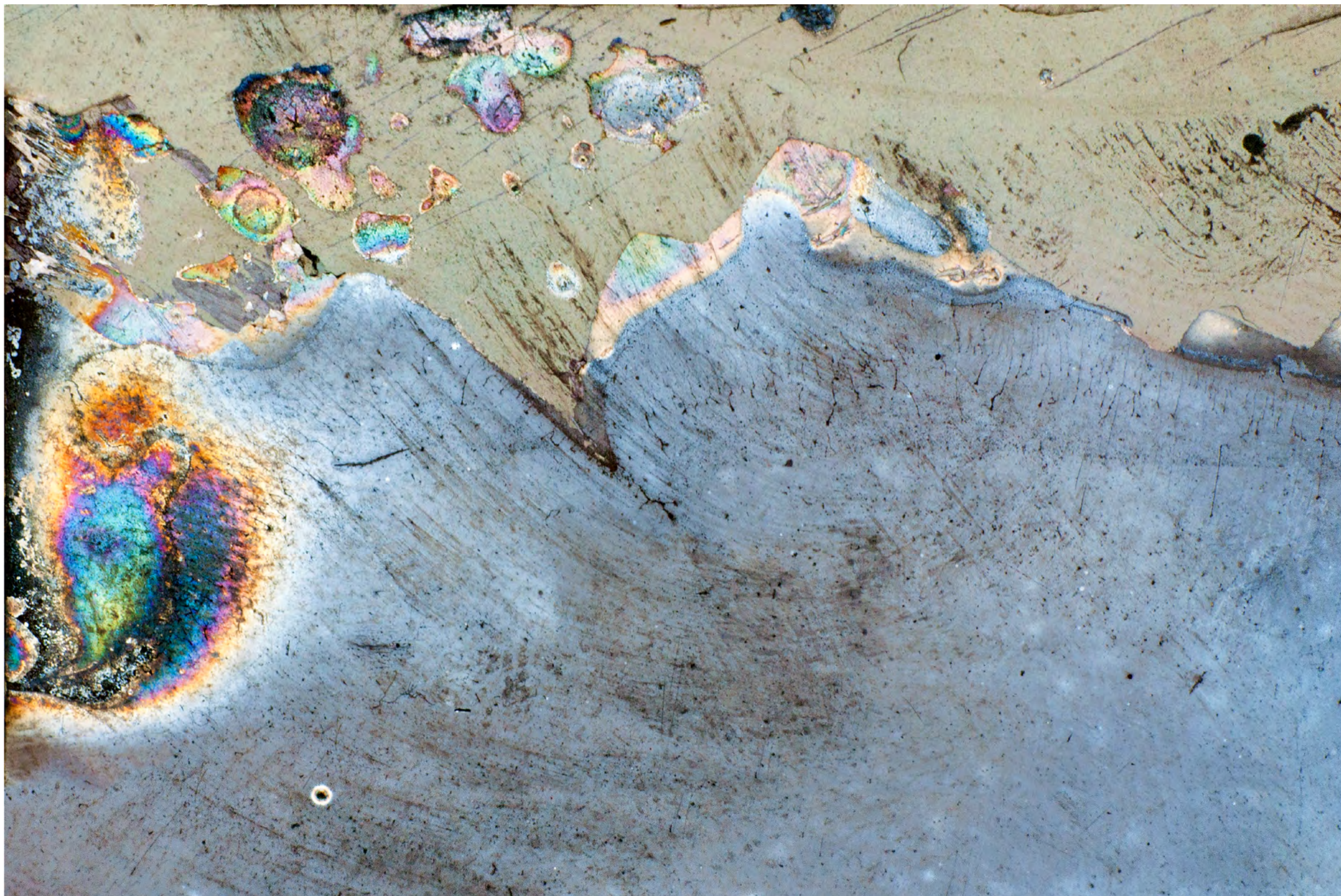
Untitled, from the series *Studies for Vestiges*, inkjet-print, 55 x 80 cm, 2009





Untitled, from the series *Studies for Vestiges*, c-print, 55 x 80 cm, 2010





Untitled, from the series *Studies for Vestiges*, c-print, 55 x 80 cm, 2010





Exhibition View *Studies for Vestiges*, Fototeca de Cuba, Havana, 2011

***HOME (II)***

**2 images, c-prints, 2008**

The photographs *Home (II)* are the result of an invitation to an exhibition with the theme “At Home”. Upon reflection I realized that for me the feeling of being at home was in large measure based upon the sensations which I repeatedly experience within my four walls. These form a kind of shield around me, and provide an emotional bedrock. For the exhibition I sought a visual correlative. *Home (II)* arose a couple of years later, more or less immediately after moving to a new house which needed extensive renovation. Rather than familiar memories and the feeling of security, it was at first associated with many difficulties and the wish to create a real home. In these images I sought to convey this emotional state.





Untitled, from the series *Home (II)*, c-print, 61 x 86,5 cm, 2008





Untitled, from the series *Home (II)*, c-print, 61 x 86,5 cm, 2008



***HOMe***

**Inkjet-prints, ongoing since 2012**

*HOMe* is a series in progress, in which through portraits of objects I find at home, I seek to create a portrait of myself. The resulting images are intended to express inner states.





*RR: RE: RE: RE: Dust on Screen*, from the series *HOMe*, inkjet-print, 42 x 59 cm, 2014



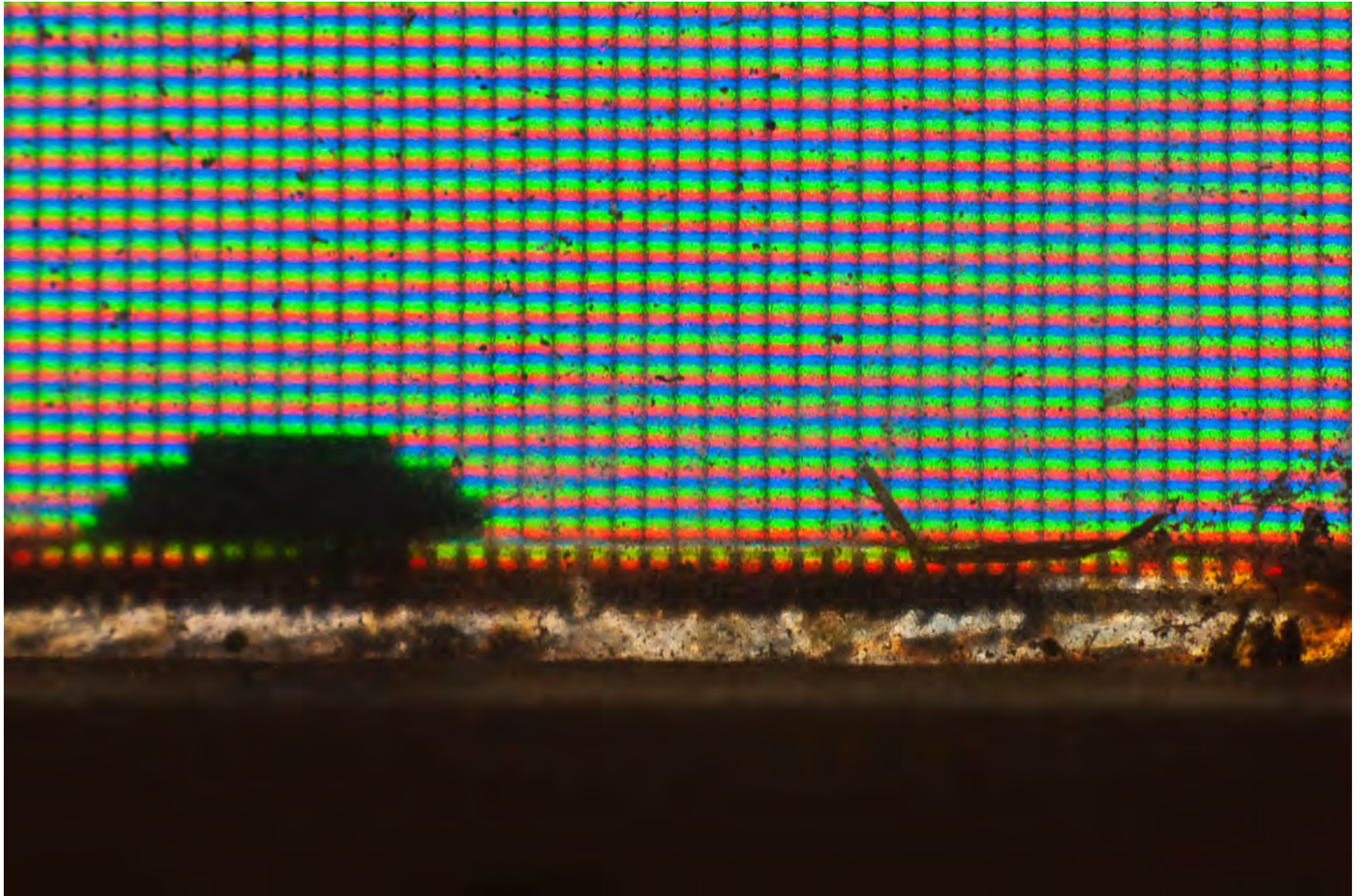


Untitled, from the series *HOMe*, inkjet-print, 42 x 59 cm, 2013



Untitled, from the series *HOMe*, inkjet-print, 42 x 59 cm, 2013





Untitled, from the series *HOMe*, inkjet-print, 42 x 59 cm, 2014



## ***TEMPORARY REFUGES***

**Series of 25 images, inkjet-prints, 2013-2016**

Temporary Refuges consists of pictures of the remains of objects which have been thrown into the sea and swept back to land by the tides. They are for the most part animal and vegetable in nature, and are the leftovers of sacrificial rituals practiced in Cuba by devotees of syncretic religions.

These age-old rituals are enjoying increasing popularity on the island. In contrast to earlier times, they are practiced by people of all social classes, even though many still belong to the poorer strata of society. Their purpose is the fulfillment of wishes, and they are often seen as the only practicable means of improving one's life. Frequently they have to do with material needs.

I am moved by seeing what remains of these ritual gestures enacted with so much hope. I consider these remnants of hope a metaphor for the current state of my homeland. Despite the endlessly repeated official discourse which preaches the achievement of a utopia of equality, altruism and progress, and despite the hopes and sacrifices of generations, the perception of people at all levels of society is precisely the opposite. The only remaining path to happiness now seems to be magic.

The photos were taken at a small beach in a neighborhood of Havana. As with all accessible beaches of the city, it overflows on a daily basis with countless leftovers of such rituals.





Untitled, from the series *Temporary Refuges*, ink-jet print, 42 x 59 cm, 2013





Untitled, from the series *Temporary Refuges*, ink-jet print, 42 x 59 cm, 2014





Untitled, from the series *Temporary Refuges*, ink-jet print, 42 x 59 cm, 2016



## ***INVERSIONS***

**Inkjet-prints, ongoing since 2015**

The series *Inversions* is an ongoing work in progress that was begun in 2015 operating between Berlin and New York.

It takes as its main focus festive and joy promising events that are permeated by consumerism. I portray their remnants (for example the aftermath of sports and cultural events, like New Year's Eve etc..) and ask Do they evoke satisfaction or deprivation?

The work takes a look at the entertainment and fun culture of the two cities wondering if the pursuit of happiness is fulfilled or if it is based on a false promise of meaning and pleasure in life.





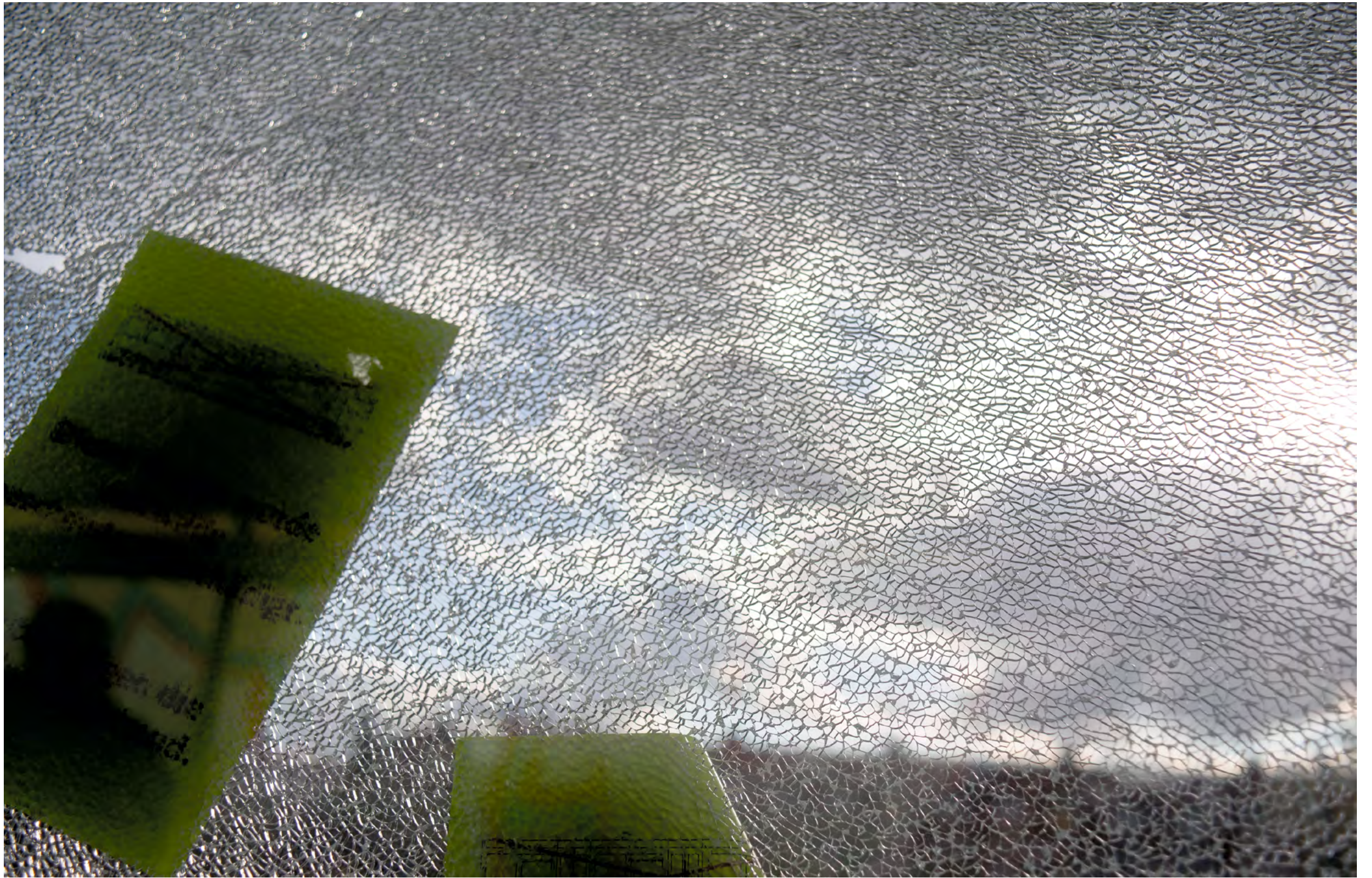
Untitled, from the series *Inversions*, c-print, 70 x 105 cm, 2018





Untitled, from the series *Inversions*, c-print, 70 x 105 cm, 2015





Untitled, from the series *Inversions*, c-print, 70 x 105 cm, 2015



***RESTE VON RESTEN (LEFTOVERS)***  
**Series of 15 images, inkjet-prints, 2017**

*Reste von Resten* explores discarded objects that have escaped the circulatory system of production and recycling, caught between dying and living a second life in a Berlin wasteland.

The project is a reflection on consumerism and the will to an immediate repurposing of the apparently useless in our society.

In these microlandscapes, the useless is re-visioned as an element of dissidence able to generate new interpretations, but also o new chances: Absorbed by nature, the portrayed objects become the support of life in a space where life was not expected to be, existing in a sort of unscheduled and unstructured process of integration into the landscape.

My intention was to capture the tension between the signs of brutality that the leftover possesses, and its new, unpredictable existence.

The title of the project takes inspiration from one of the first objects I encountered in one of my fieldtrips in the Berlin wasteland, which was, paradoxically, a shredded pamphlet about how to include and use rubbish in art.



DIFFRACTIVE DIFFERENCE

## EPISTEMOLOGICAL MATERIALS

— Die diffraktive Methode ist eine Methode der theoretischen und praktischen Wissensproduktion, die sich von der epistemologischen Theorie des kritischen absetzt. Káran Barócski'sche Performativität von Diffraktion, den Ding werden materiell durch Beeinflussung und Beschreibung transformiert. Die Genealogie neuer materialistischer Theorien basiert auf dem Verständnis der Materie als situierte Performance; wie Donnell und Geuze denken. Sie beschreibt diese materielle Epistemologie und ihre Bedeutung für das Jahr über, wie Welt Materie performt.

— Attractive methodology offers a mode of theorizing about knowledge and knowledge production. Karan Barad refers to this mode of theorization as performative in the sense that it requires an understanding of the material reconfiguration of things as they are observed, and mapped. In this genealogy of new materialist theory, the understanding of matter concerns a situated performance, as Donna Haraway points out. This talk describes a mode of material epistemology, and its significance for thinking about how the world performs matter.

**FELICITY COLMAN**

# THE DIRTY DIGITAL:

## THE MATTER OF OBSOLESCENCE

Künstler sind Experten im Plündern. Sie sammeln die Reste und eignen sich fremdes Material an, um die Materie in eine neue dauerhafte Form zu überführen. Doch die Voraussetzungen, unter denen die Materie in energetischer Form im digitalen Reich besteht und zirkuliert, bedürfen einer Überprüfung. Der Vortrag beschäftigt sich mit der schmutzigen Seite des Digitalen, den metallischen Abfallprodukten, die der Umwelt und den Recyclingarbeiten gleichmäßigen Schaden: Blei, Kadmium, Quecksilber, sechswertiger Chrom, Polybromide, verschiedene Polymere. Wie können Künstler mithilfe der Theorie des neuen Materialismus beim Umgang mit den krebserregenden Abfallprodukten unseres konsumptiven Verhältnisses zur Energie helfen? Im Mittelpunkt steht ein anwendungsorientierter und an die Künstler gerichteter Blick auf den neuen Materialismus.

— Artists are excellent scavengers, picking over the leftovers, and re-appropriating materials, in order to produce a different durational form for matter. However, the conditions in which matter resides and circulates as energy forms in the digital realm requires scrutiny. This talk examines the dirty side of digital matter: the metallurgical waste materials, which are toxic for the environment, and for the human e-recycling workers – the leads, cadmiums, mercury, hexavalent chromium, polybiprimides, and various polymers that are the materials of the e-waste. How have, and can artists use the tools of new materialist theory to assist with the carcinogenic dirt of consumptive energy practices? This talk will offer an applied view of new materialist theory for creative practices.

LECTURES IN ENGLISH—2. JULI 2015, 18:30 UHR

R. RÜBEL

ALL VON RESTEN

INSTLERISCHE VERWENDUNG  
MÜLL UND SCHUTZ

— Die Materialien und Dinge zum Konsum bestimmt sind, kann  
überhaupt nicht mehr der Moderne angesehen werden. Und der große  
den diese Entwicklung hervorbrachte, ist der, dass plötzlich Rese (ent-  
worfene) Müll und Schmutz erscheinen als das eigentliche Produkt der ästheti-  
schen und gesellschaftlichen Konversionen seit der ersten industriellen Revo-  
lution. Dieser Fleck ist der Fallout unseres Begehrens nach Modernität. Der  
Vortrag gibt einen Überblick über die künstlerische Verwendung von Schmutz  
im 20. Jahrhundert. Dabei steht eine „unreine“ paradigmatische Wen-  
dung im Zentrum: Die Unreinheit der Moderne werden nicht mehr als „un-  
reine Reine“ betrachtet, sondern als eigensinnige Materialität aufgefasst, die  
durchaus in Gang setzen können.

[illegible]

DEUTSCHER SPRACHE

JUL 1 2011 18:30 UHR

*Reste von Resten*, from the series *Reste von Resten* inkjet-print, 42 x 59 cm, 2017





From the series *Reste von Resten*, inkjet-prints, each one 42 x 59 cm, 2017



**Alfredo Ramos Fernández**

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