2

View. Theories and Practices of Visual Culture.

title:

An Archival Impulse: The Return of 1970s Leftwing Terrorism in Contemporary German Art

author(s):

Svea Bräunert

source:

View. Theories and Practices of Visual Culture 2 (2013)

URL:

http://widok.ibl.waw.pl/index.php/one/article/view/43/74/

publisher:

Institute of Literary Research of the Polish Academy of Sciences
Institute of Polish Culture, University of Warsaw

Svea Bräunert

An Archival Impulse: The Return of 1970s Left-wing Terrorism in Contemporary German Art

The archive has figured prominently in artistic discourse since the 1990s, and has become one of the major critical tropes deployed to come to terms with contemporary art's drive towards memory and history, researching and collecting, probing and presenting. "Archives represent scenes of unbearable historical weight, and, therefore, open up a productive space for artists in the form of aesthetic, ethical, political, social, and cultural speculation."[1] The artist as archivist can thus be seen as a new take on the artist as historian, putting yet another methodological spin on art's fascination and preoccupation with history and memory. In an essay from 2004, Hal Foster even goes so far as to claim that at the beginning of the 21st century art's dominant feature is "an archival impulse," suggesting that art's turn to the archive as source, subject, and practice may be seen as one of its common grounds. Examining works by Thomas Hirschhorn, Tacita Dean, and Sam Durant, Foster sees them as sharing "a notion of artistic practice as an idiosyncratic probing into particular figures, objects, and events in modern art, philosophy, and history"[2] – a quest for lost traces and a re-reading of common paths that he terms their archival impulse. Their sources can be "familiar, drawn from the archives of mass culture, to ensure a legibility that can then be disturbed or *detourné*; but they can also be obscure, retrieved in a gesture of alternative knowledge or countermemory."[3] It is the latter that interests Foster the most. He is intrigued by artworks digging deep into historical matter, bringing to the surface what may have been marginalized in its heyday, but has since been neglected and forgotten: "obscure traces… unfulfilled beginnings or incomplete projects—in art and in history alike—that might offer points of departure again."[4]

Particularly in the case of Sam Durant, these unfulfilled beginnings or incomplete projects have to do with the 1960s and 70s, a good example of a trend James Meyer describes in his text, *The Return of the Sixties in Contemporary Art and Criticism* (2008). As Meyer observes, young artists emerging in the past ten to fifteen years have shown an increasing interest in the legacies of the 60s. "This tendency is indubitably, excessively pervasive. Artists revisit the forms associated with that era, and make the history of the sixties, and of sixties' art, their subject."[5]

Intrigued by the decade's progressive and utopian potential, they comb its historical and art historical archives in search of this new point of departure that Foster mentions. "Much of the art writing on the period," Meyer writes, "bespeaks the melancholy of having not been present at the happenings and the exhibitions and the demonstrations we so assiduously describe; we can only imagine these events. [It is a] longing for a past that is not one's own."[6] However, it is also a past weighed down by some heavy historical baggage, especially concerning the question of violence. Indeed, violence, destruction, and utopian vision often go hand in hand, as can be seen in Durant's destructive reconstructions of Los Angeles' case study houses, and his concurrent treatment of the Rolling Stones' concert at Altamont, the Kent State massacre, and Robert Smithson's *Partially Buried Woodshed* (1970).[7]

While I am well aware that there are distinct differences between German and American postwar histories, especially where they concern the development of the radical left,[8] I nevertheless believe that some of Foster's and Meyer's key points also hold true for the German situation, and that a combined reading of the two texts can provide a productive methodological framework for situating the ways in which left-wing terrorism figures into German art today. When drawing on the essays by Foster and Meyer, I am particularly interested in two aspects – the first of which concerns the relationship between history and art history. As both critics point out, the archival impulse in contemporary art is almost always directed at both. History and art history form a palimpsest-like site of mutual conflict and engagement, meaning that the return of the 60s and 70s is not only topical, but also aesthetic in nature. Or, as Mark Godfrey puts it: "The artist as historian [or archivist] is just as concerned with a particular historical subject…as he is with addressing the history of their mediums and forms."[9] Hence, artists dealing with 1970s left-wing terrorism must also be seen as dealing with artistic practices and art historical discourses of the period. The archive they draw upon and successively re-create is not one, but many. By looking at these works, we can "witness firsthand how archival legacies become transformed into aesthetic principles, and artistic models become historicizing constructs."[10]

The second aspect has to do with the kinds of associations triggered by the 60s and 70s. As Meyer emphasizes, this period is "a particular kind of past, a past that is *recent*, that is not entirely past."[11] For many of the artists in question, it coincides

with their childhood and youth. And it is a past that has become "a fundamental reference for progressive cultural politics,"[12] as well as one of the most sought-after touchstones for artists engaged in archival practices, as their work often "involves the research into and explicit referencing of works of art made roughly between 1965 and 1975."[13] In this dual function, the "Red Decade"[14] serves as the ideal point of origin to look for those "unfulfilled beginnings or incomplete projects…that might offer points of departure again" that archival art is most interested in. However, do Meyer's observations on the return of the sixties as a decade full of progressive potential and utopian ambitions also hold true for left-wing terrorism? How can a past that is more often than not described in terms of a major trauma be converted into a new and hopeful beginning? And how can something return that has never entirely disappeared, lingering on instead, as a phantom or ghost?

In the following, I will try to approach these questions by looking closely at two recent artworks addressing the history of West German terrorism from a new and unexpected angle. Andree Korpys and Markus Löffler's *Conspirative Housing Concept "Spindy"* (1998-2001) and Thomas Demand's *Attempt* (2005) understand and visualize memory in terms of what Foster has described as the archival impulse in contemporary art. The artists draw on the archive of the 1970s, finding obscure and overlooked stories that they investigate just like a detective would interpret a crime scene. Working from this site, they trace the past and channel parts of it into the present, uncovering more and more layers potentially belonging to this ever-evolving archive, inviting viewers to engage in a search for hidden meanings and unexpected detours.

Living with Terrorism: Korpys'/Löffler's Conspirative Housing Concept. "Spindy" (1998-2001)

Korpys/Löffler Conspirative Housing Concept "Spindy" (1998-2001), detail (source)

Conspirative Housing Concept "Spindy" is a three-part installation that the duo Korpys/Löffler developed between 1998 and 2001.[15] It takes the concept of 1970s secret underground apartments as its point of departure to dig into the archive of West German terrorism and to re-create it as a multimedia display of design objects presented as clues in a detective story traversing from the past into the present.

Part one of the installation is devoted to the 1970s, when the most notorious West German terrorist group, the Red Army Faction (RAF), developed its conspiratorial housing concept. It was a concept heavily rooted in West German postwar material culture, as it appropriated consumer goods and modernist architecture to mimic a petty bourgeois lifestyle. The secret dwellings were usually part of larger apartment units on the outskirts of dense urban areas with immediate access to the highway system. Their setting guaranteed a maximum of anonymity, which was reinforced by the use of standardized furniture. Former RAF member Sigrid Sternebeck remembers:

> We hunted for … the apartment with one over-riding criterion in mind: security. We had to be sure, when we rented an apartment that a variety of people could flow in and out … without being noticed. Neighborly anonymity was imperative. Points 2 and 3 on our checklist were: prime transport links and the apartment's direct surrounding … Everything spoke in favor of a high-rise … The desires…one normally harbors when searching for an apartment—such as a wish to feel at home – [did not apply]. The term "desires" was replaced by "functionality" … The entrance hall behind the door of the apartment had to elude a serious air. Coat-rack, floor rugs, an umbrella and a small painting or poster for that personal touch—and ready it was.[16]

Korpys/Löffler explore this concept by focusing on an apartment in Hanover that the group used during the so-called German Autumn of 1977. The artists check the police files and then engage in design research by attempting to identify each object listed, its brand name, serial number, and year of production. They follow the material traces laid out by the terrorists, and they do so in a way that comes close to the work traditionally undertaken by criminal investigators, historians, or anthropologists. This is made evident by the following letter disclosing their research process. Responding to a query by the artists, the *Karstadt* department store writes:

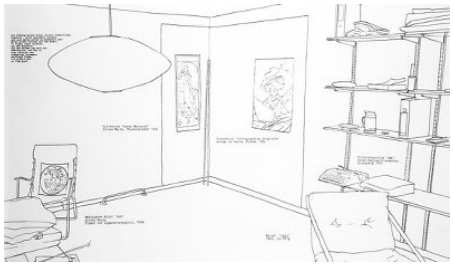
> Regarding your inquiry, we conducted an internal investigation to determine when the shopping bag you described was in circulation. The diamond-version in which pink and blue intersected (see the enclosed Polaroid from our archive) was produced from the beginning to the end of

> the 60s. Due to large supplies, it is likely however that individual department stores distributed this model even longer…Unfortunately, we do not have a contemporaneous photograph of the shopping bag in our image bank. Also, we are still trying to determine the designer.[17]

The letter is documented together with further research material in an artist book and three large-scale ink drawings. While the drawings identify each object in its spatial arrangement, the artist book presents each item in its periodical style and context, whether as part of a construction manual, a page in a mail-order catalog, or an advertisment. The inventory printed on the last page of the spiral-bound notebook then serves the dual function of listing the illustrations and documenting potential evidence in the style of a criminal record.

However, this is just the first step the artists undertake to come to terms with the RAF's conspiratorial housing concept. Also critical is the historical research necessary to undertake steps two and three—steps that are not concerned with the past anymore, but turn toward the present. First, Korpys/Löffler hire an interior designer to translate the conspiratorial model into the 1990s and then present the designer's proposal as part of their installation. Three drawings show an apartment, largely equipped with makeshift IKEA furniture and sparsely decorated with such timely markers as a *Pulp Fiction* (1994) poster. Surprising or not, the 90s apartment looks just as functional as its 70s precursor, but exudes little of the former's radical chic and retro charm. It thus drives home to the contemporary viewer that the 70s only look retro in retrospect, and that the artists' documentations are not signs of a subversive hipness, but rather markers of a life deeply steeped in petty bourgeois conventionality—the West German *Spießer* materialized.

Drawing on this proposal of how an underground apartment would look 'today,' the artists then take it upon themselves to build this very apartment, transforming the interior designer's drawings into a three-dimensional habitat. However, this life-size installation is not part of the work on display. Instead, the artists demolish what they just built and then photograph the results. Thus, neither the implementation



Korpys/Löffler Conspirative Housing Concept "Spindy" (1998-2001), detail (source)

of the model, nor the act of destruction is depicted. They are necessary parts of the process, but not of the final presentation. In their place, the destruction is visualized in three large-scale photographs marked by a distinctly abstract quality with red and blue as the dominant colors. These photographs represent the third and final step of the installation. The vanishing point of the artists' research into the relationship between terrorism and material culture is thus violence and destruction, but only as alternative modes of production. The final photographs may be the result of an assault, but their level of abstraction allows for a viewing experience going beyond the actual event. They speak to an experience of abstraction that chief investigator Horst Herold described as a way of getting to the essence of a hidden meaning: "Through abstraction, one does not get further away from things, but rather gains deeper insights into them."[18]

While it may be surprising to hear a statement like this uttered by a police chief and not by an art critic, its source fits the overall drive of *Conspirative Housing Concept "Spindy"* quite well. After all, with their focus on detail, their collecting and cataloging of data, and their dedication to research and uncovering traces, Korpys/Löffler meticulously mimic the work of the police. They piece together evidence from remnants left behind just like a forensic team would, following an approach Herold described as "making silent witnesses talk."[19] Every time an underground apartment was discovered, each little detail was painstakingly documented and fed into the police's database, PIOS, which was, at the time, one of the world's leading IT systems for keeping track of supposed terrorist activities.[20] "By interpreting the choice, position and use of objects, the detectives hoped to construct a profile of the offender that, ultimately, would be so exact it would all but automatically lead to their apprehension."[21] As one of the members of the staff recalls: "We have analyzed the terrorists' waste so carefully that we ended up having a better overview of their illnesses and habits than they did themselves."[22] However, while the police used this technique to hunt down terrorists, the artists appropriate it 25 years later to hunt down the past and channel bits and pieces of it into the present.

As this focus on the material object as a forensic trace suggests, Korpys/Löffler's probing into the archive is largely determined by criminological means, so that their criminological method must also be seen as their main archival method. As Christoph Keller, who was involved in the project as the publisher of the artist book,

remembers: "We treated these apartments as artistic objects in the same way the police had treated apartments occupied by the RAF, asking: What does it contain? Where do the terrorists go shopping? And what kind of objects are these? How can we trace their origin, starting from such sites?"[23] Thus, with every step they undertake, the artists simultaneously disclose and recreate the work of the police. As a result, they

> make viewers of their work amateur sleuths who can engage in kitchen-table-profiling by unearthing bits of putative evidence. They themselves do this, conducting pseudo-relevant investigations into the provenance of furniture and plastic bags found lying around. The upshot is an aura of political conspiracy, of a terrorist nest being uncovered through the interpretation of nondescript, everyday details. The attendant pleasures are those of observation and of deductive and/ or speculative reasoning.[24]

My experience with this temporary appropriation of the detective's lens was one of uncertainty, instability, and precariousness—a constant back and forth between seeing, believing, and disbelieving. When first flipping through the artist book, my impression was that its collection was motivated by what the artists were able to find in old police files. Its main drive seemed to be factual; a reconstruction of the past mediated by contemporaneous sources. This impression was further confirmed when I looked up the documentation of *Conspirative Housing Concept "Spindy"* in the artists' catalogue raisonée. There, I found five folders containing police photographs of uncovered underground apartments.[25] However, these photos also threw my first suspicion into question. Is this really material the artists found in the archives of the federal police? Or aren't these rather savvy reenactments of a forensic gesture? My doubts grew stronger when I noticed that each 'police folder' contained certain objects and images reappearing in the artist book supposedly documenting just *one* underground apartment in Hanover. So was this flat simply an invention of the artists? A prototype pieced together from various crime scenes, and, thus, an ideal model of what a clandestine living arrangement would have looked like? My distrust was supported by the story documented in the artist book: a bank robbery while the manhunt for Schleyer and his kidnappers was at its peak—unbelievable! I later found evidence that this robbery had indeed taken place on September 26, 1977, and that an apartment in Hanover had been used during its preparation.[26] So was everything else also

'true'?

I am not recounting this back and forth to claim that there exists some kind of questionable truth, but rather to show that Korpys/Löffler are engaged in a game of laying out and following clues that clearly goes beyond what is documented in the police archives. Their method may be criminological, anthropological, and historical all at once, but it is also distinctly archival, in that it recreates the archives it simultaneously draws upon and into which it probes. "It not only draws on informal archives but produces them as well, and does so in a way that underscores the nature of all archival materials as found yet constructed, factual yet fictive, public yet private."[27] The result is one of historical unsteadiness, a constant treading of the line between fact and fiction that is characteristic of the artists' work and the approach that has alternately been described as "borderline journalism" and "poetic documentary."[28] They put themselves and their viewers into the position of an investigator trying to make sense out of associations loosely woven together, thus bringing about an ever-evolving rhizome that sparks one potential connection after the other. And it is this kind of associative thinking—at times bordering on paranoia—that most speaks to the archival impulse at work in their installation.

Korpys/Löffler Conspirative Housing Concept "Spindy" (1998-2001), detail (source)

But what exactly is the nature of the archives that Korpys/Löffler tap into and re-create? Most notably, it is, of course, the archive of 1970s left-wing terrorism opened up in fresh and unexpected ways. With their focus on the historical space of the underground apartment, the artists find a way to address a well-known and cliché-ridden history from a new angle.[29] They hence comply with Foster's wish for an archival art seeking obscure and overlooked stories, allowing us to cast a fresh glance at what may have already become all too familiar. The concept of the underground apartment is such a sideline story; it constitutes the perfect *Nebenschauplatz*, even though one should keep in mind that the secret dwellings were all but abandoned in the fall of 1977. The entire German police force was anxiously looking for the secret hideout in which industrialist Hanns Martin Schleyer was held hostage. Korpys/Löffler allude to this search by including Schleyer's code name "Spindy," in the title of their installation.[30] There was also so

much talk about the underground apartments that the German phrase *Konspirative Wohnung* (conspirational apartment) was chosen as word of the year in 1978.

So even though the idea of living underground was ubiquitous during the 1970s, its iconography never made its way into cultural memory the way other images have. The main reason for this likely has to do with the concept itself. After all, the very idea of the secret dwellings was to go unnoticed. The RAF's conspirational code was based on a successful mimicry of what was considered average. Therefore, the underground apartments say more about the standards and fashions of the Federal Republic during the 70s than they say about the supposed aesthetic preferences of the terrorists. They manifest a convincing camouflage that scared the German public more than anything, as demonstrated by a 1977 *Spiegel* article entitled "'Everyone must become a suspect': The Dilemma of Searching for Terrorists: Underground in Bourgeois Guise" ("Eigentlich müsste jeder verdächtig sein": Das Dilemma der Terroristen-Fahndung: Untergrund in Bürgermaske).[31] In regard to the archival work undertaken by Korpys/Löffler, this dilemma of the criminal investigators becomes the opportunity of the artists, because it allows them to address a visually saturated topic (i.e. left-wing terrorism) from a new perspective, while doing so with objects and images familiar to the viewer. For what is on display is West Germany's postwar material culture—everyday objects most people will recognize and relate to, maybe even in a personal way. "When one sees photos of the hideouts," Joachim Homan writes, "one knows immediately what this furniture feels and smells like."[32] So Korpys/Löffler (born in 1963 and 1966 respectively) do not just probe into the archives of West German terrorism, they also probe into the archives of their childhood and youth. They thus follow a tendency Meyer has observed in several of the works engaged in a return of the sixties; namely that the artists' "memories of their childhoods are memories of the sixties. The histories they recall are in this regard their own."[33]

This personal background is one side of the story; the other one has to do with the art historical context Korpys/Löffler evoke by addressing West German terrorism through the lens of postwar design and material culture. Discussing *Conspirative Housing Concept "Spindy,"* Diedrich Diederichsen has remarked that the secret dwellings "are RAF-caused. They are, in a sense, their works, were they art."[34] By potentially elevating the RAF apartments into the realm of art, Diederichsen calls to

much talk about the underground apartments that the German phrase *Konspirative Wohnung* (conspirational apartment) was chosen as word of the year in 1978.

So even though the idea of living underground was ubiquitous during the 1970s, its iconography never made its way into cultural memory the way other images have. The main reason for this likely has to do with the concept itself. After all, the very idea of the secret dwellings was to go unnoticed. The RAF's conspirational code was based on a successful mimicry of what was considered average. Therefore, the underground apartments say more about the standards and fashions of the Federal Republic during the 70s than they say about the supposed aesthetic preferences of the terrorists. They manifest a convincing camouflage that scared the German public more than anything, as demonstrated by a 1977 *Spiegel* article entitled "'Everyone must become a suspect': The Dilemma of Searching for Terrorists: Underground in Bourgeois Guise" ("Eigentlich müsste jeder verdächtig sein": Das Dilemma der Terroristen-Fahndung: Untergrund in Bürgermaske).[31] In regard to the archival work undertaken by Korpys/Löffler, this dilemma of the criminal investigators becomes the opportunity of the artists, because it allows them to address a visually saturated topic (i.e. left-wing terrorism) from a new perspective, while doing so with objects and images familiar to the viewer. For what is on display is West Germany's postwar material culture—everyday objects most people will recognize and relate to, maybe even in a personal way. "When one sees photos of the hideouts," Joachim Homan writes, "one knows immediately what this furniture feels and smells like."[32] So Korpys/Löffler (born in 1963 and 1966 respectively) do not just probe into the archives of West German terrorism, they also probe into the archives of their childhood and youth. They thus follow a tendency Meyer has observed in several of the works engaged in a return of the sixties; namely that the artists' "memories of their childhoods are memories of the sixties. The histories they recall are in this regard their own."[33]

This personal background is one side of the story; the other one has to do with the art historical context Korpys/Löffler evoke by addressing West German terrorism through the lens of postwar design and material culture. Discussing *Conspirative Housing Concept "Spindy,"* Diedrich Diederichsen has remarked that the secret dwellings "are RAF-caused. They are, in a sense, their works, were they art."[34] By potentially elevating the RAF apartments into the realm of art, Diederichsen calls to

when looking at *Living with Pop* from the vantage point of the present, being aware of the future history of the West German student movement and the first incendiary sparks of left-wing radicalization, its more critical edge comes to the forefront, turning the site of the department store into a postwar *lieux de mémoire* of its own.

In the spring of 1967, members of Commune I, a famous Berlin collective positioned somewhere between the student movement and situationist counter-culture, handed out flyers in front of West Berlin's Free University. The subject of these leaflets was a fire that had broken out in a Brussels department store, killing more than 300 people. German tabloids had first suspected that Vietnam War protesters were responsible for the fire. As the European anti-war movement had still shied away from violence up to this point, the communards were convinced that this information must be a hoax. Therefore, they reacted to the accusation by taking it quite literally and exaggerating it even further. In their leaflets, they proposed four different versions of the event: one version, framing it as a contemporary happening enabling people to experience first hand "this burning Vietnam sensation," and then, in another version, reframing it as just the latest strategy in American advertising techniques. Even though this would already have been enough to provoke public outcry, it was the last flyer that got them into serious trouble. Asking, "When will Berlin department stores burn?" the communards had written:

> No one has to shed tears over the poor Vietnamese people while reading the newspaper anymore. From today on, one can just go to KaDeWe, Hertie, Woolworth, Bilka or Neckermann and discretely light up a cigarette in the dressing room … In case it burns somewhere soon … please do not be surprised. As little as you were when the Americans crossed the line of demarcation. … Brussels has given us the only answer to this: *burn, warehouse, burn!*[40]

The Berlin courts regarded these lines as incitement for arson, and two members of Commune I were taken to court. The trial took place in March 1968, turning out to be a happening of its own, ridiculing the judge and the entire German legal system. Most importantly, however, it gave the West German public a long overdue lesson in the history of the avant-garde when various professors and public intellectuals

testified before the court that the leaflets should not be read as an incitement to arson, but rather as art. These expert witnesses saw the leaflets in line with avant-garde traditions such as Futurism, Surrealism, and Dadaism, as well as some of its then contemporary versions, such as Fluxus and happening. By making this argument, they not only brought the almost forgotten tradition of the German pre-war avant-garde back into public consciousness, but also ultimately fostered a reading of avant-garde movements that worked against their original intention – the idea that, all of this was after all just art.[41]

However, only a couple of days after the accused were acquitted, two department stores were burning in Frankfurt; and this time, it was 'for real.' Shortly before midnight on April 2nd 1968, incendiary bombs exploded inside of Kaufhof and Kaufhaus Schneider; no one was hurt, but both department stores incurred massive material damage. Two of the arsonists brought to court in the fall of 1968 were future RAF members Gudrun Ensslin and Andreas Baader. In their defense, the accused, as well as their supporters from the left, described violence against things as a way to voice political criticism. Ensslin's fiancé Bernward Vesper, for example, recapitulates the lawsuit as a judgment on capitalism, taking Vietnam as its primary object. In the same tone, he describes the polar positions before the court as talking about burnt children in Vietnam (Ensslin) versus talking about burnt furniture (attorney Griebel).[42] Committing arson in a West German department store was regarded as a legitimate way to critique the war in Vietnam, as well as American imperialism, capitalism, the culture industry, and West Germany's phony post-war society, busy healing the wounds of the past with new refrigerators and modern housing units. Thus, the action of the future RAF members actively implemented a theoretical stance popular among the West German New Left, who "had begun to interpret American Pop art as protest and criticism rather than affirmation of an affluent society."[43]

With their focus on design objects and quotidian culture, Korpys/ Löffler hint at this intricate connection between terrorism and material culture. They make us aware that we can look at terrorism through the lens of material culture, and that this shift in perspective brings to light a new storyline. It is the story of a postwar country obsessed with consumption, and of a countercultural movement against this 'terror of consumption.' It is also the story of a militant group that begins with violence against things, only to end up hiding amongst these very things and from the

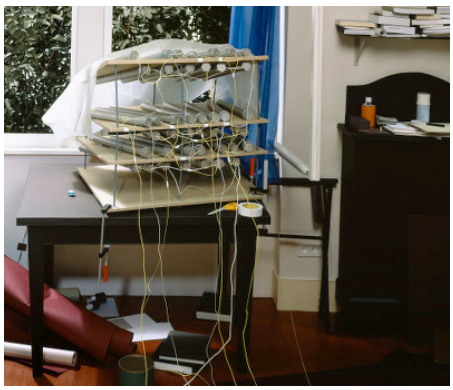
"Raspberry Reich" (Ensslin) they had originally set out to destroy. It is a story revealing terrorism's closeness to POP in a way that is quite different from the supposed *radical chic* of the 90s, with its praise of *Prada Meinhof*. Rather, it is a story that points back to the tradition of *Capitalist Realism* (Richter's intermittent term for the West German take on POP). And it is a story showing the terrorists not as others, but as people possessing an uncanny sensibility for the *Zeitgeist* they so successfully mimicked and used as camouflage. None of these elements are explicitly evoked by *Conspirative Housing Concept "Spindy,"* but they can be detected from the clues the artists have laid out. In the end, it always depends on who is looking and with what kinds of intentions in mind. In other words: It depends on the archive that we, the viewers, bring along when looking at the archive presented by the artists.

However, one thing seems to be clear. Even though looking at *Conspirative Housing Concept "Spindy"* has made me think of the early RAF's cultural criticism, voiced a mistrust of consumer society, this is not the agenda promoted by K/L's installation. One would be hard-pressed to find a distinct stance against capitalism or consumerism in their work. Instead, their ultimate act of destruction speaks to the kind of aesthetic sensibility we find at the very end of Michelangelo Antonioni's *Zabriskie Point* (1970).[44] The house explodes not just once, but many times, over and over again, so that the camera can document the action from every possible vantage point, joyfully dwelling on minute details, slowing down the action to the point where excess becomes contemplation. The damage is done, the work is completed, and a new perspective has fleetingly opened up.

Modeling Terrorism: Demand's *Attempt* (2005)

This kind of parallax view – understood as "the apparent displacement of an object caused by the actual movement of its observer"[45] – is also at work in Thomas Demand's *Attempt* (2005). The large-scale photograph shows the moment after a failed attack, an attack that literally remained an attempt. Mounted on a desk in front of a window, we see an object composed of silver cylinders, stacked on top of each other on a shelf-like construction. The object is a rocket launcher (German: *Stalinorgel*) that the RAF had used to attack the building of the Federal Prosecutor's Office (*Bundesanwaltschaft*) in August 1977, days before the German Autumn. The attack failed because one of the RAF members forgot to wind up the

clock that was supposed to launch the rockets. To this day, there are several theories as to why this happened. Most people are convinced it was just an accident, something the person in charge plainly forgot. But the RAF claimed, albeit after the fact, that they had planned it like this all along. What they had wanted to achieve was not massive destruction, but to send a powerful message. A warning that they were capable of launching an attack of this magnitude, and that next time, the violence would not remain potential, but could become a gruesome reality.



Thomas Demand, *Attempt*, 2005, C-Print/ Diasec, 166 x 190 cm © Thomas Demand, VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn / ZAPA, Warsaw

The failed attack on the Federal Prosecutor's Office took place in the immediate vicinity of the events of the German Autumn; and even though it caused quite a stir in its days, today it is more or less forgotten. It is one of many events abandoned on the margins of left-wing terrorism, events that usually do not get a mention in spectacular summaries like Uli Edel's *The Baader Meinhof Complex* (2008), or even in more serious journalistic treatments. Just like the underground apartments, it constitutes a *Nebenschauplatz*. It is an ideal site to approach the media-saturated imagery of the RAF from a new and formerly unseen angle. Demand favors constellations like this – moments where you have a prominent story, but also find a way to frame it in a way that has not yet been absorbed by mainstream culture. When asked by Hans Ulrich Obrist whether he loses interest in a topic once it becomes too public, Demand answers that this is not always the case, but once a place has been put into a museum context, "it is not a place of memory anymore, but a place for memory. It becomes a proof for something, and all I would do is prove again what has already been proven, instead of arriving at my own point of view."[46]

However, in the case of the rocket launcher, its marginal place in cultural memory is more ambivalent than it first appears. Had it not been for the kidnapping of Hanns Martin Schleyer, the *Stalinorgel* may have secured itself a more visible place in the history of left-wing terrorism. In the week following the attack, the news magazine *Der Spiegel* had already published a photo of the lethal machine that later became Demand's source for rebuilding the scene.[47] Also, chief prosecutor Herold presented the rocket launcher in front of members of the parliament in order to viscerally demonstrate how dangerous the terrorists really were. Once again, the

weapon thus came to served as a model – this time, to make an argument for increasing police scrutiny of these groups. And Herold was quite right to do so, because thise merely attempted attack can be seen as an ideal model of how terrorism operates. Even though there is a myriad of possible definitions of terrorism, one trait most of them agree upon is terrorism's psychological effect. It is, above all, the idea of violence that affects people, the fear that something that has happened in the past might happen again in the future. Terrorism may thus employ violence, but its main goal is not violence per se, but rather the horror and terror it induces in survivors, bystanders and spectators. Its actual targets are "thoughts and feelings ... opinions, judgments, fantasies."[48]

Surprisingly, or perhaps not, the *Stalinorgel* carries on its tradition as a model to this day, as it is on display at the German Historical Museum (*Haus der Geschichte*) in Bonn. So, even though no one knows its history anymore, it has come to represent the story of the RAF, a model on which to build the cultural memory of left-wing terrorism. This rather ambivalent career becomes more understandable when one considers how difficult it is to put the RAF on display. For, even though the group is often remembered along the lines of a Pop spectacle and *Gesamtkunstwerk*, its most prevalent mode of self-expression was still the written word. And this is difficult to showcase in a museum wanting to give its visitors a tactile and memorable experience of German history. The rocket launcher lends itself well to this task due to its quality as a dangerous object that looks both dated and impressive. In this capacity, its thingly attributes also exuded their spell onto artists. Looked at through the lens of art, the *Stalinorgel* – just like the underground apartments – can also be seen as a work of art. It is a sculpture, a demonstration, a performance, or an intervention in space. Its artistic property is furthermore complemented by the twisted story that surrounds the attack. For it was an artist's studio from which the assault was supposed to be launched. The local artist, Theo Sand, had his studio right across from the windows of the judiciary building, and the terrorists had gained easy access to it by once again dressing up in bourgeois guise and pretending to be a wealthy couple out to buy some art for their private collection. The event is thus deeply steeped in an art context, once more demonstrating the intimate relationship between art and terrorism.[49]

Given its context and presentation, the *Stalinorgel* lends itself well to be treated in artistic terms. This is especially true for an artist like Demand, who develops his

photographs by remediating press images through three-dimensional paper models, understanding the model as "a kind of conceptual tool or set of parameters, constituting a laboratory setting or a learning environment."[50] Originally trained as a sculptor, Demand creates large-scale photographs by taking existing images (typically photographs in the popular media), rebuilding the scenes they depict as paper models, and then photographing the rebuilt scenes. The models are life-size and more or less true to the originals, minus some details, such as labels on brand-name products, the prongs of electrical outlets, or anything else that would take away from the impression of a strictly flat and even surface. However, Demand does not exhibit the models themselves, but photographs of them. And it is the photographs that then constitute the final work. They not only resemble the source image, but also refer to the model of that image. He thus "draws on one medium (sculpture) to create another (photography), playing one form of representation against the other."[51] The artist explains:

> My work involves a process of development. I have an idea. I try to develop it into a form. I make a sculpture, then it becomes a photograph. At this point, the sculpture is no longer that important, but neither is the photograph. The work is in two dimensions, but the memory of the shape that it describes remains present. It's hybrid work, in between painting and sculpture, using different media in conjunction with a narrative element.[52]

The images resulting from this process are at once index and icon, trace and semblance, evidence and projection, thus participating in a complex auto-critique of the medium of photography. Or, as Beatrice Colomina puts it: Demand is "not simply modeling something that is then transformed into an image; he is building the image itself."[53] The model is his central medium for appropriating and working on the image in question – a choice that speaks to his interest in the spatial configuration of a given event or image.

One way to read this complex mediation of sculpture and photography is to turn to Rosalind Krauss' notion of the *photographic*, meaning not photography as a field of art historical inquiry, but rather as a theoretical object for excessive contemplation – another model, so to speak. Krauss herself has used the *photographic* in several instances of critical thinking, including her influential two-part *Notes on the Index*, which appeared in 1977 – the year of the German Autumn. Her essay was an

attempt to come to terms with 70s art in America, and to find a common ground for a diverse range of artistic practices. "If we are to ask what the art of the '70s has to do with all of this," she writes, "we could summarize it very briefly by pointing to the pervasiveness of the photograph as a means of representation. It is not only there in the obvious case of photo-realism, but in all those forms which depend on documentation – earthworks … body art, story art – and of course in video. But it is not just the heightened presence of the photograph itself that is significant. Rather it is the photograph combined with the explicit terms of the index."[54] What Krauss is most interested in is the idea of the index as a trace, an imprint, and a material presence. "As distinct from symbols, indexes establish their meaning along the axis of a physical relationship to their referents. They are the marks or traces of a particular cause, and that cause is the thing to which they refer, the object they signify."[55] The index allows Krauss to read several different modes of expression, including sculpture and installation, in terms of the photographic.[56] It is a reading that takes the mechanical process of analog photography, by which an object leaves its imprint on the photosensitive surface (the literal rendition of which is the photogram), and expands it into a realm for theoretical contemplation. "Every photograph," Krauss states, "is the result of a physical imprint transferred by light reflections onto a sensitive surface. The photograph is thus a type of icon, or visual likeness, which bears an indexical relationship to its object."[57] The photograph thus resembles (icon) what has imprinted itself (index) onto its surface. It is the latter that interests Krauss the most, as she sees the index as the sign of a deep impact leaving its mark on a wide range of 70s art, shaping "the sensibility of a large number of contemporary artists."[58]

Krauss develops her understanding of the index in regard to Peirce's semiotic theory on the one hand, and Roland Barthes' earlier writing on photography on the other (*The Photographic Message*, *Rhetoric of the Image*). She is intrigued by Barthes' definition of photography as a message without a code, spinning it further to read it as "the meaningless meaning that is instituted through the terms of the index."[59] Barthes came to his definition of photography as a message without a code via his conviction that photography entertains a material connection to the world it depicts, i.e. that it functions in terms of the index: "Certainly the image is not the reality," Barthes writes, "but at least it is its perfect *analogon* and it is exactly this analogical perfection which, to common sense, defines the photograph. Thus

can be seen the special status of the photographic image: *it is a message without a code*."[60] This supposed denotation sets the photographic image apart from any other image or sign. It "appears as the only one that is exclusively constituted and occupied by a 'denoted' message, a message which totally exhausts its mode of existence."[61] Barthes bases his observations on the press photo (and, in *Rhetoric of the Image*, on advertisements) that he sets apart from art.[62] But, even though he initially declares the photograph to be a denoted message, he eventually has to concede that it would be virtually impossible to find a photograph that fits that model. The characterization of the photo as a message without a code thus applies less to photography and more to the photographic; it is an idea rather than an image. However, if there were a photo that could broach this "utopian character of denotation,"[63] it would have to be the traumatic photo. Barthes writes:

> If such a denotation exists, it is ... at the level of absolutely traumatic images. The trauma is a suspension of language, a blocking of meaning. ... Truly traumatic photographs are rare, for in photography the trauma is wholly dependent on the certainty that the scene 'really' happened: *the photographer had to be there* ... Assuming this (which, in fact, is already a connotation), the traumatic photograph ... is the photograph about which there is nothing to say; the shock photo is by structure insignificant: no value, no knowledge, at the limit no verbal categorization can have a hold on the process instituting the signification. One could imagine a kind of law: the more direct the trauma, the more difficult its connotation; or again, the 'mythological' effect of a photograph is inversely proportional to its traumatic effect.[64]

It is the traumatic photography above all that, for Barthes, constitutes a lack in connotation, a pure denotation. However, a truly traumatic photograph is extremely rare, because it necessitates the presence of the photographer on the site and in the moment that the trauma occurs. The photographer just has to be there, so that the trauma can imprint itself upon the photosensitive surface. The trauma, hence, becomes the ideal model for the workings of the photographic index, and of what Krauss has termed the photographic. Or to slightly reverse this statement: The photograph is the site of the traumatic impact, and, as such, it does not *represent*, but rather *embodies* it.

Looking at Demand's *Attempt*, it becomes quite clear that the artist complicates such notions of the photograph as a bearer of traumatic indexicality, even though most of his works are based on press images depicting traumatic scenes. They can be scenes of violence, such as in *Attempt*, where a lethal weapon is the main subject of the image, but they can also be everyday sites, whose banality is only rendered uncanny once the historical connection is made. "There is no innocent room;"[65] not in history and certainly not in Demand's image bank. By rebuilding these charged sites, the artist accesses, recreates, and slightly shifts the images and events in question. His work on the image, through the medium of the model, can be understood as his work on the trauma itself, as it is inscribed into and acted out by the image. It is, above all, the model that allows him to do this, because it lets him "intervene *within* the Object"[66] - an act Barthes deemed impossible for photography. An important part of that intervention is to take away the instantaneous presence of the photograph. Or, to put it differently: to take away its index, and with it, the idea of a traumatic inscription, i.e. the notion that "*the photographer had to be there*."[67] so that the traumatic event could inscribe itself onto the photosensitive surface. In the case of Demand, the photographer was also there, but what he got in front of his lens was not the traumatic event itself, but rather its iconic likeness in the shape of the model. It would thus be the re-creation of the archive via the detour of the model that takes the image out of its mode of traumatic inscription.

This triple remediation from photograph to paper sculpture back to photograph causes a significant shift in appearance, the effect of which is the curious mix of a subject matter closely tied to violence and a lack of the impact of that very violence on the photographic surface. As Roxana Marcoco remarks: "Unlike the sensational images of murder and mayhem captured in the harsh light of the exploding flash, of which the Austrian-born Weegee (Arthur Fellig) remains the undisputed master, Demand's reworking of crime photography is cool and uninflected."[68] Demand's photos are after-images of violence based on an absence, deferring the traumatic scene by shifting and remediating it. An important part of this process is his engagement with space, quite literally becoming the site through which he reworks a trauma. The artist makes this space present by rebuilding it, and then he turns that presence into a past (again) by photographing it. His photographs thus make visible "a new space-time category: spatial

immediacy and temporal anteriority, the photograph being an illogical conjunction between the *here-now* and the *there-then*."[69] The latter remark is yet another quote from Barthes, trying to come to terms with the photograph and its denotative quality. Taken out of context, however, it also speaks to the spatial and temporal tensions caused by Demand's processes of remediation.

As the artist explains, sculpture and photography "contradict each other because they are different systems of representation. Sculpture aims for permanence, for presence, while the photograph is destined to render something visible that occurred at a particular moment in front of the lens. Essentially I play these two forms off against each other, adding a few neat complications that have to do with the concept of time."[70] The temporal effect attained by these shifts speaks to the traumatic quality of the images in question, participating in the circular time of traumatic repetition, all the while taking away the traumatic quality of inscription. They are images that come after the fact, remnants of a traumatic scene uncannily devoid of any traces. They show "an afterimage of a situation, an event, or a place that continues to bewilder us with its presence long after its original manifestation disappeared from the scene."[71] This belated quality of Demand's images speaks to the history of West German terrorism, because it also "continues to bewilder us long after its original manifestation disappeared from the scene." Although the RAF officially disintegrated in 1998, it continues to concern 'us' – with 'us' being those parts of the public still shaped by a West German biography, even though one can clearly discern a trend towards the topic becoming more international, a phenomenon brought about by increasing interest in terrorism since 9/11. With *Attempt*, Demand lets the history of 1970s terrorism return; he makes it present as a spectre left behind by history.[72] What we see is not the event itself, but its spectre. And as we know from Shakespeare's *Hamlet* (1603) and Jacques Derrida's reading of it in *Specters of Marx* (1994), a ghost is always meant to return. (In this way, the sixties returning as an effect in contemporary art and criticism is also something akin to a returning ghost.) It is the figure through which a trauma lives on in history. And in this peculiar *Gestalt*, the historical apparition can – in its most hopeful and thus most archival reading[73] – signal a repetition that is also a working through, enacting a metonymic shift away from indexical inscription and towards iconic likeness, opening up further archives of potential connections and virtual relations.

The Forensic Potential: Reading Crime Sites as Archives

One further such connection that allows me to revisit and ultimately refocus my argument one more time is the crime scene and its investigation. *Conspirative Housing Concept "Spindy"* and *Attempt* both employ the topos of the crime scene, as well as specific techniques of crime scene investigation. By doing so, they turn the crime site into an archival site. Putting on the demeanor of the anthropologist, the archaeologist, or the detective, they follow traces, lay out clues, and suggest one potential connection after another. It is a process that comes very close to what Foster has termed the archival impulse in contemporary art at the beginning of the 21st century. The crime scene is a special place to indulge this drive towards the archival as it stands for a mode of historicity, tying together presence and absence, focusing on after-effects and reconstructions. Crime sites always show an event after the effect. They are spaces of deferred action, signifying an "aesthetic of aftermath…a place where the action has already occurred."[74] There may be traces allowing for a reconstruction of the crime, but the crime itself is not *there* anymore. What *is* visible are its remnants, its effects. The traces hint at the event, but they are not the event itself. Even though they are treated as indices, they come closer to the icon, referring to something beyond their immediate material presence. "Though they are produced by a physical cause, the trace, the impression, the clue, are vestiges of that cause which is itself no longer present in the given sign. Like traces, the works … represent the [event] through the paradox of being physically present but temporally remote. … The procedure of excavation succeeds therefore in bringing the [event] into the consciousness of the viewer in the form of a ghost."[75]

The latter quotation is a description by Krauss referring to the inaugural exhibition of *Rooms* at PS 1. Taken from the second part of her essay on the index, all I have done is replace the word "building" with "event" to arrive at a fairly apt account of what constitutes the temporal tensions innate in a crime scene. Krauss' treatment of the index thus inadvertently speaks to the proximity between the crime scene and the artwork. Following up on a long tradition of forensic aesthetics, Ralph Rugoff has elaborated on this proximity by focusing on two aspects that tie the artwork and crime scene together: their coming after the fact and their clue-like status demanding interpretation. Citing Harold Rosenberg's famous statement on Action Painting: "What was to go on the canvas was not a picture but an event,"

Rugoff comments: "While Rosenberg's claim has often been dismissed as a rhetorical flourish – a work of art is not an action, ultimately, but an object – it needs only slight modification to make perfect sense: what ended up on the canvas was not an event, but its aftermath."[76] It is in this temporal delay, spatially enacting, and materializing what in psychoanalytical terms could only be called a deferred action, that artwork and crime scene intersect. Both hint at something that happened in the past, but the remnants of which still linger in the present, pointing at that past, and shuttling bits and pieces of it into the present. Artworks making reference to the crime scene thus confront their viewers "with the residue or record of an earlier event on which their meaning seems utterly contingent. Indeed, the art functions almost in a documentary fashion, conveying information about a set of prior actions or a missing body, so that the final work seems defined as much by an absence as by its own physicality."[77]

Transposed into an art context, crime scenes constitute ideal sites for exploring the conditions of memory and the archive. This is especially true when looking at the way 1970s terrorism figures in German art today. Artworks like *Conspirative Housing Concept "Spindy"* and *Attempt* approach the story of the RAF belatedly. They place the artwork in the aftermath of the event, both representing and tracing what has happened in the past. By doing so, they access the archive, and make parts of it present again, thus enacting the archive's potential to store something – literally, to keep it present – hoping that its mnemonic energy will spark again in the future. Not so different from the crime scene, archival art thus also comes after the fact. It is concerned with a past whose legibility is not automatically given, but has to be meticulously reconstructed from the archive. The works by Korpys/Löffler and Demand underscore this correlation not only by subtly evoking a latent connection between the crime scene and the archive, but by actually turning to two different crime scenes: the underground apartment in Hanover and the artist's studio from which the rocket launcher was supposed to embark on its attack. What they draw on is thus a dual impulse: the archival impulse of the crime scene and the investigative impulse of the archive. By doing so, their works suggest that the relationship between crime scene and archive may function reciprocally.

This reciprocity of archive and crime scene is further supported by the second characteristic Rugoff mentions in regard to the artistic crime scene: its clue-like status demanding interpretation. Just like the archive, the crime scene is driven

towards interpretation. It invites the viewer to read and interpret it, trying to make sense out of the nonsensical. The audience could thus "no longer be mere viewers but had to function like detectives or forensic technicians, attempting to reconstruct the activities and ambiguous motivations congealed in physical artifacts."[78] Their task is to create a pattern out of remnants, to propose intentionality where there might have only been coincidence. "A crucial dimension of the forensic aesthetic," Rugoff writes, is "that it prompts us ... to ask how a given situation came about, to wonder what unseen circumstances produced the evidence before us. In arousing our curiosity, it may further lead us to examine the public aspects of our personal response, to consider the cultural biases that inflect and inform our interpretations; indeed the word *forensic* derives from the Latin *forum*, with its attendant meaning of public discussion and debate."[79]

Crime sites speak to a wish to dig into the archive and to let loose the associative thinking put forward by it. "An archival form of research [prevails] (with one object of inquiry leading to another)."[80] However, when we think of Michelangelo Antonioni's *Blow Up* (1966), in which a photographer stumbles upon a murder (or so he thinks) and tries to prove his point by further and further enlarging and cropping the original photo so that in the end it resembles an abstract painting more than a photograph, we can see that there is both a creative impulse opened up by the virtuality of the crime scene, as well as a caution to its potential limits. It is limited in the sense that we, as critics intrigued by the archive and the associations opened up by the crime scene, also tread the line between fact and fiction. Some associations may go too far or lead us on tangents taking us further away rather than closer to what we set out to investigate; others may seem outlandish at first, but ultimately prove to be to the point. Thinking about archives can thus easily turn out to be archival itself, enacting its own kind of archival impulse within critical writing.

In the case of Korpys/ Löffler and Demand, this archival mode of thinking and writing is triggered by artworks that follow an archival impulse themselves. By looking at the media-saturated history of West German terrorism from new and unexpected angles, *Conspirative Housing Concept "Spindy"* and *Attempt* make visible what had formerly remained unseen. It was hidden from the public eye in the archives of forensic units and old newspaper records. The artists return to these files more than thirty years after the fact, and by excavating parts, they turn the

potentiality of the archive into the actuality of the artwork. What they show is "the residue or record of an earlier event,"[81] the remnants history has left behind. In this way, their return to the 1970s can also be seen as a new beginning. For what returns in these works is not the grand narrative of the RAF, but its marginalia. The interior designs of the underground apartments or the merely attempted attack with the rocket launcher are not the first stories that come to mind when thinking about West German terrorism. Their marginal character lends itself well to an archival take on the RAF, with one development leading to the next. Two of these developments were Lueg's and Richter's 1963 performance *Living with Pop*, and Krauss' 1977 essay *Notes on the Index*. Basically, they have nothing to do with West German terrorism, but once one has proposed a link between their stories and the stories of the RAF, it quickly takes on the form of a missing link carrying interpretative potential. By way of this attribute, these further side stories become part of an ever-evolving archive of repeated returns and multiple associations. Artists and critics alike probe into them, and they present their probing as a renewed construction of the very archive in question. They thereby effectively materialize the notion of the archive as something that simultaneously stores, produces and reproduces, and is, therefore, never closed or completed.

Research sponsored in the framework of the program of the Polish Ministry of Science and Higher Education, „Narodowy Program Rozwoju Humanistyki", in 2012-2014; project entitled The World as Archive. Critical Modes of Historicity.

Footnotes

1 Okwui Enwezor, "Archive Fever: Photography between History and the Monument," in Okwui Enwezor, *Archive Fever: Uses of the Document in Contemporary Art* (New York, Göttinge: Steidl/International Center of Photography, 2008): 33.

2 Hal Foster, "An Archival Impulse," *October* 110 (Fall 2004): 3.

3 Ibid: 4.

4 Ibid: 5.

5 James Meyer, "The Return of the Sixties in Contemporary Art and Criticism," in: *Antinomies of Art and Culture. Modernity, Postmodernity, Contemporaneity*, ed. Terry Smith, Okwui Enwezor, and Nancy Condee (Durham, London: Duke UP, 2008): 325-6.

6 Ibid: 330.

7 See Sam Durant's *Abandoned House Series* (1994) ; and Sam Durant's *Partially Buried/ Altamont Series* (mainly 1999). As Foster makes clear, "Durant is drawn to two moments within the archive of postwar American culture in particular: late modernist design of the 1940s and '50s (e.g., Charles and Ray Eames) and early postmodernist art of the 1960s and '70s (e.g., Robert Smithson)." (Foster: 17). Meyer does not deal with works by Durant, but instead mentions Renée Green's *Partially Buried* (1996), thus evoking yet another multimedia installation making reference to Smithson's *Partially Buried Woodshed*, suggesting that Green's work may be understood as nothing less "but an archive of the year 1970" (Meyer: 329). The role of Smithson's model of entropy as a marker and model of historical time in relation to these current archival works begs further investigation in regard to the kind of archives that are probed and re-created. Meyer suggests as much when asking: "But it is perhaps the idea of critical history that these projects most evoke" (Meyer: 329).

8 For a comparison see Jeremy Varon's: *Bringing the War Home. The Weather Underground, the Red Army Faction, and Revolutionary Violence in the Sixties and Seventies*. (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 2004).

9 Mark Godfrey, "The Artist as Historian," in: *October* 120 (Spring, 2007): 168.

10 Okwui Enwezor, "Archive Fever: 21-22.

11 Meyer, "A Return of the Sixties,": 330.

12 Ibid: 328.

13 Godfrey, "The Artist as Historian": 148.

14 For the West German context, the term "the red decade" was coined by Gerd

Koenen in order to describe the different leftist movements and histories between 1967 and 1977. Gerd Koenen,: *Das rote Jahrzehnt: Unsere kleine deutsche Kulturrevolution 1967-1977* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 2004).

15 For a complete documentation of the work, please see: Christoph Keller (ed.): Christoph Keller, ed., *Korpys/ Löffler: Organisation 1990-2005*. (Frankfurt am Main: Revolver, 2005): 425-326. (pagination in reverse order)

16 Sigrid Sternebeck,: "A Concept for Conspirative Housing." In: Christoph Keller (ed.): *Korpys/ Löffler: Organisation 1990-2005*, ed. Christoph Keller (Frankfurt am Main: Revolver, 2005): 383-382. In a similar tone, Christoph Keller explains: "An RAF apartment always consisted of at least two rooms – the one in the back was the operative room, and the one up front was the cover-up. And these front rooms are the ones that are of real interest, because they look as bourgeois and contemporaneous as possible. There, you see everything that was considered fashionable during the 70s, from the wall mural to the Marcel Breuer tables. And all of this was undertaken so that someone who happened to stumble upon the apartment wouldn't immediately know what was going on." (my translation) "Design und Destillate. Markus Miessen im Gespräch mit Christoph Keller,". In: *build*. No. 2 (2010), http://build-magazin.com/index.php/interviewpartner2010/items/christoph-keller.html/.

17 Andree Korpys and Markus Löffler, *Konspiratives Wohnkonzept "Spindy"* (Frankfurt am Main: Revolver, 1998). (my translation, no pagination)

18 Horst Herold quoted in: Dieter Schenk, *Der Chef: Horst Herold und das BKA* (Hamburg: Hoffmann und Campe): 57. (my translation)

19 Herold quoted in: Schenk, *Der Chef*: 80. (my translation)

20 PIOS was the abbreviation for *Personen, Institutionen, Objekte, Sachen* (People, Iinstitutions, Oobjects, Tthings). Due to his fascination with still-new computer technology, and his close collaboration with the IBM, one of Herold's nicknames was 'detective computer.' His introduction of IT systems into the police work was both progressive and highly problematic, as it carried the potential for an Orwellian model of total surveillance.

21 Nina Möntmann, "My Birthday is on the Same Day as Brigitte Mohnhaupt's:

Politicized Interiors and Combinatorial Relations," in: Christoph Keller (ed.) *Korpys/ Löffler: Organissation 1990-2005*, (Frankfurt am Main: Revolver, 2005): 293.

22 Quoted in: Schenk, *Der Chef*: 131. (my translation)

23 Interview with Keller in *build.* (my translation) As Keller explains in this interview, it was the artist book for "Conspirative Housing Concept 'Spindy'" that started the renowned Revolver publishing press.

24 Möntmann, "My Birthday is on the Same Day as Brigitte Mohnhaupt's": 293-291.

25 Christoph Keller, (ed.), *Korpys/ Löffler: Organisation 1990-2005*. (Frankfurt am Main: Revolver, 2005): 371-340.

26 In an earlier article, I focused more on the fictional aspect of the work and then later had to 'correct' myself. See Svea Bräunert, "Konspirative (Kunst-)Räume: Andree Korpys' und Markus Löfflers multimediale Installation Konspiratives Wohnkonzept "'Spindy' (1998-2001)," in *NachBilder der RAF. Köln, Weimar, Wien*, ed. Inge Stephan and Alexandra Tacke (Böhlau, 2008): 232-245. For documentation of the apartment see "Ihme-Zentrum war die Terrorzentrale der RAF in Hannover," *Hannoversche Allgemeine Zeitung*, February 4, 2011, http://www.haz.de/Hannover/Aus-der-Stadt/Uebersicht/Ihme-Zentrum-war-die-Terrorzentrale-der-RAF-in-Hannover. The apartment and robbery are also mentioned by Schenk, *Der Chef*: 258.

27 Foster, "Archival Impulse": 5.

28 Gunter Reski, "On the Far Side of the News: Free Jazz Reportage as Representational Critique," in: Christoph Keller (ed.): *Korpys/ Löffler: Organisation 1990-2005*, ed. Christoph Keller. (Frankfurt am Main: Revolver, 2005): 961.

29 In the last decade, the underground apartment has become a relatively popular way for contemporary artists to address the history of the RAF. See, for example, Andreas Bunte's *Die letzten Tage der Gegenwart* (2006), Markus Draper's *In and Out of Rosenheim* (2012), Thomas Schütte's *Ferienhaus für Terroristen* (2002), and Johannes Wohnseifer's *Spindy* (1995).

30 Unlike Johannes Wohnseifer, who, in *Spindy* (2005), actually goes back to the

apartment near Cologne used by the RAF for a large part of its hostage taking, Korpys/ Löffler focus on yet another *Nebenschauplatz*: an apartment in Hanover that was in operation during the days of the German Autumn, but not to hide the hostage. Instead, it harbored further members of the group who prepared a bank robbery in late September.

31 "'Eigentlich müßte jeder verdächtig sein.' Das Dilemma der Terroristen-Fahdnung: Untergrund in Bürgermaske," *Spiegel,* No. 38 (1977): 22-33. Even though the article supposedly deals with the bourgeois mimicry employed by the RAF, it does not show any photos of the underground apartments. This explains Christoph Keller's reaction when Korpys/Löffler first showed him the photos they had obtained: "They showed me the photos and I thought: these are absolutely unpublished, we definitely have to make these sites public." *build.* Interview. (my translation)

32 Joachim Homann, "Andree Korpys & Markus Löffler," in: Gijs van Tuyl (ed.): *German Open. Gegenwartskunst in Deutschland. Ostfildern bei*, (Stuttgart: Hatje Cantz, 2000). (my translation, no pagination)

33 Meyer, *Return of the Sixties*: 330. This personal connection is pushed even further when the artists decide to include, in one version of the installation, some Super 8 films that one of them shot as a youth in 1977/78. The films (*Manöverkritik* 1977/ 1996) are uncanny and uncomfortable reenactments of war scenes, loosely alluding to World War II.

34 Diedrich Diederichsen, "BRD 2004: The RAF as Headscarf," in: Christoph Keller (ed.), *Korpys/ Löffler: Organisation 1990-2005*. (Frankfurt am Main: Revolver, 2005): 328.

35 Don DeLillo, *Mao II*. (London: Vintage 1991): 41. This very notion of a potential competition between artists and terrorists was taken up again and satirized by Erin Cosgrove in her novel *The Baader Meinhof Affair* (2002). She writes: "But most terrorists are artist wannabes. They wanna change the way people think, but they're too lazy to do something cool like, say, make a sculpture, paint a picture, or whatever, so they resort to violence. I mean, violence does change thinking, but never for the better. If you think of the most radical stuff in Germany in the seventies, you don't think of the Baader-Meinhof Gang. You think of Fassbinder or

early Kiefer." (Erin Cosgrove,: *The Baader-Meinhof Affair*. (New York: Printed Matter, 2002): 170).

36 Thomas Elsaesser, *Terror und Trauma: Zur Gewalt des Vergangenen in der BRD* (Berlin: Kadmos, 2006/07): 100-101. Elsaesser proposes to look at the RAF through the lens of conceptual art, but ultimately concedes that the RAF failed not only in political, but also in artistic terms. This chapter is based on an article that was first published in English as "Thomas Elsaesser: Antigone Agonistes: Urban Guerilla or Guerilla Urbanism? The Red Army Faction, *Germany in Autumn* and *Death Game*." In: Joan Copjec, Michael Sorkin (ed.), *Giving Ground: The Politics of Propinquity*. (London: Verso, 1999): 267-296.

37 Boris Groys, ed., "Das Schicksal der Kunst im Zeitalter des Terrors," in *Die Kunst des Denkens*. Hamburg: Philo Fine Arts, 2008): 49-67.

38 Another potential trace leads to *documenta 6,* which took place at the same time as the German Autumn of 1977. It not only coincided with the events, but also included a section on utopian design for the first time. And even though this section was not devoted to interior design or architecture, it picked up on the other space central to terrorism's topography: the car.

39 Konrad Lueg and Gerhard Richter, "Living with Pop: A Manifestation for Capitalist Realism," in: *Gerhard Richter: The Daily Practice of Painting: Writings 1962-1993*, ed. Hans Ulrich Obrist. (London: Thames & Hudson, 1995): 18-21. For a discussion of the work within the context of West German Pop, see Christine Mehring, "The Art of a Miracle: Toward a History of German Pop, 1955-72," in: Stephanie Barron, Sabine Eckmann (eds.), *Art of Two Germanys: Cold War Cultures*. (New York: Abrams/ Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 2009): 152-169.

40 *Kommune I: Gesammelte Werke gegen uns* (Berlin: Self-Published, 1967). (my translation. The slogan "burn warehouse, burn" is originally in English. Choosing the term "warehouse" over "department store" reveals the authors' German background, as the German word for department store is *Warenhaus*.)

41 For a history of Kommune I and a survey of the stories around the leaflets, see Ulrich Enzensberger, *Die Jahre der Kommune I. Berlin 1967-1969* (Munich: Goldmann, 2006). For a documentation of the trial, see *Kommune I: Gesammelte Werke gegen uns. Kommune I: Klau mich*. (Frankfurt am Main: Edition Voltaire,

1968). For an analysis of avant-garde traditions, see Sara Hakemi, *Anschlag und Spektakel. Flugblätter der Kommune I, Erklärungen von Ensslin/ Baader und der frühen RAF*. (Bochum: Posth Verlag, 2008).

42 Bernward Vesper, "Nachwort zu Baader, Ensslin, Proll, Söhnlein: Vor einer solchen Justiz verteidigen wir uns nicht. Schlusswort im Kaufhausbrandprozeß," in: Gudrun Ensslin, Bernward Vesper, *Notstandsgesetze von Deiner Hand. Briefe 1968/69.* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2009): 161-170.

43 Andreas Huyssen, "The Cultural Politics of Pop: Reception and Critique of US Pop Art in the Federal Republic of Germany," in: *New German Critique*,. No. 4 (Winter, 1975): 78. For a survey on the importance of design in postwar Germany see Paul Betts, *The Authority of Everyday Objects: A Cultural History of West German Industrial Design.* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 2007).

44 The connection to Antonioni's *Zabriskie Point* (1970) is suggested by the similarities in colors and shapes between the large-scale photographs in *Conspirative Housing Concept "Spindy"* and the last scenes of the movie. It is driven home by a video often shown in conjunction with the installation. *Studio 77* (1997) is a five-minute video loop presenting explosions in slow motion and in an aesthetic very similar to that employed by Antonioni. This visual proximity is further emphasized by the 1970 Pink Floyd song "Come in Number 51, Your Time is Up," which is used in both films. However, what explodes in *studio 77* are mainly symbols of high modernism, and not just of consumer culture.

45 Hal Foster, *The Return of the Real: The Avant-Garde at the End of the Century*. (Cambridge Mass.: MIT, 1996): xii.

46 Hans Ulrich Obrist, *Thomas Demand und die Nationalgalerie: Gespräch über die Ausstellung mit Hans Ulrich Obrist, Berlin 2009* (Köln: Verlag der Buchhandlung Walther König, 2009), 46. (my translation) The example here is the Pavilion of the German Chancellor in Bonn that had been turned into a museum site. Another example concerns the terrorist attack at the Olympic Games in Munich in 1972. As Mark Godfrey reports, Demand has the infamous photo of one of the terrorists standing on a balcony in the Olympic village in his image bank, but has decided not to rework it, because it is too well known and its subject matter is too closely tied to

other themes the artist has already dealt with in the past. (Mark Godfrey, "Nationalgalerie," in *Thomas Demand. Nationalgalerie. Bildlegenden von Botho Strauß*, ed. Udo Kittelmann (Göttingen: Steidl Mack, 2009): 3.

47 "'Eigentlich müßte jeder verdächtig sein.' Das Dilemma der Terroristen-Fahdnung: Untergrund in Bürgermaske." *Spiegel*, No. 38 (1977): 22-33. Interestingly enough, this is the same article I already mentioned in connection with Korpys/Löffler's exploration of the RAF's underground apartment. And there is indeed a connection between the two events, or the sites rather, as the flat in Hanover that Korpys/Löffler take as their conspirative model was also used to construct the rocket launcher for the attack in Karlsruhe. The two stories thus coincide in an anonymous high rise in Hanover; a fact that only the local press found worthy of mention.

48 Franz Wördemann, *Terrorismus: Motive, Täter, Strategien. Unter Mitarbeit von Hans-Joachim Löser.* [1977] (Frankfurt am Main, Berlin: Ullstein, 1979): 15. (my translation)

49 The attack with the rocket launcher was also briefly picked up by Marcel Odenbach in his video *To Stay in a Good Mood or the Spoilsports* (1977/78). Korpys/Löffler also explore the connection between the artist studio and the attack in *Sand Heap* (1996).

50 Thomas Demand and Hans Ulrich Obrist, *The Conversation Series 10*. (Köln: Verlag der Buchhandlung Walther König, 2007): 63. (my translation)

51 Roxana Marcoci, "Paper Moon," in *Thomas Demand*, ed. Roxana Marcoci (New York: The Museum of Modern Art/ D.A.P., 2005): 12.

52 Thomas Demand quoted after by Francesco Bonami, "Ghosts," in: Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain (ed.): Thomas Demand, ed. Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain (London: Thames & Hudson, 2000): 46.

53 Beatriz Colomina, "Media as Modern Architecture," in: Serpentine Gallery (ed) *Thomas Demand*. (London, Munich: Serpentine Gallery/ Schirmer/Mosel: 2006): 35.

54 Rosalind Krauss, "Notes on the Index: Seventies Art in America. Part 1," *October* No. 3 (Spring 1977): 78.

55 Ibid: 70.

56 In the second part of her essay, Krauss tries her theoretical elaborations by looking at concrete exhibitions: PS 1's inaugural exhibition *Rooms* (1976), showcasing a number of site-specific installations, including works by Gordon Matta-Clark (*Doors, Floors, Doors,* 1976), Lucio Pozzi (*P.S.1 Paint*, 1976), and Marcia Hafif (*Unititled*, 1976).

57 Krauss, Notes on the Index. Part 1: Ibid: 75.

58 Ibid: 67.

59 Ibid: 78.

60 Roland Barthes, "The Photographic Message," in: *Image, Music, Text.* (London: Fontana Press, 1977): 17.

61 Ibid: 18.

62 Ibid: 18.

63 Roland Barthes, "Rhetoric of the Image," in: *Image, Music, Text.* (London: Fontana Press, 1977): 42.

64 Barthes, "The Photographic Message": 30-31.

65 Demand quoted after by Bonami, "Ghosts": 63.

66 Barthes, "Rhetoric of the Image": 43.

67 Barthes, "The Photographic Message": 30.

68 Marcoci, "Paper Moon": 21.

69 Barthes, "Rhetoric of the Image": 44.

70 Thomas Demand in: "A Conversation between Alexander Kluge and Thomas Demand." In Serpentine Gallery (ed.) *Thomas Demand.* (London, Munich: Serpentine Gallery/ Schirmer/Mosel, 2006): 56.

71 Marcoci, "Paper Moon": 26.

72 This phrase is borrowed from Alexander Kluge, who said about Demand's

work: "You could just as well say that we see the spectres of history left behind. It looks ghostly and yet realistic." (Alexander Kluge in: "A Conversation between Alexander Kluge and Thomas Demand": 71.)

73 Foster hints at this positive effect of the archive when he closes his essays with the observation that archival art shows a "desire to turn belatedness into becomingness, to recoup failed visions in art, literature, philosophy, and everyday life into possible scenarios of alternative kinds of social relations, to transform the no-place of the archive into the no-place of a utopia ... This move to turn "excavation sites" into "construction sites" is welcome in another way too: it suggests a shift away from a melancholic culture that views the historical as little more than the traumatic." (Foster, "Archival Impulse": 22.)

74 Ralph Rugoff, "Introduction," in Ralph Rugoff (ed.), *Scene of the Crime*. (Cambridge, Mass., London: MIT Press/ Hammer Museum, 1997): 18-19.

75 Krauss, "Notes on the Index. Part 2": 65.

76 Ralph Rugoff, "More than meets the Eye." In: Ralph Rugoff (ed.), *Scene of the Crime*. Cambridge Mass., London: MIT Press/ Hammer Museum, 1997): 66.

77 Ibid: 60.

78 Ibid: 61.

79 Ibid: 73.

80 Godfrey, "The Artist as Historian": 143.

81 Rugoff, "More than meets the Eye": 60.