



Stephen Gill - Talking to Ants, 2014

SIMONE SZYMANSKI

THE MATERIALITY OF PHOTOGRAPHY  
IN A POST-PHOTOGRAPHIC ERA

Photography is omnipresent. The rise and development of digital photography and especially smartphones gives an unprecedented amount of people access to a photo camera at all times. In the current so-called "post-photographic era", which started in the 1990s with the coming of digital photography, photography as a material and medium are again gaining increasing attention as what photography is, is constantly redefined. Some photographers experiment with analog, sometimes self-invented techniques and photo cameras which were hacked and remodeled. Although these photos aren't always perfect, they harbor a lot of knowledge, practice and experience, with room for chance and experiment. While the process and accurate timing play a large role, the scientific aspects (such as chemistry and physics) are also explored. Analog and digital techniques are combined more and more, and although it makes the analysis and explanation of these working methods more complex, it gives a lot of new insights in photography as material.

In her research, Simone Szymanski analyzes these working methods and places them in the context of the work of various photographers and recent developments in post-photography and new craftsmanship. It also forms the basis for a series of lessons for the Bachelor DBKV at the Willem de Kooning Academy. Szymanski developed a series of lessons based on the multiple intelligences of Howard Gardner, in which sensory experiences, nature and photography are brought together. In the lesson series "Layered Landscape", the terms landscape and layers are examined from an autonomous perspective, but also in relation to the media used. From documentary photographs to exploring various methods and techniques, both digital and analog, the students are challenged to develop their own artistic, photographic vision.

External critic: Lisa Kleeven (Head of Education at Foam Museum of Photography Amsterdam)