

A conversation
with Thomas Scheibitz
by Isabelle Graw

THE PITFALLS OF
RESEARCH-PAINTING

- IG: I want to start off this contribution to the catalog accompanying your exhibition at the MMK in Frankfurt by talking about the significance of artist's catalogs in your work more generally. Most of your catalogs have turned into carefully designed artist's books, many of which you produced yourself. Traditionally, the catalog is part of the secondary framing of an oeuvre, but in your case, it functions as something essential or primary. In this regard, your project communicates with the tradition of Conceptual art—whose founding figure, Marcel Duchamp, had already declared his notes for the *Large Glass* to be an integral component of that work. By giving such privileged treatment to the catalog, do you claim a conceptualist filiation for your work, invoking a tradition for which the picture does not end at its frame?
- TS: I once said in an interview that “the artist's book is an example of the perfect solo show.” Of course, the example has its limitations, since an exhibition can work out well, too. But what's interesting about the book is the bound format, the option of flipping through something that has a beginning and an end, that imposes concrete constraints on how one perceives it. The situation is different in an exhibition, where I cannot demand that the beholder start with one thing and finish with another. In the book, by contrast, you predetermine a method, a sequence, which points the reception in a certain direction and facilitates it.
- IG: So the advantage of the artist's book would be primarily that it allows for an ideal-typical reception? It's just that at the moment when the artist's book becomes central, haven't you nonetheless also emphasized the discourse affinity of your own work?
- TS: I wouldn't want to put it quite so rigorously. Perhaps my approach inevitably invites this sort of reading. But the question of its compatibility with the discourse must in the end remain open. Because you could also turn the whole thing around and say: the more effort you put into a publication of this sort, the more precisely you want to be understood. But that likewise becomes a falsehood when you make it a general rule—it would mean that the biggest and most lavishly produced books would be the most valuable ones, which is of course not true.
- IG: Then again, there are many differences between your books and the typical avant-garde publication. For example, one would look in vain for a programmatic artist's statement, in which you might proclaim your conception of what art is and distinguish it from those championed by other artists. The books convey your interest in certain phenomena, such as illusionism in painting, for example by integrating facsimiles of scholarly writings on such issues. Still, your artist's books do not frame decidedly programmatic propositions.
- TS: Well, that sort of programmatic proposition is what I would want to assert with my work. The energy, you might say, is in the picture. If I could make a one-to-one translation of what I want to achieve with the picture into writing—which I can't, because my medium is not language but the things I can do with the picture—I would end up with something that's as typical of postmodernism as it is hazardous: the illustration. To my mind, the illustration is a sort of double poison.
- IG: Because the picture then merely illustrates an idea and that's all it does?
- TS: No, conversely, because my statement then merely illustrates the work. This sort of illustration, I believe, is fatal in the realm of the “visual arts.” It conjures up a regulative element that constrains the potential of the picture. The question is always: do you believe the picture, or do you have more faith in the text? There is the view, after all, that you see only what you know. But I would still want to maintain that the “invented” picture, the picture you have developed, lets you show something without telling it. A film can be retold—that's what distinguishes the filmic format from the pictorial one ...
- IG: ... but a history painting can be retold as well!
- TS: Yes, but we don't deal with history paintings anymore today. And luckily we also no longer need the tools that were required for the history painting. The task of the history painting—to transmit messages—has been assumed by other media in the meantime. I am convinced that a picture is doomed once it can be retold. It needs a different quality, one that can precisely not be put into words.
- IG: On the one hand, I would agree with you that painting in particular lays claim to an aspect of irreducibility that cannot be explained away. Still, painting is also a discourse, something your pictures with their reminiscences of the alphabet in the form of quasi-letters call to mind as well. That language functions in a way different from spoken language, but it is nonetheless semiotic through and through.
- TS: But I couldn't write a manifesto, nor do I think that I need a manifesto for what I do in my studio to stand up more robustly under my own and the beholder's gaze. Perhaps that also has something to do with our time. We are still in the postmodern era, or in its final stage, where parallel worlds of effects exist side by side. Everything is fundamentally feasible in parallel—there are painters, colleagues of mine, whose method leans toward impressionism, as well as expressive visual languages, and there also still is concrete art. There used to be a linear timeline on which one avant-garde model supplanted the other. By contrast, the present situation, which has existed since the 1920s, is one of parallel tracks. In these circumstances, any manifesto would be no more than an affirmation of self, one that tells the story of one's own affiliation with certain artists' circles, friendships, dependencies, etc., and just describes the need to draw intellectual distinctions between oneself and others.
- IG: It's true that today's art world is no longer constitutively antagonistic; nor is it still characterized, as it was in the era of the historic avant-gardes, by antithetical poles. As a social universe, it has undergone strong internal differentiation, it is highly segmented, with the different segments existing side by side in apparent peace without attacking each other in public. That's also due to the necessities of a networked society based on cooperation. Virtually no one today can afford to run the risk of getting seriously on the wrong side of a potential cooperation partner.
- TS: That is true of artists. On the side of their theoretical accompanists, there have been numerous attempts in the art world to frame things clearly or put them right, which I think is totally OK. It's just that, if I look around among artists I know, there is no general practice of, say, all video artists talking about how painting is pointless, or conversely, of painters rejecting the moving picture per se.

- IG: This tolerance is also an expression of the much-invoked *post-medium condition* (Rosalind Krauss), in which art is no longer defined by the alleged essence of its medium. Your pictures, too, have broken with a restrictive conception of painting by virtue of the simple fact that they open up to the world we live in. After all, the peculiar constructive-biomorphic formal vocabulary of your pictures derives from the source materials you have collected. That becomes clear in your artist's books: each iconic form relates to a wide variety of external models—such as an architectural detail, a press photograph, or an old engraving. Now, postmodern painters such as Ellsworth Kelly already strove to anchor their abstract formal languages in the life-world. But it seems to me that you manipulate and alter your source materials more strongly than Kelly did.
- TS: Yes, and this more forceful alteration of the sources is the essential point in my work. For the past year or two, I've been studying the distinction between "representational" or "figurative" and "abstract" as well as the concept of "abstraction" as such. I wonder whether such distinctions still make sense today. I've recently received several invitations to exhibitions that bore titles such as "Abstract Sculpture" or "Abstract Painting." And what you see there is a disaster. I think these concepts, which still made sense in the twentieth century, need to be abandoned in the twenty-first in favor of a new iconographic method. I don't really feel strongly about Ellsworth Kelly—if at all, it's his drawings more than his paintings that I relate to. Because all the things in my collection of materials are really very unsystematic; the point is not the single model in a source I then adopt. I always need three or four sources—or three or four similar things—for any one picture, whose combination then leads to a fifth thing or a sixth variant.
- IG: But doesn't your use of found material nonetheless aim to anchor your abstract visual language in the reality of everyday life?
- TS: My work has to be on the edge of an invention. Because at bottom you can't invent anything. That's why I'm always happiest when I'm on the edge of an invention. I can't make up anything truly novel—that's impossible. But then you also need a benchmark that stands halfway between concrete vision and recollection. The idea always comes into being in an interstice of direct visual perception: seeing this dictating machine here, as a box—and with it, perhaps, the fender of a car that may have a similar shape, which I recall at that moment in something like a *déjà-vu* effect—will produce an idea in the sketchbook that may bring a sculpture to my mind.
- IG: When Kelly derives his abstract iconic form from certain structural models, like the shadow cast by a flight of stairs, that charges his works with the reality of life. By contrast, when you take inspiration from a newspaper image, a plastic lid, or a record cover, my impression is not that you're trying to say something about these realities of life.
- TS: That's an interesting question. On the one hand, it's probably a problem if you feel obliged to engage contemporary realities. But the wish for something absolutely timeless is no less questionable. My work moves between these two poles, between meaning and non-meaning. There is a kinship with reality, a suspicion of reality. Because I don't make anything up and experience things I translate into art.
- IG: In Frankfurt, you will present your—for now, let's call them source materials ...
- TS: ... secondary materials ...
- IG: ... ok, your secondary materials, in the form of objects in display cases and printed matter mounted on bulletin boards. (Fig. 1, p. 58) We might say that this presentation claims a high degree of reference to life's realities for your abstract works.
- TS: No. My goal is primarily to use certain visual sources to set up a valuation by cheering or denouncing very explicit examples.
- IG: Can you explain that more precisely?
- TS: I can't invent anything and I can't use what I find as it is. So I'm not going to "paint a copy" or just take a photograph of the source that inspires something in me. I have to translate it with a sort of second instinct, using that second instinct like a pedestal in order to find a beginning that ultimately also satisfies me with a picture or sculpture.
- IG: But Ellsworth Kelly didn't paint one-to-one copies either; he made diagrammatic translations and reconstructions of his sources. He did not make silkscreen prints, which would have been the way to minimize the personal intervention.
- TS: Although I have to magnify some sources, like the Pop artists, I reject the silkscreen technique for my art.
- IG: Why?
- TS: I don't mean this as a value statement, but in the final result, silkscreen printing produces a directness that strikes me as too journalistic. The picture acquires an overly general layer that, I think, would merit closer inspection. True, Andy Warhol said that "there is nothing deeper than the surface." But I would want to contradict him on this point, because I do believe that it takes a bit more on the intellectual level. You might call it a stylistic element, or the part or thing whose use interests me.
- IG: Is it the relativization of authorship associated with serial serigraphy that strikes you as problematic? By insisting on the "intellectual level," are you also trying to preserve a sort of vestigial authorship?
- TS: You could say that.
- IG: But then why do you put such emphasis on exhibiting your secondary materials?
- TS: In an exhibition catalog,¹ I did something that was probably a little too didactic: I presented the exact worksheets that belong to a specific picture and that I used in making it. Now, this explanation doesn't make the picture any better or less good for the beholders, or at least that's my impression. But then I do get asked a lot about the source for a work. I acknowledge this wish—yet I do have a problem when there's suddenly the false appearance that the path that led to my works is obvious.
- IG: Isn't this wish to see the source revealed also and primarily an expression of a more general phenomenon: the increased desire to have things made plausible? Once a biomorphic shape in your picture can be traced back, for example, to a label on a bottle, it somehow seems more plausible.
- TS: At the outset, in my sketchbook, it's not yet clear whether an idea will lend itself to implementation in something three-dimensional or something two-dimensional. But that issue then sorts itself out fairly quickly. Does it come out better when I make an object

¹ Andreas Wester (ed.), *Lineage One/Stilleben & Statistics* (Berlin: Jarla Partilager, 2011).

where I can walk around it, or would I rather realize it in a two-dimensional field? Unlike the pictures, the objects require a more thinglike quality. If you then do both things at the same time, there is always the great danger that in the end, standing in your studio, where sculptures and pictures function now as foregrounds, now as backgrounds, you find yourself in a stage décor. That would be the biggest pitfall. That's why I take so-called studio photographs. At the moment when I take pictures of my works, I can check whether the sculpture is really no more than the three-dimensional form of what is in a picture, or vice versa. That's something I need to avoid. I tend to value the sculptures, for that matter, when they are more tectonic or monolithic—in my work, these are all hollow spaces, air spaces. And as hollow spaces, the sculptures need the clear link back to the idea.

- IG: The formal vocabulary of your sculptures reminds me of Antoine Pevsner's and Naum Gabo's constructivist objects, which likewise related to geometry or architecture and eschewed representation. At the same time, their pictorial system already looked oddly biomorphic and anthropomorphic, which is very similar in your art. Why do you update this constructivist formal vocabulary? Or am I completely mistaken in associating you with this tradition?
- TS: You're not wrong, though it's certainly not like I have a catalog of Pevsner's or Gabo's work here at the studio and incessantly study them. Still, there may of course be similarities in the results. There's a concept that's of interest in this connection that is described by the English term *objecthood*. This thinglike quality, which was back then a theoretical issue, seems to me to have risen in importance since the 1920s. Today, both painting and sculpture very often leave me stuck in a thinglike experience. There are a great number of tactile or fashioned things that surround us and initially flatter the eye, serving as an occasion, as it were.
- IG: Objecthood is a concept Michael Fried coined in his famous essay "Art and Objecthood" from 1967 in order to describe the theatrical stage presence of Minimal art, which he vehemently rejected. I recently proposed that Fried's objecthood is a subjecthood in disguise, as he rejects the objects of Minimal art also because they appear on a stage like actors and interact with the beholder.

TS: On the other hand, you could also read a landscape as a large congeries of objecthoods. When I climb a mountain and look down on a landscape, it has this thinglike quality: there are distances, there are different materials that clash, we have a horizon line, we have above and below, it's at bottom really a constructed world. What Fried perhaps also rejected in Minimalism is that this art imposes constraints on itself. The things that it depicts or that it can show as results remain of the nature of details. By contrast, I'm interested in a slightly larger perspective, one that can be shown and that I think is worth making a picture about ...

- IG: ... it's hard to imagine a larger perspective than in Richard Serra. (Laughs.)
- TS: I was thinking more of wider fields, like the theme of the landscape or the theme of the still life—these are fairly large intellectual as well as spatial domains I work on. Of course, you might also advocate the idea of limiting yourself in order to then branch out. You might begin, or conclude, with structures, lapse into a fetishistic attitude toward your materials, bring technical things into form. My interest, however, is in setting things in new contexts. Otherwise there would be no point at all to painting an interior or something like an interior or something like a landscape, since these formats have at bottom long been thoroughly exhausted.
- IG: Isn't it rather that no format in art is ever utterly exhausted? But it does seem to me as though your pictures suspended the old antagonism between systematic approach and physical reality. On the one hand, the mere fact that you also exhibit your secondary materials articulates an aspiration to systematic application, to "artistic research" and working from an organized reservoir of elementary ideas. At the same time, we are faced with an emphasis on the materiality of the surfaces, for example when the paints are applied in different textures and intensities.
- TS: That is part and parcel of the process of painting. I wouldn't necessarily want to highlight this effect as a central quality of my work. Because one mustn't confuse the tool for the idea. The tool mustn't become the object of interest, since that would immediately limit one's possibilities. I take a rather pragmatic approach to my tools—they're not the primary issue. In connection with painting in particular, people nowadays

often speak of "craft" again. I completely reject this idea of an affinity between painting and craftsmanship.

- IG: Even though you reject craftsmanship, you don't delegate the process of painting—you have your objects built, but you reserve the application of paint to yourself. Sometimes it looks like you painted quickly and carelessly, while in other instances, the application is very careful; now it looks graphical, now seemingly expressive. These different textures bring the absent artist-subject into play.
- TS: I once tried to delegate the painterly execution—the results were appalling. I have the basic rule that whenever you can delegate something, you should absolutely do it. If you don't, you end up with a tacky assertion of authenticity that, to my mind, is also irrelevant. But when there's something I can't delegate, I have mixed feelings about it. To be honest, I sometimes wish I could communicate the idea in such a way that someone else could execute it as well. Only I can never convey in words how I want it done, and so in the end I do it myself.
- IG: Still, it strikes me as telling that, of all things, it is the application of paint that you execute yourself. Traditionally, color is where the impression of animation comes into being. Perhaps this suggestion of something being alive can't be delegated?
- TS: That sounds about right. Because when I stand in the studio with paint and brush in hand, I am primarily interested in the situative side of painting. You might describe this process as highly complex, because it requires you to make very quick decisions. It's basically like a game of chess—an example I like to use. Because of course you need to master the rules of chess. But to win a game, knowing the rules is not enough, there's something else as well. You need a second or third level on which the purely technical understanding of the rules is merely a customary beginning.
- IG: It's become clear that your pictures aspire to be more than the mere implementation of an idea. Does that mean that you rely on the model of a self-activity on the part of the picture?
- TS: An art where I'm purely executing something would indeed not interest me. I grandly fail every time I try to repeat a picture. When I start on a picture, I'm a thousand percent convinced that, at that point, it is what it should be. Ten minutes later, that

- certainty is gone. I have to declare the image part for part, combine it in multiple layers with other images, erase it or dovetail it in new ways. Almost every night, I make a printout of what I've done on an inkjet printer, in four or six different variants. I then use a Sharpie or pen to map out a strategy for the next steps on paper.
- IG: I'm familiar with this form of switching between media from writing. I often print out my texts and then go on writing by hand, which creates a new distance and offers better ways of establishing structure.
- TS: I need the switch between media so I can keep going the next day.
- IG: Why do you often put your objects on pedestals when you present them?
- TS: Because the pedestal's architectonic task is to connect the object to the room. (Fig. 2, p. 58) I've never yet really made a sculpture or a picture for a particular corner, and so my works need a sort of declaration of completion, a general quality that has nothing to do with the particular room, the gallery or museum.
- IG: So the pedestal is a way of striving for universal validity beyond the site-specific? The principle of site-specificity strikes me as an important accomplishment of the twentieth century, behind which there is no going back. Works of art, after all, are not meaningful per se, but only because they're embedded in a frame that also means them. The boundary between the work proper and the conditions that frame it is fluid.
- TS: I see what you mean. But would that mean conversely that a work that is presented at a site different from its original site is thereby destroyed? The medieval altarpiece was created for a church, and now it's on a wall in a museum.
- IG: But the museum ideally alerts us to these original framing conditions.
- TS: But today, the first time you see most contemporary pictures is not at their original sites but in catalogs or on the Internet. This secondary aspect of the reception, I think, is something we have to deal with. Of course, I respond to architectural circumstances. But my works must first be self-contained and, at least in theory, be able to stand their ground anywhere.
- IG: The commercial art market emerged in a process that ran in parallel with art's attainment of autonomy, in the eighteenth century; I think that's not a coincidence. The market has less use for a picture that is tied to a site or a specific social function than for a freely circulating, ostensibly self-contained object. True, even the site-specific works of the 1970s, which were originally meant to be incompatible with the commodity form, have turned out to lend themselves to restaging and commercialization. But it is one thing to address the conditions of circulation, as site-specific art did, and another to make pictures that circulate perfectly and mask their conditions.
- TS: The artist himself is probably the one who has the least interest in circulation. Once you've entered things into the operating system, it is easier to let them run along their trajectories than to intervene into this cycle. I am interested, moreover, in whether the works endure when they end up in different contexts.
- IG: On the one hand, your pictures radiate a constructive aura also on the level of the colors, which recall the aesthetic of the Bauhaus, for example in the pictures of Oskar Schlemmer. But on the other hand, they display a wide spectrum of pictorial surfaces as well, and that's where the artist-subject, which constructivism believed to have overcome, seems to leave its traces.
- TS: I think it's more that my pictures allow for recognition on the level of their motifs and composition. In the process of working on them, I do not actually spend a lot of time worrying over the question of the right color. But that doesn't mean that I'm afraid of taking the brush in hand and getting started. After all, you also can't want to write a novel and be afraid the whole time that you might not really know how to spell. Another advantage is that no one observes me during this process—for example, I dislike being filmed or photographed while at work. And if someone were to make a documentary about the way I work at some point, people would be astonished by how casually some things come into being that look like they were meticulously made, and how much precision I devote to things that exude casualness. I'm not trying to say that a smooth surface takes longer to make or that a blurred brushstroke corresponds to a fraction of a second. It may occasionally be precisely the other way around, but it is fundamentally related to the logic of brush and paint, of binders and pigments—things that are difficult to read at a glance.
- IG: Why does the aspect of composition, which has long seemed dubious in light of the historic methods of anti-composition in painting, play such an important part in your work? The champions of painterly anti-composition in the postwar era—from Ellsworth Kelly down to the early Albert Oehlen's "bad painting"—always sought to eliminate the factor of composition in a wide variety of ways, be it by giving themselves up to chance, like Kelly, be it by imposing an external experimental arrangement on the picture, as in Oehlen. With your work, by contrast, my impression is that, despite a symbolic opening made by the external reference, closure ensues, because the picture ultimately does end at its frame.
- TS: As regards "bad painting"—I can't even imagine that you can plan on making such a thing. Because that would imply that you're always sure what is not "bad painting," what is "good painting," as it were. Every time a picture turns out too good, you would destroy it, saying, "but I want 'bad painting,' bad compositions, bad colors." In a purely practical perspective, that strikes me as an inconceivable approach. But I can look at Kippenberger's and Oehlen's early pictures with a view to motifs of that sort. Still, Kippenberger's *Krieg böse* is, to my mind, a perfectly accomplished composition, everything fits together incredibly well, which makes it the exact opposite of "bad painting." Now if you apply the same problem to other media—say, to writing—it's just as true that you can't write an argumentative essay and say, "I'm going to disregard correct spelling on purpose, but in such a way that it remains legible." That strikes me as too contrived. Unless what you wanted was to write a Dadaist poem—visual poetry.
- IG: With the early Oehlen in particular, the point was more to disregard the ostensible "essence" of painting, such as its commitment to composition, by giving oneself up instead to a stupid experimental arrangement such as "paint using nothing but tones of ochre."
- TS: I'm totally on their side and know immediately what that's about. But there's also something Münchhausenish about it—as though you were trying to pull yourself out of a bog. In my view, that sort of approach is initially laughable on the face of it.
- IG: What is it that attracts you to the format of the painting on canvas?

TS: I'm interested in the object-like quality. The way I use the colors, the surface or texture, and the tactile aspect that constitutes the surface, my aim is to achieve the effect of "skin." Passing your hand over this sort of picture, you should feel something like skin—not dry, but also not moist or greasy. It should have a structure that resembles that of skin. It's hard to describe, but there's an incredibly sublime quality to it when you're looking at the fabric on a stretcher frame. That's why Blinky Palermo's fabric paintings are, to my mind, among the greatest icons—his strips of fabric sown together realize this quality with enviable succinctness.

IG: Given the external inspirations that went into them, I would have tended to associate your pictures more closely with the recent history of painting, for example, with painters like Peter Halley or Sarah Morris, whose abstract pictures likewise make reference to urban structures and architectures.

TS: I'm less interested in architecture than in tectonic relations. (Fig. 3, p. 58) Louis Kahn, to my mind, is one of the architects who handled the tectonics of spaces, surfaces, and formats most successfully. I'm so fascinated by his work also because it operates on the margins of sculpture. I think it's always about formal and spatial qualities—whether I'm looking at something by Louis Kahn (Fig. 4, p. 59) or the city map of Dubai (Fig. 5, p. 59) or a still life here on the table.

IG: You use materials of very different provenience—from a still life to a map of Dubai—as sources of inspiration, without regard to their functional contexts. In methodological terms, that reminds me of scholars in visual studies who compare pictures, irrespective of their particular circumstances, based on morphological similarities. Doesn't that mean that you ignore their specific contexts and, what is more, subject them to a treatment that levels out the differences between them?

TS: That may be so, but then I also put great emphasis on the so-called "list of illustrations." For every thing and every piece of paper shown in a plate, I give the source as well. That's also a gesture of respect for the original context, which is why it's extremely important to me. But it may absolutely happen that an overdrawn landscape from an advertisement for life insurance ends up sitting next to a landscape by Hercules Seghers. (Fig. 6, p. 59) Seghers is a good example of how someone created sites

without site-specific reference, and going against the then prevalent documentary ethos. His pictures look like landscapes on Mars. In the end, that's what I am basically interested in: that one can combine such things in order to find something new.

IG: So in your view, the specific circumstances associated with a Seghers are less decisive than the fact that its motif lends itself to your purposes?

TS: I must be able to approach a form in a way that is irreverent and nonetheless serious. That's the precondition, or else I would be completely browbeaten by the context, taking it at face value or thinking that it's set in stone or of absolute validity.

IG: How should we imagine your search for suitable motifs? Do you proceed systematically, in the sense of "research-painting"? Or do the things you use just cross your path, as in the model of the objet trouvé?

TS: Neither nor. To begin with, I don't think that anyone can claim the ability to really do complete justice to the ideal of a "systematic" approach. At bottom, that's often a misconceived form of industriousness, which has no place in the visual arts anyway. On the other hand, it would be just as cheap to wait until something just comes to you. That's another myth I wouldn't want to give any credence to. Still, even in my work, there is an instinctive quality that comes into play. Your finding something is also fundamentally dependent on the environment in which you move, on whether people deliberately or unintentionally feed ideas to you, for example through friendships or on other occasions. There are people who arrive at insights after working in complete isolation. Others rely on networks from the outset. Depending on the choice between these, the result will evince a different quality.

IG: And how about yourself?

TS: I would in fact say that I am fortunate to be able to choose either one of these two paths. I can seclude myself, but at the moment when that leads into a dead end or I come to a point where there's no way forward, I can immediately reengage in social exchange in order to shift gears. Still, things do not come to me without any effort on my part. As with a collective memory, I have a certain vocabulary at my disposal that I can draw on. Of course, I can go into a hardware store or a toy paradise or a

botanical garden. But when I need the structure of a seashell shape or a rock, going to a toy store is of course pointless. Then the botanical museum is probably the best place for me to start with. But I can't say why I get hooked on a specific image and not another. For example, I couldn't say that there are things in which I am fundamentally uninterested, or that I exclude potential sources altogether, for example, that I do not look at fashion journals or music journals or architecture journals as a matter of principle, or on the other hand, that I find images and inspiration solely in architecture journals. Still, there is something tentative about this search process. Each picture requires several layers, a sort of substructure. You have to somehow feel that you're not looking at a lucky first attempt, that the matter has somehow been enriched.