

WAITING

(A theory on the use of photographic images in Miquel Salom's work)

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Why don't we envisage a photograph as a journey instead of regarding it, as we usually do, as a reliable record of one: the documentary outcome of a trip? Perhaps because we are unable to relinquish the notion of cause and effect, believing that cause comes first, followed by the effect. Can't there be effects that are causes in themselves? As I see it, this is exactly what photographs are: effects that are there, only existing if a photograph bears witness to them. Man Ray was conscious of this subtlety, not when he created his solarizations but when he observed the outcome of the strange relationship between a body or object and a light.

This is the objective facet of a photograph. That is, what the photograph contains as opposed to its source, even if the source isn't seen until the photograph is taken. Let us list the evidential input used in photography, despite the fact that, strangely enough, not all the following are inevitably involved: a) a camera [not even this is necessary...]; b) a lens [not necessarily required on many occasions...]; c) light which affects or encircles objects; d) framing, in the sense of an area where there is interplay with light, beyond which something might exist but not in the photograph; e) the development of a plate or impregnation on a support. These five components form part of the creative process used to transform photographs into a tangible object. This is what we initially referred to as "the effect": something that exists because photography makes it exist, not because it is determined by a certain cause. All this is rather similar to certain types of paintings in which only the paint itself is of importance and not the object or message in any way. In photography, the important factor is the light. This leads directly to the generation of an image termed, in this case, a photograph.

Nonetheless, there are photographers who believe that they are recording the permanence of the object world when the present no longer exists. Their goal seems to be to capture a reality that must emulate painting if it is to be artistic or to have a unique, unconditionally attractive subjectivity. The word pictorialism was coined to designate this approach. The term calotype had also been used, due to the internal sense of homogeneity that was achieved: beauty transformed and offered in a specific form. In this case, however, the outside world continues to predominate in photographs, reflecting something very much like a unique moment and thus presupposing a simultaneous presence, sense of expression and meaning.

This is not the path that Miquel Salom's photographs seem desirous of taking, with images obtained and achieved through use of light rather than through the existence of an object that is reduced to a photographic image. No doubt these objects exist and they might well be fascinating, but Miquel's photographs have to be even more fascinating. They must only show what light has left survive, (an inherent characteristic of photography). This is the starting point behind Miquel Salom's approach to and understanding of photography.

Following similar criteria, his photographs might be compared with images of star maps and the imagined popular visions they spark off. Nevertheless, the images in these photographs are not generated in spectators' minds but through direct digital means (with no subsequent touching up or alterations), and the presential reality is only captured when Miquel Salom's creative genius is able to identify the referential autonomy that he seeks in his photographs. These images only exist in the photographs themselves. In them, one cannot find the coloured segments of Newton's disk, which generates white when it is rotated. Neither are there achromatic combinations. The photographs only show what was dictated by the

photographer's artistic sensibilities, following keen research into the technological subtleties of how to photographically record light's chromatic or non-chromatic spectrums. Are they photographs that allude to nothing and express nothing? No they are not, since they are the result of light's capacity to generate its own coloured lights, (light being what photographs are sensitive to). Each one is the result of a gravitational constellation whose presence has led to its existence, to a photographic reality: a segregated polarized stream of light that might, in a previous referential phase, have been attributable to an inorganic entity or form part of another organic one.