

*The distracted gaze only briefly captures the images that spark initial ideas. For me, taking photographs is (primarily) a documentary means of supporting memory. It sorts the 'auxiliary stocks' of my work – image / object-based elements seen both inside and outside the studio – into different categories and directions. Nothing is directly usable yet: no image or fact can be immediately employed. The familiar but nevertheless disconcerting aspect of this process, however, is that I often only see things once I have photographed them. Associations are intuitively formed through comparison with things I have seen before or with found images and their similarities to the products of my own painterly and sculptural imagination. The photographic impressions and stored records of commonplace objects, together with the repeated viewing of these images, open up contexts that cannot be accessed by sketches and drawings as preliminary studies for paintings and sculptures. It is important to me that the photographs stimulate some kind of development rather than imitation. What is then actually produced in the studio may be partial déjà vus of photographs, sketches or images from media sources, or of the combination and translation of these into an artistic form. (As someone else once said, the disadvantage of photography is that it cannot show two things at once.) In other words, each of my paintings and sculptures may indirectly have two or three 'doubles' in my archive of photographs. The collected (and initially purposeless) items of documentation and information enter my structures through the back door, as it were, and simultaneously return to the realm of formal abstraction. If I later photograph details of my works or parts of studio situations (meaning a place somewhere between a still life and a 'viewing warehouse'), then only to make sure that the paintings and sculptures allow each other enough space and do not combine to produce a stage.*

*In this context, grouping the photographs into a series is the only possible way to represent and view them, as opposed to painting and sculpture, where individuality is considered a mark of quality. The methods and forms I employ in this work may reveal a general canon and approach that are made visible by the use of photography in the studio, regardless of image and subject matter. The next step in this direction would be a film.*

Thomas Scheibitz, 2009