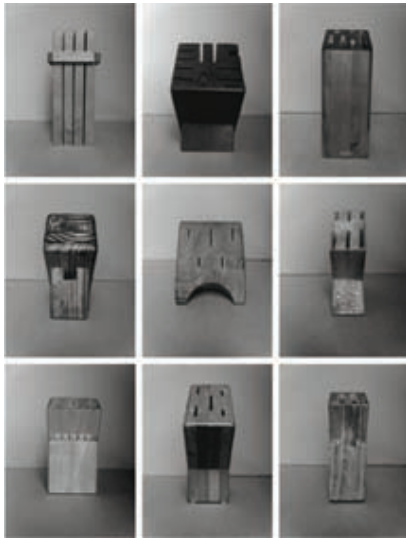


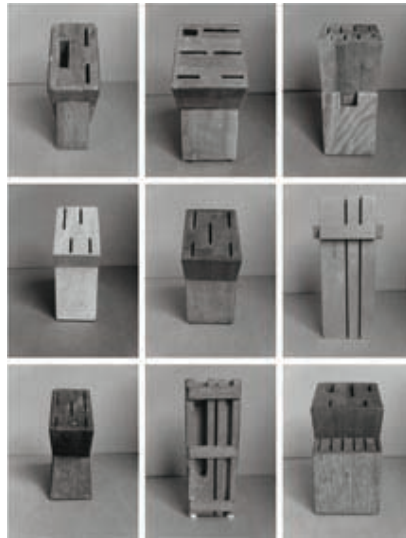
Gallery 1

Patrick Pound *Soft archive*

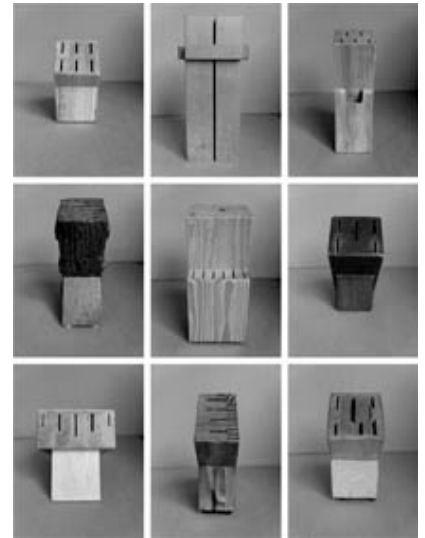
11 February – 06 March 2010



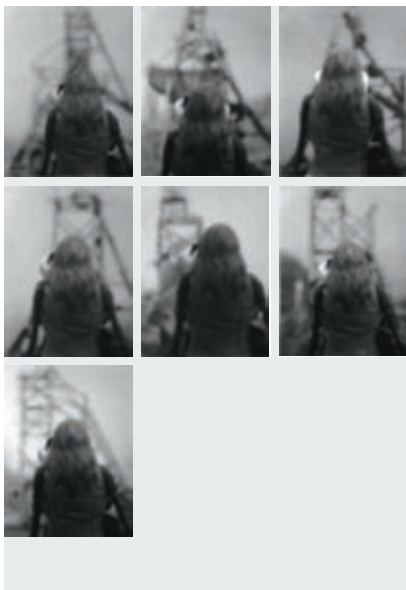
G/1: 01



G/1: 02



G/1: 03



G/1: 04-10



G/1: 11

G/1: 01. *Knife Blocks I* 2009
Giclee print on rag water colour paper
Framed size: 109 x 84cm
Edition of 10 + 2AP's

G/1: 02. *Knife Blocks II* 2009
Giclee print on rag water colour paper
Framed size: 109 x 84cm
Edition of 10 + 2AP's

G/1: 03. *Knife Blocks III* 2009
Giclee print on rag water colour paper
Framed size: 109 x 84cm
Edition of 10 + 2AP's

G/1: 04-10. *Hilla Becher and mine tippel I – VII*
2009 (seven works).
Giclee print on rag water colour paper.
Framed size: 42 x 32cm

G/1: 11. *Soft archive* 2008 (detail)
Giclee print on watercolour paper
210 x 750cm (105 x 150cm each)

[continues over page >](#)

Gallery 1

Soft archive: so much for photography

Dr. John Ray

To photograph is to get back from things. Then comes the act of selection.

Lee Friedlander put the problem this way:

I only wanted Uncle Vern standing by his new car (a Hudson) on a clear day. I got him and the car. I also got a bit of Aunt Mary's laundry and Beau Jack, the dog, peeing on a fence, and a row of potted tuberous begonias on the porch and seventy-eight trees and a million pebbles in the driveway and more. It's a generous medium, photography.¹

The camera is a collecting machine. For years Pound's art has had collecting at its core. Photography reduces the world to a list of things to photograph. Pound's primitive digital cameras absorb a measure of life and a measure of art.

Pound's *Soft archive* is a vast grid of soft focus photographs. The soft focus renders the fake and the real indistinguishable. Some are taken from cinema, some from television. Some are from the painted world. Some are from the real world. Some are of wax models and some are of celebrities. There are images of resorts and refugee camps, of terrorists and terrariums, real estate and empty lots. Some are taken out of the suburban newspapers – a world delivered to our door. This huge wall of images has the utility of an archive. It triggers memories as we recognise different things. Something comes to the fore – then something else.

The soft focus photos synthesize artful pictorialist codes with a clinical documentary detachment. *Soft archive* stands "like a mirror" that is "breathed upon and blurred". When told what each image is really of, we realize that what we may have thought of as "the truth was again an infamy and the actual a lie".² Like all photographs these are contingent and pliable records.

Pound's black-and-white mobile-phone photos of things, on the other hand, ape the matter-of-fact detachment of a government record. This show includes the *Knife Block* series. The knife blocks are discards. They were bought one-by-one, second-hand, from the same store over several years. They are accidental sculptures. They knowingly recall the typologies of Bernd and Hilla Becher who famously photographed mine tipples, water towers and other endangered industrial structures, and displayed them in grid forms.

Pound has retaken the Becher's mine tipples with his mobile phone. He has photographed a toy model of a female photographer as if she were caught in the act of photographing them. She stands in for Hilla Becher. These images belong to a series of phone photos of photographers famous for photographing things in series. This series goes under the name of *Re-photographers*. They include images of Ed Ruscha taking his carparks from above, and of Lee Friedlander taking photographs of TV screens in 70's rooms, and of William Eggleston collecting images of the American South. Again, it is as if Pound has simply taken a step back from it all, in order to re-photograph things.

Pound also collects thousands of found photos in categories. He has hundreds of photographer's shadows. He has a category he calls *Portrait of the wind*. It is filled with snaps of people in the wind. The indexical medium of photography is made to shimmer. This is art made in the wake of things. Many of these works present things that are just past their use-by date. Old knife blocks, second-hand images, discarded books, and the like. This exhibition includes ten framed title pages – stamped with the word CANCELLED – torn from de-accessioned library books. There's: *The List Maker* CANCELLED, *Space* CANCELLED, *Fishes of the Great Barrier Reef* CANCELLED, and *River Phoenix* CANCELLED. Together they make up an amusing and melancholy archive of loss.

Walter Benjamin famously proposed the idea that we might see history through the recently redundant. He thought he might capture the dialectics at a standstill, and might even glimpse a "point of rupture".³ For his unfinished (and unfinishable) *Arcades Project*, he ended up with a vast list of things. Gustave Flaubert invented two characters who tried to collect and copy the world, and explain it in a series of ridiculous and poetic home-projects. Like *Bouvard et Pécuchet*, and like Walter Benjamin's *Arcades Project*, Pound's collected works contain an element of irony and farce, and a little poetry in their systems. Collection is not simply consumption lived, it is also a way of explaining the world, and of passing the time.

Endnotes:

- 1 Lee Friedlander, "An Excess of Fact", in *The Desert Seen*, D.A.P., 1996, p. 104.
- 2 Henry James, *The American*, in *The Novels and Tales of Henry James*, Scribner's, 24 Vol., 1907-9, Vol. I, p. 525.
- 3 Walter Benjamin, *The Arcades Project*, trans. H. Eiland and K. McLaughlin, Harvard University Press, 1999, p. 464.

Gallery 2

Mimi Tong *Window to the City*



G/2: 01. *Window to the City (Wetlands Detail)* 2009 – 2010
Single channel 16:9 1080p HD Blu-ray video. Duration: continuous loop
Edition of 3+1 AP

My time in Shenzhen just north of Hong Kong on the mainland border, marked a return sojourn to China as part of a second Chinese residency. I chose to go to Shenzhen because I hadn't been before and due to its proximity to Hong Kong; a city I have visited many times. The plan was to start in Hong Kong, tracing its geographical relationship to Shenzhen.

With recent and first hand experience of several major cities in China, I wanted to cast a wide definition of the built environment. Starting in Hong Kong, I had not fully explored the green terrain in which the city is encapsulated. Staying with family in Tsuen Wan (near the New Territories district and China's border), I soon discover a vast countryside of mountains, reservoirs, wetlands and beaches.

At times when I was walking on bush trails or speeding by on the bus, high-rise buildings framed the countryside as a backdrop. As a visitor, the city's incongruous relationship with its mountainous islands was not alarming. It was a visual reminder of the compact yet diverse nature and texture of the environment. The bird aviary in Hong Kong Park is a memorable example of this observation. Inside the large and elegant arch enclosure, you can inversely view the residential towers peering over the park.

Crossing the border into Shenzhen, I entered a new and unfamiliar cityscape that is less than 30 years old. There are not many visible remnants of the former farming and fishing village. Rapid and continuous urbanisation has transformed the physical and social landscape. Millions of economic migrants from rural areas and neighbouring cities have made and shaped the manufacturing and construction industries to build China's fourth largest economy.

Shenzhen's profile as a successful case study in urban renewal made the process of finding green spaces all the more interesting. From the residency

studio, I was within walking distance of many scenic and tourist sites that could be perceived as both natural and man-made. The 'Window of the World' and 'Splendid China' theme parks are miniature representations of culture expressed through architecture and formal landscaping. In 'Window of the World', replicas of famous monuments and landforms from around the globe can be found. You can have your photo taken under the Eiffel Tower and ride the monorail over the Egyptian Pyramids, all in one convenient location.

Dotted throughout the urban landscape where examples of 'green spaces'. Manicured hedges and trees line every dual carriageway, footpath and roundabout. Potted plants were in shopping malls and museums in vast numbers, as friendly bollards demarcate viewing space. I encountered Shenzhen's green civic pride in daily transits from the heart of the city, to the suburbs and outer fringes.

In the same way the 'Window of the World' theme park is a cultural construct through celebrating scaled replicas, I too have miniaturised parts of Hong Kong and Shenzhen in the space of my photographs. These images illustrate the landscape with knowing limitations. Small yet tactile, they pose as windows onto selected views of these two cities.

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The artist thanks Simon Killalea
This is an Asialink Project supported by the Australia Council for the Arts.



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Window

Bridget Currie *Natural Units*



G/W: 01. *Window to the City (Wetlands Detail)* 2009 – 2010
Single channel 16:9 1080p HD Blu-ray video. Duration: continuous loop
Edition of 3+1 AP

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