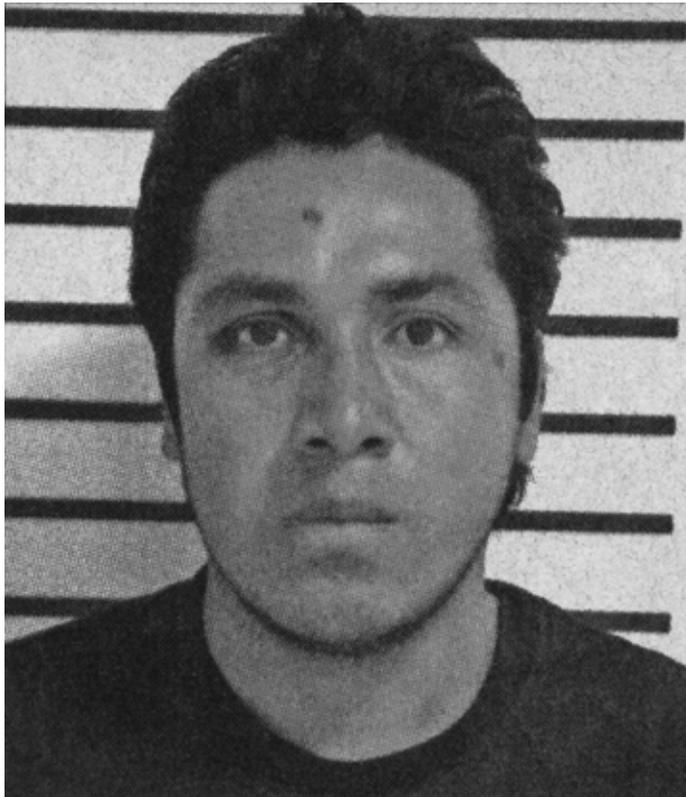


BEHIND BARS

Artistic appropriation of prisoners' headshots in the works of Susana de Sousa Dias, Binh Danh and Clarisse Hahn



1. Clarisse Hahn, *Assesino a su Hermana*, 2011, C-print, 60,7 x 70 cm, installation Gallery Jousse Entreprise, Paris (photo: Clarisse Hahn, France).

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Stéphanie Benzaquen discusses the use of mug shots in art. The role of three contemporary works containing such pictures is analyzed via the writing of several theorists. Benzaquen discusses the ways in which the artworks re-contextualize the visual archive.

What connects an installation depicting the horrors of the Estado Novo regime in Portugal between 1933 and 1974, daguerreotypes reflecting on the Khmer Rouge reign of terror in Cambodia in the late 1970s, and a series of manipulated portraits of arrested Mexican gang members? In other words: what binds the works *Natureza Morta* (*Still Life*), *Visages d'une Dictature* (2005) by Portuguese filmmaker Susana de Sousa Sias; *In The Eclipse of Angkor: Tuol Sleng, Choeung Ek, and Khmer Temples* (2008) by Vietnamese-American artist Binh Danh; and *Boyzone, Mexico D.F.* (2011) by French artist Clarisse Hahn? All three are relatively recent examples of how artists can employ existing archival documentation in order to recount or even reconstruct an historical event or episode. On a conceptual level they transform historical archives into counter-archives. In that sense they are illustrations of Hal Foster's suggestion that some practices of artistic appropriation might turn 'excavation sites' into 'construction sites'.¹ More specifically, these works show how such processes apply with respect to a particular category of images: the headshots of prisoners.

The use of identification photographs in administrative, judiciary, medical, psychiatric, and ethnological contexts to classify and control groups or individuals is well known. What happens when such images are displaced into the artistic realm? Can archival art transform such records of Order into something else? In *Natureza Morta*, a movie that can also be presented as three-screen installation, Susana de Sousa Dias combines headshots of political prisoners made by the PIDE, the state defense police of the Estado Novo, with newsreels and propaganda documentaries filmed by the dictatorship.² In *The Eclipse of Angkor* mingles photo-



2. Binh Danh, *Ghost of Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum # 2*, 2008, daguerreotype, 29,8 x 24,1 cm (photo: Binh Danh, USA).

graphs of Buddhist monks and Angkor Wat temples that Binh Danh took in Cambodia with portraits of prisoners of the infamous prison Tuol Sleng, where the Khmer Rouge tortured and killed 17,000 of their countrymen between 1975 and 1979.³

Boyzone, Mexico D.F. reproduces photographs of young Mexican criminals that Clarisse Hahn collected in local newspapers during a stay in Mexico City (fig. 1). She cropped, enlarged, and digitally retouched the images so that only the heads and bodies of the delinquents appear in life size.⁴

This paper looks at the different strategies used to re-contextualize the prisoners' headshots, deconstruct the processes of iconization attached to such photographs, and produce 'possible scenarios' for bearing witness to political and social forms of violence.⁵

Artistic representation of violence

Whether and how photographs related to situations of terror and repression can be used in artworks is

an ongoing debate. To understand the contribution to the discussion made by *An Archival Impulse*, it might be useful to briefly indicate areas where Foster's analysis of archival art interacts with other discourses on artistic representations of violence. One notion, crucial in the case of prisoners' headshots, is what Holocaust scholar Marianne Hirsch calls the 'monocular seeing that conflates the camera with a weapon'.⁶ It places the viewer in an awkward position – 'the same position as the lackey behind the camera', to quote Susan Sontag.⁷ To break with the perspective of the oppressor or perpetrator and give rise to other responses is a central issue to artists who recycle such images. One option is to resort to the 'nonhierarchical spatiality' of the installation format.⁸ The latter provides another site, physically and metaphorically, for re-seeing the photographs. It generates active (at times bodily and participatory) forms of reception that radically alter the act of looking at the prisoners' faces. The transformation from voyeuristic to experiential opens up the way for redeeming the photographs. The result, the production of 'new orders of affective association', in Foster's terms,⁹ reminds of the 'corrective caption' that Ulrich Baer points out in different contexts of appropriation.¹⁰ The images are ascribed as new sets of meaning that enable both a critical engagement with the power that produced the records, as well as empathic relations with the people who appear in the pictures.

It could be useful in this context to recall the idea of reversibility of archival photographs, indicated by Allan Sekula in *The Body and the Archive*. The 'reversibility' results from something intrinsic in photographic portraiture, 'a system of representation capable of functioning both *honorifically* and *repressively*', as well as from the structure of the archive itself, 'a vast substitution set, providing for a relation between images'.¹¹ Such reversibility evokes the idea of a fluid boundary to be articulated in artworks – between past and present, inside and outside, positive and negative, documentary and aesthetic, cognitive and empathic. The fourth and last notion which ought to be mentioned, is that of 'sense-memory'. Art historian Jill Bennett defines it as 'not so much *speaking of* but *speaking out of* a particular memory or experience. In other words, speaking from the body *sustaining sensation*'.¹² 'Sense-memory' points to the importance of the artist's initial encounter with the images in shaping the visual language through which the latter will



3. Susana de Sousa Dias, *Natureza Morta (Still Life)*, *Visages d'une Dictature*, 2005, image from the movie (photo: Susana de Sousa Dias, Portugal).

be re-mediated (Foster too underlines biographical aspects at play in the choice of the appropriated archive). It also evokes counter-narratives in that it posits individual perceptions if not against, then beside official, canonized, or simply collectively circulated versions. It is within this constellation – of archival impulse, monocular seeing, corrective caption, reversibility of the archive, and sense-memory, – that this paper will examine *Natureza Morta*, in *The Eclipse of Angkor* and *Boyzone*, Mexico D.F.

Still life of a statocracy

Susana de Sousa Dias started her research in the archives of the PIDE in 2000. The Estado Novo's

secret police occupies a particular position in the collective memory of Salazar's regime since it crystallizes different phases in the 'politics of past' in post-dictatorship Portugal, from retaliation to reconciliation, from erasure to re-emergence of trauma narratives.¹³ When Sousa Dias browsed for the first time through the big albums containing the photographs of political prisoners, she felt overwhelmed (fig. 3). There was in these portraits 'something that [could not] be explained, let-alone appropriated', she recalls.¹⁴ It is this 'something' that *Natureza Morta* wants to re-present, creating for the viewer the sensation experienced by the filmmaker when confronting the PIDE's records. To do so Sousa Dias operates at two levels: she



4. Susana de Sousa Dias, *Natureza Morta* (Still Life), *Visages d'une Dictature*, 2005, image from the movie (photo: Susana de Sousa Dias, Portugal).

deconstructs from within the Estado Novo's iconography, and she creates another perceptual framework for the portraits. This twofold process points to what Allan Sekula locates the 'essential unity' of the archive in the fact that images of 'moral exemplars' (for instance military and clergy) and 'embodiments of the unworthy' (such as political opponents and colonized populations) stem from the same set of representational and ideological principles.¹⁵ In that sense *Natureza Morta* is concerned with the polarity of images, the latter's charge being defined by the environment in which they appear; by the montage. Since there is no existing material filmed by opponents of the Estado Novo, Sousa Dias has had to show the behind-the-scenes of the dictatorship on the basis of its self-representations.¹⁶ Her exposure of the regime's visual rhetoric relies on de-familiarizing its images, what she calls, in reference to Georges Didi-Huberman, the 'malaise of the image'.¹⁷ *Natureza*

Morta re-views the dictatorship's archival material under the sign of the 'symptom'. Sousa Dias resorts to cinematic strategies such as slow motion and zooming-in, to disrupt official representations and to make visible those things or relations that were previously inaccessible. A sequence showing the Portuguese army in Malele, Congo, 'befriending' the local population illustrates such a process. Dias slows down the original rushes, in which the soldiers cheer on Congolese boys performing a traditional dance, and shifts the attention from the military to the children. The good-natured atmosphere the propaganda film sought to convey gives way to the feelings of sadness and humiliation that can be read on the boys' faces. Dias also eliminates the narrative frameworks that usually mediate historical documents and replaces them with multiple registers of sensory experience, thereby opening up embodied access to the material. *Natureza Morta* does not include textual and verbal communication

or chronological markers. It is a non-linear, quasi-anachronistic, journey into the Estado Novo. The estrangement is heightened by the electro-acoustic musical score, itself a non-narrative composition, created for the occasion by composer António de Sousa Dias. The viewer, deprived from any fixed position, has 'to find her own space between the space proposed by the images and the space proposed by the sound'.¹⁸ The PIDE photographs of political prisoners are thus integrated into a synesthetic tapestry, leaving their meaning to be constructed over and over again. They are taken out of the secret police's filing cabinets and brought into another context, namely the testimonial one. They do not 'speak' about the dictatorship but rather mediate affects about it.¹⁹ The slight wavering of the camera filming the headshots challenges the 'monocular seeing' originally implied in the photographs, since its effect prevents the spectator from staring at the faces. It also adds to the feeling, sustained by the static sound that accompanies them, that the pictures 'come to life' – become a 'still life' (fig. 4). The photographs become the emblematic portraits of what many Portuguese lived through during the Estado Novo years as time stood still, brought to a halt by the backward-looking ideology of the regime, and deprived of a future by the lack of hope. In this respect the mug shots embody an experience, rather than a history, of the dictatorship.

Rescuing individuals from oblivion

During his visit to the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum in 2008, Binh Danh re-photographed mug shots of prisoners, which make up part of the permanent display in the museum. He made several works based on these photographs.²⁰ In *the Eclipse of Angkor*, the latest series, he combines the portraits with photographs he took of Buddhist monks and Angkor Wat temples while in Cambodia. The work reflects in many ways on the encounter with the memory of Khmer Rouge atrocities. The experiential dimension of the confrontation with the headshots is a central issue to Dahn. In Tuol Sleng visitors are surrounded by thousands of portraits. Overwhelmed by the amount they can hardly do more than catch a glimpse of them. In such numbing conditions seeing so many faces is like seeing (and remembering) none. The fact that this way of looking inadvertently reiterates the objectifying perspective of the perpetrators themselves both-

ers Danh.²¹ That is why he re-introduces an aspect that was hitherto absent from the pictures: time. The lengthy exposure involved in producing the daguerreotypes clashes with the de-humanizing recording of inmates at Tuol Sleng, photographed one after another. By printing the portraits directly onto metal plates, the artist transforms the headshots from a simplistically reproducible image into an art object. As a 'corrective caption', he invests each portrait 'with a significance and uniqueness that offsets the detached, bureaucratic objectivity of the original photographs' and rescues individuals from oblivion (fig. 2).²² From afar the daguerreotypes look like framed silver mirrors. The viewer must stand up close and directly in front of them in order for the negative image of the daguerreotype, reflecting the beholder's silhouette, to turn positive, become visible (fig. 5). By physically bringing the spectator into the frame and making him or her part of the image, Danh not only creates a 'temporality of simultaneity' with the prisoners but he also creates a shared space in which the beholder can no longer take on the 'position of the lackey'.²³ Thus, he generates a transformative experience for each viewer, holding the viewer responsible for forming a special bond with the deceased and keeping the victim 'alive' in his or her own memory and body.²⁴ This is also a very acute example of a non-hierarchical spatiality. In *the Eclipse of Angkor* relocates the emphasis from the scale of the crime as a phenomenon to the victimized subject. Danh's search for another kind of relation to the portraits favours affective concerns over cognitive ones. At the same time his reflection on the effects and limits of the museum display is part of a broader and more socio-politically oriented analysis of Khmer Rouge memory. The combination of the Tuol Sleng mug shots and the pictures of Angkor Wat transforms Cambodia into a postcard country whose topography includes only death sites and temples. As such it yields a critique of dark tourism, targeting its producers and consumers alike. While the work is clearly inspired by Danh's own experience in Tuol Sleng – it conjures up sensations he associates with his visit – the artist's sense-memory also opens up to issues of the politics of remembrance in Cambodia.²⁵ One of the daguerreotypes shows a carving at the temple in Banta Srey of the snake-god Rahu swallowing the sun and causing an eclipse. Danh photographed it because he remembered the picture of a female Khmer Rouge



5. Binh Danh, *Skulls of Choeng Ek*, 2008, daguerreotype, 44,5 x 58,5 cm, installation Eleanor D. Wilson Museum, Hollins University Roanoke, Virginia (photo: Binh Danh, USA).

troop dancing in front of that very carving.²⁶ The juxtaposition of Tuol Sleng and Angkor Wat reminds us that the Khmer Rouge, far from rejecting Cambodia's past in the name of Communism, greatly admired the Angkor Kings who themselves had enslaved and worked to death their population in order to build temples. Such 'continuity' tends to be downplayed in contemporary Cambodia where the Khmer Rouge regime is presented as an isolated and almost alien event. The headshots are thus integrated into a cycle where beauty and violence, light and darkness, positive and negative intertwine in complex ways and create changing historiographical and cultural perspectives.²⁷

Archetypal criminal

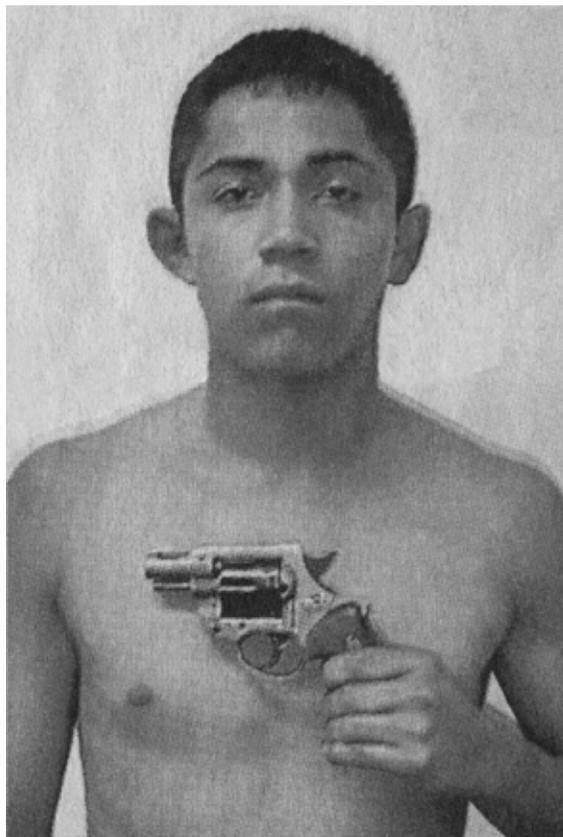
Boyzone, Mexico D.F is rooted in Clarisse Hahn's childhood memories, and as such stems from her sense-memory. Newspaper articles about young criminals, which the artist read during her three-month stay in Mexico City in 2008 brought back (obviously with a higher degree of violence) stories about the gang of teenagers whom as a child she was not authorized to hang out with because of their 'bad reputation'. Struck by the repetition of narrative patterns, she began looking for the archetypes at work in such stories, and soon extended her research into their illustrations. There is a long-established tradition of representation of urban violence in Mexican media. However, it is not the history of *judiciales* photographs (pictures

of crimes, criminals, and law enforcement) with which Hahn is primarily concerned.²⁸ Rather, she is interested in connections between the manufacturing of the 'villain' in Mexican media today, and cross-cultural representations of youth, masculinity, group bonding, and marginality.²⁹ Hahn collected from Mexico City newspapers pictures that were taken by police officers or journalists during or just after the arrest of juvenile delinquents. These photographs are mostly small images badly printed on recycled paper. They show the boys in staged poses: their torso's naked, hands tied behind the back, or holding a gun (fig. 6). The pictures by no means evoke empathy for the individuals, or invite the viewer to read the boys' faces (most of them are terrified at the prospect of spending ten or twenty years in Mexican jails). Rather, the pictures sustain social control by proving that the police do their job; confirming readers in their feeling of belonging with the other, right side of the divide, that of law-abiding citizens; and potentially turning the readers into vigilante viewers. In that sense, the photographs are interchangeable representations of a 'biotype', a 'criminal organically distinct from the bourgeois'.³⁰ Indifference as to the fate of these young men does not preclude, and might even support, feelings of voyeuristic pleasure at the sight of the humiliated and soon-to-be punished bodies of young men. Casualties of social and economical violence in Mexico (most of the boys live in slums), these criminals are 'sacrificed' a second time on the altar of catharsis for the satisfaction of a society fascinated by its own violence. As Giovanna Zapperi emphasizes in the text accompanying Hahn's recent exhibition of the photo series, *Boyzone, Mexico D.F* is an attempt to turn 'the anonymous image of fear' into 'something that looks like a portrait'.³¹ The establishment of biotypes, Allan Sekula argues, requires that 'the circumstantial and idiosyncratic' become 'typical and emblematic'.³² It is exactly such a transformation that Hahn reverses. She wants to bring back to the surface of the image the individuals erased by generic classifications. To do so she re-stages stereotypical representations of the biotype. Through the enlarged format and visible grain of the re-printed photographs she emphasizes the theatricality of the stereotypes and their connection to either mass-cultural imagery or art history.³³ For instance, the naked torso thus presented immediately conjures up the figure of Saint Sebastian and the set of

(often erotic) references that accompanies it. The fact that Hahn also reverses traditional roles in art history, as she substitutes the male artist dealing with female bodies with the female artist looking at male bodies, adds to the counter-positions that *Boyzone, Mexico D.F* opens up. The photographs that the artist collected were crumpled and covered with stains. Hahn digitally erases the blotches and the most visible creases. She repairs the faces and in the process restores the boys' dignity. The presentation of the 'corrected' images as an installation cancels out the visual economy in which the original mug shots were traded and in which the relationship between viewers/readers, criminals, and police was grounded. The 'monumentality' of the prints renders the portraits more physically present in the space. Their materiality, sustaining emotions, re-mobilizes the spectator into a face-to-face with young men, guilty perhaps, but in possession of a subjective identity.

'Archival art' as traumatic realism

'Can the photographs reside in the archive as objective historical documents and simultaneously work as empathic markers in the exhibition space?' This is the question art historian Andrea Liss asks herself in *Trespassing through Shadows*.³⁴ There have been many answers to her question, from Ernst van Alphen's *Caught by History* (1997) and Susan Sontag's *Regarding the Pain of Others* (2003), to Georges Didi-Huberman's *Images Malgré Tout* (2003) and Stephen Eisenman's *The Abu Ghraib Effect* (2007) – to name only a few well-known and seminal works. An Archival Impulse is one of these answers. The notions of constructedness, authorship, and pre- and post-production that Foster stresses in recent trends of artistic appropriation, appear as so many possibilities to deal with the challenges arising from loaded images such as mug shots. These notions complement other perspectives (legal, historical, cultural) that have been developed in literature on crime, portraiture, and prison. Furthermore, as the three artworks examined in this paper demonstrate, they suggest new imaginative engagements with such images, their contexts of production, and their reception. The 'archival impulse' makes it possible to bridge the gap between cognitive and affective dimensions, a debate that takes on many forms when it comes to artistic representations of violence, from the opposition between evidential and aesthetic functions of the image, to the



6. Clarisse Hahn, *Jesus*, 2011, C-print, 41,97 x 60 cm, installation
Gallery Jousse Entreprise, Paris (photo: Clarisse Hahn, France).

primacy of word over the visual in the depiction of historical trauma. In this respect it does not only provide a framework from which to articulate notions derived from other disciplines (e.g. Holocaust studies, memory studies) and/or from which to address visual environments that are not necessarily artistic. It also produces, together with concepts Foster previously elaborated such as 'traumatic realism' and 'the artist as ethnographer', a theoretical structure that helps clarify (through artworks) how contemporary society culturally copes with the past and the visual archive it resorts to for mediating events into collective consciousness.

- 1 H. Foster, 'An Archival Impulse', *October* (2004) 110, pp. 3-22 (22).
- 2 The Portuguese dictatorial regime *Estado Novo* (New State) was established by António de Oliveira Salazar in 1933. It was based on tradition, nationalism, religion, and anti-communism. It ended in April 1974 with the Carnation Revolution, a military coup that Portugal's colonial war in Africa had precipitated. The PIDE (*Polícia Internacional e de Defesa de Estado*) was created in 1933. First called PVDE (*Polícia de Vigilância e de Defesa de Estado*) it was renamed PIDE in 1945. Thanks to its nationwide network of informers (*bufos*, snitches) who eavesdropped in cafés, railway stations, hospitals, post offices, and other public spaces, it was very effective. The PIDE routinely practiced torture on political prisoners. In the 1960s it played a prominent role in the colonial war against insurgent nationalist forces in Portuguese Africa (Angola, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, and Mozambique). T. Gallagher, *Portugal: A Twentieth Century Interpretation*, Manchester 1983, pp. 117-119. The PIDE was dismantled at the end of the regime. Since 1990 the remaining archives of the PIDE are in the Torre do Tombo National Archive in Lisbon (nowadays Instituto dos Arquivos Nacionais). The names of agents and informers are not disclosed.
- 3 Between 1975 and 1979 the Khmer Rouge, a regime that mixed ultra-Maoism and strident nationalism, turned Cambodia into a countrywide hard labor camp where two million people lost their life. The *santebal* (Pol Pot's secret police) ran prisons and killing centers throughout Democratic Kampuchea (as Cambodia was called then). Tuol Sleng (aka S-21), a Phnom Penh-based high school until the Khmer Rouge takeover in April 1975, is certainly the most infamous site of Pol Pot's terror network. About seventythousand (possibly up to twenty thousand) people were tortured and killed there. Its commander Duch, arrested in 1999, was the first senior Khmer Rouge to be prosecuted at the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia (2009-2010). Tuol Sleng was transformed into museum-
- memorial in 1979. Since then it has become a central site of Khmer Rouge-related memory in Cambodia. Over the past ten years it has featured in many documentary movies, the most prominent being *S-21, the Khmer Rouge Killing Machine* (2003) by the Cambodian filmmaker Rithy Panh.
- 4 These works are part of the ongoing series *Boyzone* (video and photography) that Hahn initiated in 1998.
- 5 Foster, op.cit. (note 1), pp. 3-22 (22).
- 6 M. Hirsch, 'Surviving Images: Holocaust Photographs and the Work of Post-Memory', In: B. Zelizer (ed.), *Visual Culture and the Holocaust*, London 2001, pp. 215-245 (232). Carolyn J. Dean reminds that the theme of the 'camera as weapon' has been a major topic in discussions on documentary photography and art theory for several decades. The issues it implies – the re-victimization of the victims, the photographer as 'voyeur', the viewer turned into object by/through her own fascination – are, in her view, part of a wider discussion on empathy and suffering, often summarized in scholarly debates and popular representations alike as 'pornography'. C.J. Dean, *The Fragility of Empathy After the Holocaust*, Cornell 2004.
- 7 S. Sontag, *Regarding the Pain of Others*, London 2003, p. 55. 'The experience is sickening', she adds, referring to the Tuol Sleng mug shots.
- 8 Foster, op.cit. (note 1), pp. 3-22 (4). Foster explains this tendency among archival artists by their aims to make physically present historical information that has been lost or displaced. He also argues that tactility and 'face-to-face' quality of artworks are means for the 'relational' ends of archival art, especially when it comes to works that appropriate images from the 'mega-archive', Internet sources.
- 9 Idem, p. 21
- 10 U. Baer, *Spectral Evidence. The Photography of Trauma*, MIT Press 2002, p. 149.
- 11 A. Sekula, 'The Body and the Archive', *October* (1986) 39, pp. 3-64 (6) (Sekula's emphasis), (17).
- 12 J. Bennett, *Empathic Vision. Affect, Trauma, and Contemporary Art*, Stanford 2005, Bennett's emphasis. Bennett derives her conceptual framework from the distinction made by Auschwitz survivor Charlotte Delbo between 'common memory' (i.e. external, reflective, intellectual) and 'deep memory' (i.e. bodily, fragmented, traumatic), which she intertwines with theories of senses (e.g. Deleuze's *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation and Proust and Signs*, Aby Warburg's *Pathosformeln*). Images are thus productive rather than representational and the affective responses they trigger stimulate critical thought. There is a shift from object to process. 'Sense-memory' taps 'a process experienced not as a remembering of the past but as a continuous negotiation with indeterminable links to the past', p. 38.
- 13 In November 1975 a military counter-coup removed from power the radical left wing army forces that had ruled over Portugal following the Carnation Revolution. It was the end of the first transitional phase marked by purges and punitive measures against those who had served or collaborated with the Estado Novo's institutions. So far the PIDE had been on the top of the list for retaliation. In August 1975 a law was passed for the prosecution of PIDE members. A 'PIDE-hunt' began. After November 1975 however the trials were postponed. Those that were held in the late 1970s and 1980s were conducted with leniency and the culprits received light sentences. In the 1980s some PIDE agents were even restored to their rights as public employees. A. Costa Pinto, 'Coping with the double legacy of authoritarianism and revolution in Portuguese democracy', *South European Society & Politics* 15 (2010) 3, pp. 339-358.
- 14 'Quelque chose qui ne s'explique pas et qui se laisse encore moins approprier.' S. de Sousa Dias and A. de Sousa Dias, 'Natureza Morta – Visages d'une Dictature: Processus de Réalisation et Composition Musicale', *Musimediante* 4 (2009) 4, s.p.. Retrieved via <http://www.musimediante.com/numero4/ASousaDias/index.html>, accessed August 12, 2011.
- 15 Sekula, op.cit. (note 11), pp. 3-64 (10).
- 16 'L'absence de matériels filmés par l'opposition au régime posait un problème

- essentiel: comment montrer l'envers d'un régime autoritaire à travers des images produites, dans leur majorité, par la dictature elle-même?' Sousa Dias, op.cit. (note 14), s.p..
- 17 G. Didi-Huberman, *Devant le Temps*, Paris 2003.
- 18 'Permettre au spectateur de trouver son espace, un lieu à mi-chemin entre l'espace proposé par les images et celui proposé par le son.' Sousa Dias, op.cit. (note 14), s.p.
- 19 In a later work, the movie *48* (2009), Sousa Dias does delve into the dictatorship. The prisoners depicted in the photographs tell about the circumstances of their arrest, what they experienced in the hands of the PIDE agents, and the way it affected their life.
- 20 An earlier series *Ancestral Altars* (2006) involved complex chlorophyll printing methods that Binh Danh had developed for the occasion.
- 21 In a 1997 interview Nhem En, the Khmer Rouge who was in charge of the photography unit at S-21 in 1975-1979, told the law scholar Peter Maguire that within a short time routine made him feel numb and he no longer saw the inmates as living persons. P. Maguire, *Facing Death in Cambodia*, Columbia 2005, p. 120.
- 22 M. Weintraub, 'Mirrors with memory: the photographs of Binh Danh', Weblog *art:21*, December 7, 2010, Raleigh 2010, *Binh Danh: In the Eclipse of Angkor*, exhibition review, North Carolina Museum of Art, USA, retrieved via: <http://blog.art21.org/2010/12/07/on-view-now-mirrors-with-memories-the-photographs-of-binh-danh/>, accessed August 12, 2011.
- 23 'Temporality of simultaneity' is an expression by Benjamin Buchloh, 'Residual Resemblance: Three Notes on the End of Portraiture', In: M. E. Feldman (ed.), *Face-off: The Portrait in Recent Art*, Philadelphia 1994, pp. 53-69 (63).
- 24 Artist in conversation/correspondence with the author (February 2010). Such conception also have to be connected to the artist's Buddhist beliefs, central to his work.
- 25 He says, for instance, of *View from the center of a mass grave*, an abstract-like image with limes and forms: 'I remember the day it was taken. It was very bright and sunny, and like any place in the tropics the sun was really high overhead, and it was projecting all these leaves' shadows down onto the ground.' E. Hoffman, 'We see all these faces – looking back at us – almost confronting us', Website *KALA*, interview with Binh Danh, July 21, 2011. Retrieved via: <http://www.kala.org/wordpress/?p=1474>, accessed August 15, 2011.
- 26 Artist in conversation/correspondence with the author (February 2010).
- 27 Hoffman, op.cit. (note 25), s.p..
- 28 One might refer on the subject to the exhibition catalog and research by Jesse Lerner on crime photography in Mexico City in the first half of the twentieth century. He names among the most important producers of *judiciales* photographs the brothers Agustin Victor and Miguel Casasola, Enrique Diaz, and Enrique Metinides. Lerner also mentions the influence of Mexican criminologists such as Dr Francisco Martinez Baca and Dr Manuel Vergara. These images – e.g. anthropometric photographs of prisoners, bodies of victims, reconstruction of crime scenes, police procedures – were central in lowbrow newspapers (e.g. *Crimen* [Crimes], *Guerra al Crimen* [War on Crime], *Jaque al Crimen!* [Checkmate for Crime!], *Nota Roja* [Crime Report], *Prensa Roja* [Red Press], and *Alarma*). J. Lerner, *The Shock of Modernity. Crime Photography in Mexico City*, Turner 2007.
- 29 Artist in conversation/correspondence with the author (August 2011). These connections were the subject of an earlier series entitled *Boyzone – Adolescence* (2006). Hahn excerpted four portraits of young offenders, accused of robbing a bank or burning a car, from the newspapers *Oise Hebdo*. They showed the men when they entered the courtroom, all looking in the same direction (probably the judge), caught by the journalist's camera at a moment when they are not aware of being watched. Retrieved via: <http://www.jousse-entreprise.com/contemporary-art.php?texts=true&id=34>, accessed August 17, 2011.
- 30 Sekula, op.cit. (note 11), pp. 3-64 (16).
- 31 'L'image anonyme de la peur devient quelque chose qui ressemble à un portrait.' G. Zapperi, 'Face au pouvoir. Sur les travaux récents de Clarisse Hahn,' Paris 2011, exhibition text, *Notre Corps Est une Arme*, Galerie Jousse Entreprise, Paris.
- 32 Sekula, op.cit. (note 11), pp. 3-64 (18).
- 33 The constellation formed by stereotype, pose, social body, immobility/mobilization, and artistic appropriation is central to the seminal text by Craig Owens, 'The Medusa Effect or the Spectacular Ruse', In: S. Bryson et al. (eds.), *Beyond Recognition. Representation, Power, and Culture*, Berkeley 1992, pp. 191-200.
- 34 A. Liss, *Trespassing through Shadows. Memory, Photography, and the Holocaust*, Minneapolis 1998, p. 10.