

few thoughts on drawing (prospects)

technology - creativity - expression - machine - body

The conglomerate 'future-drawing' triggers a cascade of words. I suppose I am thinking about how image-making evolved. About a general awareness of labour-intense hand-drawing - replaced by technology. About all those architects, engineers, scientists, designers using computers, tablets, programmes and algorithms that draw for them. I am thinking about how most of the images today are generated, or at least processed digitally: manipulated, reproduced, compressed.

But if I step back a little, I realise there is something about drawing that makes it so treasured, so elementary, so imbedded in our lives that we feel the need to constantly resurrect it and redefine its position. And if I am to foretell its future, I would first inspect drawing's fundamentals.

Defining drawing is not necessarily fruitful pursuit since one can easily get caught in contradictions or simplification. Thus I intend to *sketch* my understanding of drawing rather than provide a clear definition. Firstly, I see (and use) drawing as a way of externalising first thoughts, as means of drafting, visualising and later materialising ideas. I recognise drawing in everyday life as it stretches way beyond the (artistic) medium.



Let's take for example the status of a sketch – it is omnipresent within visual arts but also other disciplines, music, poetry, sciences, to name a few. As a form of drawing belongs to pre-verbal system of generating symbols. Before we write, we express ourselves by moving the hand with a pen leaving the trace on a sheet of paper. I believe it is this very primality, straightforwardness and sensitivity, this instant(aneous) nature of drawing that will root its presence in the future, just as it did in the past.

In my own practice, I regard collage as a mode of such drawing, namely drawing with found elements taken from their original context. By combining them into a new composition, these elements give each other meaning and reciprocally constitute a new context. What I appreciate in collaging, is its very instant language. I often combine it with gestural strokes with ink, pastel or charcoal. I find this expressive potential of drawing one of the most curious characteristics that make it intriguing also in the future.

Drawing's immediacy is, I believe, a quality that will keep it much alive in the future. In the context of contemporary artistic practice simplicity and directness are illustrated in Dan Perjovschi's work. He makes use of formally very clear and simple drawing in combination with text to communicate his view on current political and social situation. On this wise, I see its capacity in addressing complex issues in a simple, clear and legible way.



Mia Paller: Untitled (2018) - link

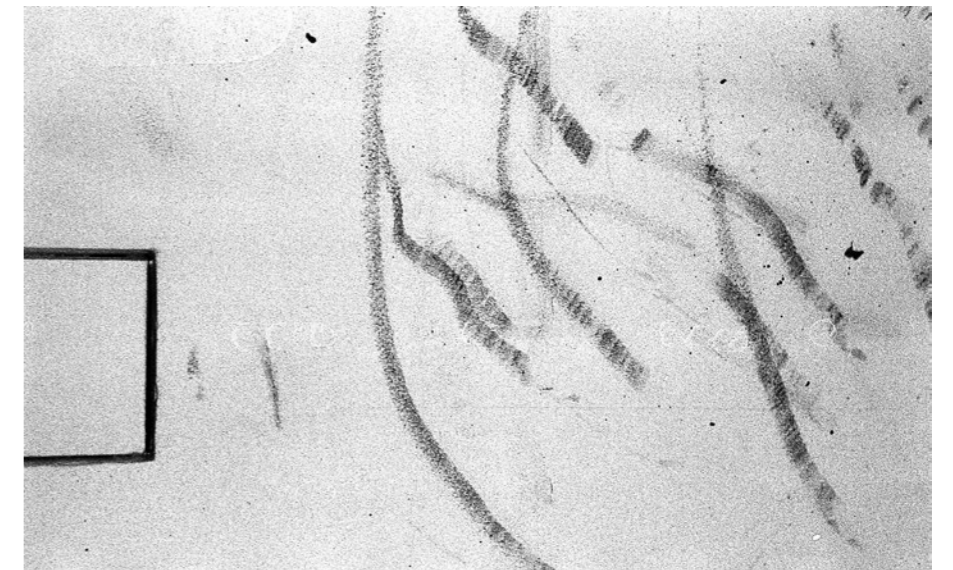


Dan Perjovschi: *Free Style* (Michel Rein, Paris, 2009) - link to vimeo

I regard drawing as an elementary mode of mark-making. Leaving a trace to inscribe our existence into the certain slice of time is, I believe, inherent in human nature. It goes back to the very myth of tracing a person's shadow - so called *origin of drawing* - or even all the way to cave paintings, to the outlines of hands. It implies drawing's close relation to human body and this is precisely the reason which makes it intriguing for the future.

New technologies transfer the experience of drawing by hand into 'automatically' programmed process. However, the bond of drawing and body is still much present even in this new technological environment. Thus, I see one future of drawing in performative practices that deal with time, body and marks.

I recognise these fundamental concepts in my current work, for instance in *Trace I* and *II*. These are artist books, showing a photographic series of stains which resemble details from paintings and drawings - brushstrokes, drips and blots. I mapped my environment by photographing these marginal marks of use. Moreover, the books were exhibited on a table, covered with charcoal dust. Clean white covers were stained immediately, and anyone who wanted to leaf through the book, inevitably left smudges. Work's content generates on its own in a performative way. Thus, *Trace* testifies to circumstances of its existence in particular space and time and illustrates drawing's fundamental relation to human body.

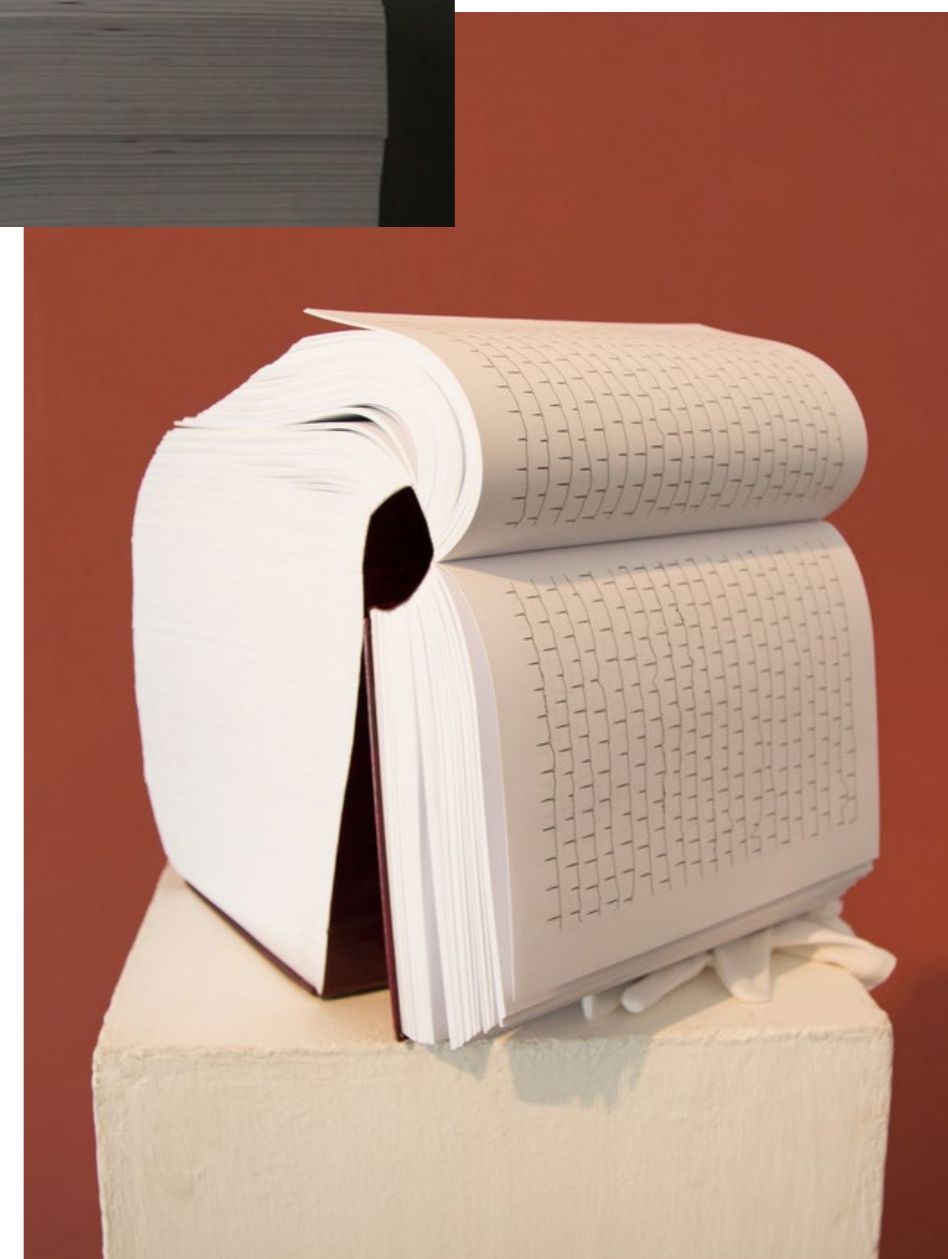
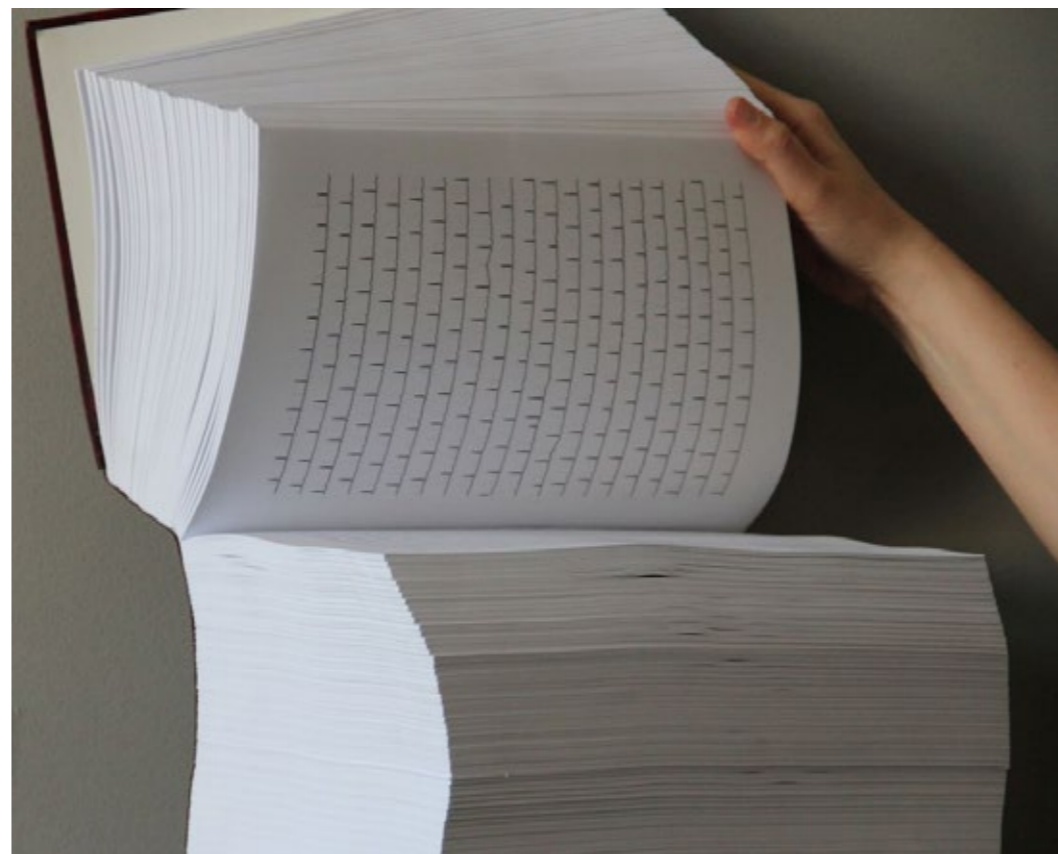


Mia Paller: *Trace I and II* (2019) - [link to web](#)

Performativity and physicality of drawing are also essential in the work of Anja Jelovšek. *June*, for example, is an extensive diary with the drawings of her electrocardiogram (ECG) which she tracked for one month. This project also reveals how artists derive new types of drawing from current technology (and the one yet to come). It seems that drawing has an ability to bridge the past and future in a fundamentally physical experience.

Just recently, I experienced VR for the first time. I expected estranged computer-generated environment, however, the tool (TiltBrush) actually felt very analogue to drawing with paint over an enormous sheet of paper. Holding the 'palette' controller in one and the 'pen' controller in the other hand, using TiltBrush indeed means drawing with the whole body, and on the infinite canvas which spreads in all three dimensions. However alien the whole CG image was, the expressive and physical aspects of the process were very close to the primeval concept of drawing. I realise that despite the overflow of new technologies which seem to overtake hand-drawing's importance, drawing remains. It resists by transforming and mutating into new hybrid modes of expression.

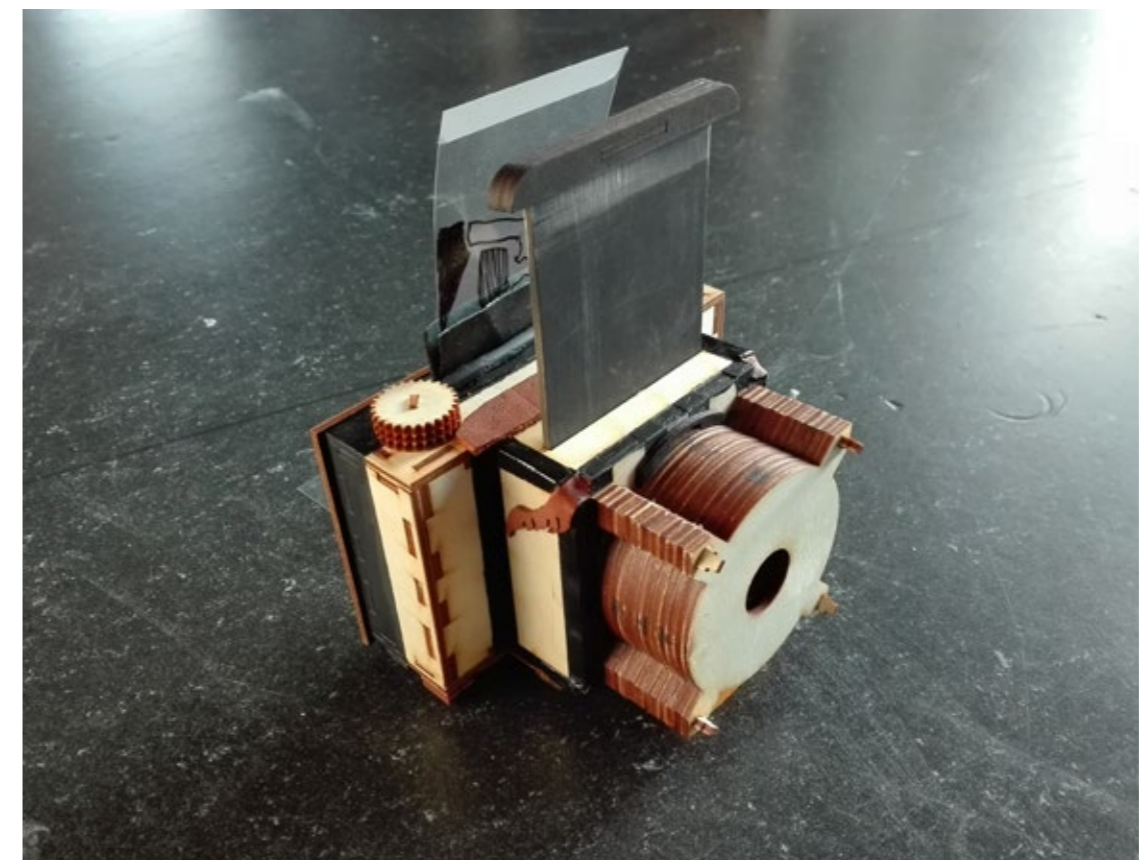
This is, I believe, drawing's peculiarity which makes it intriguing for the forthcoming art as well as other disciplines. It has the ability to infiltrate in other media - we talk about drawing in paintings, in photographs, sculpture, landscape etc. In this sense, drawing goes beyond the medium. Through my own work, I am particularly interested in its relation with photography. Even though

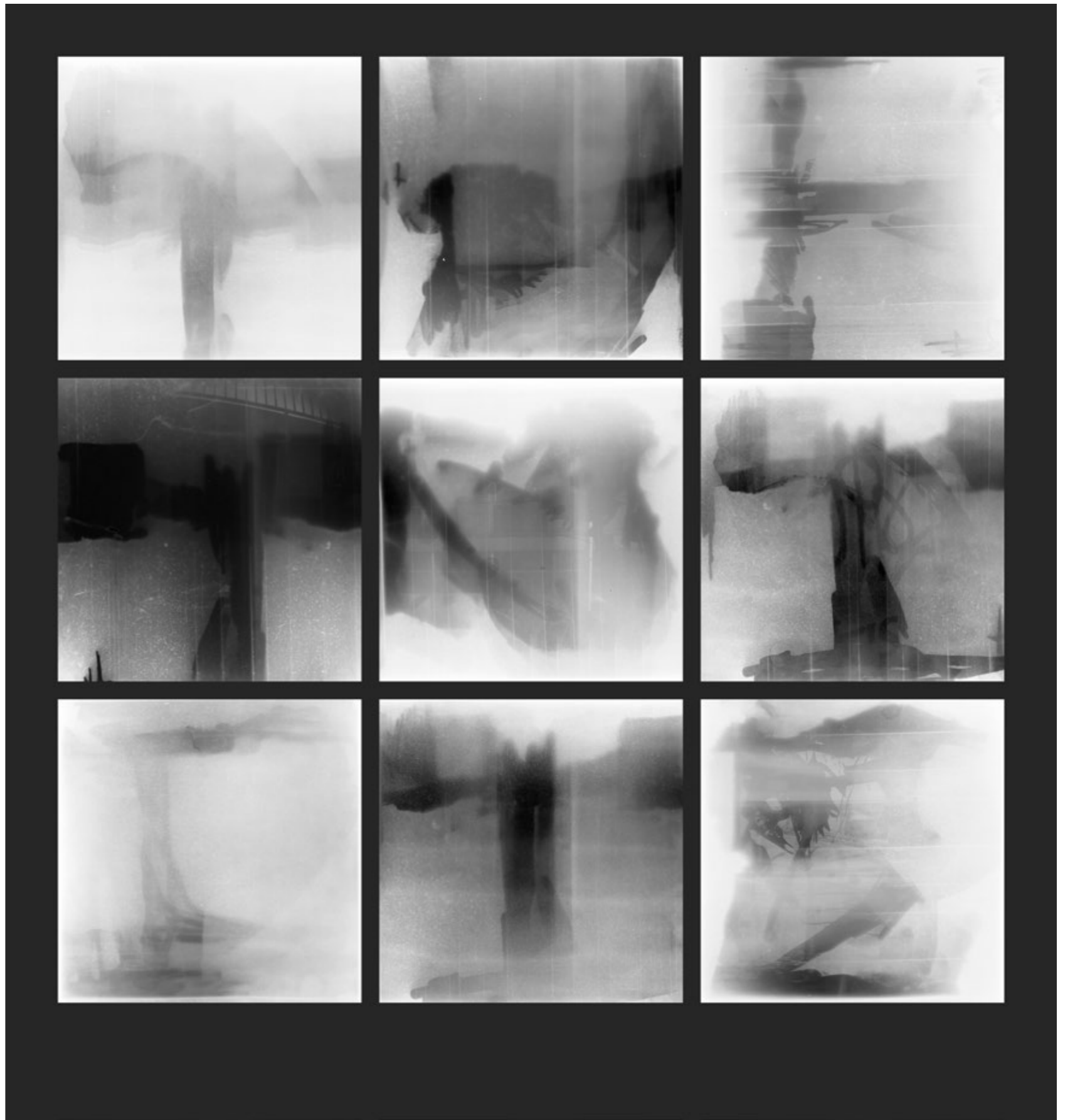


Anja Jelovšek: *June* (2015) - [link to web](#)

the latter seems objective in contrast to drawing, I explore where the two modes of representation meet and merge. Thus, I built my own camera, in which I insert plastic strip with drawings, and then take pictures. The object photographed and the hand-made drawing merge in the machine itself, resulting in a multi-layered photographic negative.

With this impromptu I tried to show how capricious and evasive drawing is in relation to other media, and in this very character I see its potential. Because it is an expressive as well as technical tool, it bridges the apparatus with human physicality. In the future, I envisage it as a form of performative practice, as an approach to technological image-making, in close relation to painting and photography and above all, as a primary mode of mark-making, deep-rooted in human nature. Drawing is - and will be - transmedial.





Mia Paller: *Drawing Camera* (2019)