

Hannah Pezzack

Unseen Platform, 2018

## Monuments

Douglas Mandry's (b. 1989, Switzerland) new Monuments series explores the transience of dissipating glaciers. Using camera-less printing processes, the artist transferred fragments of ice onto photographic paper, creating abstract visions wrought with magnetic depth and colour.

In his previous projects, Douglas Mandry has scoured a range of territories with a careful eye, reimagining the shape of mountains, waves or tropical jungles in emboldened, rainbow tones. Foreboding and eerily beautiful, Monuments represents Mandry's first exploration of his homeland, archiving contemporary efforts to protect an ethereal landscape threatened by global warming. Trapped under panes of glass, shapes drift. Lights flash, flicker and disseminate. A cold shadow, dripping with icy heat.

Monuments reflects a relationship between technological evolution and climate change. Fascinated by the juxtaposition of the natural and the mechanical, Mandry travelled deep into the Swiss Alps, capturing chasms of ice protected by man-made, geotextile blankets which cool and reinforce the earth. Switzerland is currently facing huge alterations in its snowy weather. With the glaciers retreating, freezing winters are replaced with increasingly balmy temperatures.

A fixation with contrasting and transitional procedures led to extensive research into environmental preservation. As disposable, synthetic materials are gradually abandoned, innovative technology looks instead towards tools of the past – an adaptation which resonates in Monuments. 'I discovered companies who had started to develop a storage system for

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digital data based on micro-engraving on quartz. Information can be stored for millions of years. I found it so interesting that the latest technology had turned towards natural, primitive means for inspiration.' The photogram, the earliest incarnation of the photograph, finds lineage in this analogy.

'Sustainability is now the focus in today's technological acceleration. Working on a project which chronicles the disappearing glaciers, I wanted to use a direct medium which preserved the subject. Glass plates were presented as an alternative to paper, which fades much more quickly.' A product of the digital age where images are reproduced endlessly in virtual formats, Mandry questions materiality. By utilising physical materials and printing methods, he examines notions of tangibility and permanence. Experiments with analogue reworking such as rubbing, punctuating and dispersing, reference a history of photography and archetypal imagery. In constant dialogue with his means of making, subject and surroundings, Mandry offers up new ways of engaging with the world around us.