

Daniel von Sturmer, *After Images*, CCP, May 24-July 14, 2013

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All images courtesy of the Artist and Anna Schwartz Gallery

Cover image: Production still from *After Images*

Inside image: *iPhone 5 (with cover)*, 2013, archival pigment print on rag with timber
frame, 358mm x 358mm

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DANIEL VON STURMER
AFTER IMAGES

Ibid

Looking at some shadows as you do whilst lying down, the thought occurred to me that we are on a sphere which always has a shadow on one side, and due to the rotation of that sphere this shadow travels around the surface. Time is measured and delineated by an occlusion of light and a presence of it. The constant and constantly moving shadow falls with apparent unalterable repetition, cast by and falling upon, the earth.

They, the shadows, have a ubiquitous presence and we a perceptual dependence on them, though you can't touch one or pick one up and ironically you are always almost completely unaware of them. The association for us is naturally with partial darkness, because total darkness would mean not seeing the umbra, penumbra and antumbra. You don't see shadows that much even though they define objects, though you might notice them in a negative kind of way, one that leaves you with a sense of temperature variation, or of feeling enervated.

Merleau-Ponty observes that papers on his wall appear white even though they are in the shadow of a wall.^[1] How can this be? His answers suggest that the coherence of things and the constancy of colours is due to the holistic organisation of the field; a gestalt that reveals aspects of the world's context, and the way our bodies apprehend this as invasion.

They used to think that colours are shadows, in varying degrees of density enabling invisible light to become visible. Shades of colour and tone, the means of representation of form, are a mimesis of reality and a representation of the facts – an historical equivalence of umbra, namely chiaroscuro (clarity and obscurity).

To honour this transition in language, not to diminish it, an attempt may be made here to return to a figure of speech regarding light and dark, to a basic metaphor of philosophy as metaphysics. A *photological* [my italics] and historical fact becomes a metaphor – metaphor generally understood as the movement from one state or existence to another, or from one signification to another. Just as an object casts its shadow in an Apollonian world, so it does in the metaphorical world; the attendant language of metaphysics is thrown for translation. Maybe the syntax of the translator reveals a probable structure that is capable of the production of meaning, one that positions a horizon of language in an intimate yet general relation between the photographed object and an experience of unfixing^[2] the three umbras as signs from the mirror of index.

Andy Thomson
Seoul Korea May 18th 2013

[1] M. Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, page 262 [2] In 1839, Louis Daguerre invented the daguerreotype – he called it "the art of fixing a shadow."

