







This sense of wonder

Brigitte Lustenberger

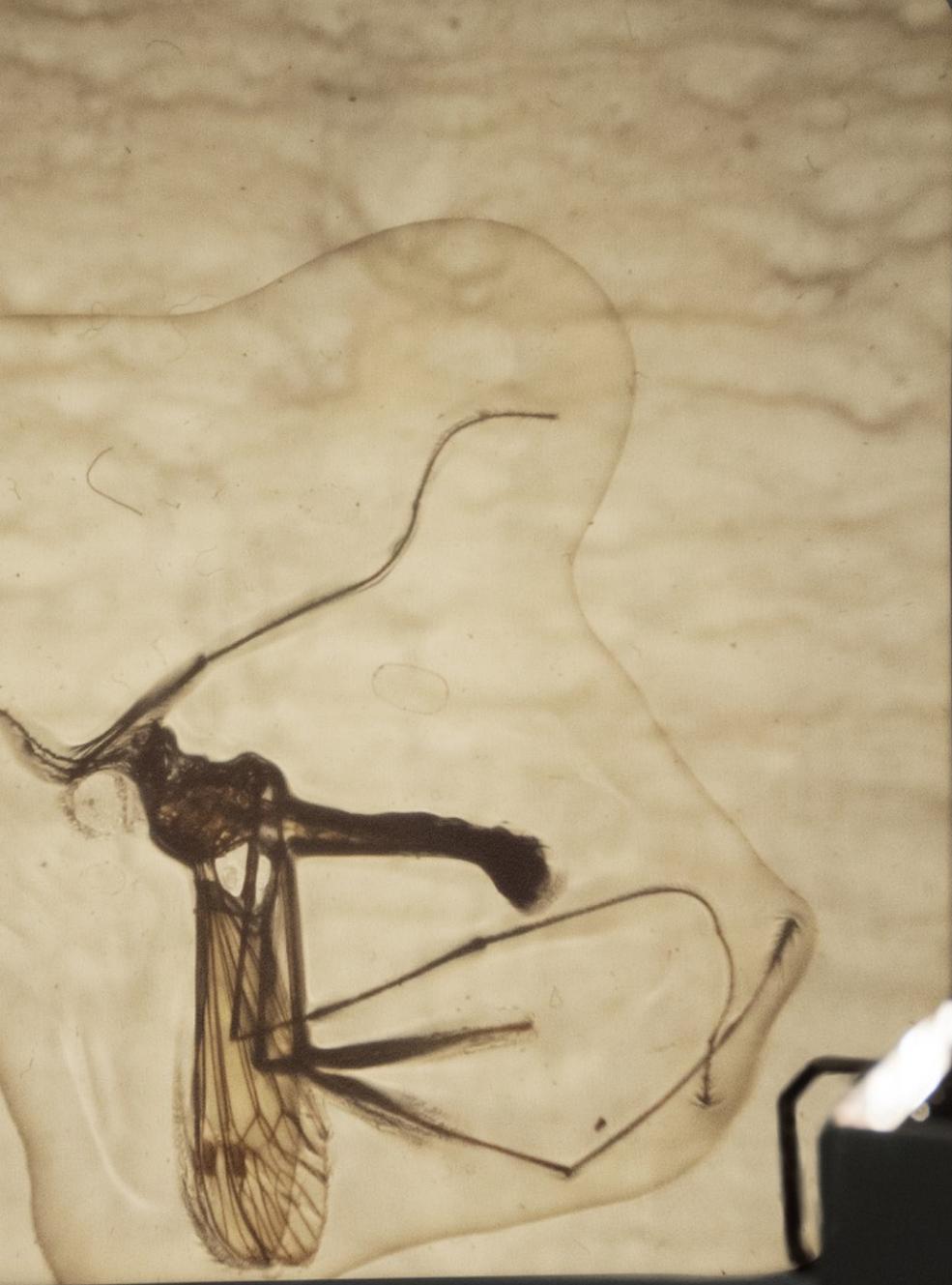
*«Life and death, the flicker that separates one from the other,
fast as a bat's wing, more beautiful than every sonnet.»*

Dorian Gray, from the TV Show *Penny Dreadful*



For years I have been developing and refining the analog and digital multimedia installation *This Sense of Wonder* – a project at the interface of photography, images of light, projection, photograms and transparencies.

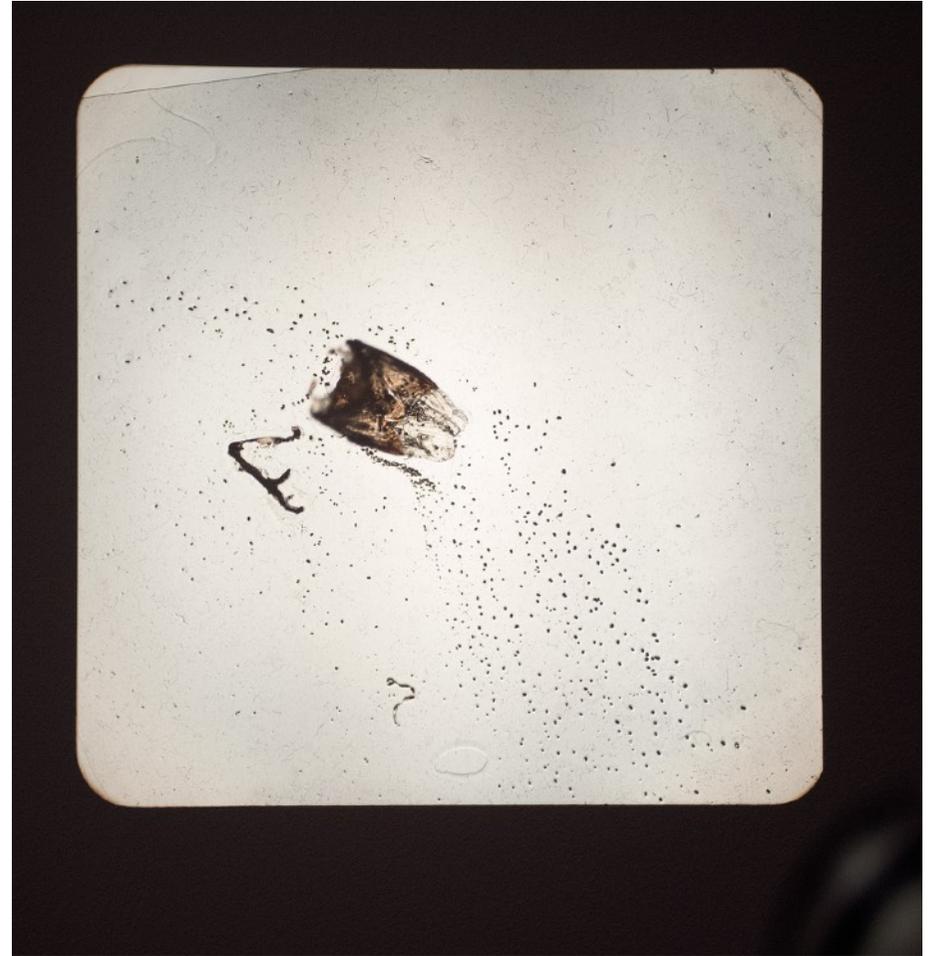




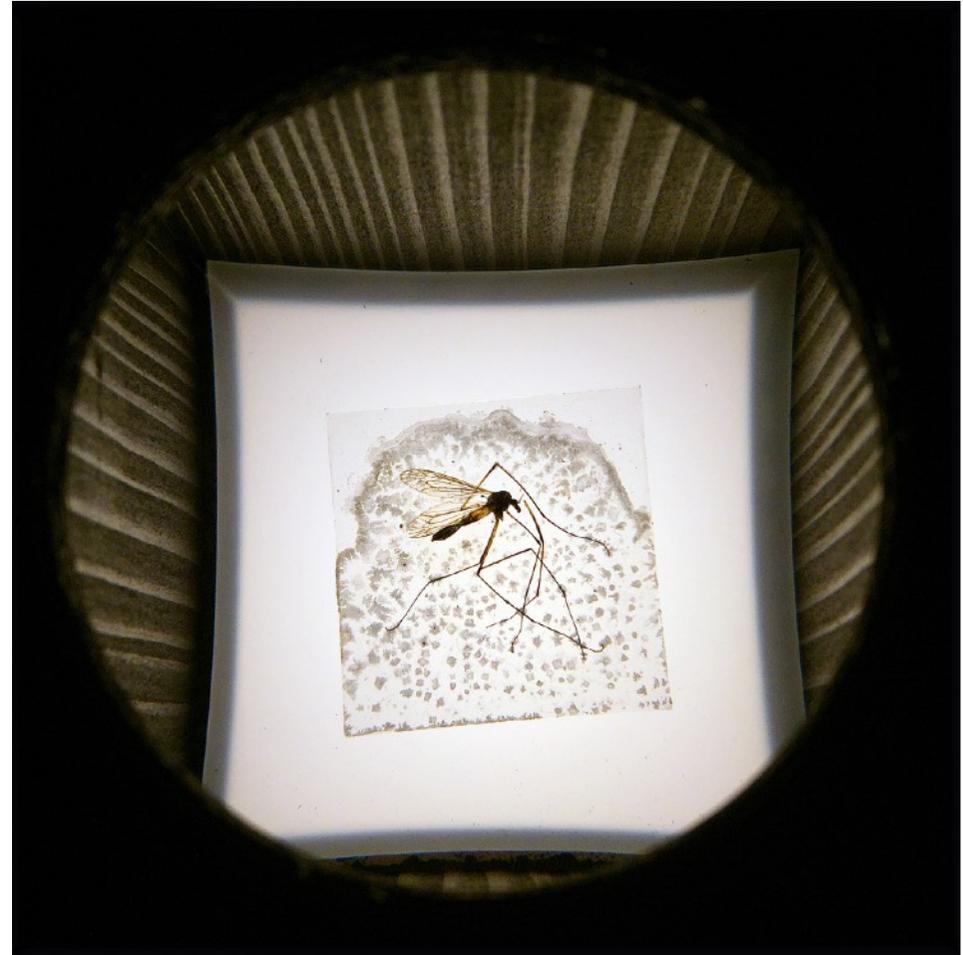
Installation view detail: projections of *Weeping somnambulist* and *Bugs unknown IX*



Mixing different media and photographs genres to push and break the boundaries of photography.



The bright light of old slide projectors and the light desks transform the insects' semitransparent body parts into fragile but powerful projections.



Like a scientist I collect dead insects and fix them to glass slides.
The insects were alive, but are now frozen in time, still decomposing –
the images becoming almost deconstructed scientific abstractions.



Installation view at Mathildenhöhe: *This sense of wonder*







Installation view at Kunsthau Interlaken: *Don't look now*
C print diameter 120cm submerged in water



An in water submerged portrait surprises the viewer with an intense, almost eerie encounter. From under water a woman looks you straight in



the eye, Ophelia-like, peaceful but unsettling. The disturbingly beautiful decay of the portrait references subtly and unequivocally the transitoriness of being.

For my portraits and still lives I literally go back to the meaning of the word *Portrait* which descends from the latin word *protrahere*. It translates as *to bring something to light*.

For my analog images the only light source I use is natural day light coming through a window. The images are of a serene reduction leaving as much as possible to the viewer's imagination.





















I am obsessed with transience, death, the process of aging.
Instead of fear and disgust I witness a lost, enraptured world
of withered and faded things: A beautifully wilted flower, the
tenderness of an insect's wing, a hint of daylight on an
almost forgotten world.



Photographed moments are no more than representations of the past lingering on the beauty of decay. They are ephemeral like the electronic light that fuels the projectors: As soon as the power supply is cut off, the images fade into darkness without leaving a trace.





«As a photographer, Lustenberger works meticulously like a scientist, aesthetically like a baroque painter and poetic like a lyricist. Her multimedia approach, her spatial experiments and sculptural thinking are breaking the boundaries of photography.»

Jury Merck Prize 2018

All animals used for my works were found dead.

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Thoughts too deep for tears
C print, 80x80cm; glass slide, 8x8 cm



I heard the blackbird sing
C print, 80x80cm; glass slide, 8x8cm



For its mate will come to mourn
C print, 80x80cm; glass slide, 8x8cm



You are the one who flew into the sun
C print, 80x80cm; glass slide, 8x8 cm



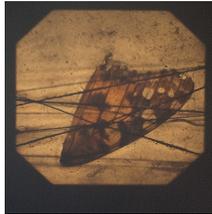
Is there nothing after, do you think?
C print, 40x50cm



Installation view detail: projections
of *Weeping somnambulist* and
Bugs unknown IX



Installation view detail of a
projection, *Bugs unknown XXI*



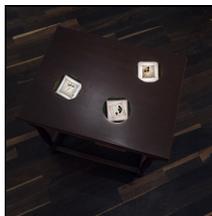
Installation view detail
projection, *Thoughts to deep
for tears*



Installation view detail of a
projection, *Bugs unknown XI*



This sense of wonder
Installation view detail, projections
and slide viewers



Installation view detail:
light table with different
glass slides



Installation view detail:
Glass slide on light table,
Till time has lost all meaning



Installation view *This sense of
wonder* at Mathildenhöhe, 2018



Don't look now IV
C print, 80x100cm



Who am I looking at? III
C print, 28x26cm



Some Time Before (after Caravaggio)
C print, 80x100cm



Still Untitled I
C print, 100x125cm



Birds
C print, 100x125cm



Still Untitled II
C print, 40x50cm



Flowers XIX
C print, 80x100cm



Flowers V
C print, 100x80cm



Flowers XXII
C print, 100x80cm



Flowers XXXIX
C print, 40x32cm



Flowers XXII
C print, 40x32cm



Allegory of a Vanitas
C print, 80x100cm



Bugs unknown III
C print, 32x40cm



Bugs unknown II
C print, 40x50cm



Installation view *This sense of wonder*
at Kunsthaus Interlaken, 2017/18



Don't look now
C print, diameter 120cm



Don't look now
C print, diameter 120cm; the print has been submerged in water for 6 weeks.

Bio:

Born in Zurich, Switzerland, I studied at Zurich University and received my MA in Social and Photo History in 1996. In the following years I established myself as a fine art photographer. I moved to New York and received my MFA in Fine Art Photography and Related Media at Parsons The New School of Design in 2007.

I won the Grand Prize Winner PDNedu, got the Golden Light Award, Selection Voies Off at Arles, the prestigious Landis&Gyr residency, 2002 and 2013 the Photo Award of the Canton Bern and 2018 the Merck Prize at the Darmstädter Tage der Fotografie.

About my works:

For several years I have been developing and refining the analog and digital multimedia installation *This sense of wonder* – a project at the interface of photography, images of light, projection, fotograms and transparencies. The work has been awarded with the Merck-Prize 2018 of the Darmstadt Days of Photography.

I am very interested in the ambiguity of the medium of photography: preserving the moment but making its ephemerality very palpable at the same time. I combine prints, projections, sculpture-like slides and light tables so they can play off each other. I combine different photographic genres like portraits, still lifes, nudes, tableaux, and landscape. And I create new photographic genres, a mix of nature, scientific, and forensic photography to convey a sense of our conception of mortality.

I explore the media itself and its close connection to themes like decay, memory, death and transitoriness. I work with a 4x5 large format camera and natural daylight, with Scanners, my iPhone, projections and everything that has to do with light images.

Currently I live and work in Bern, Switzerland.

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