

Heinz Peter Knes
Rosa Winkel, zweiteilig, 2026
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The casual glance from the corner of the eye, or distracted sweep across the field of vision, catches something else than a straight-on gaze. Instead of demanding direct meaning from that which is seen, a sidelong look allows for the blur of misinterpretation. There is opportunity in misalignment which can open different, slanted meanings.

Meaning always depends on context, which itself accrues with habit and experience, sometimes slowly over time, and colours understanding in all kinds of ways. In the Tiergarten, a glance from a stranger in one part of the park might mean something else entirely in another area. Certain paths and secluded areas of shrubbery have been established cruising spots for a hundred years. Recognition of this depends on understanding eye-contact and certain gestures. For those whose gaze is trained on treetops and birdlife, this meaning likely remains obscured.

An image can work in the same way. It may be passed over as insignificant, or else catch your eye unexpectedly, wanting something from you. For Heinz Peter Knes, a 'calling image' is one that arrives 'like a possibility - an uncertain and open thing.' A photograph lying forgotten in the artist's archive for months, if not years, suddenly seems to express something that previously went unnoticed. In the interim, it has loosened itself from the subject matter that it ostensibly depicts. Detached now from that particular incident, place and time, it floats free to claim other associations.

The image, or pair of images, that called out this time shows something pink against a black background. The colours meet in a diagonal seam that crosses the picture plane. The photographs offer a close-up view, but it is not clear of what. The smooth surface offers no clues. In the absence of wider contextual indicators, this pair of images moves into a field of abstraction, as does the empty space between them.

'In photography, *detail* is more commonly used than *fragment*,' writes the artist. 'But can a photograph itself be a fragment, for example, when a color print yellows and fades away?' A meaning proscribed at one point in time, belonging to the specific ideology of that era, fades into obsolescence but remains a fragmentary indicator of an oppressive past. A shape and colour once used to label a criminalized and persecuted sexual identity has been charged with new significance. In the 1970s, the gay movement adopted the symbol that had been used by the Nazis to categorise homosexual men imprisoned in concentration camps. Persecution was switched for self-identification. Shame exchanged for pride. The image itself remains the same. *Rosa Winkel. Zweiteilig.*

Text by Kirsty Bell