

Incidents (2005)

"Rome had in the fifth century of our era the population of a village, but its Imperial palaces were still habitable".
Oswald Spengler, *The Decline of the West* (1917)

Incidents is inspired by the nine photographs 'How to dial a telephone number. Photographic instructions' (see below) from the collection of the Telefónica Foundation, made by Alfonso in 1926 (the methodology and the spirit is also that of John Gossage). The photographic image attempts to work, in Alfonso's as in here, like an instructions manual of a new technological artifact destined to change everyday habits, even though this set of instructions can not possibly help us understand the logic of its functioning, or its aspirations. With the passage of time, technological artifacts seem to have dematerialized, as if it were impossible to fix the objects with the echo of their fabrication. Cotemporary technological artifacts sit like outside of time, or their time doesn't seem to coincide with our biological time.

In the past, technological artifacts had an effect in social life through their actual familiarization in the everyday. Now, on the contrary, they are only assimilated as ruins: when we get the grips with them they are already obsolete. The feeling is that we can not catch up with technology, that we can only assimilate it as a relic: technological artifacts get scrapped while still new.

What are the components of this corporate campus, a new technological apparatus in construction? What is it made of this "future of work", as the company's corporate literature puts it? And, what is it that gets displaced, or eliminated, in terms of the past of the site, but also of possible futures? I proposed to make an archaeology of the building site. My nine-year old son (indeed, we are talking about his future here), picked up fragments of materials and objects found in the building site and we photographed them on location. These found objects can either be from what was on the site before the building works began, as well as fragments of what the building is made of, leftovers and residues of its fabrication. In some way, the child makes a reconnaissance of the future that is being put forward for him as a productive individual.

Incidents is about a suspended space and time. 'Before' and 'after' overlap each other, past of the place and future of the building: What will be here when this building will eventually collapse? The images try to make visible this state of suspension, they attempt to give it a form through the connection of these apparently random objects, found as if by accident. In the background, the half built structures refer to the future building, just like a ruin refers to the building that has already collapsed. Displacement, construction and ruin, intermingled, incomprehensible.