

## HENRI FOUCAULT • THE BODY, INFINITELY

Henri Foucault's images conjure up photographic flatness, transforming photography into a medium of three-dimensionality. As if, with a mischievous spirit, it was precisely through photography that Foucault wanted to demonstrate after Rodin that one must always "*consider a surface as the end of a volume*". Especially since Henri Foucault has found in the body the ideal material - without, however, shaping it in the literal sense - to maintain the forms in a vibratory suspense that makes them oscillate between flattening and relief.

In Henri Foucault's works, surface is never what it seems to be. Because he never ceases to alter it, to experiment with it, to rework it in successive layers of interventions that end up making the subject of his photographs evaporate. Most of the time, the autopsied body plays on the oppositions that underlie the artistic process - empty/solid, internal/external, background/form - in the same way that it sometimes blurs the boundaries between the photographic positive and negative.

This dialectic underlies Foucault's work. He plays around the limits of paper. The sculptor in him knows how to remove matter and make use of emptiness. Foucault drills, perforates, digs again and again his photographs. The gap is certainly small but the artist never ceases to infringe on the two-dimensional. His obsession is eminently sculptural: it is always a question of perceiving the line that gives existence to the visible, of drawing (even if it means subverting it) the border between inside and outside, between surface and space.

As a sculptural object, the body can be split, fragmented, reduced, at the edge of the erasure, at its contour or in a splash of light. It is sometimes entirely in the space that surrounds it. Because ultimately, Foucault may be working on a form of conceptual dissection. He doesn't open on anything. It shines in a cold and precious luminosity.

And if the epidermis is equivalent to the content, the full to the void, the background to the form, the bottom to the top (and vice versa), it is because Henri Foucault explores photography from the inside, from what a form means to him. He dissects the body less than the image in order to leaf through the degrees of visibility, generating a decorative material at the same time. Pierced or shrivelled by pins, the surface has the look of silverware.

The body is often gone. Yet, it is still vibrating, and shining too.

**ALIX AGRET**