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## Barbara Kasten

### A matter of perspective

5/14—6/25/2011

Barbara Kastens photographs do not narrate and document stories, instead, they are a “print” of the abstract features of light and shadow. In the 1970s she began experimenting with photochemical reactions and photograms, which she painted over using synthetic colors from the cyanotype process.

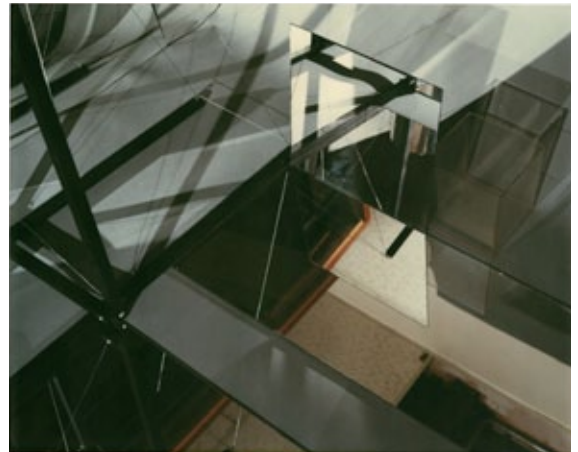
The works in the current exhibition, A matter of perspective, belong to the “Construct Series” created in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Barbara Kasten built space-filling, abstract installations in her studio made of mirrors, colour surfaces and metal elements, which she then photographed with 8 × 10 inch and 20 × 24 inch mid-format Polaroids. Each photograph is therefore unique. Barbara Kasten’s Construct photographs depict a kind of constructivist “stage” that changes from photo to photo, but remains abstract and non-narrative.

Although Barbara Kasten’s art-historical significance has been confirmed by her being represented in important American collections such as those of the Metropolitan Museum and the J. Paul Getty Museum, as well as the inclusion of her works in anthologies on the history of photography, e.g., “Starburst: The History of Color Photography in the 1970s” and “The Edge of Vision: The Rise of Abstraction in Photography”, her oeuvre has almost disappeared from present-day perception in the USA and particularly in Europe.

Barbara Kastens’ working method proves to be highly relevant, both for current trends in the abstract/concrete photography of the younger generation, for example, Liz Deschenes, Eileen Quinlan, Walead Beshty, Peggy Franck or Wolfgang Tillmans, and due to its art-historical connections to early trends in abstract photography as can be found with Lázló Moholy-Nagy, Christian Schad or Man Ray.

Moreover – and this is what makes Barbara Kasten’s position so exceptionally relevant – her abstract pictures are based on the *real* construction of expansive installations *in front of* the camera. Thus, in the early 1970s, she already crossed genre-specific borders between sculpture, painting and installation, something which strongly connects her work with the approach of a younger generation of artists.

Barbara Kasten was born in 1936. She lives and works in Chicago. She will be present at the show in Karlsruhe. In case of any questions, please feel free to contact us. Additional information can be found on our website:  
[www.kadel-willborn.de](http://www.kadel-willborn.de)



Construct I-A, 1979  
polacolor  
20,32 x 25,4 cm

Mit besonderem Dank an Olivier Renaud-Clément

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