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# THE PHOTOGRAPH AS CONTEMPORARY ART

third edition



Thames & Hudson **world of art**



**242. Kate Steciw,**

*Apply, Applications, Auto, Automotive, Burn, Cancer, Copper, Diameter, Fire, Flame, Frame, Metal, Mayhem, Pipe, Red, Roiling, Rolling, Safe, Safety, Solid, Strip, Tape, Trap, Trappings*, 2012.

**243. Artie Vierkant,**

*Image Objects*, 2011–.

Vierkant's *Image Objects* have a hybrid character. Vierkant selects documentation images of his gallery exhibitions that circulate online and overlays them with Photoshop manipulation to create new images that build on, rather than merely derive from, their original sources.



vernacular photography – such as generic, commercial product images that Steciw renders into exaggerated forms using Photoshop – with cheap, seemingly mass-produced sculptural elements made using industrial commercial processes, Steciw's projects draw a parallel between sculpture and photography as both physical objects and cultural ciphers. Artie Vierkant's (b. 1986) [243] series of 'image objects' transfer the dynamics and aesthetics of digital photography and graphics tools into seductive but disarming wall-based gallery experiences. His approach is provocative in the way that he monumentalizes the visual language of our screen-based everyday lives into formal objects. Anne de Vries (b. 1977) [244] works with photography, sculpture and new media. He brilliantly combines the modernist conventions of sculpture and installation art with visual motifs that reference advertising and amateur photography. His work distills contemporary visual culture into into sculptural





experiences that operate as philosophical abstractions of technological experience.

The photographers who conclude this chapter offer a fitting end to this book, encouraging us to engage with the wonders of life and to recognize the beauty and magic that are still to be found photographically. The enduring capacity of photography to abstract and give form to our experiences is continuously reworked and revived, both through reference to the traditions of analogue photography and through the tools of digital photography. In an era in which we receive, take and disseminate as well as tag, browse and edit photographic imagery, we are all more invested, and more expert, in the language of photography than ever before, and we have a greater appreciation for how photography can be a far from neutral or transparent vehicle for bridged and framed moments of real time. The contemporary art photographers described in these pages rephrase our material and physical understanding of photography's past, while continuing to expand the vocabulary of photography as contemporary art. They show us ways of working and thinking that have real substance and direction in an increasingly digitized sphere, with its constantly shifting values and evolving sense of what it truly means to make photographs.