

The three boys, from top left, Daniel Agosto, 6, Justin Pagan, 5, and Arisbal Cruz, 11, David Agosto, Daniel's father, was embraced yesterday after the

Make a room of paintings that engage with photos of figures and groups of figures that are responding to states of emergency. The paintings are in egg tempera on wood panels of different sizes and suggest a discontinuous path through past facts into a feeling that could occupy the present. The indexical relationship between painting and document will be only suggestive, creating a type of visual theatre where forms and facts replace one another in the mind of the viewer.



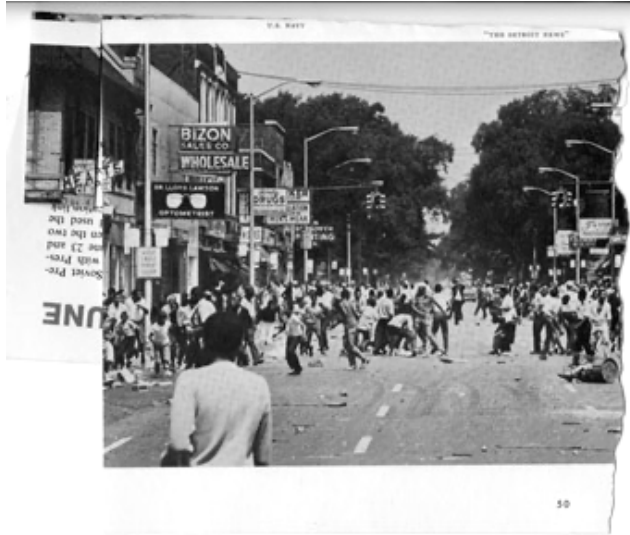
The immersive experiences of abstract form can make the political reactions we have to documented history feel separate: as images that can be torn from their context into affect. This would be a theatre of design, where pictures can take the place of actors, a tableau vivant of social mediation. By painting against a document, the facts in a photograph take on multiple stories in their distorted recognitions.



There is a huge reservoir of feeling produced by abstraction, daily as the dark impartiality of economic systems that tear culture apart and rarely as the brighter possibilities of a distanced view: both positions of looking (and thinking and making) are incandescent because they are separated from the space of reality. The works in this room of paintings are between the dark and the light, suggesting the chance to transport oneself to places for thought to work on history differently.



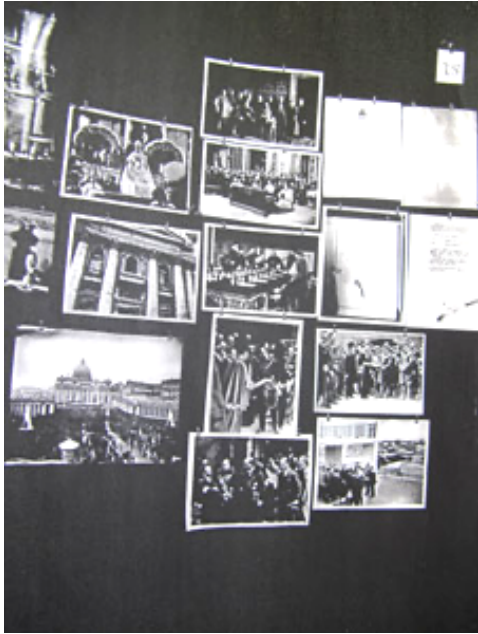
Is it useless to imagine social participation in this abstract way? If democracy is at best an empty space for discourse and creative agonism, how do we visualize its effects, its production? The photos in the room are chosen for both their report and their image: for what motivates the figures depicted, figures which are beautiful because respond to disaster, moving as if empathy has taken on its own momentum and can overcome catastrophe. Disaster creates times of extraordinary love because it makes a duration beyond economies of getting and selling.



This might be like looking at abstract visual forms, especially when such forms are made carefully, somewhat geometrically with gravity made relative and dynamic. The gravity of an abstraction might create a state of both immediate AND deferred identification. "Immediate" because the lack of objective reference in a an abstract form means recognition beyond rational debate. And "Deferred" because this visual pleasure causes us to look elsewhere for definitions, leaves us with less of an anchor back to the real, leaves us in another unexpected state: in anxiety.



Amidst every abstract form in this room of paintings is a group of people photographically depicted in disarray: collapsing and reorganizing itself. Its previous order is exploding into the unstable connections that often grow in the face of grief, an experience hard to know under social mandate of the protections enforced in a "state of emergency". We do sometimes know however, that in calamitous events, we can become subjects of a love that is beyond the world's regulations.



Aby Warburg , *Memory Atlas*