

# Andersen's

## Thomas Dozol | Memory Recall Pattern

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Amaliegade 40, 1256 Copenhagen

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When moments in life freeze as memories, they can mark the passing of time, a new era, for the better – or for the worse. As human beings, we do not bear memories; but rather create them by selecting, often subconsciously, what we wish to remember and what to forget, appropriating a selection of souvenirs from which to develop favourable stories.

In his work, Thomas Dozol addresses and plays with archives of rich fragmented, memories of smells, feelings and emotions, all of which are in flux. Dozol manipulates the scenes in his photographs by overlaying them with graphics – as we each punctuate our own memories – with signs, impressions and handmade marks, erasing and highlighting details as we see fit.

It was the marked significance of Dozol's decision to relocate his studio from New York to Berlin that initiated his desire to celebrate and also preserve the distinction between 'before' and 'after'. Thinking about those he would leave behind, Dozol concluded that those in his social sphere were not only his friends but also his peers – artists, curators, musicians and performers. He had shared reflections, ideas, projects and ambitions with them and he had recognised that he was bound by a sense of belonging to this artistic community that would never be recreated as such after he was gone.

Using photography as his medium, Dozol began a process of memory making. He started documenting his friends and peers, inviting them to his studio with the excuse of a shoot, but with the purpose of sharing moments of friendship filled with conversations on life and art, laughter and silence. As architect to the scenes he depicted, Dozol was consciously making memories and aware that his subjects may never represent themselves as he had done so. It was intended that the project should last around three months, but instead it continued to develop for almost three years into a visual catalogue of nostalgia and love.

In the end, Dozol actually stayed in New York, working between there and Berlin, but the series continued to develop, the purpose of the project becoming something bigger and more meaningful for the artist.

Central to these portraits is a reflection on the idea of impermanence, a feeling that occupies even busy minds, reminding that nothing is stable in life.

Inspired by secular iconography, Dozol portrays his subjects standing in front of a backdrop of a simple white wall; they are often hit by sunlight entering the space from a nearby window. The tone is somewhat reminiscent of the 17th century paintings by Dutch artist Johannes Vermeer, where awkward and cramped spaces in which the sitters are depicted inspire a tender union between flesh and light. The subjects are not caught in action; rather they stand or sit, composed in striking poses that have a graphic component and which characterise their personality. However, Dozol's most direct reference is to the 'high art/low life' black and white portraits – as defined by New Yorker art critic Peter Schjeldahl about American photographer Peter Hujar.

Hujar's pictures are especially intriguing as they capture the downtown bohemia that flourished in New York between the late 1960s and the onset of the aids epidemic. His portrait sitters – male, female, friends, lovers, peers – were visiting his cheap East village loft. The intimate poses of his sitters, contrast with the grandiosity and precision of the photographer's use of the light.

Similarly, Dozol invited his subjects to share moments together. However, unlike Hujar, he would intervene in the photographs by marking each portrait with a graphic – a shape, a colour or a sign – which replace the sitter as the predominant subject of the photograph. The graphic signature on each portrait imitates the characteristic gesture or pose of each sitter. At the same time, it creates an iconography that introduces something of the subject's personality.

The sign seems to be a record of the subject's soul. It is when we are able to identify and appropriate someone else's gesture, sight, smile, grimace, pose or look, that we create a memory of this person that can last forever.

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## About Thomas Dozol

Thomas Dozol (1975) was born in Martinique and educated in Paris. After receiving a Masters in Economics and Applied Mathematics, he moved to New York to pursue a career in the performing arts, as an actor. He began to spend more time documenting other performers than he did on stage, and these images lead to photography commissions from such magazines as *Interview*, *Another Man*, *Vogue Paris*, and *Monopol*, among others. Since *I'll Be Your Mirror*, Dozol's first solo show of intimate portraiture, his artistic practice has expanded to include silkscreen and sculptural works, as well as more abstract photographic studies, through which he explores color and geometry in representations of the body.

Dozol's work has been featured in solo shows in NY, Berlin Sao Paulo, Atlanta, and most recently at French Riviera in London. He lives and works in both New York and Berlin.

## About Andersen's

Andersen's originally began as a project space, Andersen's Wohnung, on Linienstrasse in Berlin. From 1996 to 1999 Andersen's Wohnung operated as an alternative art space run by Danish artist Claus Andersen and German artists Thilo Heinzmann and Anselm Reyle.

The gallery opened in Copenhagen in 2005 with its focus based on Claus Andersen's German connections and started out with artists he was working with in Berlin, among these being Henrik Olesen, Anselm Reyle, Olafur Eliasson and Tomás Saraceno.

Today the gallery represents a variety of emerging and established artists from all over the world. A key feature of the gallery's programme is a focus on conceptually rigorous artistic practices that take part in the vital dialogue transpiring between art and the broader socio-cultural currents in contemporary society.

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### Andersen's Amaliegade

Amaliegade 40, 1256  
Copenhagen

Wednesday - Friday  
12:00 - 17:00

Saturday  
11:00 - 15:00

*and by appointment*

### Andersen's Bredgade

Bredgade 28, 1260  
Copenhagen

Tuesday - Friday  
12:00 - 17:00

Saturday  
11:00 - 15:00

*and by appointment*