



**University of Brighton**

**JOHANNA LOVE**

**DUST, DRAWING AND TIME**

Exploring the relationship between scientific  
image-making and hand-drawing

# RESEARCH OUTPUT



## Lichtlose Luft

Johanna Love

20 September to 31 October 2016  
PV Tuesday 20 September 16.30 to 18.30.

PARCspace, Room W224, London College of Communication,  
London, SE1 6SB.

Open Tuesdays from 12noon to 3pm, and other times by appointment. To arrange a visit, please contact Melanie King at [m.king@lcc.arts.ac.uk](mailto:m.king@lcc.arts.ac.uk)

***Lichtlose Luft***  
Solo exhibition  
PARCspace, London College of  
Communication, 2016  
Publicity image

**Dust, Drawing and Time was a body of artefacts, drawings, lithographs and laser etchings, that were exhibited and published in 2015-2017. The research sought to examine problems of human perception in relation to modern technology.**

It used drawing and photography to question the scientific image as one that remains detached and outside experience, sitting at the precipice of our perceptual understanding, resulting in a body of artefacts

Dust was collected and, using laboratory equipment, large photographic images were obtained of individual dust particles. They were then submitted to digital manipulation and further manual intervention through drawing. The resulting artworks were exhibited and published.

The research takes what is beyond perception (particles of dust) and gives it an embodied presence through the physical action of pencil on paper. The process of drawing from or within the original photographic image interrogates the results of imaging through technology and scientific methods. Graphite and digital interventions bring these images back into the physical, material world through a living, imaginative interpretation. Love published a journal article reflecting on aspects of the research (Love, 2020).

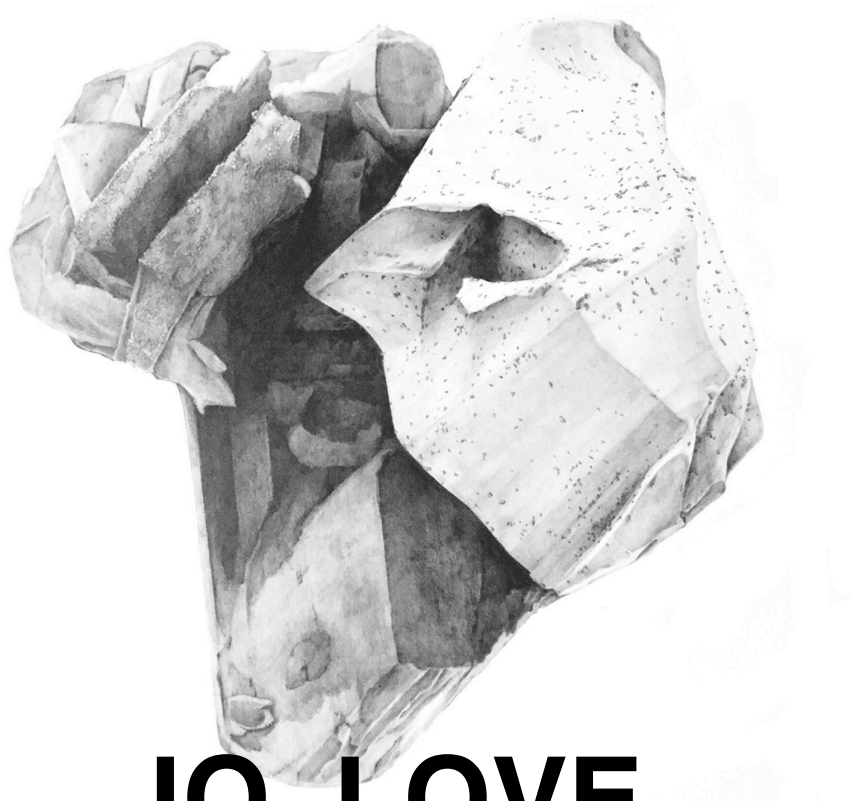
# Dust, Drawing and Time

Galerie im Gartenhaus

**GIG MUNICH**

BAUMSTR. 11 RGB

80469 MÜNCHEN



# JO LOVE

7. November – 5. December 2015

Montag – Donnerstag 12:30 – 18 Uhr UN.VBG

**ERÖFFNUNG: Samstag 7. November, 15 – 18 Uhr**

*Jo Love*

Solo exhibition

GiG Gallery, Munich, 2015

Publicity image

## Dust, Drawing and Time



**Beleuchten I**  
2016  
graphite pencil on paper  
120cm x 140cm

## Dust, Drawing and Time



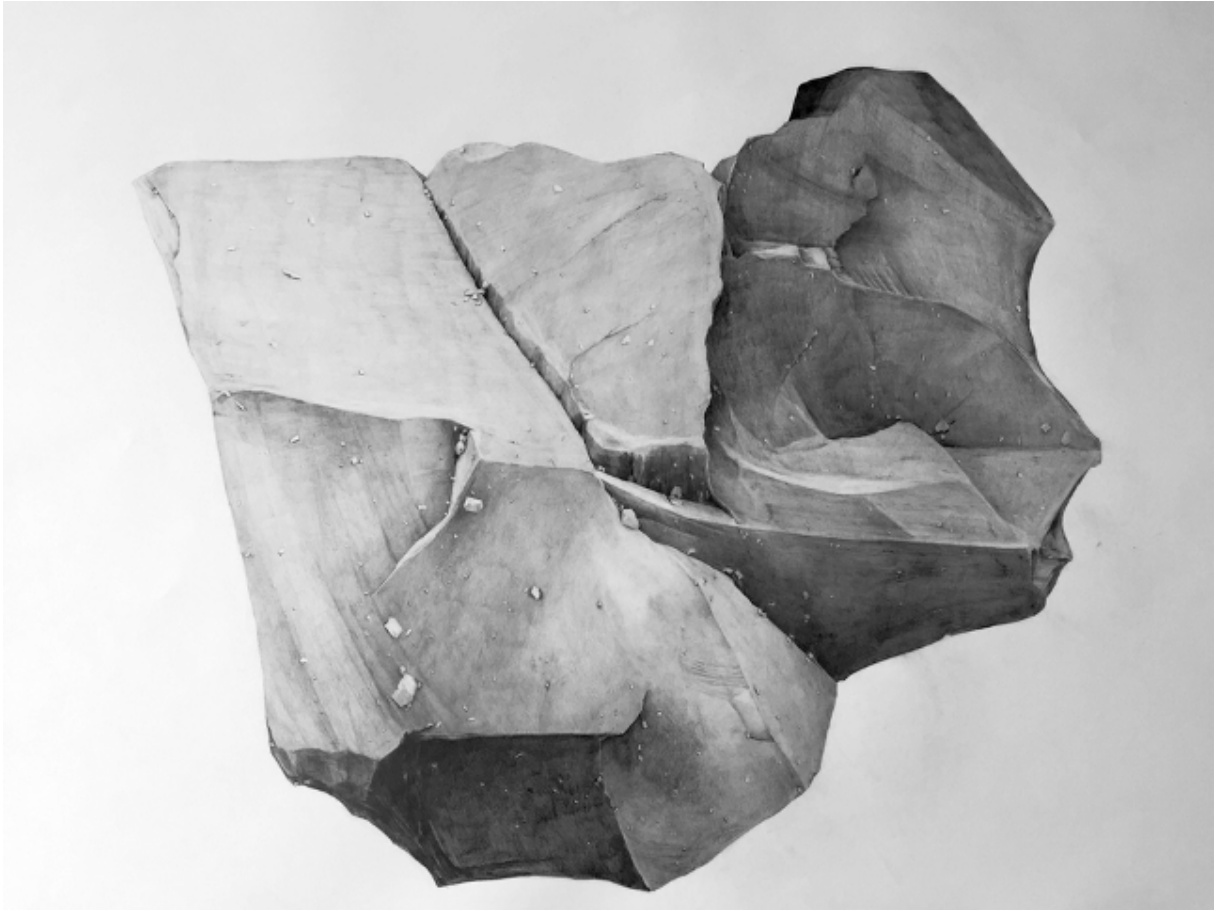
**Beleuchten III**  
2016  
graphite pencil on paper  
120cm x 140cm

## Dust, Drawing and Time



**Beleuchten IV**  
(Neumunsterschestr.)  
2017  
Graphite pencil on paper  
120cm x 140cm

# Dust, Drawing and Time



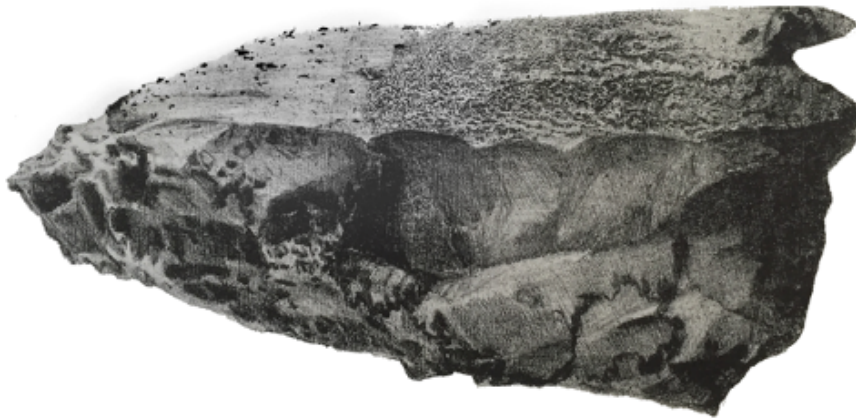
**Graphite pencil on paper**  
100cm x 130cm

## Dust, Drawing and Time



**Stone Lithograph**  
20cm x 30cm

# Dust, Drawing and Time



**Stone Lithograph**  
20cm x 30cm

## Dust, Drawing and Time



Laser etching on paper

## Dust, Drawing and Time



Laser etching on paper

## Dust, Drawing and Time



Laser etching on paper

## Dust, Drawing and Time



Laser etching on paper

## Dust, Drawing and Time



***Lichtlose Luft***  
PARCSpace, London College of  
Communication, 2016



***Jo Love***  
Solo exhibition, GiG Gallery,  
Munich, 2016

# RESEARCH QUESTIONS



**Beleuchten IV**  
Studio work in progress

**This research set out to test how visual representations may invite or preclude a viewer's human attachment and experience, depending on the methods of production.**

Working with a material (dust) that is at once familiar and yet inaccessible to human perception except through technologically-produced images, which remain outside experience, it asks:

- how drawing and print can transform scientific imagery through the physical engagement of surface, weight and material;
- how this practice can re-establish a connection to human experience, generating new understandings of the material presence and significance of dust.

# RESEARCH CONTEXT



Laser etching on paper (detail)

**The research used a theoretical framework based on the writings of Maurice Merleau-Ponty and Vilém Flusser, whose work highlights differences in visual perception of images derived through a scientific technological approach and those made through drawing by hand.**

Science provides us with imagery that goes beyond human perception and therefore remains detached from human understanding of scale, weight and mass. By re-drawing scientific imagery, the project attempts to re-instate the image back into the world of human experience and the imagination.

The process of drawing asserts a new perception and experience of the scientific image. Understanding that tactility is fundamental and central to human experience and perception, the artist is able to re-negotiate and re-imagine the image through the touch and weight of the drawing.

The project builds on previous research which examined how the existence of dust on the surface of photographic printed images shifted visual perception.

In taking dust through the processes of science and art, Love generates a discussion as to how we understand images made through scientific imagery and technology and those made through drawing by hand.

# RESEARCH PROCESS

Love adopted a practice-based, multi-method approach for this project to develop a dialogue between scientific and technological imaging and the making of artefacts within the context of fine art drawing and printmaking.

## 1. Collecting the dust

Love visited the site of her old family house in Hamburg, Germany to collect physical samples of dust from the attic and cellar, selecting this because of its powerful and personal connotations around place, time and ruin.

## 2. Understanding the potential of electron microscopy

Love explored the methods of scientists producing imagery of objects outside normal perceptual experience: Dr Alex Ball, Head of the Imaging and Analysis Centre at the Natural History Museum, London, and Dr Peter Grindrod, Senior Scientific Researcher at the Regional Planetary Image Facility (RPIF) at UCL.

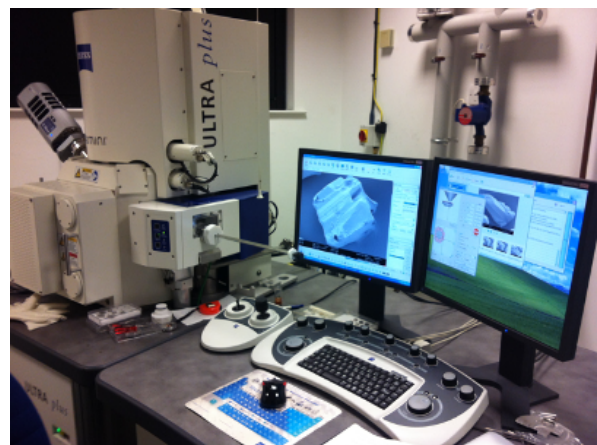
Working with Dr Ball, a Scientific Electron Microscope (SEM) was used to reveal and digitally image the house dust, which showed a mix including dust mite carcasses, vegetable matter, pollen and building rubble.

## 3. Production and exhibition of artworks

Love examined the resulting SEM images then considered and experimented with artistic process. Processes of drawings and printmaking added a sense of scale, weight and mass to the SEM images. A methodological cycle of action and reflection methods allowed the artwork to develop through drawing and print languages.

Love recorded her heightened awareness in the Natural History Museum blog, recognising that imagination took over from scientific factual understanding when the dust particles were photographically enlarged and enhanced through SEM.

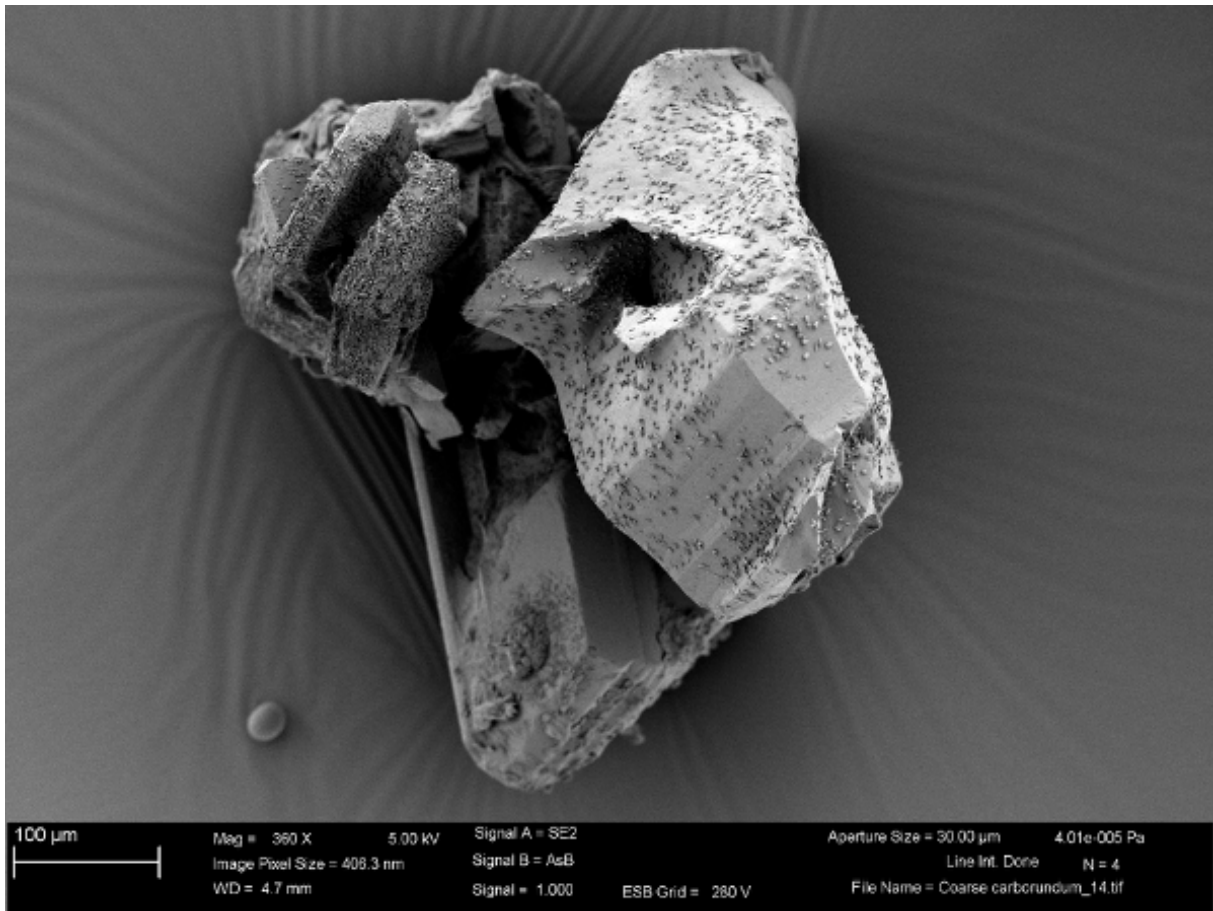
Through the practice, she confirmed the sense that the image derived from modern digital technology lacked the human sense of a relationship with the original dust, or a trace of engagement with materials and process.



**Scientific Electron Microscope (SEM) at the Natural History Museum, London**

(top) Creating samples  
(bottom) Using the machine

## Dust, Drawing and Time



SEM (Scientific Electron Microscope) image file from dust sample ...

## Dust, Drawing and Time



... and its reinterpretation: Beleuchten I, 2016. Graphite drawing on paper 120cm x 140cm

# RESEARCH INSIGHTS

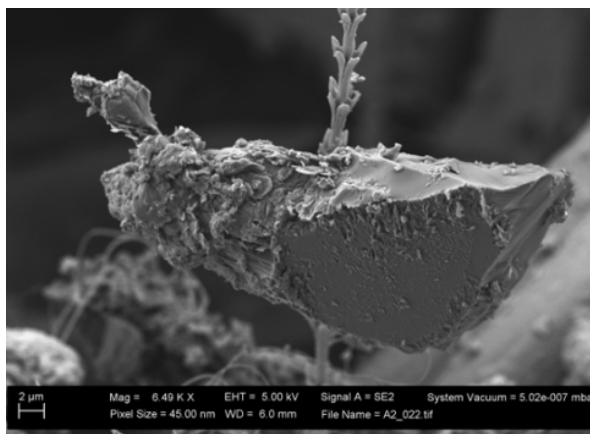


**This research explored the relation between 'scientific' image-making and manual intervention through hand-drawing and printing.**

Love used a process that began with personal and emotional awareness in the collection of dust samples, systematically taking these through the scientific laboratory-based process to achieve images of microscopic particles at a scale and clarity that seems beyond imagination or understanding.

Whilst dust is not within our unaided perception, it nevertheless has a cultural presence and set of connotations. Love took the 'objective' images of collected dust produced by scientific visualisation, and worked with that imagery to gradually re-introduce elements that it seemed to exclude. In this way she created new images and new ways of seeing the ever present phenomenon of dust that pervades our environment. She discovered that the process of graphite drawing re-established the human understanding from which it began. It mediated between the objective and the deeply personal and emotional forms of vision, to provide the viewer with a new visual experience.

By undertaking this process, Love gained a heightened sense of how visual images are characterised through human emotional connectivity and perception, particularly where this differs from scientifically produced imagery.



The exhibition was designed to ensure audiences were aware of the process and could themselves engage with the perspectives that were important to the research. The exhibition included quotations from Merleau-Ponty, the philosophical germ of the work, juxtaposed with a description of the SEM scanning used.

The research invited audiences to share something of the artist's emotional connectivity with the dust collected from a site of historic change and personal importance. The exhibition introduced concepts from materiality, history and time in response to the artistic re-working of technologically-created images.



(top) Laser etching  
(middle) SEM image file from dust sample  
(bottom) Exhibition installation view from *Dust, Drawing and Time: Artist in Residence* (2018)

PARCspace, Room W224, London College of Communication, London, SE1 6SB.

## Lichtlose Luft

Johanna Love

20 September to 31 October 2016



Private View 20 September 16.30 to 18.30.

PARC space, Room W224, London College of Communication, London, SE1 6SB.  
Open Tuesdays from 12noon to 3pm, and other times by appointment.

This exhibition presents a selection of current work by British artist Johanna Love, who is working closely with scientists at The Natural History Museum, London and The Regional Planetary Image Facility (RPIF) at UCL, London. Through a combination of photography and drawing, the project seeks to examine problems of human perception in relation to modern technology. It questions the scientific image as one that remains detached and outside of our experience, sitting at the precipice of our perceptual understanding, and making visible matter that is beyond human vision.

What drives this work is a fascination with how tiny specks of dust – what seems most insubstantial – has the material power to fascinate, to generate and to sustain thought. The scientific technical image is a starting point for the work, either obtained through the electron microscope or the digital scanner. However, it is always submitted to some kind of digital manipulation and then manual intervention through drawing. In drawing from or within the original photographic image, there is a critique of technology and a questioning of the scientific approach. Through the process of drawing and digital manipulation, there is an attempt to bring the image back into the physical, material world of the living and imagination, for as Merleau Ponty (1964) states, 'science manipulates things and gives up living in them.'

Johanna Love is an artist and academic living in London. She is currently MA Printmaking Pathway Leader at Camberwell College of Arts and Senior Lecturer in Fine Art Printmaking at the University of Brighton. She exhibits widely both nationally and internationally. Recent exhibitions include *Johanna Love*, GiG Gallery, Munich; *A small constellation of photographic evidence*, Cheng Art Gallery, Beijing; *Behind the eyes: making pictures*, Gallery North, Newcastle; *Viewfinder*, Artspaceh Gallery, Seoul, Korea; *British Printmaking Japan*, Kyoto Museum & Art Gallery, Japan; *Scope: New Photographic Practices*, Tsinghua University, Beijing.

PARC space, Room W224, London College of Communication, London, SE1 6SB.  
Open Tuesdays from 12noon to 3pm, and other times by appointment. Contact Melanie King at

**Publicity for PARCspace  
exhibition**

# DISSEMINATION

## Exhibitions

*Jo Love* (November 2015) Solo exhibition, GiG Gallery, Munich. <https://gig-munich.com/2015/11/> [Accessed October 2021]

*Lichtlose Luft* (2016) Solo exhibition. PARCSpace, London College of Communication. <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/188258513.pdf> [Accessed October 2021]

*Dust, Drawing and Time: Artist in Residence* (2018) solo residency, publication with solo exhibition in Kloster Bentlage, Germany. 22-26 September 2018. <https://druckvereinigung-bentlage.de/johanna-love> [Accessed October 2021]

*Artist of the Day, Day Eight: Johanna Love selected by Rebecca Salter RA.* (3 July 2018) Solo exhibition at Flowers Gallery, Cork Street, London. <https://www.flowersgallery.com/exhibitions/482-artist-of-the-day-2018/> [Accessed October 2021]

*Marks Make Meaning: Drawing Across Disciplines* (12-29 March 2018) Group exhibition, University of Brighton Gallery, Brighton. <http://arts.brighton.ac.uk/whats-on/gallery/gallery-exhibitions-2018/marks-make-meaning-drawing-across-disciplines> [Accessed October 2021]

*Under a darkening sky* (20 September - 11 October 2019) Solo exhibition. Standpoint Gallery, London. <https://standpointlondon.co.uk/gallery/2019/johanna-love/johanna-love.php> [Accessed October 2021]

## Publications

Love, J. (2015) Somewhere between Printmaking, Photography and Drawing: Viewing contradictions within the printed image. *Journal of Visual Art Practice*, 14(3) pp.214-223. <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/14702029.2015.1094239> [Accessed February 2021]

Love, J. (2017) *Lichtlose Luft: Lightless Air*. London. Camberwell Press.

Love, J. (2018) 'Jo Love: the concept of dust', Natural history Museum blog' <https://naturalhistorymuseum.blog/2018/05/17/contemporary-art-at-the-natural-history-museum/> [truncated version of original set of posts now available. Accessed October 2020]

Chance, V. and Ganley, D. eds. (2018) *Re:Print*. London: Marmalade, Publishers of Visual Theory.

Love, J. (2020) 'Drawing dust'. *Drawing: Research, Theory, Practice*, 5(2) pp.193-208. December 2020. <https://www.ingentaconnect.com/contentone/intellect/drt/2020/00000005/00000002/art00002> [Accessed October 2020]

## Symposia

Love, J. (2015) 'Somewhere between Printmaking, Photography and Drawing: Viewing contradictions within the printed image'. *Hybrid Practices in Printmaking Symposium*, Chelsea College of Arts, London, 24 April. <https://ualresearchonline.arts.ac.uk/id/eprint/10230/> [Accessed February 2021]

Love, J. (2015) 'Dust: Exploring new ways of viewing the printed photographic image'. *Shadows: Material photography in a digital culture*. Photography and the Archive Symposium, London College of Communication, London, 18 May. <https://ualresearchonline.arts.ac.uk/id/eprint/10241/> [Accessed February 2021]

# REFERENCES

- Chance, V. and Ganley, D. eds. (2018) *Re:Print*. London: Marmalade, Publishers of Visual Theory.
- Flusser, V. (1984) 'Towards A Philosophy of Photography.' Bennett, D. ed. *European Photography*. Berlin: Göttingen.
- Love, J. (2017) *Lichlose Luft: Lightless Air*. London. Camberwell Press.
- Love, J. (2018) 'Jo Love: the concept of dust', Natural history Museum blog, 17 May 2018. <https://naturalhistorymuseum.blog/2018/05/17/contemporary-art-at-the-natural-history-museum/> (accessed October 2020)
- Love, J. (2020) 'Drawing Dust'. *Drawing: Research, Theory, Practice*, December, 5(2) pp.193-208. <https://www.ingentaconnect.com/contentone/intellect/drt/2020/00000005/00000002/art00002>
- Merleau-Ponty, M. (2012 [1945]) *Phénoménologie de la perception*. Paris: Gallimard. Translated Landes, D.A. *Phenomenology of Perception*. New York: Routledge.

(overleaf) **Beleuchten IV (detail)**  
(Neumunsterschestr.) 2017

## Dust, Drawing and Time

