

# GERT JAN KOCKEN

## ORGANIZED COMPLEXITY

SEP 21 – NOV 09

FRANS HALSSTRAAT 26



Gert Jan Kocken | *Depictions of London* | 2019

GRIMM is proud to announce a solo exhibition by Gert Jan Kocken (1971 Ravenstein, NL). The exhibition *Organized Complexity* combines a selection from the artist's eminent *Depictions series* with works from his *Fission series*.

The exhibition will open during UNSEEN Photo Festival's Open Gallery Night and is programmed to coincide with the commemoration of the Second World War, which started eighty years ago this year. *Organized Complexity* is the first exhibition by the artist with the gallery.

For almost a decade, Gert Jan Kocken has been working on his *Depictions series*; in this body of work hundreds of unearthed historical maps are used as source material to create expansive views of cities such as London, Amsterdam, Dresden, Rotterdam, Łódź, Warsaw, Berlin, Munich and Rome. The maps are scanned or photographed and methodically layered into a single digital image, subsequently rendered as a large digital C-print. The resulting compositions contain a welter of information representing the breakneck change, contradictory claims, and massive data production of the Second World War.

The photographs visualize the conflicting ideologies which prevailed during the Second World War, the cities representing axes of fascism from East to West and from North to South.

In *Fission*, the artist meticulously traces the origins of the nuclear program leading up to the bombings of both Hiroshima and Nagasaki through the use of texts, photographs of speeches, classified military documents and images. The resulting work is an entropic conjunction which must be both seen, and read, to fully grasp. Accompanying this work is a large photograph, *Charles Sweeney, Pilot, B 29 Bock's Car, Nagasaki, 9 August 1945*.

Rounding out the exhibition is Kocken's latest work; a palimpsest of German aerial photographs showing London bombing targets with text superimposed on the photographs to form a visualisation of the propaganda machine and the chronological course of the war.

**Opening: Saturday September 21<sup>st</sup>, 2019 from 6 pm until 8 pm**

not for publication

For more information, interview and royalty free image requests, please contact the gallery manager Jorien de Vries:  
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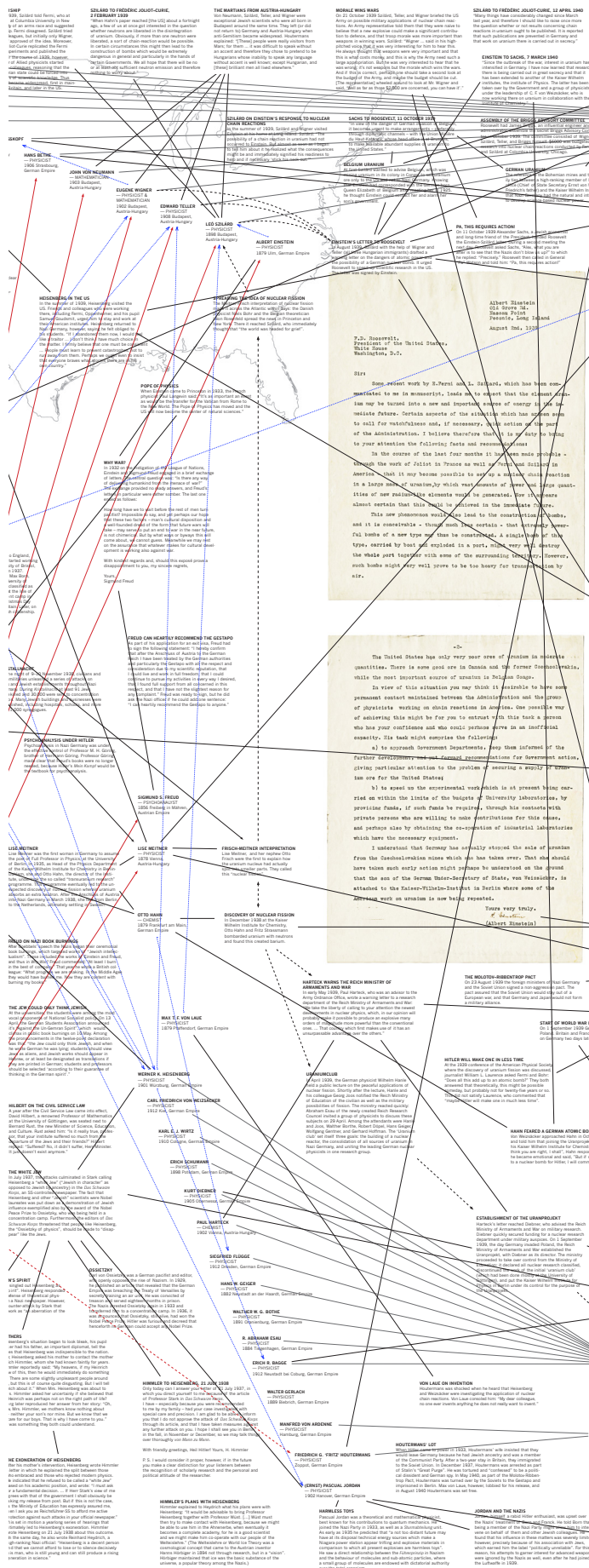
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Gert Jan Kocken | *Fission* | detail

## About the artist

Gert Jan Kocken (1971 Ravenstein, NL) graduated from the Royal Academy of the Arts in The Hague in 1998 and continued his curriculum at the Rijksakademie van Beeldende Kunsten in Amsterdam from 2011 to 2012. Kocken's practice is based on ongoing research into the remembrance and visual representation of pivotal episodes in world history. When these episodes are committed to our collective memory, they form intricate constellations of facts, interpretations, opinions and visual impressions. This process of memorialization is influenced by official chronicles and mass media coverage, which offer clear-cut accounts of inherently ambiguous events. Kocken critically engages with these accounts, and offers multiple viewpoints which encourage the contemplation of alternative readings and counterfactual histories through the media of photography, digital assemblage and writing.

The work of Gert Jan Kocken has been widely exhibited. Recent exhibitions include; *No You Won't be Naming No Buildings After Me* at TENT, Rotterdam (NL), 2019; *Freedom, The Fifty Key Dutch Artworks Since 1968* at Museum de Fundatie, Zwolle (NL), 2019; *Space of Exception, Fifth Moscow Biennial*; *Moscow* (RU); *Meer Macht at Museum de Fundatie*, Zwolle (NL); *Dread, Fear in the Age of Technological Acceleration*, Museum De Hallen, Haarlem (NL); *Dutch Art After 1945* at Stedelijk Museum, Schiedam (NL); *Identity*, Sammlung Hoffmann, Berlin (DE); *Nature as Artifice* shown at the George Eastman House, Rochester, NY (US); Aperture Foundation in New York, NY (US); Alte Pinakothek in Munich (DE) and at the Kröller-Müller Museum, Otterlo (NL); *Questioning History* at Nederlands Fotomuseum, Rotterdam (NL).

Notable collections include; Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam (NL), Joods Historisch Museum, Amsterdam (NL), Sammlung Hoffmann, Berlin (DE), Kunstmuseum Wolfsburg (DE) among others.

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