

RedsandGreens

**PHOTOGRAPHS BY  
GER C. BOUT**

Reds and Greens

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From *Hockney on Photography*, Conversations with Paul Joyce,  
Harmony Books, New York, 1988:

“People want to make things neat all the time but life isn’t like that.”

# Outer Layer - Inner Soul

Ger C. Bout takes us on an experimental photographic journey that explores the world of RedsandGreens. Enlarged by the eye of the camera, colors and textures come to life that would otherwise be invisible, photo after photo. Plunging us into the deep, the imagination is triggered: hues, forms, and landscapes of Reds and Greens inside and out, up really close.

There are no frills in this photography. The bright soft red skin of a worn out pepper is surprisingly organic. In one glance you might imagine reflections of waterfalls at sunset or creases of an organ bursting with blood. It is what it is or what you see it to be. Bout is an artist who has been inspired by different elements and visual effects of artists before him like David Hockney, John Chamberlain, and Dennis Hopper, yet the combination of subject and size for the current collection is what draws you into his unique world. At once, you literally step into that arena.\*

What is quite fascinating about these photographs is knowing that they were not quick coincidental snapshots. A lot of time is spent on finding the right model and mode for each specific set because there are so many facets to consider like color and shape. Will the skin or cross section be photographed vertically or horizontally? What does Bout think will be more interesting or striking to look at? In addition, a complete series could entail more than a thousand shots of which only one of its kind will find its way to the gallery. Bout searches and researches each one until he finds that particular one that expresses to him a certain mood or emotion. Once he finds that connection, he continues to develop it.

The process of shooting the things he does are specific and deliberate. Bout is not a photographer who leaves things up to coincidence. He is an explorer using the eye of the camera to lead him the way.

The concept of the Outer Layer, Inner Soul of RedsandGreens is an invitation to partake in one man's microscopic personal journey through the lens of the camera. The immensity of the prints capture and immerse you in a way that is nothing less than confrontational and spectacularly intriguing. At the same time though, these photographs are meant to be appreciated without imposing a specific outcome.

"I stepped into a special world, at once"

Betsy M. Blan

1st time visit at home-studio Ger C. Bout

February 2014

# Prozess der tiefen Farben

*'I want to illuminate things with my spirit and to project their reflection on others'.*

*Charles Baudelaire*

Ger C. Bout sieht seine tägliche Umgebung mit anderen Augen, er sieht in Gemüse und Früchte mehr als nur etwas natürliches. In der Serie RedsandGreens verrät schon der Titel, dass wir rote und grüne Objekte sehen. Wir sehen zwei Bilder mit einer monochromen Farbe, einmal rot und einmal Grün. Im Detail sehen wir verschwommene Strukturen, tiefere Niveaus, unerklärlichen Streifen und minimale Farbunterschiede. Keine scharfen Linien, keine Rundungen oder keine Ansätze vom Stiel verraten, dass es sich um rote Paprikas und grüne Gurken handelt.

Genau wie in der Serie Wasser fotografiert Bout eine Oberfläche. Diesmal sind es jedoch nicht historisch beladene mystische Orte sondern Oberflächen von Gemüse. Die Arbeitsweise erinnert an die Art und Weise, wie er die Serie Wasser fotografiert hat. Die Lichtreflektionen und die Spiegelung der Oberfläche ist sein Spielraum bei der Montage von den hunderten sehr scharfen Fotos. Die Oberfläche bewegt sich hier allerdings nicht, nur langsam tritt ein Verrottungsprozess ein. Sobald organische Spuren von faulen Stellen auf der Oberfläche erscheinen enden seine Aufnahmen.

In der Montage will er keine Spuren von dem Vergänglichen sehen. Bout will die Oberfläche als eine kostbare künstliche Farbmalerie konservieren, die uns an die großen monochromen Farbflächen erinnern von den Amerikanischen Colorfieldpainters. Mark Rothko ist einer von ihnen, der nicht in die abstrakte Malerei interessiert war, sondern in die Gefühle der Menschen. In seine großen unscharfen Farben sollte man von sehr dicht bei betrachtet selber die religiösen Gefühle erfahren, die Rothko selbst erfahren hat beim malen.

Bout ist nicht in religiöse Gefühle interessiert sondern in die Veränderung eines Objektes durch die fotografische Reproduktion. Das industriell gezüchtete Gemüse, das in den holländischen hoch technischen Gewächshäusern produziert wird, beurteilen wir auf eine farbig glatte und glänzende Oberfläche. Paprika und Gurken sind vergleichbar mit einem Massenprodukt. Bout konzentriert sich auf die objektiven Qualitätsmerkmale, nicht um eine ideale Paprika zu fotografieren, sondern um durch seine subjektive digitale Montagearbeit ein Massenprodukt in ein individuelles Kunstbild zu verändern.

Die Intensität der Farbe und die Kombination von Schärfe und Unschärfe in RedsandGreens befriedigt direkt unser Verlangen. Das tägliche Gemüse verändert in ein pornografisches Bild, die sanften Strukturen stehen im Kontrast zu den harten Lichtreflexen besonders in theReds. Vielleicht liegt es an der Farbe, dass in theGreens durch die starke Unschärfe viel tiefer liegende Niveaus sichtbar werden.

Wir denken bei Rot und Grün, Schärfe und Unschärfe, Flachheit und Tiefe an einen 3D Film und an eine Brille bestehend aus einem grünen Glas und einem roten Glas, so dass unscharfe Bilder sich vor unseren Augen verschieben und wir den Raum intensiver erleben können. Jetzt stellt sich natürlich die Frage, was sehen wir in der Oberfläche von Paprika und Gurken mit einer 3D Brille? Sicherlich geben die Fotos von Bout uns eine Antwort, wir sehen nicht mehr eine Paprika oder Gurke mit guter Qualität sondern erkennen unsere eigenen Wünsche in monochrome Farben und in tiefere Schichten.

Ute Brinkmeier, Januar 2015

# Reflections

These photos are intended to be viewed  
at 6 x 9 metre formats  
they are incredible close-ups  
of everyday objects.

That's why they resemble landscapes,  
resemble skin  
that might stretch to eternity.

And within those cucumbers  
it is little lakes we find.  
These photographs are maps of little  
universes,  
places to perhaps have a picnic one time,  
one afternoon,  
one forever.

As fruit turns into skin  
maybe you can feel your own skin,  
feel your own veins

more clearly than before

and you might remember  
the one, crucial difference  
between the fleshy, fruity surfaces of skin  
and our own blood-shifting veins:

humans heal when they bruise.

Looking at these images, one becomes certain  
that along those stretches of cucumber-plains  
there are tiny little people-beings,  
living their lives,  
rowing their boats,  
chatting away.

And who knows?

They might, occasionally,  
look up at the sky  
like we do.



And wonder

what causes their clouds to tremble,  
what causes their Earth to shake,

what causes their infinite fields of  
red-pepper-skin  
land to break,

what causes their Gods to spit fire -

maybe,

Like we do.

Isha van der Burg, February 2014

Red 29731 x 14057, scale 1:50



Red 37679 x 17024, scale 1:50



Red 40299 x 20939, scale 1:50



Red 40914 x 18855, scale 1:50





Red 41983 x 13243, scale 1:50



Red 42634 x 18854, scale 1:50



Red 44754 x 30992, scale 1:50



Red 51981 x 22343, scale 1:50





Green 61000 x 22629, scale 1:50



Green 42501 x 13825, scale 1:50



Green 42133 x 13064, scale 1:50



Green 42003 x 13168, scale 1:50





Green 41888 x 11653, scale 1:50



Green 41868 x 12288, scale 1:50



Green 40233 x 14321, scale 1:50



Green 38609 x 13442, scale 1:50







# The Start of the RedsandGreens

*'Nothing is more difficult for a true painter than to paint a rose, since before he can do so, he has first to forget all the roses that were ever painted'.*

*Henri Matisse*

Every day on television, in newspapers and on the internet, I see images, lots of images. I filter what I have seen and delete in my head as much as possible. I try to forget most of what I saw. Some images however keep coming back. I have no idea why. To be honest I do not care.

The images that keep coming back offer a kind of starting point: a first hint for a possible project. I liked the colours and textures of the ingredients I saw in our kitchen and at the market: like apricots, paprikas and bananas. I started to make pictures of them, got intrigued by the results, picked up more ingredients, made more pictures and got more intrigued.

I liked the images of the colours and the textures I photographed. I forgot I was working with food. I felt like a painter, painting with natural colours of natural materials. The images of the paprikas and the cucumbers in particular were bright red and bright green. The images presented here are made of combinations of hundreds of exposures, resulting in large digital files. Each image is named after its colour and the number of pixels it is made of.

Ger C. Bout, Rotterdam, January 2015

\*From Henri Matisse A Second Life Alastair Sooke, Penguin Books 2014

# About Ger C. Bout

Ger C. Bout studied at the Department of Architecture at the Technical University of Delft in 1975. One of the places where he worked during his studies is Linz, Austria, where he met his Finnish wife Riitta. Directly after graduation, he moved to Finland and begun working for the Department of Architecture at the University of Otaniemi/Helsinki. There started to design and produce furniture.

Some years later, the couple moved to the Netherlands. While continuing to design and make furniture, Bout became more and more interested in art, modern dance, theater and music. He also discovered he enjoyed building, but disliked architecture. During this time he often made trips to New York and San Francisco and other cities. He met artists like John Cage, Christo, Robert Frank, Robert Irwin and Dennis Oppenheim. Their inspiration took his interests beyond building and architecture.

In the eighties and early nineties Bout realized installations in various countries and worked with all kinds of artists and disciplines. He learned he was able to reach many people with his ideas. People who had never had anything to do with art became key players in the making of these works, both with regards to the concept as well as influencing the sculptural form. Many were willing to participate in his projects, inspired by the presentations with which he started each project. He realised that the images he produced at these presentations played an important role in the projects.

As a result, Bout decided to concentrate completely on the production of images. He started to experiment with pictures of nearby objects, using combinations of old fashioned large format camera's and today's digital camera's and techniques. The pictures of cucumbers and paprikas presented here are the first results of this new approach.



# Colophon

RedsandGreens are presented by the artist with texts by *Betsy M. Blan, Ute Brinkmeier, and Isha van der Burg.*

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More information about Ger C. Bout at [www.gercbout.com](http://www.gercbout.com)

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