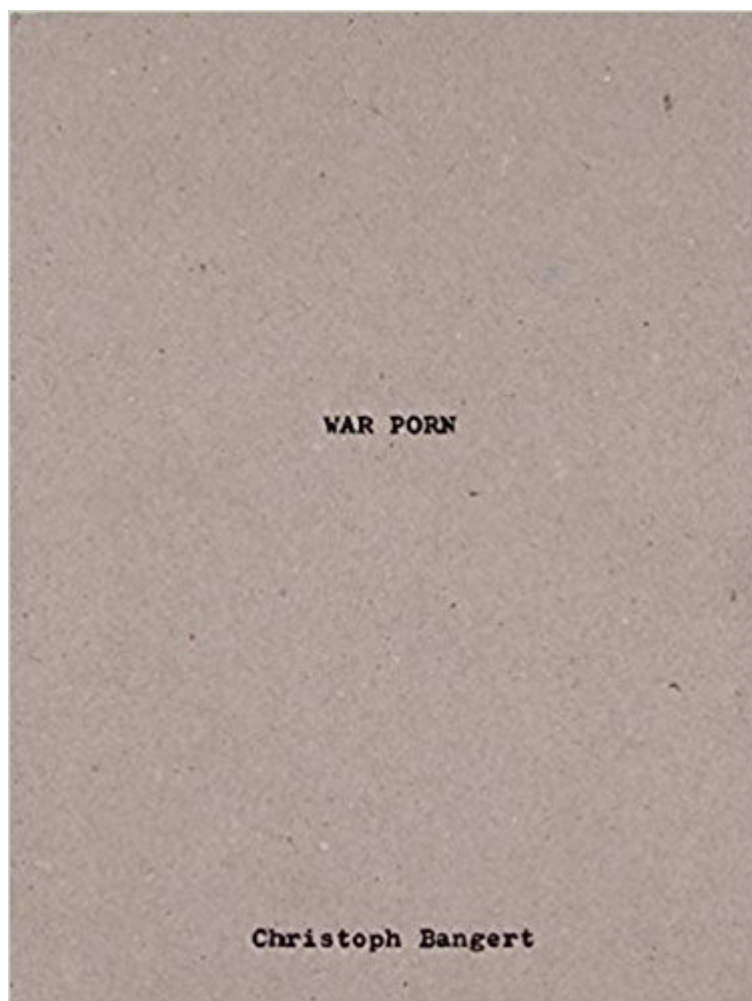


The book was found

War Porn



Synopsis

Do I exploit my subjects? Is it morally justifiable to work as a photographer in war zones and disaster areas? Why are we all so attracted to images of other people's misery? Am I producing 'War Porn'? As a photographer covering conflicts for international publications, Christoph Bangert is regularly confronted with the dilemma between truthful documentation and (self-) censorship. Using his images taken during the past ten years in Afghanistan, Iraq, Lebanon, and Gaza, Bangert started an experiment: What would happen if we suppressed our need for self-censorship for once? The result is as shocking as it is honest. Designed by Teun van der Heijden, Chiho Bangert and Klaus Kehrer, the book is also a collector's item: The small format, open spine binding, rough cover material and typewriter font are reminiscent of a handmade, personal journal. Some of the pages are not cut apart, but have a perforation which can easily be ripped open. This way the reader can decide just how much he wants to see, how much he can take. Spreads between these "hidden" images, naturally, are open to view.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Christoph Bangert (born 1978) studied photography at the Fachhochschule Dortmund and at the International Center of Photography, New York. He graduated from ICP in 2003. Bangert was a semi-professional rally driver for four years. In 2002 he shipped an old green Land Rover from Germany to Buenos Aires and in six months, drove from Argentina, 22,000 miles to New York City. The journey resulted in his first book titled Travel Notes. Bangert has worked in Palestine, Japan,

Darfur, Afghanistan, Indonesia, Pakistan, the US, Lebanon, Nigeria, Zimbabwe and Iraq, where he spent about nine months in 2005 and 2006 on assignment for The New York Times. His work from Iraq is collected in the book *IRAQ: The Space Between*. His pictures have been published in leading international publications and he regularly photographs on assignment for The New York Times, Stern Magazine and Neue Zürcher Zeitung. Bangert won awards from World Press Photo, POYi and others and participated in the Joop Swart Masterclass. After completing a 14 month long overland journey with his Land Rover across Africa he published a book called *Africa Overland* with National Geographic Germany in 2013. In recent years he started to compete in motorsports events again, particularly desert off-road rallies. Currently he is working on a long term project about the Fukushima nuclear disaster. Christoph Bangert lives in Uster, Switzerland.

Excellent, incisive reportage from some of the most heinous and harrowing conflicts of our time. Bangert's work is brilliant -- dignified, non-exploitative, and graphic in service of a nuanced point. The physical metaphor of the book is a little heavy handed - you have to "choose" to open every other page and expose yourself to violent war imagery - but the work itself is undeniably strong. If you find that Don McCullin, Chris Hondros, Christopher Anderson, and Peter Van Agtmael resonate with you, I think you'll (for lack of a better term) "enjoy" Bangert's work. One note: as you would expect from a book called 'War Porn', it is gruesome. That is, of course, rather the point, or, part of the point, at least, but worth noting nonetheless.

Bangert's book is disturbing, likely to cause controversy, and a major visual contribution to understanding how the (largely self-imposed) censorship of the media in democratic states distorts our understanding of suffering in places like Iraq and Afghanistan, where this photographer has created some of the most powerful and emotion-wrenching images of those "distant" conflicts. More than a distillation of graphic pictures from war and natural disaster (many of which were never published due to their disturbing and at times grotesque content) *War Porn* seeks to situate violence and representations of violence within a society served by massive structures of "knowing", such as news websites, TV channels and textbooks, that set subtly powerful limitations on what should be seen of what, and when, and how. Make sure to read the photographer's thoughtful preface and very personal afterword.

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