EN: Isomorphine
CZ: Izomorfin

Isomorphine is a project devoted to finding a language to visually articulate my own queer experience as a gay man within the changing cultural context of Central Europe. It does not form a linear autobiographical narrative. It is conceived instead as a fragmentary glossary or map of meanings, in which individual photographs function as autonomous points connected by similarities of form, recurring motifs, traces, associations and titles.

One of the main strategies used in the project is the construction of “imprecise metaphors” — relationships between image and title that do not yield a single answer, but instead open up a field of possible interpretations. An ordinary object can be shifted into an entirely different semantic field, while similar gestures or forms can connect experiences that appear remote from one another. The project therefore does not attempt to draw a sharp outline of identity, but rather sketches a map of meanings, tensions and associations.

One recurring motif is the cut and the trace it leaves behind. The knife itself appears directly only rarely; more often it remains absent, yet is suggested by shape, wound, gesture, context, or by the very process through which the image is made. In this way it connects different fields of meaning: care, violence, desire, memory, stigmatisation and risk.

The title *Isomorphine* is itself a neologism. On the one hand, it refers to isomorphism — the similarity of structures and forms that I look for between seemingly distant images and experiences. On the other, its sound evokes a substance associated with pain, its relief, and an altered way of feeling. The title therefore brings together two areas that are central to the project: the search for similarities and the attempt to come to terms with experiences that are difficult to name unambiguously.

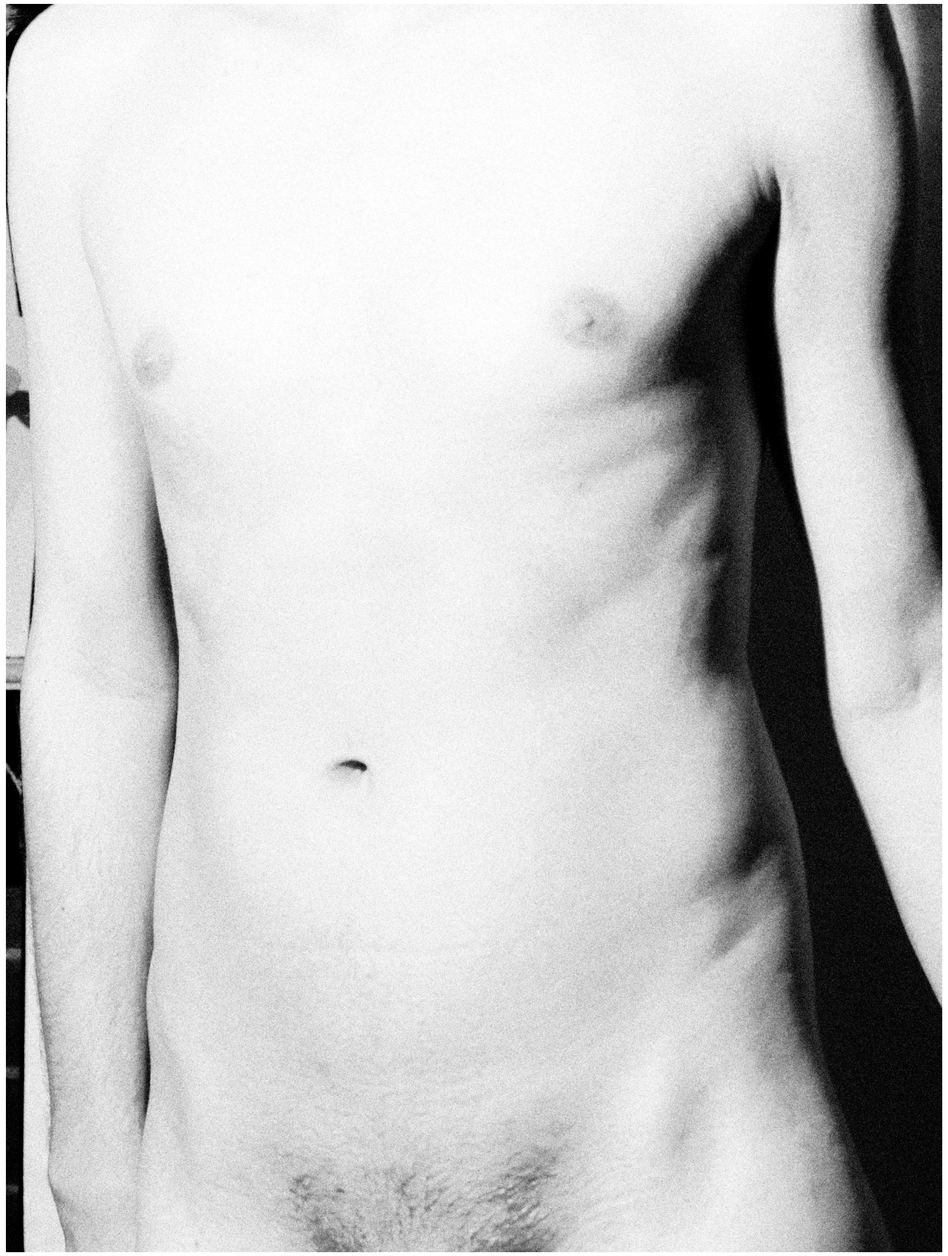
The individual works differ in format, material and mode of presentation because I treat them as separate objects rather than as a visually uniform series. Their coherence arises from the relationships between images, titles and meanings, rather than from a homogeneous aesthetic.

Patryk
Kurowski



EN: God accepts Cain's offering
CZ: Bůh přijme Kainovu oběť

The work speculates on what might have happened if God had accepted Cain's offering of the fruits of the earth instead of favouring Abel's offering, which required the death of an animal. Could the first murder in one of the foundational myths of our culture have been avoided? Did Cain really have the possibility of keeping a clear conscience, if from the outset the offering involving blood was deemed more valuable?



EN: The first time
CZ: První řez

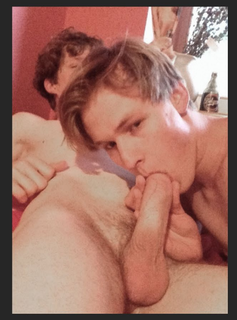
At the centre of the photograph is a navel. Despite the sexually suggestive title, the work refers to the first moment in which the human body encounters a knife. Cutting the umbilical cord is the first cut made on a human body and, at the same time, marks the beginning of life as a separate being.



EN: Thief
CZ: Zloděj

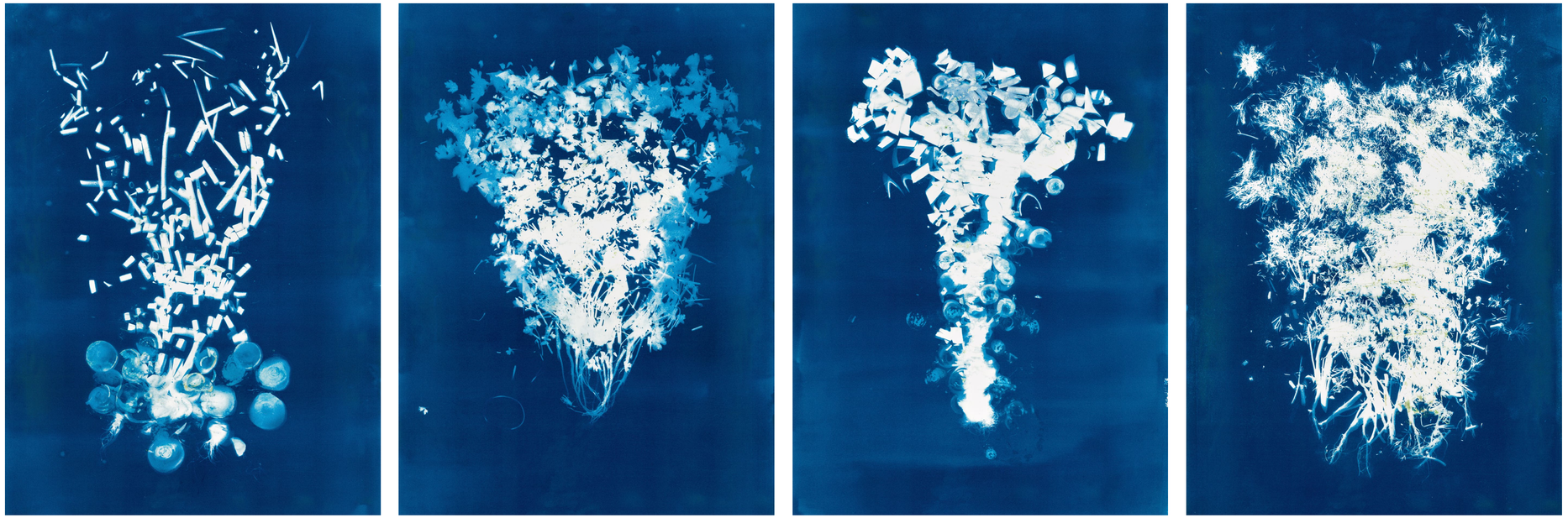
The photograph shows a man standing in a doorway, with one arm ending at the elbow. The work draws attention to the fact that bodily mutilation and difference have no fixed meaning, but are interpreted through cultural and historical context.

The upper part of the man's body, including his face, is concealed by the passe-partout. This gesture repeats the body's implied severing while also rendering the figure anonymous. In the context of a person accused of theft, anonymity might mean the possibility of saving face and being protected from public stigmatisation. In a contemporary context, however, the device draws attention to the ways in which the identity of the "Other" can be constructed on the basis of bodily deviations from a commonly accepted norm.



CZ: Pasování na rytíře
EN: Knighting

The work draws attention to the role of phallic objects in rituals and representations associated with becoming a man — a motif that recurs across different cultures and historical periods.



EN: Analysis
CZ: Analýza

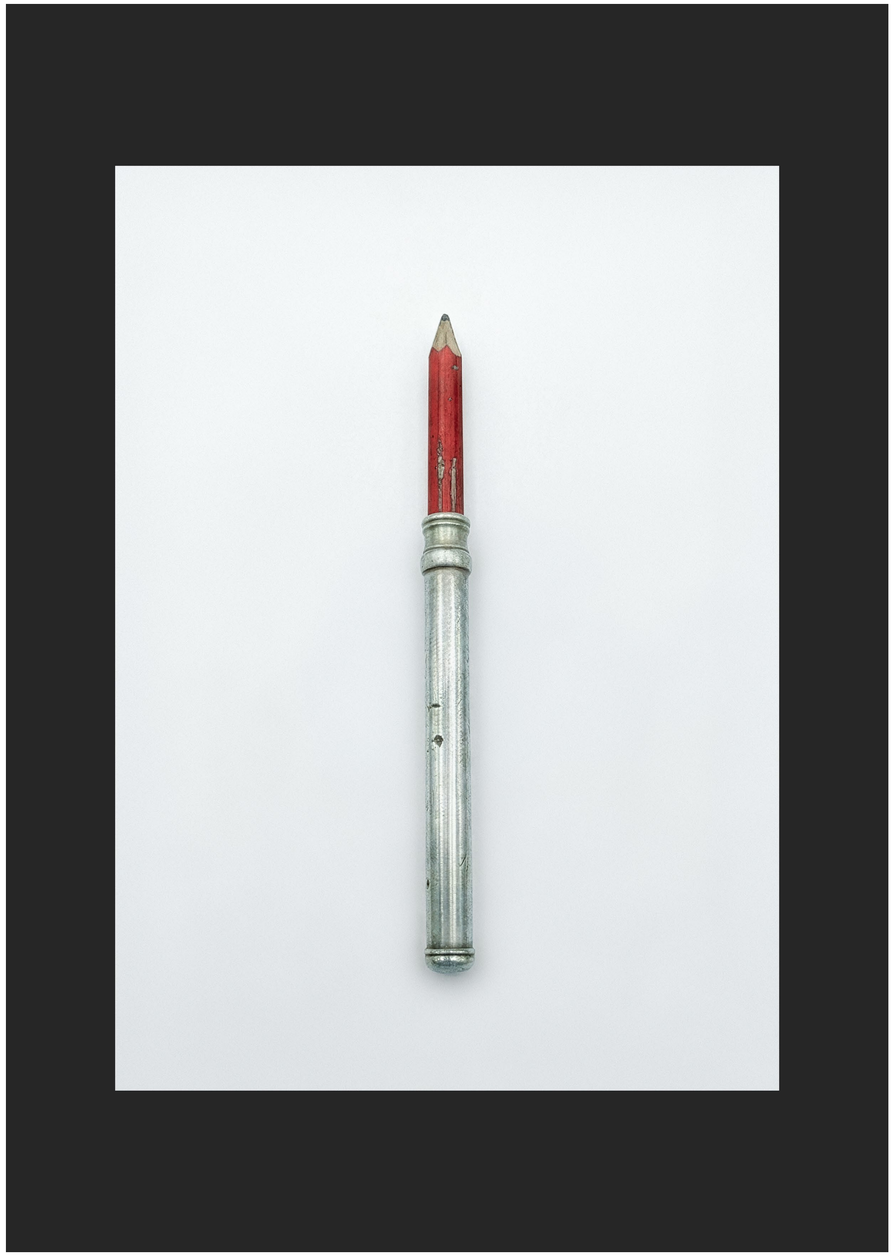
A set of four cyanotypes made on light-sensitive paper. Plants commonly used in cooking were cut directly on its surface and then exposed. In this way, their ordinary, utilitarian form is deconstructed and broken down into fragments.

The resulting arrangements visually evoke the inkblots used in projective tests in psychiatry and psychology. The work juxtaposes the physical deconstruction of the plants with processes of analysis and interpretation, drawing attention to how breaking something down into parts can serve both understanding and the imposition of meaning.



EN: Fold
CZ: Záhyb

The work shows two young men walking through a forest, either from the beach or towards it. One carries a bag, the other a folded umbrella. The road ahead curves. The photograph is out of focus and resembles a single frame taken from a moving image.



EN: Fever
CZ: Horečka

The photograph shows a red pencil in a silver porte-crayon holder, reconstructed from Thomas Mann's description. In The Magic Mountain, the object is lent to Hans Castorp by his schoolmate Pribislav Hippe. Hans's adolescent homosexual desire is narrated in the novel through this very pencil. Reconstructing the object extracts the material bearer of desire from the literary narrative and gives it physical presence.

Framing the work with a passe-partout refers to the motif of the box and emphasises the object-like character of the item.



EN: Brutus
CZ: Brutus

The model's pose, the format of the photograph and its presentation as a loose sheet of glossy paper refer to posters printed in colour magazines. Yet marks are visible on the man's back whose meaning is ambiguous. To some, they may be stretch marks; to others, traces of BDSM practices.

The work makes use of this ambiguity, juxtaposing the aesthetic of an idealised, erotic image of the male body with signs that may suggest both its biological materiality and experiences of pain, violence or desire.



EN: Catastrophe
CZ: Pohroma

The black-and-white photograph of scattered plastic knives filling the entire frame refers to James Nachtwey's photograph of machetes made in Rwanda. The work asks to what extent it is legitimate to juxtapose genocide with ecological and climate catastrophe, and how these experiences can be represented through images.

At the same time, it poses a formal question: can camp aesthetics and the postmodern irony embedded in them be used to speak about violence, catastrophe and collective responsibility?



EN: Operating theatre
CZ: Operační sál

The photograph shows, seen through glass, a room in the National Archaeological Museum of Naples where damaged sculptures are conserved and repaired. The English title Operating theatre is particularly important, bringing together the meaning of a surgical operating theatre with that of a theatrical spectacle.

The work juxtaposes care for the body and the attempt to repair it with the history of medicine as a field that also developed through drastic experiments and vivisections performed before audiences.

It also draws attention to the different value assigned to different lives and asks about the necessity of violence and the suffering of some in order for the treatment of others to be possible.



EN: Record
CZ: Záznam

The photograph shows hands in a gesture that exposes the wrists. Yet no expected marks are visible on them.

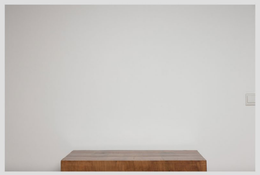
The absence of visible signs may suggest that not every trauma leaves a legible representation on the body. At the same time, it may point to the privilege associated with not having experienced violence.



EN: Miracle
CZ: Div

The work presents a scanned slice of bread. The unusual, “heavenly” colour of the background is the result of a scanner error.

The work refers to the biblical miracle of the multiplication of the loaves and juxtaposes it with the possibility of almost unlimited image duplication in the age of mechanical reproduction. In doing so, it asks what is actually being multiplied: food or merely its representation, and what kind of nourishing potential such a reproduction can have.



God accepts Cain's offering



The first time



Thief



Knighting



Analysis



Fold



Fever



Brutus



Catastrophe



Operating theatre



Record



Miracle

Exhibition plan