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STORYBEHIND

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Edmund Clark

This street is where an American pilot lives. He flew rendition flights [a controversial CIA practice allegedly aimed at facilitating the torture of prisoners on non-US soil]. They carried people around the world to secret prisons and to be interrogated. I can’t tell you how I found where the pilot lives. I’d risk getting someone into trouble if I did that.

The image was taken in America, three years ago. My research led me to those houses: I wanted to record those spaces. I was also working in and around the homes of men who’d been subject to extraordinary renditions.

I decided to redact the image on legal advice, but also after reflecting on it myself ethically: did I want to reveal this man’s location? He has a reasonable expectation of privacy and security in his own home, although that was not afforded to the people who were his cargo on rendition flights. Ultimately, I think it’s important that it’s censored.

When I look at the image now, I think it’s stronger and more aesthetically appealing for its redaction. The tones of the mosaic redaction, the way the redaction works in relation to the V of the parking space and the water, the grass on the foreground... it actually makes it more interesting. It also plays to the imagination, which is vital in engaging people. You’re encouraged to think about what’s been covered up. You draw your own conclusions about what you can’t see.

Censorship and secrecy are visual themes that run through my work, which also reflects on how terror works on all of us. Terror moderates our behaviour, it moderates the way we think, it moderates the way we relate to the spaces around us. **Edmund Clark: War of Terror is open until August 2017 at the Imperial War Museum. Negative Publicity: Artefacts of Extraordinary Rendition is published by Aperture/Magnum Foundation, for US\$60.**