

venice_scans

a project by Kurt Hoerbst

... Doges, French, Austrians and Italians - Venice has had many masters. And who does the city belong to today? Americans, Russians and Chinese? The Venetians despair. Those tourists. The hordes with their maps, cameras and mobile phones everywhere you look. And now this photographer as well. Someone who wants to get up close and personal with the people who live here. Can you trust him? Venice has always been a city of artists. Veronese, Carpaccio, Peggy Guggenheim, the Biennale. That all has an effect. Okay then, let him do it.

The stranger directs proceedings. Putting his models on the floor and starting his scanner. Breathe in and lie still, please. Arm length, eye colour, nose shape. Scans measure the people, from top to toe, from the soles of their feet to the hair on their heads. Everyone presents themselves as they are, in jacket and trousers, in worn shoes, everyday clothes. Look behind the portraits and you see doors opening to reveal workshops and kitchens, gallery backrooms and fish sellers' warehouses. The cook, the cleaner, the student. They lie still for a few moments and let themselves be seen. Then they get up, put on their shoes and they are gone. Disappearing into the crowd. All that remains are the photos of Kurt Hörbst - and confusion. "Grasping the good fortune that the ground on which you are standing cannot be larger than the two feet covering it." Franz Kafka. The foundations that carry us shake. Suddenly everything can be completely different. As shown in these portraits. Venice is everywhere. Either way. ...

*Extract from the german text: „Schwankend zwischen den Welten“ ...
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About people_scans

The project is to be regarded as a counterpoint to the high speeds found in digital photography. Not, however, as a sign of personal rejection of the new media – the idea behind this project is more a form of concept-based personal slowdown, concentrated work, personal awareness of the environment.

The technical part is handled by a high resolution digital camera which moves along a specially designed rail system and can be used to photograph and scan individual surfaces/objects/subjects. The individual images are then put together to make life-size pictures. A finished picture consists of up to 20 individual images – giving you a high-quality finish. When you take a closer look at the finished picture, the high technical quality reveals new aspects in the contents.

The with regard to the genre of portrait photography and the slowing down of what is normally a very spontaneous act in portrait photography represent an additional aspect of communication between photographer and model.

The photographer takes on an exceptionally domineering role in this „game“. He literally rises above the model. The model has no possibility of movement.

He or she is at the mercy of the photographer for one to two minutes.

The result is a form of victim/assailant situation (as is very often the case in photography).

The shooting angle does the rest, making sure that once the exhibition picture is put up vertically again, there is something strange, distant and removed about it. An impersonal, unapproachable image develops, something that can only be the result of personal trust and personal closeness ...

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