

PASSENGER – Claudia Fritz

"I am a passenger, and I ride and I ride... ". This is the opening line of the song "Passenger" by Iggy Pop in which he describes himself as a passenger of life. In these song lyrics the photographic artist Claudia Fritz found the inspiration for her recent series.

The artist is continuously dedicating herself to contemplating the living space and people moving in it as well as the relation between the individual person and its environment, between the antagonistic pairs evident and hidden, permanent and instantaneous. However, her approach is never accusatory or even claiming. Instead, she succeeds in widening the perspective in a narrative way by her characteristic feel and intuition for seeing the beauty in unimpressive, transient and ephemeral objects.

As in the previous series "Jungle" or "To whom the city belongs?" also in the latest photographic work "Passenger" her area of artistic activity is the urban context. Rather than focusing on what is tangible, Claudia Fritz is giving her particular attention to the perception of passing scenes. She wants to capture non-recurring, constantly changing, time-dependent moments. To be a passenger means to be on the move, to be on a journey. Besides short-term changes of place or permanent commuting between A and B, it can also mean the journey of life starting with the birth. Regardless of whether it is considered under a narrow or holistic view, every movement causes change and thus turns to an existential sense of our existence.

Human beings in the urban setting are inevitably – irrespective of whether they move or not – exposed to the constant flow and thus part of a continuous process which has a lasting impact. Lingering moments and the capability to freeze moments are the cornerstones of Claudia Fritz's work. For this purpose she is also moving around and takes pictures from moving trains, buses, underground trains or cable cars and escalators waiting for the appropriate moment to press the shutter button. In the reverse process the photographer is placing on carefully selected strategic locations to capture passing scenes from a stationary position.

Her images rarely have sharp outlines because the photographs of fleeting moments are subject to the fast moving and constantly changing realities. They look like as if different levels of foreground and background were overlapping between those the viewer's eyes are wandering back and forth. The impression of condensed extracts of reality floating on the surface of the image is intensified by the fact that, for this series, Claudia Fritz hardly photographed directly but rather through and in front of glass panes. Again and again the sight obscuring films or advertising panels on the transparent fronts of buses are melting confusingly with instantaneous and background scenes influenced by speed so that the gaze is not only directed to the image but is literally drawn into it. Dotted roadsides, glancing lights on tree rows, pedestrians pursued by shadows or train compartments immersed in red are results of a trained photographic vision and in particular of technical and handicraft skills to capture moods created by light shades with the camera. In this series light is transforming to a hinge between static and moving scenes and opens access to interspaces with surreal effect.

With these poetic photo works Claudia Fritz provides free tickets offering a change of perspective to become something of a passenger on his/her own thought journey. (German text: Lisa Trockner, translation: Manuela Zine)

About the artist:

Claudia Fritz was born in Innsbruck in 1973 and studied architecture in Innsbruck and Paris. Since 1996 she is intensively pursuing artistic photography and independent photography projects and has taken part in numerous exhibitions in Austria and abroad. Since 2007 she is participating in projects of the "Photographic Documentary of the Tyrolean Country". In 2013, she received a grant for city photography in Freiburg, Germany. The artist lives and works in Innsbruck.

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