

LARS

For the Eyes of Strangers

by Lars Kemnitz

I like the idea of everyone being a voyeur. As a photographer, I am per se some kind of voyeur myself, affecting others looking at my pictures, transforming them into accomplices often without them noticing it. So, this time, I wanted voyeurism to take center stage and make the viewer peek through the keyhole to witness ostensibly intimate moments in the lives of strangers. My aim is to deliberately blur the boundaries between closeness and distance, intimacy and isolation, private and public as well as subject and object.

Therefore I created pictures that are highly suggestive and evocative, sometimes sexually charged. They are not straight photographs but instead more akin to stills from an experimental film. I wanted them to have this dreamy, painterly, expressive quality in order to detach them from reality and at the same time make them catch the eye of the viewer, so she or he gets involved with them. I also felt like it is important that there is this dark and dense atmosphere that pervades every picture of the series. Maybe that is because for me voyeuristic activities are night-time activities. Under the cover of darkness you feel safe to let your imagination run wild.

The process of creating the pictures was very intuitive and driven by experiments with the medium of photography and by collaborations with dear friends who modelled for me. Some of the pictures are self-portraits. I spent a lot of time working on the sequence and overall composition. Looking closely at single pictures or from a distance at the series in its entirety makes a difference in perception. The series is designed to work both ways, opening up different opportunities for interpretation. I am really drawn to the idea of the series being like a kaleidoscope: every turn reveals a new facet which yearns to be discovered.

If you are asking me for the reason why I have done this series, I can only say that I felt a need to do it. And that I want to see how people react. Talking to them and listening to what they have in mind when looking at the pictures is the most rewarding experience I can hope for and helps me to continue with my photography.

—

The series consists of 23 pictures.

I have been working on the series for one year and finished it in late summer 2017.

© 2017 Lars Kemnitz