

STAGED AUTHENTICITY. HOW THE 'REAL' IS CREATED IN MODEL PHOTOGRAPHY

Maja Tabea Jerrentrup, *Media and Film, Ajeenkya DY Patil University, Pune, India*

ABSTRACT

While obviously lavish styling was favored in the past, the so-called "authentic" or "natural" style has recently gained popularity in the model photography scene. After looking at the cultural situation that paved the way for this style the article explores the on first sight conflicting needs for "the real" and for perfection. In the following, (visual) strategies for conveying the "authentic", including the choice of ordinary locations, the emphasis on the moment, built-in film errors reminiscent of analogue times, but also the emphasis on the friendly-intimate relationship between model and photographer. The resulting images pretend to be natural but are not. Through the apparent abandonment of signifiers, which stand for elaborate, high-quality recordings, these images emphasize emotion and intuition and could be perceived as more auratic.

KEYWORDS

people photography, staging, authenticity, reality, emotions, aura

BIO

Dr. phil. Maja Tabea Jerrentrup works as an associate professor at Ajeenkya DY Patil University/Pune, as a faculty member at the Indian Institute of Photography/Delhi, and as photographer (Nikon ambassador, editor of Pictures Magazine). Thus, she deals both with theoretical and practical aspects of visual culture. Among her current research interests are motifs in staged photography, corporeality, and photography as a tool for psychological well-being. Her latest book looks at the therapeutic potential of staged photography

maja.jerrentrup@adypu.edu.in

Introduction: A change in staged photography

Some years ago, photo shootings in living rooms were known to be the territory of filthy beginner photographers and with the prospect of a kitchen unit as the backdrop, it would have been very hard to enthruse a young woman from the model photography scene. In the best case, such motives would have been regarded as lifestyle or advertisement pictures with the expectation of financial compensation. As desirable per se, they considered shootings involving great efforts with respect to an extraordinary or luxury location, special props, opulent costumes, peculiar make-up, and extensive retouching—in this field it was easy to find “tfp”-models (time for print/pictures, no other payment). At the moment a change is happening, a style has come up in the model photography scene that is referred to as “natural” or “authentic”¹ by its members. This article should explain its appeal and at the same time show its controversy.

I use the word “scene” (see Gelder 2005: 11) as I refer to a mostly free-time activity, with which many of its protagonists identify far more than with another hobby or job. On a daily base, most of them invest some time for networking on social media, for shootings, and retouching, and define themselves strongly by it, as my interviews and surveys have shown (see Jerrentrup 2018). There are affiliations with other scenes, e.g. a model can consider herself as a member of the cosplay culture as well as of the model scene. More or less professional photographers and models register on internet platforms such as Modelkartei, Fotocommunity or Facebook² (see Barth 2015: 250), but there are real-life-events and workshops as well

¹ A clear name has not yet evolved, whoever wants to mention it refers to example pictures.

² Modelkartei comprises over 300 000 members, mainly from Germany, Austria, and Switzerland. The scene is much bigger on Facebook, but more difficult to isolate, as most protagonists do not exclusively devote their accounts to photography. Popular

where people meet to improve their portfolios, to act out their creativity, and to criticise and discuss their works. The roles of recipient and producer are intermingled. For a specific shooting, a team gathers, usually comprising a model, a photographer, and often also a make-up-artist/designer and an assistant. After the selection of a team³, the topics will be discussed. Many topics require an intense staging, but there is a growing number of pictures that can be ascribed to the “authentic style”. Still, everyone active in the scene should know that a truly authentic reflection of reality cannot be expected: It should be clear, that every picture is staged.

Methods

I look back upon several years of participant observation within the scene, exerting various roles, being a photographer, a model, and an editor of a photography magazine. The participant observation took place in the two settings relevant to the scene: In real-life situations in which shootings, workshops, and meetings take place, and on social media where pictures are presented, discussed, and broader topics about modeling are debated. As I have a strong emic perspective that could be criticized for lacking the necessary distance (see Caruso 1967: 12) I decided to use a triangulation of methods (see Jerrentrup 2018: 24ff.).

During shootings and meetings, I conducted informal interviews that gave me the chance to learn more about the people’s values and opinions (see Mikos 2017: 367) and to verify the impressions I got from the participant observation. Within the course of the interviews, I addressed the question of liability with the conclusion, that there is a high interest regarding the analysis of their scene.

Further, I conducted short surveys on social media with the option of answering privately via message or e-mail to minimize the effects of social desirability that definitely have to be considered on social media. These data should broaden my scope by getting opinions of people that I would not reach in person. Moreover, the format of the survey allowed people to take a while to think before they answer and resulted in well manageable data.

Playing ‘authentic’

The photographed scenarios show e.g. models lolling on living room sofas, models leaning against kitchen doors holding a coffee cup or models in public space, usually showing a pensive expression. The following aspects are typical for the pictures’ look: Different than in street photography that declares natural moments as its terrain and thus has to deal with relatively closed apertures leading to a bigger depth of focus, in the authentic style very open apertures are chosen. Often there are specific light situations such as backlight with the foreground being lit up by a reflector or during retouching. The obvious use of a flash system is very seldom. As settings, public spaces such as streets or cafeterias are popular just as apparently private rooms, e.g. bedrooms or kitchens, rather nice indeed, but not flamboyant. One often finds dynamic pictures as well, e.g. a model walking down a street, turning her head so that her hair flies. These motifs remind on slice-of-life-advertisements. However, the cheerful mood which is dominant in slice-of-life-ads is not that typical for pictures in the authentic style. Here, the mood, as well as the model’s expression is often neutral, thoughtful or yearning.

When it comes to retouching, black-and-white is popular as well as sepia coloring, desaturations, and the imitation of analog development processes such as cross-processing. The model usually will receive a beauty retouching comprising the enhancement of skin and figure and a neat dodge-and-burn. The scenarios shown in the resulting images *could* be realistic, *could* be happening in real life—but they are not. Their origin is characterized by numerous conscious and unconscious decisions before, while, and after pressing the shutter. The entire situation, the meeting between the team members, the visit of the location, etc. would not have happened, be it not for the purpose of the shooting. Everything happens just to be photographed: “Ultimately, having an experience becomes identical with taking a photograph of it” (Sontag 2005: 18). Thus, these images can be described as staged, just as pictures using extreme costumes and make-up.

facebook groups count over 30 000 members, but usually feature only one specific look or are closely connected to one photographer or model.

³ For the typical features of casting and creation see Alward (2012: 13).

What provided the ground for this new style? Photography has always been the art of the person and its identity (see Barthes 1989: 89). Staged images usually tried to make the persons, their fashion, etc. look good or let them incorporate certain concepts. From the turn of the century onwards there is something new entering the world of model photography, as Dagmar Venohr analyses:

“At first sight, the new seems to be the beguiling realism of the photographs, their snapshot aesthetic and the authenticity in their mode of depiction. Looking closely, it becomes obvious, that in this kind of authenticity in fashion photography it can only be about an impression of authenticity because just the contextualization of the photograph in a fashion magazine should be enough to create this knowledge and a mindset of reflection connected to it. On the one hand, it is a staged authenticity, on the other hand it shows itself as an authentic staging, as the kind of fashion photography reveals, *that* it is staged. And at the same time it makes it clear, that on the side of the recipient there is an emotional longing for truth, even if he knows, that it will be impossible to fulfill” (Venohr 2010: 47).

Here, Venohr introduces the concept of staged authenticity referring to certain artists, among them Jürgen Teller and Terry Richardson. In the case of the model photography scene, this idea suits as well, even though the aesthetics are rather different: While Teller’s and Richardson’s work can be described as using a “trash” aesthetic, this feature is not present in the scene I consider here, probably as the line between the awkward beginner and the ambitious hobbyist would fade too much.

Longing for the “Real” and “Perfect”

An approach to explain why this specific style emerged in the model photography scene lies in the search for the “true” look. In a time in which even pictures taken by mobile phones can easily be manipulated with simple apps, e.g. Beauty Plus, such a look might be gone astray:

“For hobbyists and pros alike, we’ve reached a point at which the photos we see are both indecipherable from reality and not representative of it. Trust suffers. Viewers and creators alike crave authenticity” (Gottschalk).

In this way, Gottschalk also explains the current boom in analog photography. The best-selling camera in 2016 was the Fuji Instax—an analog instant camera. But what exactly makes an instant picture more authentic? Cameras like the Polaroid Z2300 enable the photographer to process the “instant” picture before the camera prints it. Consequently, the photographer holds an instant picture in hands that actually fails the criteria for instant pictures. The photographic result is not more relatable to reality. The same is true for the authentic style in model photography. The viewer has to keep the formation process in mind in order to understand the picture—such a thing as “recognizable authenticity” does not exist.

Other visual trends can also be regarded as in accordance with the longing for authenticity:

Beauty activities (such as make-up and hairstyling) should often “not be perceived as such, as beauty appears to be too artificial and one concludes, that the character must be rather fake. The outer appearance should mirror the inner being and look natural and authentic. This is why one is ‘naturally made up’, but not blunt, as the latter would be showing (although it actually contradicts naturalness)” (Seywald 2013: 8).

An example between art and commerce whose style is matching the authentic style in model photography is the Pirelli Calendar 2017. The yearly Pirelli calendar became famous by showing naked skin and sexy models. The 2017 calendar, photographed by Peter Lindbergh, was astonishing the audience as it pictured fully dressed celebrities. “The photographer explains his idea, which is the main topic of the Pirelli Calendar 2017: ‘In a time, in which women in the media and in general are said to be a portrayal of perfection and beauty, it mattered to me to remind us that there is another, more real and more authentic kind of beauty that is not manipulated by advertisement, etc. A beauty that expresses individuality and the courage to be yourself, as well as a certain sensibility’. The title ‘Emotional’, chosen by Lindbergh himself is stressing his intention, not to create ‘a calendar of perfect bodies, but rather a

calendar, which uncovers the sensibility and the feeling, the souls of the portrayed persons, and thus portrays them more nude than nude photography” (Pirelli Press Office 2016).

Yet, there is an area of conflict: Lindbergh already mentions the two terms of *authenticity* and *perfection*. In model photography, two needs collide—the need for authenticity, and the need for sophistication, the craving for recognition. The need for authenticity is socially relevant: It probably has its roots in a psychological safety motive, as it is necessary for people to properly assess situations and their fellow human beings. Therefore, they need information—the more authentic, the more adequate this information is, the better their evaluation works out. Authenticity thus is a quality that is valued as a positive trait in many ways. For photography, it carries a specific aspect, which reaches up to photography’s right to exist. Because of multiple options for retouching, even the option of creating realistically looking virtual worlds, photography finds itself more and more in competition with computer graphics. To save its terrain, it needs to bethink itself of the one trait, which really distinguishes it from computer graphics: The immediate relation to reality, its indexicality, its “deictic power” (Blunk 2010:34) is offering this peculiarity. Everything experienced with one’s own senses is commonly understood as real. As photography appears to be very familiar to the usual sensual perception it is inclined to be seen as presenting the truth (see Wortmann 2003: 126). Of course, this is not self-evident any more—if it has ever been (see e.g. Lackner 2014:100 or Stiegler 2006: 135)—and in the resulting images the indexicality can neither be easily spotted nor denied. Still, just by declaring a picture as a photograph its reference to something “real” often tends to be assumed by the audience. The boundaries are quite ambiguous, and one easily confuses indexicality with authenticity⁴, as well as overlooking plenty of opportunities to influence a picture while it is being taken or processed. There are various standpoints concerning the question whether authenticity and truth are fundamentally different in analog or digital photography (see Hägele 2009: 24 f.), William Mitchell even talks about “a kind of vulgar technical determinism, which thinks the ontology of a medium is properly determined by looking at its materiality and its technical-semiotic character” (p. 241). Without going too deep into the topic an approach to the problem could be the description of the difference as less fundamental than gradual. Features in photography and retouching of digital photography make a directed intervention much easier and more accessible to the inexperienced—it is easier to implement one’s ideas of a perfect picture. However, too much of it nowadays seems to be unwanted; a new “ethic of photography” is coming up. “Photographs cannot create a moral position, but they can reinforce one—and can help build a nascent one”, Susan Sontag famously stated (2005: 13). A general craving for authenticity might find its counterpart in the authentic style.

The wish for authenticity is opposed by the wish for perfection: The photographer wants to present the best possible picture—which is prone to be more successful by strongly controlling it, especially, as the result does not disclose its development process and the audience cannot tell with certainty, in how far it was staged, how much was done in photoshop, etc. If perfection is seen as a linear dimension the professional computer graphic that does not have to deal with the deficiencies of reality is on the one end opposed by the amateur’s snapshot. The room in between is filled by average-ambitioned pictures—but of course, model photographers would not like to be found close to the amateur. For Peter Lindbergh it is easier to be daring not just because of his undisputed talent and mastery: The authority of his name and the context of the famous calendar already distinguish him, and looking at the women shown in the calendar it is obvious that they are extraordinarily attractive and further, that they know how to move in front of the camera. These advantages are not there for the usual photographer.

Strategies for developing the ‘Real’

Let’s take a closer look at how authenticity is conveyed both within the picture and by considering its context and presentation. The following strategies have been produced by the model photography scene to join the wish for authenticity and the need for perfection which comes accompanied by the need for control and thus, for staging (see Jerrentrup 2018: 76-80).

As already mentioned most scenarios are rather ordinary. Often, tiny interferences are integrated such as hair being blown over the model’s face.

⁴ A very staged picture, showing an artificial situation with the people pictured as actors, might be indexical in so far, as it refers to this very staging.

When it comes to the composition a slight violation of common portrait rules such as “the nose should not cross the cheek line” or a composition, which does not follow the typical two-third-rule or the golden cut should provide more authenticity.

One more approach is the deliberate insertion of disruptive elements, such as overexposed areas reminding of analog times (see Coleman 2015: 75), surface scratches reminding of old prints, etc. The in this way suggested “passing of time adds to the aesthetic value of photographs, and the scars of time make objects more rather than less enticing” (Sontag 2005: 136). Adding such elements happens either by using specific photographic techniques or later during the retouch. Popular filter collections for the postproduction such as the Nik Color Efex contain digital imitations of cross processing, nostalgia or vintage filters, and conversions to grainy black-and-white. Other filter collections fully devote themselves to the analog optic.

Adding a voyeurist look is one more strategy achieved either by elements in the foreground that create bokeh or by photographing the model through a window, a door, or a curtain. It puts the recipient into the position of seeing something that was not supposed to be photographed, something private, and thus “real”. Further, he is somehow participating in the situation (see Sontag 2005: 7).

Another strategy to make a picture authentic is crossing the boundary of the single image. It concerns a new interpretation of the role of the model. Apart from several superstars, photo models have been rather exchangeable for a long time. Now the mere hobby model gains individuality. She is often not just a certain model type, but a certain person, stressing her individual traits.

“Individual’ is in the first place the undividable... In the 17th and 18th century the term was related to people and it meant then: an individual carries the same features over *various* situations and thus shows certain social predictability. If it changes the scene or the context, it will not become something completely different. It stays the same under different social circumstances” (Becker 2007: 66).

But does every model have an easily recognizable individuality? Among the traits which are considered to communicate visual individuality freckles, tattoos, and scars can be mentioned. Freckles are highly desirable not just because of their connection to individuality, but also because they signify naturalness and genuineness. Being perceived as a blemish in older times and therefore rather covered, nowadays freckles are accentuated by make-up and retouching or even painted on the skin or digitally inserted. Even freckle tattoos are trendy. A more extreme example is the American model Winnie Harlow whose skin shows the depigmentation Vitiligo and thus strongly individualizes her. Yet the possibilities to achieve a strong visual individuality are rather restricted, as Magdalena Wolak is criticizing:

“The beauty ideal of our time embodies a bony, androgynous woman [...] paradoxically individuality seems to be in demand as well. The beauty ideal still has to fulfill certain criteria [...] but the models are allowed to or eventually even have to show their individuality [...] Uniformism and individuality seem to be two contradictory criteria. The uniform thin, tall and young models try to convince by their individuality by telling their preferences, dislikes, and little idiosyncrasies. Idiosyncrasies provide character and make them more human, they are something special, the exception among the need for uniformity. But the actual rules still are very clear: They have to measure at least 174 cm and must have a slim body. Only on this basis, the model industry can allow itself excesses such as individuality and genuineness” (Wolak 2005: 12).

Looking at the scene characterized by semi-professionals and amateurs, this is true in a slightly different way: A beautiful face and an attractive body can be seen as a good precondition, but extremes are popular as well and provide memorability due to their appearance. Being extreme can be partly controlled by the model herself, be it by body modifications or by investments in extraordinary costumes. Still, it is questionable, in how far individuality really can be shown:

“What was ‘the undividable’ before now is the singular and people are expected to act originally or authentically, sometimes even deviant. The modern individual, confronted with this imposition, cannot do any different than copy socially fabricated patterns of individuality” (Becker 2007: 66–67).

Indeed there are models, which can clearly be allocated in one certain section associated with individuality, be it the retro or gothic segment, and do not try out any other style (anymore). This happens for example, if the person concerned is really enthusiastic about one of these topics or if she has realized that due to her visual features she will be more successful in one particular field. A retro model can be a bit curvier than a typical fashion model and appear more cheeky. Yet, most models vary their visual traits often by changing hair color and cut, changing their stylings, etc. at such a speed that it is difficult to talk about individuality as “stability in various situations”. Many identities a model “plays” for certain shootings will not be considered as parts of herself, but rather as testing of opportunities, for which her body and her theatrical talent offer some raw material. On the one hand individuality is stressed, on the other its frame should be as loose as possible (see Bieger 2008: 55). It is less about the individual authentic “being”, but about the “being possible”, less about “being yourself” but being a postmodern, flexible human being, whose manifold appearances are tied together by the term “model”.

Being individual as a model does not exhaust itself in visual features but is accompanied by a certain way of acting on social media that underlines the model’s personality. Some of the social media posts show a strong connection to shooting results, often accompanied by some information about the shooting, a quotation, a poem, or some emotional content, but there are also backstage and “real-life” pictures, jokes, sentimental stories, personal statements up to political opinions. The recognizable individuality of the model also caters for a change in power relations: The photographer is no longer necessarily in a dominant position as supposed in most literature (see for example Stiegler 2006: 163).

I have just mentioned backstage photographs, i.e. pictures, which all people involved in a model shooting tend to show on social media as an illustration of the real shooting process, often in real-time. Paradoxically these pictures find themselves—as long as they are not intended to be “before/after pictures” shown to give an impression of the stylist’s or retoucher’s performance and therefore aim for the greatest possible difference—in a similar dichotomy as the finally resulting images in the authentic style: They would like to convey the atmosphere of a shooting but look aesthetic and interesting at the same time. They should neither anticipate nor repeat the shooting results nor disenchant them by communicating an atmosphere that contradicts the one shown in the final images. When mentioning backstage pictures, they should not be confused with the backstage area described by Erving Goffman: These backstage impressions are thoroughly staged, chosen, and often retouched, or at least filtered, especially as some steps in retouching are already offered by smartphone apps.

One more aspect is the stylisation of the relationship between model and photographer, a relationship that can provide a feeling of authenticity:

“The intimacy between photographer and model is stressed and the recipient starts to see this kind of model photography as an autobiographic document. So does Tracey Emin, an artist friend of Jürgen Teller who speculates in an attitude of directness: ‘[...] how does he achieve such a natural intimacy? If I would not know it any better, I would say, he has fucked them all, this is how far he goes with the camera.’ This intimacy, so it suggests to the viewer, is a result of ‘real’ closeness and ‘real’ feelings, the staging of the relationship between photographer and model is forced to seem authentic” (Ruelfs 2006: 214).

The photographs do not only appear as artistically motivated works but also as evidence for the time spent together, for common experiences, often accompanied by proving backstage pictures⁵. The photographer can adorn himself to have spent time with attractive models—just the term “model” makes them somehow attractive—and even more, to be part of the models’ lives. The model can show that she is popular and that it is not just her appearance, which is appealing, but her character as well. On social media, the people concerned often use positive attributes to describe the shooting and to mutually stress the teams’ abilities, among them attributes that lie beyond photography such as “incredibly congenial” or “just wonderful”. Superlatives are very popular.

⁵ “Youngsters appear to take less interest in sharing photographs as *objects* than in sharing them as *experiences*”, José van Dijck notices in an article about selfies (van Dijck 2008: 61), this is partly true for the model photography scene as well.

Looking at the ‘Real’

The relationship between the photography team and the recipient should be regarded as well. What does a picture in the authentic style tell besides the already mentioned aspects? Compared with the obviously staged pictures there seems to be a certain *laissez-faire*-attitude expressed in many of these pictures as if one would neither crave attention, nor hope for the benevolent look of the recipient, nor long for “likes”. One does not try to impress with great effort and abundant *mise-en-scènes*. Thus, one appears to be very self-confident, maybe even arrogant—and pictures a typical high fashion attitude. Runway models featuring big labels seldom smile, in high-gloss magazines such as *Vogue* the recipient sees rather serious expressions or sometimes eccentric laughter, but rather seldom the friendly face shown by an average woman when she intends to please. Pointedly formulated, model and photographer communicate independence and arrogance (see Dangendorf 2012: 105). Even though clear status markers are missing, this style underlines the high-quality of the shooting, a quality that does not exist due to the attributes depicted but that lies in the team members themselves.

And what about art?

All these strategies try to make the pictures and the teams behind them appear more authentic and at the same time desirable and sophisticated, accompanied by the semblance that the recipient would witness something true in the sense of unstaged.

As already shown, it is the specific ability of photography to have a definite relationship to the visible reality that is stressed in this style. By apparently giving up parts of the extensive staging, the well-thought-out, own composition, this kind of photography seems to move away from the traditional notion of art. This can deconstruct the image of the photographer: He is no more someone who deliberately draws with light but just a snapshotter (even if an intuitively ingenious one).

The German term ‘*Inszenierung*’ (= staging) has always been seen in context with the notion of traditional art: The artistic work requires many decisions, especially, when art should be distinguished from the mere depiction of nature. “The expression ‘*Inszenierung*’ is a relatively new one; its usage was growing during the first half of the 19th century [...] In German it can be traced back to an article by August Lewald in the *Allgemeine Theater Revue* in 1838 [...] In Lewald’s time staging comprised primarily the stage arrangement” (Walter 2002:53). In many model photographs, the staging makes itself obvious, e.g. if a model is wearing an unusual headdress or an antique costume that would not be worn if not for a shooting. In the authentic style, this is different—the final images should appear just like moments of everyday life. Through the seeming surrender of a conscious composition, photography sets itself apart from what is generally considered as traditional art, a visible, willingly reflected composition. Presented as “lucky shots”, as “everyday moments” these pictures seem to move away from this idea of art and rather represent the ability of the right intuition. Further, these pictures lack clear signifiers for high-class status such as well prepared, elaborate dresses, special backdrops, and luxurious locations. Thus, emotion and intuition become more important than the concept or the on first sight noticeable status markers. Here, Walter Benjamin’s idea about the aura of art in the age of mechanical reproduction comes to mind. The aura of the authentic style lies in its assumed and suggested indexicality. Maybe this is what Benjamin meant with regard to Eugène Atget’s photographs when he said they would have aura even though they are reproducible, as they show the “inimitable gaze on apparently irrelevant, trivial motifs” (Haegele 2009: 30).

Two aspects can be further worked out: First, it is the art of finding the right moment, which distinguishes documentary and street photographers as well, even if they usually have to cope with different challenges than model photographers. The rather analytically seeming art of the *mise-en-scène* is replaced by the intuitive, emotional talent not to construct but to notice and capture the right moment. This moment is not as in classical painting the moment, in which e.g. the story is condensed, reaches its culmination (see Pochat 2011: 354), but a comparatively mundane moment, which often appears very transitory: The moment, in which the wind is blowing a strand of hair in the model’s face, in which she is turning around, in which warm evening sun is hitting her head, in which she is straightening herself up. This emphasis on the moment, its fluidity and transience, strengthens photography’s relationship to reality.

The second aspect refers to the design of the situation and thus is acknowledging the photographer’s interference in reality. By designing a moment that could be possible in real life, the photographer creates

a second, thoroughly thinkable reality. He is no longer a storyteller just as someone who is taking fantasy pictures with sublime styling, bizarre locations, and elaborate photomontages (see Hägele 2009: 29) that always carry the flavor of the unreal, but he creates illusions that seem real. Art here is neither the visualization of the fantastic nor the hiding of messages in specifically calculated works, but it is creating a scenario that allows the recipient to dream himself away into this situation. Instead of focusing on complicated settings full of metaphors, allusions to the history of art, etc. the genuine emotions count, emotions that are conveyed to a recipient, who just needs to show diffuse attention⁶. This kind of photography strikes us as oddly similar to some slice-of-life-advertisements. In both cases, the recipient could be aware of the photograph's staged character. Both the advertisement and the model photograph works as most people do not pay much attention to it, or rather do not analyze it any further. Be it due to the very short moment pictures are looked at in times of Facebook and Instagram or be it due to a new romanticism (see Beyer 2011: 13) that focuses on feelings rather than on rationality: Emotions are prioritized, building on the impression: "It could be just like this".

⁶ Here this type of model photography comes close to the Indian theory of art which develops around the notion of "rasa", loosely translated as essence. One of its central concepts is the transfer of emotions.

Pictures



FIGURE 1: Ilka: Obviously staged, shot underwater, referring to mermaids or Shakespeare's Ophelia



FIGURE 2: Lilly: No requisites, yet clearly a staged motif



FIGURE 3: Giu: Many signifiers of the authentic style: Black-and-white conversion, weird cut, overexposed areas.



FIGURE 4: Alina: Foreground bokeh underlining the voyeuristic atmosphere, making it look more authentic.

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