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PHOTO MAGAZINE



MIRIAM TÖLKE



Getting hold of the world in its fast pace and volatility, to grab scraps and put everything back together, for a moment of peace and inner retreat, for a moment the concerns that pursues Miriam Tölke in her photo collages.

Born 1977 in Bielefeld, she completed her painting studies at the State Academy of Fine Arts in Stuttgart in 2000 and moved to Berlin. Already in her time in Stuttgart, she began to collect discarded things: magazines, notebooks, books, catalogues. Paper that has been deemed useless by others, but for her of incredible value. A treasure hunt in the city, which she continued in Berlin.

She stacks everything in her studio, discovers, pulls individual leaves out of their bindings, rearranges them and cuts out first impressions as forms. Faces are halved, landscapes chosen – everything that is important to Miriam – and what Berlin and the surrounding countryside reflects her own impressions. Between the city itself as well as nature are a constant impulse for her. The pulsating, compressed and the disturbing character of a big city, the anonymity and disorder through which one glides as a flaneur and absorbs moments in order to store them for oneself are just as relevant to the artist as the peace and harmony of nature outside of the turmoil.

Both are reflected in her work: her found faces seem to rest within themselves, as if they are floating, falling out of the

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glossy magazines and fashion magazines of a chaotic world that is only a touch of memory away. Reassembled with aspects of other faces and ideas, they bring the gaze to the very centre, guiding you out of the picture into the next landscape. Identity and balance, both guiding principles that play a major role for the artist.

As a mother of four, femininity is a natural theme for Miriam. But it's not just the only one. At the same time, she feels her art as a reflection on states, community and society. Where is our place in the transience of the moment? How do we find our ways? The collage offers the perfect setting for her.

The idea of harmony is transferred to her forms, which always come together and build up a new formation. Nothing bumps into each other or repels. Quite the contrary happens: as if it had never been otherwise, the landscape in the background suddenly becomes a dress or waterfall cut out of a pitcher. The well-groomed head opens in a surreal way, but only to present an insight into the inner landscape in the same well-formed way. The surface is broken – not just that of the image – and makes us realise that the horizon line can be where we decide to put it.

Miriam Tölke (1977) is a German artist based in Berlin. Her work consists in collecting and piecing together bits and pieces and putting these loose parts back together again. She explores face, posture and hiddenness while playing with contexts and representations in a somewhat repetitive and contemplative manner. Miriam is represented by Mikalab in Zürich, Switzerland.





