

The Eyes of Frida Kahlo

After several weeks of research on Frida's work Bert Loewenherz began to look out for a team of hair & makeup artists, stylists and assistants and was fortunate enough to discover Turkish actress Idil Üner as the perfect model for the project. Ten years earlier she already auditioned for the feature role in the Frida movie directed by Julie Taymor.

A periode of intense preparation began. Locations had to be scouted, garments and jewellery had to be inspected. Backdrops had to be painted.

Frida's makeup, eyebrows and exotic hairstyles were discussed. Cats, parrots and a monkey had to be found. An iron cot, a wheelchair, gynaecological instruments from the 1920s and many other things had to be made available.

Two months later the project had matured and the final shootings were realized during three days on three different locations in the City of Berlin.

A 20-minute video on the making of "The Eyes of Frida Kahlo" documents the background history of how the project came into being. The camera provides a glimpse behind the curtain to observe the exciting processes involved in composing these portraits, and the intricate psychological work between photographer and model during the final three days of the shoot.

In a different video, the photographer speaks in an interview about his personal motivation for this project, how finding the right model presented so many difficulties, and why he considers Frida Kahlo to be a Shaman of the arts.







The Project

"It was a great challenge for the entire team, to dissect Frida's strong works, and solve the puzzles – all the surreal, hidden, and symbolic levels of her work in order to translate it photographically."



Set Design

„In order to lend my production a coherent look, all of the psychological, stylistic, and color elements have to blend together.

A good choice of the shoot-locations, and set designs are also critically important.

All clothing and accessories that we selected were originals from the 1920's and 30's.

Borrowing from the film designs of the early 20th century, we used theatrical techniques like painted backdrops.

These large-format paintings by the artist Thomas Schliesser, added a harmonious touch to the motifs that formed the picture and color schemes, by opening room for interpretation.“



Costume Design

„The costume design proved a daunting challenge, as Frida concealed her deeply wounded body and soul behind brightly colored garments, traditional Mexican robes and a unique ethnic mix of styles. We felt inspired by this unconventional trait and combined Mexican, Indian, Greek and Nepalese costumes and accessories with Chinese and Japanese elements originally from the 1920s.“

Aside from that, there were other biographical influences involved in the styling concept. Because Frida had a private collection of kimonos, we worked original 1920's Chinese silk kimonos into the pictures "Between the Curtains" and "Self-Portrait with Wheelchair".

Bert Loewenherz



Reviews

„A fascinating photographic project that goes directly under the skin. A congenial artwork about a legendary artist.“

„Hypnotic, touching, creative and professional. A superb homage to Frida Kahlo. This is probably one of the most fascinating art projects I have ever seen.“

„Amazing work! As if Frida was still alive! These photographs irritate, bewitch and fascinate at the same time. Idil Üner as Frida Kahlo in the best role of her life!“

„Marian spirit and goddess of war – Frida’s essence in one photograph. Thank you Thank you Thank you!“





Exhibitions

Dust Temple, Gold Coast 2015
 Month of Photography, Berlin 2014
 Private Thursday, Berlin 2013
 Atelier MooGreen, Berlin 2012
 Galerie Photo Edition, Berlin 2010
 Art Directors Club, Berlin 2008
 Art Directors Club, Berlin 2007
 Photokina, Köln 2004
 Art Directors Club, Berlin 2004
 Art Directors Club, Berlin 2003
 Einstein, München 2002
 HeiligGeistKirche, Frankfurt 2002
 Mahnmal St. Nikolai, Hamburg 2002
 Art Directors Club, Berlin 2002
 Staatsbank, Berlin 2001

Art Directors Club, Berlin 2000
 Month of Photography, Bratislava 2000
 ESD Galerie, Berlin 1999
 Art Directors Club, Berlin 1999
 Internationale Fototage, Herten 1999
 Kunstamt Reinickendorf, Berlin 1999
 Zoofestsäle, Wuppertal 1999
 Galerie U Recickych, Prag 1998
 Galerie KunstNetzWerk, München 1998
 Photokina, Köln 1998
 Stiftung Starke im Löwenpalais, Berlin 1998
 Photokina Kodak Galerie, Köln 1996
 Deutsche Fototage, Frankfurt 1996
 PPS Galerie, Berlin 1996
 Museum für virtuelle Kunst, Erfurt 1995

Salon of Photographic Art, Rovigno 1995
 Photokina, Köln 1994
 Deutsche Fototage, Frankfurt 1993
 Museo di Fotografia Contemporanea, Brescia 1993
 Galerie 77, Berlin 1992
 Kulturstiftung Schloss Britz, Berlin 1991
 Historisches Museum, Frankfurt 1991
 Photographers Gallery, London 1990
 PhotoArt, Heidelberg 1990
 Arts&Technology Museum, Milano 1989
 Galerie Frank Müller, Berlin 1987
 October Gallery, London 1986
 Selbach Galerie, Berlin 1984

Awards

Midas Award of Excellence, New York
Art Directors Club Europe Award
Kodak Gold Circle Award
Kodak Talents Award
Scholarship by the Cinematheque Francaise, Paris
Honorary appointment into the German Photographic Society
OBS Award Corporate Communication.
Hasselblad Fine Art Award
Kodak Portrait Award
Berlin Artists Fund
Invitation by the Goethe Instituts, Paris

Collections

Collection Bibliotheque Nationale, France
The Polaroid Collection, USA
The Lorenzo Merlo Collection, Italy
The Fritz Huber Collection at Museum Ludwig, Germany
The Hand Collection Prof. Dr. Vaubel, Germany
The Bert Hartkamp Collection, Netherlands
Collection Machiel Botmann, Netherlands
Collection Deutsche Fototage, Germany
Collection Kunst & Bild, Germany
Collection Museo di Fotografia Contemporanea, Italy

Clients

American Express
AOK Insurance
AGFA Gevaert
Arwobau
BASF
Bausch & Lomb Pharma
BVG
Berliner Feuersozietät Versicherung
Bundesverband Elektromobilität
Caterpillar / MVS Zeppelin
Calida Underwear International
Design Zentrum NRW
Debitel – Mobilcom
Demmin & Sohn
DeTeWe
Deutsches Pelletinstitut
Deutsche Radio Philharmonie
Engel & Völkers Real Estate
English National Opera
FAZ

Fiege International
Friend Scout 24
Gangway
Glunz Deutschland
Gropius Passagen
Grundkreditbank – Köpeniker Bank
Getränke Hoffmann
Hugendubl
Ikon AG
Ideal Versicherung
Jazz Radio Berlin
Johanniter – Unfall – Hilfe
Kodak AG
Konzerthausorchester Berlin
LBS
Mercedes Benz AG
MCM Worldwide
Mention Softwear GmbH
Mondial Holding AG
Relaxa Hotels

Roche Pharma
Samsung Electronics
Skoda Moden
Sharp Computer
Stern Magazine
Sony Entertainment
Tupperware GmbH
Total Mineraloel AG
T-Mobile
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