

“La Source / Die Quelle” (“The Source”)

Questions about **role models** and **stereotypes** are among the most important issues at the center of my artistic practice, in regards to my role as a female artist, wife and mother in society, and how they influence my own self-perception and how others perceive me; and consequently, the critique of posthuman body design in the times of digital and social media. Where is **the authenticity of the bodily subject** in the times of the capitalistic mass exploitation of bodies? Is there still an impenetrable last refuge for the “**inner**”?

The project I'm working on is called “**La Source / Die Quelle**” (“**The Source**”). I would like to explicitly address the theme of “**becoming human**”, of human birth. This topic, tabooed in artistic disciplines almost to the point of erasure, it is about nothing less than an existential, physical and mental liminal experience. My project “**La Source / Die Quelle**” is intended to be an homage to life, to all women and to the female body.

Inspired by Gustav Courbet's painting “**L'Origin du monde**”, I want to develop a series of photographs for the project “**La Source / Die Quelle**” that I rework and alter through various photographic “interventions”. This is an extensive series of pigment prints on photographic paper, the source of the pictures being **YouTube-videos** of women giving birth. These videos are public and accessible to all YouTube users.

The women filmed there more or less expose themselves publicly during one of the most existential and intimate moments of their life. There is apparently no discrepancy between **maximal intimacy** and **extreme exposure**. In contrast to Courbet's painting, I will try to capture with the camera a moment that is only to be seen on the elated faces of these women. In this way, close-ups of female faces are produced, that at first sight do not reveal what it is exactly that unleashed their ecstatic and highly emotional expressions.

Technically this means that with a camera, I am taking a photo of a picture displayed on a computer screen, while I am pausing the action of the video. The eye of the camera does not only capture the image that I chose, but also the monitor as the carrier of the picture. It shows all reflections, blurs, impurities and dust from the moment when I stopped the moving picture and pressed the shutter.

Pixels, chromatic aberrations, the mouse pointer, reflections, blurring, incoming light, dust and impurities thus become an elementary part of the artistic work. They function like a mirror that reflects back the voyeuristic gaze. They are the “errors in the system”, which lead us to question the validity of the actual event.

For me, this process of “making visible” my subject transforms the simple using of her as a source of an anonymous “digital body” into an empathic, haptic, recreative moment. Through this act of selecting and “displaying”, every single photograph goes through a careful, touching form of artistic appropriation.

I understand my work as an attempt to explore the intimate and fragile **moment of elation**, as it becomes visible on the screen, and to give this moment back and to preserve it.

This project is serial one. Only the multitude of different female faces from different nations can give an idea of what “bringing into the world” means in its totality. “**La Source / Die Quelle**” shall be a work about creativity and dedication, about the beginning of all, about life and about all of us.

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