

MARTIN SCHOELLER

Up Close

31.10.–22.12.2018

Opening: Tuesday, 30.10.2018, 7 pm

Martin Schoeller will be present.

He had them all in front of his lens: from Cate Blanchett, Christopher Walken, Dolly Parton and George Clooney to Rihanna, Willem Dafoe, Barack Obama and Donald Trump. Martin Schoeller, one of the most important contemporary portrait photographers, has been producing distinctive close-ups of politicians, sports stars, film and music icons for over twenty years – staged in bright, unforgiving light.

OstLicht Gallery presents the work of Martin Schoeller for the first time in Austria, with a selection from his series »Close Up«, »Portraits«, »Identical«, »Transgender« and »Female Bodybuilder«.

In the internationally acclaimed series »Close Up«, the portraits of well-known personalities confront us eye-to-eye, intimate and unprotected, in the form of oversized blow-ups. Since the 1990s Martin Schoeller has staged the portraits of his models as spectacular close-ups in a recurring way: he defines the eye level and positions his camera at the same height; instead of a flash he uses soft neon light, creating the effect of luminous eyes which is so characteristic for his work. By exercising total control, the artist relieves his models of all attempts of self-staging and performing. Nothing remains hidden: Every wrinkle, every birthmark is open to scrutiny and each individual trait is exaggerated to hyperreality.

Nevertheless, there is hardly a star who has not already taken a seat in front of Martin Schoeller's camera. From Angela Merkel and Valentino to Paris Hilton – all accepted the uncompromising rules, which make Schoeller's style so unique. With a reduced use of make-up and a recurring camera perspective and lighting his photographic practice is characterized by a levelling and democratic manner: The same rules apply to everybody.

However, Martin Schoeller does not only photograph celebrities. With his clear and straightforward aesthetics he portrays people, who are in the process of changing their sex in the »Transgender« series, or women athletes with their steel-like muscles which appear almost as bust sculptures in »Female Bodybuilder«. The group of works entitled »Identical« shows double portraits of twins – a fascinating exploration of questions of identity.

In the colourful scenes of the series »Portraits« Martin Schoeller again plays with the image of celebrities and the clichés attributed to them. The photographer positions them in a setting planned down to the smallest detail: Bill Murray is playing golf in a hotel room, Elon Musk is depicted with his five sons in a car service station, and Marina Abramović is in the subway surrounded by naked passengers.

The exhibition is co-curated by Anke Degenhard.

Biography

Martin Schoeller (* 1968) was born in Munich and studied photography at Lette-Verein in Berlin and in Hamburg. His work was influenced by German photography tradition of August Sander and Bernd & Hilla Becher. After starting his career in his home country he moved to New York in 1993, where he worked for several years as an assistant to Annie Leibovitz. In 1996 he left to pursue his freelance career and soon became renowned for portraits of people he met in the street. Since 1998 his work has appeared in *TIME*, *GQ*, *Rolling Stone*, *Esquire* and *VOGUE*, among other publications. Since 1999 Schoeller is working for *The New Yorker* and, like Richard Avedon before him, is the editorial photographer there. His magazine covers brought him many international awards. His signature large-scale close-ups were exhibited in museums and galleries worldwide, are included in the permanent collection of the Smithsonian National Portrait Gal-

lery in Washington, D.C., and have been awarded internationally. Martin Schoeller lives and works in New York.

Sale

The photographs of the exhibition are archival pigment and C-prints available in a limited edition. For any enquiries please refer to Corina Lueger: lueger@ostlicht.at.

Photobook

The photobook »Close« by Martin Schoeller has been recently published by Steidl and can be purchased in the gallery. »Close« contains 120 portraits of influential celebrities from the arts, entertainment industry, politics, business and sports – from Julia Roberts and Adele to Julian Assange and Roger Federer. Martin Schoeller will sign the book at the opening event.

Interviews with Martin Schoeller

The photographer is available for interviews on Tuesday, 30.10.2018.

Press contact

Stefan Musil
T +43 (0)676 931 66 65
musil@ostlicht.at

OstLicht. Gallery for Photography

Absberggasse 27
A-1100 Vienna
T +43 (0)1 996 20 66
F +43 (0)1 996 20 66 66
info@ostlicht.at
www.ostlicht.at

Opening hours

Wed–Sat 12–6 pm
and by appointment