

Interference / Inner Eye / Krystyna Ziach by Joanne Dijkman, 2008

Joanne Dijkman is an art historian based in Utrecht, NL

The photo series *Inner Eye* by Krystyna Ziach overawes one with the large dimensions of the photo works. Ziach shows seven portraits in which she examines the boundaries between reality and dream, the conscious and the unconscious, the visible and the invisible.

Ziach's photographs are not about the individual, but about a universal, inner portrayal of mankind. The closed eyes obfuscate the characters and grant the works a serene atmosphere. The person portrayed is looking inward and moves to the verge of the unconscious.

The six women in the portraits – there are only women – have been placed in the centre of the image against a pale blue background, which contributes to the serenity of the whole. The pale blue colour becomes symbolic, yet remains poly-interpretable.

The series constitutes a group due to the recurrent stately composition in which the models frontally face the camera. The absence of all attire or adornment gives the women an anonymous and universal appearance, which is even enhanced by the closed eyes hiding the mirrors of the soul. The facial expression could nevertheless betray what is going on inside, were it not that the women have taken off their masks and seem to be completely introverted, as if in a meditative state of being.

The portrait of a Japanese woman is remarkable, she is represented twice in the series. Although it is the same model, the subtle changes in the face make it almost seem as if there are two different women.

A double portrait of twins deviates from the series by its larger size. The two budding girls are portrayed together. They are individuals, yet the inner tranquillity which they emanate with their closed eyes is very similar.

Ziach uses analogue photography and does not manipulate the works with photoshop afterwards, because this would not benefit the image she has in mind. She does not want to show wax dolls, but real human beings whose inner beauty is perceptible. The medium of photography reduces capturing the inward gaze to an instant exposure, which is also why it is so important not to retouch as the image would then be lost.

The photos have been taken exclusively by daylight, because this light is closest to reality; this is why the shades of the blue background differ per portrait. The series *Inner Eye* – which is a still ongoing project – fits in with Ziach's large body of work in which tranquillity and contemplation are key concepts.

Translation: Hanny Keulers

