

«Reality becomes suspended over the chasm that opens up between image and perception», C. Morpeth

The photographs of Niklaus Spoerri show people that we think we know. But something is not right. These are doubles, lookalikes. Original or copy? *Who is Who?* strikes a neuralgic spot in the modern media world, with its celebrity cult, in which categories such as authenticity and identity are more than ever open to question. The book analyses the motif of the doppelganger and focuses on the power of media presentation.

The artistic concept: photodocumentary portraits

In 2007, Niklaus Spoerri began photographing people who use their similarity with a celebrity to work as professional doubles. His portraits examine this enigmatic field at the interface between privacy and public life. They tell a story from the private residential surroundings – such as that of Hans from Pforzheim, who looks like Bruce Willis, or insurance broker Heinz-Uwe from Schwerin, who resembles the film character Borat.

In these documentary portraits Spoerri is not interested in the star on stage, but in the person behind and next to the double. Celebrities are familiar to us from television, internet and the print media. We have internally 'stored' certain details, and we associate these with corresponding expectations.

For this reason some doubles present themselves in Spoerri's pictures with typical accessories, characteristic poses so that the original qualities can be better recognised. The portraits thus reflect how the lookalikes deal with their roles and the respective degree of their identification with their 'model' but also reveal how our media-trained memories function.

The title: «Who is Who?»

A «Who is Who» lists and portrays the most renowned figures in a particular sector as a kind of lexicon. Niklaus Spoerri's photo book imitates this structure, at the same time parodying it with real doubles. The title thus arouses visual expectations, but its ambiguities are revealed as the pictures are viewed. *Who is Who?* turns into a puzzle book, stimulating a playful discourse.

The texts: eight essays on Niklaus Spoerri's works and the motif of the doppelganger

Jimmy Wales, Wikipedia Foundation *Whose Lookalike? The Real and the Character*

Jean-Martin Büttner, reporter and music critic for the Tages-Anzeiger *Giving Oneself up to be Somebody*

Caroline Morpeth, manuscript scout & editor at Hackett/London, freelance writer

Spitting in the Mirror

Markus Reich, Journalist at Glückspost/Ringier *(Almost) alike as two Peas in a Pod*

Rudolf Scheutle, curator at Münchner Stadtmuseum/Sammlung Fotografie *The Fame of the Others*

Silvia Jaklitsch, editor/Vienna «You are either professional or not», *Interview: Jeannette Charles alias Queen Elizabeth II*

Manfred Prisching, sociologist/Vienna, author *Das Selbst. Die Maske. Der Bluff. When People Dupliacte themselves*

Jens Groß, dramaturg at the Maxim Gorki Theater Berlin *The theatrical Consequence of the Lookalike*

Participants/Portraits: Doubles von Andre Agassi, Pamela Anderson, Michael Ballack, Antonio Banderas, Boris Becker, David Beckham, Bono, Borat, Richard Branson, Adriano Celentano, Bill Clinton, George Clooney, Joan Collins, Columbo, Sean Connery, Daniel Craig, Lara Croft, Penelope Cruz, Jamie Lee Curtis, Johnny Depp, Danny DeVito, Leonardo DiCaprio, Roger Federer, Sarah Ferguson, Clark Gable, Ricky Gervais, Whoopi Goldberg, Michail Gorbatschow, Steffi Graf, Hugh Grant, Lewis Hamilton, Daryl Hannah, Erich Honecker, Anthony Hopkins, Michelle Hunziker, Michael Jackson, Samuel L. Jackson, Günther Jauch, Angelina Jolie, Indiana Jones, Oliver Kahn, Miroslav Klose, Kevin Kuranyi, Lady Gaga, Udo Lindenberg, Sophia Loren, Diego Maradona, Angela Merkel, Liza Minnelli, Jack Nicholson, Ozzy Osbourne, Sarah Jessica Parker, Camilla Parker Bowles, Luciano Pavarotti, Pablo Picasso, Lukas Podolski, Harry Potter, Prinz August von Hannover, Prinz Charles, Prinz William, Queen Elizabeth II., Gordon Ramsay, Lionel Richie, Julia Roberts, Ronaldo, Cristiano Ronaldo, Claudia Schiffer, Gerhard Schröder, Michael Schumacher, Arnold Schwarzenegger, Sebastian Schweinsteiger, Britney Spears, Sylvester Stallone, Gwen Stefani, Sharon Stone, Rudi Völler, Andy Warhol, Bruce Willis, Amy Winehouse

Book vernissage & exhibition opening

Wednesday 28 September 2011, 7-10 pm

Esther Eppstein, message salon, Perla-Mode,

Langstrasse 84/Brauerstrasse 37, 8004 Zurich

Duration: 28.9. bis 8.10.2011 (Finissage)

Öffnungszeiten: Thurs, Fri, Sat 3–6 pm, Wed 6–10 pm

Getting there: Tram 8/Bus 32 to Helvetiaplatz, Bus 31 to Militär-/Langstrasse

Bern: Book presentation/exhibition vernissage

Friday, 18 November 2011, 6–9 pm

raum, Militärstrasse 60, 3014 Bern, www.kulturraum.ch

Duration: 18.11. bis 9.12. 2011 (Finissage)

D-Nürnberg: Book presentation/exhibition vernissage

Friday, 24 February 2011, 7 pm

Galeriehaus Nord, Wurzelbauerstr. 29, 90409 Nürnberg, www.galeriehaus-nuernberg-nord.de; Duration:

24.2. to 30.03.2012 (Finissage)

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Orders: in bookshops or via www.vfmk.de

Downloads (pictures 300dpi/titles/biographies & press texts): www.niklausspoerri.ch/presse-who-is-who