photography

what makes them click?

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Axel Pfennigschmidt

Graphic detail takes on a whole new meaning with this German photographer's abstract images. Axel removes seemingly innocuous detail, like rough tears in wall-glued posters, from its surrounding by tightly cropping into the photo. The result is an image that is photograph and abstract art in equal measures. 'I have always been a very visual person and these images are like a diary of puzzle pieces that bring back memories from places I have been and travels I've made,' Axel explains. 'The detail that I photograph is part of everyday life that passes unnoticeably by people. Taking a photo of it is like making the invisible visible.'
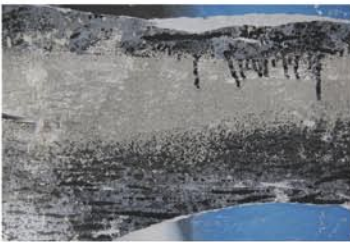
Axel explains that his photographs work because of the symphony between the various objects, similar to a collage, and because of its abstract nature. 'The pictures almost act like optical illusions where the viewers' eyes switch between the real and surreal as they try to figure out what the photograph is all about. Because the subjects are often multi-layered, the final picture also has somewhat of a 3D element to it.'

None of the pictures are styled or retouched in any way. It is the purity of the image that Axel enjoys. 'My photographs are honest and authentic,' he adds, 'and I never tell people what they should see in a picture, it is open to their interpretation. In fact people often see things in the pictures that I myself haven't even noticed!'

Taking this type of photograph is something he cannot force. When he submerges himself in a culture, then the visuals almost jump out as he wanders the streets. 'Sometimes I find pictures, and sometimes the pictures find me. Sometimes there is something that shouts to be photographed.'

Axel Pfennigschmidt stays in Berlin, Germany, and has been taking photos for the last ten years. When he is not photographing seemingly indifferent detail, he works for an advertising agency. He has just completed a trip across the globe and is currently in negotiations to exhibit his work at galleries in the cities where he has photographed. Axel shoots with a Canon EOS 30D camera.

This page, from left to right: (1) Paris, France; (2) Cape Town, South Africa; (3 - 6) Berlin, Germany; (7) New York, USA; (8) Marrakech, Morocco; (9) Buenos Aires, Argentina; (10) Paris, France. **Left page:** Buenos Aires, Argentina.

Buenos Aires, Argentina ¦ Photographer **Axel Pfennigschmidt**

New York, USA ¦ Photographer **Axel Pfennigschmidt**