

TOBIAS GREWE

AS I'VE SEEN IT

Aperture, perspective and detail are the primary tools of the Cologne-based photographer Tobias Grewe, who systematically renounces the use of technical aids such as artificial lighting, tripods or filters, as well as any kind of post-production digital image processing. The choice of detail as well as of coloration and composition thus all take place at the very moment in which the image is shot on site. In his "Light Worlds" and "Structures" series, he purposely employs extreme overexposure and radical worm's-eye-view to transform urban architecture into enigmatic abstract compositions. Almost nothing recognisable remains of the original image source. Façades or entire buildings appear to dissolve into completely abstract, constructivist composition in the tradition of Kazimir Malevich or Paul Klee.

Grewe's pictorial experiments thus have little in common with conventional architectural photography, since he is concerned neither with architecture as such nor with an objective documentation of this. The artist is much more interested in the classical painterly experimentation with form, colour and light. Although architecture plays a central role as a point of origin for his images, it is less the buildings as such and much more the carefully chosen details of façades as well as the play with light and the often extreme perspective, which characterise the artist's unique works so succinctly.

Grewe's works challenge us as viewers to reconsider the everyday and our habitual ways of seeing and perceiving this. He uses architecture as a prime example of the everyday world, since it literally surrounds us in a daily basis and cannot be avoided. For Grewe, architecture is the epitome of humanity and the modern, urban way of living. Through his photographic vision, we see our own familiar environment, and with this our own selves, with completely new eyes. We discover the aesthetics of the everyday and begin to perceive the world around us actively and consciously.

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