

Dark Days - Venice III

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1 Topic of the Artwork

This photograph belongs to a cycle of about 70 works which emerged from journeys to several cities, among them New York, Prague, and Venice. The whole cycle is called "Dark Days - Venice, Prague, New York". Its topic is the isolation of the modern human being in today's big cities. The selected image shows a scene of an alley in Venice, Italy. Several figures are walking along. But due to stylistic devices it is not clear how many people exactly walk through the scene. Many parts of the image, such as hollow doors and windows, sink in ambiguity. This ambivalent effect of the artwork is intended. It is achieved by an estrangement of the original photograph by stylistic means such as coarse grain, artificial colorization, multiple exposures, and motion blur.

2 Technique

The technical process to generate this image is a hybrid one. The photograph has been taken on panchromatic film. The relevant section of the negative has been scanned with high resolution (4000 ppi). After applying the usual image enhancement techniques, artificial grain was added to the image to further exaggerate the effect of the film grain. After this the image has been scaled up to its final size. Finally, a triplex filter with yellowish and purple tones has been applied to the black and white image for atmospheric reasons.

Several visual primitives for images have been identified, which are able to evoke an aesthetic appeal, i.e., the choice of monochrome colors, the exploitation of the dynamic range, or the clarity of the spatial organization of the image components (see [1] for a survey of aesthetic prim-

itives of images). In *Dark Days - Venice III* a number of them has been applied. For example, the film grain, the artificially added grain, and the subtle colorization should give the photograph an appeal close to painting.

3 The Artist

Gabriele Peters lives in Bochum, Germany. She studied Mathematics, minor Psychology, at Ruhr-University Bochum and received a doctor's degree in 2002. She co-developed new photo panorama techniques at Caltech, Pasadena, and was Professor for Visual Computing at the University of Applied Sciences and Arts, Dortmund, before she took over the Human-Computer Interaction Chair at University of Hagen in 2010. Her photographic education she received at the Center of Art and Music at Ruhr-University. She presented her works in numerous international exhibitions, e.g., at the Museum of Arts of Bochum or at SIGGRAPH, the world's largest Computer Graphics exhibition, where she is also member of the jury for the Space-Time exhibition, which annually reviews photographic works of art students. Furthermore, she serves as reviewer for the annual Photography Festival Voies Off in Arles, France. Her artistic topics are alienation of reality and human isolation.

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References

- [1] Peters, G.: Criteria for the Creation of Aesthetic Images for Human-Computer Interfaces - A Survey for Computer Scientists. *Int. J. of Creative Interfaces & Computer Graphics*, Vol. 2 (1), pp. 68-98, 2011.



Figure 1: *Dark Days - Venice III.*