

## Text by Barbara Rüdiger, 2022

The Self Portraits / Portraits to Questions of Femininity is the title of Patricia Reinhart's ongoing series of self-portraits, she has been creating since 2001. This has been a recurring theme for the past two decades: on location in Paris, the artist uses the existing photomaton in the Métro stations to photograph herself. Between stops, such as Porte des Lilas or Pont Neuf, phases of a life are inscribed. They are locations that connect the private with the public space, interweaving them to form an individual world of images.

The brief appropriation of a tiny booth – a passport photo machine as A Room of One's Own – thus becomes the stage for an intimate moment, featuring a black-and-white photograph as an accomplice to a staged embodiment. But the artist's look inward, in the act of repetition, opens up the expansion of her own identity(ies) – she looks at us by looking at herself, opening the viewer's eyes. Sometimes an amplification takes place because of the duplicated image and gives us a direction of legibility – away from the image of a young woman and onward toward an emphasis on an emancipatory gesture.

The distance created by the strictly conceptual approach is transformed into personal closeness by the familiarity of the photographic setting. Format and location are familiar, the process is that of an everyday one: the product, a means to an end or image carrier of private memories, lodged in our imagination somewhere between a passport photo and a display of love. The artist's physical presence becomes a projection surface, her preceding inner monologue serves as a mirror. The self-portraits become a vehicle for female identities. Portrait after portrait and layer after layer, her gestures are condensed in the medium of photography and symbolically inscribe themselves in the visual theme. The narrative strands interlace to form a fabric of social conditions and circumstances. Their balance of power is left to individual observation, for which the visual elements set in relation to each other serve as links to points of reference and departure.