

WALEAD BESHTY

INDUSTRIAL PORTRAITS



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THE "GREAT FAMILY" OF ART PROFESSIONALS

Walead Beshty started his "Industrial Portraits" series in 2008. Still ongoing, he realizes them wherever he goes, asking all the art people he works with to pose in their working environment and working clothes. This straightforward black and white documentation thus portrays the studio assistants, gallery staff, curators, lab technicians, critics, fellow artists, collectors, art handlers, and even the "machines," which contribute to an artwork's progress from studio to gallery and beyond. Captioned as "framer," "Fedex courier," or "darkroom assistant" and then identified with the location and date of the shoot, together his models form a nonhierarchical kaleidoscopic yet very detailed "facebook" of the art world, following in part the tradition of great American anthropological photographic surveys.

According to Jacob Proctor, "In their affect, these photographs acknowledge rather than expose, and any hint of heavy-handed institutional critique is immediately dispelled by the portraits' air of ease and informality. Even the color processing equipment is accounted for in Beshty's quasi-systematic investigation into the myriad conditions that normally remain obscured, even as they collectively define the work's position in the world."

This publication gathers together the Industrial Portraits created between 2008 and 2012 and is introduced by Hans Ulrich Obrist essay "Ever Industrial Portraits." A second volume will be published to span the subsequent years.

Born in London in 1976, Walead Beshty is an artist and writer based in Los Angeles. He is renowned for his unique conceptual approach to photography and sculpture and his emphasis on the conditions of the production and circulation of images and artworks.