

INFO & THANKS

@KALINAPULIT @LF5TLGLZ #LF5TLGLZ

LF5TL GLZ (Lifestyle Goals) is a photobook by Kalina Pulit encompassing a palette of cars with various degrees of opulence. It is the outcome of sustained research into the meaning and symbolism of cars in our culture. The series aims to explore our complex relationship to the automobile – objects of desire, lust, nostalgia, display of status, social class, privilege and more. The publication is designed to pay homage to and capture the once ever-present practice of printing images in photo labs.

Photography & Creative Direction by Kalina Pulit
Art Direction by Jamie Reid
Graphic Design by Ieva Misiukonytė
Words by Estelle Marois & Jack Mills

Special thanks: DoBeDo Represents, LCC Research, Angela Michanitzki, Edward Jonkler, Elis Finlayson, Emily Woolley, Gabriela Szymczak, Ian Hague, Jan Porębski, Józef Ostrowski, Kinga Jankowska, Marcin Sentyrz, Michelle Cage, Paulina Superstarska, Przemysław Pulit, Stefania Lucchesi

Dedicated to Antoni Pulit



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by Kalina Pulit

'It's about the feeling,' says the aptly named Arthur Kar in a 2019 HYPEBEAST video. Kar and car culture, a love story that started when he was 16. A mechanic, he climbed the ladder to become a designer and car dealer collaborating with the most emblematic sports car brands.

'Like this Porsche GT1,' Kar adds. 'It's a beautiful design and it's expensive at the same time. Unfortunately, I will not drive it, even if I look like I will. But it reminds me of wanting to do races and drive this car.' A white and green Porsche 911 Carrera Coupé flying the flag of the German police sucks him into a childhood fantasy. He's now being arrested in a red Porsche for speeding on the Autobahn and – the pleasure is tangible – shouts like he's the Polizei: 'Hallo! Catch the guy!'

The scene is a textbook example of desire. We witness its manufacturing by memory and reminiscing, the unbridgeable space between lack and its object, but also the role of play in wish-fulfillment. Not only is Kar's car park the adult materialisation of a child's dreams;

THE DREAMS BATHED IN THE COLOURS OF THE POSTERS

that plastered their bedroom's walls. What's more, his pleasure comes from enacting a scene that's not happened, very much like a kid, and from not driving a car he's always wanted and now owns.

In Kalina Pulit's photo series, the gaze is also tinged with desire. Sharp diagonales and lighting contrasts repeat, as if the light bite of frustration had provoked the photographer to return, again and again, to try and grasp what keeps on escaping. The close-ups turn the cars into pure, glossy slopes on which our desire slides infinitely.

Boundless reproduction multiplies desire, turns it into lust, pushes us into the realm of consumption. Here, we may as well be flipping through a colour varnish wheel at a nail bar, or a Pantone chart at Leyland. We're caught in the loop of endless possibilities—

'FUCK, WHICH ONE DO I WANT?'

—and permanent un-accomplishment. And perhaps, the darkness of the framing is plunging us in a peep show scenery, where we can only catch quick glimpses of these shiny objects of desire.

Lust is also rooted in the lustre of the desired objects. Sleek and rounded, Kalina's cars are the *Smooth* without/before the *Striated*, to paraphrase Deleuze and Guattari in *A Thousand Plateaus*, they are matter and surface only. The viewer's gaze bounces back in a sharp ricochet. All one can see besides is the surroundings' distorted reflection: the car's depth is one of pure exteriority, and does not signal the presence of a ventilated, explorable *Space Within*, as Henri Michaux would say – only contracted, hard matter. Absence of *Striation* (of pores to breath or interact, of cuts,

notches, scratches, ribs, cracks, interstices) is the absence of air, of sound, of vibration, all that can wrinkle a surface and allow for movement. It freezes Kalina's cars – quite a twist, for sports cars. 'An excess of speed turns into repose,' writes Barthes (*Mythologies*): 'the jet-man... is defined by a coenaesthesia of motionlessness... as if the extravagance of his vocation precisely consisted in overtaking motion, in going faster than speed'. Kar is the contemporary jet-man, living his speeding fantasy precisely by not driving.

ABSENCE OF MOTION IS ABSENCE OF EMOTION,

and the cars stay impassive to our desire. Each presents its curves indifferently, under similar angles, as a blasé glamour model who'd know what poses are just enough to feed the viewers' desire while keeping them wanting more. The close-up photographic process has similarities with the blason, a type of 16th-century French poems that singles out parts of a beloved woman's body to manifest its passive indifference to the poet's desire, and the impossibility to grasp the corporeal outline and ultimately possess the body. Interestingly, as a nod to our desire, many luxury car brands sport a blason (as in, a coat of arms) as their logo.

But what is our desire attempting and failing to fixate? What is Kalina doing by repeatedly snapping their glossy hips? Her book is a palette, a declination; we have all the variations of a catalogue, and fatally inherit the difficulty to choose; and by choosing a car, we'd put an end to our endless, desiring swiping. Yet, among contemporary objects, super cars are among the best placed to fulfill the promise of uniqueness. Each is the close embodiment of the 'Original' one, the only one we're all after. It is both an archetype and a type, a singularity ready to be declined as multiples.

WE ARE LOOKING. ARE WE TOUCHING?

Each of Kalina's photos provides the sense of a gentle brush – yet a one-off brush. In each photo, the lighting establishes a temporal line from left to right, as if we were facing a carousel – a procession or a catwalk: a car steps out of darkness, into light, and back into darkness, and so does the next one. And because each's appearing as a one-off, we dare not fully touch any. Barthes wrote that 'the tactile phase of discovery' is 'the moment when the marvelous visual is subjected to the reasoning assault of touch', touching being 'the most demystifying sense, on the contrary of sight, which is the most magical'.

Ultimately, the photo series reveals something about what these cars do to us. Their confined, egg-like nature reactivates the banal 'infantile passion for huts and tents: enclosing oneself and settling in, this is the existential dream of childhood' (Barthes). That may explain the often intimate feel of car interiors, so hard to penetrate and blatantly uterine, as an extension of the home. Meanwhile, 'outside, the tempest, i.e. the infinite, is raging pointlessly.' But for now, outside is where we stay.

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