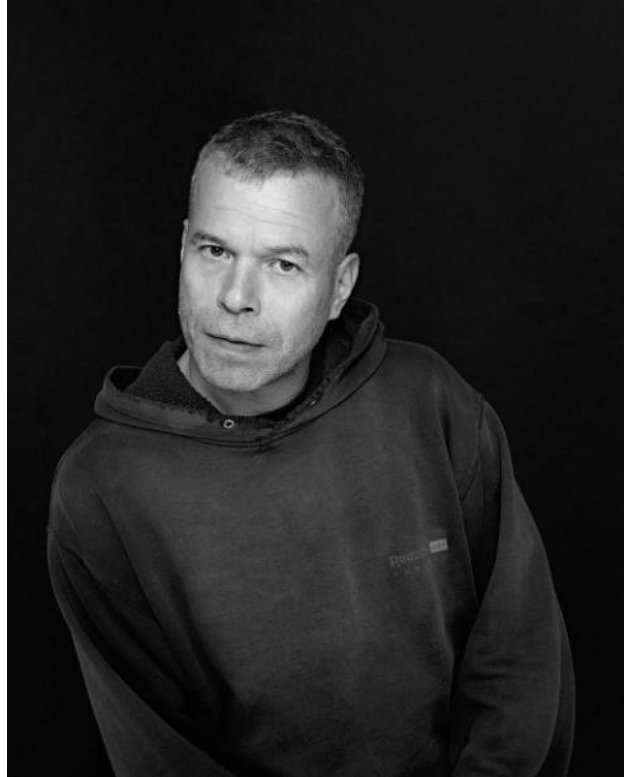


**#80 February 2023 Cameraderie**  
**Wolfgang Tillmans (1968-)**



Wolfgang Tillmans—at last I get to write about a young contemporary photographer (relatively young—he is 54). I am happy to discuss someone who is not among the long dead. His work is in color, and very daring and innovative.

Tillmans has been a winner of major prizes, member and chair of foundations and committees, a professor of fine arts, and a guest museum curator. See the Wikipedia article for details. He is by no means merely a scrappy young photographer.

Here is Tillmans' Wikipedia entry. It summarizes the multiplicity of genres that he has explored.  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wolfgang\\_Tillmans](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wolfgang_Tillmans)

This is Tillmans' official site. Notable are the photographs of his museum installations, supervised by himself and his team of skilled installers—see one below.  
<https://tillmans.co.uk/>

Here is a recent New Yorker article on Tillmans:  
<https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2022/10/10/the-polymorphous-genius-of-wolfgang-tillmans>. It is by the senior art critic of The New Yorker, Peter Schjeldahl, who passed away on Oct. 21, 2022, less than two weeks after this New Yorker's issue date.

Here is an article about Tillmans' famous "Free Swimmer" series of darkroom-created images—see one below.

<https://www.phillips.com/article/36819653/wolfgang-tillmans-freischwimmer-series>

From this article: "Created with a manual manipulation of 'light-sources and light-emitting tools' over light-sensitive paper in the darkroom, his work references the cameraless photography of his predecessors Man Ray [#7 June 2013] and László Moholy-Nagy [#57 Jan. 2021], whose practices were similarly reduced to the most elementary components of the medium: light, paper and chemistry."

Here are a few of Tillmans' images that caught my attention.

Installation view of "Wolfgang Tillmans: To look without fear," at the Museum of Modern Art in NY, photograph by Emile Askey for The New Yorker Article.



This is a sample of Tillman's complex style of exhibition installation.

From a photograph of an exhibit showing this and other hung images.



I am fascinated by Tillmans' eye for seeing this lighting situation.

Freischwimmer [Free Swimmer] 26, 2003.



Tillmans' famous Free Swimmer images were all created in the darkroom. No camera was used. There is a bit of word play in the title, Freischwimmer—this word can also be used to indicate the swimming ability of a person, that is, that they have passed their swim test. Hence, the Freischwimmer images are named with a tone of competence.

Zhong Lin - #172.



To me, this typifies Tillmans as a completely contemporary photographer.

Dan.



Truly a unique point of view.

Lutz und Alex in den bäumen  
[Lutz & Alex in the trees], 1992.



Alex & Lutz holding each other, 1992.



The left image is one of Tillmans' best-known images, but I have no idea why. I cannot see why shooting two friends, essentially naked in a tree, wearing raincoats, makes a great photograph.

Lutz, Alex, Suzanne & Christophe on Beach, 1993.



This I find more interesting, for its compositional complexity.