

The professional Image: 5 Questions to Photographer Galya Feiermann

Galya Feiermann is a Photographer from New York currently living in Berlin. She is specializing in business portraits, corporate event documentation and promotional, editorial, lifestyle and advertising photography. She worked with various start-up initiatives at Factory Berlin, Entrepreneur First, Co-Found Berlin, Betahaus, made event documentation for Facebook, De Beers Diamonds, The Berlin Art Biannual among many other companies and private clients in corporate, commercial and cultural sectors.

Question 1:

Events are currently only taking place digitally. How do you live through the times as a photographer? What has changed in your work?

It was a major change!!! Everything I loved about busy, fast paced, crowded events is no longer possible and we don't know for how long. With the comic difficulties this crises brings, freelance jobs in general became much more scarce as well as the live networking opportunities allowing for this kind of job search. However, let's look also at the positive aspects, which are that much more appreciated now :) During summer and fall months of lighter restrictions, which we are hopefully heading towards soon, there were many small scale "soft" events still possible within the existing rules. The smaller scale of those events allowed the organisers to prepare them much better and allowed me as a photographer to have the time and space to concentrate better on the content. I feel that the images from those events were possibly more thorough, although the people's faces were covered by masks. The same honest effort is true for other activities triggered by the pandemic and the inability to follow the regular course. This was very important! Everybody asked themselves, "if suddenly we can not do all of those routine things, what is it what we can do?" Out of this immense desire to keep working and feeling alive, a lot of amazing projects came out! Some businesses renovated and built new spaces, some developed new products, some took the time to revamp their digital presence, business and personal. All of those things require photography and suddenly I found jobs documenting those new developments of the pandemic. Even digital events, at the end, have a small team that transmits and documents them, who are quite human. There is work for a photographer there as well. A lot of commercial and cultural projects with a previously planned budget undertook a digital format and the documentation of this digital execution is the only evidence and marketing. Finally, I myself was able to build a couple of new websites, which I feel represent me better. It's like a digital renovation. And most importantly, I had the time to review my practice itself, to see where I am coming from and where I want to be going and to set the steps in this direction.

Question 2:

You work with technology start-ups in Berlin. What trends are you observing?

This question is directly related to the first one ;) Especially with the coming of the crisis, the trends took on a warp speed towards digitalisation, virtualisation and crypto-currency. One of my recent jobs was for a VR startup and a completely online large scale art auction particularly supporting the artists.

Then of course, more and more foreigners are arriving in Berlin, particularly into the start-up world, and bringing with them the things that are more developed in other countries and are still missing here. The same concept is implemented by local entrepreneurs as well. At the beginning of the pandemic, an online grocery order took 1 month, now it takes 15

minutes. Finally, I see a lot of digital automatisaton and unification/ simplification of services unifying many providers.

Question 3:

What is particularly important to you in a collaboration/clients project?

Communication! The more clearly and in detail the client expresses their vision and goals, the better I understand them and can propose the specific details of visual solutions, the closer we both become to achieving a final successful result. Many things are technically possible to do and a lot of weak representation is simply a result of a misunderstanding of intentions. Enthusiasm of course is also extremely important. I am automatically on fire when I work with someone who loves what they are doing because I love my job too!

Question 4:

What tips do you have for a professional product presentation on social media?

Communicate in the style of your intended audience.

You can not always insert everything in one image :) Some times a simple clear picture communicates better than a convoluted image trying to say everything at once, combining product, emotion and atmosphere with the TV tower in the back.

That said, of course it is good to have a balance between clear detailed product images, the images of the future users of these products and the atmosphere which these clients inhabit and where they would be using the products. This helps the customer really see what they are buying and to recognise themselves using it. And a little romanticism and humour doesn't hurt, just to give people a good feeling.

It always helps to brain-storm similar images of other brands, but also to focus on what it is that makes a particular brand special. An honest original is always better than an inadequate copy.

As a photographer of course I am always happy when there is a bit of freedom involved for a more imaginative approach, not at the expense of important details and backed up with clear communication, of course.

Question 5:

What are your next goals and plans?

I am currently working on a personal editorial project exploring some aspects of the quarantine business closures. It is still a secret, but it teaches me to work in more emotionally involving, personal, cinematic ways, which I hope to bring to my business and advertising photography.

As any photographer I would like to expand and vary my client base and take on more complex advertising assignments. As I said before, I would like those assignments to be bridging the gap between commercial and editorial approaches for more personal communication.

On the totally other side of things, I have a studio, which I would like to utilise more for still-life and product photography for small business demands around Berlin. And of course, portrait, portrait, portrait! I am never tired of being amazed by the human face!