

NEW RELEASE 2024



## Kristin Schnell *Of Cages and Feathers*

Texts by Hans Pfeifer  
Designed by Jana Neff and Juno Hamburg  
Hardcover  
24 x 32 cm  
128 pages  
71 color ills  
English / German  
ISBN 978-3-96900-180-6  
Euro 48,00

### Clear the stage for the feathered symbols of freedom!

The renowned German photographer Kristin Schnell moves from the bustling city of Berlin to the countryside in northern Germany. Here, she lives in a remote house with a large garden, surrounded by nature. The dramatic extent of the decline in bird populations caused by industrial agriculture is now a daily reality for Kristin Schnell. She begins to engage intensively with this issue. She processes her impressions by setting up a photography studio in her aviary and capturing the interactions of birds in an artificial habitat. The idea for the impressive and profound photo book *Of Cages and Feathers* is born.

The global decline in bird populations has devastating consequences for nature. It disrupts entire ecosystems, as pollinators, seed dispersers, and pest controllers are missing. This, in turn, leads to the increased use of pesticides and insecticides in agriculture, which pose a significant threat to both humans and the environment. The decline in bird populations is one of the many consequences of this negative spiral. A study from the USA shows that in Europe, approximately 300 million breeding pairs of birds disappeared between 1980 and 2016, and in the USA, even three billion birds. A study by the Max Planck Institute also found that birdsong can significantly reduce anxiety and irrational thoughts. Notably, interest in birds and bird feeding increased significantly worldwide during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Engaging with these studies, the photographer begins to take action against the decline in bird populations on her own. She intensively plants her garden and notices that more birds now nest in her green space. At the same time, more and more people approach her with requests to take in needy birds and keep them in her aviary.

Kristin Schnell accommodates this until ultimately forty birds live in the cage. She also takes in abused animals. Over time, she develops a deep connection with the birds and begins to photograph them in the aviary. She sets up a photography studio, integrating mirrors, brightly colored flowers, and other elements into the birdcage, and observes the interaction of her birds with the artificial landscapes she has created. She captures the interplay of colors, shapes, sunlight, wind, and bird movements photographically. For the titles of her images, Kristin Schnell chooses song titles from jazz legend Charlie Parker. The result is a set of vibrant and form-rich images that also reflect the social structure of the birds, in which the photographer sees parallels with humans: "My images are not primarily about the birds. It's more about the relationship between them and us. And ultimately about the relationship among us humans. When we come into the world, we have a lot of possibilities. But somehow, we also do not." In her photo book, Kristin Schnell advocates for greater appreciation of both human and animal counterparts, urging a more respectful and empathetic approach to them.

**Kristin Schnell** was born in Germany in 1968 and has been working as a freelance photographer. Her photos have been widely published and exhibited internationally. Most recently, she was selected among the top 50 in Photolucida's Critical Mass 2024 Awards.

#### Please note:

These photographs have been copyright cleared for worldwide print and electronic reproduction in the context of reviews of the books only. Print media: No more than 3 photographs plus the cover image from the selection can be used in total – they are not to be used on the cover or cropped. Online media may use a total of 12 images in a gallery.

#### For further details, press images, permissions and review copies, please contact the publisher's press office:

Simona Bonanno, [press@kehrerverlag.com](mailto:press@kehrerverlag.com) or  
[pr.assistance@kehrerverlag.com](mailto:pr.assistance@kehrerverlag.com)  
Kehrer Verlag, Mannheimer Str. 175, 69123 Heidelberg,  
Germany  
+49 (0) 6221 - 649 20-18 – [www.kehrerverlag.com](http://www.kehrerverlag.com)

## Press Images



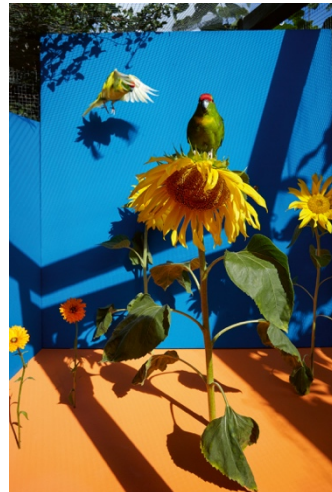
01\_Chasin' the Bird\_ © Kristin Schnell



02\_Blues for Alice\_ © Kristin Schnell



03\_Take Five\_ © Kristin Schnell



04\_Ornithology\_ © Kristin Schnell



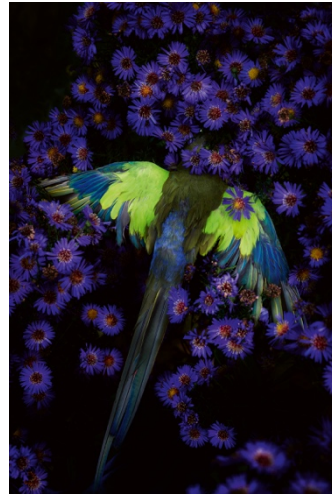
05\_Anthropology\_ © Kristin Schnell



06\_Birds on Stage #13\_ © Kristin Schnell



07\_Birds on Stage #2\_ © Kristin Schnell



08\_Alwurr MMXXIII\_ © Kristin Schnell



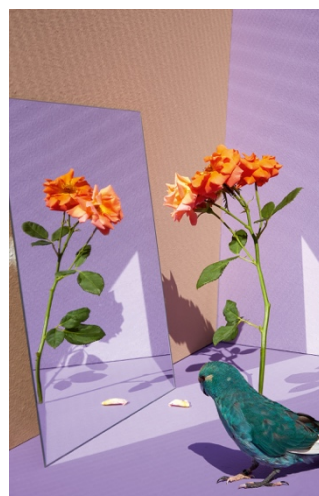
09\_Sippin' at Bells\_ © Kristin Schnell



10\_Yesterdays\_ © Kristin Schnell



11\_Ballade\_ © Kristin Schnell



12\_I Remember You\_ © Kristin Schnell