

# Edition Patrick Frey

## Press Release

Gaechter+Clahsen  
*Fünf Finger Föhn Frisur*



A person's hair may be likened to the top of a mountain. But while mountaintops are often shrouded from our eyes by clouds around them, a person's top is almost always visible—especially in latitudes that have given up the daily use of bonnets, hats and headscarves. Hence the understandably heavy pressure on people's heads—to get the hair just right. Over the course of several decades, photographer Peter Gaechter shot a wide array of hairdos for Zürich hairdresser Elsässer Pour Dames, tracking the changes in—and revivals of—hairstyles in late 20th-century Switzerland. The present publication brings together a selection of his photographs from the catalogues on display at these upmarket salons, showing the latest hairstyle trends from the 1970s to the 1990s. These sculptural cuts and coiffures, which were to be reproduced à l'identique on the customers' heads, were also telltale signs of the times. Whether a punk or "Cold War Kids" cut, a "five-finger" blow-dry, feathery "Charlie's Angels" wings or "Old Hollywood" coiffure—the multifarious hairstyles of local beauties, "It girls" and actresses featured in this book reflect the "why not?" whateverism of liberal consumer culture as well as concrete changes in society, e.g. in the sudden apparition of a clunky cell phone included in the picture frame as a pixie cut accessory.

Gaechter's photographs also hark back to an age in which photography was still infused with a spirit of professionalism. There are no snapshots here, no affectations of an amateur aesthetic, no strategically trashy elements—Gaechter's pictures target a clientele aspiring to distinction, as could once be said of the photographer's craft as well.

Bettina Clahsen (b. 1941) studied photography at the Folkwang University of the Arts in Essen, Germany. She has been based in Zürich since 1960.

Peter Gaechter (b. 1939) trained in gravure printing at Konzett+Huber, completed his preparatory course at Zürich's Kunstgewerbeschule and studied photography at the Zurich University of the Arts. In 1984 they founded the GAECHTER+CLAHSEN photographic studio in Zürich together.

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