

DAILY CONSTRUCTIONS

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The globally established format of daily soaps is also extremely popular in India. The individual episodes of the daily television series with topics from everyday life and relationships always have an open plot and this is precisely what creates a strong bond. The series do not usually end with a happy ending, but rather with an escalation of conflicts that have arisen in the protagonists' mostly family and private environment, which drives the tension to a climax and thus arouses the viewer's interest in watching the next episode. The production costs of these series, which are rather trivial in terms of content, are usually comparatively low, partly because the scenic actions always take place in the same place in the same setting.

The action scenes in these series are often private living spaces that are installed as permanent set constructions in film studios. The furnishings of these living spaces can be seen as a reflection of the mass taste of the emerging middle and upper classes in India. Furniture and decoration have a referential value and are a uniform, pointed reflection of current interior and lifestyle trends. Real living spaces usually serve as templates for these backdrops.

This is what my photographic work *Daily Constructions* is about, as it documents these filmic reconstructions. The illusion of supposed reality is dissolved by making the reconstructions recognizable as such. Insignia of the construction become visible in the photographs using larger image sections than used in the film. Open ceilings, shading and lighting elements, spotlights,

tripods and one-dimensional backgrounds make the backdrop architecture obvious.

There is still a broad underclass in India's population for whom such a living environment will remain an unattainable illusion for life. However, the middle and upper classes' opportunities for greater material prosperity have been growing in recent years. The two television series I have examined from the *Vandana Film Enterprise* in Kolkata, *Dwiragaman* (a Bengali term that describes the official end of a traditional wedding ceremony on the eighth day) and *Tumi Asbe Bole* (Come back to me), depict two central identity-forming positions of the Indian population and show the field of tension in which Indian society is increasingly moving in the wake of global developments: a traditional, conservative attitude that can be derived from the interior in *Dwiragaman* and the lifestyle oriented towards western modernity that is reflected in the furnishings in *Tumi Asbe Bole*.