

J. Jabs fotografiert ("J. Jabs takes photographs")

15 April - 27 May 2023



GALERIE BERNAU

For over 40 years, J. Jabs has been documenting streets and the people on them almost daily: from Berlin to London, Amsterdam, Paris, Vienna, Cuba and even on the beaches of the Baltic Sea. His photo series are truly long-term projects; his subjects range from bicycles, the facades of buildings, amateur football teams to the landscape of Brandenburg. Taken over a period of years, the series bear witness to the great patience that Jabs, a trained geologist, dedicates to his practice.

With the exhibition *J. Jabs Takes Photographs*, Galerie Bernau presents three of these projects in the first comprehensive solo exhibition dedicated to his photographic practice.

Jabs' photo diary *Baum des Tages* (2020 - 2022) was created during the corona pandemic. For the series, he repeatedly cycled into the countryside around Berlin, photographing a tree that particularly caught his eye that day. In the Galerie Bernau, the project takes the form of three large-format prints. A bench is placed between them, inviting visitors to linger. The installation transports the viewer into nature, invoking memories of their own bike rides and walks through the Barnim forests.

In *Uckermark-Panoramen* (ca. 1994 - 2010), Jabs captures the rolling hills of Brandenburg. His impressive black-and-white photographs depict the topography of the northern German terminal moraine in all weather conditions. Via nearly twenty photos exhibited in Galerie Bernau, visitors can wander past ponds, fields, wind turbines and trees, paying particular attention to the graphic structures of this landscape shaped by the ice age.

Jabs' series *Zweieinhalb Kilometer am Ostseestrand* (1990 - 2022) was created on the coast between Haffkrug and Scharbeutz on the Baltic Sea. His images capture unknown people on the beach, photographed during his annual trips. Unlike the photos that most private photographers bring home from a holiday, the pictures do not show Jabs' own family, but colourful and ambiguous characters; two proud bodybuilders on the lookout for a bride - or a young love? An elderly couple - or two people who don't know each other? A woman looking pensively at the horizon - or with her eyes on a child in the water? Although these photos seem to show everything, they do not reveal anything specific.

J. Jabs (*1953 in Prenzlau) lives in Berlin. He studied geology at the University of Greifswald and worked as a collection conservator for fossil invertebrates at the Natural Science Museum until 2016. Self-taught, Jabs began taking analogue photographs in 1975 during his studies. Up until 2013, he always developed his black-and-white films himself in a makeshift darkroom in his own home, making baryte prints of his images using contact prints. He then switched to digital photography. An essential part of his work is the production of calendars, postcards, photo books and other printed products.

The exhibition was curated by Marie Egger.