



CHAUSSEE 36
BERLIN

NADINE DINTER [PR](#)

P R E S S R E L E A S E

EROS & PHOTOGRAPHY

Press Preview: 14 October 2020, 11 a.m., @ the Studio House / by accreditation

Opening: Thursday, 15 October 2020, 9 – 11 p.m. / ticket required + please register at: rsvp@chaussee36.photography

Duration: 16 October 2020 – 23 January 2021

Location: Studio House, courtyard of CHAUSSEE 36 & The Whisper



Renaud de Gambs, *Cascade*, 2009
© Renaud de Gambs, Courtesy the Artist + CHAUSSEE 36



Ellen von Unwerth, *Untitled*, from the series *Revenge*, 2003
© Ellen von Unwerth, Courtesy the Artist + CHAUSSEE 36

Following the completion of an elaborate extension and renovation work in 2019/2020, the renowned exhibition space **CHAUSSEE 36 in the heart of Berlin-Mitte** will re-launch with two top-class exhibitions –which could not be more different.

The group exhibition ***Behind Desire*** takes a critical look at the notion of eroticism shaped by patriarchy. Thematically, it follows the spring 2019 exhibition, *Women on View – Aesthetics of Desire in Advertising*, in which CHAUSSEE 36 critically examined the eroticization of women's bodies in advertising.

Behind Desire marks the start of the exhibition series **EROS & PHOTOGRAPHY** and introduces the multifaceted, complex, and powerful implications of eroticism. The exhibition not only aims to foster a comprehensive understanding of eroticism through an aesthetic investigation of the topic, but also to enable visitors to confront their own Eros, looking beyond gender and sexual orientation. In a world in which sex is available with a swipe of a finger and pornography has become omnipresent – what is the significance of eroticism?

The group exhibition *Behind Desire* – with works by **Nobuyoshi Araki, Gilles Berquet, Lucien Clergue, Daidō Moriyama, Herb Ritts, Jeanloup Sieff, Evangeline, Eva Ionesco,** and **Ellen von Unwerth**, as well as **Renaud de Gambs, Thomas Hodges,** and **Gérard Musy**, among others – introduces the various facets of eroticism and examines the mechanisms of desire in fine art photography. For the first time, works will be shown from the Collection de Gambs, which specializes in nudes and erotic photography. Also premiering is the series *Les Confessions* by New York-based photographer Laurent Elie Badessi, who has researched the city's BDSM scene in depth.

A special theme needs a special opening. Inspired by the surrealist exhibition *Eros* (1959, Galerie Daniel Cordier, Paris), the works can be experienced along a "parcour of the senses" – on 15 October at 9 pm, as part of a masquerade party.

In conjunction with the exhibition, a photo competition will be held on the subject of eroticism. The works of the three competition winners will be exhibited.

RENÉ GROEBLI: Farbzauberer / Master of Color

Duration: 16 October 2020 – 23 January 2021

Location: Atelierhaus, courtyard of CHAUSSEE 36



René Groebli, D58, Portrait of the painter Aja Iskander Schmidlin, 1970
both: copyright the artist



René Groebli, Photo, D39C, 1963

The extensive and diverse oeuvre of the Swiss photographer **René Groebli** (*1927) can hardly be reduced to one style. Always daring to do something new, he set new standards in photography. His passion for experimentation is particularly evident in his color photography. These "magical pictures" challenge conventional ways of seeing, through their play with perspective, composition, defamiliarization, but above all through the use of various photographic techniques. At a time when black and white was still considered the "colors of photography", Groebli's work was pioneering. His photographs tell the story of color photography and its acceptance as an artistic medium.

René Groebli was born in Zurich in 1927. After an apprenticeship as a photographer with Theo Vonow, he studied under Hans Finsler, a proponent of New Objectivity who established the first photography class at the Zurich School of Applied Arts. Groebli soon realized that New Objectivity was not his visual language, and after half a year switched to film, where he trained as a documentary cameraman. Dissatisfied with merely serving as a "henchman" in that field, however, René Groebli returned to photography. Working as a reportage photographer, he travelled in Africa and the Near and Middle East. In the mid-1950s, he founded his own photo

studio for advertising and industrial photography in Zurich and specialized in color photography. He quickly made a name for himself, his reputation reaching far beyond the national borders. In 1957, he was praised as a "Master of Color" by the US magazine *Popular Photography Color Annual*. But René Groebli was best known for his black-and-white photographs. His first two photo books – *Magie der Schiene* (Rail Magic) and *Das Auge der Liebe* (The Eye of Love) include some of the artist's best-known motifs today. In 1981, Groebli sold his commercial photo studio but continued to work as an artist, producing photo books and working on his image archive.

Groebli's works not only push boundaries in terms of content but also with regard to the medium of photography, attesting to its mutability. For Groebli, it is about "translating ideas in a young and thus surprising medium: To think, steer and stage color." (Hans-Michael Koetzle) The darkroom in particular played an important role for the artist. His images were not created primarily at the moment of taking the picture, but rather through what could amount to hours of editing, using a wide variety of techniques. What is achieved through Photoshop and a few mouse clicks today, Groebli realized in analogue form years before digitalization. In this way he created ever new compositions of visual motifs and colors, montages with unconventional, associative perspectives. The exhibition presents the different techniques that the artist used in his color photographs. With colored light, for example, Groebli transformed somber factories and their technical operations into unique and unexpected places. By using color in a subjective way, he created particular atmospheres or underscored the deeper message of his images. Particularly striking are his color portraits, which are limited to a few bold colors. In this case, the dye transfer process is used to break down the images by means of color separation into individual primary colors, which can be influenced and manipulated separately. "This can be done through special masking, mechanical or photographic screening, and changing the structure, through inversion, solarization, switching colors or visual elements, etc." (René Groebli) The photographs are reminiscent of Andy Warhol's screenprints, which were made around the same time. Other portraits by Groebli look like paintings or reliefs. His portrait of Aja Iskander Schmidlin, for example, depicts the painter as if he had painted his own self-portrait with a paintbrush. For yet other works – such as René Groebli's *New York* series – the artist constructed a "box of wonders" in which he used semi-transparent mirrors and lighting to combine several photographs into one image. (Text: Mona Mathé)

About CHAUSSEE 36:

CHAUSSEE 36 is located in the heart of Berlin-Mitte. It is a place for creative exchange and artistic collaboration, offering several exhibition spaces and shooting locations as well as its own photography and design collection. The listed building also houses an event agency, library, publishing house, artist residence, and an analogue photography lab. It is an inspiring place that invites discussion and reflection, offering a platform for socially relevant topics presented in the form of photography, design, and architecture. More at www.chaussee36.photography

Opening hours:

Thursday – Sunday, 1 – 6 pm | Combo ticket: 7€ / 5€ (reduced)

Entrance to the exhibitions through the courtyard; admission to the exhibition *Behind Desire* for ages 18 and older.

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