

GALERIE DITTMAR

Katja Liebmann

Berlin London New York – Retrospective I

24 January to 10 March 2020



Gotham City, New York, 1997, 62 x 75 cm

Katja Liebmann, born 1965 in Halle an der Saale studied 1989-91 at the Academy of Fine Arts Nuremberg, 1995 at the Art College Berlin and 1997-98 at the Royal College of Art in London (Master of Fine Arts). She first attracted attention in the mid-nineties with the series *Gotham City* which was bought by the Saatchi Collection in 1998. In the same year she was nominated for the Citibank Photography Prize (today the Deutsche Börse Photography Prize). Whilst studying at the Royal College of Art she taught at the State University of New York in 1997-98. Then there followed teaching posts at London College of Printing and Camberwell College of Art. In 2000 she received a scholarship from the Hasselblad Foundation, Gothenburg associated with an exhibition. The following year an exhibition in the Goethe Institute in London. Since 2003 she has been a lecturer in Printmaking at the University of Oldenburg.

Katja Liebmann's experience with various media led to her choosing photography and her orientation towards early and simple processes. This widened the scope in her search for new means of expression and a different perception of reality. This concerns black and white photography but the inherent possibilities of monochrome in the working process, such as salt printing, reinforce the degree of abstraction, despite the painterly character. The pure black and white images seems to be somewhat distant and timeless. This impression is reinforced when the shot is revealed in a dimly manner behind a superimposed rain-soaked glass panel or when a printed sheet marked with irregular tracks also acts as the base for the photograph.

When the artist includes herself and intermingles alternately a portrait and an urban landscape, this creates an alienation effect that removes the boundaries of genre and redefines urban space. This occurs in a different way in her images of wide squares devoid of people. Here the assumed absence of people is explained only by the long exposure time and the apparently contradictory titles such as *Rush Hour* increase the irritation and the feeling of the indeterminate and transitory. Her images fluctuate, they are charged with content and memories without giving away the answers to their puzzle. In other works, these superimpositions and compactions are supplemented with a process-related moment so that here the superimposition can be experienced as a succession and a progression ("Walk over a Bridge") and creates a cinematic sense of time.



Walk over a bridge, Berlin, 2000, 51 x 51 cm

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