

Jessica Backhaus*What Still Remains*

- ISBN: 978 386 828 01 97
- www.kehrenverlag.com
- Publisher: Kehrer Verlag, Heidelberg
- Publication year: 2009
- Format: 28.6 x 25.4 x 1.6 cm

Brought together in this volume is a photo sequence that German-American photographer Jessica Backhaus shot in various locations since 2006. These sixty-plus colour images of commonplace objects dwell on how things become abandoned and forgotten. A water bottle, the air crushed out of it, floats in a scummy body of water; faded pink and white plastic strips of industrial plastic entangle an oxidised iron pole, a vast expanse of water in the background. In their examination of surfaces, reflections, ephemera and the discarded (an apple core, a post-it note), Backhaus' images read as an ode to loss.

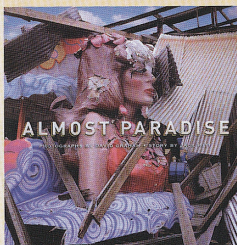
Where the photographs in *One Day in November* occupied both the left and right-hand pages (grouped in pairs, sometimes threes or appearing singly), in *What Still Remains*, the image is presented on the right, with a brief caption—a title perhaps—printed at the very centre of the opposite, left-hand page. For instance, the image of the floating water bottle is paired with the word 'bottle'; the plastic ribbon accompanied by the word 'eternity', the post-it note bobbing in water with the legend 'floating'. Backhaus' photographs are exercises in visual poetry, her composition tightly orchestrated, her palette jewel-toned and luminous.

Jessica Backhaus*One Day in November*

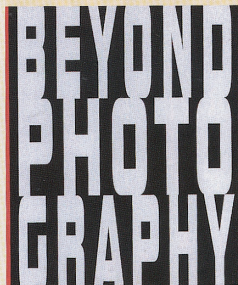
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This book is essentially a tribute to Gisele Freund, whom Backhaus met in the early 1990s, and to a friendship which was to shape the young artist's development. The title, *One Day in November*, refers to the month in which the two met and is intended as a posthumous birthday gift to Freund, who would have attained her one hundredth birthday in December 2008.

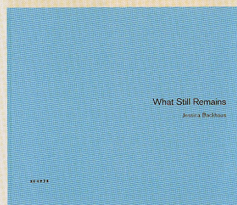
Containing over ninety images, Backhaus has combined the photographs to work as triptychs and diptychs, or simply as single images. Her images are delicate, the colouring quite delicious—early leaflets budding in translucent lime, peeping out from the tips of slender, silver branches. Backhaus offers us an intimate, restrained domain – images at once commonplace but which compel us to look more closely, to see more vividly. Simply bound in a lightly padded blue-green Japanese linen, its natural weave visible, this slight volume has an air of the treasured and the precious – the look and feel of a private journal or personal memory book. ■



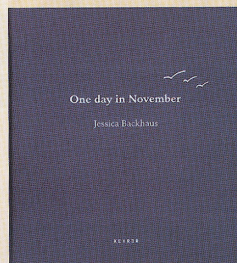
ALMOST PARADISE



BEYOND PHOTOGRAPHY



WHAT STILL REMAINS



ONE DAY IN NOVEMBER