

Jock Sturges

Jun 5 — Jul 25, 1998 | Paris

"Often I photograph people who are at an age at which, in my own life, I was least happy. Time and again my few good friends would disappear from the schools and summer camps I attended, swept away by time, by the end of terms and semesters, by the end of summer. And very often I'd never see them again."

In the summer months, Jock Sturges practices nudism, either in northern California or on the Atlantic coast of France. He photographs people he knows well: "I often spend weeks and in some cases months with my subjects. Toward the end of that time, a certain urgency builds, because soon they will leave, and I am going to lose them anew. I make my best work the last days of summer".

Jock Sturges' pictures are not stage directed, as in the 19th and the early 20th centuries, when childhood and teenage years were photographed either veiled or almost unveiled by a garment. They are also a long way from the mawkishness of the picturesque photos of young girls decked out in skirts and flowers of the 70s, and they go beyond the face and body of the subjects photographed. Rather, his photos express both the potential disillusionment and damage to which teenagers are prey, and their desire to find other directions. They also, crystallize a fleeting androgyny, at once seductive and fragile, an intuitive state that is neither innocent nor conscious.