

Guy Hersant, un photographe en campagne

SAINT-JEAN-BRÉVELAY

Guy Hersant

Marie-Hélène Lafon



By opening a year-long work in June 1983 in Saint-Jean-Brévelay and in the surrounding towns of Morbihan, photographer Guy Hersant was responding as a then Lorient neighbor to an order from the BPI * of the Center Pompidou in Paris.

At that time, the Breton countryside rustled under the wind of a modernity which surged since the sixties in regrouping, in mechanization, in free stalls and in milking parlors, in corn silage, in farm buildings which s emancipate themselves from the old architecture of the farms, in decohabitation of the young farmers from the old ones, in cooperatives, in Common agricultural policy of what was still the European Economic Community.

The purpose of the photographic mission was to testify to this great shift in agricultural Brittany, which the CNRS ** Rural Sociology Study Group – – partner organization of the project with the BPI – had already observed the beginnings in the town from precisely of these sixties.

In Saint-Jean-Brévelay, the focus is on poultry and CNRS research mentions the town as a pioneer in the development of industrial development of turkey and chicken farms. The upheaval goes beyond the only agricultural object and turns out over time to be a cultural revolution. The adherences to the old world are displayed in work coats, in caps, in blouses, in sweaters, in collective practices and joys while already pointing out the combinations inspired by the factory and the “pay of milk”, the loans at Crédit Agricole and convenience stores. Thus, beyond the form, the photographic harvest of Guy Hersant is worth ethnographic investigation on the moult of the rural society of the end of the twentieth century.

Gilles Luneau

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Carré Bisson, 10 bis rue Bisson
75020 Paris
T +33 (0)6 31 20 20 23

Filigranes Editions
3 lieu-dit Toul Guido
22140 Landebaëron
T +33 (0)6 31 20 20 23

www.filigranes.com
filigranes@filigranes.com