

Jogues Rivard

AVENTURIER DES BÂTIMENTS PERDUS

(RAIDER OF THE LOST BUILDINGS)



19 mars
au 10 mai 2008

Vernissage
18 mars, 18 h.

“Jogues Rivard’s photographs affect us by their documentary worth as much as by their poetic quality: the mysterious light, the dark spaces . . . Remaining true to the traditional documentary approach—which is also my own, and in which I strongly believe—the photographer introduces us to sites as he discovered them, in their genuine state of abandonment and disintegration. These informatively rich images symbolize the agony of our cities and invite us to reflect on the future of the civic space and its redevelopment.”

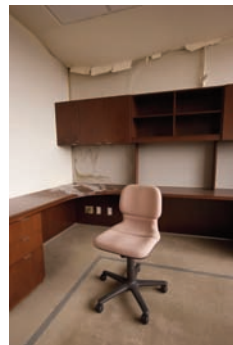
Gabor Szilasi,
photographer



Singer Company of Canada Ltd.
Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu



Brasserie Dow



Imperial Tobacco,
Montréal

MONOPOLI, 181 Saint-Antoine W.
Place d'Armes metro
Wednesday – Friday 13 h - 18 h – Saturday 13 h-17 h.



Abbaye Cistercienne Notre-Dame-du-Bon-Conseil,
Saint-Romuald

For Jogues Rivard, buildings live and die. They have their last moments, their dying breaths. He captures them, at times too late, but also when still animated by the last traces of the last gestures of the humans who worked and lived there.

Factories, schools and hospitals, but tunnels and pipes, as well. It goes beyond aesthetics, obvious nonetheless, beyond the fascinating beauty in deterioration. It is genuine emotion. One can still sense some human presence, in these operating rooms that bring to mind torture more than therapy; in the warped old flooring, waves rather than floor; in the old machines stuck on functions that we'll forget once they're gone; in the detail of these safety glasses, now a spider's nest.

A determined, organized adventurer, Jogues Rivard sets himself a mission: “I make it my duty to document and index . . .”

Several visits are often required to capture the place entirely. The photos move from indications and descriptions to testimonies and emotion. Light made smooth by long exposure, the surprising features of buildings, phantoms of action, but also the baroque beauty of decay, and the respect for the skills of past



Maison Notre-Dame de la Chesnaie, Sainte-Clotilde-de-Horton

artisans in the details of their architecture or the products of their work.

The photo conveys the view, not by seeking effect, but by what it contains. No artifice, no manipulation. The photo sharpens to focus on its subject, and the technique follows, docile. It's also a documenting, a photographic mission without a commission, a witness-bearing for those who come after, of course, but for us, too. Because this view regards us: how do we handle these things that disappear so quickly, that have been so important, and that we allow to die without burial, without grief, without even a glance?

The work of an adventurer; the work of a photographer.

Alain Laforest, photographer
Curator



Abbaye Cistercienne Notre-Dame-du-Bon-Conseil,
Saint-Romuald



Brasserie Dow



Les Ateliers du Grand-Trunk
de Pointe Saint-Charles, Montréal

I've always been drawn to exploring unusual places that are normally inaccessible. Since childhood, in fact. My earliest memory is of my father telling me that a trap door in our apartment storage shed led to the roof. I was five at the time, and already I could picture myself walking from rooftop to rooftop.

In grade four, my friends and I played baseball in the back alleys of the Villeray neighbourhood. We'd often climb up on the roofs to retrieve our ball. While up there, we'd walk around and set off to explore. At Le Plateau primary school, we'd try to visit the building's nooks and crannies and even managed to get into the boiler room.

But my first genuine “urban exploration” of a deserted building goes back to fifth grade. A classmate told us that there was a small abandoned lavatory building in Parc Lafontaine that we could enter through a basement window. And we did just that, examining and exploring the whole place, even the women's bathrooms.

I like visiting this type of building, because I can find hidden areas in them that one wouldn't usually have access to.

When you visit a deserted place, you notice everything: what people left behind, that the walls were originally painted mint green, that the roof leaks, that the basement is big, that the view from the roof is beautiful. But when the place was still alive with activity, people went about their daily business without necessarily being interested in these details.

Urban exploration
my own definition could be:
*An insatiable curiosity for places that are
abandoned and out of the ordinary*

Exploring a place that's not being used is all about being curious and going beyond the notion of “This way, please.”

A building can be abandoned for several months or several years, and still hold traces of the people who left their jobs behind on the last day. It gives an impression of time having stood still; the objects are exactly where the workers left them. But at the same time, you can clearly see how time has deteriorated the premises. The paint is flaking, the mould is growing, the plaster falling, the iron rusting and nature is slowly taking over. It's as if you were visiting the site of a catastrophe.

The aesthetics of these abandoned places can be observed only in a building where there is no longer any human presence. They're ideal for photography.

I make it my duty to document and index these buildings and all the vestiges of the past and their current deterioration, with photos.

I appreciate the work done by the people of the era, their concern for detail, evident in the construction of the buildings.

When a building changes vocation and is converted into lofts, almost all of its character and authenticity disappear. It's then that I feel the need to intervene and capture the building's last moments.

These buildings are like corpses that are not yet buried.

Jogues Rivard

www.explorationurbaine.ca