



NEW RELEASE 2025

Bettina Flitner *Prostitution—Johns, Women, Places*

Texts by Klaus Honnef, Bettina Flitner

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Unvarnished insights into the world of prostitution—a statement

With her new book *Prostitution* the renowned photographer and author Bettina Flitner presents one of her most radical works to date. Since 1992, Flitner has traveled to cities in Germany, the Czech Republic, Poland, and Thailand, engaging with a subject that, to this day, remains a social taboo—yet continues to impact countless women.

In her latest publication, the artist brings together three of her most significant photographic series for the first time, each exploring the complex system of prostitution from a different perspective:

Johns, shot in the large brothel Paradise in Stuttgart in 2013, presents expressive portraits of the brothel's patrons and captures surprisingly candid answers about their motivations. In contrast, a 2014 photo essay offers deep insights into the lives of women on the notorious European route E 55, the »longest street prostitution route in Europe«. Both works have been exhibited and awarded several times internationally.

The third part of the book focuses on the ordinary places of prostitution—from a Cologne brothel to so-called »appointment apartments« and the functional »service boxes«. This most recent series, created between November 2024 and April 2025, is published here for the first time. Remaining true to her documentary approach, Flitner records these spaces with almost scientific precision—void of people: an unsettling absence in which the traces of sexual transaction linger like an echo.

With *Prostitution*, Bettina Flitner achieves a body of work that is both artistically and socially radical. She compels her viewers to look—without voyeurism, yet without embellishment.

From the foreword *Art in documentary Stil* by Prof. **Klaus Honnef**:
Through the striking evidence of her pictures, Bettina Flitner removes any doubt that the male perception, which whitewashes and justifies prostitution, is correct. That of the women concerned is diametrically opposed. Prostitution mocks human rights.

Bettina Flitner lives and works as a photographer and author in Cologne and Berlin. Her conceptual photo essays on social and cultural themes repeatedly spark vivid public debates. After training as a film editor at WDR, she studied at the Deutsche Film- und Fernsehakademie Berlin before devoting herself entirely to photography. Her focus remains on portraits, cultural-political essays, and socially critical photojournalism. Texts are an integral part of her work, often in the form of quotations from her subjects—adding a second, narrative layer to the images.

To date, she has published fifteen photobooks and literary works; her photographs have been exhibited internationally and recognized with numerous awards. In 2022, she published her first novel, *Meine Schwester* (My Sister) with Kiepenheuer & Witsch; her second, *Meine Mutter* (My Mother), followed in autumn 2025.

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Press Images



02_Günter. Freier series. © Bettina Flitner

I don't like the ones who are too professional, I prefer those who make it only now and then. They perform better. My last one said afterwards: That was the best sex ever. 50 Euros. The price-performance ratio is simply right. – Guenther, 55, divorced, pub owner, 1 son.



03_Andrea. Frauen series. © Bettina Flitner

My dream for the future? I don't have one. I've been doing this since two years now... I was in Frankfurt, Hamburg, Nuremberg, in clubs. My boyfriend? There's only one with his family, but they're not very nice to me. – Andrea, 22, no vocational training



04_Dana. Frauen series. © Bettina Flitner

My dream? I want my boyfriend back! It all used to be so good: I was a working girl and he took care of me. At some point, I couldn't pay the rent anymore, so he left me. Sure, of course there were other women. But it was me who he really loved. – Dana, 53, no vocational training

Please note:

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o5_Terminwohnung Hof II. Orte series. © Bettina Flitner



o6_Verrichtungsbox Berlin. Orte series. © Bettina Flitner

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