



# Stéphanie Probst

Stéphanie Probst is in the midst of a crowd. She is feeling a mix of emotions – excitement, fear, pride, and strength – but most of all she feels an overwhelming sense of togetherness, a feeling of safety that Probst doesn't often experiences when she walks the streets of her hometown.

Probst is attending a protest march in Geneva, something she does several times a year in order to support causes she feels strongly about, such as women's rights.

Women's suffrage came late to Switzerland, having percolated out slowly from individual cantons to be codified into national law in 1971. And although equality

between men and women was written into the country's constitution in 1981, with little having had changed aside from the granting of the vote, the first Feminist Strike took place in 1991. It was a national event with 500,000 of the country's population of 6.8 million taking part. However, with continued salary inequities and violence against women, as well as a conservative government threatening the safety and security of women and those in the LGBTQ community, the protest has become an annual event that attracts hundreds of thousands of participants.

Slutwalk protest is a feminist protest against the rape culture and pro women/LGBTIQIA people.  
The first one happened in 2012.  
It happened a few times, and then it was abandoned.  
It was a "reborn" in 2022.  
I was there with 350 women and nonbinary people.

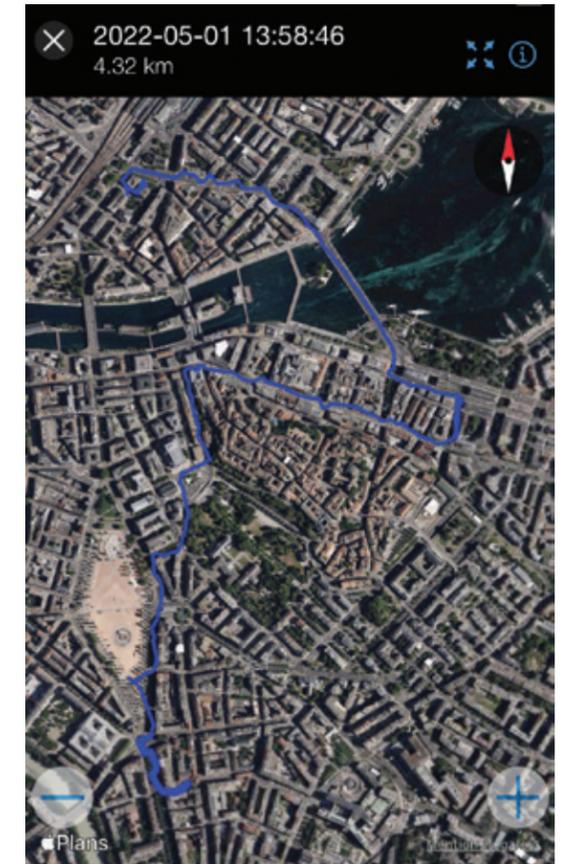




This idea of female bodies populating public spaces can be a powerful tool with which to fight not only systemic but societal inequities. Probst cites studies that explore how women typically navigate such spaces – by walking quickly or avoiding them altogether, for instance – and feels that through mass protest the power dynamic of these spaces is inverted, allowing women to occupy them for their use and their causes. Feeling lucky to be in a position where she can take time off work to protest – unlike those who cannot do so because of disabilities, fear of losing their jobs, their immigration status, position as carers for loved ones, etc. – Probst is happy to utilize this privilege to elevate not only her own voice but the voice of others, as well.

An artist and photographer, Probst found herself drawn back to analog photography after teaching

darkroom practices to teenagers. Around eleven years ago, she discovered pinhole photography and has experimented with it both in the streets and in the studio, with a particular focus on the representation of women. Having attended protest marches, she felt dissatisfied with the photographs that documented the events; she felt they weren't reflective of the emotions she experienced while protesting. Still images seemed inadequate for capturing the energy, the movement, and the passage of time at the marches. After attending a workshop at the Experimental Photo Festival with fellow pinholer Justin Quinnell, during which they took "long pause" images – throwing their cameras in the air while riding on the metro, for instance – Probst felt inspired to apply the concept of solargraphy to her protest photography.

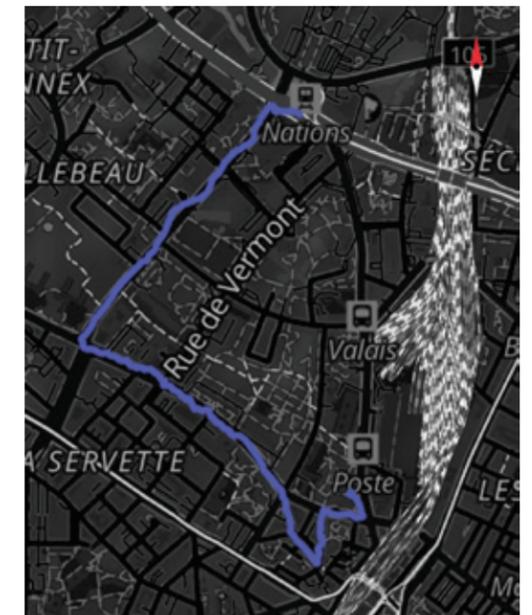


1st mai is a traditional march for workers rights. I go every year. This year, there was 2000 people in the streets between 1:30pm to 4pm. I wanted to test different dilutions for the revelation process and different time. That is why you can see several cans on my backpack in the documentation picture.

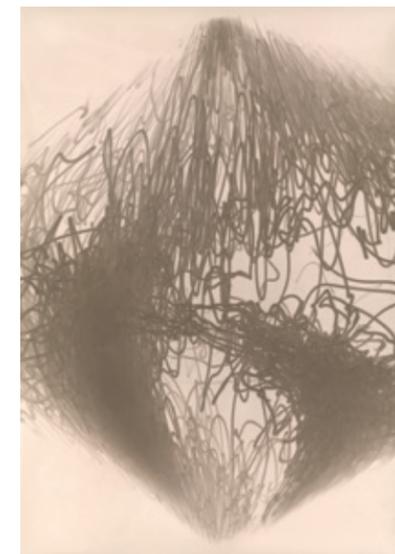
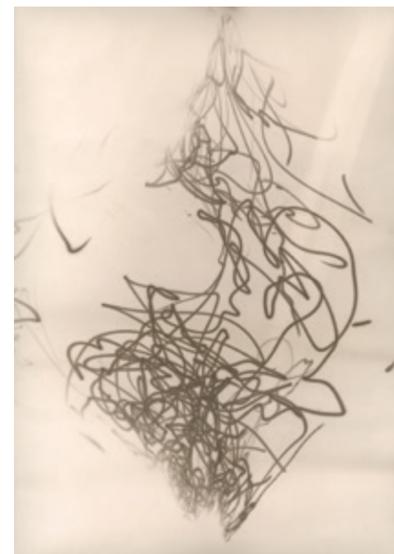
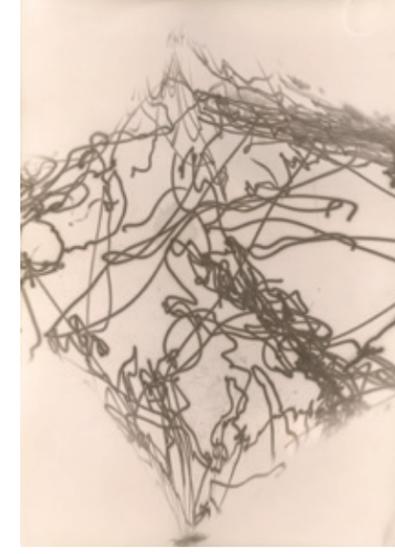


After over a year of trial runs at other protest events, she attended a Feminist Strike on June 14, 2023. Embracing the idea of collective strength, Probst decided not only to create her own pinhole images while marching but to distribute cans to other protesters to carry while they marched, as well. To Probst, a single can representing a single path depicts only one point of view and is not representative of the event as a whole; incorporating the views and experiences of other protesters into the project was important to Probst. She advertised the project through the collective organizing the event, put out a call on social media, and created

both a website and social media account for the project. She brought 120 pre-loaded cans to the march, distributed 77 of them, and collected 70 from her collaborators after the march. Some she had to search for, and some made their way into her mailbox, but Probst was very pleased with the results of what she describes as a collective performance. She sees her role in this project as that of a "conductor," programming the conditions of the image capture and collaborating with others to create an imprint of the strike. As she says, "These topics are bigger than me; I feel that alone I can't do much. Together we are stronger."



Protest to cease the fire in Palestine and ask our politicians to take a position against the violence.  
I went to a protest with more than 3000 people on the 11th of November. It was a very gray day.  
I did two cans: One with RC paper, one with fiber paper (FB).



*Process notes: I use beer can pinholes as cameras. Fomaspeed variant 312 matt paper (13x18cm), developer diluted 1:49, fixed, and scanned. The paper is fogged by the long exposure and the very low developer. It brings light colors (pink-ish, orange-ish) depending of the paper. The hardest part of the project is the interaction with people; explaining the process and how to use the can. It's mostly a question of time. The trick is also to accept chance and risks; somebody can open the can, the hole can be obstructed, the can can be lost or crushed. It's all valid, since it's a trace of the events that happened.*