

Sam Gregg

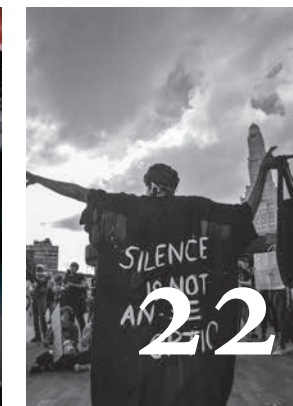
Character-Driven
Social Realism

and Works by
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Anna Lazareva
Bill Livingston
Cathy Cone
Damiano Errico
Fran Forman
Maria Dupovkina
Mikkel Hørlyck
Patricia Scialo
Pepe Pax
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and
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Cover image:

© **Sam Gregg**

Untitled, from the series See Naples and Die, 2019

LETTER FROM THE PUBLISHER

Dear Readers,

In the last editorial, I had voiced my concerns and hopes regarding the US elections. Today, hate speech and bigotry are a step closer to leaving the White House, shining a more positive light on the end of this difficult year.

Let us not forget our values and our task of promoting photography from all horizons and cultures. Thanks to you, we have a community with whom we can share them.

We are now releasing the 11th edition of FotoNostrum Magazine, with this issue no.10. More than 150 photographers from all around the world have contributed to this endeavour so far and continue to make it possible. We are immensely grateful for that.

In this edition, we have included portfolios of talented artists touching themes of intimacy, vulnerability, equity, spirituality, always celebrating diversity and inclusion. As Bill Livingston wisely said in his article herein, "Everyone's story deserves to be told."

To complete your experience, please do visit our virtual exhibitions on our page fotonostrumvirtual.com. A lot of exciting news will be revealed in the following

weeks regarding online sales and new exhibitions. As the hope of an effective COVID-19 vaccine grows, so does our aspirations towards a new normality in events, travelling and reunions.

This will mean to finally see all of you again, in our lovely Barcelona, for more exhibitions, talks, cultural events, etc., all celebrating what brings us together: photography.

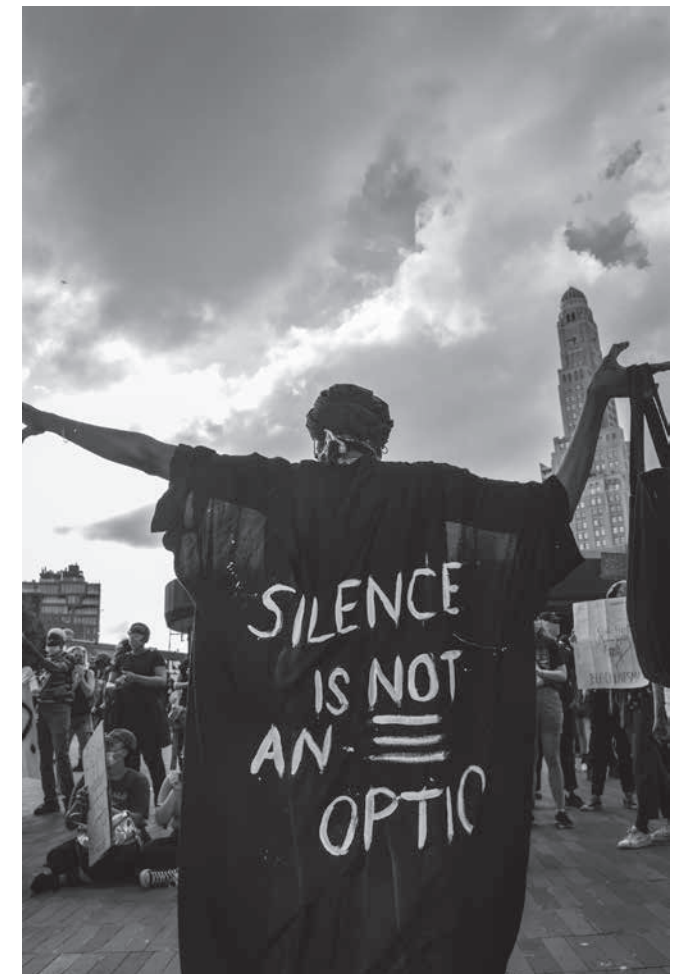
As our space remains open for small groups with strict sanitary measures, we look forward to being able to organize bigger events, where people from abroad can come, exchange, appreciate and contribute to the art.

In the meantime, from the whole team at FotoNostrum, we would like to wish you a very merry holiday season. May the new year bring you much success and happiness.

Stay safe and healthy.

All the best,

Julio Hirsch-Hardy
Publisher, FotoNostrum Magazine



Bill Livingston, Barclays Center2, Brooklyn, NY, 2020



Sam Gregg

Character-Driven Social Realism

Sam Gregg (b. 1990) is an autodidactic portrait and documentary photographer from London. With a particular interest in marginalised and dispossessed communities, Gregg's work is both immersed and removed, taking refuge within complex environments as a means of following narratives that reflect on his own culture. Throughout his work, Gregg returns to outliers, individuals who live on the outskirts and are hidden away or deliberately misrepresented as a means of exerting power and controlling narratives. Gregg's work seeks to unravel stereotypes and rather than trying to glamorise difficult situations, he aims to sit side by side with his subjects, without judgment in order to know their stories as they wish them to be told rather than how society seeks to mould them. His work is a quest to disrupt and question taboos, to celebrate universal human values whilst also being honest about social structures and media, which can restrict and bind people rather than saving or liberating them. His work has been published and exhibited internationally, including at the Leica Gallery Milan, Photo Vogue Festival and The National Portrait Gallery.

All images © Sam Gregg

Left page: Untitled, from the series *See Naples and Die*, 2017-2020



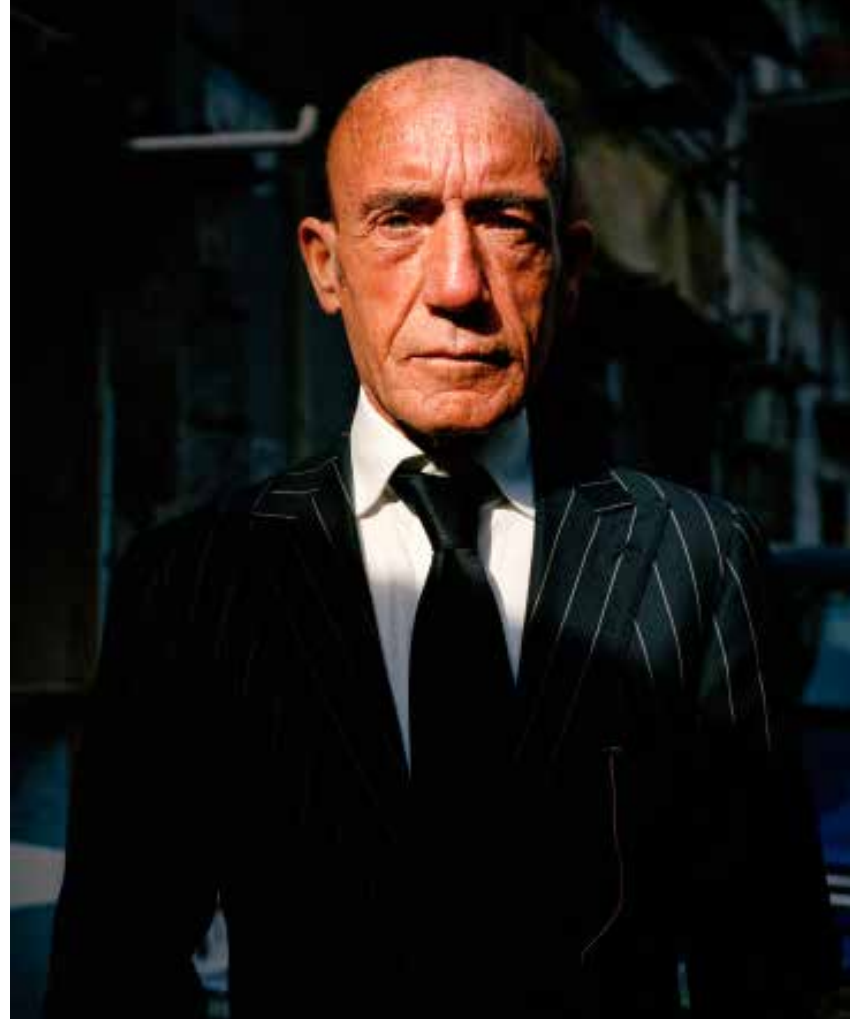
I describe my work as character-driven social realism. Recurrent themes are antiquity in the face of modernity and individualism in the face of collectivism.

I hope to transmit emotion. I want to make the viewer feel. Portraiture is a powerful emotive tool. Through capturing the spirit and emotion of another human being, the viewer can not only be transported inside the mind of the subject, but it can also encourage them to look deeper inside their own self. In an emotionally numbed

world, humanistic portraiture can be a powerful counteractive tool. In terms of photographers, I would say Koudelka and Paul D'Amato are great sources of inspiration. In general, I don't consume too much external stimuli other than the real world, which is inspirational enough. I try not to allow myself to be influenced both consciously and unconsciously by other artists. I want my creations to be as pure and as true to my own self as possible. Perhaps it's genius, perhaps it's ignorance.

All images on this and the followings spreads: Untitled, from the series *See Naples and Die*, 2017-2020



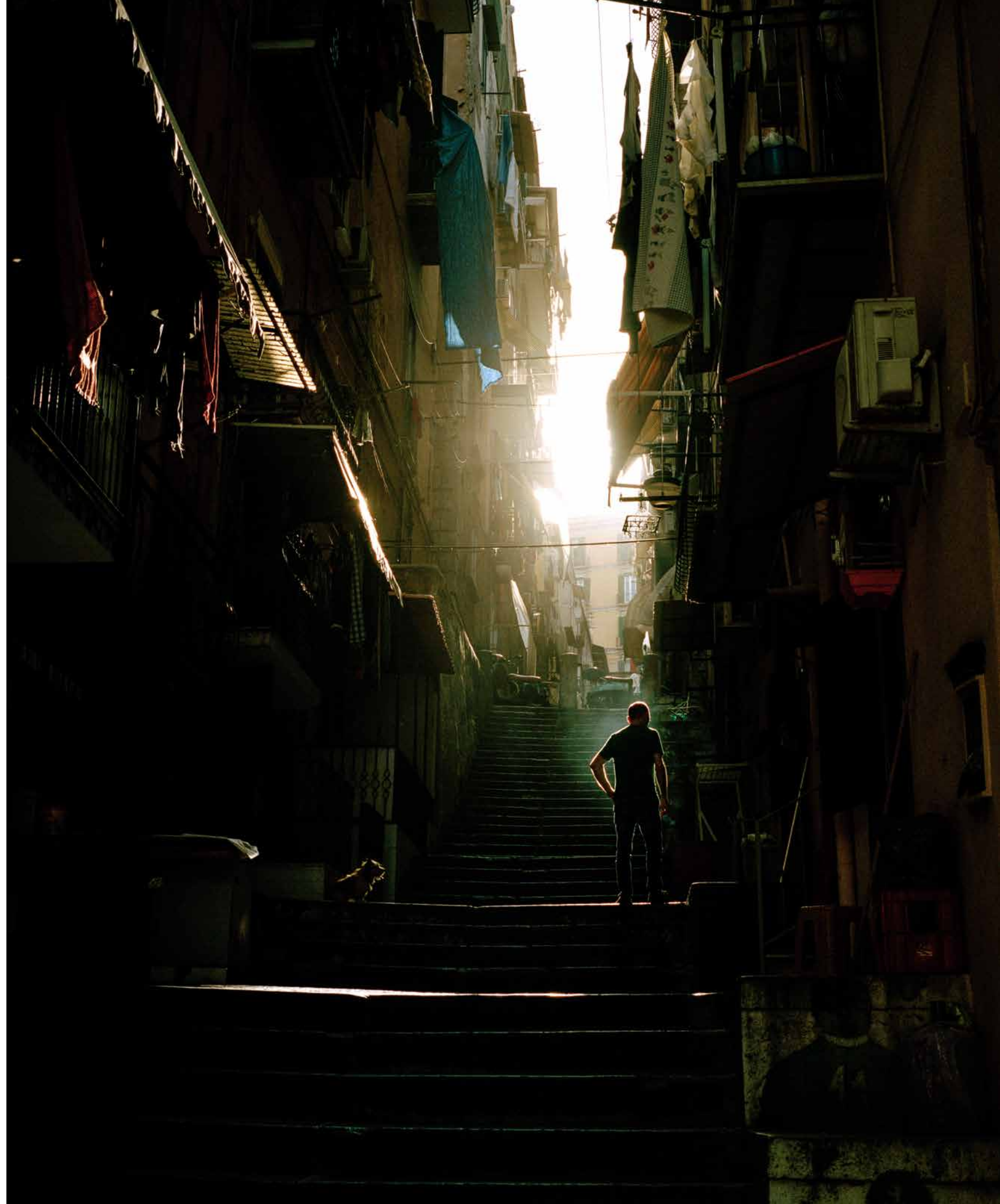


My work process is very organic. I trust my gut and go with the flow. Photography is very much a feeling out process for me. Although I may set out to focus on a particular part of a country / city, I rarely have a narrative in mind. Most projects are formed only after having shot a bulk of images. I let the photographs sit for a while and then proceed to dissect thematics and form narratives.

I more or less shoot exclusively medium format

film. Every now and again 35mm film. My main cameras are a Pentax 67 and a Mamiya 7. I shoot in the street and in the homes of the people that I encounter and use natural light only.

I do very little post-processing. Sometimes I scan my negatives and do a light retouch in Photoshop. Sometimes I hand print my negatives in the darkroom, so all retouching is done chemically and manually.



All images on this spread: Untitled, from the series *See Naples and Die*, 2017-2020

See Naples and Die

“See Naples and die,” Johann Wolfgang Von Goethe, *Italian Journey*, 1786. During the golden age of Spanish Bourbon rule Naples was considered one of the most opulent and enchanting cities in the world. So much so that many found it impossible to leave, only doing so upon dying.

In a modern context the phrase may be read as a tongue-in-cheek reference to the over-documented gang violence of the city. Whilst outsiders may associate the phrase with the presence of the Camorra and glamorise the idea of violence and organised crime, understanding it solely through the lens of TV and film, to me ‘See Naples and die’ bares a much more complex reading.

My project focused on four of central Naples’ historically rich yet contemporarily volatile areas – Forcella, Quartieri Spagnoli, Rione Sanità and Santa Lucia. Over a year I was guided by the locals into the heart of this multi-layered city where eccentricity thrives, flamboyant clothing is paired with machismo and gender politics is the opposite of the expected. Here where others seek easily identifiable caricatures such as ‘the brute boss’ I saw people filled with contradiction and the troubles and joys of everyday life.

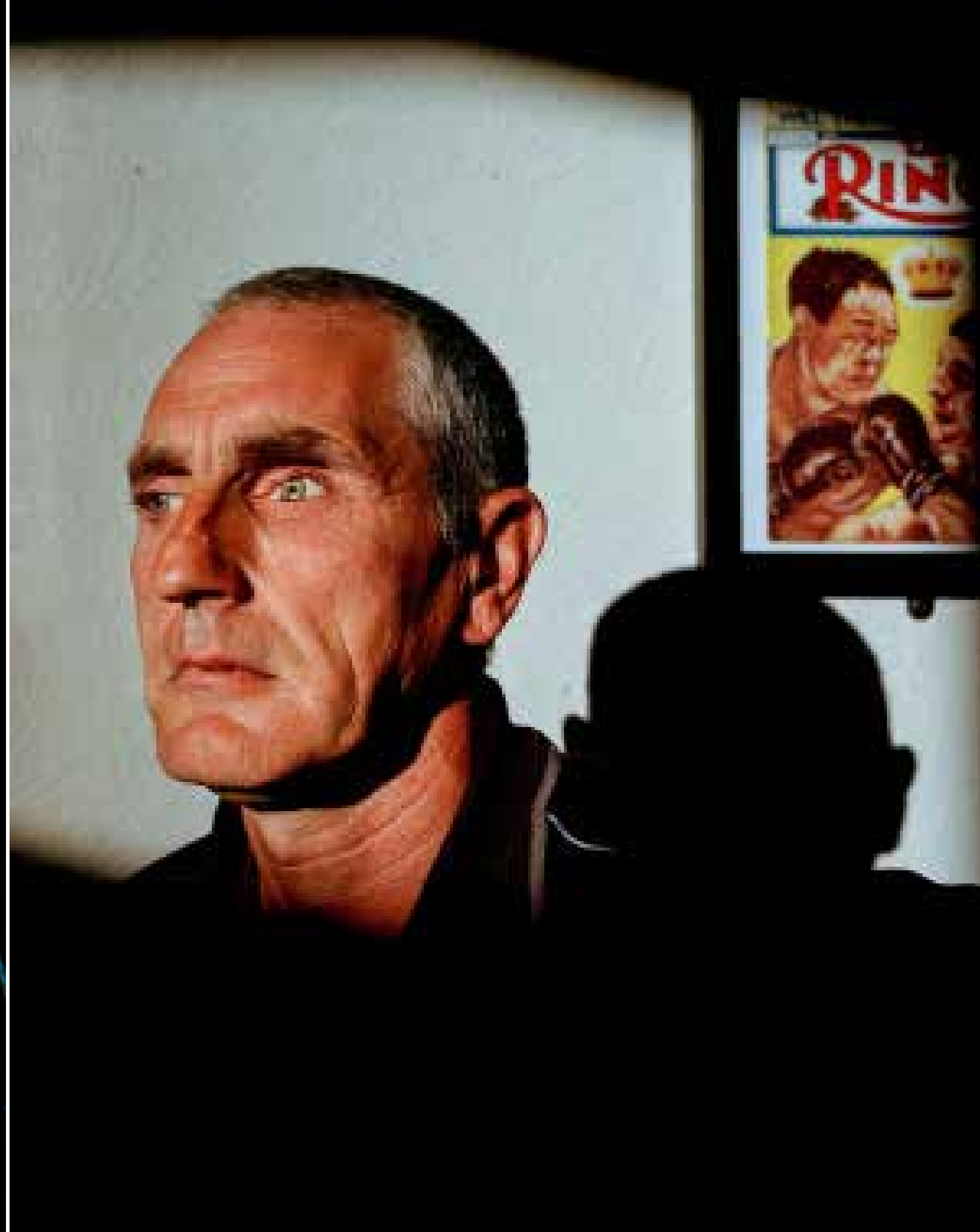
I met and captured Luigi the ‘playboy’ who struts in pin-stripe suits; the nonna who scrubbed her floors to perfection each morning; Rita, the eyes of the quarter who gave me coffee and shared new gossip; the mother who scorned her child in public under the watch of Jesus; the pastry chef with murderous eyes and a sugary heart; Mary the femminiello, the flamboyant birdkeeper who became a caring friend; Salvatore a pockmarked self-proclaimed ladies’ man with whom I often swam; the boys at ‘Lido Mappatella’ the speck of sand that somehow declares itself a beach and attracts hordes of sun-worshippers; the mother and adopted daughter whose love allowed them to claim their city is free of prejudice; sisters hanging out in doorways; boys smoking cigarettes and talking about girls; Gianni and his pit bull dreaming of life as a superstar DJ and many, many others.

Overtime, I was invited to share a glimpse into the private lives of so many of Naples’ residents, slowly coming to understand that to See Naples entirely would take a life-time, perhaps giving new meaning to the phrase ‘See Naples and Die’. This project scratched the surface of my experiences and in many ways is the beginning of an on-going investigation into one of the world’s most vibrant and mysterious cities.



Right page: Untitled, from the series *See Naples and Die*, 2017-2020

All images on the following spread: Untitled, from the series *Blightly*, 2018 - ongoing





Blighty

“Blighty” is a British/English slang term for Great Britain or often specifically England. Though it was used throughout the 1800s in India to mean an English or British visitor, it was first used during the Boer War with the specific meaning of homeland for the English or British, and it wasn’t until World War I that use of the term became widespread.

The word derives from the Urdu word *vilāyatī*, meaning “foreign”, which more specifically came to mean “European”, and “British/English” during the time of the British Raj.

I’ve spent so much time abroad that I’ve almost forgotten what it means to be British.

Come to think of it, maybe I’ve never known.

So I wander the streets in search of my heritage, flitting from greasy spoons to pie & mash shops, from north to east and back again.

Maybe I’m looking in the wrong places, maybe I’m not.

Perhaps one day I’ll find it, at the bottom of a translucent parcel of chips or in the calcified dregs of my tea.

This is me,
simply trying to find out.

“In an emotionally numbed world,
humanistic portraiture can be a powerful
counteractive tool.”

Right page: London, from the series *Blightly*, 2018 - ongoing

Following spread: Untitled, from the series *Blightly*, 2018 - ongoing





Bill Livingston

Blessed to Breathe: Barclays Center Protest - 5/29/20

Self-taught and still exploring his genre, Bill Livingston looks for the happy accident and fits of cultural expression to capture compelling street images. His photos have been featured in *Black & White Magazine*, *ZEKE*, *F-Stop*, *Dodho*, *Right Hand Pointing* and *Montana Mouthful*. His work has been in several group gallery exhibitions in Los Angeles and a group show at the Bethel Woods Center for the Arts, New York. The series featured here won a silver medal at Prix De La Photographie Paris 2020. A member of the American Society of Media Photographers, the International Center of Photography and the Social Documentary Network, Bill's influences include Diane Arbus, Henri Cartier-Bresson, Mary Ellen Mark, Vivian Maier, Richard Sandler, Garry Winogrand and Bruce Gilden, to name a few. Originally from Altoona, Pennsylvania, he now resides in Brooklyn, New York with his wife and twin daughters.

All images © Bill Livingston, from the series *Blessed to Breathe: Barclays Center Protest - 5/29/20*





When George Floyd's life was unnecessarily and brutally snuffed out by Minneapolis law enforcement on May 25, it was yet another final straw...and that straw was set ablaze around the globe. Four days later, I joined public protests in Manhattan and later, in Brooklyn, four blocks from home. I arrived at the Barclays Center early, raised my fist, my voice and my lens while the proceedings were relatively peaceful. On this warm spring day, a beautiful melting pot of humanity stood in unity against the virus of racial injustice. Even though most participants wore masks to protect themselves from COVID-19, their souls shone brightly through their eyes and furrowed brows. I couldn't help but capture these images and present them in black and white as a tribute to the great photographers and social justice warriors of the past.

Every day since then, Americans of all races, generations, cultural and socio-economic backgrounds have taken to the streets to make their demands known, to fight for justice, even to fight against justice—peacefully and otherwise. Even though Joe Biden will be sworn in as President of the United States on January 20, systemic racism won't be vanishing anytime soon. Change is happening, but all too slowly.

More unarmed African Americans will be killed by police, more screams will pierce the skies and the protests will multiply. Perspectives from both sides should be represented responsibly. It's been happening for months and it's happening now—Seattle, Washington, Portland, Oregon, Kenosha, Wisconsin, Rochester, New York and Louisville, Kentucky. As long as injustice exists and people take to the streets, I intend to continue this work—to capture the pain of loss, the anger of betrayal and the reality of the moment. I want to shine a light on what the future could hold and the work that needs to be done.

If there's one recurring theme in my work, it's humanity or the human condition captured candidly, on the fly and under the radar. There's not a lot of thought that goes into street photography. You pick a location, put in the footwork, stalk an unsuspecting subject, sit and wait with your lens pointed up and fire away, hoping to strike visual gold. There's no time to worry about manual camera settings. Automatic programming, superior autofocus, and low-light capabilities have revolutionized the street photography game and I'm taking full advantage of every digital innovation at my disposal. Still, I greatly admire the hardy legions who are keeping the analog film tradition alive.





With each image I deem presentable, I want to instill a sense of wonder and a certain emotion based on the subject matter. I want to elicit questions. Where was this shot? What was she thinking? What was he shouting about? What's the story? Can I see more? The best examples of photojournalism--the Pulitzer Prize winners--usually tell the whole story with no need for the printed word. Though I enjoy having the freedom to choose my own assignments and take as long as I need to shoot, edit and present a series of photographs that tell a story, I'd love to land a job with a news outlet that dispatches me to the action, while still giving me freedom to shoot and edit in my style.

In previous years, my focus has been events, landscapes, travel and the mystery of abandoned places. I didn't fully embrace the art of street photography until the Vivian Maier phenomenon broke. She had such an in-your-face style and the courage of a lion. A lot of street photography takes a certain amount of bravery. It could also be a matter of employing a spy-like stealth to get the perfect shot. You have to ask yourself, "Do I want eye contact?" or "Will the subject strike an unnatural pose when they see the lens?" I'm starting to adopt that in-your-face approach to the shot. Another one of my influences, Bruce Gilden, has perfected this--using a flash, no less, mere inches from the unsuspecting, often startled, soul. Shoot first, answer questions later.

As an introvert, invading one's space and getting in their face does not come easily. I've been screamed at here and there, but I have yet to be chased or assaulted. If that ever happens, I truly hope it's worth it.

I shot film throughout the nineties and early aughts. I usually carried two identical cameras--one for color and one for black & white. About 17 years ago, after shooting wildlife through the morning mist on a New Hampshire lake, I had an embarrassing accident climbing out of a canoe. I slipped on the dock and fell right on my fairly new Nikon rig, causing irreparable damage to both the body and lens. This was a huge factor on my embracing the digital format. After shooting for several years with a Canon S90, I graduated to a Nikon D7100 SLR with one lens, the 18-140mm. This has been my go-to for events and happenings that don't require stealth and speed, such as parades, street fairs, political rallies and marches. I also use a Ricoh GR11, but my favorite stealth cam that goes with me everywhere is the amazing Sony RX100-V. It's small, quick, provides outstanding resolution and features a viewing screen I can flip up and focus on the subject while looking down, as Vivian Maier did with her Rolleiflex. Most of the images in this series were taken with my Nikon rig. During a loud public demonstration, there's no real need to shoot incognito.



Before post processing, I go through my camera roll and eliminate the obvious--blurred, obstructed or out-of-frame subjects. I still keep way too many bad images on the SD card before I download them onto my MacBook Pro, usually worrying about them later and perhaps finding a nugget of something worth keeping that I didn't find in the initial edit. I'm somewhat of a digital hoarder. I keep everything I've ever downloaded. This necessitates moving thousands of image files at a time to external hard drives, so my computer can function at normal speed again. Six years ago, I discovered the brilliance of Adobe Lightroom and have been using it ever since. It's the perfect tool for black & white conversion, sky darkening, contrast adjustments and sharpening. Then I use Photoshop to convert images to grayscale, re-size and process in batches to make consistent submission packages for contests and publications.

**“Everyone’s story
deserves to be told.”**

My current creative process is fairly simple. I follow NYC Protest Updates 2020 on Twitter to get a sense of where marches and rallies are happening in the five boroughs and usually attend the one that might draw the largest crowd. I've never been a studio shooter. I'm all about getting out there, on location with natural light (preferably a very low sun), employing fill flash in certain situations. I try to take a photojournalistic approach to the subject matter in the moment and attempt to bring in an aesthetic, timeless style during the editing process. I could take several weeks to process an event and make it suitable to share on whichever platform I choose. I'm incredibly fastidious with what I present and how I present it. I want the viewer to appreciate the artistic value while understanding the full story. While I've been shooting protests and rallies mostly around New York City, one of my favorite projects is currently in

the editing process. It's a documentary series of celebrations in Brooklyn after the media declared Joe Biden the winner of the 2020 US Presidential Election—a stark contrast to the pain and anger of the protests.

I'm currently in the process of applying for a Guggenheim Fellowship, despite it being a longshot. I don't have any books published, I'm not an educator and I've never worked for a news outlet. I'm vying for the financial backing and creative support to visit other parts of the country, maybe even the world, and continue this work while gathering perspectives from all sides. It's impossible not to have personal political opinions, but as a storyteller, I commit to approaching my subjects with a photojournalist's neutral, unbiased eye. Everyone's story deserves to be told.





Mikkel Hørlyck

Jørgen, a Mystery

Mikkel Hørlyck (b. 1990), is a freelance photojournalist based in Copenhagen, Denmark focusing on projects about social injustice, personal stories, global issues and spirituality.

He is currently studying photojournalism at the Danish School of Media and Journalism. Previously, he has worked as a photojournalist intern at the Danish daily newspaper *Politiken* and studied at Fatamorgana, The Danish School of Art Photography.

Mikkel is the recipient of Discovery of The Year at The Lucie Awards 2019. His work has received honours and awards from Danish Picture of The Year, Vilnius Photo Circle and LensCulture.

He has had exhibitions and screenings in Denmark and abroad.

All images © Mikkel Hørlyck, from the series *Jørgen, a Mystery*, 2016 - ongoing





Photography is a way to open myself for those being photographed, express their feelings and have their story told. I find that task very important and honorable. It is my job to do it in a way, so people can open themselves to the story and learn from it. I am focusing on projects about social injustice, personal stories, global issues and spirituality. My wish is that photography be an instrument to help creating stronger bonds between us.

Photography is also a way for me to investigate and interact with our world. It is constantly bringing me new insights in life and I am grateful for that. Right now, I am finishing my studies in photojournalism at the Danish School of Media and Journalism and finishing a story about a family who lost a near relative to Covid-19.



Jørgen, a Mystery

- An ongoing project from 2016 - now

Jørgen and I met by accident in the streets of Aarhus, in February 2016. He invited me to his home, I started photographing him and we became friends right away. My aim with the project is to experience Jørgen's ability to survive against all odds, his complex personality and his love and curiosity for his relatives and life.

When considering his age, countless diseases and 40 years of drug abuse, Jørgen Pedersen should have been dead long ago. He has played his part on the drug scene of Aarhus since he moved there as a teenager and was first intrigued by the rush of heroin. Jørgen (60) refers to his own life as a "heavenly hell". On heroin you are in heaven, without it, in hell.

The constant hunt for cocaine and heroin controls Jørgen's everyday life. Nevertheless, he survives. "I've always been good at dosing the drugs, eating regularly, having a social life and maintaining a daily routine."

Every day, Jørgen visits the heroin clinic in Aarhus. There, he receives two daily heroin fixes as well as aid in health and practical matters, just like 19 other heroin addicts in Aarhus. The staff at the heroin clinic hopes to be able to give the visitors the energy and motivation to become clean. But for Jørgen, the game is over. "I've tried rehab several times but keep falling into temptation," he says.





“When I was young, I was quite shy. Drugs and alcohol helped me let go so I could be who I really was. I was never abused, unlike many others on the drug scene. My childhood was happy and safe. I was never meant to be hooked on heroin. But my brother and I have always had an interest in money and life in the fast lane,” Jørgen says.

Six years ago, Inger (86), Jørgen’s mother, lost her middle son, Ole, to a liver disease. He too was a drug addict and he was the brother and best friend of Jørgen. Ole, was a smart guy, who finished his theology degree while he and Jørgen sold a lot of heroin and made big bucks in the

1980s. Since his brother passed away, Jørgen has thought of himself as “a lonely cowboy”.

Inger, Jørgen’s mother, is the most important person to him. Jørgen used to visit Inger every Sunday in his childhood home. But now it is only once or twice a month. Both Inger’s and Jørgen’s health conditions have simply put a stop to the frequent get-togethers. “I can’t stand the thought of my mother passing away. I can’t take it,” Jørgen says. But the thought of his mother being at risk of losing another son is just as terrible. Therefore, Jørgen is determined to do everything in his power to stay alive and be there for Inger till the end.



“Photography is a way to open myself for those being photographed, express their feelings and have their story told.”



Maria Dupovkina

Empathetic Photography

Maria Dupovkina is an independent visual artist and sociologist from Ivanovo, Russia, currently based in Moscow. She is a student of the Academy of Documentary Photography and Photojournalism Fotografika and an official photographer of the Andrei Tarkovsky International Film Festival «Zerkalo». Maria works with documentary photography, art photography and video. She prefers working with themes of family, self-determination, humanity and social interactions, gently explores this sensitive topics using her sociological education. Maria's projects have been awarded various international competitions (in particular, the Julia Margaret Cameron Award, LensCulture Visual Storytelling Awards, Riga Photomonth) and were exhibited in Russia, Portugal, France and other countries, as well as in the framework of exhibitions of online galleries (L.A. Photo Curator: Global Photography Awards, Wall-online and other). In the fall of 2020, the first Maria's solo cross-media exhibition took place in St. Petersburg, Russia.

All images © Maria Dupovkina



“If the word gender was clear, so many lost people just like me would not wander alone, and would have never been ignored for so long.”

All my projects are reflections of my curiosity towards the world and people. The thing that affects my works the most is my own condition. Many years ago, I started a project about my nephews and my family (*The Flow*). It was published, participated in competitions and was warmly received in Russia, but the main driving force behind my work was pain. Photography was a way to get through this pain. And when I gradually managed to make my life happier and less dramatic, it was very difficult to learn how to find new resources for creativity. I was scared that I would not be able to create anything as strong and valuable in a state of happiness and peace. Because of this, I did not shoot any projects for several years, but then I was still able to return. Since then, I have been working on the topics of self-identification, social problems and interactions, the role of the family in the socialization of a person. These projects often touch upon sad aspects of our lives, but I try to view them in terms of caring, empathy, growth and healing.

I strive to ensure that photography is not just beautiful, but helps change something, even if it is not something global, but at least a small step in the development of sympathy for other people or support and inspiration for someone who needs it. With my projects, I try to shine a light on complex topics, helping to form an environment

in which it will be easier to comprehend them. Project ideas come up before starting to work on the project itself. Sometimes they come from my personal life experience, sometimes from observations. Sometimes, something will accidentally appear while working on a project that prompts me to think about something completely different. I think about it for a long time, nurture these ideas, and when I feel that they have matured inside me, I usually shoot pretty quickly.

For many years, my main reference point in photography has been Lyalya Kuznetsova, not only because of her photos, but because of her personality and the will to be an independent photographer at a time when the system did not allow women to insist on their vision. I am influenced by the work of various photographers (classic and new ones), painters and filmmakers, but I try to avoid intentional imitations. I simply accumulate the feeling of something beautiful, close to me at some point in my life. Much more direct influence on my photos is exerted by visual impressions from some new activity that I constantly include in my life. It can be traveling, strange acquaintances, learning labor specialties, be it ceramics, composing flower arrangements, working on a movie backstage or volunteering in a center for social rehabilitation of difficult teenagers.

Left page, top left: Chrysallis, from the series *The Flow*, 2010-2019

Left page, bottom left: Liza, from the series *The Flow*, 2010-2019

Left page, top right: Grandpa, from the series *The Flow*, 2010-2019

Left page, bottom right: Velimir, from the series *The Flow*, 2010-2019



The choice of equipment for my work varies every time. Sometimes it is more convenient for me to shoot with film cameras, sometimes with digital. I currently work more often with a digital camera. As for post-processing, I like it simple, natural colors or a fairly contrasting black and white. I often try new techniques and approaches, but these experiments do not appear very often in my projects.

My main tactic is to be an attentive and tactful spectator, patient almost like wildlife photographers - to wait long enough so my presence and influence do not feel too strong. I wish I wasn't an influence at all, but I don't believe it is possible. My second main rule is to make sure that my photographs and texts do not harm those whom I photograph. Themes of gender, domestic violence, post-trauma are very difficult to perceive in public spaces in my country. People have a lot of taboos and problems, and not always enough awareness. This sometimes makes them react with aggression. So when publishing my pictures, I almost always have to think very carefully - will this cause problems for the participants of my projects? Will they receive unpleasant or angry comments afterwards? Will they be safe? But, probably, a photographer should be ready for this if he or she decides to speak on complex sensitive topics. So the main

things for me are care and naturalness. This also applies to light - if I have the opportunity to choose whether to use artificial or natural light, I always choose natural.

I am currently working on my graduation project at the Fotografika Academy, about the Kazantip festival (project *On the Rave's Grave*). In parallel, I am working on a long-term project about the post-trauma of domestic violence. Fortunately, the seriousness of the problem of domestic violence began to be recognized (although the legislation in my country still does not protect victims from this terrible disaster). Even after leaving the relationship with the abuser, a person has to cope with the consequences of the trauma experienced, and this is terribly difficult, especially in the culture of victim-blaming and general silence (I say "person" because violence has no gender). Sometimes a person has to cope with the lack of housing, livelihood, ruined health, psychological problems in parallel, sometimes having several minor children and without any help from friends and relatives (all of the above can be the result of economic, physical, sexual violence, which often all happen together when it comes to violence in a long-term relationship). I think this project is very important, but it is difficult to work on it, so I move slowly and gently with the characters, their stories and myself.



Right page: Veta and Vova, from the series *The Flow*, 2010-2019

Following spread, left page: Mother, from the series *I Can't Find the Right Word*, 2016

Following spread, right page: Sister, from the series *I Can't Find the Right Word*, 2016



My mother refused to come to my place. She cannot accept me for who I am, but still loves me.



I have four sisters. Five daughters in my family —four girlish girls and me. This is my younger sister. She is feminine and beautiful.

I Can't Find the Right Word

The world that surrounds me and my family do not provide many opportunities to understand one's sexual identity. Moreover, this question leaves everybody perplexed. What does it mean to understand your sexual identity? Even a child knows the difference between a boy and a girl (a smile). But

as time goes by, their parents' smiles are replaced by a nervous giggle. The problem becomes obvious, but remains unclear. I came across the word 'gender' in university, having already given the matter a lot of thought: "I'll always be alone, I'm a weird creature"; "I'm a lesbian"; "This man wants to take me as I am, but I don't care, I'm lost and I don't want this life, so let him take it".



It's me. It's all me. All this and so much more. But I do not have the right word. On the one hand, this is freedom, but on the other, I don't belong to any community or group. I'm lost.



Each man I've chosen is not quite a man. All of them have a lot of female traits. They have a hazy desire to be with someone masculine. Some of them tried to have relationships with men, some of them didn't. But all of them are attracted to my masculine features no less than a woman's body.



I am pleased to be with girls. I understand that I am attracted to their softness and care. For me, it is a kind of shelter. But I understand that this is not the choice of my nature.



I am a single mom, so I have to be both - mother and father. And in this case, my duality is a good thing. Sometimes I can better act as a dad than as a mom.

After several years of marriage to an abuser, after the hell I went through, after I gave birth to my son, I managed to escape with great loss.

Even now, having read countless studies, essays and information about sexual and gender identification, I haven't found my place yet. The strict system in my mind formed by my family and the society

confuses me. But just by being in search of the right words and understanding, I have already found my peace—me, it's me. Not a lesbian. Not a heterosexual woman. Not hating my woman's body, and not eager to be a man. It was very hard. If the word gender was clear, so many lost people just like me would not wander alone, and would have never been ignored for so long.

Above, left: Lost, from the series *I Can't Find the Right Word*, 2016
 Above, right: Beloved, from the series *I Can't Find the Right Word*, 2016
 Right page, left: Lover, from the series *I Can't Find the Right Word*, 2016
 Right page, right: Son, from the series *I Can't Find the Right Word*, 2016
 Following spread, left page: Woman, from the series *I Can't Find the Right Word*, 2016
 Following spread, right page: Boy, from the series *I Can't Find the Right Word*, 2016



"You're such a beautiful girl! Why are you doing this? Why are you usually dressed so ugly? Why don't you use make-up? You're a girl!"—everyone, always. I love this role, I like to play. And it's certainly a part of me. But only a part.



The part of me that I'm trying to live with, which is very difficult to understand. I'm just at the beginning. I'm not a tomboy. I'm not a fellow, but I'm not entirely a grown-up man.



Anna Lazareva

Metaphysical Body Landscapes

Anna Lazareva is an influential visual artist working in Art and Fashion photography. Her projects are focused on finding new innovative styles both shooting and post processing. Her work has been rewarded and been exhibited internationally in many countries around the world, she has won a number of famous photo contests. She is a Creator of photo magazine *FotoSlovo*, which promotes every year new emerging talents in photography from Russia & CIS counties. She lives and works mostly between Moscow and Paris.



All images © [Anna Lazareva](#), from the series *Metaphysical Body Landscapes*, 2018 - 2020

Metaphysical Body Landscapes

My childhood was spent at my grandmother's house in Romania, near the Carpathian Mountains. Seeing people's strong bond with earth, observing nature and the landscapes around me influenced my understanding of the earth's beauty and our connection with it. Life is something whole, indivisible. Earth, sky, plants, fruits, mountains, rivers, men, women, day, night – all merge together and flow into each other. This process is infinite and harmonious. We came from the earth, live on the earth and will return to the earth. And landscapes of the earth can be seen in the curves of our bodies. Growing up, I moved to live in big cities, my grandmother passed away and I felt my spiritual connection with nature slipping away. In order to reconnect, I started to search for those Romanian landscapes in our bodies.

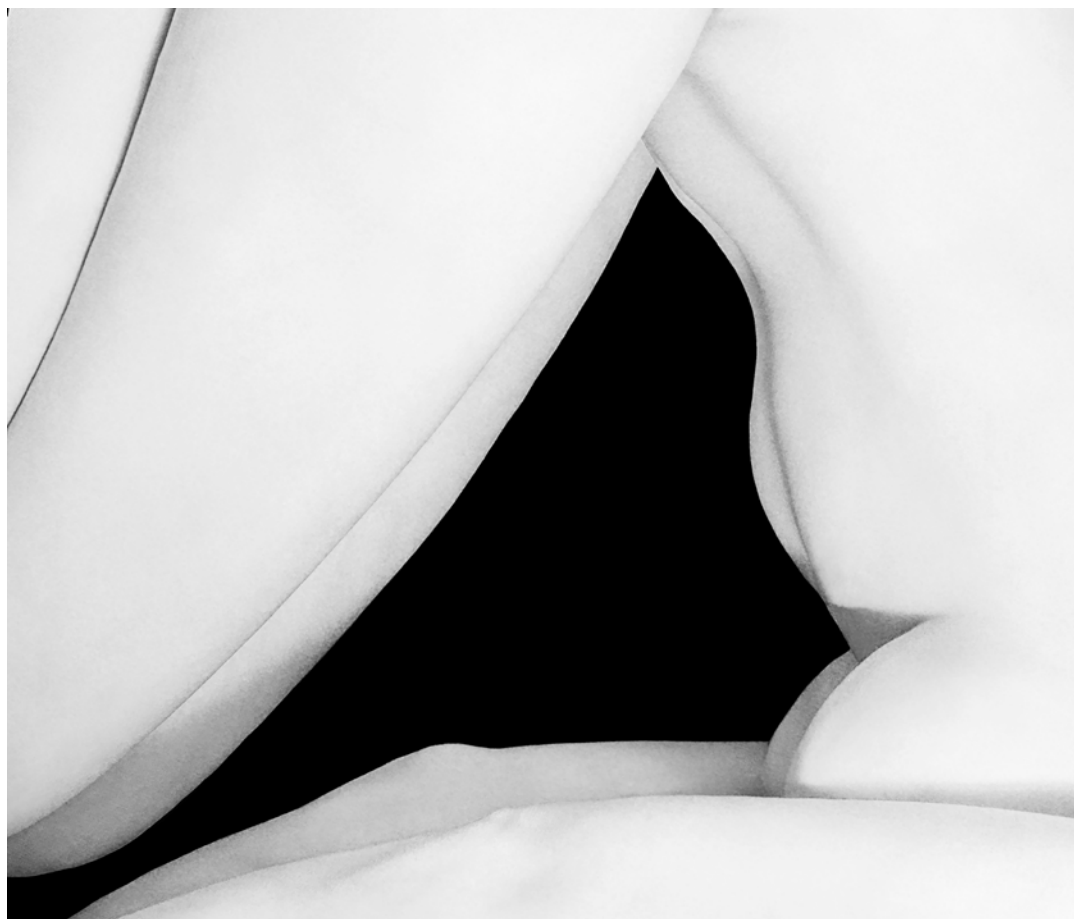
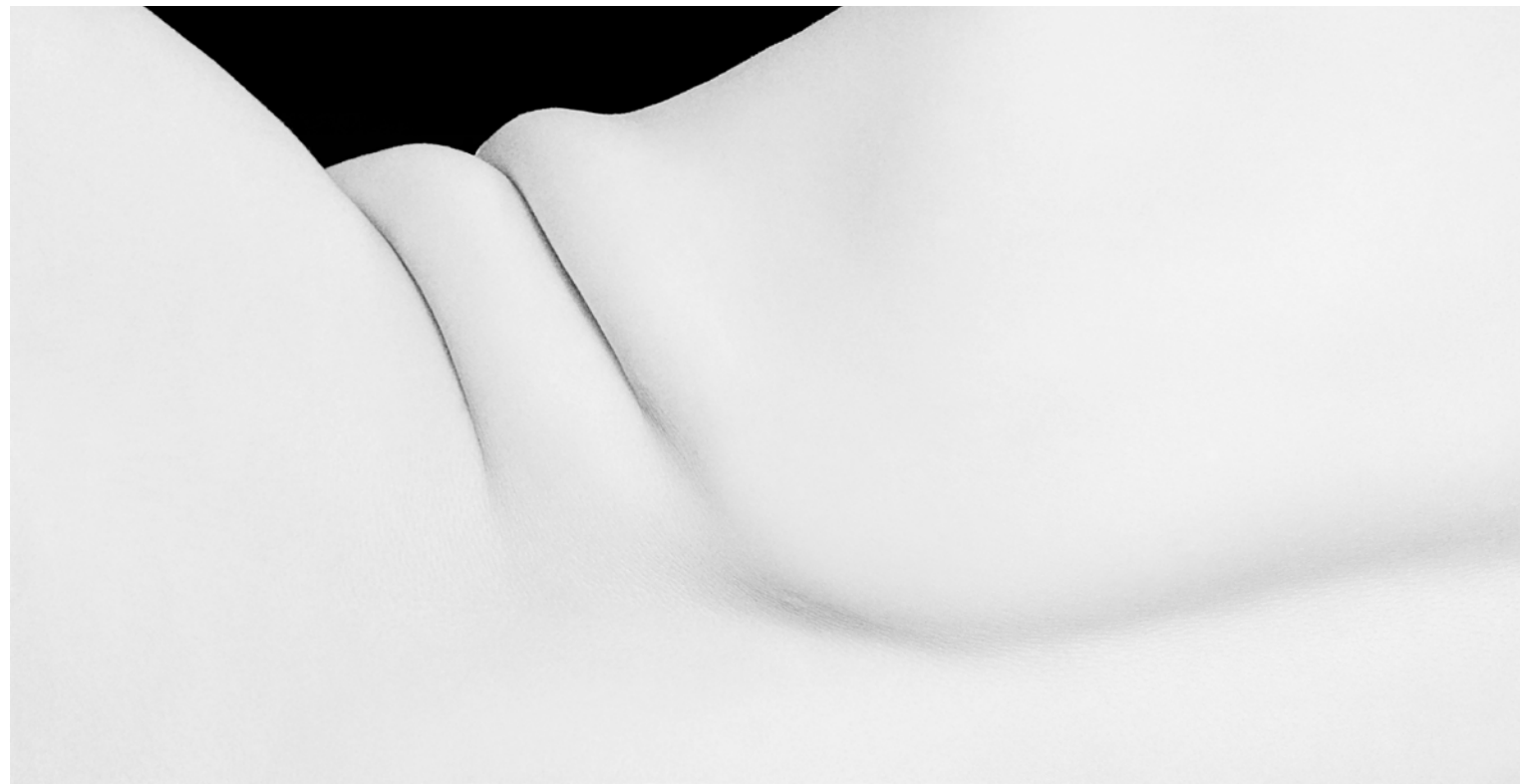
In my project *Metaphysical Body Landscapes*, I was thinking about the connection between the body and landscapes. The term “metaphysical” here means what cannot be seen at first sight, what is beyond the first impression, what is

hidden in the imagination. I was photographing bodies with the idea of going beyond the reality and allowing myself to connect them to the landscapes scenes that have stuck in my mind since I was a child.

My goal was to take images from my mind to the world and challenge myself with this task. The photographs show both immortality and fragility, and both the human body and earth landscapes should be treated with care. I would love for my landscapes to find a home in people's houses. An inspiration for me was my grandmother, who worked all her life in a hospital. During my childhood, she would tell me that some particular edge of a mountain looked like a woman's neck and I would see it too. That way, I learned to view the world through a wider angle, having in mind the versatility of an object. My grandmother influenced me in a certain way and inspired me to look far beyond the simple things. Other sources of inspiration are Ansel Adams' photography and Edward Hopper's painting, due to the atmosphere and that anonymous, transitory environment that you can feel in their work.







During photo shoots, I came to the conclusion that the concepts of this series best suited young women with pale skin. The female body symbolises fragility and at the same time strength of nature.

I was searching for thin models, specific angles also helped reinforce an angularity that I sought. As a perfectionist, I tried to do things better and had doubts during my experiments. It was not easy to reach the contrast I wanted while retaining all the details and texture of the skin. Through my photo shoots, I experimented with different lighting schemes, different lenses and post-processing techniques.

My goal was to keep all the details of the human body while playing on the edge of maximum contrast possible. Finally, I managed to create light schemes to reach the goals I wished. And

then after came experiments with prints.

The camera I used for the project was a Canon 7D, with a 50mm lens. I also used a tripod as I was shooting closeups in a dark room. All the other technical secrets, I would like to keep for my next series. I saw my body of work in monochrome as it represents eternity and the imperishability of landscapes. Hundreds of years passed by, but these shapes remain the same. And very slowly, they transform into another shape of body. This process is never-ending. Making this project come to life taught me to stay truthful to my goals. I learned how to interact with other people. And most importantly, to challenge myself in doing different things, pushing myself to go deeper and think wider.

Currently, I am working on another series, also mystical, but in colour this time.

**“I saw my body of work in monochrome
as it represents eternity and the
imperishability of landscapes.”**





Angelika Kollin

Search for Intimacy

Angelika Kollin is a 44 year old Estonian photographer currently based in Tampa, Florida. She is self-taught and engages with her passion for photography and art as a tool of exploration of interhuman connections, intimacy, and/or the absence of such. Angelika has spent the last 8 years living in African countries (Ghana, Namibia, South Africa), where she explored the same topic in a variety of different cultures and economic conditions. More and more it strengthens her belief that despite many circumstances in life, the one thing that shapes us the most is our relationship with our parents. Through intense artistic evolution, she has arrived at her current project *You Are My Mother/Father*.

Angelika has won numerous awards including 1st Place Single Image LensCulture Journey 2020 and 1st Place Fine art nudes category at the International photography Award 2020. She was a finalist at the Lucie Foundation Open Call 2020 and the PHmuseum 2020 Mobile Prize. *Hold Me 'Till I Go* is the series of portraits of the 75 year Katinka Hall, who has been diagnosed with cancer in progressed form and undergoes chemo treatments. Due to her age, Katinka had to accept and surrender to the possibility of not recovering and facing the most difficult journey one can encounter on.



All images © Angelika Kollin

Right page: Untitled, from the series *You Are My Father*, 2020
Following spread: Untitled, from the series *You Are My Mother*, 2020





The recurrent theme in my work is search for intimacy. I come from a society and family where intimacy was interrupted and not readily available. Only in my later adult years did I come to the realization of this lack in my life and subsequent desire to find and restore it. I consider all my work to be a direct reflection on my inner journey, my suffering, and so one can safely call it autobiographical. With each of my models without exceptions, I build deep connections and explore aspects of myself that I struggle to recognize or to reintegrate. My main focus, if I can call it so, is to express my search and longing for human connection. You can call it love, love in a broader aspect. Universal love, love for life. The one way I discovered I can manage it, is by being fully there for my models, fully acknowledging and seeing them as human beings, their story, their pain or happiness. I call it SEEING.



Left page, top left: Untitled, from the series *You Are My Mother*, 2020
 Left page, bottom left: Untitled, from the series *You Are My Father*, 2020
 Left page, bottom right: Untitled, from the series *You Are My Mother*, 2020
 Above, top left: Untitled, from the series *You Are My Father*, 2020
 Above, bottom left: Untitled, from the series *You Are My Mother*, 2020
 Above, top right: Untitled, from the series *You Are My Mother*, 2020
 Following spread: Untitled, from the series *You Are My Father*, 2020



I have a very deep connection to nature and get most of my inspirations from either bodies of water or sounds of nature and trees. Outside of nature, I find most of my inspiration either in real people I meet or in the work of my favourite director Andrey Tarkovsky. His movies are poetry, one can watch them again and again, and continue getting creatively inspired and nurtured. I do not allow myself to “prepare” for the shoot, I

want to have an open mind to the widest possible degree. It is undoubtedly scary each time to be so unprepared, and yet as I repeatedly found out, the only way to enter into deeper and broader areas of creativity and expression. I always meditate before my photoshoots and always practice some form of technique of staying acutely present and aware during the creative process. In all honesty, I can call my artistic expression an integral part of my spiritual practice.



Above: Untitled, from the series *You Are My Father*, 2020

Right page: Untitled, from the series *You Are My Mother*, 2020

Following spread, left and right: Untitled, from the series *Hold Me Till I Go*, 2020





I work with Canon 5ds and Sigma Art lens 35mm 99% of the time. It is simple and easy to use. I would like to start experimenting with medium format in the near future. I don't have a preference regarding light, I always trust the circumstances and work with what life presents in front of me. I shoot in natural light only.

My post processing is very simple and quick. I used to be one of these excessive Photoshop people, but I found that for me, less is more. I rarely open Photoshop, a few adjustments (shadows/highlights for mood) I do in Lightroom. I try to

capture the original image as close to my vision as possible.

I moved continents 4 weeks ago, and I am currently in the stage of my life where I decide "Where Next". What calls me the most, and hopefully the world situation will allow it, is to go back to my roots. I would love to travel back to my country of origin, Estonia, and spend a few months mostly in solitude surrounded by nature and deep contemplations. I do not know what this will bring up artistically, but I can hear my soul calling for this experience.

"I can call my artistic expression an integral part of my spiritual practice."



Pepe Pax

The Temptation of Light



© Pepe Pax by Violina
Stamtcheva, 2019

For as long as he can remember, Pepe Pax has always felt fascinated by photography.

In 1974, he began studying photographic techniques at the Fine Arts Section of the École des Arts et Métiers in Luxembourg.

During a year and a half, he got familiar with the field of photography at a photographic studio, before resuming his studies at the Fine Arts Section of the École des Arts et Métiers, from which he graduated in 1977. Thus, in 2014, Pepe Pax became an independent photographer and a freelance graphic designer.

He had a successful career as a graphic designer, art director, as well as a freelance and at various communication agencies for more than three decades, yet he never abandoned his early passion.

Since the autumn of 2015, he has been exhibiting his impressions from Belgium, Bulgaria, Crete, Croatia, Estonia, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, The Netherlands, North Macedonia, Portugal, Scotland, Serbia, Spain, Turkey and Wales.

All images © Pepe Pax





I have been taking photographs since 1969 (since I got my Kodak Instamatic 224 with flashcubes for my 1st communion). When I look at my work since then... What is recurrent? I walk, I drive, I look around. I capture moments, flashes I get from a beautiful or bizarre view, a building, anything I find eye-catching. I like rural, urban, landscapes, seascapes, pictures of good friends, I like the thousands of pictures of my children, I like industry and architecture... I like being

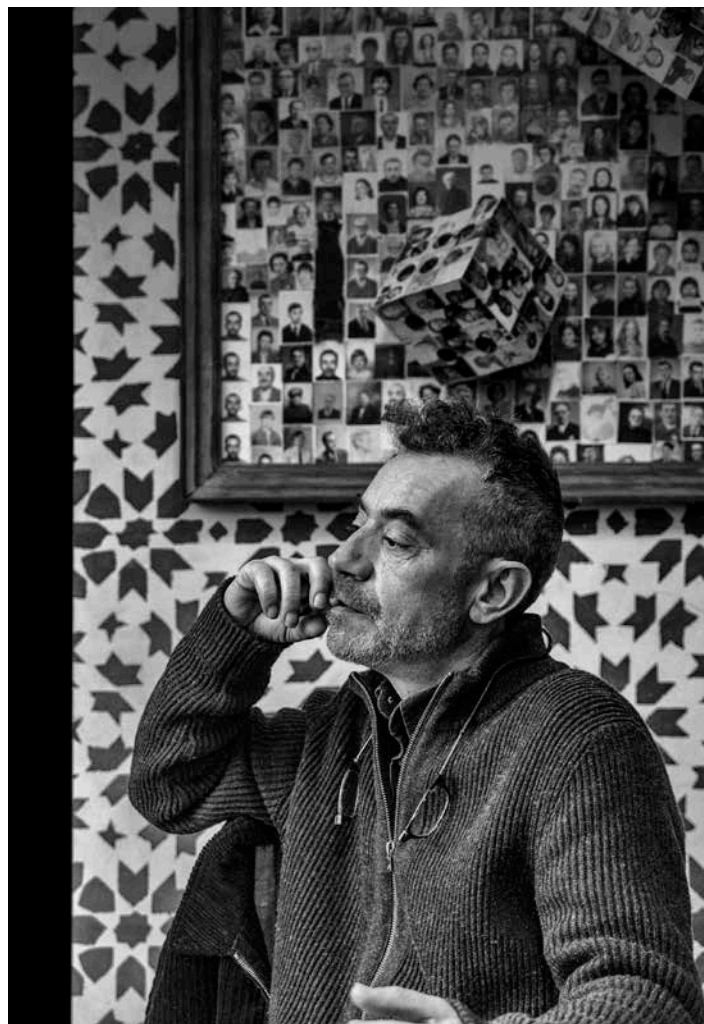
above the clouds, I like the sea. I like Black and White. So, if I like all of that, I am a documentary photographer. The recurrent theme is my life, the encounters with the special in the ordinary things or people, the feeling of fascination they give me when I look at or discover them, mostly by accident. However, this is the “accident” of my eye, trained to observe, to spot and to try to capture it.

I want to photograph things that move me. I am not showing “hidden” things. I am showing real things that catch my attention. I want to show things to people they themselves do not have the time to look at or what is happening around them. My focus is on little details of light or shadows on a face, and strange combinations of elements you would see only from a concise angle, a moment in the flow of movement. For a long time, I photographed somehow

carelessly with disappointing results. But (knowing in the back of my head, that the 1st take is nearly always the best), I started concentrating much more. This, and a lot of discussions with fellow artists about their and my own work, helped me to improve my photographs. And discipline. Never leave your house without a camera, even if it looks or feels cumbersome or hopeless of success. And, most of all, I enjoy it.

Left page, left: Actor Pit Goedert (1955) about Acting, Ardèche, France, 2020
Left page, right: Artist Moritz Ney (1947) about Art, The November Series, La-Roche-en-Ardenne, Belgium, 2020

Above: Actor Germain (1959) with Miissi, Ardèche, France, 2020



When I was 12, I had the 11 volumes of Time-Life Art/Photography Books lying next to my bed. My bedroom was my darkroom and I fell asleep looking at Ansel Adams and Henri Cartier-Bresson. My adolescence smelled of developer, stop bath and fixing bath.

I admire Helmut Newton, Sebastião Salgado, and Antanas Sutkus very much.

Years ago, a friend compared a dramatic landscape of mine to an etching of Dürer, for its sharpness and relief you could almost materially sense. I do not know. I guess looking at art from a photographer's perspective influenced me as well.

To obtain results more suited to my perception, I use classical black-and-white filters (red, orange, polarising and infrared) to approximate my view of lights and contrasts. I process RAW in Bridge and use Photoshop. Being rather purist, I limit post processing to a minimum and just manually dodge and burn like I used to do in the darkroom. This creative process is important to me.

I use a modified Sony Alpha 7rII for infrared with custom-made filters and a Sony Alpha 7rIV for "normal" photography. I only do BW using Voigtländer prime lenses (10, 21, 35, 50 and 65 mm) and a Sony E 4/PZ 18-110 GOSS.



Left page, top left: The Teacher Romain Lambert, Clausen, Luxembourg, 2016

Left page, bottom left: Artist Will Lofy (1937), Grund, Luxembourg, 2018

Left page, top right: Sculptor Ben Goerens (1957) and Geri in Parthenonas; Sithonia, Chalkidiki, Greece, 2020

Left page, bottom right: The Architect Stephane Rueda-Molina (1961), Brussels, Belgium, 2014

Above: Brewmaster Timeon Pax McDowell (1992) about Beer, Tallinn, Estonia, 2020

Following spread: The Lignite-fired Power Stations Neurath I and II, Grevenbroich, North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany, 2020





“I want to photograph things that move
me.”

Left page, top: The Arenfels Castle, Bad Hönningen, Germany, 2020
 Left page, bottom: Bad Godesberg Beach, North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany, 2020
 Above, left: A Walk in Dzhigurovo, Blagoevgrad Province, Bulgaria, 2019
 Above, right: At the Szechenyi Square, Győr, Western Transdanubia, Hungary, 2015



I photograph spontaneously, I move a lot, but also return to the same spot several times, to improve and look for a different view/light.

My view got surely “improved” by my teachers and studies at an art school in the 70ties, in days where art schools were teaching people to “see”. I think I have a gift to catch moments, to discover angles of view and prescind what I feel and see.

I prefer shooting on location with natural light. Trying to be a documentarist, I do not like studio settings or set-up in my photography. That does

not mean I do not enjoy well-crafted pictures of settings (I admire Julia Fullerton-Batten). It is just a personal choice.

I have taken a lot of portraits in the last 45 years that I never showed. Many of them are beautiful and spontaneous. So, I would like to show pictures of my friends, painters, sculptors, artists, actors, people that have my trust, great artists that inspired me and encouraged me all my life. During the last 5 years, I have been working on a project that I call *The Temptation of Light*, which, as the name implies, will probably never finish.

Left page: Late Zeb and the Taurus, Leffrincoque; Département du Nord, France, 2016
Above: No Paragliding in Leffrincoque, Département du Nord, France, 2016

Cathy Cone

Rewinding Forward



Cathy Cone is a photographer and painter. Cathy, together with her husband master printer Jon Cone, founded Cone Editions Press in 1980, in Port Chester, NY, as a collaborative printmaking workshop. Cone Editions is now located in East Topsham, Vermont where Cathy is director of the Workshops and Studio.

Cathy received her training at Ohio University, Vermont Studio Center and the Maine Media Photographic Workshops. She received her MFA at the Maine Media College. She was awarded the Vermont Art Fellowships. Some of her exhibitions include Weisman Art Museum, University of Alabama, DeCordova Museum, and The Vermont Center for Photography. Her works are in the collection of IBM, MCI, Hallmark Fine Art Collections, American Express and the Beekman, A Thompson Hotel, New York.

All images © Cathy Cone, from the series *Rewinding Forward*, 2017-2020



The recurrent themes in my work that resonate examine identity, memory, spirituality and transformation. The *Rewinding Forward* series is a dialectic between grief and anger, life, death, hope and mourning. I am interested in connecting the inner story through an outward situation. I want to feel the image as the witness. I explore Self -Portraiture as a way to access trauma and psychological states. For me, making

images is a way of creating labyrinths between earth and heaven through my camera.

Ideally, I want to express or enact a transformative moment and fill it with presence. I work obsessively and photography is a guide that is always ahead of me.

For me, the revelatory aspect of photography communicates as an experience similar to

faith. I want the photographs to be visual poems. The long lineages of photographers and painters nourish me. I am also a practicing painter and very much interested in ways mediums cross-pollinate and form new hybrids in contemporary culture. I am partial to the surrealists and abstract expressionists. I love Indian and Persian miniatures, Piero Della Francesca, Sassetta, Alfred Hitchcock and the

list is infinite.

Roy DeCarava's photographs inspired me to become a photographer. William DeKooning made me want to be a painter. Artists who have had a huge influence on my practice are Keith Carter, Cig Harvey, Andrea Modica, Sylvia Plachy, Archie Rand, Norman Bluhm, Lester Johnson, Douglas Beasley, Howard Greenberg and Pradip Malde.





My partner Jon Cone is a master printer and his collaborations have had a profound influence on my work and life. The Piezography process he pioneered has greatly influenced my esthetic choices in Black and White.

The Maine Media College and Workshop community where I received my MFA changed my life and continues to support the things I value most. Poetry is also a springboard in my work. My grandmother who raised me, was instrumental in shaping my creativity with a folklife curiosity.

I work in a variety of ways. The *Rewinding Forward* series was printed using the Piezography method of gradated carbon inks developed by my partner Jon Cone at Cone Editions Press Studio. I try and get the image in camera and do minimal editing. The Piezography method is very sensitive and allows me to express the

breath of an image that is essential. Regarding the gear I use, I have a Sony A7R-IV that I have adapted both vintage and contemporary lenses to. I use an iPhone camera. My black & white work is printed with Piezography® carbon inkjet, platinum print, or photogravure.

Ideas can come from anywhere. I often experience new insights in the making and editing processes. Dreams, long walks, meditating and poetry are some of the ways that lead to inspiration. I work like a DJ does.

I want to expand the physicality of the print through an architecture of layers. My studio is in the same building as Cone Editions Press and I often combine several of the processes that the studio provides for artist to work with. I use platinum print, cyanotype, photogravure, and inkjet. I follow my intuition, or my nose so to speak, and use what is available.

“I take a slice of life through my camera lens in attempt to see what I missed.”





I begin by finding an image in the world. The image emerges and appears as a rather strange, unexpected surprise. This is the evidence that I take back into my studio as “something found”, not unlike collecting specimens. I photograph so I can see what something looks like. I take a slice of life through my camera lens in attempt to see what I missed. I then go to work by responding more directly, in order to rediscover it through a new conscious intention. The finding and constructing of what I understand and know, links up with what I do not know or cannot see. If I am lucky, they meld into a new image that lives on the threshold. I make photographs as a way to listen to my heart’s song, and then I practice like hell to sing it.

Most recently, I have been shooting at night with both artificial and natural light. I do not limit myself and I will often take images back into the studio to process then in different mediums in order to extend my photographic vision.

I have several ongoing projects on my website. I am currently collaborating with an artist on several book projects. I will be presenting my own book at the Chico Springs Review in October 2021. I will also be having a solo show in 2022 of my painted photographs.





Patricia Scialo

What We Cannot See

Originally from Long Island, New York, Patricia Scialo currently lives on the North Shore of Massachusetts. She has been practicing in the field of fine art photography since 1979. Her work is influenced by her experience of living and working at Peters Valley Craft Center in New Jersey early in her photographic career. Being a part of this craft community challenged Patricia to experiment with historic and alternative processes. In 1981 and 1982, Patricia received fellowships from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts and the New York Foundation on the Arts in response to her series of palladium prints entitled *Still Life Assemblages*. Validated by these awards and the financial support provided, Patricia was able to follow her passion to pursue a career in photography.

Patricia has exhibited her work in three solo shows mounted by regional art centers and in numerous invitationals. Throughout her career, Patricia has also devoted herself to teaching historic and alternative photographic processes as an artist-in-residence at institutions throughout the East Coast of the United States.

In 2019, Patricia received an honorable mention for her work exhibited in the 12th Julia Margaret Cameron Award in Barcelona, category Alternative Processes. In the 2020, 15th Julia Margaret Cameron Award, professional section, Patricia is the winner in three categories: Abstract; Alternative Processes; and Children, with two additional honorable mentions in Alternative Processes and Women Seen by Women.



© Patricia Scialo by
Eleanor Mason

All images © Patricia Scialo

Left page: No.1, from the series *Bonsai*, 2018

The observation of light is the starting point of my photographic works. I am inspired by the way in which light cast on an object creates shadows and depth, how it highlights, softens, or sometimes diffuses, creating an emotional response. My eye is continually attracted to the transformation that occurs through light while viewing closely through the lens. The subject itself becomes an abstraction as I compose using shape, line and texture. Finding ways to manipulate how light is perceived, I seek to provoke and challenge the viewer, offering them the opportunity to look within, pause, and contemplate the subtleties of what lies beneath.

What We Cannot See describes the undiscovered latent image preserved in light-sensitive material before chemical processing occurs. One of my first discoveries of the latent image occurred when I received my grandfather's old Kodak Brownie camera containing a thirty-year-old roll of film. Processing the film, I brought images to life and discovered untold stories. The rediscovery of untold stories through the lens of

the camera remains central to current ongoing investigations.

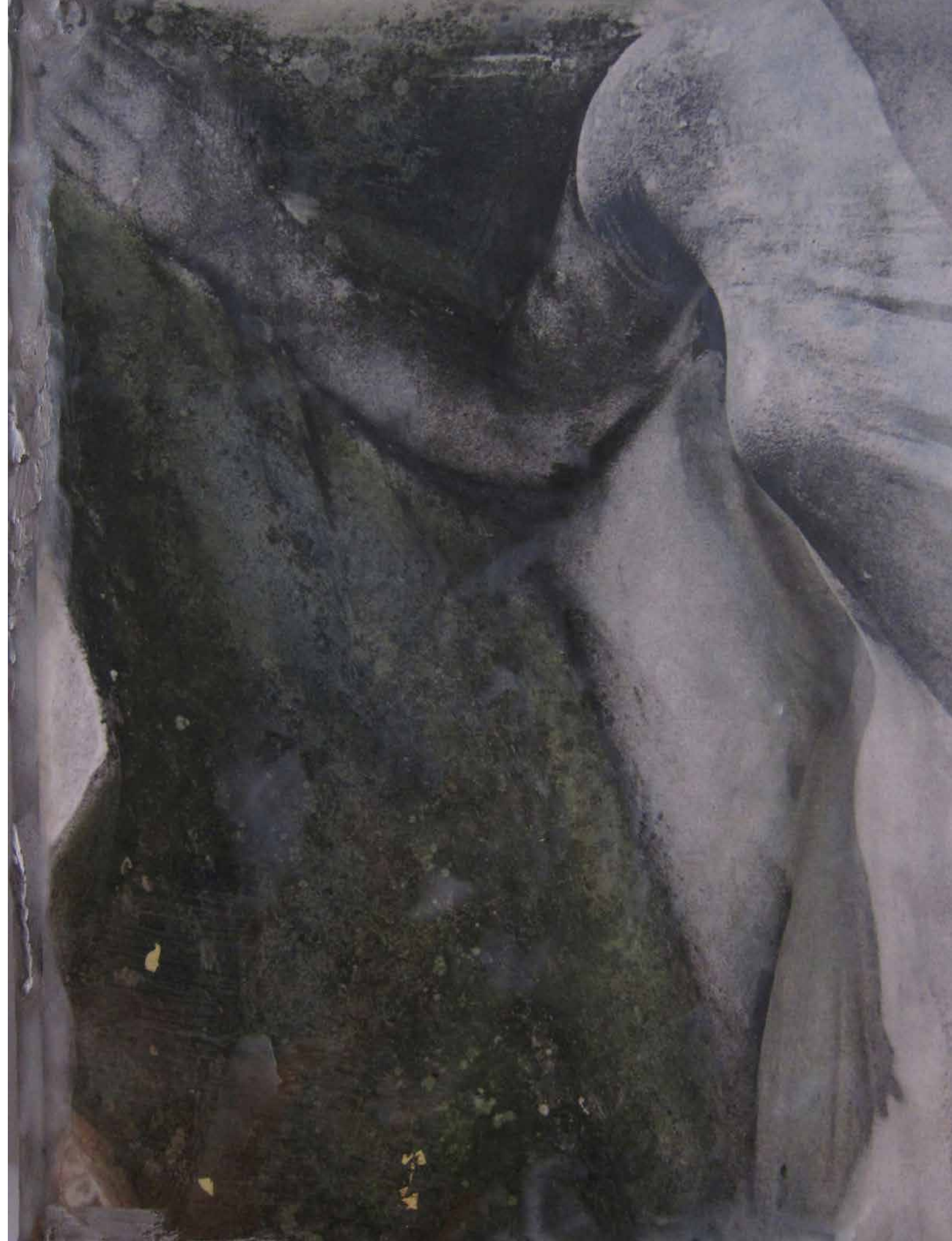
Taking on a mixed-media approach, I produce handmade, one-of-a-kind prints that register experiments with the interaction of material and subject, approaching an interweaving of the two. I photograph primarily in natural light, using 35mm film with a macro lens, 4x5" view cameras, and constructed pinhole cameras. When working in a studio setting, I often use a soft-box for highlights. Since my imagery is film based, any post processing is done in the darkroom. I do very little altering when making enlargements, always printing full frame. After years of practicing the art of hand papermaking, I began to prepare paper for chemical processing, designing each sheet for use with my images. Pulp and fiber as well as embedded elements such as the wing from a dragonfly or a pod from a plant all become part of the composition. The use of hand tinting techniques, oil, and encaustic wax layered over the image add another dimension, lending a sculptural quality to the work.



Right page: Figure, 2018

Following spread, left page: No.1, from the series *Statuary*, Stiges, Catalonia, Spain, 2018

Following spread, right page: No.3, from the series *Statuary*, Stiges, Catalonia, Spain, 2018



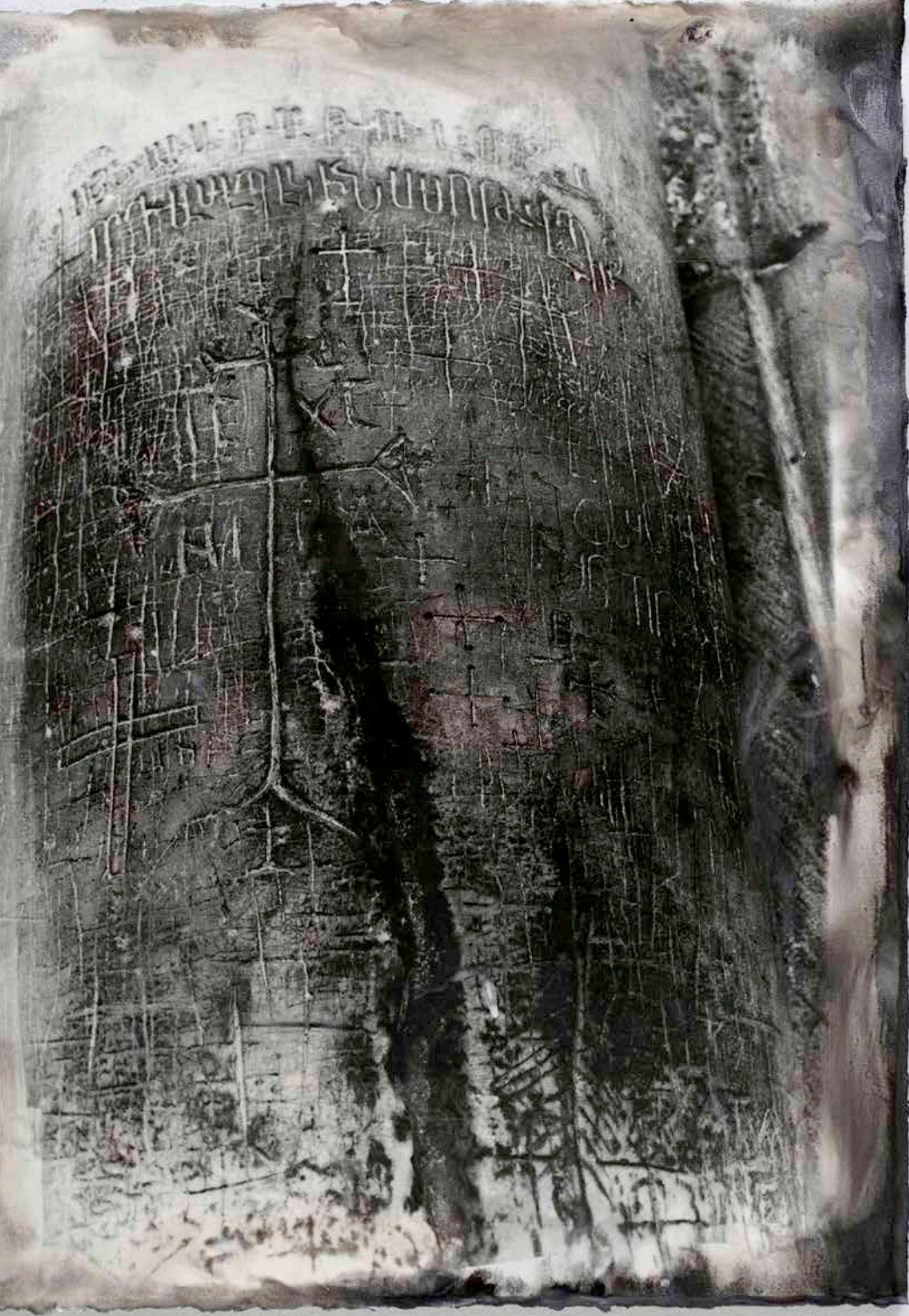


Above: No.1, from the series *What We Cannot See*, 2018
Center: No.2, from the series *What We Cannot See*, 2018



Recurrent themes include unusual forms in nature, the figure, statuary, vintage imagery, and abstract textures and patterns. For example, the series *Markings, Israel*, illustrates unusual symbols found on stone columns with layers of decay formed over centuries. In comparison, I photographed the rough textured surface of tree bark with mysterious carvings that led to a similar series of abstractions. Very often, my figurative work is similar in design to forms found in nature. When I received my first camera, I was instantly inspired to create through the viewfinder, which provided the opportunity to compose imagery spontaneously. Through the camera lens, I minimize my surroundings, narrowing the point of view, and looking closely at the subject to concentrate on design elements such as line and shadow. Early in my career, I was given a 4x5" wooden view camera, the lens of which had no shutter. Thus compelled to work in a low light situation, I started constructing still life images in the studio, using found objects, processing sheets of film and printing using the sun. The resulting series, *Still Life Assemblages*, began a sustained fascination with both still life and alternative processes.

**"I am always seeking
new subjects while
observing light."**



I am continually influenced by early photographers such as Anna Atkins, the first woman photographer known for her botanical cyanotypes, William Henry Fox Talbot's photogenic drawings, and Julia Margaret Cameron's romantic portraits of women.

Other powerful influences include Imogen Cunningham's portraits, Minor White's ethereal images, and the contemporary artists Olivia Parker's still life images and Linda Connor's gold toned sun prints.

Current projects include combining still life with the figure and using found objects and botanical materials that complement each other, uniting form. I am always seeking new subjects while observing light.

Left page: No. 3, from the series *Markings Israel*, 2019
Center: No.1, from the series *Markings Israel*, 2019
Above: No.2, from the series *Markings Israel*, 2019



Above: Bay Window, 2018

Right page: Behind the Drape, 2018





Tash Damjanovic

Finding Calm in a World of Curves

Tash Damjanovic is a fine art photographer whose calm and painterly images explore the curved nature of existence. Her art draws attention to the vulnerability we feel when faced with unforeseen twists and turns of everyday life. Her work explores themes of vulnerability, strength and grace and how they can coexist.

Based in Toronto, Canada, Tash has spent most of her life creating images. After a career in finance and business, while raising her three children with her husband, in recent years she has been able to focus more fully on creating and exhibiting art.

Her work initially focused on delicate, ephemeral and often anthropomorphic curves found in nature. More recently, she has turned to photographing curves in the human body, first working with mannequins and then with humans. This new body of work has been recognized by the 2020 Julia Margaret Cameron Award, as well as the 2020 International Photography Awards. Her work has also been featured in numerous international art fairs, exhibitions and galleries.

Tash is currently working on photographing fellow creatives in the time of COVID. This project is a celebration of those for whom creativity is not just a lifestyle, but an essential tool in maintaining mental health, and even survival.

All images © Tash Damjanovic

Left page: Stay, from the series *Stage*, 2018-2019



I believe that curves are the most spectacular and fundamental attribute of nature – literally, the beautiful shapes found in nature and human figures, and metaphorically, the surprising paths and detours that our lives can often take. While their twists and turns offer a much richer and nuanced experience of life, curves are a symbol of our vulnerabilities and can at times

be quite frustrating. Straight lines often appear to be simpler, quicker, more expedient and often manufactured solutions. I want to find strength and beauty in the spontaneous, embrace the vulnerable and unexpected, so I can live in the calm of life's curvy journeys.

I first came across the work of Hundertwasser and his love of the curved line during my

travels through Europe in my 20's. He believed that we live in a jungle of straight lines, and that it ran counter to nature, and to human nature. As a result, everything he created, whether it be paintings, buildings, windows and floors, embodied curves. I will never forget the feeling of walking on the bumpy floor of Hundertwasserhaus, which he built in Vienna – it

was soothing, as if I were taking a stroll outdoors. I had just graduated from business school, after completing undergraduate degrees in psychology and philosophy, and already felt that my life had been anything but a straight path. Several years later, I finally decided to study the one discipline that had captivated me since teenage days – fine art photography.

Left page, left: Someday, from the series *Stage*, 2018-2019
 Left page, right: Tea & Oranges, from the series *Stage*, 2018-2019
 Above, left: Shadow, from the series *Stage*, 2018-2019
 Above, right: Promise, from the series *Stage*, 2018-2019

I have always wanted to photograph the human figure. However, that journey too has been a winding road. Initially, I photographed shapes in nature that were of fleeting, momentary beauty. Sometimes these shapes resembled human forms and were created by strong forces of nature - wind, water, fire. The most striking aspect of these images is the juxtaposition of fragile, ephemeral, brushstrokes of nature with the powerful forces that make them possible. For example, my series titled *Light* represents images that hint at a female figure and were created by photographing flames, which hold their shapes for fractions of a second.

The series *Windscares* represents a desire to find calm in the midst of a storm. It depicts sailboats racing in the Toronto harbour. Crews are fiercely competing in harsh weather and are exposed to all the elements - cold, fog, wind, yet in the images they look like they are gently gliding across the lake. Their journey is full of unexpected moment to moment adjustments in response to temperamental winds. The scenes appear to take place in spacious, open waters, yet they are set in the harbour of a busy metropolis. Making peace with the unexpected is a daily practice, sometimes one moment, or one image at a time.

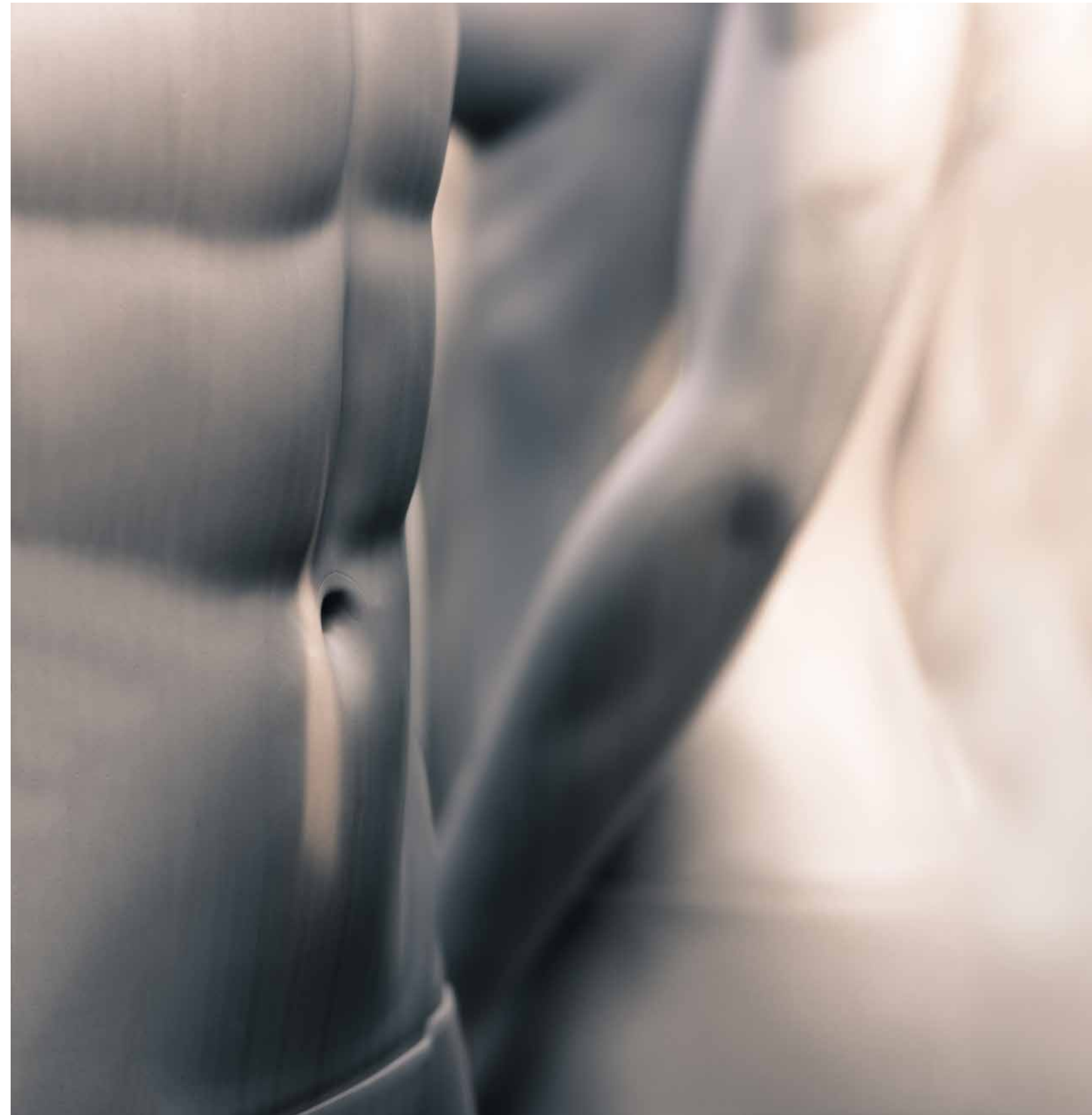
My first series of figurative work, titled *Stage*, was inspired by lifelike but lifeless mannequins, infinitely beautiful and virtually indestructible. These sensual, seemingly fragile mannequin designs are based on live models. They are made of strong material using a sophisticated

manufacturing process. I spent many hours exploring the curves of these manufactured bodies, both in studio and outdoors, and the resulting images look delicate, and entirely human. Through the transformative power of light, perspective and our own imagination, the bodies are infused with emotion, desire and meaning. Our individual and collective experiences often take place on this edge between real & imagined, vulnerable & unbreakable.

During the creation of this series, I became increasingly interested in the idea of indestructible beings. The human body is the most intimate example of our own vulnerability and impermanence. Photographing mannequins became an invitation to explore how I too could become unbreakable, not just physically but psychologically, and spiritually.

My most recent project involves photographing real humans, fellow creatives, in the time of COVID. These are individuals who create in spite of, or because of, the challenging times we live in. As one cultural institution after another cancels shows, performances and entire seasons, they have become among the most vulnerable to the effects of the pandemic – financially, emotionally and physically. There is a parallel pandemic in mental health, alongside of COVID. Finding ways to express creativity seems to be an essential method of survival, a way to draw strength, and a possible doorway to becoming unbreakable.

My work has been influenced by creative spirits across a variety of disciplines, for example Modigliani, Gaudi, O’Keeffe, Steichen, Sarah Moon and Lillian Bassman, to name a few.



Right page: Stage XXI, from the series *Stage*, 2018-2019
Following spread: Surrender I, Surrendering 2019





For the greater part of my life, I have felt that accessing a beautiful and enchanted vision of reality was an indulgence, a privilege, and something I needed to earn the right to. I have discovered that for me it is in fact a necessity, a moment of respite, a source of inspiration and strength to confront the world. It helps me maintain a sense of calm, sanity and hope. Accessing this parallel world that is spectacular, beautiful, serene and eternal is a way of finding meaning and pleasure. Uncovering its mysteries makes life worthwhile and divine.

Visitors to my art exhibits often comment, “I feel like I can finally exhale, relax”. I love hearing that, because that is exactly how I feel when I create. Through my creative process, that energy is stored in the image and transferred to the viewer. In fact, my tag line is “Exhale. Find your Calm”.

If I had to describe my process with one word, it would be: Slow. I sit with my subjects for hours, walking around, seeing them from different perspectives. It is a process of discovery, with all senses turned on and tuned in. I want to learn something about the subject that I don’t already know or that is not visible in a casual glance. I prefer my subjects to be spontaneous rather than scripted, so my preparation is really just a broad sketch of potential options.

I live for those moments of surprise, delight and insight. Sometimes, the people I photograph

also learn something new about themselves. In a recent project, which will be released in 2021, I photographed middle aged and older women who are thriving after battling a life-threatening disease. That is, no doubt, one of the most challenging curves life can throw at us. In the images, their bodies are almost fully bare, delicate, and absolutely beautiful, and their spirits are bright, courageous and powerful. Most of them have never been photographed this way before and told me how much they enjoyed and learned about themselves from the journey we took together.

I shoot with a full frame DSLR camera, usually with manual settings and also manual focus. I prefer shallow depth of field, and I use either natural sunlight or continuous studio light. This combination of manual mode/focus and a spontaneous approach force me to slow down. It can be challenging to shoot this way, especially when capturing people. It requires me to be fully present and react quickly, since small movements in the body or facial expression can radically alter an image. By being in tune with my subject, time stands still, my focus is singular and my imagination completely absorbed. That is how I create the calm that you see in the final image. Most of my creative process is in camera, which makes my post processing relatively simple. I prefer to reduce clutter and distill the image, and thereby create a heightened sense of calm.

Left page, top left: Windscares XXI, from the series *Windscares* 2018-2019

Left page, bottom left: Windscares II, from the series *Windscares* 2018-2019

Left page, top right: Windscares X, from the series *Windscares* 2018-2019

Left page, bottom right: Windscares XXVIII, from the series *Windscares* 2018-2019



“I want to find strength and beauty in the
spontaneous.”

Left page: Windscares XXIV, from the series *Windscares* 2018-2019
Center: Windscares XXV, from the series *Windscares* 2018-2019
Right page: Windscares XXVII, from the series *Windscares* 2018-2019

Damiano Errico

The Convergence of the Arts



Damiano Errico was born in Caserta in 1970, he lives and works as a professional photographer in Italy. He attended the Art Institute of S.Leucio (Caserta), where he met the master of painting Bruno Donzelli, a fundamental meeting for his artistic training. He spent a long period as an assistant in the master's studio, learning the painting techniques. After graduating, he enrolled at the Academy of Fine Arts in Naples, where he studied photography with Mimmo Jodice. The meeting with the master Jodice opens up new artistic and visual horizons: photography. From the first meeting with the master until today, not a day goes by without photography. He periodically exhibits in galleries and museums. Errico has always experienced an inner conflict between painting and photography. In recent years, he has been engaged in a pantheistic vision of photography, where all the arts try to converge, where years of all-round artistic experiences are expressed in an instant. He currently lives in Caiazzo, in a small hilltop village. He runs a b&b to host his students for photography courses and workshops.

All images © Damiano Errico





I was a painter, my photography comes from my artistic studies, inspired by the great masters of art. The concepts I am looking for are the relationship between Sacred and Profane, between Torment and Ecstasy. I find wonderful photography that unites matter with the soul.

As a child, I always drew, at 14 I painted. At the age of 20, I started taking pictures. I understood that pencils, brushes, colors, cameras are just objects. They are tools, like a translator, they shape our thoughts, our intellect.

My photographs already exist in my mind. When I look at a sculpture, or a painting, I start to travel with the imagination, and I can already see my photo. I just have to take it. I believe that the most complex work lies in our mind, the shot of the photo is the final part, it is the synthesis of our whole culture. When I take a photograph, all the works of art that I have studied, and that I have observed, are available to inspire me. My project is not to copy a work of art, but to add my own personal and modern style.

My most important job is to study, observe

and finally make photography. My whole studio is preserved in my mind: I have been a photographer for 30 years, my last photograph contains 30 years of studies.

I study all periods of art history, from glorious ancient Greece to contemporary arts. But some art movements and some artists have influenced my work. Greek art, in particular Hellenism, contributed to the search for perfection through the canons of beauty, the Renaissance and Michelangelo for Neoplatonic concepts, and Caravaggio for his dramatic realism. A. Canova also influences me for his return to classical canons. The “Pre-Raphaelites” were also important for my research: the return to the past with the magical atmospheres of Gothic and Greek / Roman myths.

It is evident that painters and sculptors inspire me. But photography also has masters who inspire me. I was lucky because I was a pupil of Mimmo Jodice, a great master from Naples. With him, I appreciated the classical statues. Other masters who inspired me are: David Hamilton, Robert Mapplethorpe, Jeanloup Sieff, Herbert list.

“My most important job is to study, observe and finally make photography.”

Above: Virgen Macarena, 2020
Center: Ragazza Con Drappo Rosso, 2020
Following spread: Amanti, 2019



I think the shot is very important for a photo, about 80% of the overall work. But post-production is also important. I work with Camera Raw, then Photoshop. Sometimes, I also add texture to the file to create a painterly effect. I will explain how I work: I bring the file into Raw Camera, add a little desaturation and bring the warmest color temperature. Finally, I add a file / texture. I create a double layer, then with the eraser I delete some parts of the texture. This is a pictorial phase, my mouse becomes a brush, I start “painting” with Photoshop.

Regarding the equipment, I have a Canon 5D mark IV, my favorite lens is the 85 1.2. I often photograph with maximum apertures, the background becomes all out of focus and the eye focuses only on the subject. I am convinced that the equipment is not essential, it is only a tool. We must also invest in culture. It is not important to have the best camera without culture. The equipment does not suggest ideas, while the study brings us inner wealth. When I was a boy, I only worked with a Nikkormat reflex and a 50 mm lens. For 10 years, I only had this,

but in those 10 years I studied a lot. Now, I have expensive equipment, but I gave importance first to culture and then to the equipment.

Michelangelo Buonarroti claimed that his sculpture already existed in the block of marble, it was only necessary to remove the excess marble and come up with his idea. I also think that the photos already exist. We must be the ones to find them through studies and observation. I usually work through projects. For long periods, I read, observe and study, so I accumulate a lot of mental energy, and then start taking pictures. Mine is a process of meditation, like Zen, a long meditation to then act. I accumulate experience and then take action.

The relationship with the models is also important. I try to involve them in my research, we see some works together, then decide how to make the photos.

It often happens that my initial project undergoes variations because during the photo session I get new stimuli. Art is magic because you only know the starting points, you never know the arrival, this is called research.





For dresses, I usually use draperies, or theatre dresses. For my artistic nudes, the only dress I use is light. Yes, I dress my models with light. Light is like a journey, which starts from a source and affects everything it encounters. Light is born the same for everyone, we understand it and transform it. To understand light, I studied great artists. Monet for example, had a large bright studio, with large windows, where a soft and enveloping light entered. Through some paintings, I saw that Vermeer's studio had large windows with soft light too. So many artists prefer natural, but diffused light. This is the same light that I love. My light is natural, it is usually window light, although I insert a diffuser panel between the light and the model to get a truly exceptional softness. Even when I am outside, I try to photograph with sunlight, always using a filter with a diffuser panel. But I always prefer to shoot inside. Before, I often worked with flash, even outdoors, but now, I prefer natural light. The important thing is to know how to manage all the lights, because every light must be loved and respected.

I work on many projects. For me, projects are like an open box, they are always ready to receive new photos. Recently, I have been working on two very demanding projects: the first is titled *Towards Painting*, the second is still lifes. *Towards Painting* is a journey that goes through all my painting studies and my art as a painter, but using the camera. I start from a photograph to bring it into a pictorial dimension. I am convinced that photography is like all other artistic disciplines, so it must combine the aesthetic aspect with a content. We Europeans have a great cultural heritage and the task of continuing the path that the great ones have left as masters of inheritance. I started photographing objects, fruit and vegetables because models weren't available but I had a great desire to photograph. It sounded like a game, but I got it right away. I thought of Flemish painters, Caravaggio and Baroque still lifes. Giorgio Morandi was also a master of still lifes. This means that even an object "dressed" in a magical light can create emotions. The light must pass into our mind, then into our heart and finally reach the subject.

Left page, top: Addolorata, 2019
 Left page, bottom: Grande Nudo Giacente, 2019
 Following spread, left page, top left: Addolorata, 2019
 Following spread, left page, bottom left: Eros, 2019
 Following spread, left page, top right: Addolorata, 2019
 Following spread, left page, bottom right: Nudo Dinamico, 2019
 Following spread, right page: Addolorata, 2019



Fran Forman

Telling Stories Through Light and Shadows



© Fran Forman, by Julia Dean, 2019

Fran's images have been exhibited widely, both locally and internationally, and are in many public and private collections including the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum (Washington, DC), and the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston.

Fran's 2nd major award-winning monograph, *The Rest Between Two Notes: Selected Work by Fran Forman*, with 110 color plates and 224 pages, was published by Unicorn in 2020. *Escape Artist: The Art of Fran Forman*, another award-winner, was published by SchifferBooks in 2014. Fran's work is featured in *Contemporary Cape Cod Artists: People and Places*, *Photoshop Masking and Compositing*, *BETA Developments in Photography*, and the magazines *AAP*, *Internationales Magazin für Sinnliche Fotografie (Fine Art Photo)*, *The Hand*, *Blur*, and *Shadow and Light*. Four separate monographs of Fran's solo exhibitions were published by Pucker Gallery over the past decade.

Recent solo exhibitions were mounted at The Fox Talbot Museum, Lacock Abbey, England, The Massachusetts State House (The Griffin Museum of Photography), AfterImage Gallery (Dallas), the University of North Dakota, Galeria Photo/Graphica (Mexico), and the Pucker Gallery (Boston), as well as numerous group shows. In the past decade, Fran has won many significant awards and prizes.

Fran is represented by AfterImage Gallery (Dallas), Pucker Gallery (Boston), SusanSpiritus Gallery (California), and Galeria Photo/Graphica (Mexico).

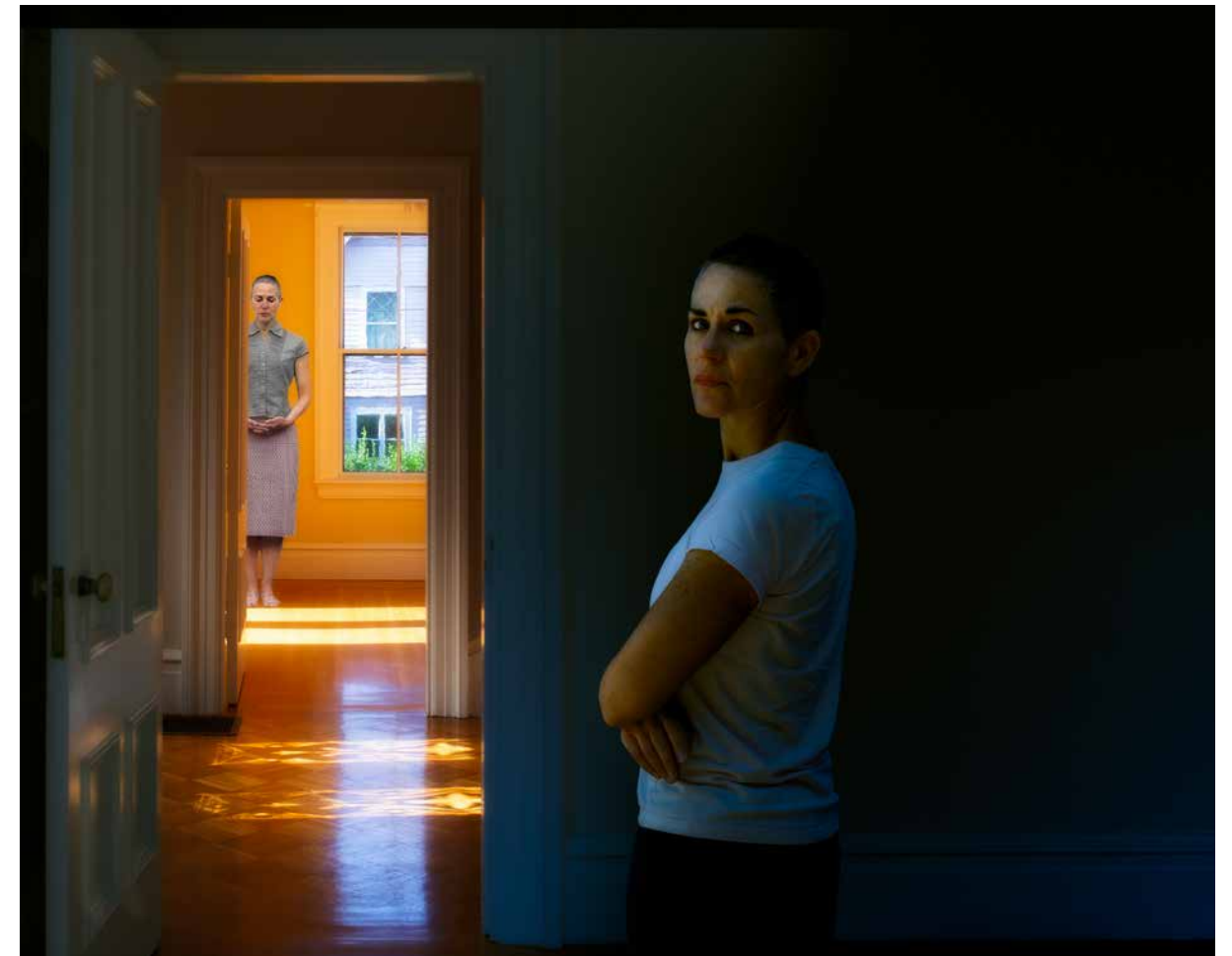
She is an Affiliated Scholar at the Women's Studies Research Center at Brandeis University, a recipient of several grants and Artist Residencies, and is often asked to juror and curate photography competitions.

She resides in the New England area.

All images © All images Fran Forman, from the series *Noir Portals and the Time of Corona*, 2018 - 2020

Right page, top: Prayer, 2020

Right page, bottom: Waiting, 2020



Over many decades, I have been constructing new and imagined images out of existing photographs, staging scenes that often defy the laws of physics or perceived reality. These 'photo-painting' images integrate and juxtapose realism with illusion, truth with magic, hope with sorrow, light and shadow. I have long been drawn to and inspired by artists and art forms that evoke solitude, mystery, or self-reflection through color, chiaroscuro, and geometry. I pay particular homage to the patterns and abstractions of the mid-century American

painter Edward Hopper, whose stark geometric compositions and solitary figures are absorbed in their interior lives and suggest the vague dark edges in everyday life. Drawing on 17th century Dutch and Flemish masters who elevated the use of light and shadow to create mood, I place my composited photographic figures within interior spaces, making use of chiaroscuro, color, perspective and harmony. And I am indebted to the great cinematographers, especially noir, with their stylized foreboding sparseness, slashes of light, and alienated protagonists.



The past few years have been filled with concern about threatening fascism, climate destruction, and the global recognition that racism and ignorance lies within the underbelly of American life. The images that I have created during the most recent months, in the series *Time of Corona*, further expand on the isolation, entrapment, and disconnection endemic in our current lives.

My images reflect this foreboding and expand on the noir tradition of looking at what lies beneath the illusory, sunny narrative of American life, while a slash of light through a portal can offer a measure of hope.

Before the Time of Corona, I traveled extensively to shoot various locations and models. My method of shooting is straightforward - with minimal gear, natural light, and only my Nikon DSLR or a small Sony. After uploading to my Mac, I catalogue the people, places, and objects that I have shot and sometimes do not return to them for weeks or months, if at all. When I do return to these images, I begin to look for relationships between them, stories they may generate, memories they may spur. I manipulate and move the individual parts around on the 'canvas' of my monitor, as if I were a choreographer experimenting with the shapes and movements of dancers on a stage. The process is intuitive and organic; rarely do I have a pre-conceived notion, but rather I let my unconscious be my guide.



Previous spread, left page: Two Men

Previous spread, right page, top: Sisters, 2020

Previous spread, right page, bottom: SA Marriage, 2020

Above: Companions, 2020

Following spread: Rear Windows, 2018



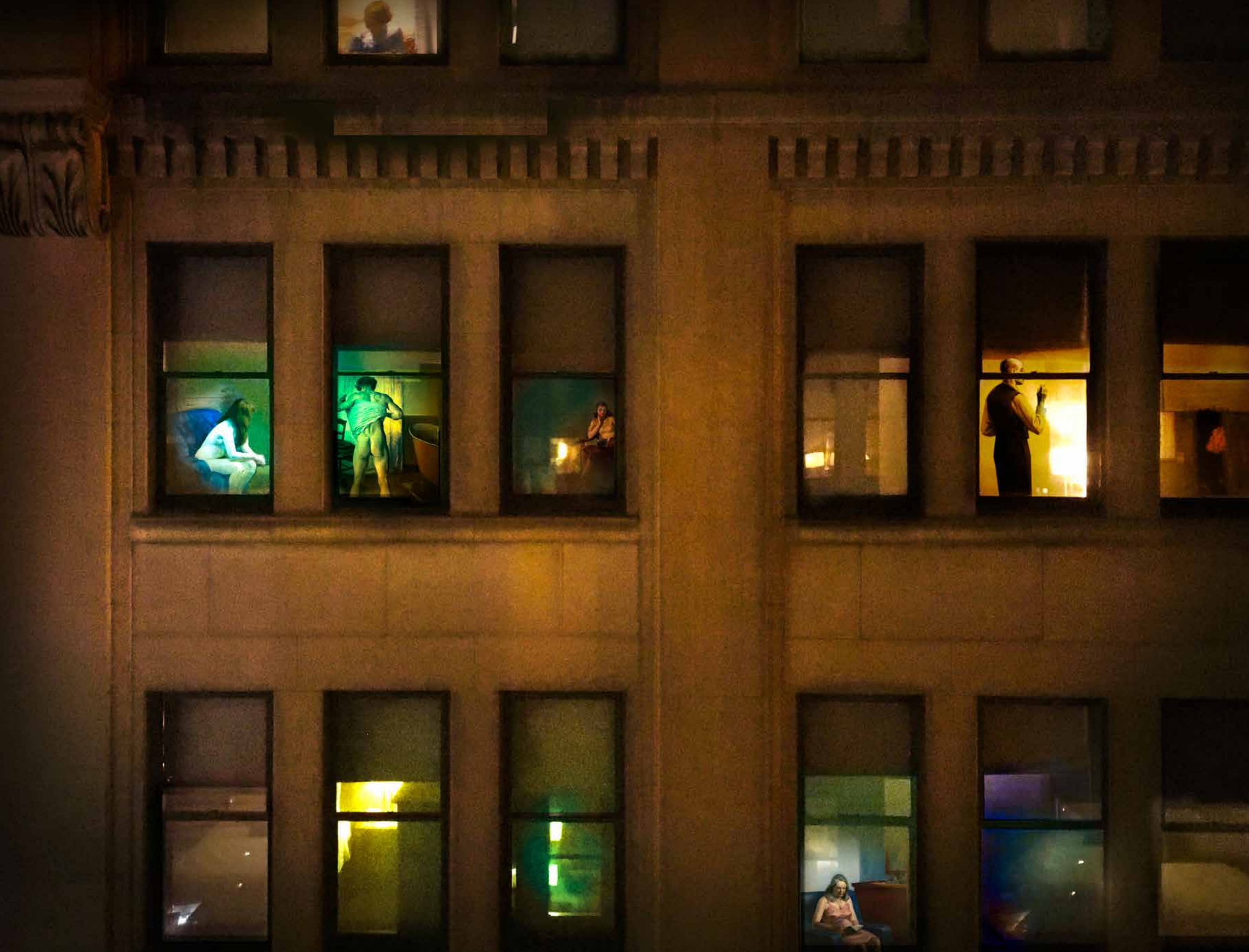


Above, top: *Insomnia*, 2020

Above, bottom: *Stranger*, 2019

Right page, top: *Untitled*, 2020

Right page, bottom: *The World Beyond after Hopper*, 2019



I have come to understand the paradox that you cannot have light without casting shadows. Solid physical structures can house ambiguity and discontent. Relationships between people, cultures, and generations can sever, despite one's hopes and best intentions. Light and shadow can tell stories that reside in that enigmatic moment between darkness and light, connection and absence, coming and going, not quite leaving nor arriving - the frozen moment in time, or the moment between moments where the direction one takes is not yet known.

**“You cannot have
light without casting
shadows.”**



Vanja Bucan

Individual Ecospheres

Vanja Bucan is an award-winning Slovenian photographer, who was born in 1973 in Nova Gorica, Slovenia. She currently lives and works in Berlin, Germany. From 2006 to 2010, she attended the Royal Academy of Fine Arts, The Hague, and obtained her degree in Photography. She distanced herself from the straight documentary genre after her studies and focused on staged photography instead. Before becoming a professional photographer, she studied sociology at the Faculty of Social Sciences in Ljubljana, and actively took part in environmental activism, which is evident conceptually in her artistic oeuvre. She views photography as an open medium, a realm where she can freely express her views and critique of society. In her signature artistic style, she alters her own photographs and places them in staged compositions in order to achieve deconstructed and multifaceted realities that generate a visually rich expression, which verges on fiction.

Her work has been awarded and exhibited at several major international group exhibitions biennials, and solo shows. Among some are Kunsthaus Wien(AU), Benaki Museum with Athens Photo Festival, Biel Fototage(CH), Circulations(s) Festival(FR), CAFA Art Museum Beijing, Lishui Art Museum, Photo London, Photo Basel, Talent Latent(SP), Viennacontemporary,(AU) Vento Solar (BR), Leica Gallery Wetzlar(DE), etc.

All images © Vanja Bucan, from the series *Concrete Flowers*, 2019 - ongoing

My work is usually centered around the human condition (*la condition humaine*), the individual's place in this world, not connected to a particular event nor historical theme. I am interested in memories, states of mind and dreams. I place the individuals like monuments inside these natural spheres which I create from my own nature photos. I create individual ecospheres.

Nature is not a big part of my daily life, so I project it in my art, because I miss it. I think a lot of my work is a cry for more nature.

My photography has changed throughout the years, so I look up to many different photographers. I very much like intervention in photography, so for me Jeff Wall is always someone I look up to.

Since my work has much more artistic connotations, I admire photographers who apply various interventions to their work. I Love Stephen Gill, Ouka Leele, then Lorenzo Vitturi, Vivianne Sassen, Elspeth Diederix, Maisie Cousins, Noemi Goudal and I also like more (creative) documentary figures such as the new generation of Magnum photographers like Carolyn Drake, Christina de Middel, Newsha Tawakolian, etc. These are varied versatile photographers who constantly inspire me, I would say.

I do not work with digital manipulation. I create my photos in different stages. The final photo is a result of intervention on a background photo I

have made. I always use my own images to create the final photo. I never thought I would end up in this type of process, but I tend to experiment a lot. I do want to remain in the realm of photography though.

I see a location or a segment that I like, I photograph it, and I already sort of know how I am going to transform it afterwards. I think like a painter. Reality is not enough for me, I tried to be a photojournalist and I felt empty, I needed a different language to say things, and also to say different things.

I work in two steps. I take a photo on location, then I print it out in a big format to work on adding new segments to the photo, then I photograph it again. I use natural light because I work with paper prints and if you use a flash, you see too much paper structure on the final photos.

I did not entirely finish my *Concrete Flowers* series, so this is still on my plate. I was planning to return to China/Japan to make more work, but due to Covid-19 this is not possible at the moment. I am waiting like thousands of other spoiled souls, to be able to travel again. I am busy with a new transitional short project at the moment, which deals with the idea of body pain and our inherited vision of paradise. It would be like an inverted paradise with floating bodies. I know it sounds strange, but it is just the beginning of an idea.





Concrete Flowers (work in progress)

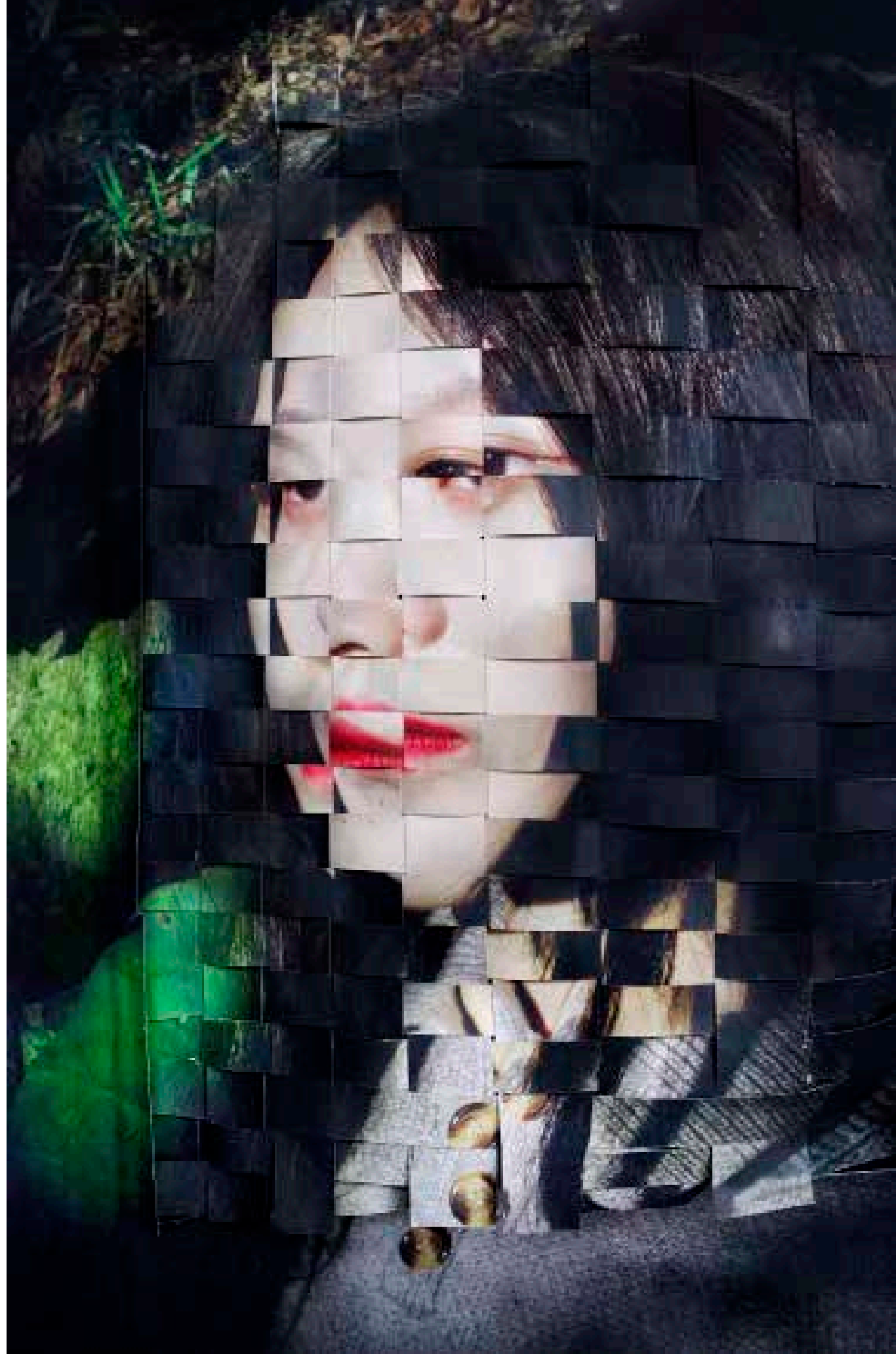
I visited China in 2019 for the first time. I was inspired by the flow and geometries of concrete streets and everyone I met there. The architecture of space, even if layered with concrete, was very much alive and welcoming. I could still see flowers everywhere. I documented typical urban landscapes and upon return, transformed them into a set of personalised ecosystems. We humans witness concrete as building material that divides and pollutes life worldwide, but actually people and all the other living beings always manage to assimilate to it and make it into a friendlier matter. “Concrete flowers” literally means something beautiful and organic that grows out of concrete.

“My work is usually centered around the human condition.”



Left page, top left: Untitled
Left page, bottom left: Orchid China
Center, top: Leaf China
Center, bottom: Pahljaca China
Above, top: Untitled
Above, bottom: Untitled
Following spread. left page: Broken Pomelo
Following spread, right page: Untitled





Above, top left: Bubbles Small
 Above, bottom left: Untitled
 Above, top right: China Textile
 Above, bottom right: Untitled
 Right page: Untitled

BOOK REVIEW

MATTIA BALDI

CASTING / A BOOK ABOUT WOMEN

CASTING | A book about women

Photography by Mattia Baldi

Texts by Benedetta Barzini, Benedetta Frucci,
Nadine Barth

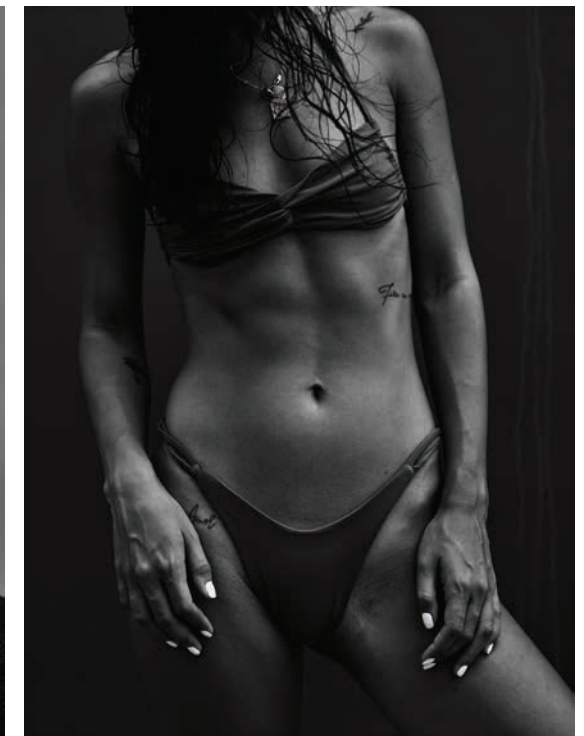
<https://www.seipersei.com/products/casting-by-mattia-baldi>



This project is a black and white photography book that wants to bring to the attention to modern beauty standards, especially in fashion. Instagram beauty filters, the unreal Photoshop skin retouching are today the very base standards of the Social Media aesthetics. These impossible standards of beauty are changing the view of contemporary society, especially for women who often today are chasing an unattainable digital image.

The shots of this project do not have any digital retouch or any kind of alteration. The objective is to show a more sincere

view of female beauty. The tone of the Art is not celebratory, nor tend to extra enhance the beauty of the subjects, the book wants to be a raw filter of reality. Especially here in Thailand, where the whole book was shot, the beauty standards are particularly manipulated by the massive use of Social Media. Thai youngsters pass more time on Social Media than anyone in the world and their perception of beauty is strongly influenced by digital images. *Casting* contains shots of people who are currently in Bangkok but underline a rampant global phenomenon.



Left page: Cover *Casting*

Above, top left: *Casting* Book contents

Above, center left: *Casting* Book contents

Above, bottom left: Cece portrait

Above, top right: *Casting* Book contents

Above, center right: *Casting* Book contents

Above, bottom right: Polina body

Moritz Küstner
SILENCE
IS THE
SOUND OF
FEAR



MORITZ KÜSTNER

Silence is the Sound of Fear

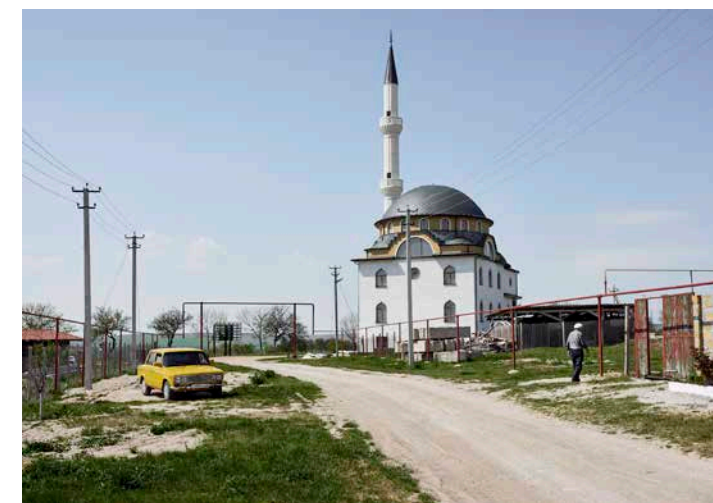
A photographic essay about the life of the Crimean Tartars
August 2020
Hardcover
96 pages
37 pictures
19,5 × 24,5 cm
English
32€
Published by Verlag Kettler
German Photo Book Award 2020 Gold

In March 2014, Vladimir Putin signed an agreement that declared Crimea to be a part of the Russian Federation. The annexation of the peninsula was preceded by a controversial referendum, and neither the referendum nor the annexation have so far been recognized by the international community. The events are still shaping Ukrainian politics and the country's relations to Russia.

Crimea's economy has also taken a severe hit since the annexation. Tourism, its main source of revenue, has all but disappeared, and the fact that the peninsula is cut off from the Ukrainian mainland frequently causes supply shortages.

The sanctions imposed against Russia and the crackdown on freedom of expression and the free press have dramatically changed people's way of life. In particular, the Crimean Tartars, a Muslim minority who had called for a boycott of the referendum in 2014, suffer intimidation and reprisals at the hands of the Russian authorities.

I spent five years, from 2015 to 2019, documenting the changes affecting Crimea and the lives of the Crimean Tartars. The book creates dense narrative interweaving texts and photos that tell stories about individual lives, displacement, hope, resistance, and new beginnings.



Left page: Cover *Silence is the Sound of Fear*
Above, top: Beach Sudak, 2018
Above, center: Hydyrlez, 2015
Above, bottom: Mosque Levadky, 2015



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MAGAZINE

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