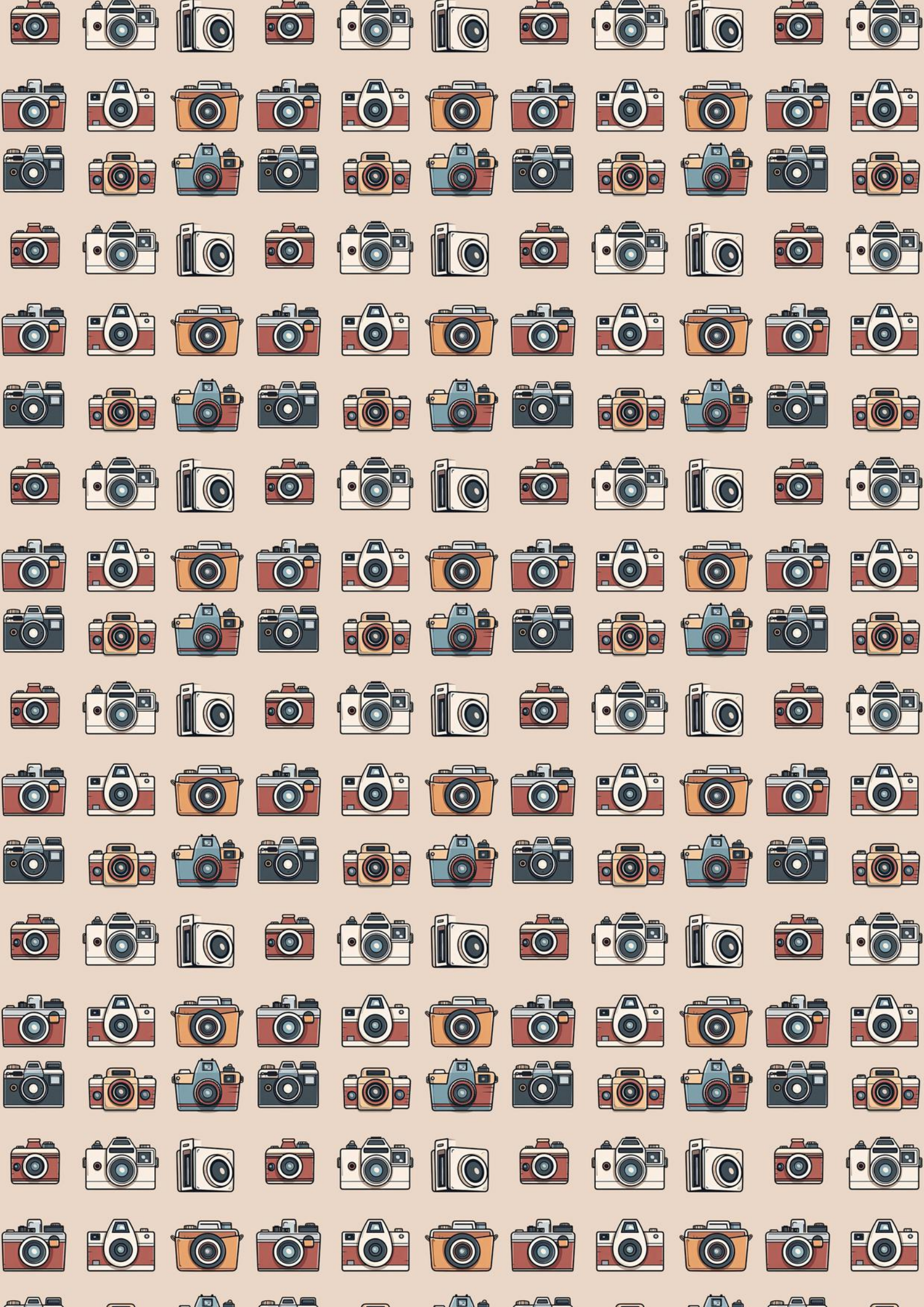


VISUAL POETRY JOURNAL



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— INTRO



Anna Gvozdeva

Curator of
Visual Poetry Journal

On the Front Cover:

Mihail Onaca

The Unhurried Country
(Series)
2020

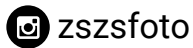
On the Back Cover:

Keith Mahon



We invite artists to submit their works for publication in our magazine: <https://visualpoetryjournal.com/open-call/>

Zsuzsanna Sárközi



I work with contemporary photography, focusing mainly on presence, memory and quiet everyday moments. My approach is intuitive and atmosphere-driven, often exploring emotional traces rather than direct narratives. Nature, animals and natural light are recurring elements in my visual language. My photographs have been featured in several international online exhibitions and selections, including group exhibitions by PH21 Gallery.

Artist statement

Among the Horses This series is not only about horses, but about the quietness that exists around them. A collection of observed gestures, light and small moments – fragments that are meant to be felt rather than explained. Photographed in natural light, the work approaches the animals intuitively and without staging. Rather than documenting, the images attempt to preserve a sense of stillness, vulnerability and presence.



Zsuzsanna Sárközi | Among the Horses



Zsuzsanna Sárközi | Among the Horses



Zsuzsanna Sárközi | Among the Horses

INTERVIEW

Iris Deklerck

 irisdeklерck



You moved from Belgium to Sweden and rediscovered photography there. How did this change of place influence the way you look at the world through the camera?

Moving to another country comes with many challenges. Just because you move to a beautiful place does not mean everything is perfect. Finding a stable job has been difficult, administrative processes took months, I missed my family



Iris Deklerck | Wouter | 2026

and friends, and adapting to a new culture was more challenging than I expected. Sweden is very different from Belgium in ways I had not anticipated.

Although photography has been part of my life since childhood, moving to Scandinavia encouraged me to pick up my camera more often again and reconnect with my passion for photography. It became a way for me to gain some control and perspective during a period of major change. By documenting my surroundings, I learned to truly look at Sweden and appreciate its beauty.

In the beginning, I photographed mainly for myself. It was a way to remind myself of the beauty around me and to connect with my new environment, rather than something I intended to share with others.

As I gradually started to find my place here, I felt a desire to share that experience through my lens. What began as a personal way of understanding and embracing my new life in Scandinavia has evolved into a way of showing others how I see and experience this new chapter of my life.

Your photographs often feel quiet and contemplative. Do you see photography as a way of slowing down and paying attention to small moments?

I think it is actually the other way around. Moving to Sweden has encouraged me to slow down. The Swedish lifestyle places a much stronger emphasis on balance, nature, and taking time to appreciate everyday life than I was used to in Belgium.

Because of that, my passion for photography has had the space to grow and develop. I spend more time outdoors, walking, hiking, fishing, and simply observing my surroundings. Photography allows me to capture those moments, but the sense of calm in my images comes primarily from how I feel here.

In many ways, my photographs reflect my experience of life in Scandinavia. The quiet and contemplative atmosphere people see in my work is a reflection of the peace, presence, and connection to nature that I have found since moving here.

Many of your images were taken while hiking or fishing. How important is it for you that photography is connected to everyday experiences rather than planned photo sessions?

It is very important to me. My photography is mainly about capturing how I experience and see certain moments in my life. Because of that, planned photo sessions often feel unnatural to me. From a young age, I realised that photography, for me, is more about documenting than creating. I am drawn to real moments as they unfold rather than carefully constructing a scene. When I am hiking, fishing, travelling, or simply spending time outdoors, I naturally reach for my camera when something catches my attention.

I am interested in preserving a feeling, a memory, or a particular way of seeing the world in that moment. The photographs become a reflection of my experiences rather than the result of a planned concept. That is why most of my work grows out of everyday life. I want my images to feel honest and connected to the moments that inspired them.

What was the first thing about Scandinavian nature that truly surprised or moved you?

The first thing that truly surprised me was the scale and vastness of the landscape. Coming from Flanders, in the northern part of Belgium, where almost everything is built up and closely connected, it felt like stepping into a completely different world.

I am still amazed by how endless nature feels in Scandinavia. There are places where you can drive for hours and be surrounded by forests, lakes, and open landscapes. Sometimes my partner and I simply get in the car and drive without a specific destination, just to enjoy the scenery, the silence, and the feeling of space.

Growing up in cities, I always thought I was a city person. Moving to Scandinavia made me realise the opposite. Discovering this landscape has changed the way I spend my free time and the way I see the world. These days, I would much rather spend an entire day hiking through a forest than



walking through a city. The connection I feel with nature here has become an important part of both my life and my photography.

In your work, water, snow, forests, and open spaces appear as central elements. What do these landscapes represent for you emotionally?

Water, snow, forests, and open spaces represent a sense of peace and freedom to me. Before moving to Sweden, I lived a much busier life in Belgium. I worked full-time, spent a lot of time commuting in traffic, and was constantly balancing work and social commitments. At certain points, that lifestyle brought a considerable amount of stress.

Since moving to Sweden, I have become more aware of a different way of living. People seem to be more present in the moment and more intentional about making time for themselves, nature, and their well-being. That perspective has influenced the way I see the world and, as a result, the way I photograph it.

How do you approach color and black-and-white photography differently? What makes you choose one over the other?

I use black and white only when it adds something meaningful to the image. If color is not essential to the story, mood, or impact of the photograph, removing it can sometimes make the image stronger. Black and white allows me to focus more on contrast, light, texture, and emotion. For me, it is never about creating a black-and-white photograph for the sake of it. Rather, it is about recognizing when the absence of color enhances the image. Sometimes I can already sense while taking the photograph that the contrasts and tones will work better in black and white. In those moments, the image feels more powerful without the distraction of color.

Through your lens, you say you are slowly falling in love with Scandinavia. What do you hope viewers will feel when they look at these photographs?

I hope viewers can experience some of the peace and happiness I felt in those moments and, for a brief moment, forget about the pressures of everyday life.



Tom Oliver



Tom Oliver is a London-based street and documentary photographer whose work explores the relationship between people, place, and fleeting moments of everyday life. Working primarily with a Fujifilm X100VI, he is drawn to scenes where light, shadow, and composition transform ordinary environments into something quietly cinematic. His photographs often focus on moments of transition—individuals moving through urban spaces, brief interactions, and the subtle tensions between movement and stillness. Influenced by both classic street photography and contemporary visual storytelling, Tom seeks to create images that invite viewers to pause and find meaning in moments that might otherwise go unnoticed. Through careful observation and an instinct for timing, his work captures the poetry hidden within everyday life, revealing the beauty, solitude, and humanity that exist within the rhythms of the modern city.

Artist statement

In Still Motion is an ongoing photographic project exploring the quiet moments that exist within the movement of everyday life. The work is driven by a fascination with fleeting intersections of light, architecture, and human presence - moments that often pass unnoticed in the rhythm of the modern city. Rather than documenting events, the series seeks to isolate fragments of experience that reveal something deeper about how we inhabit urban spaces. A solitary figure crossing a pool of light, a brief gesture, or a moment of stillness within a busy environment becomes an opportunity to reflect on themes of solitude, connection, scale, and belonging. The title In Still Motion reflects the central tension that runs throughout the collection: the search for calm, meaning, and permanence within a world that is constantly moving. Each image is an invitation to pause, observe, and reconsider the extraordinary qualities hidden within ordinary moments.

Tom Oliver | Cyclist in Still Motion





Tom Oliver | Hackney Student in Still Motion



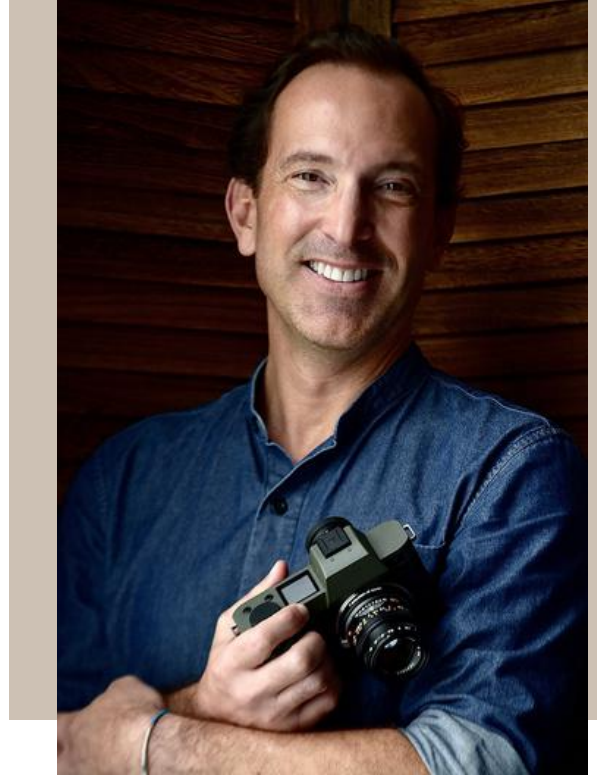
Tom Oliver | Visitor in Still Motion

CURATORIAL REVIEW

by Anna Gvozdeva

Nuno Alves

 nuno_photographer



Nuno Alves's Bhutan series arrives with a clear ambition: not to catalogue a destination but to register an atmosphere — what the artist calls, in his statement, "the rhythm between the visible and the invisible." this series succeeds precisely where it resists the documentary impulse to explain.



The strongest images here are built on contrast and restraint: the aerial view of drummers crossing a dzong courtyard reduces the human figure to a rhythmic, almost calligraphic line against the immense grey geometry of the flagstones, while the framing of a single eye peering from behind a heavy red curtain compresses an entire monastic world into one wary, curious glance. Alves clearly understands that Bhutan's spiritual register is best conveyed through fragments rather than panoramas. Color is handled with real intelligence throughout. The crimson of monks' robes recurs as a structural device, sometimes diffused into soft, painterly blur (the dancing novices caught mid-gesture against a whitewashed wall), sometimes concentrated into a single saturated block (the curtain image, the sand mandala). The mandala photograph is the technical high point of the set: the overhead angle, the monk's hands entering from the lower frame, and the concentric symmetry of the pattern combine craft and subject into a genuinely arresting composition.

The elderly woman lit from the side, her laughter carving the whole frame into wrinkles and warm shadow, has the kind of unguarded intimacy that no amount of "documenting happiness" tourism imagery ever manages — this is a face the camera was clearly trusted with, not merely pointed at.

The portrait of the monk in the carved doorway is competent and handsome — good light, good framing against the dragon motif accomplished. The landscape of the chortens at the mountain pass and the bridge of prayer flags are both well-built, classically composed frames.



The Bhutan series has also continued to resonate beyond its initial presentation. Following its exhibition at Leica Galerie Singapore, the project has developed into a broader photographic journey, including the forthcoming "Travel with Leica: Kingdom of Bhutan" experience with Nuno Alves, organised in collaboration with Leica and Druk Asia. This continuation reinforces the sense that Bhutan is not simply a subject within Alves' practice, but an ongoing field of return — a place where observation, spirituality, and visual storytelling remain in active dialogue.

The project statement promises an emotional atmosphere over factual documentation, and the strongest photographs deliver on that promise; a tighter, more selective edit, leaning further into the intimate and the architectural, would sharpen this already evocative body of work into something close to essential.



Teresa Comito

📷 photography.tere

Teresa Comito is a photographer focusing on documentary and poetic visual storytelling. Her work moves between silence, human presence, and fleeting moments of connection, often exploring themes of uncertainty, distance, memory, and emotional atmosphere. Working across black-and-white and subtle color photography, she is particularly drawn to spaces where stillness and everyday life intersect. Her recent work from India reflects an interest in visual quietness, spiritual environments, and the fragile tension between intimacy and isolation.

Artist statement

This series was created during quiet mornings along the Ganges in Varanasi. Rather than documenting the city directly, the work focuses on atmosphere, distance, and moments that seem to exist between presence and disappearance. Boats, birds, water, fog, and solitary figures reappear throughout the series as recurring visual fragments. The images are less about describing a place and more about observing a state of stillness — where silence, movement, ritual, and uncertainty coexist. Through minimal compositions and subdued tones, the work attempts to leave space for ambiguity, contemplation, and emotional openness rather than fixed narratives.





CURATORIAL REVIEW

by Anna Gvozdeva

Keith Mahon

 mrkeithmahon



Keith Mahon's portfolio has already won a Gourmand World Cookbook Award for Best Digital Cookery Magazine, and the images presented here largely justify this recognition. What distinguishes this work from professional restaurant photography is its unwavering focus on process rather than product: Mahon is less interested in the finished dish as a static object than in the moment when it becomes food.

The most formally accomplished images in the collection are those of pouring. Bright green foam dripping into a deep white bowl over a mousse of seafood and edible flowers; creamy sauce cascading over morels and white fish in a bowl with a concentric rim; the chef's hand and white jacket visible against a soft background. These images possess a genuine narrative energy—they document not a dish but a ritual, a moment of giving that defines hospitality. The controlled movement of liquid against the stillness of a skillfully composed garnish creates a productive tension, and Mahon chooses his moment precisely. The pour is always captured at its most expressive point: arcing, smooth, just before it bursts.

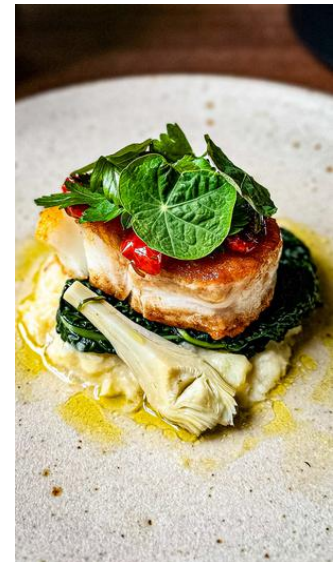


His mastery of color deserves special attention. A salmon dish—various preparations, a purple roulade coated with spices, next to a seared fillet in a blue-rimmed bowl adorned with borage flowers and green marbles—distinguishes itself with a complex color palette without descending into visual noise.

A caviar tartlet, shot close-up against a blurred golden background, achieves opulence through restraint: dark caviar marbles against white flower petals and creamy quenelles, the warm golden petals. Mahon understands that in food photography, color is an appetizer, and he treats it accordingly, keeping the saturation realistic rather than pretentious.



The portfolio demonstrates a conscious approach to food selection. Berry buns dusted with powdered sugar on a distressed baking sheet represent a deliberate shift in tone—warm, artisanal, accessible—and Mahon works with this register with the same ease as he does with haute cuisine. The composition above, depicting a slice of terrine surrounded by chanterelles, nasturtium leaves, marigold petals, and pickled radish on a light marble surface, is one of the most striking images in the series: abundant, seasonal, and visually democratic, in contrast to the architectural precision of the caviar tartlet.



Mahon's stated mission—to enliven hotels, restaurants, and bars through food—is successfully realized in most of the work presented here. His best shots don't simply document the process of cooking; they document care. Hands, spills, tablecloths visible at the edges of the frame—all suggest that someone prepared it, someone brought it, someone set it. In an industry where photography too often presents food as sculpture, this insistence on depicting the human act of service is both commercially savvy and genuinely moving.

Trong Hoang



Trong Hoang (b. 2002) is an independent photographer based in Vietnam. His work explores quiet spaces, traces of everyday life, and the subtle tension between what remains and what disappears. Drawn to uncertainty rather than resolution, he uses photography to linger with moments that resist easy explanation and invite closer attention.

Artist statement

Lately, I have been thinking about how some things remain. Not in any dramatic way. Most of the time they are small, quiet, and easy to overlook. In a world where images appear and disappear so quickly, I often find myself returning to things that seem close to disappearing, yet somehow remain.

I often found myself standing in places that felt inhabited, though no one appeared. The signs of a life were everywhere, yet they never quite added up to a person. The more I looked, the more uncertain it became. It was as if the space held on to something that could still be felt, but could no longer be seen.

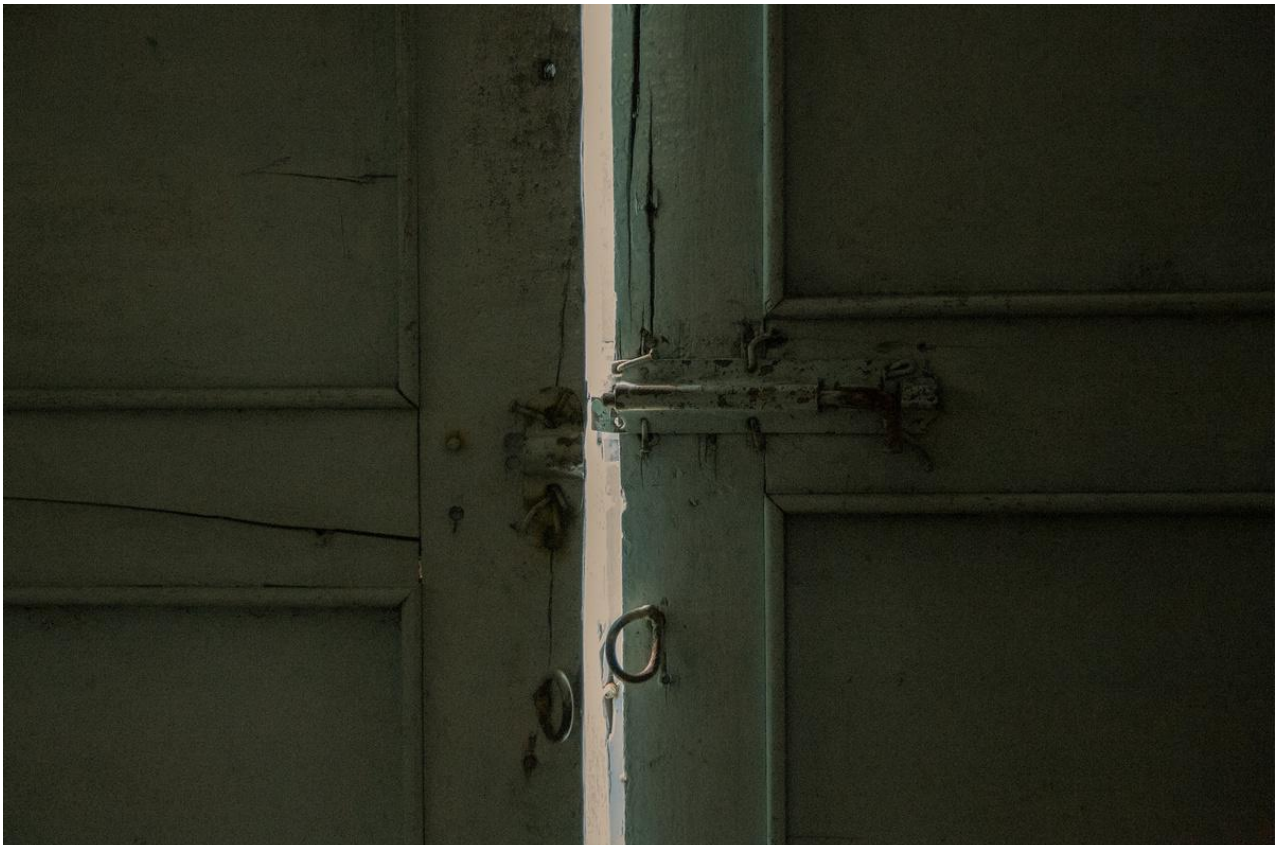
What stayed with me was not the absence of people, but the distance between presence and absence. The feeling that something remained, without ever fully revealing itself. Rather than becoming clearer, it seemed to shift each time I looked at it.

What first seemed present began to feel distant. What I thought was gone seemed to linger a little longer. The photographs are not attempts to explain it or resolve it. They simply stay with it a little longer.

Perhaps that is why I keep returning. Not because I expect to understand it, but because I have gradually learned to live with its uncertainty. If anything, it moves a little further away each time I approach it.

Still, I find myself looking.

Trong Hoang | There or Not





INTERVIEW

Rick Blumsack

 martinezludivine_

Your statement begins with Yogi Berra's idea that "You can observe a lot by watching". What does observation mean to you as a street photographer?

Observation means watching everything. You never know where you'll see something special. It's a little like sports. Yogi Berra



Rick Blumsack | Girl Shooting Soap Bubble Gun, Jerusalem | 2026



was a great baseball player. Now, when most of us are watching sports, we follow the ball. Our eyes are usually focused only on the player handling the ball. We don't pay much attention to the other players.

But Yogi understood how much we can learn about a sport by watching the players who don't have the ball. As a street photographer in Jerusalem, that's what I'm doing most of the time – watching the people without the ball.

And I try to be discreet and respectful. I'm not an "in your face" photographer. My role is to observe people, not disturb them.

You describe Jerusalem as more human and original than the clichés often associated with it. What aspects of the city do you most want viewers to notice through your photographs?

If I had to pick one aspect, it would be the little moments that everyone can relate to. Over the years, there have been countless good photographs from Jerusalem. But most of them are stock photos. This building, those clothes. The technical skill may be impressive. But often the image only scratches the surface.

My goal is to capture simple yet revealing moments. Hopefully, each photograph stands on its own as a work of art. And I hope it says something about people in Jerusalem, or maybe says something about all of us.

Many of your images capture fleeting, unexpected moments. How do you know when a scene is worth photographing?

It's hard to know for sure. But when the stars align, you sense it. In other words, each street scene is a new random constellation of people and things. When does the constellation have the geometry, color, texture and meaning that it feels like you've got something?

Is the image visually compelling? Is the metaphor meaningful? Can the viewer relate to it? Is it worth preserving for another time?

Are the optics interesting? For instance, is there a balance to the composition, or an intriguing juxtaposition, or sharp contrast?

Is it a scene which particularly lends itself to black and white or bright color?

Can I isolate what's important from the chaos around it? Is the subject clear? I'm a minimalist at heart. If a photograph feels messy, all over the place, then I probably won't like it. By the way, you're right. The moments are fleeting. On the street, the scene only lasts a split second. If we miss it, it's gone forever. We shouldn't take it for granted.

Humor and poignancy often appear side by side in your work. Is this contrast something you consciously look for, or does it emerge naturally from the street?

I think it emerges naturally. The key is remembering that everyone is human. We're multi-dimensional. It sounds obvious perhaps, but it's not.

One of my criticisms of some fine art photography is the prevalence of deadpan portraits. The fine art aesthetics are lovely. But why are there so many portraits of faces staring blankly at the camera? A few photographers have tried to explain it to me, but I'm not persuaded.

In my time walking the streets of Jerusalem, I've seen people who are having a good day, or a bad day, or they're relaxed, or they're stressed, or whatever. But I've never seen anyone frozen, staring blankly into space.

When speaking with young photographers, I'll sometimes remind them that their subjects are human beings, not caricatures. If this is your mindset, then the pictures come more easily. The scenes suggest themselves. The people reveal themselves. You'll notice it.

But if your mind is closed – if you view subjects as inanimate objects or stereotypes – there will be shots you'll miss.

Your photographs are not staged and do not use AI. Why is this commitment to real-world experience important to your artistic practice?

I admit I'm old-fashioned about this. I believe truth is good and lies are bad. As the American politician Daniel Moynihan famously said, "People are entitled to their own opinions, but not their own facts."

Even today, with computers all around us, we generally believe our own eyes. At least we want to. When we see a photograph, our innate assumption is that it's real. But an AI image is not. Now, it's one thing if the artist informs you, "This is make believe." Like writing a novel and being upfront with the reader that it's fiction. All good.



Rick Blumsack | Lesbian Couple Running Through Sprinklers in The Park, Jerusalem | 2023



Rick Blumsack | Two Men Exiting Bus, Jerusalem | 2025

But showing an AI (or staged) image and misleading the viewer? In my view, it's dishonest and harmful.

How does living in Jerusalem shape your eye differently from someone photographing the city as a visitor?

Well, when tourists visit our city, they want to see the famous landmarks – the places in Jerusalem which can't be found anywhere else.

It's usually a once in a lifetime visit for them, so they want their experience to be out of this world (literally). They also have very little time, rushing from one site to another. I understand. I'm the same way when I visit other cities. If I visit, say, New York or Paris, I'm not photographing it like the famous street photographers did.

Street photography provides the opportunity to uncover a city in a way the tourists never see. My best photographs have come from circumstances where I felt like both an insider and an outsider. I was comfortable in the environment, but I felt removed enough from the specific situation to maintain distance in photographing it.

I was an observer, not a participant. But I understood the participants. I think this combination happens more often where we live, not where we visit.

As both a practicing attorney and a fine art photographer, do these two parts of your life influence each other in any way?

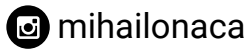
At first blush, they seem totally different. As a lawyer, I'm sitting at a desk trying to be precise with words. As a street photographer, I'm wandering outside trying to sense images and metaphors. Honestly, if I transition too quickly from one to the other, it feels like my head will explode!

But they have something important in common – anticipating what will happen next. As a lawyer, if I'm in a meeting, it's useful to anticipate what others will do next. If I say X, how will they respond?

Street photography is the same. If I see a tempting composition only at the last second, and rush to catch a photo of it, I'll probably miss it. But if I'm watching a scene unfold, and can predict in my mind where the people will be in 3 seconds, then I have a decent chance of catching it.

Asking the question repeatedly – What will they do next? What will they do next? – is a transferable skill.

Mihail Onaca



Mihail Onaca is a Romanian photographer whose work explores cultural identity, rural life, and the enduring relationship between people and place. Inspired by the landscapes and traditions of his native Transylvania, he takes a documentary-style approach to visual storytelling, finding meaning in simplicity and the unhurried rhythm of daily life.

With a background in theatre, Onaca developed an early understanding of presence, light, and emotional nuance, elements that continue to shape his visual language. His images demonstrate a strong sense of composition and timing, using light and space to create depth without artificial staging. Rather than pursuing spectacle, he favours patience and long-term engagement, approaching the communities he documents with sensitivity and respect.

Working primarily with natural light, he balances wide frames that establish context with intimate perspectives that reflect cultural heritage, local traditions, and the continuity of community life. His photography avoids romanticized narratives, instead examining how identity is preserved and reshaped across generations, particularly in regions where tradition and modern life intersect.

Mihail Onaca's work has been featured in National Geographic Traveller, as well as in The Guardian and the Financial Times. These collaborations highlight his ability to translate complex cultural landscapes into compelling visual stories with international resonance.

Alongside editorial assignments, he collaborates with cultural initiatives and tourism partners who seek thoughtful, place-sensitive imagery. Increasingly focused on long-form documentary projects, Onaca continues to explore Eastern Europe's evolving cultural landscapes through a lens defined by attentiveness, integrity, and narrative depth.



Mihail Onaca | The Unhurried Country | 2022

Artistic vision:

Mihail Onaca's vision of art is rooted in attentiveness and patience. He believes that meaningful images emerge when a photographer allows a place to reveal its rhythm rather than imposing one upon it.

He is inspired by spaces shaped by history and by the dignity of everyday life. The layered architecture of European towns, rural traditions, and lived-in environments continue to influence his work. Light plays a central role in his approach, not only as a technical element but as a way to shape mood, depth, and emotional presence.

His motivation lies in preserving atmosphere and authenticity, focusing on everyday moments as they naturally unfold.

Instead of focusing on spectacle, he seeks subtle gestures and situations that carry a universal resonance.

Through his photography, he aims to honour the passage of time and the enduring relationship between human experience and place.

Mihail Onaca | The Unhurried Country | 2021



INTERVIEW

Haris Kakarouhas

 haris_kakarouhas



Your background includes cartography, visual perception, colour theory, photography, and psychotherapy. How have these different fields shaped the way you observe and photograph the world?



Haris Kakarouhas | A Fragile Wonder

The first four fields reveal what I might call my lifelong obsession with the image. It is something I seem to have been born with. This inexplicable attraction first became evident when my mother took me to the cinema at the age of seven. I was so completely spellbound that, at the end of the day, they practically had to carry me out of the theatre so that they could close it.

I had fallen under the spell of the image, and that spell has remained unbroken ever since. First there was cinema and painting, and then—for several decades now—photography. What is remarkable is that the image revealed the central axis of my life. From a very early age, I was profoundly moved by the Fayum portraits, the paintings of El Greco, and the films of Andrei Tarkovsky. What drew me to them was their mysterious existential depth—the sense of entering a world that was not entirely of this world.

This is where psychotherapy enters the story. By psychotherapy, I mean a wide range of practices and approaches that led me onto an inner path: an exploration of who I truly am. They turned my attention inward, towards the very existential depth and presence that I had first recognised in those images.

I gradually came to understand that I do not photograph the world, as I once believed; I photograph the way I experience life. I give visual form to the mystery that I perceive existence to be.

Since then, image-making and inner life have remained engaged in a continuous, playful tango. I try to remain passionately available—without a predetermined purpose—to surprise, to emotion, and to wonder.

In *A Fragile Wonder*, you describe moments when the ordinary suddenly reveals an unexpected depth. How do you recognise such a moment, and what makes you decide to raise the camera?

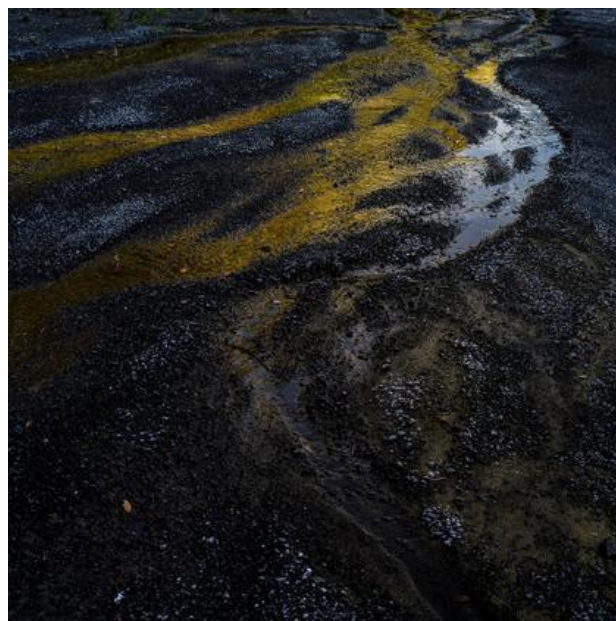
From the very beginning of my creative life, I have never started with a project or with an idea that I wanted to construct. Instead, I have trusted the innocence of my eyes. Wherever my gaze came to rest in a moment of wonder, I would make a photograph and move on. Only later did I understand that this process is, in essence, an act of recognition. I recognise in the world something that already exists within me. If it were not there, perhaps I would simply be unable to see it. This is why each of us perceives existence differently: each of us carries a different inner world.

This moment of inner resonance is what impels me to raise the camera; it is what allows the wonder to reveal itself. Yet, as the inner journey deepens, this is no longer simply an emotional response. It is the moment when our being—our inner, unconcealed truth—recognises its own reflection in the forms of existence. I do not consciously decide to raise the camera. The recognition itself makes the decision.

The series moves between human portraits and close observations of water, grass, stone, and earth. How did you arrive at this dialogue between the human body and the landscape?

This series began around the time I was completing my doctoral thesis, during a professional assignment for the Greek Ministry of the Environment. My task was to photograph the Greek natural landscape as part of a public environmental awareness initiative. Alongside the commissioned work, I also began making photographs for myself—a practice I continued in different parts of the world.

At the same time, I found myself photographing the people close to me—people who shared a similar inner search. I did not approach this as a new “project”; I photographed them simply because they were part of my



Haris Kakarouhas | A Fragile Wonder

life. Many of these encounters took place in natural surroundings, since the spiritual communities and schools I was connected with were often situated in nature.

At some point, almost by chance, I noticed that certain portraits and landscapes formed natural diptychs. They seemed to share a common inner quality or emotional resonance. A person whose presence conveyed strength and solidity, for example, might find an unexpected counterpart in a rocky landscape. The body and the landscape appeared to mirror one another—not through superficial resemblance, but through a deeper affinity of presence.

This discovery led to the idea of a book composed of diptychs. The result was *Natural Presence*, published in 2018. I continued photographing these subjects, and in 2024 the work developed into the exhibition *A Fragile Wonder*. I felt that this title reflected the essence of the work more fully.

You write that a stone can carry the same weight as a human face. What kind of presence are you searching for in both people and natural forms?

What I encountered in the Fayum portraits and in the portraits of El Greco was something I longed to bring into photography. But I had no idea how this could be done. In everyday life, we rarely encounter people whose gaze possesses such depth. How could I evoke that gaze in someone I was photographing when I had no direct experience of what I recognised in those paintings? How could I bring the person’s essential truth to the surface? Would this be possible with someone I knew intimately, or perhaps with a complete stranger? And would the final image reveal that person’s truth, or would it merely be a projection of my own?

After making hundreds of portraits, I found a few that contained something of what I had been searching for.



Haris Kakarouhas | A Fragile Wonder

Yet that gaze appeared only when it chose to appear. It had nothing to do with gender, familiarity or social circumstances. The only essential condition was that I should be genuinely interested in the person before me. This allowed a spontaneous process of play, exploration, receptivity and empathy to unfold.

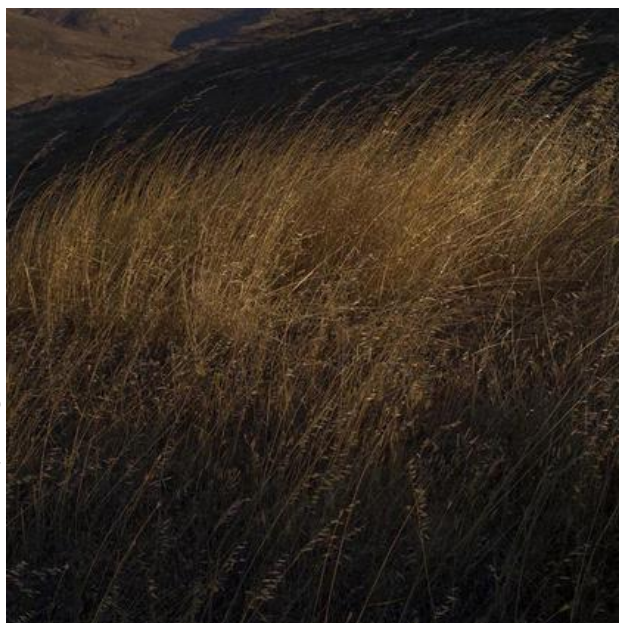
Through this inner journey, I discovered—and continue to discover—that the true person, the human being in their wholeness, emerges from the emptiness we encounter when we come face to face with our own deepest self. It is an emptiness that mysteriously becomes a womb of life.

This is the presence I search for, first of all, within myself. The act of photographing is, in essence, an invitation to enter this loving dimension of profound stillness. Like a therapeutic encounter, it sometimes happens quickly; at other times it requires patience, and sometimes it does not happen at all.

The same is true of all my photographs, because every photograph is an encounter with the other. A stone, a face, a reflection on water or a trace upon the earth may each reveal the same silent presence. In that moment, the distinction between the human being and the natural world becomes less important than the mystery they share.

Several of your landscapes appear almost abstract, with reflections, textures, and traces becoming more important than a recognisable location. What role does abstraction play in your photographic language?

I did not arrive at these images through a preconceived plan or a clearly defined concept. They emerged gradually as the result of a photographic journey spanning more than thirty years, shaped by a continuous effort to approach what I understand as a truthful image. Over time, my interest shifted from the subject itself to the act of seeing. I found myself searching for images



Haris Kakarouhas | A Fragile Wonder



Haris Kakarouhas | A Fragile Wonder

stripped of everything unnecessary—free from embellishment, aesthetic mannerism, or any attempt to impress. Not images that describe or explain, but images that reveal. I am drawn to those moments when form begins to dissolve and the image returns to its material essence; when representation recedes and something more fundamental remains. Reflections, textures and traces interest me because they occupy a threshold: they still belong to the visible world, yet they are already beginning to free themselves from description. Abstraction was never an objective in itself. It emerged naturally from this process—an attempt to remove everything that is not essential, until only the irreducible core remains. A search for the point where the image no longer refers to something beyond itself, but simply exists. There, perhaps, lies its deepest truth.

Your doctoral research focused on portraiture and the imaging of the self. How has your understanding of the "self" changed since completing that research?

My doctoral research grew out of the photographic work I made in Cuba between 2000 and 2002, which received the European Publishers Award for Photography in 2004. During the following five years, I left my camera in a cupboard. In essence, I was searching for a deeper understanding of the photographic process. Why do I see in this particular way and not another? What does my work offer to the community? How do we define artistic value?

This search led me to complete a doctorate in photography, focused on portraiture and the imaging of the self, as well as to train as a therapist. Alongside my academic research, I studied various forms of art therapy and humanistic psychotherapy. Together, these paths gave me a more profound and personal connection to the act of making photographs.

When I began this research, I was still inclined to think of the self as something that could somehow be revealed



Harris Kakarouhas | A Fragile Wonder

and represented through the portrait. Gradually, I came to understand it less as a fixed identity and more as a presence—something that emerges when our familiar narratives, roles and defences begin to recede. Paradoxically, the deeper we move towards the self, the less solid and separate it appears.

The photographic process itself remains a spontaneous choreography governed primarily by rhythm. The fact that I now “know” what I am doing, or what I am searching for, is of relatively little importance, because photographing is inseparable from life—and life remains mysteriously unpredictable. The essential difference is simply that I am now a different human being.

For me, the word “therapist” does not describe someone who merely possesses a knowledge of therapeutic techniques. It describes someone capable of standing before another human being with complete receptivity and love. To do this, of course, one must first learn to stand in the same way before oneself.

What heals is not our knowledge or intervention, but the serene and loving dimension of emptiness. To encounter it is, in itself, a blessing.

The title *A Fragile Wonder* suggests that the experience you are describing can easily disappear. Is photography a way of preserving such moments, or does the photograph become an entirely new experience?

Photography does not preserve such moments in the sense of keeping them intact. The original moment disappears, as every living moment must. Yet through the photographic act, something new comes into being—something that has an existence of its own, independent of the objective event from which it emerged.

I experience a photograph as a living vessel of energy and meaning. It carries within it the quality of presence—the inner state of the person pressing the shutter at that particular moment. Its meaning, however, is not fixed by the photographer. It reveals itself anew when a viewer truly connects with the image, not merely through intellectual interpretation, but through a deeper and more immediate recognition.

In this sense, the photograph is neither a record nor a container of the original experience. It is a new field of experience: a meeting place between the presence embedded in the image and the inner world of the viewer. Perhaps what is fragile is not wonder itself, but our capacity to remain available to it. The world does not cease to be miraculous; we cease to notice it.

Photography, for me, is both a practice of attention and an act of transformation. A transient moment passes through the photographer and becomes an image with its own autonomous life—an image capable of allowing wonder to be revealed again, differently, in another human being.

Imogen Golding-Douglass

Imogen is an amateur photographer based in Durham, England. Photography offers her an escape from the everyday life that keeps her busy as a Bachelor of Laws student. Her practice gravitates towards nature, landscapes, and how people influence the places they occupy. She is especially drawn to capturing the North East of England and the Ionian islands.

Artist statement

This series captures the island of Corfu, Greece. The island has been influential to my family, my life, and my work. Through these images, my focus is on Benitses, the village where I live when on the island. My work captures the luscious land and seascapes, as well as life on Corfu.

Imogen Golding-Douglass | Poseidon Express | 2024





Imogen Golding-Douglass | The Pergola | 2024



Imogen Golding-Douglass | Marina | 2025

CURATORIAL REVIEW

by Anna Gvozdeva

Nataliia Maiboroda

 nataly.maiboroda



Photographing a tradition already recognized as endangered, listed as a cultural heritage site, and thus implicitly transformed into a spectacle even before the advent of the camera, presents a particular challenge. Natalia Maiboroda's work, "Vanishing Craft", masterfully tackles this challenge, and the images presented here demonstrate why her work is featured in National Geographic and The Guardian, rather than simply relegated to documentary archives. The visual core of the series is color: the stark amber-yellow of the fishermen's rainsuits against the almost uniform gray of the sky and sea. Maiboroda uses this chromatic contrast with discipline rather than mere convenience. In the frontal shot of a dark gray horse and rider walking directly toward the camera—surrounded by wicker baskets, like a heraldic symbol—the yellow figure above the horse's dark head creates something approaching the iconic. This is the kind of image the project deserves, not plans: a moment of harmony between subject, light, and compositional instinct that, for someone who's never heard of the Oostduinkerke, might represent horseback fishing.



The series is constructed with a thoughtful editorial approach. It begins with the work itself—riders in the water, nets hanging, seagulls swooping in for prey—and unfolds in both directions: back to the stable interior, where worn leather saddles frame two horses at the feed trough, a figure quietly passing between them; and forward to the social setting after the shoot, where empty coffee cups and used glasses are cleared from a tray by a hand still clad in a red fisherman's jacket. This movement from the sea to the stable to the café gives the project a breath of fresh air that is often lacking in purely documentary sequences.



A sweeping beach landscape is Maiboroda's most formally composed work: two groups of fishermen in yellow clothing at the far edges of the frame, a vast expanse of wet sand with hoofprints in the foreground, and two civilians in the center. The image subtly asks what it means to witness a vanishing practice: the fishermen work, indifferent to observation; visitors record their surroundings. The hoofprints, arcing from one group to the next and then diverging, carry rhetorical weight without being intrusive.



One image holds tight on a horse's foreleg breaking the surf, the rider cropped away entirely; another frames a rider so frontally, basket-laden on either flank, that he becomes an extension of the animal's silhouette rather than its master. This is the series' central argument made through composition alone: that the relationship between fisher and horse is one of partnership worn into muscle memory over centuries, not domination performed for a camera.



Maiboroda's perspective is confident that access to the subject is clearly earned over time, and her best images work precisely because they resist the picturesque nostalgia that the subject could easily evoke. In *Vanishing Crafts*, it is understood that traditions are preserved not as monuments, but as labor - wet, cold, unglamorous, and passed down from generation to generation by certain people on a certain shore.

Brigitte B Burckhardt

 bbbeaglebearphotography

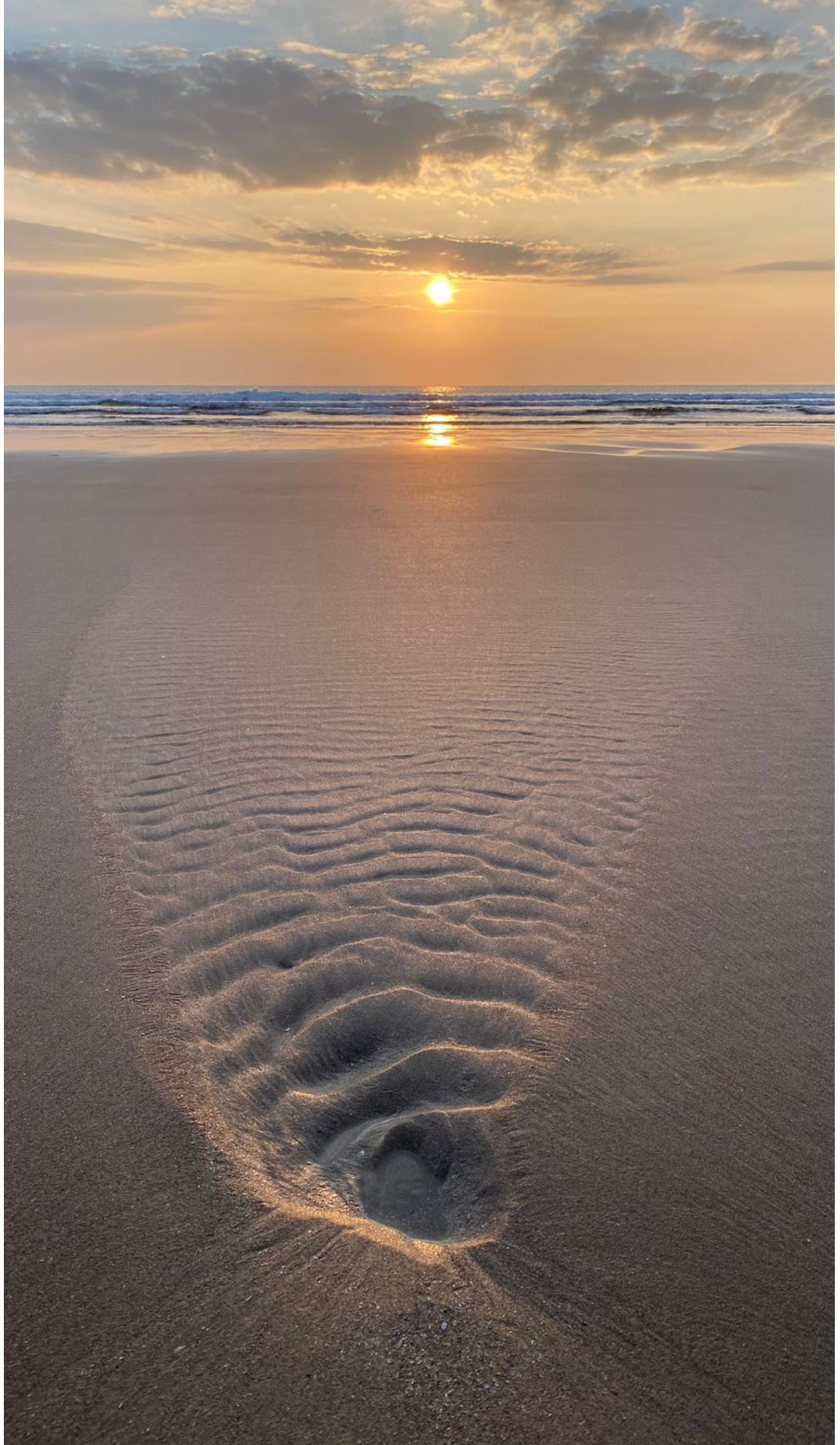
Brigitte started taking photographs at a young age inspired by her grandfather. In her twenties she travelled the globe and discovered her passion for landscape and street photography, be it colour or BnW. Today she is also experimenting with abstract approaches. Her photography has been exhibited at galleries and fairs all over Europe, in North America, Asia and more. It has been published in international art magazines, books and has received awards, the last being a gold winner at London photography awards.

Artist statement

Creating is a drive. Photography is my path. My way of expressing my emotions, my thoughts, my ever fleeting feelings. My aspiration is to showcase Life be it in nature, with people, in cityscapes as seen through my eyes. When shooting I put myself in an almost meditative state, I am either at one with my environment, calm or excited with all my senses ready to react to any movement at any moment. Thus my photography is very spontaneous, candid. When my eyes, my heart and soul are at one, aligned I might come up with a story. A story to be shared with the viewer. For this issue I chose to submit six artworks taken by the waters. They are part of a larger project that I hope to publish.



Brigitte B Burckhardt | Looking Out



Carter Nicklaus

 c_nick_photo

Artist statement

Carter Nicklaus is a Los Angeles-based photographer and filmmaker, born in Burbank, CA in 2001. He studied film editing and photography at California State University, Northridge and uses the influence of both in his work, which is characterized by bold experimentation and cinematic drama in stark monochrome. He shapes light to create intimate conceptual images, playing with multiple exposures, tight framing, and unique angles to tell stories immersed in the visual language of suspense. He strives to capture feelings of discomfort, isolation, and duality in his work through chiaroscuro compositions of the uncanny. In 2023, Carter was recognized as one of eight emerging photographers to join the inaugural LA Bridge program by ASMP, and currently serves on the board of the organization's Los Angeles chapter. My submission features images from my ongoing project "Life in Plastic", a series of studies featuring a studio mannequin with the goal of using light to breathe life into something inanimate, making you feel deeply for a simulacrum of a real person.

Carter Nicklaus | LiP | 2024





Carter Nicklaus | LiP | 2024



Carter Nicklaus | LiP | 2024

INTERVIEW

Kathryn Huang

 kathrynhuang_



Your project To and From explores a feeling of being both tethered to and disconnected from Thailand. When did you first become aware of this emotional distance from home?



Kathryn Huang | Hand

I think I became aware of that emotional distance during my late teens and early twenties, when I was navigating feelings of isolation and longing in my personal relationships. Those experiences amplified my sense of disconnection from home, or more accurately, from what I understood "home" to be at the time. Back then, the distance was less about missing Thailand itself and more about yearning for a sense of fulfillment and belonging that I felt home couldn't provide.

As I've gotten older, those feelings have shifted, and instead of searching for something I believed home lacked, I now find myself holding onto the comfort and familiarity of being in Thailand with my family, and surrounded by the culture I grew up in. After spending so many years away, the emotional distance has become rooted less in absence and more in nostalgia and preservation.

Many of your photographs feel quiet and observational, even when they depict familiar or public spaces. How do you approach photographing places that carry personal memory?

I shoot primarily on film so that already heavily informs my approach when photographing places. Since I only have 36 or 10 shots in a roll, I really let my feelings towards what I'm seeing be the driving force behind what I capture. I like being able to look back at my photographs and return back to the feeling I had when I shot it, whether it was recognizing a familiar sight, smell, sound etc. The act of photographing is an act of preservation, because a photograph triggers a feeling in the brain in an instant. It's also an exciting process overall because I can take a photograph of the same place at two different times in my life and I'll be able to reflect on so many different feelings, life stages, memories from looking at those photographs.

You mention that over-tourism and globalisation have made parts of your childhood increasingly unrecognisable. How does photography help you preserve what still feels intimate or culturally specific?

Photography captures a specific moment in time, and with film photographs, the negative like is a physical and tangible memory that you can rescan and keep forever. So in a way it's a nice way to keep something that feels frozen in time, even if the place you photograph changes the next time you see it, you'll always have the photograph to re-ignite the memory of it.

The ocean appears repeatedly in your work - as a place of leisure, movement, distance, and return. What does the sea represent within this project?

The sea carries a lot of meaning for me. Growing up, many of my family trips revolved around the beach and the islands around Thailand, so the ocean has always been deeply tied to my memories of home. In 2020, during the pandemic, I got my PADI diving license, and that experience completely changed my life, along with the relationships I have with myself and the ocean. Since then, every time I return to Thailand, I make it a priority to visit the islands and spend time in the ocean because it's the place that grounds and restores me the most. It feels deeply meditative and spiritual. Within this project, the sea becomes a symbol of safety, home, and continuity. It's a place I return to both physically and emotionally. It also serves as a constant point of comparison, every beach or ocean I visit outside of Thailand is, in some way, measured against the feeling of being back home. The sea has become one of the strongest ties I have to Thailand, carrying both the comfort of memory and the longing to return.

Flowers, fruit, markets, boats, and family rituals appear as recurring elements in the series. How do these everyday gestures help you speak about cultural identity?

All of these elements are central to Thai culture and to my own upbringing. Beyond informing my cultural identity, they've also shaped my artistic sensibility. Thai culture places a great deal of care on presentation and beauty in everyday life, whether it's arranging flowers, preparing fruit, or the rituals of gathering around food and family. Those gestures of care have influenced the way I approach photography, making me attentive to color, composition, and the quiet beauty of ordinary moments. Within this project, these everyday gestures become markers of home. They're the details that are often overlooked when you're living them, but become deeply significant once you're away. By photographing flowers, markets, boats, fruit, and family rituals, I'm not just documenting Thai culture, I'm preserving the memories, values, and ways of showing love that have shaped



Kathryn Huang | Lone

who I am. They're small, familiar moments that carry an emotional weight, acting as anchors to a place that continues to evolve even when I'm not there.

How does your South East Asian heritage influence your visual language, especially when you are photographing scenes that may seem ordinary or familiar?

A lot of my work is characterized by vibrant, bold color, which I can directly attribute to growing up in Southeast Asia. Whether it was the colors of everyday life, the vibrant chaos of the streets, or the richness of the ocean and natural landscapes, I was constantly surrounded by diverse visual palettes that shaped my appreciation for color. I'm also deeply inspired by the energy of Southeast Asian street life. Whether I'm walking through a night market or riding a motorbike through town, I'm drawn to the many layers of life unfolding simultaneously. Those moments naturally create dynamic compositions, and that sense of visual density has become an important part of my photographic language. I love people-watching, so I'm often interested in making photographs where the viewer's eye can wander through the frame, discovering different people, gestures, and details with each look.

Do you think romanticism is a way of protecting memory, or can it also create distance from reality? How do you navigate that tension in your work?

I think both can be true. For me, romanticism is less about creating distance from reality and more about a visual language through which I understand it. I have always been drawn to the scenic and to moments that carry a sense of beauty, stillness, or longing, so I naturally seek out those qualities in whatever I photograph.

Within this project, romanticism isn't a filter that conceals complexity. To me, it's a way of engaging with it. The project is rooted in tensions I am openly at odds with: belonging and disconnection, closeness and distance. The romantic qualities of the images allow me to hold these contradictions together rather than resolve them. There is also a deeply personal intimacy in the act of making these photographs, because I am fully aware that the moments I am documenting are raw, unrepeatable, and may never happen again. That awareness is what keeps the work grounded in reality. Photography becomes a way of documenting and archiving moments that eventually become memories, preserving not only what was there, but also how it felt to be there.



Kathryn Huang | Flower Night Market

Du Pham

Du Pham is an interdisciplinary artist with professional roots in graphic design, writing and online journalism. She prefers to earn her living through prosewriting, painting, and photography. Unwilling to compromise her ideals, she accepts a low income in exchange. Her work can be described as enlightening, infantile anti-art.

Artist statement

My work takes shape while I am out cycling. For me, there is nothing more intimate than observing people as they go about their everyday interactions. They are out in public, yet completely undisturbed by their surroundings.

Du Pham | Evening Bathrobe | 2024





CURATORIAL REVIEW

by Anna Gvozdeva

Marcel van Beek

 [_marcel_van_beek_](#)



Marcel van Beek works in a tradition that photography has always harboured but rarely made its explicit subject: the image as perceptual event rather than representation. Across these two series, the camera is deployed not to describe the world but to destabilise our confidence in how we see it, and the results are, at their best, genuinely disorienting in the most productive sense of the word.



Marcel van Beek | Chlorophyll Trance I | 2026



Marcel van Beek | Chlorophyll Trance II | 2026



Marcel van Beek | Chlorophyll Trance III | 2026

The Chlorophyll Trance triptych demonstrates the range of approaches a single conceptual commitment can sustain. Trance I is the most openly sensory of the three — a warm dissolution of leaf and light in which the image refuses to settle into legibility, the motion blur functioning less as technique than as atmosphere, something close to the visual equivalent of submersion. It is seductive without being self-indulgent, because the colour alone — the amber and ochre pulled from the plant's own spectrum — carries enough structural argument.

Trance III is the most formally ambitious: the tonal inversion of the Monstera surface creates a cyan photograph of such unexpected architectural rigour that the botanical origin becomes almost irrelevant. What reads is a circuit board, a map, a modernist grid — the leaf's fenestrations recontextualized as apertures in a designed system. The conceptual leap here is clean and exact.

Trance II occupies a more complicated position. The sepia monochrome and the sharp rendering of leaf fragments glimpsed through soft diagonal bands is formally elegant, the tonal range beautifully controlled.

Yet it is also the image most aware of its own aesthetic lineage — one can feel the weight of a certain mid-century botanical fine art tradition in its bones — and it benefits less from van Beek's formally experimental instincts than from a more classically photographic command. This is not a flaw, but it does mean the image coheres differently from its companions, which occasionally makes the triptych feel like a series with two centres of gravity rather than one.



Marcel van Beek | CITRINITAS 01 : Inside and Out | 2025



Marcel van Beek | CITRINITAS 02 : Citrinitas | 2025



Marcel van Beek | CITRINITAS 03 : Window Delta | 2025

The Citrinitas works introduce a decisive formal shift: the subject is no longer the plant but the transparent surface that mediates between the camera and a world beyond. Condensation, snail traces, and the fall of light across a fogged pane become the vocabulary of a practice that is now explicitly about mediation itself — about the screen between perceiver and perceived. Inside and Out is the most immediately striking: the yellow window frame, burning through the wet glass with an almost ominous saturation, reads as both colour-field painting and architectural document. The alchemical title earns its place here; the yellow really does function as signal, as the first visible warmth inside an otherwise cold grey matrix.

Citrinitas (the pure surface work) is the series' most confident image and perhaps the strongest single photograph in the entire selection. The granular luminosity of the condensation, the slow drip lines that descend like notation, the decay of yellow into copper and then into shadow — this is a picture that has no interest in explanation and needs none. It holds.

Window Delta is the most painterly of the group, its dark horizontal register of water-streaked colour suggesting a compressed landscape — forests, lakes, rock — with the condensation texture binding everything into a unified material surface. It works, though it is also the image that most clearly reveals van Beek's visual debt to certain abstract expressionist and painterly photographic traditions. Whether that lineage is a resource or a constraint is the open question his practice is still negotiating.

Together, the two series constitute a coherent statement about perception, surface, and transformation that is formally rigorous and evidently sustained by genuine optical intelligence. The alchemical framework — vegetal immersion, yellow illumination, emergence — is applied with enough restraint that it enriches rather than overdetermines. Van Beek's most significant contribution is the insistence on strictly in-camera methods: these images are earned, not assembled, and the commitment to photographic process as the meaning-making act is what distinguishes the work from digital abstraction. The challenge ahead is to push further into the territory his best images already occupy — where the viewer's perceptual certainty simply gives way.

joãozero

 joaozero.official

Photography project

"The Big Illusion"

A project that has continually described the comparison of the Human Being with his construction. A giant construction like his ego, but which belittles him in his day-to-day life, as he passes by, making him a lonely, isolated and tiny being. A Human Being who drags himself through the streets so busy with everything and nothing, bathed in solitude and contempt, in this century of such advances and setbacks!

Through the cropped and counter-cropped photographic plans passing through the most unlikely reflections, where the described reality is further magnified, always using wide-angle lenses, amplifying the difference between the Human Being, which I try to isolate and capture in "special" moments. With this set of "objects", techniques and technology, I explore the project in big cities, applying the concept in a mix of travel photography, documentary photography, fine art and street photography resulting in joãozero@s photography.

All this in an obsession for the right moment in a different place!

The world is my oyster!
in William Shakespeare

joãozero | Small Euphoria and the Bird





joãozero | In This Shadow Between the Past and the Future!



joãozero | ...of That Arch That Defended Me!

Jordan Potae

 corrupted_dngfile

Jordan Potae is a New Zealand based photographer who focuses on light, interior spaces, and the suburban environment. His work looks at ordinary structures and emptied rooms that hold onto memories — recording what spaces hold once they are no longer occupied.

Artist statement

Growing up I'd often feel like an outsider looking in, and whenever I did find myself "in" I would usually find comfort in my own company, never the one to try stand out. When I first started creating visual art the ordinary and mundane seemed to attract my attention far more than things that were loud and colorful. I was, and still am quite a "loner" and quiet person, finding myself drifting from conversations mentally, wrapped up in my own thoughts about something completely irrelevant to the topic. What was it about the mundane and supposedly boring subjects that kept attracting me? Something I still can't fully define. But the more I started to take photos a recurring theme appeared, one of isolation, memories, the absence of presence. There is something quietly honest about a space after someone has left it, or an object worn down by years of use no one thinks to notice. The signs of human life but none to be seen, the way light bounces and shines on these mundane objects declaring itself as it enters. These are the things I find myself drawn back to — not because they are dramatic, but because they are real in a way that asks nothing of you. They don't perform. They simply exist. I think my work is less about what is seen and more about what is felt. The long pause in a conversation. The room that still holds to memories of someone's absence. I am not trying to show people anything they haven't already experienced — I am trying to give them permission to stop and sit with it for a moment, the way I always have. In many ways, I am still that outsider looking in. But I have come to understand that the window itself — that quiet distance — is where I see most clearly.



Jordan Potae | Granada | 2026



Natalya Gordeeva

 natalya_gordeeva_

I've been interested in art for as long as I can remember. About a year ago, I picked up an old film camera and fell in love with the process, with the warmth of the atmospheric shots, and with the ability to show the world the way I see it. I'm currently learning and trying different styles and dedicating myself to shooting film-only photography and capturing authentic emotions.

Artist statement

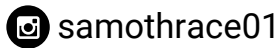
The Shape of Stillness is a black-and-white film series exploring the quiet relationship between the body, light, and space. Through natural light, subtle gesture, and the tactile qualities of film, the photographs embrace slowness and simplicity. Rather than telling a fixed story, the series invites the viewer into a contemplative space where presence becomes more important than narrative.

Natalya Gordeeva | 2026





Alexandra T



A dreamer at heart and passionate about art, I have always found in creativity a space to escape and refocus. Sculpture grounds me in the material world, while photography opens me up to the lightness of the gaze; two different impulses, yet deeply connected by the same desire to express the world in a different way.

At a very young age, my curiosity about images led me to the Nicéphore Niépce Museum in Chalon-sur-Saône, then to the Museum of the Camera in Vevey, Switzerland. These early encounters fostered a lasting wonder for the history of photography and the magic of its processes. Later, as a student, I was fortunate to experience a magical time in my school's photography club: we spent hours developing our negatives in a darkroom, before roaming the streets of Paris to take night photographs.

And later, my camera bag, always filled with film, has accompanied me on my travels through the United States, Africa, India, and Europe. Going out to encounter the world, capturing it, and then preserving it in the memory of paper (or, in recent years, on a screen) is for me a form of contemplation: gathering images, then reflecting on what they reveal — their beauty, their meaning, their resonance, and sometimes even their nostalgia.

As a laureate of the Wipplay contest held as part of the event "Food Temple California", centered on the theme "California Love," I had the honor of being exhibited at the Carreau du Temple in Paris in 2024. I have also been featured in several issues of a local magazine (La Source), to help readers discover my region through a different lens—one that is more intimate and more poetic.

Statement

Wonder, beauty, contrast, and contemplation could sum up my vision of photography.

Photography is a way of capturing the beauty of the world, of preserving its most fragile and dazzling moments. I love seeking out contrasts: those that amuse, unsettle, or provoke thought, and sometimes those that bring us to a sudden halt, like a moment of silence in the midst of movement, a freeze frame.

I am also deeply drawn to the living world and to the natural elements — earth, rock, water, snow, air, sky — which bring another kind of rhythm to my images. They add movement, texture, and breathing space, while also bringing us back to simplicity, to life, and to what is essential.

To photograph is to gather. To gather light, gestures, emotions, and moments that pass too quickly, and to offer them a refuge on paper or on a screen. It is also a way to contemplate the world with attention, to traverse it with wonder, and to reveal its quiet poetry. There is often, in my images, a touch of tenderness, distance, and sometimes nostalgia — as if each photograph were both a trace and a presence.

Alexandra Toitot | Billboards and Bikes Are Talking | 2019





Alexandra Toitot | Metal Against Sky | 2019

Patrizio Vailati Facchini

 pats_greatjourney

Patrizio Vailati Facchini is an Italian photographer and architect whose work explores the relationship between people, space and collective behaviour. After working in the field of cultural heritage conservation, he left his profession to undertake a long journey across East Asia, using photography as a tool to investigate how places are experienced and inhabited through everyday rituals, movements and rhythms. His practice combines documentary observation with a personal interest in urban systems, focusing on the subtle interactions between human presence and the environments people move through.

Artist statement

'Hidden Thresholds' is a photographic exploration of the subtle boundaries that mediate the relationship between public and private space. Developed in Osaka and Kyoto as part of the long-term project 'In Search of Rhythms', the work investigates how urban facades communicate different attitudes towards visibility, access and human interaction. Rather than focusing on iconic landmarks, the series observes ordinary streets, storefronts and architectural details, paying attention to the thresholds that separate what is openly displayed from what remains hidden. Doors, curtains, wooden screens and partially obscured interiors become visual devices through which the cities reveal their character. Although geographically close, Osaka and Kyoto express opposite approaches. In Osaka, hidden interiors often function as an invitation. The partial concealment of restaurants, bars and small businesses generates curiosity, transforming the threshold into a mechanism of attraction. What is hidden encourages exploration. Kyoto, on the other hand, uses concealment as a form of protection. Wooden lattices, controlled visibility and cultural codes create a respectful distance between observer and observed. Here, the threshold becomes a space of preservation, safeguarding traditions, daily rituals and forms of life that are not intended for constant exposure. Through these contrasting attitudes, 'Hidden Thresholds' reflects on how cities negotiate visibility, shaping not only what can be seen, but also how people are invited to engage with the spaces around them.

Patrizio Vailati Facchini | Hidden Threshold | 2026





Patrizio Vailati Facchini | Hidden Threshold | 2026



Patrizio Vailati Facchini | Hidden Threshold | 2026

Jeremy Gotzler

 jeremy_the_traveler

Jeremy Gotzler is a German author and visual storyteller with a strong interest in travel, atmosphere, and quiet everyday details. His work often explores the space between place, memory, and imagination, with a particular focus on Japan and the small visual moments that are easily overlooked.

Artist statement

These photographs are quiet observations from Japan, focusing on small visual moments rather than iconic landmarks. I am interested in the tension between everyday urban life and older layers of tradition: shrine gates between apartment buildings, narrow streets shaped by cables and shadows, paper umbrellas, trees, blossoms, and objects that seem ordinary at first glance. The series looks for poetry in overlooked details. Instead of showing Japan as a postcard, I wanted to capture fragments that feel lived in, temporary, and slightly hidden. The images are about stillness, texture, repetition, and the feeling of passing through places that hold more than they immediately reveal.

Jeremy Gotzler | Golden Threshold | 2026





Jeremy Gotzler | Quiet Bend | 2026

Jeremy Gotzler | Paper Suns | 2026



Evangelia Mavridou

(Evangelia Mavridis Photography)

 evangelia_mavridis.photography

Evangelia Mavridou is a fine art photographer based in Greece whose work explores the emotional landscape between reality and memory. Self-taught, she creates atmospheric black-and-white images that begin with her own photographs and evolve through a painterly digital process, transforming familiar scenes into contemplative visual narratives. Drawn to solitude, light, silence, and the quiet presence of nature, her work invites viewers to experience places as emotional spaces rather than literal representations. Through abstraction, mood, and visual poetry, she seeks to evoke reflection and personal interpretation. Evangelia's photographs have been selected for an upcoming traveling exhibition across five cities, and she continues to develop a distinctive artistic voice through projects that blur the boundaries between photography, memory, and imagination.

Artist statement

This series explores the fragile space where landscape becomes emotion. Rather than documenting places as they appear, these photographs transform familiar environments into interior landscapes shaped by memory, solitude, and longing. Together they form a visual poem about presence and absence, about the conversations we have with silence, and about the traces we leave in places that continue to remember us.



Evangelia Mavridis | Where the Light Waits | 2026



Katelyn Secchiano

 katelyn.secc

Artist statement

A hobbyist photographer, I love photography for its tendency to reframe perspective, be it through human scale, the passage of time, or highlighting the otherwise peripheral moments. I collect photos as souvenirs from travels and favourite memories. Canadian-based.

Katelyn Secchiano | Smoke | 2026





INTERVIEW

Ludivine Martinez

 martinezludivine_

Your project *Tant que je ne suis pas mort (As Long As I Am Not Dead)* is deeply intimate and personal. How did you decide that photography could become a way to accompany and document this experience?

Photography had already been an important part of my life, a way of looking at and understanding the world. When I went through this period, it felt natural to create this project and bear witness to what we were experiencing. It was also a way of staying connected to that experience, accompanying it day by day and giving it a space to exist.

As Long As I Am Not Dead was born from a need to give shape to something that was difficult to express otherwise. Photography allowed me to transform a deeply intimate experience into a space for reflection and sharing. Through images, I could capture fragments of reality, emotions, and



moments of vulnerability or resilience that often escaped words. The project gradually became both a personal testimony and a way of opening a broader conversation about vulnerability, illness, and our relationship with life itself.

The title of the series carries a strong emotional and existential weight. What does this phrase mean to you within the context of the project?

The title *As Long As I Am Not Dead* comes directly from something my partner said after his very first surgery, during which part of the tumor was removed. At that time, he was still able to speak. Despite the physical consequences of the operation, he said that he would rather be in that condition than be dead. Those are literally his words.

I was immediately struck by the strength and sincerity of that sentence. In just a few words, it expressed both the brutal reality of his situation and his profound attachment to life.

It therefore felt obvious to use it as the title of the project. The phrase encapsulates something essential to this work: the coexistence of fragility and resilience, of fear and hope. More than a title, it is also a way of keeping his voice at the heart of the project and preserving the trace of his words.

Beyond its origin, the phrase became a kind of guiding thread. It reflects the mindset with which we lived through those years: taking life one day at a time, learning to live with uncertainty, yet continuing to move forward despite everything. It carries both an awareness of the illness and a refusal to be defined solely by it. It is also a way of letting his own words guide the narrative. This project tells our story, but the title serves as a reminder that it is first and foremost rooted in his experience, his voice, and his way of facing what was happening to him.

How do you navigate the boundary between documenting illness and preserving the dignity, privacy, and identity of the person you photograph?

The question of dignity and respect was present from the very beginning. We were engaged in this process together, and he was fully aware of the project, its intentions, and every image that was made.

The trust he placed in me was essential. It allowed me to photograph moments of great vulnerability, but it also came with



a responsibility. I never felt the need to photograph everything. Some moments belonged to our intimacy, and it felt important to preserve them, both out of respect for him and for ethical reasons. The fact that a situation could be photographed did not necessarily mean that it should be.

I sought to document his experience of illness. What interested me was bearing witness to what we were going through together, while continuing to show the person he was beyond his condition. Illness occupied an important place in our lives, but it did not define who he was.

This boundary between documentation and intimacy was shaped throughout the project through listening, dialogue, and mutual trust. For me, preserving his dignity meant, above all, respecting his wishes, his perspective on the images, and the way he wanted to be represented.

Many of the images focus on fragments of the body - hands, skin, hair, medical traces. What draws you to this fragmented visual language?

I don't think I consciously set out to fragment the body at first. It was rather a way of photographing that emerged naturally throughout the project.

These fragments of the body revealed a great deal about what we were going through. The scars, medical marks, hair loss, and everyday gestures bore witness to the effects of the illness, but also to the body's capacity to endure, adapt, and continue despite everything.

I was also interested in the physical and sensory dimension of these details. Photographed up close, they can give the viewer the feeling of almost being able to touch the skin, the hair, or the traces left on the body. This sense of proximity creates a form of intimacy and empathy that felt important to me.

However, these fragments are never intended as isolated images. They are part of a larger body of work, a narrative built through the accumulation of images, gestures, and moments.

Each detail acts as a clue, contributing to a broader experience without ever claiming to represent it in its entirety.

Your photographs often feel quiet and tactile, almost as if the viewer can feel the skin, fabric, or hospital environment. How important is this sensory dimension in your work?

The sensory dimension is very important in my work.

Photography is often perceived as a primarily visual medium, but I am interested in its ability to evoke other sensations and to engage the body's memory.

In this project, I was trying to create a sense of proximity to what we were experiencing. The textures of skin, fabrics, everyday objects, and the hospital environment were all integral parts of that experience. Photographing them with attention allowed me to make visible sensations that are often difficult to put into words.

I like the idea that an image can trigger a physical memory or sensation in the viewer. That one might almost feel the softness of a fabric, the fragility of skin, or the particular atmosphere of a hospital room. This sensory dimension, in my view, allows the viewer to enter the image in a more intimate and embodied way. Beyond documentation, what I am ultimately trying to convey is a lived experience. The sensory dimension is one of the ways I create that connection.

When working so closely with someone you love, how does the act of photographing change the relationship between presence, care, and memory?

I do not think that photographing fundamentally changed our relationship. I was first and foremost his partner, and photography had already been an important part of my life long before this project. It therefore felt natural to continue photographing what we were going through together. At the same time, I felt a need to preserve a trace of our experience. We were living through an intense period marked by change, uncertainty, and precious moments. Photography allowed me to hold on to fragments of that reality and to preserve moments that might otherwise have faded with time. The images gradually became a form of memory—not only of the illness, but also of our relationship, our daily life, and everything that continued to exist despite the upheavals we were facing. Today, they stand as a record of that shared experience and of the way we lived through it together.

What do you hope viewers will carry with them after encountering *As Long As I Am Not Dead*?

I hope that people who have experienced illness, either personally or through a loved one, will recognize something of their own experience in the work. Although the project is rooted in a very personal story, it addresses a reality shared by many people and one that is still not talked about enough: cancer and its impact on everyday life.

Through these images, I wanted to make visible an experience that is often lived in private. Not to seek sympathy, but to create a space for recognition and connection. I wanted to show not only the illness itself, but also everything that surrounds it: love, care, uncertainty, intimacy, and the transformations that become part of daily life.

If the work can help open conversations around cancer, or make someone feel seen and less alone in their experience, then I feel it has achieved something meaningful.



Elise Fisher

 elise_desmet_photography

Artist statement

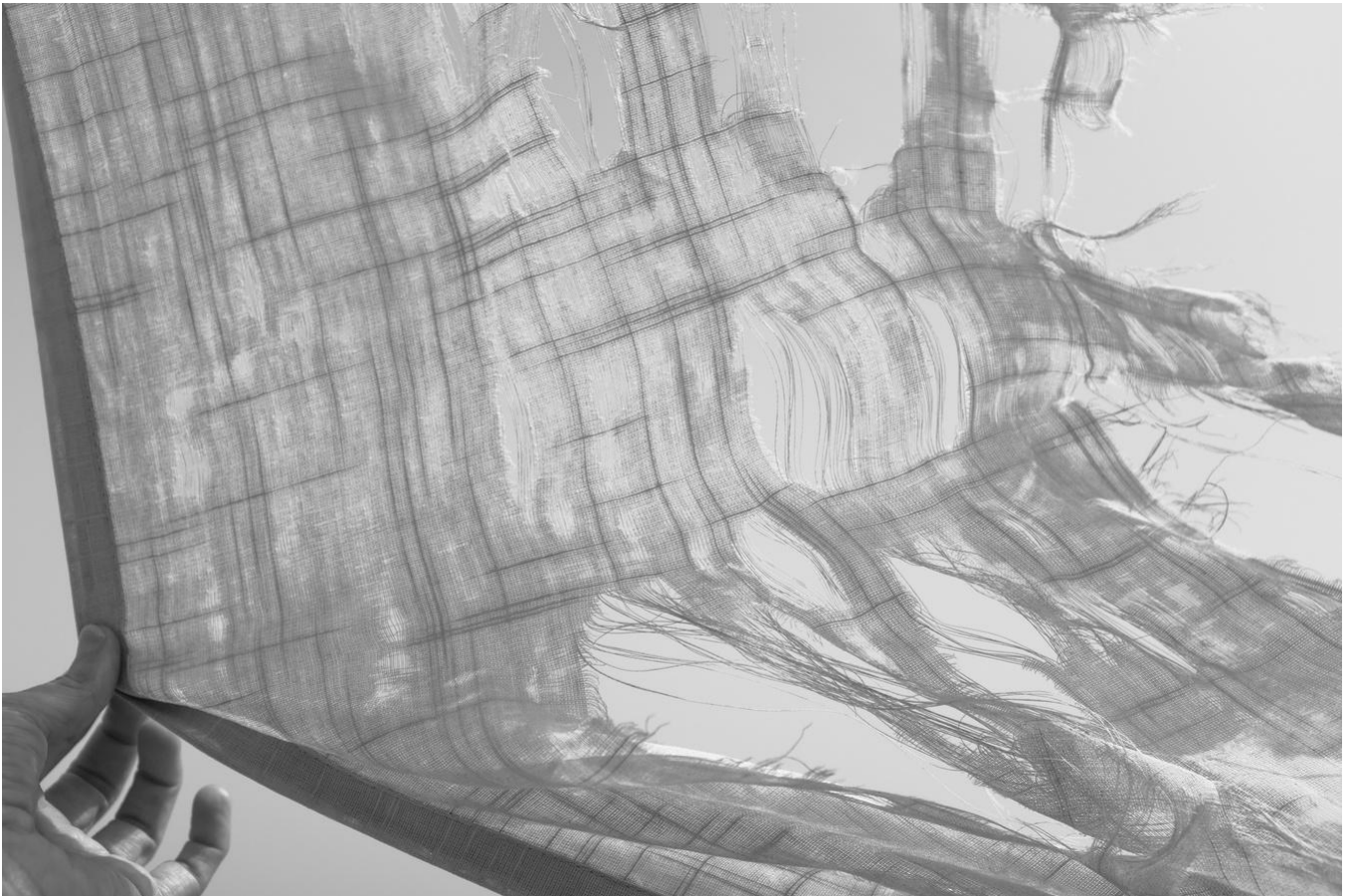
Elise Fisher is a French photographer based in Ireland. Her work is driven by the details that catch her eye.



Elise Fisher | Cévennes | 2024



Elise Fisher | Cloud in the Window | 2020



Elise Fisher | Worn | 2024

Glen Powley

 powpics0

My name is Glen Powley, and I would like to submit my photography work for your consideration! Over the past several years, I have developed a photographic style that I am confident in. Much of my work is created on film, which has helped shape my approach to image-making and taught me to be intentional with every frame. Whether documenting people, places, or fleeting moments, I strive to create photographs that feel honest, personal, and timeless. I am confident in the voice I have developed as a photographer and in the body of work I am submitting. My images reflect both technical craftsmanship and a strong visual perspective, and I believe they can contribute meaningfully to your publication, exhibition, or platform. Thank you for taking the time to review my work. I appreciate your consideration and would be happy to provide any additional information if needed. I look forward to hearing your thoughts. It means a lot!

Artist statement

I have been shooting film since the end of high school. It has become almost religious for me at this point. I try to fill my frames with an internal feeling that the viewer can suggest, be it calm, loneliness, happiness, etc!

Glen Powley | Wagon





Glen Powley | Lost at Sea



Glen Powley | Man and Sea

Beatrice Wong

 missypfeathers

Beatrice Wong is a Hong Kong based transwoman who is part photographer and filmmaker, part writer, part DJ and musician. Her focus on photography currently is reigniting a sense of wonder in the wonderful cityscapes of Hong Kong since leaving behind the world of addiction, a world that has blinded her from seeing beauty. Her modus operandi is patient street photography with little retouching, she doesn't know how to use Photoshop, what she does know is - to loiter in the streets of Hong Kong that's full of contradictions, to point the camera at scenes where grace pierce through the shadows.

Artist statement

After 30 years of self-destruction, going to seek out and doing the work in recovery has led me to see myself and the world in a new light, light that's both literal and metaphorical; light that is healing, light that is overwhelming, light that is hope carving out a path in an existence of dread and sorrow. This street photography project is reflective of my spiritual journey in recovery, a willingness to let light in to quell the pull of the dark void in one's soul, the act of allowing oneself to be touched by light while treading amongst the doom and gloom of uncertainty and instability.

Beatrice Wong | Approaching Grace | 2026





Beatrice Wong | Light in the Crowd | 2026



Beatrice Wong | Inching Towards Home | 2026

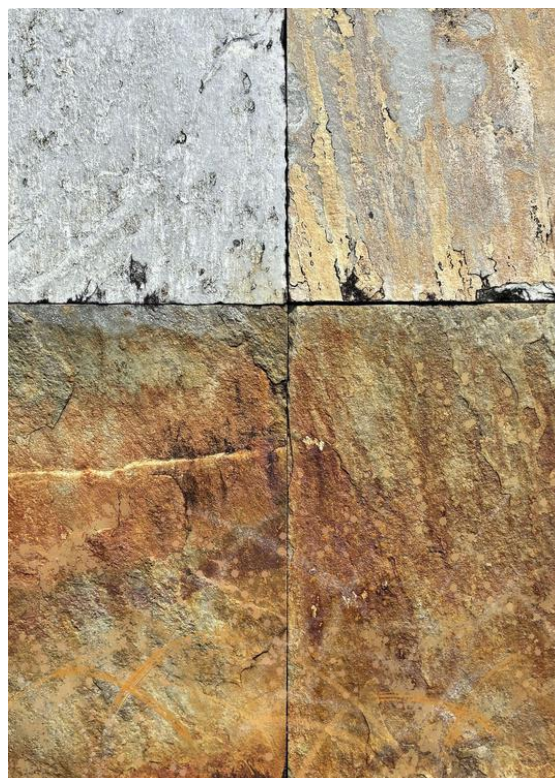
Antonio Domingos



Antonio Domingos was born in Portugal, and lives in the city of Oporto. He is a painter by training, yet photography has become his primary tool of expression. His creative journey is rooted in a minimalist approach, guided by the principles of geometry and the Golden Ratio. Where canvas once guided his hands, he now searches for harmony in the surfaces of walls, doors, and windows—spaces marked by time, weather, and human presence. His work explores the quiet order found in everyday materials: weathered wood, rusted metal, concrete, and industrial textures. Through careful observation, he seeks to reveal the beauty in imperfection and the transformation that occurs as materials age and decay. Each composition is a study in balance—vertical and horizontal lines echoing the fundamental directions of our universe.

Artist statement

My work is unified by a minimalist sensibility. I strip away distraction, focusing on the essential geometry of rectangles, verticals, and horizontals. This compositional rigor, based on the Golden Ratio, creates a sense of order and balance, even as the subject matter itself is about imperfection and transformation. There's also a strong emotional thread: a kind of contemplative stillness. Rather than dramatizing decay, I invite viewers to pause and notice the subtle harmonies in surfaces most people overlook. The interplay between natural and industrial materials, the tension between organic textures and human-made structures, and the dialogue between documentation and intervention all contribute to a cohesive artistic voice. My art encourages viewers to slow down, look closely, and discover the hidden order within the everyday. In my most recent works, I engage in a dialogue between photography and painting, intervening directly upon the surfaces I depict. Each work begins with a photograph of a weathered wall, door, or industrial material—sites marked by time, decay, and the silent histories of their environment. Onto these captured surfaces, I digitally introduce painterly gestures: lines, marks, or spattered “painting” that both disrupt and harmonize with the underlying textures. This process is an act of collaboration with the material world. The pictorial interventions do not seek to conceal the original surface, but to amplify its presence—highlighting the interplay between natural imperfection and intentional mark-making. Geometry, balance, and the Golden Ratio continue to guide my compositions, but now the boundary between documentation and creation becomes porous. Through these works, I invite viewers to consider the layered nature of perception: how meaning emerges from the meeting of observation and imagination, of found structure and artistic intervention. They are a meditation on transformation, resilience, and the quiet poetry that arises when the hand of the artist meets the silent testimony of timeworn surfaces.



Antonio Domingos | Silent Stone



Sumesh Senan

 sumesh_senan

I am a photographer and filmmaker/video producer with over 18 years of professional experience, having completed more than 400 commercial assignments across diverse industries. Early in my career, after completing an MBA in Marketing, I worked with Singapore Airlines. In 2013, I transitioned fully into a creative path as a photographer and video producer. With no formal art or design education, I am entirely self-taught, building my practice through experimentation, observation, and continuous learning. Over time, this has allowed me to develop a distinct visual language and a broad skill set.

Artist statement

My series, "ADAPT," features Bangalore-based practitioner Nidhi Yogini. The project places yoga within busy metros and chaotic city spaces to show how stillness can exist even where it seems impossible. It strips away the cliché backgrounds of serene green parks and pristine studios to reframe yoga as an everyday act practiced not in ideal environments, but in real ones. It is about grounding, not escaping. Centering, not withdrawing. Finding space, even when none appears available.





Kai Johnson

 [kqj.photography](https://www.instagram.com/kqj.photography)

Kai Johnson is a British photojournalist and documentary photographer covering political demonstrations across the UK, documenting movements from all parts of the political spectrum. His work focuses on the people at the centre of these events, using a grounded, observational approach to show how political beliefs are expressed in public spaces. Johnson's images emphasise the context and human dynamics that shape moments of tension, solidarity, and disagreement. Alongside his political coverage, he photographs cultural events and local traditions, recording how communities gather, celebrate, and express identity. This combination of political and cultural reportage builds a broader picture of contemporary Britain as it is lived on the ground.

Artist statement

My work as a photojournalist centres on true and honest storytelling and creating a public record of events that unfold. I focus on documenting the people who gather in Britain's streets to protest, show allegiance, or simply to be seen. I pay close attention to the individuals who stand within these crowds. What interests me is not the headline version of politics, but the human expression of it: the gestures, tensions, and quiet interactions that occur when people publicly express their opinion. The images in this project come from right-wing political demonstrations such as Unite the Kingdom rallies and Raise the Colours demonstrations. I approached these events with a grounded, observational style, working quietly and without intervention, letting scenes develop on their own terms. Photography, for me, is a way of recording how identity is performed and contested in real time. These six images are a small part of an ongoing effort to document contemporary Britain through the people who shape it at street level.

Kai Johnson | Crowd Control | 2026





Kai Johnson | Faith Fury | 2025



Kai Johnson | Smoke Signal | 2026

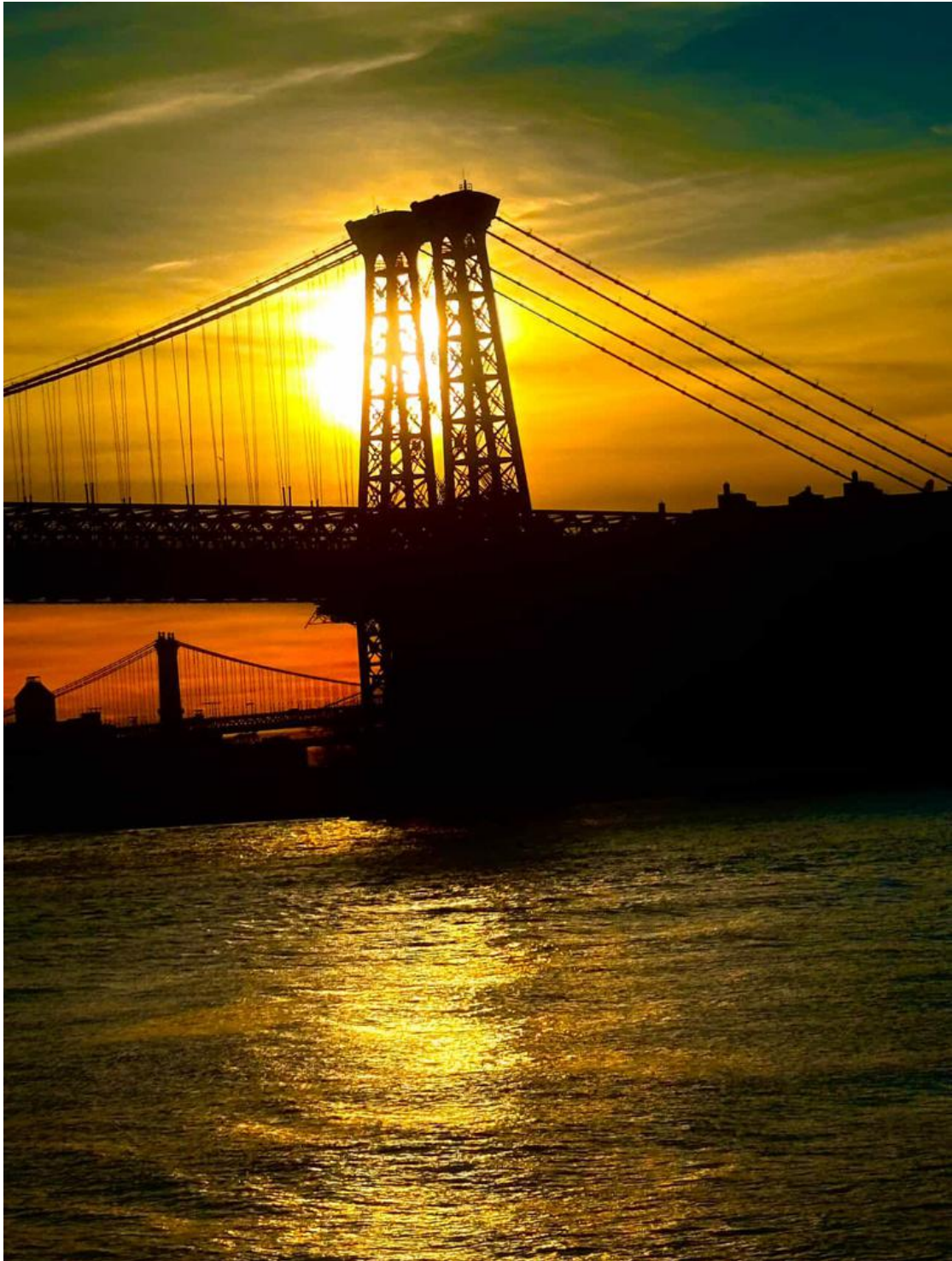
Venture Awaits

 photosfrommr

I am a self taught photographer who built up my brand over the past year from scratch. I explore every moment wholeheartedly looking for my camera to guide me to my next shot. Allowing my intuition to flow and show me the orchestra of movement.

Artist statement

I hope these photos speak to your soul. Too visually stun you in a way that is hard to describe. Venture awaits.





Todd Reynolds

 toddrey_901

I am an artist, using photography as media. I have a BFA in Photography and an MFA in Visual Studies. Currently I am a professor at a university, teaching photography, digital media, and art appreciation.

Artist statement

I look at the dark side of things, mostly the darker side of masculinity. I use the male body as a place of discussion for how the perceptions of the male in society can be subverted, emphasized, or annihilated.





Michele Gurrieri

 michele_gurrieri_dop

Biography

I was born in Florence, Italy. From childhood onward, I was immersed in art, drawing, and culture. I discovered cinema thanks to my mother and my older brothers, who exposed me, as a child, to an unfiltered love of film.

As a teenager, armed with an analogic camera (also inherited from my older brothers), I began to immerse myself voraciously in photography and the darkroom; I explored, wandered, and freely developed my visual sensibility, eventually coming to the conclusion that the moving images might be my path into art.

In 2006, I applied at La Fémis cinema school in Paris in the cinematography department. It was there that I discovered this profession—one of creativity, intelligence, rigor, and absolute passion: Director of Photography. I graduated in 2010.

For several years now, alongside my work as a cinematographer, I've been pursuing a creative practice on multiple fronts: I direct documentary films, installations, and experimental films; I'm also a photographer and the author of a documentary photo book on the society and politics of my native country, Italy: "Ogni mare ha un'altra riva - viaggio in Italia con una reflex", published in 2019.

I have participated in group exhibitions and held a solo exhibition in 2021. Since 2022, I have been working on the series I am presenting here, shot on film in color, which is much more intimate than my previous work. I am also currently working on a photo book based on family archive images discovered after the death of my parents.

Project Statement

I began *Lontano lontano nel tempo* as a formal exploration of the representation of romantic grief. The title, in fact, is taken from a line in an old song by Luigi Tenco about the distance from a loved one.

But the years have passed, the wound has largely healed and transformed, and the series has become a sort of personal diary of a wandering gaze - often with my eyes downcast, often drawn to the mundane and the random, which create ephemeral compositions before my eyes.

Portraits are rare: they are loved ones from my past and present, figures from my private life and daily routine. The way I look at them is modest and filled with affection.

Perhaps more than absence itself, it is the solitary experience of the photographic gaze - and the possibility of sharing these personal flashes of insight - that structures and unites these images.

Michele Gurrieri | *Lontano lontano* | 2026





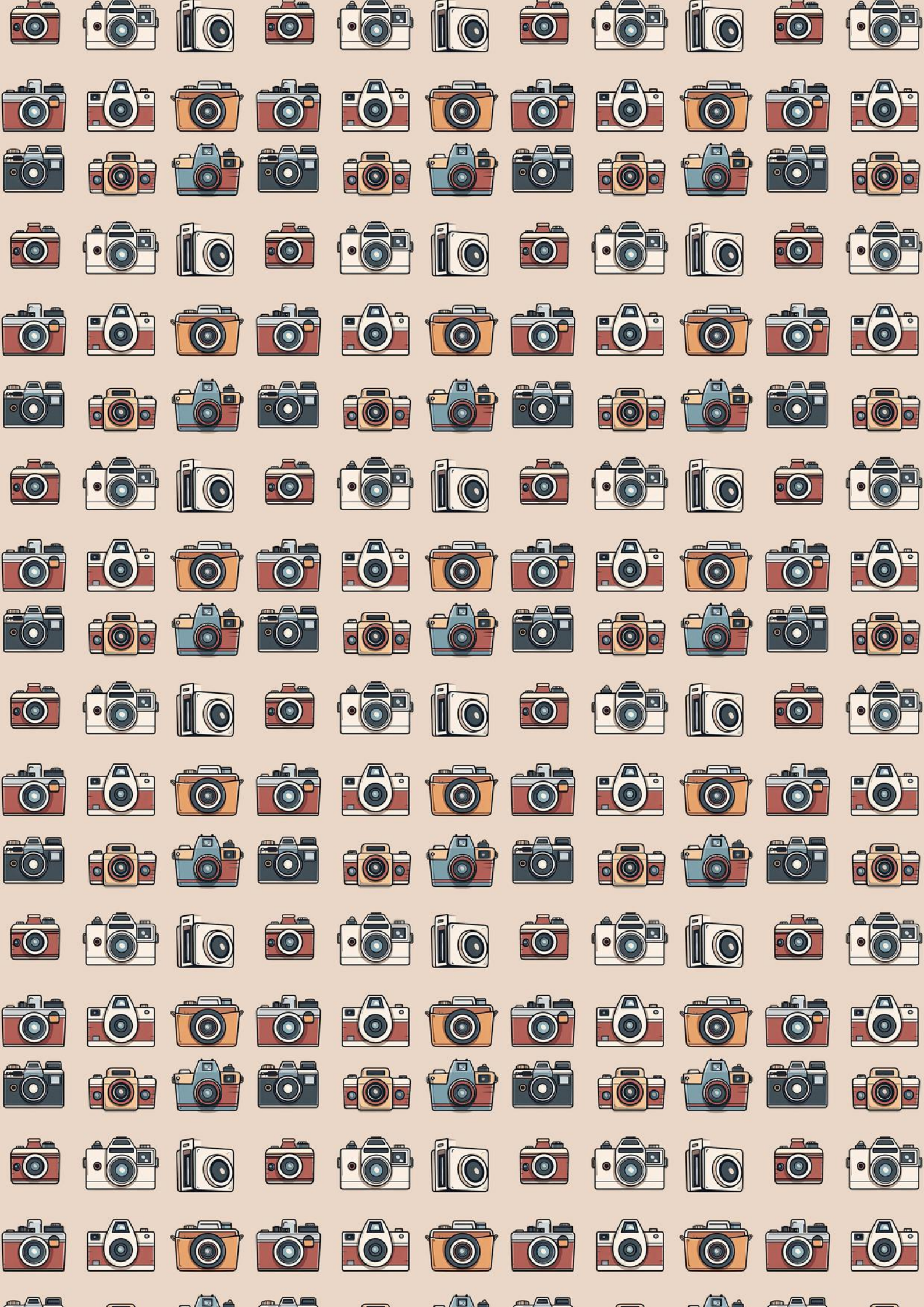
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