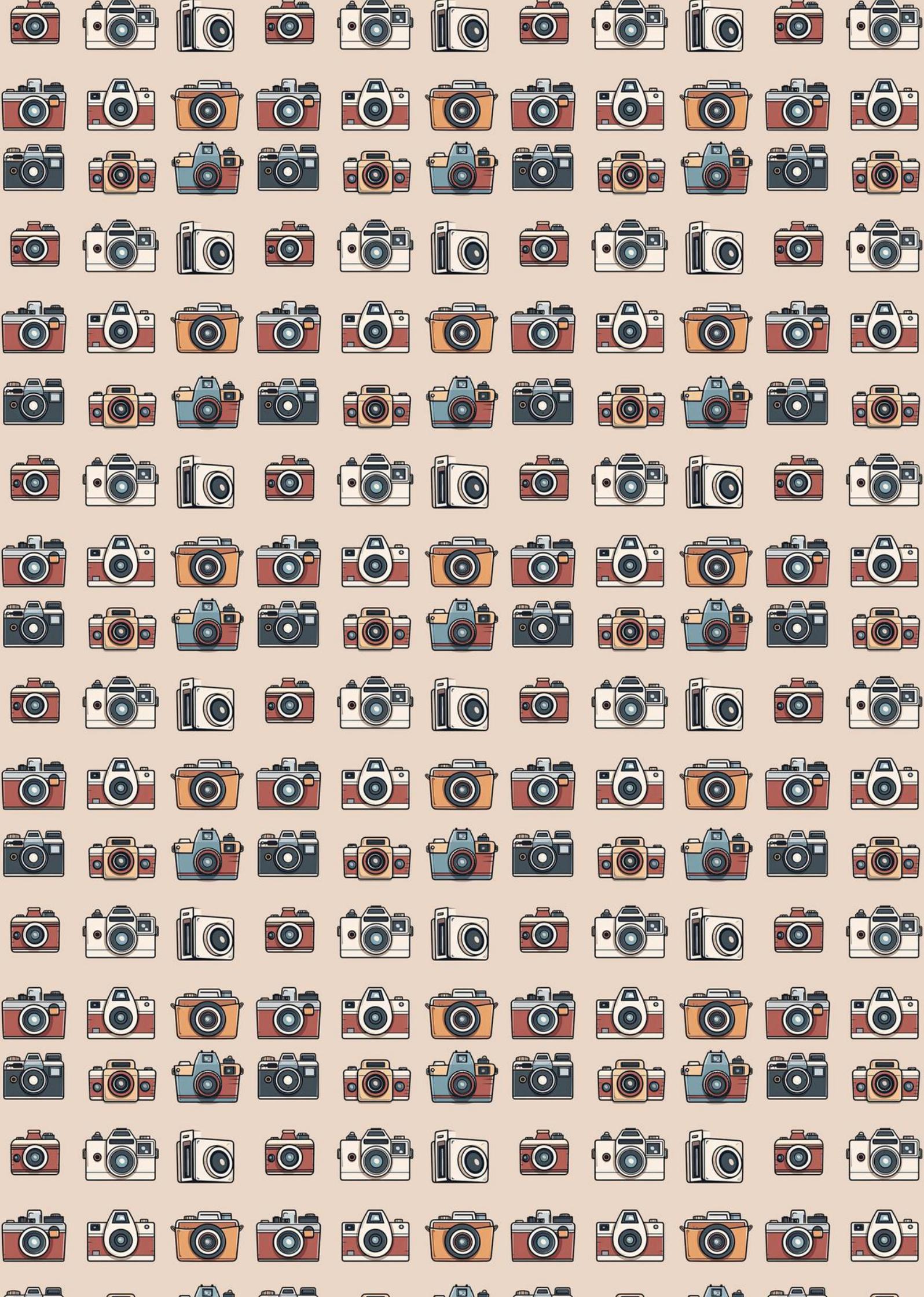


NO 8 · OCTOBER 25

VISUAL POETRY JOURNAL





— INTRO



Anna Gvozdeva

Curator of
Visual Poetry Journal

Hello, dear reader,

Welcome to the eighth issue of our photography magazine. This edition continues our mission to showcase powerful visual storytelling from both established photographers and fresh new voices. Inside, you'll discover striking imagery that reveals the inspiration and process behind the lens. Whether you're a professional or simply passionate about photography, we hope this issue sparks creativity, reflection, and connection. Dive into a new collection of moments captured in every frame and every story.

On the Front Cover:
Daniela Kahlert
Hot tub(e)

On the Back Cover:
Fuad Sarkar
New day
2022



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

INTERVIEW

Dustin-David Chu

 Dustindavidchu



You often connect your photography to your mental-health journey. How did photography first become a way to express and process those experiences?

Photography began for me not just as a way to make beautiful images, but as a lifeline. Growing up in a conservative Christian environment, I felt the weight of theology, expectations, and the tension with my own identity, particularly my sexuality. The camera became a way to externalize what felt like an internal storm of emotions.

At my lowest, my earliest works were surprisingly playful, colorful, and even quirky, almost as if I were subconsciously creating a safe world for myself. Over time, as I pursued therapy and began caring for my mental health, my work shifted. The images grew darker, more reflective, carrying the weight of the struggles I had long tried to silence. But that shift was crucial: photography became a tool of resilience, a way to see myself honestly, to acknowledge trauma, and to heal through it.

You have lived in different cities—Portland, Seattle, Las Vegas, and now the Bay Area. How have these moves influenced your artistic perspective and subject matter?

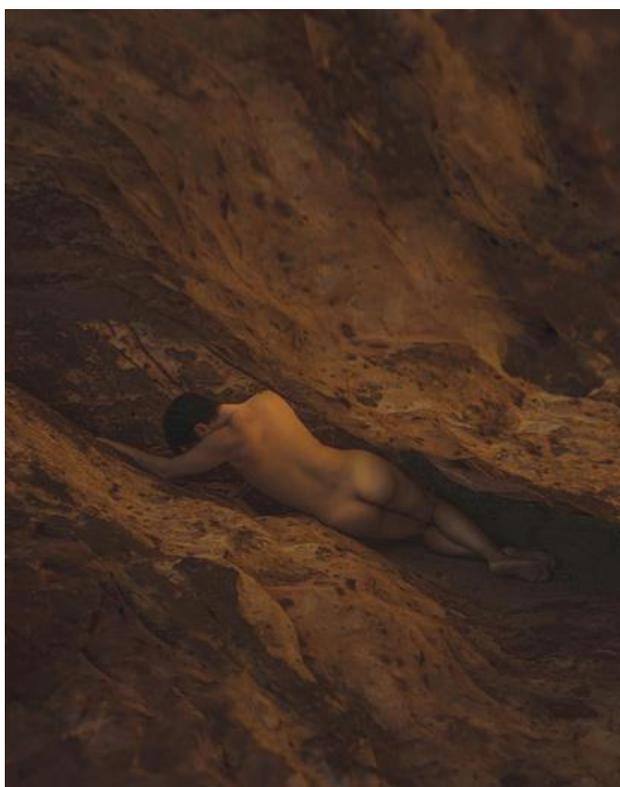
My artistic journey has been shaped by the places I've called home. I began my journey in the lush landscapes of the Pacific Northwest, capturing mountains, rivers, and the quiet details of nature. Seattle invited me to look closer, to experiment with abstraction and minimalism, finding beauty in overlooked objects and everyday spaces. Then came Las Vegas: stark, bright, and almost devoid of the greenery I was used to. That contrast pushed me toward portraiture, where the human presence became my landscape. As a naturally shy person, the camera became my bridge—an invitation to approach others, to connect, and to collaborate. Each move carried its own lessons, shifting my perspective and expanding the way I understand both art and people.

Your self-portraits are rich in symbolism and dramatic lighting. Can you describe your creative process—from concept to final image?

I've always been drawn to avant-garde and baroque portraiture: the drama of light, the emotional weight of a longing gaze. That language of chiaroscuro and symbolism deeply influences my own self-portraits and other subjects as well. Most concepts begin with a question: how can I translate a specific emotional or psychological experience into a visual form? From there, I think about the 'what' and the 'how'—what the emotion felt like, and how that feeling might manifest symbolically.

Sometimes it's being torn apart, sometimes it's the presence of a shadow self. I'll sketch or visualize the idea, then consider the technical elements: how light should fall across my face, which colors or props might embody the theme, and what composition will carry the weight of the story. The final image emerges through multi-layering: shooting, refining, and editing until the photograph no longer just depicts me, but becomes a reflection of the inner state I was trying to confront.

How do poetry and photography intersect in your practice?



Dustin-David Chu | Chasm



Does one medium influence or inspire the other?

I don't necessarily believe a photograph speaks a thousand words on its own. For me, the image and the poem complete each other. The photograph captures presence and vulnerability, while the poem carries memory and inner dialogue.

In my self-portrait, Chasm, my body lies pressed into the earth, cradled yet engulfed by stone. Visually, it speaks to collapse, to being swallowed by forces larger than myself. The accompanying poem gives that silence a voice: describing tremors, fractures, and the upheaval of inner foundations. They embody what it feels like to live through trauma: the ground beneath you suddenly unstable, the world you thought you knew breaking apart.

The photograph alone conveys stillness and surrender; the poem introduces the unseen quake beneath the surface. Together, they show both the fragility and the strength within me: that even in moments of collapse, there's still something human and real worth seeing.

Many of your works balance darkness and hope. How do you find that equilibrium when creating a series?

Finding a balance between darkness and hope is sometimes intuitive, sometimes very deliberate. Emotionally, I'm often in that place between despair and longing, but also yearning for light, and I try to let that tension live in my work. Technically, I use lighting, color, and shadow to mirror that tension: deep shadows, strong contrast, but with bursts of vivid color for accents, or moments where light breaks through, literally or metaphorically.

When planning a series, I always think about the narrative, similar to my philosophy about mental health: there has to be a journey. The darkness can't just be there for aesthetic; it needs to serve the hope. The motifs, the mood shifts, the way the subject or self-portrait moves through the frames, all help to show that hope isn't separate; it often emerges because of the darkness. The hardest pieces are the ones where hope feels forced, so I try to be patient, to let hope emerge through authenticity.

Birds, roses, and vivid colors recur in your images. What do these motifs symbolize for you?

Each motif has layers of meaning for me; they will often overlap or shift depending on the piece or what I was going through when I made it.

Birds often symbolize freedom, the possibility of transcending from one plane to another. They represent escape, a longing to be free, the ability to soar above constraints, especially those internal or societal constraints. At the same time, they remind me of fragility, of the tension of wings, that reaching for freedom often comes with risk, with vulnerability.

Roses carry both beauty and pain. Rose petals are lush, vivid, sensuous; the thorns are sharp. For me, a rose is about love, desire, but also about the wounds we carry. It's about maturing and looking back and growing from the pain.

Vivid colors in my work are a way to convey how strong the emotions are. Colors are emotional in themselves. They can feel overwhelming, joyful, and defiant. Sometimes using bold color is like raising a flag: this is me, this is my feeling, this is what I'm refusing to hide. At the same time, color can be a bridge toward hope: in darkness, color becomes more noticeable, more precious.

What advice would you give to emerging photographers who want to tell deeply personal stories through their art?

Three pieces of advice. First, be honest with yourself, even when it's scary. Personal work can mean being vulnerable. Let yourself feel uncomfortable. Let your doubts, your fears, your contradictions show: often that's where the richest work comes from.

Second, give yourself the space and time. You don't have to rush because creating pieces of personal work often unfolds slowly. Did the story you're trying to tell come to an end? Or is it still being written? Some ideas need simmering: emotional, technical, and conceptually. Shoot, reflect, pause, repeat. Again, don't rush yourself.

Third, protect your mental health. Telling personal stories means revisiting hard things. Set boundaries with yourself. Create rituals that help you close a session or decompress. Art can heal, but it can also reopen wounds, so be gentle and patient with your audience and yourself. Sometimes people will misinterpret or not see what you meant. That's okay. The person who matters most is you, and the truth you need to see. Keep making, keep refining.



Daniela Kahlert

 daniela_kahlert

I am a passionate amateur photographer and have been since the COVID-19 pandemic, when I felt a strong need to document the drastic changes taking place. I love being out on the streets, capturing the fleeting moments of everyday life—some beautiful, some tragic, and some funny.

Project Statement

The photos I've submitted are from the "Public Transportation" Series.

Using public transportation is more than just getting from A to B. People are part of a fleeting community for a shorter or longer period of time, which usually follows the same routines: setting off, waiting, persevering, arriving, leaving. In between, there is the coming and going of other people, ups and downs of boredom, frustration, (self-)entertainment...

I would like to capture and record all of this in this project.

Daniela Kahlert | Hot Tub(e)





Daniela Kahlert | Little Stories

Daniela Kahlert | Do we know each other



INTERVIEW

Jeremiah A. Gilbert

 jg_travels



Your work captures both the vastness of the world and its most intimate human moments. How do you decide what kind of story a place will tell through your lens?

I think every place has its own rhythm, and my job is to tune into it. I rarely arrive somewhere knowing what story I want to tell — instead, I let the story reveal itself through time, light, and human connection. Sometimes that story unfolds in the vastness of a landscape, where scale and silence speak louder than words. Other times, it's in a single, fleeting gesture — a glance, a laugh, a quiet act of daily life. Before I ever raise the camera, I spend time simply being present — walking, observing, listening. I want to feel what it's like to be there. The story a place tells comes from that emotional and sensory experience. In the end, I try to create images that balance the epic with the intimate — showing that even in the grandest scenes, it's the human presence, however small, that gives the world its meaning.

You've visited more than a hundred countries. Are there certain places that have shaped your artistic vision more than others?



Jeremiah A. Gilbert | Halong Bay, Vietnam | 2014

Absolutely. Certain places stay with you long after you've left, and they inevitably shape how you see the world — and how you photograph it. For me, it's often the places that challenge my sense of scale and perspective. The stillness of Antarctica, for example, taught me to embrace minimalism and the power of negative space. In contrast, the chaos and color of markets in India or Morocco reminded me how beauty can emerge from rhythm and movement. But beyond geography, it's the emotional resonance of a place that leaves a mark. Standing in a remote village in the Andes or watching dusk settle over a temple in Thailand — those moments recalibrate your awareness of light, time, and human connection. Each place adds a layer to my visual language. Over time, I've realized my artistic vision isn't shaped by any single destination, but by the way these experiences intersect — vast and intimate, structured and spontaneous — forming a kind of global mosaic of perception.

Many of your photographs reveal quiet, contemplative atmospheres. What draws you to those still, reflective moments rather than dramatic or action-filled scenes?

I'm drawn to stillness because it reveals something essential — both about the place and about ourselves. In those quiet, in-between moments, the noise of the world falls away, and what remains feels honest and timeless. Drama and action have their place, but contemplation allows space for emotion to breathe. For me, photography isn't about capturing spectacle; it's about capturing presence. A soft light on a wall, a figure lost in thought, the hush before a city wakes — these are the moments that ask you to pause and feel rather than just look. Stillness has its own power. It invites connection, reflection, and a kind of empathy that can transcend language or culture.

How has your perception of "travel" evolved from your early trips to your most recent journeys?

In the beginning, travel was about discovery — the excitement of new places, new cultures, new images to capture. I was chasing the world, trying to see as much as I could. Over time, that impulse has quieted. Now, travel feels less about movement and more about meaning. It's no longer just where I go, but how deeply I can connect once I'm there. I've learned that the most profound journeys aren't always to distant places; sometimes they're about seeing the familiar with new eyes. My perception of travel has shifted from collecting experiences to cultivating awareness — slowing down, listening more, and letting each encounter change the way I see both the world and myself.

You often mention curiosity as the core of your practice. How do you sustain that sense of wonder after visiting so many places?

Curiosity is less something I have to sustain than something I return to intentionally. Every place, no matter how familiar, holds layers I haven't yet seen — a pattern of light, a fleeting expression, a sound that shifts my perception. I try to approach each moment as if I'm encountering it for the first time, which keeps wonder alive. Travel also teaches patience and attentiveness. When I slow down, walk instead of rush, and allow myself to truly observe, the world continually surprises me. After more than a hundred countries, I've realized that curiosity isn't about novelty; it's about presence — noticing what's often overlooked and letting that discovery guide my photography.

Some of your images, such as those taken in Tibet, Vietnam, or Japan, balance cultural documentation and personal emotion. How do you navigate between being a storyteller and a respectful observer?



Jeremiah A. Gilbert | Gyeongbokgung Palace, Seoul, South Korea | 2025

For me, the line between storyteller and observer is guided by empathy and attentiveness. I enter every place with curiosity, but also humility — recognizing that I am a guest in someone else's world. My goal is never to impose a narrative, but to translate what I see and feel in a way that honors the people and cultures I encounter. I try to photograph from a place of connection rather than extraction. That might mean waiting for a moment of genuine interaction, noticing subtleties in daily life, or simply observing quietly until a story emerges on its own. Balancing documentation and emotion comes down to presence: being fully aware of the environment, the people, and my own role within it, so the images reflect both authenticity and respect.

What advice would you give to emerging travel photographers seeking to find their own voice in a world saturated with images?

Finding your own voice as a travel photographer in today's image-saturated world starts with curiosity, not technique. Before you worry about followers or trends, immerse yourself in the places you visit—listen, observe, and let the environment shape your perspective. The most distinctive images often come from moments that resonate with you personally, rather than what you think the world wants to see. Equally important is patience. Developing a unique visual language doesn't happen overnight. Experiment relentlessly—shoot different styles, angles, and subjects—and don't be afraid to fail. Over time, patterns emerge, and your eye begins to recognize what feels authentic to you. The photographers who stand out aren't those who imitate others, but those who translate their genuine experiences into images that make viewers see the world through their eyes.



Jeremiah A. Gilbert | Wat Phanan Choeng, Ayutthaya, Thailand | 2012

Simone Campedelli

Artist Statement

My work explores human stories through black and white photography. With strong cuts and contrasts, I focus on hands, faces, and gestures to reveal both fragility and dignity in everyday life.





INTERVIEW

Kartikeya Malhotra

 kartikeyamalhotraphoto



Your work focuses on the “unseen currents” beneath the surface of human experience. How do you translate these invisible emotions into visual form?

I don't see it as a translation. It's more an act of recognition. I believe these internal states, these invisible emotions have echoes in the external world. It could be a certain quality of light, the contour of a landscape, the atmosphere of an empty room or the way distance sits between two people. My work is about finding these moments of resonance where the inner world and the outer world align. The photograph isn't a depiction of an emotion; but a canvas where that emotion can be felt.

In your statement you describe your practice as



“witnessing.” Could you elaborate on what witnessing means to you in the context of photography?

To witness is to surrender judgment, to remove oneself as much as possible. It's the act of observing without trying to possess. In my process, witnessing means standing in quiet observation until the world arranges itself into meaning. When I am photographing, I don't try to impose a narrative but allow one to reveal itself to me. The resulting image is not something I have created, but something that happened.

The project *What the sea remembers* reimagines the coast as a threshold to the subconscious. What first inspired you to explore the sea in this way?

The sea has always felt like a mirror to my mind - vast, reflective, and cryptic. It kind of holds history without keeping records. I was drawn to that duality, to its permanence and its indifference. The project became a way to stand at the edge of that mystery and simply look.

How do you approach the idea of memory in your photographs—do you see images as fixed records, or as shifting, fluid impressions?

For me, they are certainly fluid impressions. In fact, memory, like water, is fluid. It never holds the same



shape twice. I have little interest in the photograph as a factual record. Like memory itself, an image is a reconstruction, an echo, a feeling that remains after the event is gone. Each time I look at an image, it changes — not because the photograph changes, but because I do. In that way, my work is less about preserving the past and more about watching memories reform themselves.

Water often symbolizes both permanence and impermanence. How do you reconcile these opposing qualities in your work?

I don't try to reconcile them. I'm drawn to that tension precisely because it's irreconcilable. It is a fundamental truth of existence. The ocean is ancient, a permanent feature of our world, yet no two waves are ever the same. I love that duality. I feel it's true to how human experience works, always changing, yet somehow the same.

Your images feel like fragments of a larger unspoken narrative. Do you plan them in advance, or do you allow them to emerge intuitively while shooting?

It begins with intuition. I go to a place with a question or feeling in my mind that I can't articulate quite yet, but the images themselves are found, not made. And then, everyday the narrative starts to reveal itself. Later, while editing, is where it all comes together. Patterns of tone, gesture, and colour emerge, and that's when I begin shaping the entire story.

What role does silence play in your creative process?

Silence is the medium. It's the prerequisite for everything else. It is in the quiet moments that we can begin to perceive the "unseen currents. It feels a bit odd to say this, because most of the time I feel like my mind is a storm. A lot of things are going on at the same time. But sometimes, when I pick up the camera, I can reach this quiet, meditative space inside where I am receptive enough to perceive these "unseen currents". My process requires internal silence to be receptive, and the final images are, I hope, an offering of silence to the viewer, a space where they can pause and feel, free from the noise of the world.

Tymur Ovsienko

 timoko.ph





INTERVIEW

Ioan Oprisan

 ioan_oprisan_photography



Your photographs often evoke a sense of isolation and awe. What draws you to such remote and untamed landscapes?

When I was a kid, I used to spend most of my time reading, and my preferred books were always the adventure stories – both historical stories, as well as fictional ones. I was and still am a big fan of the fantasy genre, with authors such as J.R.R. Tolkien firing up my imagination. One of my favourite books is Captain Hatteras by Jules Verne – in which the nearly impossible task of reaching the North Pole is nevertheless achieved through sheer determination. I guess I was always attracted by the unknown, the different, the bold. Being a rather introverted person, I consider the wilderness an escape from the monotony and noise of city life. I also tend to prefer cold weather, and many of the world's remaining wild areas have such a climate. I am particularly fascinated by ice, snow and glaciers, which are quite unique from a photographic perspective since they often act like giant reflectors.



Ioan Oprisan | Fire And Shadows | 2025

You mentioned that your journey into photography began after your mother's passing. How has that emotional origin shaped your creative process?

I tend to be a very focused person with clear goals in my mind – and photography wasn't on my radar back then. Usually when you start doing something new, you have some sort of expectations about it, because you invest time or money in it. The fact that I was suddenly left with a camera from my mother created a situation in which there was no mental pressure to "do something". So I just started taking it with me whenever I went hiking, or on a road trip, to explore what it can do. I soon discovered that what you casually capture with a camera can be very different from what you've felt in that particular moment – because a photo, no matter how expansive, is a static, two-dimensional fragment of the dynamic landscape you were standing in. I realised, however, that this can also be an advantage: the possibility to frame only what you find the most interesting in a scene, and leave out what you don't like as much. In this way, you can compensate for the loss of motion and three-dimensionality. To this day, I find the approaches to doing photography and videography to be very different, and being good at one will not necessarily make you good at the other one, although it does help. Whenever I am out in the field I struggle to convince myself to do video work because scouting for that amazing photo angle is so much more fun, haha! I approach photography in a way that reminds me of great paintings – both in the field and during editing. I can't say I am very knowledgeable in this domain, but painters such as Caspar David Friedrich or Ilya Repin inspire me. I was never able to understand "purists" who insist that a photo should be as close as possible to the way it comes out of the



camera: a camera is a tool, and the way a sensor (or analog film) works is inherently different from the way our brain interprets what our eyes see. You don't see people complaining about a painting "not being realistic enough" – for millennia, drawings and paintings have been used to depict certain events, objects, scenes and people, even though they might have been significantly different from reality. Early photographers also understood this, for example Ansel Adams is known to have extensively worked in the darkroom to bring his images closer to what his vision was. This is why I take quite some creative liberties in the way I adjust the mood in my images. My background as a musician is another reason why I approach photography in this way: because if you just leave the photo the way it comes out of the camera, where is your input in all of this? It is just like playing a song note-for-note: everyone can do it, with enough practice. Computers can do it much better. But can you transmit YOUR feelings through that song? This is what separates great artists from the good, I think. Humans from AI. It's the ability to take something, and make it unmistakably your own. As a guitar player, although a virtuoso, I was never the guy with "perfect technique". Mistakes happen. The world itself is imperfect. I became more interested, especially as time passed, in character rather than perfection. I apply this mentality to my photography too: I care relatively little about the "best camera", corner sharpness or the latest cool gadget. For me, usually the best tools are the ones that I already have, and the ones that give me as much artistic freedom as possible. I also do not care much about trends: for example, I think nowadays it is a really popular style to capture abstract, minimalistic, polished landscapes from a drone, such as a

braided glacial river. And there is nothing wrong with that. I can appreciate those kinds of images, and when the opportunity strikes, I do not hesitate to also capture such scenes if I find them interesting enough. But for me, the storytelling capacity of an image is by far the most important aspect that I'm looking for. Which is why I think some, but not all of my photos tend to be a little busier than expected. There is power in chaos.

Having studied geography and environmental sciences, how does scientific knowledge influence the way you see and capture nature?

You know, I don't think it influences the way I capture images that much, certainly not in the classic sense of "framing". I've always been first of all an artist at heart, and when I'm out in the field, my biggest concern is the "ability to speak" of the image that I'm taking. That being said, I do think that this scientific background has increased my ability to connect with the environment. Understanding the way certain geomorphological processes or ecosystems work has definitely raised my appreciation for nature, and I think it is partly responsible for my, let's say addiction to spending time in the wilderness. Perhaps this knowledge doesn't dictate the composition, but it informs the story. For example, when I see a cirque lake, I don't just see water; I see the ancient glacier that carved it. This adds a layer of complexity that probably plays an important role in the way I feel when I take that image. I also have thousands of images that will probably never see the daylight – I took them to document a certain location, event, process, even though their artistic value might be lower than what my standard is.



Many of your images feel cinematic and almost surreal. How do you find the balance between realism and emotion in your compositions?

Thank you! It is definitely a tough job trying to maintain this balance. I tend to prioritize the way an image makes you feel above anything else, as I've already mentioned before. However, there are also things that I consistently refuse to do in my images: for example, I will not add in permanent elements that do not exist in the field. I do not do focal length blends. Astrophotography aside (due to the limitations of the imaging equipment), I consistently avoid wherever possible major time blends, replacements. Not that there is anything wrong with that. But if I go too far from the original moment, I personally feel that I lose my motivation to do this. I like to spend a lot of time exploring the outdoors, and photography is a good way to give myself a purpose while doing that. For me, resorting to digital composites feels like a shortcut that has no connection to a real moment that I've experienced, even though the process itself involves significant work. Because if you are good enough, you will eventually find the interesting framing in the field, even in places that seem "boring" at first. For example, in Romania, making a great landscape photo is generally not as straightforward as it is in some iconic places such as the Alps: most mountains are smaller, rounded, grassy or densely forested, limiting the amount of options that you have in choosing a composition. This, I think, made me a better photographer, because I started exploring ideas, locations and angles that I would have never considered otherwise – it's all about the effort that you put in. And this is a constant reminder to myself that great artists aren't limited by their tools, or in this case, environment. Going back to your question, I would describe my approach in this way: I try to work with the moment rather than against it.

You travel through vast mountain ranges such as the Himalayas and the Karakorum. Could you describe one moment in those journeys that changed your perception of nature or yourself?

I think one event that significantly changed, or rather confirmed my perception about both myself and nature is the time when I was caught for days in a tropical depression

in the far east of Nepal – a remote area that is the rainiest part of the country, being closer to the Bay of Bengal. It was in September, so still technically monsoon season, but the rains that we've had were unlike anything that would be normal even during peak rainy season – it was the worst flooding that Nepal had seen in at least fifty years – there is even a Wikipedia article about it called 2024 Nepal floods. I won't get into too many details here, but getting from the Kangchenjunga trailhead to the regional town and then to Kathmandu was a real, five-day ordeal that I will never forget. I bushwhacked through steep mountain jungle, avoided dozens of landslides and dealt with a critical situation which involved a river crossing at night, all while being eaten alive by the dozens of leeches that kept finding their way to me through the clothing, despite my best efforts. There were basically wartime conditions – everything was paralyzed, roads were destroyed, communications were down and I was told even Kathmandu had no power. I chose to trek to the regional town (and it turned out, beyond!) after we got stuck for two days due to a massive, highly active landslide which destroyed the only existing road out of the valley. We had no idea when the rains would stop – it was already raining for several days without a break. My guide and I got separated at some point: despite my insistent warnings and opposition, he tried to swim across that creek I mentioned earlier – a mistake that almost claimed his life. Hundreds of people died in this natural disaster. It's a long story that is not very pleasant. But I can say this: I think in such situations, it is important to rely mostly on yourself, be calm and to evaluate the risks objectively – you can't be either too reckless or passive, you must find a balance between the two. Because being too passive in such situations can also be dangerous. My phone might have been almost dead, but some of the scenes that I saw will be forever etched in my memory, such as a dam almost overflowing despite the emergency gates being wide open. It is important to respect the power of nature.

What role does light play in your work – especially during twilight or under the stars, when the mountains seem almost otherworldly?

As you know, when it comes to landscape photography, light and weather are the second most important elements in any scene after composition (or part of it!). Good light can make



an average scene look absolutely incredible, and bad light (talking about you, harsh mid-day sun!) can make a great location forgettable. I would rather have a cloudy, grey day than harsh sunlight: at least you have some mood. That being said, there are certain niche situations in which mid-day sun can create interesting conditions, such as sharp shadows and light rays at a certain angle.

Most of my images are shot during the golden hour or the blue hour because this aligns with my style, which I would say is rather dramatic. I tend to do night-time photography when I want to create a scene that feels a little alien—because our eyes cannot distinguish colours well in the dark, while the camera can. If I had to pick a single moment of the day, a single type of light, I would probably choose the blue hour, with one caveat: to make a compelling image during that time, you often need to have something dynamic or complementary in your scene to counteract the flatness of the light—which is not always easy to find. The golden hour is much more dynamic and typically works with almost any kind of scene, so it often ends up winning when choosing an image. Another type of situation that I really like is when the sky displays dramatic storm clouds. It's probably the only time when I really enjoy shooting during the day.

Environmental degradation is a recurring theme in your statement. Do you see photography as a form of activism, documentation, or personal expression?

All my images are a form of personal expression – but that doesn't mean they can't also be a form of documentation. For me, this is a difficult subject to talk about, and I've spent years trying to come to terms with what is going on in the world.

I spent a lot of my childhood in Bukovina – a region famous for its forests. It has a long history of logging, going back to the Habsburg Empire, which gradually replaced most of the natural beech forests with conifers. But forestry was never done in such a ruthlessly precise, industrial style as it is today. Over the years, I noticed how pretty much all of the old-growth forests disappeared, and the age at which a parcel is cleared for exploitation keeps getting lower. Officially, forest cover has increased and everything is going well. But the question is, what exactly is a forest? Because it seems nowadays that “forest” is just a cover term for what I like to call “tree farms”: empty, monotonous, strictly managed, a means to an end. They are a far cry from what a real forest is – incredibly biodiverse, chaotic, alluring. It has been scientifically proven that old-growth forests are vastly more efficient at storing carbon and sustaining ecosystems. Romania was one of the last countries in Europe with remaining fragments of these real forests – and now most of them are gone. Some efforts are being made to save what can still be saved, but hardly anyone talks about restoring a part of what was lost. Because that takes a long time – and the world always prioritises quick profit over long-term value. It is an uphill battle. I am not naïve; I understand the increasing demand for land and resources, but I still think more could be done – especially at the grassroots level. In my opinion, taking photographs of remaining natural environments can play a role in helping people understand why these areas hold immense value and why they should be largely spared from development or exploitation. Most people live disconnected from nature, and it can be difficult to resonate with the idea of protecting it if you can't see its benefits. I think that natural beauty is a powerful argument for this cause.



Francisco Prieto Montesdeoca

 prietofineart

Francisco Prieto Montesdeoca (b. 1979, Germany) is a conceptual black-and-white photographer whose work explores the fragile balance between structure and solitude in contemporary urban life. With a background in business and industrial sectors, he turned to art after a personal crisis, initially through painting before finding in photography a more direct visual language for resilience and social observation. His ongoing photographic cycles, including System Clock and Urban Threshold, trace human presence within architectures of transit, consumption, and isolation. In 2025, DOCU Magazine dedicated a special issue to his work. Prieto lives near Hamburg and works between Germany and Northern Europe.

Artist Statement

My work investigates the fragile architecture of contemporary life – the silent choreography of systems, movements, and absences that define our collective existence. Through black-and-white photography, I explore how human rhythm collides with the mechanical pulse of the city: subways, markets, transit zones, and in-between places where anonymity meets emotion. These spaces become metaphors for disconnection, resilience, and the quiet persistence of individuality within structures of control.

Rather than seeking spectacle, I focus on the poetry of observation – on the tension between order and vulnerability, movement and stillness. Each image is a study of what remains unseen: the invisible pulse beneath modern surfaces.

Francisco Prieto Montesdeoca | Invisible Pulse





Francisco Prieto Montesdeoca | Silent Observere

Francisco Prieto Montesdeoca | Blind to Time



Julia Ashikhmina

 aj_filmphoto

My name is Julia, I am 42 years old.

I was born and raised in Vladivostok (the Russian Far East). Later I lived in China for a long time, and now I am based in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam.

I am married and have two children.

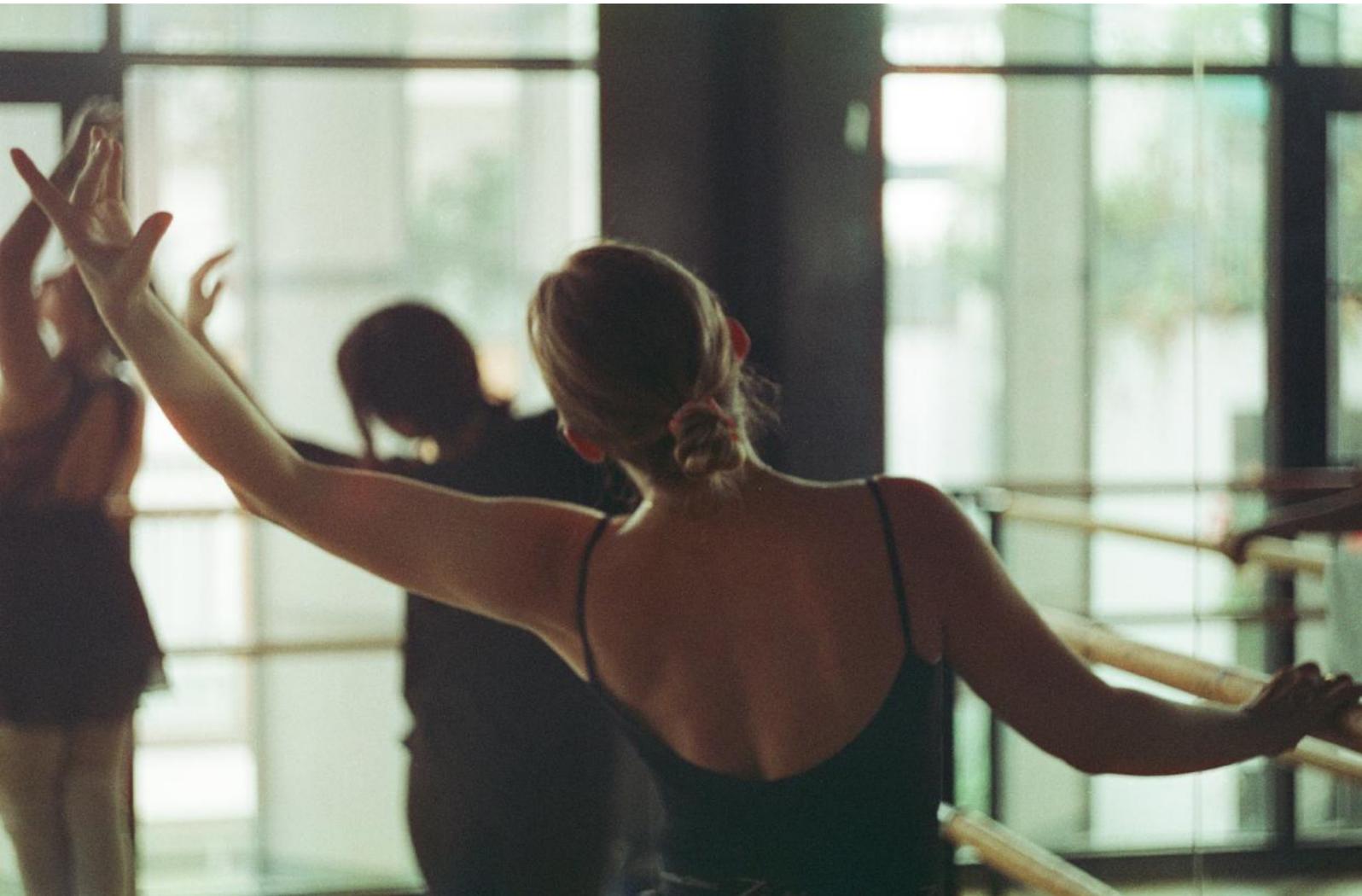
My daughters often appear as my models during photo shoots, and recently they have also become my assistants – light, wind, smoke – they handle everything perfectly.

Photographer Statement

I began my photographic journey with film, a medium that for many years remained my greatest passion. As times shifted, the unhurried rhythm of analog photography seemed to vanish, replaced by the pursuit of speed and volume – “frames per second,” thousands of shots reduced to a handful of selections. Yet in time, a quiet realization emerged: many had grown weary of this race. And with that, film began to return.

Today I work with both digital and analog cameras, though with film the connection feels like a renewed and enduring love.

This series, captured on film in a ballet studio, reflects that dialogue. Choreography, like film photography, requires thoughtfulness, focus, and full dedication. It unfolds slowly, fluidly, and with extraordinary beauty.





Martin Červinka

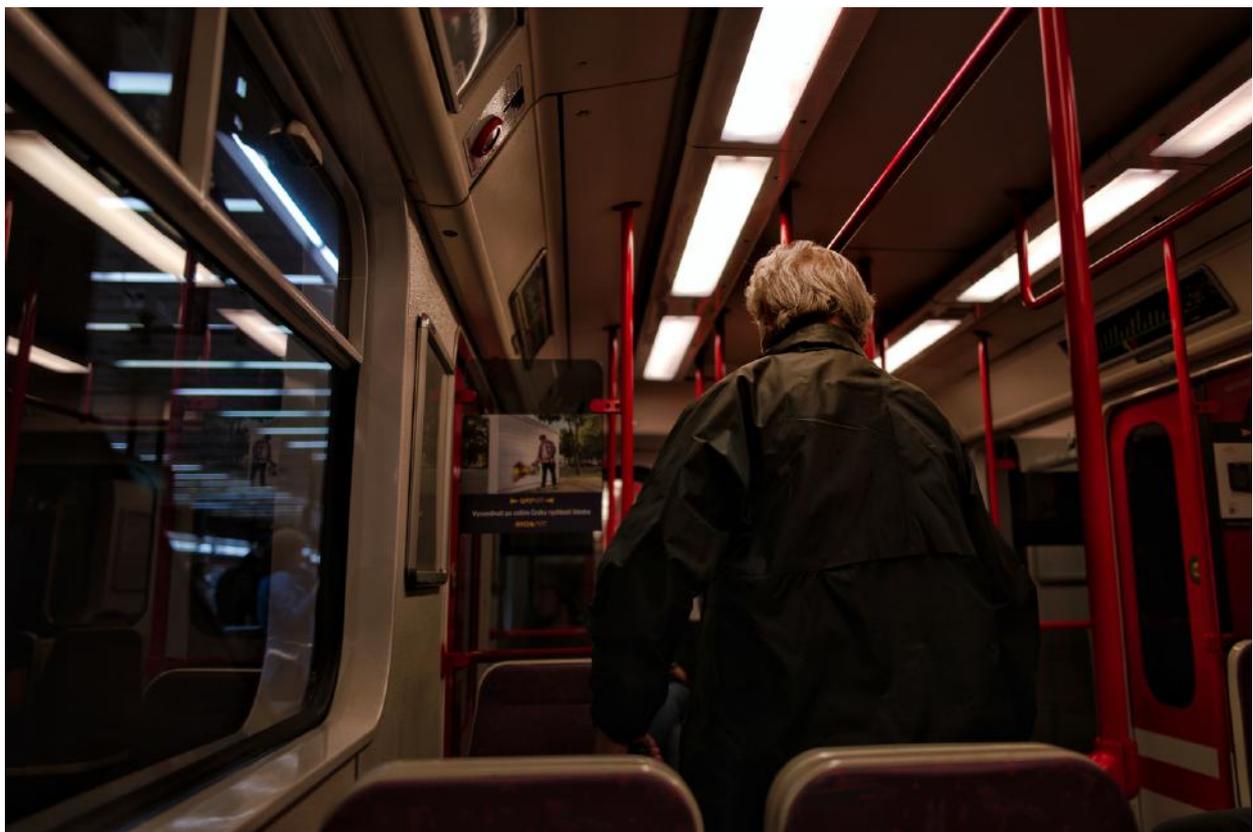
 mart.in_out

Artist Statement

I try to capture everyday life, the ordinary world around me, and above all, people in their natural state. I spend hours walking through Prague with my camera—I love this city and the world beneath it: the metro. I'm drawn to its atmosphere, colors, and lights... and from the metro, I'm sharing six selected photographs, some in color, some in black and white. This underground world is visually fascinating to me in both forms.



Martin Cervinka | Arrival | 2025



Martin Cervinka | Red | 2025



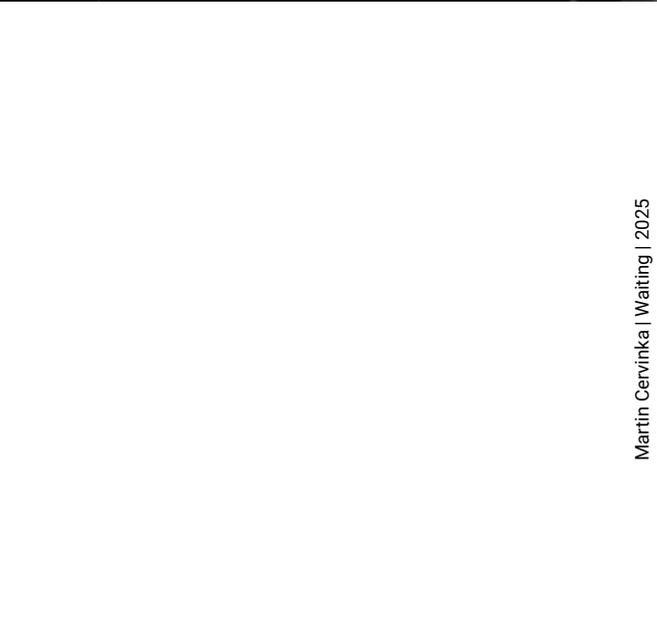
Martin Cervinka | Hand | 2025



Martin Cervinka | Subway | 2025



Martin Cervinka | Sunglasses | 2025



Martin Cervinka | Waiting | 2025



Eliézer Sena

 elidefaria

Working between the personal and the public, Eliézer Sena documents the tender and sacred within everyday life. Raised in a religious environment and now working as a queer artist, his practice is both a reclamation and an act of witnessing. His visual language combines emotional honesty with an attention to color, gesture, and stillness.

Artist Statement

This work began as an experiment in connection. I was a foreigner, often wordless, but constantly being invited in, not always into homes, though that happened, but into routines, rhythms, glances. Each photograph holds the memory of a moment shared without language: a gesture, a laugh, a pause long enough to mean "yes, you can see me."

What surprised me most wasn't access, but intimacy. That people, even in the briefest encounters, make room for you. That eye contact can feel like fluency. That beauty...real, ordinary beauty...is everywhere, if you're willing to slow down and be changed by it.





Despoina Tsoulou

 despinatsou

I work in the business field, with professional experience in sales, marketing, and communication. I hold three master's degrees: Economic and Business Strategy from the University of Piraeus, Marketing & Communication from Athens University of Economics and Business, and Digital Communication Media & Interaction Environments from the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens (NKUA). Alongside my professional career, I have been practicing photography for six years, focusing on capturing landscapes and the beauty of travel. I also enjoy painting, which allows me to explore creativity and visual storytelling in multiple forms.

Artist Statement

I am a photographer who finds inspiration in travel and nature. I enjoy capturing landscapes, exploring the unique beauty of different places, and sharing the emotions and stories they hold through my images.





Gaby Zak

 gzphoto_

Artist Statement

Landscape and documentary photographer based in the north east of England.





Như Phúc

 [_nhuwphucc_](#)

Artist Statement

Daily life





Anna Rosenlund

 annarosenlund_ / annarosenlund_photography

Anna Rosenlund is a photographer from Oslo, Norway. Based in Paris since 2019, she experiments with various textures of analog film. For Anna, film photography is her anchor – an intimate dialogue with light, grain, and time. Developing a roll of film is like rediscovering a moment, embracing the unexpected. Her work explores the ties between memory and place, between wandering and belonging. From Oslo to Paris, from Cairo to Naples, each image tells a story of intimacy and human connection.

Through a visual language that expresses a deep search for closeness and resonance, Anna captures the essence of diverse social and geographical horizons. With the softness of her lens, her photographs immerse us in a sense of nostalgia, togetherness, and the rediscovery of childhood memories.

“I want to capture the viewer’s senses – for my photos to feel like sunrays on the skin after a nap, when just before opening the eyes, dreams still merge with reality.”

Since 2016, Anna has been developing an artistic practice that has given her the opportunity to exhibit at the Scènes Paysannes Festival in Normandy, France (2024) and to be published in several newspapers and magazines such as Aftenposten, Nettavisen, Jazz i Norge, TRASS, and STOFF. As the artistic director of The Space Between project, produced by four-time Grammy Award winner Larry Klein, she also organized a charity sale in Cairo in June 2024 in support of displaced families from Gaza. Many of her works have found collectors in France, Norway, and Egypt.

Artist Statement

This photo series moves through quiet, sunlit moments : Shot between Cairo, Essaouira, Naples, and Oujda, each photograph carries a tactile warmth: the dust of Cairo filtering through a window, the tender haze resting on a lover’s skin, the salty breeze tracing the Mediterranean shore, the ochre glow of sunlit rooftops.

Together, these images form a meditation on belonging and distance, a quiet reflection on the continuity between places, bodies, and memory.

Each frame holds its breath, suspended between presence and memory.

Anna Rosenlund | To Be Seen | 2025





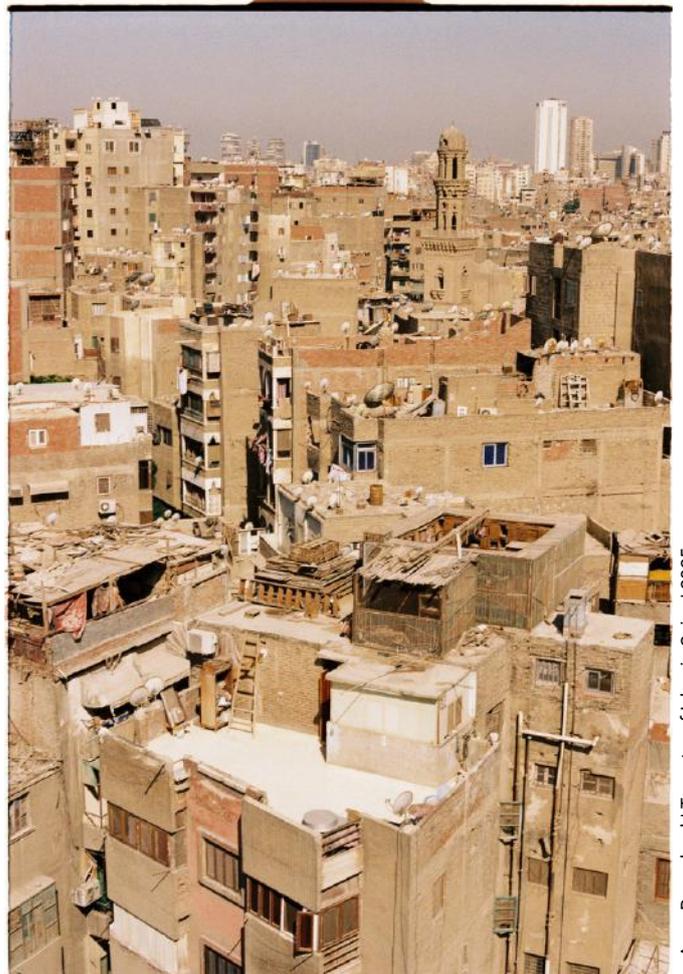
Anna Rosenlund | Positano | 2024



Anna Rosenlund | Suspended Heat | 2024



Anna Rosenlund | Tahrir | 2025



Anna Rosenlund | Tapestry of Islamic Cairo | 2025

Maia Minea

 [_blue.chihiro](#)

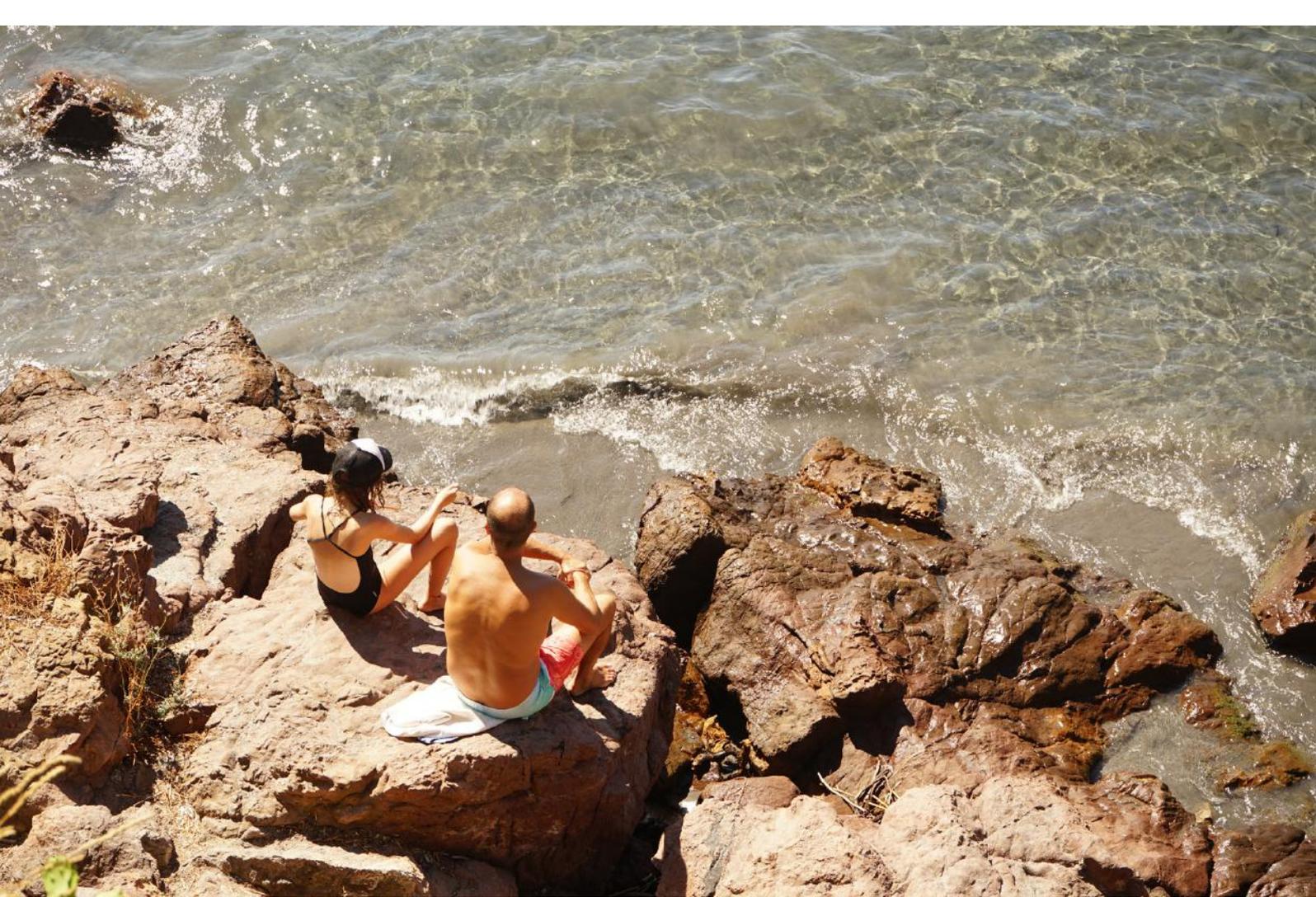
Second-year student in the Dual Degree program in Economics – Geography & Urban Planning at Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne I am passionate about understanding today's global challenges and deepening my knowledge of cultural differences. As a franco-roumanian freelance photographer I am committed to preserving and celebrating natural diversity, both locally and internationally. I especially have a passion for arts that I want to share because I believe it's what makes us a functional and empathic society. - Maia MINEA, alias Blue Chihiro

Artist Statement

Fascinated by the sea, this project delves into a boundless passion. Through the lens, the aim is to capture the intimate and complex relationship humans share with the shoreline—a space where the sea becomes a mirror, a refuge, and a revelation. Each image seeks to encapsulate the essence of those moments when people let themselves be swept away by emotion. It is meant as a dialogue between life and life. Between escape and a wellspring of stories, these photographs tell tales of water, silence, and encounters. Most of these images come to life in the Mediterranean, along the French Riviera – my heartland.

Maia Minea | Harbour | 2025





Maia Minea | Aftersun | 2025

Maia Minea | Michel | 2025



Anne-Frédérique Lenne

 a_travers_champs

As a amateur and self-taught photographer, I come from health field where I work during more than 20 years, even if I always done. For the past 7 years, I have taken up photography again in a substained manner. Black and white is my favourite style and the most used in my practice. Indeed, looking for the little signs and adventures of everyday life is my favorite field. Personally, when words fail, photography is a magical way to connect to oneself, to others, to nature, to the invisible and the inexpressible.

* Member of street photography France

* Second prize in the Wipplay competition for the french "festival de la mer" of Guilvinec:"women and the sea" (june-october 2025)

* Selected for exhibition "festival de la photo des hauts de France" (14-15 june2025) in Amiens

* Exhibition of 5 pictures in France, in Amiens FNAC STORE (june-october 2025)

* Second prize in the summer 2025 Amiens FNAC Store challenge

Exhibitions in Amiens Fnac store and Amiens Galeries Lafayette (october-november 2025)

*Exhibition in progress in Les Sables d'Olonne (France) for April 2026.





Isabelle Hayeur

 ihayeur

Isabelle Hayeur is known for her photographs and her experimental videos. She has also realized public art commissions, several site-specific installations and artists' books. Her work is situated within a critical approach to the environment, urban development and to social conditions. Since the late 1990s, she has been probing the territories she goes through to understand how our contemporary civilizations take over and fashion their environments. She is concerned about the evolution of places and communities in the neoliberal sociopolitical context we currently live in. Her works have been shown at the National Gallery of Canada, Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Arts, Neuer Berliner Kunstverein in Berlin, Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal, Canadian Cultural Centre in Paris, Tampa Museum of Art, Bruce Silverstein Gallery in New York, Casino Luxembourg Forum d'art contemporain, Today Art Museum in Beijing and Les Rencontres internationales de la photographie à Arles. She has also actively participated in international artists' residencies, notably at the Rauschenberg Residency, Sitka Center for Arts and Ecology, The Studios of Key West, the International Studio & Curatorial Program, A Studio in the Woods / Tulane University, Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts, Wall House #2 Groninger Museum, amongst others.

Artist Statement

This artistic research stems from a personal experience. For over twenty years, I have lived along the banks of a polluted river. I have closely observed the transformations of this watercourse, noting changes in its ecosystems and the disappearance of certain animal species that once thrived there. My goal was to create a body of work that bears witness to these human-induced upheavals. These photographs immerse viewers in these environments, probing our relationship with water and aquatic ecosystems while emphasizing their vital importance. To date, I have documented various bodies of water across North America, capturing both polluted environments and healthy ecosystems. While the project primarily focuses on the deterioration of aquatic ecosystems, I have also photographed aquatic plants, salt marshes and intertidal wetlands in various regions. These ecosystems face numerous natural and environmental threats, including hurricanes, floods, algal blooms, rising sea levels and coastal erosion. Though fragile, they are resilient. The clarity and captivating beauty of these submerged worlds remind us that the natural environment can still play a central role in reconnecting humanity with nature, countering the disenchantment rooted in capitalist modernity.

Isabelle Hayeur | SpringCreek | 2024





Isabelle Hayeur | Mangrove Roots



Isabelle Hayeur | Substances

Zofia Nowicka

 nowicka.jpg

I'm a young engineer who designs and builds machinery, and in my free time I chase and photograph the little moments that make the world beautiful.

Artist Statement

I came to Australia for a conference – but found unexpected silence and peace. I wanted to capture that stillness in these photos.





Silvia Ottobriini

 [_silviaottobriini_](#)

Based in North West costa of Italy, founder of Impermanent Installations movement, ambassador of Warsaw School of Arts, mixed media artist and photographer.

Artist Statement

Imagine to see the word from space, beeing on heart.





Jiska Wolthaus



I am Jiska Wolthaus, photographer and psychologist. My fascination with the inner world of people forms the foundation of my work. As an autonomous photographer, I search in my images for what remains hidden beneath the surface of the everyday. I create space for stillness and reflection: an invitation to feel and perhaps to recognize something within yourself that has not yet found words.

Artist Statement

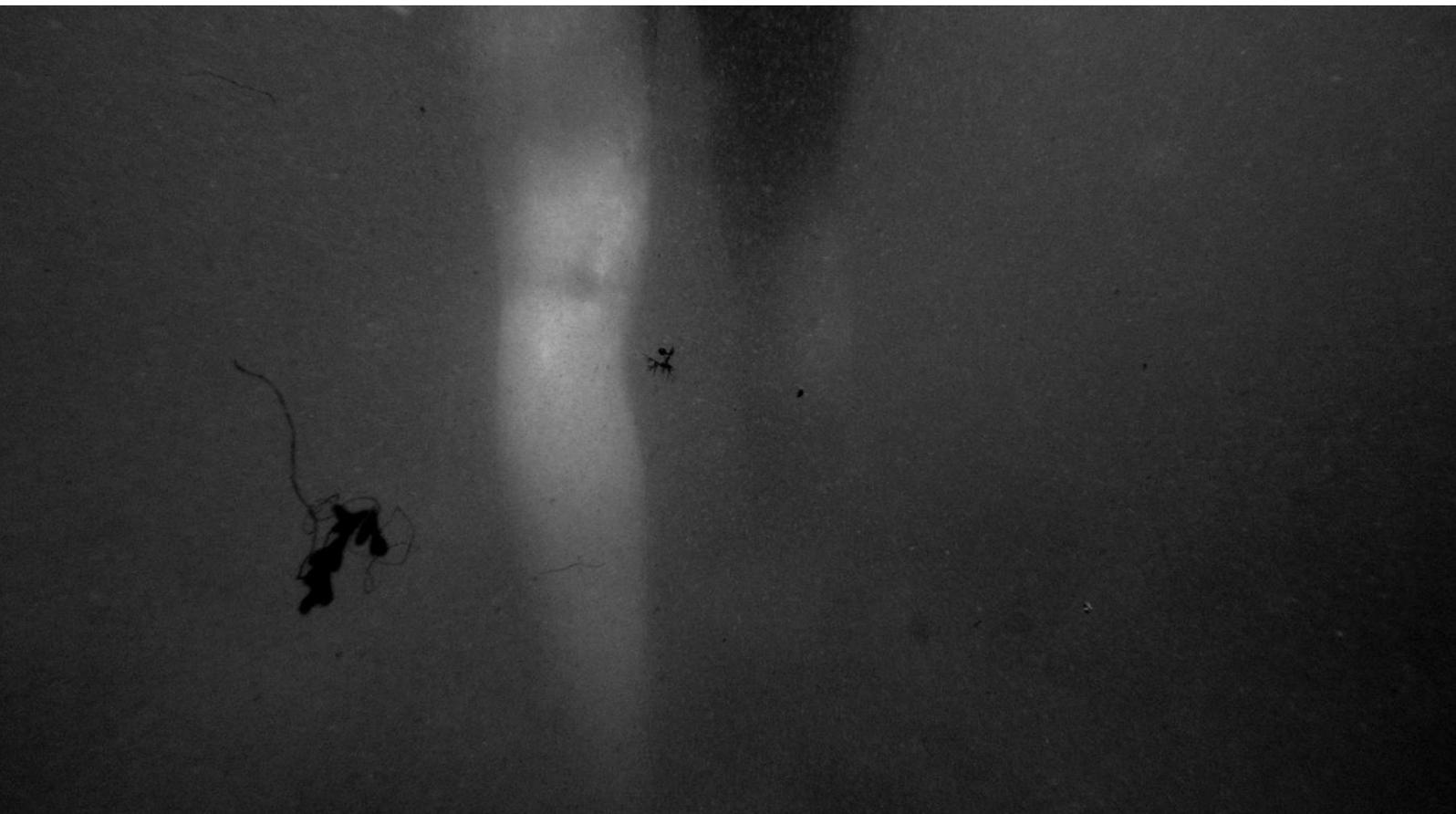
Under the Surface (series 1)

When you submerge into the magical, mysterious world beneath the water, sound and time dissolve. Reality slows, transforming into something slow and surreal. Water holds its own paradox: serenity and tension, clarity and darkness, beauty and estrangement. These images invite stillness and wonder: a weightless freedom where the world above drifts away and you lose yourself in a fluid, elusive reality.

Unfold (series 2)

This series traces the quiet process of becoming: of growing, changing and embracing vulnerability as a form of strength. Softness and roughness intertwine, as the boundaries between body and landscape begin to blur. The work reflects on transformation: on the act of searching, shifting and allowing space for what is yet unknown.

Jiska Wolthaus | Under the Surface | 2022





Jiska Wolthaus | Unfolding | 2023

Jiska Wolthaus | Unfolding | 2023



Nikola Vaníčková

 niki.vanickova

My name is Nikola Vaníčková. I am a student and a beginner photographer from the Czech Republic. I enjoy capturing emotions and everyday moments through photography. My work focuses on atmosphere and light, and I hope to develop my artistic style through projects like this one.

Project Statement

This project explores the quiet beauty of ordinary moments. Through natural light and simple compositions, I try to express emotions that are often unnoticed in daily life. Each photo tells a small story of calmness and reflection.

Nikola Vanickova | Terrace Sunlight | 2025





Nikola Vanickova | Mediterranean Huddle | 2025

Nikola Vanickova | Island View | 2025



Lucas Marques

Lucas Marques is an up-and-coming young amateur photographer based in Lisbon.

Artist Statement

I believe that the message in an image doesn't come from the subject or anything portrayed in it. For me, it's an attempt to freeze something in time; and the choices made by the artist such as framing, focusing and exposing, are the true carriers of meaning. What I find beautiful is not only the landscape that surrounds me, but the process of engraving my unique way of observing it forever in a flat image.

Therefore, I try to vary what I shoot, instead focusing in my own eye in an attempt to demonstrate my way of looking at the world, while trying to find beauty in unlikely compositions, simplicity and texture.

Lucas Marques | Fisherman | 2025





Lucas Marques | Texture | 2025

Lucas Marques | Monument | 2024



Eric Xie



Eric Xie is a California-based photographer. He works with immediacy and chance, photographing whatever comes his way. His images highlight the impact of unguarded moments within ordinary surroundings.

Artist Statement

A study of Tokyo after dark, where light carves geometry from concrete and asphalt. High-rises dissolve into black, their lit windows floating. round Taillights, reflections on asphalt, bodies of metal moving beneath overpasses.

Primarily shot in rich black-and-white, the work follows Japan's nocturnal infrastructure. The streets hum with energy, but the series finds its tension in contrast: a couple on a pedestrian bridge, crying in embrace under the yellow glow of a stoplight, framed in the picture's corner by the same industrial landscape that brings night to life.

These images are fragments of movement and pause, where the city's famous velocity meets its overlooked quiet.





Andreas Spinos

 andreasspinos

Andreas Spinos has been involved in photography since 1993. He has attended seminars in photography, Art History, and Image Psychology. In 2007, he was admitted to the Athens School of Fine Arts (ASFA), where he attended photography courses. He graduated in 2009 from Leica Academy, and in 2020, he was accepted as a member of the Chamber of Fine Arts of Greece.

He published both a photographic book and a photozine. He has participated in numerous group exhibitions and one solo exhibition in Syros island, while his photographs have been exhibited at "1650 Gallery" in L.A, USA, "CICA Museum" in South Korea, "FokiaNou Art Space" in Athens, and "LoosenArt" in Rome.

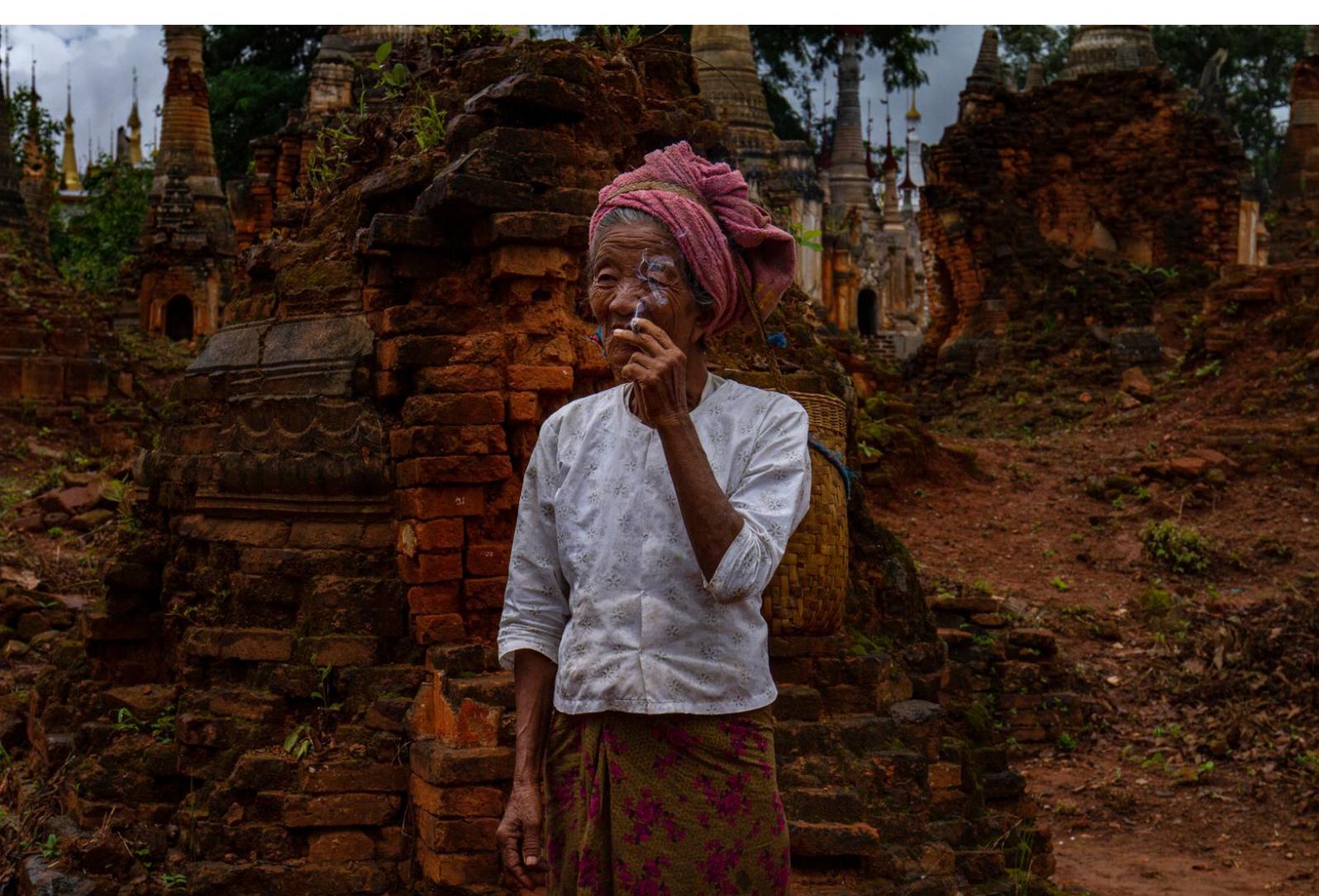
Artist Statement

In my street photography, I seek the small human stories that reveal the essence of everyday life. My journey to Myanmar in 2017 was a profound experience of observation and respect. Through spontaneous portraits captured in natural light, I tried to convey the strength, stoicism, and inner calm of people who, despite living under political turmoil and daily hardships, remain remarkably kind, gentle, and dignified.

My visual approach captures both the quiet struggles and the enduring spirit I witnessed. I aim to celebrate the resilience, warmth, and humanity in each face, inviting viewers to reflect on the power of perseverance and the universal hope for peace. Behind every gaze lies a story that inspires connection and understanding.

Andreas Spinos | Myanmar | 2017





Andreas Spinos | Myanmar | 2017

Andreas Spinos | Myanmar | 2017



Eleftheria Karasmanoglou

 ritaki_7

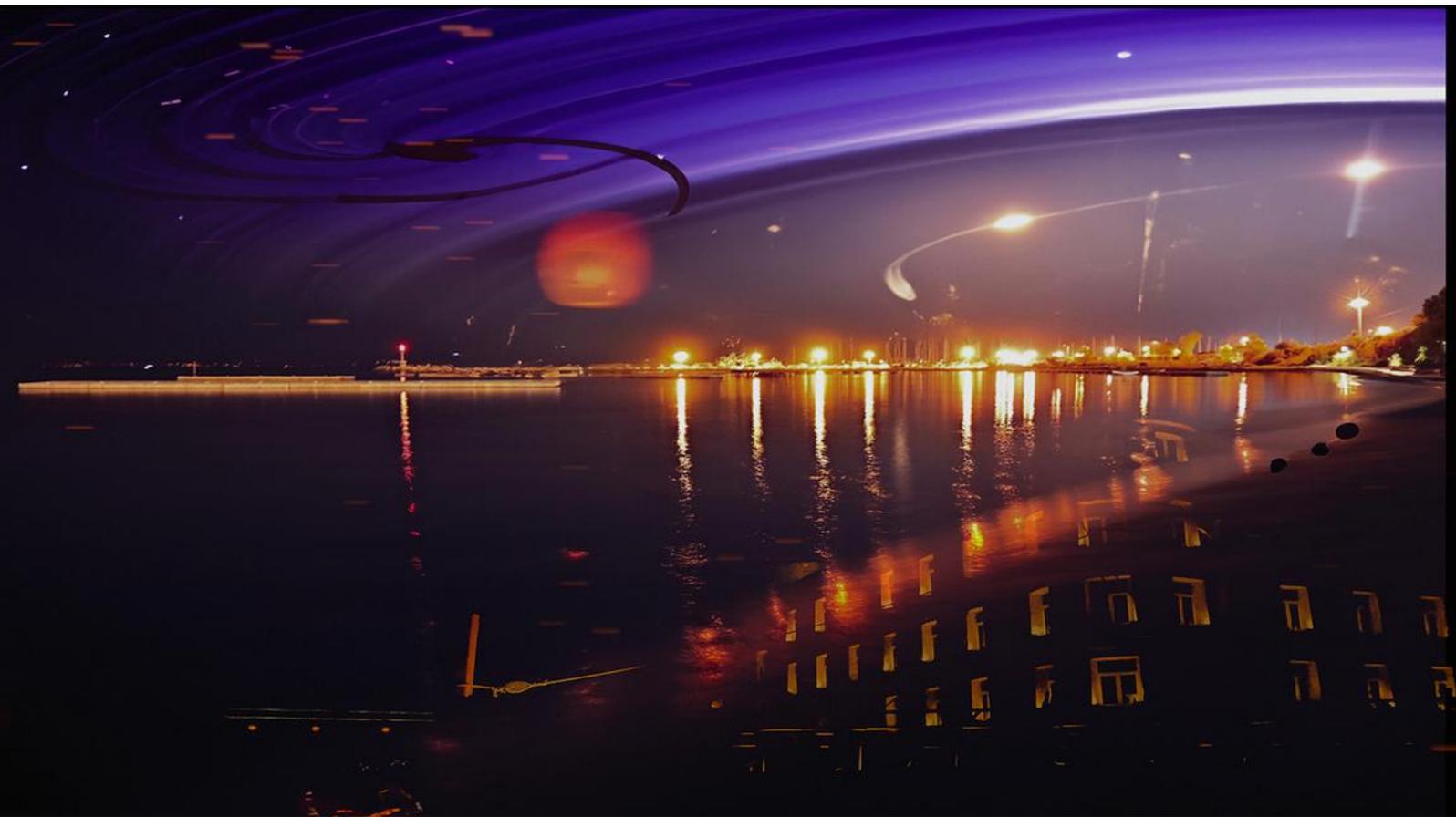
I started to engage in photography as an amateur in 2015. I attended seminars and workshops by Yannis Stratoudakis in Volos and online courses with Ypatia Kornarou. I am a member of the Greek Photographic Society (E.F.E) and the Volos Photographic Club. I have taken part in exhibitions and competitions in Greece, Athens (Blank Wall Gallery and Greek Photographic Society (E.F.E)), Thessaloniki (International Book Fair) and abroad, Cyprus (Paphos), Slovenia, Ljubljana (Ravnikar Gallery Space) and Italy, Milan (Mia Photo Fair). Focusing on the nature of online production and the intersection of art and technology.

Artist Statement

It all started with an idea and then became a reality through a photographic journey of disobedience, rebellion, disruption of lines, shapes and people. Turning everything upside down, forgetting security and certainty, I take the opportunities that the world around me offers me, I stop and click because I feel that there is something there to be discovered. In a world full of complex interactions, CHAOS has the power to push everything forward, images that have the power to convey feelings or thoughts that we all may have and perhaps do not recognize. Images that tell a story and I found order through creativity. Maybe this CHAOS is what makes life so interesting.

Karasmanoglou Ritsa | Greece Candles



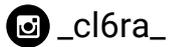


Karasmanoglou Ritsa | Greece Dream City

Karasmanoglou Ritsa | Greece Chaos



Clara Kornelis



Clara Kornelis is a high school junior from Portland, Oregon. She attends an arts high school, Northwest Academy, where she has been studying black and white film photography for three years and is the Teaching Assistant for the middle school's film photography class. She recently released the sixth issue of her zine, Nearsighted, which includes her own photography, movie reviews, and interviews about the local music scene.

Artist Statement

The sound of the freight train moving slowly below June's high moon. The delicate "I'll miss you," soon to be crushed under the weight of leaving. Through photography, I confront and capture the terrible, empty feeling that forms itself deep in your gut and makes you breath slow and heavy as it works its way up to the cavity where your nose meets your mouth. There's freedom inherent to the emptiness of the space there. There's freedom in space until the walls quit moving and build violent corners. Each photograph describes and depicts a moment, or series of moments, in my life where the void-like feeling was ever present.

The knowing that you'll never be here again, not in the same way. The looking at the clock to see it;s five already and soon the sun will be gone and soon you'll be home again. The feeling that you've changed without being able to notice quite how. The need to hug your knees to your chest and stare straight out the car window.

Clara Kornelis | VOID11 | 2025





Clara Kornelis | Teeth | 2023



Clara Kornelis | The Roof | 2025

Mikky Atser

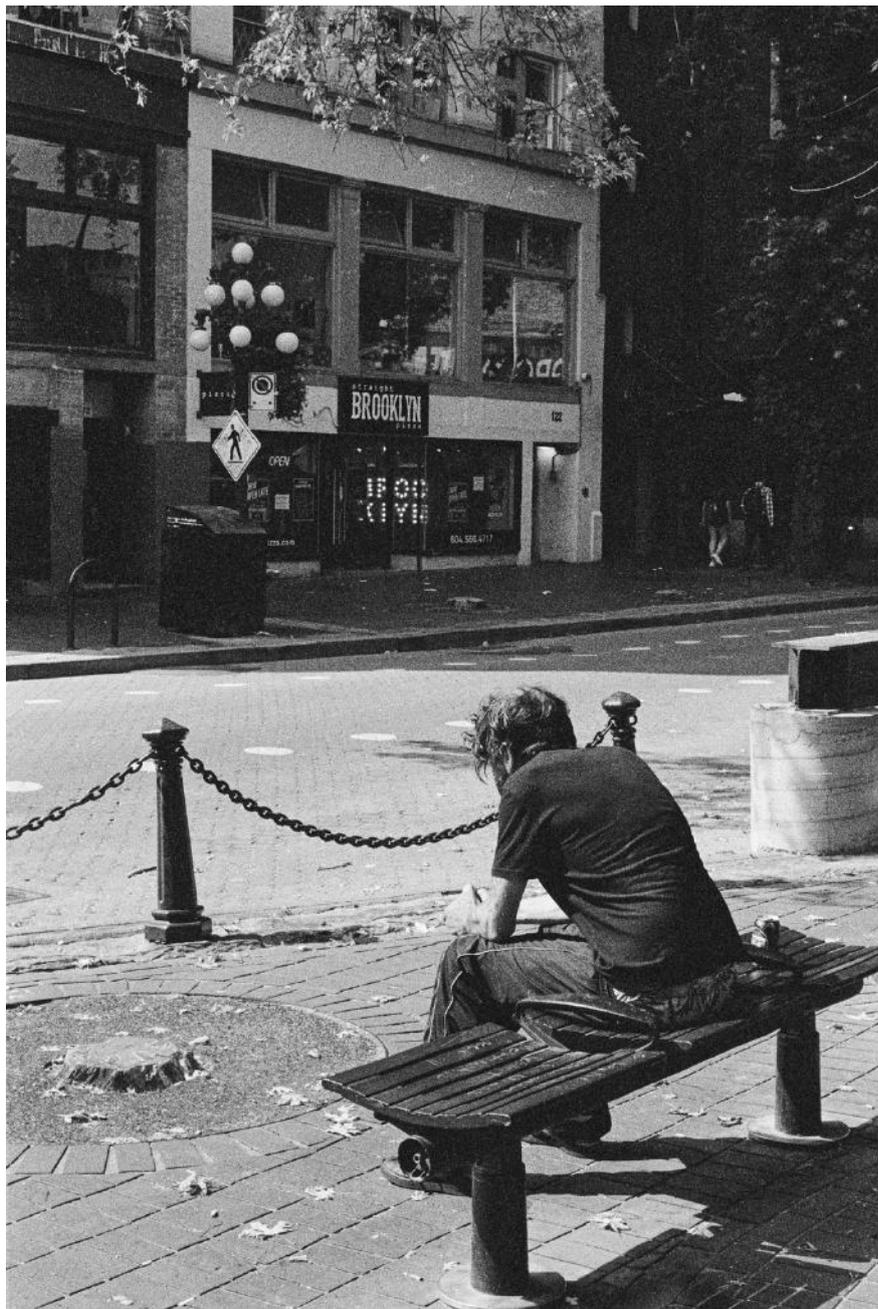
 at.mikky

Mikky is a Vancouver-based Street photographer whose work aims to capture the raw pulse of city life defined by grit, intimacy, and social commentary in both digital and film photography. Drawing inspiration from literary voices like Chinua Achebe, Chimamanda Adichie, and Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, Mikky approaches photography as storytelling, an exploration of migration, identity, and human connection.

Artist Statement

This series is an exploration of human presence within the urban landscape. The work focuses on the characters who move through its streets, strangers caught in fleeting gestures, faces etched with resilience, postures heavy with untold stories. Each photograph invites us to consider what these moments reveal about ourselves and our different realities in shared spaces. The encounters in these images are less about spectacle and more about intimacy wound into narratives that are never fully told but deeply felt.

The city, rendered in black and white, becomes a backdrop stripped of distraction, a stage where light and shadow sharpen the presence of its characters. Texture, grain, and contrast underscore the rawness of these scenes, evoking both fragility and strength. What emerges is not a portrait of the metropolis itself, but of the people who animate it, people who embody its contradictions of movement and stillness, struggle and perseverance, alienation and belonging. Ultimately, this project asks viewers to look longer, to view the characters within these frames as not mere subjects to be consumed, but mirrors held up to our own lives: reminders of our vulnerabilities, resilience, and inequalities.



Mikky Atser | Summer Solitudes | 2025



Mikky Atser | Bridging the Divide | 2025

Mikky Atser | To Growing Together | 2025



Sabine Hagerman

 [_sabinibanini_](#)

Artist Statement

All of my photographs are shot as I am experiencing the world, going about my life. None of them are through staging or shoots, and they simply communicate to you what I am seeing. I feel as though the act of sharing them is deeply personal, as if someone else is peering through my eyes. Much of my art focuses on the small details I notice in my day-to-day life, in a formalized appearance. I am very interested in how we perceive art and how said perception shifts based on context and I find it fascinating that by photographing shadows on my walk to the bus and then printing them, I have transformed them into a piece of artwork.

Sabine Hagerman | Rod Iron Fence | 2024





Vivian Kalomiri

 vivian_kalomiri

Vivian Kalomiri was born in Athens in 1977 and she is professional photographer. She has a lifelong passion for arts. She pursued her artistic education at the Fine Arts Academy of Rome in the scenography department and then continued her studies at the Leica Academy of Athens, where she completed her photography training in 2000. Since then, she has been working as a professional photographer in various fields. She also creates and exhibits art photography in different venues. She experiments with different techniques and styles, and she enjoys shooting people and documentary subjects. Her images aim to provoke emotions and challenge perceptions, as well as to present stories of her personal life. She is always looking for new ways to express her vision and creativity, mainly through film photography.

Project Statement

"Thresholds" By Vivian Kalomiri

In this series, I explore the quiet tension between presence and absence, movement and stillness, intimacy and isolation. Each image is a fragment of urban and coastal life, yet together they form a poetic meditation on the human condition as seen through fleeting moments of solitude, connection, and reflection.

Urban Echoes From shuttered storefronts to barbed-wire fences, the city becomes a stage for silent narratives. A lone figure on a bench beneath a "Do Not Enter" sign evokes themes of restriction and resilience. These urban vignettes are not just backdrops—they are emotional landscapes, echoing the internal states of their inhabitants.

Play and Pause Children crouch behind planters, peek from corners, and animate the stillness with curiosity. Their presence punctuates the adult world with spontaneity, reminding us of the joy and vulnerability that coexist in public spaces.

Tenderness in Transit A woman cradling a child on a park bench becomes a symbol of care amid transience. The objects beside her—a bottle of water, a pack of cigarettes—speak to the ordinariness of survival, the poetry of the everyday.

Coastal Contemplation The beach scenes offer a counterpoint: open horizons, soft light, and the vastness of sea. A solitary figure gazing at a sailboat, a volleyball resting in the sand—these are moments suspended in time, where the world seems to breathe more slowly.

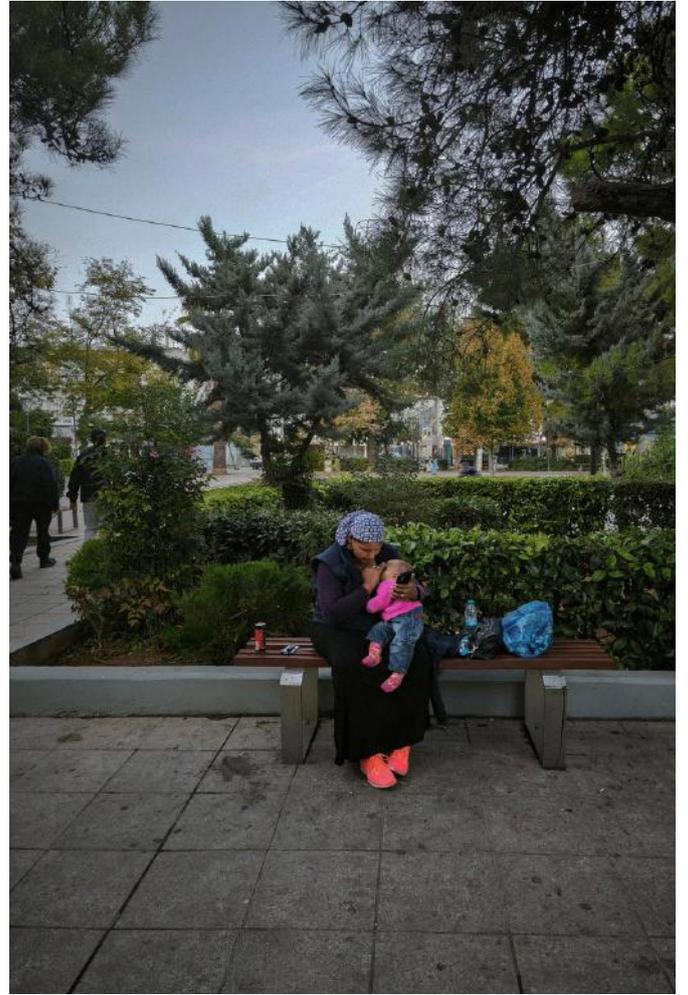
Together, these photographs form a lyrical sequence of thresholds—between public and private, youth and age, confinement and freedom. They invite viewers to pause, to feel, and to read between the lines of the visible.



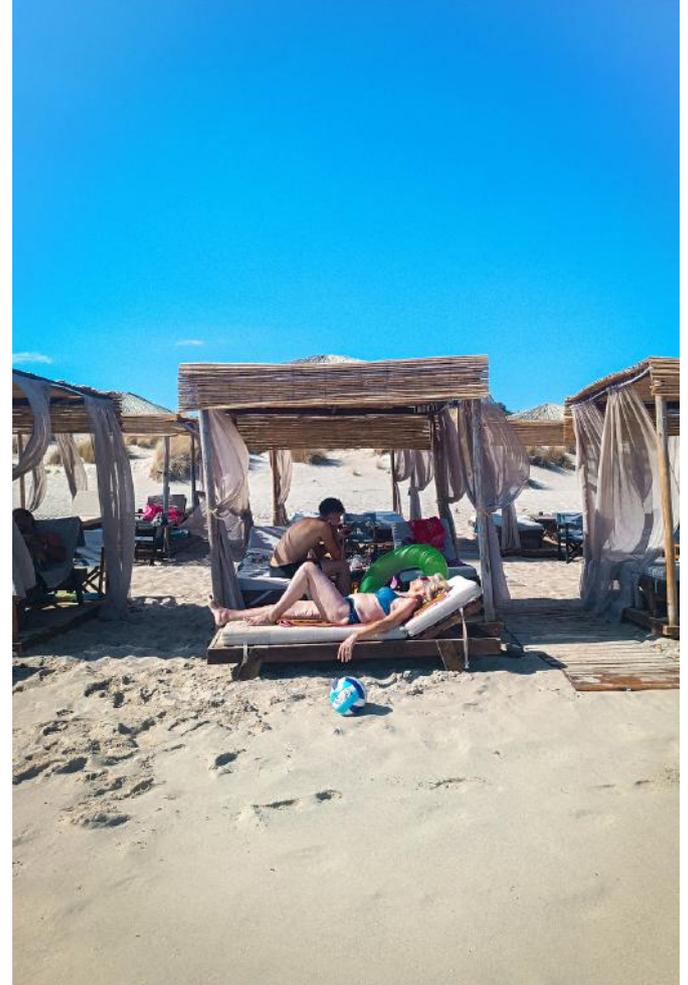
Vivian Kalomiri | Red End



Vivian Kalomiri | Hide & Seek



Vivian Kalomiri | Neon Gipsy



Vivian Kalomiri | Sun of the Beach

Bettina Preysler

I'm a 32yo woman, who was born and raised in Manila, Philippines. Since 2017, living & creating in Berlin, Germany. I've been a photographer for over 10 years but all my photographs are just sitting on my hard drive and my wall. After years of hesitation, I am finally ready to share my work publicly for the first time.

My photography is an extension of my journey, reflecting my move from Manila to my new home in Berlin eight years ago. I feel deeply connected to a mix of subjects, from the energy of a bustling city to the beauty of human imperfections. My work is inspired by a conscious effort to see the world with the fresh, curious eyes of a tourist, appreciating the beautiful, often-unnoticed details that make any place feel special.

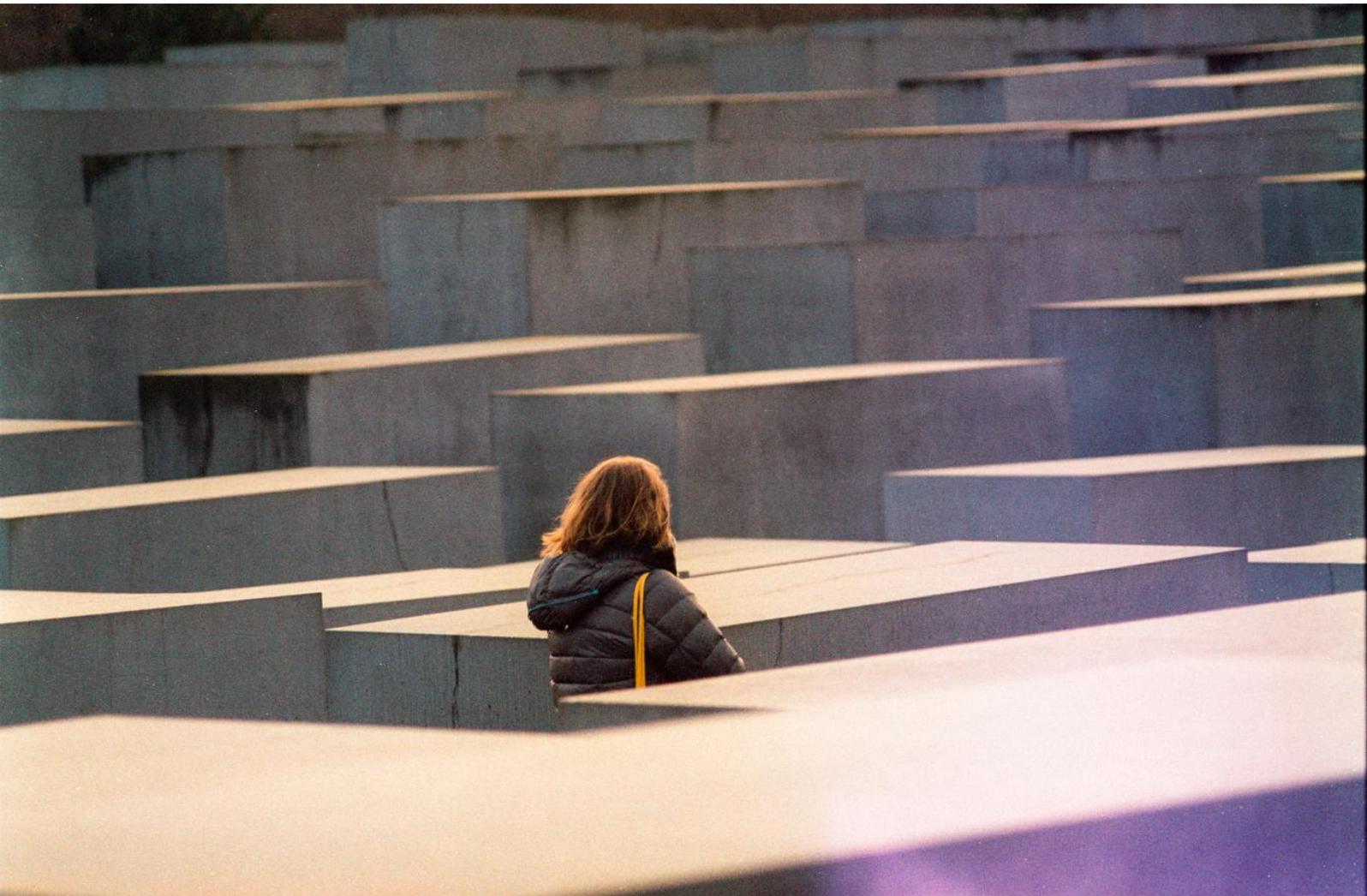
Artist Statement

"I GOT YOUR BACK" - Analog Photography Exhibition

This body of work is an archive that holds a dual meaning. It is a literal documentation of capturing strangers from behind, but it also delves into a deeper theme, serving as a testament to the profound symbolism of unwavering support and loyalty.

This project is a ten-year archive of analog photographs dedicated to capturing strangers exclusively from behind. A collection inspired by the people who always have my back, and whose backs I will always have. It is my way of saying, "I got your back," no matter who they are or where they come from.

By deliberately removing facial expressions and context, I create my own interpretation of their moods and stories. This series is an invitation for people to pause and appreciate the great moments that often go unnoticed. This collection is a small tribute to humanity itself, a reminder that despite the chaos, life is still beautiful and exciting because of the people we encounter, whether we only cross paths for a moment or they choose to stay by our side.





Noemi Lenner

 dandelionessy

Project Statement

Dance of Edges

This photo captures the tension between solidity and fragility in architecture. The sharp glass façade, reflecting both sky and city, becomes a fragment of light and geometry rather than just a building. Stripped to black and white, the image invites the viewer to pause and see the quiet poetry hidden in urban forms.

Towards to Light

In this photo, a lone boy stands at the edge of shadow and light in a narrow Venetian street. Seen only as a silhouette, he becomes both anonymous and universal – a figure caught between past and present, stillness and discovery. The darkness frames him, while the glow ahead suggests the timeless pull of wonder and possibility.





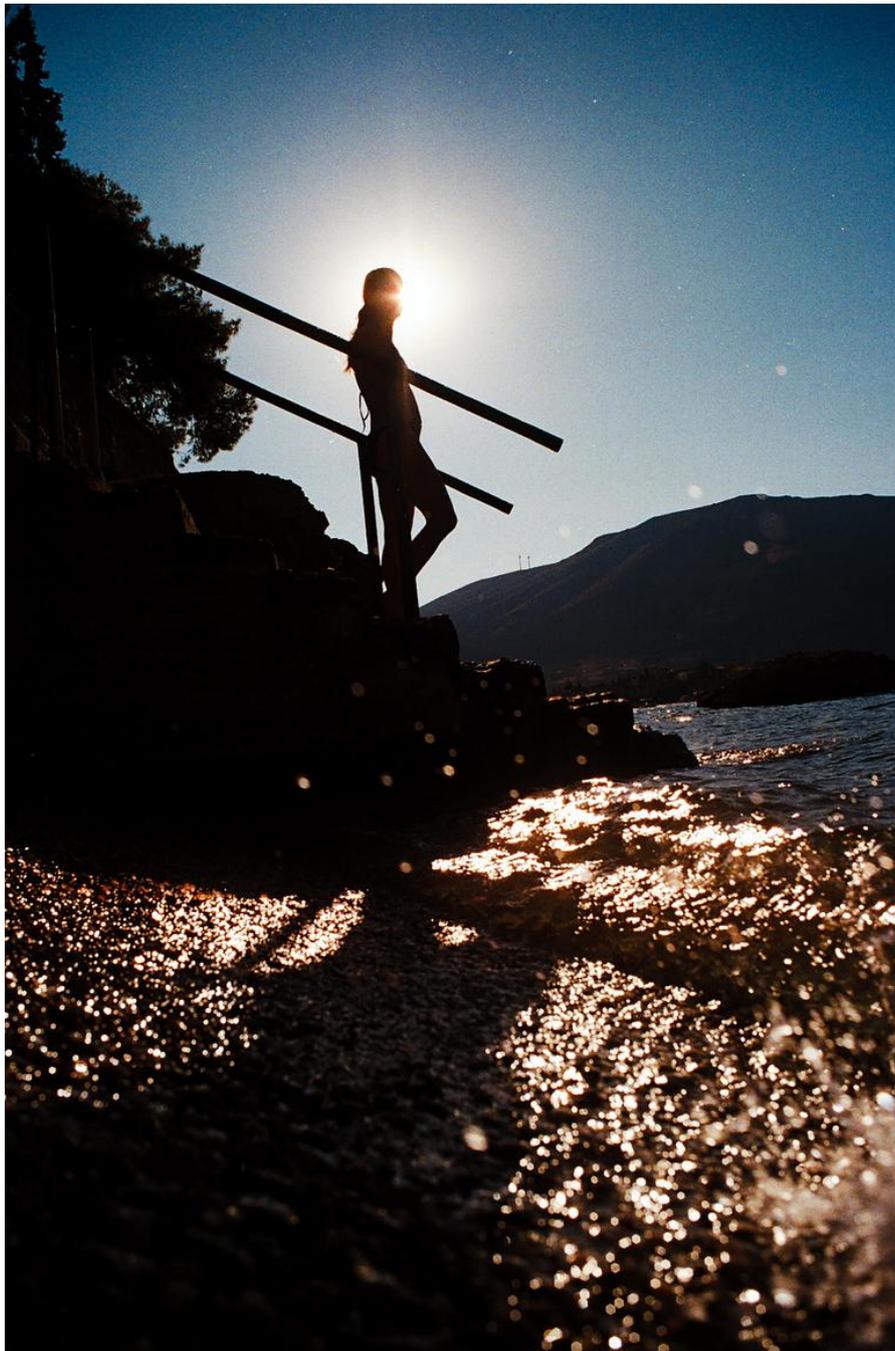
Pierre Armand

 eternal__retour

Born in Geneva in 2005, Pierre Armand was raised in an artistic environment, the son of an architect father and a visual artist mother. His early years were marked by a strong inclination toward drawing, accompanied by an ambition to pursue a career as a comic book author. At the age of six, he began studying theatre, a discipline he would practice for more than thirteen years, notably at the Geneva Conservatory. At seventeen, while enrolled in an international school, he discovered filmmaking through a cinema course, an encounter that profoundly shaped his artistic trajectory. This exploration of moving images naturally extended to photography, with a particular interest in analogue practices. Currently a second-year bachelor's student in film at the University of Montreal, he continues to develop his work in both cinema and photography, disciplines linked by a common thread: film. In 2025, he directed *Cain*, a short film shot on 35 mm, which was awarded Best Experimental Film at the Kraken International Film Festival in Milan.

Artist Statement

My photographic work explores zones of passage, where outlines waver, where two fragile realities blend. Each of my series follows a movement in which bodies become shadows, mirrors, or flashes of light. I seek the persistence of a bond despite the break, for the possibility of a gaze beyond the visible. My pictures question suspended time, the boundaries that separate two beings or two worlds, and the way in which, in silence or in fever, memory is born.



Pierre Armand | Eclipse | 2025



Pierre Armand | The Surge and the Abyss | 2025

Pierre Armand | Yellow Smoke | 2025



Jakob Mortensen

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

Jakob Mortensen, born in 2004, Essex, picked up a camera for the first time at a young age, slowly developing his technique through to A-Level photography and now Marine and Natural History Photography at Falmouth University. Influenced greatly by his dad who studied photojournalism, his surroundings, and his interest in nature, he creates work delving into both the urban jungle and the natural one.

Project Statement

Bleary: looking or feeling dull and unfocused from sleep or tiredness.

Bleary is a zine project I created to demonstrate the impact spending time in nature has on one's mental health. Whilst it may come across as twisted, this is a positive project. I've had my issues when it comes to mental health but I was never inclined to tell others about it because I feared burdening them, so I would take walks in nature, I've always liked forests in particular. Through this, I've learnt that nature is one of life's greatest healers, the subtle rustle of leaves, the swaying of trees, the fresh air, and the sound of rivers are so effective at making me feel grounded and refreshed.

When I was given an assignment by my university to create a "natural history related" project, I decided I wanted to focus on this ability nature has, and so I took black and white flash intentional camera movement images in local forests, a style inspired by Masahisa Fukase's 'Ravens', to create gritty dark images that depict negative emotions being flushed into the landscape, I wanted to show that nature can take on your problems and help you with them. The full set of images changes in demeanor losing clarity as it goes on to put across this idea of emotions being discarded into nature.

Jakob Mortensen | Clawing | 2024





Jakob Mortensen | Radiant | 2024

Jakob Mortensen | Screaming | 2024



Janet Dias

 janet.sem.e

I am a Portuguese photographer who is sensitive to beauty and to the small things of everyday life. Through my photos, I try to capture simple moments that reveal emotion, light, and meaning.

Artist Statement

This photograph was taken on April 25th in Lisbon, during the march that celebrates Portugal's Carnation Revolution of 1974. On that day, thousands of people took to the streets to remember the peaceful revolution that ended decades of dictatorship and restored democracy and freedom to the country.

For me, this image captures not only a historical memory but also a living spirit, the ongoing fight for freedom, equality, education, health, and housing. Through the raised hands and the red carnation, I wanted to show how beauty and resistance can coexist in a single moment, reminding us that democracy is built every day through hope and collective strength.



Alfredo Diano

 blue_edo

I am an Italian hobbyist photographer with a background in art, photography, and fashion. I love photographing people in their everyday contexts during my travels. My research focuses on conveying the poetic dimension of reality. Emphasizing the value of my subjects and maintaining essential composition are the foundation of my creative process.

Artist Statement

The photographs I present were taken in Senegal in 2024 and in Zanzibar in 2025. On Fadiuoth Island and Gorée Island in Senegal: an elderly person sitting in the shade of a canopy, a boy admiring the skyline by the sea, a father and son reflected in the mirrored glass of a window. In Jambiani: a game of football on the beach as the sun sets, a girl dressed in a simple black dress strolls in the low tide, a boy plays with his toy boat, anticipating his future life as a fisherman. In both stories, I captured moments of slow life and leisure, seeking an unconventional perspective that could create a sense of suspension of reality itself.



Alfredo Diano | A Place in the Shadow



Alfredo Diano | Close to the Sea



Alfredo Diano | Father and Son



Alfredo Diano | Playing Football



Alfredo Diano | Walking in the Low Tide



Alfredo Diano | Playing in Paradise

Weronika Kann



Weronika Kann (b. 1990) lives and works in Warsaw, Poland. She focuses on portrait photography, seeking to capture what often remains unseen – inner experiences, emotions, and the intimate relationship of the sitter with themselves. Her artistic practice explores themes of body, naturalness, freedom, and mental well-being.

Exhibitions and projects:

2019 – group exhibition Foto Open at Foto Art Festival, Bielsko-Biała

2019 – Too Tired Project, group screening organized by Leica Gallery Warsaw

2020 – contribution to the zine Global Zoo, part of Zine Therapy (Zoopark Publishing)

2021 – My Queer Body project in collaboration with Replica Magazine

2021 – solo exhibition The Body I'm at Home With, Pracownia Otwarta Jazdów, Warsaw

2025 – mentoring program Do Art Together, organized by Picture Doc Foundation and FSH1

Artist Statement

I remember her disappearing. Folding into herself, falling silent. Most of my questions remain unanswered to this day – and now I can't ask them anymore. My mother had been ill for as long as my childhood memory reaches. I never knew the diagnosis. There was no name to explain her vanishings, the strange reshufflings of my life when I was sent to relatives so I wouldn't see her at her worst. But distance never worked. Even miles away, her moods seeped into me, clung to me, unsettled me. No one ever spoke to me about what was happening. I was told only to be good, quiet, undemanding whenever she slipped away. Yet in flashes of clarity, she would reach for me desperately – calling at dawn, needing conversations too heavy for a child to hold. And then, when the storm passed and normal life returned, she never came back to those words. She believed silence would shield us. That secrecy could keep the illness behind closed doors. Years later, as a young woman, I began to feel depression tightening around me. I wondered if I had inherited it, if I had absorbed her state the way one carries the scent of someone else's perfume after an embrace. I never told her. I mirrored her silence, her masks, her insistence on coping alone. By the time I felt ready to speak – about her illness and my own – it was too late. Now the only possible conversation happens here, through this work, through images and art. I turned to the family archive, to photographs of her. I stared at the picture where she holds me as an infant. Can illness be seen? In the eyes, the gestures, the posture? Does it etch itself into our bodies, our family histories, our images? Once, in Poland, documents about mental health were printed on yellow paper. What was meant as bureaucratic clarity became a mark of shame, a way of branding lives. I still don't know the name of my mother's illness. But because of her, my world is yellow.





Aldona Lis

 aldona.lis

Artist Statement

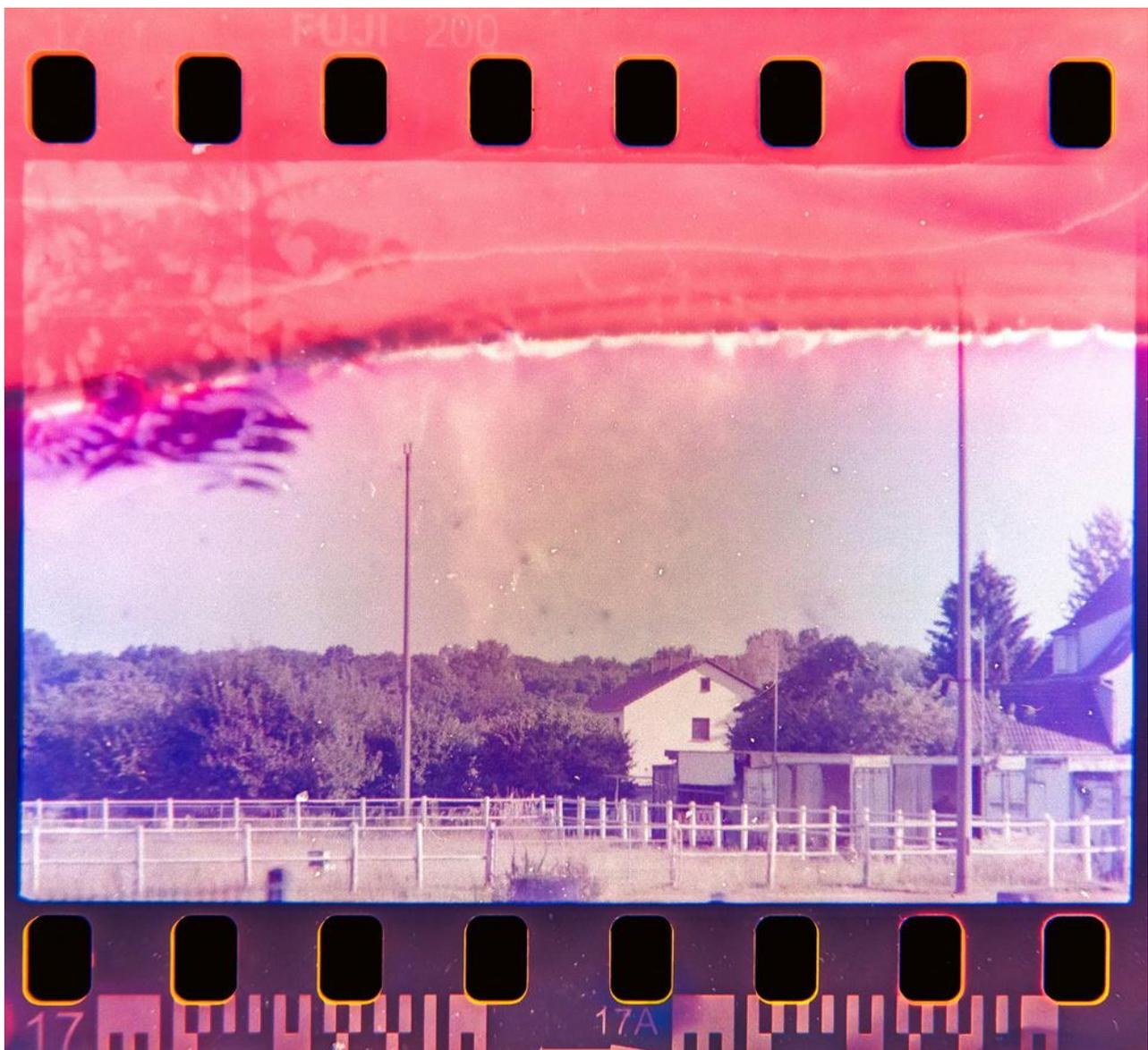
Cooperation with Chance.

This project emerged from a desire to explore the concept of chance more deeply. Chance implies that something happens unintentionally or without deliberate intent. It cannot always be relied upon to occur exactly when needed. But it is possible to cooperate with it by leaving certain decisions up to chance.

In my project, I create various series of analog photographs while allowing chance to guide the process as much as possible. This happens on three levels: first, chance influences the choice of subject matter. I focus on locations selected randomly rather than deliberately. Second, the photographic process itself is largely left to chance - camera settings for each series are determined by random selection. Finally, I use the "film soup" technique, in which the analog film is soaked in different liquids to create unpredictable visual effects.

The goal of this project is to break free from my own expectations and preferences, to experiment openly, and to let chance inspire new creative directions.

Aldona Lis | KMDZ





Enrique Gavilán

 doktorsperber

Born in Málaga, Spain (1972), and settled in the mountains of Extremadura. Amateur photographer and apprentice poet, as well as a rural doctor. Master's Degree in Author Photography and Personal Projects. Author of photojournalism reports («Salvaje» and «El Periódico» magazines), and participant in analog photography fancies.

His work is nourished by narrative photography and contemporary documentary photography. His ventral themes are the search for freedom and identity, the interactions between humans and the natural environment and the tensions between reality and desire, in which he investigates by exploring the poetic interfaces between image and word.

At the end of 2025 he will give birth his first photobook, "Libertad was her name".

Artist Statement

You face the scale of the days, and beneath this harsh gravity arrives to your dreams the fragrance of the tempered sea foam seething against the car window—a rest, the breath you yearn for—, and to that swarm of magic you can only respond wielding your old Pentax, as classic as yourself, and memorizing words to write down on your carnet de voyage. Summer —its breeze on the arm, its tongue of warm over the face— it opens everlastingly before your gaze, in need of air.

Enrique Gavilán | Summer Breath | 2025





Enrique Gavilán | Summer Breath | 2025

Enrique Gavilán | Summer Breath | 2025



Fuad Sarkar

 fuad01717

Fuad Sarkar's journey into the realm of art and creativity began in his early childhood. Fond of painting, he would express himself through colors and strokes on canvas, unraveling the imaginative world within him. Simultaneously, his fascination with storytelling took root as he delved into the enchanting realms of storybooks.

Hailing from the beautiful village of Rajshahi in Bangladesh, Fuad found himself immersed in the soothing embrace of nature. The breathtaking landscapes and the harmonious coexistence of flora and fauna became his muse, laying the foundation for a lifelong passion for photography.

Fuad, despite lacking formal education in photography, discovered an innate talent for capturing the essence of his surroundings. Nature's allure and the intricacies of human life fascinated him, compelling him to document these moments through his lens. His photographic journey wasn't dictated by academic knowledge but driven by a genuine passion for the art form.

Black and white photography emerged as Fuad's personal favorite. In the absence of vibrant hues, he found a unique way to convey emotions, moods, and the subtle beauty of his subjects. The simplicity of monochrome allowed him to focus on the raw and unfiltered aspects of his compositions, creating a timeless and evocative collection of images.

Fuad's love for photography goes beyond the technicalities and grammar associated with the art. While he may not be versed in the intricacies of photography academically, his intuitive approach and deep connection with his subjects set his work apart. Every photograph he takes is a testament to his genuine enthusiasm and appreciation for the beauty that surrounds him.

Photography, for Fuad, is not just a hobby; it's a source of ultimate happiness. The act of capturing moments, freezing them in time, brings immeasurable joy to his life. Each click of the shutter is a celebration of the fleeting yet profound instances that make up the tapestry of human experience.

Whether it's the gentle rustle of leaves in his village or the vibrant hues of a market scene, Fuad's lens captures the poetry woven into the fabric of everyday life. His photographs tell stories of resilience, joy, and the quiet beauty that often goes unnoticed.

Fuad Sarkar's journey from childhood painting to self-taught photography is a testament to the transformative power of artistic expression. Through his lens, he invites others to see the world through his unique perspective—a world where simplicity meets profound beauty, and where every frame tells a story waiting to be heard.

Artist Statement

As a photographer primarily based in Rajshahi, Bangladesh, my work is a reflection of my surroundings and my personal experiences. Through the lens of my camera, I aim to capture the raw beauty of my country and its people. My images often depict the vibrant colors and rich culture of Bangladesh, while also shedding light on the harsh realities that exist within its borders. With a keen eye for detail and a passion for storytelling, my photographs serve as a means of connecting with my audience and sparking important conversations about social issues and human emotions. My art is a medium through which I strive to evoke emotion and promote awareness, ultimately contributing to the greater narrative of our shared humanity.



Fuad Sarkar | New Day | 2022

Fuad Sarkar | Village Life | 2022



Polyzois

 polyzois_photo



Polyzois Polyzoidis Kotzia | Pigeons' Parliament



humans,



children,

Aryn Rios

 ace1photography

I was born in Los Angeles, but have spent most of my life in Bakersfield, where I am currently based. I'm a freelance photographer with 10 years of experience. Started from a camera phone taking simple nature shots, to receiving my late grandfather's film camera and eventually buying a digital camera. With those cameras, I was able to earn a Certificate of an Achievement in Photography. I continue to expand my portfolio by working with people from all walks of life and connecting through photographic artwork.

Artist Statement

My work generally focuses on visual contrast and perspective depth. I have a very throw-it-at-the-wall-and-see-if-it-sticks kind of method to my photos, but by virtue of that, I have no set-in-stone preferences for subjects or even themes most of the time, allowing myself to experiment with new methods and collections as I go. For the photographs I've selected, I wanted to show my range in subject matter while demonstrating my style of high contrast.





Aryn Rios | Rose | 2019



Aryn Rios | Squirrel | 2019

Jingyun Guan

Jingyun Guan is a London-based Chinese artist whose practice spans painting, performance, and installation. Guan graduated from University of Arts London with a MA in Fine art Drawing.

Guan's work employs various media and materials to explore themes of personal mythology, feminist perspectives, and queer identity. Using materials such as wax, tights, cotton wool, and silicone, Guan creates tactile forms that evoke both vulnerability and resilience. These pieces investigate the tension between softness and sharpness, reflecting nuanced expressions of concealed identity and personal emotion.

Project Statement

Hair, as an ambiguous presence on the body, is like a stray organism living upon the skin. It exists on the threshold between the inside and the outside: both an extension of the flesh and something that seems to escape it. "Above Skin" therefore carries a double meaning - it refers at once to the surface of the body and to the fragile boundary between the physical shell and the immaterial world of consciousness.

The series originates from my attention to the overlooked details of daily life, where the sudden appearance of hair in unexpected places evokes strikingly different psychological responses. Hair is not inert matter; it is alive, endowed with its own agency. It grows, falls, decays, changes colour, reviews. In this sense, hair becomes a movement - an intimate clock that silently records the passage of time within our private world. Through it, traces of our identities are revealed.

By photographing body hair in various situations and juxtaposing it with organic and inorganic materials, I explore how hair reflects stories of the body and gender. The work situates hair within domestic and public contexts, inviting viewers to confront their own emotions, discomfort, or desires when encountering hair in "incongruous" circumstances. These images cultivate an atmosphere of ambiguity - both alluring and unsettling - where hair becomes a site of projection and imagination.

Ultimately, the question emerges: if the flesh beneath the skin is the vessel of life, then could the hair upon it be the soul that hovers above?



Aleksandar | Above Skin



Jingyun Guan | Above Skin



Jingyun Guan | Above Skin

Stefan Wulff

 photo_by_a_wulff

I was born in 1968 in a small seaside town in southern Sweden. My father had an interchangeable-lens camera that interested me but I wasn't allowed to use it. I bought my first camera, an Instamatic, at the age of 11, and by 15, I had earned enough money to buy an interchangeable-lens camera.

After completing my military service, during which I had the opportunity to learn more about darkroom techniques, I decided to become a photographer. Through contacts, I secured an internship with one of the local freelance photographers. There, I had access to a studio, a darkroom, cameras, etc., and I mostly learnt about press and street photography. Over the years, I attended two photography schools and worked as a darkroom copyist, photographer's assistant and photographer. It wasn't as glamorous as I had dreamed and times became harder. After re-educating myself, I became a final artist and digital image processor. Suddenly, I found myself employed at an advertising agency, with less and less time for photography.

As the years passed, I became increasingly indifferent to my images and found myself in a rut. Then, suddenly, the pandemic hit and I started to see things more clearly again. I took my camera and went out. I had more patience, created better compositions, and found more interesting subjects. But most importantly, I discovered an aesthetic that I never realised I possessed and felt reborn.

It was when the blue morning sky met the yellow streetlights that I found the spark I had lost years ago. For so many years, my mind had been set on black-and-white photography, but now I realised that I should embrace the world of colour photography. I was back on the streets, and they were mine again.

Artist Statement

I primarily work with artistic documentation in an urban environment using the city as both a stage and backdrop. Sometimes a specific location is the theme of the photography while at other times, the theme becomes the engine for the choice of motif. How the public spaces of the city are designed and used by the inhabitants has long been a recurring theme of my observations.

The repercussions of the pandemic included a more deserted city with fewer elements of disturbance. The shapes and contours of the city stood out more clearly in the desolation. It was especially at dawn that I found the right sensation and energy. I feel that something hypnotic arises when the electric light is given centre stage, preferably with a bluish sky or shadows that provide contrast and depth.

The calm atmosphere gave my photographs several positive ingredients. The image composition became more elaborated. The image content more transilluminated. The visual story-telling more thought through. The choices of motif were neither censored nor dismissed before an attempt to capture it had been made. If I was drawn to something, like a street corner, a light, a façade, I gave it a chance. With time a few themes became crystallised. Electric scooters, abandoned shopping trolleys, murals, façades/street corners and empty advertising boards, are some of the themes.

Sources of inspiration for the project (and for many of my street images) are photographers such as Eugène Atget, Lee Friedlander, Gerry Johansson and similar. However, in contrast to them I take colour photographs in order to maintain and accentuate the character brought out by the city lights.

The main project is still ongoing and the part I present in this application is about electric scooters. Some types of locations and choices of motif are continuously explored further in order to develop and reinforce the storytelling in general. The latest subject to mesmerize me is underpasses. To be continued...



Aioria Fontana

 gabriele_aioria01

Artistic nude photographer born in Brescia in 1980. Since 2016, I have been delicately exploring glamorous portraiture and the nude form, using spontaneous sets, makeshift lighting, and essential equipment to capture the ephemeral and intimate.

My work is a journey into the contraction of the body, where tension, suspension, and dialogues with light tell unspoken stories. Inspired by Caravaggio and Francis Bacon, I see photography as an adult game, a language of paradoxes and freedom in constant transformation.

Artist Statement

My early Nude Glamour work explore the interplay between light and the human form. Using a single studio light inspired by Caravaggio, these photographs reveal vulnerability and strength, capturing intimate, fleeting moments.



Aioria Fontana | Vegetable Horns | 2018



Aioria Fontana | The Bent Bride | 2018

Corey Lineham

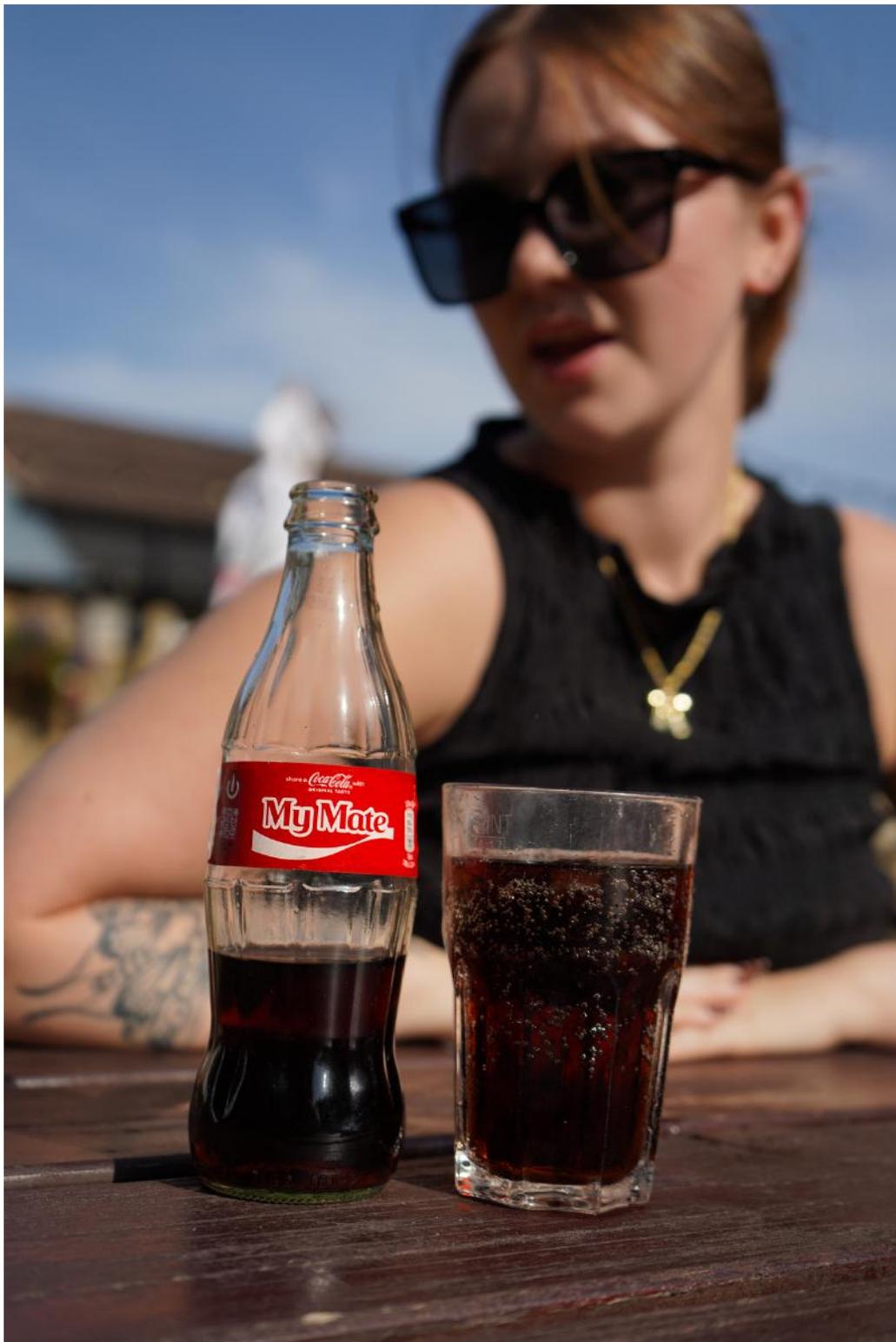
 Lymonphotos

I'm an aspiring food and fashion photographer, currently working with friends to create shoots that feature food products with a fun spin on usual format. As well as fashion shoots that highlight the uniqueness of individual styles and a person's vision on their own clothing.

Artist Statement

This shoot was for a brand competition within local pubs, showing Coca Cola, advertising it on social media in as creative as a format as the photographer desires.

Following this brief, I thought adding a vogue-like spin on the shoot to advertise Cola would make it much more fun and interesting to the audience and for the competition itself.





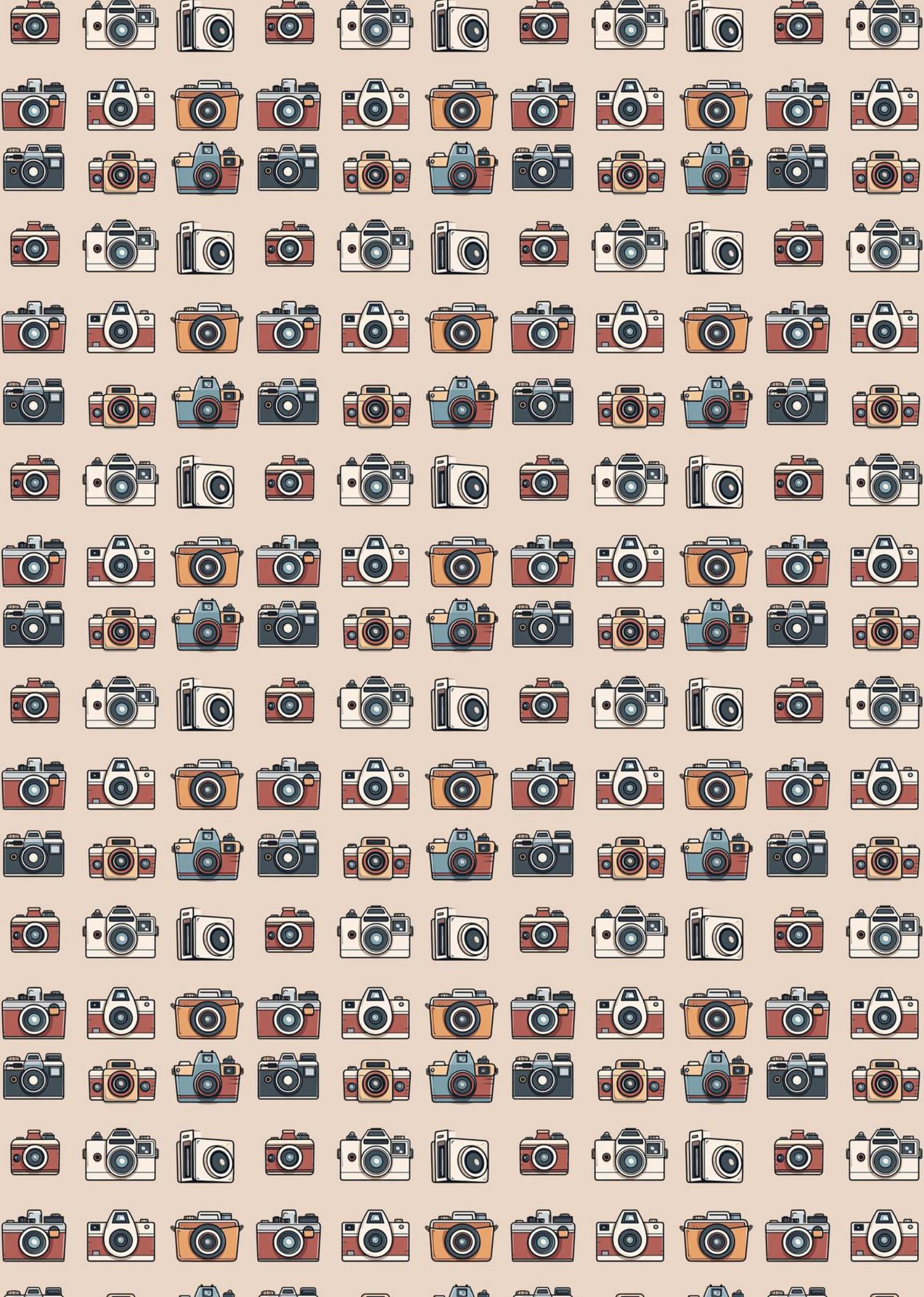
CONTENTS

Interviews

Dustin-David Chu	4	Kartikeya Malhotra	12
Jeremiah A. Gilbert	8	Ioan Oprisan	16

Featured artists

Daniela Kahlert	6	Eleftheria Karasmanoglou	56
Simone Campedelli	10	Clara Kornelis	58
Tymur Ovsienko	14	Mikky Atser	60
Francisco Prieto Montesdeoca	20	Sabine Hagerman	62
Julia Ashikhmina	22	Vivian Kalomiri	64
Martin Červinka	24	Bettina Preysler	66
Eliézer Sena	26	Noemi Lenner	68
Despoina Tsoulou	28	Pierre Armand	70
Gaby Zak	30	Jakob Mortensen	72
Như Phúc	32	Janet Dias	74
Anna Rosenlund	34	Alfredo Diano	76
Maïa Minea	36	Weronika Kann	78
Anne-Frédérique Lenne	38	Aldona Lis	80
Isabelle Hayeur	40	Enrique Gavilán	82
Zofia Nowicka	42	Fuad Sarkar	84
Silvia Ottobrini	44	Polyzois	86
Jiska Wolthaus	46	Aryn Rios	88
Nikola Vaníčková	48	Jingyun Guan	90
Lucas Marques	50	Stefan Wulff	92
Eric Xie	52	Aioria Fontana	94
Andreas Spinos	54	Corey Lineham	96



VISUAL POETRY JOURNAL



NO 8

OCTOBER 25

VISUALPOETRYJOURNAL.COM