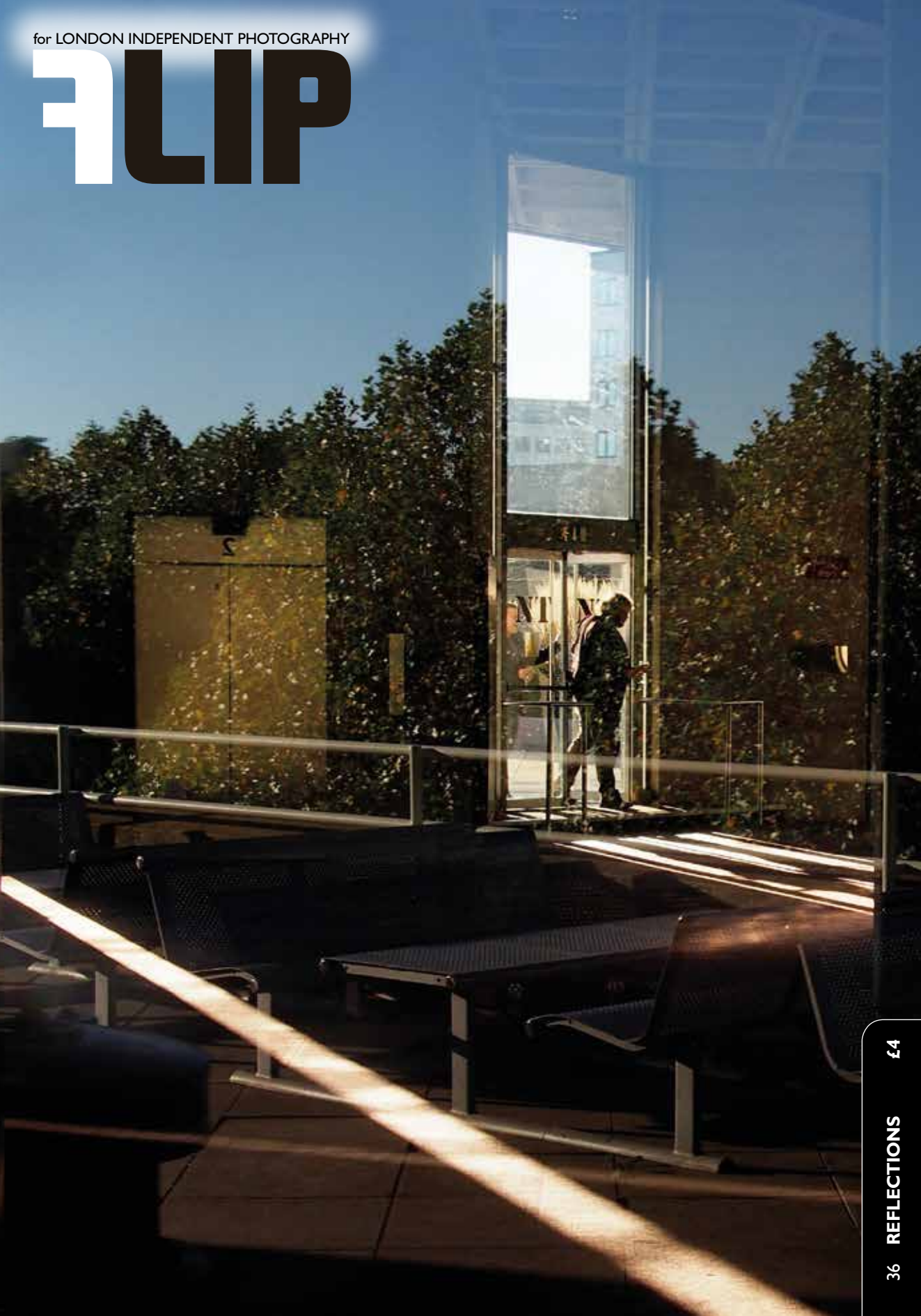


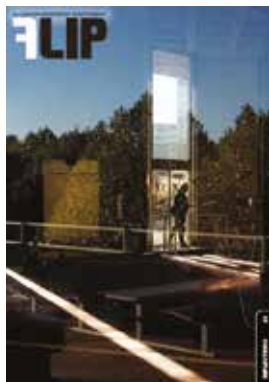
for LONDON INDEPENDENT PHOTOGRAPHY

FLIP



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#36 Reflections, Spring 2017

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Back Image: Yoke Matze

London Independent Photography is a community organisation of photographers from different backgrounds and levels of expertise who wish to develop their individual approach to photography. The group was founded in 1987 as an informal gathering of like-minded photographers, and has since grown to over 600 members. Not-for-profit and run by member volunteers, LIP comes together to offer a programme of workshops and talks, and to produce an annual group exhibition. www.londonphotography.org.uk

The magazine for London Independent Photography is published three times per year with the aim to showcase members' work and to engage readers in a wider dialogue concerning diverse approaches to photography. It is funded entirely by annual membership fees, contains no advertising and is free to members.

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Application details are online at

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The theme for the next issue is **STORYTELLING**

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Small informal groups meet approximately once a month to discuss each others' work, plan exhibitions and just share ideas. As groups are independently organised by members, the structure, content, times, dates, and frequency of meetings are left to the individual groups to decide for themselves.

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Editor's Note

'Photography is a reality so subtle that it becomes more real than reality.'

~Alfred Stieglitz'

Welcome to the spring issue of FLIP, the first of 2017 after a long winter. We often think of spring as the time to reflect and review... to look forward and make new plans.

REFLECTIONS is the theme of this issue and interpretations have varied widely. Some reflections have adhered more to the literal sense of the word, ie. skilfully composed mirror images, often in an architectural and landscape vein; others have responded to the theme in a broader sense, presenting us with contemplation around their personal experience, or on the recent political events that will now shape our future.

All these reflections focus on subtle realities and their visualisation, real or in a person's mind, that make it larger than reality - as Stieglitz alludes to in his quote.

We would like to thank everyone who has contributed to the issue. As usual, we hope we've selected a representative and interesting visual mix which inspires challenge and facilitates the debate around photography.

We also would like to remind all of you of the next themes: STORYTELLING for the Summer Issue (with a submission deadline in June) and URBAN for the Winter Issue (with a submission deadline communicated at a later stage).

So, have a happy spring and enjoy this issue!

Best wishes,

Frank Orthbandt

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Letter from...

By Ted Kinsey



In late 2014 I started my third major photographic project, *Under Tracks*, recording the individuals and businesses who spend their working days in London's c7500 railway arches. This project was planned as a photographic record of the arches as they are used 'today'; a social document that captures an evolving and sadly changing facet of the fabric of our capital city.

With hindsight, maybe railway arches weren't the best idea for a project. As I'm a monochrome film and darkroom photographer and the arches can be very dark and badly lit, at times it has been challenging! I'm using 400 ASA film (3200 is just too grainy) and pretty slow shutter speeds. My two trusty vintage cameras have been used, a NikonFE (1979) and a medium format Pentax67 (1990). When required I've used a tripod, but never flash lighting. I shoot both candidly and formally, as the project needs visual variety.

As the project progressed, I began to see the amazingly diverse uses of London's rail arches. Since 2014, I've shot thousands of frames including an aerial trapeze gym; a swimming pool; churches; micro-breweries and distilleries; a dog crèche; a Sainsbury's Local supermarket; an aquatic showroom; cafés, studios, live music venues, artisan workshops - you name it (almost) and it's probably in a railway arch! What an eclectic mix, in one of London's most unnoticed and underrated attributes.

But alas, the times, they are a changing'. The evictions in the arches at Brixton have received national press coverage as another regeneration scheme begins. Other areas such as Peckham Rye, Loughborough Junction, Tottenham and Bethnal Green all have 'modernisation schemes' hanging over the future of their arches. I'm glad that I'm shooting *Under Tracks* now as I suspect very few of the older occupants will still be there in even five years' time. Just think of those thousands of

London's Railway Arches



rail commuters who travel in and out of London each day, completely oblivious to the changing and parallel universe in the arches beneath them.

A project like this is exciting, all-consuming and exhaustive. Previously, my street photography was random, a day here, a holiday there... but a project like this focuses the photographer's mind. In the beginning, I tried to prepare a long list of the arch locations across Greater London. Much time was spent on Google Earth. Before each trip, I'd research online the area, arches and businesses. On the day, walking, stopping, talking to my subjects all takes time. Many a cup of tea has been sipped 'under tracks' since I started in 2014. Of course, I'm arriving unannounced, so if business in the arch is too busy at that time and it's a good location, a return visit is required. I still have a few unfulfilled trips.

Three years on, and the project is reaching its conclusion. As with my previous projects, an exhibition was my final goal. On my travels along the arches, I've had several offers of exhibition venues in railway arches - the worst being a damp, empty arch in a cul-de-sac in south-east London. The best offer turned

out to be the venue where I'm showing *Under Tracks* in June. The Underdog Gallery, just four minutes' walk along from The Shard and London Bridge Station will be displaying around 90 framed photographs.

To cap it all, the complete collection of photographs from this project has been accepted for inclusion in the History of London Archive at the Bishopsgate Institute Library in the City of London: *Under Tracks* in perpetuity!



Fairways

By Mandy Williams



'I didn't want to photograph his personal objects. I only wanted to record the essence of the home, its space and light.'

The series about Fairways began last August although at the time I was unaware of it. I had travelled down from London to stay overnight at my father's house in Sussex and as we waited for the ambulance to arrive, the early morning light passed through the rooms. It was so beautiful and unexpected that for a moment I felt hopeful. I took a photograph before we left.

Neither of us had any idea that when we went to the hospital that morning my father would remain there for seven weeks and would never see his home again. There were talks of carers, of nursing homes, assisted living, but there was always the hope that he would be able to continue his life as independently as possible.

My father had lived alone for the past eleven years in a small modern bungalow a mile from the sea. It had been decorated by my mother a long time ago and was full of warm tones, of pinks and oranges that glowed in sunlight. As my father had made only a few changes to his home over the years I always felt close to both of them when I visited.

While he was in hospital he occasionally asked me to go to the house and I realised I wanted to take some photographs. Part of me sensed that he wouldn't be coming home now and that this would be my only chance to record it while he was alive and his presence

was there. That quiet time, slowly walking through the rooms with my camera, was also a way for me to cope with him being ill. I didn't want to photograph his personal objects. I only wanted to record the essence of the home, its space and light. The sun streamed through the house as the summer ended and the rooms seemed to burst with colour. It felt wrong that the weather was so beautiful.

And then there was a time when I didn't go at all. Summer became autumn, leaves fell in the garden and settled beside the door. I thought about the house every day, how empty it was.

Now in winter, much of the house looks the same as when my father was here but the light is weaker and colder and enters the rooms differently; the colours are subdued. It still feels like my father's house when I visit, but for how much longer? I'm here every week to pack boxes, trying to quantify the meaning of the objects around me when everything has emotion. The clutter in the rooms is unsettling. As furniture is rearranged and personal belongings are packed away my memories are disrupted. It feels too soon to turn this home into something else. I photograph the lines, the light and the space so they can't be forgotten, the colours, reflections and patterns that flow between rooms. I take photographs each time I visit, trying to capture the last small details that make this place my father's home.



Reflections: My Perspective

By Kathryn Alkins

'I take pictures of whatever appeals visually and pick up themes and think about them later.'

I have a biology and psychology background and having pursued a career in education I've channeled my more artistic side into arranging a small garden and home - however I feel I'm now in a position to pick up from my Art 'A' level and explore my creativity through the medium of photography. Three years ago, I purchased a digital camera and started walking around, mostly in London, looking for things I found visually interesting - and then one year ago, I started photographic classes which broadened my vision beyond the representational. One theme that I found emerged in my work, in a number of contexts, was reflections; another was the use of colour. I became fascinated by and drawn to reflections in their various forms, and their scope for blurring reality, inviting different interpretations, the opportunity for candid

moments and the elements of visual interest divorced from form, the purely visual abstract aspects.

An exhibition of Saul Leiter's work challenged my ideas on a number of levels and has been an influence on my ways of looking at what can be in a photograph. I have not sought to reproduce his work but his way of looking has helped me to focus my ideas - in particular, multi-layering, the use of space, texture, the painterly effect, ambiguity - and how these can be explored in reflections.

Reflections allow me to peer into another world, often fresh and mysterious; an opportunity to see and show the mundane in another light, a parallel 'other' experience. Materials transform, objects lose their solidity and colours intensify. I also see it as an

invitation to reflect on my/our assumptions and the nature of our own construction of reality, to acknowledge that our own unique perspective of the world around us is only one of many possibilities.

A face reflected in a New York cafe window is one of many layers, and I felt that her expression invited speculation without intrusion. Generally, I take pictures of whatever appeals visually and pick up themes and think about them later - but I did intentionally set out to Chinatown as a place where there was likely to be condensation, which Leiter had used to create some of the images I was drawn to. The elderly woman appeared like a 'spirit' of Chinatown, which evoked in me many emotions, and was a window into a whole history, unbeknownst to me.

A hoarding near Fulham Broadway, despite its mundane function, became a symphony of hues, the paint giving it a silky feel, creating an impression of calm.

I've become totally absorbed in the process of 'looking for' and capturing scenes that affect me in some way and allow me to express something of myself in them. I hope this is a thoughtful/reflective view, visually interesting to others, as well as myself.

Reflections allow both myself and the viewer to become drawn into a world with different rules, a glimpse down the rabbit hole.



Finding Images, Creating Worlds

By u.lula-collective



'The 'Red Planet' always attracted human fascination, in ancient mythology representing the god of war, in popular culture offering escape.'

Reflecting, hiding, moving... different places far away in space. Finding images, creating worlds. This collaborative project started after the festive season in 2016, the period in between Christmas and New Year. Contemplating a difficult year behind, both personally and politically, has led to greater uncertainty, and the questioning of underlying values and direction of society. At this turning point, the future looked uncertain, with challenges ahead. Nevertheless, optimism prevailed. Time to discover a new planet, a new world. Mars.

Mars was always considered one of the potentially inhabitable planets in our solar system - or perhaps even inhabited in the past. The 'Red Planet' always attracted human fascination, in ancient mythology representing the god of war, in popular culture offering escape (David Bowie's song *Life on Mars*) or housed alternative life forms (one of the biggest blockbuster movies of 2016 was called *The Martian*). Hence there is a long standing tradition of imagining an alternative world on Mars.

As science advances, humans are determined to get to the bottom of what's happening on that far away

planet. Since the early 00s, Mars exploration has gathered pace with numerous missions of unmanned rovers, analysing everything from stones, dust, dirt, and air in their attempt to find water - considered the prerequisite for any form of life, as least as we humans know and can imagine it.

With photographic equipment advancing rapidly, the rovers have sent a vast amount of images back to Earth where they now are freely available in high resolution via the net. As rovers do not frame the scene and just automatically fire the shutter, there is countless repetition in the material... so much detail that focus is lost, and a great editing project if you have a little spare time and need to nurse a festive hangover!

So, with contemplation, imagination and a degree of melancholy, these appropriated images use collage techniques, as real images form the basis for a complete fictitious interpretation of the mars-scape. Which brings us back to the age-old question 'Is there a life on Mars for me and you?' - and the answer 'Not yet! We need to hold out and make the most of where we are for a little longer'... But we're allowed to dream!



'These appropriated images use collage techniques, as real images form the basis for a complete fictitious interpretation of the mars-scape.'

Church

By Peter Jennings

Music and literature have often been a point of departure in my photographic projects; a means to a very different end. In the case of my 'Church' project started just over a year ago, it was Phillip Larkin's poem *Church Going* that was the catalyst. I must have read this over twenty years ago but it had stayed in my mind like a bat hanging upside down in the dark.

'A shape less recognisable each week' - Larkin reflects on the state of the English parish church, initially predicting a bleak future for these ancient monuments. He enters a church to find it 'not worth stopping for' and in 'awkward reverence' removes his cycle clips. With supreme poetic disrespect he donates an Irish sixpence to the collection box. I share with Larkin a secular view of the English parish church and I too have often reflected on whether this institution will survive in an increasingly multi-cultural society.

When in a village, I always visit the church if it's open. I admire the mise-en-scène of these institutions, and their sense of quiet and sanctuary. A year ago, with no plans to take photographs, I strolled into Leeds Parish Church in Kent - like Larkin, making sure it was not in use. After admiring the architecture, I entered the vestry.

A rack of coat hangers caught my attention; utilitarian objects conveying a sense of purpose and strongly imbued with human presence. Lines from *Church Going* flitted down from my belfry. Initially pessimistic, the poem concludes on an optimistic note stating that a church is where 'all our compulsions meet' and are 'recognized and robed as destinies'. Destiny, the artefacts of living, human activity, the here and now (in this case the coat hangers) shared space with the piety of cold medieval stone and memento mori. There are moments when something needs to be said. This was such a moment; the potential for challenging images, the sort that I feel if they work are looking at me rather than me looking at them; images with personality that need constant re-reading.

I returned with a camera (I use film) to take the photograph and made plans to investigate further afield. Having decided to restrict the project to the county I live in, I made a list of churches in Kent. Some churches I knew would be locked up, some needed permission to enter. As it turned out most were trustingly open.

There has to be a point of departure, and the image of coat hangers was it; a straight document for which I used a wide-angle lens. But as I sought out and photographed other images in other churches, I found a telephoto lens worked better, and that paradoxically, using a long lens to distance myself from a subject for a close-up gave me the intensity I needed - an abstraction, a visual compression, a visual truth.

'When in a village, I always visit the church if it's open. I admire the mise-en-scène of these institutions, and their sense of quiet and sanctuary.'



'Music and literature have often been a point of departure in my photographic projects; a means to a very different end. In the case of my 'Church' project started just over a year ago, it was Phillip Larkin's poem *Church Going* that was the catalyst. I must have read this over twenty years ago but it had stayed in my mind like a bat hanging upside down in the dark.'





Heavy Colour: Reality Reflected

By Dmitry Stepanenko



Heavy Colour is a result of many transformations that have happened to me and the interpretation of my surroundings in the last several years. I've been through many changes while searching for my own style. Being heavily influenced by work of the great Henri Cartier-Bresson and co, I used to shoot very classic pictures - but eventually I found my real passion was in shooting intense colour.

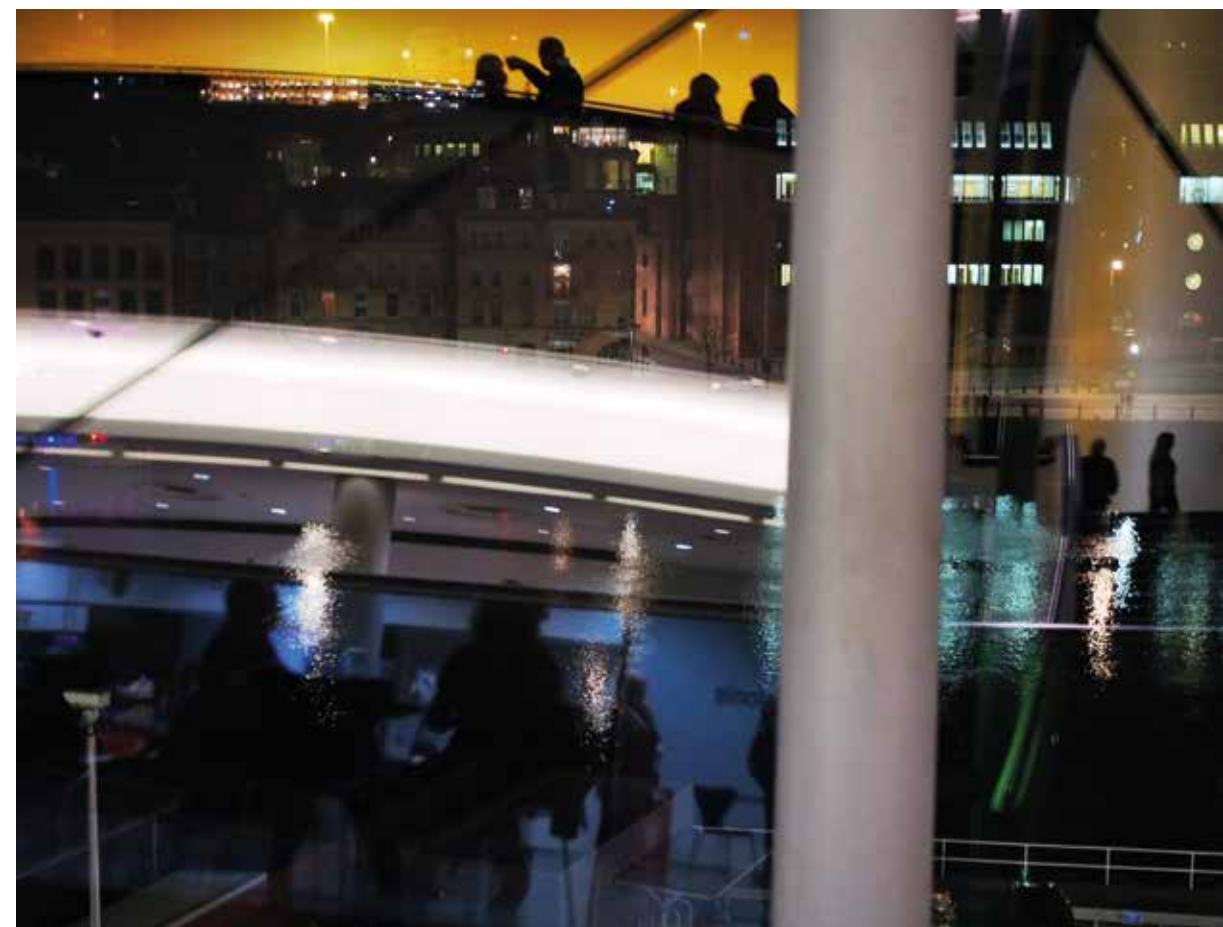
For me it was more than just a matter of moving from black and white to colour; it was looking at things differently, searching for other kinds of harmony and interactions between subjects, colours and shapes - with the latter two becoming increasingly important and at times overtaking the subjects. *Heavy Colour* is a long-term project, and the selection here (*Reality Reflected*) is a small subset of that project focusing on reflections, which I like not only for the artistic qualities but also as an opportunity to show the complex and multiple layers of the modern world we live in.

I believe that colours and shapes have their own meanings and I often tend to look at my photographs as if they were abstract paintings with two key distinguishing features: firstly, all my photographs represent real

life, they are not staged, manipulated, or set up in any way - and, secondly, in contrast to the paintings, they include the element of unpredictability, mostly in the form of a human element. I often use reflective surfaces as they help me to make the photographs more abstract, change the meanings or sometimes add some mystery. I want my viewers to ask questions, to find their own meanings and to get aesthetic pleasure from my work.

Colour often plays the leading role in my images. When we think about colour photographs, we often recall India, Latin America and the USA, but not usually England. In contrast, *Heavy Colour* has been inspired by London. I came to London from Southern Europe and initially found it rather grey and dull so to cheer myself up I decided to challenge myself and hunt for intense colour here. It's a challenge that I still constantly face when shooting up to this day. Nowadays, I have expanded the geography of the project to include photographs from the rest of Europe, China and the USA... but I aim to keep it consistent in style and approach, meaning that in most cases the viewer will not be able to tell where a picture was taken.

I've been influenced by a large number of photographers, such as Harry Gruyaert, Gueorgui Pinkhassov, Saul Leiter and Ernst Haas, but have also drawn inspira-



tion from the abstract works of Vassily Kandinsky and Piet Mondrian, the colours of Edgar Degas and Pierre-Auguste Renoir, the light in the paintings of Edward Hopper and Caravaggio, and from the movies of David Lynch and Stanley Kubrick.

Heavy Colour aims to change the perspective from subject-driven photography to give colours, shapes and light the meaning of their own and the place they deserve.



'Colour often plays the leading role in my images. When we think about colour photographs, we often recall India, Latin America and the USA, but not usually England. In contrast, *Heavy Colour* has been inspired by London.'



'All my photographs represent real life, they are not staged, manipulated, or set up in any way and in contrast to paintings, they include the element of unpredictability, mostly in the form of a human element...'



In Focus: Michal Iwanowski

Interview by Frank Orthbandt

Clear of People



Using landscape as a means for personal reflection on his family's past, Michal Iwanowski recreates his grandfather's daring escape from Soviet captivity after WWII. This epic journey, taken together with his brother through a politically-charged landscape, was made all the more precarious by injuries sustained during the war. A three-month trek, marred by constant hunger and exhaustion, followed the escape. The two men stayed clear of people, trying to avoid any possible danger and discovery of their escape. What kept them alive, was their longing to return to their families back in Poland.

Using a rough map and notes he inherited from his uncle, Michal - who was born and grew up in Poland before moving to Wales - embarked on a similar journey, faithfully retracing every step, with a camera as his sole comrade, documenting his experience in landscape and topographic images.

The starting point of this project is clearly personal yet also reflects on geographical displacement, an experience shared today by the growing number of migrants and refugees responding to geopolitical instability, attaching a wider and more universal interpretation to the work. Michal talks to fLIP about the motivation and inspiration behind this work, which was self-published in early 2017.

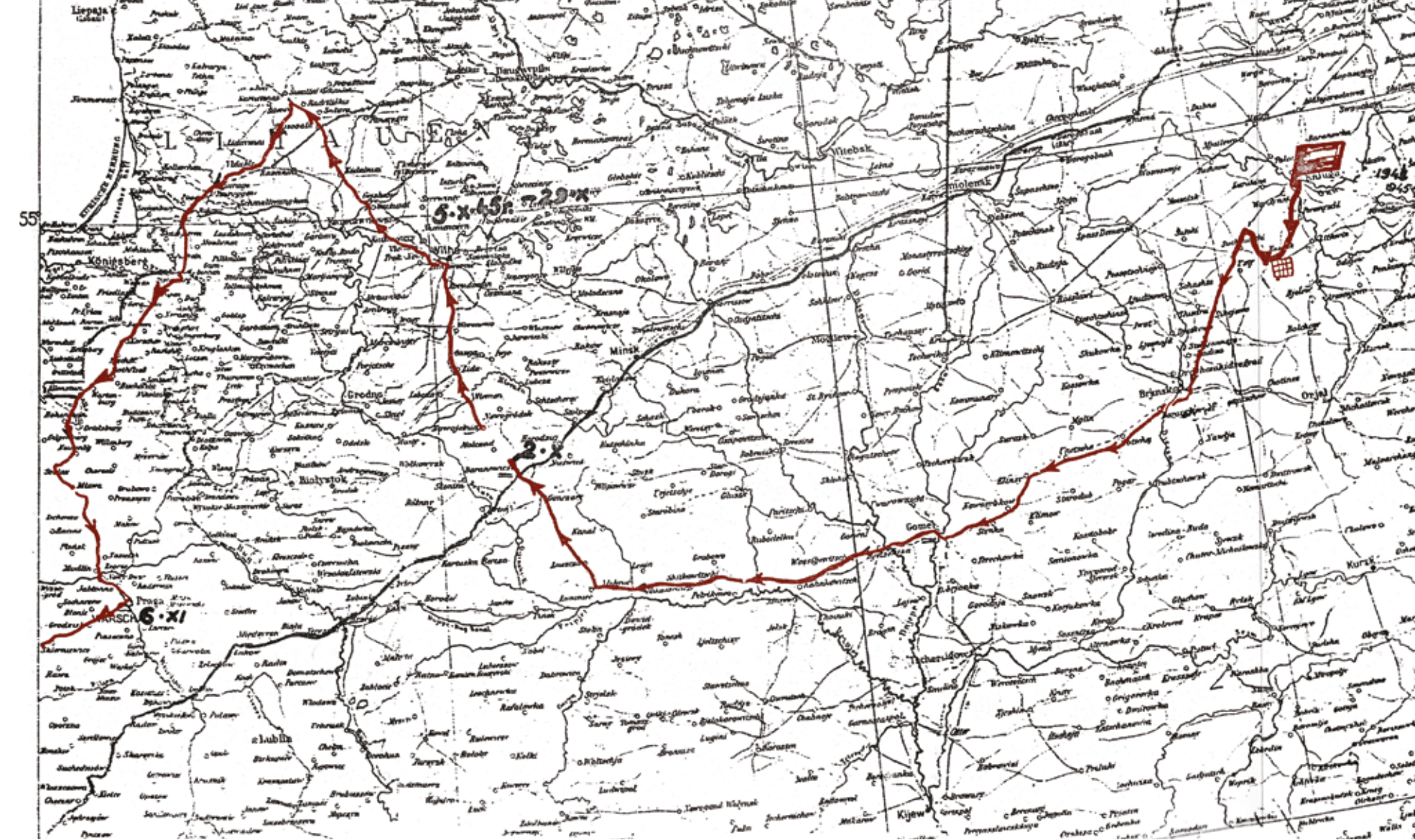
< Hello Michal, many thanks for talking to us about your project and upcoming publication *Clear of People*. This is a very personal project dealing with a specific aspect of your family history. Please tell us about its background, both from the historic context and your personal motivation.

Firstly - thank you for your questions and interest in *Clear of People*.

The family history came to the forefront when I was invited to do an art residency in Lithuania in 2012. I had no preconceived ideas for new work at the time, but I was very excited to be going to the country of my grandparents' youth for the first time. They had come from the Vilnius region, which in the lead up to World War II was under Polish administration, but after the war was annexed by the Soviet Union and a great deal of ethnically Polish residents were expelled to the newly acquired territories of western Poland. So my family ties to that particular geography ended in 1945, when my grandparents started a new life in Wrocław.

There was never much bitterness or nostalgic harking back, but they savoured various humorous stories from pre-war Vilnius, which to the young child that I was, sounded slightly magical. So when I eventually arrived in Lithuania for my residency, it already looked strangely familiar. Instinctively, I felt the right way to explore the environment was by just walking into it, and that's exactly what I did. I started walking from Kaunas, where I was based, to Vilnius, a modest 100 km way. I did that in sections for a number of days, 10-20 km at a time along the railway line, returning to my base in Kaunas every evening, and resuming the trek the following day. I spent a lot of time on my own, usually somewhere in the forest, trying to pinpoint which part of my memory generated the feeling of being 'at home' in a place I had not seen before.

That's when I got interested in the notion of landscape as a carrier of collective memory. And that drove me to want to explore the notion further. As I was looking for a clear narrative for that new body of work, the story of my grandfather's escape from soviet captivity kept crossing my mind. In 1944, along with his younger brother and thousands of other partisans, they were arrested and transported to various military camps and gulags in Russia. A year later, the two brothers managed to break out, and made an epic return journey home. Staying clear of people and moving only at night, they were crossing the forests on foot, and whenever possible they would also jump freight trains. Three months later, in November 1945, they were reunited with their parents and sister in Wrocław. That story resonated with me during my trek towards Vilnius. There I was, a citizen of united Europe, arriving on a convenient, cheap flight and freely moving across the land - a completely different experience. And just how had he managed to cross 2000 km with no help? How does one do that? What had he seen along the way? That was when I realised there was only one way to find



out; I decided to make the same journey, and in doing so pay a personal tribute to their efforts, and to the efforts of others who had then, and who have since shared a similar fate.

At the centre of your story lies the displacement of people, and all its effects on the individuals and families, as a reaction to the political framework at the time. This is also a very pertinent issue today in our current geopolitical situation. How do you view your family experience in view of today's increasing number of refugees, growing nationalism - and protectionism?

My family story is by no means exceptional, and I have never seen it as such. It is one of so many similar and much more harrowing stories. But it represents the universal fugitive experience. Whether in the forests of Russia, or on the boats from Syria across the Mediterranean, the fugitive journey is constant. The geography and navigational tools may change, but people keep on running away from danger or returning home in exactly the same fashion and for

similar reasons. Conflict and displacement do not discriminate. So from early on in the project I knew I was working with many people's family stories, and I knew the responsibility and the potential the work offered in terms of communicating with audiences. I am a firm believer in applying the individual in discussing the global perspective, and in that sense I knew I had access to a very precious narrative.

Can you fill us in with the logistics of the project, such as how long it took to prepare for your trip, and how long it took to complete? Did you actually walk the whole distance?

I planned my trip very thoroughly. I spent hours on Google earth, breaking it into manageable chunks, making sure the distances between bases were do-able, and that there would be a bridge where I needed to cross a river, etc. Most of the time I got it right. My plan was to retrace the original journey faithfully, so I followed my uncle's diary and walked exactly where they had walked, and I took trains where they had. I walked some 800 km, and crossed

'It turned out to be a rather slow process. . . sometimes I would walk for a long time without taking a single image. That was very liberating, and that was when I felt in the position to respond to the environment with a good degree of openness.'

< some 2300 km in total. Most of the time I was able to make it from one base to another in a day, up to 40 km/day, but some places I would spend a few days in, like Kozielsk, where I felt a really strong connection and needed to stick around for longer. It took me 10 weeks to cover the entire track, with some parts covered a few times. My journey was not done in one single trip, but a number of trips.

Visually, did you have an idea about the type of images you wanted to bring back from your journey? The images are very much rooted in a landscape and topographic vein, often transporting a personal interpretation of a place. Was this your intention from the start?

I was lucky not to have certain images on my mind that I felt I needed to chase and bring back with me. The visual language emerged quite early on in the process, while I was still in Lithuania on the residency. I say quite early, as I had to allow my eyes to get used to the place and let the initial novelty wear off. I had to get all the predictable photographs out of my system. Get off that high horse. Wipe those tourist eyes. Once that was done, I felt the landscape and I could finally form an open dialogue.

And it turned out to be a rather slow process... sometimes I would walk for a long time without taking a single image. That was very liberating, and that was when I felt in the position to respond to the environment with a good degree of openness.

Walking became a form of meditation, with all the trees passing steadily by my peripheral vision; it resembled a gentle hypnotic state. You stop noticing the usual, the predictable, but suddenly notice very subtle changes in the landscape, shapes and elements you'd not otherwise pay attention to. The mundane poetry of sticks. I wanted that in my images. Not the historical or geographical signifiers, not the monuments, but the quiet experience of landscape that is only accessible to those who have been exposed to its repetitiveness and its tedium, or to its danger. I photographed what I imagined my grandfather would have looked at, as we shared a deep appreciation for nature. In practical terms, I wanted the landscape to be translated into images in a similar way to how my eyes experienced it, so I only used a prime 50mm for the whole project and kept it very simple. I used natural features, like bridges or frozen lakes, to reach vantage points, and like the fugitives, I stayed clear of people.

Looking around some of the projects recently published, particularly from currently emerging artists, photography appears to be a favourite medium to explore personal topics and family history. In one of our recent issues we featured David Favrod, who re-enacts in his work crucial aspects of his family history that shaped the understanding between generations. Why do you think so many younger photographers now explore their past and origins, and work with historic material and archives?



The socio-cultural context within which we exist has rapidly expanded with globalisation. And we need to negotiate new frameworks to go with it. I certainly have witnessed the shift from 'for the good of the system' to 'the world is your oyster' in my generation. I grew up in communist Poland, not the most fertile ground for an individual to think outside of the system. But then the system changed and we jumped at the opportunity to pursue our individualism. But as much as we are led to believe we can be anything we want to be, or go anywhere we want to go, it is only a matter of time before we start asking where we actually came from. It is basic psychology, the search for roots, and exploration of our history. Laurie Anderson says, 'freedom is a scary thing, not many people really want it,' and maybe that is the reason we so eagerly attach ourselves to elements of our past? Historical context serves as a gyroscope that stabilises us, sets a level, allows us to define our own position. It's the bare minimum of a solid

foundation we need to keep exploring the freedom and the rapid changes we're experiencing.

At the same time, and this is a dark observation, we are living in times when the concept of war is becoming a daunting prospect rather than the recent memory it was for our parents. This is something we share with our grandparents, who not so long ago witnessed similar growing tensions that eventually turned into a world war. We see the parallels and recognise their voices are more important than ever. Their stories are a reminder that the circle of history is yet again closing and about to repeat itself. That is surely the case in *Clear of People*.

Please tell us about the editing process. What did you learn during this essential part of the project?

I have given myself the luxury of time, and there is no better aid to a good edit than this. I am also lucky

to be surrounded by talented artists, curators and editors, who at some point in the editing process have given me valuable feedback. It is important to have a very clear narrative in mind, of course, but it helped to hear whether my choices were transparent enough, clear enough, and poignant enough. The editing process has taken me 3 years. I started with the first solo show at Ffotogallery in Cardiff in February 2014, for which an initial edit had emerged. In the following two years I exhibited and published the work extensively, trying out different ways of presentation, working out the balance between my images and archival materials.

My objective was to make an edit that pays a tribute to my family history, but one that is ultimately about every family, rather than my family. As the book is about to be published, I have stopped wanting to make changes, which gives me some confidence the edit must have reached a point of completion, some



< sort of a Zen point. I would never have been able to reach this point had I not given the process the time it required.

How has the work been received? Did you always envisage it as a book? It seems to lend itself very well to publication as I think it's a topic and series that grows on you as you come back to it over time.

I agree, the project naturally lends itself to book form. It's a notebook, a journal, like the one that my great uncle wrote about his experiences of the escape. It sets out a linear narrative and combines two distinctive voices and experiences: their journey and mine. I recognised the potential, but I waited for a while before deciding to make the book. The first question I asked myself was whether the world needed another photo book. Whether what I had to offer was of any use to the world. Making books is expensive and stressful, so I wanted to be sure I wasn't taking on that challenge only to end up serving my own ego.

The feedback I was gathering during exhibitions or online, often very moving and emotional, suggested the project resonated with a great number of people from different backgrounds, from all sides of conflicts, and made enough of an impact for me to consider the publication. I think the tipping point was when my great uncle, soon before his death said 'this story is yours now.' I felt it was worth preserving in a book form, worth taking it out of the gallery setting and sending it to someone's home,

putting it in a library, so it would not just fade.

For the publishing process you have chosen to collaborate with an independent book designer and publisher (*Brave Books* based in Berlin) and to fund the edition by way of a Kickstarter campaign. Was this always your preferred route or did you also discuss the work with more traditional publishing houses?

Tom (Mrazauskas, *Brave Books*) was a natural choice for me. He had worked with my photographs before in another publication, so when we met at *Paris Photo*, we decided to talk about a possible collaboration. Neither of us had the funds to publish the book, but we were eager to see if we could make it happen if we pooled our resources. In a way, we saw an encouraging parallel between the story of two fugitives on their quest for safety, and the story of two artists on their quest to publish a book.

The name *Brave Books* fitted the bill perfectly. I have little entrepreneurial sense, so it was Tom's idea to run a Kickstarter campaign, which we did, and we succeeded. In many ways this publishing journey has been extremely challenging, often close to a breaking point, but now, from a safe perspective, it almost seems appropriate – the fugitive experience and the publishing experience have both made this book what it is.

What is your view on the current state of the photobook market? With so many new titles being

published, how does one stand out and grab the attention with audiences?

In terms of the content of the book, I am confident there is room for work like mine, especially in the current political climate. And it was important for me to be sure there was an audience for my book before I went into publishing it. I am now in a privileged position where over 400 copies have already been sold prior to publishing. In that sense we almost bypassed the market by creating our own. We seem to have crammed all the hard work and promotion into the publishing process.

That is one of the greatest advantages of crowd funding I think. When the book is out in March, we have a number of bookshops that are waiting to stock the remaining copies, and we will be able to focus our attention on further promotion without the pressure to sell. It is quite a luxurious position to be in. However, I would like to think that there will always be an audience for a strong project, no matter how saturated the market becomes.

Many thanks talking to us and we wish you all the success for this amazing project and book.

'We are living in times when the concept of war is becoming a daunting prospect rather than the recent memory it was for our parents.'



The Photograph that Inspired Me

By Sirkka-Liisa Konttinen

Young Man in Velvet Suit Playing Violin, Portobello Rd, 1976, Markéta Luskáčová

I didn't grow up with an awareness of great documentarians. My auntie was a good photographer without thinking there was such a thing as good or bad about it. She gathered in albums my family's summers and the children's capers. My appreciation is partly retrospective, although I always knew a good capture was potent and I couldn't wait to get my hands on a camera. My auntie lent me hers when I was twelve and from then on I was hooked.

My potential role models were already famous for decades and sometimes dead before I knew they existed. Some eventually turned out to be my contemporaries and it was a thrill to discover them when I became a film and photography student in London in the late 1960s. I immediately identified with how and what they saw with their cameras. One of these was to be Markéta Luskáčová, whom I got to know and photographed with during one happy summer in the 1980s on the beaches of Northeast England, for a *Side Gallery* commission.

In the 1970s Markéta was already photographing street musicians in her neighbourhood of London. This particular photograph, new to me from her recently published book, *To Remember. London Street Musicians 1975-1990*, strongly connects me back to what made me a photographer of people, too.

At first glance we may muse that the man is either very tall or very thin. He wears a smart velvet suit and a tie. His elegant, classically trained fingers of the left hand, instead of the usual right, are holding the bow poised on the strings of his violin. He is young and unbothered by his beauty, oblivious of his passing audience. He is deeply into himself and the music he is making.

He has his back against a wall.

But it is his feet that kill me. His platform shoes are scuffed and skewed, the sole of one is worn and parting. He is not posing for the camera though he must have noticed it, so close by. He is not aware of revealing his vulnerability, which the photographer takes on board with utmost care, knowing that it is precious.

Markéta writes that in her Czech language, the verb to photograph means to immortalise and she was

shocked to learn that in English the equivalent is to shoot. In my native Finnish the verb to photograph is to picture with light. But we do also 'take' a photograph.

Of course Markéta may have taken a dozen or more photographs of this young man, and on several occasions, but out of all of them she has chosen this particular frame that is capable of stopping my heart.

He plays his violin. This instrument is as sensitive to heat and cold as its player who is making his living out in the street. His is the closest musical instrument to the human voice, both fragile and powerful, sharing the same pitch and sonority. It sears directly into your core. I want to imagine, if I could hear it, how he would make it tell me more about himself. But I have already had a glimpse into his soul in this still photograph. There is no reason to excavate his privacy any further than what he and the photographer have already given me: his singular humanity.

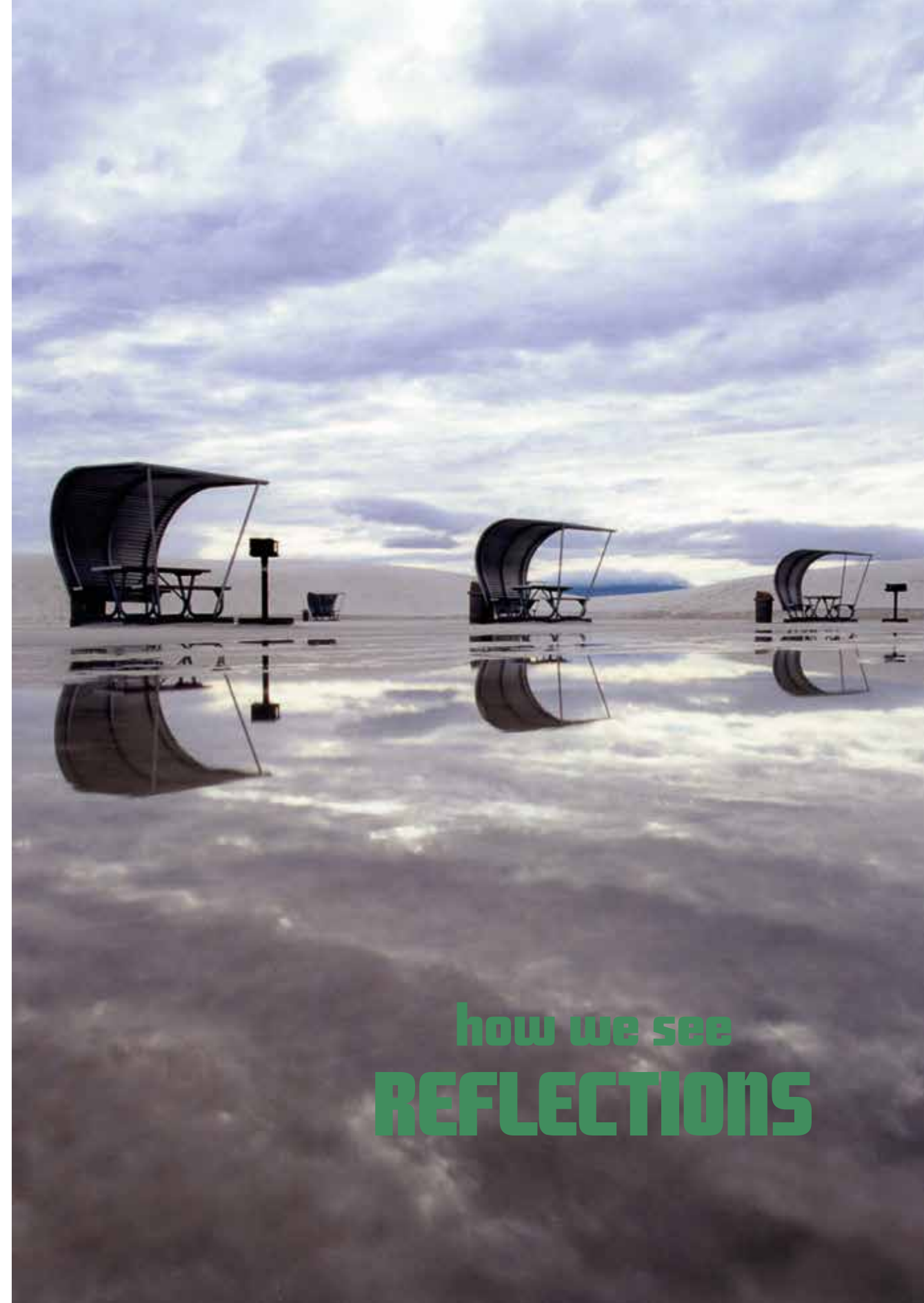
The photographer is embedded in the picture. And so is the viewer. The violins that reverberated in my home: my father's, my brother's, and my daughter's, now lend their music to this violin.

One of my own photographs is carried in a suitcase by a woman who travels a great deal. She tells me she takes it out for quiet contemplation wherever she stops, and it restores her back to herself. She is not interested in the story behind it. She has created her own and she takes her nourishment from it.

To Remember. London Street Musicians 1975-1990 by Markéta is as unpretentious as its title. It has a robust feel, utilizing the pages to capacity with large pictures, each one complementing the next, both a story and a mystery. It is beautifully printed and reproduced, honest and bold from its grainy negatives. It is art and I know this because it has the power to hold on to me.

Empathy and emotion have not been passwords to the art world of recent years. But if a piece of art doesn't get me to my core, it has clearly missed its target. This one does.

View this image at: <http://bit.ly/2mzABNG>



how we see
REFLECTIONS





2-3 Alex Ingram

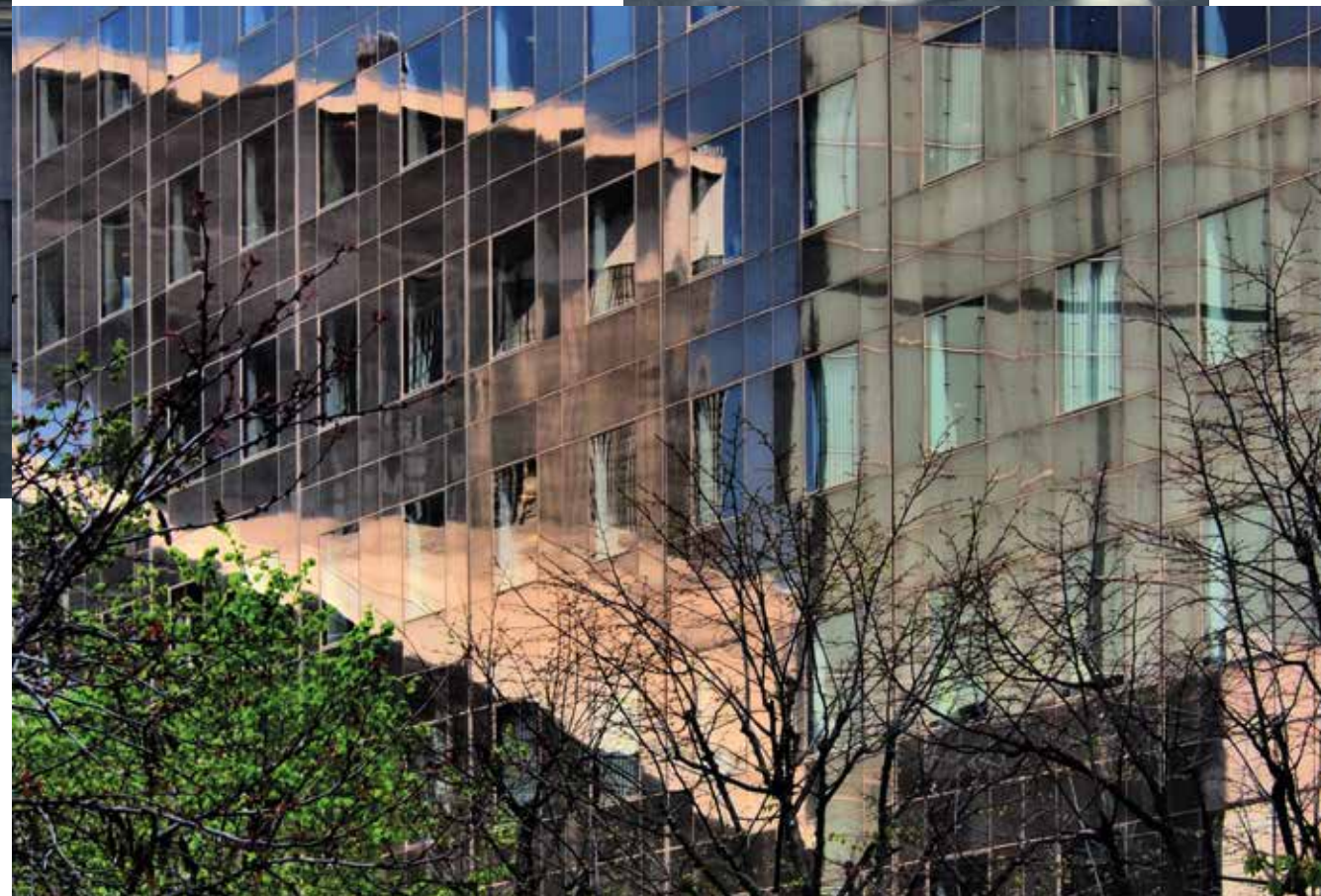




7- 8 John Chappelow



9 Sandra Roberts







12 Dan Loveday

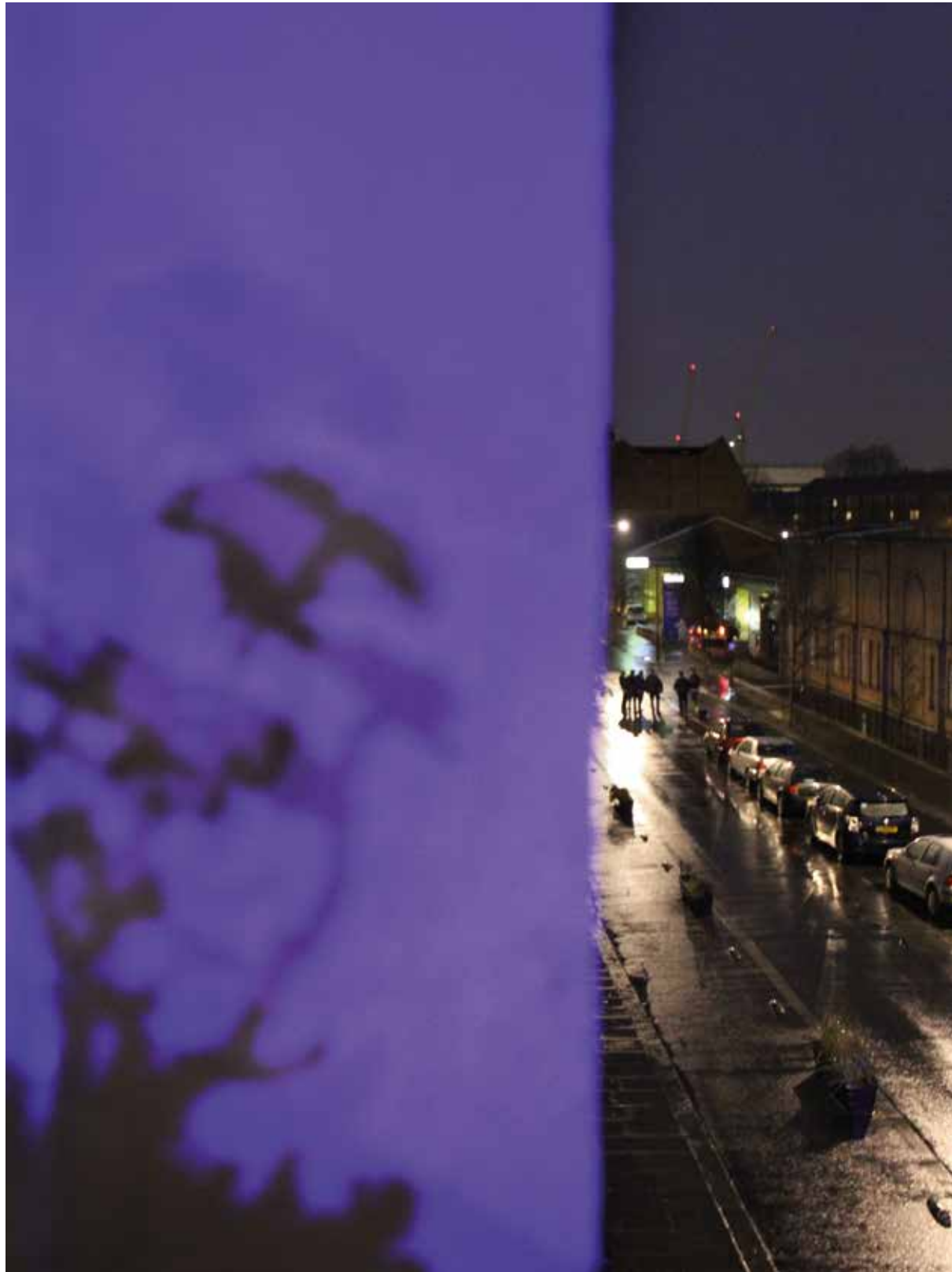


13 Behzad Sharouz
14 David Reed >









22 Anna Lerner



23 Barbara Luckhurst



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Theme Cover: Quentin Ball *Sailing ships, White Sands NM*

In the midst of the sprawling dunes of White Sands New Mexico is an area for picnics, with ramadas to protect one from the sun. After a short rare storm this was what I found. This is why the area of the American Southwest keeps drawing me back to its awesome landscape.

I Andrew Wilson *The RNLI Lifeboats at the ready in Chiswick West London, across the river from The Leg o'Mutton Nature Reserve in Barnes.*

2-3 Alex Ingram *St Davids.* St Davids is a city founded on the desire for seclusion, situated on the most westerly tip of the Wales and surrounded on three sides by vast expanses of open water. It's a landscape that has been shaped by nature and in turn has shaped the inhabitants of this community, who have learnt to live and adapt to its remote geographical location in quiet solidarity. After four years away, my return to St Davids has enabled me to consider it, and its people, through fresh eyes, examining my relationship and understanding of the place that for the majority of my life I called home.

4 & 19 Katie Waggett

5-6 Danilo Leonardi *Riverboat Service from Greenwich Pier, a sunny Saturday morning, reflections on the ceiling & 14th July Parade in Paris, near the church of La Madeleine, the crowd is reflected on the gendarme's sunglasses.* Both from the series *Cities and Urban Spaces*. I regularly post a selection of these shots on Instagram (@danileonardi5092). A lot of the images are about people using public spaces, and for these two in particular I looked for reflections that are a priority in the image, rather than a secondary element.

7-8 John Chappelow *La Défense 1&3*

9 Sandra Roberts *Driving the 29 Bus, Location Tottenham Court Road*

10 CJ Crosland *The London Shard*

11 & 22 Anna Lerner. *Mystic place, 2016. & Night scene, 2016.* Flashing blue lights. I open the window, I shoot.

12 Dan Loveday *Untitled, Dreamland, Margate*

13 Behzad Sharouz *The Transformation of Space.* Architects at design stage have carefully considered the reflections on a façade of a building as its outward appearance. It is a mapping from a Euclidean space to itself that is an isometry with a hyperplane as a set of fixed points; called the axis of reflection.

The transformation of space facilitates the building more appropriately in its place of the surrounding.

14 David Reed *Canalside Reflection,* Close-up of building reflections after a barge created ripples in the canal basin outside the cafe at Kings Place, King's Cross.

15-17 Md. Enamul Kabir *Untitled,* from the project *Escape from Life Alternative...* On August 27, 2015 many things were bothering me. I was thinking about all of the things that are frustrating in my life: a boring job, the girl I love being far away, and my mother's health problems. As I took a walk beside Sarwardi Park in Dhaka that evening I suddenly saw a flock of crows on the tree. Somehow this scene shifted my attention from my problems and I knew I needed to take a photo to capture that moment. Masahisa Fukase's work, *The Solitude of Ravens*, helps me to find myself. I felt a connection with Masahisa Fukase because of the loneliness that permeated his work, a loneliness I am currently feeling.

18 Gerry Atkinson *Bridal Wear*

20 Angela Ford *Mirror Vision.* This infrared image was taken in France where distorted mirrors had been randomly placed in the town. The way in which people approached the mirrors and tentatively looked at themselves was fascinating. After a while they would make different poses in the mirror whereas some ignored the mirrors completely.

21 Terence Lane *Reflect (I).* From the series *Coal Drops Yard, Kings Cross, London*

23 Barbara Luckhurst *Reflecting.* At the *City Lights* exhibition the people proved to be as compelling as the exhibits.

24 Alex Ingram *Abereiddy*

25 Edith Templeton *Golden Leaves* Taken on the *Queensmere* on Wimbledon Common.

Backflip cover: Sandra Roberts *Ahead of the Curve, City of London*

The theme for the next issue is STORYTELLING
www.londonphotography.org.uk/magazine/submit



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ARTICLE

Great Old Days: A Journey into the American Rustbelt

Photographed by Brendan Hoffman and reviewed by Frank Orthbandt

The result of the US presidential election was so far, the biggest populist protest vote with wide implications to geopolitical stability. Reflecting on the drivers behind this movement Brendan Hoffman documents the decline of the US rustbelt in a very personal work.



Who knows what will have happened in world politics by the time this article is printed... the current political environment is so uncertain and fast moving, unimaginable compared to only twelve months ago. The impression is that we are currently living in a period that will in years to come feature prominently in history books as the start of seismic shifts in the international order.

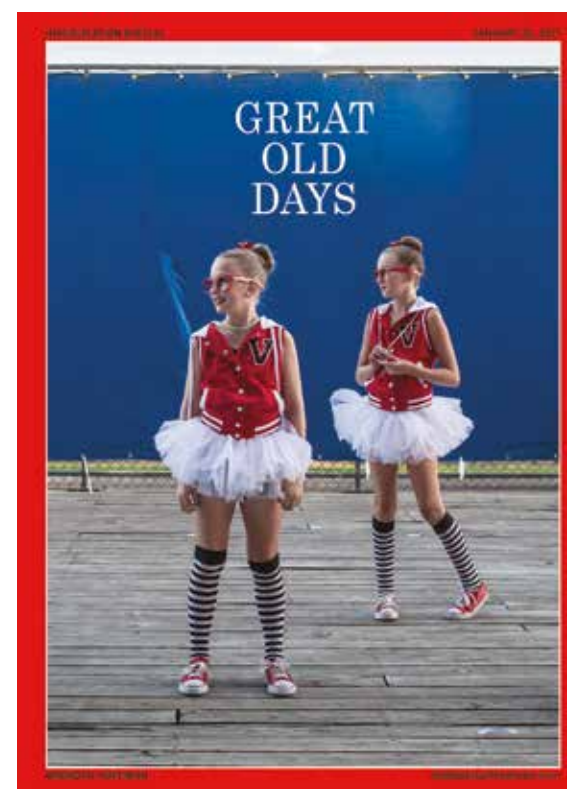
The US presidential elections - so far, the biggest populist protest vote - has questioned the conception of the wider world order and it's important to understand and reflect on the drivers behind this movement. Even before Trump's emerging election campaign, US documentary photographer Brian Hoffman had documented the decline of the industrial heartland of the US in his long-term project *The Beating of the Heart*.

Here he illustrates over a period the effects of de-industrialisation and resulting social and personal changes on the community of Webster City, based in rural Iowa, once the home to the first manufacturing site of the washing machine in the US. Established in 1937, the factory gave the town an economic and social identity - but as the plant was transferred to Mexico, applying rules of free trade and globalisation, nearly all of a workforce that once topped 2,000 was laid off.

It's not the first community to end up in a tough spot, and it won't be the last - though to a large degree, these workers were forgotten. As a story we've heard before, Webster City isn't unique, but as an anecdotal emblem of contemporary small-town Midwestern life, it's fascinating and inspired Hoffman to document the process. Making some dozen trips, over several years, Hoffman embedded himself in daily life in Webster City, striving to capture the charac-

ter-driven drama and vague sense of anxiety common to such places. As a document of a middle-class town slowly losing that distinction, his project is in part an attempt to understand the changes taking place among the middle-class in America today, as they lose confidence in a positive outlook for a prosperous economic future. On November 8, 2016, people in communities like Webster City, spread throughout the Rust Belt, finally made their anxieties heard when Donald Trump was elected President of the United States.

In Hoffman's images we see smart tree-lined streets, middle-class homes and busy main streets packed with local businesses, all things which very much defined the middle American dream. But in his portraits, we see the despair, the angst and the desperate struggle to keep this modest American dream alive for the next generation. Many of these have now nothing to lose and subject to



'Making some dozen trips, over several years, Hoffman embedded himself in daily life in Webster City, striving to capture the character-driven drama and vague sense of anxiety common to such places.'

ARTICLE



< slow economic decline since the financial crisis now nearly a decade ago. The images record decline, despair, and an attempt to hang onto a dignified life. These are the faces of people behind economic statistics... the people who want to make America great again – and the people who feel they need to be part of the story again. It's a reminder that there are real unanswered questions and a crisis of capitalism behind the much-lamented rise of populism.

A selection of the images of the ongoing project have been published in a brochure, together with press headlines and personal messages of the affected

individuals. This magazine, referencing the famous layout of *Time Magazine*, was distributed during Trump's inauguration ceremony in Washington as a reminder of the movement and people behind the political change we're experiencing at great speed. The booklet has been published by *Overlap*, the imprint founded by LIP member Tiffany Jones. See further images and order a copy of the magazine at www.thebeatingoftheheart.com

'But in his portraits, we see the despair, the angst and the desperate struggle to keep this modest American dream alive for the next generation...'

EXHIBITION REVIEW

Wolfgang Tillmans: Beyond Images

by Frank Orthbandt

With this new exhibition, Wolfgang Tillmans: 2017, Tate Modern stages the most comprehensive retrospective so far of the photographer's work.

Tillmans has always been associated with London and its art, music and youth culture, so it is only fitting that Tate Modern is currently showing one of the largest retrospectives of his work so far. Leaving his native, small-town Germany to study in the UK, Tillmans became a prominent figure in the emerging East London art and club scene in the late 20th century, creating a style that defined the late 90s popular visual language and culminating in him being awarded the 2000 *Turner Prize*, the first photographer to receive it.

The exhibition spans work from all his different periods, including new work, in a curation that favours a thematic approach rather than a chronological display. Right from the start his exhibitions have been about more than showing single images; they have been very much about the object, its print as a transporting medium, and a careful curation - using the individual gallery space and experimenting with sizes, textures and sequences of images. In his studio, which in the last decade has moved to Berlin, Tillmans prepares exhibitions using architectural models to create his displays. Most his studio time is spent on research to advance his printing techniques and curating his body of work. Thus, Tillmans very much makes a statement for photography being exhibited in a

gallery space. The curation of his work, the quality and brilliance of the prints, the use of different sizes, framed and unframed images add a further dimension, that even the currently much praised photobook does not transport. Indeed, the room in the exhibition dedicated to his numerous publications, either in photobooks or magazine print, demonstrates that images lose their impact compared to the presentation during the show.

Tillmans' work was always influenced by club culture, creating an aesthetic adopted by many magazines at the time such as *ID*, *The Face* and *Dazed & Confused*, and the influence and link between music and his work features prominently in two installations in the exhibition. His experimentation in how mediums transport recorded music as well as images form a core interest in his work. Other of his activities, maybe lesser known than his defining images, are also referenced in this retrospective. His gallery project *Between Bridges* first hosted in Bethnal Green and now moved to Berlin shows him as curator of often forgotten and overlooked artists. His *Truth*



Iguazu 2010 © Wolfgang Tillmans



AstroCrusto A 2012 © Wolfgang Tillmans

Study Centre, an ongoing project where he works with newsprint on political and current affairs topics, and increasingly with the notion of 'time', has also been intelligently integrated into the show.

Being of similar age, from a similar place and background, and sharing a number of cultural and biographic references, Tillmans always has been a major influence for my photography. As such I enjoyed the exhibition, and was particularly pleased that his 'middle years', characterised by a search to develop his visual language and topics further and leading to some concerns about his continued relevance, actually make perfect sense in this overarching retrospective and have led to his latest, more outward looking work, focusing on more travelling and geopolitical awareness, but still applying his unique style. Tillmans reckons that the public has seen probably only 5% of his total work of the past 25+ years and if you get a feeling for and an emotional reaction to it, he considers he has achieved success. Applying this definition, for me this is a very successful retrospective indeed.

At Tate Modern until 11 June 2017.

EXHIBITION HIGHLIGHTS

Gillian Wearing and Claude Cahun: Behind the mask, another mask. This exhibition brings together for the first time the work of French artist Claude Cahun and British contemporary artist Gillian Wearing. Although born almost seventy years apart and from different backgrounds, remarkable parallels can be drawn between the two artists. Both share a fascination with the self-portrait and use the self-image to explore themes around identity and gender, which is often played out through masquerade and performance. *Until 29 May at The National Portrait Gallery, St Martin's Place, London WC2H 0HE*

Mat Collishaw: Thresholds. Going back in time to the dawn of photography *Thresholds* uses the latest in VR technology to restage one of the earliest exhibitions of photography in 1839, when British scientist William Henry Fox Talbot first presented his photographic prints to the public. *18 May-11 Jun at Somerset House, Strand, London WC2R 1LA*

Scarlett Hooft Graafland: Discovery.

These surreal, dream-like photographs provide a lasting record of her carefully choreographed, site-specific sculptural interventions and performances in some of the most isolated corners of the earth. Hooft Graafland's images emphasize the 'natural strangeness' of the landscape with uncanny juxtapositions of everyday objects and materials. *29 Mar-29 Apr at Flowers Gallery, 21 Cork Street, London W1S 3LZ*

From Selfie to Self-Expression. Saatchi Gallery and Huawei have teamed up to present the world's first exhibition exploring the history of the selfie, from the old masters to the present day, and will celebrate the truly creative potential of a form of expression often derided for its inanity. The show also highlights the emerging role of the mobile phone as an artistic medium for self-expression by commissioning ten exciting young British photographers to create new works using Huawei's newest breakthrough dual lens smartphones co-engineered with Leica.

31 Mar-30 May at Saatchi Gallery, Duke of York's HQ, King's Rd, Chelsea, London SW3 4RY

Untethered: Joseph Szabo & Sian Davey. These two series, made nearly fifty years apart, explore the vulnerability, beauty and ambivalence of adolescence. *6 Apr-20 May at Michael Hoppen Gallery, 3 Jubilee Place, London SW3 3TD*



After the Swim Group Portrait ©Sian Davey. Courtesy Michael Hoppen Gallery



At Claude Cahun's grave ©Gillian Wearing 2015, courtesy the artist

Dafna Talmor | Constructed Landscapes. An ongoing project that stems from Talmor's personal archive of photographs initially shot as mere keepsakes across different locations that include Venezuela, Israel, the US and UK. Produced by collaging medium format colour negatives, the process relies on experimentation, involving several incisions and configurations before a right match is achieved. *Until 6 Apr at Photofusion, 17A Electric Lane, London SW9 8LA*

Terrains of the Body: Photography from the National Museum of Women in the Arts. Drawn from the National Museum of Women in the Arts (Washington, U.S.), this collection display showcases photography and video work by 17 contemporary artists from around the world. By turning their camera to women, including themselves, these artists embrace the female body as a vital medium for storytelling, expressing identity and reflecting individual and collective experience. *Until 16 Apr at Whitechapel Gallery, 77-82 Whitechapel High St, London E1 7QX*

Jan Kempenaers. Jan's third solo exhibition with Breese Little features the debut presentation of a new, unseen body of work. The new photographic series is the subject of *Composite* (2016), Jan Kempenaers' fifth collaboration with Roma Publications launched at the New York Art Book Fair, September 2016. *Until 20 May at Breese Little, Unit 1, 249-51 Cambridge Heath Road, London E2 6JY Photo*



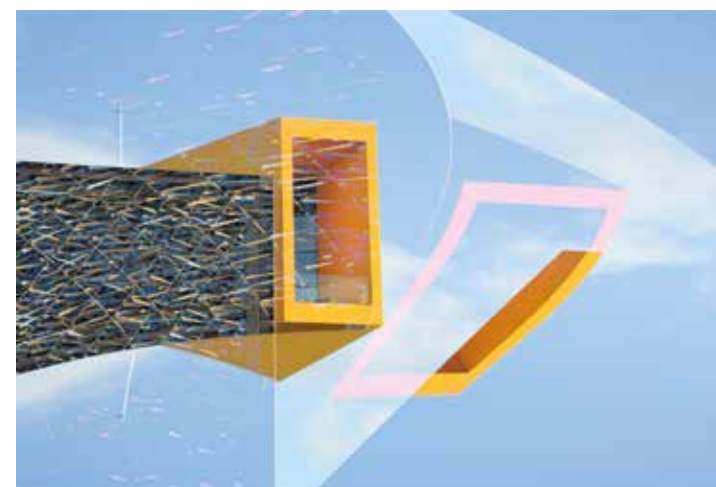
Jan Kempenaers, Untitled I, 2016 ©courtesy Breese Little

The Deutsche Börse Photography Foundation Prize. The prize rewards a living photographer, of any nationality, for a specific body of work in an exhibition or publication format in that year. The shortlisted artists are Sophie Calle, Dana Lixenberg, Awoiska van der Molen, and Taiyo Onorato and Nico Krebs. *Until 11 June at The Photographers' Gallery, 16-18 Ramillies St, London W1F 7LW*

The Ceremony of Life - Early Works by Martin Parr. These early works reflect Parr's roots of his observational prowess but also reveal a gentler, less punishing eye compared to his later, more famous works: a photographer passionate about capturing the unsung rituals of everyday life, these monochromatic works faithfully and tenderly chronicle the characteristics and pleasures of the vernacular and document an aesthetic realised before he finally abandoned black and white photography in 1986. *3 Mar-23 Apr at The Photographers' Gallery, 16-18 Ramillies St, London W1F 7LW*



© Scarlett Hooft Graafland, Resolution, Malekula, 2015 Courtesy Flowers Gallery



© Caroline Frasier

Peter Herbert: 38 Green Carnations. 38 *Green Carnations* provides a juxtaposition of two aspects of Oscar Wilde's life. The early privileged family and successful background of one of the world's most brilliant and witty writers is reflected by a portrait of the artist as a younger man, presented against fabric by the fashionable Victorian designer of the time William Morris. Photographs taken inside Reading Gaol are displayed on panels of bars as a stark indicator of the incarceration of Wilde in Reading Gaol in 1895 when tragedy ruined his life, family and career.

Until 20 April 2017 at The Conference Centre Gallery Space, St Pancras Hospital, 4 St Pancras Way, London NW1 0PE. Mon-Fri 9am-5pm



© Peter Herbert

Caroline Fraser in RPS Members Biennial 2017. Caroline has two works selected for the Royal Photographic Society members' biennial exhibition. The exhibition tours the UK from March and also includes work from some of The Society's Honorary Fellows, which provides selected photographers with the rare opportunity to exhibit their work alongside some of the most respected names in photography today. *Until 7 December. Locations and dates:*

www.rps.org/competitions/members-biennial-2017



© Chris Moxey

Thirteen, at the Croatian Embassy. In their third exhibition at the embassy, THIRTEEN come together to show a diverse selection of their work. Lip members taking part are: Duncan Unsworth, Gwen Campbell, Gareth Davies, Gordana Johnson and Chris Moxey. *From 25 May to 25 June at the Croatian Embassy, 21 Conway Street, London W1T 6BN. Monday to Thursday 11am-2pm and Friday from 10am-12.*

Ted Kinsey. Under Tracks: Celebrating London's Railway Arches. From Hammersmith to Hackney, Latimer Road to Leytonstone, Southwark, Stamford Brook, Shadwell and Shoreditch. Ted has been photographing the businesses and individuals who spend their working life beneath the arches since 2014. Over 90 of these will be on display in this exhibition. *June 23 to 25th at The Underdog Gallery, ARCH 6, Crucifix Lane, London Bridge, SE1 3JW*



© Ted Kinsey

EXHIBITION PREVIEW

Prix Pictet

Reviewed By Ingrid Newton

In May, the prestigious *Prix Pictet* prize, which draws attention to issues of sustainability and the environment, will be hosted by the V&A Museum. Since 2008 each cycle of the award has highlighted a certain facet of sustainability: Water, Earth, Growth, Power, Consumption and Disorder. The theme of this, the seventh cycle, is Space - and the twelve finalists, which have been short-listed out of a total of 700 nominations, are Mandy Barker (UK), Saskia Groneberg (Germany), Beate Gütschow (Germany), Rinko Kawauchi (Japan), Benny Lam (China) Richard Mosse (Ireland), Wasif Munem (Bangladesh) Sohei Nishino (Japan), Sergey Ponomarev (Russia), Thomas Ruff (Germany), Pavel Wolberg (Russia) and Michael Wolf (Germany). The winner will be announced on 4th May.

The selected photographers responded to the theme in various ways, ranging from the overtly political to the personal - but certain common threads emerge. The approach of two artists to the pressing issue of the refugee crisis is a case in point. Sergey Ponomarev's hard-hitting *Europe Migration Crisis* documents the human cost of this exodus in a series of unforgettable images depicting the privations and horror involved in their journeys across Europe. Richard Mosse tackles the same subject in a less emotional way. His *Heat Maps* show refugee camps and staging posts on their journey, using a military grade thermographic camera which picks out temperature variations in different colours. The resulting pictures represent people as masses rather than individuals, mirroring the dehumanising way in which migrants are often depicted in the media.



Rinko Kawauchi, Untitled 2012 2010 © Rinko Kawauchi

Another theme that emerges is one of conflict and its effect on the landscape. Pavel Wolburg's panoramic photographs from his series *Barricades*, shot in Israel, the West Bank and the Ukraine focus on barricades, fences and walls as the symbols of division and dispute. Munem Wasif's *Land of Undefined Territory* consists of repetitive, mundane images of an undefined area on the border between Bangladesh and India - a kind of no-man's land which has witnessed years of land disputes and tensions without any evidence of a particular identity.

Urban life is a recurring theme. In the *S Series* Beate Gütschow investigates urban space, as-



Benny Lam, Trapped 08, 2012 © Benny Lam

sembling photographs of buildings from all over the world into digitally manipulated imagined cityscapes. These seemingly real 'visual utopias', despite reflecting modernism's belief in progress and idealism, on closer inspection reveal themselves to be a crumbling fiction. Sohei Nishino's *Diorama Map* is also a fiction, a combination of a multitude of images taken whilst walking the urban environment: the maps created reflect only his own experiences and memories. In contrast, Michael Wolf's *Tokyo Compression* illustrates the very real nightmare of Tokyo's urban commute as people are crammed like sardines into trains at rush hour, contorted and squashed, resigned, exhausted and frustrated. Issues of space are also addressed in Benny Lam's *Subdivided Flats* where the crisis in the Hong Kong property market is exposed. His claustrophobic bird's eye views show entire families squashed into one cramped room, living, cooking and sleeping in the tiniest of spaces. Saskia Groneberg's *Büroplanze*

questions the values of working life by portraying the office plant, often the only organic element in a highly organised, artificial space, in terms of its relationship with humans.

The *ma.r.s* series by Thomas Ruff combines the documentary and the fictitious. Based on black and white satellite photographs of the surface of Mars, taken by the high-resolution camera aboard NASA's spacecraft Mars Renaissance Orbiter, the images have been digitally manipulated and coloured to create evocative, fictional topographies. Also exploring unknown worlds is UK photographer Mandy Barker's *Beyond Drifting: Imperfectly Known Animals*. In a highly innovative approach to her subject, her ethereal studies of marine plastic debris mimic microscopic samples of plankton, drawing attention to the devastating impact of plastic pollution on marine life and the world's oceans. Finally, Rinko Kawauchi's *Ametsuchi* although ostensibly representing different aspects of a particular place over a period of time, deals with greater spiritual concerns. A poetic meditation on connections and shared time and space, the depiction of the ritual agricultural burning of the fields evokes the cycle of life and death.

The work on show tackles some of the most pressing, significant issues facing the world today, sometimes by allusion, sometimes more directly. Whoever the winner turns out to be, don't miss this opportunity to see what promises to be an important and influential exhibition! *The Prix Pictet runs from 6 to 28 May at V&A Museum, Cromwell Road, London SW7 2RL.*

Platform 10

Rammy Narula

Reviewed by Chris Moxey

Hua Lamphong is the major railway station in Bangkok serving 60,000 passengers a day. As such it's the starting point for many travellers to Thailand, as well as the local commuters who use it daily, to travel to and from their place of work. But this is no ordinary station! Designed by Italian architect Mario Tamagno in 1916, it took six years to build; it's renowned for its neo-renaissance style, and its beautiful stained glass windows.

Almost a century later, and cut to Platform 10. Enter photographer Rammy Narula. This is where the magic happens; the place he chose to document at the same time every day, for six months.

For some time Rammy had been photographing in the station, but it was by chance one morning that he found himself on Platform 10, just as the only scheduled train arrived. Something about the light caught his eye and he took a few photos. When he got home and looked at them more closely, he realised they evoked a mood different to anything he'd shot elsewhere in the station. When attempts to recreate the same mood at different times of day and on other platforms didn't bear fruit, he realised that he'd need to have the exact same conditions and location; this was a non-transferable magic! So it became a challenge that became a series that became a book... unexpectedly so, as this wasn't the original goal for the work.

Rammy has been referred to as Thailand's 'film noir' photographer and there's certainly a filmic quality to this work. These are all unposed images, and although his interest is in ordinary people and how they interact with their surroundings, these interactions



© Rammy Narula

'He'd need to have the exact same conditions and location; this was a non-transferable magic!'

appear far from ordinary. To me they evoke a strong sense of solitude, even amidst such a hive of activity. Many are lost in thought. What are they thinking about? The mood feels intense. Rammy has said he likes to be fully immersed when he is photographing and I think this comes across in the work.

Some images I find reminiscent of the Belgian surrealist painter Paul Delvaux in that people seem transfixed in their surroundings... often seemingly everyday settings that are rendered as mysterious backdrops. Delvaux even features railways; his two paintings *Le Train Bleu* and *Solitude* are perhaps good examples.

There is a bitter-sweet end to the story. Hua Lamphong celebrated its 100th anniversary last year. Although it's been renovated there's been little modernisation and it's now been announced that a new station will be built, leaving this one to be transformed into a museum. In some way then, this project has become a part of the station's history.

BOOK REVIEWS

Italianita – A Reflection on Modern Italy in Three Photobooks

By Frank Orthbandt

With its great cultural heritage, good weather, food and lifestyle, Italy has long had the admiration of many Europeans – but more recently it's attracted a different focus. Headlines are increasingly of economic decline, populist and anti-European voices, referring to a country where strong traditions are challenged by rapid advances of globalisation. The crisis is far beyond economics; it centres around society, culture, confusion and loneliness of the individual exposed to an accelerating pace of life.

Over the past few years, I've followed with interest the very exciting Italian photography scene, as talented emerging photographers have begun to openly tackle cultural identity and change in society. Three recent photobooks, dealing with these issues from different angles are presented in this review. London-based Sicilian photographer Mimi Mollica's *Terra Nostra*, published by Dewi Lewis, deals with the effects of Mafia rule in his home town of Palermo. Often romanticised in literature,

and particularly cinematography, his work reminds us that there has never been a 'good' Mafia. From its outset and at all stages of its development over decades, The Mafia was exploitative, hostile to people's interests - even its own - coercive, colluding and violent. Appearance and strategies have changed however, as the organisation has adapted to different times and socio-economic circumstances to ensure its influence and survival. This is the background for Mollica's images. The Mafia itself does not appear in his edit, but we see its influence on daily life of people

in Palermo, either through careful social codes that have been adopted after years of Mafia rule or in the face of city, characterised by building projects associated with money laundering. Mollica says 'The Mafia wanted to deprive us of everything that is beautiful on the island'.

Mollica's images remind us that The Mafia is part of the historic and cultural fabric of an island that has seen many rulers, often neglecting the island's development and leaving a political and social vacuum that facilitated the structures of The Mafia, to the point that it became a 'state in the state' - colluding and collaborating with the 'official' politics and police to ensure its success. Mollica grew up in Palermo, and throughout his youth was exposed to mafia warfare in the city, often documented by the brutal and gritty photography of Letizia Battaglia, which shaped his view. He needed over a decade of distance - moving to London and having developed his photographic practice abroad - before he felt able to address the issue in his work. The result is *Terra Nostra*. His images are mixture of black and white portraits, street scenes, sea- and landscapes. In line with the impact of The Mafia on everyday life in the city, the impact is shown implicitly. We see abandoned brutalist building, a result of money laundering and bribery/coercion with local authorities. We see people glancing into the camera, who are on guard whilst conducting everyday life ...and we see religious iconography, a reminder of how mafia practices are interwoven with customs, beliefs

and traditions of everyday Sicilians, making it difficult to identify where interference and manipulation starts.

Martin Bogren's *Italia* brings a non-Italian eye to this view. Although photographed partly in Palermo, Bogren's approach to his images is different, and the individual place and situation is not important. Here the subjective reflection and dialogue, the observation of a place and its people are paramount. In black and white tableaux, detail disappears; reality gives way to a dark poetic poem of the country. The images live off their secretive ambiguity, which encourages and challenges the viewer to detect and define the meaning. They are multi-faceted and timeless in subject matter and visual language; abstraction is driven to extremes obscuring detail and meaning.

Bogren's technique plays with grain, underexposure, light and textures to create the ambiguity in expression. Reviewing the work in the context of his earlier works *Lowlands* and *Tractor Boys*, he now moves further away from the descriptive, documentary approach to a subjective, at times impressionist, visual language. This emancipates his work further from his teacher and mentor Anders Peterson. A very telling and interesting side-story to the images is in the attached booklet with diary-like notes, where he reflects on his anxieties, uncertainties and self-doubt, during his visit to the country, and in approaching this body of work.

Giulio Rimondi (b 1984) is the youngest photographer of the three, and the only one presenting his work, *Italiana* in colour, although also using strong contrasts between shadow and light to accentuate his images. He presents us with scenes of Italian life, individual characters and situations. It shows a country proud and aware of its tradition, a little lost in modern times, where many aspects of a global and digi-



© Giulio Rimondi

tal world, although they clearly have arrived, make little sense or add ambiguity. We are presented with lonely, poetic characters, grotesque contrast between history and modernity, and isolation and loneliness.

Many images work with a stark contrast of light and shadow, and bright colour palettes against monochrome backgrounds, adding to the sense of clash and displacement.

The resulting feeling of alienation and loss of identity is one of the main sources of the social and political backlash we experience today, leading to a threat of social contracts and systems in its wake. This has been observed here in the context of Italy, by the young photographer, with a strong eye for detail and atmosphere, even if the book could have benefitted from a little more careful editing and sequencing to enhance this message and its impact on the viewer. A new and refreshing view on classic Italian photo scenes.

'We see Italian life, individual characters and situations. It shows a country proud and aware of its tradition, a little lost in modern times, where many aspects of a global and digital world,'



© Mimi Mollica

Turning Point

A Series of Incidents and Opportunities

'KOR' by Onur Girit



For him, I was a sudden and unexpected flash of light, filling up the room in the middle of the night. For me, he was somebody that I have noticed long after I went home and washed the film. A faceless nobody falling through the cracks of the city. I only saw a half-open shutter and some chairs. We came face to face that second, caught off guard and yet we were miles away from each other. He stood at attention, I was just passing by. In that moment, lights flashed simultaneously and we heard the sound of triggers pulled. BANG! After all, he stayed in his prison in the city, and I just went back to mine.

This is an image from my project series *KOR*, which I have worked on for almost two years, and which has eventually become a photobook. With this series I aim to capture the violence in the form of urban transformation/demolition in Istanbul, and those of us who strive to exist in the city.

This particular image describes a moment when the dwellers meet for the first time in a city transformed and deformed continuously. Exposed to this violence and injustice, we constantly meet and unmeet until we are left with no faces.

'For him, I was a sudden and unexpected flash of light, filling up the room in the middle of the night. For me, he was somebody that I have noticed long after I went home and washed the film.'

Onur Girit (b 1982, Istanbul) graduated with a BFA in Photography from Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University in 2014 and since then he has been studying towards his master's degree at the same department. His work has been included in multiple group exhibitions and festivals.

Onur's documentary style practice involves black and white photography and his subjects drive from social and urban issues. Onur is involved in organizing the 2nd Istanbul Photobook Festival held April 28th -May 1st.

Contributors

Kathryn Alkins grew up in North Wales and has lived and worked as an educator in London, for many years. Kathryn is now beginning to explore and express her artistic aspect through photography. She has recently joined LIP and is currently enrolled on a number of short photographic courses. tinyurl.com/hw8835e

Gerry Atkinson trained as a photojournalist at the London College of Communication and completed an MA at the University for the Creative Arts, Rochester. She enjoys travelling and exploring new places and has exhibited in solo and group shows in England, the Philippines and New Zealand. www.gerryatkinson.com

Quentin Ball found photography fifty years ago in a kibbutz in Israel. Living for almost twenty years in the American Southwest he finally found the palette he was seeking for his images. He currently resides in London but regularly takes like-minded souls to the southwest landscape for their photography needs and his. www.quentinball.com

John Chappelow enjoys making pictures. www.ximages.co.uk

CJ Crosland is a self-taught artist and photographer who uses whatever experiences life brings, and seeks to capture the essence of their individual experience and the powerful emotions which are central to it. Their work has been described as exploratory, introspective, poetic and powerful. www.cjcrossland.com

Angela Ford has a wide-ranging interest in photography. She is keen to evoke impressions of people and places through colour and monochrome images and use of infrared - and enjoys working on projects that convey a storyline to capture the mood and perception of events. www.angelaforimages.co.uk

Onur Girit was born in 1982 in Istanbul, where he now and works. Onur graduated from Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University Photography Department in 2014. His focus is on documentary series' and he has been assisting photobook production workshops at FuamProject since 2015. www.onurgirit.com

Alex Ingram is a freelance photographer from St Davids, Pembrokeshire, currently living and working in London. His project, *David's House* explores his relationship with his hometown and the impact of living in such a secluded part of the world, not just on his own life, but on the lives of everyone in the community. www.alexingramphoto.com

Michal Iwanowski is a Cardiff-based artist and Ffotogallery tutor who studied Documentary Photography at the University of Wales, Newport. His work explores the relationship between landscape and memory; marking the silent passing of seemingly insignificant individuals and histories. His first monograph *Clear of People* is out in March 2017, published by Brave Books. www.michaliwanowski.com

Peter Jennings studied Graphic Design and Photography at Portsmouth College of Art 1966- 69 and worked in media service units for 20 years. He has published and exhibited widely,

including at The Photographers Gallery. Also a composer/musician; music and literature inspire his photography.

Md. Enamul Kabir lives and works in the capital city, Dhaka. He loves to shoot everything, from people to animals and prefers the tranquility of silence to crowded places. He says 'We think we know Life but Life always surprises us. I never thought about photography but it's in my blood now.' <https://tinyurl.com/hlpn3q4>

Ted Kinsey is a film and darkroom photographer. Since taking up photography seriously in 2006, his masthead has been to only shoot on film, in black and white, and for all images to include human content. Ted produces large projects to exhibit and is now completing *Under Tracks - A Celebration of London's Railway Arches*. www.tedkinsey.com

Sirkka-Liisa Konttinen, born in Finland (1948), is a founder member of *Amber Film & Photography Collective* and the *Side Photographic Gallery* in Newcastle upon Tyne. Her photography and film projects include *Byker, Step by Step, Keeping Time, Writing in the Sand, Letters to Katja, The Coal Coast, Song For Billy, Byker Revisited* and *Today I'm With You*. Konttinen's photography and *Amber's* films were inscribed in the UNESCO UK Memory of the World Register in 2011. www.amber-online.com/

Terence Lane is a mainly self-taught photographer based in the Midlands. His main areas of interest are the urban and rural landscape - sometimes responding to the formal aspects of design placed within or possibly growing out of a landscape, at other times attempting to make some sense of the apparent organised chaos in nature. www.terencelane.com

Danilo Leonardi is a freelance photographer specialising in architecture, interiors and construction. His current project involves using Instagram to keep a notebook on cities and urban spaces. www.property-and-architecture-photography.com

Anna Lerner enjoys photography as a medium to capture and share her observations of the beautiful, funny and interesting world around her. Her approach to photography is immediate and instinctive. *Instagram: annalernerphotography*

Daniel Loveday works with environmental portraiture, within the documentary practice of photography. Each of Daniel's series works as a way of collecting a final portrait of the places and people he has met and grown around. danielloveday.wixsite.com/dlphoto

Barbara Luckhurst has been a member of LIP for several years. During this time of developing her photographic interests she has found that people, their activities and their environment are what interests her most. www.barbaraluckhurstphotography.com

Yoke Matze works for the publishing and art world. Her work has been published widely in books and magazines. As a fine art photographer Yoke creates bodies of photographic images as

prints and published in book form. Her work has been widely exhibited in the UK and Abroad. www.yokematzephotography.co.uk

David Reed is a 75-year-old snapshotter, originally from near Manchester but long based in London. He has been taking photographs for over 50 years as a keen amateur, and is still surprised by what cameras can show that the eye cannot see. David is chairman of *Hampstead Photographic Society* in NW London. www.hampsteadphotosoc.org.uk

Sandra Roberts is a self-taught photographer who lives and works as an Occupational Therapist in London, with a family home in the Ciociaria region of Italy. Her photography conveys the present moment and personal responses to her different home environments, where she enjoys taking photographs in busy city streets and calm and open landscapes. www.flickr.com/photos/choopalone/

Behzad Sharouz is an architect, urban planner and architectural photographer, interested in creating objective documents of the built-form, a spirit of time and place. He focuses on recording human behaviour; considering notions of place, culture, identity and belonging within the urban landscape. His photographic tableau investigates a visual understanding of modernity within today's urban landscape.

Dmitry Stepanenko was born in Odessa, Ukraine in 1987. Moving to the UK in 2010, he started doing street photography, which quickly became his prime interest. In 2013 he and others founded international group *The Street Collective*. Dmitry has taken part in group exhibitions in Russia, Europe and the US and has been widely published. www.dmitrystepanenko.com

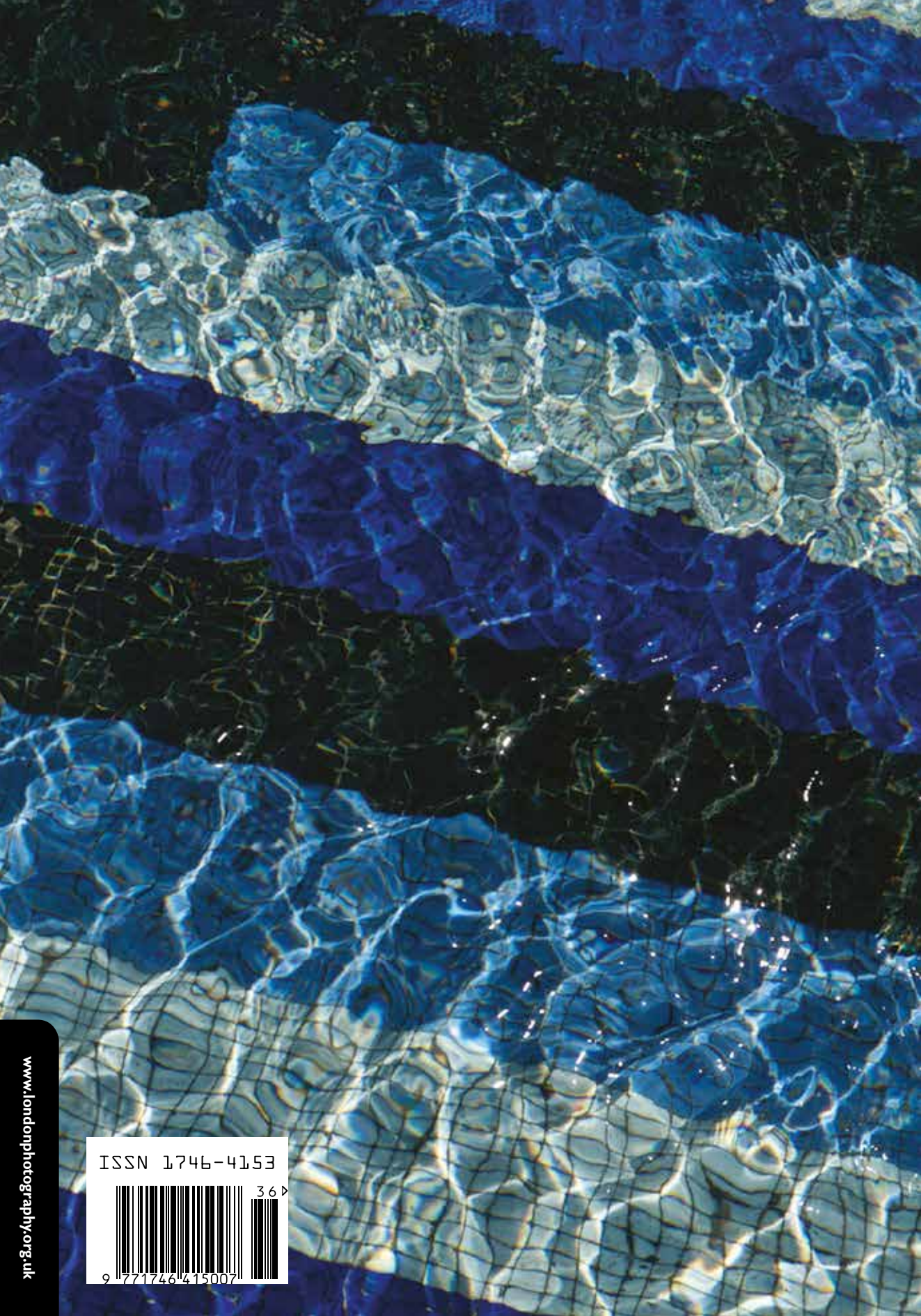
Edith Templeton lives and works in London. www.tinyurl.com/jc6x9r

u.lula-collective is a London and Berlin based publishing project and blog focusing on young and emerging European photography. www.ulula-editions.com

Katie Waggett is a London based documentary photographer. She graduated with first class honours in Graphic Arts and Design, and currently works as a freelance photographer. Her work has been exhibited both in the UK and internationally, and her prizes include *D&AD Best New Blood* and the *Andrew Winterburn Documentary Photography Award*.

Mandy Williams is a London-based artist working with photography and video. She is interested in new approaches to landscape photography and the psychology of place. She regularly exhibits her work and has been recently published in *#Photography*, *KALTBLLUT Magazine*, *Another Place Magazine* and *Platform Magazine*. www.mandywilliams.com

Andrew Wilson runs the LIP satellite group in Putney and this scene is on one of his regular dogs walks around West & South West London. It was a beautifully still day back in late January and the shot was taken on his iPhone 7.



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