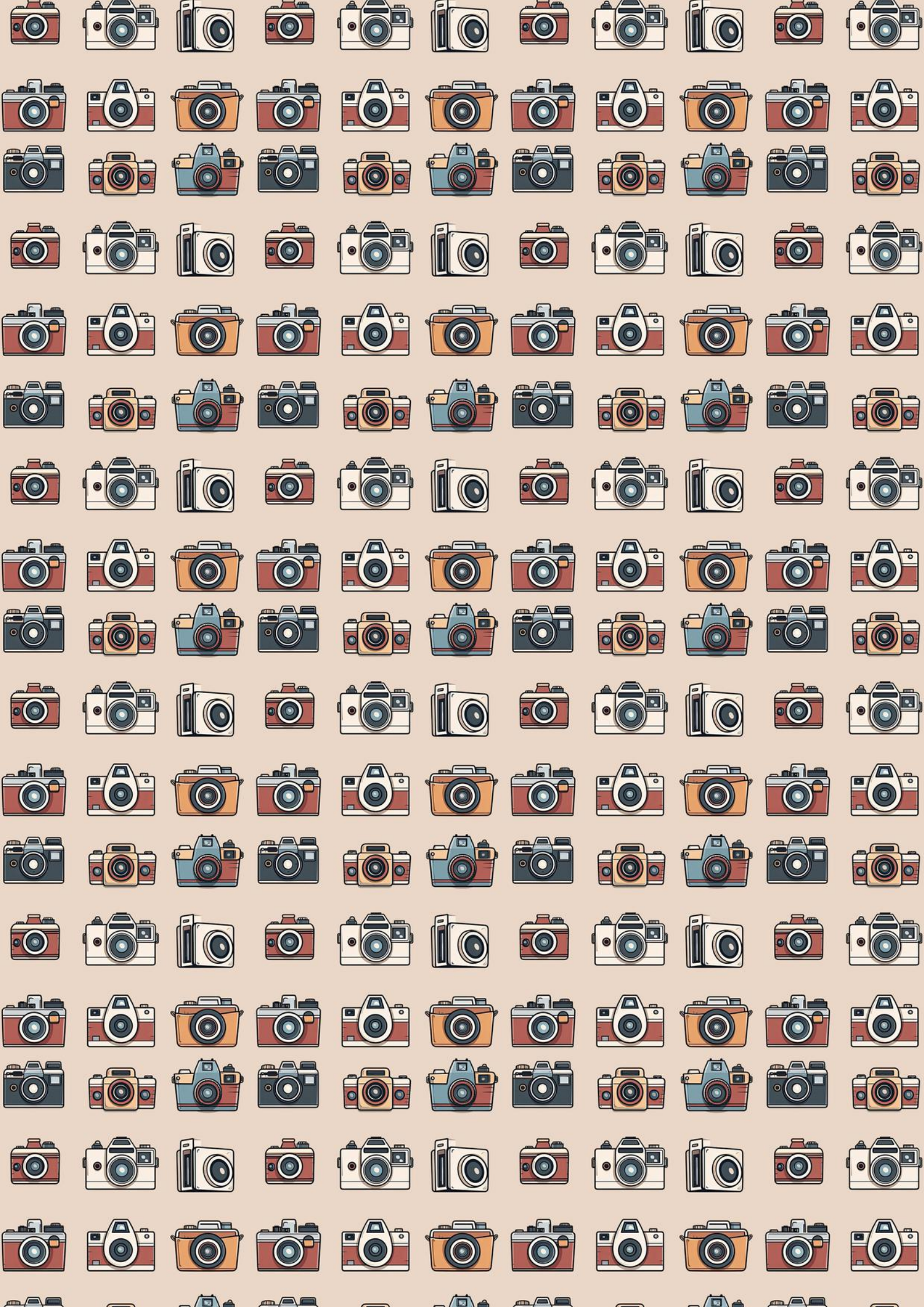
VISUAL POETRY JOURNAL

VISUALPOETRYJOURNAL.COM

NO 15
SEPTEMBER 26



INTRO

Hello, dear reader,

Welcome to the fifteenth 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.

Anna Gvozdeva

Curator of
Visual Poetry Journal

On the Front Cover:
Alisa Kishchenko
In the dark
2025

On the Back Cover:
Stefano Ceretti
Guarded Vulnerability
2026

9 773051 287003

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

INTERVIEW

Marcel van Beek

_marcel_van_beek_

In A Trance of Chlorophyll, you describe the Monstera as a "living presence" rather than a decorative subject. What first led you to approach the plant in this way?

My engagement with animistic philosophies of nature was decisive. They encourage me to understand plants and trees not as mute material arranged for human use, but as fellow living beings with their own presence and ways of inhabiting the world. That perspective also changed how I looked at the Monstera. I no longer wanted to use it as an attractive studio prop or a symbol imposed from outside. I wanted to spend time with its leaves, openings, scars and movements, and to respond to the individuality I encountered. Calling it a "living presence" is therefore also an ethical position: the plant is not merely there to decorate the image; it participates in what the image becomes.

Marcel van Beek | Window Delta | 2025

The photographs often move between recognisable botanical forms and near-abstraction. How important is this moment when the subject stops being immediately identifiable?

This threshold is central. As long as the leaf is immediately identifiable, the viewer may stay within the familiar category of "houseplant". When recognition begins to loosen, attention shifts to rhythm, light, colour, depth and bodily association. The photograph can then become a field of sensation rather than a description. I do not want the botanical source to disappear completely; a residue should remain, so that abstraction grows from an encounter with something real. The tension between recognition and uncertainty allows the plant to be itself and, at the same time, to become a possible landscape, body, aperture or mental space.

You use close framing, selective focus, and intentional camera movement to transform the leaves. How much of each image is carefully planned, and how much depends on chance and instinct during the exposure?

The one decision established in advance is that I am not making neutral botanical documentation. Beyond that, the process is deliberately open. I may choose a particular leaf, angle, distance or light situation, but the decisive relationships often emerge spontaneously while I am photographing. Selective focus and intentional camera movement are responsive gestures: I follow what the plant and the light offer at that moment. Chance is therefore important, but it is not arbitrary; it operates within a concentrated act of looking. In post-production I work just as intuitively, refining tonal and chromatic relationships until the

image reaches the emotional register I sensed during the exposure. The single exposure remains the foundation, while the final image develops through a dialogue between intention, accident and recognition.

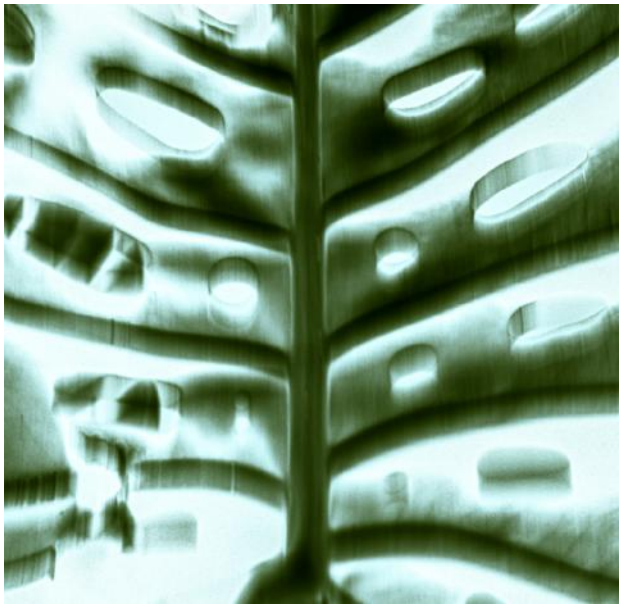
The Monstera's natural openings become almost like eyes, windows, or apertures in several photographs. Do you think of these shapes symbolically, or primarily as formal elements within the composition?

Both. Formally, the openings are powerful because they interrupt the surface of the leaf and create depth, rhythm and a play between concealment and visibility. At the same time, it is difficult not to experience them symbolically. They can resemble eyes, windows, wounds or portals, and each association changes the emotional temperature of the image. I do not assign them one fixed meaning before photographing. The symbolism arises through the formal encounter and remains open. An aperture may invite the gaze, return it, or suggest that another space exists behind the visible surface. That ambiguity is more important to me than a single decipherable symbol.

Yellow appears as a particularly significant presence in the Citrinitas works, sometimes as an architectural detail and sometimes almost as pure light. What role does colour play in shaping the emotional or symbolic meaning of this series?

In alchemical thought, citrinitas — the yellowing — marks a stage of transformation and illumination. This association is fundamental to the series. Yellow is not simply an attractive colour laid over the subject; it is the agent through which condensation, water, glass and the traces of a snail are transformed into new visual worlds. A minor architectural detail can become a luminous threshold; a trail can resemble a river delta, a map, a script or a passage between spaces. The colour gives these ordinary materials an inner intensity. Emotionally, it oscillates between warmth and warning, revelation and strangeness. It suggests that transformation

Marcel van Beek | Light Script



Marcel van Beek | Chlorophyll Trance | 2026

can be radiant, but never entirely stable or reassuring.

Both series transform ordinary things — a houseplant, condensation, glass, traces of a snail — into images that feel unfamiliar and difficult to decipher. What attracts you to making the everyday appear strange?

This is perhaps the central impulse of my practice. I am drawn to the possibility that the everyday world contains forms and states that remain hidden until a particular light, framing or movement reveals them. Making the familiar strange allows me to uncover those latent qualities. It also creates a bridge between outer observation and inner experience. Again and again, I find things in the world that correspond to something I feel inwardly: a condensation mark may become a threshold, a snail trace a nervous system, a leaf a body or an eye. Photography enables me to recognise these correspondences without illustrating them literally. The image becomes a place where external matter and internal states briefly mirror one another.

Your photographs often resist giving the viewer a clear explanation of what they are looking at. How much ambiguity do you want to preserve, and what kind of experience would you like viewers to have before they understand — or perhaps never fully understand — the subject?

I want to preserve enough ambiguity for the image to remain active after the first glance. Identification can be satisfying, but it can also close perception too quickly. My primary interest is not in ensuring that viewers understand the object exactly as I do, or even that they identify it at all. I am more interested in evoking a mood: attraction, unease, intimacy, suspension, perhaps the sense of standing before something familiar that has changed its nature. Viewers should be able to move through the image according to their own memories and sensitivities. Full understanding is not the goal. Sometimes the most meaningful encounter occurs precisely when a photograph remains partly unreadable.

Marija Vrućkić

Artist statement

These photographs capture the beauty of two Greek islands that swept me off my feet: Rhodes and Symi island. This specific project aims to share their beauty with others and hopefully they will fall in love with them as much as I did.

Marija Vrućkić | Islands | 2025

Marija Vručkić | Islands | 2025

Marija Vručkić | Islands | 2025

Paolo Pelosi Bonini

pillo1966

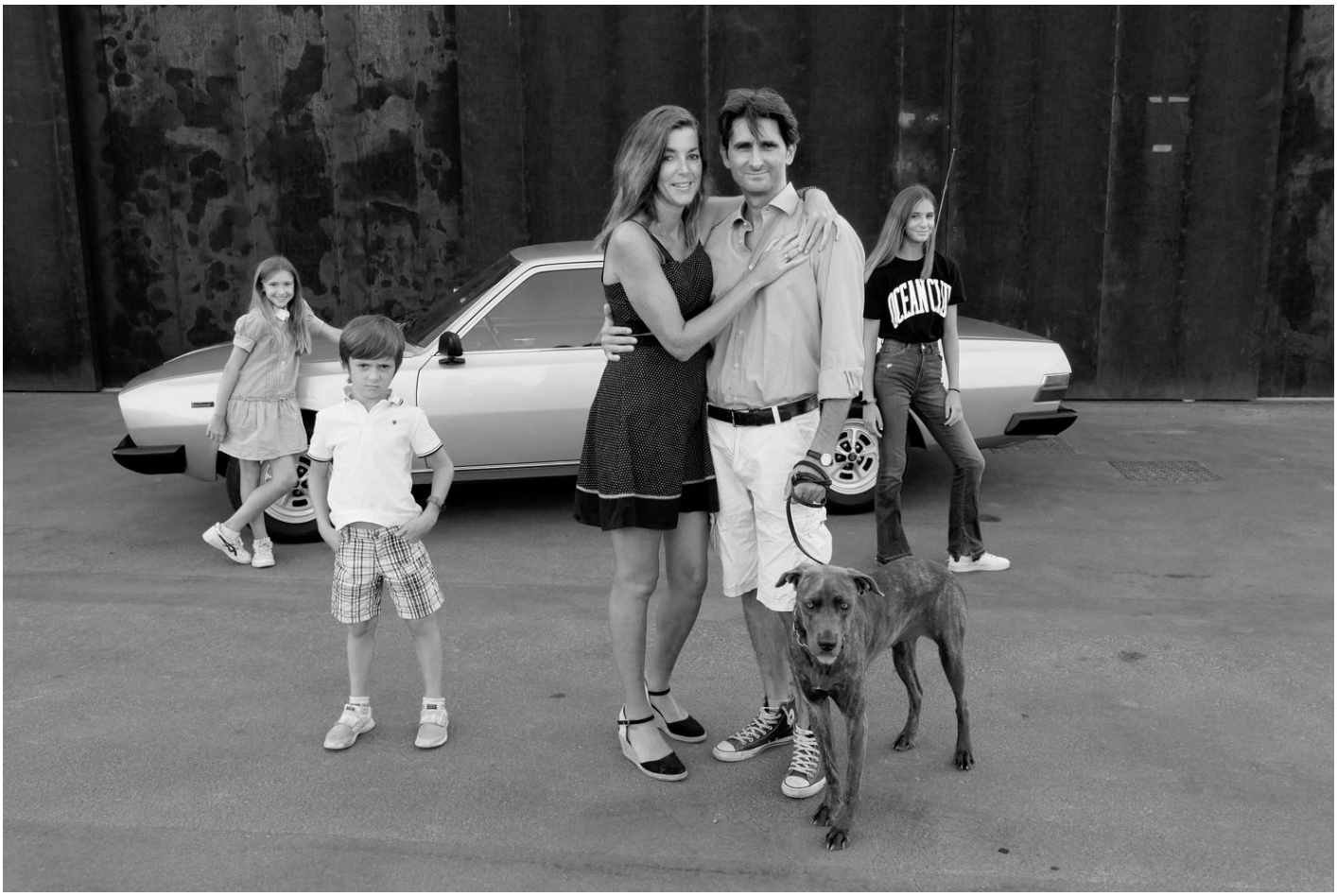
He was born in Reggio Emilia, where he lives and works. He began taking photographs whilst still at school, using an old folding camera he found in the attic. His main focus is on landscapes, in which he seeks to convey the emotions and moods that these places evoke, whilst in his portraits he brings out the subject's character, their mannerisms and the bond that is forged with the people he photographs. His work has been featured in several solo exhibitions in Reggio Emilia, Venice, Montecchio Emilia, Bergamo and Gualtieri. In March 2024, he took part in the fourth edition of the 'IMPULSE FESTIVAL' in Arles with the project 'Noir sans Blanc'. In July 2024, the 'Noir sans Blanc' project was exhibited as part of the 'Rencontres' Photography Festival in Arles. His photographs are held in the Photo Library of the Panizzi Library in Reggio Emilia and in numerous private collections.

Artist statement

I stopped many people who were passing through from one place to another, so that they might be etched into my memory, into my heart, onto my photographic paper. I photographed men and women who seemed happy or seemed sad, people on the move, restless people, people happy to linger with me, others ready to flee, ready to set off, ready to go, ready to return, ready to stay. They were all in their cars, a MEANS of reaching nearby destinations, distant destinations, familiar destinations, new destinations, the right destinations, the wrong destinations. Some loved the car, others used it, some adored it, others hated it. But they all drove it, or perhaps let themselves be driven in turn.

Paolo Pelosi Bonini | Ivan and Alfa | 2022

Paolo Pelosi Bonini | Giorgio and Morgan | 2023



Paolo Pelosi Bonini | Nelson Family | 2022

INTERVIEW

John Harrison

johnpharrisonphoto

You have been making photographs for more than thirty years. How has your way of observing people and places changed during that time?

In some respects, my interests are not hugely different to what they were when I started out making photographs, but how I manage my photography has. I think that the most important change in my photography is related to adaptability. At the moment, I have three projects I'm working on, all with distinct styles and themes. They overlap throughout the year, but two of them are seasonal, so there's this natural experience of 'ok, now it's time to leave this one until spring next year'. My projects, therefore, evolve as the years pass and, when I deem one to be completed, another takes its place. I wasn't able to achieve this when I was younger. I was more single-minded, more obsessive about 'completing' a portfolio of work. Now I allow my photographs and the themes I'm exploring the time to percolate. They grow and morph into the stories they eventually become as I continue to develop them. This experience of visiting - then re-visiting - my photography helps me in constantly evaluating what my photographs are about, and where they should lead next. I couldn't have achieved this approach twenty or thirty years ago…I suppose I just didn't have the patience.

Much of your early work was centred on Blackburn, while your recent photography explores North West England more broadly. What prompted this geographical and creative expansion?

I was quite shy when I was younger, but I grew up with a large family and lots of friends so it was a secure place. Yet, it was the kind of town where people expected you to follow fairly rigid social

norms. I didn't like that aspect, but through photography I became more adventurous, more outgoing, and I wanted to see more of the world. Photography inspired me, and in some senses rewarded me with a more outward persona. By my late-twenties, I'd spent quite a lot of time in the bigger cities in the UK and across Europe. Throughout my professional career in higher education, I've collaborated with so many talented and amazing people across the UK and in other parts of the world. And I think it's common that when people grow in such a way, they begin to feel less connected to the place they grew up in - not because they've forgotten it, or because they dislike it, but because they've grown beyond it. This experience has had a positive impact on my photography. As I'm looking back, in answering your question, I suppose it was natural that I started to look beyond the borders, to other regions, to new landscapes, to other cultures. And I'm bringing with me all my previous experiences and knowledge to the making of new photographs in new places.

Your project draws on Gaston Bachelard's description of the sea as "material imagination". How do you interpret this idea, and how does it shape your photographic approach?

I think that Bachelard's writing on space is so relevant and useful to how photographers and artists can engage with the world. I love how he writes so poetically about space and about the notion of home. Specifically, I've channelled Bachelard's writing about the qualities of water into the making of The Shore Between Two Rivers. Prior to even making photographs, I had become

fascinated with the idea of the sea as a material that provokes memory, imagination, and reflections on our past, present, and future lives. Essentially, I connected with the idea of the sea as 'material imagination'. I think it resonated with me partly because of my age - I'd reached a milestone in turning fifty a couple of years ago - and also experienced a couple of turbulent years in my work life. So, I also found myself being drawn to the shoreline. That's when the concept of rivers being drawn to the sea, towards a great expanse and the unknown. It seemed to me that this happens to us too. We have our own specific lives and journeys towards an older age, and we can feel ourselves being pulled towards the sea - literally or metaphorically - as we consider what our future will be like and how our past has drawn us there. Of course, people are drawn towards the sea and the shoreline for many reasons, but I've been particularly interested in the reflective experience that older people have in places like the Fylde Coast. The expanse of water that they confront acts almost as a portal to another future. Or, it's allowing them the space to breathe, or to reflect on where they are in their lives. So, in this sense, Bachelard's writing helped me to connect with the subject matter and it also influenced the visual approach as non-sensationalist, perhaps poetic, documentary photography.

Although the Fylde Coast provides the setting for this series, the sea is sometimes only partially visible - or absent from the frame altogether. How do you convey its presence through the people, light, architecture, and atmosphere of the shoreline?

I think the sea is present in all the photographs, but often it's implied. The risk when making this work was in not getting drawn into the tremendous extravagance and busyness of the seaside resort, with its abundance of neon signs and fast-food stalls. It was also about not being too literal. I wanted the work to have a poetic, reflective quality. So, I needed to select carefully when making photographs, and when bringing them together as a story. When I photograph bouquets of flowers tied to a balustrade, that photograph can relate to a husband and wife holding hands as they look towards the sea. The story, then, is not explicitly about the shoreline or even the sea, but rather about how we, as visitors to the sea or as the viewers of these photographs, are affected by that experience. The choice of when I made photographs also helped to convey this - this has been a seasonal project, only progressing during the sunnier months, meaning there's a warmth in the photographs. This has been a conscious choice, to capture the yellows, blues, and reds that seem so vibrant at that time of year. It's been a conscious choice also because it links to the story of people connecting with the richness of their lives in a spectacular natural landscape.

Many of these photographs focus on older people - sitting, walking, shopping, or spending time together. What draws you to these everyday moments and to this stage of life?

I'm trying to convey something that is distinct about the seaside, and about our experiences within that space. Firstly, I'm attempting to describe something that is liminal, a place between one world, or one journey, and the next. A portal. Yet, I'm also describing something that is elegiac, a feeling that people have as they get older, as they accept that they have more time left behind them than they do in front. There have been many different ways that artists engage with the sea and the shoreline, but in The Shore Between Two Rivers, I'm implying that a particular age of people use the sea and the shoreline as a place to reflect and to prepare. The challenge is then bringing together a series of photographs that takes the viewer along on this journey, that puts them in this environment and, hopefully, encourages them to understand this experience as a commonality. To support this, I weave still-life photographs into the series that provide an oblique perspective on the subject matter.

How do you navigate the ethics and intimacy of photographing strangers, particularly in quiet or unguarded moments?

I've developed a strong awareness on the range of ethical approaches to documentary photography over the years. This was consolidated further when I completed a PhD in photography, where I designed participatory and social engaged approaches. For The Shore Between Two Rivers I've adopted a direct and observational approach. This was an important decision, because I didn't want to interrupt the way people engage as they meet the sea, or as they sit and look across the expanse of the shore. In this sense, you could argue my visual approach has elements of a modernist approach - setting out to capture an objectivity in the world - and a contemporary approach - applying concepts in the

making of photographs. This was driven by my desire not to stage the moments of reflection, but rather portray them in the moment they occur. I felt that this was an appropriate strategy to produce the types of photographs I wanted to make. Very often, people are aware that I'm making photographs, but sometimes they aren't - I try to reconcile this knowing that what I'm attempting to describe could be very easily distracted and interrupted by, say, a participatory approach. Yes, I'm using people's image, and their presence, but in a way that I consider is informed and non-sensationalist. I've also been very conscious that the selection and sequencing of my photographs mirrors this approach. The photographs I have chosen - from many thousands - are those which I see as being delicate, reflective and respectful to the story I am trying to tell. In this sense, the ethical approach is as much about choosing the most appropriate photographs in a sequence, as it is about how I make them.

The works were created between 2024 and 2026. Did your understanding of the Fylde Coast - or of the people who gravitate towards it - change as the project developed?

They've certainly changed as I've experienced the broader range of environments and people that make up the Fylde Coast. From the industrial port, to the promenades, to the sleepy seaside parks. By spending a lot of time there, I've learned to understand and recognise the specific places that people head to, in order to satisfy their intention. For example, if they are there with friends and family to have a celebratory knees-up, they are going to head straight to the cafes, bars and arcades that line the seafront. They are not there necessarily to reflect on their life, but rather to be right there in the present. I've also learned about the geography of the Fylde Coast, about how the estuaries to the north and south affect how the land is used by industry, or by commerce. Yet, most importantly I've experienced how people live their lives in anticipation of something enjoyable - being near the sea, being able to sit and look out across an ocean, to take in the expanse of the sea, the land and the sky, is a universal experience that I think we can all benefit from. Photography is commonly like this: you receive an education in something much broader, as a natural byproduct of studying something very specific. It's something I've grown to love greatly about being a photographer.

Kayoko Shiomi

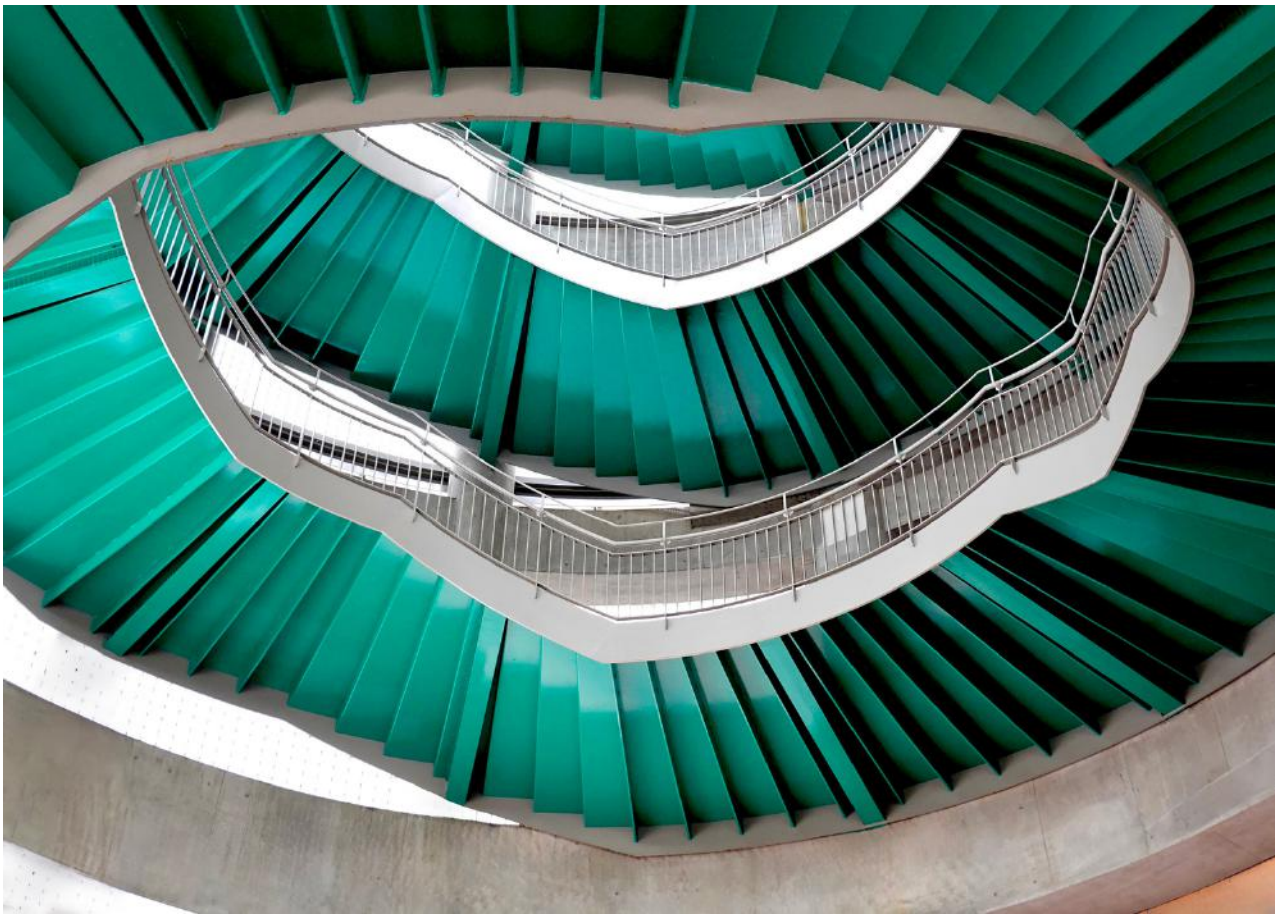
kayoko403

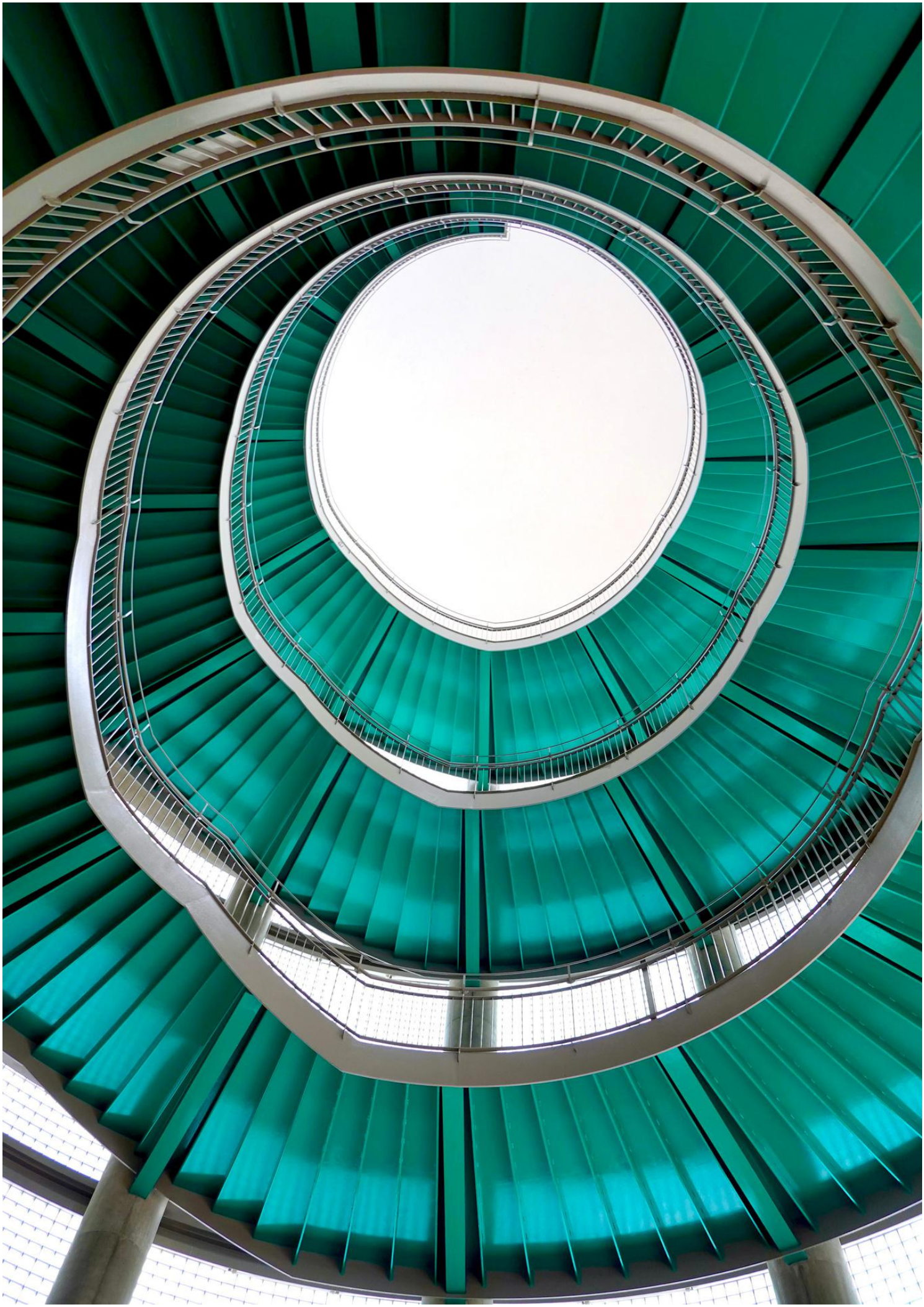
Kayoko Shiomi is a Kyoto-based photographer whose work explores beauty found in stillness. She photographs natural landscapes and flowers, as well as everyday objects and distinctive architecture encountered while exploring different places. Drawn to quiet, fleeting moments, she observes how seasonality, light, shadow, reflection, and perspective can transform familiar scenes. Her work has been exhibited at KG+, the satellite event of the KYOTOGRAPHIE International Photography Festival, from 2024 through 2026.

Project Statement

My photographic practice is rooted in close observation of nature, landscapes, and spaces. I am drawn to moments when a change in perspective reveals something unexpected within a familiar environment. These photographs depict a staircase at Act City Hamamatsu, Japan. Viewed from above, the stairs appear conventional, with tiles in subdued, earthy tones. Yet when viewed from below, a vivid green pattern emerges, resembling a whirlpool or blooming flower. As one moves through the space, this shift in perspective creates a quiet moment of surprise and discovery. The green staircase incorporates imagery inspired by nature, visually connecting with the lush rooftop garden and the blue sky above. I am interested in the interplay between nature and the built environment, and in how a simple change in viewpoint can reveal unexpected beauty in everyday spaces.

Kayoko Shiomi | Emerald Spiral | 2026





Kayoko Shiomi | Emerald Spiral | 2026

INTERVIEW

Ján Špireng

jan_spireng

What inspired you to begin PROJECT LIFE, and how did you arrive at the idea of presenting human life as a sequence of photographic chapters?

PROJECT LIFE did not really begin as a project. It began with a single photograph, PROTECTION, which I created with my daughter Zoe. Her mother passed away, so the photograph grew from a deeply personal thought: “As long as I am here, you will not walk through life alone.”
At first, I wanted to capture that one feeling: protection, closeness, and a father’s responsibility toward his child. Gradually, however, I realized that the photograph contained something much broader. Life is not made up of a single moment or emotion. We move through decisions, losses, falls, searching, pain, forgiveness, and many other states.
That was when the idea of PROJECT LIFE began to take shape: to tell the story of human life through individual photographic chapters. Each series captures one part of that journey, while together they gradually form a larger story.
Although PROJECT LIFE grew out of a very personal moment, I do not want it to tell only my story. I want every viewer to be able to find a part of their own life within it.

Ján Špireng | Forgiveness

PAIN and FORGIVENESS form a continuous emotional journey. What, in your view, allows pain to transform into forgiveness?

For me, pain does not have to be the final outcome of a life situation. Even when we hurt one another, there is still a possibility to stop, look at ourselves, recognize our own mistakes, and try to work on them together.
Forgiveness does not mean forgetting what happened or pretending that the pain never existed. It means accepting that something happened and still being able to move forward.
That is what the transition from PAIN to FORGIVENESS represents for me. Pain does not have to be the end of the story. It can be the moment after which we decide what comes next.

Are these two chapters rooted in personal experience, observations of other people, or a combination of both?

I think almost everyone has experienced both pain and forgiveness at some point in life. We all know what it feels like to be hurt, but we may also find ourselves on the other side, deciding whether we are able to forgive.
PAIN and FORGIVENESS are personal chapters for me. They come from my life and from my relationship with my partner. Even so, I do not want the photographs to tell only our story. That is why they contain no specific faces, places, or circumstances that would tell the viewer whose story they are seeing.
I believe people who encounter these series may find part of their own story in them. If the photographs help someone see their own pain differently, or perhaps make the decision to forgive and try to continue through life together, then the work gains an even deeper meaning for me.

The figures in your photographs rarely reveal their faces clearly. How does this anonymity help you create a more

universal emotional narrative?

Anonymity in my work is not simply a visual style or an aesthetic device. I deliberately photograph the figures so that they remain anonymous because I want viewers to be able to place themselves in their position.
I do not want someone looking at a photograph to feel, 'I am watching the story of two strangers.' My aim is for the image to awaken the viewer's own emotions, memories, and experiences. For me, an anonymous figure is therefore not someone without an identity. It is a space the viewer can fill with their own identity and story. When that happens, they are no longer simply looking at my story; they become part of it.

Physical distance plays an important role in the series: the figures sit apart, reach toward one another, turn away, and eventually move forward. How did you develop this choreography of gestures?

My photographs do not begin in front of the camera. First there has to be an idea, a thought, an emotion, or an experience that I want to express. I then visualize it and consider how to translate it into a series of three photographs, so that each image can stand on its own while all three create a single story.
Only when I have that story in my mind does the actual production begin. I use gestures, the distance between figures, the way they turn, and sometimes very small suggestions to guide the viewer through the series. I do not need to state everything directly. Sometimes the space between two people or the gesture of a hand is enough to suggest what is happening between them.
At the same time, I try not to give my stories a completely definite ending. PAIN and FORGIVENESS, for example, form one continuous story. The final photograph in FORGIVENESS shows two people who have chosen to continue through life together. They walk away side by side, but there is still darkness ahead of them. We do not know what is waiting there or how their story will end.
That space for uncertainty is important to me. I want to guide the viewer through the story, but I do not want to tell them how they must complete it.

Motion blur makes some figures appear to be fading, departing,

Ján Špireng | Pain

Ján Špireng | Forgiveness

or transforming. What role does movement play in expressing memory, loss, and the passage of time?

Motion blur is one of the elements I use to express the passage of time, a memory, or simply something that was once here and is no longer present. A disappearing figure can represent a person, a moment, or a part of life that we can no longer hold on to, but which still leaves a trace within us.
I work with light and darkness in a similar way. Light often represents a path, a direction, or a sense of certainty. Its opposite is darkness and the large areas of negative space, which can suggest uncertainty, the unknown, or something still to come.
I also try to use as few elements as possible within the frame. I do not want to distract viewers with anything that is unimportant to the story. Movement, light, darkness, and empty space are not simply visual effects; they are ways of directing attention toward the central idea of a photograph or an entire series.
Technique is not the goal of photography for me. It only has meaning when it helps tell the story.

How important is the precise sequence of the photographs? Do you want viewers to follow a particular narrative, or are they free to construct their own story?

By creating a series and deciding the order of its photographs, I tell the story as I see it. The sequence is not accidental: the individual images build on one another and together create a particular emotional journey.
That does not mean the viewer has to read the story in the same way I do, and I do not mean only the order of the images. People often write to me and describe an interpretation of a series that is completely different from the story I had in mind when I created it.
For me, that is one of the greatest compliments. It means the photograph has opened something in them: a memory, an experience, or an emotion of their own. They are no longer passive observers of my story.
Every viewer can enter the story personally and find something different from what I saw when I created the series. I determine the beginning of the journey, but I do not have to determine where it takes the viewer.

Andrija Ratkovic

hyperacreativity

Andrija Ratković is a chemist from Vršac. In 2013, he graduated from the Faculty of Science and Mathematics of the University of Novi Sad, where he obtained the title of master of chemistry. Soon after, he started working as a chemistry professor in several schools. From 2013 to 2021, he actively participated in the cultural life of the city of Vršac, organizing various events and exhibitions. In his free time, he is engaged in photography, sports and science.

Artist statement
My photographs are made in period from 2013 and I am very interested in portrait and street photography. I had 3 different exhibitions in Serbia, where I presented my work. Now I am interested to present my work abroad and get connected with photographers around the world.

Alisa Kishchenko

alisa.kishchenko

My name is Alisa Kishchenko, and I am an amateur photographer. I discovered my passion for photography about a year ago. It became my main passion. I create all of my photographs using only the camera on my iPhone. I believe the best camera is the one that's always with you. Photography allows me to slow down, observe the world more carefully, and transform familiar scenes into images that invite curiosity, reflection, and a fresh way of seeing everyday life. I mainly photograph architecture and everyday objects, finding beauty and interesting details in ordinary surroundings. My goal is to discover the extraordinary in the ordinary. Through light, shadows, geometry, and minimalism, I try to reveal stories that often go unnoticed, inviting others to pause and see familiar places from a new perspective.

Alisa Kishchenko | Old Town in the Window | 2026

Alisa Kishchenko | Looking Up | 2026

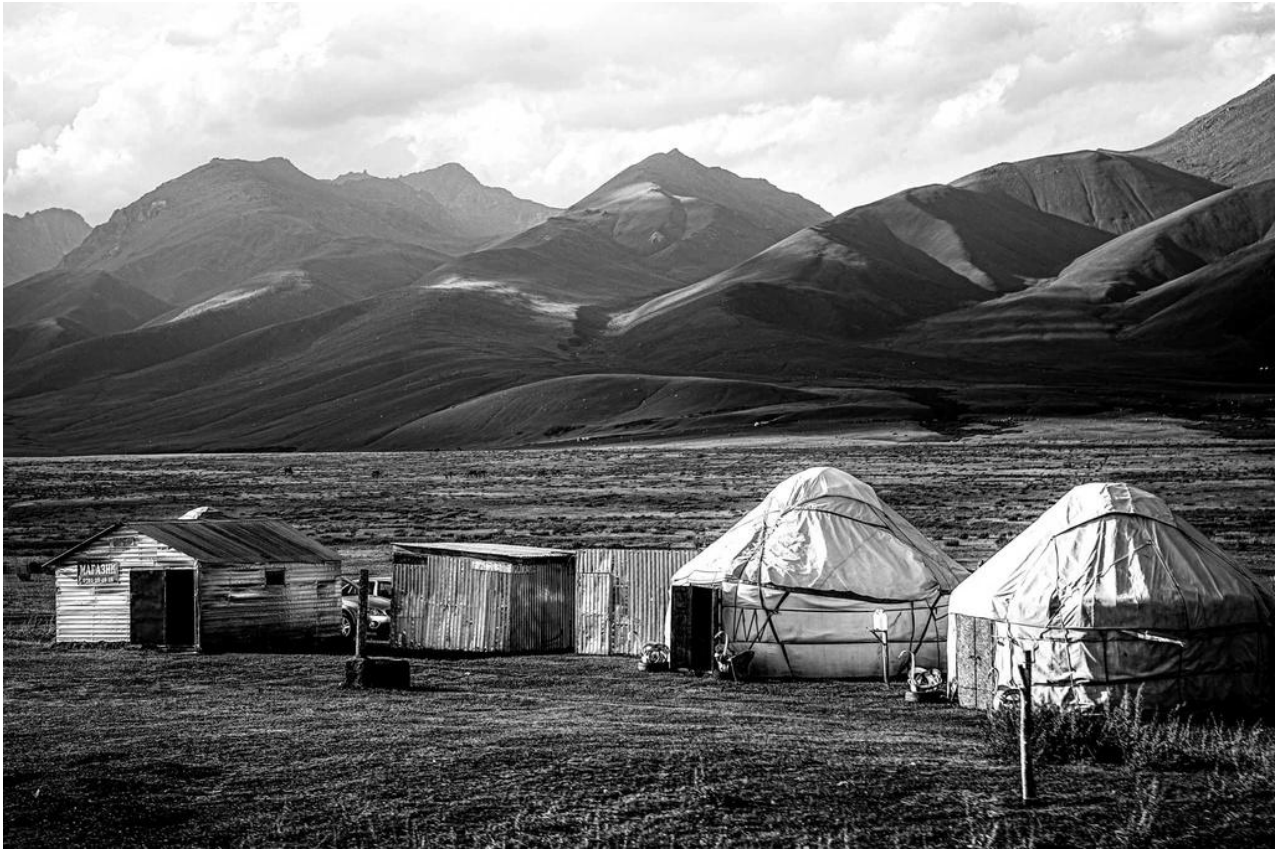
Aaron Coles

arc_photoss

Aaron is a passionate and dedicated aspiring photojournalist whose work is driven by a deep commitment to documenting the human experience. With a strong work ethic and an unwavering curiosity, he believes that photography has the power to inform, inspire, and create meaningful conversations.Having travelled extensively across the world, Aaron has covered a wide range of challenging stories, working in difficult environments to shed light on places that might otherwise go unseen. His approach combines empathy, integrity, and a determination to tell authentic stories through compelling imagery.
Beyond creating impactful photographs,Every assignment is approached with professionalism, respect, and a genuine desire to connect with people and their stories. Through honest, powerful imagery, Aaron strives to preserve moments that matter and contribute to a greater understanding of the world and the people who inhabit it.

Artist statement
This documentary photo series was created while hiking through the remote landscapes of Kyrgyzstan, exploring the country's mountains, valleys, and rural communities on foot. Travelling beyond the main roads provided an opportunity to experience daily life at a slower pace, meeting the people whose traditions and livelihoods remain closely connected to the landThe photographs document the relationship between landscape and community, capturing scenes of nomadic culture, farming, herding, and everyday life set against the dramatic backdrop of the Tian Shan mountains.

Aaron Coles | Beneath Ancient Peaks



Aaron Coles | Beneath Ancient Peaks

Aaron Coles | Smiles Beyond the Horizon

Natalya Gordeeva

natalya_gordeeva_

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

Project Statement
OUT OF CONTEXT
We often let the world around us define who we are. The place we find ourselves in. Our circumstances. Other people's expectations. Rules we never chose to follow. So we adapt. We change ourselves to fit the space we're in. We become quieter, more restrained, less visible when the context demands it. But what if we don't have to fit in? What if the place we're in doesn't get to decide who we're supposed to be? You can stay vibrant against a grey backdrop. Be gentle in a world that feels harsh. Remain fully yourself in places where no one expected you to be.

Natalya Gordeeva | OUT OF CONTEXT | 2026

Natalya Gordeeva | OUT OF CONTEXT | 2026

Stefano Ceretti

stefanoceretti

Artist statement

Beyond the Visible: Guarded Vulnerability In an era pervaded by perfect yet detached imagery, Stefano Ceretti's artistic choice responds to a profound need to rescue the female body from the trivialization of a superficial approach.

Motion Blur: The Fluid Essence of Emotion The nude body is not photographed to be exposed in its formal staticity, but to be narrated through the technique of pronounced motion blur. Movement goes beyond the perception of detail to make room for pure vibration: the figure becomes an echo, a fluid and dynamic presence that suggests moods, transitions, and emotions rather than a defined anatomy. It is the representation of the soul in motion, where the body loses its rigidity to become a dreamlike, impalpable substance.

The Material-Bubble Wrap: Protection and Three-Dimensionality The decision to print directly onto bubble wrap transforms the work from a simple two-dimensional photograph into a tactile sculpture.

• The Symbol of Packaging: Bubble wrap is, by its very nature, a material created to wrap, protect, and preserve what is fragile. Applied to the female nude, it becomes a visual and conceptual metaphor: the vulnerability of the body is safeguarded by a transparent armor of air.

• The Three-Dimensional Texture: The bubbles fragment and refract the light, creating an organic filter between the viewer and the subject. The image decomposes into the plastic's lenticular structures, compelling the viewer to adopt a slower, more intimate reading.

The Synergy of the pluribART Project Through pluribART, Stefano Ceretti merges conceptual research on the human figure with experimentation on industrial substrates. The synergy between the motion blur of the shot and the three-dimensional surface of the bubble wrap creates a veil of poetic protection: the body is visible yet elusive, protected yet revealed, transforming the photographic act into an experience of pure sensory perception.

Stefano Ceretti | Guarded Vulnerability | 2026

Carlos Cabrera

slowtravel_fotografia

Artist statement

About myself: Passionate about traveling. Observing the world with calm. Trying to find the beauty in the everyday. I love to share my perspective through the lens, featuring photographs taken on every trip I take, and in every place I discover.

About my project: "A visual study of human interaction with culture, heritage, and landscape. Through a slow-travel perspective. This collection explores fleeting everyday moments, architectural silence, and the subtle rhythms of life across different corners of the world."

Carlos Cabrera | Walk Among Giants | 2026

Carlos Cabrera | Guardians of the Shallows | 2024

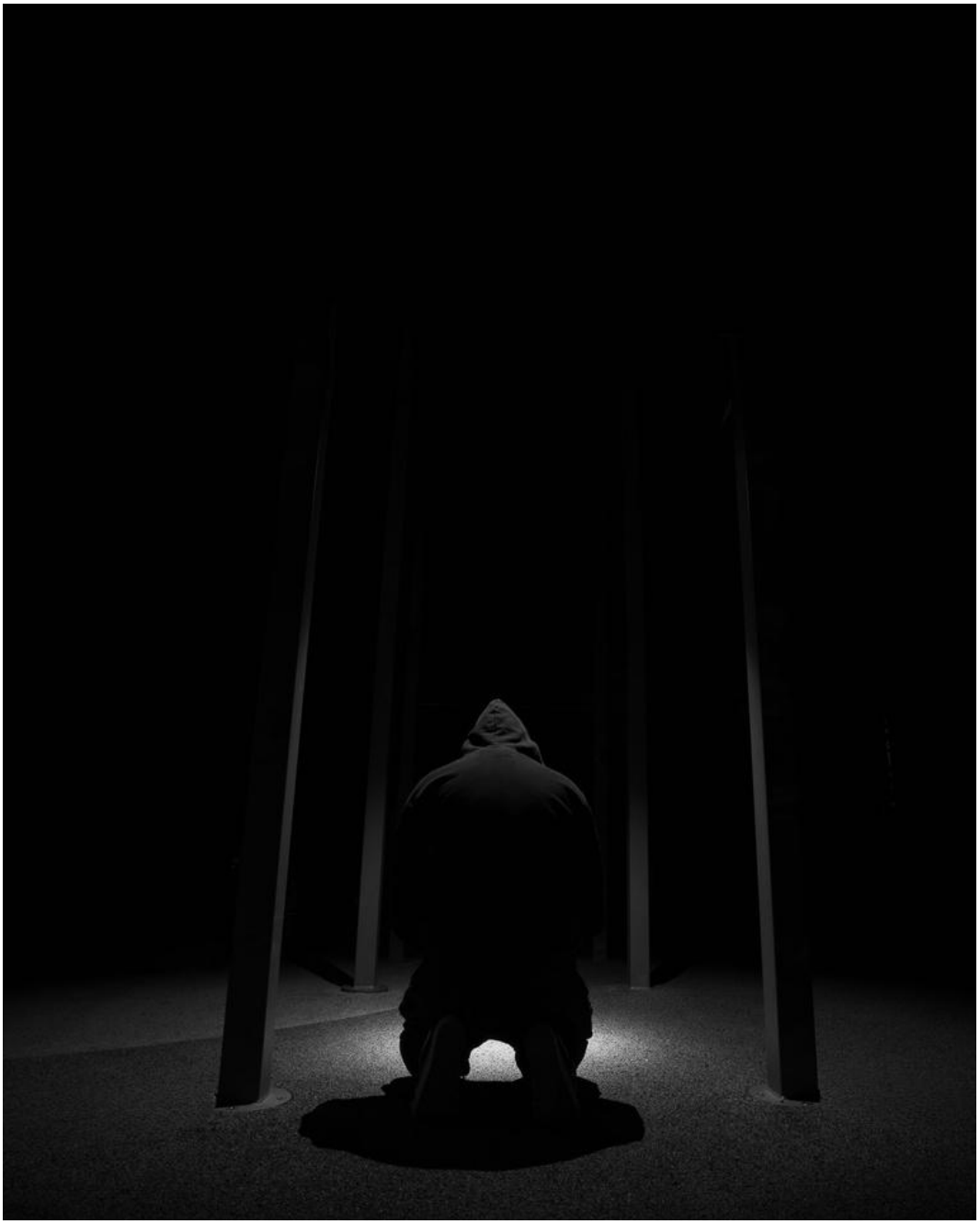
Carlos Cabrera | The Last Show | 2026

Ján Špireng

jan_spireng

I am a Czech conceptual black-and-white photographer. I work with light, shadow and movement to explore human relationships, solitude, decisions and moments of change. My photographs create space for the viewer's own interpretation.

Artist statement
PROJECT LIFE is my ongoing conceptual photography project about the moments that shape us. Through black-and-white images, I explore the movement between solitude and closeness, a decision and its consequences, loss and the possibility of taking a breath again. The Lost and Broken are consecutive chapters within PROJECT LIFE. They move from the solitude that remains after others have gone to the fragile space after a breaking point - between collapse and acceptance.



Jan Spireng | Broken | 2026

Jan Spireng | The Lost | 2026

Professor Pete Ford

Pete Ford is an NHS consultant anaesthetist who spends his working life gazing at the world from behind an anaesthetic machine. When not putting folk to sleep, he works in healthcare innovation and sustainability. Photography is his chance to stay awake, look around and capture what catches his eye.

Project Statement
This isn't a project that began with a plan. It is a collection of photographs of things that simply caught my eye. The images are eclectic: people, places, objects, details and moments that might otherwise have passed unnoticed. There is no single location or subject linking them, and they weren't taken with a particular photographic style or story in mind. Most of my working life is spent in the NHS, where observation is important but usually rather more purposeful. Photography gives me a different reason to look. I can notice the unusual, the beautiful, the funny, the slightly odd, or simply the way light falls on something ordinary. Taken individually, the photographs are unrelated.They are simply things that caught my eye.

Chan Suk On

sukon.chan

Chan Suk On was born and lives in Hong Kong. She graduated from the Hong Kong Polytechnic University with a Bachelor of Photographic Design. She gained her Master of Arts in Fine Arts at the Chinese University of Hong Kong. On is an artist, photographer, and editor. She is inspired by everyday life experiences. Her artistic journey is going from documentary photography to conceptual art. Her first book, "Chan Suk On Conceptual Photography," was published by Contemporary Art Station in Barcelona on December 2022. Her second book is "Art Elite Collection - International Art Monograph Series, Loose Pieces, Chan Suk On Contemporary Photography," published by Contemporary Art Curator on September 2026.

Photographer's statement:

Rainbow in My Palm, 2026
In July 2026, I travelled to London to visit art museums and galleries with my elder sisters. Inside our hotel room, a sudden rainbow appeared like an unexpected visitor. It brought a warm light across the lines of my hand, touching my heart like a sign that good days were coming. The messy folds on the bed showed how tired we were from traveling. But the light shining through the window changed the whole feeling of the room.
Light has no weight, but I could really feel it resting on my hand. The quiet, colourful light turned my simple skin into something warm and special. We often travel far away to look for beautiful views, but we forget that the most wonderful moments are often these small, quick surprises.
The rainbow will fade as the sun moves, but the warm feeling in my hand stays. A photo holds that moment forever. It was not just light passing through; it was a quiet message reminding us that good things come at the right time, and better days are slowly coming our way.

Morning, Dandelions, 2026
Waking up at 7:00 AM, I looked out the window and saw sunlight bathing a dandelion. In that exact moment, I grabbed my camera to capture this beautiful moment. Sunlight flooded from behind the dandelion, outlining its details with delicate elegance.

Chan Suk On | Rainbow in My Palm | 2026

Chan Suk On | Morning, Dandelions | 2026

Adriana Gutierrez

I am a Mexican photographer based in Toronto, Canada, drawn to quiet, reflective moments shaped by light and space. My images emphasize atmosphere, restraint, and subtle human presence or traces. I hold an HBA in Sociology from the University of Toronto, a background that has influenced my interest in the relationship between people and environments. I seek to create photographs that invite reflection on solitude, memory, and the ways we find meaning within the places we encounter.

Artist statement

Cape Breton Island often evokes dramatic natural beauty: green mountains, rugged cliffs and winding roads overlooking the Atlantic. Travelling across the island, however, I found myself drawn away from these postcard views and towards melancholic, isolated and, at times, seemingly abandoned landscapes. For generations, coal mining and steel production shaped Cape Breton's communities. Their decline brought economic uncertainty, population loss and outmigration, a history that changed the way I understood the remoteness I encountered. Rather than documenting these consequences directly, these photographs consider how absence can become embedded in a landscape through distance, silence and decay, capturing the solitude of an island on the edge of Canada.

Adriana Gutierrez | Approach | 2026

Adriana Gutierrez | Remains | 2026

Adriana Gutierrez | Solitude | 2026

Elmira Zueva

elmira.zueva

Project Statement

My creative work is like a personal diary of thoughts and poems, carrying sincerity, life — its poetry and contemplation. In my photography, video art, and mixed media, I strive to create a living dialogue with the world, where I draw energy from nature and connect with it — this is my way of creating a space of unity between and nature, of conveying a sense of being, of existing outside of time. Contemplation is the foundation of my worldview. It helps me step outside of time, letting go of what seems important. It's in these moments that the most sincere imprint of feeling is born. I believe in mystery — in hidden meanings, in the sacred and the magical. I'm drawn to what can't be touched: the vibrations of the soul, the response of the heart, the presence of God in simple things. I'm a sensory person, and I look for ways to convey this flow through the visual — through flickers of light, through handwritten text, through crossed-out lines from which something real, something alive, emerges. Yellow, green, and light blue are my main colors. They are the colors of sky, sun, and nature — the colors of connection with the world. Nostalgia lives within me — like the light of the past that keeps warming. Rural motifs, childhood memories, the warmth of present moments. I gather fragments of time in which I was, am, and will be. My work is an attempt to hold on to that light. Everything I do is a dialogue — with nature, with God, with myself, and with the viewer, to whom I want to convey what's in my heart. And in this dialogue, my vulnerability becomes the most valuable material.

Vonessa Robinson-Lindo

infragilis_worldtravella

Vonessa Robinson-Lindo is a Jamaican documentary and street photographer whose work explores culture, community, identity, and the everyday stories found within ordinary places. Her practice is rooted in observation, capturing candid moments, and finding meaning in the people, places, and interactions that often go unnoticed.
A retired U.S. Army Captain with more than 22 years of service, Robinson-Lindo brings a perspective shaped by travel, cultural experiences, and a background in Environmental and Public Health. These experiences influence her interest in the relationship between people, place, community, and resilience.
Her photography spans Jamaica, the Caribbean, Central and South America, with a particular focus on street life, roadside vendors, markets, cultural traditions, and everyday environments. Through light, color, gesture, and composition, she transforms spontaneous moments and familiar surroundings into visual stories. Robinson-Lindo has participated in photography workshops in the United States, Peru, and Colombia and has exhibited her work in Austin, Texas, and Jamaica. She is currently pursuing an MFA in Photography at Academy of Art University, continuing to develop her practice in street and cultural documentary photography.

Project Statement
By The Roadside is a cultural documentary photography project that explores the people, places, and everyday moments that shape life along Jamaica's roadsides. The project grew from my desire to look beyond the passing landscape and pay closer attention to the people who make these spaces part of everyday Jamaican life.
Roadside vendors, small stalls, market spaces, produce stands, and informal businesses are more than places of commerce. They are spaces where culture, community, work, and human connection intersect. Through these photographs, I document the individuals who create their livelihoods along the roadside and the environments they have built around them.
Working primarily with natural light, I use color, gesture, composition, and the surrounding environment to tell these stories. I am interested in the quiet moments of work, the textures of the roadside, the colors of Jamaica, and the relationship between people and the spaces they occupy.
By The Roadside is ultimately about seeing the familiar differently. These photographs invite viewers to slow down and recognize the beauty, dignity, resilience, and cultural character found within ordinary moments of everyday Jamaican life.

Vonessa Robinson-Lindo | Day's Harvest | 2026

Vonessa Robinson-Lindo | Roadside Rhythm | 2026

Vonessa Robinson-Lindo | Hand of Harvest | 2026

MinA Choi

8project_choim

MinA Choi is a documentary and cultural heritage photographer based in South Korea. Her work explores traces of time and memory embedded in history, places, and everyday lives.
Her ongoing series Hands That Carry Ritual documents the Suryukjae ritual at Jin-gwansa and grew out of her participation in Fujifilm's 4th Korea UNESCO Heritage Documentation Project, Seoul. Focusing on hands, gestures, movement, and human connection, she explores how rituals and cultural practices are carried forward through generations.
She was selected for the 2026 Busan International Photo Festival International Open Call and participated in Fujifilm Photo Festa 2026. She continues to document cultural heritage and traces of time through photography exhibitions and projects in Korea and abroad.

Project Statement
Hands That Carry Ritual
At Jinkwansa Temple, the Guk-haeng Suryukjae — a Buddhist rite for the deliverance of souls on land and water — unfolds through gesture rather than words. Monastics raise cymbals overhead in the barachum, strike the great drum in solemn rhythm, and move through the nabichum in towering paper headdresses shaped like lotus blossoms.
This series follows the hands and bodies that carry these movements forward: the stillness before a gesture begins, the blur of silk sleeves mid-motion, the weight of tradition held in an elder's clasped palms.
Photographed in black and white, the work sets aside the color and spectacle often associated with temple ritual to focus on form, rhythm, and the quiet discipline required to keep a centuries-old practice alive.
— MinA Choi

MinA Choi | Hands That Carry Ritual | 2026

MinA Choi | Hands That Carry Ritual | 2026

MinA Choi | Hands That Carry Ritual | 2026

Peishen Liang

jiyiyojio

Peishen Liang is a London-based photographer and lens-based artist working across documentary, portraiture and quiet observational image-making. His work is drawn to thresholds — the spaces between departure and arrival, stillness and motion, the sacred and the everyday — and to the small, often overlooked gestures through which people carry the weight of distance and belonging. Working across colour and black and white, his projects develop slowly, often over several years, favouring sustained attention over quick resolution.

Project Statement
Misread
Conceptual photographic series | 18 photographs | Ongoing
She is visible before she is known.
I began Misread with a contradiction I had encountered repeatedly: a woman may be admired for how she looks, yet the same appearance can be used to doubt her intelligence, seriousness or ability. In Chinese, the stereotype of the "flower vase" names this reduction explicitly — a beautiful woman is treated as an ornament, present to decorate a space rather than contribute to it. Similar assumptions appear in Western workplaces and media through beauty bias, sexualised visibility and the idea that femininity undermines authority. The work does not reject beauty; it asks why beauty is so often allowed to become an argument against the person who possesses it.
To translate this idea into images, I used a transparent water tank as an enlarged container for display. A vase holds water and flowers so that they can be arranged and looked at. In these photographs, the tank holds water, flowers and the woman's body within the same frame. She is not the vase; the container makes visible the logic that treats her as one. By enlarging the vessel until it can be entered, the stereotype becomes physical: she can be seen clearly from the outside, but the glass still separates her from the viewer.
Water makes the body appear luminous and weightless while also restricting movement, breath and voice. Refraction shifts the face and gestures, showing that visibility is not the same as understanding. Flowers, make-up and dress remain deliberately present because the project does not ask a woman to abandon femininity in order to prove her competence. They belong to her self-presentation and pleasure. The contradiction is that the same qualities praised as beautiful can later be used to dismiss the person who embodies them.
As the sequence develops, the container moves between vase, display case and barrier. Attention shifts from the woman inside it to the system of looking around her. Misread asks whether it is the subject who has been misread, or the assumptions through which she is viewed. It refuses the idea that credibility must be purchased by becoming less feminine, less beautiful or less visible.
Beauty is not the cage. The judgement attached to it is.

Peishen Liang | Misread

Peishen Liang | Misread

Peishen Liang | Misread

David Ferman

dfermanphoto

I am a Spanish fine art photographer interested in exploring the emotional and symbolic dimensions of everyday life. Through carefully composed images and a restrained visual language, I seek to transform ordinary scenes into spaces for contemplation and reflection. My work is driven by an interest in atmosphere, perception, and the subtle moments that often go unnoticed, inviting viewers to pause and find their own meaning in each image.

Artist statement
Artificial light is designed to attract our attention. It highlights landmarks, streets and attractions, shaping the way we experience a city at night. Yet every illuminated space leaves another in shadow, quietly directing our gaze while allowing other places to fade into the background. Night Lure explores this tension between what light reveals and what it quietly conceals, inviting us to reflect on how our perception is guided as much by absence as by presence.

David Ferman | Night Lure | 2026

David Ferman | Night Lure | 2026

Marina Kornoukhova

marina_filmstyle

I was born in Vladivostok, Russia, on the shores of the Sea of Japan. I have been practicing photography for five years. In 2026, I completed an author's course in photography by Russian photo photographer Sasha Manovtseva, who opened my eyes to the amazing world around us.
Now I would love to share this world with you.
I work in various genres, but portraiture is perhaps my favorite. Every person is a vast world.
Every time I really fall in love with the heroes of my photoss—they are amazing.

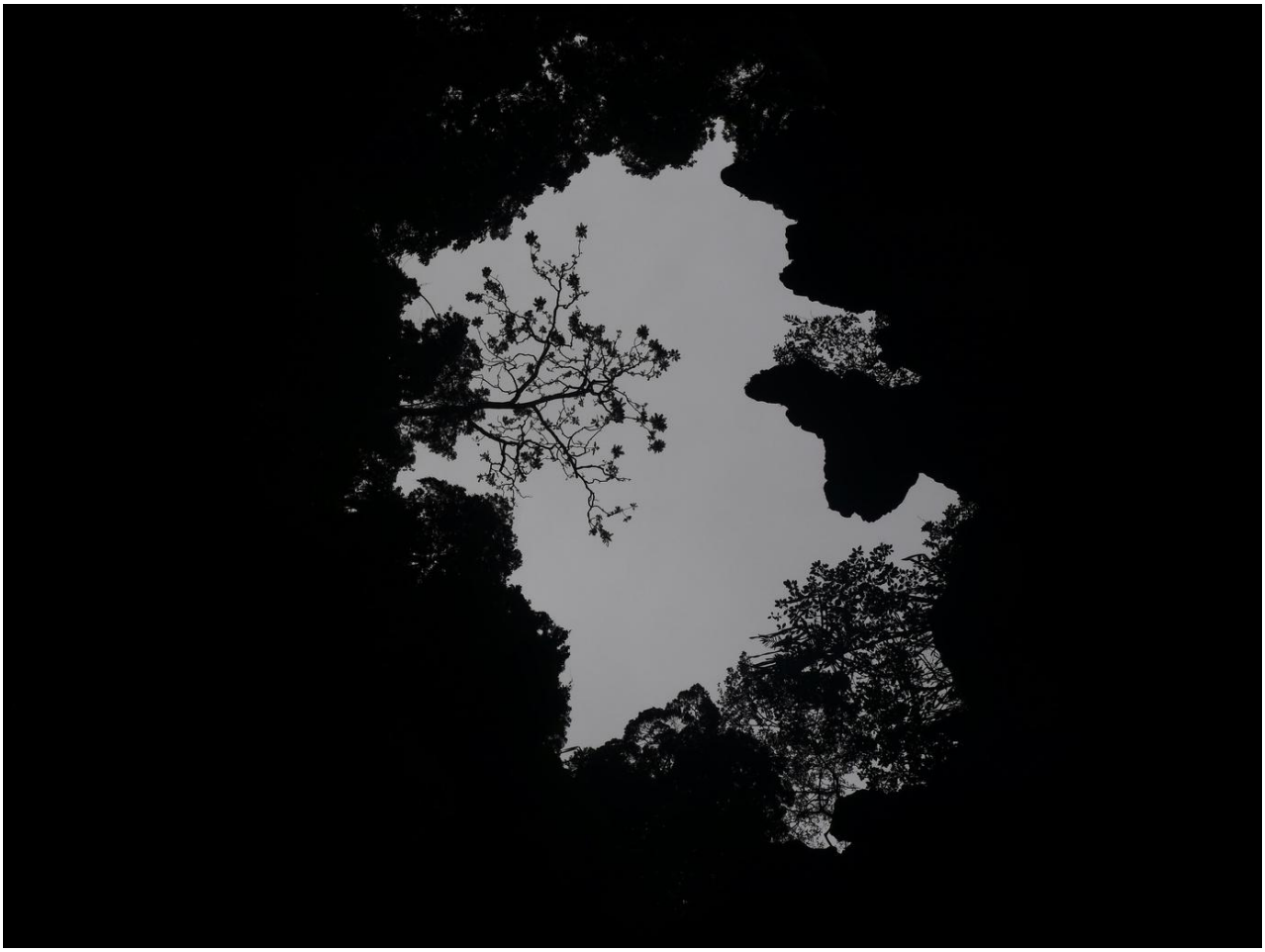
Jibril BEN JAMAA

israfil_paciencio_almirol

I was born and raised in Japan with a Filipino-Tunisian background. With a French academic background, I just got so passionate about language, so I rolled up my sleeves and started learning multiple languages. I am now on language number 7, and I am excited about this fact. Come my passion for language and literature, come my passion for different faces. I took my camera and started taking pictures of unique faces from different people. Though this proved to be a challenge for me, as not many people wished to have their faces in some stranger's camera. So I switched to sights. With my privilege to travel, I started taking pictures of elements and compositions I would never see again. Hence, the submissions.

Artist statement

When nighttime hits, there's something about the one source of light that illuminates leisurely in solitude. Not lonely, but something else. The feeling is similar to a passionate dancer flaming their way to a music no one else could hear, ball gown swaying and rejoicing in the wind playing along. What's more fantastic is that the night is illuminated by such creative shapes and moods of light. Mystery, serenity, futuristic, loud… fireflies are only seen in the dark. Light shapes at night are like what fireflies are to a moonless pond. Hence the name of this collection, "Firefly".



J. Gambande

jgambandephoto

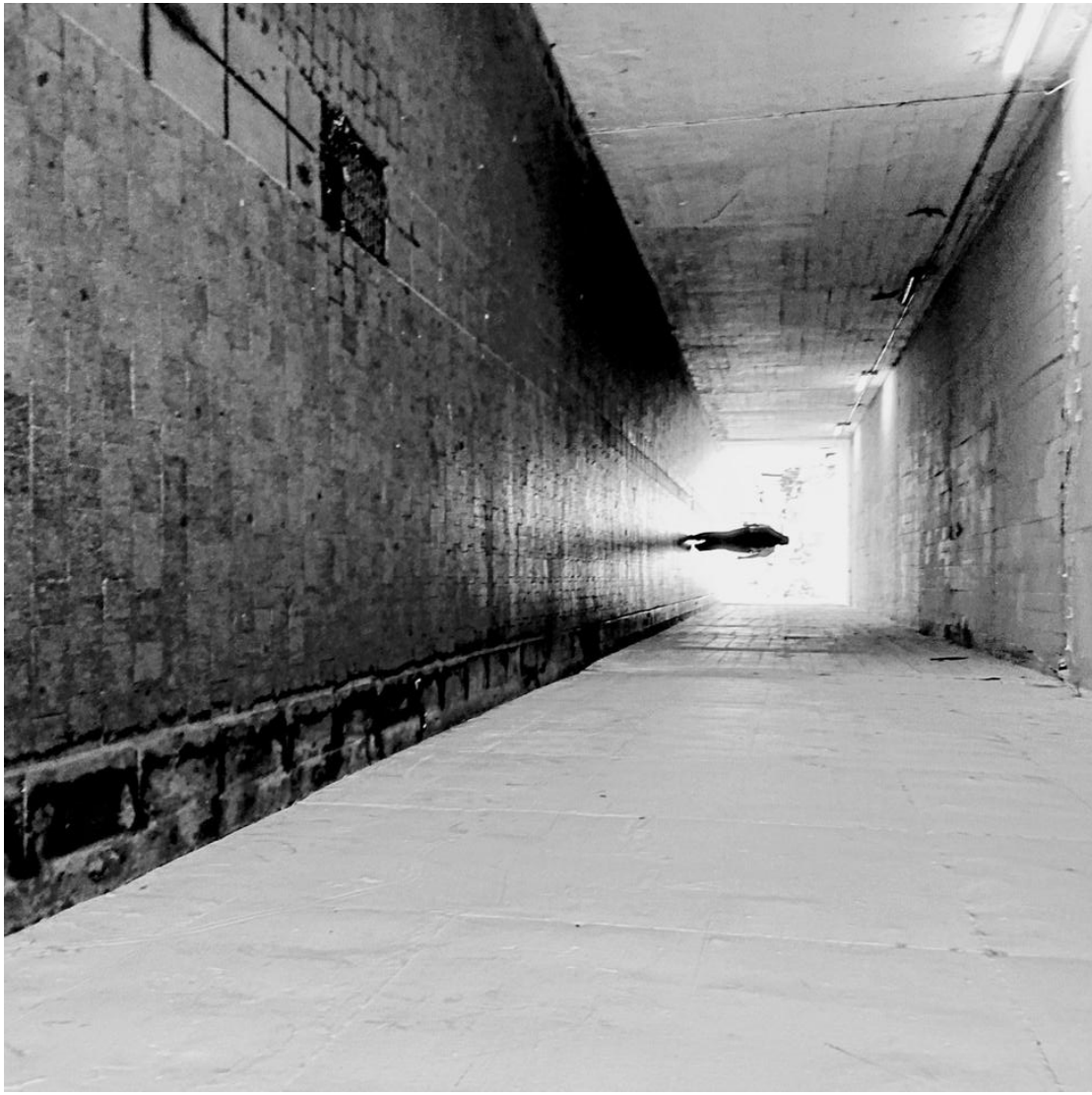
J. Gambande is an Argentine photographer based in Spain. Working exclusively in black and white, he photographs ordinary places as if they were fragments of an unfinished story. His images move between architecture, landscape and the quiet presence of people, looking for moments where reality becomes slightly ambiguous.

Artist statement

I photograph ordinary places at the moment when they begin to feel unfamiliar. Working in black and white, I look for silence, distance and small signs of human presence—an open road, a lit window, a figure disappearing into the dark. These images are not intended to tell a story, but to leave one slightly unfinished, allowing the viewer to enter it.

J. Gambande | Chair–Window

J. Gambande | Route



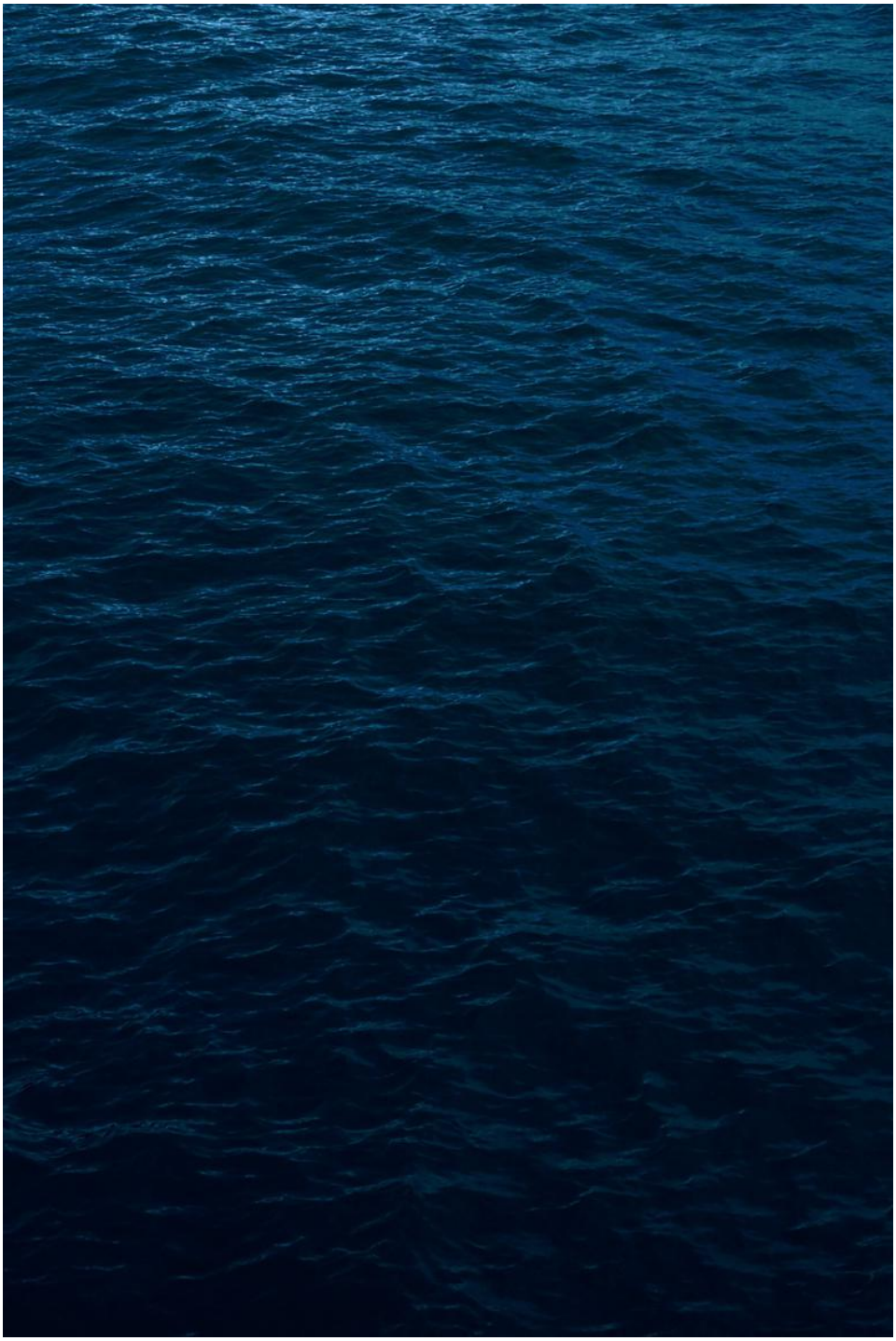
J. Gambande | Tunnel

Alekhya Nethra

alekhya.n_

Alekhya Nethra is an Indian Fine Art Photographer based in Ireland. Alekhya's photographs encompass elements that evoke varied feelings through nature, people and places that hold art closer. Being an aesthetic as an integral part of her being, her work revolves around art and nature.

Project Statement
This series captures the moving waves of "The Irish Sea". The photographs carry emotions of pensiveness, eerie feeling and calm.



Monica Sunkara

___m.o.n.i.c.a___a

I am an architect and photographer currently based in Shanghai, where I am pursuing my Master's in Architecture. I enjoy capturing everyday life, people, and the little moments that make a city feel alive. Photography, for me, is a way of observing the world around me and finding something interesting in the ordinary.

Artist statement
Shanghai never ceases to amaze me with how active its elderly residents are. From the familiar rhythms of square dancing to vigorous morning exercises in parks and along the waterfront, there is an energy to the city that begins long before the rest of it fully wakes. It is something I quietly admire, and something I hope to carry with me as I grow older. One morning, in the soft golden light along the Bund, I came across a man dancing with a dragon. As it whooshed dramatically through the air, the dragon seemed to embrace Shanghai's iconic skyline, almost like an ancient lifeline asserting its presence within the modern metropolis. For a fleeting moment, the glass towers and the centuries-old symbol shared the same breath, reminding me that tradition does not disappear; it simply learns new ways to move. This series captures that brief encounter with a mystical dragon, emerging in the midst of an otherwise calm and quiet morning.

© Monica Sunkara

© Monica Sunkara

Mona Singh

monasinghphotography

Mona Singh is a Gurgaon-based Indian photographer whose practice moves between documentary, street and fine-art photography. Her work explores people, memories and places.
Drawn to moments of vulnerability, intimacy and human resilience, she often works with a poetic and observational approach. Her work has been exhibited and published internationally including presentations in India, Germany, the United States and Australia.
Her ongoing project Silent Circus documents the fading world of travelling circuses across India, reflecting her long-standing interest in stories that exist on the margins of everyday attention.

Artist statement
The Silent Circus is my long-term photographic project documenting travelling circuses across India at a moment when they are slowly losing their place in public life.
Over the past two and a half years I have travelled to multiple cities spending time with circus communities to understand what remains when a form of live entertainment no longer draws people in the way it once did.
Fewer people come to the circus today. Children and families are increasingly absorbed by phones and social media and entertainment has moved indoors and onto screens. Inside the circus tent this shift is visible and painful.
Performers continue to present the same acts three times a day, often to very small audiences. Applause is limited and many performances unfold in near silence. Yet the work does not stop.
The lack of audience directly affects how the circus survives. With low ticket sales companies do not have the funds to build proper stages or improve lighting or create safe and welcoming spaces for families. Performances take place on makeshift infrastructure even as the acts themselves demand extreme physical effort.
Artists balance, lift, jump and suspend their bodies with minimal safety measures risking injury in order to earn a living. Watching this repetition..risk without security, labour without recognition..reveals the fragile reality of a culture sustained almost entirely by endurance.
My personal connection to this project grew from spending time within these spaces observing what happens when people continue to perform despite knowing they may not be seen. I became drawn to the moments between acts..exhaustion, waiting, quiet preparation and shared resilience.
As a photographer I have always been interested in silence, pauses and emotional undercurrents rather than spectacle. The circus brought these concerns into sharp focus.
The Silent Circus is not about saving or romanticising the circus. It is about paying attention. By spending time and building trust this project stays with a community that continues to perform with skill and risk even when few people are watching.
The photographs ask a simple question: what does it mean to keep performing when the audience is disappearing?

Mona Singh | A Little Closer | 2023

Mona Singh | A Shower of Light | 2023

Mona Singh | Waiting for Applause | 2025

Alberto Verici

bert66

Started photography seriously in 2018. Approaching photography in younger age because of my father work. I don't never leave home my gear every time i move on holiday or vacancy. Never more...

Artist statement
Sara is a complete athlete, climber, and dancer. She let me photograph her in an untouched woodland and in an ancient, closed attic filled with very old furniture.

Olga Dozhidaeva

kuliturmulitur

Olga Dozhidaeva is a photographer, visual artist, and curator based in Petrozavodsk, Russia. Her practice explores everyday urban environments, approaching post-Soviet architecture as a space where traces of human presence, memory, and time remain visible. Working primarily with photography, she also uses photographic images as the foundation for graphic and painterly works. She completed the postgraduate programme in History and Theory of Contemporary Russian Art at Sreda Obucheniya (Moscow). Her work has been exhibited at Cube.Moscow, the Vykhod Media Center, and other venues.

Artist statement

Photography is the foundation of my artistic practice. Through it, I observe the ordinary urban environment and the subtle ways in which people leave traces of themselves in the spaces they inhabit. I am interested in residential neighborhoods, facades, windows, repetitive architectural forms, and seemingly insignificant details that often go unnoticed in everyday life. Rather than documenting architecture as an object of historical or aesthetic value, I approach it as a living surface that records routines, habits, and the passage of time. Even when people are absent from my photographs, their presence is felt through the spaces they have shaped. My work explores how familiar environments become carriers of collective memory. I am drawn to places that appear visually neutral or overlooked, where repetition, color, geometry, and small disruptions reveal the quiet relationship between architecture and everyday experience. Working primarily with photography, I also use images as a starting point for graphic and painterly works. Across different media, I am interested in how careful observation can transform ordinary spaces into visual narratives that invite viewers to reconsider places they might otherwise pass by unnoticed.

Olga Dozhidaeva | Between Silence | 2026

Olga Dozhidaeva | Between Silence | 2026

Olga Dozhidaeva | Between Silence | 2026

Ximena Etchart

ximeetchart

Photographer and visual artist with more than 20 years of experience whose practice explores portraiture, editorial photography and an ongoing exploration of identity. Her work is characterized by a strong aesthetic and narrative sensibility, combining a documentary approach with a contemporary vision of the image. Her practice has been shaped by extensive experience across Argentina, London and the United States, where diverse cultural and creative environments have formed her visual language and perspective. She graduated from the Visual Journalism and Documentary Practice program at the International Center of Photography (ICP) in New York and went on to establish and further develop her photographic practice in Los Angeles. Over the course of her career, her work has been published internationally in numerous publications. Her photographs have been exhibited in galleries and cultural institutions across Argentina, London and New York. Her work has also received international recognition through awards and distinctions from organizations including the International Photography Awards (IPA), the National Press Photographers Association (NPPA) and Prix de la Photographie Paris (PX3). Alongside her personal and artistic practice, Ximena brings extensive experience in advertising, editorial production, and creative direction, having collaborated on campaigns and visual projects for international brands and creative teams. This multidisciplinary background has given her a sophisticated understanding of image-making, visual language, aesthetic direction, and narrative development, allowing her to move fluidly between commissioned and fine-art practices. Her work is ultimately grounded in a sustained interest in people, identity and the visual narratives that emerge from everyday life.

Project Statement

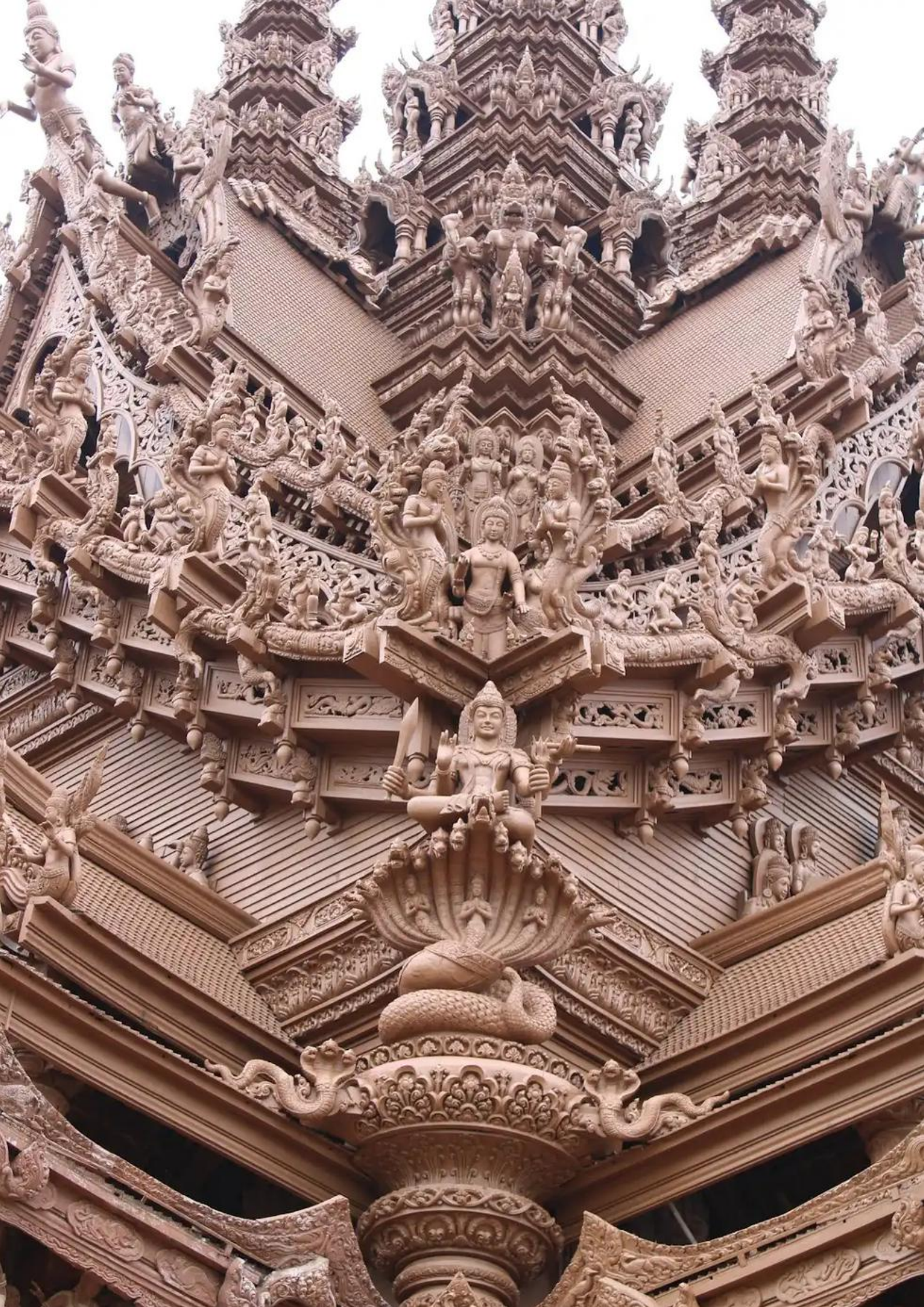
MOTHERLAND. This project is a meditation on presence and absence, memory and return and the quiet transformations that unfold through motherhood. After many years living ABROAD, I returned to my motherland, Argentina, carrying with me the distance of time and the memory of the place I had left behind. Yet I returned changed, shaped by years away and by the quiet, profound transformation of becoming a mother. I found myself looking again at a familiar landscape from within a life that had become unfamiliar to me in many ways. At the center of the work is motherhood and the experience of watching my children grow away from me. Their gradual movement toward independence has made me increasingly aware of my own transformation: I am still myself, yet I am no longer the woman I was. The photographs inhabit this space between holding and letting go. They are fragments, moments that are already becoming memory. Through them, I explore the parallels between returning to a homeland and returning to oneself, knowing that neither can ever be exactly as it was. The choice of printing on textured cotton paper is an intentional extension of this idea. Its tactile, delicate surface evokes something held, touched, and remembered. THE paper becomes part of the narrative itself, reinforcing the tension between permanence and impermanence, presence and absence.

Venture Awaits

photosfrommr

As a self taught photographer the venture I took to get here was immense.

Artist statement
The name venture awaits signifies the feeling of always Telling yourself to go faster. Venture awaits is about the Many of sleepless nights but you've only begun forging the path. Just as Asclepiodotus burnt his boat with no way back to Rome to signify accomplish or die trying. Continue with unwavering optimism and dedication and the universe will provide. after getting on a Times Square billboard at 19, there is no going back to "reality" or a sense of normalcy. I highly recommend to checkout my website photosfrommr.art for my portfolio , t-shirts , photography prints.



Roger Ajjour

rogerajjourphotography

Roger Ajjour is a Lebanese photographer whose practice explores the relationship between people, light, atmosphere, and visual storytelling. His work moves between portraiture, fashion, beauty, editorial, and fine-art photography, with a particular interest in creating images that balance visual simplicity with emotion and atmosphere.
Based in Lebanon, Roger has developed his photographic practice through both commercial and artistic work, collaborating with individuals, brands, and creative professionals while continuing to develop his personal fine-art projects.
His photographs have been exhibited in Lebanon, including his selection for Beyond the Frame, the Fifth Edition of the Open Call for Emerging Lebanese Photographers by ART DISTRICT – House of Photography. His work has also been presented in exhibitions and photographic projects that bring together emerging and established artists.
Alongside his practice as a photographer, Roger shares his experience through photography education and workshops, including masterclasses and programs focused on visual storytelling, and creative image-making.
Through his work, he continues to explore photography as a way of observing, interpreting, and transforming everyday moments into visual narratives.

Roger Ajjour | Eve Reimagined

Roger Ajjour | Veil of Fired

Bernard Coops

bernardcoops

Bernard Coops is a Dutch photographer and visual artist whose autonomous practice operates at the intersection of sensory perception, the psychology of perception, and material abstraction.
The conceptual layering of his autonomous work is informed by a broad, multidisciplinary anchoring within visual media:
Academic Foundation: Coops graduated in Illustration from the CABK Art Academy (now ArtEZ University of the Arts) and subsequently completed his professional studies at the Fotoacademie.
Applied Media & Visual Direction: His expertise in visual grammar and design was extensively applied within the media industry for many years. As a designer and art director, he was responsible for the visual identity of both the Dutch public broadcasting network as well as various commercial television channels.
Knowledge Transfer: As an educator, he continuously reflects on the evolution of contemporary visual language; currently, he primarily teaches photography courses at the Dutch Academy for Image Creation (Fotovakschool).
International Projects and Institutional Recognition
Coops' anthropological interest in the human condition and the synergy between body and mind has resulted in profound documentary work abroad. His long-term project documentating traditional Tibetan medicine (Sowa Rigpa) in India — titled 'Bodies in Balance' — was exhibited at the renowned Rubin Museum of Art in New York and featured in leading academic publications.
His autonomous portfolio enjoys growing international and national visibility, with exhibitions at galleries such as Laguanacazul (Buenos Aires), Casa del Arte Palma (Palma de Mallorca), and within the curated platform of the Haarlem art project LUMEN '25.
Contemporary Positioning
Coops' work is gaining significant momentum within the international contemporary art circuit:
BBA Prizes (Berlin): Named "Artist of the Week" for the series Traces, recognized for its poetic engagement with texture and transience.
The Hopper Prize: Selected as a "Featured Artist", a distinction reserved for artists demonstrating exceptional commitment and a distinct voice within contemporary art practice.

Project Statement
My practice operates in the quiet spaces between memory and perception, exploring how the mind fragments and reconstructs sensory experiences. I am fascinated by the intangible, fleeting emotional states that leave an imprint on our consciousness but resist literal representation.
In the series Traces, I investigate this psychological archeology through abstraction, deliberate distortions, and the interplay of deep shadows and textures. Drawing from my background in film and design, I approach the photographic frame as a layered canvas where light is tactile and shadows hold the unsaid.
The resulting imagery hovers on the edge of recognition, inviting viewers to confront their own internal landscapes and projections. Ultimately, Traces is an invitation to feel the weight of the unseen and find meaning in the fragments left behind.

Bernard Coops | Limbs | 2025

Apostolis Giannakopoulos

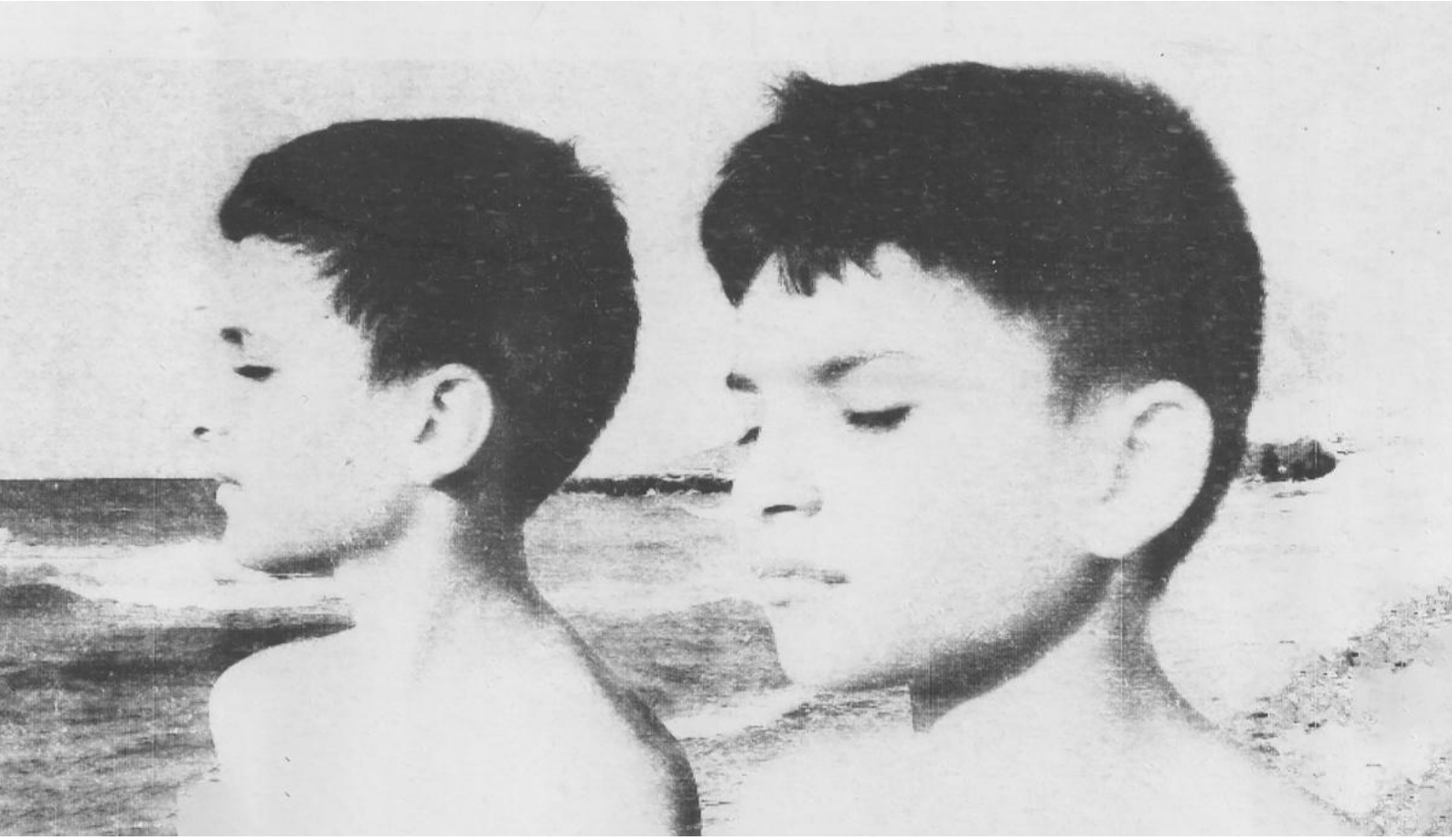
giannakopoulosap

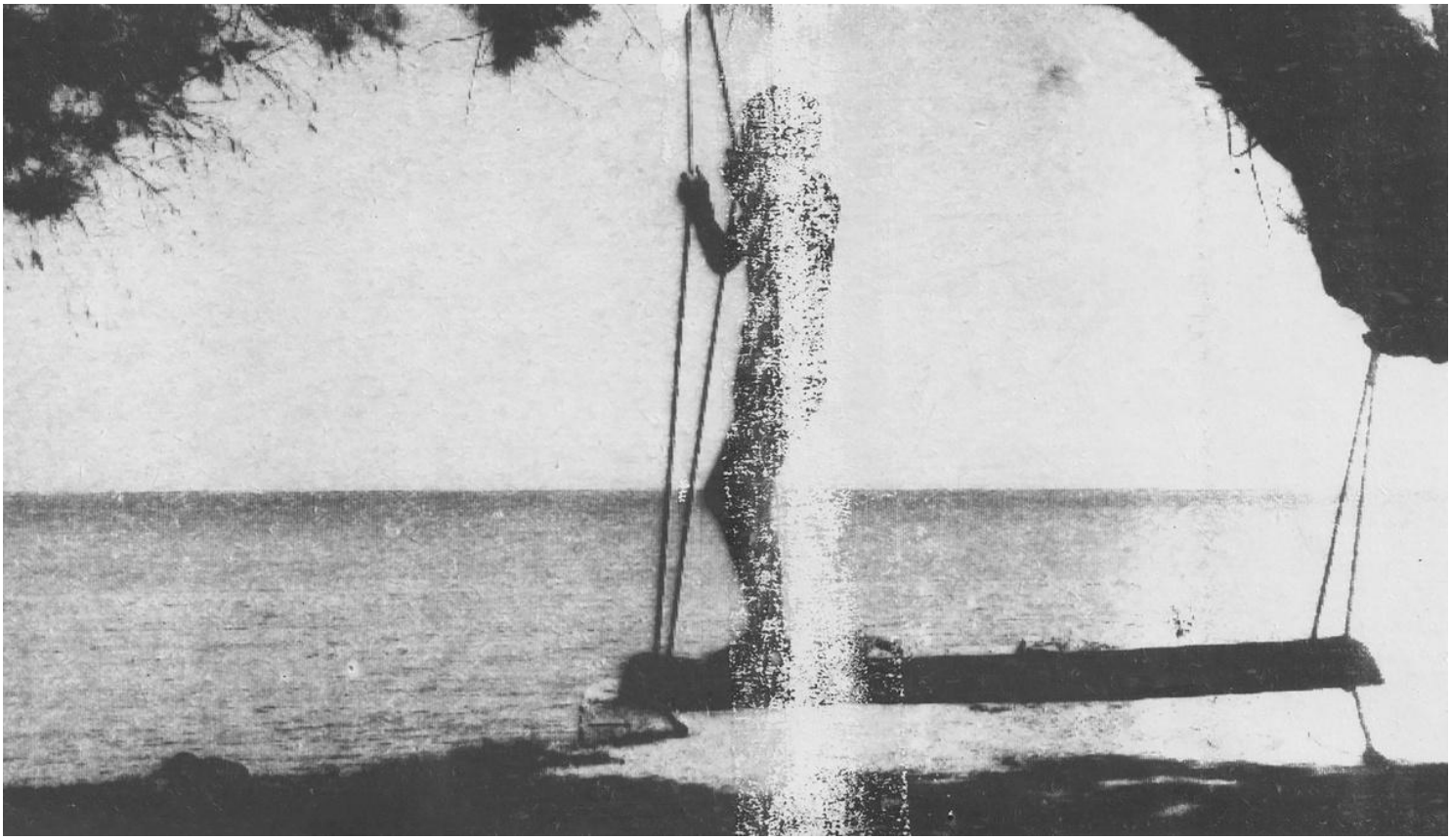
Apostolis Giannakopoulos (b. 1968) is a Samos-based educator and photographer. His practice—Mute Photography—utilizes low-resolution children's thermal printer cameras to explore transience, material decay, and the quiet traces of memory and place. He is the founder of Photonisos Arts & Culture and director of the International Mute Photo Festival (IMPhF). Selected Achievements: Award: Honored by the Academy of Athens (2023) for his cultural contribution to Samos.

Artist statement

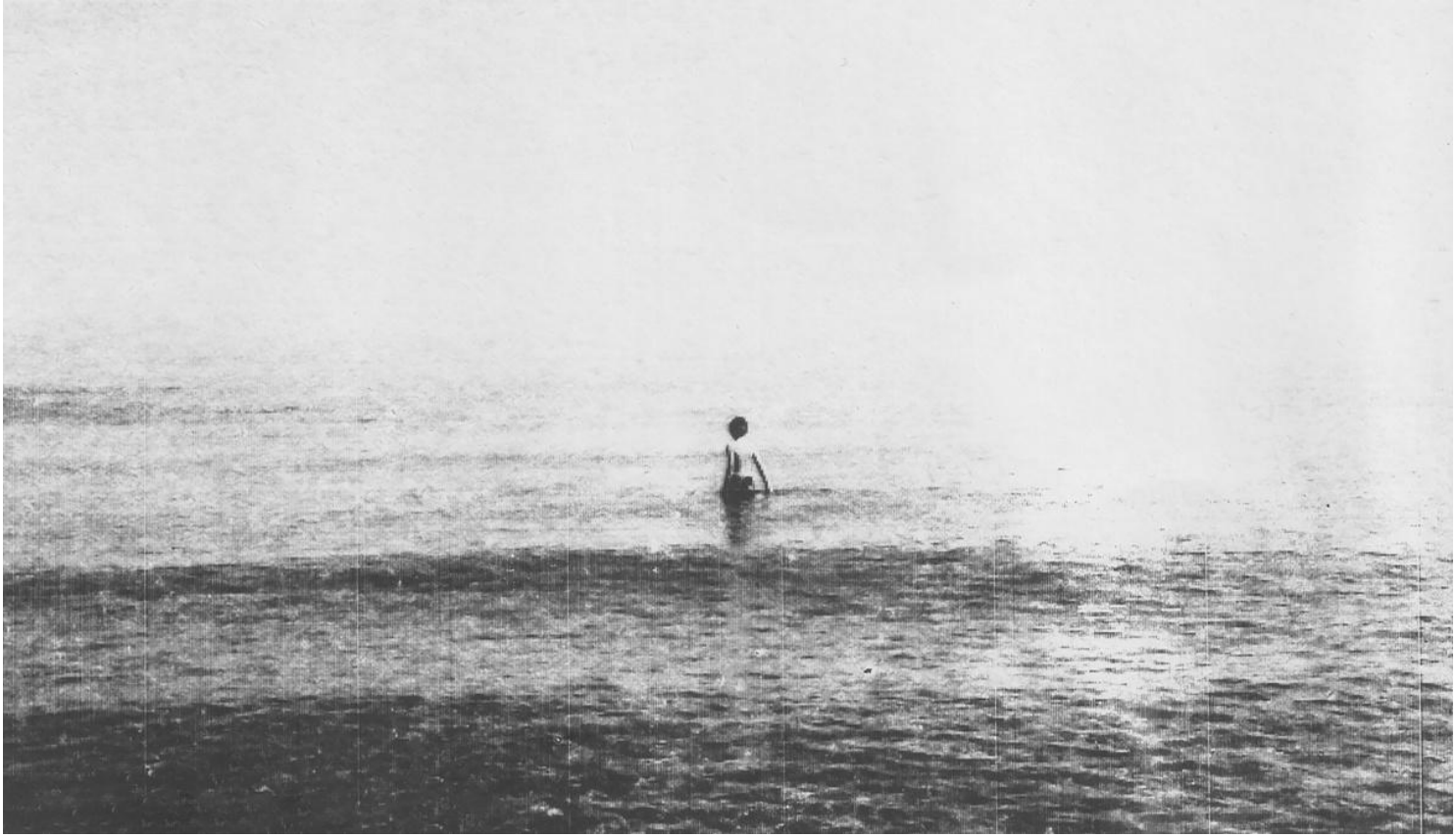
"Mute Landscapes" is a visual exploration of Anima Mundi—the intrinsic force connecting human consciousness with the natural world. Rooted in the ethos of "Mute Photography," the project approaches absence not as subtraction, but as a stratification of space, memory, and material traces. Using a humble, low-resolution thermal camera, the Samos landscape is stripped of technological polish, transforming into a tactile palimpsest through three ontological stages: Imposition (primal, rugged geometry), Transition (the flow of energy and memory), and Integration (the dissolution of the boundary between body and soil). Colorless and heavy-grained, these low-fidelity prints function as visual umbilical cords between skin, bark, and stone. Ultimately, "Mute Landscapes" invites the viewer beyond the visible, into the quiet, sensory infrastructure of existence.

Apostolis Giannakopoulos | Before it Fades





Apostolis Giannakopoulos | Before it Fades



Apostolis Giannakopoulos | Before it Fades

Dane S. Kam

darnnella

Born in Guayaquil (Ecuador, 2003), graduated in Fine Arts High School in Guayaquil, graduate in Contemporary Social Anthropology (Humanities) at Soka University Japan and currently a master's student in Artistic and Documentary Photography. "Dane" as a name itself is a statement in the spanish language (had changed an "a" which leads to being tagged as female to an "e") to challenge the idea of gender that hispanic speaking cultures have on men and women. Through photography, autoethnography and transfeminist studies research, my work aims to show through specific visual details (like objects and body parts) how certain social phenomena tend to be dismissed or constantly ignored. Not only by institutions or expected entities who treat what these social issues carry but by anyone surrounding us.

Artist statement
Manual for self-elimination
Project statement: From the age of eleven until now, the idea of suicide has lingered in my mind. I've never been able to figure out how it arose or why. I only know that it's a persistent thought during specific periods of my life. As the years went by, I only thought about the age at which it would happen. When I was 13, I thought I would die at 15. When I was 15, I thought I would die at 17. When I was 18, I thought I would die at 21. And now that I'm 23, I only think that the maximum age I'll be lucky to reach is 31. I started going to therapy sessions and seeing a psychiatrist a couple of years ago because people around me were worried about me. However, deep down, talking with the therapist and the psychiatrist, I knew that I didn't actually want to feel better. Nor was I looking for a solution to my thoughts and ideas about suicide. A few months ago, I talked about it with a friend who understands how it feels. One of the things she told me was, “Well, in the end, it’s something you learn to live with. It’s like cancer. It seems like it might go away, but ultimately, there’s no cure.” Today more than ever, I feel exactly that. That I don't have a cure. This photographic series is a compilation of the objects I have used or planned to use in multiple suicide attempts. This work does not intend to romanticize suicide or minimize its severity. It's about how within simple objects from our daily life, someone can develop a self destructive thought. Viewer discretion is advised.

Dane S. Kam | Suffocation | 2026

Dane S. Kam | Stabbing | 2026

Iulian Tanase

foto.pefilm

Iulian Tanase is a film photographer from Romania. Photographic film is his way of expressing his experiences and thoughts on what and how he sees, on what he chooses to photograph, on how he does that, and why. His (rather unconventional) feelings and approach to art photography are yet to be clear, at least for him. He is on a continuous journey, not yet certain of the destination, but enjoying every mile of the way. Graduate of the New York Institute of Photography Accredited photojournalist SNJ / EFJ (France) Member of Federation of European Photographers, Romanian Association of Photography Artists, International Association of Art Photographers 16 international awards/diplomas and 4 Gold medals with the International Association of Art Photographers in 2025.

Artist statement

UBI BENE, IBI PATRIA

This old Latin saying is stating a truth, universally known, applicable in ancient and modern times alike: wherever you find a better life, that's where your home is. Indeed, it is true, for so many humans who, for various reasons, left their home country to live a better, more secure, peaceful, decent lives elsewhere.

And while the saying above may be seen as somewhat lacking patriotism, it does not, because these two are different notions and they can live together in a person. The feeling of belonging to a certain country, culture, customs and so forth is not canceled by the fact that one moves abroad in order to get a better life, I believe.

At the end of April 2026, I had the opportunity to participate in the Spring Festival of the Sri-Lankan community in Romania, a welcomed chance to try and understand a bit about their life here, in their new country. Romania, when they arrived, probably was a country completely foreign in culture, history, climate, and of course, language and customs.

Their community is not the largest here, of course, but starts to be of some significance; the first Sri-Lankans arrived in Romania as hired labor in the last 7 or 8 years, as far as I know. From what I was able to learn from various employers and such, they are perceived as hard working, honest and reliable personnel.

So, along the last years, more and more Sri-Lankans were hired and got approved to work in Romania, and also elsewhere in the European Union. They spread the word in their small communities back home, and so they came too. Many of them skilled laborers, among them quite a few with university studies or similar. They speak with pride about their home, and I cannot but notice a glint in their eyes and something resembling of home sick and nostalgia. It is only natural, I know. And I have a strong feeling that this is making them more resilient here and more willing to make a new life.

Looking at them playing their favorite games, it's like they forgot they're not in Sri Lanka; they are completely immersed in the moment. Romanian words are set aside today, the holiday belongs to their heritage. For the best part of the day, they are transported in their town or village, playing with friends, reliving and enjoying the memories of a place they left, not without tears and cringe of heart. For a few hours, they never left, and it feels good.

With time, families were made, or families were reunited; children born here never visited the old country, and they speak Romanian. For the young' uns, Sri Lanka is an exotic land, far away and foreign. They know it only from the stories their parents are telling when stories are told around the dinner table. They will visit later in their life, I guess, but for now they are at home. A home far away from home.

The Sri Lankans here adapted and overcame, and they are now a growing part of my city.

Welcome, I say.

All images shot with Nikon F3 on Ilford Delta 100 and Ilford HP5+ 400.

M. Reza Samandar

realsamandar

We enter this world as one with our mothers, until separation begins. The first great separation is birth. Then, perhaps, marriage, and finally, death. We spend our lives learning to live with the distance from the one person we once could not be apart from.

After years away from photography, I found my way back through a workshop with the internationally known Iranian photographer Shadi Ghadirian. On the first day, she asked us to capture our personal “Very Near, Very Far.”

This is my mother.

She will always be my “Very Near, Very Far.”

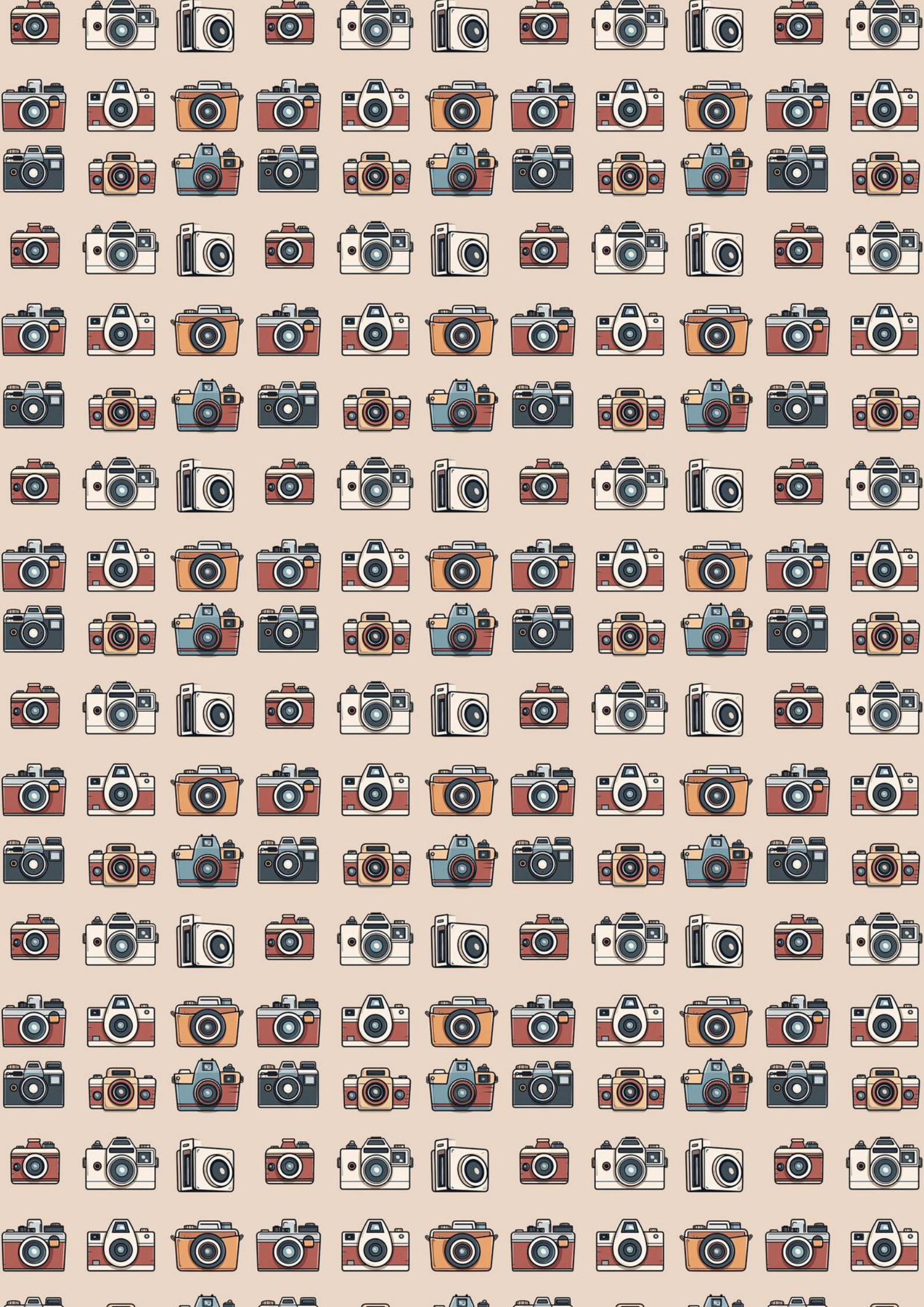
CONTENTS

Interviews

Marcel van Beek 4
John Harrison 10
Ján Špireng 16

Featured artists

Marija Vrućkić 6
Paolo Pelosi Bonini 8
Kayoko Shiomi 14
Andrija Ratkovic 18
Alisa Kishchenko 20
Aaron Coles 22
Natalya Gordeeva 24
Stefano Ceretti 26
Carlos Cabrera 28
Ján Špireng 30
Professor Pete Ford 32
Chan Suk On 34
Adriana Gutierrez 36
Elmira Zueva 38
Vonessa Robinson-Lindo 40
MinA Choi 42
Peishen Liang 44
David Ferman 46
Marina Kornoukhova 48
Jibril BEN JAMAA 50
J. Gambande 52
Alekhya Nethra 54
Monica Sunkara 56
Mona Singh 58
Alberto Verici 60
Olga Dozhidaeva 62
Ximena Etchart 64
Venture Awaits 66
Roger Ajjour 68
Bernard Coops 70
Apostolis Giannakopoulos 72
Dane S. Kam 74
Iulian Tanase 76
M. Reza Samandar 78



VISUAL POETRY JOURNAL

NO 15
SEPTEMBER 26

VISUALPOETRYJOURNAL.COM