

StreetCore

photography



NR18.MAR21.

FRONT COVER BY **MICHAIL** FROM THE UPCOMING BOOK **VAMA VECHE**

CURATED **PHOTOGRAPHS**

SELECTED FROM THE **SCP/BULB** FB AND IG STREAMS

One of the few good friends I have, reminded me the other day:

***Go shoot and then present your work knowing that you are a hero!
Because it takes courage to reveal, to share the intimate moments of a
partial failure, to understate that to be a good photographer is not an
eternal achievement but just a clandestine touch of genius!***

We are witnessing a new kind of totalitarianism which is not shooting us in the foot but which is aiming for our intellect. Shoot back with your cameras!

March 2021

Instagram : www.instagram.com/balkan.collective

Facebook : facebook.com/groups/496641317130357

Web: www.bulbphotos.eu

Read online : issuu.com/michailfotografia

DL free pdf : <http://www.bulbphotos.eu/the-books.html> & www.facebook.com/groups/496641317130357/files

The images we see around for the last year are reflecting quite faithfully the intolerable times we are living. Sometimes, like yesterday evening, the weak light and the vestimentary apathy of people, are (re)creating nightmarish memories of the past. Sometimes, like yesterday evening, I see Plague Doctors everywhere.

Nevertheless, the "Plague Doctors" brutal visual representation became iconic, symbolic, powerful in its repugnance.

On the contrary the photographs of today's masked reality do not seem to convey any present or future message, neither to narrate fragments of the story we are actually living. It is understandable that fears can be exorcised through photography but the mere recording of people wearing FFP2 masks will not ever make it to the next level of a meaningful image.

That is why, pictures like Svilen's are so welcome in order to make us doubt our locked-down existence and preserve the state of mind that will lead us to resist and fight the idiocracy of the ruling class. A ruling class, governments, which have vaccines but not syringes, they have police states but not for the citizens, they have tax wealth but no will to share, they have the means but not the brains ...

If you too are watching the world through fences and barbed wire then tomorrow's prison is now! Do you still question the political character of photography?



In these unbearable times, I am overwhelmed by the, legitimate otherwise, urge of photographers to make images of landscapes, very creative I must admit. But, as a private (idiotic, as in "idiot" from the Greek ἰδιώτης) endeavour, these images should remain for private viewing only.

There are fabulous photographers out there that have mastered the landscaping photography and any intention to equal them is a pointless, if not derisory, act.

This is even more pointless in times of crisis when the photographic message becomes political and must be a trigger and not a sedative. Cartier-Bresson was saying in the thirties that "The world is going to pieces and people like Adams and Weston are photographing rocks!"

So forget still-life images and let's stick to the metaphoric power of people in the metropolises, and to the instinctive capture of ideas, of futile lives and of the dramatic and pessimistic behaviour of the ordinary fellow citizens.

Who put this half-naked man in front of Ruxandra's lens? Pure luck? No such a thing! Only the gifted and the worried can feel the street. Only the uneasy ones can really see! If you are lying down untouchable in your safe-house, undisturbed by the social upheaval which is about to burst, stay safe but spare us your landscape "masterpieces".



Appearances

The ideological use of a photograph as the ultimate truth or evidence is no more applicable nowadays.

The visual affinities of the appearances are the only use that remains to photography in order to be considered art.

For example, a tiny rock can look like a mountain, sea waves like valleys, horizontal lines like a horizon.

In the present picture, all is flattened down to coloured paper clippings, glued together to create an imaginary stage for the man to perform his short walk.

But in no case this walk is short because we, the viewers, are passing to the next level of the coded message and we create a whole universe around the picture based on our specific memories.

More than this, the “simplicity” of the visual message of the picture enables us to create a different universe at each reading (viewing).

Masterful and memorable image!



The invisible, the blind and the capitulation

The obsession of the photographers to be invisible is best represented by the fact that most of them have taken at some time pictures of blind, pictures of lowly people, of beggars, of handicapped. But by far the blind was a recurrent subject in photography. The blind accordionist even more.

But what if, a photographer this time, enters the twilight zone where talent is absent, creativity was eaten by a comfortable living and where it seems that nothing is to be said anymore. Worse, the photographer becomes mute, and in photographic terms, blind. Most quit, wait, idle in silence, but they do not capitulate. However there are some who go a step lower. Those who go for a stroll with a camera hung round their neck and who are not far away from the statement of a blind man wearing the label "BLIND". They state "I have nothing to say even if I can talk".

Closing this parenthesis and getting back to our picture, Yannis revisits underwater the blindness-invisibility love-hate relationship between the photographer and the subject. The message of the underwater photographer is clear and direct: I am not in a comfort zone, I am not a peripatetic photographer who is surrounded by subjects, I work hard to create a photograph with impact and I am doing it for you.

Here, the author goes further in his quest for the two main elements of a meaningful image (the studium and the punctum). He goes further in merging the two concepts. We cannot tell anymore which is the context and which is the surprise. Which is the form and which is the content.

This is a fusional photograph where everything is irreversibly and inseparately melt in one frame. The photographer, the medium, the background, the subject, the message, the intent, all are one and they convey each other.

Open your eyes, observe this photograph, take your vision places, carry with you your passion not just your camera round your neck.



When dealing with aesthetics we may wonder whether visual literacy is a skill to acquire or interpreting photographs is just a matter of feeling(s).

We are always able to detect a meaningful image by intuition but feeling a photograph is not describing it.

Of course, we are always attracted by geometry, composition, chromatic or grey palettes, and in the present picture we admire the positioning of the subjects; together but alone, gazing to opposite directions, eyes which do not lock, bodies bent in sinuous geometries, laying down but in a perpetual movement, bordering with immateriality and mimetizing marine creatures.

However they are not enough if the photograph does not convey the author's obsessive quest for the extraordinary. Many say that a photograph has to be more dramatic than what was photographed.

A photograph, in order to transcend must be able to trigger the imagination of both the visually prepared and unprepared viewer.

The reality suspending moment manifests itself when the picture puts our certainties in doubt, our beliefs in suspension. The breakthrough in art is operated when we cannot tell anymore if the seemingly candid moment has become theatrical or not.

And here comes the psychoanalytic power of the present photograph not only for the photographer but also for the viewer. We are trying to explain the inexplicable in order to fight our fears and nightmares. The photographer proposes his internal world through the interpretation of a candid moment in order to transform it into a symbolism about our ordinary agonies and uneasiness.

The bathers (λουόμενοι) are not anymore peaceful vacationers enjoying a moment of relaxation. We may see bodies, death, mass destruction, genocides but also parents and children, overprotective mothers, absent fathers ...

In the end we cannot name it, we cannot nail down a powerful image. In the end the secret of the image remains unrevealed and the unknown has undoubtedly more power in installing an uneasiness, essential to revive a conventional documentary image and confer an enigmatic reality.



I admit that I am staying in this picture because it affects me personally. Piraeus, the city where I was born and went to school, is getting a punch in its beautiful face. Repeatedly, since some time now.

If human suffering is a universal language, then the rape of our urban space transmits a non-verbal signal not to ignore.

What hurts more is that this bidonville could be anywhere in the world. The fact that the contextual information is partial (Zo-rba Re-staurant) already puts us in a playful mood to solve the puzzle. But it also makes us stay in the frame and try to reconstitute the facts.

No, it's not an earthquake. Is it a demolished illegal construction? If yes, then what about the others?

Luckily for our conscience, the fisherman took over the shattered space and we can turn our glance elsewhere.

What makes this image special is that it remains somehow with us even after we left the frame.

PS: All photographs are ambiguous by their discontinuity of space and time. My personal relation with the event of this photograph "supplies the missing continuity" according to John Berger (Understanding a photograph). Nevertheless, I am impacted in the same way.



Every detail counts in a frame. Don't bother to crop out some "intrusive" elements. You will ruin the message, the story. The narrative power of a picture lies in the use of every single square of the four-angle limited shape.

The choice of these elements to include in a picture may persuade the viewer to embark in the quest of the past and the future instant. And when this happens the story line is established.

The child saw our photographer, became aware of being photographed and stopped his activity. The adult in the wall opening continued to observe. The photographer didn't take the muddy road, he turned around and left the scene. Surely nothing changed in the life of the protagonists of the picture. The mud, the waste, the ruins will prevail for a long time.

But something changed for the photographer. He walked there, he was taken by the absurdity of a lesser world and he wanted to share this uneasiness with us. Every photograph is a gift to the viewer. Accept it with grace and attention.

PS: For some time now (maybe years) I have stopped underlining the technical qualities of the images I comment. For one simple reason: they are not enough! Nevertheless, here the use of the grey palette and the transposition of high and low key areas are proof of great skills. The same goes for the construction of multiple levels of reading, the frames in frame and the creation of a haunting atmosphere melting together smoke and clouds.



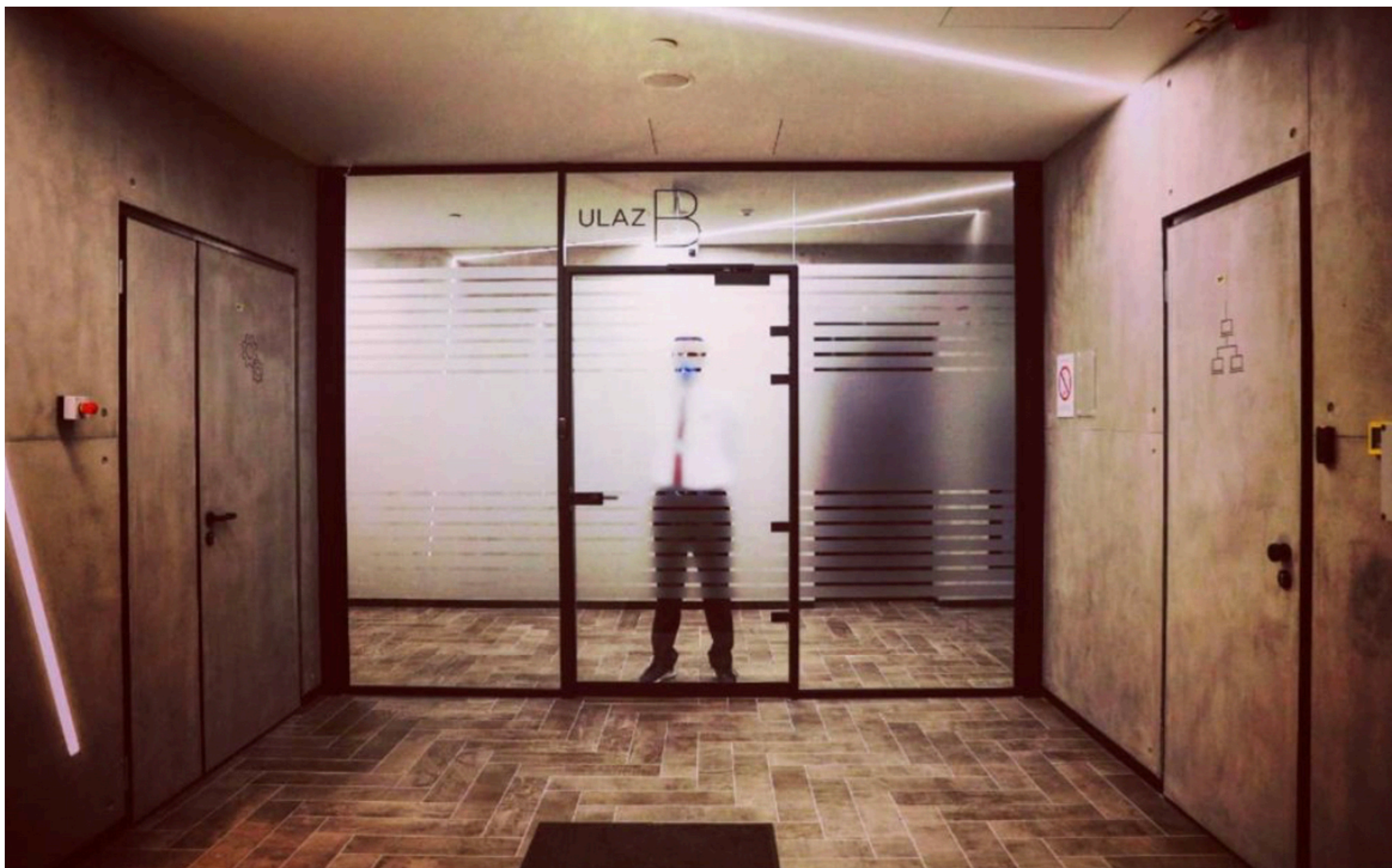
Let it be drama

Garry Winogrand was convinced about that: "In the end, the word 'dramatic' has to apply. Is the photograph more dramatic than what was photographed? It has to be." It's all about drama or nothing. Some would say that a photograph must be poetic. But poetry has to be dramatic. Some would say that a photograph must be story-telling, narrative. But this narration has to be dramatic.

In the present image by Marko Risovic the idea of slicing time and space (the concept of photography) is brought in the picture itself. An otherwise typical image of a modern life in revamped post communist buildings becomes an uncanny drama. The contemporary fight of the individual against its annihilation.

A situation where we find ourselves out of focus, broken in pieces, on the edge of immateriality but still standing. ULAZ in Serbian means entrance. Not the main one, just the B entrance. And still we are not welcome, as much as he is reluctant to step out, since a long time now.

An interesting detail: Among the deluge of photographs with masks in those years of the pandemic, here, the subtle way of including this element in the photograph is a proof of a great visual dexterity of the author. Finally, to paraphrase Geoff Dyer (The ongoing moment, A book about photography) : This is a vivid example of the camera's unique capability: not the creation of a drama but its depiction.



Love is blindness

Street photographers desire to be invisible was always extremely powerful. In the early days they came up with solutions free of ethical dilemmas (because they could). They were shooting blind people. Would Paul Strand's iconic photograph be possible today? Probably not, since it wouldn't be publishable.

Then they tried inventive solutions, hidden cameras, shoot from the hip, top-notch silent and small cameras, name it. Self-portrait is somewhere in the middle of this love/hate relationship between the photographers and their subjects.

Self-portraiture is clearly driven by the need of projecting the self rather than defining it. The need for alter egos, the desire of reinventing the water pool surface so that Narcissus becomes invisible! Or blind!

In the present picture the cathartical character of photography is clearly stated but what is more liberating is that the mental preparation has occupied the totality of the photographic process. The instant of releasing the shutter is no more relevant. And suddenly we are closer than ever to Antonino's doubt (*). Do we want to photograph dreams?



(*) "Did he want to photograph dreams? This suspicion struck him dumb, hidden in that ostrich refuge of his with the bulb in his hand, like an idiot." Italo Calvino, *The adventure of a photographer*.

PS: Photography criticism should not discuss technical issues, neither describe the obvious. But this is exactly what I am confronted with in numerous contemporary photography essays. I am thankful though that by reading them I can realise how much my love (for photography, and not only) is blindness.

All is cyclical apparently. Probably the same goes for art criticism.

After almost 2 centuries of photography, the medium evolved in many ways in its descriptive capacity, juggling with creativity and technology.

But every now and then, the below quoted dismissal of photography by Baudelaire comes back, not anymore as an aphorism, but as an opportunity to reinvent it creatively.

“It is useless and tedious to represent what exists because nothing that exists satisfies me.... I prefer the monsters of my fantasy to what is positively trivial.”

Corneliu calls his work “expressive photography”, but it is exactly the kind of photography which would satisfy Charles’ fantasy in finding both monsters and angels.

In a masterful way, the present image (one of many of his work), defies the core of the compositional elements of photography.

Colour is flirting with immateriality. It comes and goes depending on the viewer’s visual tension.

The same goes for patterns, texture, depth of field, foreground subjects, background objects ... all are orchestrated to do exactly this: look away and immediately return. We can never leave the picture assured that we have seen it all. We go back and forth and each time we feel poorer in understanding it, and at the same time richer in interpreting it.

This impossibility of talking about a picture, this futility of describing its contents and context, makes the greatness of a photograph after all.

PS: In order to avoid trivial comments of the kind: "it is just a staged picture of a child and an animal in front of a wall", I am convinced that many of us would have left the scene with a nicely saturated frame of a textured wall or of a lovely goat or of a smiling child portrait, using a "realistic aesthetic which indeed is reduced to irrelevance" (for what's worth, Charles nailed that)



Bice

Since infatuation is one of the main drives in photography allow me to be obsessed with the short story of Calvino (the adventure of a photographer). I always recommend this brief reading and not just once. Repetitive readings reveal many of the secrets of the behaviour of all past and present photographers.

No need to read lengthy essays to find out that almost all the great masters have gone through photographing naked torsos of women in their vicinity (more or less intimate vicinity that is).

Bill Brandt's Eva, Alfred Stieglitz's Georgia, Edward Weston's Charis, Man Ray's Kiki, HCB's Leonor ... all these naked models of old masters, have all the same name in Calvino's story. Bice. Antonino's Bice.

"He had thought of certain nineteenth-century photographs of women in which from the white of the cardboard emerge the face, the neck, the line of the bared shoulders, while all the rest disappears into the whiteness. This was the portrait outside of time and space that he now wanted; he wasn't quite sure how it was achieved, but he was determined to succeed. He set the spotlight on Bice, moved the camera closer, fiddled around under the cloth adjusting the aperture of the lens. He looked into it. Bice was naked."

So, why nude photography? What is the message, the story, the impact, the intent? Is it a closure, a beginning or a halfway? Is it an obsession or a persecution?

In a controversial book by J.Berger (*Ways of seeing*), one might simplify by saying: "men act and women appear. Men look at women. Women watch themselves being looked at. This determines not only most relations between men and women but also the relation of women to themselves. The surveyor of woman in herself is male: the surveyed female. Thus she turns herself into an object - and most particularly an object of vision: a sight."

We won't stay on this sexist affirmation but we would like to reiterate that a photograph has to contain disturbance, in order to be remembered, to be loved. Being just interesting is not enough.

Nude photography has a problem of monosemanticity as long as it remains homogenous, naive, with no intention to surprise or to disturb. It remains a pornographic photograph and never rises to the level of the erotic unless it breaks through to the secondary levels (beyond sex). Unless it manages to "half conceal, delay, or distract ..."

In conclusion keep the secret in the vault, and not only because of the contemporary hypocritical censorship which does not allow for naked body parts to see the light; which does not allow us to see the light!

Moreover, the secret of a picture lies in the inexistence of the previous and the next frame ...

And we, the viewers, are called to imagine it, to recreate the time trail and to even see the angels, the demons and the gargoyles which just left the scene.

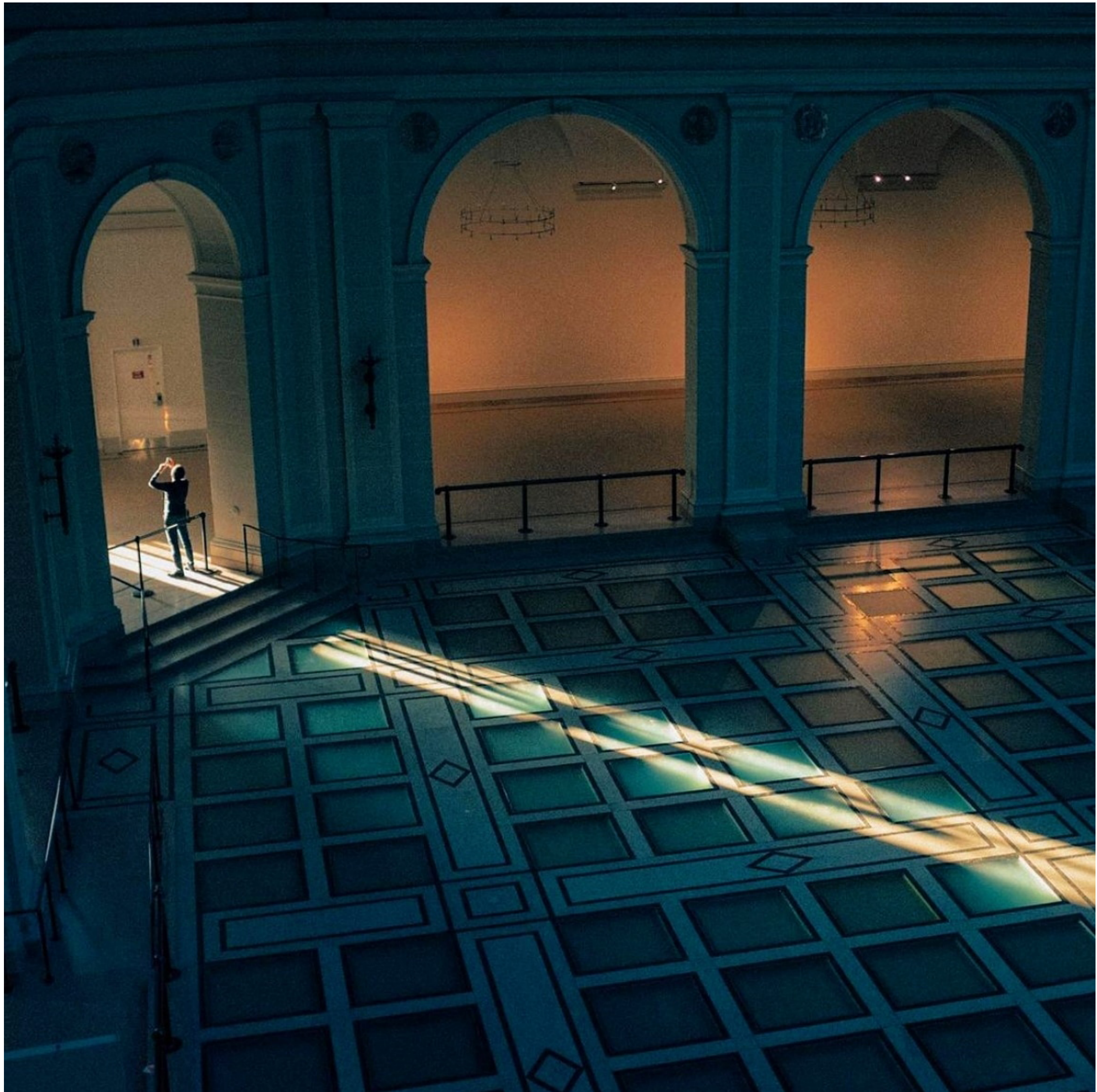
As French say: "Quand ça va pas y'aura toujours le cinema" ... "et la photographie" we could safely add.



BY ORDER OF APPEARANCE

Alexander Bronfer, Alexander Stanishev, Alfredo Oliva Delgado, Ali CAN, Andres Cesar, Antonio E. Ojeda, Antonis Panagopoulos, Antonis Panagopoulos2, Arpit Saxena, Ayhan Ton, Chloe Mavr, Dragos Dumitrescu, Emilian Avrănescu, Florian Gautier, George Tsilis, Liubomir Skumov, Liubomir Skumov2, Makis Makris, Marcelo de Paula Araújo, Mihaela Dura, Mihai Ciama, Mikhail Shestakov, Önder Sertçelik, Patrulescu Stela, Ploutarcos Haloftis, Stelios Katsatsidis































TV
Характеристики

Свойства и характеристики телевизора, а также информация о его функциях и возможностях. Включает в себя описание основных параметров, таких как разрешение, частота кадров, контрастность и яркость. Также описаны различные режимы просмотра и настройки звука.

2021























BY ORDER OF APPEARANCE

Antonio E. Ojeda, Antonis Panagopoulos,
Filip Machac, Filip Machac², Giannis
Markoulakis, Joel Martirez, Kai Hirai,
Koushik Sinha Roy, Massimo Russo, Paul
Raymond Paule, Petros Kotzabasis,
Stefanos Chronis, Stratis Tsoulellis,
Theodoros Katsikis, Theodoros Katsikis²,
Vittorio Fabianelli

































BY ORDER OF APPEARANCE

Antonio Denti, Cristian Crisbășan, Dorian Feraud, Hans van Leeuwen, John Rudio, Jone Reed, Vittorio Aulenti, Vittorio Fabianelli

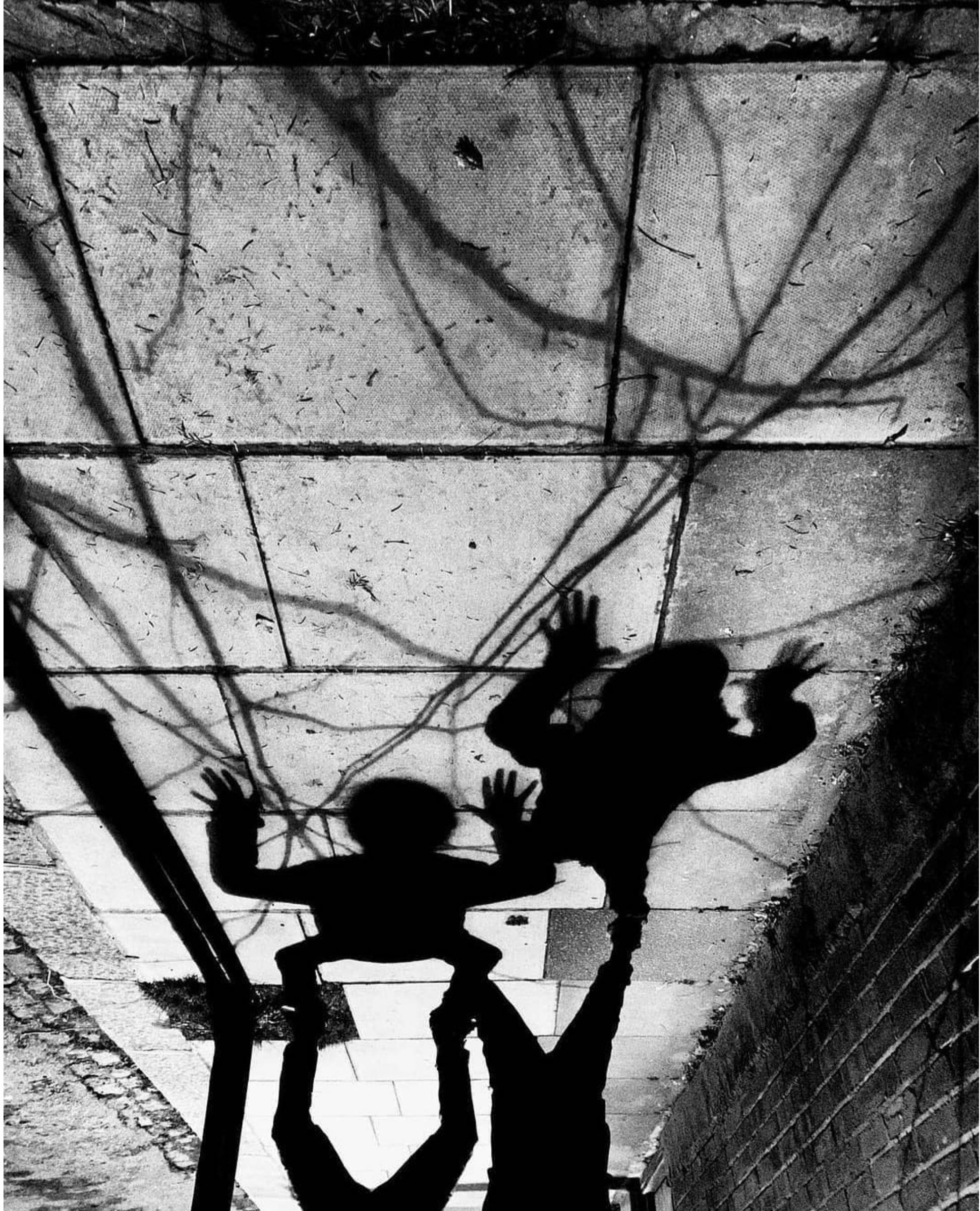
















SELECTED BY **TZEN XING**

BY ORDER OF APPEARANCE

Andreas Kalavrouziotis, Niklas Lindskog





BY ORDER OF APPEARANCE

Andreas Vassiliou, Gökhan Arer, Marina
Nota, Marios Vrenozis, Mustafa Öngün





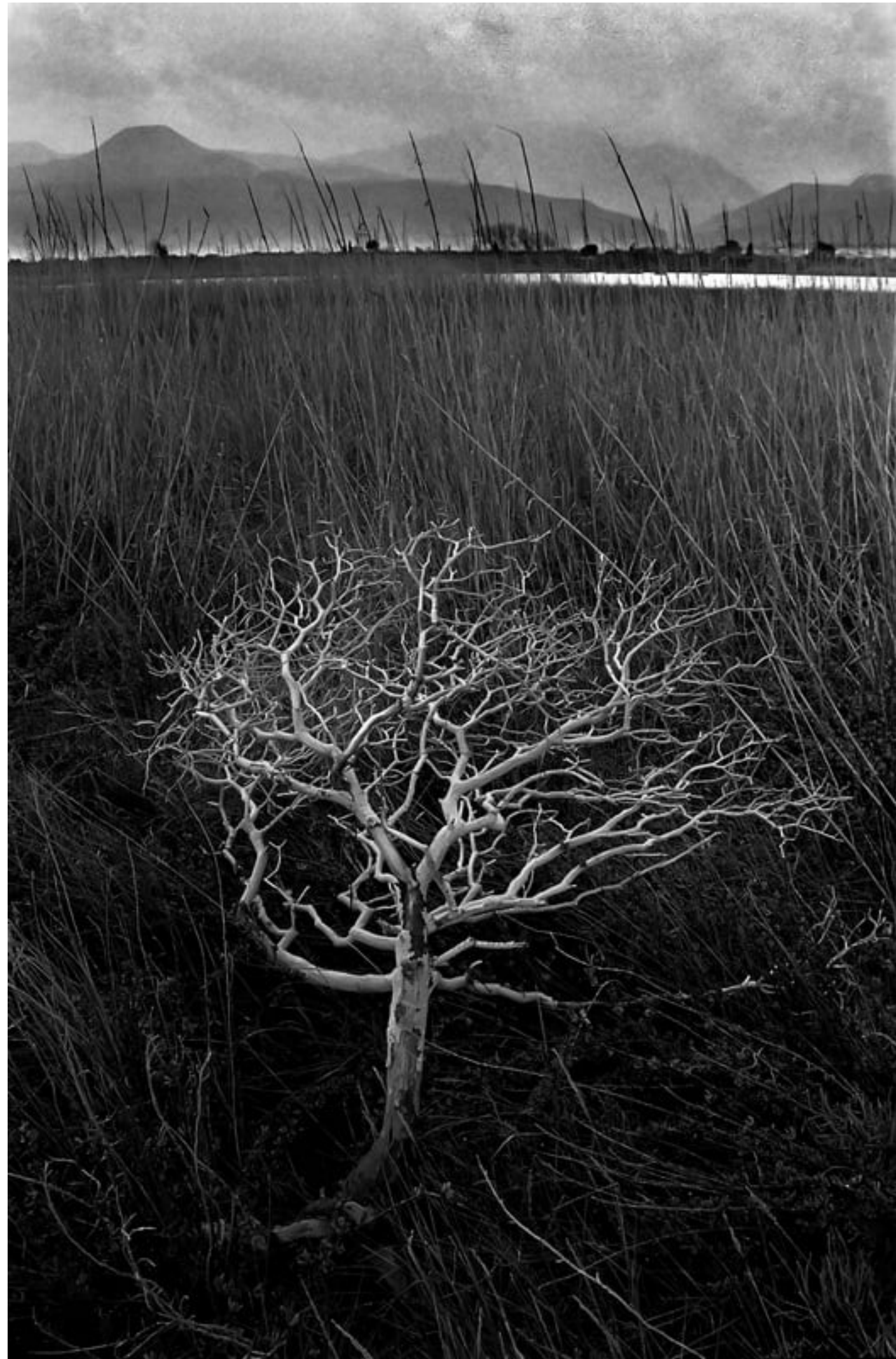






BY ORDER OF APPEARANCE

Antonis Panagopoulos, Panfil Pirvulescu,
Petros Kotzabasis, Petros Kotzabasis2









SELECTED BY **MIHAI CIAMA**

UKRAINE, A SERIES BY TURAL RAHMANLI

















THE INTERVIEWS

GABI BEN AVRAHAM

CONDUCTED BY DORA LAVAZOU ON MAY 28, 2020

What subjects inspire you and push you to look for the shot in the city where you live or in the places you frequent?

I think what characterizes me is that I love taking photos of people in urban surroundings since there is always a story to catch.

The street is not a studio. Sometimes I stand and wait for things to converge – a cyclist, a dancer, a child – moving along. They are not aware that they are moving towards a certain object, but I am. The components 'speak' with each other in a special dialogue, either by color, shape, or light. Capturing the elusive, special moment after which things will never be the same and making it eternal – that is my goal. Forgotten, transparent people in urban surroundings are being granted their moment of grace. The shadows, fragile outlines, reflections within daily lives that are not noticed in the busy and thick urban landscape and sometimes are even crushed by it – these are precious to me.

Full interview at: <http://www.bulbphotos.eu/home/interview-gabi-ben-avraham>







THE STORIES

AFLOAT 2.0 BY TODD RIGOS

Afloat, is an ongoing photographic series that tells the story of Greece's notoriously unsafe Moria refugee camp and the thousands of people who called it home.

Revisiting the overcrowded facility on the island of Lesbos in late 2020, a lot had changed: during a COVID-19-related lockdown, a great fire had turned the camp into ashes leaving about 13,000 people without shelter for weeks to follow. In an effort to retrace my steps, Afloat 2.0 chronicles this devastating aftermath in a sequence of diptychs portraying two different time periods within the same year -before and after the fire- when life in Moria took a turn from bad to worse overnight. Juxtaposing those two realities side by side this project illustrates the aftershock of the destruction.

Staying afloat is now more important than ever.

Full story at: <http://www.bulbphotos.eu/home/afloat-20>







BACK COVER BY **MICHAIL** FROM THE UPCOMING BOOK **VAMA VECHE**

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