

THE DOUBLE CITY



LA
CITTÀ
DOPPIA

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THE DOUBLE CITY - LA CITTÀ DOPPIA

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ALJONA DIACHENKO

Blind rain

INTRODUCTION

In a world defined by both connection and division, the story of border cities - those that straddle the line between two nations, cultures, or identities - offers a compelling glimpse into the complex realities faced by communities living along these divides. Through the lens of photographers from across the globe, this book aims to create a global portrait of the unique challenges, cultural intersections, and shared experiences of dual cities.

The idea for this project, The Double City, was born as a multidisciplinary photographic initiative to coincide with the celebration of GO!2025 Nova Gorica-Gorizia European Capital of Culture. Its purpose is to explore the intricate dynamics of communities split by borders - both physical and metaphorical. By capturing the essence of life in these twin cities, this collection seeks to delve into the ongoing struggles and opportunities that come with living in such liminal spaces.

The theme of The Double City is intentionally open to interpretation. Photographers were invited to document any location around the world where duality and division are present, whether a formal border exists or not. As you turn the pages of this book, we hope you will immerse yourself in the stories these images tell - of connection and conflict, of division and unity. We invite you to join us in reflecting on the shared human experience that transcends borders, offering insight into the ways in which we are all, in some way, shaped by the lines that divide us.

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INTRODUZIONE

In un mondo definito sia dalla connessione che dalla divisione, la storia delle città di confine - quelle che si trovano a cavallo tra due

nazioni, culture o identità - offre uno sguardo affascinante sulle complesse realtà vissute dalle comunità che abitano lungo queste separazioni. Attraverso l'obiettivo di fotografi provenienti da tutto il mondo, questo libro mira a creare un ritratto globale delle sfide uniche, delle intersezioni culturali e delle esperienze condivise delle città doppie.

L'idea per questo progetto, La città doppia, è nata come un'iniziativa fotografica multidisciplinare in occasione della celebrazione di GO!2025 Nova Gorica-Gorizia Capitale Europea della Cultura. Il suo scopo è esplorare le dinamiche intricate delle comunità divise da confini - sia fisici che metaforici. Catturando l'essenza della vita in queste città gemelle, questa raccolta intende approfondire le lotte continue e le opportunità che derivano dal vivere in questi spazi liminali.

Il tema di La città doppia è volutamente aperto all'interpretazione. I fotografi sono stati invitati a documentare qualsiasi luogo nel mondo in cui siano presenti dualità e divisioni, indipendentemente dall'esistenza di un confine formale. Sfogliando le pagine di questo libro, speriamo che vi immergerete nelle storie che queste immagini raccontano - di connessione e conflitto, di divisione e unità. Vi invitiamo a riflettere insieme a noi sull'esperienza umana condivisa che trascende i confini, offrendo una visione su come, in un certo senso, tutti noi siamo in qualche modo plasmati dalle linee che ci dividono.

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UVOD

V svetu, ki ga opredeljujeta tako povezanost kot tudi delitev, zgodba o mejnih mestih - tistih, ki se raztezajo med dvema narodoma, kulturama ali identitetama - ponuja privlačen vpogled v kompleksne realnosti, s katerimi se soočajo skupnosti, ki živijo ob



ILARIA TASSINI

River Isonzo (Soča) and the two Gorizias

teh ločnicah. Skozi objektiv fotografov z vsega sveta si ta knjiga prizadeva ustvariti globalni portret edinstvenih izzivov, kulturnih presečišč in skupnih izkušenj dvojnih mest.

Ideja za ta projekt, Dvojno mesto, se je rodila kot multidisciplinarna fotografska pobuda ob praznovanju dogodka GO! 2025 Nova Gorica-Gorica Evropska prestolnica kulture. Namen projekta je raziskati zapletene dinamike skupnosti, ki jih delijo meje - tako fizične kot tudi metaforične. Z zajemanjem bistva življenja v teh dvojnica si ta zbirka prizadeva raziskati nenehne izzive in priložnosti, ki jih prinaša življenje v teh prehodnih prostorih.

Tema Dvojnega mesta je namerno odprta za interpretacijo. Fotografi so bili povabljeni, da dokumentirajo katero koli lokacijo na svetu, kjer sta prisotni dvojnost in delitev, ne glede na to, ali obstaja formalna meja ali ne. Ko boste listali po straneh te knjige, upamo, da se boste potopili v zgodbe, ki jih te podobe pripovedujejo - o povezanosti in konfliktu, o delitvi in enotnosti. Vabimo vas, da se nam pridružite pri razmisleku o skupni človeški izkušnji, ki presega meje, ter ponuja vpogled v to, kako smo vsi na nek način oblikovani z linijami, ki nas delijo.

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EVERYTHING THAT HAS A LIMIT WANTS INFINITY

0. Last time I was in Nova Gorica/Gorizia I made some psycho-geographical observations about myself. As long as I stayed in Nova Gorica, I had the feeling of tabula rasa that I usually have in the forest. My mind wandered around trees and mountains. As soon as I crossed the border and entered Gorizia, my mind became overwhelmed by fantasies that I would call “cultural” and “architectural”. Something very “ancient” is encoded into the streets and houses of Gorizia, which is around a thousand years old city. Nova Gorica, on the other hand, was made in the 1950s. Its houses were built in the same time when its trees were planted. A house in Nova Gorica is basically as old as a cedar tree that grows next to it. If we’d draw a line between people and nature, we could say that in Nova Gorica the human civilization is as old as nature. As long as there are lines like the one between Italy and Slovenia, we could draw all kinds of lines. Some of them are more, some are less against the laws of nature. But they all want to exist and belong.

That brings me back to the thoughts that I’ve had in the forests of my homeland Estonia – looking at the tops of old pine trees at the seaside, I’ve seen architectures that are much older than the mankind. I’d call it a proto-architecture. I believe that the shapes and patterns that we see on trees reached the human consciousness way before anyone had an idea to build a hut. So, a forest is the very first and the most basic environment. The natural state of being. Parks and landscaping are usually references to it. It depends on the proportions between trees and houses. It might not be the reality, but in Nova Gorica it at least seems that trees

and houses make a nice balance. In Gorizia it is different. It is a real city of stone, where trees are just meant to remind you that they exist. But still, because of these proto-architectural forms, Nova Gorica points towards something that is as old as nature. And Gorizia points towards something that is as old as mankind.

1. I’ve always been interested in transitions – the ways how one becomes the other in nature. And how differences are possible, how they exist side by side. In the case of man-made differences like border cities, everything looks simple. There is a line drawn on the map and that’s it. The rest is left to projections and imaginations. Sometimes a line can be justified by “natural borders” (rivers, coasts, mountains, etc) that makes it easier to understand what a difference is. In reality, outside the map context, there are no lines. There are symbols and signs, gates and fences, walls and border controls. Everything has to be legitimate and accord to the man made laws. And the legitimation must be supported by state force – real people who carry guns, licensed to execute state sovereignty. Like Achille Mbembe once wrote, the sovereignty is about the license to kill. Without that license all these symbols, fences, walls and guns won’t be real. Any artist can install a fence that looks exactly like the state border that is installed by the state border guards. Materiality of fences and walls comes from the same source, but it becomes a difference because of the power of law.

The border crossing between Nova Gorica and Gorizia, right at the point where Erjavčeva ulica and Via San Gabriele meet each

other, is a great example of the coexistence of the power of law and the power of nature and arts. The booth of Italian border guards stands right next to Carinarnica project space, which is an artistic initiative. The difference between these two enterprises is so visual and explicit there. I think there is no other such border elsewhere in the world, where art and state power stand so naked in front of each other.

The border between Nova Gorica and Gorizia with Carinarnica on one and Carabinieri on the other side can be seen as the symbolic stage of what is going on in Europe. The idea of open borders in Schengen area is one of the things that Europe is about. It is the idea of a freedom, which may sound abstract, but on borders it becomes real and can be measured. I understand this European idea of freedom as a reference to the basic freedom of every living being, who live on this planet. You can be who you are and wander around from one state to another as if borders didn’t exist at all. That’s another natural state of being. Apart from the concept of Schengen area (which has its limitations and dysfunctions), this freedom can be practised in the areas of loose and uncontrolled borders, all over the world. You just have to follow the laws of nature and avoid another human being. Because another human being may be the carrier of state sovereignty and have a license to detain or kill you. Although, every living being has the freedom of movement, given by nature. And there can be a high price to pay for that freedom. A border control station can be seen as a ticket office for using that freedom.

2. On maps and medals the existence of states is manifested by their shapes, their external boundaries that can mean borders and coastlines. The boundaries of states are always about land and soil, although a border can exist in the open sea and in the air. Boundaries and borders can be, but don’t need to be one and the same thing. Just like many inner processes express themselves as symptoms on skin, which is the external boundary of human body, many things that happen in the capitals of states, show up at places that are manifested as state boundaries, but are actually more than just borders – these are specific border crossings where the ritual of state power takes place. In a way, such border crossings can be seen as instruments of state power. But not instruments without consciousness – they are rather hands and teeth. Although they are often situated in peripheries and margins, far away from the centre.

Margins and peripheries have their own logic. Being part of one, they exist side by side with the other. Thus they are under the influence of the other or may even feel oneness with the other, while they are obliged to resist that influence and surrender their centre. The nature of margins and peripheries is like mold that covers and eats the idea of borders as the teeth of the centre. And if mold is fed well enough, these teeth may fall off. This is why statehood becomes amplified in some border cities. The castration of a periphery gets compensated by the smile of sharpened teeth, which I would call as provinciality. If castration is not compensated well enough, it may lead to breakup from the centre.

3.

Although I don't like the idea of periphery-centre, especially in the context of Nova Gorica and Gorizia, let me elaborate the focus of castration in abstract level. The castration of borders and border cities is performed by a double sided blade. First, as a periphery, your reach towards the centre is limited. In fact, you are not supposed to reach the centre, but on contrary – the centre is supposed to reach you. It is a one-way traffic. Secondly, your natural being and will for freedom is castrated by the border. Provinciality is just one option for compensation. There are also many other ways for it and there are realities with lesser castration and no urge for compensation. "Autonomy" is the keyword here. Depending on the border, it may sound as something great or something really terrible. All depends on the border, on the relationship – who are the partners and what is their background.

If there are no grounds for cultural autonomy, which means culture that is older than the borders that are imposed on it, then it could be invented or imagined, but in a healthy way. Autonomy is a sub-relationship. It is the matter of freedom and belonging. It is the matter of boundaries. But these days it has become a highly politicized and manipulated issue. Which brings up the fact that borders are not always legal. Just like there are cases where state power might not be legal. Such cases are rather about the borders between order and chaos.

I don't want to talk about things like Donetsk People's Republic. Such "autonomies" are orchestrated from a centre and they mean violence, blood and the lack of imagination. The latter is the symptom of the lack of freedom. Imagination needs simplicity. It needs a lot of space, it needs the feeling of infinity. Also, it needs limitations to the extent where they would trigger creativity. A good example of imaginary autonomy that has grown out of freedom, but also limitations is Nowa Amerika at the German-Polish border. It is a border region that has been established by artistic initiative and it includes both countries. Based on some historical truth, it is a conceptual borderland with fluid borders and besides artistic inventions like ID cards, anthems, symbols, etc, it is linked to different social engagements that are real.

As the region around the Oder river has a very complicated and traumatic history, Nowa Amerika is a necessary platform for dealing with it. One of the biggest mass migrations of the 20th century took place there after the WW2, when Germans were forced to leave their lands and people from the Eastern parts of Poland were forced to settle down by Oder river. This is why Nowa Amerika is another example of finding balance at the border. Balance between imagination and something that pretends to be reality, but it changes itself so often and so traumatically that it could also be fiction.

A real borderland, which is not an artistic initiative, is situated in Lapland, between Sweden and Finland. It is called Meänmaa (meaning: "our land") which is a region around Torne river, starting from the Gulf of Bothnia and reaching towards the far North. It is inhabited by Tornedalians who speak Meänkieli (meaning: "our language"), which is a Finnish dialect. This Baltic-Finnic ethnicity existed here for centuries before the border was drawn as a result of Russian-Swedish war in the early 19th century, when Russia conquered Finland and Swedes built the new Haparanda village behind the border. I can call it a borderland only because a border was drawn right through it. Otherwise it could just be a land like any other. A land that people who live there just call "our land". Although the border runs through Meänmaa, it doesn't divide it, but rather delicately shows the presence of Sweden and Finland. That's because of the relationship that these countries have with each other. They could be seen as caretakers of Meänmaa. The Museum of Torne Valley manifests it quite well – it is an institution of both, Sweden and Finland. As they say, there is no other museum in the world that is maintained by two countries.

When I was there a few years ago, I felt freedom that allowed me to focus on everything else but the boring dance around the state border. I was rather thinking about borders between the influence zones of the Arctic Ocean and the Baltic Sea. I was thinking of being near the edge of the world, facing towards the North, where mankind gradually ceases to exist and the nature of ice takes over.

4.

The freedom I felt in Goriška region was a bit similar. When I visited it for the first time, I felt I've reached a new country. It was very different from the Slovenia I used to know – mostly Maribor and Celje with their Central European atmosphere. I had been wondering how Central Europe meets the Mediterranean zone. Where exactly is the point, where nature starts to turn from one to the other? There must be a twilight zone, where the mystery of transformation takes place. There must be a kitchen with chefs who cook differences behind closed doors, until everything is ready and will be served to you on plate. This is how we talk about differences, as if they exist as objects that are separated from each other. That's the misguiding nature of language. But something really happens in the West from Ljubljana, as the Adriatic steps in. Mountains are the boundaries that shape the kettle where changes are cooked by wind, air and sun.

But the reach of the Adriatic goes way beyond Slovenia. I believe that Europe is most of all divided by its seas. The Adriatic influence likely coincides with the boundaries of old Austro-Hungary, as well as the former Yugoslavia. Somewhere in Poland should be the line where the Adriatic zone meets the Baltic zone. Czechs didn't want to dig a tunnel to the Baltic, they wanted to dig it to the Adriatic.

I've always seen Slovenia as something that stands on an edge. It stands on the foot of the Alps, gazing towards the South. "Here we see how Italians eat, Germans work and Balkanians party," said a winemaker from Brda. I guess, if you see these things, you might also see a lot more. I see the whole Slovenia as a certain kind of awareness. An open eye that observes and absorbs the life around it. But it does it because of the huge amount of borders that it has. And borders, as I said, are relationships. Slovenia is a highly connected country with a huge amount of border crossings to every cardinal direction, while Italy is a peninsula (half-island, like we say in Estonia) and is mostly surrounded by the sea. Which makes it a country hidden behind its boundaries, but perhaps more exposed to long distances overseas.

5.

Estonia, like Italy, is mostly surrounded by water, and like Slovenia, it is situated at an edge, but it has just a few border crossings to its neighbours. I can sense an open eye looking towards the horizon of the sea. But instead of awareness, there is uncertainty and unpredictability, as the eye gives just a few glances towards the East. My free journey of thought finds its end right here, as everything I say becomes heavy as a burden. Estonia is situated at an edge, next to a wall. The border between Narva and Ivangorod looks very iconic, as the river runs between two fortresses that are opposed to each other. It is one of the hardest borders in Europe and if we call it a relationship, imagine how it could be like! As the reality hits me and touches my ties with the collective trauma, I feel my imagination shrinking. If I'd keep talking about border rituals and teeth of state power, it would just turn into meaningless babbling. Maybe this is what happens when we lose our freedom and privileges? "If we didn't have borders, we'd need to stage them as we need limits for the sake of infinity!" I read from my notes I made in Nova Gorica. Every prison cell has a window. And if not, it has at least a drainage or a rat hole. And if not, then imagination paints a picture on the wall. A picture of a border crossing that you can just enter and disappear through it. A human mind needs infinity. It needs a way out. Maybe we need to draw another line in Narva? A second border that is missing here? A border between oppression and freedom. And a border between imagination and guns. These two things should exist separately, like Carinarnica and Carabinieri in Nova Gorica/Gorizia.

TANEL RANDER
Estonian artist, curator and art writer
2024

TUTTO CIÒ CHE HA UN LIMITE DESIDERA L'INFINITO

0.
L'ultima volta che sono stato a Nova Gorica/Gorizia ho fatto alcune osservazioni psicogeografiche su di me. Finché sono rimasto a Nova Gorica, ho avuto la sensazione di tabula rasa che di solito ho nella foresta. La mia mente vagava tra alberi e montagne. Non appena ho attraversato il confine e sono entrato a Gorizia, la mia mente è stata travolta da fantasie che definirei “culturali” e “architettoniche”. Qualcosa di molto “antico” è codificato nelle strade e nelle case di Gorizia, che è una città di circa mille anni. Nova Gorica, invece, è stata fondata negli anni Cinquanta. Le sue case sono state costruite nello stesso periodo in cui sono stati piantati gli alberi. In pratica, una casa a Nova Goriza è vecchia quanto il cedro che le cresce accanto. Se tracciamo una linea di demarcazione tra l'uomo e la natura, potremmo dire che a Nova Gorica la civiltà umana è antica quanto la natura. Fintanto che esistono confini come quello tra l'Italia e la Slovenia, potremmo tracciare ogni tipo di linea. Alcune sono più, altre meno contrarie alle leggi della natura. Ma tutte vogliono esistere e appartenere.

Questo mi riporta ai pensieri che ho avuto nelle foreste della mia patria, l'Estonia: guardando le cime dei vecchi pini in riva al mare, ho visto architetture molto più antiche dell'uomo. La definirei una protoarchitettura. Credo che le forme e i motivi che vediamo sugli alberi abbiano raggiunto la coscienza umana molto prima che qualcuno avesse l'idea di costruire una capanna. Quindi, la foresta è il primo e più elementare ambiente. Lo stato naturale dell'essere. I parchi e il paesaggio sono di solito riferimenti ad esso. Dipende dalle proporzioni tra alberi e case. Forse non è la realtà, ma a Nova Gorica sembra almeno che alberi e case creino un bell'equilibrio. A Gorizia è diverso.

È una vera e propria città di pietra, dove gli alberi servono solo a ricordare che esistono. Tuttavia, grazie a queste forme protoarchitettoniche, Nova Gorica punta a qualcosa di antico come la natura. E Gorizia punta a qualcosa di antico come l'uomo.

1.
Sono sempre stato interessato alle transizioni, ai modi in cui l'uno diventa l'altro in natura. E come le differenze siano possibili, come esistano l'una accanto all'altra. Nel caso delle differenze create dall'uomo, come le città di confine, tutto sembra semplice. C'è una linea tracciata sulla mappa e questo è tutto. Il resto è lasciato alle proiezioni e all'immaginazione. A volte una linea può essere giustificata da “confini naturali” (fiumi, coste, montagne, ecc.) che rendono più facile capire cosa sia una differenza. In realtà, al di fuori del contesto cartografico, non esistono linee. Ci sono simboli e segni, cancelli e recinzioni, muri e controlli di frontiera. Tutto deve essere legittimo e conforme alle leggi dell'uomo. E la legittimità deve essere garantita dalla forza dello Stato – individui armati, con licenza di eseguire la sovranità dello Stato. Come scrisse Achille Mbembe, la sovranità consiste nella licenza di uccidere. Senza questa licenza, tutti questi simboli, recinzioni, muri e armi non saranno reali. Qualsiasi artista può installare una recinzione che assomiglia esattamente al confine di Stato installato dalle guardie di frontiera dello Stato. La materialità delle recinzioni e dei muri proviene dalla stessa fonte, ma diventa una differenza a causa del potere della legge.

Il valico di frontiera tra Nova Gorica e Gorizia, proprio nel punto in cui Erjavčeva ulica e via San Gabriele si incontrano, è un grande

esempio della coesistenza del potere della legge e del potere della natura e delle arti. Lo stand delle guardie di frontiera italiane si trova proprio accanto al project space Carinarnica, che è un'iniziativa artistica. La differenza tra queste due imprese è così visiva ed esplicita. Credo che non esista un altro confine simile in tutto il mondo, dove arte e potere statale sono così nudi l'uno di fronte all'altro.

Il confine tra Nova Gorica e Gorizia, con Carinarnica da una parte e i Carabinieri dall'altra, può essere visto come il palcoscenico simbolico di ciò che sta accadendo in Europa. Il concetto di frontiere aperte nell'area Schengen è una delle caratteristiche dell'Europa. È l'idea di una libertà che può sembrare astratta, ma che alle frontiere diventa reale e può essere misurata. Intendo questa idea europea di libertà come un riferimento alla libertà di base di ogni essere vivente che vive su questo pianeta. Si può essere chi si è e vagare da uno Stato all'altro come se i confini non esistessero affatto. È un altro stato naturale dell'essere. A parte il concetto di area Schengen (che ha i suoi limiti e le sue disfunzioni), questa libertà può essere praticata nelle aree di confine libere e non controllate, in tutto il mondo. Basta seguire le leggi della natura ed evitare un altro essere umano. Perché un altro essere umano può essere portatore di sovranità statale e avere la licenza di trattenervi o uccidervi. Tuttavia, ogni essere vivente ha la libertà di movimento, data dalla natura. E può esserci un prezzo alto da pagare per questa libertà. Una stazione di controllo di frontiera può essere vista come una biglietteria per l'utilizzo di questa libertà.

2.
Sulle carte geografiche e sulle medaglie l'esistenza degli Stati si manifesta attraverso le loro forme, i loro confini esterni che

possono significare frontiere e linee di costa. I confini degli Stati riguardano sempre la terra e il suolo, anche se un confine può esistere in mare aperto e nell'aria. Confini e frontiere possono essere, ma non necessariamente, la stessa cosa. Proprio come molti processi interiori si esprimono come sintomi sulla pelle, che è il confine esterno del corpo umano, molte cose che accadono nelle capitali degli Stati si manifestano in luoghi che si manifestano come confini statali, ma che in realtà sono più che semplici confini: si tratta di specifici attraversamenti di confine in cui si svolge il rituale del potere statale. In un certo senso, questi passaggi di frontiera possono essere visti come strumenti del potere statale. Ma non sono strumenti privi di coscienza: sono piuttosto mani e denti. Anche se spesso sono situati nelle periferie e ai margini, lontano dal centro.

Margini e periferie hanno una loro logica. Essendo parte di una, esistono fianco a fianco con l'altra. Sono quindi sotto l'influenza dell'altro o possono persino sentirsi uniti all'altro, mentre sono obbligati a resistere a tale influenza e a rinunciare al loro centro. La natura dei margini e delle periferie è come una muffa che ricopre e mangia l'idea dei confini come denti del centro. E se la muffa viene nutrita abbastanza bene, questi denti possono cadere. È per questo che la statualità si amplifica in alcune città di confine. La castrazione di una periferia viene compensata dal sorriso di denti affilati, che chiamerei provincialità. Se la castrazione non è compensata a sufficienza, può portare alla rottura con il centro.

3.
Sebbene non mi piaccia l'idea di periferia-centro, soprattutto nel contesto di Nova Gorica e Gorizia, permettetemi di elaborare

il tema della castrazione a livello astratto. La castrazione dei confini e delle città di confine avviene con una lama a doppio taglio. In primo luogo, in quanto periferia, la tua portata verso il centro è limitata. In realtà, non si suppone che tu raggiunga il centro, ma al contrario che il centro raggiunga te. È un traffico a senso unico. In secondo luogo, il vostro essere naturale e la vostra volontà di libertà sono castrati dal confine. La provincialità è solo un'opzione di compensazione. Ci sono anche molti altri modi per farlo e ci sono realtà con una minore castrazione e nessun bisogno di compensazione. "Autonomia" è la parola chiave. A seconda del confine, può sembrare qualcosa di grandioso o qualcosa di veramente terribile. Tutto dipende dal confine, dalla relazione - chi sono i partner e qual è il loro background.

Se non ci sono le basi per l'autonomia culturale, che significa cultura più antica dei confini che le vengono imposti, allora si può inventare o immaginare, ma in modo sano. L'autonomia è una sotto-relazione. È la questione della libertà e dell'appartenenza. È la questione dei confini. Ma al giorno d'oggi è diventata una questione altamente politicizzata e manipolata. Il che fa emergere il fatto che i confini non sono sempre legali. Così come ci sono casi in cui il potere dello Stato potrebbe non essere legale. Questi casi riguardano piuttosto i confini tra ordine e caos.

Non voglio parlare di cose come la Repubblica Popolare di Donetsk. Queste "autonomie" sono orchestrate da un centro e significano violenza, sangue e mancanza di immaginazione. Quest'ultima è il sintomo della mancanza di libertà. L'immaginazione ha bisogno di semplicità. Ha bisogno di molto spazio, di una sensazione di infinito. Inoltre, ha bisogno di limitazioni fino al punto in cui queste possano innescare la creatività. Un buon esempio di autonomia immaginaria che è cresciuta grazie alla libertà, ma anche alle limitazioni, è Nowa Amerika, al confine tra Germania e Polonia. Si tratta di una regione di confine nata per iniziativa artistica e che comprende entrambi i Paesi. Basata su una certa verità storica, è una terra di confine concettuale con confini fluidi e, oltre alle invenzioni artistiche come carte d'identità, inni, simboli, ecc, è legata a diversi impegni sociali che sono reali. Poiché la regione intorno al fiume Oder ha una storia molto complicata e traumati-

ca, Nowa Amerika è una piattaforma necessaria per affrontarla. Una delle più grandi migrazioni di massa del XX secolo ha avuto luogo in questa regione dopo la Seconda Guerra Mondiale, quando i tedeschi furono costretti a lasciare le loro terre e le persone provenienti dalle regioni orientali della Polonia furono costrette a stabilirsi lungo il fiume Oder. Ecco perché Nowa Amerika è un altro esempio di ricerca di equilibrio al confine. Equilibrio tra l'immaginazione e qualcosa che finge di essere realtà, ma cambia così spesso e in modo così traumatico che potrebbe anche essere finzione.

Una vera terra di confine, che non è un'iniziativa artistica, si trova in Lapponia, tra Svezia e Finlandia. Si chiama Meänmaa (che significa "la nostra terra") ed è una regione intorno al fiume Torne, che parte dal Golfo di Botnia e arriva fino all'estremo Nord. È abitata dai Tornedalians che parlano il Meänkieli (che significa "la nostra lingua"), un dialetto finlandese. Questa etnia baltico-finlica esisteva qui da secoli, prima che il confine fosse tracciato a seguito della guerra russo-svedese all'inizio del XIX secolo, quando la Russia conquistò la Finlandia e gli svedesi costruirono il nuovo villaggio di Haparanda dietro il confine. Posso chiamarla terra di confine solo perché un confine è stato tracciato proprio attraverso di essa. Altrimenti potrebbe essere una terra come tutte le altre. Una terra che le persone che ci vivono chiamano semplicemente "la nostra terra". Sebbene il confine attraversi Meänmaa, non lo divide, ma piuttosto mostra delicatamente la presenza di Svezia e Finlandia. Ciò è dovuto al rapporto che questi Paesi hanno tra loro. Possono essere visti come custodi di Meänmaa. Il Museo della Valle di Torne lo dimostra molto bene: è un'istituzione di entrambi, Svezia e Finlandia. Come si dice, non esiste al mondo un altro museo gestito da due Paesi.

Quando ci sono stato qualche anno fa, ho provato una sensazione di libertà che mi ha permesso di concentrarmi su tutto il resto, tranne che sulla noiosa danza intorno al confine di Stato. Pensavo piuttosto ai confini tra le zone di influenza dell'Oceano Artico e del Mar Baltico. Pensavo di essere vicino al confine del mondo, rivolto verso il Nord, dove l'umanità cessa gradualmente di esistere e la natura del ghiaccio prende il sopravvento.

4. La libertà che ho provato nella regione di Goriška è stata un po' simile. Quando l'ho visitata per la prima volta, mi è sembrato di aver raggiunto un nuovo Paese. Era molto diversa dalla Slovenia che conoscevo - soprattutto Maribor e Celje con la loro atmosfera mitteleuropea. Mi sono chiesta come l'Europa centrale incontra la zona mediterranea. Dov'è esattamente il punto in cui la natura inizia a trasformarsi da una all'altra? Ci deve essere una zona crepuscolare, dove avviene il mistero della trasformazione. Ci deve essere una cucina con cuochi che cucinano le differenze a porte chiuse, fino a quando tutto è pronto e viene servito su un piatto. È così che parliamo delle differenze, come se esistessero come oggetti separati gli uni dagli altri. Questa è la natura fuorviante del linguaggio. Ma a ovest di Lubiana succede davvero qualcosa, quando l'Adriatico fa il suo ingresso. Le montagne sono i confini che danno forma alla pentola in cui i cambiamenti sono cotti dal vento, dall'aria e dal sole.

Ma la portata dell'Adriatico va ben oltre la Slovenia. Credo che l'Europa sia divisa soprattutto dai suoi mari. L'influenza adriatica coincide probabilmente con i confini della vecchia Austro-Ungheria e dell'ex Jugoslavia. Da qualche parte in Polonia dovrebbe esserci la linea di demarcazione tra la zona adriatica e la zona baltica. I cechi non volevano scavare un tunnel verso il Baltico, ma verso l'Adriatico.

Ho sempre visto la Slovenia come qualcosa che si trova su un bordo. Si trova ai piedi delle Alpi e guarda verso sud. "Qui vediamo come mangiano gli italiani, come lavorano i tedeschi e come fanno festa i balcanici", mi ha detto un viticoltore di Brda. Credo che se si vedono queste cose, si possono vedere anche molte altre. Vedo l'intera Slovenia come un certo tipo di consapevolezza. Un occhio aperto che osserva e assorbe la vita intorno a sé. Ma lo fa a causa dell'enorme quantità di confini che ha. E i confini, come ho detto, sono relazioni. La Slovenia è un Paese molto connesso, con un'enorme quantità di valichi di frontiera in ogni direzione cardinale, mentre l'Italia è una penisola (una mezza isola, come si dice in Estonia) ed è per lo più circondata dal mare. Il che lo rende un Paese nascosto dietro i suoi confini, ma forse più esposto alle lunghe distanze oltreoceano.

5. L'Estonia, come l'Italia, è in gran parte circondata dall'acqua e, come la Slovenia, è situata ai margini, ma ha solo pochi valichi di frontiera con i suoi vicini. Percepisco un occhio aperto che guarda verso l'orizzonte del mare. Ma al posto della consapevolezza c'è l'incertezza e l'imprevedibilità, perché l'occhio dà solo qualche occhiata verso est. Il mio libero viaggio di pensiero trova la sua fine proprio qui, perché tutto ciò che dico diventa pesante come un fardello. L'Estonia si trova su un bordo, accanto a un muro. Il confine tra Narva e Ivangorod ha un aspetto molto iconico, perché il fiume scorre tra due fortezze contrapposte. È uno dei confini più difficili d'Europa e se lo chiamiamo relazione, immaginate come potrebbe essere! Mentre la realtà mi colpisce e tocca i miei legami con il trauma collettivo, sento la mia immaginazione ridursi. Se continuassi a parlare di rituali di confine e di denti del potere statale, diventerebbe solo un balbettio senza senso. Forse è questo che succede quando perdiamo la nostra libertà e i nostri privilegi? "Se non avessimo confini, dovremmo metterli in scena come abbiamo bisogno di limiti per l'infinito!". Leggo dai miei appunti presi a Nova Gorica. Ogni cella di prigionia ha una finestra. E se non ce l'ha, ha almeno un canale di scolo o una tana per i topi. E se non c'è, l'immaginazione dipinge un quadro sul muro. L'immagine di un passaggio di frontiera in cui si può entrare e scomparire. La mente umana ha bisogno di infinito. Ha bisogno di una via d'uscita. Forse dobbiamo tracciare un'altra linea a Narva? Un secondo confine che qui manca? Un confine tra oppressione e libertà. E un confine tra immaginazione e armi. Queste due cose dovrebbero esistere separatamente, come Carinarnica e Carabinieri a Nova Gorica/Gorizia.

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VSE, KAR IMA MEJO, SI ŽELI NESKONČNOSTI

0.
Ko sem bil zadnjič v Novi Gorici/Gorici, sem opravil nekaj psihogeografskih opazovanj o sebi. Dokler sem bil v Novi Gorici, sem imel občutek tabula rasa, ki ga običajno imam v gozdu. V mislih sem se sprehajal po drevesih in gorah. Takoj ko sem prečkal mejo in vstopil v Gorico, so moj um preplavile fantazije, ki bi jih poimenoval „kulturne“ in „arhitekturne“. V ulicah in hišah Gorice, ki je približno tisoč let staro mesto, je zakodirano nekaj zelo „starodavnega“. Nova Gorica pa je nastala v petdesetih letih prejšnjega stoletja. Njene hiše so bile zgrajene v istem času, ko so bila posajena drevesa. Hiša v Novi Gorici je v bistvu stara toliko kot cedra, ki raste ob njej. Če bi potegnili črto med ljudmi in naravo, bi lahko rekli, da je v Novi Gorici človeška civilizacija tako stara kot narava. Dokler obstajajo meje, kot je tista med Italijo in Slovenijo, bi lahko potegnili najrazličnejše črte. Nekatere od njih so bolj, druge manj v nasprotju z zakoni narave. Toda vse si želijo obstajati in pripadati.

To me vrača k mislim, ki sem jih imel v gozdovih svoje domovine Estonije - ob pogledu na vrhove starih borovcev ob morju sem videl arhitekture, ki so veliko starejše od človeštva. To bi imenoval protoarhitektura. Verjamem, da so oblike in vzorci, ki jih vidimo na drevesih, dosegli človeško zavest veliko prej, preden se je komu porodila zamisel, da bi zgradil kočo. Zato je gozd prvo in najosnovnejše okolje. Naravno stanje bivanja. Parki in krajinska ureditev se običajno sklicujejo nanj. To je odvisno od razmerja med drevesi in hišami. Morda to ni realnost, a v Novi Gorici se vsaj zdi, da drevesa in hiše tvorijo lepo ravnovesje. V Gorici je drugače. To je pravo kamnito mesto, v katerem so drevesa

namenjena le temu, da te opomnijo, da obstajajo. A vseeno Nova Gorica zaradi teh protoarhitekturnih oblik kaže na nekaj, kar je staro kot narava. Gorica pa kaže na nekaj, kar je staro toliko kot človeštvo.

1.
Vedno so me zanimali prehodi - načini, kako v naravi eno postane drugo. In kako so možne razlike, kako obstajata druga ob drugi. V primeru razlik, ki jih je ustvaril človek, kot so obmejna mesta, je vse videti preprosto. Na zemljevidu je narisana črta in to je vse. Vse ostalo je prepuščeno projekcijam in domišljiji. Včasih lahko črto utemeljimo z „naravnimi mejami“ (reke, obale, gore itd.), zaradi česar je lažje razumeti, kaj je razlika. V resnici, zunaj konteksta zemljevida, ni nobenih črt. Obstajajo simboli in znaki, vrata in ograje, zidovi in mejni nadzor. Vse mora biti zakonito in v skladu z zakoni, ki jih je ustvaril človek. Legitimnost pa mora biti podprta z državno silo - resničnimi ljudmi, ki nosijo orožje in imajo dovoljenje za izvajanje državne suverenosti. Kot je nekoč zapisal Achille Mbembe, gre pri suverenosti za dovoljenje za ubijanje. Brez tega dovoljenja vsi ti simboli, ograje, zidovi in orožje ne bodo resnični. Vsak umetnik lahko postavi ograjo, ki je videti natanko tako kot državna meja, ki jo postavljajo državni obmejni stražarji. Materialnost ograj in zidov izhaja iz istega vira, vendar postane razlika zaradi moči zakona.

Mejni prehod med Novo Gorico in Gorico, prav na točki, kjer se stikata Erjavčeva ulica in Via San Gabriele, je odličen primer sobivanja moči zakona ter moči narave in umetnosti. Stojnica italijanske mejne straže stoji tik ob projektnem prostoru

Carinarnica, ki je umetniška pobuda. Razlika med tema dvema podjetjema je tam tako vizualna in očitna. Mislim, da drugje na svetu ni takšne meje, kjer bi si umetnost in državna oblast stali tako goli nasproti. Mejo med Novo Gorico in Gorico s Carinarnico na eni in Karabinjerji na drugi strani lahko razumemo kot simbolno prizorišče dogajanja v Evropi. Zamisel o odprtih mejah na schengenskem območju je ena od stvari, za katere gre v Evropi. Gre za idejo svobode, ki morda zveni abstraktno, vendar na mejah postane resnična in jo je mogoče izmeriti. To evropsko idejo svobode razumem kot sklicevanje na osnovno svobodo vsakega živega bitja, ki živi na tem planetu. Lahko si, kar si, in se sprehajaš iz ene države v drugo, kot da meje sploh ne bi obstajale. To je še eno naravno stanje bivanja. Poleg koncepta schengenskega območja (ki ima svoje omejitve in disfunkcionalnosti) je to svobodo mogoče uresničevati na območjih ohlapnih in nenadzorovanih meja po vsem svetu. Upoštevati je treba le zakone narave in se izogibati drugemu človeku. Kajti drug človek je lahko nosilec državne suverenosti in ima dovoljenje, da vas pridrži ali ubije. Čeprav ima vsako živo bitje svobodo gibanja, ki mu jo daje narava. Za to svobodo je treba plačati visoko ceno. Postajo mejne kontrole lahko razumemo kot blagajno za prodajo vstopnic za uporabo te svobode.

2.
Na zemljevidih in medaljah se obstoj držav kaže z njihovimi oblikami, zunanji mejami, ki lahko pomenijo meje in obale. Meje držav se vedno nanašajo na kopno in zemljo, čeprav lahko meja obstaja tudi na odprtem morju in v zraku. Meje in meje so lahko, vendar ni nujno, da so ena in ista stvar. Tako kot se številni notranji procesi izražajo kot simptomi na koži, ki je zunanja meja

človeškega telesa, se številne stvari, ki se dogajajo v glavnih mestih držav, kažejo na mestih, ki se kažejo kot državne meje, vendar so pravzaprav več kot le meje - to so posebni mejni prehodi, kjer se odvija ritual državne oblasti. Na neki način lahko na takšne mejne prehode gledamo kot na instrumente državne oblasti. Vendar ne gre za instrumente brez zavesti, temveč za roke in zobe. Čeprav se pogosto nahajajo na obrobju in robu, daleč od središča.

Margine in obrobja imajo svojo logiko. Ker sta del enega, obstajata poleg drugega. Tako so pod vplivom drugega ali morda celo čutijo enost z drugim, medtem ko se morajo temu vplivu upreti in se odpovedati svojemu središču. Narava robov in obrobij je kot plesen, ki prekriva in razjeda idejo meja kot zob središča. In če je plesen dovolj dobro nahranjena, lahko ti zobje odpadejo. Zato se v nekaterih obmejnih mestih državnost še okrepi. Kastracijo obrobja kompenzira nasmeh nabrušenih zob, ki bi ga imenoval provincialnost. Če se kastracija ne kompenzira dovolj dobro, lahko privede do odcepitve od središča.

3.
Čeprav mi zamisel o periferiji-centru ni všeč, zlasti v kontekstu Nove Gorice in Gorice, naj razčlenim žarišče kastracije na abstraktni ravni. Kastracija meja in obmejnih mest se izvaja z obojestranskim rezilom. Prvič, kot periferija imaš omejen domet do središča. Pravzaprav naj ne bi dosegli središča, ampak nasprotno - središče naj bi doseglo vas. To je enosmerni promet. Drugič, vaša naravna bitnost in volja po svobodi sta kastrirani z mejo. Pokrajinskost je le ena od možnosti za nadomestilo.

Obstajajo tudi številne druge poti zanjo in obstajajo resničnosti z manjšo kastracijo in brez želje po kompenzaciji. „Avtonomija“ je tu ključna beseda. Odvisno od meje se lahko sliši kot nekaj odličnega ali pa kot nekaj res groznega. Vse je odvisno od meje, od odnosa - kdo sta partnerja in kakšno je njuno ozadje.

Če ni podlage za kulturno avtonomijo, kar pomeni kulturo, ki je starejša od meje, ki so ji naložene, potem si jo lahko izmislimo ali izmislimo, vendar na zdrav način. Avtonomija je podrejen odnos. Gre za vprašanje svobode in pripadnosti. Gre za vprašanje meja. Vendar je v današnjem času postala zelo spolitizirano in zmanipulirano vprašanje. To opozarja na dejstvo, da meje niso vedno zakonite. Tako kot so primeri, ko državna oblast ni zakonita. V takih primerih gre bolj za meje med redom in kaosom.

Ne želim govoriti o stvareh, kot je Donecka ljudska republika. Takšne „avtonomije“ so orkestrirane iz centra in pomenijo nasilje, kri in pomanjkanje domišljije. Slednje je simptom pomanjkanja svobode. Domišljija potrebuje preprostost. Potrebuje veliko prostora, potrebuje občutek neskončnosti. Prav tako potrebuje omejitve, ki bi sprožile ustvarjalnost. Dober primer domišljajske avtonomije, ki je zrasla iz svobode, a tudi omejitev, je Nova Amerika na nemško-poljski meji. Gre za obmejno območje, ki je nastalo na umetniško pobudo in vključuje obe državi. Na podlagi neke zgodovinske resnice gre za konceptualno obmejno območje s fluidnimi mejami in je poleg umetniških izumov, kot so osebne izkaznice, himne, simboli itd. povezano z različnimi družbenimi angažmaji, ki so resnični. Ker ima regija ob Odri zelo zapleteno in travmatično zgodovino, je Nova Amerika nujna platforma za njeno obravnavo. Ena največjih množičnih migracij v20. stoletju je tam potekala po drugi svetovni vojni, ko so bili Nemci prisiljeni zapustiti svojo zemljo, ljudje iz vzhodnih delov Poljske pa so se bili prisiljeni naseliti ob reki Odri. Zato je Nova Amerika še en primer iskanja ravnovesja na meji. Ravnotežje med domišljijo in nečim, kar se pretvarja, da je resničnost, a se spreminja tako pogosto in tako travmatično, da bi lahko bila tudi fikcija.

Prava mejna črta, ki ni umetniška pobuda, se nahaja na Laponskem, med Švedsko in Finsko. Imenuje se Meänmaa (kar pomeni: „naša

dežela“) in je območje okoli reke Torne, ki se začne v Botnijskem zalivu in sega proti skrajnemu severu. V njem živijo Tornedalci, ki govorijo Meänkieli (kar pomeni: „naš jezik“), ki je finsko narečje. Ta baltsko-finska narodnost je tu obstajala že stoletja, preden je bila meja določena kot posledica rusko-švedske vojne v začetku19. stoletja, ko je Rusija osvojila Finsko, Švedi pa so za mejo zgradili novo vas Haparanda. To območje lahko imenujem obmejno samo zato, ker je bila meja speljana prav prek njega. Drugače bi bila lahko le dežela kot vsaka druga. Dežela, ki jo ljudje, ki tam živijo, preprosto imenujejo „naša dežela“. Čeprav meja poteka skozi Meänmaa, ga ne deli, temveč nežno kaže prisotnost Švedske in Finske. To je posledica odnosa, ki ga imata ti dve državi med seboj. Lahko bi ju imeli za skrbnika Meänmaa. Muzej v dolini Torne to zelo dobro izraža - je namreč ustanova obeh držav, Švedske in Finske. Kot pravijo, na svetu ni drugega muzeja, ki bi ga vzdrževala dve državi.

Ko sem bil tam pred nekaj leti, sem občutil svobodo, ki mi je omogočila, da sem se osredotočil na vse drugo, le ne na dolgočasen ples okoli državne meje. Raje sem razmišljal o mejah med vplivnimi območji Severnega ledenega oceana in Baltskega morja. Razmišljal sem o tem, da sem blizu roba sveta, obrnjen proti severu, kjer človeštvo postopoma preneha obstajati in prevlada narava ledu.

4.

Svoboda, ki sem jo čutil na Goriškem, je bila nekoliko podobna. Ko sem jo prvič obiskal, sem imel občutek, da sem prišel v novo deželo. Bila je zelo drugačna od Slovenije, ki sem jo poznal - predvsem Maribora in Celja z njunim srednjeevropskim vzdušjem. Zanimalo me je, kako se Srednja Evropa stika s sredozemskim območjem. Kje točno je točka, kjer se narava začne spreminjati iz ene v drugo? Gotovo obstaja območje somraka, kjer se odvija skrivnost preobrazbe. Tam mora biti kuhinja s kuharji, ki za zaprtimi vrati kuhajo razlike, dokler ni vse pripravljeno in vam bo postreženo na krožniku. Tako govorimo o razlikah, kot da obstajajo kot predmeti, ki so ločeni drug od drugega. To je zavajajoča narava jezika. Toda na zahodu od Ljubljane se nekaj zares zgodi, ko se Jadran vmeša v dogajanje. Gore so meje, ki oblikujejo kotel, v katerem veter, zrak in sonce kuhajo spremembe.

Toda Jadran sega daleč prek meja Slovenije. Verjamem, da Evropo najbolj delijo morja. Vpliv Jadrana verjetno sovпада z mejami stare Avstro-Ogrske in tudi nekdanje Jugoslavije. Nekje na Poljskem bi morala biti meja, kjer se jadransko območje stika z baltskim območjem. Čehi niso želeli izkopati predora do Baltika, ampak do Jadrana.

Slovenijo sem vedno videl kot nekaj, kar stoji na robu. Stoji ob vznožju Alp in gleda proti jugu. „Tu vidimo, kako Italijani jedo, Nemci delajo in Balkanci se zabavajo,“ je dejal vinar iz Brd. Mislim, da če vidiš te stvari, lahko vidiš še veliko več. Celotno Slovenijo vidim kot neko zavedanje. Odprto oko, ki opazuje in vsrkava življenje okoli sebe. To pa počne zaradi ogromnega števila meja, ki jih ima. In meje, kot sem že rekel, so odnosi. Slovenija je zelo povezana država z ogromnim številom mejnih prehodov v vse svetovne smeri, medtem ko je Italija polotok (napol otok, kot pravimo v Estoniji) in jo večinoma obdaja morje. Zaradi česar je država, skrita za svojimi mejami, vendar morda bolj izpostavljena velikim razdaljam v tujini.

5.

Estonija je tako kot Italija večinoma obdana z vodo in tako kot Slovenija leži na robu, vendar ima le nekaj mejnih prehodov s svojimi sosedi. Čutim odprto oko, ki gleda proti morskemu obzorju. Toda namesto zavedanja je tu negotovost in nepredvidljivost, saj oko le nekajkrat pogleda proti vzhodu. Moje svobodno miselno potovanje se konča prav tu, saj vse, kar rečem, postane težko kot breme. Estonija leži na robu, ob zidu. Meja med Narvo in Ivangorodom je videti zelo ikonična, saj reka teče med dvema trdnjavama, ki si stojita nasproti. To je ena najtežjih meja v Evropi, in če ji rečemo odnos, si predstavljajte, kako bi lahko bilo! Ko me realnost zadene in se dotakne mojih vezi s kolektivno travmo, čutim, da se moja domišljija krči. Če bi še naprej govoril o obmejnih ritualih in zobeh državne moči, bi se to spremenilo le v nesmiselno blebetanje. Morda se prav to zgodi, ko izgubimo svojo svobodo in privilegije? „Če ne bi imeli meja, bi jih morali uprizoriti, saj potrebujemo meje zaradi neskončnosti!“ Prebral sem iz svojih zapiskov, ki sem jih naredil v Novi Gorici. Vsaka zaporniška celica ima okno. Če pa ne, ima vsaj odtočno kanalizacijo ali luknjo za podgane. In če ne,

potem domišljija nariše sliko na steno. Sliko mejnega prehoda, na katerega lahko preprosto vstopiš in izgineš skozi njega. Človeški um potrebuje neskončnost. Potrebuje izhod. Morda moramo v Narvi potegniti še eno črto? Drugo mejo, ki je tukaj ni? Meja med zatiranjem in svobodo. Meja med domišljijo in orožjem. Ti dve stvari bi morali obstajati ločeno, tako kot Carinarnica in karabinjerji v Novi Gorici/Gorici.

TANEL RANDER
estonski umetnik, kurator in pisec o umetnosti
2024



ILARIA TASSINI

Basaglia Park

Glimpse of the tenements overlooking the park behind the old hospital, named after psychiatrist Basaglia who worked here leading to the closure of asylums.

**TOWARDS
GO!2025**

**VERSO
V SMERI GO!2025**

MASSIMO SIRAGUSA



The one time I was in Gorizia, many years ago, there was still the wall. That division in the fabric of the city was a vision that repelled and attracted me at the same time. I had the curiosity of wanting to know the world beyond and, at the same time, I could not understand the deep meaning of that divide. I had a partial and rather nebulous knowledge of the history of those places, and the enthusiasm of youth made me loathe any barrier. Although, I confess, even less could I understand and accept the divisions in the present day.

The border appeared disturbing to me. Border police checking passports. The cars with their trunks open to allow inspection of suitcases. The long lines of people waiting. For me, born on an island, the only border imaginable was the fluidity of the sea. The barriers, the walls, the inspections, had a vaguely threatening and repelling flavor.

I remember, as I was on the train back home, reflecting for a long time on the perception that my visit to the city had left me with. A beautiful place, surrounded by lush nature and full of nice people. Yet I seemed to detect in the gaze of some people, in some signs



THE TWO CITIES



scattered here and there, a feeling of unfinishedness, almost a veil of melancholy. Nothing real, for goodness sake. It was probably just the impressions of a too hasty and distant observer.

Today's city is a different story.

The division is a barely visible trace. Sure, the crossings are still there, but they seem to have mellowed and appear less hostile and mysterious. Above all, they have lost their meaning. And so it is interesting to go in search of those traces that take on the appearance of markers, of signs existing in a territory. A place is a container of memory. In the path of searching for the evidence that memory offers us, photography provides many tools of analysis, but above all a method. Like an archaeologist, a photographer must exercise unveiling, which does not mean simply recording what surrounds us, but offering a key to interpretation, an interpretation of reality. More than seeing, a photographer must know how to look. He or she must go in search of the detail, the revealing element from which to begin the understanding of the whole.

The old route of the wall, reduced to a small protuberance winding along the state border, is still clearly present, albeit camouflaged among the houses of the double city. A path that crystallizes the years of physical division, and turns it into a signal. Almost a warning, suggesting that we should not go over the mistakes of past history again. I had fun playing with that remnant wall. I tried to climb over it several times, in a childish game that allowed me to move from one nation to another a dozen times.

Lost along the border that separated the two cities, the bike path is, in the evolutionary path of the territory, perhaps the most symbolically significant example. I have not seen many cyclists in Gorizia. Probably that track will be used occasionally, just for a Sunday ride. But how marvelous to imagine the metamorphosis of a border into a path to be cycled.

A utopically barrier-free future that is already present.

A place, with the layering of interventions, with the processes of transformation that follow one another, and with changes in the very



way it is experienced and enjoyed, is an expression of society's evolution over time. The temporal dimension is identified, therefore, as an essential moment in understanding an area, and photography is the perfect language for making the idea of time plastically concrete. On closer inspection, the very act of photographing is an action that ferries the past into the present. From this we should start. We should cherish the memory of history carefully, to ensure that we have greater awareness and knowledge of our present.





NIK ERIK NEUBAUER

I stop at the bakery in Rožna Dolina. It's been a long day and all I want is a hot, greasy burek. An older gentleman with Italian plates parks in front of me. He jumps into the bakery too. Each of us, in our own world, enjoys our dinner. I look towards the car where the policeman is standing. I quickly run over and the policeman, who is about my age, is already looking very angrily towards me:

"Is this your car?!" "It is, I'm sorry, I thought it was the car park." "A car park? Ma in the middle of the road, at the border crossing. Can't you see there's a road here?!" "Oh, I'm really sorry!" "Documents! And pull over there!"

Meanwhile, an Italian man also returns to his car and is subjected to a similar story, when the Slovenian policeman gives him the same instructions in fluent Italian, just as angrily. I wait anxiously in the car, wondering how much my insolence will cost me. Will it be 250, 500 euros or God forbid anything more? Will I also get penalty points? After all, I really did park right in the middle of the road. A policeman comes up to me and says that this time he will just give me a warning, but that it should not happen again. I am extremely grateful to him



CAN'T YOU SEE THAT THERE IS A ROAD HERE?



and assure him that it will not happen again. The burek is now quite cold and no longer appealing, which I regret a little, but I realise that it could have cost me much more than it did.

I have to admit, all these days, I've been a little too relaxed about the wonderful, international connection between the two cities. Nevertheless, there is still a border and rules are rules. I thought it was so incredibly wonderful when I was walking from Nova Gorica in Slovenia to Gorizia in Italy, with friends I had just met, just like that, on foot. And it was even more wonderful to come back after a wonderful dinner and a few glasses of wine. There were still Italian policemen at the border, but they just greeted us nicely and wished us a good evening. Besides, the people on both sides of the border are so friendly that everything seems "a bit more easy". The lady from the retirement home tells me that it is because of the climate, which is quite different from Ljubljana, where she moved from. While she is explaining, I look at my phone - it is really storming in Ljubljana, but in Nova Gorica, a few minutes later, it sprinkles and blows a bit, and then the sun shines again.



For the second time in three days I missed the exit for Nova Gorica and ended up on the Italian side. As today is the last day of my residency, I tactically decide to stop at a grocery store. There I buy 3 kg of coffee, 4 proseccos and 30 dag of mortadella with pistachio. Some traditions just do not change. Before going home, I stop at the Kostanjevica Monastery. While Father Niko and I are sipping coffee, I ask him if he has any other important tasks today. He looks at his watch and says to me, "Phew, there's so much to do! Moto GP is starting right now!"





PAUL MONTAGNON



In Gorizia and Nova Gorica we could fantasize about a cultural gap between two worlds that would have opposed each other for decades. On one side an "Occident" and on the other side an "East". Actually, this territory has always been fed by the exchanges between the different "communities". Even if fascist and dictatorial ideologies tried to cancel what didn't correspond to their violent and decadent dogmas, contaminations have always disturbed and made the border weaker. A border placed here for geopolitical issues and now partly erased by the global consumerism. But the political issues are often far removed from people concerns. For some people the border doesn't matter, for others it means a lot, for the migrants coming from the "Balkan route", cross this border is vital. Borders can be very concrete or abstract constructions, the story of this heterogeneous "double town" remains in a certain way a common construction, fed by exchanges and cleavages. Now the atmosphere seems peacefully open to new common perspectives, even if some bad noises from the past can be heard in a strange political context.



THERE SHOULD BE LIGHT FOR EVERYONE



«What do I like most here? Tranquillity. But we are old, we stay at home, we watch television...
Go ask young people »
«It's not like there's a lot of movement in these areas. You don't see many young people
around. They don't have many activities here but there aren't many negative points.»
«I don't see myself staying after university. Everything is closing, the town dies.»
«I see two quite similar cities on certain aspects. There are many projects in progress, I think
that something will change and that will succeed in bringing these two cities together more and more.»
«It enriches you to do a few kilometers and find yourself in another world, another culture.»
«I never go to Italy, I don't need.»

«We need more parking spots.»
«There's always a stronger connection between the two communities. That's nice. In the past, my parents told me that they were almost
afraid to cross the border.»
«In Italy we can obtain international protection and documents, they don't send you back to
Bosnia, you don't get hit and robbed.»
«I forgot everything, I can't help you, I'm sorry...»

Words from :
Abid; Denis; Emilio; Tommaso; Primož; Giulia; a sweet forgetful lady



ROBERTO PASTROVICCHIO

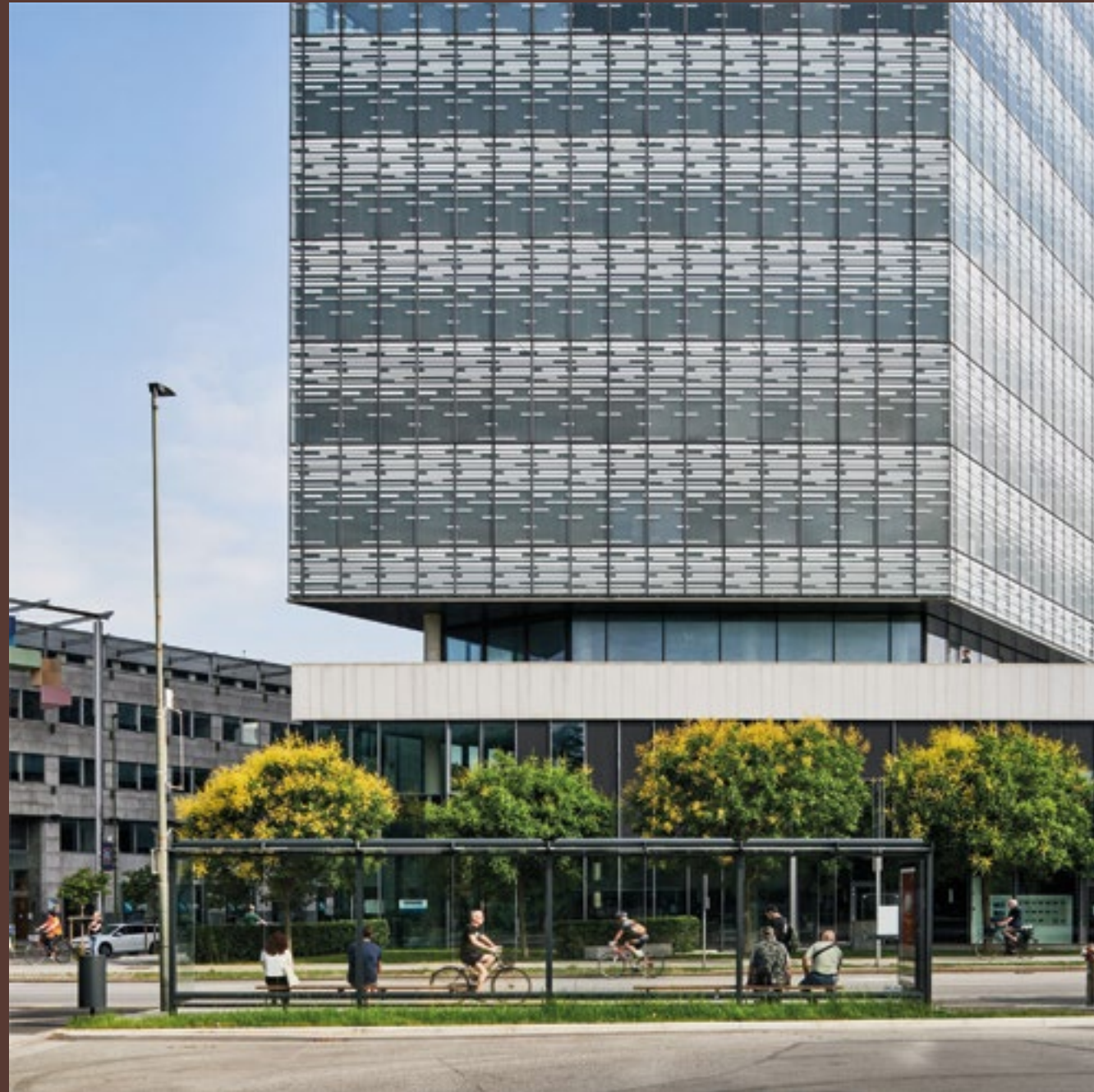


Is the bicycle that does not know the word "border." Its wheels do not stop in front of barriers, because the person who rides a bicycle is, in my experience, happy, a child who does not want to grow up. The idea of a separation between two people, between two peoples, between two worlds can only creep in who is no longer a child. Yet the two-wheelers continue to ride unabated.



THE LINE OF TWO WHEELS – COMMON DIRECTIONS ON THE BORDER





ANDREA CIPRIANI



"Border: physical, more or less visible; mental: not often visible but equally present, especially in a land that has had a troubled history. Equally present is the knowledge that it is possible to overcome the borders: physically, by simply crossing them; mentally, with patience, perseverance and commitment on everyone's part."



BORDERS



GIUSEPPE ROCCASANTA



Here and there... it seems easy now, but it wasn't and maybe it still isn't.



NO BORDERS LINE(S)



There and here





No more borders stone (IV)



A handshake across the border



Border cities compete in celebratory public statuary, that goes without saying; even the names of streets and squares hark back to divisive events and dates. But in strolling through the streets of Nova Gorica or the gardens of Gorizia, you realize that they are amassed by a statuary that has largely “abolished” the pedestal and placed the heroes - on the lawn on the squares and streets - at human height. It lacks the bottom-up gaze, a typical element of monuments that emphasize the rise of the characters represented in the ‘secular Olympus. Not here, the two cities are littered with heroes who look you directly in the eye as if to say, “here I am! were you looking for me?”. The photos do not give references but invite the viewer to try to place the statues in the big city, addressing the heroes directly and asking, “and who are you?”

NICOLA BOSCARATO



THE EYES OF HEROES



ANDREA ROSSATO



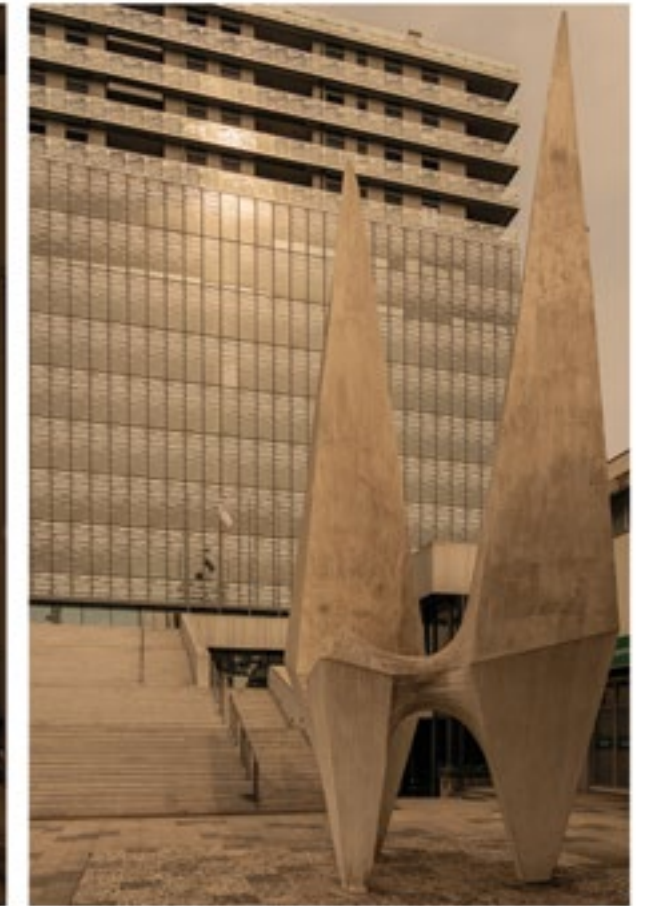
Two states: Italy, Slovenia; two cities, Gorizia, Nova Gorica: two speeds, two histories converging in a place where the old border remains only marked on a map, as a bureaucratic identity and as the national belonging of two peoples who have learned to be roommates in a single territory.

The history of Gorizia and Nova Gorica represents a fascinating interweaving of cultures and identities, marked by significant historical events that shaped the destiny of these two cities. The division after World War II created a rift, but over the years, the process of integration and openness has fostered renewed dialogue and connection between the two peoples. In 2007 when Slovenia finally joined the Schengen area, the Red House remained unchecked and the fence that separated Transalpine Square in half was torn down, physically reuniting the two cities.

The integration process is not just a matter of physically breaking down barriers; it is a journey toward mutual understanding and acceptance of differences. The two cities offer a unique experience, where visitors can walk freely from one side to the other,



GORIZIA – NOVA GORICA: DUAL CITIES



experiencing cultural enrichment ranging from gastronomy to visual arts Gorica and Nova Gorica represent a microcosm of harmony between differences, where the traditions and cultural influences of Italy and Slovenia are intertwined in various aspects of daily life. The streets of Gorica tell stories of an Austro-Hungarian past, with historic buildings reflecting Baroque architectural styles and neoclassical, while Nova Gorica, designed with a modernist vision, is distinguished by its contemporary structures. This convergence of styles illustrates not only physical separation but also unity in diversity, a concept that is becoming increasingly evident through joint cultural events, festivals, and exhibitions.

Today, through initiatives such as GO2025, shared culture is celebrated, creating opportunities for collaboration and exchange. Breaking down physical and symbolic boundaries allows people to see how architectural differences tell stories of coexistence, uniting the cultural heritage of two nations into a single narrative.

The evolution from a past of division to a shared and cooperative vision for the future is a beautiful example of how cities can



transform themselves into spaces of interaction and synergy despite their different histories, while still keeping identities defined and legible a dual representation of the same place. Stores differ not only in sign language, streets have different structuring, architectural-urban styles continue to differ in a diptych vision of two peoples, two cities, one place.

Together, Gorizia and Nova Gorica are demonstrating how history can turn into opportunity. As 2025 and the title of Capital of Culture approaches, the GO!2025 initiative provides a platform to celebrate the richness of both cities, promoting a future of collaboration and cultural innovation. This union of purpose and vision is creating a sense of community that transcends borders, making Gorizia and Nova Gorica a shining example of unity and understanding in Europe.



ILARIA TASSINI

River Isonzo (Soča) from Salcano (SLO) towards Oslavia (IT)



ILARIA TASSINI

Urban cow

Resident cow on the hill of Kostanjevica (SLO) overlooking Gorizia (IT) with the skyline of the castle and university, in front of the Slovenian hills.



MOJCA LIPICER STANTIČ

Untitled



OLGA ARUNE

Devil's Bridge

Devil's Bridge, one of the main sights in Cividale del Friuli, a picturesque Italian town located near the Slovenian border.



MATTEO FALIERO

Untitled



MATTEO FALIERO

Untitled



LUCA MENOTTI

Mirror



LUCA MENOTTI

Green passion



MAURO ZONCH

Steps on the border

Walking on this border is like walking on history, on the pain of this land, on the pain of these people. Now, in the brotherhood between peoples, it no longer exists, but what remains is its silent testimony.



GIUSEPPE ROCCASANTA

Double Faced



MAURO ZONCH

Pedestrian routes

Both cities offer many paths where you can get around on foot or by bicycle.



MAURO ZONCH

A meeting point in the same memory.

The two communities dedicated these monuments to the Rusjan brothers who pioneered flight. In the sky there are no borders.



GIUSEPPE ROCCASANTA

Double sense



MAURO PINOTTI

Untitled



ALBENA NIKOLOVA

San Martino Collio

Dual city between Slovenia and Italy.



ILARIA TASSINI

Border bikes

Bicycles parked near the Gorizia train station. Today there is cross-border bike-sharing between Gorica and Nova Gorica that facilitates sustainable mobility between the two cities straddling the border.



FULVIA VOGRIC

Confine ciclabile



MOJCA LIPICER STANTIČ

Untitled



ILARIA TASSINI

Red star

A red star on a monument in Nova Gorica, reminiscent of the one that stood on the Transalpine railway station in Yugoslav times.



ILARIA TASSINI

Piazza Vittoria

The contrast between the historic houses in the square (formerly Travnik, meadow in Slovenian) and the 17th-century St. Ignatius Church, flanked by the 20th-century INPS building.



MATTEO FALIERO

Untitled



NICOLA BOSCARATO

The Sun of the Future

A tidy city with signs of capitalism. But where are the people?

PLOTS OF UNUSUAL DOUBLES

LUCIA KRASOVEC-LUCAS

President of IN/Arch Triveneto

The urban history of the city of Gorizia ties in with the political events that have taken place over time, significantly altering its structure and boundaries, made intelligible by the traces that are still very evident today in both the physical and social fabric. Indeed, the present form of the city reveals not only the transformations that have taken place over time but also the different evolutionary modes and privileged geographical directions of recent times.

Squeezed between the border with Slovenia, the surrounding hilly territory, and the Soča River, the Autonomous County of Gorizia, which had consolidated mainly in the areas north, south, and west of the Castle, maintained a stable and contained form and size until the advent of manufacturing industry and the construction of the railroad. Small constructions were already lining up, however, along the main extra-urban road axes connecting with the territory, the routes of which are still recognizable towards Cormons and Udine, the Soča Valley, Aidussina and Ljubljana, and Gradisca.

With the annexation to the Austro-Hungarian Empire, the city had a great building impulse concentrated mainly along the urban routes connecting with the Trieste - Udine and Transalpine railway stations, which also determined all its later developments, both as a service city and as an imperial tourist city, referred to then as the Austrian Nice.

Before the change in the geopolitical situation, following the Great War, the axis identified by today's Corso Verdi and Corso Italia was

to become, together with the railway, an important artery linking the port of Trieste with the Germanic regions, but the forecasts of Max Fabiani's 1921 City Plan were only partially realized in the interwar period, concentrated mainly along established streets and urban systems. With the end of World War II, and the drawing of the new state border, Gorizia was confronted with a situation that would go on to affect its future to this day, namely, it found itself forced to turn its back on its eastern hinterland.

From 1947 many parts of the city therefore suddenly became peripheral, while the station of the Transalpine railway remained territorially in Yugoslavia, and the axis of today's St. Gabriel Street was interrupted in its planned function as the main route of development of the city. The continuation of this axis became in the following decades the Evriaceva Ulica, one of the main urban routes of Nova Gorica (New Gorica), the foundation of which created an unprecedented and dual condition in the relations with the cities and their territory. In fact, the Urban Plan drawn up in 1949 in the wake of the theories of the modern by architect Edvard Ravnikar (1907-1993), who had worked in Paris with Le Corbusier in 1939, represents the construction of a foundation city that in some ways also seems to function as a device for recomposition and connection between the new and the old city.

The structure of the urban organization reflected the Le Corbusieran principle of the street cross on which occurred the opposing distribution of the four main functions: administration and services (to the north), industries and residence (to the south). The center, elongated on one of the vertical sides of the cross,



LUCIA KRASOVEC-LUCAS

Ravnikar Floor Maquette

is located along the main artery, the Magistral (Magistrala), on which: "...a Mediterranean-type center is thus created along the straight road, about two kilometers long, with a dense planting of plane trees and with the construction at its edge of public buildings, offices and stores open to the sidewalk..." (E. Ravnikar).

After more than 50 years as a city of confinement, Gorizia and Nova Gorica will be able to begin to rethink in a more open way the design of connections and form, as the substance of an unprecedented relationship between history and the future, with which to activate evidence-filled planning for the construction of the memory of what will be. Starting with the hoped-for realization of the unfinished tree-lined avenue of plane trees desired by Ravnikar, as a symbol of an idea of universal spatial architecture and concord among all living beings without genetic and generational distinction.

The city fosters art, it is art itself, said Lewis Mumford, in the sense whereby art moves out of the concept of idealistic aesthetics and becomes an expression of a sum of components not necessarily identifying a single artist or historical era.

Photography is the art by which the soul of things is represented, and it is in this complex and seemingly distant urban space that the double of this city is encountered. The shifting ideal, which somehow recomposes the essence of identity and the desire to be a part of one another, is extrinsicated by the relationship that architecture forges with the semiological aspect: a system of signs to be interpreted with the possibilities of functions,

material and immaterial, communicating those to be fulfilled (Roland Barthes). In fact, using the words of Umberto Eco, what enables the use of architecture is not only the possible functions, but first and foremost the connected meanings that dispose us to the functional act. Hence, of some architectural elements one might not feel their stimulus or functionality, but only their communicative effectiveness. And based on the observations of John Klaus Koenig, if it is true that architecture as a total act is composed of sign vehicles that promote behaviors, these are signifying forms that go to connote a certain ideology of function. And again, in this experience, we can also refer to Bruno Zevi for whom if architecture is the articulation of spaces the codification of the articulation of spaces could be the one given by Euclid in his geometry, namely that the elements of first articulation will be spatial units or choremes, while the Euclidean stoichéia will be those of second. Matters that lead us to think about the need to organize rather than occupy space, in the critical Távorian idea where organizing becomes an expression of desire and a manifestation of will as well as continuity, whereby the forms registered by sight manage to establish relationships, harmonious or disharmonious, between them, which are always evident.

In conclusion, this journey through images highlights the importance of any gaze that implies and underlies an evaluation of the present objective condition of urban space, in the awareness that the task of humans is to anticipate and accommodate the changes of history. An experimentation that highlights the more or less emerged potentials that may be very useful in the process

of connecting and revising the urban double. A scientific approach of free inquiry, even emotionally, that enters into the folds to return a transversal and unexpected narrative, free of prejudice, based on a particularly profound interpretation of the term functional, understood as a place in which to finally wonder. This experience may contribute to reinventing the spaces traversed in the right way as photography returns a wealth of signs necessary to reconnect a series of relationships that may never have existed and only desired. Here, to the question how will we live in the future?, we could answer that here, now, we feel a wind of beauty and that is why we hope for a GO!2025 fruitful of new foundations, a yard of new relationships open to the future in which to live together and experience happiness.

Gorizia, Nova Gorica, Trieste, June 8 and 9, 2024

FOToclub LUCINICO



ANNALUIGIA SOLETI

[View](#)

Gorizia, located at the eastern end of the Friulian plain, is distinguished by its peculiar history related to the border between Italy and Yugoslavia, now Slovenia. A border that, during the 20th century, deeply marked the city's life, dividing it into two: Italian Gorizia and Nova Gorica, first Yugoslav and then Slovenian. The two present-day cities share a common past. For centuries, the area that today comprises Gorizia and Nova Gorica was a single urban entity, under Habsburg and then Italian rule.

A border drawn by history

In 1947, with the Treaty of Paris that followed World War II, the border between Italy and Yugoslavia bisected the city of Gorica. On September 16, American and British troops began drawing the border with lime. The eastern part, with the Transalpina train station and some neighborhoods, passed to Yugoslavia and was renamed Nova Gorica ("New Gorica") while the western part remained in Italy. Nova Gorica, in fact, was built from scratch largely after 1947. The Yugoslav authorities wanted to create a new modern socialist city in contrast

**THE GORIZIA BORDER:
A DIVIDED PAST, A UNITED PRESENT**



LAURA ZANETTI
The centre of Nova Gorica

to the “old” 19th-century capitalist Gorizia. This border deeply marked the lives of Gorizians, separating families, friends and creating a deep wound in the community. The border, it comes to be said now, was drawn without meaning and without warning to the population. The military at the time entered private property to draw a line with lime that would divide the house-leaving it on the Italian side—from the barn with the cows—which remained on Yugoslav territory or vice versa, cutting in half the vegetable garden that lay between the two, along the path of the line. The same treatment also applied to graves in some of the cemeteries located on the border, which for a long time were divided between Italy and Yugoslavia. The border was guarded by armed guards and barbed wire, and passage from one side to the other was controlled and subject to very strict restrictions.

The Gorizia Wall and the division of the city

A tangible symbol of this division was the so-called “Gorizia Wall,” a fence consisting of a concrete base wide 50 centimeters topped by a five-foot railing that ran along the boundary line, separating Transalpina Square in two.

From the Cold War to the demolition of the border

The “Gorizia Wall” became one of the most tangible symbols of the Cold War, representing the division between Western Europe and the East. In the years that followed, tensions between the two blocs remained high, with strict customs controls and limited opportunities for the population to move. However, with the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the dissolution of Yugoslavia in the 1990s, a new era finally opened for Gorizia. At 10:36 a.m. on February 11, 2004, the border between Italy and Slovenia was officially torn down, marking the end of a long period of division and with Slovenia’s subsequent entry into the European Union.



ANNUALIGIA SOLETI

Slovenia – Merna cemetery

Gorica today: a city without borders

Today, Gorizia and Nova Gorica are two cities united, not only geographically, but also by strong cross-border cooperation. The Transalpina Square, once crossed by the wall, has become a symbol of peace and cooperation, hosting events and initiatives that unite the two communities. The once impassable border has now become a line of encounter and exchange, a bridge between two cultures and two nations. Gorizia and Nova Gorica represent an exemplary model of how history, even with its wounds, can be overcome in favor of a common future under the banner of unity and cooperation.



LAURA ZANETTI

The centre of Nova Gorica



FULVIA VOGRIC
Municipio di Gorizia



FULVIA VOGRIC
Municipio di Nova Gorica



FULVIA VOGRIC

Confine valicabile

Rebirth

Today, the Gorica border is almost invisible. The barriers have been removed, the crossings have become mere city streets, and people circulate freely from one side to the other. Transalpina Square has been unified and symbolizes the rebirth of a single city.

Together toward the future

Despite their differences, Gorizia and Nova Gorica are building a common future based on cooperation, innovation, and sustainability. Their nomination as European Capitals of Culture in 2025 is a unique opportunity to celebrate their unique identity and to show the world the power of cross-border cooperation.

“Gorizia and Nova Gorica, once divided by an insurmountable border, today are an example of how history, even with its wounds, can be overcome through cooperation and the will to build a common future. The cities represent a model of peaceful coexistence and appreciation of diversity, a beacon of hope for a united Europe without borders.”



ANNALUIGIA SOLETI
From the Transalpine



FULVIA VOGRIC
Via Rastello, Gorizia



ANNALUIGIA SOLETI
San Gabriele crossing point



LAURA ZANETTI
Piazza S. Antonio



ATTILA BALOGH

Morning Exercise

Taijiquan on the riverside promenade of Shanghai.

**DOUBLE CITIES
IN THE WORLD**

**CITTÀ DOPPIE
NEL MONDO**

MANCA JUVAN



The photographic series Istanbul, Faces of Freedom by Manca Juvan is part of the Svoboda Metropole – Freedom of Metropolis, TRANS-MAKING project (2017-2022) by The Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts (ZRC SAZU). This project explores urban freedom and metropolitan life, aiming to highlight changes in urban spaces through its exhibition and accompanying book.

European cities, which were considered spaces of freedom from the high Middle Ages onwards, are experiencing new groundbreaking changes in regard to the concept of freedom in the new millennium. If until recently metropolises, including Istanbul, were observed as a safe haven for anyone who wanted to break free from the shackles of a rigid traditional way of life or flee political persecution, today's perception of urban freedom testifies to the fact that freedom can be restricted at the origin of its birth as well. On one hand, blame rests with the authoritarian policies of states seeking to exert control over urban spaces in terms of both capital and politics. On the other hand, responsibility lies with neoliberal capital, which thrives most rapidly within urban environments. And thirdly, reasons also lie in nuances in-between and various personal life circumstances.

Although Istanbul only entered history under the name Byzantium, its role remained the same: it continued to evolve into a center of different worlds and cultures. As a space of direct contact between continents and civilizations, the city was able to absorb, blend,



ISTANBUL, FACES OF FREEDOM



and transform all those who settled in it. From Asian Turks, Syrians, Kurds, Greeks, Bulgarians, Bosniaks, Albanians, Russians, and even Vikings, it formed a multi-layered mixture that extends beyond our imagination, originating from remnants of Orientalist fantasy in the European perspective, and makes this city on the Bosphorus Strait extremely special, if not unique.

Oto Luthar,
Director of the Research Centre
of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts







PAVEL GOLOVKIN



I'm mixing London and Tokyo with double-exposed film photography to create a new city. "It is the capital and largest city of the country, one of the world's major global cities, exerts a strong influence on world art, entertainment, fashion, commerce and finance, education, health care, media, science and technology, tourism, transport, and communications. It's a captivating island nation known for its picturesque countryside, historic castles, and a resilient spirit that has shaped world history." This description based on Wikipedia can be attached for London and Tokyo without changes. So close and so far cities in different cultures, meanwhile with many similarities.

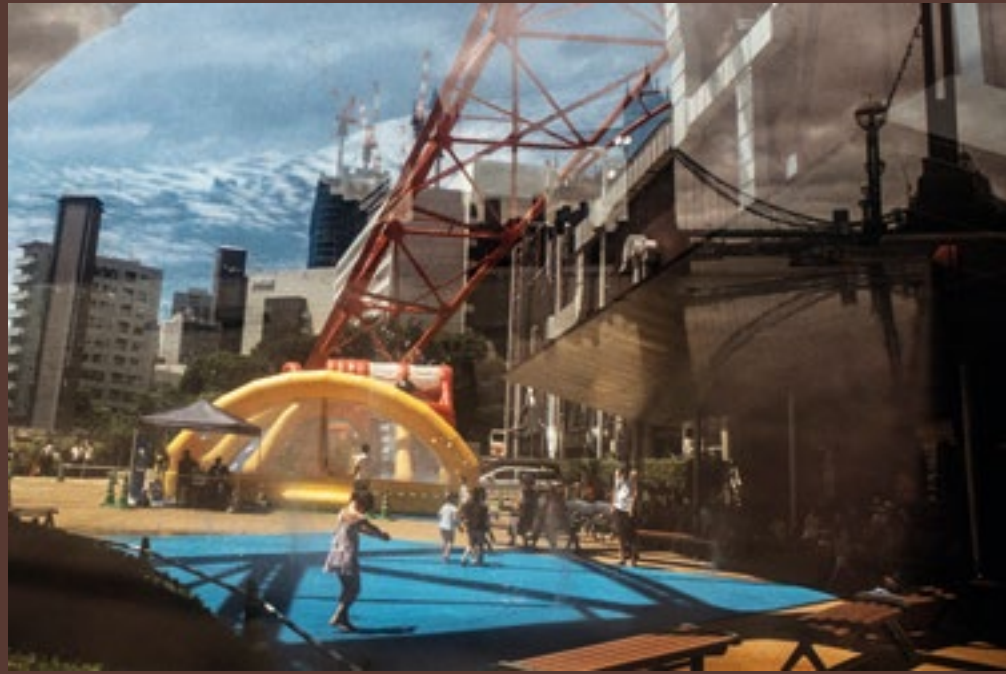
To make a visual mix of so different and so similar places I'm using the double exposed 35-mm film. Some magic power is constructing a new world alongside me. It's impossible to predict clearly what you'll have when rolling your film back and starting to expose again. You can even hold new-build negatives with new world inside.

First part of the pictures were exposed in Tokyo in 2021. London's side captured on the same frames in 2024. Feel the atmosphere, find your own place inside new spaces, enjoy the visual journey.



**THE CITIES.
2021-2024.**





MARINA DEGO



Manaus and the forest: difficult to say where one begins and the other ends. They intertwine in a tangle of interrupted roads and houses that settle among the vegetation that does not give up. The roots claim space and penetrate everywhere, until they get into your head. The city grows, disorderly, chaotic, it throws itself into the waters of the Rio Negro, it is reflected in the puddles of a rain that gives no respite. Man doubles himself, wearing the Amazon as the memory of a nature he is forgetting. He seeks the earth, he finds it again in a dream that reunites everything, where the trees meet the clouds.



MANAUS, THE OTHER FACE OF THE AMAZON







ELIS HOFFMAN



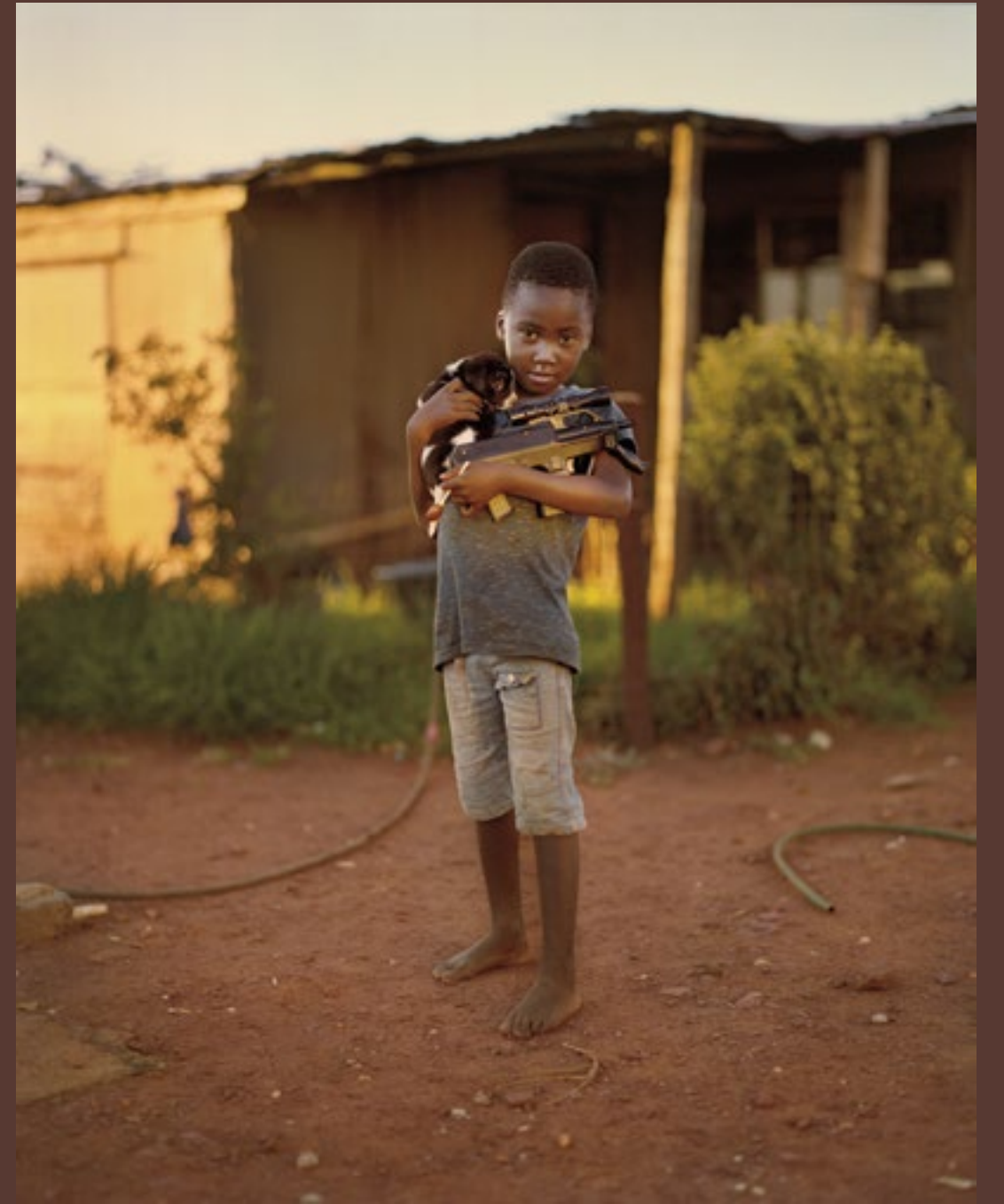
Searching for safety, somewhere to belong. Feeling meaninglessness and exhaustion without context, like being in a vacuum and not seeing a way out. The mundane becomes rituals to escape your thoughts for a little while. And those important moments of social interaction that get you through the day.

Our existential needs are fundamentally very similar. Whatever your background and your life looks like; we want to feel safe, to belong somewhere and feel like our life has some meaning. Our dreams can be different but our needs are the same. "Shadows" is a series that portray an emotional state as well as shed light on people that feel marginalized and forgotten.

"Shadows" was photographed in a squatter camp outside Johannesburg, South Africa. Maybe the only camp in South Africa that is not segregated and where people of different colors live together. The images are a part of a larger body of work.



SHADOWS









ELEONORA PANNUNZI



This line is not a border.

During a journey, I unexpectedly found myself crossing the Fusine Pass, which is an entry point into Italy from Slovenia. Soon after, I saw a sign indicating that Austria was only 6km away. I had arrived at a unique point where the borders of three countries, Italy, Slovenia and Austria, meet. This is called a triple border area, and there are only 157 such areas in the world. This experience made me realize the significance of crossing a border, inspiring me to create this photographic project called "Triland".

Triland is an investigation that explores the complexity of living in a border area that involves three different countries. Although these countries are geographically separated, they share a sense of commonality, which is expressed through cultural exchange, multilingualism and shared traditions. What is the significance of human identity when confronted with a border?

The project aims to investigate the meaning of borders in the contemporary context. It highlights the cultural and historical overlaps between the three communities and encourages us to recognize the border as an opportunity for encounter. This means that it is a chance to embrace diversity and step out of one-dimensional narratives.



TRILAND





PEDRO RIOS



Whiskey 8 is an open-air detention site that the United States Border Patrol uses to force migrants to wait before being picked up for processing in San Diego, California, right along the border with Tijuana, Mexico. Since February 2023, I have documented asylum-seeking migrants at Whiskey 8 in an area between primary and secondary 30-ft tall border walls, where they wait for hours and days, often hungry and thirsty. Some migrants arrive injured and must wait in hot or cold weather without any protection. Of specific concern is that children must endure these conditions. Like the adults, most children cross into the United States in this area by scaling border walls. When they arrive, some will play, not understanding they have crossed an international boundary. Sometimes Border Patrol agents will search them for weapons as they do everyone else. Humanitarian aid workers provide some relief to migrants by passing food, water, medical assistance, and other basic items through the steel beams of the secondary border wall.



**WHISKEY 8, AN OPEN AIR DETENTION SITE
ALONG THE TIJUANA /SAN DIEGO BORDER**





STEFANIA GIACOMIN



A mainland city and an island city, administratively, they constitute a single urban settlement divided by the lagoon and physically united by a translagoon bridge: this is how Venice has been, since 1926, the year in which the municipality of Mestre and adjacent villages were annexed to it, together with the nascent industrial center of Marghera.

Venice is therefore a double city par excellence, both physically, functionally and administratively, two cities in one so different, so close, so linked. It was in the 90s of the last century that Leonardo Benevolo consecrated its duality, basing the preliminary project for the new urban Master Plan, which he planned, on the concept of "bipolar city" (1996). The last master plan dates back to 1963, it was obsolete and disobsessed with respect to the urban reality that was deeply transformed in the following decades, leaving out the necessary structural and functional connection between the two poles.

About thirty years have passed since the Benevolo master plan, today the distances between the two cities have sharpened, disregarding their purposes and objectives: in Venice, tourism has increased exponentially, favoring its decline more and more similar to a tourist park, an open-air museum, a city increasingly emptied of residence and primary and neighborhood functions, artisanal-productive and tertiary areas that are not linked to tourism, moved to the mainland to which it is linked by the lagoon umbilical cord. The mainland city is also



BIPOLAR VENICE



affected by the increase in tourist hospitality, hotels and micro-accommodations, functional to the city of water now called “ancient city” but otherwise they are two urban realities of opposite diversity. The industrial hub of Marghera, which has been in decline for decades, is struggling to be relaunched with compatible conversions, while port and logistics activities fit well into the strategic intermodal platform of northern Italy and Europe for trade routes.

The proposed sequence focuses on the water border between the two urban realities: on the lagoon edges of both cities where one faces the other and establishing connections.



PATRICIO MICHELIN



I'm of immigrant descent with my DNA consisting of Italian and Ukrainian. My ancestors had to flee Europe due to pogroms and war, the most recent being in 1945. I was always curious about what people filled their suitcases with, what they left behind and what they took with them. One travels with memories, photographs, with light/heavy or small/big objects, but they can't transport their house. Sometimes it's not within your control when you need to leave, sometimes people are forced to leave without warning, without thinking, without doing proper logistics... Empty spaces where there was at some point life, energy, dreams or even problems and now all that is gone. Everything built, dreams, effort, work, just gone in a blink of an eye. Hence, questions like "who lived there?", "why did he leave such or such a thing?" are mind blowing trip to the past... Questions that feed the imagination as well as curiosity. The previous photos were taken in 2015, in L'Aquila, Italy, in the aftermath of the 2009 quake and 2016 in Pripjat, Ukraine inside the Tchernobyl exclusion zone.

EXCLUSION ZONE





NICOLAS BRUNETTI



Inshallah is an Arabic word, often used by Muslims, meaning 'If God wills'. It manifests the hope of a believer that an event may happen, the dream of seeing one's goal realised. The project speaks about dreams and hopes of youngsters living in the Principe Alfonso barrio, in Ceuta (Spain). These youngsters live on a social exclusion situation, feeling a sensation of suspension and waiting. They are Spanish, European, in Morocco, but they do not feel they have the same rights and therefore find themselves almost without nationality. The youngsters of Principe Alfonso cannot find work because they are considered dangerous and unskilled.

Ceuta is the city with the highest unemployment rate in Europe, where the percentage is around 30%. The land border between Ceuta and the Moroccan hinterland is fenced and monitored, with the aim of containing the entry of migrants into the semi-enclave. After the illegal entry of some 10,000 Moroccans in 2021, the border was closed definitively.

The Principe Alfonso barrio is positioned on a hill close to the Moroccan border and is described by international press as one of the most dangerous neighbourhoods in Europe. The causes are unemployment, dropping out of school (around 24% in Ceuta, roughly 56% in Principe Alfonso) and lack of prospects. The wishes of the youngsters of Ceuta are to be found between the desire to see what lies outside of this semi-enclave and to be able to be considered on an equal footing with their fellow villagers.



INSHALLAH







STEFANO GAVAZZI



Imaginary Bergamo



Real Bergamo



Imaginary Milan



Real Milan

The (Un)Real Towns photographic project was designed and created to show the border line that separates 5 cities selected for the portfolio itself.

The border line in (Un)Real Towns is not represented by a religious or cultural difference, by a border between states, or anything else, but by the dividing line between Reality and Fantasy, between reality and fiction.

Each of the 5 cities presented in the project (Bergamo, Genoa, Milan, Rome, Siena) are described by 2 photographs each: by a photograph of the real city, taken on the street by the author which defines the real part of the city, and by a photograph taken by the author of a reconstruction of the city carried out inside an amusement park.

The dividing line between reality and fantasy is not so clear, as can be clearly seen from the photographs of the project, also thanks to the black and white shots with the sharp contrasts desired by the author.

UNREAL TOWNS



Imaginary Rome



Real Rome



Imaginary Genova



Real Genova

SVEN DELAYE



In a world defined by borders, where stories unfold at the crossroads of cultures, I embarked on a journey to Tijuana, Mexico. For eight years, I have roamed the globe, seeking the places where humanity converges and diverges, where lives are shaped by the lines on a map. It is here, along the enigmatic border wall, that my lens met the heart of a complex and controversial narrative.

This photographic odyssey is a testament to my fascination with borders—their power to divide and unite, to bear witness to both hope and despair. The Tijuana Wall, standing tall and formidable, is a canvas upon which the human spirit paints stories of resilience, defiance, and survival.

As I share this collection, I invite you to become a witness to this borderland's story. Just as I have sought to capture the everyday lives in the places where I've traveled, may these monochrome frames speak to the raw humanity, the struggle, and the dreams that persist despite the imposing divide. In these images, I hope to offer a perspective on a border that transcends political discourse, revealing the lives that exist, unbroken, on its side. Thank you for joining me on this visual journey, as we explore the Tijuana Wall together.



GLIMPSE INTO LIFE ALONG THE TIJUANA WALL





FRANCESCO CAPASSO



The work of island silences aims to reflect on the theme of silence, showing the true meaning of the islands of Ischia, Procida and Capri, as if to give a double identity to these places, because beyond chaos and tourism there is a dimension suspended between reality and possibility. Through an intricate dialogue of forms, spaces, geometries and lines, the project aims to explore and reveal the deep meaning of tranquility and contemplation that characterizes these island environments. The images capture the serene and pensive atmosphere that permeates them.

"Island silences" investigates the reasons why individuals choose these places as a refuge from the hustle and bustle of the metropolis and the daily tumult by coming into sharp contradiction with the island as chaos, discos and parties. Here, amidst natural forms and local architecture, a profound interconnection between human beings and the landscape emerges, in which silence assumes a crucial role as a tool of recovery and contemplation for individual well-being.

Through photography, the project invites observers to explore and meditate on the transformative power of silence and its ability to reconcile humanity with the islands' inherent serenity.



ISLAND SILENCES





PIOTR DRAS



The story of a journey between Gdansk and Gdynia via Sopot, Poland. Created with use of infrared camera.



THE DOUBLE BUT ALSO TRIPLE CITY



NINGXIN ZHANG



When you picture Los Angeles, you might envision palm trees, drunk parties, filtered smiles and half naked models lying on a beach. When I viewed it from the perspective of a mere resident, I found the unpolished, underexposed side of this city that made it the “Homeless Republic”.

I lived in a Latino neighbourhood near the University of Southern California. It was messy, dirty, poor, and yet extraordinary - extraordinary because it was un-carved, raw, and real. Nothing seemed more carefree than the art created amidst the ruins, and nothing appeared more vigorous than the flowers blooming in the garbage dumps.

“Homeless Republic” aims to capture the often overlooked reality of the “California Republic”, highlighting the human capacity for hope and beauty even in the most challenging circumstances. This approach offers a fresh, multi-layered interpretation of the harsh realities of homelessness and poverty, juxtaposed with the prosperous and idyllic California dream.



HOMELESS REPUBLIC

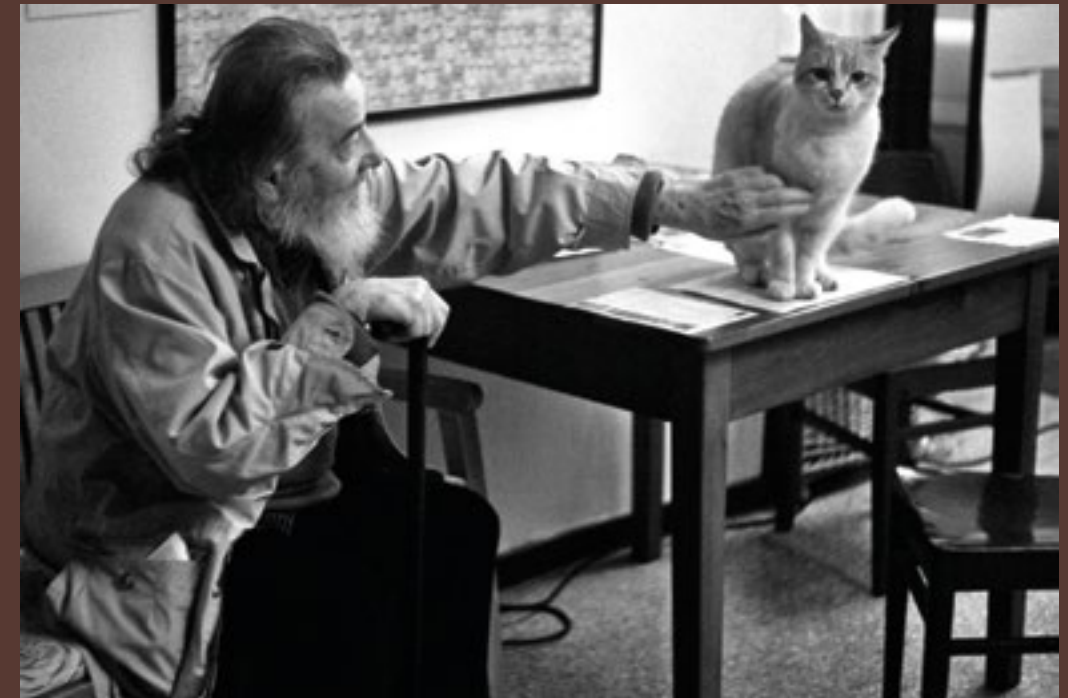




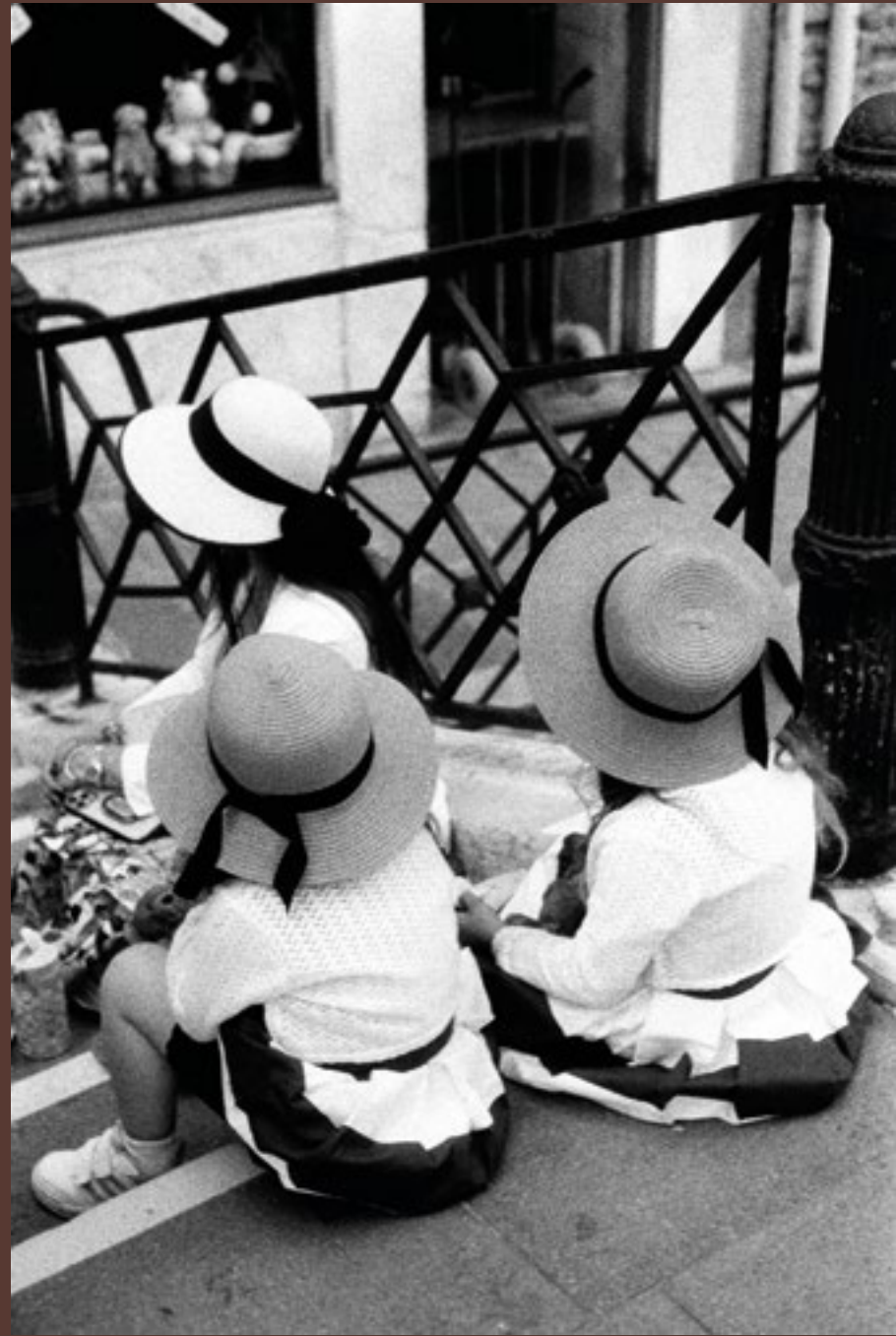
EMANUELE SCICOLONE



A Tale of two cities, two places linked by waters, shadows and blood. Padua created Venice and Venice conquered Padua. The Brenta River was the ribbon of water that connected these two places, the first of land and rivers, the second of lagoon and land. When the traveler strolls through Venice's most secret calli and campielli or Padua's sleepy rivieras and porticoes, he cannot help but feel that he is experiencing the same soul, an ancient, sleepy soul made of subtle waters and mysterious architecture. In this way Padua and Venice become the poetic choreography of endless walks in which, with my film Leica, I try to create a historical archive of my memories. Memories of the malaise of winter evenings, or of lazy late spring mornings, which are fixed on film like a sweet daydream.



A TALE OF TWO CITIES





DARIO SARTINI



Torpignattara is a city within a city, even if it is more simply a neighborhood in the eastern area of Rome where profoundly different cultures coexist and attempt to keep their traditions alive, while integrating them into the habits and customs of the host country. The neighborhood is a mosaic of nationalities, with a significant presence of communities from Asia, Africa and Latin America. This variety is evident not only in the population, but also in the numerous shops, restaurants and markets that offer typical products from different parts of the world. Torpignattara represents an emblematic example of how multiculturalism can enrich a community, promoting an environment of peaceful coexistence and cultural exchange, facilitated by the presence of numerous cultural centers, associations and places of worship that act as meeting points for the different communities.



TORPIGNATTARA
THE CITY WITHIN THE CITY



TOMASZ PADŁO



The series shows the wooden architecture of Zalog, part of Yakutsk. The intensive development of the city in recent years has resulted in the old tsarist buildings being systematically removed for the needs of new concrete buildings. The old city is losing the competition with the new one. The heritage of the region, in this large Siberian city, is dying in front of our eyes.



SLOW DEATH OF THE WOODEN CITY



CARLO DEVITI



I am a photographer passionate about telling the stories of marginalized and invisible communities. Through my lens, I have been exploring the lives of the Bajau, one of Asia's largest and most ethnolinguistically diverse groups. My project is titled "The Double City: Bajau Life between Sea and Land" and aims to highlight the complexities of this community torn between two worlds: sea and land.

The Bajau Laut, known as "sea nomads," live on small, self-made boats called lepa-lepa and depend on what the sea offers them. However, a growing number of Bajau have decided to settle permanently on land, forming the Bajau Darat group. The latter animate Kampung Mabul, a modest settlement on Mabul Island, characterized by poverty, lack of electricity and potable water, and an almost total dependence on fish for their livelihood.

This project ties in perfectly with the goals of the "The Double City" competition, which aims to explore and understand the realities of communities divided by borders. Although the Bajau are not divided by a political border, they are symbolically separated between sea and land, living two parallel lives that reflect challenges and dynamics similar to those of double cities.

Through my photographs, I intend to offer a rich and articulate view of these realities. My images document not only the economic and social hardships of the Bajau, but also their resilience and unique culture. The Bajau are often marginalized because of their nomadic lifestyle



THE DOUBLE CITY: THE LIFE OF THE BAJAU BETWEEN SEA AND LAND



and many of them are stateless, not officially recognized by governments, which makes them invisible and limits their access to essential services such as education and health care.

By participating in this contest, I hope to contribute to the understanding and awareness of the social and economic inequalities that plague not only the Bajau, but many other communities around the world. Through photographic art, we can offer an in-depth look at these complex realities and promote dialogue and action to improve the living conditions of these communities.

Each image in my project reflects my personal stylistic touch, combining elements of documentary, portrait and landscape photography to tell a complete and compelling story. I am excited to share my work and contribute to this important publishing project.





DAVIDE GRECO



Border cities share a unique characteristic: they are both geographically and politically distant from centers of power. This distance makes them ideal places to observe spontaneous forms of coexistence. In 2019, I traveled to the German-Polish border to photograph the unique connection between the border towns of Frankfurt (Oder) and Słubice. Located just an hour by train from Berlin, these towns now appear as a singular entity connected by a blue bridge, despite having been separate for 60 years.

Over the decades, these towns have experienced numerous political events that have profoundly altered their demographics and identities. Until 1945, both cities were part of the Third Reich. Post-war agreements shifted the neighborhoods east of the river, now known as Słubice, into Polish territory, forcing German inhabitants to flee overnight to the western bank. Słubice turned into a ghost town, prompting the government to repopulate it with thousands of new inhabitants from eastern Poland. This division persisted for decades, with strict controls and long waits to cross the Oder River bridge. However, this changed in December 2007 when Poland joined the Schengen area, dismantling border posts and fostering closer ties between the two cities. This integration sparked cross-border development in urban planning, services, education, tourism, and creativity.



**SŁUBFURT:
A EUROPEAN DOUBLE DREAM**



In 1999, German artist Michael Kurzwelly from Frankfurt (Oder) introduced the concept of “Stubfurt,” a virtual union of the two towns with a real council body. This initiative aimed to combat stereotypes formed over 60 years of separation, promoting a collaborative environment where residents could shape a new, shared identity. I believe that the story of this specific borderland, marked by past conflicts and demographic upheavals, offers valuable insights into the ongoing discussions about new conflicts at Europe’s doorstep. This project was co-financed by a STEP travel grant from the European Cultural Foundation Labs.



TRAVIS JENSEN



"TWO CITIES" is a long-term project captured on the streets of San Francisco and Los Angeles over a period of 15+ years. This project is massive, so it wasn't easy to narrow it down to 10 images. While San Francisco and Los Angeles are geographically close, the two cities are very different culturally and have a huge rivalry. I'd really like to showcase this project on a larger scale in the future.



TWO CITIES: SAN FRANCISCO & LOS ANGELES





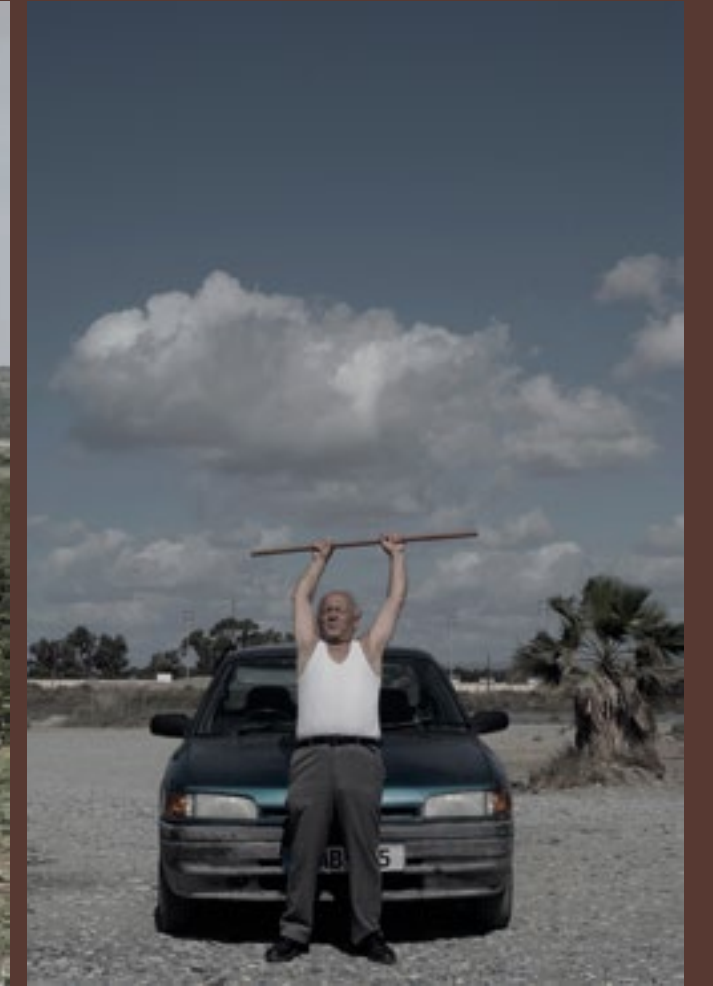
ENRICO DORIA



This photographic work was created in Cyprus, the only Mediterranean island divided between Europe and the Middle East. Taksim in Turkish means “division”, because Cyprus represents the last European land to have for a very long (too) long time a wall that divided the island in two parts, following the Turkish invasion of 1974. In the northern part, self-proclaimed Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, not recognized by any European member state, commercial areas alternate with deserted neighborhoods with houses that have never been inhabited since the year of the invasion. There are visible differences with the southern, Greek-Cypriot part, which is much more touristy and popular. Over time there have been attempts to unify the island, always rejected by the inhabitants themselves, especially Greek Cypriots; and so, to this day, Cyprus remains divided into two parts and the respective governments maintain a problematic relationship. Furthermore, the Cyprus route attracts more and more migrants from the Middle East and makes it the European Union country with the highest percentage of asylum seekers compared to the population, making reception measures difficult. Cyprus, a tax haven and attraction of capital even of dubious origin, therefore represents one of the symbols of this Europe, with its many contradictions, hypocrisies, and attempts at mediation and dialogue with the countries facing the Old Continent.



TAKSIM





GIANNI OLIVETTI



BELFAST. 26 years since the Good Friday peace accords. Walls dividing Catholic and Protestant neighborhoods, (the first ones built during the Troubles, in 1969) instead of being torn down are being raised and increasing in number. The gates are closed at night. Murales and political symbol recall the past and anchor the present to a hatred that despite agreements and promise continues to divide the two communities.



PEACE WALLS



VICTOR VARGAS VILLAFUERTE

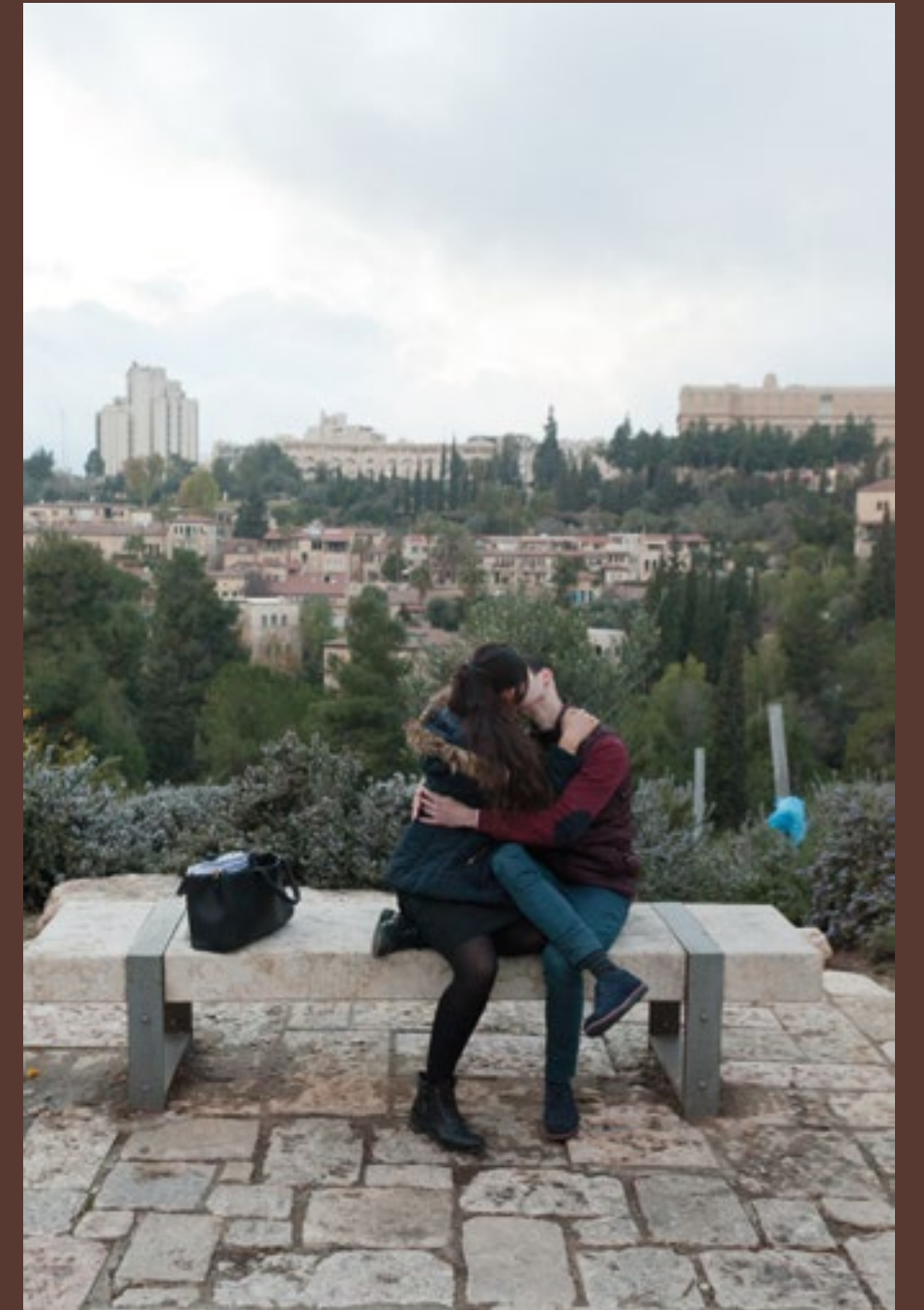


The city of Jerusalem is one of the oldest continuously inhabited cities in the world. It plays a central role in the three Abrahamic religions: Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Historically the city has been a target of power struggles and wars but always remaining as a center of pilgrimage where people of different religious and origins interact.



JERUSALEM





LUCA GRECO



The conflict in Northern Ireland seems to have never existed. Since the end of the troubles, a veil of fog has descended over the island. But Belfast, in the heart of democratic Europe, quietly continues to burn. There are walls that still divide Catholics and Protestants. There are Bloody Sundays for which even today no one is a state. The project consists of 5 pairs of photographs that tell, showing the same places and moments from opposite points of view, the crumbling, in the skies of Ireland, of the commonplace of a united and pacified Europe.



THE SKIES OF IRELAND



MARIA KREMNEVA



Baarle-Hertog and Baarle-Nassau form one of the most fascinating examples of geopolitical complexity, a legacy of medieval land divisions that remain in modern Europe. Its unique status as a series of Belgian enclaves within the Netherlands, with some enclaves containing Dutch enclaves, creates a remarkable case of international cooperation and coexistence.

The double-enclave border situation in Baarle-Hertog and Baarle-Nassau creates a complex yet intriguing economic environment. The presence of unpoliced borders within businesses adds a layer of complexity, and residents and businesses exploit jurisdictional differences. Some businesses are physically split by the border, with the division often marked by tiles on the floor. For instance, a café might have tables in both Belgium and the Netherlands, each side adhering to its respective country's rules on taxes, smoking regulations, and other legal requirements.

The borders are marked by metal plates and white crosses on the ground, indicating whether a spot is in Belgium or the Netherlands. These markers are a tourist attraction in themselves. Some houses have two different address numbers—one for each country. The unique border situation attracts tourists, leading to a disproportionately high number of shops, hotels, and cafes.

The intertwined towns of Baarle-Nassau and Baarle-Hertog marked by numerous border crossings exemplify one of the most complex border situations in the world.



THE ORDINARY EXTRAORDINARY



ZUZANA JAROŠOVÁ



In cities, we experience everything, but I especially perceive contrasts, i.e. dualities: joy and sadness, company and solitude, happiness and unhappiness, poverty and wealth. Every city is my home, because I always see the same things, in the city I feel that even these contrasts have their own space and it is up to us what we will do with them, I watch them and capture them.



**WE ARE CONTRASTS,
WE ARE CITIES**





THE SOUL OF A PLACE

"We may not realise it, but places have a soul.

The pagans first, and the Romans after them, came up with several variations on the ancient idea of the Genius Loci, yet the one most relevant to us was formed in modern times in the area of architecture and has over the years become an expression used to define the distinguishing set of social, cultural and architectural features, and those of language and customs, of a place, space, town or city.

Eugenio Novajra's shots of Berlin can effectively be placed within this context as we are clearly not looking at a gallery of pictures created solely to describe places, even if with an aesthetic slant, but instead at a narration of visual emotions experienced personally, the product of a photographic exploration into places in a "double" city whose special atmosphere stems from their present and past history.

In the first part of the work, produced in sunlight, it is immediately clear that Novajra is not interested in lining up a series of "postcards from Berlin" which triumphantly extol the city's "attractions" according to now hackneyed stereotypes, but instead his attention focuses

EUGENIO NOVAJRA



The sky over Berlin

BERLIN ELSEWHERE



Tacheles

on apparently marginal urban sites and on the so-called “non-places” with a wholly special capacity for a new and elegant reading that restores their significance. This comes from his special sensibility for getting into tune with his surroundings in order to give these places, spaces, colours and lights, soul and meaning. Basically a place is never just that place. That place is also a part of us, above all when we instinctively stop to look at it.

The technique of slowing down to stop and look, in photography, always works and Novajra is very familiar with it as he leads us in this slow-paced exploration of anonymous spots with the great skill of a consummate receiver of messages on frequencies which not everyone can pick up. At times it seems as if the places, in their stillness, have stayed there for years, waiting for someone to notice them, take care of them, frame them and take a photo, breaking down their anonymity, redeeming them and therefore elevating them to “artwork” status.



Planterwald

Naturally photography cannot convey to us noises, smells, physical sensations linked to the wind, rain, heat or cold, therefore the personal experiences of the photographer come to us through a filter, partly empty of many sensations and we often read them in a purely aesthetic register. Nevertheless if we superimpose the aesthetic dimension over the sensorial one, which we can only imagine, we obtain a sum which gives this work depth and substance. In certain very famous places, such as the dome of the Reichstag or the Holocaust memorial, the photographer uses a blurred idiom to avoid the banality of pure presentation and follows the example of the intentional error, so close to the hearts of the twentieth-century avant-garde. He repeats this also when producing a lyrical shot of bird flight at the end of the day.

In the second part of his narration he moves forwards into the night darkness, always alluring with that touch of mystery which it undoubtedly has, yet in any case lit by artificial lights which irradiate a special energy, a radiant force which is often combined



Tempelhofer Feld

with bright colours, or maps out futuristic and slightly surreal atmospheres of reflections in which shaded and ghostly human shapes move silently. Here we are transported into a dreamlike dimension, into perspective shots of tunnels as yet unexplored, our eyes drawn to them. It's as if his photography has got lost to some extent, in the sense that it seems to be moving forwards hesitantly, prey to that pleasant feeling of disorientation you can only experience in a "double" city like Berlin.

When we get to the last page we realise that we've been caught up in the images, that the experience was like seeing urban mirages, perceived as reality dissolving in a series of frames of a splendid dream in which we immersed ourselves before getting onto the next yellow train, since we've missed this one by a whisker."

Guido Cecere



Karl Marx Allee

LUIGI MANZIONE



'Double' is not only what multiplies unity by two as quantity, but also as quality. It is therefore synonymous with 'other': the 'double city' is, at the same time, the 'other city', inhabited by people from different backgrounds and cultures. In a sense, it is also the 'mirror city' where co-present cities reflect each other and give rise to complex, multi-ethnic and multi-cultural organisms.

An eloquent example is Chinatown, the Chinese quarter of Paris, located between the avenues de Choisy and d'Ivry and the boulevard Masséna. After 1975, the year of the liberation of Saigon, thousands of Vietnamese, Cambodian and Laotian refugees reached Paris, where they found a newly built urban area, which already housed one of the first Asian colonies: the quartier des Olympiades, with its 32-storey towers, largely uninhabited since they had not been popular with Parisians. This is how the Chinese (more appropriately Indo-Chinese) quarter, also known as the 'triangle de Choisy' or 'Petite Asie', came into being in the 13th arrondissement: Europe's largest Chinatown, inhabited by some two hundred thousand people, with the ethnic Chinese group predominating.

Leaving the Porte de Choisy métro station, which Parisians call 'Porte des Chinois' not by chance, we find ourselves in front of a neighbourhood that seems in some respects a paradise for the flâneur: overcoming the hierarchies and prohibitions imposed by modern (or post-modern) life, it is possible to wander here by day and by night, under the glittering lights of lanterns and neon.



PARIS, CHINATOWN: A POSTMODERN AND ARCHAIC ELSEWHERE



Here, everything is intertwined: communities, ethnic trade (as in the large 'Tang Frères' supermarket), global consumption, languages (in addition to Vietnamese, Laotian and Khmer, Cantonese and Teochew dialects are spoken), skyscrapers and pagodas (or roofs in the shape of). More than a 'melting pot', it is a space of assimilation - a typically French strategy of inter-ethnicity - which emphasises the points of contact between cultures and inhabitants to build convergence and coexistence between individuals and communities. Without forgetting that 'Only You... True'.



MONIKA ALFF



Guarding the division

I lived in the Republic of Cyprus between 2013 and 2015.

As part of an art project I photographed the border area, the Green Line, of the divided city of Nicosia.

My portfolio contains 18 images that document how the more than 60 year old conflict between the Turkish occupied north of Nicosia and the Republic of Cyprus is still alive and how its sentiment is expressed along the demarcation line in the southern part of the city – the capital of the Republic of Cyprus.

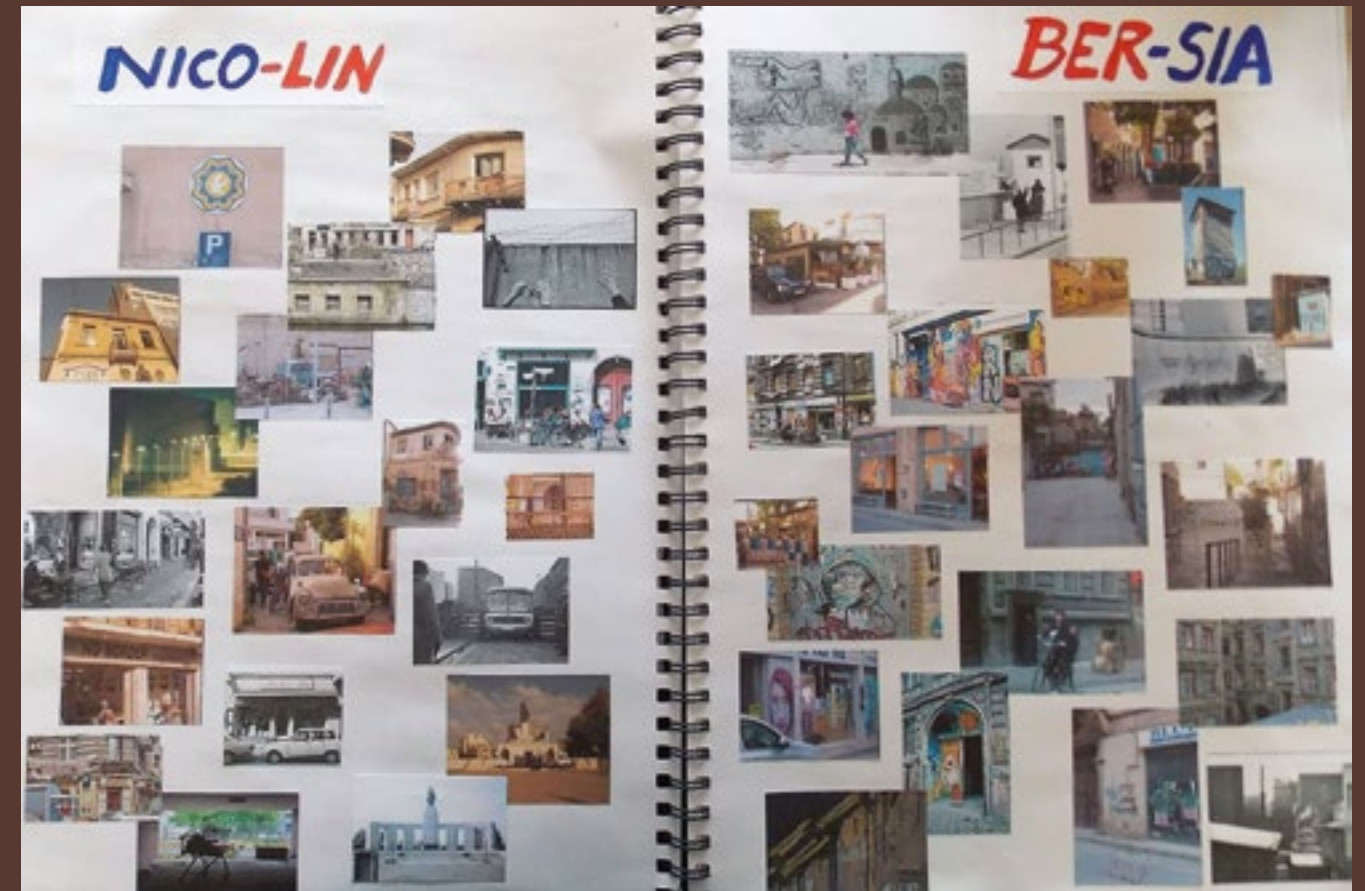
The photographs contrast peoples living areas along the Green Line with the omnipresent signs of resistance. As the political situation in Cyprus has not changed since I took the photographs I trust that my images are as current as ever.



AN OLD CONFLICT



The liberty monument



Nicosia Berlin

My photographs were part of a bigger project that compared Nicosia and the divided Berlin in which I grew up. The comparison revealed striking cultural similarities, which I could also sense whenever I explored Nicosia. Despite the many differences between the cultures the city invoked in me an instant and unexpected feeling of familiarity.

I therefore include a picture of a photo collage that compares the two cities. I used my own photos of Nicosia and juxtaposed these with images of Berlin taken from the internet.

The comparison resulted in an artwork titled "Division in Perspective", which explores the ambiguous realities of living in a divided city.



Berlin Wall Cafe Nicosia



Not an hour in the army

KAROLIS CIVINSKAS



Plant

This project began as a photographic investigation into the architectural uncanny. As it progressed, a certain methodological pattern emerged. I have arrived at an understanding that, through constant repetitive encounters, particular elements of the built environment obtain status of a personal landmark. These landmarks (street corners, gaps between buildings, facades, plants, dead-ends, etc...) connect into a personal network that not only guarantees successful navigation, but also establishes familiar territory.

In my practice camera produces an archive of fragments of the space I traverse through on a daily basis. Out of this archive a map of personal significance emerges through a symbolic act of image building. Every image in the series is a composite of two separate and unique negatives. Although this may not be instantly evident, upon discovering the physical split in the image, the viewer is invited



MAPPING PERSONAL SIGNIFICANCE



Cab

to reflect on his/her own relation to the urban matter. Moreover, this collaging further emphasises the materiality of the photograph itself, serving as a reminder of its constructed nature. It also raises questions about the limitations of photography as a medium to record the operator's presence in the world: every frame leaves out far more than it captures.

This fragmentary method is also illustrative of the way we remember places: they are never complete in our memory but emerge as a collection of key elements. This emergence quite often can be rather distressing and uncanny, nevertheless inviting to inspect our relation to the place we occupy and traverse through.

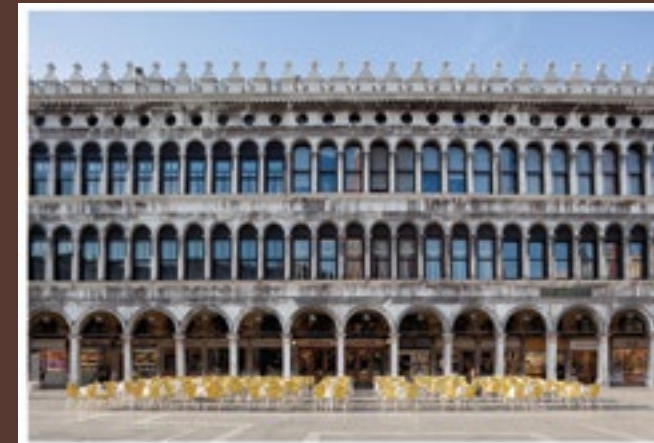


Scaffold



Roundabout

LUCA CASONATO



"3Venices" is a photographic project on Venice, or rather on the three Venices in the world. It focuses on the identity, cultural and architectural heritage of Venice: the project aims to be a photographic reasoning about Venice's architectural elements which have made it a topos, a symbol, all over the world. Moreover, the photos bring to light the elements of modernity of the contemporary Venices: Venetian Macao and Venetian Las Vegas.

3VENICES





LUCA VERONESI



The park

The ARAN skyscraper, a stone's throw from Ferrara's railway station, is a complex designed and built in the late 1950s on the wings of one of the first building speculations of the post-war "economic boom".

This building consists of two towers 80 metres high, 20 floors and almost 200 apartments. It is home for people of almost 30 different nationalities, including Filipinos, Pakistanis, Nigerians, Cameroonians, Moroccans and Chinese. However, contrary to what the locals imagine, this place is also home for many Italians, seeking a more affordable housing. It's literally a city within a city. A Tower of Babel where different cultures coexist, meet and compare each other every single day.

The ecosystem of this construction is very dynamic, surrounded by many shops and a large park where the diverse communities come together. After years of stigmatising information or political propaganda that favoured a progressive ghettoisation of the housing complex, The Babel's Tower project tells a different perspective of this community.



The Last Carousel

BABEL'S TOWER



Popular garden library



The chapel



The skyscraper



Grocery store



The petrochemical compound



Handmade clothes

ROBERTO MIGLIORE



In Mazara del Vallo you looked at the wall between the beach and the road. There was an inscription, "CAOS," at the top, separated from the bottom by a thin line. You thought: what is a line, what is a border? You asked yourself, what is chaos? Your Sicily, you thought, is the paradigm of chaos. Different cultures, looking at each other from afar, meeting each other, embracing each other. That wage war against each other. That they enrich and that they frighten. You thought that a border line separates-unites the many Sicilies. Thin line, sometimes invisible, that separates bodies, spaces and materials and makes them dual cities.



BORDERLINES



STEFANO MARCHEI



Berlin was the city of the wall, a double city divided by 45 km of internal wall and 115 km around it. Two politically, ideologically and economically divided realities that can still be observed and coexist in the same city.



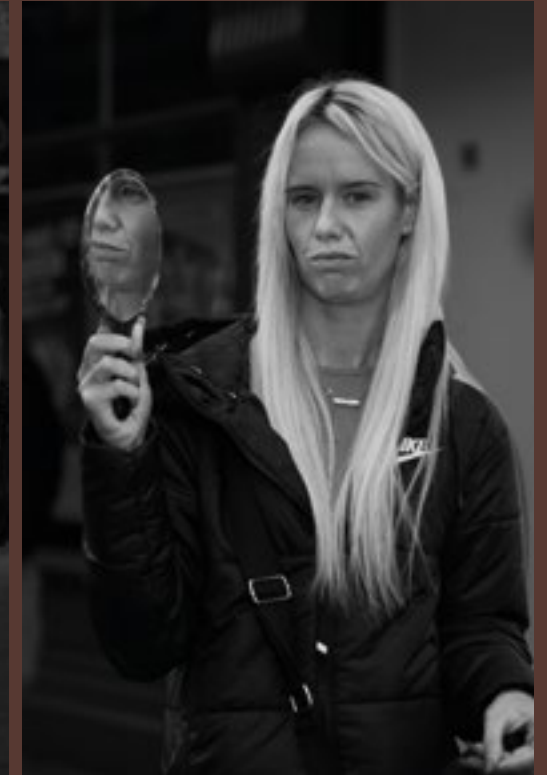
THE CITY OF THE WALL







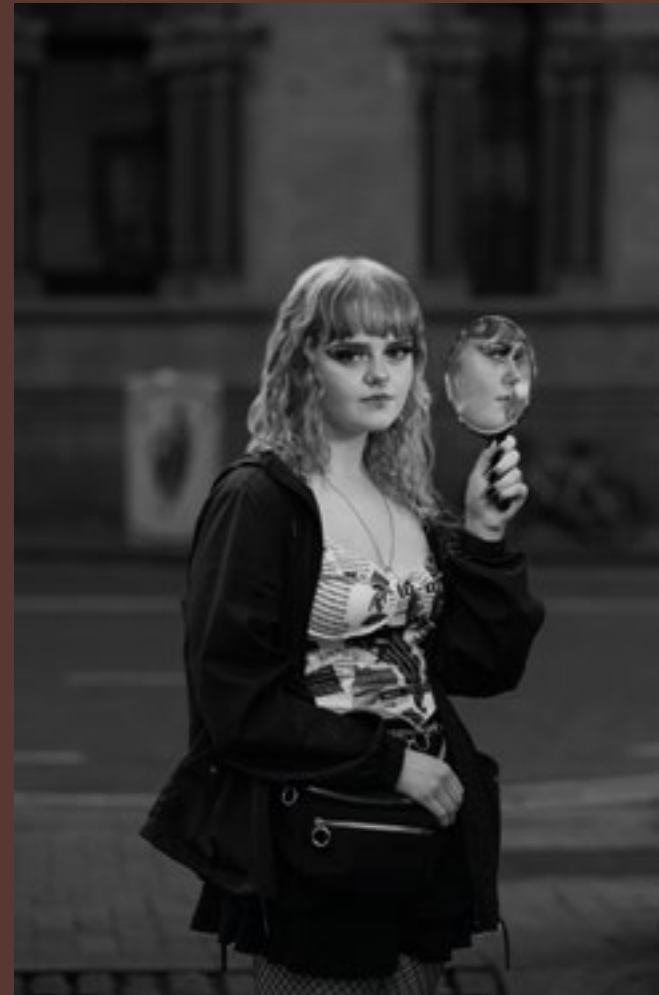
DEIRDRE BRENNAN



Dublin is becoming an increasingly diverse city, with 12 per cent of the population in Ireland made up of non-Irish citizens. The 100th anniversary of the foundation of the Irish State was an opportunity for me to gauge the state of the nation on the streets of Dublin in terms of class, race and social struggle. The Irish Free State was established 100 years ago when King George V signed a proclamation on December 6, 1922. Members of the public pose with a 1920's Bakelite mirror reflecting on the past hundred years. It was quite difficult to find a mirror that was 100 years old. As luck would have it I ventured down an unknown street in Belfast one day on a visit and came across Pretty Vintage Belfast. The lady disappeared beneath the counter for a few minutes and re-emerged with the beautiful 1920's mirror. She remarked that I was sent to her.

When asked of their opinion about the state of the nation since independence from Britain, subjects responded with a mixture of positive and negative commentary, with a lot of emphasis on the social problems facing modern Ireland.

REFLECTING ON 100 YEARS OF THE IRISH STATE





ALESSANDRO ALFANO

Tre Torri, City Life

Citylife and Milan's Isola District: two cutting-edge green projects in which smart city buildings are fully automated and powered by renewable energy sources with zero environmental impact.

Lots of innovation and progress but at the same time ensuring the city's connection with natural rhythms and the presence of various animal and plant species. Green helps mitigate the impacts of climate change by helping to save energy, reducing air conditioning needs, is an excellent air filter, removing harmful pollutants and fine particulates. In addition, urban green spaces, encourage active and healthy lifestyles, improve mental health, prevent disease, and provide a place where people can socialize.

Two sides of the same coin, the modern, high-tech one and the green, sustainable one in favor of the common good.



CITY IN TRANSITION





Isola district



The vertical forest



CityLife



Isola district

JØRGEN JACOB JENSEN



Tarlabasi is a rather small neighbourhood in Istanbul, north of the posh and expensive Taksim square and Taksim area - it used to be the home of people working for the nearby embassies and for the jewish community of Istanbul. Today it is the home of hookers, drug dealers and all the refugees of Africa and the Middle East fleeing war and poverty, that are not allowed to enter the EU. Now they're tearing down the old worn out buildings, building new houses for the richer people, leaving the inhabitants with nowhere to live.



TARLABASI







GIORDANO SIMONCINI

Titicaca Lake: Middle Land

A mixed group of Peruvians and Bolivians crosses Lake Titicaca, a middle ground between Peru and Bolivia characterized by a strong cultural mix.



ALESSANDRO BARTOLINI

Sunrise at Check-Point

4:00 a.m. The 'prison' checkpoint of Bethlehem, the city of peace. Hundreds of people stand in line, forced to keep vigil, inside a cage made of bars and sheet metal, on a livid dawn of any other day. Mohammed also got up at 3 a.m. today to try to pass this wall and go to work.



SHAIVAL POMAL

Ahmedabad



SHAIVAL POMAL

Ahmedabad heritage city



ATTILA BALOGH

Victoria bay

Taijiquan on the riverside promenade of Shanghai.



ATTILA BALOGH

Larung Gar

Larung Gar Buddhist Academy, also known as Serthar Buddhist Institute, sits in the Larung Valley at an elevation of 4,000 meters. With about 20 thousand monks and nuns this is the largest Buddhist settlement on the world.



ATTILA BALOGH

Taijiquan on the riverside promenade of Shanghai.

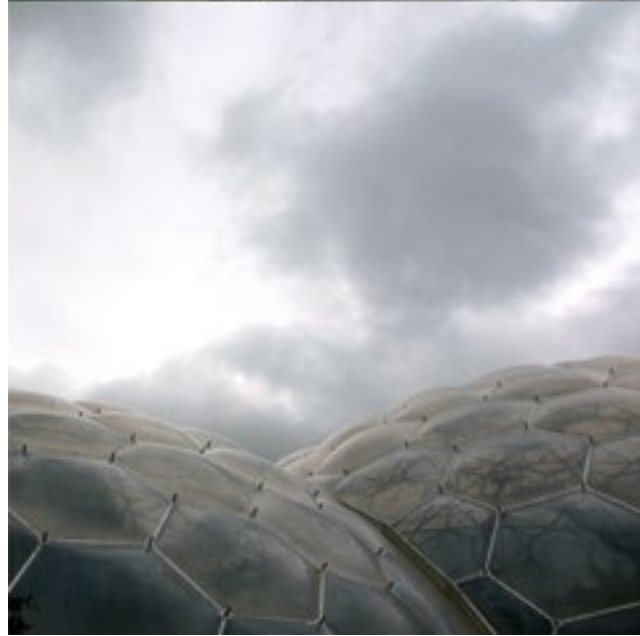
Chi Lin nunnery at night



ATTILA BALOGH

The new Atyrau pedestrian bridge over Yesil River, built for the 20th birthday of the capital city of Kazakhstan. The outer shell of the bridge resembles fish scales — the symbol of the Atyrau region; the decorative structure of the bridge consists of 2,450 aluminum petals, each of them has a unique shape.

Astana



Warm sunny city with fresh mist cold air next to a glass window to cool down versus a cold cloudy place with rainy misty clouds in the air, glass structure protects the inside for cold and rain.
In my work I try to create a new visual poetry with the juxtapositions of 2 photos. It's a nice concept to share my idea to look more around us and discover the simplicity & details on our way of life.
Searching the rhythm in the unnoticed and enjoy small things.

*** mist air ***

INGE D'HAEYER



VALENTINA D'ALIA

Old and new in Rotterdam



VERONICA FAVIA

Barriers

“Peace walls” are physical barriers that separate communities that are still very, too psychologically divided in their beliefs and their reasons. No one knows exactly how many walls, gates and interfaces (i.e., contested spaces where tensions can escalate to physical confrontations) there are currently in Belfast. These changing areas, excluding the more traditional ones, change quite rapidly.



VERONICA FAVIA

Gun and flag

The first “peace wall” was installed in 1969, and many more have sprung up since then. Even at a time when paramilitary groups had declared their own ‘cease-fire,’ and thus violence diminished, barriers and walls were being put up, often at the very behest of the inhabitants of the areas at risk.



WALTER BASTIANI

At sunset, between muezzins and bells, Mostar.

...Leaving, one more stop and, there, amid invocations of muezzins and bells, an image of the heart.



NASTARAN TAFAZOLI

But the same view!

The double colors, the same views of windows in the alleys of Nuremberg.



MARIO MATÍAS PEREDA BERGA

Hebron



ROLAND OKON

Jump into the future



ALESSIO FRANCONI

Dragon teeth

Between Italy and France runs an important border, in history marked by important divisions. Here on the mountain pass of the Piccolo San Bernardo blood was shed. In June 1940 Mussolini ordered the attack to France. Signs of war are still all around like bunkers and fortresses. A long anti-tank barrier runs along the border. Thanks to the European Union, silence and peace prevail. This photo is part of the reportage 'Here they fought'.



ALESSIO FRANCONI

Tornio Haparanda

Two wedding rings stand clear next to the border between Finland and Sweden symbolizing the union and love between the two towns. The border runs with the Torne River. Crossing the river means also travelling in time: Tornio, in Finland is one hour ahead compared with Haparanda in Sweden. When I passed it was a full arctic winter with a snowstorm going on, giving to the place a white peaceful landscape.



JULIA BORG CUOMO

Valletta Balconies

The Gallarija (pl: gallariji) is a typical element of vernacular Maltese architecture, consisting of an ornate closed wooden balcony. The term is of Italian origin, but with a shift in meaning (galleria, covered passage, vs balcone, balcony).



TOMASZ PADŁO

Tradition and modernity



ENRICO DORIA

Egoli - the city of gold

Egoli, the city of gold, is one of many names of Johannesburg and still today tells about the dramatic and poignant story of the South African mines and the apartheid regime around which the industry has been enhanced. But Johannesburg is especially the most populous and economically most important city of the country and perhaps it is the representation of the complex contradictions of South Africa, often violent and sudden. In the post apartheid years, the city has tried to find its identity and to invent a new story: it was a mosaic of opposite souls, consisting of over six million people (whose number is increasing day by day due to the influx of illegal immigrants who come from all over Africa), who speak a dozen languages, from Afrikaans, Zulu, English into street language, a language invented cross daily, which draws a bit from all languages and just talking here. A city-lab, then, which is divided between great wealth and deep misery and that is moving towards a new model of integration and peaceful coexistence, to be invented.



ENRICO DORIA

Egoli - the city of gold

These images then show the reality of a city that despite welcomes millions of people from all over Africa, possesses a solitary and silent soul, wary and varied, with its streets which, at the end of the day, are depopulated and are left to themselves; images telling about the true soul of the city, each day reclaimed and made anew in hopes and dreams, too many times disillusioned; images telling about the city of the blacks (80% of the total population), far from that one represented by upscale neighbourhoods for whites, surrounded by walls.



SANKARI ROY

Engines - Old versus new

This image shows engines of different speed and generation. Steam engines are heritage now. This image also shows a generation gap of vehicles where earlier people used to use toy trains because they had less options and now they have options of private cars, buses, two-wheelers and more.



HASAN UREY

Untitled

360 degrees spherical panorama of Manhattan in New York and New Jersey below.



FABIO NEGRI

Explain to me

“So explain to me in prose or verse, because the sky is only one and the earth is all in pieces” (Gianni Rodari).
The author is deliberately concise: Gianni Rodari’s verse overlaps eloquently with the historical moment that the world is experiencing and with the primordial human attitude of appropriation.



MACIEJ LEWANDOWSKI

Quarteira

Double city of Quarteira in Portugal - city of decay and city of tourism. Nature reclaiming space in front of modern luxury apartments.



STEFANIA GIACOMIN

Venezia/Valdrada

"[...] The mirror now enhances the value of things, now denies it. Not everything that seems worth above the mirror endures when mirrored. The twin cities are not the same, for nothing that exists or happens in Valdrada is symmetrical: every face and gesture is answered by the mirror by an inverse face or gesture point by point.

The two Valdradas live for each other, looking into each other's eyes all the time, but they do not love each other."

from "The Invisible Cities" by Italo Calvino, 1972

Insular Venice and industrial Venice, Marghera, like Valdrada are the same city, facing each other in the lagoon, looking at each other, mirroring each other. But the two souls are so different.



ELISA CRESTANI

Generations

Generations compared, from childhood to youth, to old age, cultures that pass through the city follow one another.



ANIL PUROHIT

Upside down in city



ALIREZA POURKHAN

Two forms of life

The interpretation or the factors that I have tried to consider together in this photo can be summarized in these words: difference, contrast, distance meanwhile being near together, interaction and adjacence of 2 cultures or 2 forms of life.



ANIL PUROHIT

Drying out



KHANJAN PUROHIT

Clothesline in city



KHANJAN PUROHIT

The lord in the city



ELENI CHATOU

Ceremony of resurrection of Jesus Christ at the Ethiopian orthodox church

There is an Ethiopian community in Athens, Greece who have their own church to pray. I have captured the community in May 2024.



ORNA NAOR

Israeli and Palestinian children from the Jordan Valley.

Hope for a better future



MARCIN STARZOMSKI

30.05 Wrocław, Poland. Corpus Christi.

Corpus Christi – crossing paths



ANIL PUROHIT

Chasing pigeons city roof



ANTONINO CLEMENZA

Berliner Mauer



GIUSEPPE MARIA GALASSO

Checkpoint Charlie

Checkpoint Charlie, which has become a tourist attraction.



GIUSEPPE MAIONE

East side



ALJONA DIACHENKO

Sunset in the city



MARK NEDZBALA

The dark Piazza Sant'Antonio



LIVIA FAVIA

They call them peace walls or peace lines, because when they were erected by the British Army after the August 1969 clashes that ushered in the Troubles between pro-British Protestant Unionists and pro-Irish Catholic Republicans, Belfast was a theater of war, and those barriers were supposed to provide protection for communities. To date, of fragmented and scattered walls, there are a hundred, mostly in the north and west neighborhoods of the city, more than a dozen of which were built in the years following the Good Friday peace accords (April 10, 1998) that marked the official end of the conflict and the laying down of arms by the loyalist paramilitary groups - UVF (Ulster Volunteer Force) and UDA (Ulster Defense Association) - and nationalist groups - IRA (Irish Republican Army).

For those who have been born in Belfast over the past fifty years, peace lines have nothing eccentric about them; they are an integral part of the city, articulations of the urban fabric complete with gates that open by day and close by night, hinges and scars, but also pages of a history illustrated in pictures and painted in strong colors. An iconic symbol of the city, and now also a tourist attraction, the murals that cover Belfast's walls from both sides tell opposing stories: on the one hand, the epic, belligerent epic of the Unionist fighters studded with Union Jacks, symbols and royalist portraits; on the other the struggle for the liberation of a united Ireland from the yoke of British colonialism and its martyrs, including Bobby Sand and the other IRA militants who died like him after a long hunger strike in Long Kesh prison, flanked punctually by the faces of Mandela, Che Guevara, Leyla Khaled and other heroes of international resistance.

In spite of the frescoes, the city walls serve neither a purely decorative nor a purely propagandistic function, which is why despite the 10-year dismantling plan proposed in 2013 by the Belfast Executive, the demolition process has stalled, and residents on both sides of the barricades little in favor of accelerating it.

Do not cross



ANSELME TOCANIER

The Dubai Frame

The Dubai Frame is an architectural project which separates the city in two parts. You can see the old city through one side of the frame and the modern city through the other side. So beautiful and unique.



DANIELA RADICE

Double Nonspecular

Lavena Ponte Tresa, a border town with Switzerland.
A strip of land and water dividing and uniting two nations, an intense and emotionally charged moment stopped by time in an autumn snapshot.



JÜRGEN STEIN

Bell of peace

The bell is found at Polish-German double city Frankfurt/Oder - Slubice at Odra river.



RUSTY WESTON

This photographic diptych shows an unfinished border wall at Eagle Pass, Texas, USA. It's a "Big beautiful wall," according to former President Donald Trump.



Big beautiful wall



DANIEL MEEGAN

Renewed



STEFANIA GIACOMIN

Untitled

Urban renovations in cosmopolitan Pest, create temporary urban voids where street artists leave their ephemeral art.



MARIA KREMNEVA

Crazy borders



HUGO PALOTTO

Vallecas - The entropy of a city within

The community spirit in Vallecas is legendary. In the past, when new arrivals struggled to find affordable housing, residents would come together to build makeshift homes under the cover of darkness. This collective effort was a direct response to the threat of eviction and police intervention, showcasing the neighborhood's determination to protect its own.



HUGO PALOTTO

Vallecas - The entropy of a city within

The spirit of Vallecas is one of unity and collective strength. Whether it's standing up against external threats or supporting each other in times of need, the residents of Vallecas have always stood together.



LYZA SAHERTIAN

City on reflection



MIHAEL VECCHIET

Urban rurality



ROSELLA TAPPELLA

Double faced

Turbigo is a town in Lombardy on the border with Piedmont from which it is separated by the Ticino River. Turbigo is part of the Ticino Valley, is surrounded by woods and countryside with interesting nature and historical trails, and is flanked by the Naviglio Grande that reaches Milan. After intense industrialization due to the large amount of water available, it suffered the closure of many companies as in many parts of Italy, but it remained the site of the Hydroelectric Power Station founded back in 1908. From later renovations, it was converted into a thermal power plant. Turbigo is literally broken in two by the passage of the Naviglio River. Natural landscape on one side, smokestacks and electricity production (moreover, indispensable) on the other. The photo does not show the Naviglio, but the trees that line it typical of the surrounding nature, over which the smokestacks rise menacingly.



VIVIAN WONG WING LAM

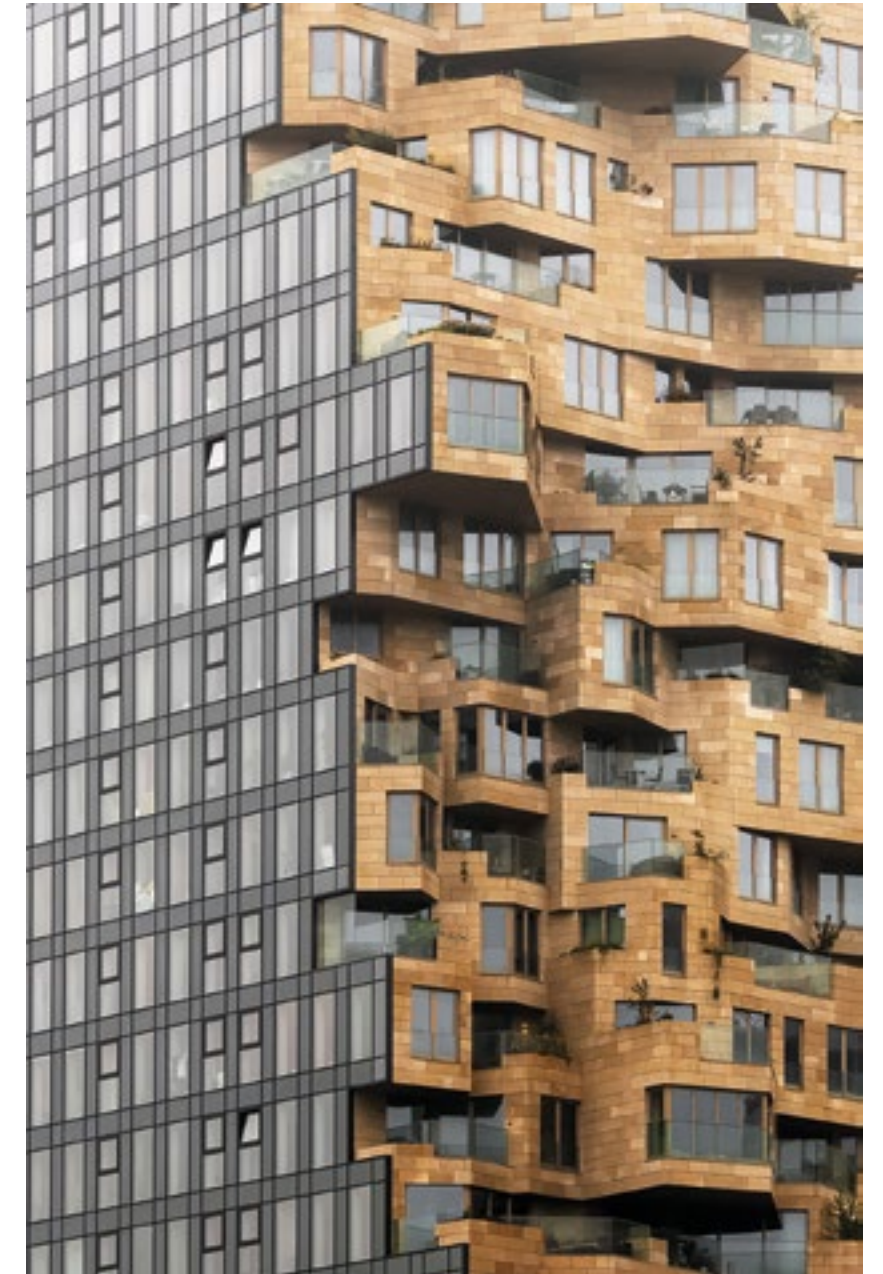
Once upon the fishing harbor

The cityscape on the opposite shore, towering skyscrapers and the mountain stand in harmony, echoing with each other and showcasing the city's history blended with modern civilization. On the near shore, there are two fisher sitting together, as if listening intently to the century-old stories of this city when it was just a fish harbor. The skyline is draped in the gentle hues of dusk, adding a dreamlike quality to this beautiful urban landscape. This photograph captures the blended beauty of two different eras of the city - tranquil yet captivating, drawing the viewer into a dreamlike dialogue with the passage of time.



VALENTINA D'ALIA

Agrigento



ALEX POLLI

Double face



STEFANO GRASSANO

Untitled

The border par excellence, not two cities, but two worlds, two cultures, two ways of being.



MARIACRISTINA FERRARAZZO

Incongruity

In a city of sea, concrete and public works just a few meters from the beach.



YUHAN WU

Serenity in division

This artwork explores the unique reality of the North-South divide on the Korean Peninsula. The moment a North Korean woman is immortalized walking in the serene morning light at 7 a.m. The serenity and tranquility of the image contrasts with the global stereotypes of North Korea, revealing the unexpected beauty and quiet resilience of its civilized life.

On the other side of the river is modern and vibrant South Korea, revealing the very different realities and cultures on both sides of the river. This photograph is not just a record of a corner of North Korea, but a profound exploration of a divided community. Through this work, I hope to challenge preconceived notions about the Korean peninsula and evoke empathy and understanding of shared human experience, regardless of political boundaries and social constraints.

The theme of this project, "Twin Cities of the World," encourages us to delve into the complex realities and dynamics of divided communities. By showing the different worlds on the two sides of the same river, this work highlights the differences in the lives and cultures of people on both sides of the border. It is not only an account of life in North Korea, but also an exploration of divided cities and communities around the world, demonstrating the power of photography as a bridge between different cultures and life experiences.



OLHA ZHELTONOZHENKO

Bremen, Germany



IGAL STULBACH

Border between the cities of Jaffa and Bat Yam



MALVA SUAREZ SILVA

The Woman in all her present roles I

The importance of Woman (Fatima) in the story told by the Epic of Ashura, is masterfully interpreted by actors from the theater group @comunicalle21, in their different expressive poses of history, pain, hopelessness, humility, fortitude before the facts, the stage the square.



LIDIJA JEVREMOVIC

Sunset in Istanbul

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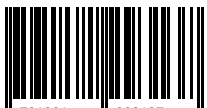
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