



ADAM MAZEK
Diaries

July
2018
p. 11



URBAN POETRY

• *Post „Urban Poetry“*

• *Cover: post „Sightseeing“*

During my photographic walks, I often think about the people who surround me here and now. Taking pictures and writing down my reflections is enigmatic urban poetry. When I see passersby, I try to read some information from their faces. I often try to imagine whether they are happy or have a problem. Sometimes I add fictional stories to these people and imagine how they live, where they work or how they spend their free time. I often try to answer for myself the question of whether passersby I pass have someone who loves them to cuddle with. The exciting thing is, when I was young, I wasn't interested in strangers at all. I began to think about strangers after reading almost all of Dostoyevsky's books translated into Polish. When I did this in 2013, I realized that the most important thing we should implement in our lives is taking care of others. Of course, I don't mean taking care of the whole world. My point is that we should try to give our loved ones, our family and friends, and society everything we can offer them.

I believe that our actions should bring added value to other people, and only then to ourselves. Broadly understood, art is an ideal tool for expressing oneself, i.e., one's thoughts and feelings. Art and photography have helped me deal with some issues in my life. What do I mean exactly? I will write about it in the future. I believe art has healing powers for our souls, hearts, and minds. There are many examples: novels, poems, music, paintings, drawings, photography, graffiti, dance, etc. All of these kinds of artistry can regenerate human souls. Therefore, wandering through Warsaw's streets and seeing strangers, I do not blame myself for trying to "steal" something from them. I mean by the word "stealing," photographing their surroundings and telling a story based on what I observed. I don't want to steal anything material. Still, I want to pay the honor of anonymous passersby by introducing their mundane surroundings to the rest of the world. I want to commemorate our times by taking photos. Taking pictures in the streets and writing reflections on many topics is the eponymous urban poetry that posterity will read and analyze.

• *Post „Urban Poetry" (also p. 4)*

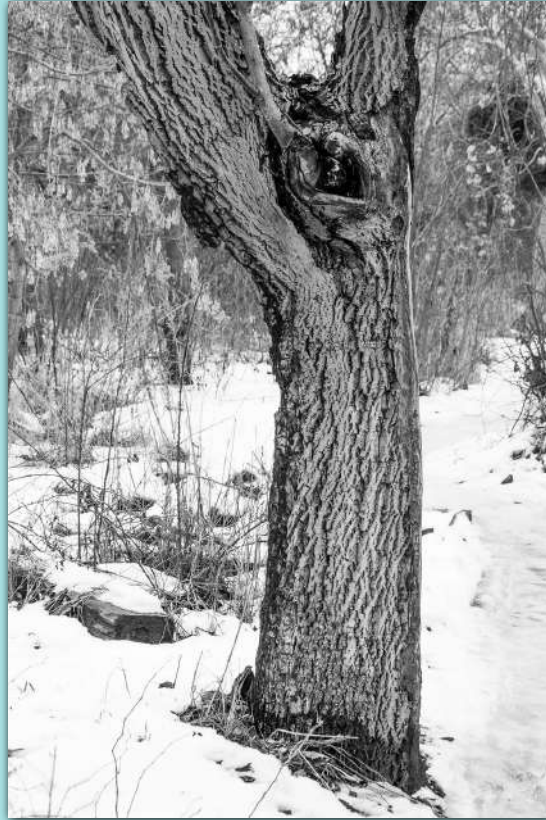


URBAN POETRY



URBAN POETRY

WEATHER



- *Post „Weather“*

When people don't know what to talk about, they often talk about the weather. Does this mean that when I write about the weather, I have nothing to say? If I didn't, I wouldn't be blogging. I wrote the post "Weather" on April 11, 2018, after taking photos on Warsaw's streets for three days in a row. Although it was a calendar spring, the weather was comparable to the summer heat. Inhabitants of Warsaw, hungry for spring sunshine, were leaving their homes and offices en masse to walk, ride a bike or chat with friends in the summer, winter aura. I was no exception. While walking around, I was engrossed in taking pictures. I wandered the streets of Warsaw, contemplating and taking photographs of the city surroundings. The most exciting thing about all this was that I couldn't fully concentrate on my actions before spring (from October 2017 to March 2018). I know I couldn't focus 100% on shooting because there were too many people around me. I couldn't think the way I wanted to. The springtime when the inhabitants of Warsaw went outside their homes, after long, dark, winter days, was the fact that I noticed not for the first time. This practically always happens in the early spring period.

WEATHER

In autumn and winter, relatively few people walk the streets. Looking through the prism of my photographic activity, for me, the fewer people there are on the roads, the better. Why? When it's empty, I can focus on my thoughts and my hobbies. Too many people around me distract me. Everyone can distract my thoughts, including cyclists, runners, and people walking with dogs. Every year I am getting used to the increased presence of people on the streets. The truth is, it takes a while for me to adjust to the many people around me. As you have probably noticed, my Dear Friend, I like to take pictures, but not necessarily with people in the frame. This is my style of work. Sometimes I laugh that people spoil my shots. Nevertheless, I do not rule out that in the future, this characteristic style will change. Maybe I'll just start making portraits? Or perhaps I will part with photography and switch to a different type of art, e.g., drawing? The truth is, we don't know what the weather will be like next year. So how can we try to predict the future regarding our business, our lives? Nobody knows what the future holds. With this observant accent, I will end my argument about the weather.



• *Post „Weather“*

ADDICTION

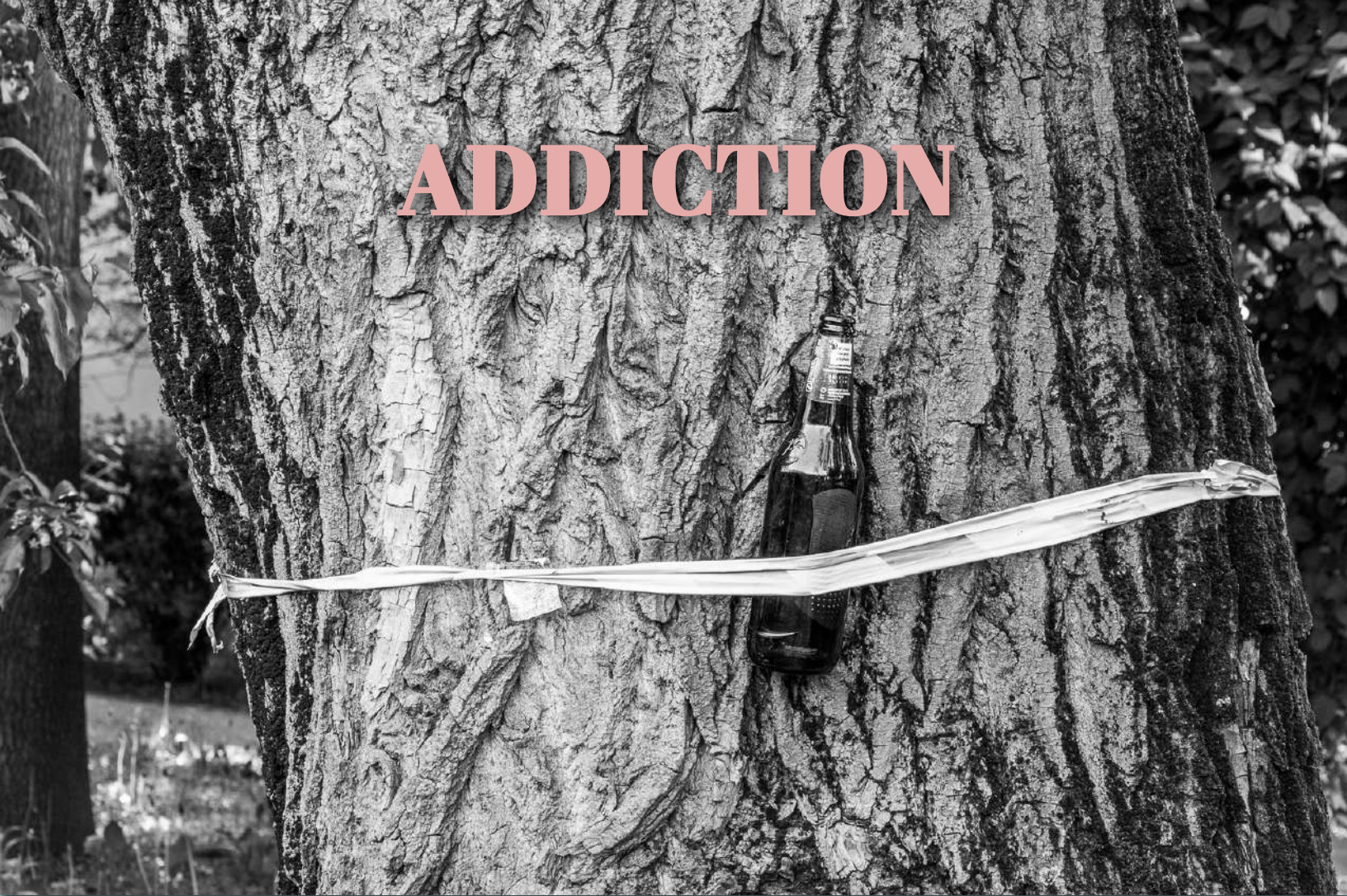


About the fact that sometimes I have the impression that I always have to be addicted to something in my life, I wrote in the post entitled "Addiction." I sometimes wonder if addiction is an indispensable part of some people's lives. For many years, I was undoubtedly addicted to playing sports. In elementary school, high school, and college, I played football regularly. At this point, I would like to say hello to all my colleagues from all those years, thanks to which I have spent many hours on the football field. I have one message for you: do sports as if you were still young! Later, when I was working in the office, I started to swim regularly. I began with thirty minutes of swimming in 2011. Years later, I increased my swimming time to one hour and forty minutes. After jumping into the pool, I swam practically continuously. The only breaks I had were when I had to pee. Nevertheless, I want to emphasize that throughout 2016 and early 2017, I swam in the pool for one hour and forty minutes, sometimes even seven days a week.

- *Post "Addiction" (also p. 7)*



ADDICTION



- *Post „Addiction“*

I remember between 2011 and the beginning of 2018 (this was when I was addicted to swimming). I had the record of swimming continuously for over 30 days in a row. I believe it was pure addiction. Today my addiction is photography, writing, and running this website. I know I am addicted to these activities. When I wake up in the morning, I think about what I will write. Then, after I'm done in the office, I go out and wonder where I should go and take pictures. After a photographic walk, I analyze how I should combine my next posts with images when I come home. Photography and writing are my most essential and craziest passions. They are almost like obsessions.

Nevertheless, they bring me a lot of joy. New to me is that I can show off my hobby-addiction to the rest of the world by posting. I was not able to do that while swimming. Now I wonder if I will be able to continue my passion for the rest of my life. I hope so. I believe that the broadly understood creation of new things will remain my most fruitful and greatest addiction and that "Diaries" will be my magnum opus.



**WHY WE FEAR TAKING
PHOTOGRAPHS IN THE
PUBLIC SPACES?**

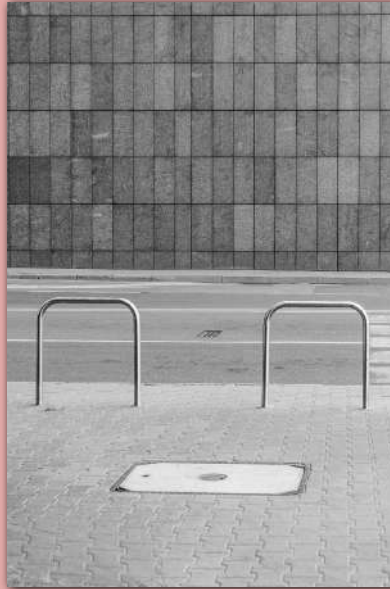
WHY WE FEAR TAKING PHOTOGRAPHS IN THE PUBLIC SPACES?

In the fourth post of the second part of July 2018, I asked why we are afraid of taking photographs in public spaces. I believe that an unequivocal answer to this question is not easy. I am no exception. Despite taking photos regularly since October 2015, I still have a slight fear of taking pictures on the streets. Indeed, every time you go out with a camera to the city's streets is a kind of exit from the comfort zone. When I think of photographing in public places, I mainly mean typical, down-to-earth suburbs, neighborhoods full of blocks - places without popular tourist spots, for example. There was a post that I mentioned that one of the most terrifying things for me is the suspicion that I want to take pictures of children near schools, playgrounds, etc. When I take pictures, I try to avoid places such as kindergartens. Sometimes, however, it is inevitable to pass near such facilities. Nevertheless, it seems that other people have a much greater fear of taking pictures in the streets. I think most people are afraid to take pictures of strangers.



- *Post „Why we fear taking photographs in the public spaces?“ (also p. 10)*

WHY WE FEAR TAKING PHOTOGRAPHS IN THE PUBLIC SPACES?



- *Post „Why we fear taking photographs in the public spaces?“*

Some people are undoubtedly fearful of their camera being stolen. I, too, kind of share the fear of these people. I would be a liar if I said, "I'm not afraid of anything when I take pictures in the streets." Moreover, I am sure that by taking pictures in public places, we feel that we are somehow stealing something from other people. However, the fact is that while walking along the streets of Warsaw, with a camera in hand, I try not to think about all these matters. I always try to imagine that I am alone and that no one is watching or interested in me. I often feel like this because as I walk, I think about many aspects of my life. I analyze and contemplate many things. For example, I think about my relatives, my passion, broadly understood art, and often think about many existential issues. This is my recipe for success in street photography and for overcoming fear. I just try not to think about the passersby and pretend not to see them. That's why I'm usually confident. I'm not acting suspiciously. I believe that insecure behavior when taking street pictures, akin to spying on someone or looking for something, can hinder all the photographic fun. Other people will quickly notice strange behavior. Then they will begin to observe your actions more closely. Maybe they will think that you are, for example, a thief? That is why I recommend treating passersby like the wind: I can hear them but not see them. I focus only on my passion, which is photography.



LACK OF INSPIRATION

- *Post „Lack of inspiration“*

I wrote about the lack of inspiration in a subsequent post. I started writing the text on April 14, 2018, at 6:44 am. It was a time when I still didn't know what I wanted to write about. For the first time, I woke up early in the morning (6 am, to be exact), and I lacked inspiration. I checked all my virtual notes with pre-written ideas, but no specific idea or topic came to mind. I even started going through books placed on a bookshelf but still lacked inspiration. In one of my previous posts, I have already mentioned that the writer's creative impotence is one of the worst things that can happen to all writers or artists in a broad sense. While writing this post, I have decided that I should regularly prepare a little inspiration almost every night so that I can write something in the morning. I could take my good old books and look at them for the strokes I wrote on them before. Tagging quotes in books I read have been my constant practice since 2011. While writing this text, I thought that if I don't have a good enough idea for the reader, maybe I should start reading a book? Thinking about it "out loud" now, I transform my thoughts and put them on virtual paper.

LACK OF INSPIRATION

The starting point of all activities related to photography, writing texts is that all this should bring joy to my soul. The funny thing is that despite the lack of inspiration, I feel delighted and relaxed even though I have no idea what I should write. The process of creating, transforming the world around us into words, images, sculptures is an eternal human need. This desire is mostly unaware in most minds. We should change and develop the mundane reality that surrounds us into something extraordinary. Such a process usually makes us feel alive. In the long run, this helps us and our loved ones and society as a whole. That's why people often take pictures. It is one of the most popular ways to create art, express yourself, reflect, and interpret the reality around us. Writing is another tool that can fulfill our artistic aspirations. In conclusion, I want to emphasize that practice makes perfect. Suppose we are going to turn reality into a work of art. In that case, we should focus on this activity practically every day. Nevertheless, there may be times when the flow of creative processes doesn't work out at the moment. When the moment comes, you'd better take a break and read a book or hug a loved one. The creative flow of incentives, sooner or later, will come back alone.



- Post „Lack of inspiration“



VISUAL EXPERIMENT

Last time I realized that I was unconsciously doing a visual experiment on myself. It happened at a time when I was swimming regularly, almost every day. I already wrote about swimming on the blog, but since I never know who and when will start reading my website, I find that it is worth repeating things that are important to me. Coming back to the main topic: I would like to emphasize that swimming helped me develop my imagination. How? I think this was because when we swim in the pool, we see the same things practically all the time (i.e., the pool tiles at the bottom and sides, possibly the ceiling of the building, etc.) When we look at the same things most of the time (e.g., every other day for 1 hour and 40 minutes of swimming), we involuntarily use our imaginations to start visualizing something. My experiment was to use my imagination to discover the inner worlds that dormant in me.

VISUAL EXPERIMENT

The truth is, while I was swimming, I was able to find solutions to many problems that happened in my life. What's more, I believe that regular swimming has given me new sensations that I would not have experienced while practicing other sports. While swimming, I was able to fantasize about other worlds and dimensions. I contemplated the existence of God and the meaning of our lives. The fact is, I swam regularly from 2011 to 2018. During this period, there were many weeks that I didn't have a single day off from swimming. The swimming time in the last year was one hour and forty minutes. Only sickness and travels could stop me from going to the pool. Now it's photography that has conquered my world of passion. Nevertheless, I believe that swimming helped stimulate my imagination, my inner world of visualization. I am convinced that without this physical activity, I would not have taken the photos I take. While swimming, I missed the outside world.



VISUAL EXPERIMENT



- *Post „Visual Experiment“*

In a way, I sometimes wished I was swimming and not seeing what was going on outside. I don't swim anymore today. I prefer to stretch my muscles at home. I do this during breaks by entering another post. Sometimes I miss my intimate, inner world that appeared to me when I was in the water. I'm sure it's only a matter of time before you go back to swimming. I will undoubtedly find the proverbial golden mean in the future to combine photography and swimming. It is only a matter of time before I dive back into the water, start swimming, and more or less consciously return to my visual experiment, during which my imagination will work.

Most of us love to travel and visit new places. I wrote about the fact that I am not an exception in the post entitled "Sightseeing." Nevertheless, a strange thing comes to mind, practically always after returning from any trip. What is this unusual thought? The fact is, I would often like to see and discover places that are not my final destination. I mean ordinary, down-to-earth places that people relatively rarely choose as their destination. When I'm on tour, I often think about the vast, peculiar spaces I pass along the way. It doesn't matter if I'm going by car, train or plane. As I travel, I often think about the places I pass and wonder why we don't stop here and look around. I often feel like sightseeing like this. Why are we not doing this? The answer is clear: we usually want to get to our destination as quickly as possible. However, I am still curious to see what lies behind the vast forest I can see in front of me. I also try to imagine how big the city district is and the inhabitants of the passing city's everyday lives.

• *Post „Sightseeing“*



SIGHTSEEING



• Post „Sightseeing“

SIGHTSEEING

The need to ask me these kinds of questions has been in my head for a long time. The worst part is that I realize that it is impossible to visit every corner of our planet in detail. So my need is a dream, impossible to fulfill. Of course, we can visit, say, a hundred countries in our lifetime. Nevertheless, can we honestly say that we have seen all the charming places of a given country? I doubt it. Any effort to visit and experience all the usual places on our planet is impossible. Why? I will give two examples:

1) Visiting Siberia by the Trans-Siberian Railway. Even if we travel to the region mentioned above by train, can we say that we have seen all of Siberia? You will find the answer on the map.

SIGHTSEEING

2) Seasons. Overall, we have four seasons (spring, summer, fall, and winter). My diligent and detailed observation of many Warsaw parts proved that all places look different at different times of the year. I would add that the Warsaw landscape differs from one another when viewed through the prism of weeks and even days. Every day is different, and you can discover the surroundings you live in anew every day.

Considering points 1 and 2, can you imagine visiting all of Siberia in all four seasons? I leave you, my Dear Friend, with this question, unanswered. Hope you understand why I always come back from my travels with nostalgic memories, longing, and a bit of sadness. The fact is that the more I visit, the more I am aware that I will never see all the places I would like to see.

• *Post „Addiction“*





TRASH

TRASH

I wrote about why I often take pictures of garbage in the post entitled "Trash." Junk is a dirty, smelly symbol of the general standard of living of people. I believe waste can tell a lot about the inhabitants of the area where the photo was taken. I also think that garbage can say to us a lot about modern civilization, its general condition. You can answer me, my Dear Friend:

OK, I agree with you. Nevertheless, this answer is insufficient. Why are you taking photos like these, and why are you publishing them? I don't want to see shit like that.

First, I will refer to the second part of the statement: if you don't want to see these kinds of photos, you'd better not browse my website. Just. Second, I take pictures like this because I want to know something that really scares me. Becoming a homeless man looking for food in garbage cans is one of the worst nightmares I can imagine.

TRASH

I feel scared when I think about it. That's why I take pictures of garbage. Thanks to this, I analyze not only the way of life of contemporary people. Taking photos like this helps me imagine what the everyday life of the local people might be like. Thanks to the pictures of garbage, I get to know something unknown, disturbing, and terrifying. I fight my own fear this way. By taking photos, I try to contain this fear. The garbage is dirty and smelly. They cause anxiety. They are a disgusting part of the reality that surrounds us. By photographing them, I try to overcome my own fear of becoming homeless. By visually confronting the rubbish, I create in my imagination a psychological pillow, a buffer, a mental shock absorber that protects me from something that scares me. The camera is a limit for me, thanks to which I do not have to experience the direct touch of impurity. Thanks to the camera, I don't necessarily have to smell waste. Does what I write mean that I plan to become homeless? No. I just want to tame the fear of something that I fear symbolically. Photographing garbage is a mental, visual, symbolic, and imaginary confrontation with an unknown fear. As you can see, broadly understood art/photography helps me to tame my fears.



• *Post „Trash“*

**TO BE OR
TO HAVE?**





- *Post „To be or to have?“ (also p. 24)*

TO BE OR TO HAVE?

"To be or to have?" - I think most of us often ask ourselves this question. I believe you can both be and have. There are many examples where we can find people who have managed to make a career with a well-paid job and have a hobby that made their dreams come true. Albert Einstein, for example, discovered and developed the Theory of Relativity. Engaging, in this case, is the fact that he did it while working at the patent office in Bern, Switzerland. On the other hand, the famous American writer Charles Bukowski worked at the post office for several years. This fact would not be so significant if we did not realize that he was creating novels and poems during all these years. I work as an accountant myself. This job gives me a fixed salary, thanks to which I can cover my expenses. I do everything in my power to be and have, that is, to work and have money for current fees and to create broadly understood art.



- *Post "To be or to have?"*

TO BE OR TO HAVE?

At the same time, in June 2018, I graduated from an art school in a field closely related to my greatest passion, i.e., photography. At this point, I would like to thank all my friends from school, especially the teachers. In the future, I plan to write more about you in separate posts. In the last post from July 2018, I wanted to emphasize that you can have an equally stable job and develop your passion at the same time. It is only up to us how we deal with this problem. Maybe I am not the perfect example of someone who really exists and has. However, let's remember about Einstein and Bukowski. These are the cases that proved that you can be (develop your skills not necessarily related to work) and have (earn a living with a usual job not necessarily associated with a hobby).

THE END