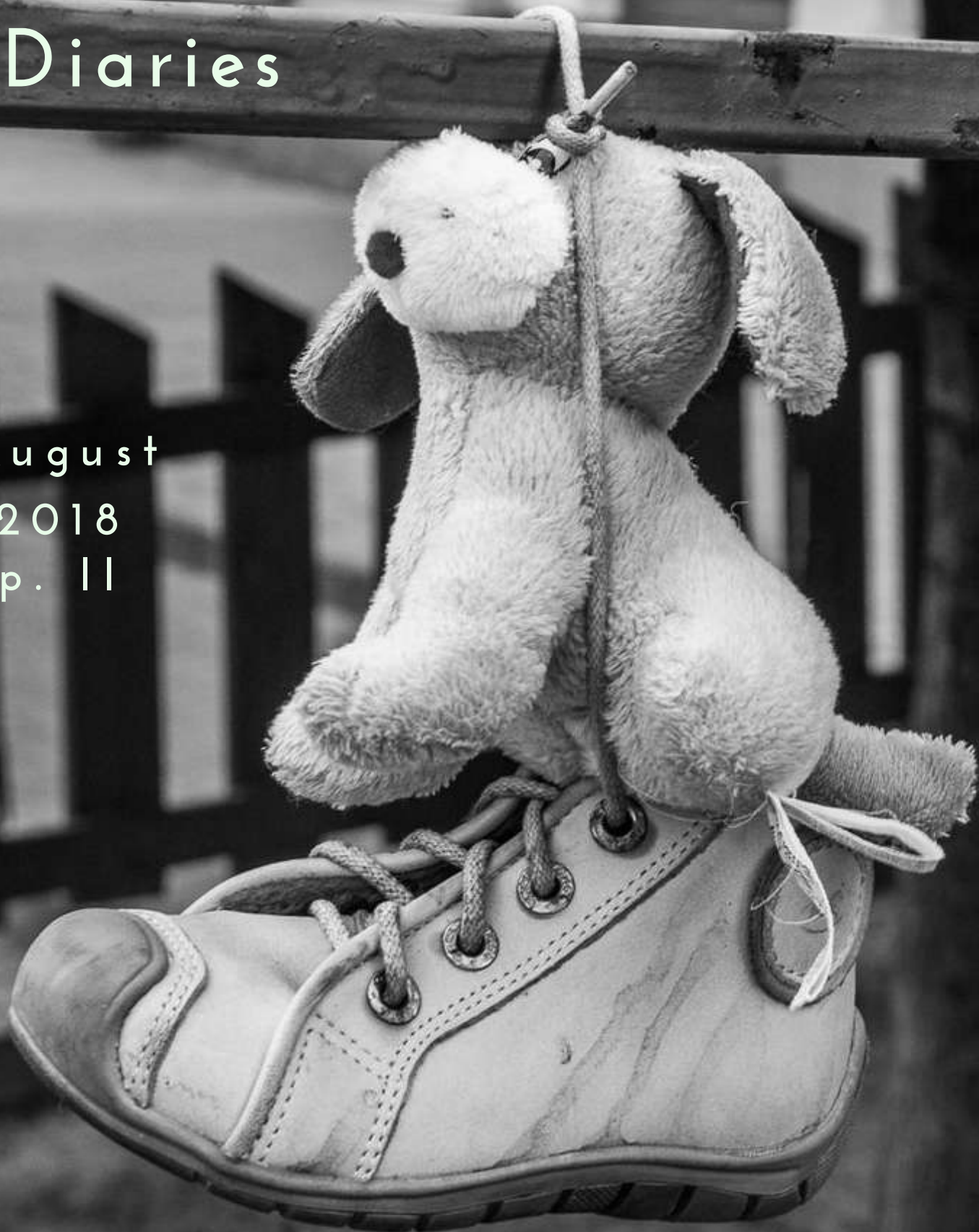


ADAM MAZEK

Diaries

August
2018
p. 11





• Post „Why do I not plan to change my camera?“

• Cover: post „Pain.“

WHY DO I NOT PLAN TO CHANGE MY CAMERA?

Why do I not plan to change my camera? Part of the answer is that I prefer to spend money on books. I bought the camera that I use (Nikon D-90) in 2012. In the beginning, I was shooting only in automatic mode. Then I "discovered" the aperture mode. I still use this mode today. In October 2016, I started my studies related to photography. It happened a year after I started taking pictures regularly on the streets of Warsaw. I graduated from the school in June 2018. I believe that this is a great occasion to thank all my teachers from the school. First of all, I would like to praise Bartek Mokrzycki and Tomek Grzyb for the inspiration and knowledge they shared during the classes. I will definitely come back to these inspiring characters in the future. At this point, I would also like to thank all my friends from school. Learning with you was pure pleasure!

WHY DO I NOT PLAN TO CHANGE MY CAMERA?

Returning to the main thread: when I went to the school, I was hoping to get some useful information on which camera is best for street photography. I have received this information. When I experienced the natural optical phenomenon (camera obscura) during my first class in the school darkroom, I was amazed. Taking pictures with shoeboxes has radically changed my point of view about the equipment I photograph. Thanks to the teachers mentioned above, I realized that I don't need a specialized, better camera for my type of photography. There is no point in waiting for new cameras that are regularly appearing on the market. It is a man who observes, analyzes, processes, composes, and ultimately creates the frame. The most potent power to create unique images is in our minds. It is the brain that processes information from the outside. It is the imagination that makes the pictures first. Remember, my Dear Friend: take a picture in your imagination first. Then use the camera. Changing the camera is not a measure of photography progress. That's why I plan on taking pictures with my good old Nikon D90 until it stops working. Until then, I'd instead invest my money in books. Books can provide creative power for the imagination, nutritious food for the mind. Therefore, I am not going to change the camera. The best equipment for taking photos is the one you have at hand.



- *Post „Why do I not plan to change my camera?“ (also p. 4)*



**WHY DO I NOT PLAN TO CHANGE MY
CAMERA?**



THE GOD THAT DIDN'T FAIL

The next post ("The God That Didn't Fail") was inspired by the song by Metallica entitled "The God That Failed." The lyrics are about James Hetfield's (band's lead singer) mother, Cynthia Hetfield, who died of cancer. The singer's mother was a devout follower of the Christian Science Association. A branch of the Christian faith condemns and rejects medications and other treatments. They believe that only God can heal diseases through their prayers. That's why Cynthia Hetfield didn't even try to heal herself with drugs. Illness and death have won. The song is about losing faith in God. Probably some part of James' soul also died along with his mother. God had failed him. I, too, have a traumatic memory of death in my family. I will write about it soon. Today I will only note that when I was nine, I brutally learned what death is.

THE GOD THAT DIDN'T FAIL



• *Post „The God That Didn't Fail“*

Being nine years old, when I realized that a close, loved member of my family had passed away from me forever, I did not believe that God had failed me. On the contrary. I began to believe that what is happening in our lives is not a coincidence. In my opinion, we Humans have too limited opportunities to understand all the processes and things that take place in the broadly understood universe. We continuously strive to learn about our surroundings, and it is a beautiful phenomenon that makes us human. However, I am sure that we are unable to understand and respond to many critical existential problems. We don't have (and we will never possess one) the power in our brains to understand why we appeared in this world and why we all have to die. In one of his books ("The Star Diaries"), Stanislaw Lem gently mocked the human inability to understand how we appeared in this world. In one of the stories, the aliens claimed that humans are among the most primitive civilizations in the entire universe because they do not know how they appeared on their planet.

I understand the grudge against God that he took someone we loved. If we don't understand something, sadness, desperation, anger, and frustration arise. Ultimately, however, I believe life is fair. Our existence is painfully fair. Why? Because we will all end our lives with death without exception. The end of existence will affect all of us. In this case, God, if he exists at all, will undoubtedly not fail us.



PAIN

PAIN

The third post of the second part of "Diaries" from August 2018 was called "Pain." Pain, both mental and physical, is paradoxically one of the most critical factors that help us develop and grow stronger. Suffering is an inseparable part of human life. I don't like pain. However, when I suffer, I always remind myself that I can develop in life thanks to pain. Human civilization learns many things in torment from the very beginning. Thanks to the possibility of experiencing pain, we could find out what is harmful and dangerous for us and what things and situations we should avoid.

Regarding physical pain, here are three examples of how this kind of suffering helps us grow. First of all, when we play sports (especially after a long break), we feel pain in the muscles. Physical activity affects all systems and many organs of the human body. Proper training increases muscle mass. This increase is closely related to the pain we experience during and after activity. Whenever I have this specific type of muscle pain, I feel alive and want more.

On the other hand, there is also pain associated with the disease. This kind of suffering can also teach us many things. I know it's easy to theorize about it, but this kind of anguish, in some cases, can help us figure out what to avoid in the future. The pain we experience once can help prevent similar suffering in the future. I don't mean now the extreme pain that can be associated with a terminal illness.

Nevertheless, perhaps even this kind of pain can teach us something? Another extreme suffering in childbirth. The sort of pain that only women can feel is suffering that I cannot imagine. Nevertheless, I would like to emphasize that the effect of this pain is one of the most magical miracles we can imagine. It is a newborn man. We must remember that there is also psychological pain. For example, we can feel it when someone we love with all our heart has died. I am sure that despair over the loss of a loved one is one of the extreme mental suffering types. I suffered this kind of anguish when I was nine. Nevertheless, even in such circumstances, we should try to find a light of hope. I am convinced that this kind of suffering can help us find peace and harmony in our hearts paradoxically.



- *Post „Pain“ (also p. 7)*

PAIN

In this case, it should be emphasized that peace in these types of cases can be found, but in the long run. Sooner or later, we can believe that the person we loved and who has died has left this earthly world, has moved somewhere where we may meet again someday. Faith, hope, memories, silence, and photographs are the only things that can remain of a deceased loved one. This kind of mental suffering reminds us of the famous Latin saying: "Memento mori." In the long run, after mourning, this kind of mental anguish can give us strength. Thanks to this suffering, we can become a better person. It is undoubtedly worth remembering a deceased loved one. We could imagine what this man could advise us if he had only lived. As human beings, we can develop through the worst mental torments. In conclusion, I would like to emphasize that we should try, as far as possible, to treat all our suffering as an ally, not an enemy.

WINE



WINE

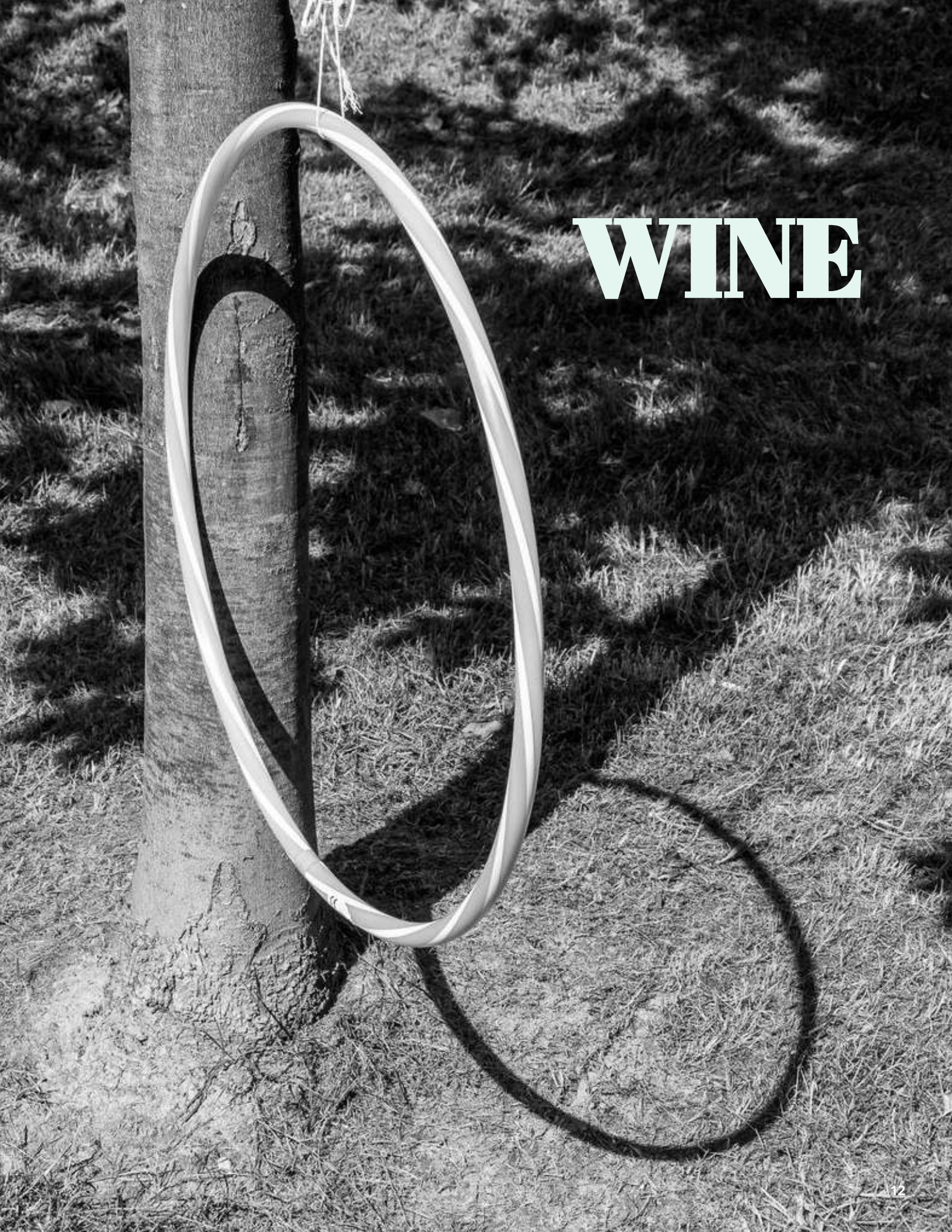
I wrote about the fact that sometimes I feel like wine in the post entitled "Wine." By writing this, I did not mean the state where I wake up in the morning and smell alcohol the day before. I want to emphasize that the older I am, the better I feel. I would say that this statement applies equally to mental and physical health. The older I get, the more energy I have. Although I know that my time is running out every day, I also know that the more I create, the more powerful I become. That's why I feel like wine. As the years go by, I feel that I have more and more creative powers. When I write about my better well-being, I mean mental and physical aspects (I feel more strength in my muscles). My experience is influencing my behavior. Thanks to the passage of time, I get to know more and more books that adequately stimulate my imagination.

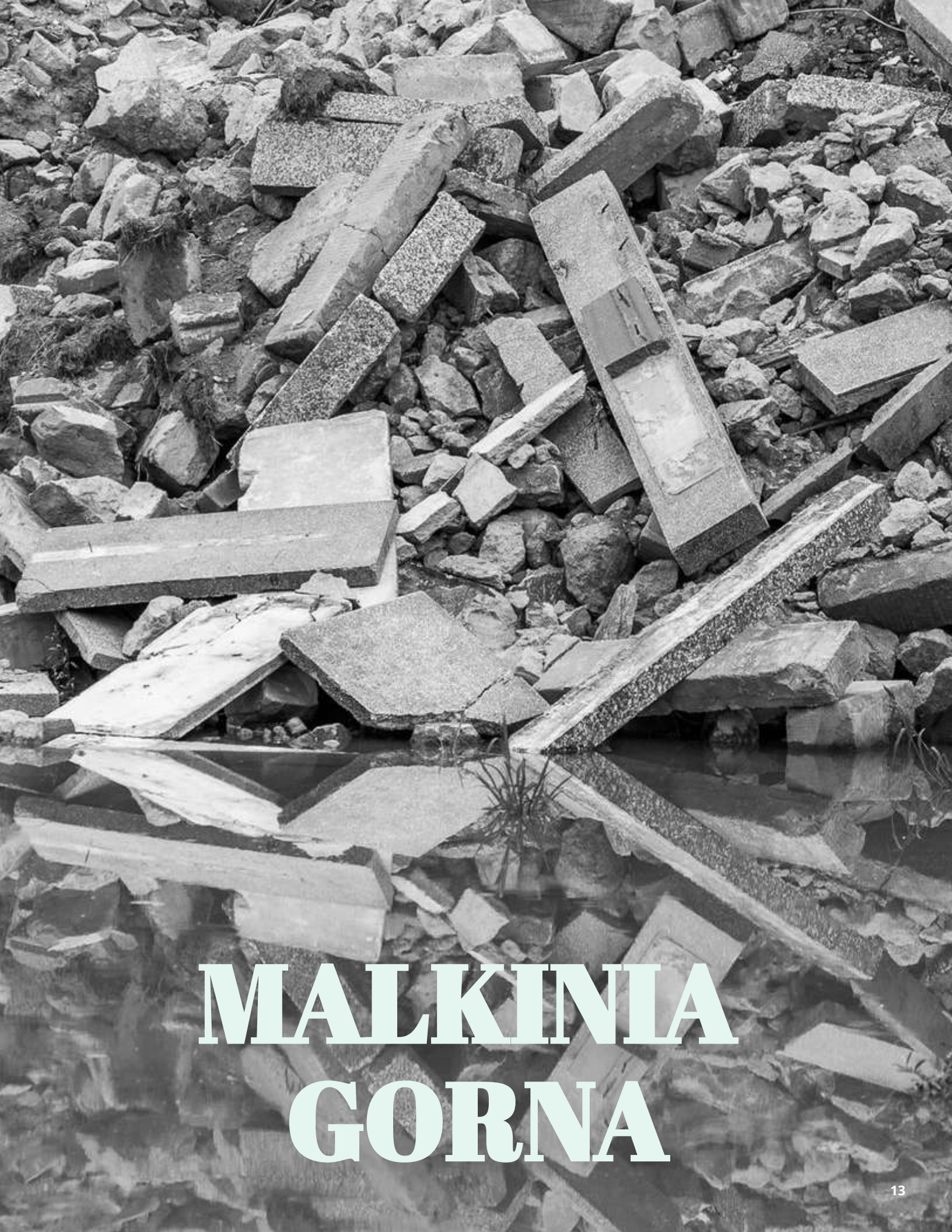
I also have the feeling that with age, my heart and soul become more and more sensitive. It helps me make better decisions. As an example that other people may feel similarly, here are two well-known geniuses: the famous Japanese painter Hokusai and one of the greatest writers, Fyodor Dostoyevsky. The first one painted his most famous paintings when he was 70 years old. He stated that all the works he created before being seventy were not as great as those made when 70. On the other hand, Dostoyevsky, in one of his great novels, *The Idiot*, stated that real life begins after the age of fifty-five. He described this age as:

the blooming time of existence, when the absolute joy of life begins.

In private letters, Dostoyevsky was consistent with what he wrote in his novels. When the famous Russian writer was 56 years old, he wrote that he did not know if his life was ending or just beginning. My dream is to live with the awareness that the older I get, the better things (photos, texts, etc.) I will create the same like Hokusai and Dostoyevsky. In short: I want to be like wine - the older I am, the tastier.

WINE





MALKINIA GORNA

MALKINIA GORNA

It may sound funny, but for me, a symbol of hope is both Michael Jackson and my second (after Brok) hometown, Malkinia Gorna. Why? Let's go back to the early years of my life at the beginning of the 1990s (I was born in 1985). At that time, I lived in the town as mentioned above. Malkinia Gorna is a town located in the north-eastern part of Mazovia, about 12 km from my other hometown of Brok (you can read more about this town in "Diaries" from February 2018). The beginning of the '90s in Poland was a time of change. My homeland was starting to clean up the mess left behind by the corrupt communist regime. In my memories, Malkinia Gorna is nothing short of unremarkable, ordinary, sleepy, down-to-earth, gray, and nostalgic concrete mass situated between fields, forest, and the Bug River. Sometimes this place appears to me as a town located in the middle of nowhere. Nevertheless, Malkinia was and will undoubtedly be a magical, charming, and somewhat strange place for me. The title town will remain in my memory forever.

- *Post „Malkinia Gorna” (also p.13)*





- *Post „Malkinia Gorna“*

MALKINIA GORNA

I remember living in Malkinia Gorna as peaceful and happy times (I could refer these adjectives to my whole life). Nevertheless, the gray concrete block in Malkinia (I think this gray can be seen in my photos today) will remain in my memory forever. This post is the right moment to thank all people I met in Malkinia Gorna for the time we spent together. The fact is that I spent the first fifteen years of my life in Malkinia. I am very grateful to my beloved parents, friends, and acquaintances for all the moments we spent together during my youthful life. It is thanks to you that I am who I am. I also remember when Michael Jackson suddenly appeared in the early years of my life. More precisely, his two vinyl albums appeared in our home: "Thriller" and "Bad," which captured my childhood imagination. My dear parents bought these albums and often turned on the music of the American artist. I loved Michael's work from the very beginning. This love continues to this day and will probably never end.

MALKINIA GORNA

My childhood enthusiasm for pop music was terrific. I can still remember that excitement. I also remember asking my parents to turn Michael's music and closed the door. Then I was able to dance and jump on all the furniture in our living room. You can imagine a 7-year-old boy who dances and sings the hits of an American singer. Undoubtedly, Michael Jackson brought unprecedented quality and excitement to my life. In my psyche, hope is symbolically connected, rooted in both Malkinia Gorna and Michael Jackson. How is this possible? The river Bug flows through my hometown. In childhood, I often walked with my parents along the river. Thank you, Mom and Dad, for everything you've done for me. You both have been and continue to be real support and role model for me. Being by the river, I often looked towards America, where Michael lived. Needless to say, this direction should be the West. As I did this, my heart and imagination filled with hope. I was hoping to go to the USA someday to see Michael. These dreams came true partially. The fact is that before I flew to the USA, Michael came to Poland. The artist gave the only concert in my country, in Warsaw, in 1996. I was present at this concert. I will remember its atmosphere for the rest of my life. Ten years later, in 2006, I went to the USA. I was there as part of the "Work and Travel" program for students. This is also a suitable occasion to greet all members of my family living in New York City. I was lucky to meet you on my journey. I was twenty-one at the time. The purpose of my trip was not Michael Jackson. It was work, fun, traveling, and the opportunity to meet a family. I would like to thank you again for the warm welcome and the time spent together. Coming back to the main topic: the real surprise for me was that years later when I remembered my childhood on the Bug River, I realized that I was not looking westward. The fact is, I was looking east towards Fyodor Dostoyevsky's homeland. Today it does not matter to me that as a child, I looked in the wrong direction. The most important thing is that Michael Jackson's songs and Malkinia Gorna remind me of my wonderful childhood. This whole period is a synonym of hope for me. Therefore, after returning to Malkinia, I feel refreshed, just like when I listen to Michael Jackson's songs.

WHO IS MY WORST ENEMY?



- *Post „Who is my worst enemy?“*

I wrote that my greatest enemy is myself in the post entitled "Who is my worst enemy?" My worst enemy lives in my head. People would call my most demanding opponent "internal weakness." Internal weaknesses complicate the lives of many people. I believe that there is no worse waste of time and vital energy than looking for enemies among other people, knowing that the greatest threat that can meet us is in our minds. When we try to find our worst opponent among other people, we first lose the broadly understood life energy. We spend our time unproductively, not pragmatically. I often wonder how some people may not respect their own time and fight others, knowing that their enemies are other people. For me, such people don't value their time. In doing so, they waste the resources that could help them improve themselves. In short, they are focusing their efforts in the wrong direction. Why do we try to find external enemies when we deal with many problems in our minds every day? The most significant battles are not between people but in their minds. People addicted to alcohol, drugs, gambling, etc., are losing their fights. However, just because they are failing does not mean that they will lose their lives' final battle. Therefore, we should never delete people who are in the middle of their fight against addiction. Interestingly, it depends mostly on us whether we can overcome our weaknesses and fears. I fight myself every day, in my mind.

WHO IS MY WORST ENEMY?

I often feel like my body, mind, and imagination are a battlefield. I make every effort to overcome my weaknesses and pursue my artistic passion. Of course, it's important to have allies in your actions. My wonderful Kamilka, my Dear Parents, family, and friends are always with me and help me keep my inner balance, peace, and rhythm in self-realization.



Post „Who is my worst enemy?“

GARDEN

It was May 3, 2018. I woke up at 6 am at my family home in Brok. I looked out the window and began to observe our beautiful garden. I made a coffee and started writing this text. Suddenly, I remembered my high school, located in Ostrow Mazowiecka (12 km from Brok, 14 km from Malkinia Gorna). I recalled times when I would wake up regularly every day to go to school (instead of going to the office as I do today). After almost fourteen years of living in Poland's capital (I moved there in 2004, before starting my studies), I can truly appreciate the good old times. I would like to thank all the people I have been able to meet during high school times. Nevertheless, today I will focus on something else. Today I want to focus on the surroundings of my family home. The house of my beloved parents is in the middle of the garden. Unusually, it reminds me of this apartment in Warsaw, where I live with my beloved Kamilka. When you go out to the apartment's balcony, you can touch the branches of the nearby tree.

• *Post „Garden”*





- *Post „Garden“*

GARDEN

On the other hand, in Brok, we have a wonderful, magical garden where my parents often do something. The fruit of their hard work is impressive. Our garden is a truly inspiring place to live, create, breathe and exist. I love to be enchanted by the shrubs and trees surrounding me or listen to birds singing from the garden. I believe that this kind of environment is one of the most inspiring things people can experience. How fantastic it is to drink coffee in such scenery and write another text. How wonderful it is to wake up refreshed. I am ready to work in this state of mind, whether it will be gardening, office work, or my hobby. I know that not every inhabitant of this planet has a similar oasis of peace. There are many places devastated by wars, economic and political crises. My work's primary goal is to help other people reach the heaven that lies within them and remind them that they have everything to find their inner happiness. The truth is that art and the creation of new things, in general, have healing properties. You can start taking photos, writing, reading or dancing whenever you want. The sooner, the better. End of writing for today. I'm going to do my morning garden tour.

PS

The photos presented in the post "Garden" are not photos of our garden.



SIMPLY NOT THE BEST



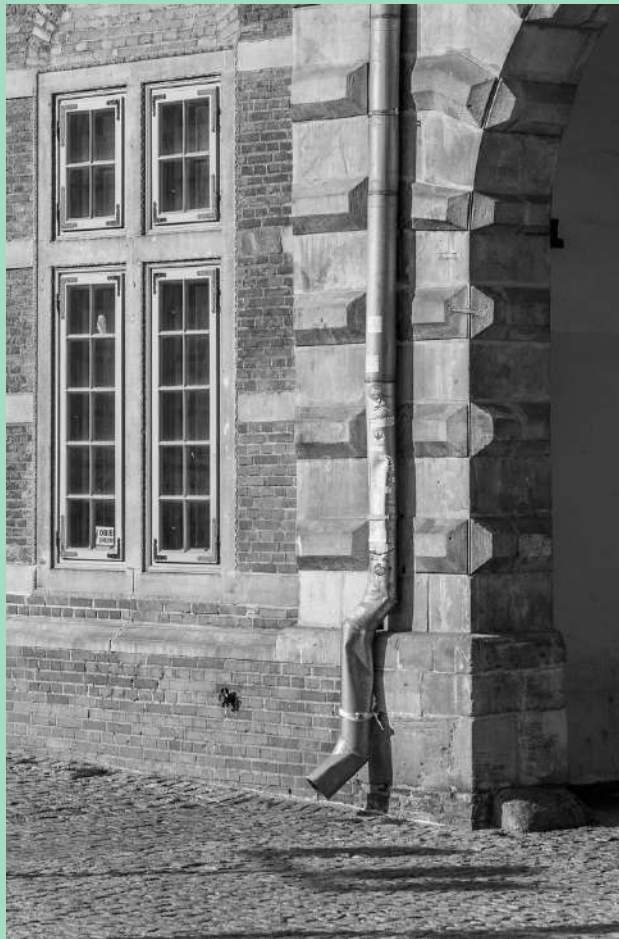
SIMPLY NOT THE BEST

I wrote that I am not the best in the post entitled "Simply not the best." Since the dawn of time, mankind has continuously been fascinated by everything that is the best, the biggest, the longest, the deepest, etc. It is no wonder that the winners take it all. The winners remain in the memory of their children. It is the champions who write history. For centuries, people have wanted to discover the farthest stars of our universe, climb the highest peaks, explore deep oceans, develop the most influential and wealthiest countries, cities, etc. In the world of social media, the desire to be the best and stand out from others is also huge. We watch commercials on the Internet and on TV that keep telling us: you have to be rich to become someone other people can reckon with. If you fail to do this, others won't respect you. Suppose you want to be a successful person. In that case, you have to book the most expensive vacation in the most luxurious hotel. In short: if you are rich, you are the best. If you want fame, you have to buy the latest sports car, because this particular model is "the best." Today, everyone wants to be the best. Personally, I have no problem with that. I would like to be a famous artist myself. It is not my artistic goal. Creating images and texts and continuous mental and creative development is the key to success for me. We often forget and overlook other unique phenomena, people, and things during our journey on the path to becoming the best. My point is, we don't focus on aspects that aren't the best. I am convinced that when we are in a hurry to achieve our goals, we miss many unique things that we pass literally and figuratively in our lives. My photography could be an example of how we can still see the beauty in the usual places between the beginning and the end of the journey. Last time, I decided not to take part in photo contests. Someone malicious would say that I quit because I won't win. I believe I could win international photography competitions. Today, however, I prefer to focus on my website, and I don't care if www.adammazek.com is internationally recognized or not. My focus is not on being the best but on developing.

Moreover, I don't care about my page numbers. I want a quiet life without the blinding flashes of paparazzi. I don't want to be at the center of any events. I want to focus on creating works of art and inspiring others.

SIMPLY NOT THE BEST

Besides, I want to read books written by people smarter than me and live a quiet life with my beloved Kamilka. I don't need the shine of glory and the feeling of being the best to fulfill my dreams and be happy. I want to remain Adam Mazek and not be the best photographer, but to help others by inspiring them.



THE END
