



**ADAM MAZEK**

Diaries

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p. 11





# HUMAN ANTI- PERFECTION

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# **HUMAN ANTI-PERFECTION**

I do not believe in human perfection. Instead, I believe in human anti-perfection. Why? Because perfection does not exist. The truth is that we are all, without exception, imperfect. Being people who are not perfect, we cannot create flawless things. In my artistic endeavors, I do not seek perfectionism. I reject it. Stanislaw Lem, one of the greatest science-fiction writers, accurately described the imperfection of man. In one of his novels, entitled "Dialogues," the Polish writer aptly described the fact that mankind will never be able to create a perfect society and that there will always be inequalities in them, divisions between the poor and the rich. There will inevitably be a ruling class in this world and people who will be ruled by those in power. Utopia is pure fiction.

Thanks to Lem, I know that whatever humanity creates, our creation will always have its flaws. I have an ambivalent attitude towards human imperfection. On the one hand, it is a curse to me because it seems we would sooner destroy ourselves (e.g., by neglecting ecology or attacking each other with bombs) than create a perfect artificial intelligence. On the other hand, our imperfection appears to me as our liberation, our egress. Why? I can imagine an ideal world as a boring place where one lives without a meaningful purpose. Is it possible that we will create something perfect, without flaws? I don't believe so. That's why I don't seek perfectionism in my artistic activity. I am aware that my photos could always be done better.

Moreover, I could always write a better text than the one you are just reading, my Dear Friend. If I wanted to create perfect things, I would probably never publish my photos or texts, nor would I set up a website [www.adammazek.com](http://www.adammazek.com). By the way, I was reminded of my short science-fiction story titled "Artificial Intelligence" ("Diaries" 01.2018). It was Lem who inspired me to write this short story. In it, I touched on the subject of human anti-perfection. I want to emphasize that Stanislaw Lem was, is, and undoubtedly will be a great source of inspiration for me. If you don't have an idea for reading, my Dear Friend, I recommend Stanislaw Lem's novels.

• Cover: post "Salvador Dali."



A black and white photograph of a tree with bare branches. Two birds are perched on a nest made of sticks, situated in the upper part of the tree. The sky is a uniform light gray. The text 'COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE' is overlaid in red, bold, serif font, centered in the upper right quadrant. A thin red horizontal line is positioned below the text.

# COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

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## **COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE**

In a post titled "Competitive advantage," I reflected on my greatest strength as a photographer. What could I describe as my competitive advantage? Does the fact that I analyze these types of things mean that I treat my passion like a business? Do I view other photographers, bloggers, and artists as competitors? I'll answer briefly. Since I have been regularly taking pictures on the streets of Warsaw (October 2015), I do not treat my passion like a business. I have no intention of making money from my art. Walking along the streets and paths of Warsaw, I don't think about money or how much I can "squeeze" out of my hobby. Therefore, I do not see other photographers as competitors. Photographing, writing, and running a website is, first of all, great joy and a passion for me. I feel as happy as a small child when I do all this. I treat other artists like children with whom I can play in the sandbox or on the playground. Being an adult, I find that this sandbox is simply the streets of Poland's capital. Nevertheless, if someone were to ask me to identify my competitive advantage, I would answer more or less like this:

*My most significant competitive advantage is productivity and artistic fertility.*

The fact is that from October 2015 to May 2019, I took 67,123 photos (90% of them on the streets of Warsaw). I have no doubt that taking pictures gives me a lot of freedom, liberty, and pleasure. I dream of creating as many different things as possible for the rest of my days. I want to be as prolific an artist as Pablo Picasso or Salvador Dali. The famous Spanish painters were able to create practically all their lives. They are role models for me. I want productivity to be my most significant competitive advantage, my hallmark. Does this mean that quality doesn't go hand in hand with quantity? No. I am convinced that for quality to appear in an activity, it must be followed by the amount. Practice makes perfect. I will undoubtedly develop this topic in the future. Finally, I will ask you, my Dear Friend, what the situation is for you. What is your competitive advantage in terms of creative activity?



# COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

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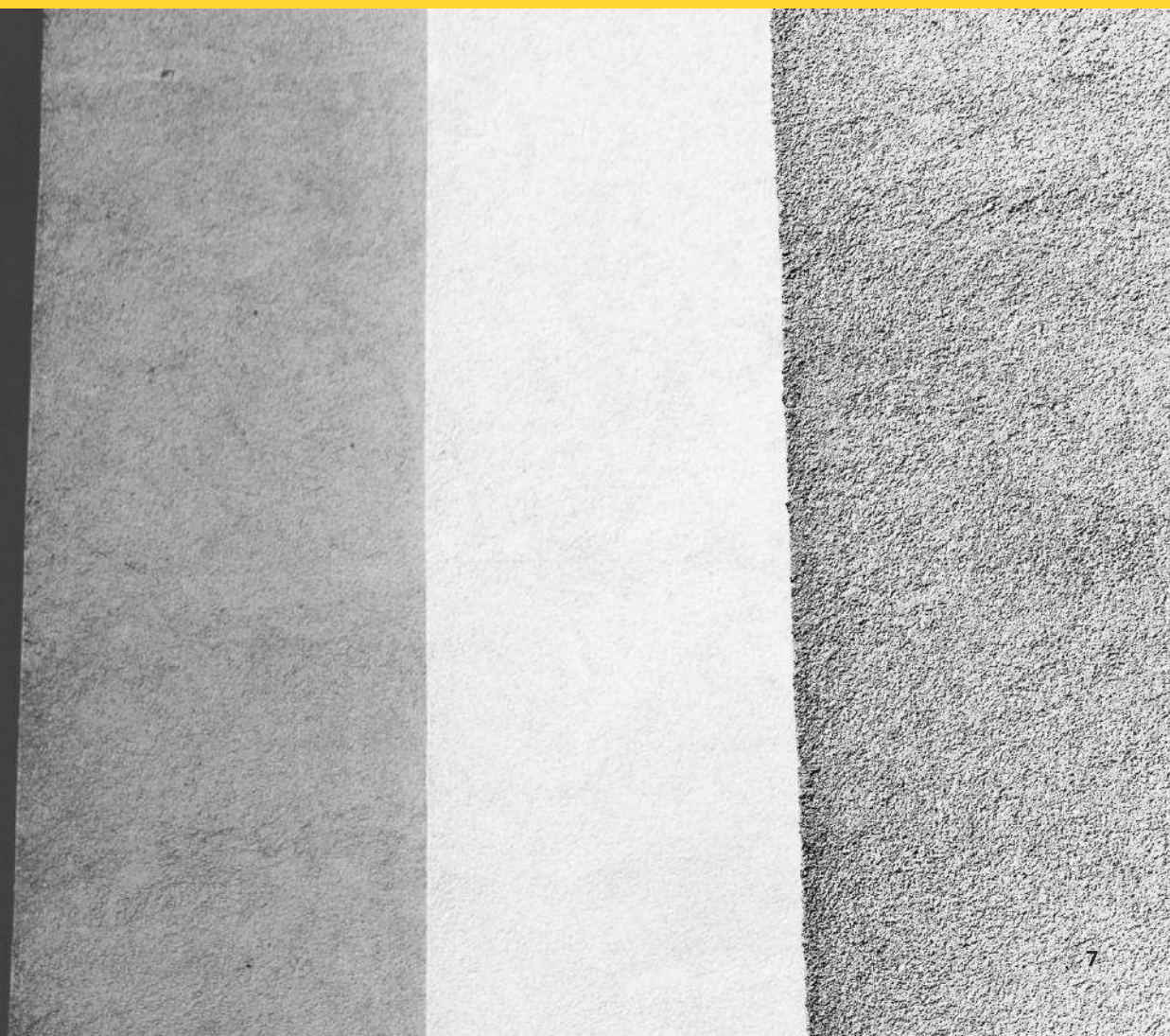
# SALVADOR DALI

Salvador Dali's quote inspired me to write another text. I found an interesting statement by the Spanish artist in a book by Robert Descharnes, "Dali" (published by Taschen). Here is the quote:

*When you paint, always think of something else.*

After reading this passage in the book, I began to wonder what I thought about when I took pictures on the streets of Warsaw. The truth is that most of the time, when walking the streets of Poland's capital, I don't think about photography at all. While wandering, I undoubtedly contemplate many aspects of our existence, and photography is often just an excuse to walk and reflect. I often feel that while walking peculiarly, my brain, legs, and eyes work separately, independently. How is this possible? Well, it is not uncommon for my eyes to seek out frames for photography in a not-so-conscious, even intuitive way.

• Post „Salvador Dali“





- Post „Salvador Dali“

## **SALVADOR DALI**

**At the same time, my thoughts are entirely elsewhere. The brain is not fully paying attention to what it sees. And the legs? They just work, going ahead, flowing along with my thoughts. Describing all this, I find that this is one of the highest states of creative thinking for me because not only do I take incredible pictures, but ideas for other texts come into my head. Is it always like this? Of course not. Sometimes I think about photography, what my eyes see and where my legs are carrying me right now. For example, when I see some interesting objects to photograph, I analyze how I want to capture the view in front of me. So there are moments during my walks when I think about my artistic activity. That's why Salvador Dali's quote fits me only partially. I believe that the best thing we can do while taking pictures is to clear our minds from our daily worries. We should try to transform thoughts into something unreal, abstract, and absent. I think the best thing we can do when creating art is to turn off the brain, the thinking process, and let ourselves be carried away not only by our feet but especially by our intuition and fantasy.**





## **BE A TOURIST IN YOUR CITY**

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**I wrote about how to take incredible photos in the area where you live in a post titled "Be a tourist in your city." The critical thing is to feel like a tourist in your own city. Whenever I take my camera out of my backpack and start walking around looking for the proper frames to shoot, curiosity in my head is hard to describe. Even though I know I'll be walking through places I've seen countless times, I'm still curious about what I'll see on my next walk. The truth is that without this curiosity, I would not have taken so many peculiar photos on the streets of Warsaw. To be constantly inspired by the place where you live, my Dear Friend, it seems to me that you should switch to "tourist" mode in your imagination. I often imagine that I am a visitor from another country (for example, Japan). When I start doing this, suddenly, everything around me (including trees, lamp posts, garbage, apartment blocks, etc.) begins to interest me in an unprecedented way.**





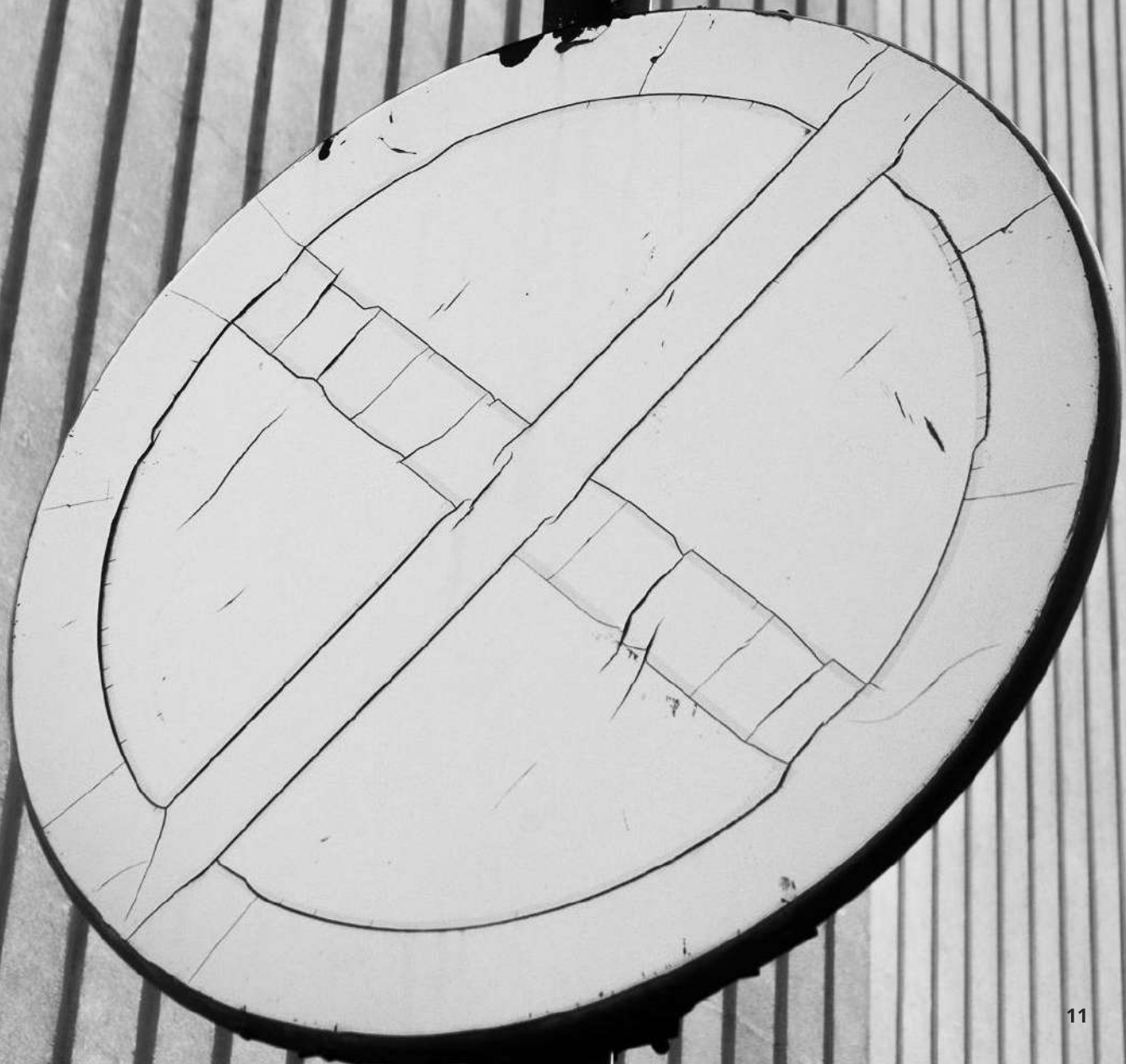
- Post „Be a tourist in your city“

## **BE A TOURIST IN YOUR CITY**

**I'm starting to become a tourist who wants to bring back as many peculiar photos as possible from my trip. It seems to me that the backpack I carry with me at all times may heighten the impression of the residents of the neighborhood where I am just taking pictures that they are just seeing a tourist. They may think of me as a curious observer who has come to their area to photograph their mundane surroundings. These people don't know that I might be their neighbor. This is the moment when I smile to myself in the depths of my soul. I encourage you, my Dear Friend, to also become a tourist in your city. Believe me, you will gain an unprecedented curiosity about your neighborhood. You will open your eyes and suddenly realize how many exciting objects and frames you will find around you. I wish you this with all my heart. Meanwhile, I'm finishing writing. I'm going to go explore the area around my house.**



# ON MY WAY TO WORK







• Post: "On my way to work"

## **ON MY WAY TO WORK**

In a post titled "On my way to work," I wrote about the fact that only one type of moving can in no way inspire me. My commute to work is the only uninspiring and boring mode of transportation from point A to point B. How do I get around the office? I drive my car. When I do this, I usually feel slightly stressed. Is this because of work? No, I always care about getting to the office as quickly as possible. Lately, I've realized that my drive to the office is the only time in my life when I'm moving around town and when I'm not visually analyzing my surroundings.



## **ON MY WAY TO WORK**

The reason is trivial: I focus on getting to my destination safely. Of course, I don't take pictures then either. Fortunately, however, there are exceptions to this as well. There are days when I walk to work. While walking quietly, I take pictures. I felt delighted then because I do my greatest passion, street photography. I find almost all journeys, whether small, urban or more extended, i.e., between cities or international, inspiring. When moving from point A to point B, I always want to photograph what is between points. What interests me is not the destination itself. I feel positive emotions during transportation. Often I want to stop in a place where there is seemingly nothing interesting and take pictures just amid boring, mundane scenery. The exception in all of this, however, is commuting.

Traffic jams and rush hour on the streets annoy me and 99% of others. Everyone wants to get to where they work as quickly as possible. The only thing that interests people moving to work in the morning is to get to their destination as soon as possible. I live in Mokotow, on the border of an office district called "Mordor on Domaniewska Street." This is where about 100,000 people from other parts of Warsaw and surrounding areas commute daily. What happens on the surrounding roads seems to be daily petty wars between upset people. Therefore, my commute by car is the only way of getting around that I don't enjoy. I rarely get to take pictures during this trip. So I'm a little sad, not because I'm walking to work, but because I don't have time to take pictures. Traffic jams, big-city rush-hour traffic, and stress do not improve the mood.





# **ON MY WAY TO WORK**

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What does artistic diversity mean to me? I divided the title diversity in the text into three spheres:

(a) photography;

(b) music;

(c) literature.

As for point a), I gave the following example: suppose I have three days in a row when I can take pictures. In this case, by artistic diversity, I mean that I will go in three different directions of the world, to three separate places. I live in Warsaw's Mokotow district. I have already walked through practically all possible neighborhoods and streets in this district. Nevertheless, on the first day of my three-day trip, I will take a long walk to the farthest corners of Mokotow.

## **ARTISTIC DIVERSITY**

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- *Post „Artistic diversity“*

## **ARTISTIC DIVERSITY**

**In this case, distance will be critical for me. My target could be, for example, the brutalist apartment blocks in the Stegny housing development. On the second day, I could go by car across the Vistula River to Praga, a distinct district of the Polish capital. The theme could be old tenements that remember the pre-war era. On the third day, I could go along the railroad tracks to two other districts next to where I live, namely Ochota and Włochy. This is my personal photographic and artistic diversity. Let's move on to point b). In one of my previous posts entitled "Natural energizer" ("Diaries" 08.2018 part I), I already wrote what kind of music I like to listen to. In this case, diversity for me means the choice associated with different types of music. My favorite music platform is YouTube. When writing posts, I listen to songs by bands and artists such as David Bowie, Metallica, Dire Straits, Madonna, Michael Jackson, The Rolling Stones, The Offspring, Pink Floyd, and Chopin, among others.**



## **ARTISTIC DIVERSITY**

Different ideas for other texts appear in my head depending on the mood that the songs put me in. Now I hope you understand, my Dear Friend, what artistic diversity regarding music means to me. As for the last point about literature, in the post, I wanted to emphasize that in 2018 I only read books by Taschen Publishing House that were published in English. In this case, the artistic diversity makes it easy for me to switch between the different books of the said publishing house. One day I can read a book about exploring the moon ("Moonfire" by N. Mailer). The next day I can learn interesting facts about ancient Egypt. Another day I may analyze the works of the Italian painter Caravaggio. Then I can read about the career of Stanley Kubrick. Thanks to all this reading, I draw a virtually endless amount of inspiration. This is what my personal artistic diversity looks like.



- *Post „Artistic diversity“*



**PLAY**  
**THE GAME**

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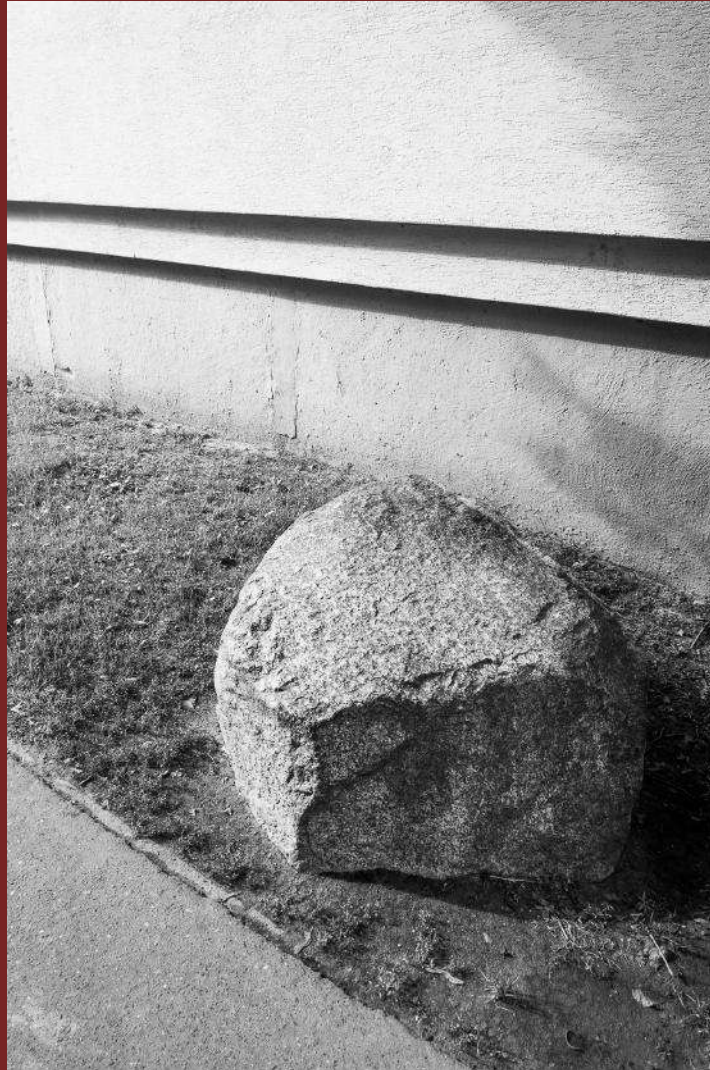
## **PLAY THE GAME**

The words of the famous song by the band Queen entitled "Play the Game" often echo in my head. In the lyrics, love is compared to a game:

*All you have to do is fall in love  
Play the game*

In a text, I went a little further. In it, I wrote that my whole life is a game for me. Life is a game reminiscent of the famous computer game "The Sims." Sometimes we are in great shape, have an excess of energy, and do many great things in the process. On the other hand, sometimes we lie unconscious, with a fever in bed, and have no power for anything. Some people have a basic, relatively easy level of difficulty in life. Often these are people born into wealthy families, people with almost everything or joyous feelings and experiences, and their material needs are met at a luxurious level.

For others, on the other hand, the game called life is at a challenging level from the very beginning. I am referring to people born in Third World countries who experience hunger and violence from childhood. It is a fact, by the way, that hunger is a global problem, and its problem also exists in highly developed countries. I have no doubts that violence or hunger will accompany humanity until the very end. How else did I compare life to a game? For example, people may have different life goals and game goals. There may be other criteria of purpose. For some, the goal of the game called life is to get rich. For many in Third World countries, the goal is simply to survive another day. For other people, the plan will be to know that they have beloved children and grandchildren. In this way, people want to leave value behind, someone who will be admired by future generations. Artists indirectly fit into this scenario. The only difference between artists and parents is that artists want to leave behind their works, the so-called artistic legacy. Artists are people who are happy through the process of creation. The fact is that there are also people for whom the sole purpose of life is to get drunk. We often call them not only addicts and drunkards but also losers.



• Post: "Play the Game"

## **PLAY THE GAME**

Undoubtedly, they are people who need the help of others. People in the game called life can do a wide variety of things. In pursuit of their goal, to win their personal game, they can manipulate, cheat, hurt, beat, destroy, harm, or kill. Fortunately, there are also people for whom the power of love is the most powerful way to win the game called life. These people build, trust, develop, care, listen, help, create and love. I believe that the latter are in the majority. I honestly believe in humanity, despite the many horrors in this world.





**ALL I HAVE IS DOUBT**

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## **ALL I HAVE IS DOUBT**

When I hear the song by the band, The Beatles titled. "All You Need is Love," I often hum to myself with my inner voice: "All I Have is Doubt." Walking through Poland's capital city's streets and taking photos, I have doubts about many existential issues. What are my sample doubts? I wonder why all humans (including me) appeared in this world? What is the purpose of humanity's existence? Where are we headed? How did life originate in the first place? The answer that life arose due to favorable conditions in the water hundreds of millions of years ago is simply unsatisfactory to me, insufficient, and not exhaustive in any way. Should the word "evolution" continually dispel my doubts? Does something happen to our consciousness after death? Is there a void waiting for us? Is the Big Bang theory correct? If so, what came before? Another Universe? What will happen to the Universe in the future? Will it shrink to an unimaginably dense and small point that will explode again? Is it an infinite process, both in time and space, that has neither beginning nor end? Or are we part of an experiment, guinea pigs?

I don't think I have any doubts except that our minds will never find answers and convincing evidence for all these questions. Nevertheless, I often wonder where all of today's doings will lead us. In which direction are we heading? To self-destruction? Will we destroy our planet? Or will we continually evolve, finding solutions to many problems without global conflicts and crises? I doubt it. However, I also wonder what my place is in all this. This little cog appeared in this world in such and not another site, at such and not another time. What will I leave behind for future generations? Who will I become in the history of my country and the whole world? An accountant like many? Or maybe an artist who will be known and admired around the world? Will my photos make a difference? Does photography make any sense? Will my creative activity change anything in this world for the better?

On the one hand, I have many doubts about everything around me, including myself. On the other hand, however, I sincerely believe in myself. I believe in everything I do, and despite all my doubts, I don't lose faith in other people. I hope that we will not lead ourselves to self-destruction. With this optimistic note, I would like to end my argument and the second part of the "Diaries" of May 2019.





**ALL I HAVE IS DOUBT**

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• *Post: "All I have is doubt"*

**THE END**

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