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JUNE 2026 | #136

Lens MAGAZINE

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The Path Within

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2 SERIES

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VOODOO
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Santa Muerte Rosary
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INDUSTRIALLY PERFECTED
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Faith COLLECTION
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AN EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH
ROBERTO PAZZI

THE POWER OF

Faith

RELIGION AND SPIRITUALITY ACROSS CULTURES


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Founder & Editor: Dafna Navarro



Dafna Navarro is the CEO and Founder of Art Market – Global Media Company.
Founded in 2013, Art Market is the publisher of two famous international art and photography magazines: Lens Magazine for fine art photography and Art Market Magazine for contemporary fine art. Beyond her many achievements, Navarro is also a curator and an appraiser of art and collectibles. In addition, she serves on the jury panel of international competitions in the contemporary art & photography fields.
Navarro is the current Editor-in-Chief and the main creative driving force behind her magazine's rise and success. With no signs of slowing down, the magazines feature interviews with the most influential figures in the art and photography fields, coverage of international exhibitions and art fairs and all the latest news regarding fine and contemporary art from across the globe.
Both magazines are distributed worldwide in both print and digital media. As a result, the magazines receive the exposure of over 50,000 monthly readers worldwide, including a unique distribution of the GOLD LIST Edition by Barnes & Noble's book stores in the U.S. and Canada, Steimatzky Bookstores in Israel, and vast appearances in international art fairs. In addition, copies of each published magazine are added to universities' archive data and academic libraries as learning material for lecturers and students.


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CANDLE PROCESSION
THREE YOUNG BUDDHIST NOVICES HOLD CANDLES INSIDE A MONASTERY IN SRI LANKA. IN BUDDHIST PRACTICE, LIGHT IS OFTEN ASSOCIATED WITH CLARITY, OFFERING, AND DEVOTION, TURNING THIS QUIET PROCESSION INTO PART OF A BROADER SPIRITUAL EDUCATION.
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Portrait of a priest of the Temple of Thunder during a Vodun rite (Benin, 2026)
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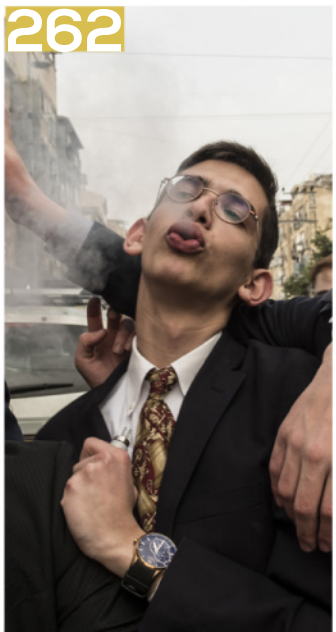

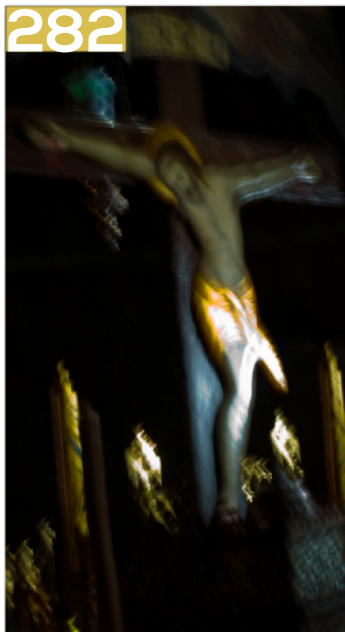


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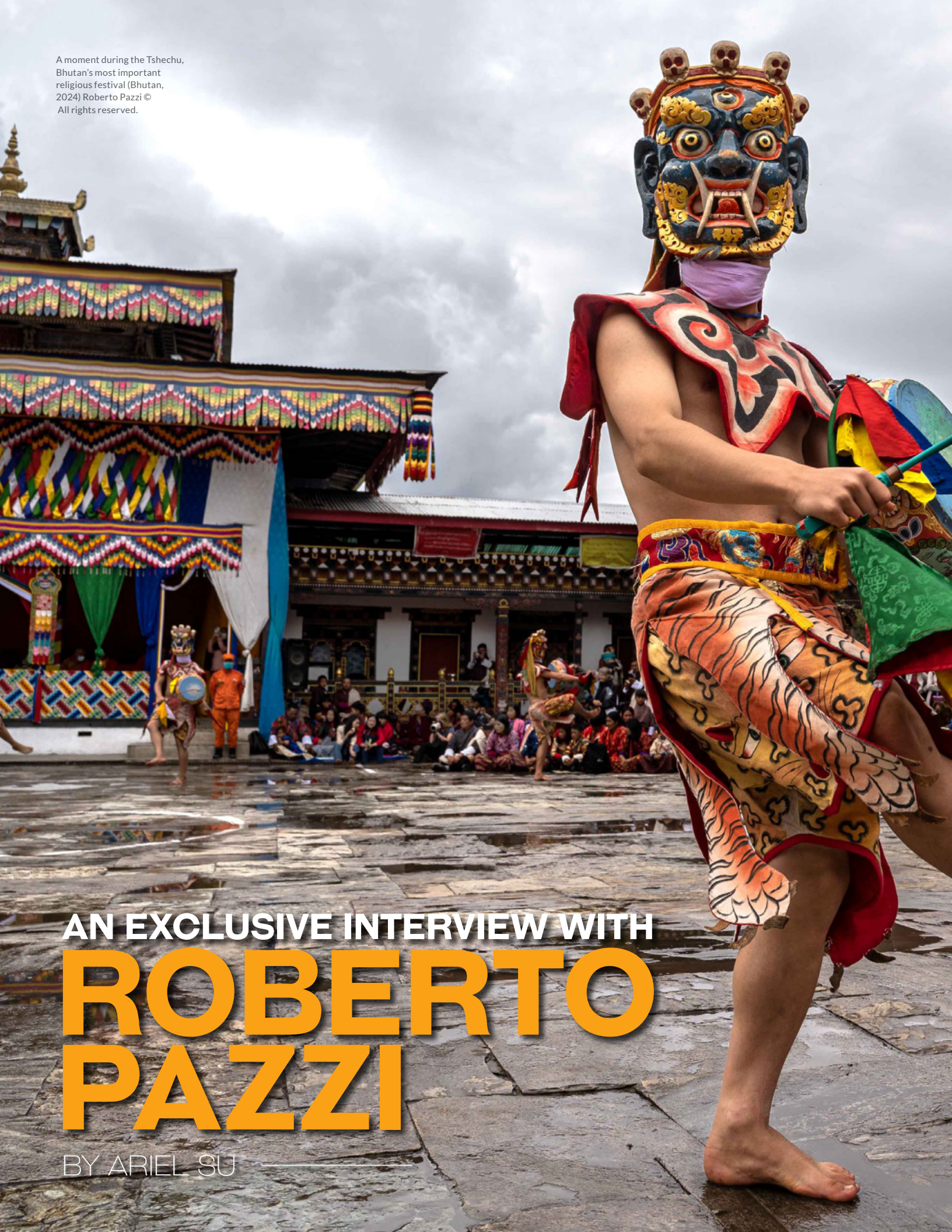

A moment during the Tshechu, Bhutan's most important religious festival (Bhutan, 2024) Roberto Pazzi © All rights reserved.

AN EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH

ROBERTO PAZZI

BY ARIEL SU



The Power of Faith

COLLECTION

ROBERTO PAZZI IS DEDICATED TO DOCUMENTING PEOPLE AND CULTURES WHOSE WAYS OF LIFE ARE INCREASINGLY THREATENED BY GLOBALIZATION AND RAPID SOCIAL CHANGE. FOCUSING ON TRIBES, MINORITY ETHNIC GROUPS, AND TRADITIONAL SOCIETIES, THE WORK CAPTURES CUSTOMS, RITUALS, KNOWLEDGE, AND DAILY PRACTICES THAT ARE AT RISK OF DISAPPEARING. EACH PHOTOGRAPH IS AN ATTEMPT TO HONOR THESE LIVING CULTURES WHILE PRESERVING THEIR STORIES FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS.



AT THE HEART OF THIS PRACTICE IS THE DELIBERATE EFFORT TO BUILD GENUINE RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE INDIVIDUALS AND COMMUNITIES ENCOUNTERED. ROBERTO PAZZI INVESTS TIME IN LISTENING, SHARING DAILY EXPERIENCES, AND CULTIVATING TRUST, GUIDED BY A SINCERE PERSONAL INTEREST AND A NEED TO UNDERSTAND CULTURES FROM WITHIN.

THIS APPROACH ALLOWS FOR REPRESENTATION THAT IS INFORMED, NUANCED, AND DEEPLY RESPECTFUL, MOVING BEYOND SURFACE OBSERVATION TO CONVEY MEANINGFUL HUMAN NARRATIVES.

AN EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH

ROBERTO PAZZI



Performers of the Tshechu, Bhutan's most important religious festival (Bhutan, 2024)
Roberto Pazzi ©
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A shaman entering into a trance next to an ovoo, a cairn used as a shrine (Mongolia, 2025)
Roberto Pazzi ©
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The Goli mask, one of the most important expressions of religious, spiritual, and social identity of the Baulè culture (Ivory Coast, 2026)
Roberto Pazzi ©
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Roberto Pazzi is an internationally acclaimed Italian photographer who documents remote cultures, indigenous communities, and spiritual traditions worldwide. Originally trained as an engineer, Pazzi chose a different path, devoting his life to travel, human connection, and visual storytelling. Through years of immersive journeys to some of the world's most isolated regions, he has developed a photographic practice based on respect, trust, and cultural understanding.

His award-winning photographs have appeared in publications such as National Geographic, GEO Magazine, The Times, The Guardian, and many others worldwide. A winner of multiple Photographer of the Year and international photography awards, Pazzi also created HUMANKIND, a premium limited-edition volume celebrating the extraordinary diversity of human cultures.

For this special Lens Magazine edition dedicated to "The Power of Faith – Religion and Spirituality Across Cultures," we are honored to present an exclusive interview with Roberto Pazzi, whose images offer a rare glimpse into spiritual traditions, sacred rituals, and communities whose beliefs continue to shape human identity across continents.



Portrait of an Orthodox priest reading an ancient holy book written in ge'ez alphabet (Ethiopia, 2017)
Roberto Pazzi ©
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Portrait of an Orthodox priest holding an ancient holy book. His wife on the background (Ethiopia, 2017)
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"REPEATED CONTACT WITH RADICALLY DIFFERENT WORLDVIEWS NATURALLY EXPANDS ONE'S AWARENESS OF HOW DIVERSE HUMAN INTERPRETATIONS OF LIFE, DEATH, AND MEANING CAN BE.

MY IMMERSIVE TRAVEL EXPERIENCES HAVE INCREASED MY COGNITIVE FLEXIBILITY, EMPATHY, AND OPENNESS BY CHALLENGING MY INTERNAL ASSUMPTIONS AND EXPOSING ME TO ALTERNATIVE WAYS OF ORGANIZING REALITY. "

- ROBERTO PAZZI

AN EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH

ROBERTO PAZZI



Portrait of a sadhu in prayer
(India, Uttar Pradesh, 2015)
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A moment during the shamanic ritual dance of Theyyam (India, 2026)
Roberto Pazzi ©
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AN EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH

ROBERTO PAZZI

"THERE ARE MOMENTS IN THE FIELD WHERE EXPERIENCE BECOMES SO POWERFUL THAT IT TEMPORARILY TRANSCENDS THE ACT OF PHOTOGRAPHING ITSELF.

BY ARIEL SU

LENS MAGAZINE: Roberto, thank you for this interview. It's a pleasure to feature your work. Your photography has taken you to some of the world's most remote and fascinating places. Before we discuss your work, could you share your background? Did you grow up around art, and what sparked your passion for photography? What inspired you to leave engineering for this path?

ROBERTO PAZZI: Thank you for the opportunity. I was born in Italy in 1973 and originally trained as an engineer. For nearly fifteen years, I built my career in the Information and Communication Technologies sector, holding a well-established and rewarding position. Although I had achieved professional success, I eventually realized that something essential was missing: real happiness.

The transition from engineering to photography was ultimately driven by my desire to pursue what I truly wanted to do with my life rather than simply continuing along a path built on what I felt I had to do. I reached a point where I understood that travel and photography were not just interests, but the activities that genuinely fulfilled me and brought me happiness. That realization became the foundation for one of the most important decisions of my life.

Although I did not grow up in a purely artistic environment, being Italian meant growing up surrounded by beauty and creativity. In Italy, art is part of everyday life, from painting and sculpture to architecture, design, fashion, and music. This constant exposure undoubtedly shaped my aesthetic sensitivity, even if I did not initially recognize it as such.
Travel had always been one of the most important parts of my life. Long before



A portrait of a Vodun believer holding the traditional talisman used to communicate with the spirits of his ancestors (Benin, 2025)
Roberto Pazzi ©
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photography became central to my work, I was a passionate traveler and backpacker, driven by curiosity about different cultures and ways of life. Photography entered my life relatively late and initially served a very simple purpose: documenting the places, people, and experiences I encountered during my journeys.

The turning point came in 2013 during an extensive trip across Indonesia. I traveled through Java, Sulawesi, Papua, Bali, Borneo, and Lombok to explore and document remote cultures. During that journey, I spent time with the Dani people in Papua, and the experience profoundly changed my perspective. For the first time, I understood that photography could be much more than a tool for recording what I saw. It could become a powerful means of human connection, storytelling, and cultural preservation.

That experience revealed the depth and responsibility that documentary photography can carry. I realized that what fascinated me most was not landscapes or destinations, but people, their stories, traditions, emotions, and identities. From that moment onward, photography became less about observation and more about immersion, trust, and relationships.

Returning from Indonesia, I began a period of deep personal reflection. I asked myself what I truly wanted to do with my life rather than simply continue along a path expected of me. The answer became increasingly clear: travel and photography. Eventually, I made the difficult decision to leave my engineering career and dedicate myself fully to these passions. It was a significant leap into the unknown, but one that fundamentally transformed my life.
I later moved to Spain, where I am now





Egungun masks representing the spirits of ancestors who return to guide and protect the living, during the traditional dance (Benin, 2026)
Roberto Pazzi ©
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based, and continued developing my work as a documentary and travel photographer. My education as a photographer was never formal or academic. Instead, it was built through travel, field experience, continuous learning, and direct immersion within the communities I photographed. Every journey became both a photographic project and a lesson in understanding people and cultures.

Over the years, my work has focused increasingly on documenting communities whose traditional ways of life are under pressure from globalization and rapid social change. I have spent extended periods working in remote regions around the world, not only photographing but also learning to approach people respectfully, build trust, and tell stories ethically and authentically.
This path eventually led me to organize and lead photographic expeditions to remote cultures in countries such as Iran, Nepal, the Himalayas, and South Sudan.

Interestingly, another important chapter came during the COVID pandemic. With travel largely suspended, I dedicated significant time to refining my photographic skills and, almost as an experiment, began entering international photography competitions. I was genuinely surprised by the response. The awards and international recognition my work has received have helped consolidate my professional path and brought my photography to a much wider audience through exhibitions, publications, and media exposure. Among the most significant achievements, I have been named winner of the Smithsonian Magazine Photo Contest in 2023 and 2025, as well as Photographer of the Year at the London Photography Awards (2026), the European Photography Awards (2025), and the 500px Global Photography Awards (2025 and 2021).

Today, through my partnership with Nomad Photo Expeditions, which started in 2021, I continue to guide photographers to some of the world's most fascinating and isolated regions, helping them experience these cultures in a respectful and meaningful way.

Looking back, leaving engineering was not a rejection of my previous life but rather the natural consequence of discovering what truly motivated me. Engineering gave me discipline, structure, and problem-solving skills. Photography gave me purpose, personal fulfillment, and happiness . The combination of travel, human connection, and storytelling ultimately became the path I was probably meant to follow.



AN EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH

ROBERTO PAZZI

Portrait of Egungun masks representing the spirits of ancestors who return to guide and protect the living (Benin, 2026)
Roberto Pazzi ©
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LENS MAGAZINE: In this series on spirituality, you captured diverse traditions—from Hindu and Buddhist ceremonies to Vodun, Christian, Islamic, and indigenous practices. After witnessing varied expressions of faith, did you notice any common threads connecting them?

ROBERTO PAZZI: Across these different traditions, what struck me most was not their differences, but the shared human structure beneath them.
Whether in Hindu and Buddhist ceremonies, Vodun rituals, Christian, Islamic practices, or indigenous belief systems, there is a consistent attempt to give form to something that is otherwise difficult to articulate: the human need to understand existence. Religion in all these expressions appears as a response to fundamental questions about life, death, suffering, and meaning.
I observed that ritual, in particular, plays a central role across cultures. Gestures, symbols, chants, offerings, and communal practices create a bridge between the individual and something perceived as greater than the individual. These acts are not only spiritual expressions but also deeply social ones. They generate cohesion, reinforce belonging, and define shared values within a community.
Another common thread is the way religion structures reality. It provides frameworks through which people interpret what happens in their lives, especially in contexts of uncertainty, fragility, or hardship. In this sense, religious systems are not separate from everyday life. They are embedded in it and help organize it.

What becomes evident upon observing these traditions is that religion is not only a matter of belief but also a cultural and social mechanism shaping identity and collective experience. It reflects a society's values while also contributing to its continuity and stability.

Despite the diversity of forms and doctrines, the underlying impulse seems consistent. A human necessity to search for meaning, to establish connection both with the transcendent and with the community, and to situate oneself within the larger structure of existence.



Representation of moksha, the liberation from the cycle of reincarnation after death (India, Uttar Pradesh, 2023) Roberto Pazzi © All rights reserved.

LENS MAGAZINE: One of the photographs depicts the concept of moksha in India—the liberation from the cycle of reincarnation. Spiritual liberation appears in different forms across many religions. Have your travels changed your own understanding of life, death, and the search for meaning?

ROBERTO PAZZI: Although I consider my role as a documentary and travel photographer to be primarily that of a witness and observer of reality, with the aim of documenting it as objectively as possible, my travel experiences and life in general have certainly influenced and continue to reshape my perspective on many aspects of existence.

At the same time, my background and my rational, engineering-based education help me maintain a grounded and analytical approach rather than a purely spiritual or philosophical one. I tend to interpret what I see through a critical lens, focusing on context, human behavior, and the social and cultural mechanisms behind beliefs and practices, rather than adopting or internalizing them on a personal level. That said, long-term exposure to different cultures, rituals, and belief systems inevitably has an impact. Repeated contact with radically different worldviews naturally expands one's awareness of how diverse human interpretations of life, death, and meaning can be. My immersive travel experiences have increased my cognitive flexibility, empathy, and openness by challenging my internal assumptions and exposing me to alternative ways of organizing reality.

It has led to a broader understanding of how central the search for meaning is in human life across all societies. Concepts such as moksha, reincarnation, or spiritual liberation are part of very structured cultural and philosophical systems that I approach with respect and interest, but always from an observational standpoint.

What has changed over time is not a belief system, but an awareness. An awareness that the questions surrounding life, death, and meaning are universal, even if the answers vary significantly. This perspective reinforces my intention to document rather than interpret, while remaining open to the complexity and depth of human experience.

LENS MAGAZINE: Many of your portraits reveal an extraordinary level of intimacy and trust between photographer and subject. How do you approach communities that may be unfamiliar with foreign visitors or photographers? How do you build the



Young Buddhist monk entering a dzong (Bhutan, 2024)
Roberto Pazzi ©
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"WHAT REMAINS WITH ME MOST STRONGLY ARE NOT SINGLE IMAGES, BUT CONVERSATIONS AND SHARED EXPERIENCES. I VALUE MOMENTS OF EXCHANGE THAT ARE COMPLETELY DISINTERESTED, WHERE THE PURPOSE IS SIMPLY TO KNOW EACH OTHER." - ROBERTO PAZZI

AN EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH

ROBERTO PAZZI



The Easter representation of the Passion of Christ in the village of Badolato (Italy, 2025)
Roberto Pazzi ©
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> **"EVERY FACE BECOMES A NARRATIVE, SHAPED BY LIFE, MEMORY, AND CONTEXT, AND PHOTOGRAPHY BECOMES A FORM OF EXCHANGE BETWEEN TWO HUMAN TRAJECTORIES."**
> - ROBERTO PAZZI

relationships that enable authentic moments, such as photographing the priest of the Temple of Thunder during a Vodun rite (Benin, 2026)?

ROBERTO PAZZI: At the core of my work, there is a deliberate effort to build meaningful relationships with the individuals and communities I encounter. When I arrive in a new place, I do not approach people as photographic subjects, but as individuals with whom I need to establish a human connection first. This happens through presence, respect, and genuine curiosity. Trust is never immediate; it develops gradually through time spent together and through the sincerity of the interaction.

A fundamental element of this process is investment of time. My work is based on immersion rather than brief encounters. I often remain within communities long enough to observe daily life, understand social dynamics, and share ordinary moments. Depending on the context, this can mean hours, days, or even weeks. This continuity is essential for moving beyond surface observation and for allowing relationships to evolve naturally.

A portrait becomes a moment of encounter rather than a simple act of capture. It is a dialogue built over time, in which the image emerges from shared experience rather than an immediate request. In this sense, every face becomes a narrative, shaped by life, memory, and context, and photography becomes a form of exchange between two human trajectories.
Ultimately, what allows moments such as the one you mentioned in Benin to happen is not a single approach, but a long-term process. It is the accumulation of time, respect, repeated presence, and authentic interest in people and their way of life.

Another key aspect is the ability to return to the same communities multiple times. This continuity changes everything. When people begin to recognize you, when you are no longer perceived as a foreign presence but as a familiar face, the nature of the



Portrait of a priest of the Temple of Thunder during a Vodun rite (Benin, 2026) Roberto Pazzi © All rights reserved.

AN EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH

ROBERTO PAZZI



Portrait of a Vodun priest during an offering to Venavi dolls (Benin, 2025) Roberto Pazzi © All rights reserved.

relationship shifts. Over the years, I have witnessed families grow, children become adults, and time pass within the same communities. In some cases, I am now received almost as a friend, which allows for a much deeper level of access and authenticity.

Trust is also built through attitude and consistency. I make a conscious effort to show genuine interest in local culture, often asking many questions, not only to understand context but also to demonstrate respect and engagement. This is not a superficial exchange but a way to learn how people live, think, and relate to their environment. That knowledge becomes essential later in the photographic process, allowing me to represent situations with greater accuracy and sensitivity.

Over time, this approach has helped me develop a set of interpersonal and observational skills that enable me to navigate diverse cultural environments. These soft skills are rooted in empathy, patience, and the ability to listen. Human connection, even across very different cultural systems, remains fundamentally universal. When sincerity is perceived, barriers tend to dissolve naturally.

LENS MAGAZINE: Your portraits of religious leaders across traditions often convey contemplation and devotion. Is there a religion or belief you feel most connected to?

ROBERTO PAZZI: I am fundamentally an atheist and do not identify with any specific religion or spiritual belief system. Nevertheless, my approach to life is grounded in common sense, respect, and core human values.

What I find particularly interesting is that these same principles are often at the core of many of the religious and spiritual traditions I have encountered. Across different cultures and belief systems, I repeatedly



AN EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH

ROBERTO PAZZI

PHOTOGRAPHY BECOMES NOT ONLY A FORM OF OBSERVATION BUT ALSO A TOOL FOR DOCUMENTATION AND PRESERVATION, CONTRIBUTING TO THE COLLECTIVE MEMORY OF HUMAN CULTURAL HERITAGE. SPIRITUALITY IS DEEPLY EMBEDDED WITHIN HUMAN CULTURE AND IDENTITY.

- ROBERTO PAZZI

Group of women in front of the Jameh Mosque of Yazd (Iran, 2019)
Roberto Pazzi ©
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Portrait of an Imam inside the court of the complex of his Mosque (Uzbekistan, 2023) Roberto Pazzi © All rights reserved.

recognize shared ethical foundations such as respect for others, the importance of community, restraint, reflection, and a sense of responsibility toward life and the world.
In that sense, many of the values that shaped my upbringing and personal development appear reflected in very different religious and philosophical systems around the world.
This lead me to observe how universal certain human principles can be, even when expressed through vastly different cultural and symbolic forms.

The same applies to my work in the field. During my photographic expeditions, I consistently operate within an ethical framework based on respect for local cultures, their rules, traditions, and social structures. Over time, I have come to view this as a philosophy of life.
In that sense, it aligns closely with a principle that has long guided my work and travels, well expressed by Chief Seattle and also used as a quote at the opening of HUMANKIND, my limited-edition book: “Take only memories, leave only footprints.”

LENS MAGAZINE: During your travels, have you ever encountered a spiritual ceremony or ritual that completely challenged your knowledge, assumptions, or expectations? Looking back on your journeys, was there a particular encounter, ceremony, or moment of faith that profoundly moved you as both a photographer and a human being?

ROBERTO PAZZI: In general, the rational and atheist component of my personality prevails. It allows me to approach every situation primarily as an observer, documenting events as a witness. This perspective is essential to my work, as it helps me maintain clarity and distance and translate what I see into a visual testimony to the extraordinary diversity of human culture.
Nevertheless, as a human being, I have been overwhelmed more than once by emotions of wonder and astonishment that far exceeded my expectations. There are moments in the field where experience becomes so powerful that it temporarily transcends the act of photographing itself.
I clearly remember a state of near-trance and deep emotional immersion during the Sunday procession of the Fifohazana



A worshipper in prayer inside the Saint Alexander Nevsky Cathedral of Sofia (Bulgaria, 2026) Roberto Pazzi © All rights reserved.

AN EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH
ROBERTO PAZZI

congregation in Madagascar , a Christian revival movement rooted in the late nineteenth century under Rainisoalambo. It was an experience that felt almost suspended in time, where collective devotion and rhythm created an intensity that was difficult to describe purely in rational terms.

A similar sensation returned in different contexts, such as during visits to the rock-hewn churches of Lalibela in Ethiopia, or while taking part in a ritual in Mongolia, sitting by the fire under a sky full of stars, interacting with a shaman in trance who invited me to communicate with ancestral spirits. I also recall the energy and physical intensity of the Theyyam rituals in Kerala, where performance, the people's devotion, and transformation merge into a single experience.

Even in more architectural and contemplative settings, the emotional impact can be equally strong, such as when entering the Nasir al-Mulk Mosque, the so-called Pink Mosque in Shiraz, Iran, where light, color, and space create an almost unreal atmosphere.

In all these cases, what remains constant is the duality of my experience. The photographer in me stays anchored to observation and documentation, while the human side is sometimes absorbed by the intensity of what unfolds. It is precisely within this tension





Buddhist faithful in prayer
(Nepal, 2018)
Roberto Pazzi ©
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that many of my most meaningful experiences have taken place.

LENS MAGAZINE: When you arrive in a remote village or community for the first time, what do you hope to learn beyond creating photographs? What conversations or experiences stay with you long after the camera has been put away?

ROBERTO PAZZI: I was born a traveler long before becoming a photographer, and that identity still defines how I approach the world. Curiosity and a genuine desire for understanding are central to my personality.
Therefore, when I arrive in a remote village or community for the first time, my intention goes far beyond creating photographs.
At the beginning, I never approached people as photographic subjects.
I approach them as individuals with whom I need to build trust through presence, respect, and sincere curiosity.
This process takes time. It is based on immersion rather than observation at a distance. I often stay long enough to experience daily life, understand social dynamics, and simply share ordinary moments without any immediate intention to photograph. Only through this continuity do relationships become real and stable enough for meaningful photographic work to emerge.

What remains with me most strongly are not single images, but conversations and shared experiences. I value moments of exchange that are completely disinterested, where the purpose is simply to know each other. These interactions are not one-directional. I ask questions, but I also receive many questions in return, and this reciprocity is essential. It allows me to understand not only the community but also how I am perceived as an outsider.

Over time, I have often been surprised by how my presence is interpreted. In many cases, what I initially assumed might be perceived as intrusive is instead met with openness, curiosity, and even a sense of honor that someone has traveled from so far to engage with their culture.
These exchanges are what stay with me the longest. They are often more significant than the photographs themselves. In many cases, over repeated visits, this relationship evolves further, and I am perceived as a familiar person.
Ultimately, what I seek is not only to document cultures but to participate, even briefly, in genuine moments of human exchange where curiosity flows in both directions.

LENS MAGAZINE: Through **HUMANKIND**, you celebrate diversity and shared humanity. What do you hope viewers learn from your work? Have any viewers' reactions especially touched you?

ROBERTO PAZZI: Through **HUMANKIND**, my intention was to celebrate human diversity while also highlighting a deeper layer: the fragility of cultural identity in a rapidly changing world. The book is not only a visual journey across more than ten years, three continents, and over twenty countries, but also a tribute to the resilience and dignity of communities whose ways of life are increasingly under pressure from globalization and social transformation.

What I hope viewers take away from my work is, first of all, a sense of recognition. Recognition of how vast, diverse, and yet profoundly connected humanity is. Each portrait is meant to go beyond the surface and reveal something universal within difference. At the same time, I hope the work encourages reflection on how much of this cultural richness is vulnerable and, in some cases, at risk of disappearing. Knowledge leads to sensitivity, sensitivity leads to appreciation, appreciation leads to awareness, and awareness can ultimately lead to responsibility and action to safeguard cultural heritage. The reactions to the book have been deeply meaningful. Many readers describe it as an emotional experience, not just a photographic one. Some speak about being humbled by the “soul of humanity” captured in the images, others mention laughing, being moved to tears,





The snake girls, young acrobatic dancers from the Guéré ethnic group for a spiritually meaningful dance (Ivory Coast, 2026) Roberto Pazzi © All rights reserved.

or feeling as though they are traveling through distant worlds that suddenly feel close and familiar. Several have highlighted how each photograph feels like a story in itself, and how the book creates a sense of connection between viewer and subject that goes beyond geography and culture.

What has touched me particularly is the diversity of people who have connected with the work. Beyond photography enthusiasts, the book has been purchased by teachers who use it to share discussions on culture and identity with students, by grandparents who explore it together with their grandchildren, and by anthropologists and intellectuals interested in questions of cultural heritage and human identity. This range of engagement was never something I took for granted, and it confirmed for me that visual storytelling can operate on many different levels.

> **HOPE IS NOT STATIC OR GUARANTEED, BUT DEPENDS ON AWARENESS. IF THERE IS A LESSON TO BE DRAWN, IT MAY LIE IN THE IMPORTANCE OF MEMORY AND HISTORICAL CONSCIOUSNESS. "**
>
> - ROBERTO PAZZI

Ultimately, HUMANKIND is the first chapter of a long-term project to document and preserve cultural diversity. My goal is not only to create a visual archive but also to contribute, even in a small way, to the preservation of cultural heritage at risk of disappearing. Photography, in this sense, becomes a tool that moves from observation to awareness, and from awareness toward a more conscious appreciation of what it means to be human in all its forms.

LENS MAGAZINE: Are there still regions, communities, or spiritual practices you dream of photographing—such as a unique tribe or North Korea?

ROBERTO PAZZI: North Korea is very much at the top of my list of destinations I would like to photograph. Alongside it, Afghanistan, Nigeria, and Angola are also among the countries I am most interested in exploring in the future.

LENS MAGAZINE: Many young photographers dream of building a career that combines travel, artistic recognition, publishing, and meaningful storytelling. What advice would you give to the next generation seeking to follow a similar path?

ROBERTO PAZZI: My advice to photographers who would like to follow a similar path is to focus less on equipment and more on practice and consistency.
Technology is secondary compared to developing your own way of seeing through time spent in the field.
The first step is to understand what truly draws you to photography, since it is an extremely broad discipline.
Once that direction becomes clear, it is important to build a personal vision and visual language that allows you to communicate your intent with clarity and coherence.
From there, I would strongly recommend working on long-term projects rather than isolated images.
Photography develops through continuity, patience, and sustained engagement. Breaking larger ambitions into smaller, daily actions helps maintain focus and ensures constant, incremental improvement.
Whenever possible, prioritize the kind of photography you are genuinely passionate about, rather than being driven solely by commercial considerations. Ideally, both aspects can coexist, but passion should remain central whenever possible.
At the core of documentary photography is the human connection. Respect, patience, empathy, and curiosity are essential when working with people and communities. Trust is not given automatically; it is built over time through presence, sincerity, and shared experience.

Careful preparation is also fundamental, especially when working in remote or culturally complex environments. Understanding context, logistics, and local conditions is part of a responsible and ethical photographic practice.

Ultimately, photography should aim to go beyond aesthetics and technical perfection. Its real value lies in expressing emotional truth, dignity, authenticity, and meaningful human stories.
Finally, this path requires long-term commitment. Consistency, dedication, and a willingness to engage deeply with the world over time are what allow a photographic vision to mature and become meaningful.



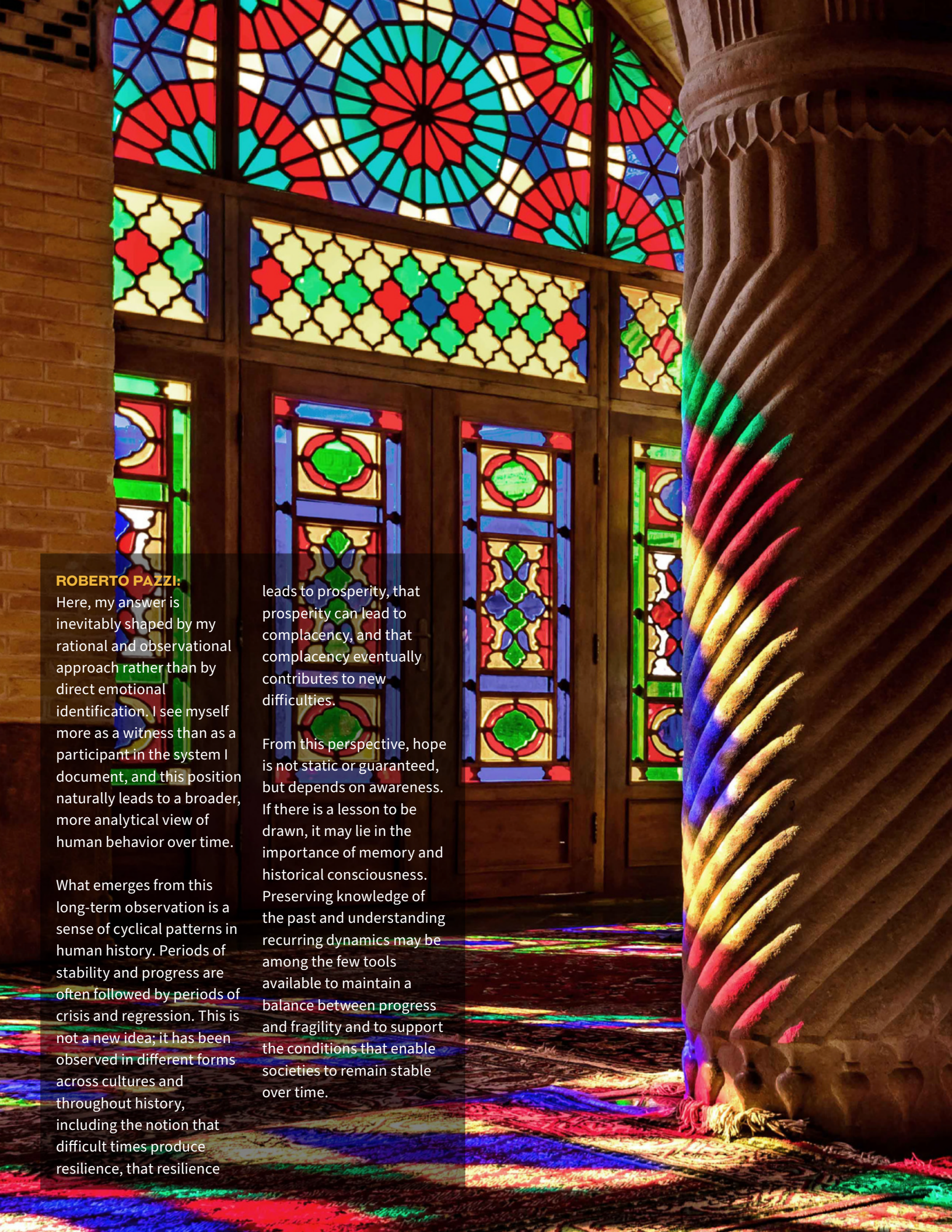
Portrait of a Sambo spiritual leader from the Guéré ethnic group, with snake performers (Ivory Coast, 2024) Roberto Pazzi © All rights reserved.

LENS MAGAZINE: Do you feel that photography can help protect cultural and spiritual heritage for future generations?



ROBERTO PAZZI: Yes, absolutely. As I have mentioned several times, this is one of the core purposes of my work and a central motivation behind my long-term project HUMANKIND. The book itself was conceived as a tribute to the beauty and diversity of humankind, but also as a visual record of cultures, traditions, and ways of life that are increasingly fragile. In this sense, photography becomes not only a form of observation but also a tool for documentation and preservation, contributing to the collective memory of human cultural heritage. Spirituality is deeply embedded within human culture and identity. It is not a separate layer, but an integral one, shaping values, behaviors, and collective memory. Beyond its symbolic and existential dimension, spirituality also plays a very concrete role in preservation. One need only consider the vast cultural and artistic heritage safeguarded within churches, mosques, synagogues, temples, and institutions associated with religious traditions worldwide. These spaces function not only as places of worship but also as repositories of art, architecture, music, manuscripts, and collective history.

LENS MAGAZINE: Finally, after all the people you have met, the cultures you have encountered and become familiar with, and the stories you have documented, what has photography taught you about humanity itself? Is there hope?



ROBERTO PAZZI:
Here, my answer is inevitably shaped by my rational and observational approach rather than by direct emotional identification. I see myself more as a witness than as a participant in the system I document, and this position naturally leads to a broader, more analytical view of human behavior over time.

What emerges from this long-term observation is a sense of cyclical patterns in human history. Periods of stability and progress are often followed by periods of crisis and regression. This is not a new idea; it has been observed in different forms across cultures and throughout history, including the notion that difficult times produce resilience, that resilience leads to prosperity, that prosperity can lead to complacency, and that complacency eventually contributes to new difficulties.

From this perspective, hope is not static or guaranteed, but depends on awareness. If there is a lesson to be drawn, it may lie in the importance of memory and historical consciousness. Preserving knowledge of the past and understanding recurring dynamics may be among the few tools available to maintain a balance between progress and fragility and to support the conditions that enable societies to remain stable over time.



An intimate moment inside the Nasir-ol-Molk Mosque in Shiraz (Iran, 2019)
Roberto Pazzi ©
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ROBERTO PAZZI

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FACEBOOK: @ROBERTO.PAZZI.PHOTO

FOR THE LOVE OF GOD



Ho Chi Minh City /
Saigon, Vietnam
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BRICE GELOT

FOR THE LOVE OF GOD

BRICE GELOT

FOR THE LOVE OF GOD IS AN ONGOING DOCUMENTARY PROJECT EXPLORING FAITH AS ONE OF HUMANITY'S MOST ENDURING AND UNIVERSAL FORCES. ACROSS CULTURES, GENERATIONS, AND GEOGRAPHIES, BELIEF CONTINUES TO SHAPE IDENTITIES, COMMUNITIES, RITUALS, AND OUR UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD.



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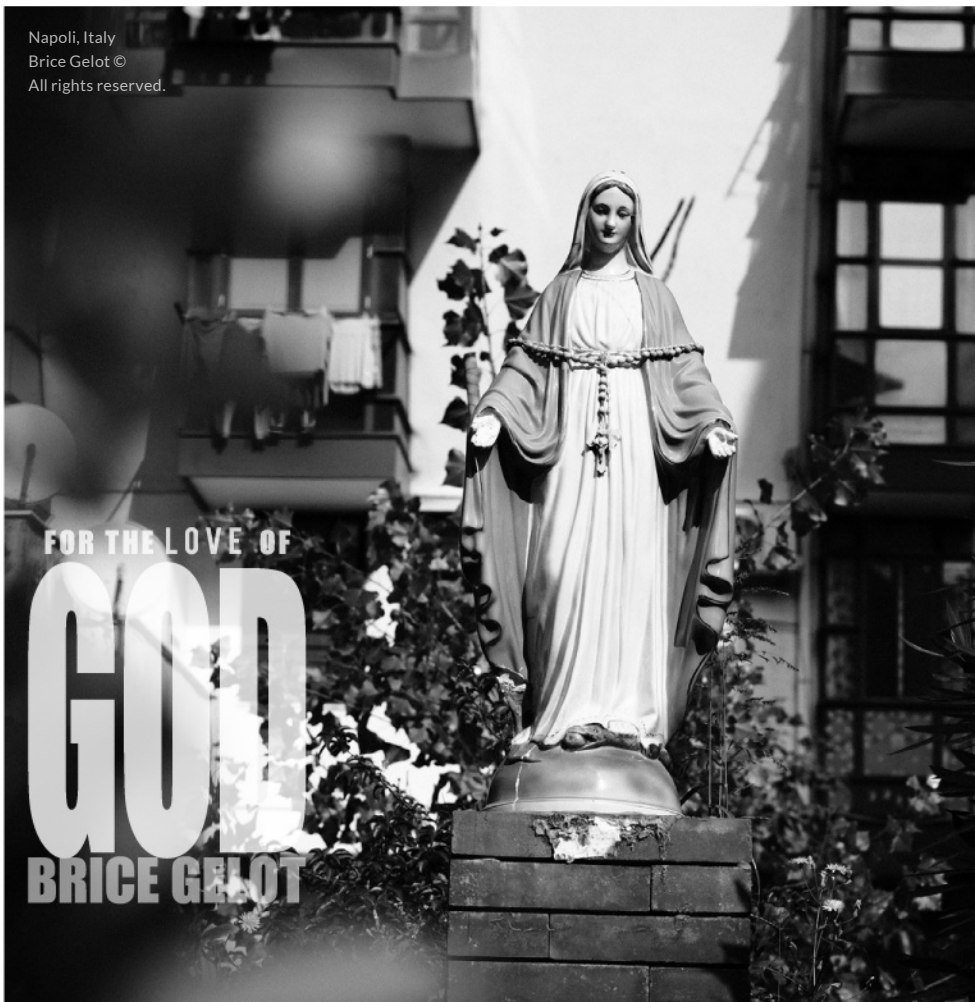
Rather than examining religion through doctrine or ideology, this series focuses on faith as a lived experience—how individuals express devotion, seek meaning, confront uncertainty, and navigate everyday life through spiritual conviction. Through intimate observations and encounters, the project documents the diverse ways belief manifests itself within contemporary society.

The work also reflects on the relationship between faith and photography. Both rely on acts of trust: one in the unseen, the other in the power of images to communicate experience and truth. In this sense, photographing faith becomes more than documentation—it becomes a means of exploring the human need for meaning, belonging, and transcendence.



Napoli, Italy
Brice Gelot ©
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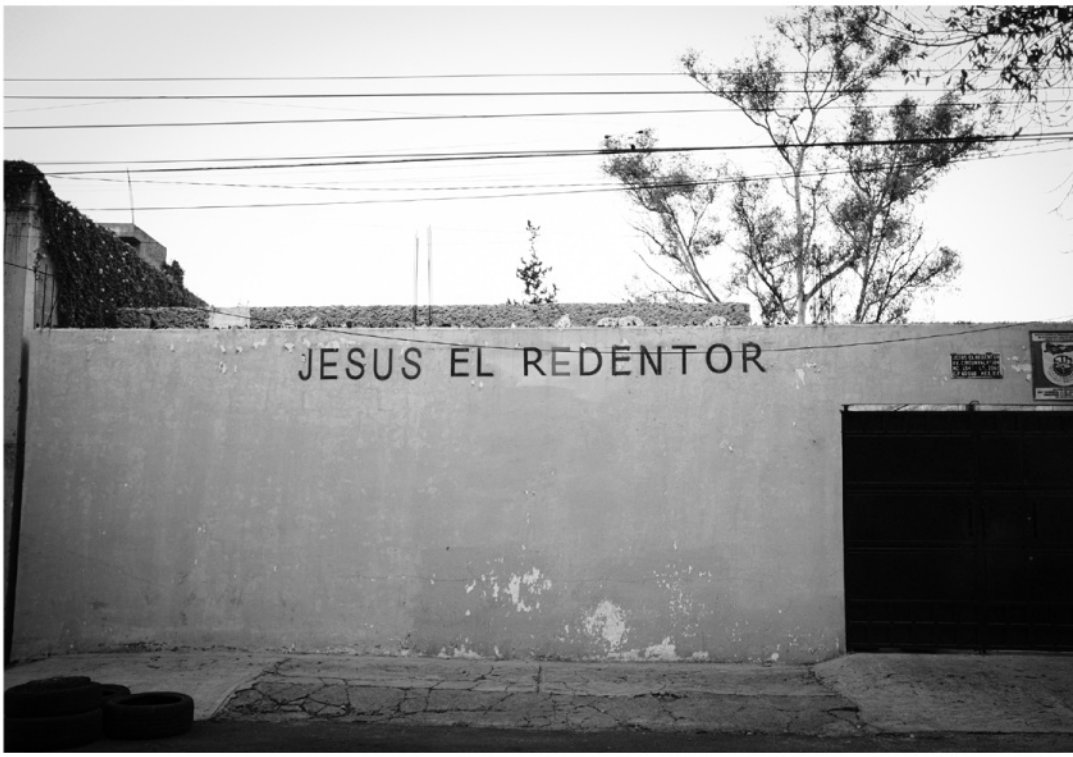
At a time when religion remains both deeply influential and widely debated, For the Love of God offers a visual meditation on belief and its lasting presence in the human condition, approached with curiosity, respect, and an open mind.

The photographs were created across multiple cities, including Paris (France), Naples (Italy), Los Angeles (USA), Ho Chi Minh City (Vietnam), and Mexico City (Mexico), reflecting the diverse cultural and spiritual landscapes through which this exploration of faith unfolds.



Top: Los Angeles, USA
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Mexico City, Mexico
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Mexico City, Mexico
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FOR THE LOVE OF

GOD

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Mexico City, Mexico
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Brice Gelot's Portrait © All rights reserved.

DOCUMENTING THE FRAGILE BOUNDARIES BETWEEN BELIEF, SURVIVAL, AND SOCIAL REALITY.

Right Page Top: Ho Chi Minh City / Saigon, Vietnam Brice Gelot © All rights reserved.

Right Page Bottom: Mexico City, Mexico Brice Gelot © All rights reserved.

Brice Gelot operates within a space where documentary photography and interpretation remain in a productive and deliberate tension. Rather than presenting information in a direct or linear way, his work builds on visual friction—moments where clarity and ambiguity coexist with precision and control.

The photographs sustain a nuanced and layered mode of reading. What may first appear immediate gradually reveals a more complex structure, shaped by absence, interruption, and the subtle presence of what lies beyond the frame. In this sense, meaning is not confined to individual images, but is generated through the viewer's evolving perception of relationships across the work.

There is a clear intentionality in this openness. The work resists closing distance too quickly, instead creating space for reflection, attention, and interpretive depth.

This measured distance should not be understood as detachment, but as a precise strategy that allows complexity to fully emerge within the act of looking.

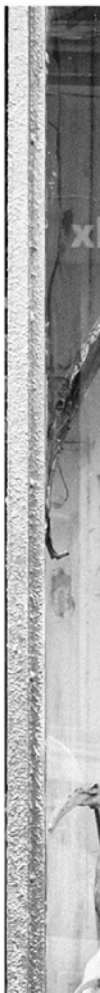
Ultimately, the work affirms photography as more than documentation. It becomes a space of negotiation and thought—between presence and absence, revelation and restraint, and the multiple layers through which meaning continues to unfold.


FOR THE LOVE OF
GOD
BRICE GELOT


SANTA MUERTE
AMOR
ÉXITO
TRIUNFO


DULCERIA PALMA
MAYOREO
Y
MENUDEO
DULCE
REGIONAL
SOL
Huevo
San
Juan
DE ALTO RIESGO







FOR THE LOVE OF GOD

"AT A TIME WHEN RELIGION REMAINS BOTH DEEPLY INFLUENTIAL AND WIDELY DEBATED, FOR THE LOVE OF GOD OFFERS A VISUAL MEDITATION ON BELIEF AND ITS LASTING PRESENCE IN THE HUMAN CONDITION, APPROACHED WITH CURIOSITY, RESPECT, AND AN OPEN MIND."

- BRICE GELOT

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Napoli, Italy
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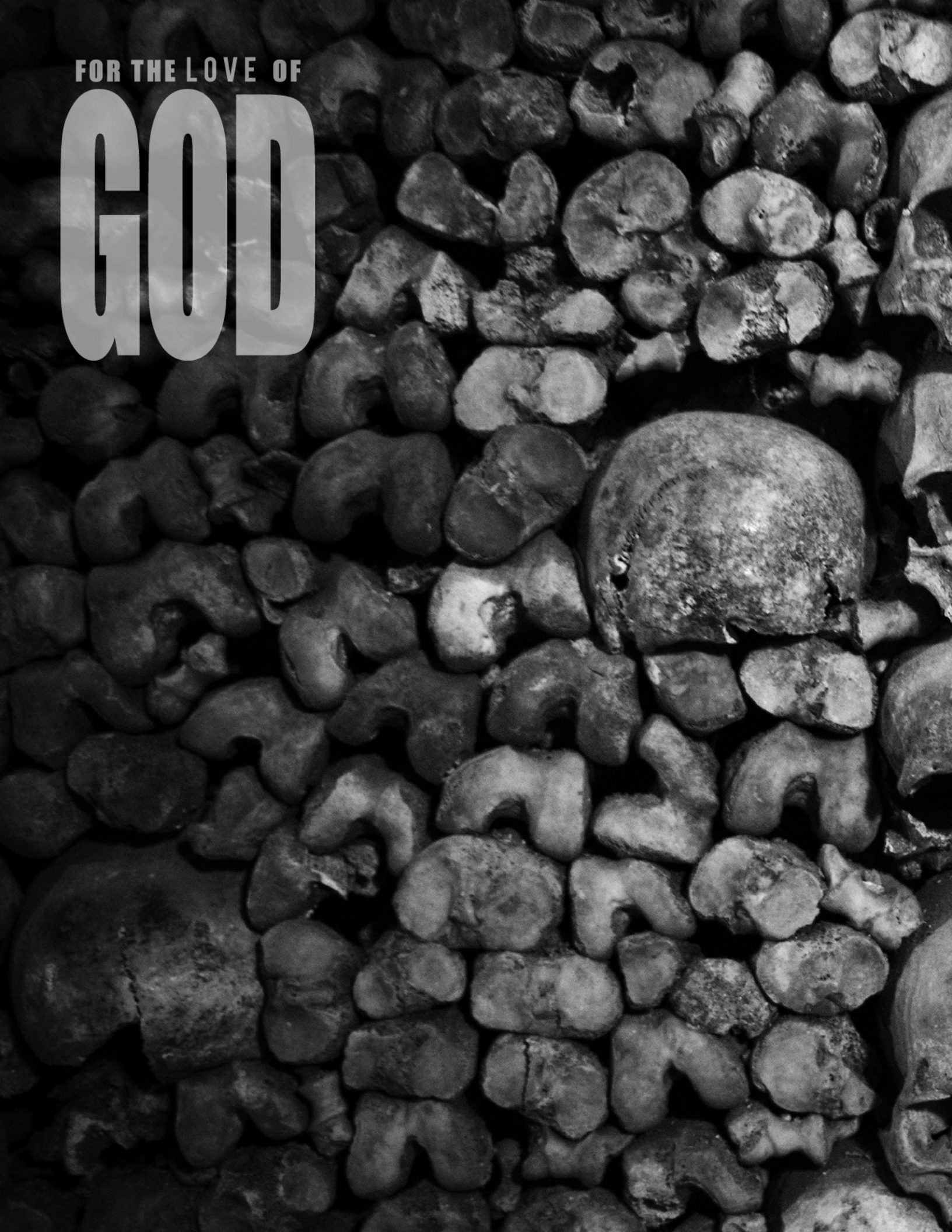
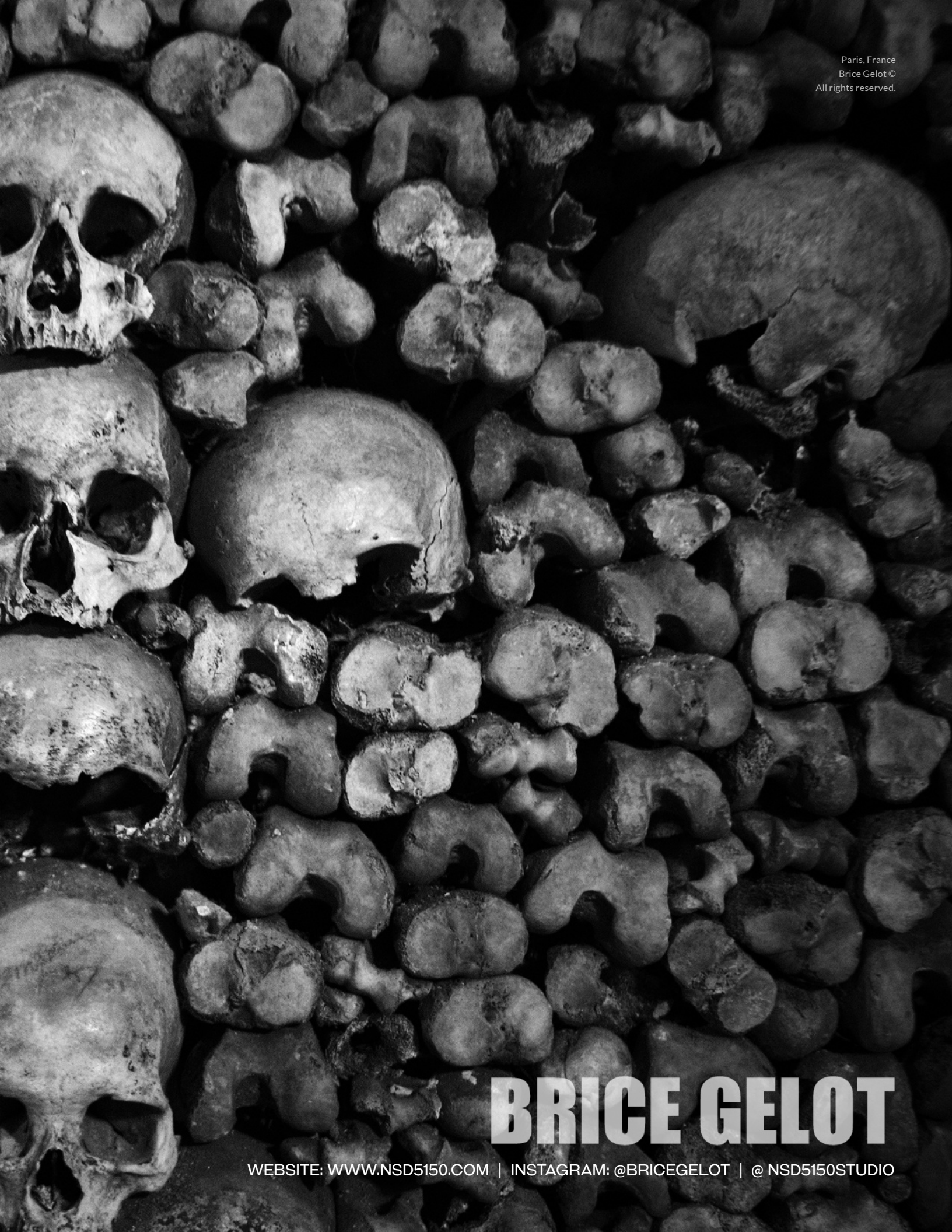
FOR THE LOVE OF

GOD

BRICE GELOT




FOR THE LOVE OF
GOD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Guardian of the Threshold
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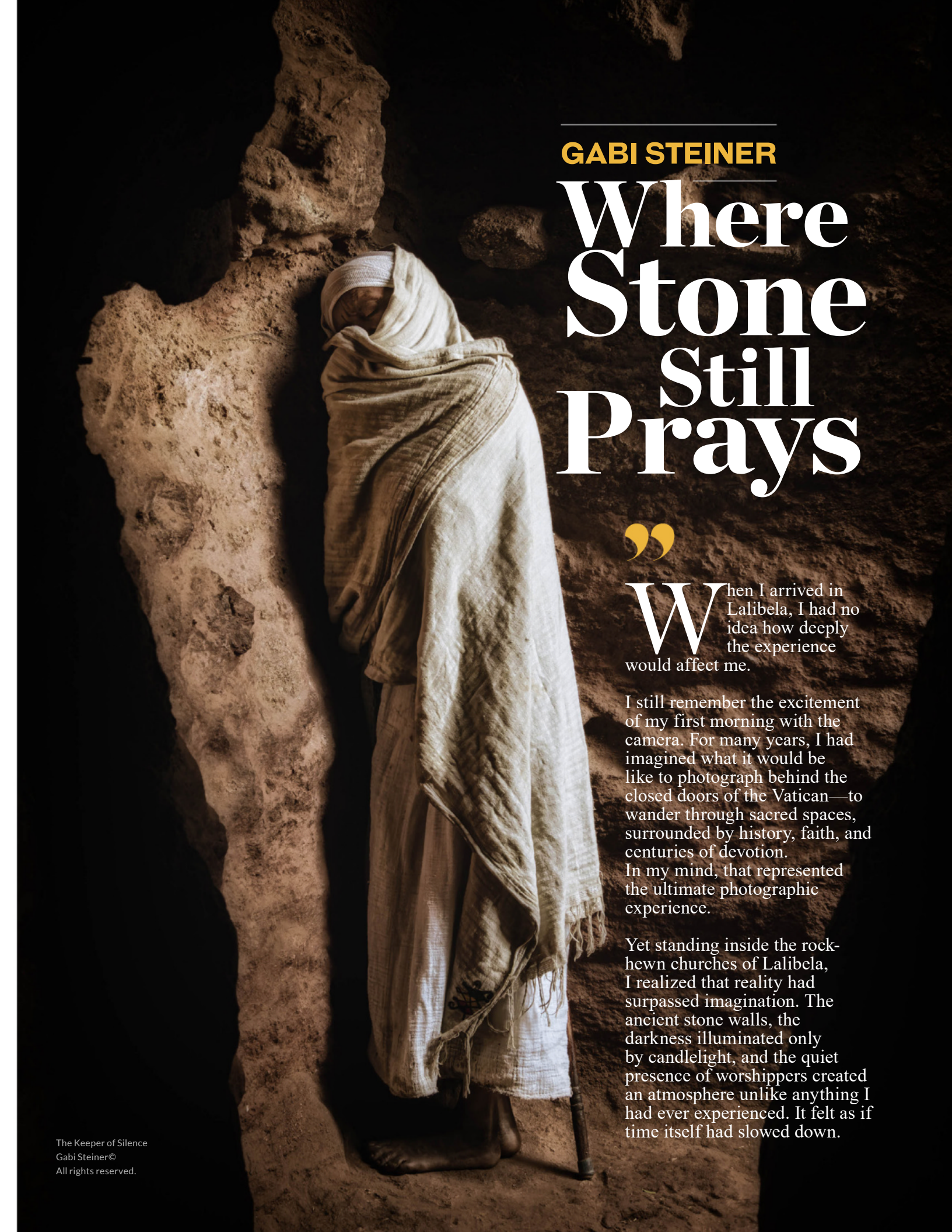

GABI STEINER

Where Stone Still Prays

When I arrived in Lalibela, I had no idea how deeply the experience would affect me.

I still remember the excitement of my first morning with the camera. For many years, I had imagined what it would be like to photograph behind the closed doors of the Vatican—to wander through sacred spaces, surrounded by history, faith, and centuries of devotion. In my mind, that represented the ultimate photographic experience.

Yet standing inside the rock-hewn churches of Lalibela, I realized that reality had surpassed imagination. The ancient stone walls, the darkness illuminated only by candlelight, and the quiet presence of worshippers created an atmosphere unlike anything I had ever experienced. It felt as if time itself had slowed down.

The Keeper of Silence
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GABI STEINER

Where Stone Still Prays

Top Left:
Quiet Inheritance
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Left Bottom:
Prayer at the Stone Gate
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Top Right:
Lessons of Faith
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The Rock-Hewn Churches of Lalibela show the deep history and spiritual life of Ethiopia. There are eleven churches, each carved from volcanic rock, in the western Ethiopian Highlands near Lalibela. King Gebre Meskel Lalibela of the Zagwe dynasty had them built to recreate Jerusalem in his own land. Today, the Ethiopian Orthodox Christian Church still uses these churches, and they remain important pilgrimage sites. In 1978, UNESCO added the site to its World Heritage List to recognize its cultural and historical value.



Before the Sacred Wall
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By Candlelight
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> What moved me most was not only the beauty of the place but the privilege of witnessing and photographing moments of genuine faith. Being allowed to photograph during religious ceremonies was far beyond anything I had expected or hoped for.

Lalibela felt less like a







GABI STEINER

Where Stone Still Prays

Top Left:
In the Presence of Light
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Left Bottom:
The Flame and the Gaze
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Top Right:
The last Prayer,
Gabi Steiner©
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The churches sit about 2,480 meters (8,140 feet) above sea level. Five are north of the town's river, called the Jordan, five are to the south, and one stands alone. Each group of churches is linked by tunnels and trenches. Biete Giorgis, the eleventh church, is also connected to the others by trenches.



GABI STEINER

Gathered in Shadow
Gabi Steiner©
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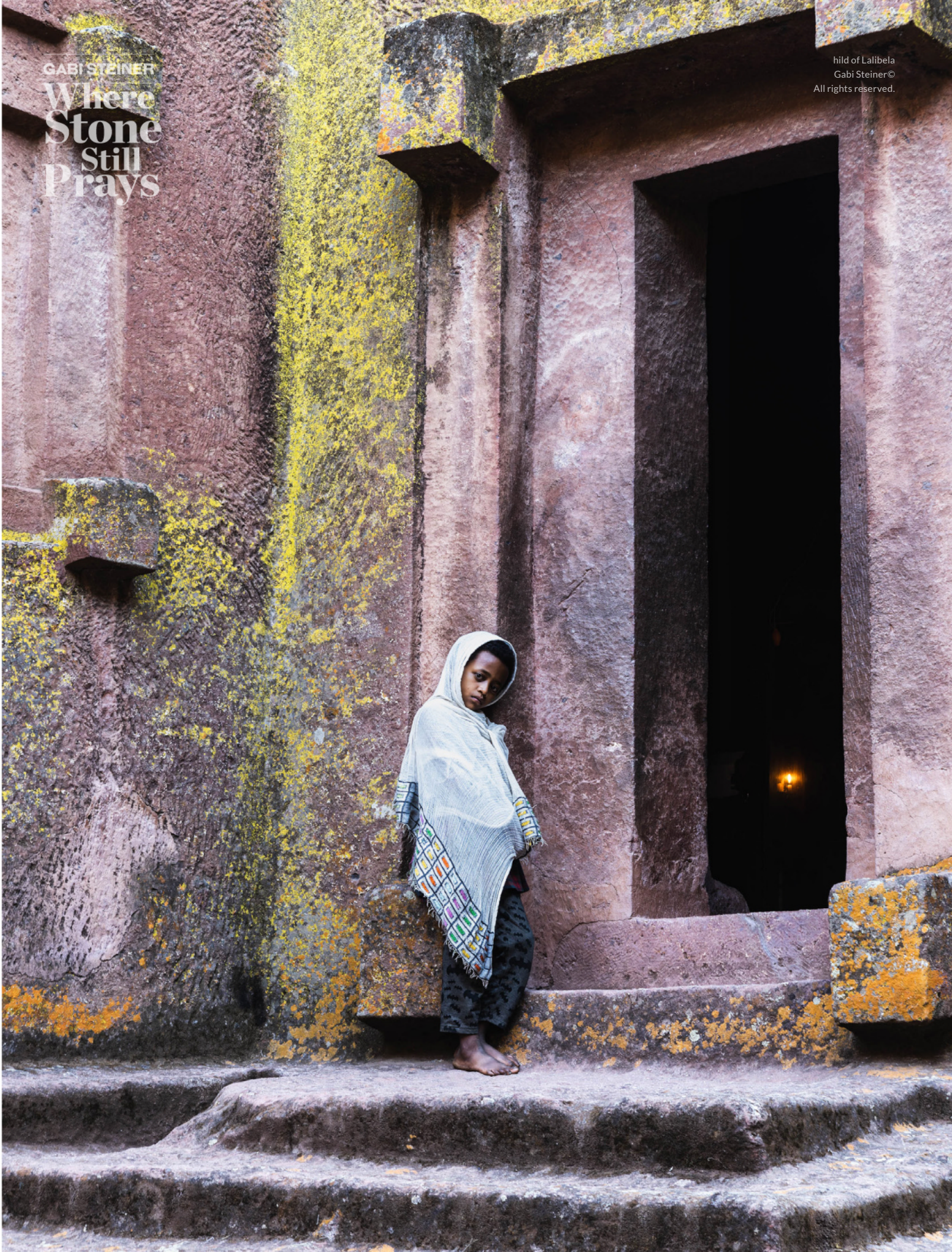
destination and more like a dream made real. It remains one of the most profound photographic experiences of my life—and one that I hope to return to someday."
- Gabi Steiner. 2026



hild of Lalibela
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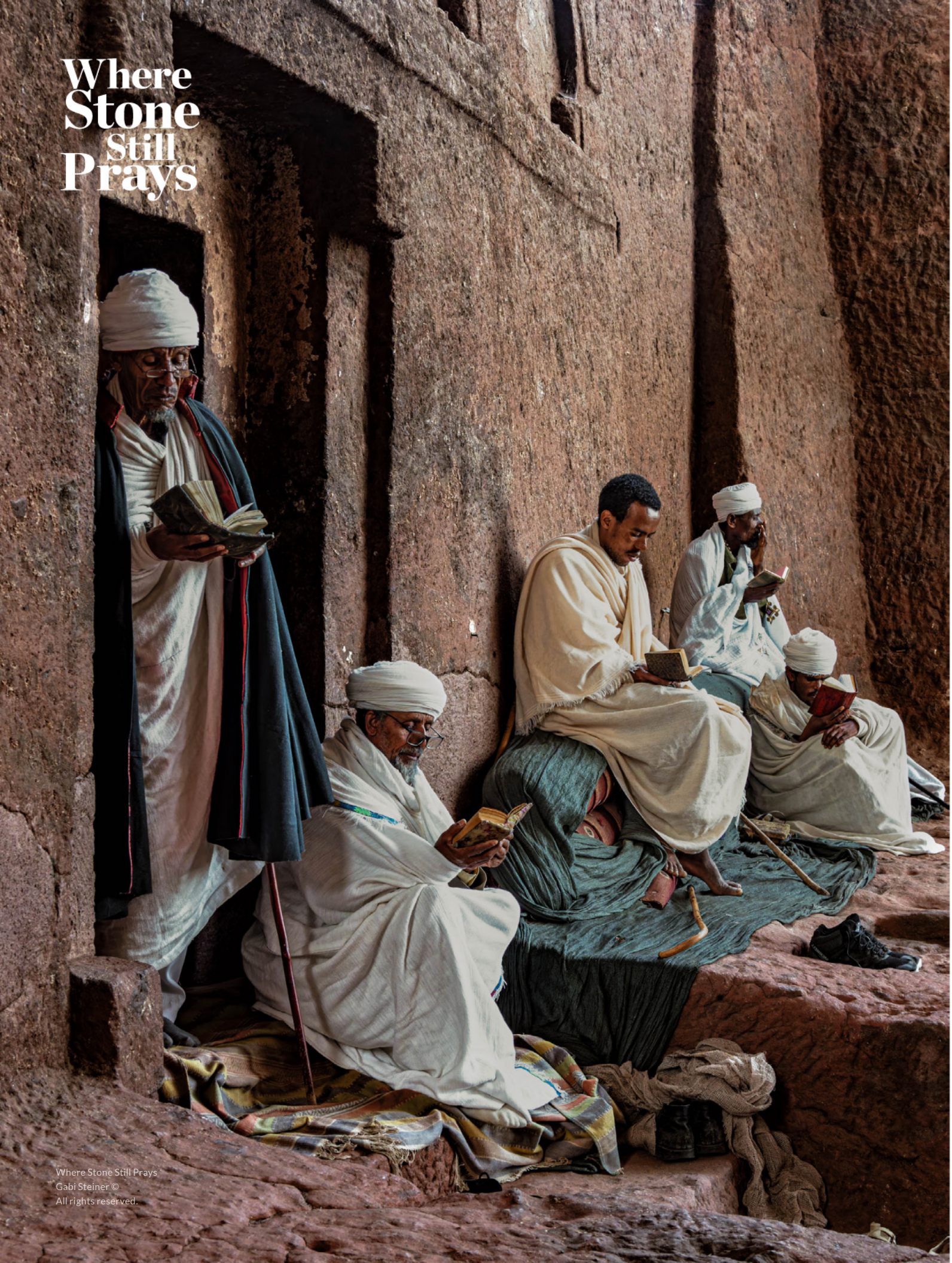
Where Stone Still Prays



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GABI STEINER





Gabi Steiner is an Austrian photographer whose work explores cultural identity, spirituality, and human connection. After discovering photography through an introductory course at the Prague School of Photography in 2017, she continued her studies with German photographer and mentor Helga Partikel, who helped shape both her technical skills and her approach to visual storytelling.

Her photography focuses on remote and indigenous communities, capturing moments of dignity, tradition, and shared humanity through an atmospheric and intimate visual language. Rather than simply documenting cultures, she seeks to create emotional resonance and foster a deeper understanding of lives and traditions rarely seen by the outside world.

Left: The Elder of Lalibela
Gabi Steiner ©
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Top Right:
Lessons of Faith
Gabi Steiner ©
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GABI STEINER

The Descent of Pilgrims
Gabi Steiner ©
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The Cross Beneath the Earth
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Where Stone Still Prays

Gabi's work has been featured multiple times in Lens Magazine and published in Dodho Magazine. Her photography has received international recognition through numerous awards, including Discovery of the Year 2025 in the Portrait category at the Refocus Awards. In 2026, her portrait Echoes of the Suri was ranked among the top five images in the Dodho Portrait Awards and selected for publication in the annual Portrait Book. Her work has been exhibited internationally, including at the Atlas of Humanity exhibitions in Paris and New York.



Visiting the Rock-Hewn Churches of Lalibela is a unique experience. These churches show deep devotion and are symbols of Ethiopia's spiritual center. They are always at risk from erosion, so dedicated caretakers work hard to protect them while honoring their religious importance. Their efforts help keep Lalibela's pilgrimage tradition alive for future generations.

The best time to visit Lalibela is in the dry season, from October to March, when the weather is good for exploring the churches. The city gets especially busy during big religious festivals like Genna on January 7 and Timkat on January 19. During these times, you can see religious services, long processions, traditional music, and rituals.

Where Stone Still Prays



Reading the Morning Light
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GABI STEINER

WEBSITE: GABISTEINER.AT | INSTAGRAM · @GABISTEINERPHOTO

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PERFECTED
Auschwitz-Birkenau
Memorial
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AUSCHWITZ-BIRKENAU MEMORIAL

BY INGMAR OSTERMAIER



"IN MAY 2026, I SPENT TWO DAYS PHOTOGRAPHING AT THE AUSCHWITZ-BIRKENAU MEMORIAL AND MUSEUM.

LIKE MANY PEOPLE, I ARRIVED CARRYING IMAGES, FACTS, AND STORIES THAT HAD ACCOMPANIED ME FOR YEARS.
I KNEW THE HISTORY. I KNEW THE NUMBERS.

I KNEW WHAT HAD HAPPENED THERE.

WHAT I WAS NOT PREPARED FOR WAS THE SILENCE."

- INGMAR OSTERMAIER





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AUSCHWITZ-BIRKENAU MEMORIAL

BY INGMAR OSTERMAIER





INDUSTRIALLY PERFECTED
Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial
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INDUSTRIALLY PERFECTED
AUSCHWITZ-BIRKENAU

BY INGMAR OSTERMAIER



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Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial
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AUSCHWITZ IS OFTEN DESCRIBED THROUGH STATISTICS, HISTORICAL DOCUMENTS, AND UNIMAGINABLE ACTS OF VIOLENCE. YET WALKING THROUGH THE CAMP, I WAS STRUCK BY SOMETHING ELSE: THE ORDER THAT REMAINS.

THE FENCES. THE BARRACKS. THE ROADS. THE REPETITION OF STRUCTURES. THE SYMMETRY. THE FEELING THAT EVERYTHING HAD ONCE BEEN DESIGNED TO FUNCTION EFFICIENTLY.

IT BECAME IMPOSSIBLE TO IGNORE THAT THE MURDER OF MORE THAN A MILLION PEOPLE WAS NOT ONLY DRIVEN BY HATRED. IT WAS ORGANIZED. PLANNED. SYSTEMATIZED.

DEATH WAS NOT ONLY INFLICTED HERE.

IT WAS INDUSTRIALLY PERFECTED.



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Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial
Ingmar Ostermaier ©
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INDUSTRIALLY PERFECTED

AUSCHWITZ-BIRKENAU

BY INGMAR OSTERMAIER



"

AS A PHOTOGRAPHER, I FOUND MYSELF DRAWN TO THESE STRUCTURES. NOT BECAUSE THEY ARE VISUALLY APPEALING, BUT BECAUSE THEY REVEAL SOMETHING DEEPLY UNSETTLING.

THE SAME ORDER THAT CAN APPEAR CALM AND CONTROLLED TODAY

ONCE SERVED A MACHINERY OF PERSECUTION, DEHUMANIZATION, AND MASS MURDER.


INDUSTRIALLY
PERFECTED
AUSCHWITZ-BIRKENAU
BY INGMAR OSTERMAIER



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Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial
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Many of the photographs in this series are built around repetition, geometry, and symmetry. These choices are not intended to aestheticize the place. Rather, they reflect the logic that once governed it.
At the same time, Auschwitz raises questions that reach far beyond history.

QUESTIONS ABOUT SURVIVAL.

QUESTIONS ABOUT HUMAN DIGNITY.

QUESTIONS ABOUT WHAT REMAINS AFTER UNIMAGINABLE SUFFERING.

AND PERHAPS ALSO QUESTIONS ABOUT FAITH.

Not only religious faith, but faith in humanity itself.

How do we continue to believe in human dignity after a place like Auschwitz?
How do we preserve memory as the last survivors gradually leave us? What responsibility do we carry toward those who can no longer speak for themselves?
I do not claim to have answers.

Photography cannot explain Auschwitz.

It cannot fully convey the suffering, the fear, the loss, or the enormity of what happened there.
What it can do is create a moment of attention.



INDUSTRIALLY PERFECTED
AUSCHWITZ-BIRKENAU
BY INGMAR OSTERMAIER

INDUSTRIALLY
PERFECTED
Auschwitz-Birkenau
Memorial

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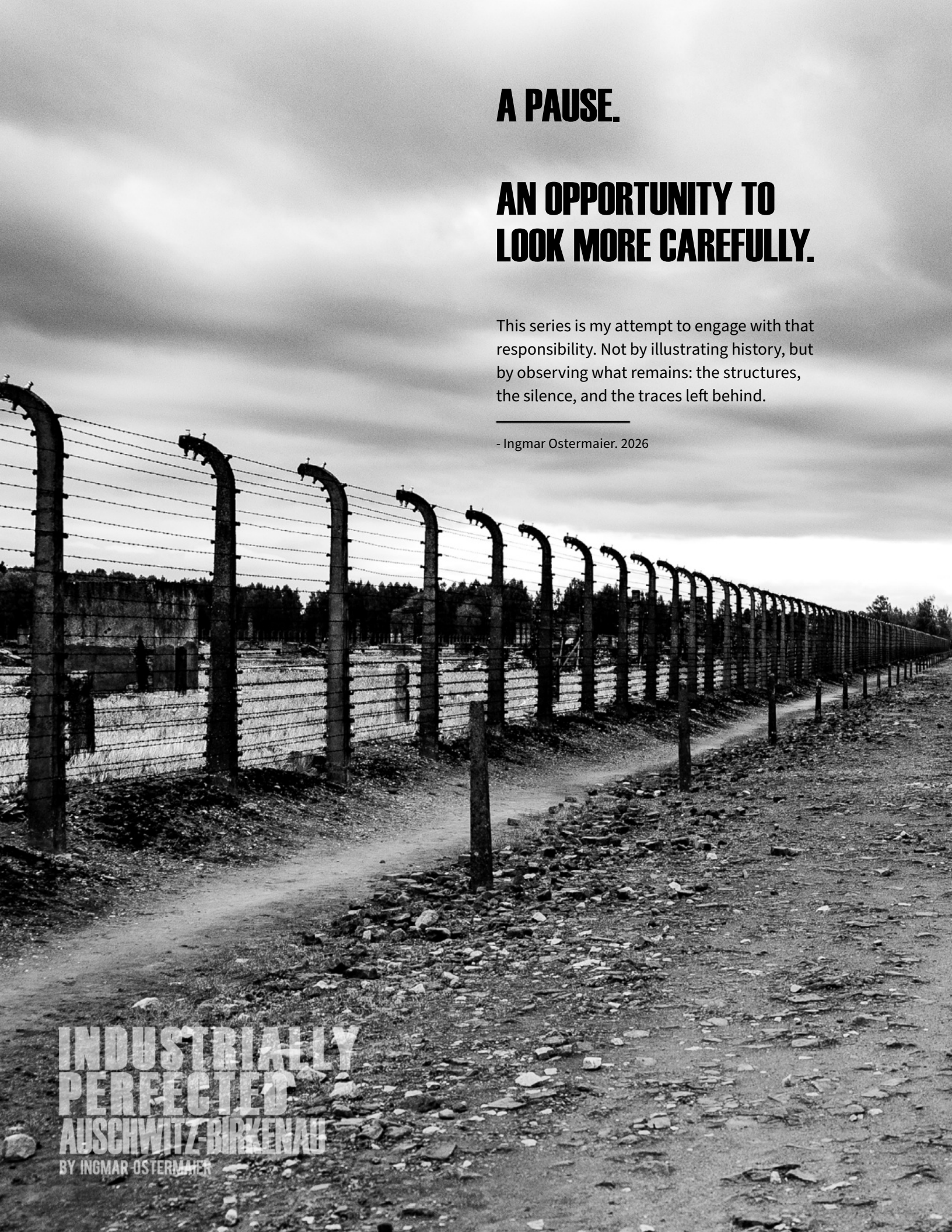

A PAUSE.

AN OPPORTUNITY TO LOOK MORE CAREFULLY.

This series is my attempt to engage with that responsibility. Not by illustrating history, but by observing what remains: the structures, the silence, and the traces left behind.

- Ingmar Ostermaier. 2026


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PERFECTED
Auschwitz-Birkenau
Memorial
Ingmar Ostermaier ©
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INDUSTRIALLY PERFECTED
AUSCHWITZ-BIRKENAU

BY INGMAR OSTERMAIER



NEARLY EIGHTY YEARS AFTER THE LIBERATION OF AUSCHWITZ, THE SITE CONTINUES TO CONFRONT US WITH DIFFICULT QUESTIONS.

THE BUILDINGS REMAIN.

THE SILENCE REMAINS.

AND SO DOES THE RESPONSIBILITY TO REMEMBER.



AUSCHWITZ-BIRKENAU MEMORIAL

BY INGMAR OSTERMAIER

"My photography is driven by presence rather than by the construction of narrative.

I am interested in moments, places, and traces that exist before they become stories. Instead of directing or staging situations, I try to remain within them, observing quietly and responding instinctively to what unfolds.

Black-and-white photography helps me reduce the world to gestures, structures, atmosphere, and the relationship between people and space. It allows the image to focus on emotional and human weight rather than on visual distraction.

Whether working in the streets of European cities, documenting humanitarian projects in Nigeria, or exploring places shaped by collective memory, such as Auschwitz-Birkenau, my approach remains the same: to photograph honestly, respectfully, and with curiosity toward the people, histories, and environments that briefly intersect with my camera.

I am particularly drawn to themes of presence, absence, memory, identity, and the traces people leave behind.

For me, photography is not about explaining the world.

It is about being present within it.



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Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial
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Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial and Museum
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INGMAR OSTERMAIER

Ingmar Ostermaier is an Austrian documentary and street photographer based in Vorarlberg, Austria, working across Europe and beyond. His photography focuses on human presence in real situations, often exploring the quiet tension between everyday life, social reality, and personal moments.

Working primarily in black and white, Ostermaier approaches photography as a form of visual field notes. Rather than constructing scenes, he photographs within unfolding situations, allowing moments to develop naturally in front of the camera.

Before focusing on photography, Ostermaier spent over a decade working as a professional singer, an experience that continues to influence his sensitivity to atmosphere, rhythm, and human expression. His work moves between documentary, street, and portrait photography, always guided by a simple principle: presence over narrative.

In 2026, he participated in a humanitarian hospital mission in rural Nigeria, documenting the work of international medical volunteers and the lives of patients traveling long distances for treatment. The resulting photographic series forms part of an ongoing exploration of humanity, resilience, and dignity in challenging environments.

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Auschwitz-Birkenau
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INDUSTRIALLY PERFECTED AUSCHWITZ-BIRKENAU MEMORIAL




INDUSTRIALLY
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AUSCHWITZ-BIRKENAU MEMORIAL



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INGMAR OSTERMAIER

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“TO ME, SPIRITS ARE SOMETHING TRULY REAL. THE WORLD IS FULL OF THEM.” SO SAYS THE TUVAN WRITER GALSAN TSCHINAG, WHO IS HIMSELF A SHAMAN. THROUGH HIS BOOKS “THE BLUE SKY” AND “THE GRAY EARTH,” AS WELL AS READING YURI RYTKHEU’S NOVEL “THE CHUKCHI BIBLE”, I GAINED MY FIRST INSIGHT INTO SIBERIAN SHAMANISM.

SHAMANS IN TUVA

MEDIATORS BETWEEN HUMANS AND SPIRITS

HOLGER HOFFMANN


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SHAMANS IN TUVA

MEDIATORS BETWEEN HUMANS AND SPIRITS


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After eight trips to Siberia, during which we – my wife Sylvia and I – mostly traveled with nomads in the winter, we found ourselves in the Republic of Tuva, bordering Mongolia. We have already been exploring the Altai Mountains for ten days when, one morning, we spot a group of people on a hill not far from the Yenisei River. Curious as we are, we persuade Mikhail, our guide, to climb the hill.

Before us stretches a vast expanse of silence, as if someone had turned down the volume. Only the wind remains. It sweeps across the grass of the hill and tugs at the colorful cloth ribbons (khadags) tied to the ovoo—a pile of stones with wooden poles stuck in them, bearing countless khadags left behind at this sacred site over the years.

Over fifty people sit expectantly in a wide circle, at the top of which the ovoo stands. No one pushes, no one speaks loudly.
It seems as though the place itself is setting the pace. We are lucky; the ceremony seems to have just begun. “Here,” Michail says quietly, almost more respectfully than usual, pointing to the ovoo. “This is the place of the ancestral spirits.”



Holger Hoffmann © All rights reserved.

I pause for a moment, raise my camera, then lower it again. “I first need to understand what’s happening here.”

Michail asks an elderly man for details and explains to us: “This is a Tailgan ceremony.” Those present are members of a clan who have traveled by bus to this sacred hill to invoke their ancestors through shamans and, with symbolic offerings, to ask them for the community's protection, fertility, and prosperity.

We stop at the edge of the circle. Although we are the only foreigners, we do not attract much attention and are welcomed tacitly. My gaze wanders around. Right next to the ovoo, a life-size cloth doll sits enthroned on a wooden chair, wearing a shaman’s cap. Behind it, a gnarled tree rises, adorned with colorful khadags fluttering in the wind. “That is the World Tree,” explains Mikhail, “it symbolizes the axis of the world, which leads the way back to the very beginning of creation.”



The women spread out cloths upon which they place food, sweets, and small offerings. Children sit close to their parents, quieter than one might expect. In the center, I see three female shamans. Their robes shimmer in shades of blue, green, and turquoise, interwoven with braided coloured ribbons and metal amulets that clink softly with every movement. Their heads are covered by shaman's hats adorned with eagle feathers, the fringes of which conceal their faces.

Someone brings them split wood. Two of them stack stones to form a fire pit. The third takes a small bowl, dips her fingers into it, and splashes milk into the air – forwards, to the side, once more. Michail leans towards me. "For the spirits. They are announcing their arrival."

We walk around the circle, but differently than before. More consciously. Every step suddenly seems to carry weight.





Sylvia whispers: “They’re probably waiting.” I wonder: For what? At that moment, one of the shamans lights the fire. With the first wisp of smoke, the atmosphere changes. It’s not a clear moment, more of a gentle sensation.

The shamans step in front of the fire. The first raises her drum, beating it slowly, evenly. Dull. Like a heartbeat. The second joins in, the third follows. A rhythm emerges, immediately settling into the body. Then they begin to sing. The voices are rough, deep, laced with sounds I do not understand – and yet they seem purposeful, as if addressing someone directly. Mikhail whispers, “They are calling the spirits. The ancestors. The guardians of this place.” The wind tugs at the ribbons of the ovoo, as if answering.

The shamans’ movements change. Standing gives way to a gentle sway, and the sway to a counter-clockwise circle. The drums grow faster, the voices more intense. One of the shamans tilts her head back, her eyes half-closed. Metal plates on her robe clink against one another as she turns.



I move closer and take photographs. Quickly, intently. I am trying to capture the moment, which is actually slipping away. “They’re already not quite here anymore,” says Michail. I feel goosebumps, even though the sun is warm.

A shaman steps forward and pours milk and sour cream into the fire. It sizzles, the smoke thickens. Then she kneels down, raises her arms imploringly towards the sky, and murmurs incomprehensible words. Another runs around the fire and throws grains of cereal into the air from a bowl.



Everything happens calmly, without haste, but with a naturalness, as if every movement were both learned and remembered. The shamans continue to move, now speaking faster, more urgently. It sounds like a dialogue – even if only one side can be heard. Mikhail: “They are asking for good fortune. For protection. For what people need.”

Most of the participants are seated; some are praying, while others stand in reverence or record the ceremony on their mobile phones. One participant stands up and pours a sack of sweets she has brought with her over the fire. Suddenly, the rhythm changes. The drums slow down. A shaman swings burning juniper branches in front of her. Aromatic smoke rises. At the same time, she rings a small brass bell to the rhythm of the drums.



Holger Flohrmann, All rights reserved.



I circle her, trying to capture it all. It seems to me that they don't even notice me.
The shamans' voices are now growing quieter.
Their movements slow down.
Finally, they stand still.
This is the signal for two of the shamans' assistants to distribute yellow and red khadags and handfuls of grain to the participants.
On this occasion, I notice that many of them have kneaded a sort of tsampa dough from the coarse-grained barley flour they brought, and have shaped it into various forms, with the milk bottles lined up in front of them. I spot several cars, a house, and shapes I cannot clearly identify. I ask Mikhail, "Is that what they wish for?" He nods.


Holger Hoffmann © All rights reserved





The Tailgan ceremony seems to be coming to an end, without any visible final climax. It is more as if the ritual were seeping away like water into the sand.

The participants rise one by one, speak more loudly again, even laugh, and walk to the ovoo to tie their khadags around the branches and place their remaining sweets on the stones, touching them with their hands for a moment. When invited to do so, Sylvia follows their example, and on the way to the ovoo, a woman presses a few sweets into her hand.

As we walk back to the car, Michail says, “Now the ancestral spirits have heard the wishes and prayers. Whether they will help – we shall see.” Left behind are the hill, the ovoo, and the fine smoke of the extinguished fire. And something that cannot be clearly named – but is there, and which we were privileged to witness.



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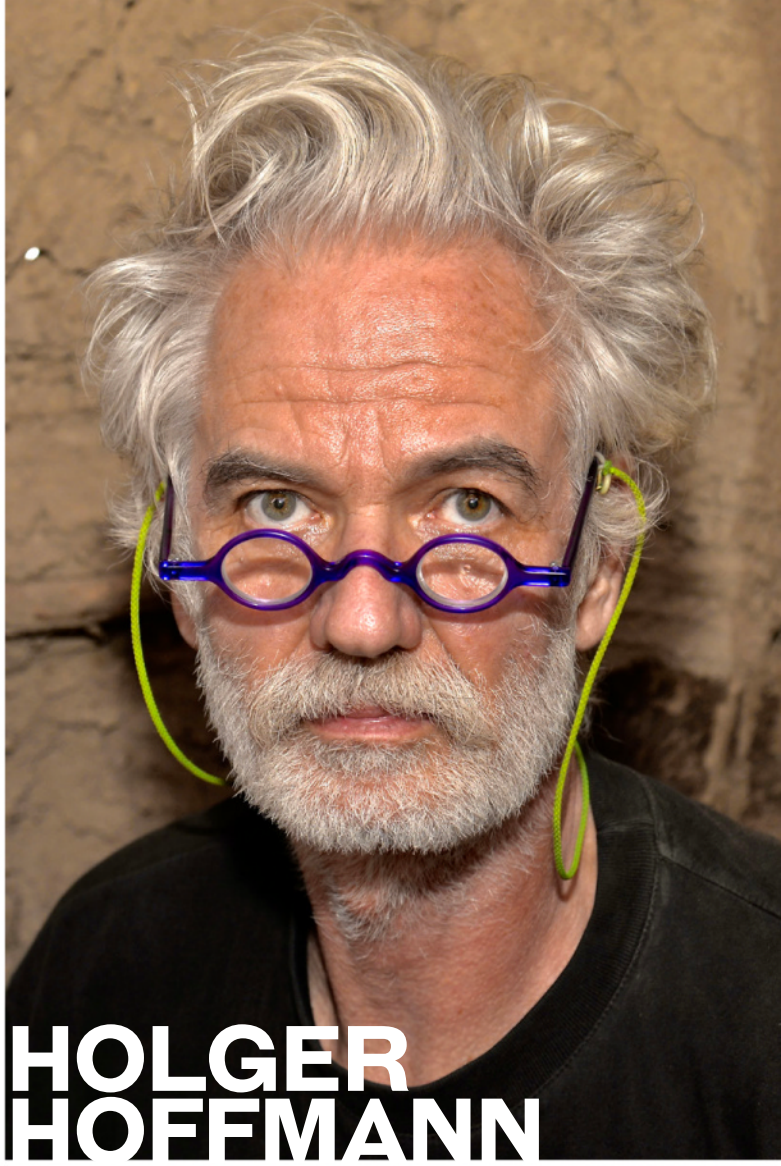
SHAMANS IN TUVA

MEDIATORS BETWEEN HUMANS AND SPIRITS



HOLGER HOFFMANN

Holger Hoffmann, a Swiss travel and documentary photographer, journeys the globe with his wife, Sylvia Furrer. Together, they have explored 110 countries, drawn to the vibrant customs and daily rhythms of indigenous communities who keep their traditions alive.

They hold deep respect for those who thrive in the world's most remote and challenging places, from the icy expanse of Siberia and the scorching Danakil desert to the steamy jungles of West Papua and the lofty peaks of the Himalayas. In recent years, their journeys have increasingly centered on the lives of nomadic peoples.

Holger Hoffmann's projects have been published internationally in travel and photo reports in various magazines, including many past editions of Lens Magazine.



> MY GAZE WANDERS AROUND. RIGHT NEXT TO THE OVOO, A LIFE-SIZE CLOTH DOLL SITS ENTHRONED ON A WOODEN CHAIR, WEARING A SHAMAN'S CAP. BEHIND IT, A GNARLED TREE RISES, ADORNED WITH COLORFUL KHADAGS FLUTTERING IN THE WIND.







SHAMANS IN TUVA

MEDIATORS BETWEEN HUMANS AND SPIRITS

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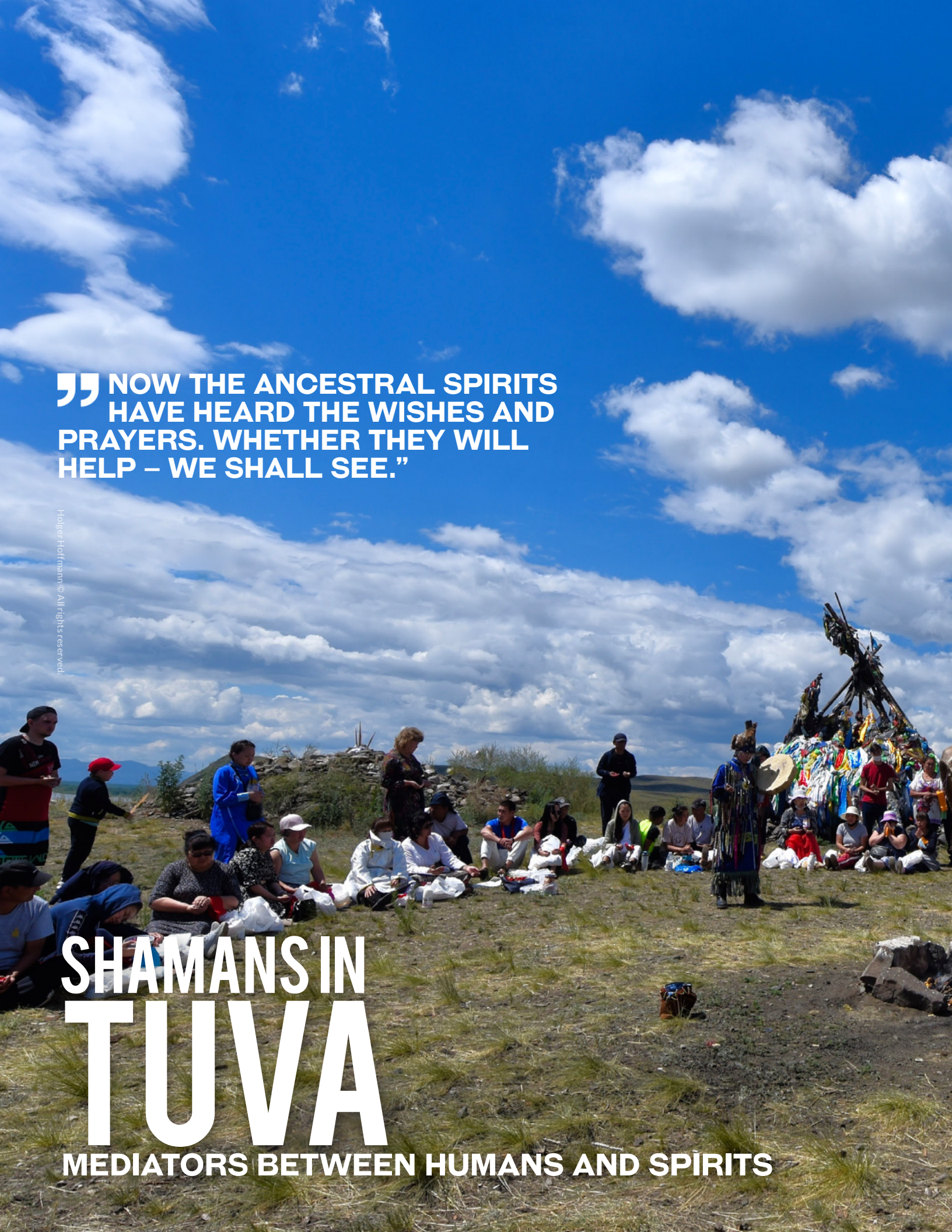

“NOW THE ANCESTRAL SPIRITS HAVE HEARD THE WISHES AND PRAYERS. WHETHER THEY WILL HELP – WE SHALL SEE.”

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SHAMANS IN TUVA

MEDIATORS BETWEEN HUMANS AND SPIRITS



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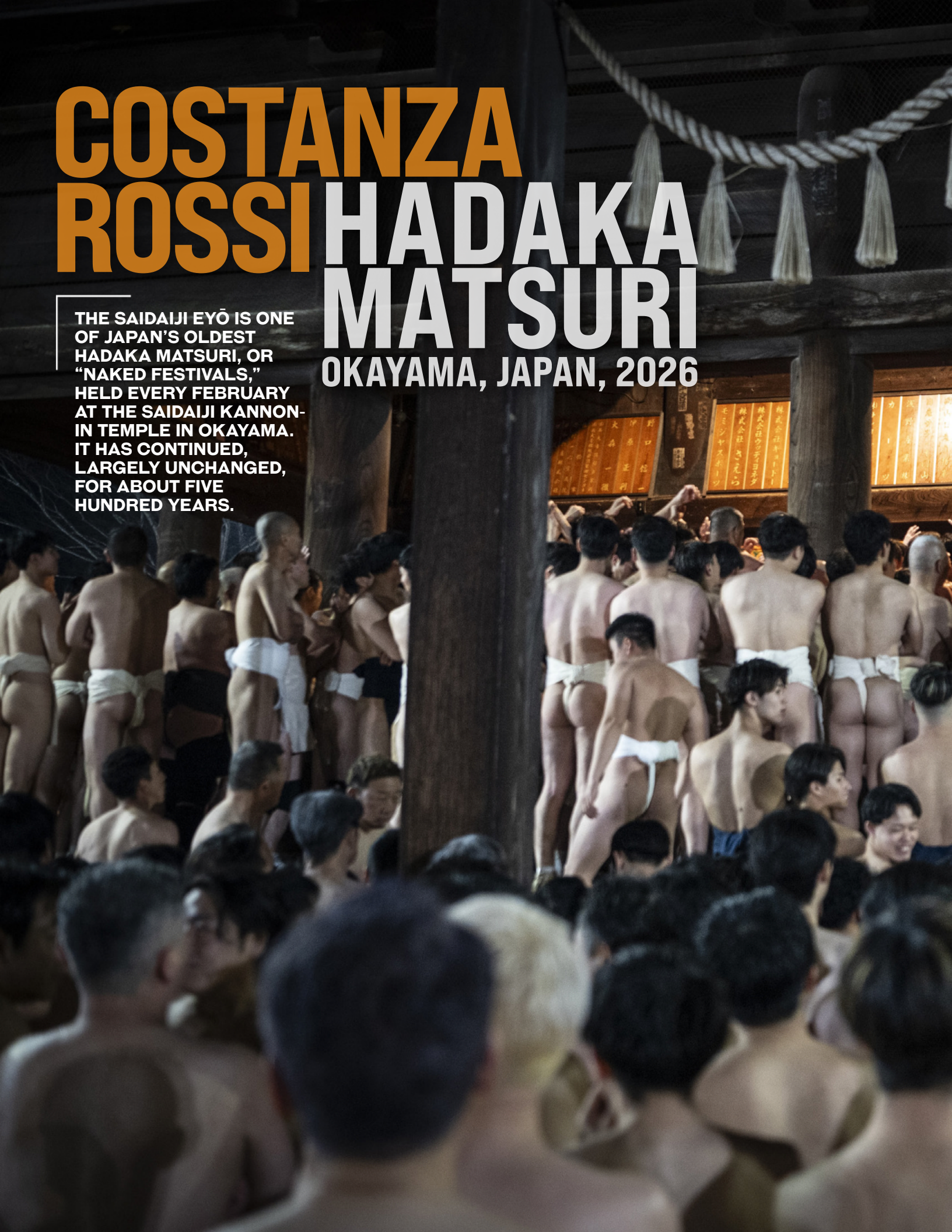
COSTANZA ROSSI

HADAKA MATSURI

OKAYAMA, JAPAN, 2026

THE SAIDAIJI EYŌ IS ONE OF JAPAN'S OLDEST HADAKA MATSURI, OR "NAKED FESTIVALS," HELD EVERY FEBRUARY AT THE SAIDAIJI KANNON-IN TEMPLE IN OKAYAMA. IT HAS CONTINUED, LARGELY UNCHANGED, FOR ABOUT FIVE HUNDRED YEARS.





The gathering.
Thousands of men, naked but for a loincloth, fill the main hall of Saidaiji Kannon-in as the rite nears its climax.
Costanza Rossi ©
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The gathering.
Thousands of men, naked but for a loincloth, fill the main hall of Saidaiji Kannon-in as the rite nears its climax.
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COSTANZA ROSSI

HADAKA MATSURI

OKAYAMA, JAPAN, 2026



THOUSANDS OF MEN TAKE PART, WEARING ONLY A WHITE LOINCLOTH AND SPLIT-TOE TABI. THEY PURIFY THEMSELVES IN COLD WATER BEFORE ENTERING THE TEMPLE, AND AGAIN THROUGHOUT THE LONG BUILD-UP TO THE FINAL RITE. HELD IN THE DEPTHS OF WINTER, IT IS AT ONCE AN ACT OF DEVOTION AND A TEST OF ENDURANCE AGAINST THE COLD.

COSTANZA ROSSI

HADAKA MATSURI

OKAYAMA, JAPAN, 2026



Purification.
Before entering the temple, and throughout the long wait before the main event, the participants purify themselves in freezing water — circling the temple, chanting, and immersing themselves again and again.
Costanza Rossi ©
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Children's festival. Boys take part in the children's hadaka matsuri, held earlier in the day before the men's rite; their loincloths bear the names of their local schools.
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THE EVENT FILLS A WHOLE DAY. IN THE AFTERNOON, THERE IS A CHILDREN'S VERSION OF THE FESTIVAL — THE SAME AS THE MEN'S, ON A SMALLER SCALE — ALONG WITH DANCES AND FAMILIES GATHERING AT THE TEMPLE.

THE MEN'S RITE BEGINS ONLY AFTER DARK, AND BUILDS GRADUALLY. A SERIES OF PROCESSIONS, PURIFICATIONS, AND RITUALS HEIGHTENS BOTH THE SPIRITUAL INTENSITY AND THE SENSE OF ANTICIPATION, DRAWING OUT THE SUSPENSE.



COSTANZA ROSSI
HADAKA MATSURI
OKAYAMA, JAPAN, 2026


3
2
會陽 林グループ



HADAKA MATSURI

OKAYAMA, JAPAN, 2026







COSTANZA ROSSI

Costanza Rossi is an Italian documentary photographer with a background in marketing, communication, and digital media. Her work ranges from travel to social, cultural, and environmental subjects, and is increasingly focused on contemporary social issues and human-centered stories that resonate beyond the moment they capture. After many years based in London, she now lives and works nomadically, traveling almost full-time.

Her photographs have been shown in solo and group exhibitions internationally, including two recent solo shows — at the Natural History Museum of Salento (Italy) in 2025 and at the Palazzo Ducale in Melpignano (Italy) in 2026. She is the co-author of The Hidden Worlds of the Surma People, a photographic book with an educational purpose, combining images with explanatory text and first-hand narrative, about the Surma people of southern Ethiopia, published by Pensa Editore in association with the Natural History Museum of Salento.



Children's festival. Boys take part in the children's hadaka matsuri, held earlier in the day before the men's rite; their loincloths bear the names of their local schools.
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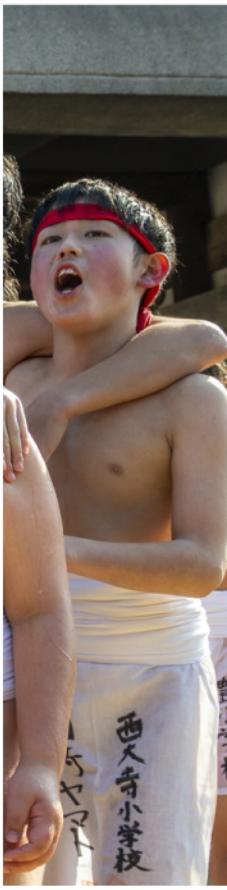



THE CLIMAX COMES AT AROUND NINE IN THE EVENING: THE LIGHTS OF THE WHOLE TEMPLE GO OUT FOR A FEW SECONDS WHILE THE PRIESTS DROP A PAIR OF SMALL SACRED STICKS, THE SHINGI, INTO THE CROWD FROM A WINDOW ABOVE.

THE MEN PUSH AND WRESTLE TO SEIZE ONE AND CARRY IT OUT OF THE HALL. WHOEVER MANAGES IT IS CALLED FUKUOTOKO, THE “MAN OF FORTUNE,” AND IS BELIEVED TO RECEIVE A YEAR OF GOOD FORTUNE. THE FESTIVAL IS LISTED AS AN IMPORTANT INTANGIBLE FOLK CULTURAL PROPERTY OF JAPAN.



HADAKA MATSURI

OKAYAMA, JAPAN, 2026

COSTANZA ROSSI

Purification.
Before entering the temple, and throughout the long wait before the main event, the participants purify themselves in freezing water — circling the temple, chanting, and immersing themselves again and again.

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HADAKA MATSURI
OKAYAMA, JAPAN, 2026

* The climax. At around nine in the evening, the lights are turned off, and the priests throw the sacred shingi into the crowd in the dark; the man who wrestles one free and carries it out is called fukuotoko, the "man of fortune," and is granted a year of blessings. The steam that fills the hall is the men's body heat rising into the freezing night air.
Costanza Rossi ©
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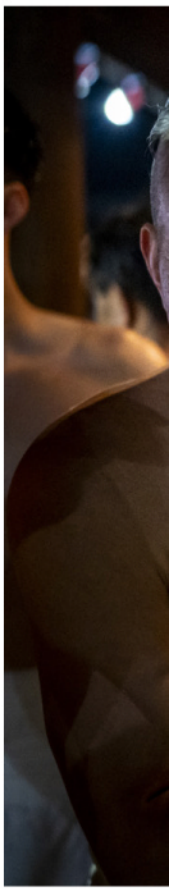
"WHAT DREW ME IN THE FIRST PLACE WAS A LOVE OF EXPLORATION AND ADVENTURE, CURIOSITY ABOUT OTHER PEOPLE AND THEIR LIVES, AND AN ATTRACTION TO ANYTHING THAT TAKES ME OUT OF MY COMFORT ZONE."







COSTANZA ROSSI

"I started taking photographs to record my own travels — the places I passed through and the people I met along the way — until it became much more than an occasional pastime. Travel and photography have grown together in me over many years; they have become so intertwined that I can no longer tell one from the other.



Over time, the work has moved from simply documenting where I was to the stories I found there — social, cultural, and environmental subjects, and, increasingly, questions of human dignity, identity, and ways of life under pressure in a changing present. I try to spend real time with the people and places I photograph rather than passing through.

At the moment, I am working on reportage projects built on immersive fieldwork, as well as on new scientific publications."

- Costanza Rossi



THE SERIES FOLLOWS THE FESTIVAL IN SEQUENCE: THE AFTERNOON GATHERING AND THE COLD-WATER PURIFICATION, THE CROWD PRESSED INTO THE MAIN HALL, AND THE FINAL STRUGGLE IN THE DARKNESS.

HADAKA MATSURI

OKAYAMA, JAPAN, 2026

COSTANZA ROSSI

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Closing.
The struggle for the sacred sticks is so fierce that injuries are common every year. Once the scramble eases, the shingi have found their winners, and the rite has been carried into another year.
Costanza Rossi ©
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THIBAULT GERBALDI

2 SERIES

The Island of Offerings

Across Sri Lanka, faith is lived through ritual, discipline, gesture, and place. This series moves from young Buddhist novice monks in Galle to candlelit temple rituals near Kataragama and a natural cave used as a monastery. A Tamil tea worker from the central highlands broadens the series beyond Buddhist monastic life. This points to Sri Lanka's layered religious landscape, where Buddhist, Hindu, and other traditions coexist.



THE SAFFRON WALK

A Buddhist monk walks through a temple corridor in Kataragama, in Sri Lanka, his saffron robe standing out against the warm interior light. The image reflects the quiet discipline of monastic life, structured by movement, prayer, and daily ritual.

Thibault Gerbaldi © All rights reserved

The Island of Offerings



CANDLE PROCESSION

Three young Buddhist novices hold candles inside a monastery in Sri Lanka. In Buddhist practice, light is often associated with clarity, offering, and devotion, turning this quiet procession into part of a broader spiritual education.

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BY THE WINDOW

A young monk sits beside a monastery window in Sri Lanka, lit by the warm glow of the interior. The shaved head and saffron robe signal his entry into Buddhist monastic life, where spiritual training begins at an early age.



Left: YOUNG MONK WITH A CANDLE
A young Buddhist novice holds a candle inside a monastery in Sri Lanka. In Buddhist practice, light is often associated with clarity, offering, and devotion, turning a simple gesture into part of a wider spiritual education.

Bottom:
YOUNG MAN AND MONK WITH FLAME
A temple visitor lights a small oil lamp beside a Buddhist monk at Kataragama. The moment reflects the shared nature of worship at the temple, where ritual gestures are repeated by people from different generations and backgrounds.

Right Page: BEFORE THE BUDDHA
Two young monks stand before a seated Buddha statue in a monastic site in Sri Lanka. The scene links childhood, instruction, and devotion within a sacred space where Buddhist teachings are learned through both study and daily practice.

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The Island of Offerings



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The Island of Offerings



KEEPER OF THE FLAME

Inside a Buddhist temple, a monk lights rows of oil lamps, a daily ritual of devotion and continuity. Through precise, repeated gestures, faith is practiced as lived experience, revealing how spirituality is sustained through ordinary acts within sacred spaces.



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AT THE MONASTERY DOOR
A young Buddhist novice stands in the doorway of a monastery near Galle, Sri Lanka, framed by turquoise wood and the dim interior of the shrine behind him. His saffron robe marks the beginning of a monastic education rooted in discipline, devotion, and daily ritual.

THIBAULT GERBALDI

Thibault Gerbaldi is a self-taught Leica photographer and passionate traveler, known for capturing authentic, emotional stories from some of the world's most remote and diverse regions.

His award-winning work crosses cultures and landscapes from Greenland to India. He blends documentary, travel, and portrait photography. Thibault has self-published eight photography books. He earned international recognition, including first place at the Siena Awards 2025, the International Photography Awards (IPA) 2025, and the International Travel Photo Awards 2024 and 2025. He also won second place at PX3 (Prix de la Photographie de Paris) 2024, the MonoVisions Photography Awards 2025, and the Fine Art Photography Awards 2025.
In 2024, he received the Rising Talent Award from Travel Photographer of the Year, the world's most prestigious travel photography competition. That same year, he was named one of AAP's Emerging Talents to Watch.

In 2025, three of his photographs were selected for Around the World with Leica, a major exhibition held at Leica's headquarters in Wetzlar. The event celebrated the brand's 100th anniversary. His work was chosen from over one million images by more than 65,000 photographers worldwide.
This recognition placed his work at the core of Leica's global centennial celebration.

In 2026, he was selected by the French Senate to present Fragilités & Résiliences, a four-month solo outdoor exhibition of 80 photographs displayed on large-scale panels along the gates of the Jardin du Luxembourg in the heart of Paris. Set to reach a very wide public, the show traces a visual journey across five continents.



SAFFRON AT PLAY
Young novice monks play with their saffron robes in the courtyard of a Buddhist monastery near Galle, Sri Lanka. Set against a white stupa after the rain, the scene shows a moment of childhood and joy within the discipline of monastic life.

The Island of Offerings

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The exhibition moves from Greenland to Namibia and beyond. Through the dialogue between people and places, it invites viewers to revisit assumptions about strength and vulnerability, and the forces shaping both the natural world and human societies. His images have been published in Leica Fotografie International, All About Photo, Digital Camera, and various specialized media. Much like Thibault himself, his work travels the world. His images have been seen in Miami, Paris, Arles, Venice, Marrakech, Los Angeles, and Rome.

Beyond photography, Thibault is committed to supporting humanitarian causes through his work. A board member of The Forgotten International since 2019, he funds solidarity projects through donations linked to the dissemination of his books and photographic prints, outside of any commercial framework.

THIBAULT GERBALDI

NOVICES IN THE CLOISTER
Young Buddhist novices gather on the white steps of a monastery in Galle, Sri Lanka. Their saffron robes mark the beginning of monastic training, where religious education, discipline, and community life are passed from one generation to the next.

Thibault Gerbaldi © All rights reserved

The Geography of Faith

Across continents, faith takes many forms: ritual, pilgrimage, prayer, performance, offering, and community. This series moves from the banks of the Ganges in Varanasi to the rock-hewn churches of Lalibela, from an orphanage in Peru to Balinese ceremonies and Andean rites. Different religions, landscapes, and traditions are brought together by a common thread: the human need to give meaning, seek protection, and belong to something greater than oneself.





PROCESSION OF OFFERINGS
Women carry offerings during the Asak ceremony in Karangasem, Bali. Their elaborate dress and ceremonial objects form part of a collective ritual practice central to Balinese Hindu devotion and village life.

THIBAULT GERBALDI

Thibault Gerbaldi © All rights reserved


The
Geography
of Faith







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THIBAULT GERBALDI

Left Page Top:
TRIBUTE TO MOTHER EARTH

On the high Andean plateau of Pampallacta, Peru, a Quechua family gathers during a ritual honoring Pachamama, Mother Earth. The ceremony asks for good harvests, protection for the family, and the well-being of the alpacas that sustain life in the highlands.

Left Page Bottom:
OFFERING TO PACHAMAMA

Ritual objects are arranged during a ceremony dedicated to Pachamama in Pampallacta, Peru. On the high Andean plateau, offerings to Mother Earth remain an important way to seek protection, fertility for the land, and health for the family and alpacas.

This Page Top:
BALINESE OFFERING DANCE

A Balinese dancer in ceremonial dress holds an offering during a religious procession in Bali. In Balinese Hindu practice, dance, music, offerings, and ritual performance are closely connected to temple ceremonies and the relationship between the visible and unseen worlds.

Left: MORNING AARTI ON THE GANGES

Priests perform Ganga Aarti on the ghats of Varanasi, raising oil lamps toward the river as worshippers gather along the banks. The ritual is an offering to the Ganges, revered in Hindu tradition as a sacred river.

The Geography of Faith

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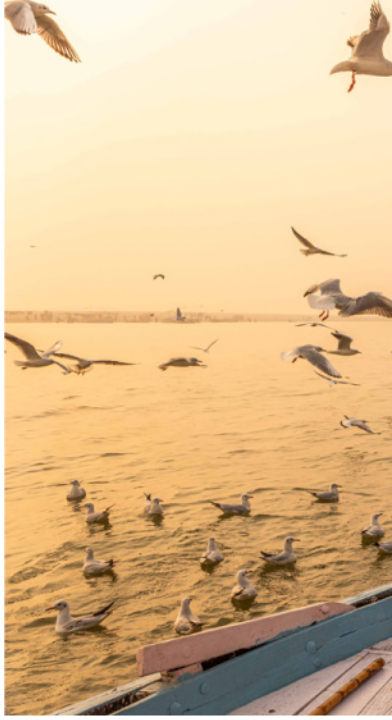
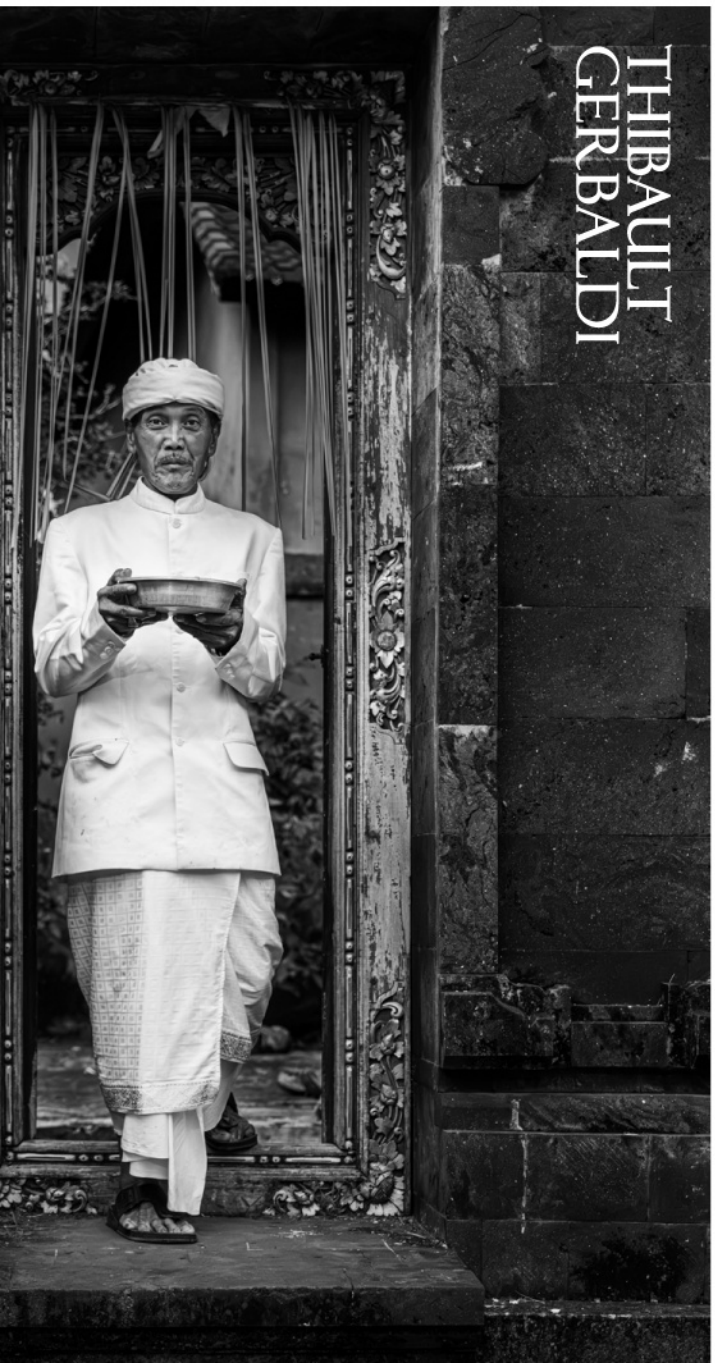










Left Page:
PILGRIMS OF LALIBELA

Two Ethiopian Orthodox pilgrims stand in the narrow passageways carved between the rock-hewn churches of Lalibela. Wrapped in white cotton shawls, they are among the worshippers who come to the site for prayer, blessing, and pilgrimage.

Left: PRIEST OF ASAK

A Balinese priest stands at the entrance of a temple during the Asak ceremony in Karangasem, Bali. The ritual is part of Bali Aga religious life, where offerings, prayers, and community participation sustain the relationship between people, ancestors, and the sacred.

Top Left: ON THE SACRED RIVER

On a boat along the Ganges, sadhus gather in the morning light as gulls circle above the water and the ghats rise behind them. The scene brings together prayer, pilgrimage, and the river that remains central to Varanasi's spiritual identity.

Top Right:
SUNDAY MORNING IN LALIBELA

Pilgrims gather for Sunday morning prayer near the rock-hewn churches of Lalibela, Ethiopia. Dressed mostly in white, they stand along the cliffs and pathways surrounding one of Ethiopia's most important pilgrimage sites.





ABOUT THE EXHIBITION

FRAGILITIES & RESILIENCE

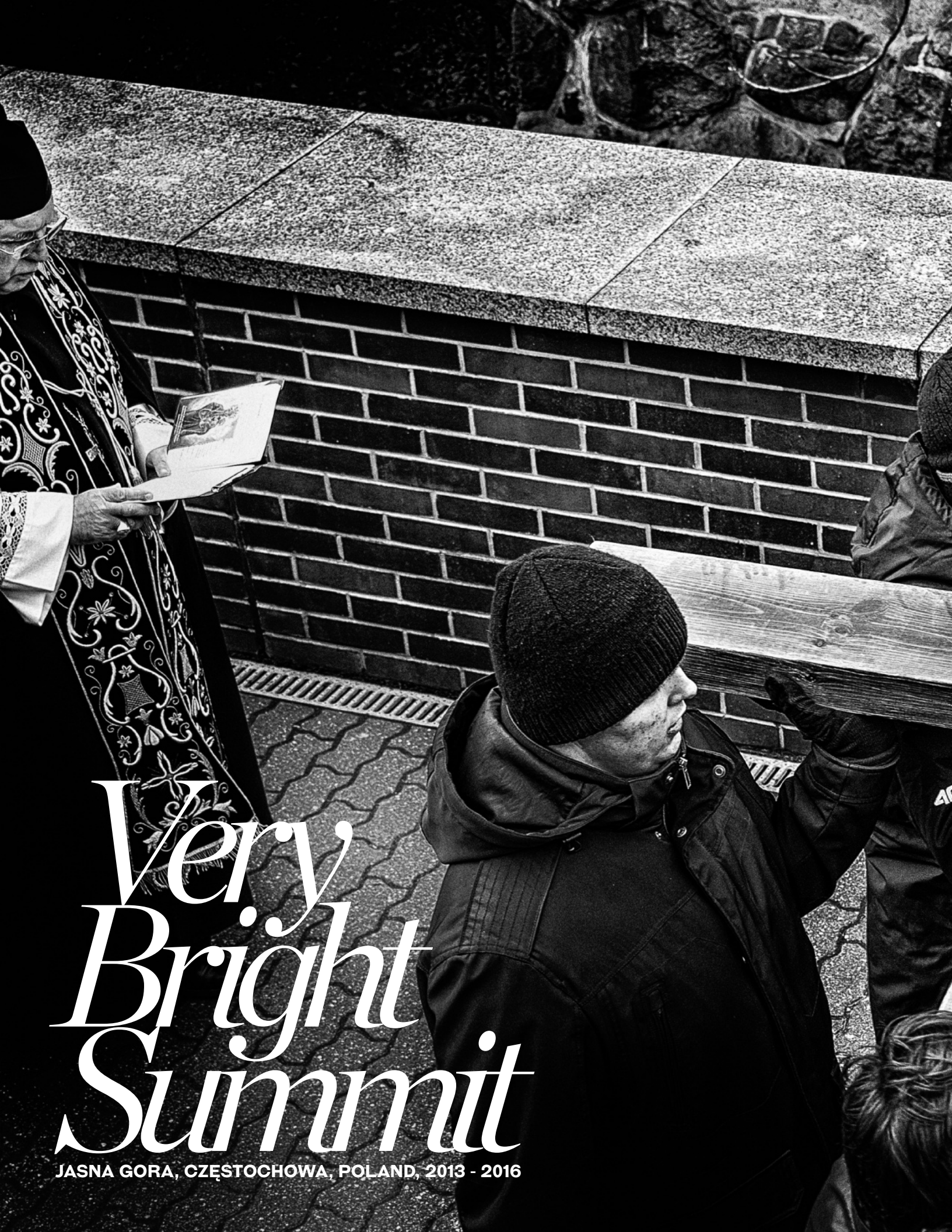
Shown at the gates of the Jardin du Luxembourg, this latest exhibition by Thibault Gerbaldi features 80 photographs from five continents. Together, they explore how natural forms change and how people adapt to these changes.

These changing landscapes show nature in action: icebergs breaking apart, glacial rivers carving new deltas, dunes advancing, and volcanic landforms, coastlines, and islands forming over time. Together, these images show that while shapes change, natural cycles continue.

Alongside these changes, we see human resilience in the variety of cultures. Everywhere, people's gestures, practices, and rituals show both continuity and adaptability to today's challenges, such as climate change, shifting populations, rural migration, and dwindling natural resources. Together, these signs show that resilience comes from culture, shared knowledge, and strong family and community bonds, whether rooted in tradition, adaptation, or spiritual search.

These images do not aim for exoticism or spectacle. Instead, they show ways of life, knowledge, and belonging—often passed down through generations—that link people to their surroundings, even as lifestyles become more similar in the digital age. Together, they show that landscapes may seem unchanging, but they are actually temporary, and that communities, often called vulnerable, show great skill, creativity, and endurance, both physically, culturally, and spiritually.

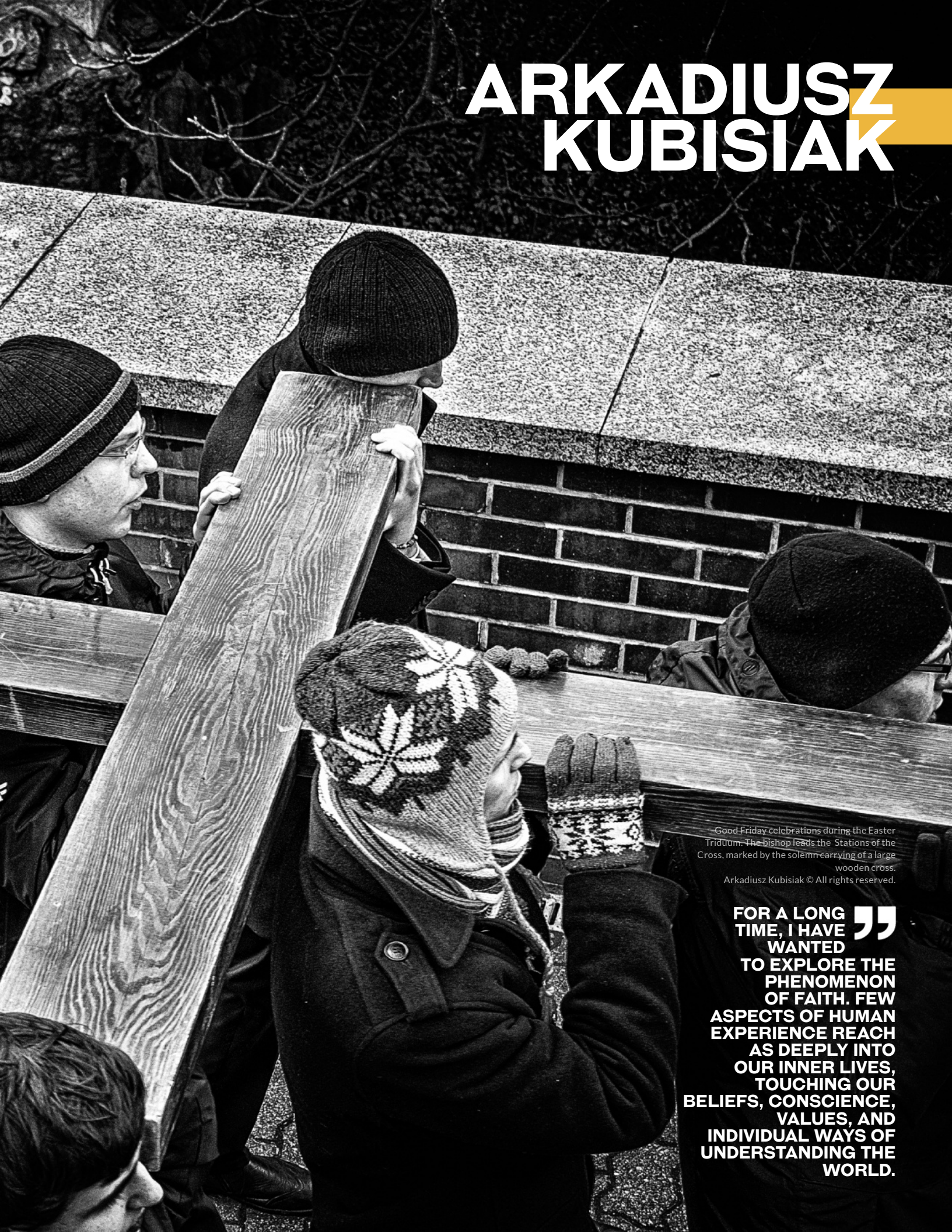
Through this journey across places and cultures, some different and some familiar, I hope to encourage calm reflection on fragility and resilience. I want to challenge assumptions and help us see in new ways. Together, these images invite each viewer to feel as well as see, and to find their own interpretation.



Very Bright Summit

JASNA GORA, CZĘSTOCHOWA, POLAND, 2013 - 2016

ARKADIUSZ KUBISIAK



Good Friday celebrations during the Easter Triduum. The bishop leads the Stations of the Cross, marked by the solemn carrying of a large wooden cross.
Arkadiusz Kubisiak © All rights reserved.

FOR A LONG TIME, I HAVE WANTED TO EXPLORE THE PHENOMENON OF FAITH. FEW ASPECTS OF HUMAN EXPERIENCE REACH AS DEEPLY INTO OUR INNER LIVES, TOUCHING OUR BELIEFS, CONSCIENCE, VALUES, AND INDIVIDUAL WAYS OF UNDERSTANDING THE WORLD.

ARKADIUSZ KUBISIAK





An outdoor Mass was celebrated for pilgrims, and members of the Oblate Knights of Christ the King gathered at Jasna Góra.
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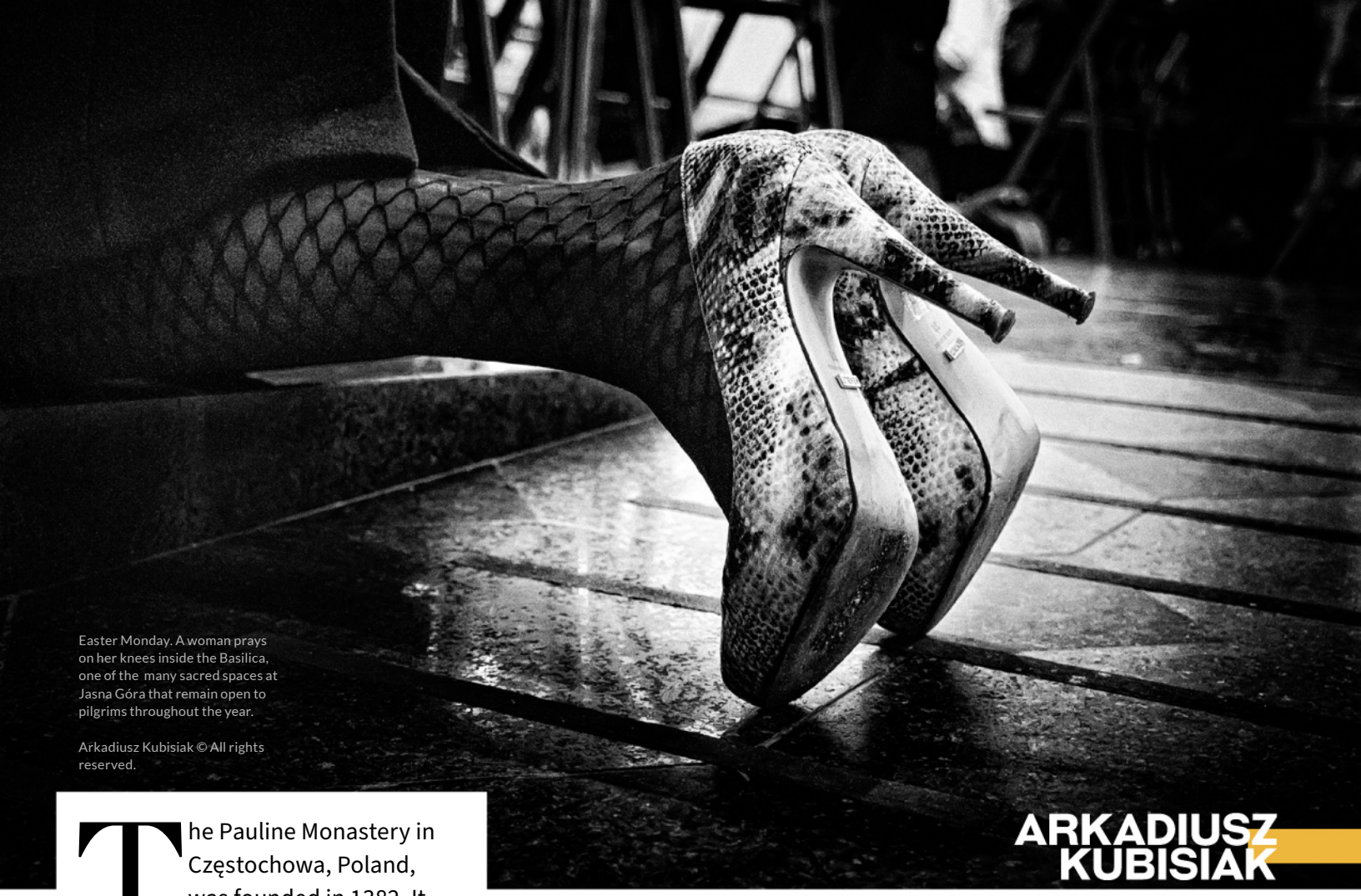
Very Bright Summit

JASNA GORA, CZĘSTOCHOWA, POLAND, 2013 - 2016



Easter Monday. A woman prays on her knees inside the Basilica, one of the many sacred spaces at Jasna Góra that remain open to pilgrims throughout the year.

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ARKADIUSZ KUBISIAK

The Pauline Monastery in Częstochowa, Poland, was founded in 1382. It is the most important shrine dedicated to the Virgin Mary in Poland and one of the most significant Marian pilgrimage sites in the world. For centuries, it has attracted pilgrims seeking spiritual guidance, prayer, and inspiration. Today, nearly 4 million pilgrims and visitors from 74 countries travel to the monastery every year.

Since its founding, walking pilgrimages have been the most popular way to reach the shrine. This tradition dates back to the Middle Ages and remains an important expression of faith and devotion. It is also customary for people representing the same professions, such as miners, firefighters, farmers, and other occupational groups, to make pilgrimages together as a sign of solidarity and gratitude.



Exhibits in the Jasna Góra Museum recall the centuries-old tradition of venerating the Virgin Mary as Queen of Poland.

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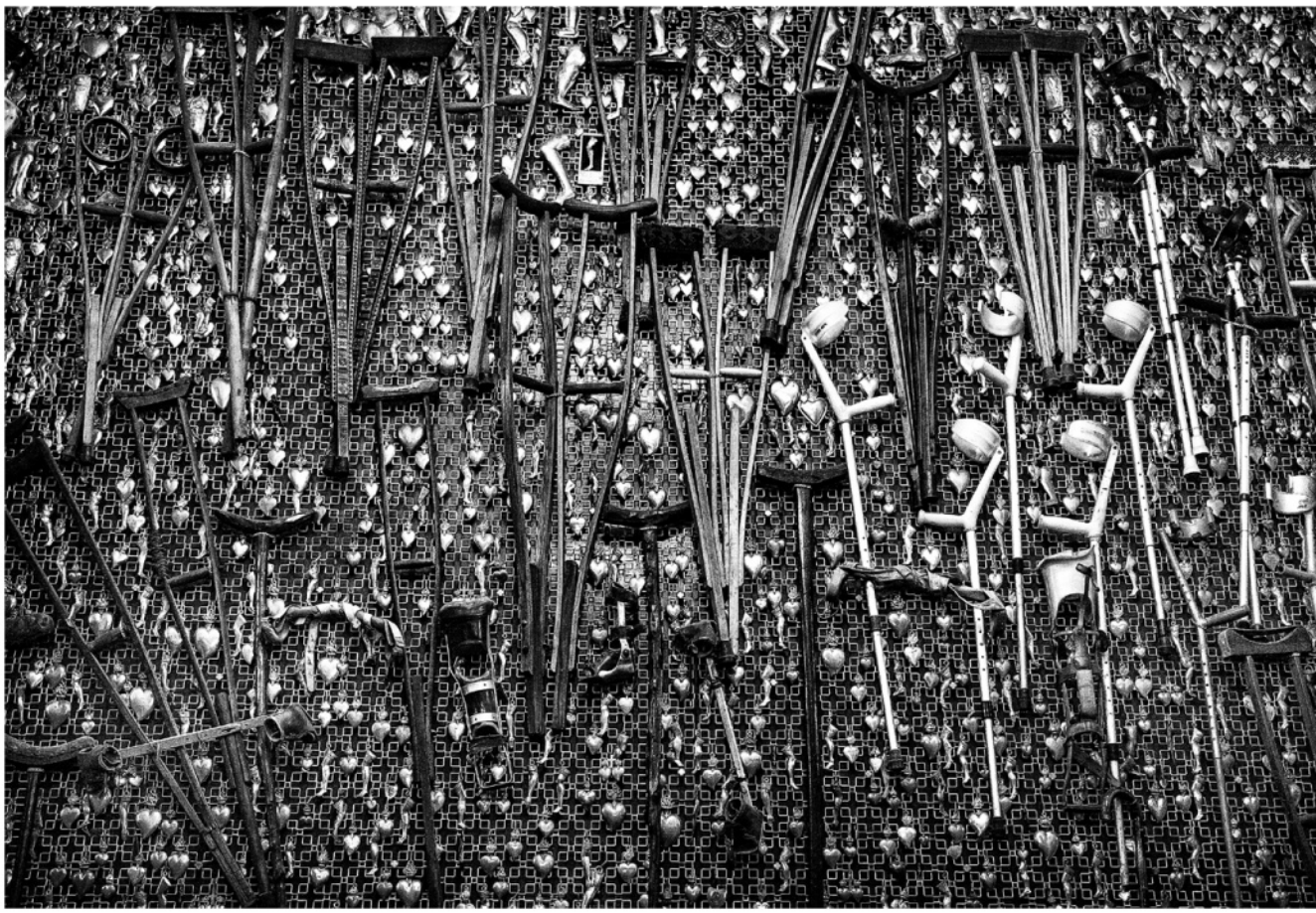

The illuminated 106.3-meter tower of the Jasna Góra Basilica projects its shadow onto low clouds after dusk. The rare optical effect creates an almost mystical spectacle.

Arkadiusz Kubisiak © All rights reserved.

Right: Crutches offered as votive gifts hang on the wall of the Chapel of Our Lady alongside medals, rosaries, and other objects left by pilgrims in gratitude for received graces.

Arkadiusz Kubisiak © All rights reserved.

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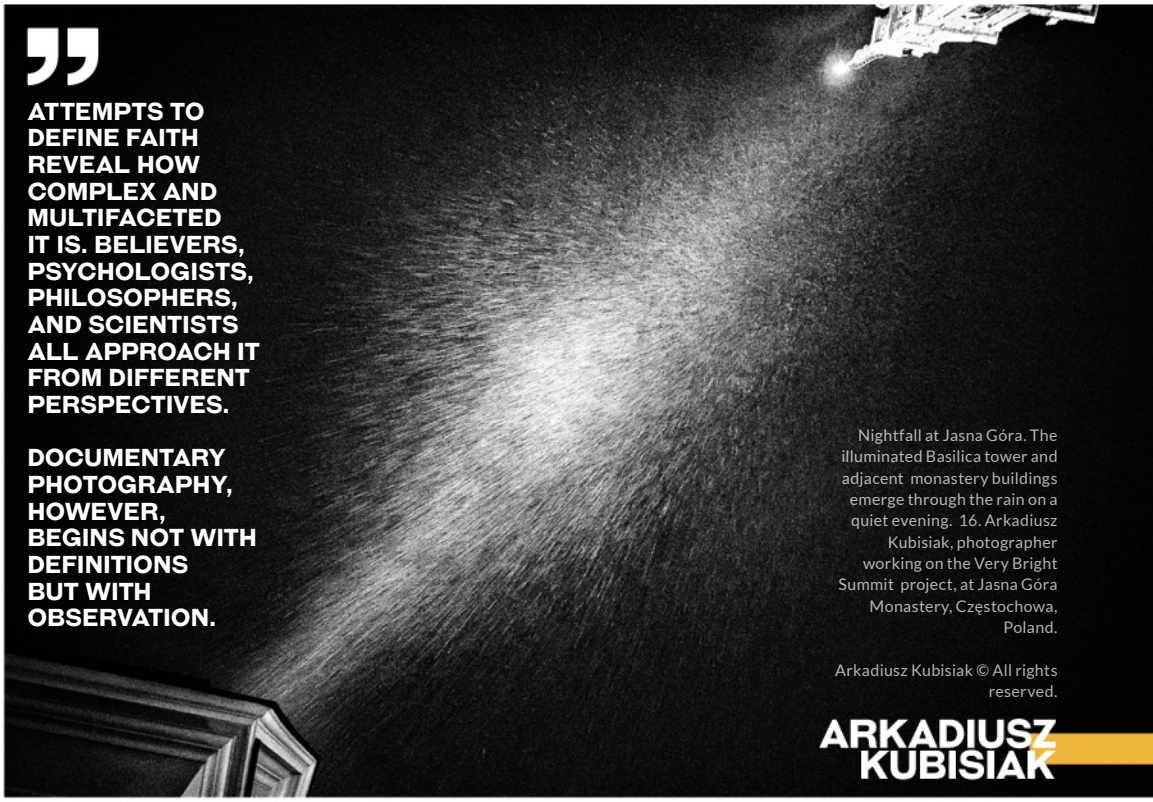
Participants in the Feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary procession carry a monumental portrait of Servant of God Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński (1901–1981), the Primate of Poland. Arkadiusz Kubisiak © All rights reserved.

The monastery's greatest treasure is the miraculous icon of the Virgin Mary, whose origins remain shrouded in mystery. The image depicts the Mother of God holding the Child Jesus in her left arm and is venerated by millions of faithful from around the world.

The icon is housed in the Chapel of Our Lady, one of the most sacred places within the monastery complex. The chapel's walls are adorned with thanksgiving votive offerings and gifts presented to the Madonna by pilgrims and visitors in appreciation of graces received.

ATTEMPTS TO DEFINE FAITH REVEAL HOW COMPLEX AND MULTIFACETED IT IS. BELIEVERS, PSYCHOLOGISTS, PHILOSOPHERS, AND SCIENTISTS ALL APPROACH IT FROM DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES.

DOCUMENTARY PHOTOGRAPHY, HOWEVER, BEGINS NOT WITH DEFINITIONS BUT WITH OBSERVATION.



Nightfall at Jasna Góra. The illuminated Basilica tower and adjacent monastery buildings emerge through the rain on a quiet evening. 16. Arkadiusz Kubisiak, photographer working on the Very Bright Summit project, at Jasna Góra Monastery, Częstochowa, Poland.

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ARKADIUSZ KUBISIAK



A woman prays in solitude in the Chapel of Our Lady. For many pilgrims arriving at Jasna Góra, faith and prayer represent a final source of hope in moments of personal crisis.
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The presbytery of the Chapel of Our Lady is opened to the faithful only on special occasions. It houses the Miraculous Icon of the Madonna, royal insignia, and a golden rose presented by Saint John Paul II, together with a fragment of the belt he wore during the 1981 assassination attempt.

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The entire monastery stands on a hill known as the Bright Mount (Jasna Gora in Polish). Because of its religious, historical, and cultural significance, the site is widely regarded as the spiritual capital of Poland and remains one of the country's most important symbols of faith and national identity.

OVER MORE THAN THREE YEARS OF PHOTOGRAPHING AT JASNA GÓRA, I WITNESSED THE LIVED EXPERIENCE OF FAITH. THIS DIRECT ENCOUNTER BECAME THE FOUNDATION OF THE PROJECT. FOR ME, SUCH EXPERIENCE IS ESSENTIAL IN DOCUMENTARY WORK; IT SHAPES NOT ONLY THE PHOTOGRAPHS THEMSELVES BUT ALSO THE WAY THEY ARE MADE.

I NEVER DOUBTED THAT IF I WERE TO SPEAK ABOUT FAITH THROUGH PHOTOGRAPHY, JASNA GÓRA WOULD BE THE PLACE TO DO SO. WITH MORE THAN SIX CENTURIES OF HISTORY AND A LONG-STANDING PILGRIMAGE TRADITION, IT REMAINS ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT RELIGIOUS SITES IN POLAND.



Caravan Pilgrimage. Nearly 400 camper vans arrived at Jasna Góra for the annual gathering. Priest Mariusz Chmura, accompanied by three altar servers, blesses the vehicles and their occupants.

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ARKADIUSZ KUBISIAK



ARKADIUSZ KUBISIAK

Arkadiusz Kubisiak, BIO, is a Documentary and portrait photographer. For over 18 years, he has been developing authorial photographic projects, primarily long-term series. Kubisiak is a graduate of the European Academy of Photography in Warsaw and a member of the Association of Polish Art Photographers.

His work focuses on the human subject seen within the context of place, history, and relationships. He has portrayed highlanders from the village of Ciche in the Podhale region, as well as participants in the June 1976 workers' protests in Radom. He has also photographed pilgrims at Jasna Góra and explored the people and urban space of Warsaw, tracing the city from its historical layers to the present day.

For nearly a year, Arkadiusz Kubisiak documented the Laundry Room Theatre at a center for people with intellectual disabilities, creating an intimate record of relationships, everyday life, and artistic activity within the group.



Kubisiak is the author of numerous solo exhibitions and a recipient of national and international photography awards. His work has been published in the Polish and international press and in authorial books. He has served as a juror for the international photography award. He shares his experience through artist talks and in photography schools.



Women pilgrims gather in prayer during an overnight vigil at the Chapel of the Miraculous Image.
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THE PEOPLE WHO COME HERE DO SO WITH PROFOUND COMMITMENT AND DEVOTION. AMONG THE MANY THINGS I OBSERVED, WHAT STRUCK ME MOST WAS THE SINCERITY, AUTHENTICITY, AND INTENSITY OF THEIR FAITH.

JASNA GÓRA OFFERS A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY TO WITNESS FAITH IN MANY FORMS: IN INTIMATE, PERSONAL RITUALS AS WELL AS IN VAST COLLECTIVE GATHERINGS THAT CAN DRAW CROWDS OF UP TO 200,000 PEOPLE. IT IS A PLACE WHERE INDIVIDUAL SPIRITUALITY AND COMMUNAL EXPERIENCE EXIST SIDE BY SIDE.



ARKADIUSZ KUBISIAK

A participant in a Catholic Charismatic Renewal gathering lies on the floor during a healing prayer. The phenomenon, known as "resting in the Spirit," is commonly associated with charismatic worship.
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WHILE WORKING ON THIS PROJECT, I BECAME SOMETHING OF A PILGRIM MYSELF. I FOLLOWED THE PATHS OF THOSE I PHOTOGRAPHED, STANDING AMONG THE CROWDS REGARDLESS OF THE WEATHER. I SPENT NIGHTS IN PILGRIMS' ACCOMMODATIONS AND SHARED MEALS IN MODEST EATERIES.

THE EXPERIENCE BECAME MORE THAN A PHOTOGRAPHIC UNDERTAKING. IT WAS A PERSONAL JOURNEY—ONE THAT REMAINS INSEPARABLE FROM THE PHOTOGRAPHS AND CONTINUES TO ENRICH MY UNDERSTANDING OF THE PEOPLE AND STORIES THEY CAPTURE.

– ARKADIUSZ KUBISIAK,
VERY BRIGHT SUMMIT


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JASNA GÓRA OFFERS A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY TO WITNESS FAITH IN MANY FORMS: IN INTIMATE, PERSONAL RITUALS AS WELL AS IN VAST COLLECTIVE GATHERINGS THAT CAN DRAW CROWDS OF UP TO 200,000 PEOPLE. IT IS A PLACE WHERE INDIVIDUAL SPIRITUALITY AND COMMUNAL EXPERIENCE EXIST SIDE BY SIDE.

- ARKADIUSZ KUBISIAK,
VERY BRIGHT SUMMIT

Pilgrims take part in the Stations of the Cross celebrated along the fortification walls of Jasna Góra during the National Pilgrimage of Polish Farmers.
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Members of the Oblate Knights of Christ the King dismantle an icon of Jesus in a parking area near the sanctuary after carrying it throughout pilgrimage ceremonies.
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ARKADIUSZ KUBISIAK

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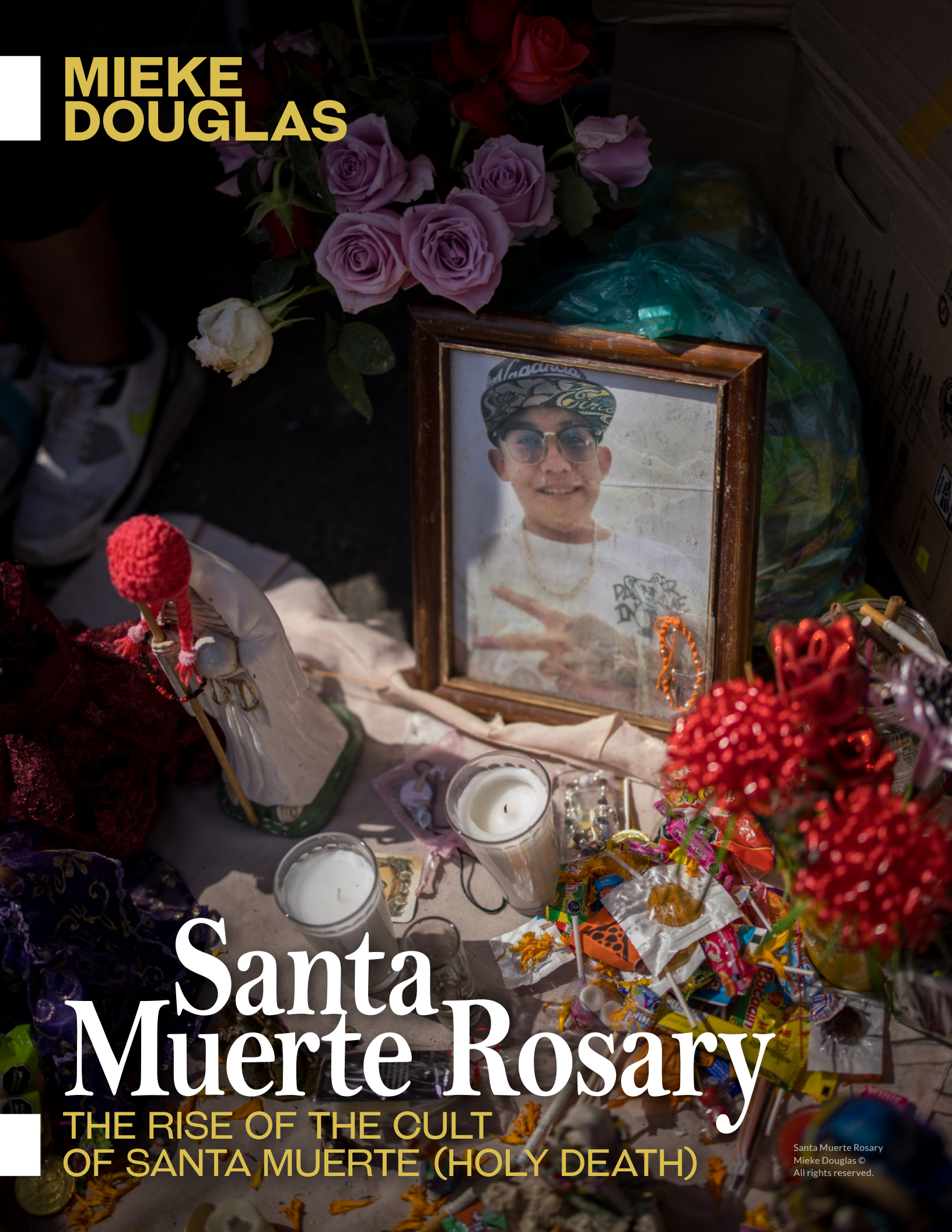
MIEKE DOUGLAS



Santa Muerte Rosary

THE RISE OF THE CULT OF SANTA MUERTE (HOLY DEATH)

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Santa Muerte Rosary

THE RISE OF THE CULT OF SANTA MUERTE (HOLY DEATH)

THE CULT OF SANTA MUERTE, OR "HOLY DEATH," HAS EVOLVED INTO ONE OF MEXICO'S MOST SIGNIFICANT AND FASTEST-GROWING FOLK-RELIGIOUS MOVEMENTS, WITH MILLIONS OF DEVOTEES.

Though still officially rejected by the Catholic Church, devotion to Santa Muerte has surged since the early 2000s, emerging from private household altars into highly visible public rituals. Tepito, a tough, densely populated neighborhood near Mexico City's historic center, has become the spiritual heart of the movement.

On November 1st, when much of the rest of the country is celebrating the Day of the Dead, thousands of devotees of Santa Muerte gather on Alfareía Street for the Santa Muerte Rosary.



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Santa Muerte Rosary

THE RISE OF THE CULT
OF SANTA MUERTE (HOLY DEATH)

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Worshipers crawl on hands and knees to her altar, carrying statues of the saint, offerings of flowers, tobacco, alcohol, candles, and marijuana smoke as a gesture of gratitude or a plea for protection and renewal.

Depicted as a female skeleton, often dressed as a bride and holding a globe and scythe, Santa Muerte embodies both death and protection. Though often described as a 'patron saint of criminals,' Santa Muerte's association with illicit worlds is more complex: some individuals involved in crime do pray to her for protection, but she is far from exclusive to them. Her followers describe her as a nonjudgmental, inclusive saint, welcoming those who feel excluded from traditional institutions: the poor, the sick, drug addicts, ex-prisoners, migrants, LGBTQ+ people, workers in the informal economy, and others living at society's margins.

Many devotees identify with mainstream religious traditions, yet feel there is no place for them within rigid structures that judge their identities, livelihoods, or past actions. For many, devotion to Santa Muerte becomes a pathway toward redemption, stability, or the hope of change.



Santa Muerte Rosary

THE RISE OF THE CULT OF SANTA MUERTE (HOLY DEATH)

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MIEKE DOUGLAS

Mieke Douglas is an internationally awarded Dutch-Canadian photographic artist, living in London. Her work explores themes of intimacy and human connection. She is known for her atmospheric lighting and surreal perspectives. Often described as moody and painterly, her images evoke a quiet tension—inviting viewers into moments that are both beautiful and unsettling.

Mieke's photographic practice is inspired by the Old Dutch Master Painters' masterful use of light – guiding the eye to reveal key details, while using shadow and half-light to obscure others, creating a rich sense of depth and mystery.
She has received numerous major awards, including a Sony World Photography Award. Her work has been featured in publications and exhibitions worldwide, including at the Royal Academy of Art and Photo London. She has held Solo Shows, 'STILL' in London and 'Lost Society | Looking In Through Glass' in Sydney.





Santa Muerte Rosary
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Santa Muerte Rosary

THE RISE OF THE CULT OF SANTA MUERTE (HOLY DEATH)

Santa Muerte blends pre-Columbian death-goddess traditions with Catholic symbolism, forming a belief system that resonates deeply in a country where death has long been ritualized, especially during Day of the Dead festivities.

Despite Tepito's harsh reputation, the atmosphere during these celebrations is strikingly warm, communal, and deeply devoted.



Santa Muerte Rosary
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MIEKE DOUGLAS

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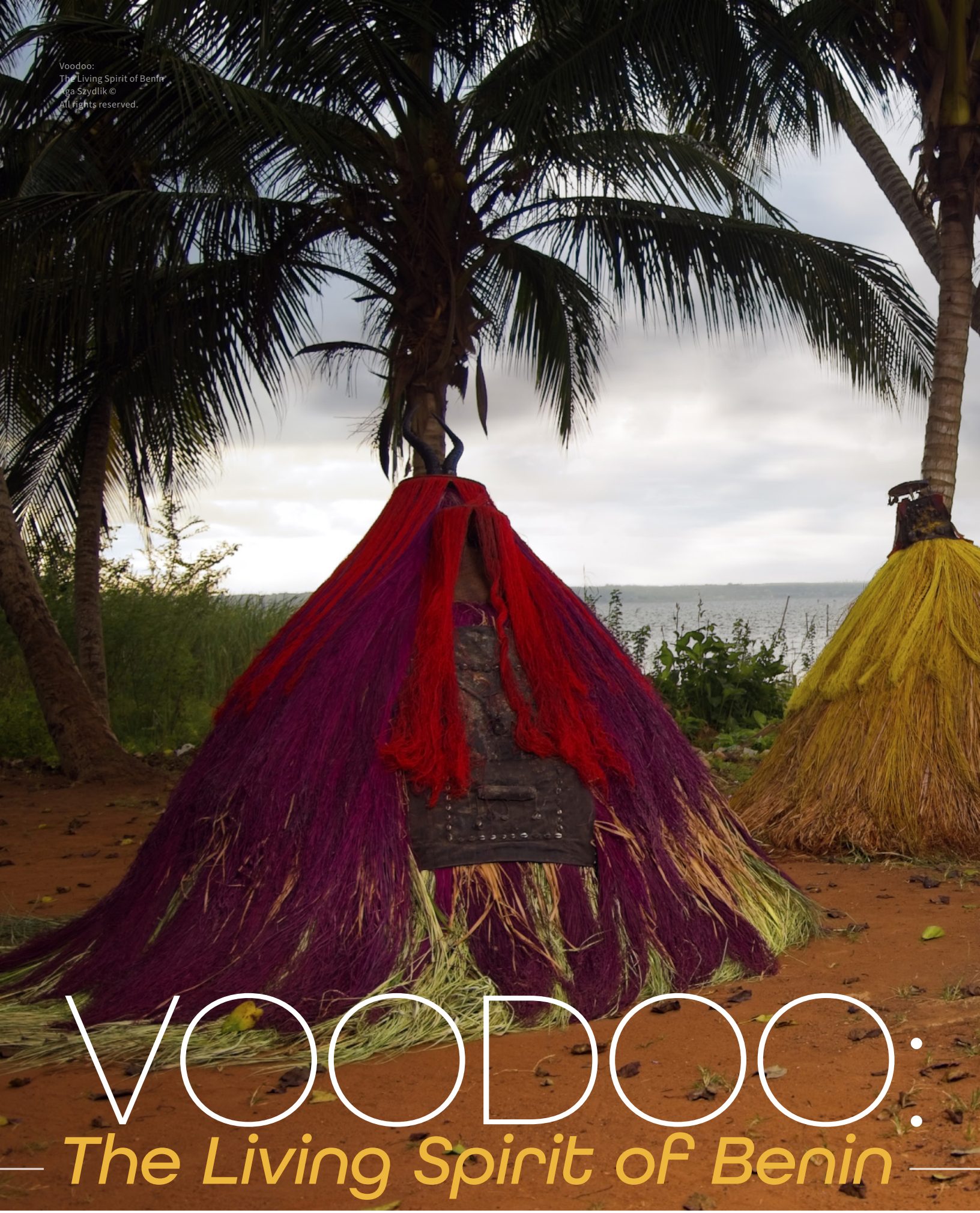

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VOODOO:
The Living Spirit of Benin



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VOODOO:
The Living Spirit of Benin

Voodoo was not born in the shadows of superstition. It grew from the red earth of the Kingdom of Dahomey — now Benin — as a living, breathing covenant between the human world and the divine. Today, more than 50 million believers across West Africa, the Caribbean, South America, and the American South carry this tradition forward, not as folklore, but as the very architecture of daily life.

The word itself speaks volumes. In the Fon language, Voodoo means “god,” “soul,” “strength,” “spirit,” or “power.” Its older name, Vodun, means “that which is hidden” — the mystery beneath the visible world. These are not merely definitions. They are an invitation.



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THE WORLD BENEATH THE WORLD

At the heart of Voodoo lies animism: the conviction that every living thing pulses with spirit. A river has will. A tree holds memory. The wind carries intent. For those who walk this path, the natural world is not a backdrop — it is a living text, endlessly communicating. It is a source not of fear, but of profound comfort.

Voodoo is not a doctrine. It is an entire civilization — encompassing art, music, medicine, and law, woven into the rhythms of everyday life.

SACRIFICE AND OFFERING

Outsiders often reduce Voodoo to a single image: the needle-pierced effigy, the shadowy ritual. The truth is both more complex and more human. Animal sacrifice is indeed central to Voodoo ceremony, but it is an act of reciprocity — a gift returned to spirits who sustain the living.

Food and alcohol, especially gin, are laid before the lwa (spirits) as offerings of respect. What is sacrificed is often shared communally afterward, transformed into a meal and a bond.

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THE CEREMONY: WHERE THE VEIL THINS

To witness a Voodoo ceremony is to stand at the threshold between worlds.

Drums begin — insistent, hypnotic, relentless. Participants trace sacred symbols in cornmeal across the ground, calling forth specific spirits. Voices rise in ancient chants. Bodies move around the poto mitan, the central post that serves as an axis between earth and sky.

Then, if the spirits answer, something extraordinary happens.

A lwa descends. It enters a human body — what practitioners call "riding" — and the person is no longer fully themselves. Eyes roll back. Movement becomes convulsive and wild. Words emerge that no one around them understands. The boundary between the living and the invisible has dissolved, if only for a moment.

This is not a spectacle. It is communion.



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PRIESTS, HEALERS, AND GUARDIANS

THE INITIATION INTO VOODOO, WHICH CAN TAKE MANY YEARS, IS A TESTAMENT TO THE DEPTH OF THIS COMMITMENT, AND ONLY THOSE WHO ARE INITIATED ARE ALLOWED TO ENTER SACRED FORESTS.

The Priests — hounnongan and bokonon — are the custodians of this world. Trained from childhood, or called by spirit possession, they interpret the will of the divine, conduct healing rituals, and guide their communities through birth, death, and crisis. Juju priests specialize in direct negotiation with particular spirits, often through offerings of palm wine and sacrifice.

The path to the priesthood is long. The initiation, beginning with a ceremony called Kanzo, may unfold over years. Only the initiated may enter the sacred forests, where the most powerful knowledge is kept.

The Egungun is perhaps the most awe-inspiring presence in the Voodoo world — a spirit of the dead returned to physical form, visiting the living. To encounter an Egungun is a charged experience: some are gentle ancestors, others — like the agbanon, marked by towering wooden structures on their heads — carry an air of severity. The living do not touch an Egungun, for the risk, it is said, is death itself.

The Zangbeto are the Night Watchmen — a secret society functioning as an unofficial police force and moral authority. They move through communities under the cover of darkness, identifying wrongdoers and dispensing justice. Who or what inhabits the Zangbeto costume is never revealed to the uninitiated. That uncertainty is the point.



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ONCE THE SPIRIT HAS OCCUPIED THE BODY, IT MAKES THE BODY DANCE WILDLY WITH ITS EYES ROLLED BACK INTO ITS HEAD, CAUSING SELF-INJURES AND CUTS, AS WELL AS SPEAKING INCOMPREHENSIBLE LANGUAGES WITH ITS BODY POSSESSED BY SPIRITS OR GODS.





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AGA SZYDLIK

Aga is an international award-winning documentary photographer based in the USA, and her work focuses mainly on documentary photojournalism, conservation, and exploration of heritage sites, indigenous tribes, and rituals.
She actively supports human rights and conservation efforts.

Aga's professional journey began with fight photography when she lived in Thailand. Muay Thai was one of her many passions, and when she was presented with the opportunity to cover Muay Thai fights, she didn't think twice about it and had the best time of her life doing it. Aga traveled extensively in SE Asia, had many adventures, and met many fascinating people. Eventually, a few years later, her journey took her to Indonesia and South Africa. Aga's passion for photography and travel is shared with her love for science, as she spends most of her time trying to cure people and the planet.

Aga actively supports human rights movements, environmental protection, and conservation efforts. Aga's assignments involve both freelance work and collaborations with various NGOs.

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NOTES FROM THE FIELD

These photographs were made across seven days in and around Ouidah, Benin, in the company of local priests, drummers, healers, and communities who generously shared their world.

On the first day, chief priest Amagnigbo Ayekou Bokonon opened the ceremonies, his son Toundé at his side.
On the second day, the Python Temple revealed its keeper — Colman Adjovi — and the air filled with drumming led by Houngbedji Geoffroy Prince, while the Gelede dance of Gapke village moved through the afternoon.
The third day brought us to the Sacred Forest for the Sapkata ceremony, the same participants returning in the afternoon to dance again.
The fourth day offered the Temple of Skulls in Vovvio village — a place not of death, but of wishes — where priest Tagbo receives the petitions of the living.
On the fifth day, in Agatogo village, the Gaglie Gogou

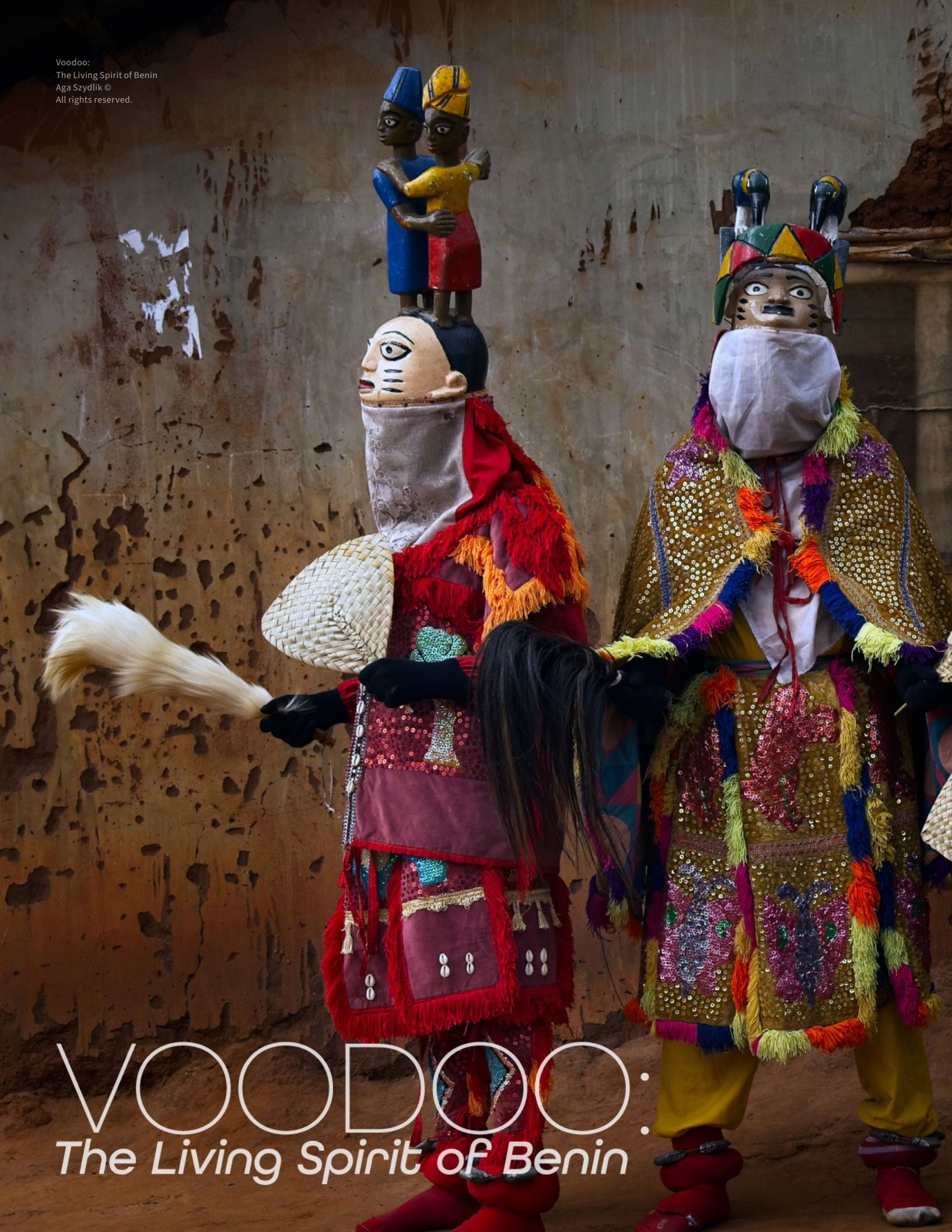


dance animated bodies slick with palm oil. Priest Desiré Gbessê Hessou, dressed in red, presided. At the shrine of Heviesso, the thunder god, justice was sought for a theft — twice the question was put, twice unanswered. The silence was its own verdict.

The sixth day found us on the shores of Lake Aheme in Segboue village, where Zangbeto held court, the identity of the priests shielded by centuries of secrecy. The women's dance of Agbadja rippled through the gathering as fishing nets dried in the heat.

On the seventh day, healer-priest Togbe Heugbe received us in the village of Adjatokpa. A padlock hung at his shrine — a charm for love, sealed shut against loss.

LEADER OF THE EXPEDITION:
Marios Forsos — MARIOSFORSOS.COM
EXPEDITION GUIDE:
Jacob Koua — OSMOSISAKANPLUS.COM
LOCAL GUIDE:
Ferdinand Bossa Vignon | Chauffeur: Zinnoussou Coucou Boris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A man performs the ritual at sunrise. The prayer he recites is posted on the wall beside him.
Yoram Biberman ©
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THE KAPPAROT ATONEMENT RITUAL

YORAM BIBERMAN

כז כפרות לאהדרין

סדר כפרות

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כי אדם יושבי חשך וצלמות אסירי עני וברזל: יוציאם
מאך וצלמות ומוסרותיהם ינתק: אוילים מדרך פשעם
ומעותיהם יתענו: כל אכל תתעב נפשם ויגיעו עד שערי
מות ויעקו אל יהוה בצר להם ממצוקותיהם יושיעם:
ישלח דברו וירפאם וימלט משחיתותם: יודו ליהוה חסדו
ונפלאותיו לבני אדם: אם יש עליו מלאך מליץ אחד מני
אלף להגיד לאדם ישרו: וידשו ויאמר פדעהו מרדת שחת
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YORAM
BIBERMAN





Left: At the end of the day, boys carry as many chickens as they can from the crates to the slaughter area.
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Top: A frightened boy. Is he afraid of the animal, or of its fate?
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THE KAPPAROT ATONEMENT RITUAL

Kapparot is an atonement ritual practiced by some Jews on the eve of Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement. During the ceremony, a chicken is waved over a person's head while prayers are recited. Symbolically, the chicken is said to "take on" the person's sins. The chicken is then slaughtered.



THE KAPPAROT ATONEMENT RITUAL

The ritual is controversial. Critics argue that it is inhumane and causes unnecessary suffering to the animals involved. I understand this criticism, but I also find some hypocrisy in it. Since the chicken's fate is to be slaughtered for human consumption, the fact that it is also used in a religious ritual beforehand seems to me of secondary importance. The ethical question, in that case, concerns the treatment and killing of animals in general rather than the ritual context in which it occurs.



A woman performs the ritual for a group of girls. According to tradition, a hen is used for females and a rooster for males.
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Top Right: Parents and their children stand together.
Each of the three children reacts differently to the situation.
Yoram Biberman ©
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Right Bottom: A boy working at the site rests inside a chicken crate, tired from the day's work, while gently cuddling a hen.
Yoram Biberman ©
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THE KAPPAROT ATONEMENT RITUAL

The slaughterer pauses briefly to rest, knife still in hand.
Yoram Biberman ©
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Children feed the hens while the hens are in their cages, before the hens are used for the ritual.
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One aspect of the ritual that is rarely discussed is that participants, especially children, are exposed to the entire process, from a living chicken to food on a plate. This contrasts with the experience of many children, at least in my country, who may grow up with little awareness of where meat comes from and may, perhaps unconsciously, view a chicken breast as a product found in a supermarket.



A terrified boy and a curious woman watch as chickens are slaughtered before them.
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YORAM BIBERMAN

A terrified boy and a curious woman watch as chickens are slaughtered before them.
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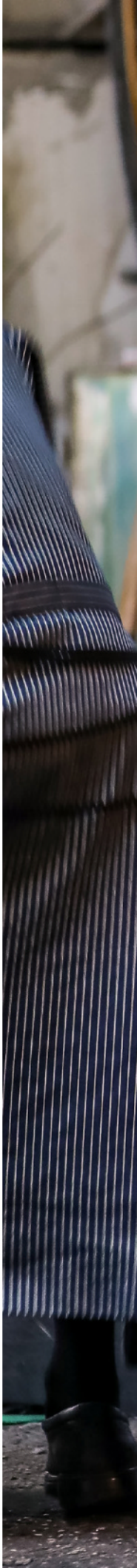

YORAM BIBERMAN

THE MEAT INDUSTRY HAS A SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT. IF YOU ARE CONSIDERING WAYS TO REDUCE YOUR PERSONAL ECOLOGICAL FOOTPRINT, ADOPTING A VEGETARIAN DIET CAN OFTEN HAVE A GREATER EFFECT THAN REDUCING AIR TRAVEL.

Top Right:
A boy looks anxiously at the slaughterer and his knife.
Yoram Biberman © All rights reserved.

For the past 40 years, I have lived in Jerusalem, Israel, and worked as a psychologist. These two facts largely shape my photography. My images explore the human experience within the small geographic space of Jerusalem. Through them, I try to show how people's inner worlds find expression in the outer world, in the unique mosaic, the nutshell, called Jerusalem.

A psychologist is trained to wait patiently for another person to open up and then to explore that person's inner world together with them: their strengths and vulnerabilities alike, with empathy rather than judgment, defensiveness, or intrusion. I try to bring the same attitude to my photography.

I am drawn to Jerusalem because it is a place where very different people meet. At times, however, I am less fond of how they meet.

The Israeli writer **Amos Oz** once described the writer's state of mind as being:
"Like a gangster on a knife night, but also, a little as if in a dream."

This metaphor could just as easily describe the attentiveness required of a therapist or of a street photographer in the field: to remain highly alert while maintaining a measure of detachment.



After a long and exhausting day, the slaughterer sits down to rest. For him, this work is also a mitzvah.
Yoram Biberman © All rights reserved.

THE KAPPAROT ATONEMENT RITUAL



A terrified boy stands amid the noise and chaos of the event.
Yoram Biberman ©
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"My photographs are never staged, and I do not explicitly ask permission before taking them. Some people notice they are being photographed; many do not. Often, the scene is crowded, and their attention is focused elsewhere. Still, I prefer moments of eye contact with my subjects. Often, that is the decisive moment for me.

There is a moral dimension to this practice that I cannot ignore. I suspect that many of my subjects would prefer not to be photographed. Some are traditional, religious, private, or simply wary of strangers. Yet I do not ask for permission.

In my defense, I can only say that my intentions are good. I try to treat my subjects with respect and to present them with as much dignity as possible. I hope that, if they see their photo, they will be pleased.

Even so, I sometimes feel that I am committing a small transgression: to reveal something meaningful, I must occasionally cross a boundary that I would rather leave untouched.



A heap of chickens, surrounded by workers and participants.
Yoram Biberman ©
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THE KAPPAROT ATONEMENT RITUAL

You may have heard the word "chutzpah". Many Israelis take pride in being considered chutzpadik. I do not.
And yet, I suspect that some people would describe my photography as an act of chutzpah—one I accept as part of my work.
Beyond all its other meanings, photography is, for me, a form of therapy.

When I am shooting, I enter a meditative state. Hopes and disappointments fade away. So do joy and anxiety.
My depth of field becomes the space between one frame and the next. And every feeling, however powerful, lasts no longer than 1/60 of a second."

- Yoram Biberman



A group of men and a frightened boy wait their turn to receive a chicken.
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YORAM BIBERMAN

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KOKU PRIESTESS IN THE TEMPLE
A Koku priestess presides over a shrine for offerings to the god of the same name. Devotees visit this shrine and bring anything from sacrificial animals to alcohol in order to wish for strength to help with life's adversities.

Inger Vandyke ©
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Faith

COLLECTION

INGER VANDYKE

> Faith is the unwavering belief and deep trust in something beyond concrete evidence. It is a guiding principle that provides purpose, shapes human values, and acts as an anchor during times of uncertainty, whether directed toward a higher power, humanity, or one's own inner resilience.
>
> - INGER VANDYKE



Faith

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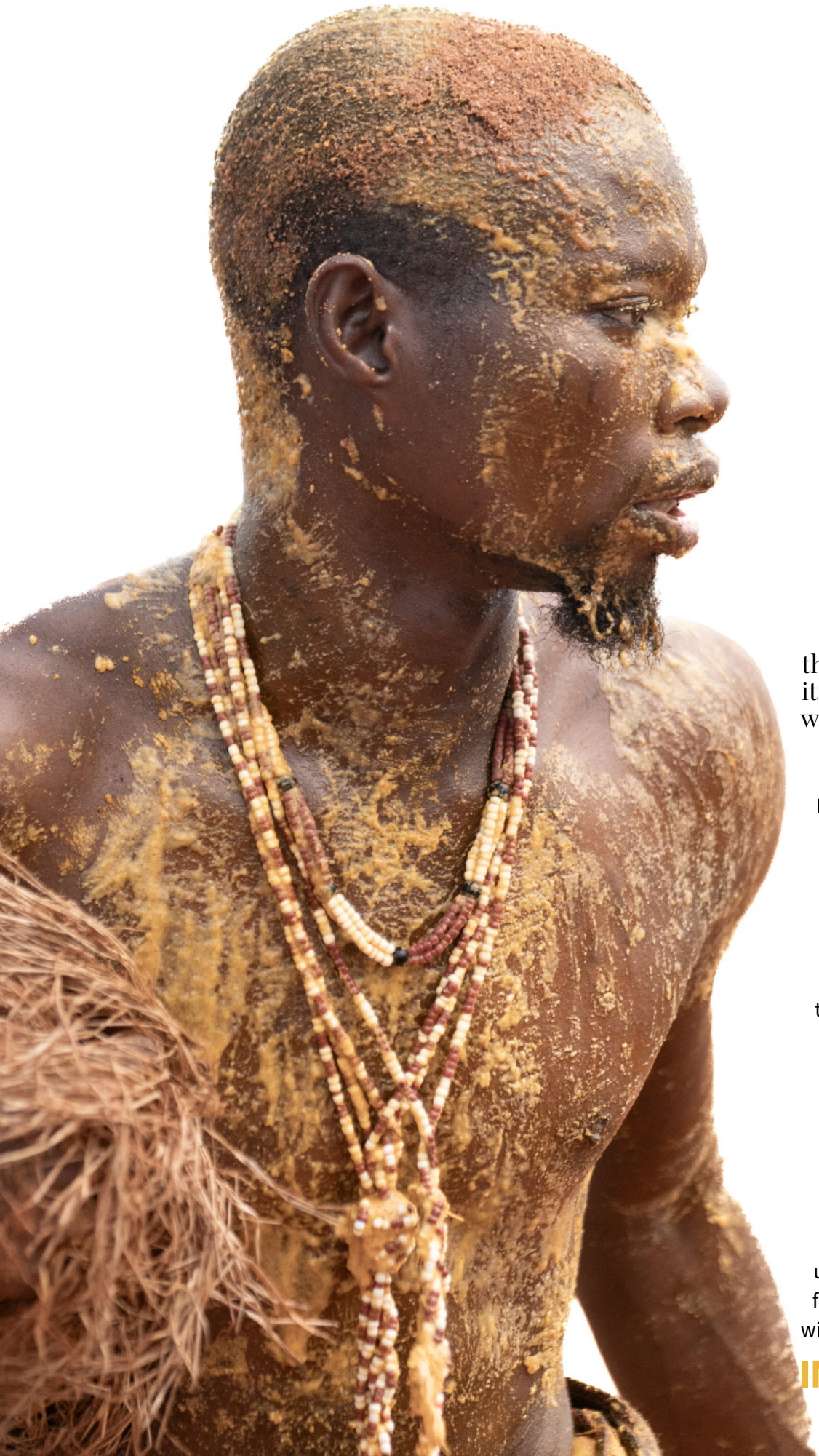

Left Page:
KOKU IN MID AIR
A Koku Dancer takes to the air at the annual Voodoo festival in Benin.
Inger Vandyke ©
All rights reserved.

KOKU DANCER
Profile of a Koku dancer. Koku is the divinity of strength and power in Voodoo religion.
Inger Vandyke ©
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> As a photographer, I've often sat in quiet fascination with people whose beliefs shape every aspect of their lives. The act of faith is more than just a personality trait; it is the internal compass by which people live, hope, and die.

Faith is the unwavering belief and deep trust in something beyond concrete evidence. It is a guiding principle that provides purpose, shapes human values, and acts as an anchor during times of uncertainty, whether directed toward a higher power, humanity, or one's own inner resilience.

While traditionally rooted in religion and spirituality, faith transcends doctrines. It is a universal human experience that fuels perseverance and inspires individuals to navigate life's unpredictable journey. At its core, faith requires an open heart and a willingness to embrace the unseen.

INGER VANDYKE



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KOKU DEVOTEE
A painted devotee of Koku. The signature body paint is created from yellow palm oil and kaolin powder. Yellow is the main color of Koku in Voodoo religion.
Inger Vandyke ©
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SHANGO CEREMONY
A human skull explodes during a Shango determination ceremony in Benin.
Inger Vandyke ©
All rights reserved.

Faith COLLECTION

Ultimately, faith is a deeply personal and transformative force. Whether it is anchored in religious devotion, a trust in the human spirit, or self-belief, faith provides the courage to face the unknown. It transforms abstract hopes into tangible actions, guiding people through life's complexities with meaning and grace.

These images were taken in a variety of settings that embrace both traditional and non-traditional beliefs. They represent religious people, masked dancers from the spirit world, ceremonies, and shrines across Asia and Africa.



GAMBADA DEVOTEES
Devotees of Gambada, the Voodoo deity of love, dance in trance at a ceremony.
Inger Vandyke ©
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SHANGO HIGH PRIEST
Portrait of Toffa holding a human skull. Toffa is a high priest of Shango, the traditional judiciary in Voodoo religion.
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GAMBADA PRIESTESS IN TRANCE
The Gambada divinity of Voodoo is responsible for love and romance. Worshippers adorn their bodies with Kaolin powder before entering a trance and attending a ceremony in which they might wish for a life partner. It is very unusual to photograph people standing still, in a trance, like this.
Inger Vandyke ©
All rights reserved.



HEVIOSSO PRIEST
Portrait of a Heviosso priest with his k'pon, a sacred emblem or ritual weight carried by priests representing the power and authority of this deity. Heviosso priests worship thunder and lightning in Voodoo religion.
Inger Vandyke ©
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HEVIOSSO CHILD
A Heviosso child at a ceremony devoted to the deity of Heviosso in remote Benin.
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SAKPATA DEVOTEE
A young man dances energetically in the dust during a traditional healing ceremony of Sakpata in remote Benin.
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All rights reserved.





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VOODOO PRIESTESS
A Kaolin-covered priestess acting as the master of ceremonies at a Gambada celebration in Benin.
Inger Vandyke ©
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SAKPATA DEVOTEE
A young man dances energetically in the dust during a traditional healing ceremony of Sakpata in remote Benin.
Inger Vandyke ©
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Inger Vandyke lives in the Ribble Valley in Lancashire, United Kingdom, with her husband Mark Beaman and is the Managing Director of Wild Images.

Hailing originally from Australia and of Anglo-Dutch ancestry, Inger was brought up on a trawler, fishing the Great Barrier Reef. Her early companions were terns, boobies, sharks, and the occasional octopus, setting off a lifelong interest in seabirds and nature in general.

Nowadays, she is a professional wildlife and cultural photography tour leader, as well as a mainstay of the administration and planning for the Wild Images tour programs.







Top: TSAATAN SHAMAN
Portrait of a Tsegtseg, the only female shaman in the Tsaatan culture of northern Mongolia's Taiga.
Inger Vandyke ©
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Left: SAKPATA DEVOTEE
A Sakpata devotee mid-flight during a ceremony in remote Benin. Sakpata is the healing divinity who lives on the earth in the Voodoo religion.
Inger Vandyke © All rights reserved.

Right: TWINS PRIESTESS
A priestess presiding over the baptism of Ibeji, or twin dolls, in Benin. Ibeji are created to commemorate the life of a twin that has died, and the living sibling or parents must look after the Ibeji until they themselves pass away. Each day, the Ibeji is washed, fed, and put to bed alongside other living children. Because twins are deeply revered in Beninese Voodoo, these dolls ensure the dead child's spirit remains with the family, bringing blessings rather than misfortune.
Inger Vandyke © All rights reserved.





Faith

INGER VANDYKE COLLECTION

GUELEDE MASKED DANCER AND CHILD
Guelede is a sacred Yoruba tradition that celebrates the deity of women. Seen as a source of worship for all things associated with women, including cooking, childbearing, and music, Guelede is a light-hearted spirit of warmth and affection.
Inger Vandyke ©
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Inger has a long-established photographic career, publishing images and stories in over 300 print and online outlets worldwide, including the journal of the Royal Geographical Society, Ocean Geographic (at which she is a Charter Member), Australian Geographic, Asia Geographic, and Africa Geographic.

In October 2024, Inger reached 30 years of experience as a professional tour leader, and 2026 will mark 37 years of her photographic experience in Africa.

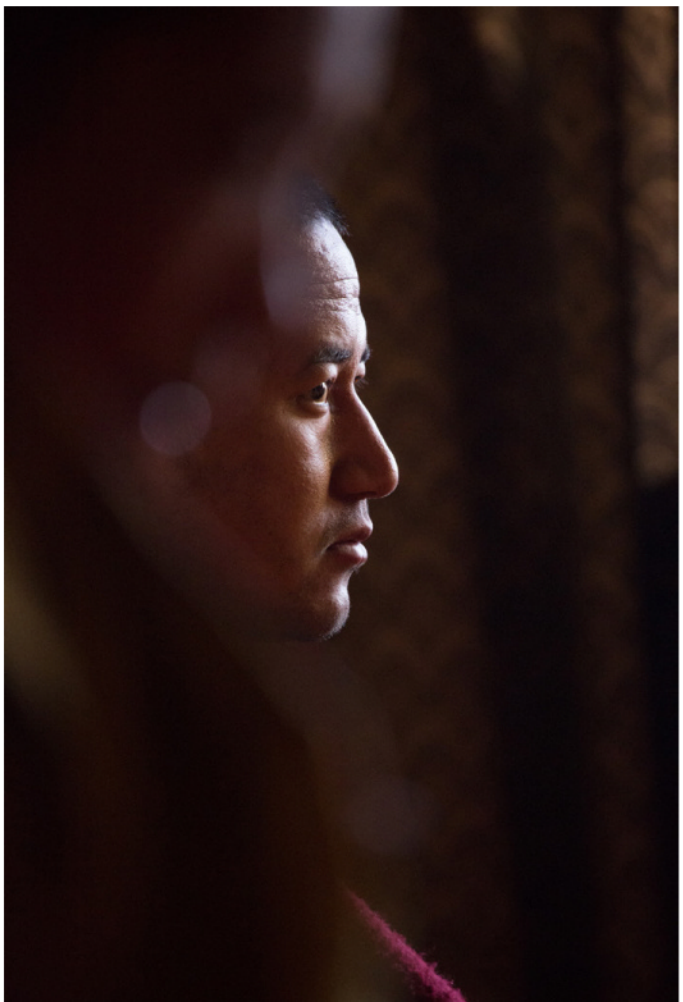
Prior to moving to the UK, Inger was the longest-standing female board member of an NFP for conservation in Australia, the Southern Ocean Seabirds Study Association (SOSSA), the longest-running study of the Wandering Albatross at sea in the world.

In 2016, she was appointed Scientific Guardian of the Heard Island and McDonald Islands Key Bird Area by BirdLife International.

During her career, Inger has been involved in numerous other conservation programs, including island conservation, sea turtle research, hammerhead shark expeditions, and the preservation of Critically Endangered species such as the Orange-bellied Parrot and Brush-tailed Rock Wallaby.

Inger is the first person in the world to photograph a wild Snow Leopard hunting sequence up close. Her images from that hunt were shot on a Wild Images tour and published widely. They graced conservation campaigns for snow leopards through WWF and the Snow Leopard Conservancy of India. To this day, they also continue to beguile visitors at numerous public education campaigns for Snow Leopards in zoos across the world.

Inger has led numerous photographic tours, ranging from day trips to explore the limits of timed-exposure photography to extended journeys focused on wildlife photography in remote areas or on the vanishing cultures of the Himalayas and Africa. Inger is a skilled tutor and is always pleased to help her group members learn new things and get more out of their



photography, whether in the field or while using Lightroom or Photoshop.

A passionate people photographer, she has worked with the various cultures of Tibet and undertaken exploratory expeditions in this out-of-reach part of the world, leading to her becoming a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society and an International Fellow at the Explorers' Club.

In 2018 Inger was honoured to be appointed as a Photographer of India and Africa for the prestigious international salon "Atlas of Humanity" and since then her work has been exhibited in Desenzano del Garda (Italy), New York (USA), Paris (France), Yunnan (China), Birmingham & London (UK) and also in Algiers (Algeria) as a part of this project.

Left Page: A BUDDHIST PRIEST IN A CANDLE ROOM
A Buddhist priest lights lines of votive candles made from yak butter wax at Swayambhunath temple, Kathmandu, Nepal.
Inger Vandyke ©
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Top: MASS PRAYER AT YARCHEN GAR
A smiling Buddhist nun in the mass prayer of Yarchen Gar, China.
Inger Vandyke © All rights reserved.

Left: PROFILE OF A BUDDHIST MONK
Profile portrait of a Buddhist monk at puja in Thiksey monastery, Leh, India.
Inger Vandyke ©
All rights reserved.



MASS PRAYER AT YARCHEN GAR
A smiling Buddhist nun in the mass prayer of Yarchen Gar, China.
Inger Vandyke ©
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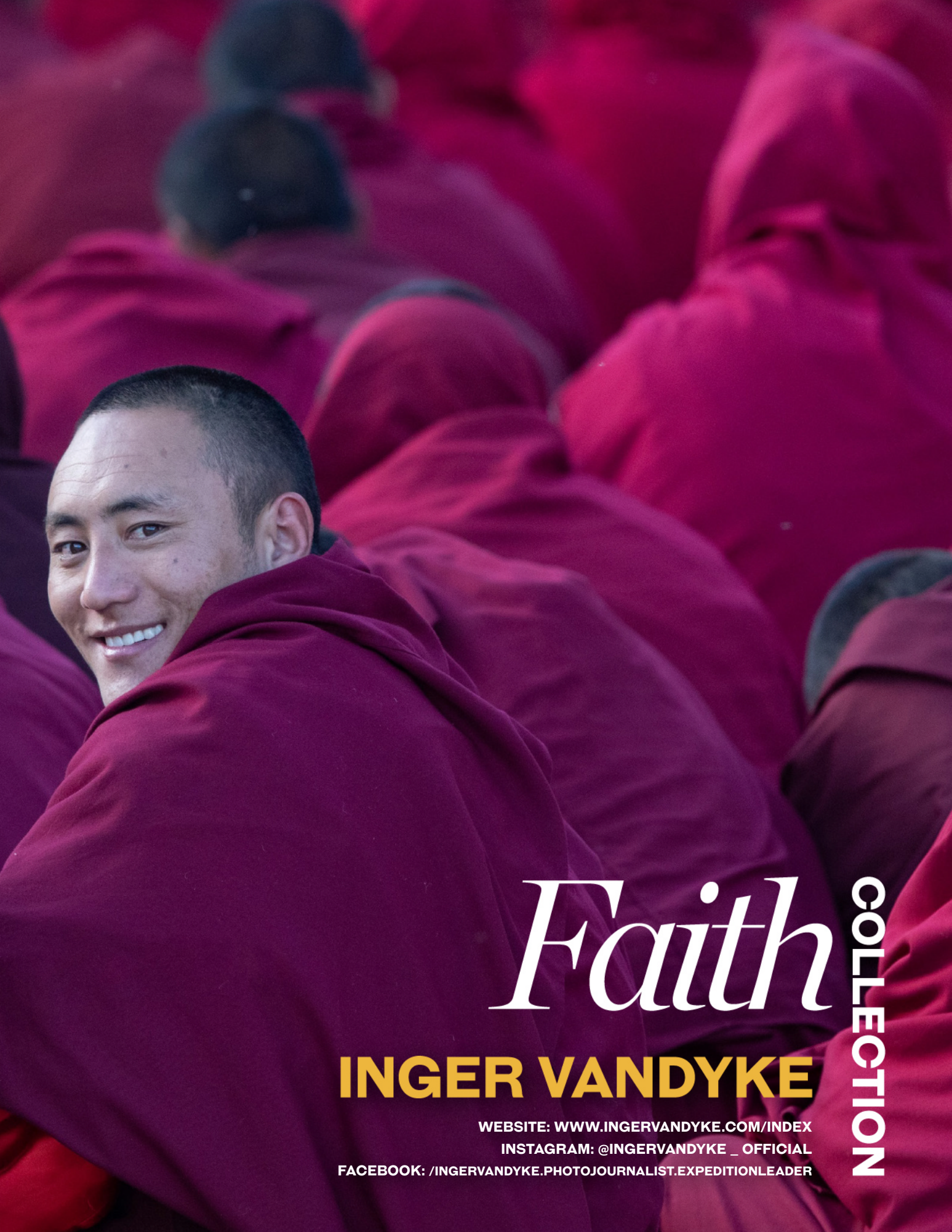
The Atlas of Humanity seeks to document humanity in all its forms, including tribes, cultures, and communities that are disappearing. Inger's work with the former artist's colony/slum of Kathputli in Delhi now forms a prominent part of this project. You can read about Kathputli and see a gallery of Inger's images from there at this link. **HTTPS://WWW.ATLASOFHUMANITY.COM/KATHPUTLI.**

When she is not leading Wild Images tours, she is developing a personal body of work documenting the vanishing cultures of Africa.



Faith

COLLECTION

INGER VANDYKE

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A NIGHT OF FAITH IN STONE:

Christmas in Lalibela

Frank Binder





Christmas Eve
Celebratory Chanting
Frank Binder ©
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A NIGHT OF FAITH IN STONE:

Christmas in Lalibela

Frank Binder

Top: Christmas Eve Celebration
Frank Binder ©
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Right Page:Gathering for the Celebration
Frank Binder ©
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As darkness settles over the highlands of northern Ethiopia, the town of Lalibela begins to glow—not with electric lights or holiday decorations, but with the soft flicker of thousands of candles carried by pilgrims wrapped in white cotton shawls. Their chants drift through the cool mountain air, echoing among some of the most extraordinary churches ever created by human hands.

This is Genna, the Ethiopian Orthodox celebration of Christmas.

Each January, tens of thousands of pilgrims journey to Lalibela, a sacred town often described as the spiritual heart of Ethiopia. They arrive on foot, by bus, and from distant villages scattered across the Ethiopian highlands. Many have traveled for days. Their destination is a remarkable complex of eleven medieval churches carved directly into solid volcanic rock more than eight centuries ago.





Christmas Eve Mass
Frank Binder ©
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The sheer number of worshippers arriving for Genna far exceeds the limited supply of hotels and guesthouses in Lalibela. In response, much of the town transforms into a vast temporary campground. Open fields, church courtyards, and every available patch of ground become places of shelter as pilgrims spread blankets, erect simple tents, and prepare to spend several nights outdoors. Entire families gather around small cooking fires, sharing meals and stories while awaiting the Christmas liturgy.



Campground relaxation
Frank Binder ©
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Bearing the Cross
Frank Binder ©
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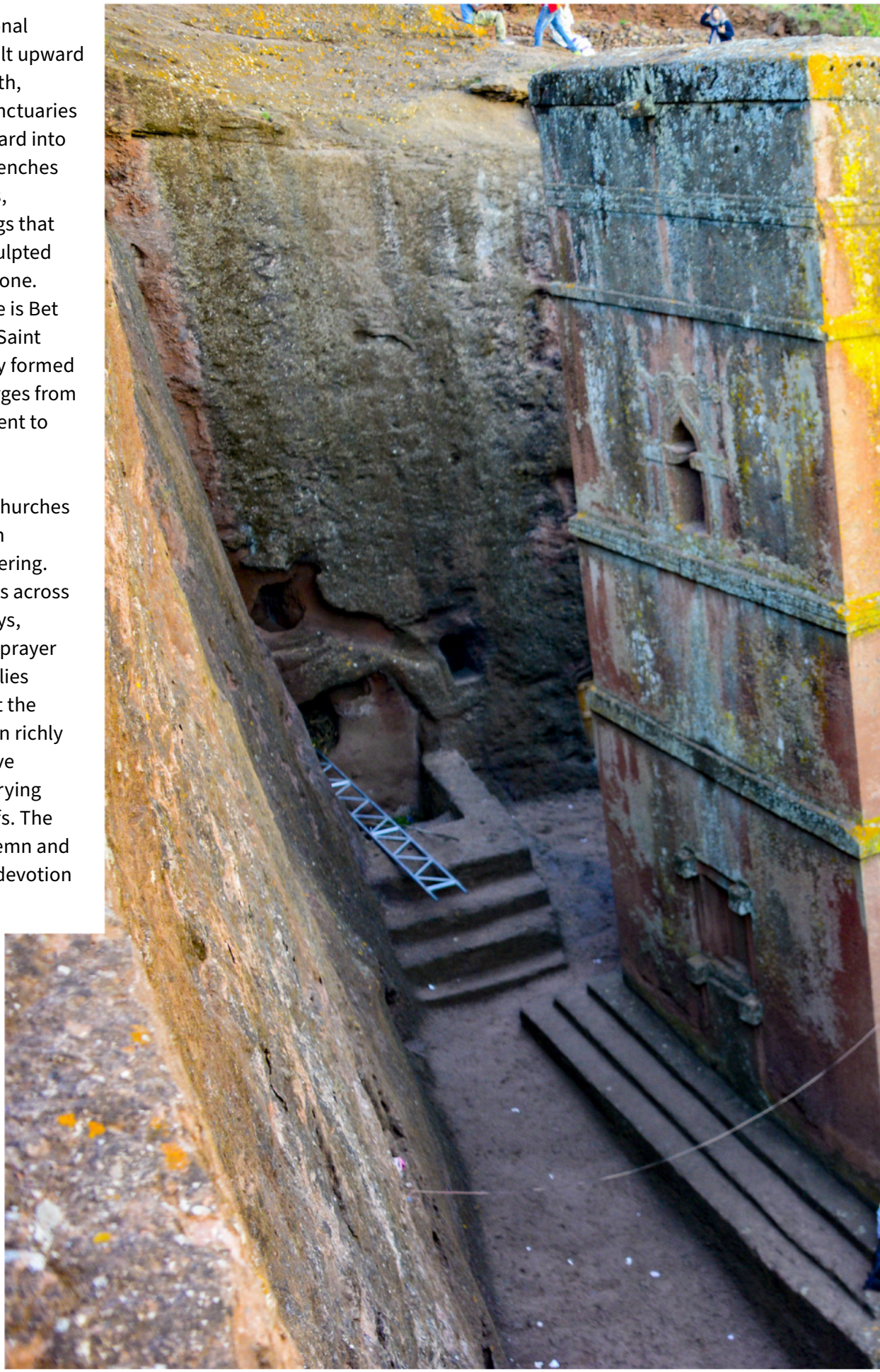
Unlike traditional churches built upward from the earth, Lalibela's sanctuaries were excavated downward into the bedrock. Massive trenches surround the structures, revealing entire buildings that appear to have been sculpted from a single piece of stone. The most iconic of these is Bet Giyorgis, the Church of Saint George, whose perfectly formed cross-shaped roof emerges from the earth like a monument to faith itself.

On Christmas Eve, the churches become the center of an immense religious gathering. Pilgrims spread blankets across courtyards and pathways, settling in for a night of prayer beneath the stars. Families huddle together against the mountain chill. Priests in richly embroidered robes move through the crowds carrying crosses and prayer staffs. The atmosphere is both solemn and celebratory, a blend of devotion and anticipation.



St Georges Church
Frank Binder ©
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Left:
Portrait of a Pilgrim
Frank Binder ©
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Left Bottom:
An Exuberent young pilgrim
Frank Binder ©
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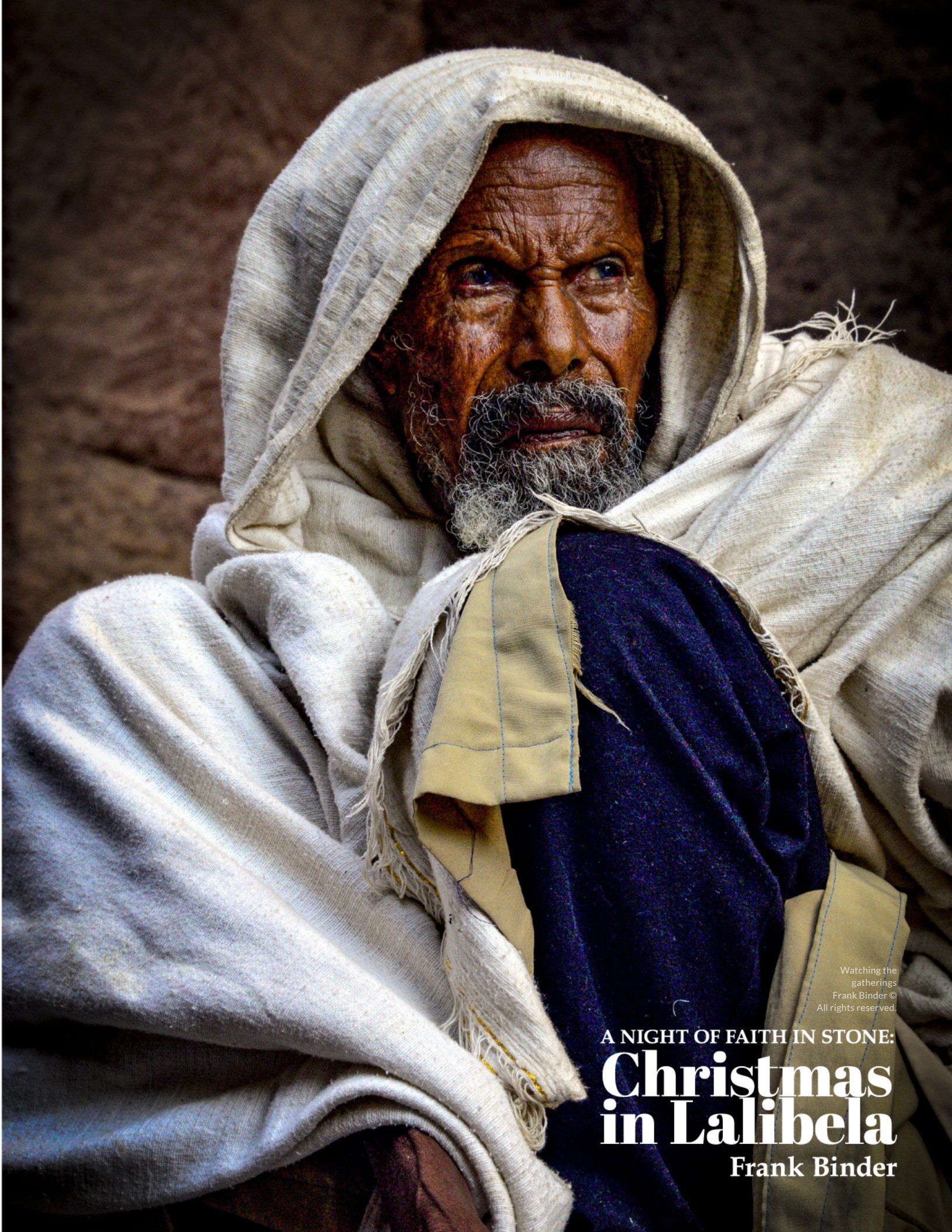
As midnight approaches, the chanting intensifies.
For the Ethiopian Orthodox faithful, Christmas is not merely a holiday; it is one of the most important events in the religious calendar. Worshippers gather shoulder to shoulder around the ancient churches, many holding candles whose flames illuminate faces etched with reverence and expectation. The rhythmic prayers, sung in the ancient liturgical language of Ge'ez, have changed little over centuries.

The scene is unlike any Christmas celebration found elsewhere in the world.
There are no brightly wrapped gifts, no decorated trees, and no commercial distractions. Instead, the focus remains firmly on worship, community, and the enduring traditions of one of Christianity's oldest branches. Ethiopia embraced Christianity in the fourth century, centuries before much of Europe, and many of the customs practiced in Lalibela today trace their roots deep into that history.



Watching the gatherings
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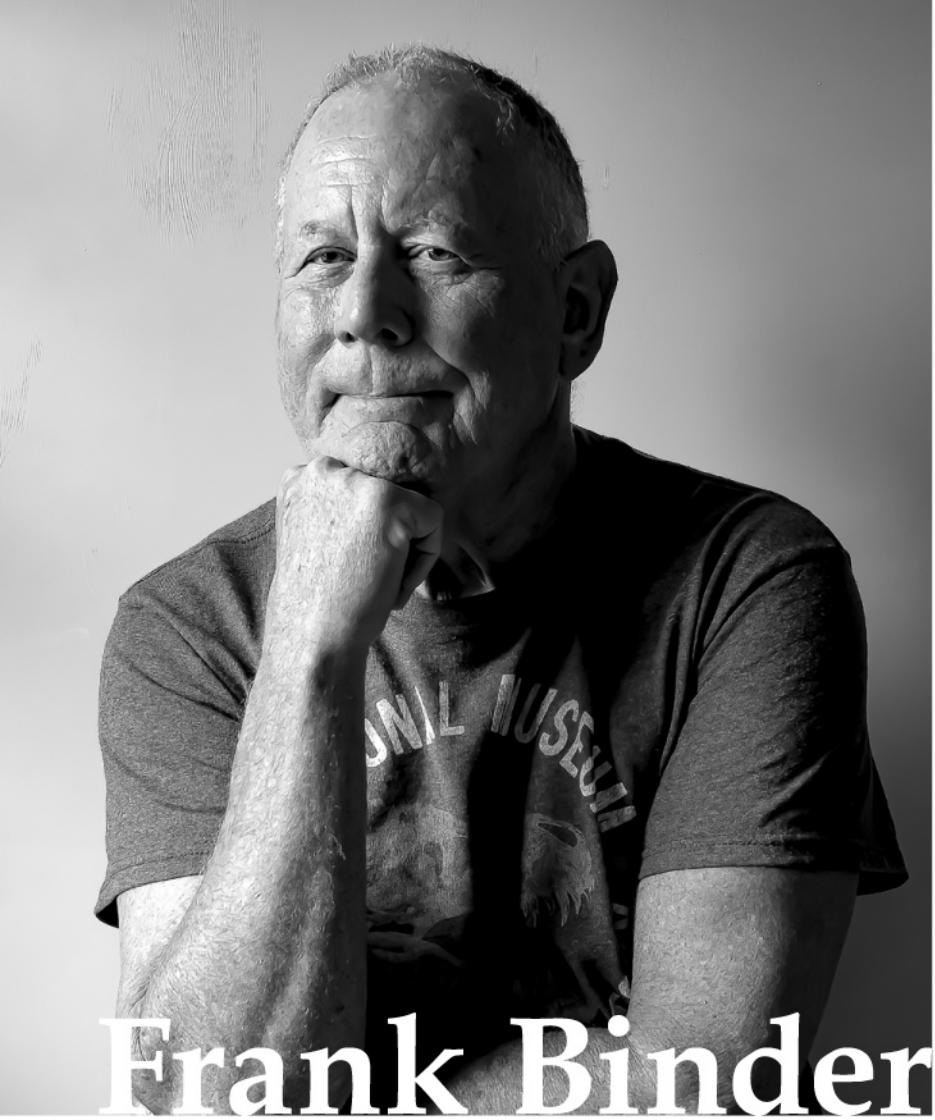
A NIGHT OF FAITH IN STONE:

Christmas in Lalibela

Frank Binder



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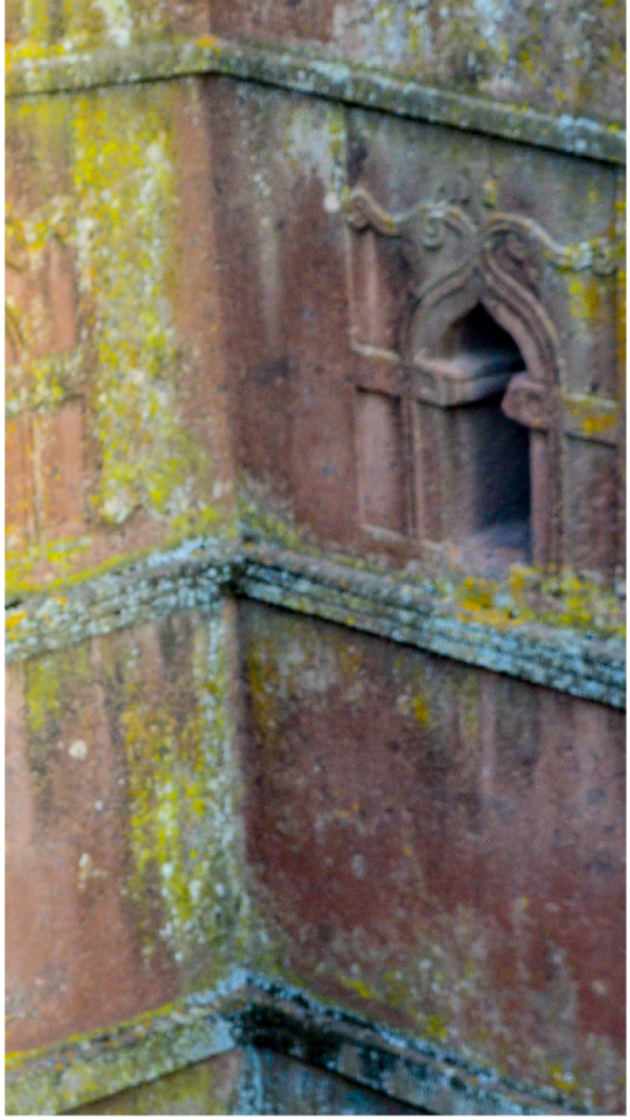

Frank Binder is a distinguished fine art photographer based in the United States. His work is characterized by a deep sensitivity to his subjects, whether capturing the untamed essence of wildlife in its natural habitats or documenting nuanced aspects of human existence.

His portfolio includes several significant projects and series, each marked by meticulous attention to detail and a compelling narrative.

Binder has garnered international acclaim, having won numerous prestigious awards for his work.

Binder's photographs are prominently featured in private collections worldwide, where they resonate with viewers for their emotional depth and technical brilliance.

”Over the last 15 years, my photography career has been dedicated to capturing the world’s wildlife and humanity in their most authentic and evocative moments.

From the majesty of the natural world to the intimate expressions of diverse cultures, my lens has sought to preserve and share these stories with passion and commitment.

Each image is a testament to my enduring love for the natural world and the rich tapestry of human experience.”

-Frank Binder



Baptising a new congregant
Frank Binder ©
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A NIGHT OF FAITH IN STONE:

Christmas in Lalibela



Portrait of a young congregant
Frank Binder ©
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Preparing a Meal
Frank Binder ©
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For photographers, Lalibela presents an extraordinary visual experience. The white garments worn by pilgrims create rivers of flowing fabric that contrast dramatically with the dark volcanic stone of the churches. Candlelight dances across weathered faces. Clouds of incense drift through shafts of morning light. Everywhere, faith becomes visible.

Yet the most striking aspect of the celebration may be its timelessness.



Honoring the Virgin
Frank Binder ©
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Frank Binder

Sojourner Devotion
Frank Binder ©
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A NIGHT OF FAITH IN STONE:

Christmas in Lalibela

Standing among the pilgrims before dawn, watching worshippers pray beside churches that have stood for more than 800 years, one can feel the centuries collapse. The same prayers have been spoken here by countless generations. The same rock walls have reflected their voices. The same stars have shone over the faithful gathered in expectation.

When the Christmas liturgy concludes, and daylight spreads across the Ethiopian plateau, pilgrims begin to disperse. Some return to nearby villages. Others face journeys of many miles home. The churches remain, silent once again, carved into the living stone of Lalibela.



Preparing Tea
Frank Binder ©
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Leading the Pilgrimage to Lalibela
Frank Binder ©
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> For a brief moment each year, these ancient sanctuaries become the stage for one of the world's most remarkable religious gatherings—a celebration where history, architecture, and faith converge in a way found nowhere else on Earth.
>
> In Lalibela, Christmas is not simply remembered. It is lived.
>
> *-Frank Binder*

A NIGHT OF FAITH IN STONE:

Christmas in Lalibela





Resting after the long journey
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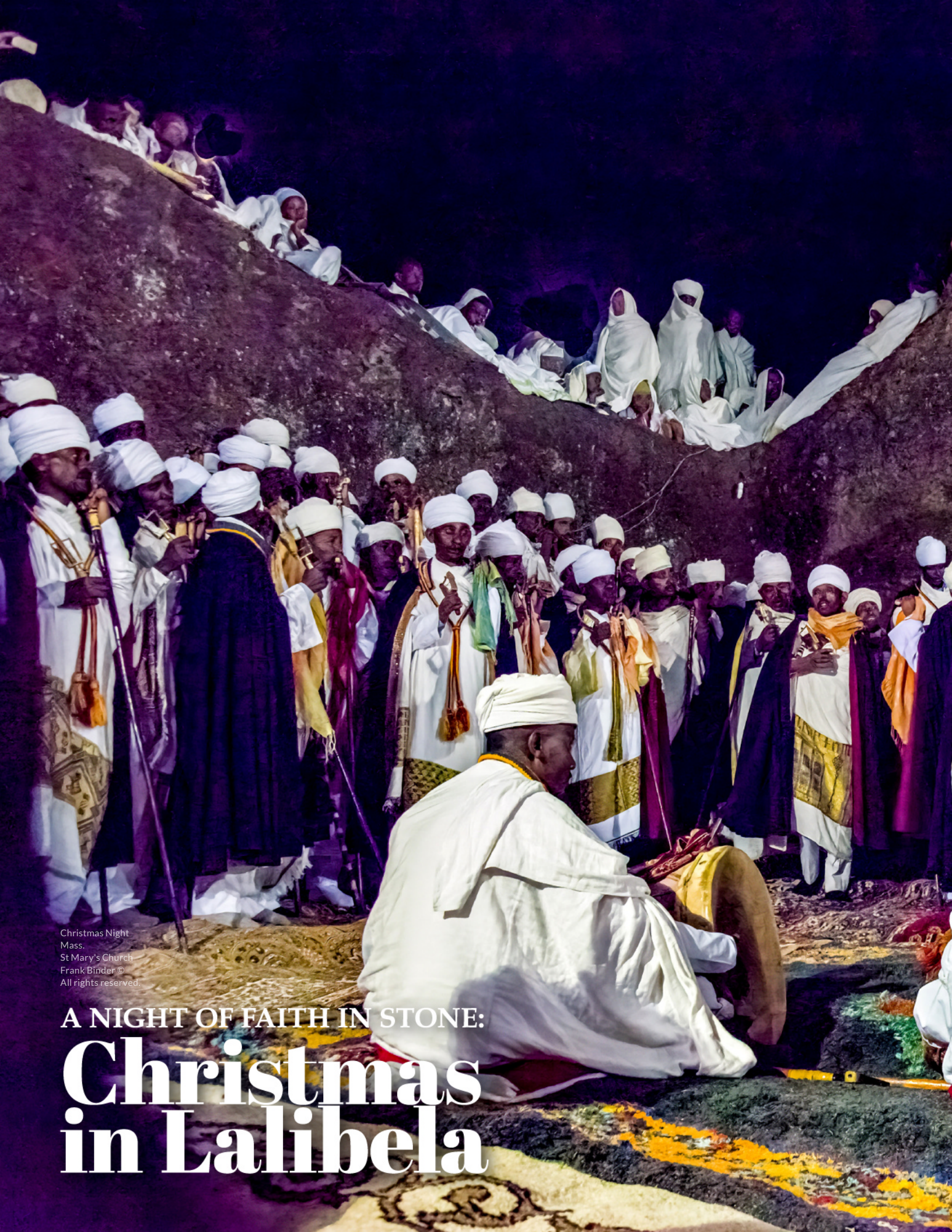

Christmas Night Mass.
St Mary's Church
Frank Binder ©
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A NIGHT OF FAITH IN STONE:

Christmas in Lalibela



Frank Binder
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BLOG: WWW.CHASING-THE-LIGHT.NET



ORA BUERKLI

2 SERIES


Expressions of Devotion
Ora Buerkli ©
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Expression of **Devotion**

Expressions of devotion have always drawn me in. I grew up in a secular Jewish home, yet from a young age, I was fascinated by acts of devotion. Today, I continue to be drawn to moments of faith and spirituality.

When I started focusing on street and documentary photography, this fascination found its way into my work, at first without me consciously noticing. What interests me is the visual aspect of these moments, coupled with the emotions they reveal, such as hope, grief, gratitude, and joy. While the symbols and rituals differ from one faith to another, the intent and the gestures feel remarkably similar.



Expression of Devotion

Over the years, I have photographed such moments in places of worship, at pilgrimage sites, during religious festivals, and simply on the street. Again and again, I found myself drawn to the gestures themselves — hands raised in prayer, heads bowed, candles lit, offerings made. These quiet acts often say more than words.



Expressions of Devotion
Ora Buerkli ©
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ORA BUERKLI



Religion often divides; we often fail to recognize the commonalities. Beneath the differences lies a shared search for meaning and comfort. As a body of work, these images offer glimpses of humanity at its most open, vulnerable, and hopeful.

Expression of Devotion



Expressions of Devotion
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ORA
BUERKLI



Expression of **Devotion**

Expressions of Devotion
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ORA BUERKLI

PHOTOGRAPHY HAS GIVEN ME A WAY TO CONNECT WITH PEOPLE ACROSS CULTURES AND COMMUNITIES WHILE ENCOURAGING ME TO SLOW DOWN AND OBSERVE MORE CLOSELY.
MY CAMERA OFTEN SERVES AS A BRIDGE, OPENING THE DOOR TO UNEXPECTED MOMENTS OF OPENNESS AND TRUST.
I AM PARTICULARLY DRAWN TO THEMES OF IDENTITY, FAITH, AND COMMUNITY, AND TO THE WAYS THESE ARE EXPRESSED IN EVERYDAY LIFE.

WORKING PRIMARILY IN THE STREET, I SEEK MOMENTS THAT REVEAL BOTH THE UNIQUENESS OF INDIVIDUAL EXPERIENCE AND THE COMMON THREADS THAT CONNECT US."
- ORA BUERKLI



Expressions of Devotion
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ORA BUERKLI

Ora Buerkli is a photographer based in Zurich, Switzerland. Originally from Israel, she has been passionate about photography since receiving her first camera at age 12. Although she initially focused on nature photography, she soon discovered a deeper interest in documenting people and cultures through street and documentary photography.

An avid traveler, Ora has traveled extensively, combining her love of travel with her photographic practice. Over the years, she has continued to refine her craft through workshops with internationally recognized photographers. Her work has received multiple awards and has been exhibited internationally.





Expressions of Devotion
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ORA BUERKLI

2 SERIES



Within These Walls

Inside Magdenau convent in eastern Switzerland, I documented the daily lives of its small community of nuns. Like many convents across Europe, the community is aging and shrinking. Originally, the convent hosted around 50 nuns; at the time of this project, only 12 sisters were living there. This reality gave the project an added sense of importance.

Within These Walls
Ora Buerkli ©
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Through repeated visits over a long period, I gained the nuns' trust and photographed aspects of convent life that are rarely seen by casual visitors. I witnessed the rhythm of everyday life, including prayer, daily household routines, shared meals, and celebrations of religious and personal events.



Within These Walls

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Within These Walls

Within These Walls



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One of the most rewarding aspects of the project was the opportunity to move beyond my own assumptions about convent life. While faith is at the heart of the community, I came to see that the sisters face many of the same joys and challenges as any other close-knit group. Friendships, disagreements, humor, and companionship all form part of their daily experience. I feel very fortunate to have been welcomed into this community and allowed to document a small part of their lives.

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ORNA NAOR

2 SERIES

THE HOLY FIRE CEREMONY

JEWISH TRADITIONS AND HOLIDAYS



The Holy Fire Ceremony
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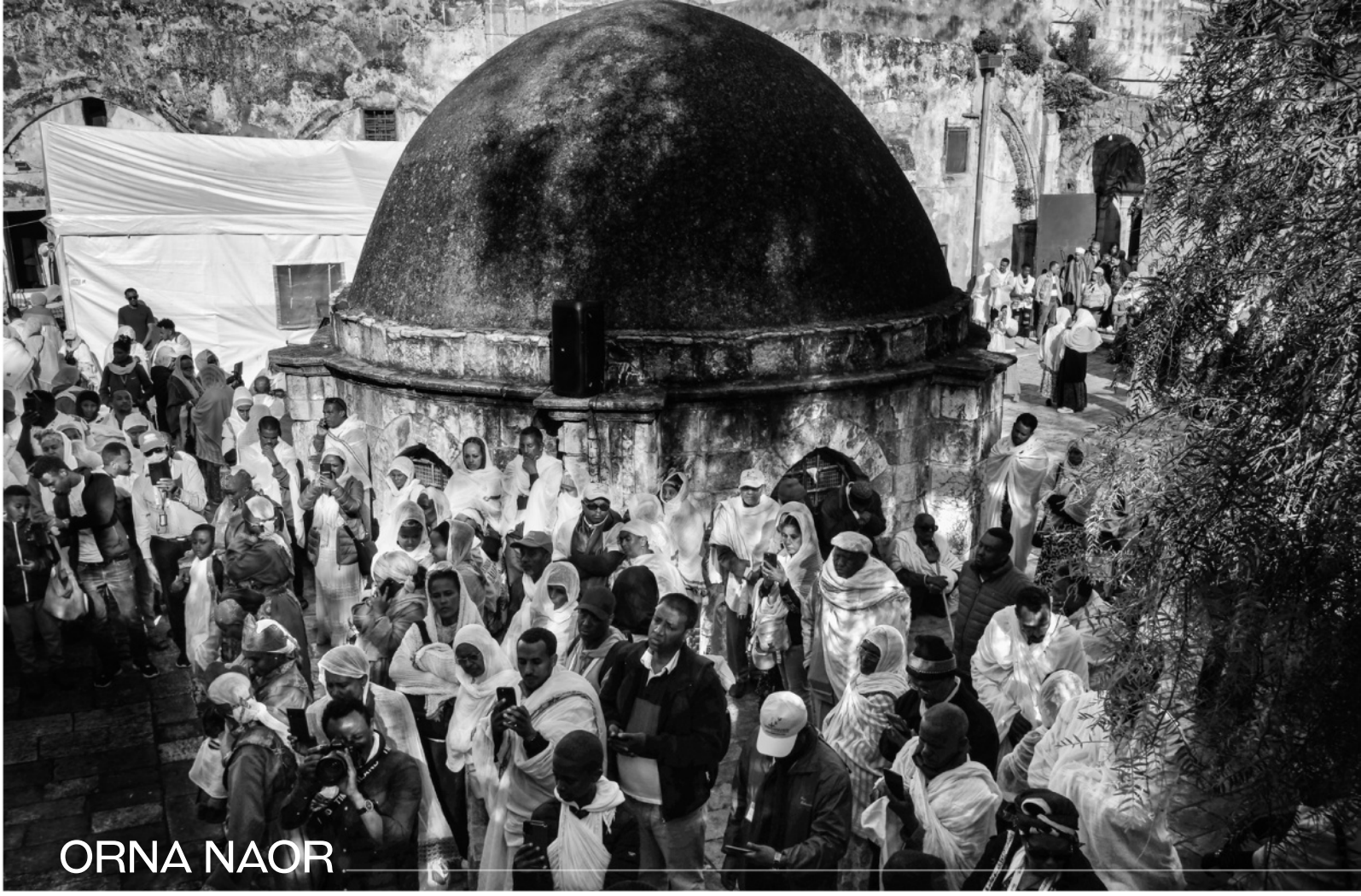
THE HOLY FIRE CEREMONY

Each year, on the eve of Orthodox Easter, the Church of the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem becomes the heart of the sacred Rite of the Holy Fire, a centuries-old ceremony. As prayers fill the ancient church, a flame is kindled within the aediculae, which many believe mark the resting place of Jesus. This fire, seen as a miraculous gift from the Holy Spirit, becomes a living symbol of Christ's resurrection.

Led by the Greek Orthodox Patriarch of Jerusalem, the ceremony draws priests and faithful from across Christian traditions. Once ignited, the Holy Fire journeys far beyond Jerusalem, carried to churches in cities like Athens, Sofia, Moscow, Belgrade, and Bucharest, uniting believers in a shared moment of wonder each year on the eve of Pascha.


ORNA NAOR



THE HOLY FIRE CEREMONY

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The "Sabbath of Light," also known as the "Rite of the Holy Fire," is Jerusalem's most beloved Orthodox celebration. Every year, on the Saturday before Easter, the Church of the Holy Sepulcher pulses with anticipation. Believers crowd together, eager to witness the miracle: a sacred fire said to descend from Jesus' tomb, setting both candles and hearts ablaze with wonder.

The miracle begins as the church is swallowed by darkness. The Greek Orthodox Patriarch enters the chapel of the Sepulcher, and after a hushed prayer, a holy fire erupts, dancing from candle to candle, passing from hand to hand in a wave of light.

Lens Magazine



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”The fire sweeps swiftly through the vast crowd inside the church, then spills out into the squares and winding alleys of the Old City, reaching the faithful who wait with outstretched hands.

I captured my photographs in the Ethiopian section of the church, where worshippers draped in white fast from sunrise until nightfall. Here, the fire ceremonies unfold as a breathtaking spectacle, offering both a formidable challenge and an electrifying thrill for any photographer.





THE HOLY FIRE CEREMONY





The Holy Fire Ceremony
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> IN MY WORK, I PAY ATTENTION TO HUMAN MOVEMENTS AND GESTURES, CAPTURING UNIQUE AND TOUCHING MOMENTS THAT SHOW UNITY AND HUMAN CONNECTION, EVEN IN THE MIDDLE OF CHAOS AND INJUSTICE.



Orna Naor is a Street Photographer, a lecturer, and one of the main photojournalist activists at the Israeli protests against Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. In her latest special series documenting the demonstrations, Orna focuses mainly on the social aspect, human rights, and conditions in Israeli society.

Her street photography has been exhibited in well-known galleries in Israel and abroad, including the Local Testimony Photojournalism exhibition and various online Street Photography groups. Naor has a unique and creative approach to street photography. She focuses on human moments, on emotions, and on creating her own story. Through the years, her work was published in various street photography books and international publications, including WePhoto Street, World Street Photography 2015, MonoPix, We Street, Art Market Magazine "Gold List," Israeli and International Lens Magazine.



ORNA NAOR

JEWISH TRADITIONS AND HOLIDAYS

MANY TRADITIONS OF THE JEWISH RELIGION ARE OBSERVED OUTDOORS AND IN THE STREETS. PHOTOGRAPHING THESE CUSTOMS IS A DIVERSE AND INTERESTING FORM OF CULTURAL DOCUMENTATION, AND OVER THE YEARS, IT HAS CONSTITUTED A JEWISH CULTURAL ARCHIVE FOR ME.



Jewish traditions
and holidays
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The first holiday of the year is Rosh Hashanah, followed immediately by Yom Kippur, the holiest day for Jews. In preparation for the Great Fast, there is an ancient custom (which today is often replaced by a monetary payment - a ransom) of waving a chicken while "transferring" a person's sins to it and then slaughtering it. This is done publicly the day before the holiday.

Jewish traditions
and holidays
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The holiday of Sukkot, which follows, is one of the three feasts, celebrated for seven days, and is one of the main holidays in the Jewish calendar.

During this holiday, people sit for 7 days in Sukkot, temporary "houses" covered with palm branches rather than roofs, to see the sky and shake four plants that the Torah commands to be taken and shaken together: Etrog, Lulav, Myrtle, and Willow.

Before the holiday, special markets called "Four Species Markets" are held.

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JEWISH TRADITIONS AND HOLIDAYS

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JEWISH
TRADITIONS AND HOLIDAYS









The holiday of Purim is the holiday of masks; men, women and children celebrate in the streets, wearing costumes and masks, and there is a custom of drinking "until one does not know who he is"; in yeshivahs, readings of the Book of Esther and "tishim" are held - Central events in the courtyards of the Rebbes and Hasidic rabbis on Purim, during which a festive table is set, "songs" are distributed, and Torah and joyous words are recited. This is one of the happiest, most special, and most vibrant days of the Hasidic year, accompanied by tremendous singing, dancing, and the saying of "Lechaim" (Cheers).



Before Passover, during which it is forbidden to eat leaven - a food made from one of the five types of grain (wheat, barley, oats, rye and spelt) that has undergone a leavening process, there is a custom of "burning leaven" in which anything suspected of being leaven is thrown into the fire; a large crowd gathers near containers and throws the leftover leaven into the fire.

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JEWISH TRADITIONS AND HOLIDAYS



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The last holiday that appears in my pictures is Lag BaOmer; after Passover, 100 days are counted during which no celebrations are held except for the 33rd day; on this day, bonfires are lit that symbolize the great light spread by Rabbi Shimon Bar Yohay and the fire from the secret teachings (Kabbalah).



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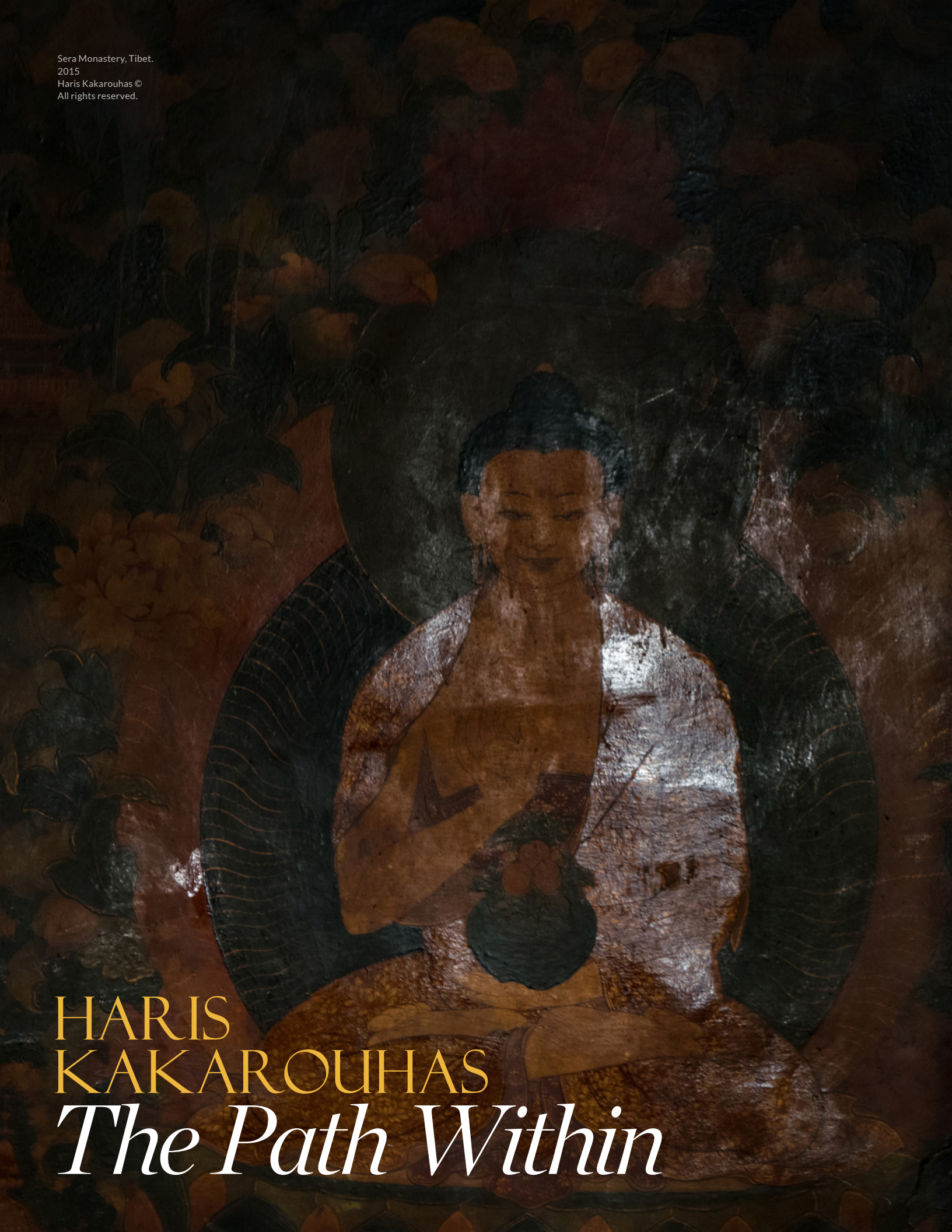

HARIS KAKAROUHAS

The Path Within



The Path Within

Hemis Monastery,
Ladakh. 2010
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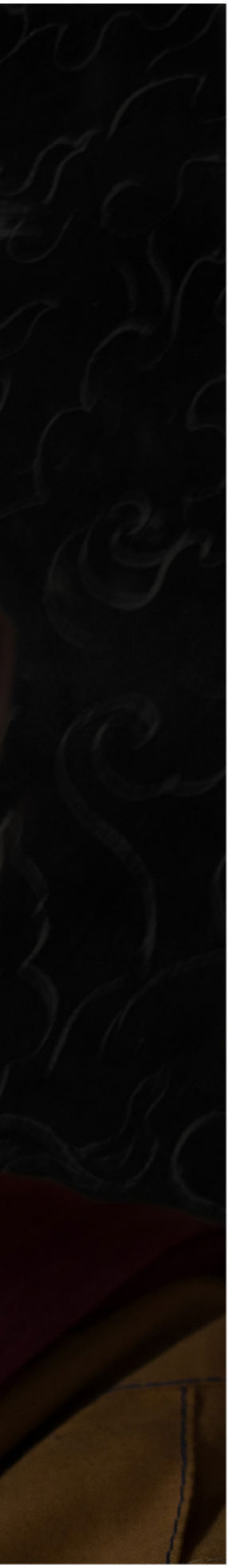
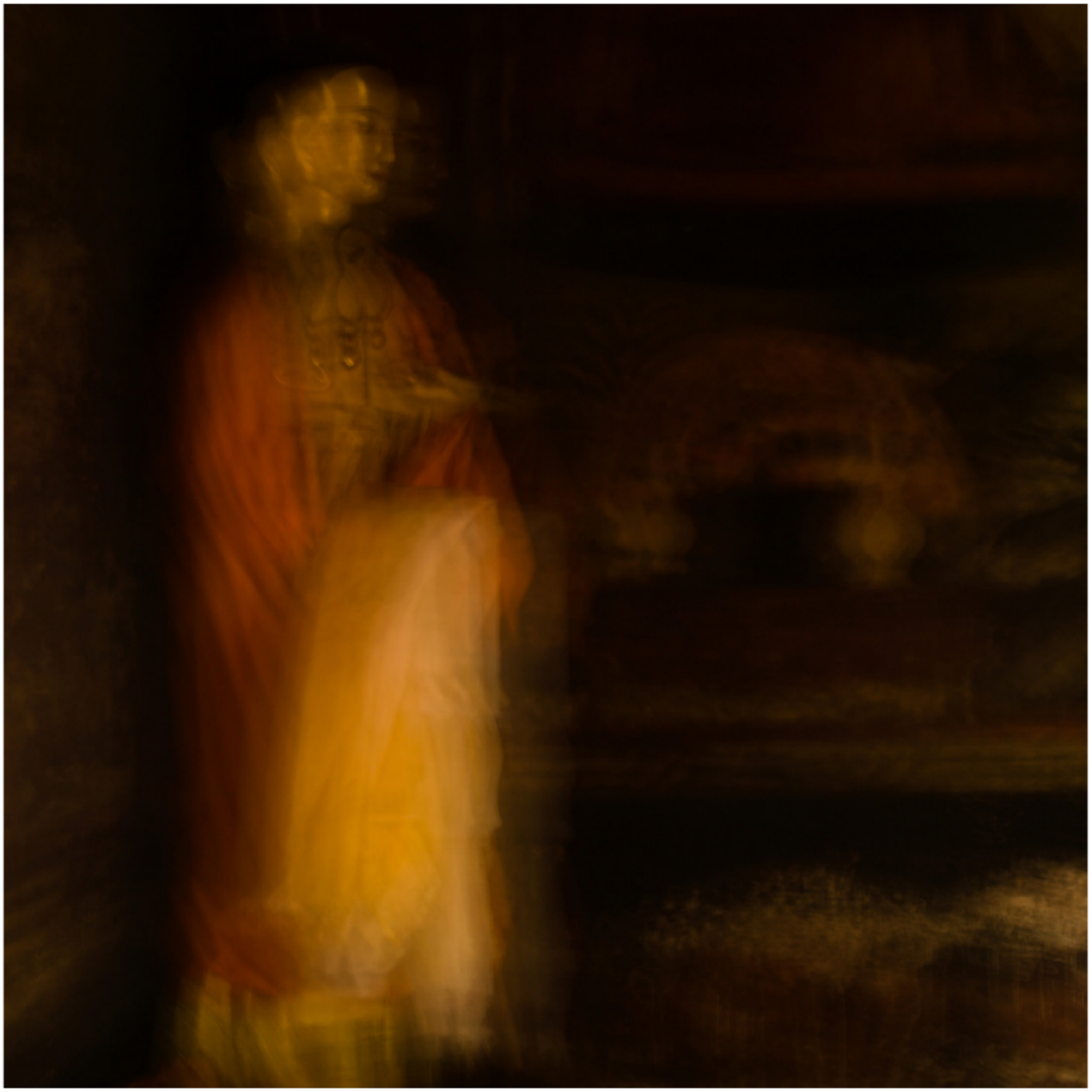
I travel to different places of prayer and contemplation not as an observer, but first and foremost as a pilgrim. Photography comes afterward — almost as a natural continuation of an inner experience. From the monasteries of Mount Athos and the churches of Lalibela to the Buddhist monasteries of Tibet and the Sufi ceremonies of Turkey, I search for that subtle moment when form begins to recede, and something deeper reveals itself within silence.

I am not interested in documenting religion as an external phenomenon or describing different doctrines. What moves me is the shared human longing for transcendence; the desire to approach the Ineffable, to stand for a moment before something greater than oneself. Within the chant of a monk, the turning of a dervish, or the still gaze of a saint, I recognize the same inner vibration — a silent longing to return to the essence.







HARIS KAKAROUHAS

The Path Within

For me, this path is not geographical but inward. Each place becomes a mirror of a common human search; a movement from the visible toward the invisible, from the ego toward a deeper inner truth. These images are traces of that journey — moments in which I feel that, even if only briefly, all paths meet at the same timeless center.

- Haris Kakarouhas

Left: Kopan Monastery, Kathmandu, Nepal. 2016
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Top: Alci Monastery, Ladakh, India, 2010
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Mevlana Sufi Konia,
Turkey. 2010
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Sema ceremony, Konia,
Turkey. 2010
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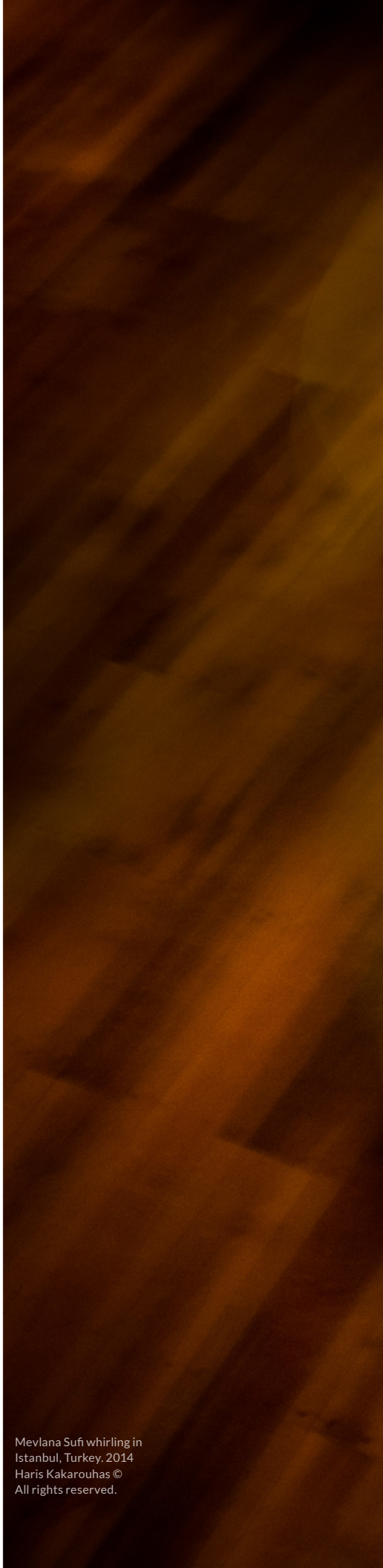

Mevlana Sufi whirling in
Istanbul, Turkey. 2014
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HARIS
KAKAROUHAS
The Path Within



Monk in Dionysiou Monastery, Holy Mountain, Greece. 2016
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THE IMAGE AS INTEGRAL PRESENCE

As we move further into the 21st century, we find ourselves submerged in an ocean of images — mass-produced, rapidly consumed, and often devoid of depth. Amid this visual overload, much of what is labeled “art” becomes mere reflection rather than presence. Images are no longer seen; they are analyzed, categorized, and explained. Feeling gives way to intellect. The eye no longer looks — it decodes.

Today’s viewer often approaches the image not with silence or openness, but with commentary, critique, or the need to rationalize. Artworks are filtered through concepts, ideologies, or stylistic categories. As a result, most contemporary images serve purposes external to themselves — they illustrate ideas, represent aesthetics, or engage in political discourse.





In many cases, they are built upon models of assimilation, as Baudrillard suggested — representations of representations in a world where objects have seemingly vanished.

But these models, being products of the analytical mind, remain detached from lived reality. The images they produce are sterile echoes, speaking more to theory than to soul.

In response to this condition, my artistic stance seeks to restore the image to its integral presence — to rediscover the image as a whole, self-contained entity capable of truly moving its viewer.

SEEING FROM WITHIN BEFORE I LOOK WITHOUT.

REALIZING THAT NONE OF MY IMAGES CAN REACH FURTHER THAN THE TRUTH I'M WILLING TO UNCOVER WITHIN.

SEEKING NOT PERFECTION, BUT PRESENCE.

CREATING NOT TO EXPRESS THE EGO, BUT TO DISSOLVE IT.

USING THE CAMERA OR ANY TOOL AS A TOOL OF REVELATION, NOT CONTROL.

HONORING SILENCE, AMBIGUITY, AND DEPTH.

CULTIVATING A SPACE WHERE ART CAN BE SACRED AGAIN.

Top Left: Nea Skiti Holy Mountain, Greece. 2009
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Left: Monastery Agiou Pavlou, Holy Mountain, Greece. 2009
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HARIS KAKAROUHAS

The Path Within



Lalibela Ethiopia. 2011
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Monastery Holy Mountain, Greece. 2013
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Prist in Godar, Ethiopia. 2011
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HARIS KAKAROUHAS

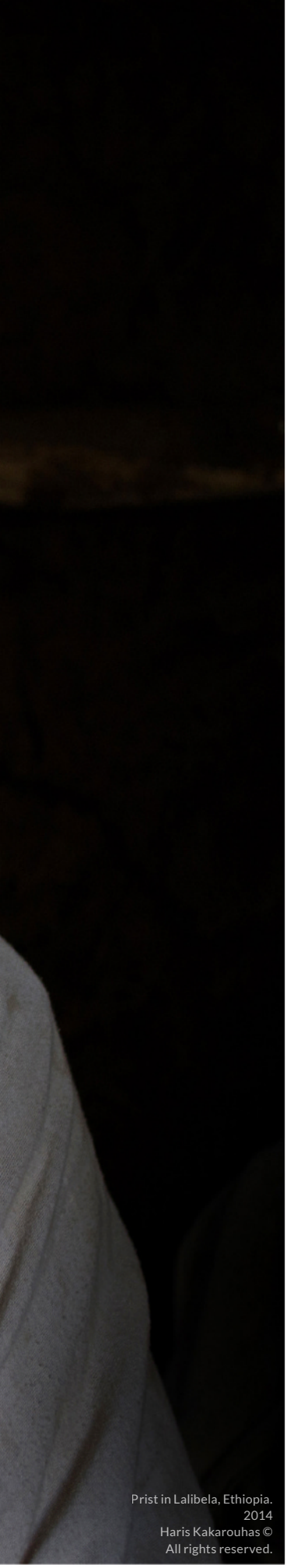
The Path Within

"MY PERSPECTIVE IS ROOTED IN A DEEPER AND MORE AMBITIOUS VISION OF WHAT IT MEANS TO BE HUMAN — A VISION THAT RESISTS FRAGMENTATION AND CALLS US BACK TO PRESENCE, MEANING, AND THE SACRED GAZE."

- Haris Kakarouhas



The Path Within



Prist in Lalibela, Ethiopia.
2014
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HARIS KAKAROUHAS

Haris Kakarouhas studied Cartography at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Visual Perception and Color Theory at the University of Glasgow (M.Sc), and Photography at the University of Derby (Ph.D. 2008) (thesis title: "Portraiture: Imaging the Self"). He also studied various art therapy methods and other contemporary psychotherapy practices. His photographic work has been published in various magazines in Greece and abroad. He has published three photography books: "On the Paths of Time" (Fotohoros Editions, 1994), "Suspended Time: A Portrait of Cuba" (2004), which has been published in six European countries and won the European Publishers Award, and the "Milos" award for Art Book of the Year in Greece, and "Natural Presence" (Luminous Eye Editions, 2019).

Kakarouhas was also a runner-up for the Schweppes Photographic Portrait Prize (London National Portrait Gallery). He served as the artistic director of the first Eco-Art Festival in Athens, organized by the Ministry of Environment and the National Museum of Contemporary Art (2013).

Kakarouhas has curated group and solo exhibitions in Athens art galleries and has held numerous solo and group photography exhibitions worldwide. Artistic director and co-owner of the gallery “Luminous Eye” – Athens (2018-2025). He conducts experiential photography workshops under the general title "Conscious Photography".
His photographic work is held in museums and private collections, and his work has been published in international publications worldwide.



The Path Within





"ARTWORKS ARE FILTERED THROUGH CONCEPTS, IDEOLOGIES, OR STYLISTIC CATEGORIES. AS A RESULT, MOST CONTEMPORARY IMAGES SERVE PURPOSES EXTERNAL TO THEMSELVES — THEY ILLUSTRATE IDEAS, REPRESENT AESTHETICS, OR ENGAGE IN POLITICAL DISCOURSE. IN MANY CASES, THEY ARE BUILT UPON MODELS OF ASSIMILATION, AS BAUDRILLARD SUGGESTED — REPRESENTATIONS OF REPRESENTATIONS IN A WORLD WHERE OBJECTS HAVE SEEMINGLY VANISHED."

- HARIS KAKAROUHAS

Left: Karakalou Monastery, Holy Mountain, Greece. 2013
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Top: Lalibela Ethiopia. 2014
Haris Kakarouhas © All rights reserved.

HARIS KAKAROUHAS

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An orthodox priest reading his bible inside one of the churches in Lalibela, Ethiopia
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See the article on page 204

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