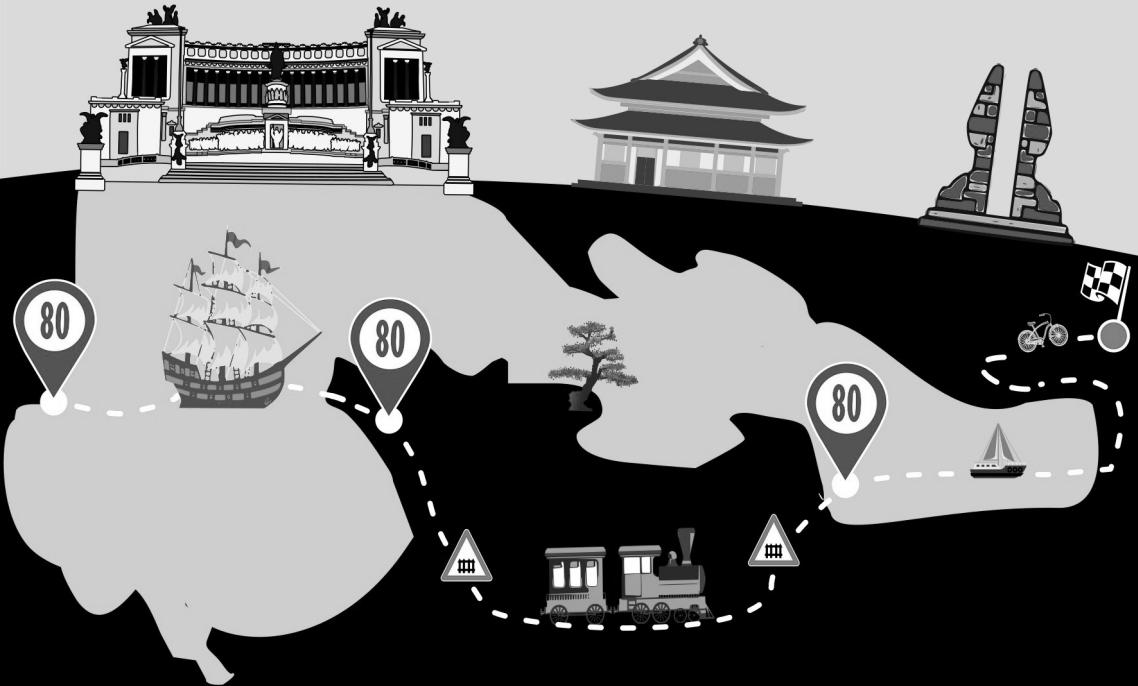


AROUND THE WORLD WITH 80 PORTRAITS



Ugo Domizioli

Grow

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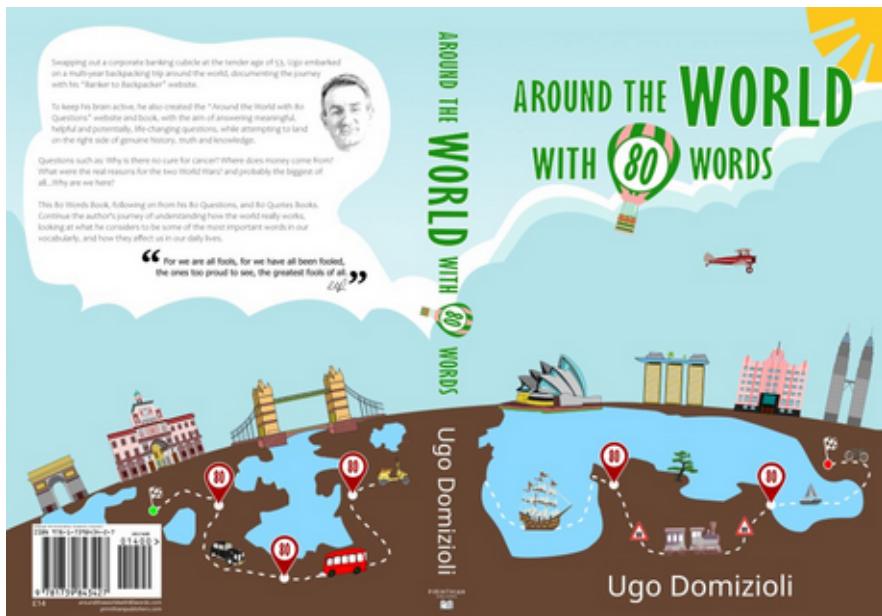
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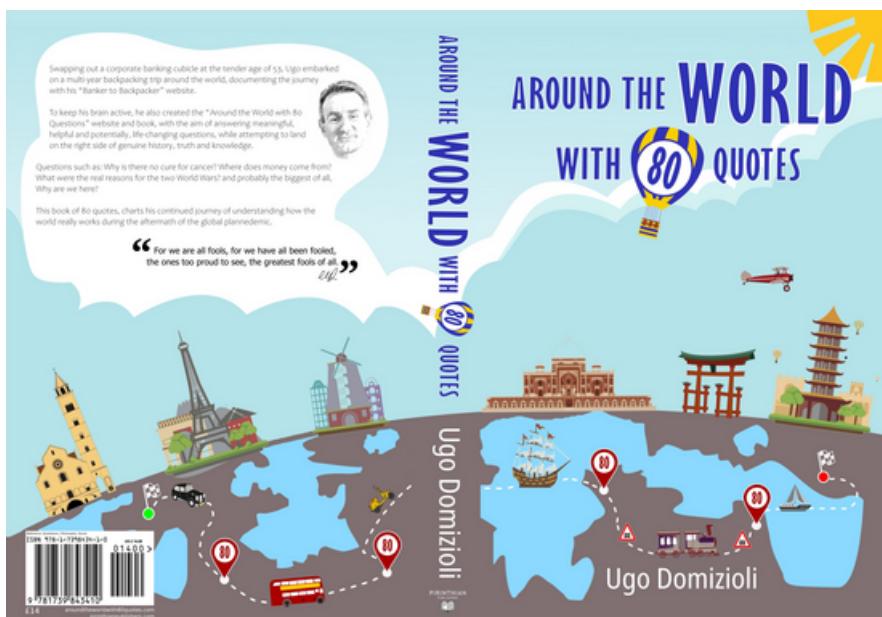
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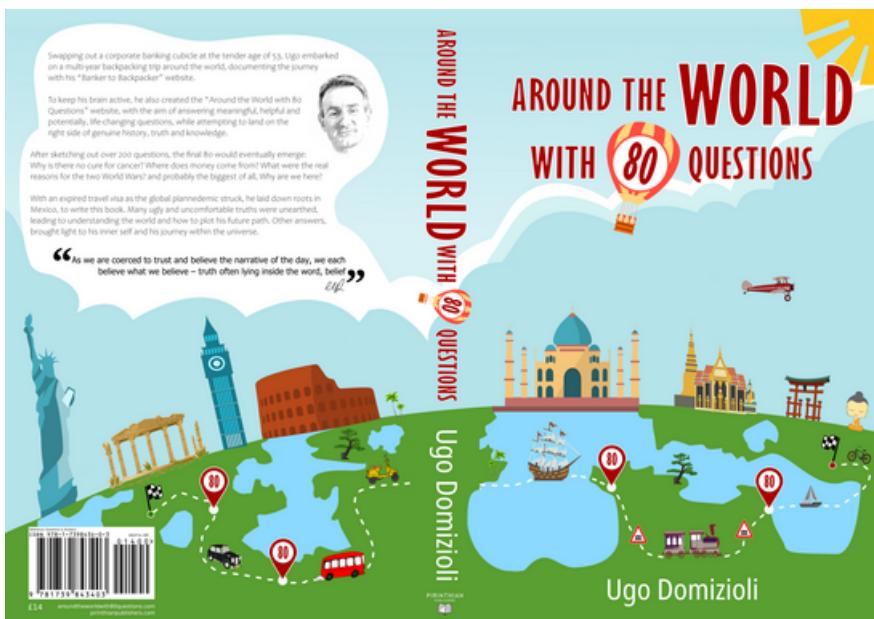
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80 Questions Book Reviews

“The book is both an easy and hard read. Easy as it's divided into 80 questions & fairly short answers which take around 10 minutes each to read. You can quickly skip to the questions of greatest interest and dip in and out of others.

The book in some instances is hard to read as the conclusions of the author were, let's say, different to my own. It certainly provoked much thought within, which I believe was the author's intention as he states he wants readers to ask our own questions and seek our own answers”

“This book will challenge the way you view the World, the society you live in and the way you live your life. You will discover the importance of asking questions, researching and finding answers. For myself it felt like an awakening...and I'm sure it will be for many other readers”

“No matter who you are or where your interests lie, the book will both illuminate your perceptions concerning important topics of our time, and challenge your thinking on how the world really operates.

Whether he's examining modern political and economic forces, pondering cultural mores, or even questioning the great spiritual and metaphysical questions of our age; his, take-no-prisoner's approach, is both refreshingly savage and alarmingly forthright.

This book is certainly a welcome and sorely needed volume at a time when speaking up and questioning "official" narratives is an ever-increasingly difficult and hazardous proposition”

“It's amazing how much I feel connected to what you're describing in your answers and deeply understanding and feeling the information you are sharing”

80 Quotes Book Reviews

“This clever book of quotations with visual elements, created during a 5 year backpacking journey, is a triumph.

Experiencing the world and humanity both physically and emotionally, the author develops his senses, intelligence, free thinking mind and researching abilities. The inspiring and challenging quotations open up avenues of thought for us to ponder, question and research for ourselves”

“For those with limited time, this book of quotes packs a punch, summarising and distilling many elements from the author's first book into bite sized pieces.

Once again, his forthright style of writing, rarely beats around the bush, often slapping the reader squarely in the face.

As if his words were not enough in waking up the masses to the real world, the author's self images add additional layers of complexity and understanding”

About the author

In 2011, after spending nearly two decades working for various investment banks and asset managers in London; Ugo was made redundant.



He took a six-month hiatus from the world of finance, little did he know, his life would change forever.

He came to the realise that much of what he believed, shaped by those in positions of trust, were in fact lies. Scientists, the medical and educational systems, religious leaders, the media and the government...the “experts”.

After some time, he found patterns beginning to form in his research, showing connections between often disparate pieces of data, analysis and information.

Sifting through this information with a high-level viewpoint and perspective, gave him the bigger picture of how the world really worked. Many of his views on economics, politics, science and religion would change forever; he was 46 at the time.

His views tend to be contrary to those in power, that control and push narratives aligning with their ideologies – more often than not, to the detriment of citizens. The last thing they want, is for the masses to wake up and begin asking questions to enact genuine change, compared to what is often professed.

At the tender age of 53, he began a two-year backpacking trip, which eventually morphed into permanent travel. He would document his journey with his [Banker to Backpacker](#) website.

He also created the [Around the World with 80 Questions](#) website. Its aim, to answer 80 meaningful, helpful and potentially, life-changing questions, while landing on the right side of genuine history, truth and knowledge. In his search of suitable questions and answers, he was not aware of the magnitude of what lay ahead or the consequences of his journey.

While travelling, fellow backpackers, posed the question of turning his questions website into a book. The idea wasn't given any thought or consideration until a year later, when the global plannedemic struck.

With an expired visa and few countries open to unvaccinated travellers, he laid down roots in Mexico, as much of the world was under totalitarian house arrest. He would use this time, to piece together his research and complete writing his first book.

This fourth book delves into another passion; black and white street photography. The 80 photographs, span a twelve year period between 2012 to 2024.

Where and how?

As many of my readers will know, I have been a digital nomad, traversing the world for the past seven years. While my first 80 Questions Book was pretty much entirely written during my time in Mexico, my second and third books, were worldwide affairs.

This fourth book goes in a new direction, focusing on photographs taken during all of my travels. Over a decade in the making, with the sorting of thousands of photographs, covering many countries.

I started getting together all my original images while briefly back in London in October 2024, putting these onto my travelling laptop and the cloud.

I would start in earnest, sorting through them while in one of my favourite parts of the world, Chiang Mai in Thailand. I returned to one of my favourite hostels called Hobnob inside the old town.

The trendy, busy independent cafe below the hostel, would act as my backdrop, beginning my initial sorting process, eventually moving onto the editing of the individual images themselves.

I gave myself a leisurely whole year to put this book together, in order to time its publication with my seven year backpacking anniversary, 24th October, 2025.

Another large chunk of sorting/editing would take place during a three-month stint in Hoi An, Vietnam. A different scenario, where I had my own room in a guest house, a mere fifteen-minute walk to the centre of the beautiful old town.

The final photo editing touches and the remaining written parts, were completed in Bali and Vietnam. Once again, this book like the others, was a truly international affair.

Countries

Despite my extensive travels, many of the photographs published in this book were limited to just a few countries. The reason? Because I am looking in the main, for a certain look, one where it's difficult to determine the date a photograph was taken, in one sense making them timeless.

In modern environments, simply by looking at what people wear, vehicles, public transport and buildings, it's fairly easy to narrow down the time frame a photograph was taken.

Countries covered in this book include: Argentina, Brazil, Cambodia, China, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Laos, Malaysia, Mexico, Morocco, Myanmar, Philippines, South Korea, Thailand, Turkey, Vietnam and the UK.

Who is this book for?

My hope is that some of the photographs may inspire others to start their own photography journey. Photography is an extremely subjective field, what I like, what you like, will differ.

When you think about it, this is perfect, as there is space for everyone with the universe balanced by a difference of views and opinions, each creating and influencing one another.

I wish to dedicate this book to anyone that feels they cannot become a photographer. Why do I say this? If you think about it, we are all pretty much photographers, virtually every single day. We have smartphones and use them to document our lives and share those memories with others.

I hope this book provides readers with the courage to go out and experiment with photography. Whether that begins with a smartphone or a simple point and shoot camera, it really doesn't matter.

The point is to begin, taking any photographs that interest you. With time, you will likely begin to understand the kind of scenes and photography you prefer.

It could be street photography, simply capturing life as it happens and how you see it unfolding around you or where you travel to. For many, it's the beauty of landscapes, that capture their hearts, showing nature at its best. Others are drawn to architecture or animals, while there are those that see a fascination in the faces of others.

You may find having a particular preference to begin with, and it totally change over time. The style of your photography will more than likely also change as you discover your niche. There is no correct path, just your path.

I would suggest studying the work of others, to begin to see what pulls on your emotional strings. What used to be confined to the physical, such as galleries, libraries and books. Now lives on the internet and available to all, via platforms that famous photographers from the past could only have imagined.

We truly live in a world of abundant information and knowledge, the only limitation is you. Get out of your comfort zone and explore what the world has to offer from the comfort of a computer screen. This hopefully, sparks a spectrum of emotions, to take your interests further afield.

Journey

My journey into the world of street photography

Everything started with my first camera given to me by my Father at age 11. I remember it well, an Italian brand by the name of Bencini, the camera was a Koroll II.

My photography in the seventies was very colourful. Looking back, I think this was because we only had a black & white television, using colour film and having photographic prints awash with colours was exciting to me.

As so often happens, life gets in the way of early passions; it wasn't until my mid-40s before photography would return into my life and spark a new journey of exploration and adventure.

I fell back in love with photography while in Washington DC for Christmas as a huge snow storm hit town, with 18 inches of snow. I went out the next day in the grim conditions, there was hardly anyone around, it was beautiful, I loved every moment.

Returning to the UK, I felt nostalgic so went through a few old photo albums. Leafing through these old printed photographs felt really good, they somehow exuded a romance I never experienced viewing photographs on a computer screen.

I wanted to view my photographic prints hanging on my walls on a daily basis, not rarely by remembering to browse them on a screen. I needed to liberate my collection of digital photographs that had been left unseen on my hard drive for years.

Something magical happens when viewing a large format print, you are drawn into the image...the art gallery comes home and becomes alive. I began having a few of my photographs printed in large format 18x12 inches and hung them in my office.

Washington DC was the beginning, but it wasn't until a former work colleague inspired me to go backpacking that photography really took a hold. I explained to her that I'd never been before and was used to staying in nice hotels from my years as a flight attendant in my younger years.

Her idea was way outside my comfort zone, plus I also felt too old to go backpacking...they were all excuses I told to myself and Diane.

She told me to shut up and just go....she was right. I learned that you really don't need much in life; water, food & shelter pretty much covers you, the luxury of a four star hotel is just a distraction.

A trip to Southern China, Vietnam & Cambodia was strangely uninspiring at first, I took the usual tourist photographs, a few with people showed some promise.

This was what I was missing...people. I then began to focus my street photography around the people I would cross paths with on a daily basis.

I had to wait until the eighth week before the magic happened, a photo in a great setting, with just enough light and the right dose of mystery.

It wasn't until I got back home that I realised I had a couple of diamonds and a dozen or so, golden nuggets...rare moments of time forever gone.

However, something wasn't quite right, I felt uncomfortable taking photographs of people, but this is how the photography world had always worked.

I racked my brain thinking about how my photography could give something back. I decided to donate 25% of each print sold to a charitable cause.

Out and about in my home town of London, then another backpacking trip to Morocco and the major Spanish cities of Andalusia, added to a possible future photography collection.

As my travels and years whizzed by, a few more photos were put into the possibles bucket to eventually lead to the publication of this book.

“Our actual path along our journey, is likely to be the one, we did not plan”

Ugo Domizioli

Methods

My initial ideas for this book

I chose to use the word “Portraits” in the title of this book, however, not in its traditional photographic sense. Traditionally in photography, Portrait is used to describe a photograph of a persons head, a face shot.

I have instead used it, in the sense of the orientation of the camera and its sensor. All of the photographs in this book were taken with the camera rotated 90 degrees so that the image captured is taller rather than wider.

While going through my collection of photographs and deciding which to put into this book, the vast majority that made my short-list and finally made it into this book were in portrait mode.

A second book will concentrate on photographs in the wide/horizontal, normal camera position mode, which I aim to publish next year.

Most photography books, have their photographs in different orientations and sizes, they tend to be either tall or wide. In this book, I made the stylistic decision to have only portrait/tall images. I didn't want the reader, when flipping pages, to have to rotate the book or their head and eyes to see the photo as intended.

In addition, many if not most photographers, even famous ones from the past, cropped images, to achieve their desired look. They would delete away the top, bottom and sides of an image to only leave what they considered the important or best part.

While this is an artistic choice, I feel it's somewhat dishonest, as the viewer only gets to see a polished version of what the photographer experienced, rather than their real field of view.

All the images in this book, you get to see exactly what I saw through the camera view finder. I minimally crop 1-2% in order to straighten if the image is not parallel....that's it.

I want to be honest with my audience, unlike some world famous photographers that not only heavily crop their images but also delete elements within them to portray a different version of events. What matters most, is to be authentic with my character & spirit and a continuation of truth in all my books.

Some well known published photographers, also stage some of their images. When people and props are used to style an image, that is no different to being in a photography studio or working to create the perfect photograph for a magazine front cover.

If the photographer is honest and explains these stylistic choices, fair game. However, this is not the case; images are often altered beyond recognition without a disclaimer.

It is only when the original photographs are leaked or the editing is exposed, do we get to understand that making money rather than staying true to photography is the aim.

I find this very dishonest and simply do not have any interest at all in putting together some sort of staged scene. My style of street photography is essentially to simply document reality.

“While photography rules should be a part of the mix, completely bending them should not”

Ugo Domizioli

Photographer

What type of photographer am I?

There is a difference between a professional and amateur photographer. Simply put, a professional is anyone that earns the majority of their income from photography.

This could be wedding, studio, product or real estate photography, these are pretty much full-time roles and considered a career.

I must therefore put myself, into the amateur category, as the monetary aspect is not my reality or goal. It's interesting, when browsing photography forums, where photography geeks discuss every aspect of photography.

Professional photographers often lament, that their professional photography work takes up so much of their time, that taking normal or fun/hobby photographs rarely occurs.

This is fascinating to me, as their original passion dies, at least somewhat, because of the difference between a job and a passion.

The type of photographer I have evolved into, is one that loves street photography. This is by far the easiest to get into as you only need a camera and zero lights, stands or backdrops.

While seemingly easy to do, at the same time, it's challenging, as you are out in public spaces and often those you want to photograph, will see you point your camera at them.

If like me, you want to capture a photograph of someone without them knowing you took the photograph, which is known as candid photography, this can be even more challenging.

Other challenges include; mastering taking photographs quickly with the correct focus and exposure, having respect for your subject, dealing with crowded streets and the general nature of an unpredictable environment.

Capturing an authentic, genuine moment, means knowing what you are looking for, before it presents itself to you. This can only be achieved by taking thousands of shots and finding what you like and your preferred photographic style.

Street photography is more than just taking images; it's about trying to tell or capture a story through your photographs which is influenced by the person you are, in that moment.

“I am an amateur photographer and proud of it”

Ugo Domizioli

Camera

Is the camera used important?

As mentioned earlier, the most important aspect of photography is simply to take photographs. It really doesn't matter what equipment you have to start with, as you can decide over time if you want to invest in a camera system.

Why do I mention system? The mistake I see most amateur photographers make, is choosing a camera based on the latest and greatest technology. The biggest sensor, the most pixels, the fastest shutter speed, the best eye tracking etc.

Every single modern camera is more than capable to be used in almost all situations. However, if you were to concentrate on sports or wild life photography, certain features are more important than others.

It's not necessary to have the biggest sensor camera in these two situations, as the most important factor is how many frames per second can be captured.

It's vital not to miss a single split second when capturing fast motion sports or wild life, as that can mean the difference between getting the most important shot or missing it entirely.

Lens choice is probably the most important aspect, as you will need a long lens that is also fast and with a wide aperture, to let in as much light as possible. These lenses are not light on weight or the wallet.

Few of the big camera manufacturers make these lenses as it requires a huge investment in research and development. Therefore professional photographers usually choose lenses first and the camera body second.

A professional portrait studio photographer, has a different set of needs. Usually a camera with a large sensor to reduce noise, giving a faultless image for cover magazines. Their lens choice will likely be a fixed length prime lens, offering a shallow depth of field resulting in those dreamy blurred backgrounds.

Fortunately for street photography, the choice is much simpler, as almost all cameras are suitable at whatever budget available. However, my personal preference is for a smaller camera due to reduced weight, which when walking all day long in search of the perfect photograph, I have found to be vitally important.

I started my equipment journey with a Nikon V1 with a 10-30mm lens. It only had a small 10mp sensor, but crucially for me with the style of photography I wanted to undertake, incorporated a real viewfinder which you had to use with your eye. A small selection of the photographs in this book were taken with this camera.

My second camera was a Canon 7D with a Tamron 17-50mm f/2.8 zoom lens. The camera was regarded as a prosumer one, above amateur grade cameras, but below professional ones. Unfortunately, this combination weighed in at 1.5kg/3.3lbs, which I eventually found to be too heavy.

My third, and current camera, is a Fuji Film XT2 with an 18-55mm zoom lens. The vast majority of photographs in this book were taken with this camera. This camera is regarded as old, as the current model is the XT5. However, for me, it's perfect, as I don't need all the bells and whistles and latest tech.

I love it, because it has "old school" manual dials on the body, allowing me to quickly change settings, on the fly as the scene in front of me unfolds. With many modern cameras, some of the important settings are hidden behind multiple screens making this process more challenging.

Think carefully before making a camera purchase, as how you use it, will determine the best one for the job.

“When we look at photographs, we do not ask which camera or lens was used, we simply immerse ourselves into the image”

Ugo Domizioli

Settings

Auto or manual?

Every photographer uses different settings with their camera. Modern ones are so amazing that to begin with, I would suggest leaving the camera in auto everything mode.

But surely I hear you say, that is not what professionals do? In truth, professionals vary in how they use modern cameras. Some choose to leave some of their settings in auto mode, allowing them to concentrate on the scene unfolding in front of them. Others, like to dial in every single variable to have maximum control.

For my style of street photography, the most important element is to capture a scene with a fast shutter speed in the range of 1/125 to 1/1000 of a second. This is because, more often than not, a street scene changes extremely quickly. In order not to have a blurred image, a medium to fast shutter speed is required. This is the button I use the most, when determining how fast the action in front of me is moving.

I tend to set my aperture to a setting of f/8 and above. This in less technical jargon, means that most of the photograph is in focus, from the front, all the way to the back.

ISO is used to control how sensitive the camera is to light, I tend to always set this to auto, allowing the camera to decide what it should be. When taking photographs at night, the ISO setting usually has to go very high to 3200/6400+.

As I have developed as a photographer, my settings have changed as my confidence has increased. I started off taking JPEGs, which are compressed images. I now shot RAW, this captures every single detail, allowing greater flexibility when processing the images later on.

Modern cameras have fantastic autofocus which I also use, except for certain situations such as taking photographs while in a fast moving vehicle, coach or train. I found it was much better, to pre-focus a set distance, rather than rely on the autofocus function which often times failed in these fast scenes.

“It is not cheating to copy settings from others, in time, tinker with them to create something new”

Ugo Domizioli

Etc

How I take my photographs

I came up with an acronym, as I developed how I approach my street photography. I call it ETC. E stands for Emotion. I must feel something when I am walking around and looking for a photo to make. For me, if there is zero emotion then clearly the scene means nothing to me.

T stands for Timing. Street photography all comes down to a few seconds at most, but usually a split second. As a photographer, it is vital to know which seconds are important and which ones to let go.

C stands for Composition. How what I see through the view-finder is arranged to create an image that works and hopefully portrays a story.

For me this is of vital importance, as I don't crop my images like most photographer's do. I have to nail my composition in a split second.

To do this, I do not use a prime fixed focus lens, instead I use a zoom lens. To some extent this is harder, as I need to zoom in or out, to fill the viewfinder with what I want to capture.

As you can imagine, bringing together all these elements is very difficult to begin with, resulting in many lost opportunities. However, over time, with continual use and muscle/finger memory, these elements become almost second nature.

When I'm out hunting for the perfect photograph, I have my camera hanging by my right hand side and almost behind me, hidden from view. I use a thin black strap in order not to draw too much attention to myself, which hangs on my left shoulder.

When I spot something of interest, as an emotion is triggered, I use my right hand to grab my camera and in one motion, turn the camera on with my right index finger, then move it to the shutter button to pre-set the auto focus while bringing the camera viewfinder up to my left eye.

I have tried many different camera gadgets, such as a hip holster which I used for my former heavier camera, a quick release chest clamp and a traditional camera bag. All however, were lacking for my need to quickly draw my camera in the quickest way possible.

“Without the emotion you bring to a scene, a photograph can never be truly your own”

Ugo Domizioli

Study

Invest in yourself by learning photography

Imagine any budding photographer to study the work of other photographers. It doesn't really matter if they are from the past or present, famous or not.

Look at photographs that you like and either buy the books from these photographers or simply download their images and start collecting them.

Start to find patterns and similarities in photographs. You will find that there are some rules most famous photographers follow, that are intrinsic to what makes their photographs stand out from others. Buying a book or enrolling in a basic photography course will also help understanding the basics.

There is also an abundance of online material, not available in the past, be it, articles, blogs or video tutorials from both professional and amateur photographers. In fact, there has never been a better time to learn the art of photography than the present.

“If you do not invest in yourself, in part, you do not believe in yourself”

Ugo Domizioli

Take or Make?

Yes, there is a difference

The vast majority of amateur photographers are simply taking photographs. What do I mean by this? Well, they raise the camera to their eye or use the screen and hit the shutter release button....take.

There is nothing wrong with this, it's pretty much how everyone starts. Taking a photograph in this fashion, is usually a very quick and spontaneous moment without much thought.

This tends to be regarded as a reactive action, having minimal influence over any artistic element or framing and more passive in nature.

In time, there is the realisation, that professional photographers, make rather than take photographs.

In a professional studio shot or wedding day session, pretty much every photograph is taken with intention, precision and design.

The goal is to achieve perfection, this is done by following certain rules, where every scene has been given thought and set according to some sort of plan.

Making a photograph, is a more deliberate and active creative process. The photographer controls either some, or all of the elements making up the image in the viewfinder.

This more active process, usually involves greater or complete control of the concept, composition, light, speed and depth of field, it is therefore regarded as a more methodical approach with planning and intention.

The making of the photograph doesn't end here. In fact, for many photographers, this is just the beginning. What used to be known as developing the negatives from photographic film in a darkroom, is the subject of whole books.

In the modern era, everything is digital. Post-processing, editing or image manipulation with software has become the norm.

Some photographers as covered earlier, prefer to heavily manipulate the photograph captured to sometimes, completely change what was actually seen.

Just as a painter/artist, makes things up as they put together an original painting, some photographers choose to follow this path which is regarded as artistic rather than photographic.

Others choose to lightly clean up their images to more closely reflect the scene actually captured, I fall into this camp.

“Everyone starts taking photographs, the key is to evolve to making them”

Ugo Domizioli

Design

Book design

This book, together with a second, landscape book will hopefully form the foundation to what every photographer aspires to. A large format, table top book with each photo having space to breath, in the huge Sumo book format. This long distance goal, should keep me busy for at least the next decade or so.

The large majority of photography books published, usually have an introduction section at the front where the photographer gets to lay a foundation for the photographs to follow.

The main part of the book—the photographs, it is considered good form to simply show each image on a page with little to zero text.

The location, date and possible name of the photograph, is usually the maximum that is written.

The reason for this, just like an oil portrait in a gallery, the artist wants the viewer to have their own experience rather than be told or swayed by any description. While I do agree with this view and method of presentation, I wanted to create something a little different.

I wanted my viewers to understand the underlying reasons for taking each photograph, as I believe each one is an emotional journey of sorts, hence explaining the circumstances leading up to each photograph.

In all my previous books, I have also created quotes that express my thoughts in addition to what is being referred to. I decided to continue this trend with this book.

In the creative arts, breaking the mould is part of the journey, to discover and explore new ways of doing new things.

“To put a piece of myself into each book, is what it’s all about”

Ugo Domizioli

Inspiration

Photographers that have been an inspiration

When you start looking into the world of photography, many will look back in time to famous photographers from the past. One of the most famous, in the world of street photography, was Henri Cartier Bresson.

I attended a one-day street photography workshop in London, at which the teacher showed the class a few famous photographs, one of which was from Bresson.

That was my first introduction to his work. When the teacher explained why each photograph worked, this began my journey to wanting to know more, looking at other photographers and their work and what I liked and was inspired by.

Fan Ho (1931–2016)

Fan Ho was a Chinese photographer, actor and director. Born in Shanghai, later emigrating to Hong Kong, where much of his black and white photography took place during the 1950-60s, capturing the essence of city.

Hong Kong as this time, had just exited Japanese occupation in 1945, going back into British control until 1997 when it was handed back to China.

Fan Ho was self-taught, with his photographs mainly looking at city life, which today we would refer to as, street photography. He would wonder the winding streets and tiny alleys of down-town Hong Kong, simply capturing everyday life. He has often times been referred to, as the Cartier-Bresson of the East.

He mentioned that he would have to be emotionally touched before taking a photo, often with some sort of story behind them. One of his main traits, was taking photos early in the morning or very late in the evening, when the sun was low in the sky, thus creating long shadows in the scenes he was scoping.

“A camera is just a tool; the photographer's mind and heart are what create the image”

Fan Ho

Henri Cartier-Bresson (1908–2004)

Born in France and spending his formative years in Paris, Bresson would come to define the term “Decisive Moment” with his style of exclusive black and white contemporary street photography.

With a background in geometric formal painting, this became his foundation in how he would go on to capture the world, with his unique style of composition with his Leica camera and 50mm lens and minimal to zero darkroom image manipulation.

The timing in his photography, is what he became known for, with elements within a scene often coming together in perfect harmony...The Decisive Moment.

One of his famous sayings: Teaching and learning is nothing, it's living and looking.

“A photograph is neither taken or seized by force. It offers itself up. It is the photo that takes you”

Henri Cartier-Bresson

Piergiorgio Branzi (1928–2022)

Born in 1928, Branzi an Italian journalist and photographer, started late in the world of photography at the age of 50. Following WWII, he set out on his motorcycle throughout southern Italy to document his journey.

Branzi studied law, and had no interest in photography. However, when a Henri Cartier-Bresson exhibition arrived in Florence, he immediately purchased a camera and his work is now a part of our history.

During the 1950s, there were few outlets in Italy to publish his photography, due to the devastating effects of economic decline post WWII.

He would later enter the world of television journalism and not touch his camera for over 30 years, instead using his time toward painting.

To say his visit to the Bresson exhibition was a pivotal moment for Branzi, would be an understatement. He would later describe that visit in a magazine interview, where he was quoted saying:

“I'd never been interested in photography, but it was like going to the movies for the first time”

Piergiorgio Branzi

Sabine Weiss (1924–2021)

Sabine was a Swiss-French photographer that unlike Branzi, fell in love with photography at a very young age. Her first camera was purchased with her pocket money and she learnt the basics until later receiving a more formal education in photography.

She became a photographers assistant and learned the importance of natural light in portraying emotions within her photography.

A fair portion of her photography showed the liberated world as she viewed it after WWII, travelling to Morocco, Egypt, India, and Myanmar.

Her photography of children simply living their lives and playing in whatever situation available, reminded me of my own early years playing on the streets of London, without a care in the world.

**“I photograph to preserve the ephemeral, fix chance,
to keep in an image what will disappear: gestures,
attitudes, objects which are testimonies of our
passing”**

Sabine Weiss

Vivian Maier (1926–2009)

Vivian Maier lived a very private life as a nanny in Chicago and also an avid photographer of life in her spare time. She never published any of her photographs while alive, her unprocessed films were discovered by accident.

A storage locker containing thousands of her films and prints was auctioned in 2007, as she failed to make payments. The purchaser decided to process some of the films and uncovered an immense body of work. Posthumously she is now one of the most celebrated street photographers of the 20th century.

Most of her photography was taken roaming the streets of Chicago capturing daily life, spanning multiple decades.

“The best moment is the one where you suddenly see with your own eyes the moment you realize that the moment you’re witnessing is a moment worth photographing”

Vivian Maier

Quotes

A collection of my favourite quotes on photography and art in general

There are so many inspirational quotes from photographers, artists and others not even connected to photography and the arts.

These quotes somehow manage to capture in a few words the magic I see in photography.

A short quote can open up awareness and take you in a completely different direction when taken on board. By transforming one's perceptions and how to view, not only art, but the world in general.

“Black and white are the colours of photography. To me they symbolize the alternatives of hope and despair to which mankind is forever subjected”

Robert Frank

“Photography, as a powerful medium of expression and communications, offers an infinite variety of perception, interpretation and execution”

Ansel Adams

“Your first 10,000 photographs are your worst”

Henri Cartier-Bresson

“Photography is an art of observation. It has little to do with the things you see and everything to do with the way you see them”

Elliot Erwitt

“Look and think before opening the shutter. The heart and mind are the true lens of the camera”

Yousuf Karsh

“I love the people I photograph. I mean, they're my friends. I've never met most of them or I don't know them at all, yet through my images I live with them”

Bruce Gilden

“It is an illusion that photos are made with the camera... they are made with the eye, heart and head”

Henri Cartier-Bresson

“It’s weird that photographers spend years or even a whole lifetime, trying to capture moments that added together, don’t even amount to a couple of hours”

James Lalropui Keivom

“A photograph is always invisible, it is not it that we see”

Roland Gèrard Barthes

“Which of my photographs is my favourite? The one I’m going to take tomorrow”

Imogen Cunningham

“Look and think before opening the shutter. The heart and mind are the true lens of the camera”

Yousuf Karsh

“The goal is not to change your subjects, but for the subject to change the photographer”

Unknown

“Treat a work of art like a prince, let it speak to you first”

Arthur Schopenhauer

“If I could say it in words there would be no reason to paint”

Edward Hopper

“The artist sees what others only catch a glimpse of”

Leonardo da Vinci

“Every child is an artist, the problem is how to remain an artist once we grow up”

Pablo Picasso

“Painting is poetry that is seen rather than felt, and poetry is painting that is felt rather than seen”

Leonardo da Vinci

“Art is the only way to run away without leaving home”

Twyla Tharp

**“Art is so wonderfully irrational, exuberantly
pointless, but necessary all the same”**

Günter Grass

**“We must avoid however, snapping away, shooting
quickly and without thought, overloading ourselves
with unnecessary images that clutter our memory and
diminish the clarity of the whole”**

Henri Cartier-Bresson

Charities

My chosen charity

As a street photographer, I always felt a little uneasy taking candid photographs of strangers without their knowledge. Even though this is part of documenting real life, it didn't seem right.

I set up the Pirinthian Photos website, as a place for photographers with similar taste and photographic style, to come together and share ideas.

I wanted to find a way to give something back to the people and communities I had photographed. After much deliberation the simple solution was to support small charities by putting aside 25% from each print sold.

I prefer not to support the huge global corporate charities that we often see on our TV screens.

The majority of my photographs were taken in Southern China, Vietnam and Cambodia and therefore felt, any charitable efforts should be directed towards one of these countries.

After much deliberation I decided upon Cambodia, based on it being the poorest and less developed of the three, as well as the location of two of my favourite photographs.

The selection of a charity had to meet the following criteria:

1. A charity solving a basic human need today, as opposed to some vague distant cure
2. Transparency of finances by knowing the percentage that goes directly to their cause
3. A small/medium sized charity

A number of my favourite photos had children as the main focus so this made choosing the right cause easier. The next question would be to decide on the best way of helping. Should I pay attention to their education, health or environment?

You can count on one hand the number of charities that have totally transparent finances and only a few that give 100% of donations to their cause. Choosing Charity Water, was thus a simple decision.

Why water? The most basic human need of staying alive can only be achieved with water. We can survive without food for approximately three weeks as many people on hunger strike have shown, most famously Gandhi.

We take for granted having access to clean water in the UK and cannot fathom the illness and disease that manifests from drinking dirty water. Safe water equals clean hands and healthy bodies.

The beauty of providing a community with healthy water is that other benefits accrue. Having fresh water helps toward the education and economic growth of a community as less time is spent collecting water from some far away source and more time is available for learning, growth and lifting themselves out of poverty.

A few quotes that mean a lot to me in the field of charities:

“We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give”

Winston Churchill

“In the end we have nothing except all we gave”

Adeosun Olamide

“No one has ever become poor by giving”

Anne Frank

*This box I find myself in,
will play a huge part of my life...
unless I open it to escape.*

In Thought

2019 | March

Myanmar | Hpa An

Hpa-An's countryside, just a short walk from the town centre, is truly a marvel of natural beauty. It was during one of my many walks, that I came across what looked like a small village nestled among the trees.

I could hear children playing, it turned out, there was a school. It must have been break time, needless to say, it was really hot. The children were happy to see a foreign face that seemed interested in their world. As I walked around, I spotted this boy seemingly having a thoughtful moment.



*Never underestimate the power
of one man, eventually he catches
up to the machine.*

Hammer Time

2023 | January

Egypt | Alexandria

I had zero knowledge or expectations visiting Alexandria in Egypt, yet from a photography point of view, it was the city that kept on giving. The backstreets of the city were simply incredible, with scenes I had never previously experienced.

I could hear a hard knocking sound as I approached this demolished building. I'm not sure what this man was doing, maybe he was trying to liberate steel from the building to sell as scrap. There was little doubt of the effort he was putting into his goal.



*I am so much more than the
shadow I create, for it is
the lightness of my heart that
will move mountains.*

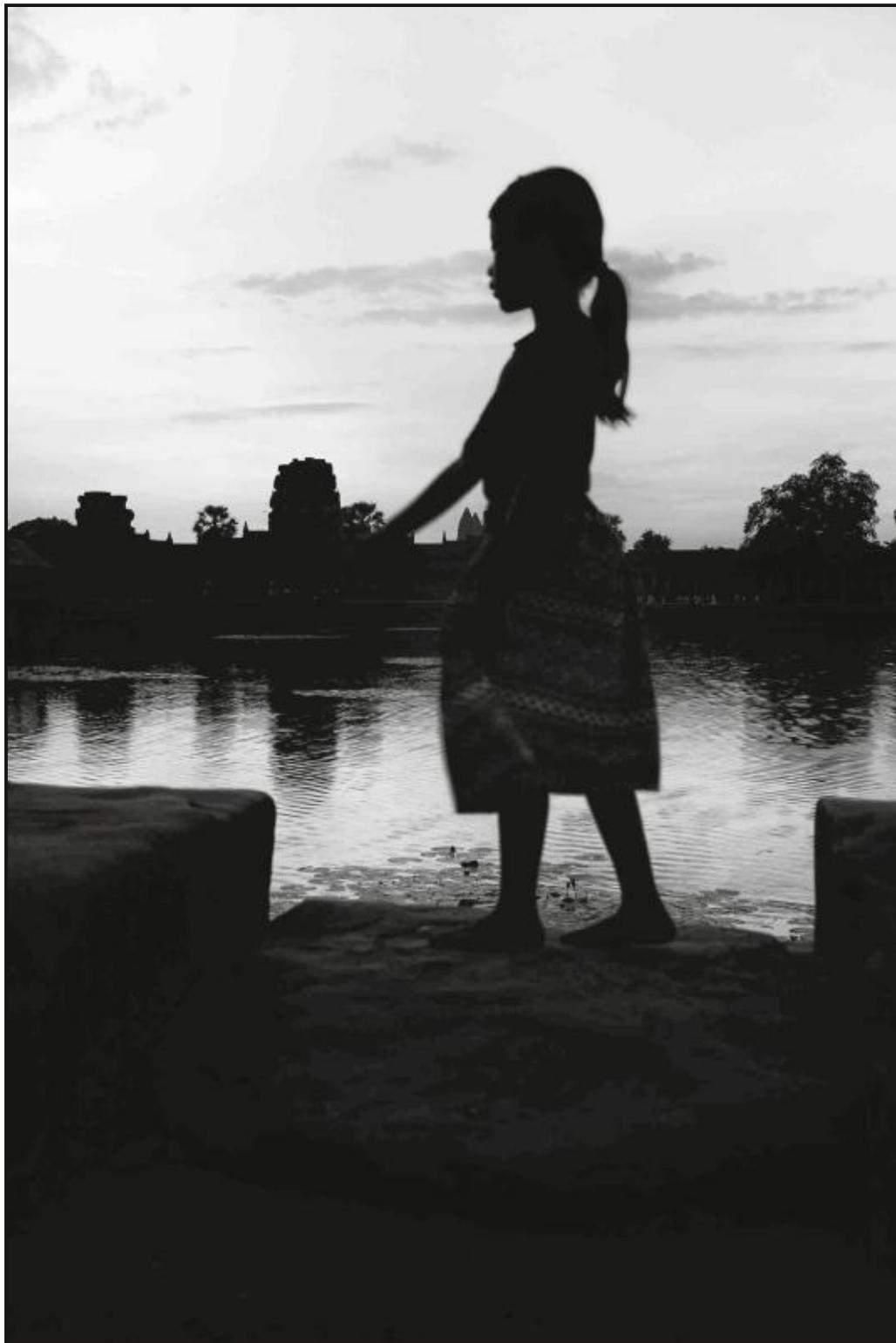
Moving Mountains

2019 | May

Cambodia | Siem Reap

The number one reason for visiting Siem Reap, is to see the truly phenomenal temples of Angkor Wat, Angkor Thom, and Bayon.

After many hours, wandering the main temples of Angkor Wat and with sunset rapidly approaching, I spotted this young girl in her own world playing, the temples as her backdrop. Her silhouette overlooking the ruins was simply too perfect to ignore.



*As my day of tail comes to an end,
and a cold beer beckons to become my
best friend, best not to get too friendly.*

Beer Time

2019 | October

Indonesia | Bali

Ubud is known as an arts, yoga retreat and cultural centre. Yet, only a few minutes walk from its main arteries, you find yourself among beautiful rice fields and terraces. Here the life of locals, takes on the more traditional roles of farming, rather than taking care of the millions of tourists that visit every year.

One late afternoon as the sunset rapidly approached, I noticed out of the corner of my eye, a pair of flip-flops. This aroused my curiosity; were they thrown away, lost or abandoned, I pondered? Upon further inspection, it became apparent, they belonged to probably a farmer that had taken them off, to walk through the muddy field to take a rest at the hut.



*A café,
a cake,
a chat.*

Chit Chat

2020 | January

Argentina | Buenos Aires

One of my favourite memories, from my one month visit to this wonderful city, was it's vibrant café culture. Most were not flashy, modern or particularly clean, instead traditional, old and rickety. Their insides were a marvel of wooden countertops and marble floors all from a previous generation.

Many also housed a small bakery where traditional pastries and cakes sold for mere pennies, keeping the locals and myself coming back. It kind of reminded me of old pubs in London that never underwent any restoration, full of interesting seniors.

I noticed these two women, on one of my many walks through downtown Buenos Aires. They were passing away the time in this café, it was their hands in motion that caught my attention.



*Our path may not be as
straight as others...whoever
said it was meant to be?*

Railway Walker

2019 | February

Myanmar | Mandalay

The station in central Mandalay bustles with activity; be it travellers or the food and drink vendors peddling their wares. A concrete jungle with patches of light and darkness created from the blazing sunshine. In my opinion, this creates the perfect foundation for photographers with blown out light areas and ultra black ones.

As I wondered around on the upper deck looking down onto the train tracks. I spotted this person traversing the train lines with almost zero care for their safety. The dark to light and the leading lines of the train tracks make for a perfect shot.



*The sweetness of a lollipop sunset,
noticed when on holiday,
however, with us everyday.*

Lollipop Sunset

2015 | April

Cambodia | Koh Rong

Another beautiful sunset walk along the shore, on the island of Koh Rong. Two men passing the time away on the edge of the dock with the sun on its way down and water calmly caressing the shore. I waited for the sun to come down just enough to touch the top of the pole.

The name for this piece came to me very easily with the beautiful lighting conditions and the contrast from the boats and progressive sunset.



*The precision of the fisherman,
at odds with the number of fish
required for survival.*

Shooting Fisherman

2019 | August

Indonesia | Bandung

Bandung, south-east of Jakarta, with a population of over 11 million, it has its fair share of income in-balance. I took a walk along a small river, where those on the poorer end of the spectrum call home and are the majority.

I came across this young man. I was curious, as to why he was aiming his rifle down toward the river, it quickly became apparent, he was fishing.



*My home but a shadow
of its former self,
home however, it is.*

Shadow Living

2023 | January

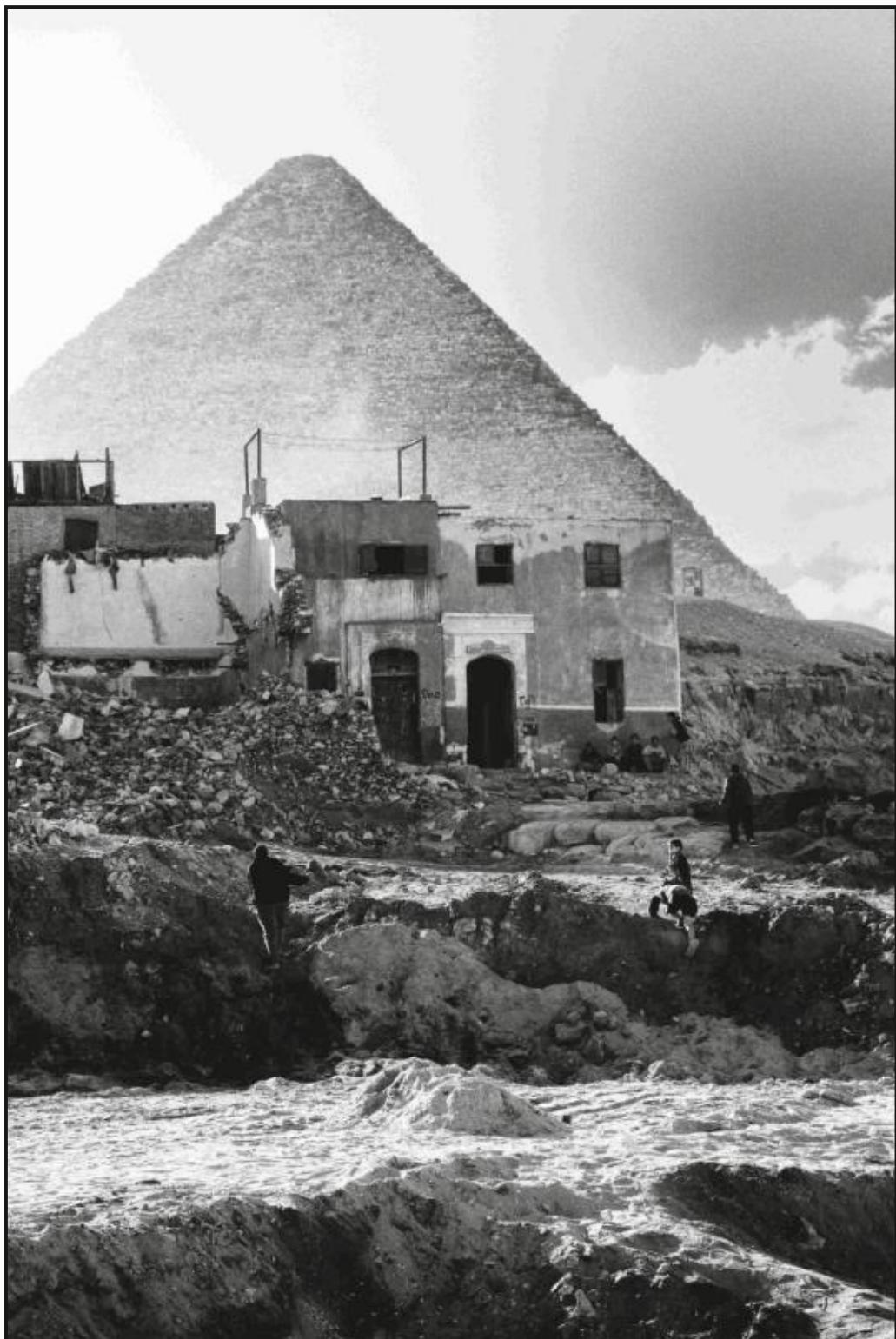
Egypt | Cairo

The obvious photographs to take of the Great Pyramids of Giza in Egypt, were never going to be an interest to me, for they have been taken thousands/millions of times.

While we do not know precisely what the pyramids are, as the genuine history behind these majestic structures has been hidden from us. We can still marvel at their brilliance.

While scouring the back streets of Giza for alternative views, I came across this scene which shouted to me to take the photograph. These children waved at me as I walked past, it looked like they were either playing inside these ruins or possibly, they were their homes.

I have no way of knowing for sure, but the contrast between the Pyramids permanent structure with little decay, and the modern houses falling apart was a good disconnect to capture.



The power of the written word,
never too late to grow,
there is no expiry date.

The Reader

2020 | March

Mexico | Mexico City

In one of the many parks scattered around the huge Mexico City, I came across this man deep in reading mode. The wide path, trees, shadows and leading lines all came together to make me take this shot.



*When society deems it necessary
for senior's to continue to toil,
it is a society in name only.*

Still Working

2015 | February

Vietnam | Hanoi

My day begins with lots of walking once again, I just love exploring new places. Hanoi in North Vietnam, is truly special with its narrow streets in the Old Quarter. I walk along one of the many market streets, they are pretty much all market streets with hundreds of shops. I see this very old lady sitting on an extremely low plastic stool, she is huddled with a headscarf even though I thought it quite mild.

The element that really jarred me was.....her feet. She was cold yet wearing flip flops/ sandals, choosing to sit on this seemingly uncomfortable stool, when a full-size chair was nearby. It was the old worn out socks with huge holes that made me think, just how little income she probably earns and how poor she was likely to be.



*As I ponder the life
before me, will my thoughts,
confine or expand my horizons?*

Deep Contemplation

2024 | March

India | Varanasi

Varanasi located in the central eastern area of India, never fails to deliver with interesting scenes around every corner or on the bustling banks of the Ganges River.

You can spend hours, simply, sitting and viewing the unbelievable events unfolding before your eyes as merchants and spiritual souls, jostle for position on the expansive river.

This young lad, caught my attention as he looked like he was pondering a question or simply whiling away the time before catching up with his friends or more likely, starting some kind of work.



The caged in labourer, how different am I from the cotton picker of yesteryear?

Barred Woodworker

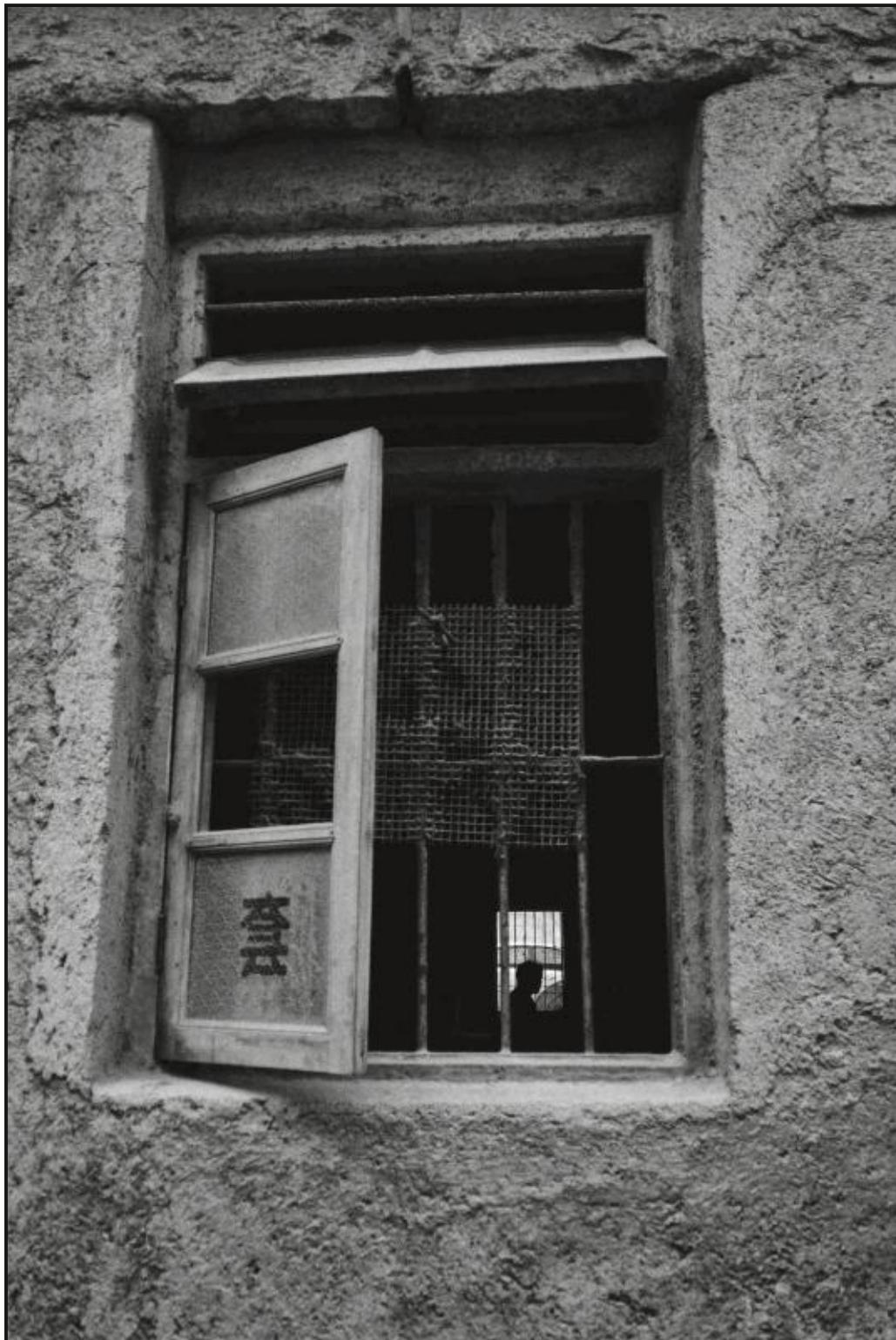
2015 | January

China | Xiamen

I started this day, with a freshly squeezed orange & carrot juice from what became my regular fruit & veg street stall. The lady was pleased to see me again, a good way to start the day. I went for a very long walk to the south of Xiamen, heading for the beach and huge convention centre.

People were flying their kites, with many young couples having their wedding photos taken. I found a small area with narrow roads, this always gives me a sense of purpose. Down a particularly narrow road, I heard what sounded like wood being sawn.

I peered through the open barred window and could see a man's head. I liked the contrast between the dark and light areas, the front and rear windows and the silhouette of the woodworker...click.



*Our journey may sometimes seem
a little uncertain, would you
want it any other way?*

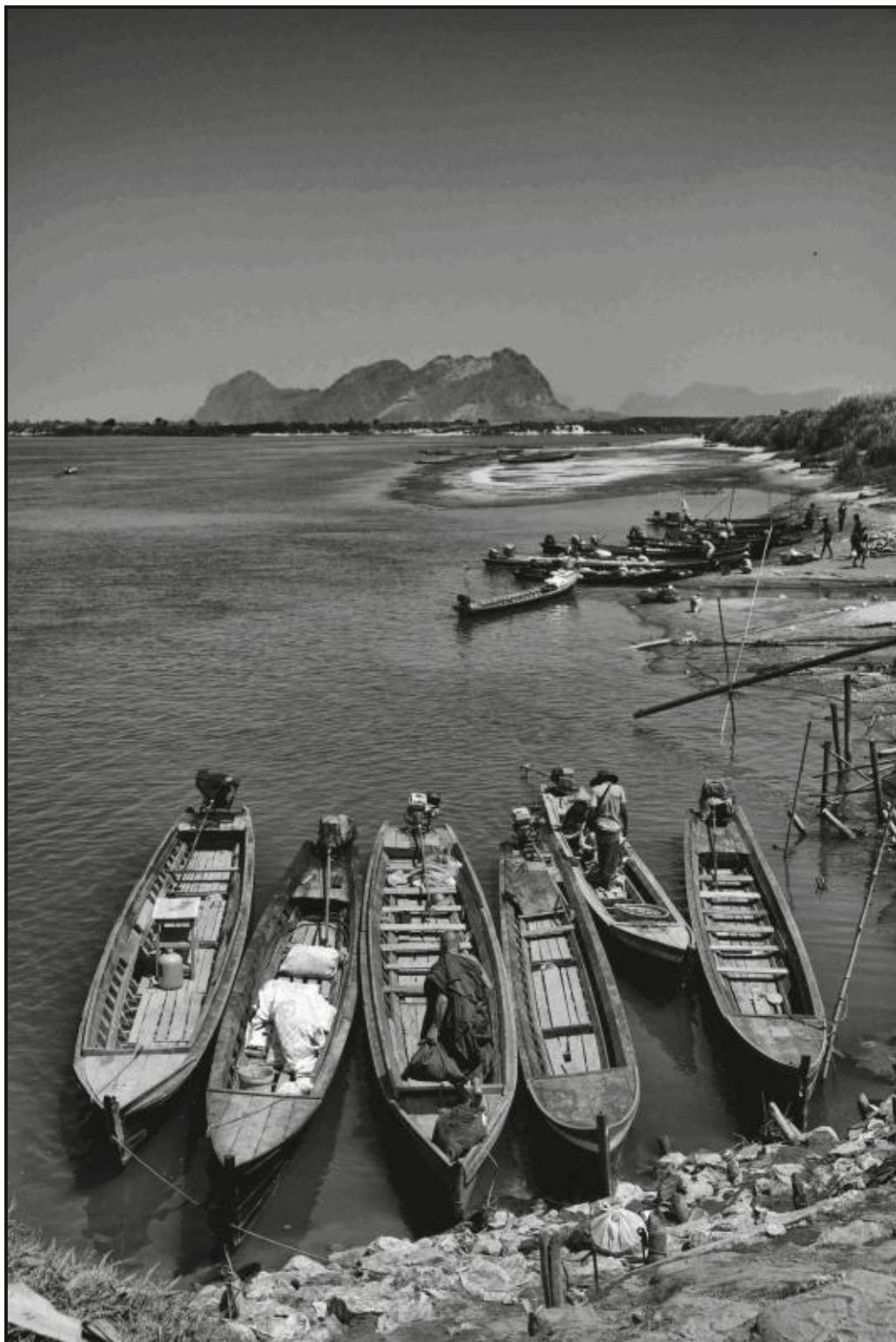
Motoring Monk

2019 | March

Myanmar | Hpa An

There were many scenes unfolding in front of me, as I wondered around the Thanlyin River running through Hpa An. So many merchants were loading and unloading goods from small and larger boats alike, all these goods, destined for the central markets further in town.

While I captured a few of those scenes, it was this monk boarding this narrow boat that tugged my emotions more than the others. Maybe it was the symmetry of him boarding the middle boat, or the way the image was complete, in that it has an interesting foreground and background with sweeping views out onto the river or maybe because I also managed to include the merchants in this image too?



*Never is it too late,
to challenge oneself.*

Disciplined Pensioner

2022 | December

Turkey | Antalya

Antalya is a well known tourist destination located on the southern coast of Turkey. The sun was out today, so I went on one of my long walks along the promenade. It was very early in the morning, the restaurants and coffee shops had yet to open.

I spotted this elderly gentleman doing his early morning exercises, along the waters edge, using a large wooden stick. I'm unsure, if he was actually doing any good, but I'm sure he thought so....who am I to judge?



*I am not as insignificant as it may
seem, for I am the future,
surrounded by the past.*

Mischievous Boy

2015 | April

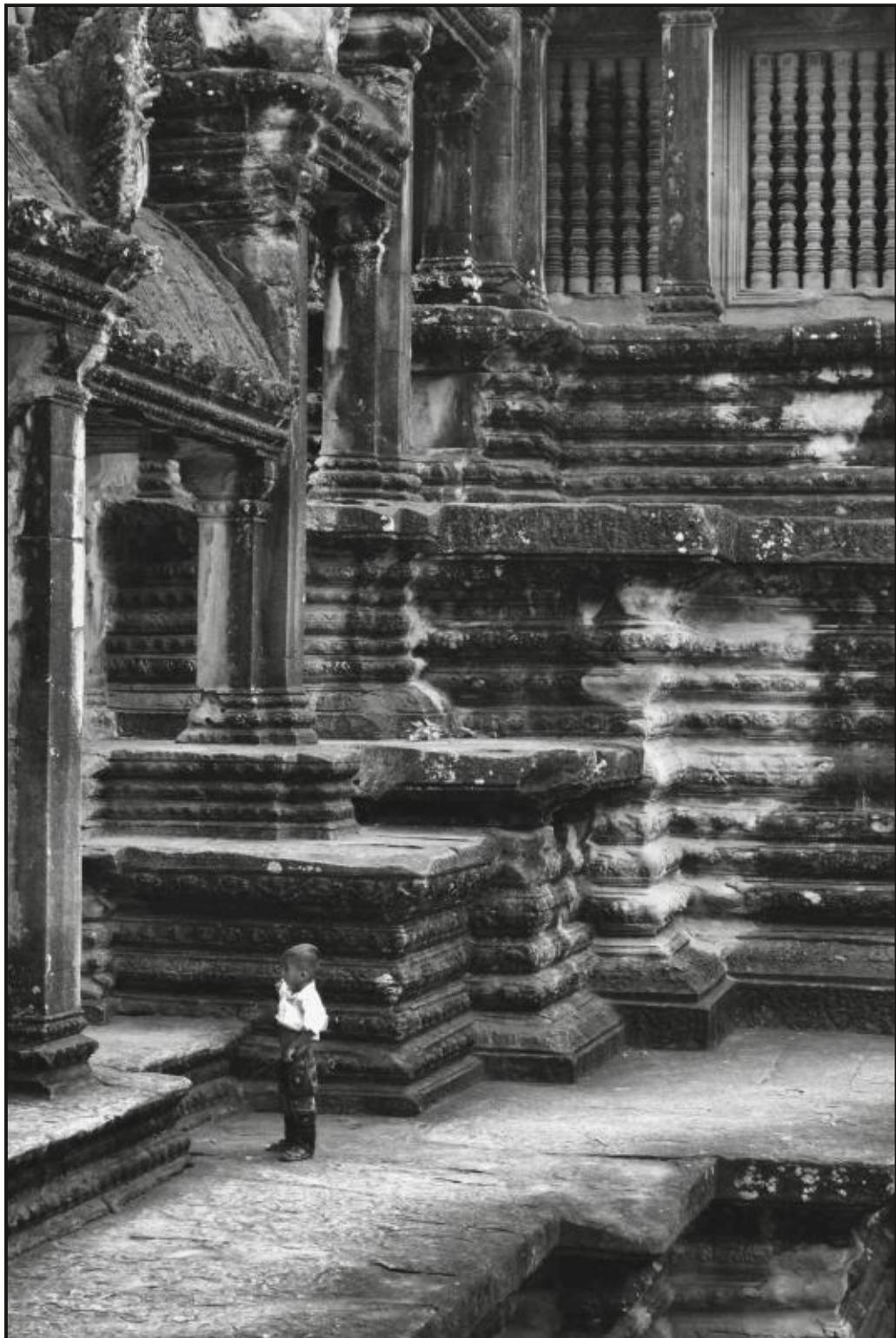
Cambodia | Siem Reap

The temples were yet to be overcrowded this morning. I take what I believe to be my first stand out image of the trip. I am wondering around the ancient temples in the rising morning heat. through one huge stone framed doorway to the next, looking through each open portal.

Through the corner of my eye, I see a small boy against the huge backdrop of the temples. I quickly pull up the camera to my eye, adjust my composition, focus and click, I get the shot.

I'm so happy, it will probably be one of the best on this trip. The huge disparity between this small boy and the huge stone temple background was jarring. Where were his parents, was he alone? So many questions crossed my mind.

Once I got back to the UK, I had a closer look at the photograph, there was something I hadn't noticed at the time. It looks like he is looking at someone whilst taking a private moment.



*We all reach crossroads in our
lives, some stumble onto a course,
others align themselves to it,
a few create their own.*

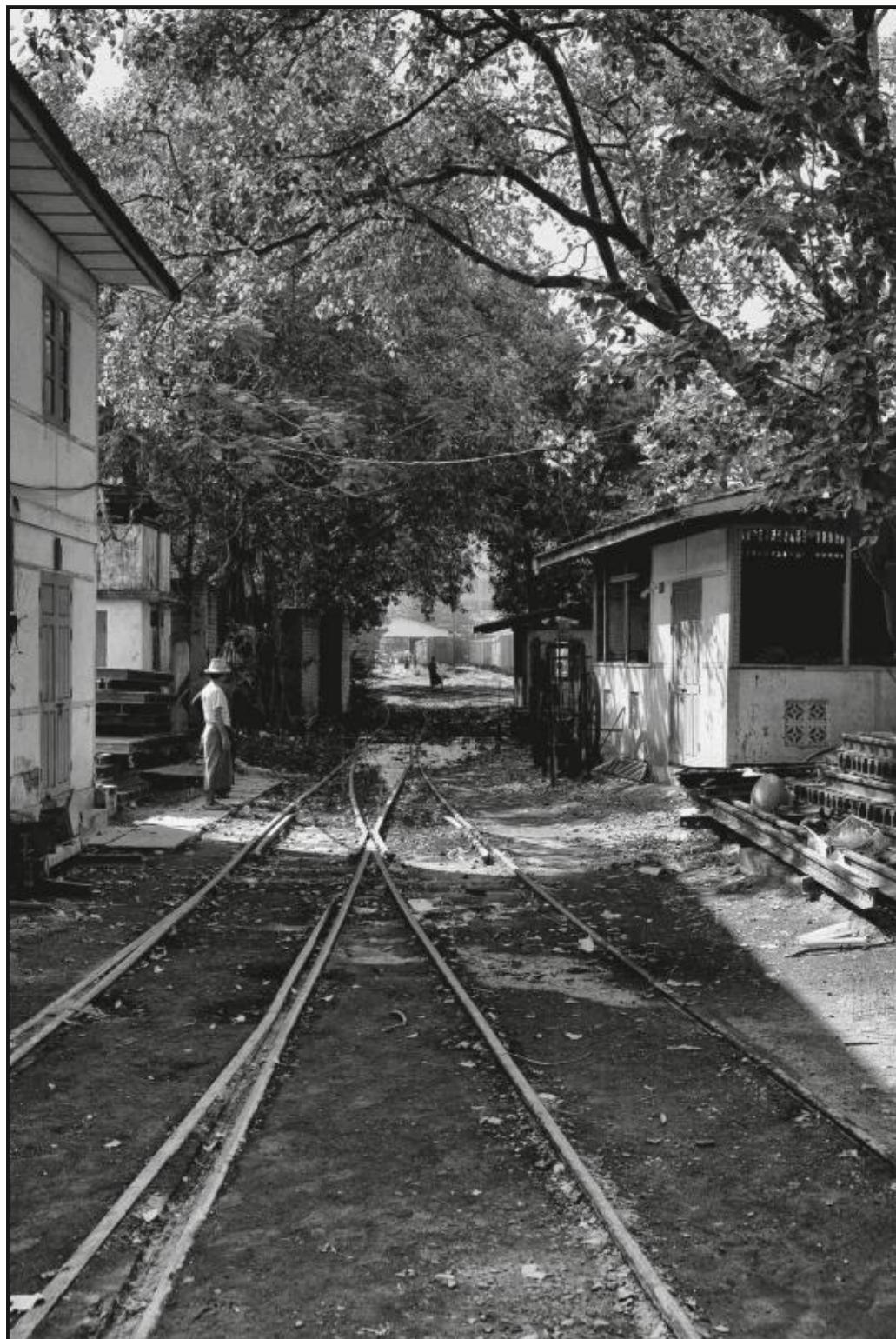
Criss Cross

2019 | February

Myanmar | Mandalay

The open railway lines in the city of Mandalay was not something we tend to encounter in the UK. Anyone can walk along and across these lines, which are simply a fact of everyday life.

As I walked around to get a perfectly framed angle, a few pieces of the frame came together. The man standing on the left filled out the foreground, I just needed someone to fill out the background, to satisfy my composition needs. I waited a while for the scene to be complete...click.



*We each have our own path to
education / knowledge,
whichever path taken,
ensure truth triumphs.*

School Run

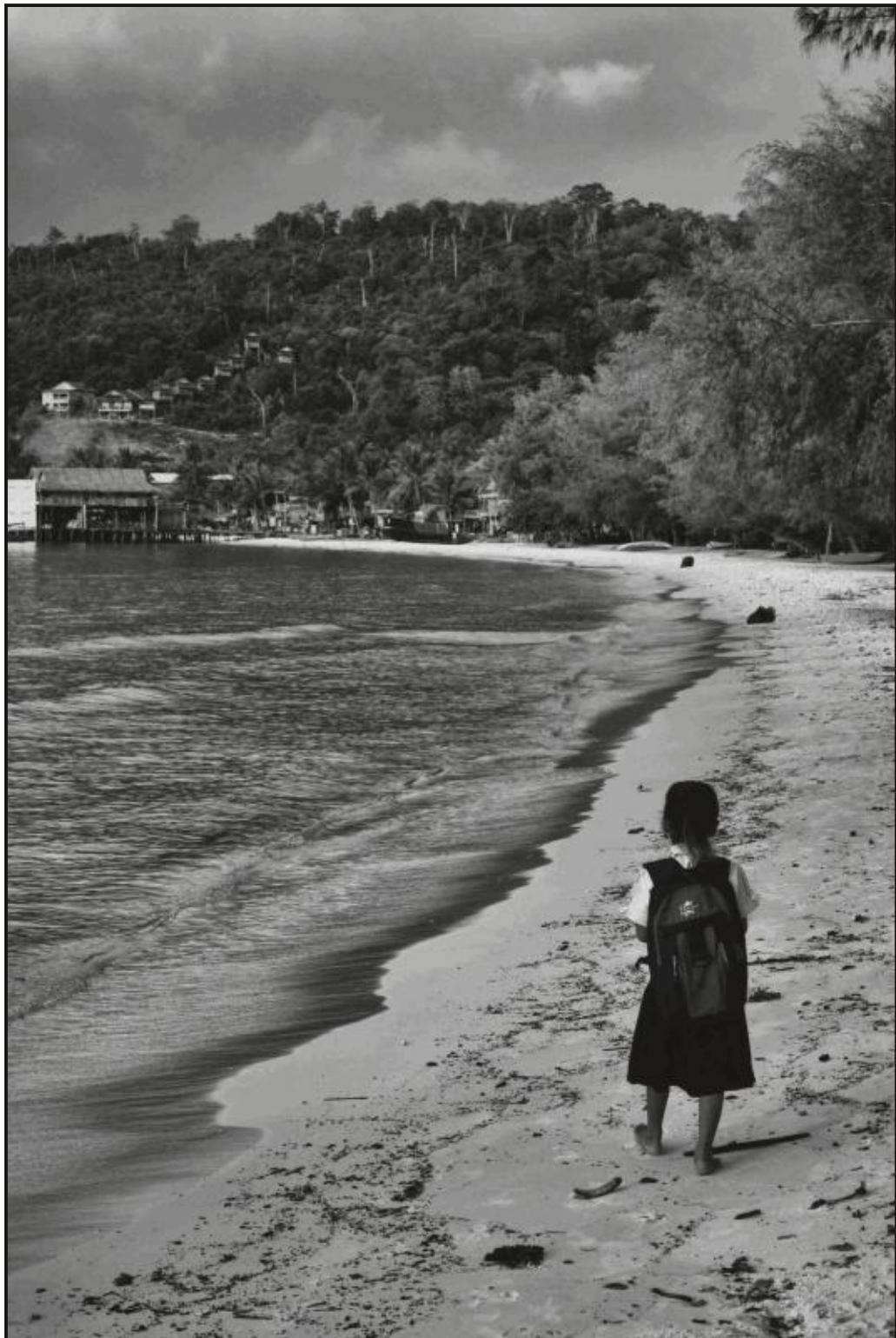
2015 | April

Cambodia | Koh Rong

I woke up very early on this beautiful day on the island of Koh Rong. I came out onto the wooden balcony of my hillside chalet looking down upon the sweeping beach below me. Only one thought crossed my mind. I quickly picked up my camera and went out for a walkabout.

It was just after 6 am, hardly anyone was around, apart from a few late night revellers and shop owners getting ready for their trading day. As I walked the length of the beach, I spotted someone up ahead, it was a young girl walking to school.

I had a quick flashback to my school journey's as a child, on a bus...what a contrast I thought as she passed by. I swung around and quickly took this photo. I was drawn by the contrast of her dark uniform against the curving white sandy beach.



*We live our lives behind bars,
keeping others out, are we sure they
are not instead, designed to keep us in.*

Seeking Freedom

2015 | January

China | Xiamen

I always look through any type of opening whether an open door, corridor or path. I spotted this circular cut-out while wandering through the lake area of Xiamen. Not quite sure why it had the iron bars as the surrounding area was wide open.

As I looked through, I could not believe my luck, a small bird on a pillar, I quickly adjusted my position while quickly bringing my camera up to eye level making sure the bird was perfectly framed...10 seconds later, it flew away.

It seemed apt when naming this photo to highlight the bird's freedom and my apparent temporary confinement, while thinking of the real lack of freedom of others around the world.



*Salary men of the world,
leading structured cubicle lives,
is it not time to escape the box?*

Salary Men

2019 | August

Japan | Tokyo

It has always been a dream to visit Japan, and in particular Tokyo. I guess it's from seeing it in various movies over the years, much like New York. Tokyo is known for its after work scene, with workers often leaving their offices, very late into the night and head out for a light meal and beers, usually too many beers

The scene somewhat reminded me, of my own time in the corporate office world and the late night beers at pubs and bars in and around the West End of London. There are hundreds, if not thousands of these small bolthole eateries, where everyone is huddled together passing away the time and putting the world to rights.

I spotted this scene only when the curtains outside swayed in the wind to reveal the inside. I had to crouch down onto the pavement to get this low angle shot with passers-by giving me a strange look.

とかつ

月曜・火曜 11時-15時
休日 17時-12時
土曜 11時-16時
定休日 日曜・祝日

*When the courage of a child is
greater than the obstacles they face,
there is little that will get in their way.*

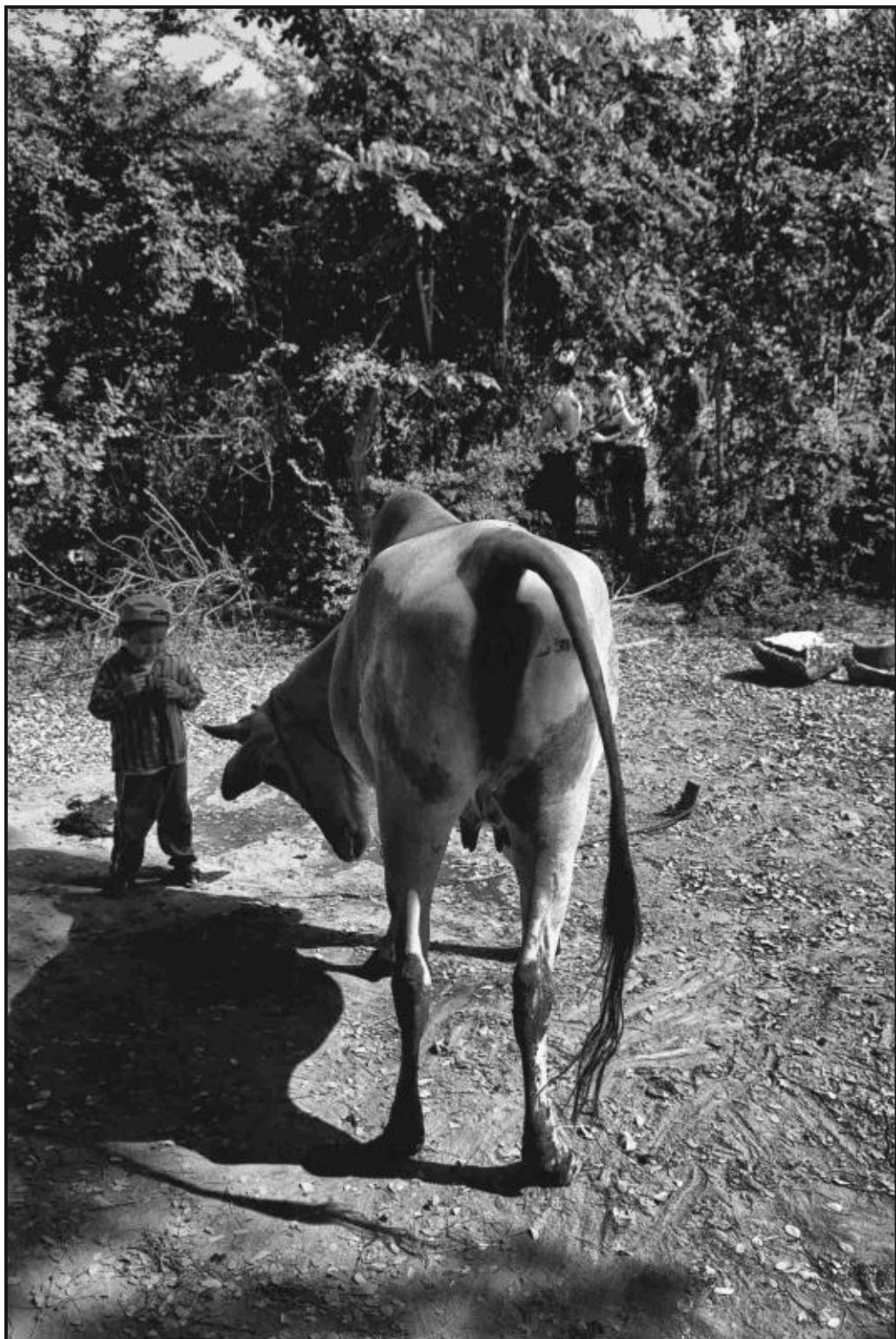
Big Balls

2019 | February

Myanmar | Inle Lake

Strangely for me, I joined a small tour group to go and visit a number of small villages that lined the riverfront. I usually hate this type of organised tour, as I hate feeling like a tourist.

Most of the children in these villages would engage with the tourists, while everyone was playing with the other kids, I spotted this young boy further away. I quickly hustled over and couldn't believe my eyes...this kid had balls of steel.



*Nature versus nurture, both
significant in their own way,
both emanating from source,
there really is no competition.*

Stoned Alone

2015 | April

Cambodia | Siem Reap

This shot was taken at the temples of Preah Khan. They say you take the best pictures during the golden hours of the early morning and sunset. I'm not suggesting this tried and tested formula is wrong, but it depends on your local surroundings.

The way the midday sun was filtering down into this temple caught my eye. This normally dark area was lit up directly from above in the most gorgeous way, as though a ceiling light had been switched on.

Strangely, the main feature that caught my attention, was the lonely stone in the bottom right-hand corner, every other stone was arranged with thought and tenure. Had it broken away from the structure, was it just rubble, had someone placed it there? Questions that added some mystery and caused me to take the shot.



*To play as we once were,
to try, to reach, to fall,
to rise once again.*

Brother's Love

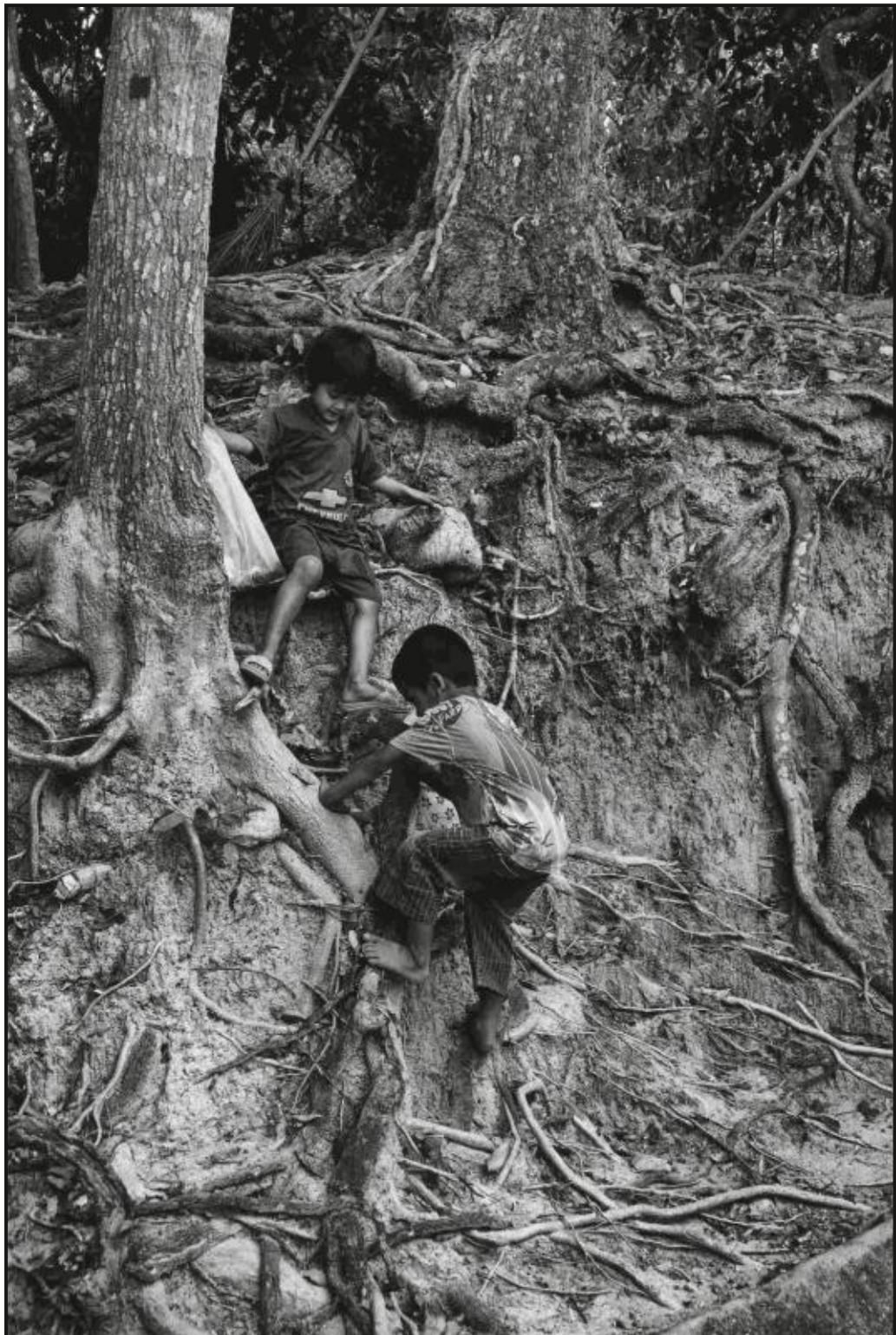
2015 | April

Cambodia | Siem Reap

This day the temples were further out with fewer people around, another early morning start, helped keep the blazing sun at bay for a few more hours. Lots of walking brought me through a still looking lake with the burnt out remains of hundreds trees from some sort of severe forest fire.

As I turn the corner towards the main temple, I hear the voice of a little girl, she sounded a little distraught. She was trying to get down a steep bank, her brother who had already got to the bottom, turned around and climbed up to help her down the steep bank.

Why do I think they were brother & sister...I'm not sure, but I would like to think so, as she gave him a little hug once down. I love the way the roots mirror the legs and arms of the children.



*Dark or light, negative or positive,
is the nature of the universe,
neither more just than the other.*

Dark Pensioner

2015 | February

China | Hong Kong

It had been a few years since my last visit to Hong Kong. The first few days I stayed in Kowloon as daily life has more grit and interest to me. This shot, however, was taken on the main island.

The markets were busy with lots of shouting and confusion, all adding to the melting pot of life in Hong Kong. I spotted this old lady tidying her groceries, she was kind of interesting so decided to wait for a little to see if the scene would unfold and develop.

An old man came down the stairs into the darkness of the corridor. This added the much-needed mystery I was looking for...click.



*While others choose the easiest path,
look again, there is sometimes
a more rewarding one.*

Umbrella Girl

2019 | February

Myanmar | Mandalay

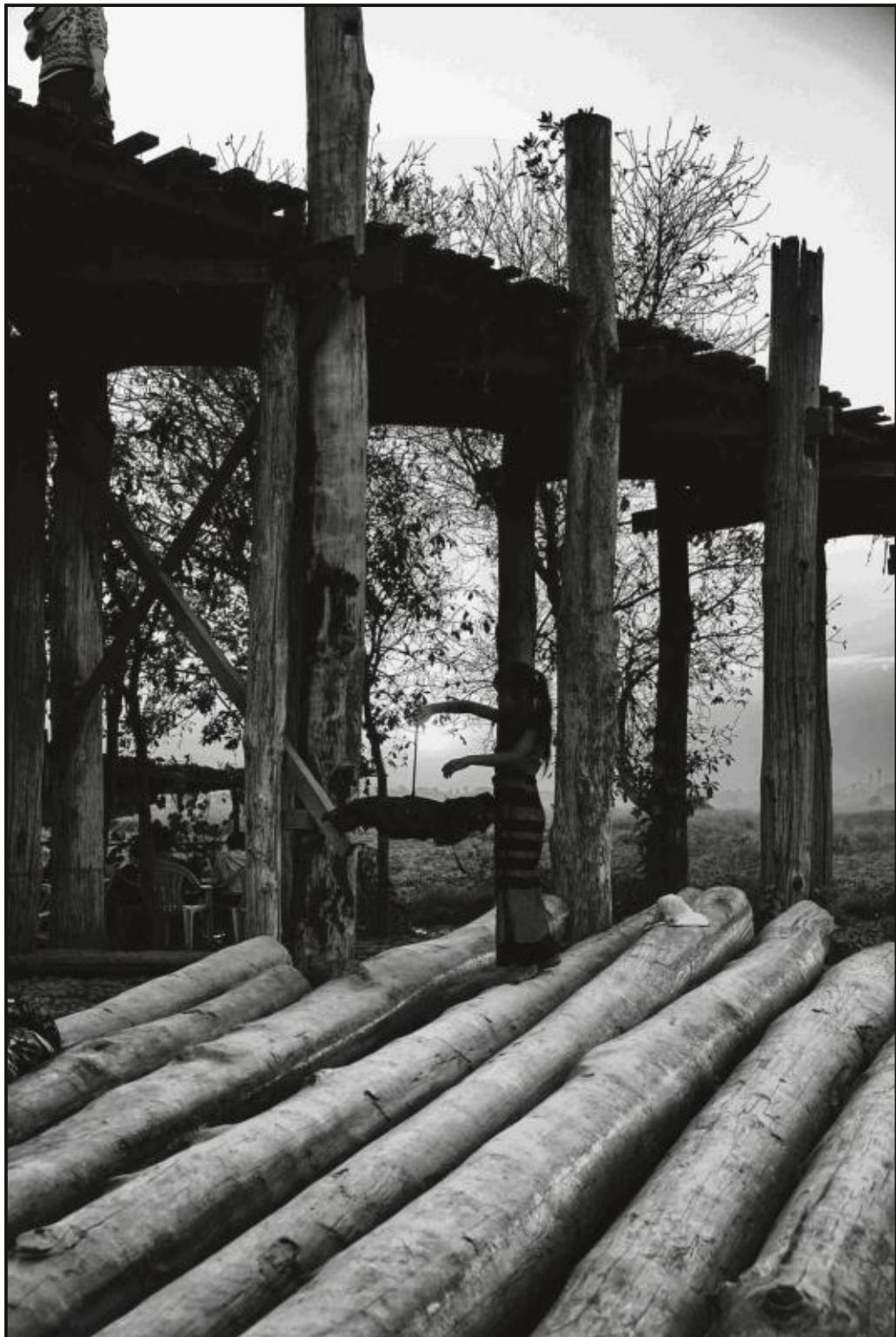
As an amateur photographer, there are many famous sites around the world, that are a must visit. Without a doubt, The U Bein bridge in Myanmar, is one of them.

However, there is one problem, it is a tourist magnate, much like The Eiffel Tower or Trevi Fountain.

Thousands of tourists descend upon this magnificent structure, especially during sunset. I arrived a little late in my tuk tuk and had to rush onto the scene to have any chance of making some sort of photograph before sunset disappeared.

I scrambled onto the bridge like everyone else, it sits about 30 feet above the lake without any barriers, it's a wonder nobody falls in, as there aren't any railings and the planks making up the bridge in disrepair. There was zero chance I was going to get the photograph I wanted, there were simply too many people.

I left the bridge, and decided instead to walk underneath it, to see if there were any other possibilities. It turned out there were a couple. I spotted this local girl playing with an umbrella upon huge logs. I managed to shoot off just a couple of frames with no people on the bridge above.



*When we go searching
for food inside a tin can,
the battle has already been lost.*

Canned Food

2019 | March

Myanmar | Mandalay

Another trip to a train station has me following a couple of street dogs boarding a recently emptied train. I knew exactly what they were doing, and had the name of this photograph in my head “canned food” before I board it. The dogs were looking for scraps of food, as I went down the aisle, they fortunately looked around to see what was going on...click.



*The wonders of the past,
the possibilities of the future,
will they avail themselves to me?*

Curious Girl

2015 | April

Cambodia | Siem Reap

The shade inside the majestic Angkor Wat temples helped this morning, if only there was a breeze I kept thinking. As I make my way around, through the endless walkways, less than 10 minutes after taking "Mischievous Boy" I'm offered another diamond photo opportunity...probably my favourite.

I see a small girl with a bag full of water bottles, she stops, I bring the camera to my eye, quickly compose the shot, just as she looks out to the wilderness...click, I only managed to fire off two shots before she moved on.

The dark foreground with the barely visible floor stones contrasts beautifully with the light background. Is she alone, looking for her family or selling just water? These contrasting elements and questions caught my attention and still keep me intrigued to this day.



*My need to fish wherever I can,
needs balancing with any
sickness that may ensue.*

Desperate Fishermen

2019 | February

Myanmar | Mandalay

Poverty means bringing in food with whatever method possible. These fishermen were hunting for fish, in a lake with sewage in almost every corner. The scene captured my attention due to the layers present within it, the garbage, the carpets, the drying clothes, the diagonal lines...what a melting pot of visuals.



*The working child,
the homeless man,
prisoners in their own way.*

Twin Prisoners

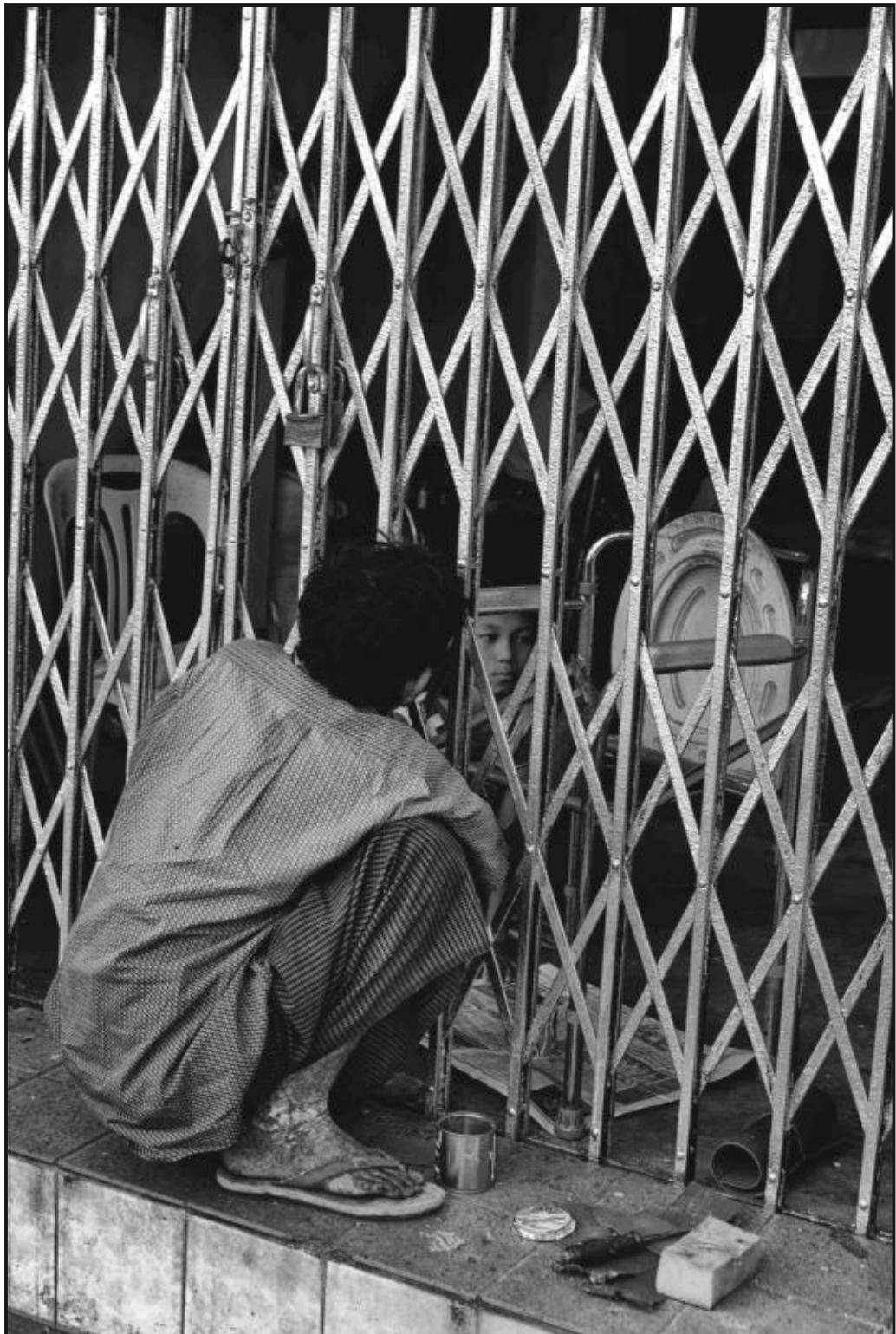
2019 | March

Myanmar | Yangon

Yangon, a former British outpost (1852–1948), boasts the largest number of colonial-era buildings in Southeast Asia. After independence, street names and parks were reverted to traditional Burmese/Myanmar names.

The mixture of poverty and grandeur in different areas of the city became very clear when I passed this scene. I was completely drawn in by the sight of what looked like a homeless man, that was completely intrigued by the small girl working on a toilet behind the shutters.

It was the shutters that got to me, both prisoners in their own way.



*As the decades pass living inside
the urban jungle, today is the day
I escape.*

Escape Velocity

2019 | March

Myanmar | Yangon

The back streets of most South East Asian cities, often times, are more interesting than the front facade. The real work of restaurants goes on in these back streets, where the grilling or washing of plates usually takes place.

This back street was more urban in nature, where people lived and took care of their plants and trees. As I turned into this alleyway, I heard the faint sound of wings flapping, I immediately raised the camera to my eye to fortunately capture this bird mid-flight in the negative space between the buildings...click.



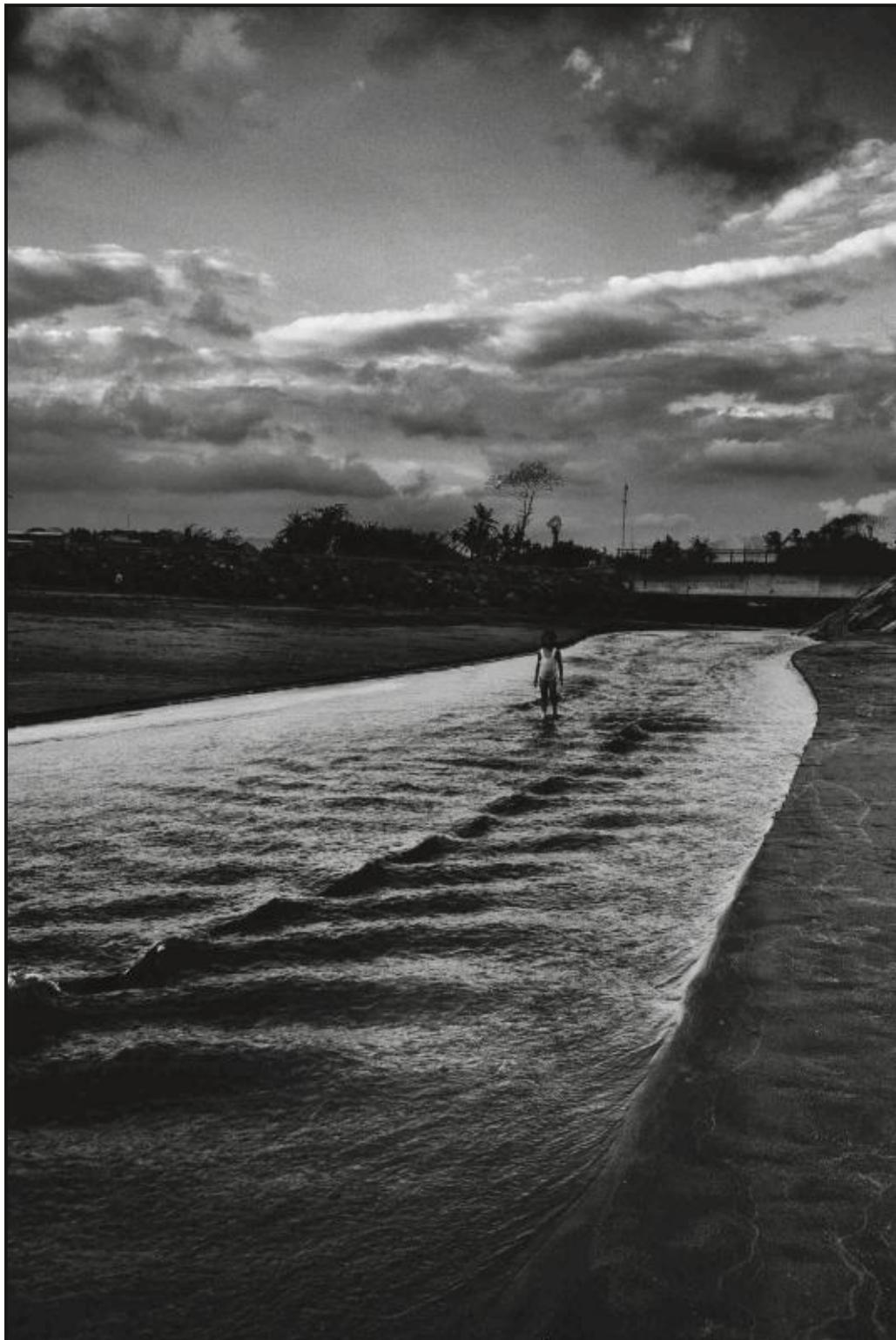
*A stream of possibilities sets
in motion a mindset and belief
that anything is possible.*

Streaming Possibilities

2019 | September

Indonesia | Bali

A late afternoon walk along the beach at Canggu, the receding tide caused wells of water in the sand with alternating patterns. This particular pattern caught my eye as there was only one child playing here, while the majority of the beach had hundreds of children enjoying the cooler sunset hours.



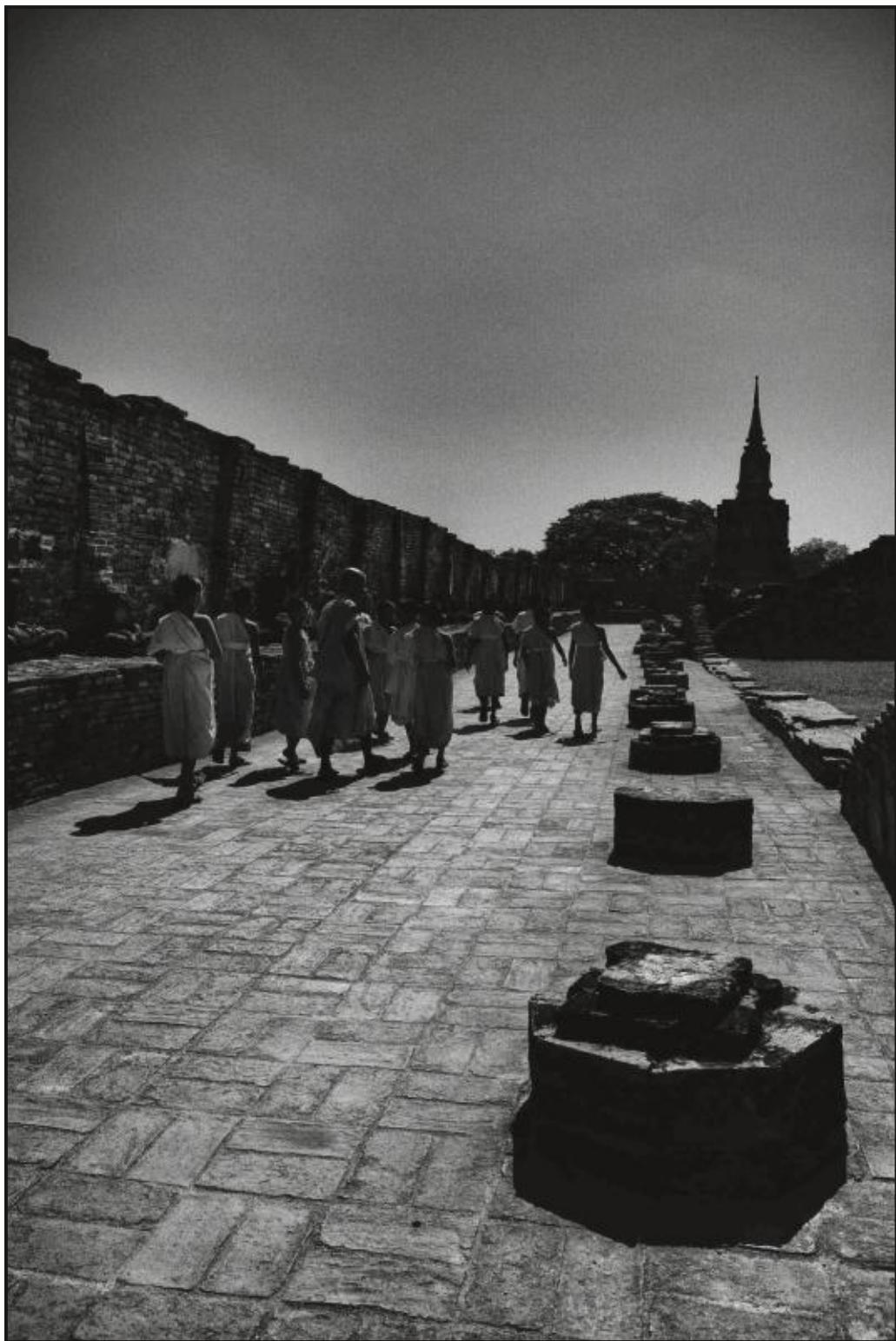
*As the new generation follows the
one before, our real quest can never
truly begin, if we fail to question.*

Blind Faith

2019 | April

Thailand | Ayutthaya

Another blistering hot day walking around the many temples scattered around the small town of Ayutthaya. I hear a shuffle of people behind me, I turn round to see a large group of monks, young and old. I hold back and wait for them to pass and take this photograph with the long dark shadows I was looking for.



A step in the right direction.

Social Steps

2023 | January

Egypt | Alexandria

Many of the back roads leading down to the sea in Alexandria are fairly steep. As I began returning down to sea level, I cannot resist taking this shot of these kids making the most of nothing, simply having fun. It once again reminded me of own childhood in London in the 1960-70s, going into abandoned houses, climbing trees and crossing gardens without a fear in the world.



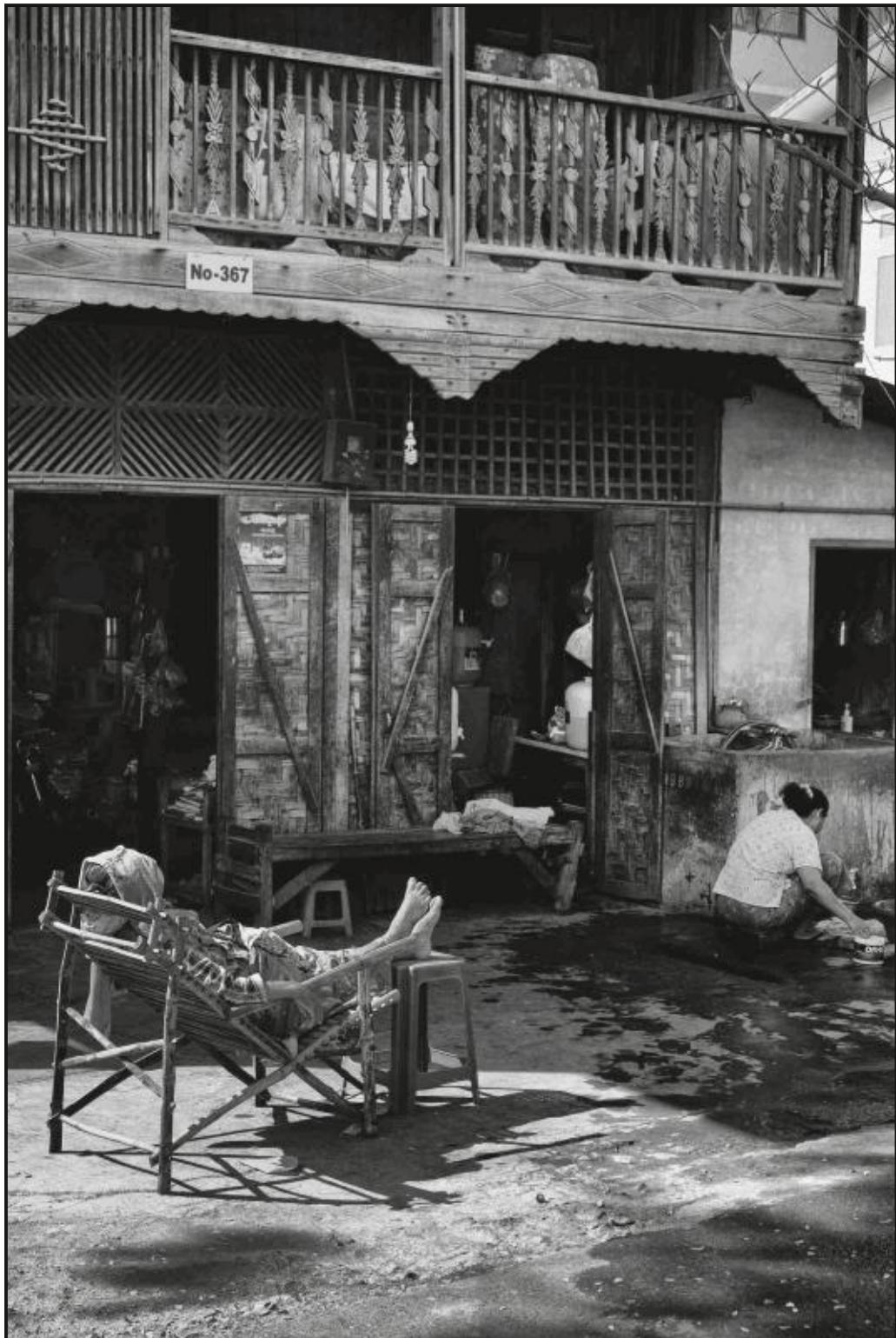
*A life of toil or one of leisure,
often the difference between
asking the right questions or not.*

Different Minds

2019 | February

Myanmar | Bagan

I was struck by this scene where one person is clearly working hard in the midday sun, while the second was taking a siesta.



*A mind boxed in by beliefs,
has a tough time embracing
the abundance that beckons
outside the box.*

Boxed Traditions

2019 | June

South Korea | Busan

Walking through many of the religious temples in Busan, I was taken back by the sight of all the lanterns and began thinking how beautiful they must be when lit up in the evening. I spotted this boy paying his respects, which led me to ponder about traditions and beliefs.



*An arch in my journey,
may be the nudge I need,
to begin in a new direction.*

La Pa

2020 | February

Brazil | Rio de Janeiro

What is there to say about Rio de Janeiro, a city known for its yearly carnival, and famous Copacabana, Ipanema, and Leblon beaches.

The carnival was the main reason for my presence in the city. It is a city of difference, with its former Portuguese colonial architecture in the centre, while other areas experience significant poverty.

The Lapa neighbourhood, known for its vibrant nightlife is where this shot was taken. I had to wait a long time for the delivery cyclist, to make the perfect appearance, heading down the slope and reflecting the bicycle in the foreground.



*When nothing is all we have,
when more arrives,
let's hope it doesn't overwhelm.*

Creative Minds

2019 | February

Myanmar | Bagan

Once again, I am drawn to children playing with nothing, again reminding me of my childhood in London, where I would scour skips for odds and ends, from builders renovating houses in my street.

I would find screws, nails, pieces of metal and wood, with which I would build things with my imagination. Kids play with imagination when nothing else is available, what a wonderful thing.



*To continue to play in our adult
years, as we did during our childhood
ones, for many is but a dream.*

Forza Italia

2012 | September

Italy | Naples

A piazza in Naples is the setting for this competitive football session among these young boys. The round pavement light in the foreground together with the ball and their head shadows with the overbearing statue and the sinister pointed finger, all contributed to the emotions that led me to wait and make this photograph.



*Our inner child is within us all,
on occasion it has the chance
to express itself.*

Joy Ride

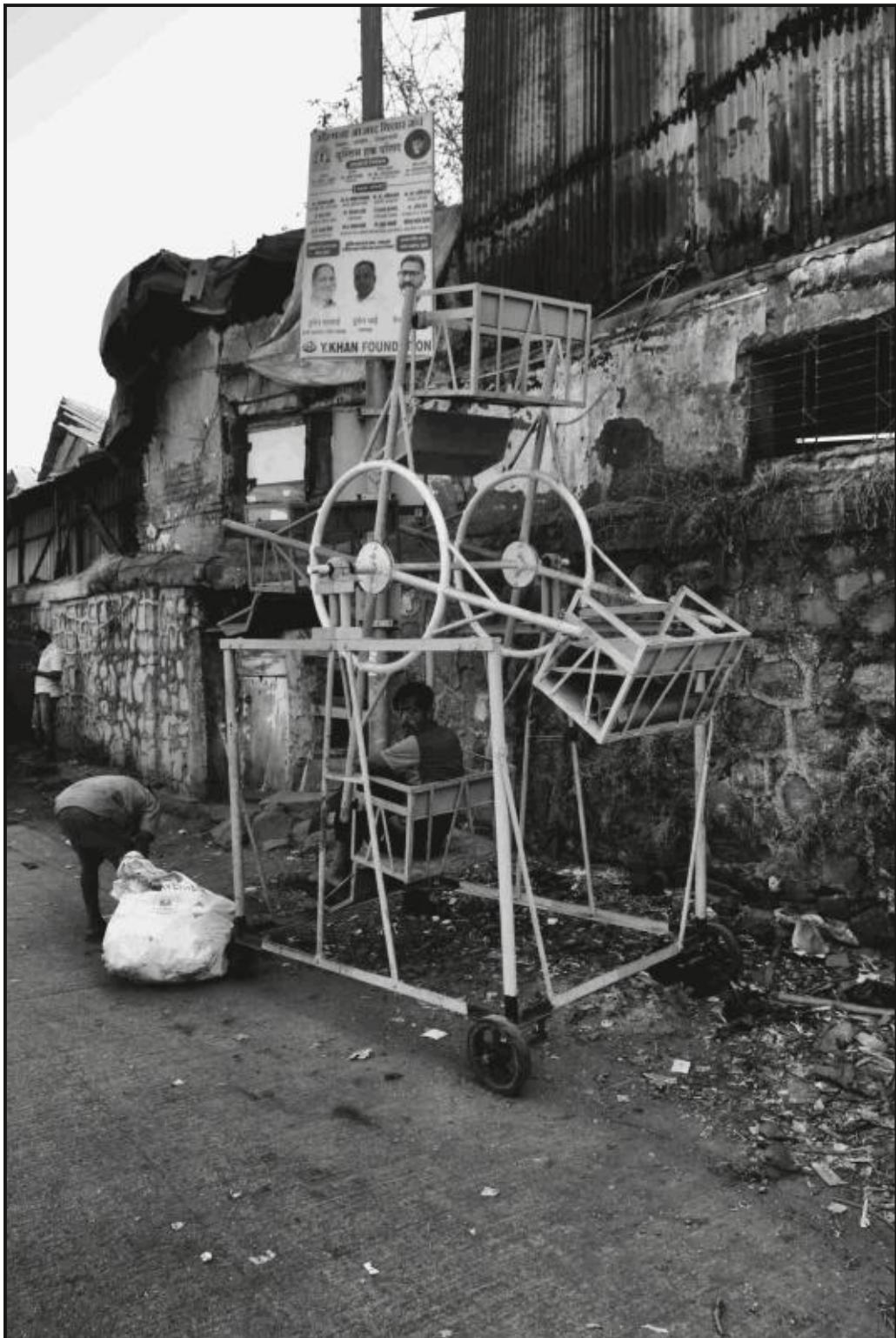
2024 | January

India | Mumbai

Mumbai is by far one of the biggest melting pots in the world. The scenes that attack the senses around virtually every corner are truly amazing and often too much to take in, especially from a photographer's perspective.

This photograph is not ideal in my eyes, as I prefer to take one, without the person knowing I had done so. In this case, I had no option, as I was clearly the centre of attention as I walked around this neighbourhood.

Clearly this was a toddler's fair ride, to see a full grown man sitting within it caught my eye, together with the contrast of the other guy collecting scraps of some sort. This photograph, somewhat disproves my quote from the previous one!



*The labels society puts upon us,
should never be an indicator of where
we can get to, or the sovereign person
we have always been.*

Ordinary Class

2019 | March

Myanmar | Yangon

It's quite normal to see First and Second Class train cabins in most countries.

Ordinary, I had never seen before, hence it caught my attention. The peeling paint, the gentleman leaning out of the window trying to get some fresh air and his general demeanour all came together, pushing me to take the shot.

၁၀၀ ရှုံးတန်း ORDINARY CLASS



*Water, taken for granted by most,
worked for by others.*

Today's Water

2024 | February

India | Aurangabad

Many of us take water for granted, it's not until you come across a scene like this, that we begin to realise how fortunate we are. Water for drinking, cooking and cleaning is so precious that others around the world have to work hard for it. The man in the background, also working hard, gave me the photograph I wanted with depth.



*I brush aside the elements,
for I have tenure.*

Architectural Tenure

2019 | April

Thailand | Ayutthaya

I was pretty much the only person wandering around the fabulous ruins in Ayutthaya, when a huge thunderstorm took hold. Should I venture out, back to my guest house and get soaking wet or simply stay put? I decided on the latter and glad I did.

These structures had stood the test of time, a little thunderstorm was not going to have any effect. As the rain and wind came crashing down, I settled into the view taken by this photo. When the storm passed, I ventured out, back into town to witness roofs of buildings ripped off and many structures completely demolished by the storm. It became clear, I was far safer in the ruins than in town.



Boys will be boys.

The Boys

2019 | February

Myanmar | Bagan

Boys will turn anything they can get their hands on, into some sort of game. I positioned myself behind this cart to get a perfect frame of what they were up to.



*The framing of our loved ones,
an act of respect well deserved.*

Loved Ones

2023 | November

India | Panaji

Another evening walk in the beautiful city of Panaji, I couldn't help notice the bars over the windows of this home. However, what really caught my eye, was the cut-out in the bars which almost perfectly framed, the framed photograph inside this home.



*New vs. old, each a continuation
of what was before.*

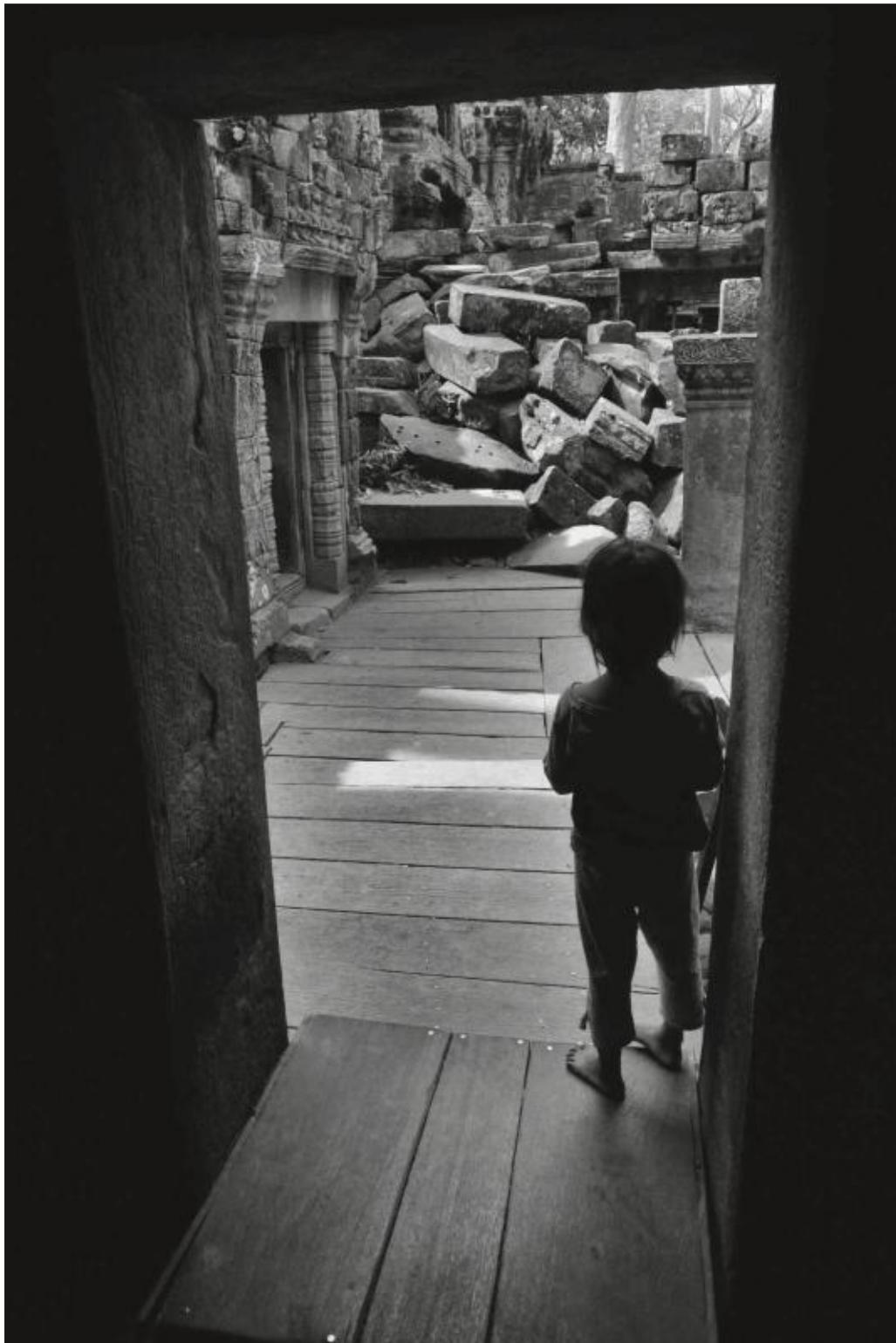
Ancient Child

2015 | April

Cambodia | Siem Reap

As I wondered further outward around the temples in Ankor Wat, fewer and fewer people were around. I see this little girl, she was selling some kind of small item. I wanted to somehow include the pile of fallen temple rocks that I had just passed. The only way to do this was to take the photo from behind.

The narrow and small cavern left me with little space to fit everything inside the camera's frame. I had to go as wide as the lens would allow which was 10mm (27mm in 35mm camera terms). The huge disparity between the young girl and the ancient stones really works for me.



*As the cobwebs of our lives
accumulate, we have the choice,
to clear them away, or allow
them to obscure our path ahead.*

Tenured Webs

2019 | February

Myanmar | Mandalay

One of the local markets in downtown Mandalay was really a sight to see. What caught my attention were the cobwebs in the ceiling of this massive warehouse and market.

The sheer size and quantity of cobwebs I had never encountered previously, this caused me to take action and capture the amazing sight before me. The selling of all sorts of fresh fish and meats was everywhere below these cobwebs.



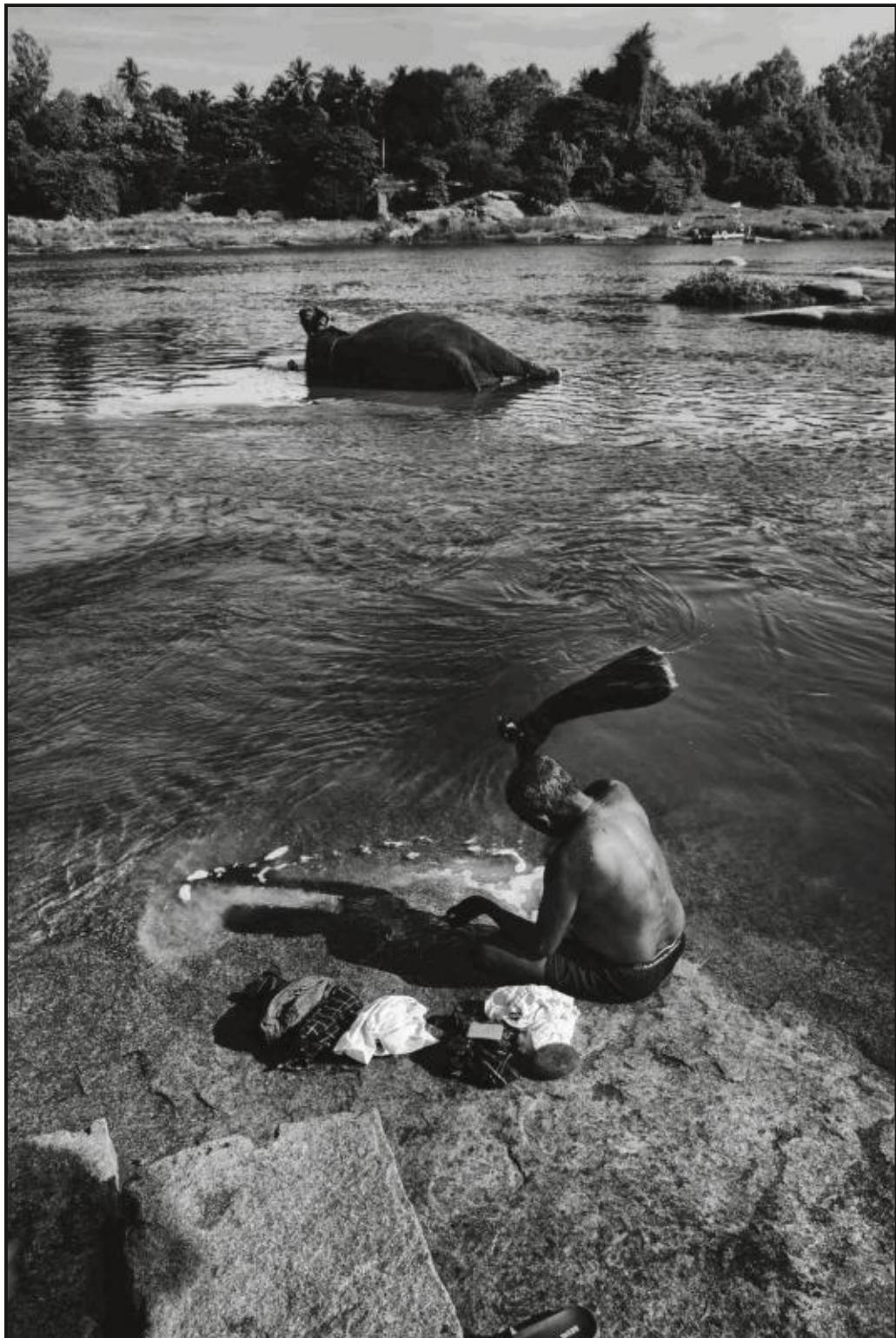
*Our daily wash routines, don't differ
as much as we may believe.*

Washing Me

2023 | November

India | Hampi

The majestic elephants in India, can often be seen simply wandering down many streets. On this occasion, this elephant was clearly owned or cared for by this man. Both the elephant and the man in the foreground were both in cleaning mode of different sorts.



*Down and out...possibly,
however, never forgotten.*

Open Door

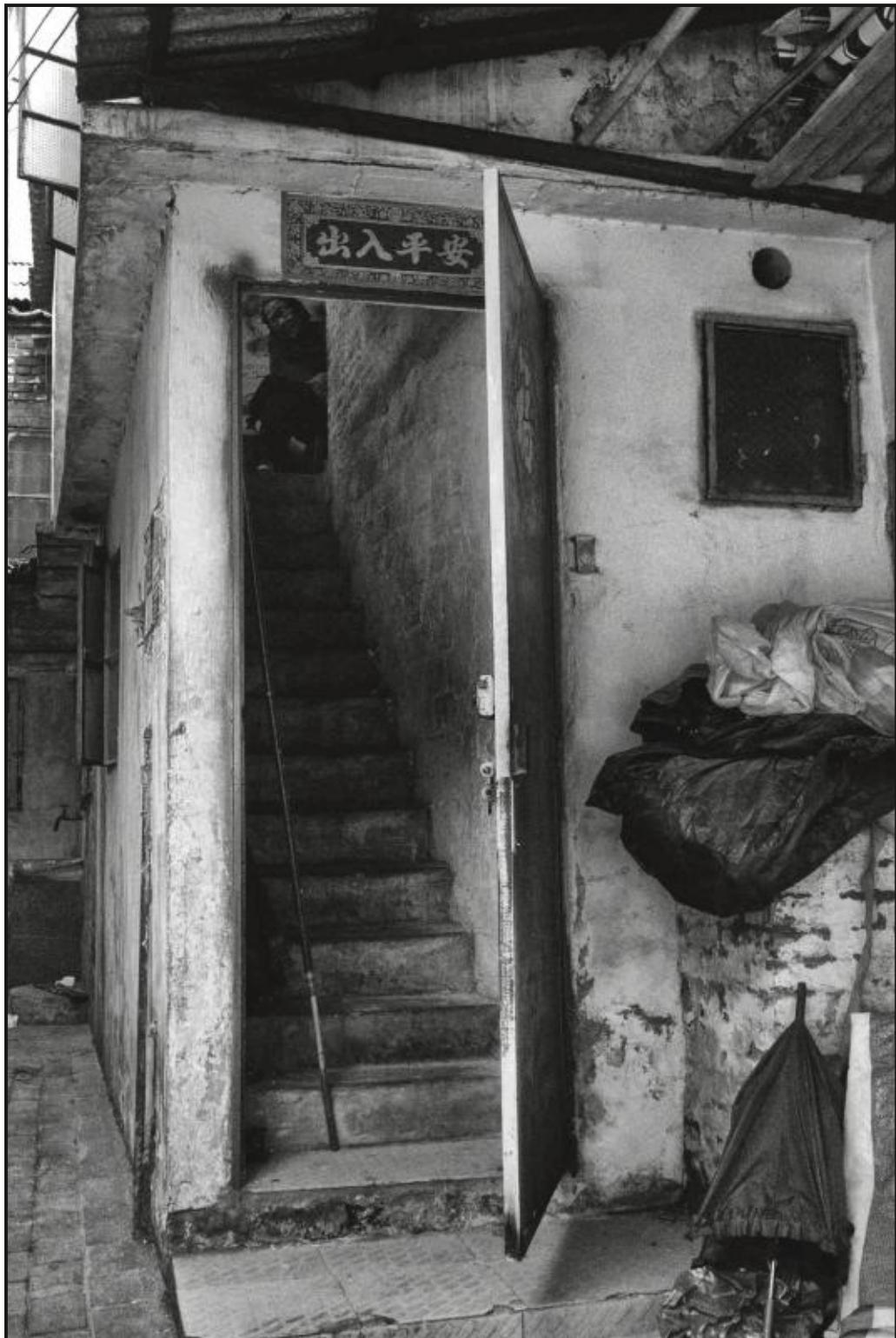
2015 | January

China | Guangzhou

An early morning trip to Shamian Island, the old colonial British outpost through the opium wars didn't give me any notable shots despite the buildings being quite beautiful and impressive. I walked around Liwan Lake to discover the old district that was tumbling down with so many ancient buildings ready for demolition.

I was amazed I could simply walk around as many of the buildings were in a dangerous condition. I have always been interested in doorways, as you never know where they lead.

Looking into this one, I noticed someone peering down the stairway. I quickly put the camera into portrait mode and took two shots, I hope I didn't scare the old lady in any way. This old lady reminded me of my grandmother, pulling the cord to open the door to let me in.



*As the mountains of food we
consume continues to rise,
failure to venture outside our comfort
bubble may lead to our downfall.*

Force Fed

2019 | August

Indonesia | Jakarta

This was another scene, where I found a frame with the window in this kitchen and the mound of plates, all I needed was to be patient and wait for someone to cross the frame.

I had to set a high shutter speed on my camera to make sure I would capture whatever came by, I think I got the shot I wanted as this woman passed into the frame.



*My frame of reference may not
be the same as yours, however,
we share more things in common
than we can imagine.*

Framed Child

2023 | January

Egypt | Alexandria

Another daily stroll around the city of Alexandria with my camera at the ready wondering through its amazing street scenes. In the distance I spot a child stroking a cat through a frame of an abandoned van. There is so much going on in this fascinating street scene that I was compelled to take the shot.



*One gives freedom,
the other locks us in.*

Love Boat

2012 | October

Italy | Venice

Venice, without a doubt, is one of my favourite cities in the world, there is simply no other city quite like it. I believe, visiting Venice is not simply about going to the popular tourist sights, there is so much more.

I spent three whole days venturing out, to the more remote parts, void of tourists where the locals live, with their washing hanging out to dry and zero restaurants in sight. I divided my three days into three areas which I would spend the best part of a whole day looking for something to capture with my camera.

There is a tradition for lovers to lock a padlock, onto a bridge to demonstrate their love for each other. On a particularly busy bridge with hundreds of padlocks, this one stood out. The symmetry between the padlock and the boat in the background was the shot I was looking for.



Art a reflection of life, or life a reflection of art?

Copycat Cleaner

2018 | November

Malaysia | Penang

Very near the beginning of my seven year backpacking journey around the world, this almost impossible scene occurred right before my eyes. That's not perfectly accurate, as this was a photograph that I made. Let me explain. It was a very busy day in this backstreet market, full of buyers and stallholders.

Out of the corner of my eye, I spot this street cleaner. What I couldn't believe, was the mural on the wall depicting a facsimile of the cleaner. I had to be patient, despite being excited by the scene and wait for the cleaner to hopefully move into the correct position on the right, so that I could capture both in the same scene, the universe aligned...click.



The fragility of life, unknown by some, embraced by others.

Fragile Life

2019 | February

Myanmar | Mandalay

Another almost daily trip to The Mandalay Central railway station. I wonder around the station, crossing platforms until I come across a possible scene of interest. This toddler was playing on the platform with its mother nearby. I was quite far away and started to decide on what composition I preferred, I had to somewhat zoom in to balance the shot.

Within seconds, the toddler approaches the train track, I felt somewhat paralysed, I was too far away to stop any possible accident, the mother was closer. I decide to take this shot.

I had to reconcile, on this occasion I couldn't help. Fortunately, on my travels, on three separate occasions, I was in a position to help other toddlers succumbing to an accident or harm.



*The wonderment of friendship,
often transcends time,
for time is but a construct.*

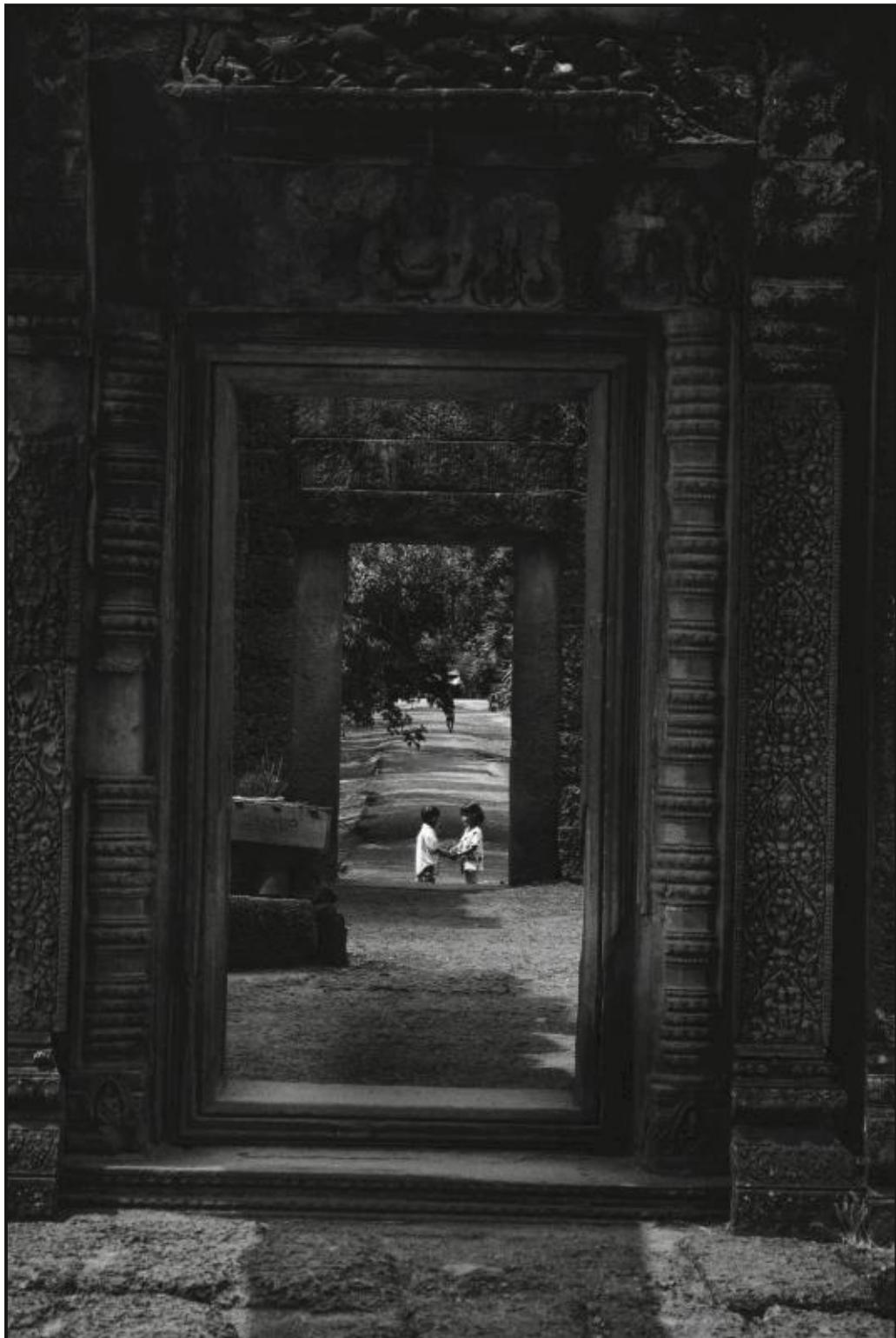
Friends Forever

2015 | April

Cambodia | Siem Reap

I had walked along the long path to this set of temples in the afternoon heat, no shelter unlike some of the others. As I looked back through this set of beautifully framed gateways, I couldn't believe the infinite view beyond the stacked frames.

I decided to wait to see if something interesting might happen. Quite a few people came through...nothing. It wasn't until these two kids came near the main doorway that my interest peaked, I quickly composed and fired off two frames.



*No matter what your circumstances,
a simple ball game, is often
the only means of escape.*

Pool Man

2023 | January

Egypt | Alexandria

As previously mentioned, the smaller side streets in Alexandria, give so many photographic opportunities, at least in my eyes with my style of photography.

Among the fallen buildings, rubble and rubbish strewn everywhere, there is a modicum of civility in that those that live here, enjoy a game of snooker/pool. I was curious who this table belonged to, when a man walked past. I spoke with him, he told me it was his pool table as he unlocked his front door.



*One man's tree,
another man's life support.*

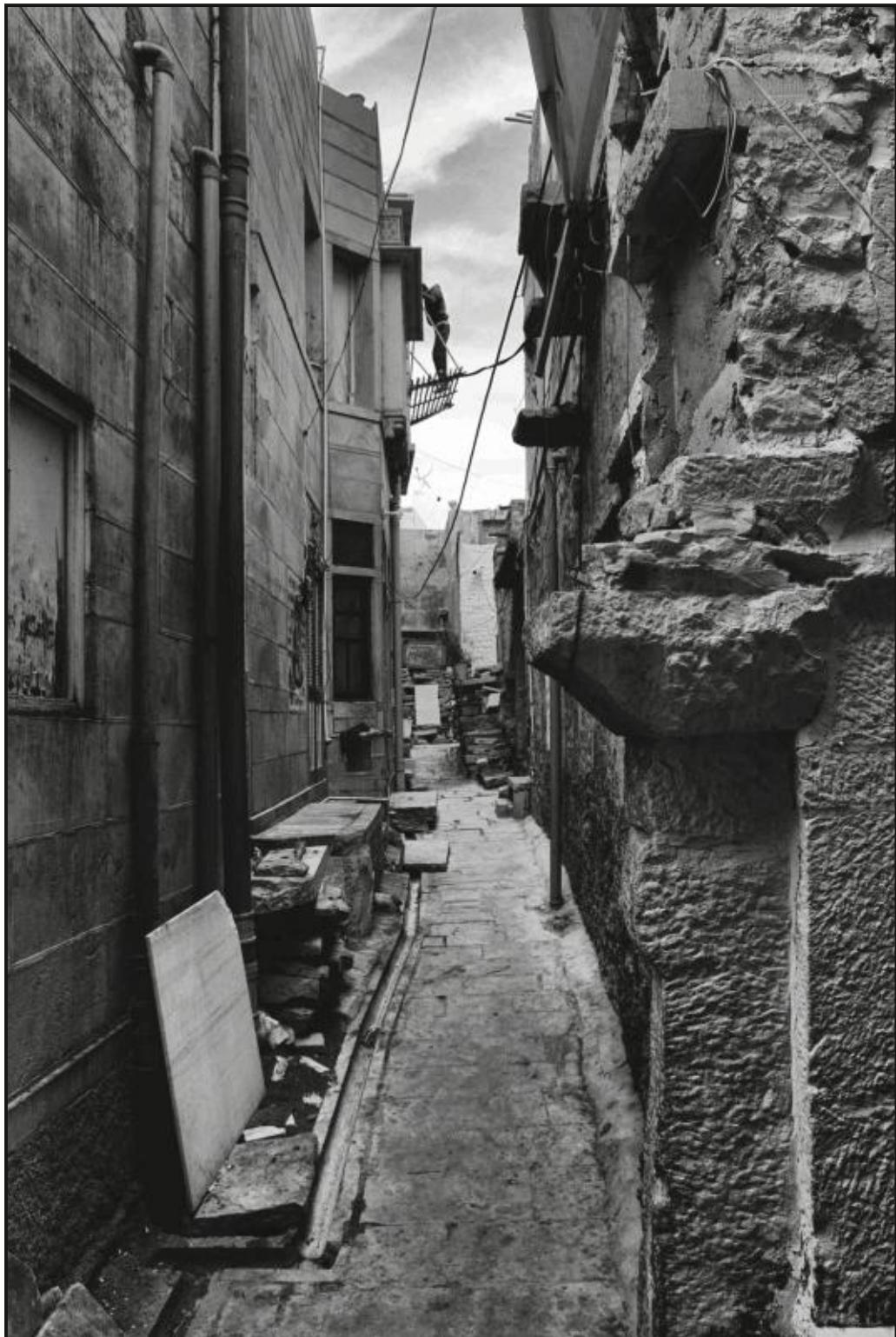
Shelf Life

2024 | February

India | Jaisalmer

It is not uncommon in some countries to see bamboo used as scaffolding. I have seen this in Hong Kong and many other South East Asian countries. Surprisingly, it is usually very structured and put together with great care for safety reasons.

What struck me with this scene, it seemed to be the opposite. This peace of bamboo platform, the worker was standing on, looked at least to me, to be so flimsy that it was a wonder an accident never occurred.



*A doorway to the other side,
may be all that is keeping you
from starting again.*

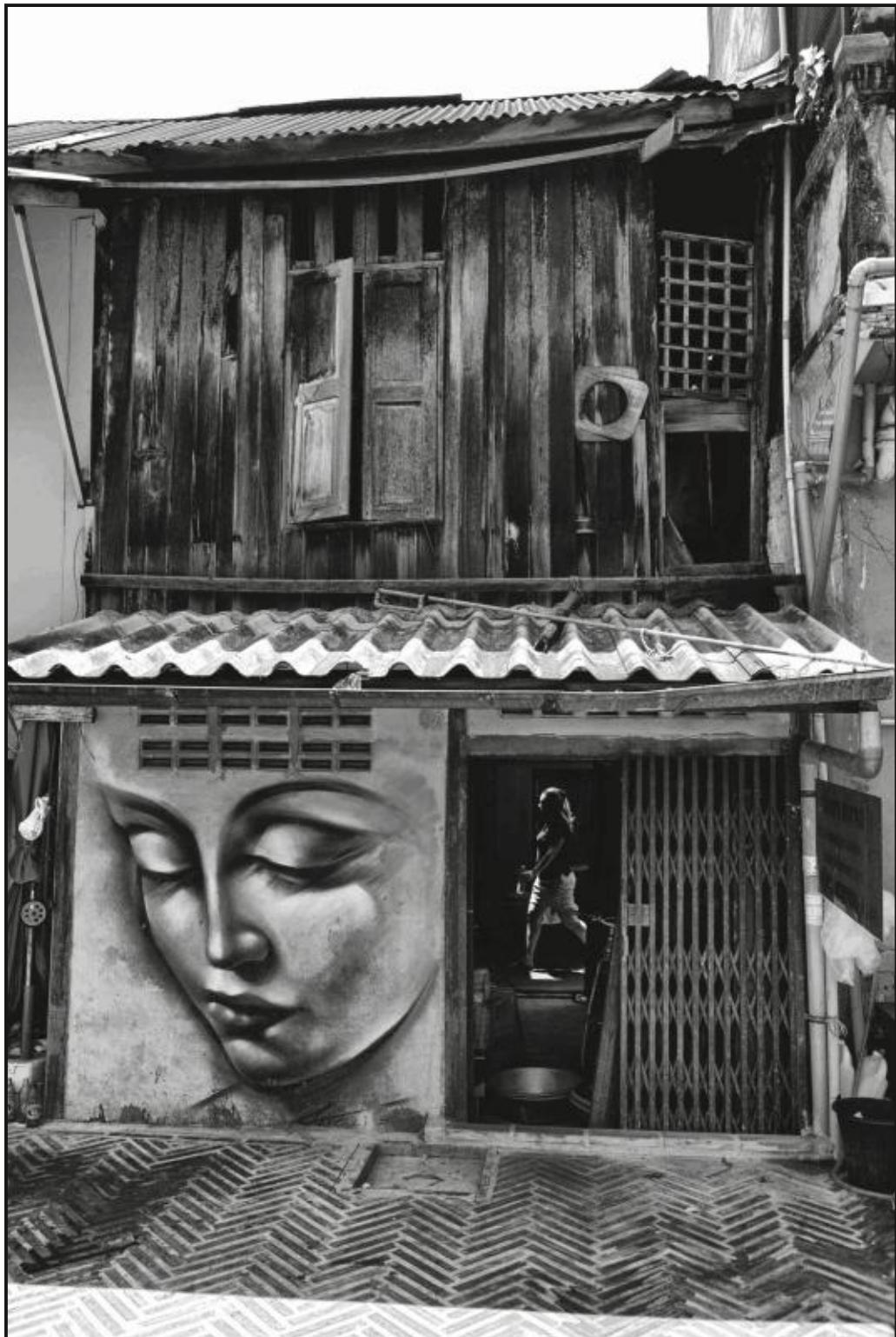
Enlightened Door

2019 | April

Thailand | Ayutthaya

Walking through the many side streets in Ayutthaya, this mural captured my attention. What really spiked my interest, was the open door, that I could see straight through to the other side.

I parked myself with my camera to my eye, setting my shutter speed to a faster setting in order to capture any motion. I was hoping a woman would pass by, I was fortunate to precisely capture that. The icing on the cake, the light on the woman created a beautiful silhouette.



*One life comes to an end,
others begin anew.*

Lifted Soul

2024 | March

India | Varanasi

Varanasi is a city in the northern Indian state of Uttar Pradesh. The world-renowned embankments/steps down to the Ganges River, are a vital part for bathing pilgrims. A few of these ghats as they are known, are used for open air cremations.

It's a very difficult sight to behold, as bodies of the deceased, wrapped in white cotton sheets, are placed upon a pile of wood, and set alight. One such scene struck me for its duality, life in the background, death the foreground.



There are times when it serves
you well to tread carefully,
other times, less so.

Perilous Path

2019 | November

Philippines | Coron

Living near water in Western countries comes at a hefty price premium. In other countries, it's the lower end of the wealth spectrum that call this home. The walkways, leading up to these shacks over the water, truly shocked me in how fragile they looked. I had to wait a while before someone navigated these treacherous paths.



*As I devour destruction
with each puff, creation
has less time to flourish.*

Death Sticks

2019 | August

Japan | Tokyo

Another tiny bolthole for the working of Tokyo to unwind after a long day in the office. It was a busy through-fare, so I had to wait some time before I could take the shot I hoped to make. I could see someone exhaling smoke in a bar, but waited for the perfect angle before hitting the shutter button...click.



入口

*Prepare yourself for the uneven
ride of your life, without the bumps,
we fail to learn or grow.*

Rocky Bridge

2019 | May

Cambodia | Battambang

Battambang located on the Sangkae River; used to be Cambodia's second largest city until overtaken by Siem Reap. This city isn't usually on a typical tourist itinerary, as it's not the easiest to get to. Its centre has the architecture of a colonial past, while the nearby countryside is host to traditional villages.

While on one of my many walks along the river, I came across this bridge and waited for something to happen. This bicyclist, taking up the whole bridge, fitted the bill perfectly.



*The definition of what a roof
over your head means,
may need reflection.*

My Home

2017 | May 17

Morocco | Marrakesh

Marrakesh is a myriad of alleys, where if you are trying to navigate the modern way with your smartphone and gps, isn't always successful as the alleyways are narrow and often covered, thus blocking satellite signals.

There are a fair number of buildings in poor repair or falling down which always makes for an interesting backdrop. When I passed this one, initially it didn't draw me in. However, upon closer inspection, I could see that someone was sleeping in the wreckage. Considering that the roof looked like it could cave in at any moment, I cannot imagine this person's situation to choose such a place.



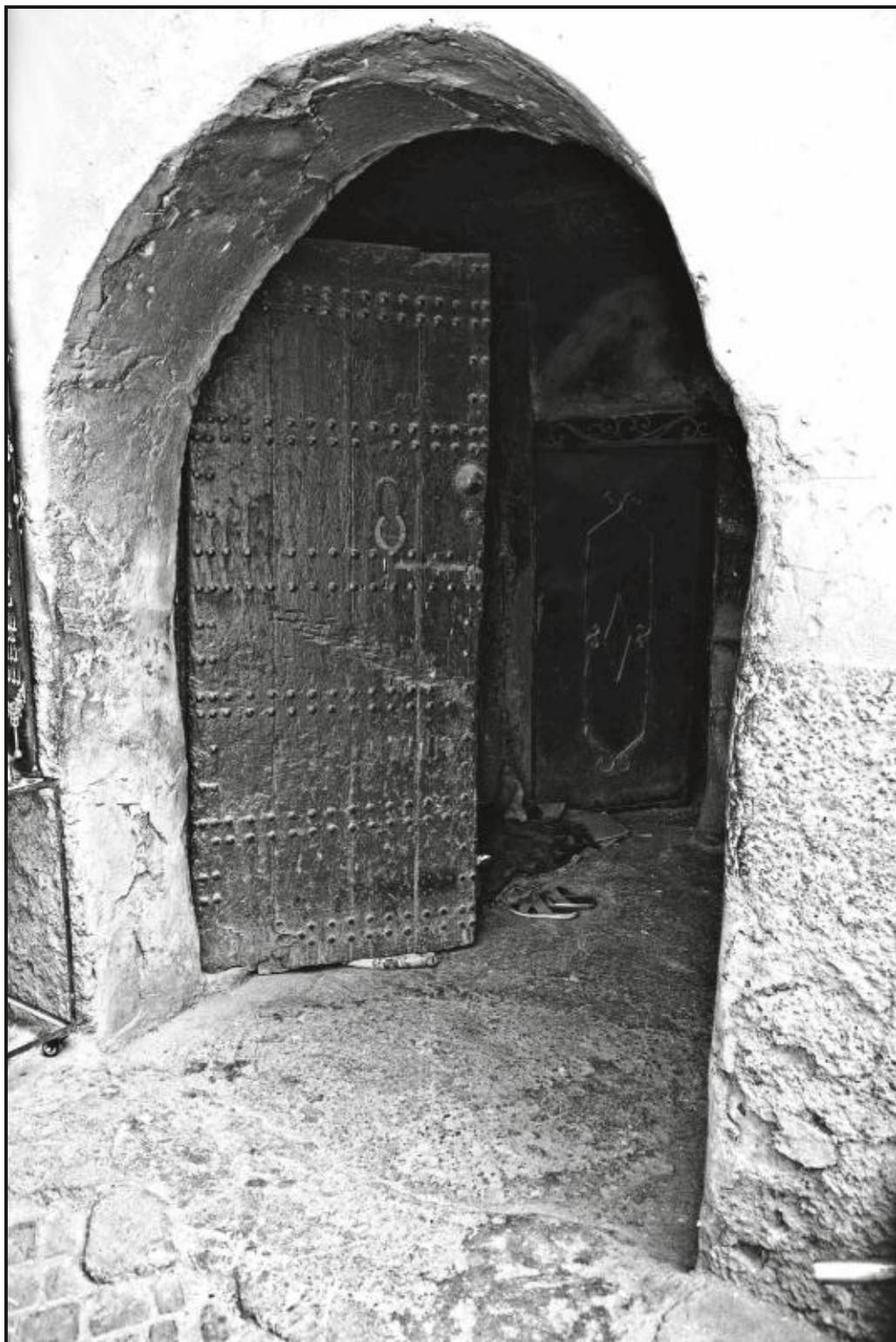
*My little piece of heaven,
in a world of chaos*

Resting Place

2017 | May

Morocco | Marrakesh

I seem to be in the mode of looking for discarded flip-flops as this is my second photograph on the theme. Another doorway with possibilities gave me exactly what I was looking for. Someone taking an afternoon siesta, away from the blazing sun.



As others cross our path, most encounters are brief, others more permanent, all however, a part of your own personal jigsaw puzzle.

Tenured Symmetry

2019 | February

Myanmar | Mandalay

Another photograph from the famous U Bein Bridge in Myanmar. Once again, instead of taking an obvious photograph, I wonder underneath to search for other possibilities as sunset rapidly faded away.

These trees/logs, holding up the bridge, seemed like the perfect setting for the symmetry they provided. Once again, I waited for someone to cross the scene to add the additional interest I needed.



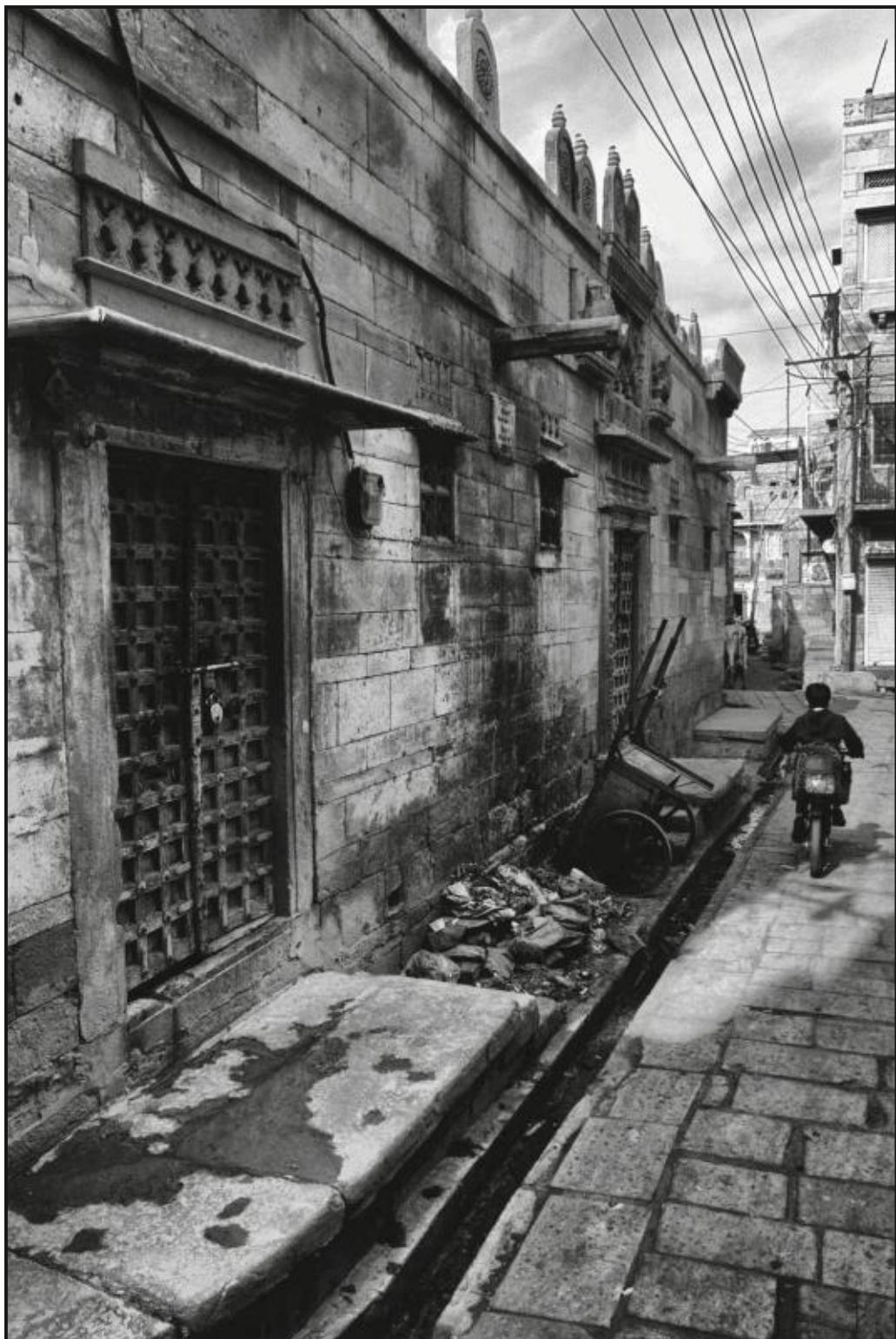
*My journey home may differ
to your own, each unique
in their own way.*

Sewage Path

2024 | February

India | Jodhpur

A sight we no longer come across in our comfortable Western countries, is that of an open sewer. We only need to go back, just over one hundred years, to see that the streets of London, were simply mud, waste and sewage and an everyday reality. In other parts of the world, this is reality is still the norm.



*Let not lines cast a shadow
of where you wish to be.*

Crossed Lines

2019 | March

Laos | Luang Prabang

It still amazes me, how many countries have so many power-lines and internet cables hanging in the air, but I guess, this is the price of rapid growth in that it's easier and cheaper to hang cables rather than dig up the roads.

This old man among his drying vests on the balcony caught my attention as I could not imagine what his perspective could be through all those cables.



*My path to illumination and
knowledge may be different to my
forefathers, however, I have the
world at my fingertips.*

Enlightened Boy

2023 | May

Vietnam | Hanoi

A night time walk around the fantastic city of Hanoi didn't yield any possible photographs until I noticed a speckle of light on my right hand side, as I walked past this scene. I doubled back and had a closer look, to unveil a young boy on a smartphone.

As I quickly tried to compose the shot, a street cleaner pulled up with her huge rubbish collection cart. I quickly went into the road to include the cart in line with the boy in the background.



*Let not my home determine where
my imagination can take me.*

Cemetery Families

2019 | October

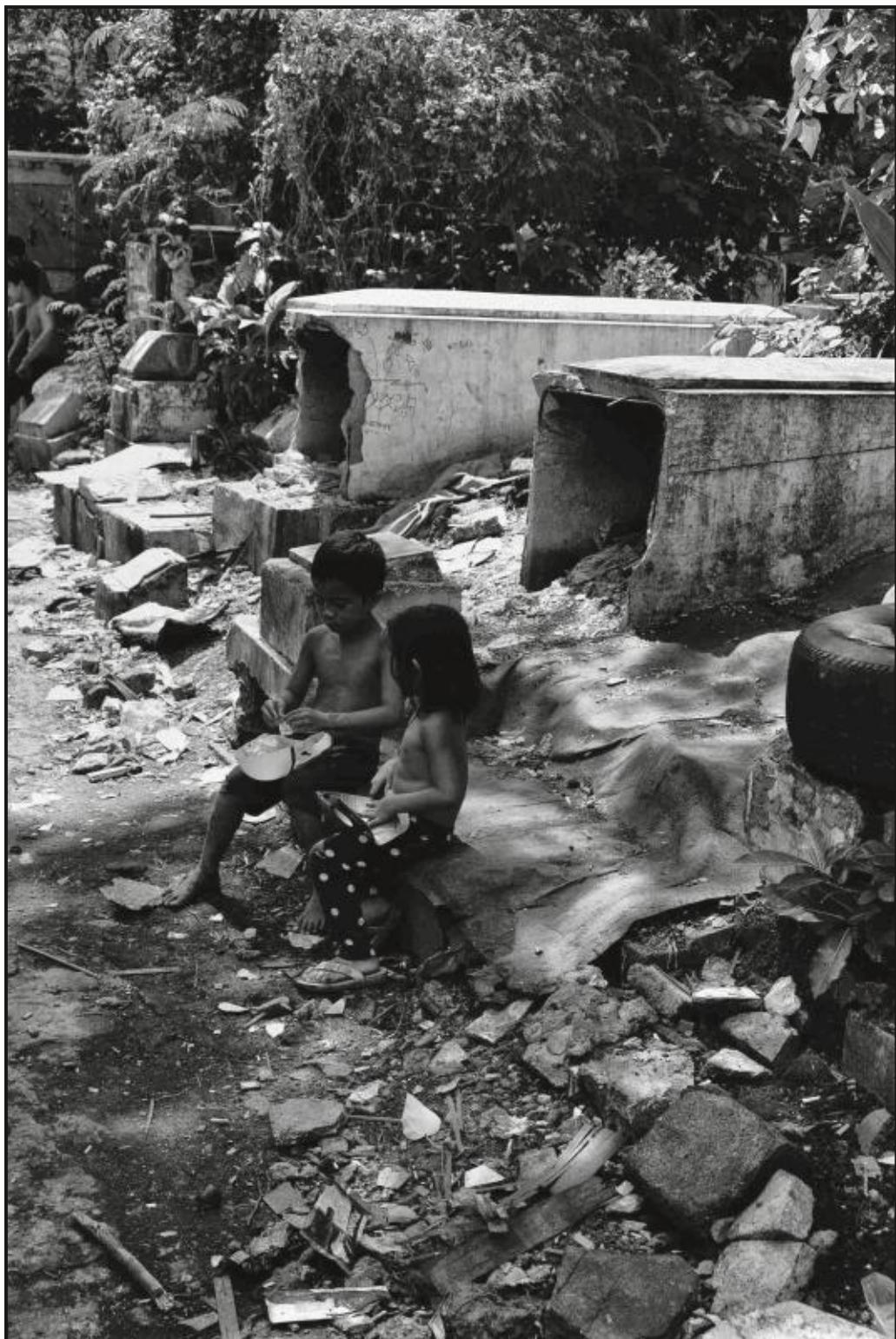
Philippines | Manilla

Manilla is another city of contrasts, extreme poverty next to high rise apartments. I headed to many of the poorer neighbourhoods as these interest me more than the modern areas. After a few days, I didn't find any notable photographs I wanted to make, until I passed a semi-open metal gate on a particular side road.

I went back the next day, and entered with some apprehension, I came to realise, it was a slum where people lived. A few male teenagers ushered me in, I felt very uncomfortable but walked further in. It turned out they were very friendly and explained they lived in this abandoned cemetery with other families.

They were waiting for the government to turf them out, as the cemetery was scheduled for demolition. They led me round and introduced me to others, I asked if it was OK to take a few photographs as I pointed to my camera, they said it was fine.

I couldn't help taking another photograph of children playing with whatever available, however this time, the stark contrast of what was behind them tugged at my heart strings. Upon leaving, I left a donation.



*One destroys,
one protects.*

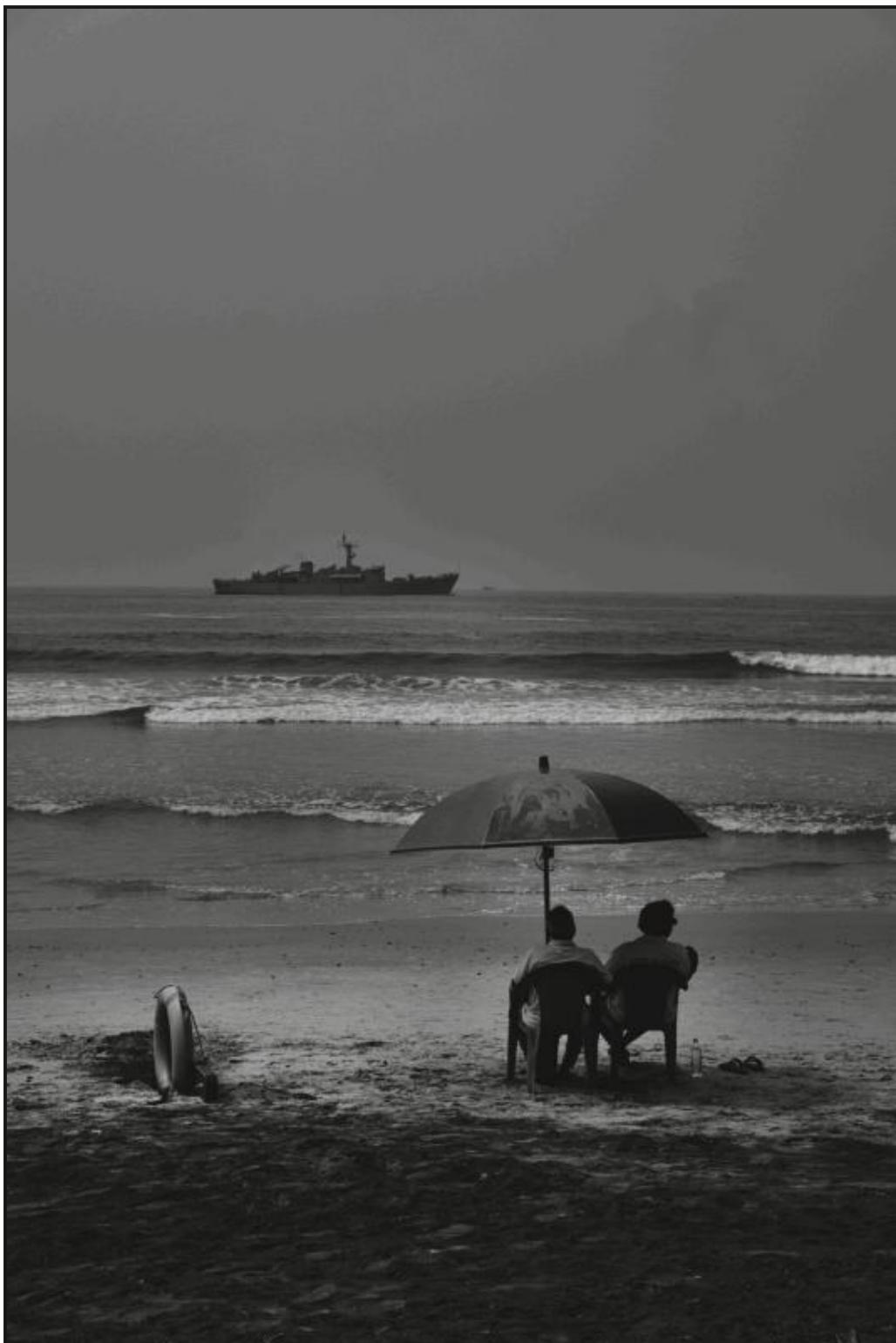
Life, Death

2023 | October

India | Kovalam

Early morning on Kovalam Beach, I notice an Indian warship off the coast. The contrast between the lifeguards on watch to save lives and the warship, I felt was striking.

However, I didn't have my camera with me, no problem, a quick sprint back to my guest house with the hope the scene wouldn't change was my only option. I was fortunate that upon my return, the scene remained unchanged.



*It is often down the darkest
alleys of our lives, that the most
important lessons are learned.*

Passing By

2018 | November

Malaysia | Penang

This alleyway had so many interesting elements, that drew me to venture down it. However, it wasn't until I turned around that I saw its real potential. I didn't have to wait too long for people to wonder past my frame of reference to capture the scene with a fast shutter speed. The elegance of a traditional bicycle, is somewhat timeless.



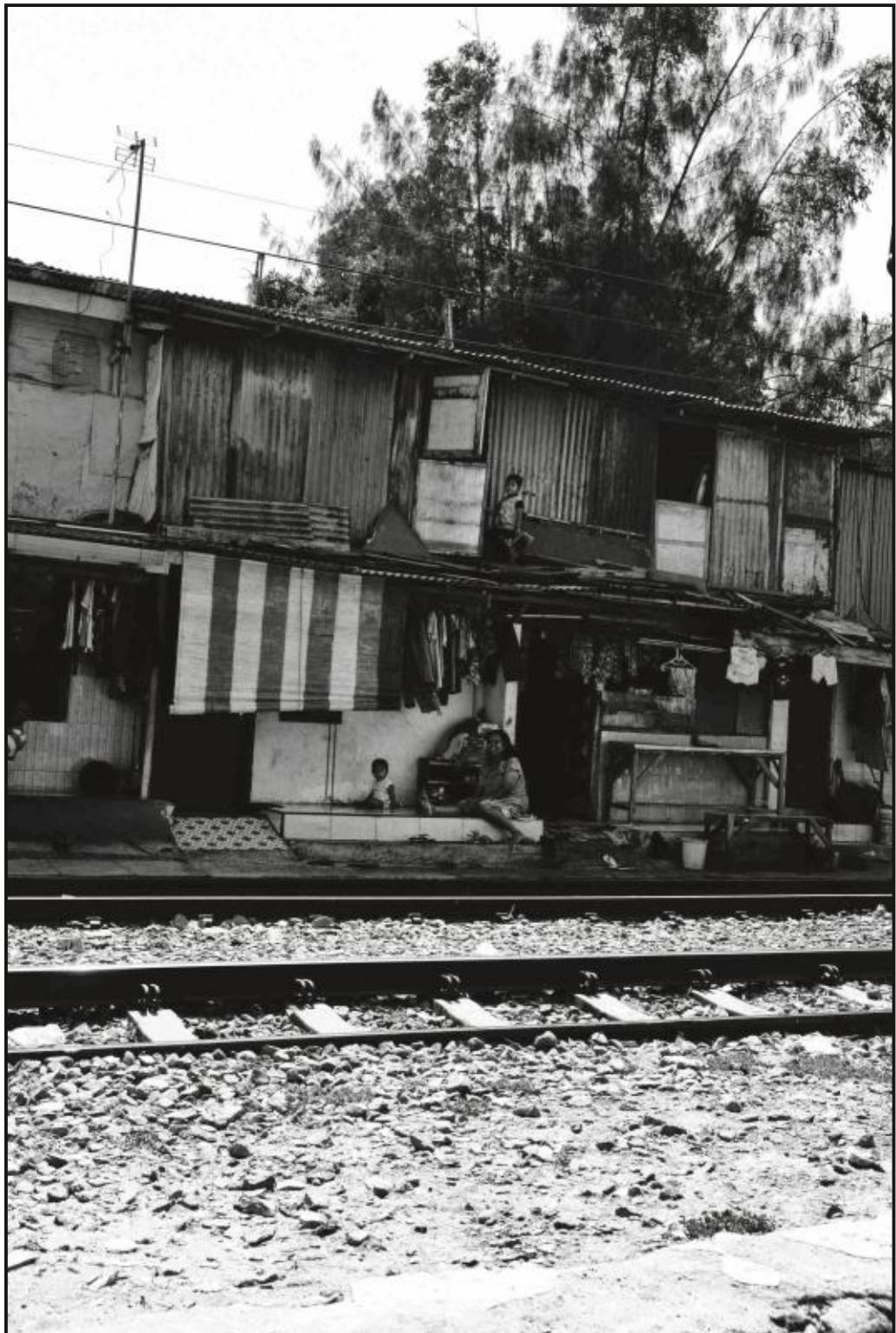
*My playground is my field of
growth, who are you to judge.*

Mental Strength

2019 | September

Indonesia | Yogyakarta

Another railway track, another photograph of children playing within a few feet of danger. This one caught my eye because of the child on the upper floor of this home right on the track, with no visible barrier stopping them from tumbling down.



*Our lives are full of shadows
and light, how we navigate
them is the key.*

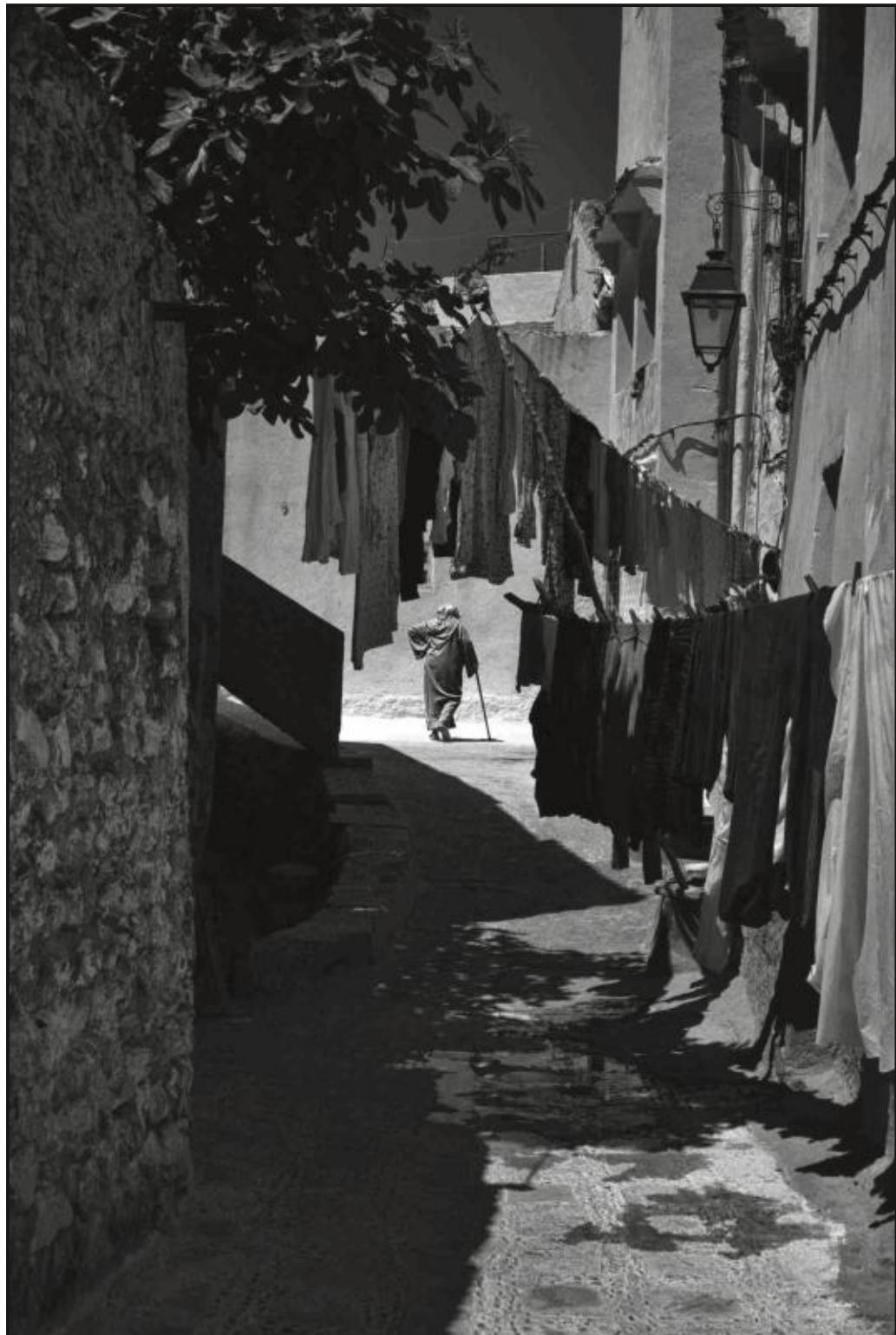
Clothed Path

2017 | June

Morocco | Chefchaouen

Chefchaouen is a well known photographer pilgrimage city, due to its blue-washed houses in the centre of town. Its steep cobbled lanes lead to all sort of small neighbourhoods where locals live out their everyday lives, all with this beautiful backdrop.

This woman caught my attention as she was wearing a blue full-body dress, known as djellaba. Her dress, not only reflected the colours of the homes she passed, but also many of the clothes hanging out to dry. I love the way the hanging clothes and shadows frame the lady perfectly.



*My sibling,
my responsibility.*

My Sibling

2017 | January

UK | London

Brick Lane in London's East End has a very colourful history, unfortunately now, is really just a tourist spot. Due to this, it's very hard to take a genuine and different image. I spot the unusual situation of a small boy outside a shop looking after a smaller child, possibly a sibling, while I assume the parents are inside the shop.



Respect.

Elderly Respect

2017 | May

Morocco | Chefchaouen

I remember as a child accompanying my mother to the outdoor markets in London for our weekly shop. It was something I hated, as I was a teenager at the time with better things to do, I had no choice.

I guess this scene somewhat triggered those memories inside of me, enough to take this shot. The random chair outside this home also intrigued me, I guess someone uses it to pass the time away, watching the hustle of their town.



*How we balance the digital
with the analogue, may turn out
to be the key.*

Corner Shop

2017 | May

Morocco | Casablanca

I loved the look of this shop selling the old and the new. The wooden shop front, the windows and the bicycle outside all added depth to the scene. The cherry on the top, were the two boys sitting inside which I believe were watching television.



*A moment of solitude as I escape
the blistering sun and hot stones.*

Ghat Goat

2024 | March

India | Varanasi

This type of boat is used on the Ganges River and usually stored on the upper steps, (Ghats) as you see hear. The goat got my attention firstly, however, the other people in the background added the depth I craved...click.



My penthouse, where's yours?

Penthouse Life

2024 | January

India | Mumbai

Mumbai has some of the largest number, and biggest slums in India. There is an official website documenting where they all are. Some of the more famous ones, are on the itinerary's of organised tours. I avoided these and picked a few at random, from the website and went out to investigate.

I was shocked that these slums were in fact, self contained communities with everything needed. Vegetable, meat, fish, rice stalls, plumbing, electrical, building supplies...in fact a huge assortment of shops, catering to all needs. Everyone I passed was surprised to see a foreigner and yet everyone smiled and was friendly, especially the children playing bare feet on the gravel roads.

On one of my visits, I was taken back, by how steep the steps to some of these homes were. Yet, the children and older generations alike, zipped up and down these stairs without a care in the world.



Straightening a life to perfection.

Tailored Life

2024 | March

India | Agra

My father was a tailor, during the summer school holidays, I would spend the day with him at the workshop in Soho London. When I passed this lady ironing, it took me straight back to my days with him as he used the same professional steam irons while making suits for British military officers.



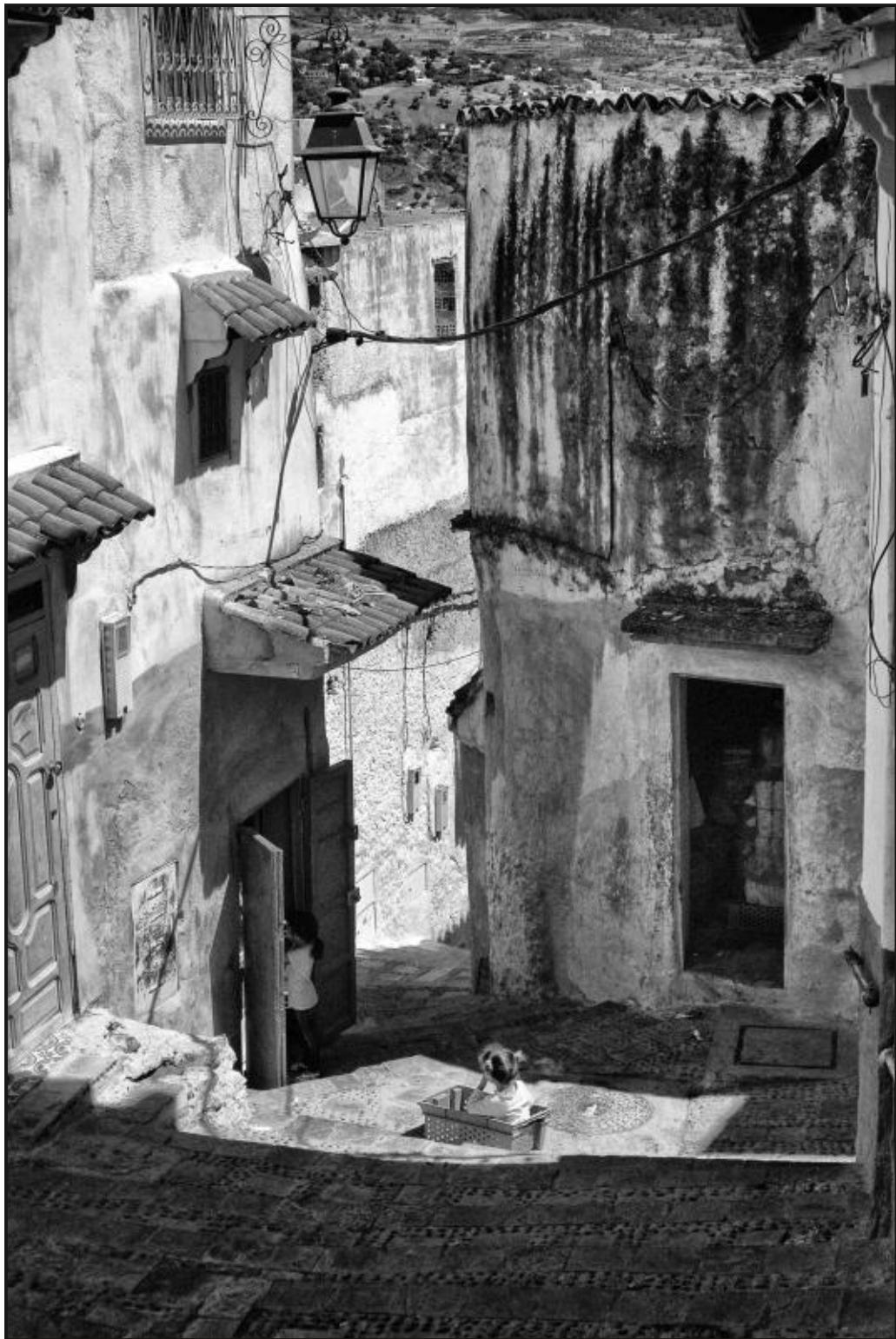
*A life inside or outside the box...
that is the question.*

Plastic Life

2017 | June

Morocco | Chefchaouen

I could hear some rattling around as I walked around Chefchaouen on another hot day. It turned out to be this young girl playing in a plastic crate....it reminded me of when I used to play in cardboard boxes as a child...click



*A labour of love,
standing tall forever.*

Love Conquers

2024 | March

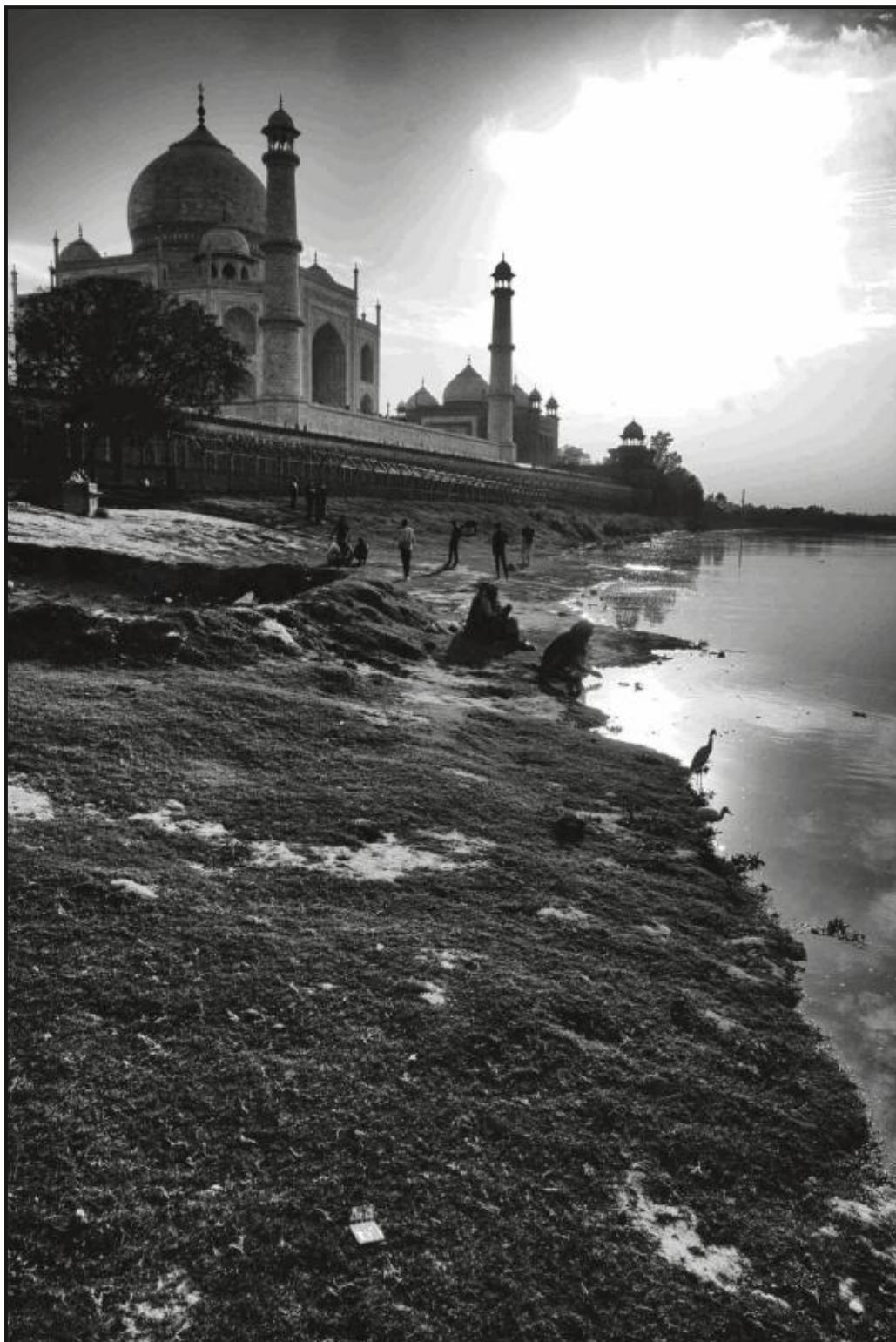
India | Agra

There are no shortage of photographs of The Taj Mahal in Agra, Uttar Pradesh, India.

My challenge was to capture its essence while veering away from the obvious shots we have all seen.

I gave myself five days to capture a photograph I was happy with. Unfortunately, if I'm honest, I failed. As always, I try to include people in my photographs, which I managed to achieve, however, with the time available, this was my best effort.

Sometimes the shot we imagine taking, prior to arriving at a famous location, ends up being very different to what we actually achieve...this photograph is one of them.



Swapping out a corporate banking cubicle at the tender age of 53, Ugo embarked on a multi-year backpacking trip around the world, documenting the journey with his “Banker to Backpacker” website.

To keep his brain active, he also created the “Around the World with 80 Questions” website and book, with the aim of answering meaningful, helpful and potentially, life-changing questions, while attempting to land on the right side of genuine history, truth and knowledge.



Questions such as: Why is there no cure for cancer? Where does money come from? What were the real reasons for the two World Wars? and probably the biggest of all, Why are we here?

This book of 80 black & white photographs in portrait orientation, charts his travels with a nod to the street photography of past masters.

“Without the emotion you bring to a scene, a photograph can never be truly your own.” *Ugo*



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