



SuperMassiveBlackHole





SuperMassiveBlackHole is dedicated to contemporary photography and the photographic imagery resulting from the time-based processes found in many interdisciplinary art practices today. The magazine seeks to engage and represent respective projects and ideas which utilise Photography (digital or analogue), New Media (high or low tech), Performance and Sculpture (through documentation). Fine Artists are encouraged to engage with the magazine as a way of exhibiting, testing, developing and experimenting with new (or old) ideas whether it is through a single image or a structured project.

Time, Space, Light and Gravity are what drive SuperMassiveBlackHole

SuperMassiveBlackHole is a free online magazine, and is published three times annually. **SuperMassiveBlackHole** accepts almost anything involved with the photographic process, from straight photography to video, performance documentation or written treatments. All submissions should be sent via Email. Please check the submission guidelines at:

www . SuperMassiveBlackHoleMag . com

Cover: *Untitled from Tonight*, by Elis Hoffman

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Night Diary

Theme

At Night perhaps because of the unknown, the threat of danger or excitement from unseen forces, the night is the reflection of our subconscious. A theme based on the activities of the night seemed to be inevitable. Its funny how we have evolved to separate night and day so conveniently and neatly. Some jobs, entertainment, social activities and private rituals are only carried out at night, and we seem perplexed when these things are done in “broad daylight”. We accept this, no matter how criminal, perverse or mundane, some things just belong to the night.

From the teenagers hanging around on street corners to the security guard, from the mother ironing clothes to the stripper dancing on a bar we encounter these nocturnal pursuits, and in some cases we are faced with questions about public and private, control and individual freedom. How business has learned to use the palette of night to project images of its products, or keep people out all night and spending, is a testament to our growing acceptance of movement and speed, instant gratification and greed.

The quietly introspective seconds and moments of nostalgia, a minute to appreciate the silent solitude of the darkness, and acquaint oneself with stillness is a valuable asset to the night. This time is for the contemplative but also for the voyeuristic individual. We need to wander alone, in our own space and at our own beckon, and what better time is there than at night - when all the others who desire the same also creep about in the dark, where we can singularly move from one point to another with as little notice or distraction as we require. In many ways the night is not so different to the day, but its clientele and its pleasures are alien to the other, and this is not without reason ●

Fergus Jordan

(Northern Ireland)

Under Cover of Darkness

Low voltage orange streetlights bouncing off wet black asphalt and yellow floodlights contaminating every inch of space. My perception of night ingrained in me from growing up in Northern Ireland where street lighting stems beyond the norms of lighting parks and pathways to create a balanced, safe social space. Rather it becomes an instrument of social control and surveillance, while darkness is positioned as a space of tactical menace, exile and the unknown. My latest series *Under Cover of Darkness* journeys through the darkened streets of Belfast, Northern Ireland orchestrating the sense of anxiety and paranoia that is present in these black-spot sectarian landscapes.





(Before) *On the Periphery of the New Lodge IX*, 2010; (Here) *Displacement*, 2010; *Dark Corner*, 2011

April Gertler

(United States/Germany)

Into The Night

I began the project titled *Into the Night* in the winter of 2001 while in Germany. I started photographing in both Berlin and Frankfurt am Main, and continued photographing in New York, in addition to some Midwestern States in America. *Into the Night* notices layered references of the past combined with the future. I am interested in capturing both the long standing historical monuments of architectural achievement and the excavation of building sites that clearly offer the short standing memory of human activity, both past and present. During this process, I have increasingly become fascinated with the stillness of the night and how images uncover hidden nuances which can not be seen with the naked eye. With this project I have been uncovering not only layers of history but also secrets and the mystery of locations.





(Before) *Untitled*; (Here) *Untitled*; *Untitled*

Sasha Tamarin

(Russia/Israel)

Mirage

Equipped with my camera, tripod and a release cable, I take my bicycle and ride into the night. I am fascinated by the transformation that is caused by the lights and shadows that were artificially created by urban landscape designers. The selective vision and quiet atmosphere create an intimate vacuum that stimulates my imagination causing an irrational mind flow. As far as I travel, the more it affects me. My works are based on the fear and thrill that seems to disappear when the shutter closes.





(Before) *Untitled*; (Here) *Untitled*; *Untitled*

Natalie Seils

(United States)

Till We Have Faces

Life is happening in chapters. These pictures are a part of just one chapter, taken over the course of one month. It was a month that saw three different homes, two jobs, and a revolving door of people. It was exhilarating and tragic, it was chaos, it was heartbreak and loneliness, and it was love. It reeked of cigarette smoke and cheap wine, soaked with coffee and littered with anti-depressants. It was a world I had created. These images are the residue, the afterglow, of that chapter. They are mirrors of myself and the choices I have made. They are attempts to understand myself, in all my chaos and contradictions.





(Before) Jessica; (Here) Self-portrait; The Ride

Sharon Boothroyd

(United Kingdom)

The Glass Between Us

North Oxford is known as the academic area where intellectuals live. Sharon Boothroyd wandered these streets at dusk, looking in the windows of the people's homes. She was intrigued as to what they were like and how they lived. She located rooms with the curtains open and the lights on, with a 'subject' inside, and knocked on the door to ask for permission to take a picture of them through the window. In crossing the boundary between private and public, Sharon creates a collaboration and the work becomes anti-voyeuristic in style.

She asked the subject to resume what they had been doing but by making them aware of her presence she introduces an element of self-consciousness. This newfound self-consciousness is in keeping with the history of portraiture. Traditionally the subject would commission an artist to portray them in relation to their chosen environment and social status. Although these subjects did not anticipate the photographer's arrival, the interiors were already staged and invite a reading of the inhabitant in line with their class and status, much like traditional portraiture. Boothroyd invited the sitters to become part of their own window displays, drawing upon the history of portraiture whilst maintaining a contemporary approach.

sharonboothroyd.com





(Before) *Untitled*; (Here) *Untitled*; *Untitled*

Chloé Devis

(France)

Nightshott

Night offers to the young people of Nouakchott, capital of Mauritania, an opportunity to meet up in places away from adult's eyes. Some glimpses of freedom in a still quite conservative society.





(Before) *The Movie Theatre*; (Here) *The Concert*; *The Fast-food*

Rafael Arocha

(Spain)

Medianoche (Midnight)

MEDIANOCHÉ (MIDNIGHT) is an essay that explores the nocturnal rituals of overtone.

To stage one night as consciousness / unconsciousness transient, as an intermediate stage towards the satisfaction of desire. A work that reveals and confronts the instinct and the ephemeral. Moments that make up an imaginary that is developed through nonverbal communication. Images that make you suspect uncertain finalities that are conceived through inventiveness, imagination or even desire.





(Before) *Untitled*; (Here) *Untitled*; *Untitled*

Patrick Clarke

(Ireland)

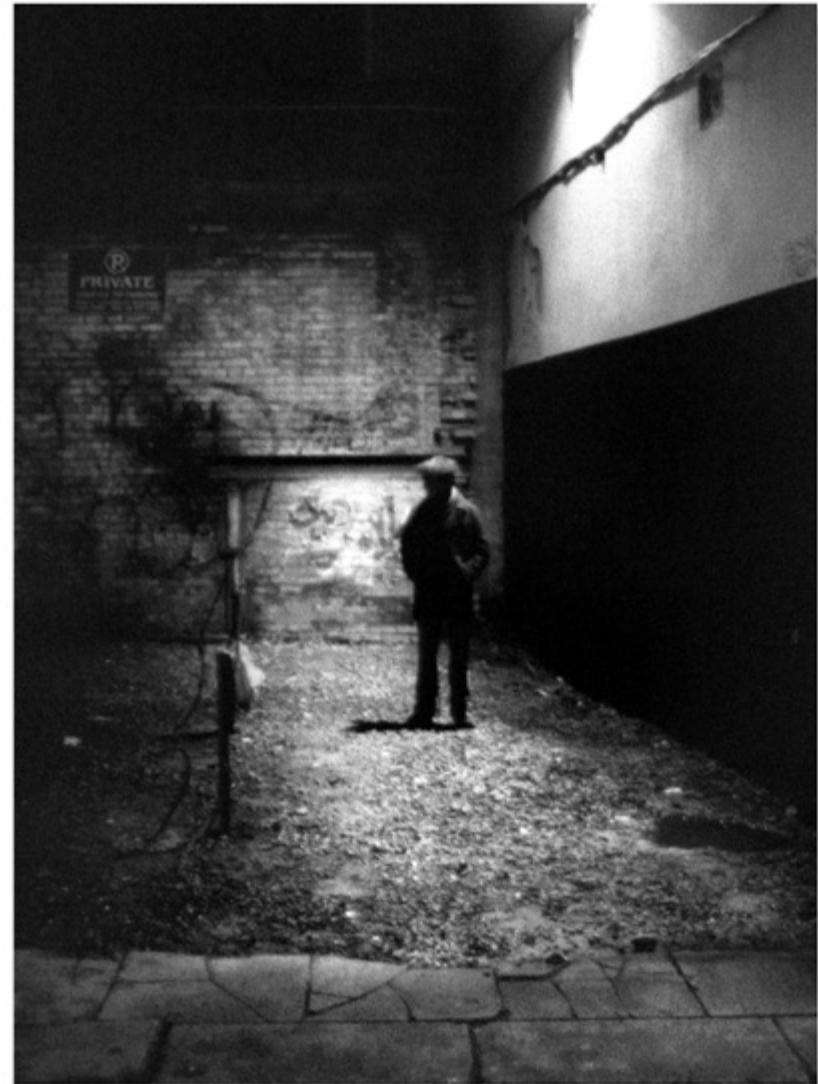
The Curse of Katrina

Sometimes it was easier at night. The dark hours brought a break from the humid New Orleans air and the Superdome became almost peaceful, yet never still. You were afraid of dropping off to sleep because you never knew what was going to happen, what was lurking in the shadows. Katrina had brought hell to earth, and the “humanitarian” response kept it there. These images were made in 2005 after a safe return home from spending a week in the Louisiana Superdome during Hurricane Katrina and its aftermath.

In explaining to others what had happened during Katrina, the words “it was like a horror movie” would creep from my mouth and this phrase provided the inspiration for the piece. This project also helped me to confront, head on, what I had seen and lived through.

Shot in Dublin at night, to replicate the mood of early black and white horror movies, these photographs explore the human tendency to expect the worst or allow uncertainty to reign when darkness falls.

whitefeathermedia.net





(Before) *Untitled*; (Here) *Untitled*; *Untitled*

Elis Hoffman

(Sweden)

Tonight

In Sweden we have a tradition of going to different venues and dance, to what we call a “dance band”. Their music and songs are often about love, heartache and memories from the past. I decided to go on tour around Sweden with these bands. After a while my focus turned from the stage to the dance floor. I identified with the dancers’ burning desire to feel and their urge to express those emotions. I started to ask my self: Why are we so afraid to show what we need and feel?

For me, people are at their most beautiful when they are brave enough to show their vulnerability.

elishoffman.com





(Before) *Untitled*; (Here) *Untitled*; *Untitled*

Christopher Meerdo

(United States)

Billboard Groves

Kodak Duratrans Lightbox, 19x24"

Billboard Groves is a series of lightboxes displaying groves of trees illuminated by billboard lights. The project was produced over several weeks along stretches of highway in the midwestern states. The photos are informed by memories of being driven through the night hours, as a child, to and from relative's houses. The project considers the construction of nostalgia in relation to the intentions of marketers and advertisers. This series acts as a nuanced example of this disparity and removes the context-heavy face of advertising on the billboard, leaving only the fleeting moments of light and place that exist in memory.





(Before) Billboard Grove No.2 - The Lions Den Adult Superstore Open 24/7; (Here) Billboard Grove No.6 - Simply Juicy, Y'all Next Exit; Billboard Grove No.7 - Stone's Harley-Davidson Next Exit Turn Left

Tina Remiz

(Latvia/UK)

Night Workers

The human biological clock works with astonishing precision, ensuring even energy spending through the day and complete body regeneration over the night. The process has been established over thousands of years of evolution and applies equally to all human beings on the planet, regardless of their geographical location or cultural identity.

Nonetheless, for some people the opposite is true. You rarely see them by day, resting after the long working hours, although you may board the same evening train, as they head to work while you return home on time for an afternoon tea. Their morning coffee is at your dinner-time, lunch break at midnight, their day ends when yours begins. They work while you sleep to ensure that your day runs smoothly, in the city that never sleeps. You know they are on duty, but tend to take their work for granted, even though your life depends on the night workers.





(Before) Doctor; (Here) Film Projectionist; Security Guard

Irina Popova

(Russia/Netherlands)

Morocco: No Organges Here

This project is devoted to Morocco. Why did the *Arab Spring* not touch this country? Is everyone satisfied with the king or is the secret somewhere else? With these questions Irina deepens into a complex reality of unknown land to drag out her own answer. She tells a story of a country sleeping under the influence of hashish smoking; Morocco is the world's largest exporter of hashish, the resin from Cannabis.

The young people spend their time hanging out in the cafes and smoking hashish and think that immigration to Europe will solve their problems. She goes to the high mountains in Ketama region to the biggest plantations of the drug in the African continent to see the root of the evil. Why do people smoke? How it is possible to produce the drug here? And what is the result of this? If one person is in a "stoned state," the reality is changing inside his mind. And what about a place where there is nothing except the drug, in fact, where the young and old smoke it.





(Before) *Untitled*; (Here) *Untitled*; *Untitled*

Jonny Cochrane

(United Kingdom)

Khao San

Khao San doesn't let you sleep. The days are disorientating, alienating; a *Kafkaesque* sequence of unremarkable and unexplained incidents, futile fleeting encounters, perplexing structures that disconcert, curious faces and relentless noise. Intense, absorbing colour. A framework that may fall apart at any moment. By night there is a heady atmosphere of chaos and confusion. Lonely hearts roam, unlikely paths cross and strange relationships are formed. Foreigners float in optimistically. Just as quickly they are gone, continuing their pursuit of enlightenment, emotional fulfillment and physical gratification elsewhere. Indifferent to what and who they have left behind. In the most beautiful and conspicuously happy of human beings is found deep sadness and fatigue, unease and regret. Souls desperately seeking affection, the prospect of an onward journey. Lives haunted by troubled pasts and held captive by their present existence.

jonnycochrane.com





(Before) *Untitled*; (Here) *Untitled*; *Untitled*

Elisabetta Zavoli

(Italy)

Night Angels

One of the meanings of the word *symbol* (from the greek “symbàllò”, as is “put together”) dates back to a practice of the Roman period, the so called *tessera hospitalis*: each of the two pieces split from a single *tile* was preserved as a token of hospitality, given or in receipt. The guest would perpetually recall who had hosted, reflecting on his/her piece while thinking of the missing fragment. Conversely, those who had hosted could remember him/her. Thus, each half became a sign of recognition.

Each symbol, therefore, contains an absence directly in its presence.

In my project *Night Angels*, for several months, I took pictures of a group of dancers in a nightclub in Riccione, an Italian touristic resort famous for its nightlife and transgressive clubs. My interest was to investigate, in their performance and off stage, those symbols in which the “people of discos” reflect upon themselves.

The use of the body, gestures and masks in the nights of work of this group of dancers are symbols which evoke what they wish: eternally young, beautiful, being observed and desired, fast love, no rules, being over the top. “We are dancers, so exhibitionists, self-centered”, states a dancer - highlights of our time.

elisabettazavoli.com





(Before) *Untitled (Riccione, Italy)*; (Here) *Untitled (Riccione, Italy)*; *Untitled (Riccione, Italy)*

David Farrell was born in Dublin, 1961, read Chemistry at UCD graduating with a Ph.D. in 1987. Currently working as a lecturer in photography in IADT-Dun Laoghaire. He has worked independently and on communion projects with Gogo della Luna (Gudòk). Received the *European Publishers Award for Photography* in 2001 for *Innocent Landscapes* and in 2004 participated in the *European Eyes on Japan* project. *Crow*, his collaborative multimedia film with composer Benjamin Dwyer, was premiered during the *Composers Choice Festival* at the National Concert Hall Dublin in 2005. He has exhibited internationally including *Houston FotoFest 2006*, on four occasions at the *Festival Internazionale di Fotografia*, Rome and in China in 2008 and 2010 and recently as part of the *BRUM collectives'* prize winning curatorial project *Margins* at *7th Poznan Photo Biennial* in Poland in 2011 His second publication, *Nè vicino Nè lontano. A Lugo* - (Punctum -Autumn 2007) was a result of a residency project curated by Luca Nostri in Lugo in the North of Italy. *David Farrell - Elusive Moments* a documentary by Donald Taylor Black (Poolbeg Productions) was premiered at the *Cork Film Festival 2008* and was broadcast on Irish Television as part of *The Look of the Irish* series on Irish photography. Since September 2009 he has been documenting his revisits to the sites of *Innocent Landscapes* and the ongoing renewed searches at some of these locations for those disappeared during the conflict in Northern Ireland at www.source.ie/blog. He has also been working in recent years on numerous landscape projects including an examination of the topography of post-Celtic Tiger period.

David Farrell

(Ireland)

The Remembering Light

(ghost walking in my neighbourhood(s))

Much has been written about the relationship between photography and memory and this has, in general, focused on the photograph as a material memory of what is photographed acting as a springboard for recollection. There is however considerable debate between theorists as to whether photography facilitates or configures memory. *The Remembering Light* is an attempt to record what would otherwise be fleeting non-moments observed and experienced in between, or on the way to, experiencing what may be more significant, more retrievable memories.

These images are not flashbacks but flash-forwards - they are, like most photographs, umbilical cords to the past and arrows into the future by allowing new narrative possibilities. As recollections, they exist solely because of the act of photography and the milliseconds of flashlight. Outside of this photographic action it is unlikely they would be remembered as distinct events at all – ‘Do ye remember the time when we saw that poster of the lost cat’ – and yet because of their communal ‘nightness’ and our desire as humans for narratives to make sense of our lives it is quite possible to link these images in a sequence which, in spite of containing different seasons and locations, they could be perceived as a single night’s amble through ones mind.

davidfarrell.org





David Farrell



David Farrell



David Farrell



David Farrell



David Farrell



David Farrell



David Farrell



David Farrell

Talk

Darren Campion

Past Tense: Michael Ackerman's Fiction

Past Tense: Michael Ackerman's Fiction

Darren Campion is a freelance writer based in Ireland. To read more visit *The Incoherent Light*, an online photography journal



All images ©Michael Ackerman.

Michael Ackerman is represented by agencevu.com

Most often we take our certainties for granted. Places or names appear to us as comprehensible, being exactly what they are and no less. A broader sense of the world is held together by that fundamental assumption, shading the contours of an unchanging landscape where dark still opposes light, but is never equal to it, where there is no likely slippage between who you are and the image you have of yourself. All of this is not exactly a lie, it's just not the world we fully belong to or are capable of making. The illusions we build our lives on are fragile and grasped with too much force they shatter.

Here there are no sure coordinates by which to navigate

If *Fiction* is a perfectly apt title for this body of work by Michael Ackerman it is because in refusing one narrative he finds others just as troubling. His is a world of forgetting (and conversely, a world where forgetting is impossible), of questions that cannot be answered, hungers that cannot be satisfied. He charts a near hallucinogenic passage through some blasted, seemingly post-historical nightscape; everything is received at the most piercing frequency, nerves raw, attention pulled in every direction. Here there are no sure coordinates by which to navigate, no anchor save for the act of photography itself – notations on the void.

The images fall into an associative and distinctly non-linear rhythm that carries the momentum of the work forward, a densely rendered stream of consciousness building upon itself, spreading out, revealing layers, currents of meaning. Its structure is actually quite elaborate, a trademark of Ackerman's that might well be unconvincing in lesser hands. He is all the while unwavering in his determination to cross into (or out of) some desolate territory of the soul, and although not necessarily distant, these are definitely states of awareness on the outer edges of our familiar existence, all those things from which we ordinarily seek shelter, that threaten the comfortable reserve we put between ourselves and the world for fear of being overwhelmed by memories too barbed to handle, or by the fevered pursuit of oblivion, pleasure and despair intertwined, the crashingly sensate. Even the light, when we find it, is a blinding absence, and whatever it touches is scorched beyond recognition, leaving only the bones, a trace of some encounter that has been and gone. Everything here exists emphatically in the past tense, now becoming then, and the future never happens, because we can only live it through the lens of the past – and of the camera.

For all its ostensible roughness, there is an insistent purity to Ackerman's photographic vision, the dark really is dark and the light is just another kind of emptiness, no less cruel. Everything is haunted, tragic – and it is, convincingly so. This happens in the materiality of his pictures, which in this case is not just a stylistic choice, but also a set of values inseparable from their meaning. In many ways, *Fiction* is an important milestone in Ackerman's continuing evolution as a photographer. It develops on the immediate observational context of his earlier pictures, but in *Fiction* they are no longer grounded, spatially or psychologically. His encounter with the world is shaped by the need he has to articulate it in photographs, leaving a core of determined expressiveness, where the feeling of a picture, its



©Michael Ackerman/Agence Vu



©Michael Ackerman/Agence Vu

emotional affect, counts for more than anything. Here the work depends wholly on the sort of charged atmosphere he manages to create, a formal consistency that subsumes all of Ackerman's experiences into a single thread, winding together the events of his life with the particularity of his own response to them – telling the story is a manifestation of the story itself.

There is an inherent creative danger, though, in the sort of landscape that Ackerman has claimed for his own. At any time he might fall into a theatrical despair that makes little more than a fetish of the human struggle, with no reflection at all on what exactly that might be, besides a stagey backdrop for the angst-ridden demimonde – life in the raw. Truthfully, Ackerman's is hardly a vision broad in scope; some will no doubt even find it hollow romanticism. But his sustained pursuit of a personal ideal is considerably more than the sum of its parts, and the cumulative effect of his photography is one that seems to offer genuine insight about the times in which we live.

It is actually the world that fits his vision and not the other way around

More than that, there is a pervasive sense of historical resonance to this work, the way a charged past seeps into our understanding of a place, and it is in this context that Ackerman's deeply felt style makes the most sense. It was conflict that drew the map of Europe, terrible loss and blood-shed. In his nocturnal wanderings Ackerman uses his own peeled sensibility like a gauge for past tragedy and finds it everywhere, the wind-blown streets, the emptied landscapes and solitary figures blurring into the dark – infected by history. This awareness is what crystallises his own existential drama; the sense of a horizon wider than just his inner turmoil and the always hectic urge to make pictures, the need to connect with what is happening around him.



©Michael Ackerman/Agence Vu

This is not to say of course that the value of Ackerman's work is to be found only in tracing the emotional overlap of past and present, because clearly it stands on its own terms as something fully realised. It is actually the world that fits his vision and not the other way around. He shows that our past is nearly always tragic, just because it is past and so far beyond where we can reach. The immediacy of Ackerman's own feeling is projected from the images; we can share in it or at least occupy a roughly comparable space for the duration of our viewing. He is not just showing a moment, but wants us to exist within it as he did and his willingness to collapse those boundaries is ultimately what makes this work such a rewarding experience ●

www.fotobookfestival.org



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www.le-bal.fr

20.-22. April 2012
Dummy Award 2012 | Photobook Award 2012
Presentation @ Le Bal

5. Foto Book Festival

5th International Photobook Festival 2012 @ Le Bal, Paris

At Le Bal's invitation, the 5th International Photobook Festival will be held in Paris in the documenta year 2012, where the photographic book will be the focus from 20-22 April. Apart from a distinguished program of lectures and a curated market place, the festival will also present the 2012 Dummy and Photobook Awards.

FotoBookFestival.org

20. - 22. April 2012

Project

Germán Peraire

Night Diary

Germán Peraire

(Spain)

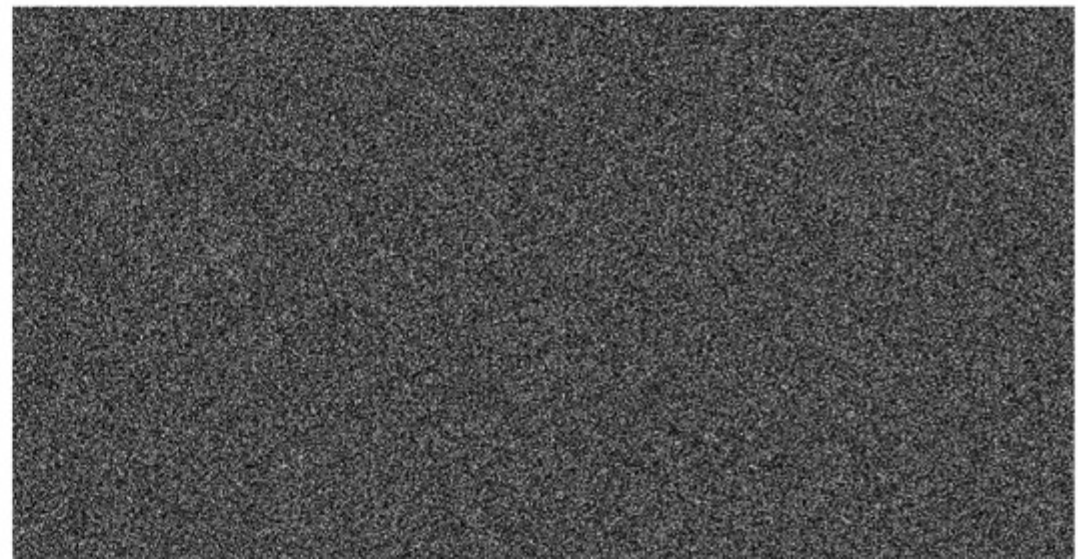
Night Diary

Night Diary is an autobiographical, introspective work, but also is a work about the other - the people I have met. I wander astray at night, carrying my camera and always meeting new people, mainly in bars and squares. My aim is to portray a hidden, hedonist, marginalised humanity, eager for pleasures, and gathering in refuge of common life. I construct a sort of testimony, a witnessing of my personal universe from which I find all around me.

Bio

Born in Barcelona in 1988, Germán Peraire discovered photography at the age of 16 and ever since devoted to it. Studied photography in the Politechnical University of Catalunya and started a professional career, exhibiting in galleries and festivals around Europe. Represented nowadays by Galería Tagomago in Barcelona, is considered a relevant emergent photographer in Spain. Lives and works between Barcelona and Berlin.

germanperaire.com.es



Night Diary is the photographic chronicle of the nocturnal wanderings of Spanish photographer, Germán Peraire. They are impressions captured by a man astray in the night, wandering through nameless bars and town squares surveying an uncertain metropolis as he encounters a cacophony of clatter and hum, echoing from this subterranean urban nightscape. Employing a simple, but raw palette of high key black and white tones, Germán collects shadows and intimacies punctuated with hints of gender blur and irreverence.

It is a world where conventional boundaries of sexuality and sensuality blur

The images in *Night Diary* unravel as a series of scenarios, like a collection of one act plays, each with its own distinct narrative. The photographs reverberate with pathos and pain, laughter, love, and desolation. Some moments vibrate with the vapors of alcohol, others rattle with a distinct surrealism from an in-between world. It is a world where conventional boundaries of sexuality and sensuality blur. Madness tumbles forth in ways one can only stumble upon when on walkabout in the early morning hours before night lifts and is replaced by the harshness of dawn. In the blazing morning light, these impressions are obliterated immediately like a vampire burned by the sun, but when encountered in the intensity of night, spot-lit under garish streetlights, the shadows that fall become epic and the subjects hold center stage with bold defiance.

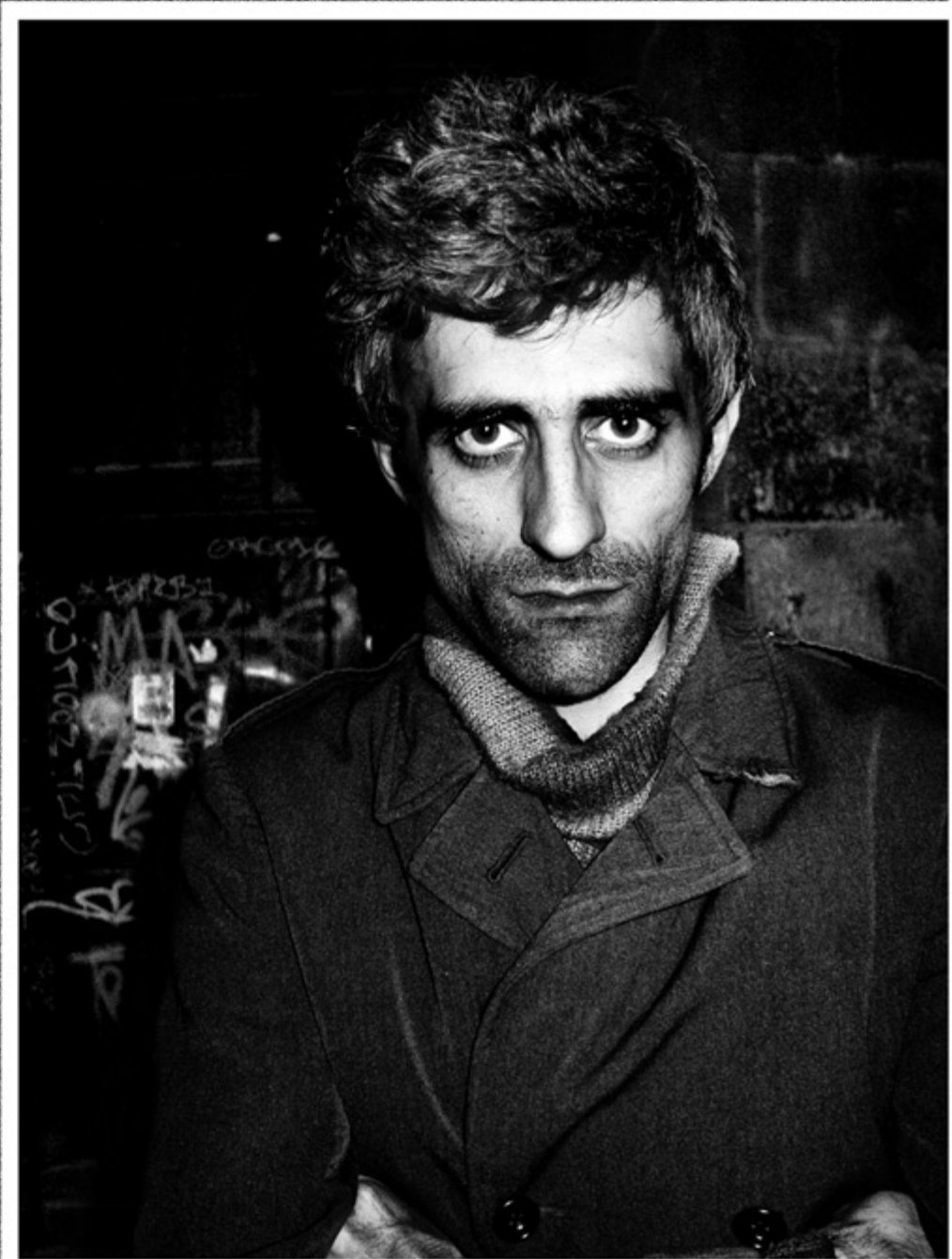


Night Diary also pays homage to what the artist describes as, the Spanish way of encountering the night – “people are drawn together with no determined final destination, but with a desire to be immersed in the energy of the moment present”. Enacted on a stage of narrow streets in the old town of Barcelona, Germán seeks other *night wolves* like himself, who grapple with personal phantoms, and like him, contemplate their existence while wandering aimlessly. He searches within this sea of outsiders for kinship, even if only for a brief few moments. Amid the messy, unkempt implied decadence, Germán seeks to discover and record with a purity with his camera, a secret beauty within, lying underneath the crust of this frenetic night force that holds him spellbound.

Germán describes *Night Diary* as the first major opus in his photographic career. He feels at present it is but a sonata, the tip of an iceberg, which he will continue to develop into a full-blown symphony over time. His aim is to portray “a hedonist, marginalised humanity seeking pleasures” but he also catches in his photographic net the other souls, those who get disoriented and lost in the night and can find no escape. The images are the reflection of his personal universe which he finds scattered around him in these night explorations. Throughout the work is a sense of homesickness, restlessness and homelessness, comprised into an unforgettable cantos, affirming this endless search for essence, identity and belonging by humanity. The visual tune is powerful, pounding with a steady bass rhythm of a perhaps tattered, but indomitable hope ●

Original text by Peggy Sue Amison

(Abridged and edited by Barry W Hughes for SuperMassiveBlackHole)







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