

**B**orn and living in Germany, your first trip to Venice was in December 2015. After great

anticipation, you arrived and proceeded to have a terrible time! It sounds like when you left, you really didn't care if you would ever be visiting Venice again. When did you catch the "I-have-to-go-back" virus and what were the circumstances?

In fact, I thought Venice and I were not going to be friends. I love Italy and my husband knew Venice, he wanted to show me the city he knew from childhood. I was really looking forward to it, I wanted to take a lot of pictures and was curious about Venice. Unfortunately, during the entire time I was so ill that I could not enjoy it at all.

This frustrated my husband because he wanted me to like the city as much as he did. A few weeks after the catastrophic first visit, he suggested that I try again. This time to the Carnevale di Venezia; only me and my camera for 3 days.

I arrived again in Venice about two months after my first visit. And this time it sparked me. In addition to the hustle and bustle of the masses, I deliberately looked for quiet corners and got to know a beautiful Venice in winter. That was in February 2016. From then on, the Venice virus had infected me.



Venice is renown for her palette of salt-washed color. However your preference is to shoot the city and black and white. What are the attributes to shooting Venice in monochrome? How has the city encouraged this option? How does the choice of black and white determine what, when, and where you shoot in Venice?

My first “successful” visit took place in February, so a rather gloomy season, but has its own charm. Silent streets and squares over which, especially early in the morning or at night, a slight haze of fog hangs over everything. This very special atmosphere along with the old palazzi, where the ravages of time gnawed, inspired me to capture this mood in black and white.

Black and white photography is a silent way to capture motifs. It radiates peace and serenity for me. Nothing distracts from the mood of the moment, not a palette of innumerable colors that make one’s eyes jump. What I record always decides unplanned and unforeseen. I often let places and moments work on me for a while, watching what happens around me. This results in the situations in which I press the trigger. I’m not the photographer who plans my tours in advance. I let the life around me decide what it offers.



You’ve mentioned being inspired by the work of Vivian Maier because of her ability to “tell a story in small and inconspicuous moments.” I see this characteristic in “Daily Work” your photograph selected for Dream of Venice in Black and White. With just a glimpse into the lives of the

squeraroli at San Trovaso, you've managed to offer us a complete narrative. Can you explain the conception of the photo, and what you wanted it to evoke?

In this photo at San Trovaso, I spent a very long time sitting on the steps by the canal and watching the goings-on in the gondola yard. At the same time, I thought about the "madness" that takes place every day in Venice at the "main attractions". Thousands and thousands of people, rushing from A to B, rushed by a tight schedule, take a selfie, and do not even want to discover the real Venice. And, as with many other situations in the city, I realized that the gondolieri and the gondola builders are real. Real in that sense, rather than being folkloristic accessories for the hustled tourist taking a gondola ride on a To-Do List.

It is their hands and body which work to be able to feed their families. Squeraroli and Gondolieri condition each other. One can not exist without the other for hundreds of years. I wanted to capture this symbiosis with this photo and so I waited for the right moment to be able to record both parts of this unit together.



I also see this element in your “Jewish Life” series that you shot in 2017, in the ghetto. The images are almost shy in their unobtrusiveness and yet still feel revealing. Can you tell us your motivation behind this award-winning series?

I think the photos also show a little bit who I am. I am a shy person, who prefers to stay in the background, instead of reaching for something in full force. This is also the case with photography, especially when I want to capture the situation on the street. I try to maintain a great distance and do not want to be noticed. As soon as a person consciously perceives a camera, even if only briefly, it changes their behavior, their body language and their movements.



The series in the Ghetto of Venice was created spontaneously. Actually, I just wanted to wait for my husband, who still had to get something. In the process, I watched as the Jewish community set up a long table in the campo for a meal together. People came and went, the children played - just normal life.

I wanted to hold on to it - the children play like all children, the adults laugh and discuss, the father whirls his daughter through the air, she is squealing with pleasure. Especially in this day and age, where you can observe that other cultures and religions are being critically observed, I wanted to show that ultimately we are all one - namely people. And we live, laugh, discuss, love and celebrate all the same - regardless of religion or anything else.



After your first ill-fated trip to Venice you've been back many times. How has your photography of Venice changed over the years?

Yes, since the unfortunate first visit, 7 more stays have been added to Venice.

Venice slows me down a bit more each time. As soon as I enter the vaporetto in Piazzale Roma, I come to a wonderful peace. No matter how hectic the journey was or how tired I am because the flight started at six in the morning.

Exactly this tranquility has also been transferred to photography over time. I take all the time in the world to let a place affect me, to wait for a special situation or to change the light. I pay much more attention than before to small, supposedly inconspicuous details. This may be a tiny picture of the Madonna on a house facade, a splendidly planted balcony or even the seagull standing and

drinking under a nasone. A special symmetry or asymmetry on a façade, an unusual shadow cast in a narrow street but also hands or faces drawn by hard work. Without this peace and relaxation that Venice has taught me, this would certainly be different today. Venice has sharpened my view even more - and will certainly continue to do so in the future.

links

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