

# BLUR

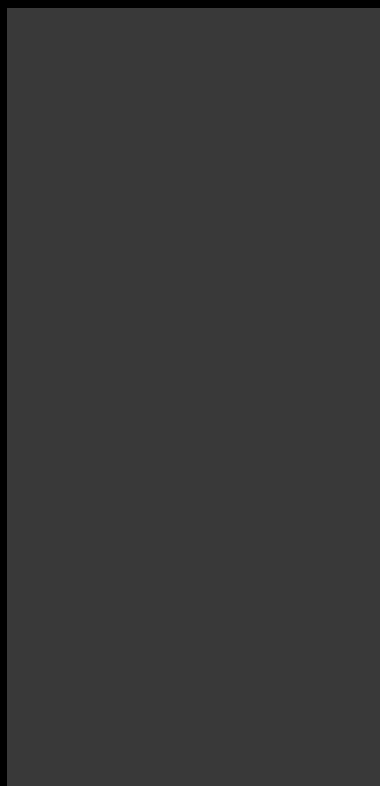


M A G A Z I N E

photo: Igor Vasiladis

20

■ TETRA



interview Robert Gojević

NEW YORK  
Hakan Strand

Sweden | <http://www.strand-photo.com/>





Would you say that you are first of all a traveler or a photographer, or vice versa? If one takes a look at your portfolio, you have certainly done your share of traveling.

First of all I am a photographer, but I also love to travel.

I find it easier to work when I am alone and away from home. When you are home there are always things that you must do and take care of. When I am away on a photo trip, the only thing I have on my agenda is to take photographs. That makes it easier to focus and concentrate on my work.

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What are your impressions of NY?

I love New York. It's such a vibrant city. My wife is from New York, so we have spent a lot of time there during the last 21 years. New York has actually become my second hometown.

I love to photograph New York, not only because it's such a beautiful city and has so many iconic scenes, it's also very easy to find your way around, and people are kind and very helpful. Actually, I think people in the US are generally very friendly and helpful. I have traveled all over the United States and I have never had any bad experiences.



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Were the photographs that we are presenting taken during just one or many visits?

They were all taken on my latest trip to New York. I spent 7 days there, at the end of February and beginning of March 2010



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I assume that photographing and visiting of all those locations was pretty exhausting. So how long did the photographing last altogether?

In general, I don't find it exhausting to travel and take photographs. After many years behind a computer screen in an office, I actually love the freedom to travel and visit new places. I love to work outside, and enjoy the physical challenge of shooting landscapes. (I don't know how long it took to take these photographs since I am not sure which pictures you are going to include?)

When I go on a photo trip, I usually go for 7 or 10 days.

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Do you have any information on NY that would be interesting to our readers, and would give a better insight into your entire project? For example, how big is the NY population and how large is the city? And what is it about NY that leaves everyone breathless?

I don't have any specific information about New York that is not generally available. Right now, I just want to build a nice portfolio with images from New York. The future will tell what's going to happen with these images.

What I think impresses most people who visit New York for the first time, at least if you are from Europe, is the size of the city. New York is big! The skyscrapers are quite impressive. I also know that many people recognize a lot of things when they visit New York. This is, of course, related to all the movies they have seen. However, the major thing that I think impresses many people is the mix of people from all over the world that you find there. New York is really the melting pot.

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From your website one can see that you have photographed such landscapes as Death Valley, in California, so would you say that you prefer urban surrounding or nature itself?

I prefer to photograph nature. I enjoy being alone in a natural environment with the camera as my only companion. I used to work as an anesthetist in a trauma center, and with clinical research for a pharmaceutical company, two quite demanding and stressful environments. So, to have a few days on my own in peace and quiet in nature, does actually feel more like a nice and relaxing vacation.

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One of the interesting things about your photographs is that there are no people. How would you explain that?

I do most of my work very early in the morning when most people are still in bed or late in the evening when most people are comfortably seated in their favorite chair in front of the TV. It's quite empty outside when the light is most beautiful.



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You mainly work in black and white. Have you ever had a doubt about a certain photograph, have you maybe thought that it would look much better in color, but being consistent, you developed it in black and white after all?

Actually no. The vast majority of my work is done on black and white film, so it has never occurred to me that one of the images would look better in color.

I think a good black and white photograph has aesthetic qualities which I find appealing. I like the relationship between the darkest black and purest white, and all the variations of grey in between. I also like well-composed photographs with strong graphic elements, which I think can be enhanced in black and white.



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Was your relationship with photography a love at first sight or...? What did your path from amateur to professional photographer look like and what are your plans for the future?

It was love at first sight for sure! I still remember when I managed to develop a photograph for the first time. It was in the autumn of 1973. I was 13 years old, groping around in a crowded darkroom with my classmates at school. After dropping the important instructions into the developing bath and splashing toxic chemicals all over my clothes, I suddenly saw, to my great surprise, how a picture emerged on the white photographic paper.

I was so thrilled by this magical process that I forgot to follow the written instructions. For obvious reasons, the teacher

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was not impressed by the results. Nevertheless, I felt both excited and proud of my first picture. Although I did not realize it then, I had just taken my first faltering steps into my future profession as a photographer.

My interest in photography waxed and waned over the years. From the mid '70s to the early '80s music took up most of my time. I played guitar in several bands, mostly blues and rock. It wasn't until 1991, when I lived in the USA for a year, that my interest in photography was once again ignited. I lived in New York and discovered many galleries that only featured photography, which was uncommon in Sweden at that time.



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I saw many wonderful exhibits, both contemporary photography and the work of the old masters. This was very inspiring, especially since I noticed that there was a big interest in black and white landscapes, which was the type of image I worked with. So, in the spring of 1991, I decided to work more seriously with photography. However, my children were still small back then, so I spent many years making preparations. When I actually made the transformation to a professional photographer, it was quite easy.

My plan for the future is to build a nice portfolio with work from the Scandinavian countries. This will hopefully result in a fine exhibition, and ultimately a book.



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Are you planning on visiting Croatia? People say that our country is special because it offers a wide spectrum of diversities on a fairly small geographical area. Is there something in particular that you would like to visit and photograph?

I have never visited Croatia, but I have heard it is a very beautiful country. I would like to visit Dubrovnik, Plitvice Lakes National Park, and the island of Mljet, among many other areas in Croatia. I am actually planning to visit Croatia in the future, but I am not sure when this will be possible. Right now I am working on a big project called Scandinavia, together with a curator, Nina Grundemark. She is the owner of the gallery Swedish Photography in Berlin, Germany. This project will include a period of extensive travel in the Scandinavian countries in the near future. When this project is done, I will plan for a photo trip to Croatia. A trip I look forward to very much.

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## Awards

1st place, Nature, IPA, International Photography Awards. USA. 2010  
8 Honorable Mentions, IPA, International Photography Awards. USA. 2010  
Honor of Distinction, Black & White Spider Awards. 2010  
Honorable Mention, Nature, Black & White Spider Awards. 2010  
7 Nominees, Black & White Spider Awards. 2010  
3rd place, Fine Art, PX3, Prix De La Photographie Paris. France. 2009  
2nd place, Architecture, PX3, Prix De La Photographie Paris. France. 2009  
10 Honorable Mentions, IPA, International Photography Awards. USA. 2009  
1st place, National Geographic International Photography Contest. 2009  
Merit Award Winner, Black & White Magazine Single Images Contest. USA. 2009  
Merit of Excellence, Nature, Black & White Spider Awards. 2008  
Merit of Excellence, Fine Art, Black & White Spider Awards. 2008  
5 Nominees, Black & White Spider Awards. 2008  
10 Honorable Mentions, IPA, International Photography Awards. USA. 2008  
2nd place, Public Choice Awards, PX3, Prix De La Photographie Paris. France. 2008  
6 Honorable Mentions, PX3, Prix De La Photographie Paris. France. 2008  
2nd place, Fine Art, PX3, Prix De La Photographie Paris. France. 2008  
1st place, Nature, PX3, Prix De La Photographie Paris. France. 2008  
Merit Award Winner, Black & White Magazine. USA. 2008  
Top 50, Photolucida Critical Mass. Portland, Oregon, USA. 2007  
Best Of Show, IPA, International Photography Awards. Los Angeles, USA. 2007  
3 Honorable Mentions, Nature, IPA, International Photography Awards. USA. 2007  
1st and 2nd place, Fine Art, IPA, International Photography Awards. USA. 2007  
Nominee, Black & White Spider Awards. 2006  
Winner of Minolta Photo World Contest. Köln, Germany. 2005



Special thanks to Tony Mamić

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**The International  
Exhibition of Polaroid  
photography**

Photo gallery Lang,  
Samobor  
March 20-April 3, 2011.

the  
**BEST  
POLAROID  
PHOTO  
EXHIBITION**





# The International Exhibition of Polaroid photography

Photo gallery Lang,  
Samobor  
March 20-April 3, 2011.

In early 2010. BLUR magazine launched a big international competition of analog images shoot on Polaroid film to celebrate the success of the Dutch The Impossible Project company and to give its recognition to the spectacular comeback of Polaroid photography to the artistic scene.

At that time, we asked you to send us your favorite Polaroid photograph after which the official panel chose the top 30 works. Through an online voting on BLUR magazine web page you have decided which 5 photos will be rewarded with rich Polaroid prizes. Moreover, during the year, we have been presenting these 5 authors in more detail through our section Instantiation.

We are pleased to announce an exhibition of The Best Polaroid Photo where we will present 30 selected Polaroid photographs. The exhibition will be held between March 20-April 3, 2011., precisely on the first anniversary of the great return of Polaroid photography. It will held in photo gallery Lang, the only gallery in Croatia specialized in photography.

We look forward to seeing you!

the  
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**The International  
Exhibition of Polaroid  
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March 20-April 3, 2011.

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