

D.

SELF-PRESENTATION

”CITY DYNAMICS –

A PHOTOGRAPHY EXPRESSION”

- **PHOTOGRAPHY**

photography allows for a specific exploration of reality
by compressing it with optical tools into a two-dimensional image.

- **PHOTOGRAPHER**

by creating a subjective image of the existing physical world,
he goes beyond the obvious fact that the matter exists,
and gives it an objective transcendental dimension.

Tomasz Sobiecki 1987/2017



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ARTIST'S BRIEF BIOGRAPHY

Tomasz Sobecki, PhD – born in 1952 and living in Toruń.

Graduated from the 4th Secondary School in Toruń and the Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń (MSc. degree in geography).

In the early period of his adult life he was involved into mountaineering and natural sciences.

His master teacher, who introduced him to the world of art, and his mentor, guiding him towards the first photographic exhibitions abroad was Władysław Hasior. The artistic approach of Sobecki was influenced by contacts with many outstanding Polish artists, including Tadeusz Brzozowski, Jacek Sienicki, Stanisław Rodziński and their artworks.

In June 2013, after defending his work *THE IDEA OF THE PYRAMIDS*, Sobecki was granted a doctoral degree in photography from the Cinematography Department of the Łódź Film School (PWSFTviT). His doctoral advisor was dr hab. Mirosław Ledwosiński, and the work was critically reviewed by Prof. Andrzej Bator and dr hab. Andrzej Musiał.

Recommendations for the opening of the procedure of granting the doctoral degree were given by Prof. Stefan Wojnecki (UA in Poznań), Prof. Wojciech Hora (UTP in Bydgoszcz) and dr hab. Piotr Karczewski (ASP in Łódź).

Tomasz Sobecki has exhibited his works in many prestigious art and photography galleries in Poland and abroad, as well as in unusual public spaces, for example in Coventry Cathedral (1983), Carski Dworzec Kolejowy in Aleksandrów Kujawski (2006), Monesterio de Pedralbes – a monastery in Barcelona (2011), Bajterek, the main square in Astana, the capital of Kazakhstan (2011), O'Hare international airport in Chicago (2013) and others.

He has had many individual exhibitions in European countries:

the United Kingdom (1983) – Liverpool, Coventry; Switzerland (1985) – Rapperswil, Finland (1990) – Äänekoski, Spain (2010) – Barcelona, Pamplona and on other continents: in Kazakhstan (2011) – Astana; USA – St. Louis (1991), Chicago (2013); Australia – Sydney (2014), and India – Hyderabad (2015).

He has taken part in international collective exhibitions of Polish art in Belgium, Germany and other countries, as well as in an exhibition of competition entries in Japan.

He represented Polish artists upon the invitation of the Polish Ministry of Culture and National Heritage (curator Nawojka Cieślińska) at the International Festival of Arts in Caracas, Venezuela (1991).

Scholarships in Poland and abroad:

1990 – artistic scholarship funded by the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs
1991–1993 – artistic scholarship funded by the Polish Ministry of Culture and National Heritage
2017 – artistic scholarship granted by the Fund for Creativity of ZAiKS Authors' Association
2017 – artistic scholarship funded by the Marshall of Kujawsko-Pomorskie Province

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A characteristic feature of Sobecki's artistic creations is that he analyses his subjects of interest until all cognitive and formal aspects are worked out. Most recognized photo collections:

- A PRAYER IN A GOTHIC CATHEDRAL, 1981
- GOTHIC – SHAPE AND LIGHT, 1985
- THE CRUCIFIX, 1983/2010
- THE SHAPE OF THE LIGHT, 1991
- PERSPECTIVE, 1987/2008
- THE CITY, 1988 – 1992
- THE COLOUR OF THE WIND, 1996

An artistic dialogue between a photographer and painter: FACE – IN DEFIANCE OF WITKACY, in cooperation with Franciszek Starowieyski, aimed at exploring the relationship between a portrait and a self-portrait, 2002.

- THE CITIES OTHERWISE, 2005
- THE WACKY LOCOMOTIVES, 2006
- THE IDEA OF THE PYRAMIDS, 2002/2012
- PYRAMIDS, PYRAMIDS, 2014
- WARSAW – SUCCESS CITY, 2014
- MAGIC TORUŃ, 2007/2015
- CITY DYNAMICS, 2014/2017

Sobecki considers photography one of the disciplines of the visual arts characterised by specific formal qualities. In the process of artistic creation he has explored the expression of black-and-white photography (e.g. THE GOTHIC SACRUM collection), colour photography (e.g. THE COLOUR OF THE WIND and THE LIGHTNESS OF THE EARTH collections), digital colour transformation (e.g. THE ALCHEMY OF THE SEA, THE WACKY LOCOMOTIVES – tribute to Witkacy), photography combined with installations (THE IDEA OF THE PYRAMIDS, MOBILE AND STABLE collections), and has penetrated the relationship between photography and cinematography (CITY DYNAMICS).

He finds artistic inspiration in nature but also in culture, including works of selected artists representing various disciplines of art: Stanisław Ignacy Witkiewicz, Franciszek Starowieyski, Alexander Calder, Francis Bacon and others.

In 1991–2015 he ran the self-founded STU Di O'Vi, an artistic agency offering complex services in promotional prints, including photography, graphic design and publishing, using modern computer technologies and a wide range of printing techniques. He received numerous Polish and international awards for his poster and multipage wall calendars.

He originated and co-organized the IDEA Publishing Contest for designers of printed marketing materials. He was an organizer and curator of the exhibition of competition entries for the European Design Annual EDA'98, in the Wozownia art gallery in Toruń.

In 2009 he established and managed GALERiA'Vi, an etude gallery in Toruń.

Sobecki has been recognized and has received positive reviews for his artistic achievements from eminent art critics, artists and intellectuals, including Prof. Konrad Górski, Władysław Hasior, ks. Prof. Janusz Stanisław Pasierb, Ryszard Bobrowski, ks. Prof. Waldemar Chrostowski, Krzysztof Jurecki, Alicja Saar-Kozłowska, ks. Prof. Michał Janocha, Prof. Hanna

Ratuszna, Prof. Prot. Jarnuszkiewicz, Prof. Wiesław Smużny, Prof. Aleksander Błoński, dr hab. Piotr Karczewski and others.

He participated in Polish and international symposia for photographers and designers, and in university conferences, e.g. PHILOSOPHY and ART, 8th Festival of Philosophy (Olsztyn 2015), and the conference BEAUTY IN SACRUM (Białystok 2016).

His works were included in scientific publications, art press and newspapers, and in albums, e.g. *Region Chopina*, UNIGRAF 2010; *Fotografia bez cenzury*, IPN Warszawa 2014.

He has been featured many times by Polish and foreign mass media.

His works are in museum collections: Museum of Art in Łódź, Regional Museum in Toruń, Gallery of Contemporary Art in Kielce, as well as in private and public collections in Poland and abroad, for example in Coventry – the United Kingdom, Äänekoski – Finland, Astana – Kazakhstan, Sydney – Australia, New York, Chicago – USA, Hyderabad – India, and Tokyo – Japan.

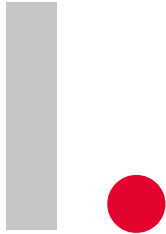
In various periods of his life, Tomasz Sobecki has lectured on various aspects of photography for future graduates of cultural studies and journalism at Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń, the University of Łódź (also in English), Kazimierz Wielki University in Bydgoszcz, and Bydgoszcz Academy of Photography. He is employed as an assistant professor at the Higher School of Banking (WSB) in Toruń.

In 2015 he was a visiting professor at the Faculty of Design, Indian Institute of Technology in Hyderabad (India), where he held classes for students of design and other faculties.

www.facebook.com/tomasz.sobecki

www.tomasz-sobecki.pl

Tomasz Sobecki
15.04.2018



CREATIVE APPROACH OF THE ARTIST

I.1. PHOTOGRAPHY AS A TOOL FOR COGNITION AND CREATION

As the headline suggests, photography has a double meaning for the author: it is a means of exploring reality, and also a tool for creation. For the artist, the whole creative process relies on these two aspects of exploiting photography as a medium, with the primary focus on the search for unique visual forms of an image, specific for photography and impossible to achieve using other means of expression.

The author, despite the tremendous popularity of digital photography in the second decade of the 21st century, does not give up traditional photography when trying to reach his artistic goals, and still appreciates its many advantages. The strongest attribute of chemical-based photography is the 'miracle' of materializing the non-material image of light reflected from physical objects into a physical real-life image. The non-material light waves, thanks to chemical processes, are transformed into a material existing image. But when it comes to digital photography, the transformation from a non-material to a material image requires additional operations, not necessarily related to photography as such, but rather to various printing techniques.

In the process of artistic creation this attachment to traditional photography does not mean the puristic negation of electronic technology and the advantages it offers. Quite the opposite, for the author photography is one of many disciplines of visual art whose ultimate product is an image (usually two-dimensional), regardless of the means used to create a piece of art. Advanced electronic tools have dramatically increased the range of the means of expression now available to photography. The use of computer technology for image processing multiplies the creative possibilities, but also forces the artist to learn new skills in the field of digital image processing, and to acquire the appropriate and very expensive working tools.

I.2. CHARACTERISTIC FORMAT OF WORK – PHOTOGRAPHIC COLLECTIONS

The author, from the beginning of his artistic career, which dates back to the late 1970s and early 1980s, has created photographic collections. He explores a selected problem until all the cognitive and creative tasks are worked out, and his imagination and technical conditions are the only limiting factors. The artist's portfolio includes etudes usually consisting of five photographs, as well as collections of 20 or more photographic images, but so far none of the collections has been larger than 200 photographs. Large collections are usually divided into smaller thematic integral sub-sets, which most often happens in a natural way during work, and less often *ex post*. Photographs intended to be stand-alone works of art are very rare in the author's portfolio. One example of such an art work is THE STONE, a photograph prepared upon the invitation of Jerzy Olek. Etudes that were presented to the public as stand-alone exhibitions include: THE EGYPTIAN TEMPLE, THE WALL, and WINTER. Two other projects ETUDE – NEW YORK, and NEW YORK – WOMEN, addressing topics similar to other collections, are still waiting for completion and digital processing. The author's portfolio includes over 10 large collections with more than 800 photographs in total, of which about 300 were executed in their target format as photo-grams. Other photographs are available as photo index prints or in digital format dedicated for display using a computer projector, or in 1 : 1 electronic files ready for printing.

I.3. RELATIONS BETWEEN MEDIA: PHOTOGRAPHY VERSUS SCULPTURE, GRAPHIC DESIGN, POETRY AND MUSIC

By exploiting photographs from the LIGHTNESS OF THE EARTH collection, and inspiration derived from Alexander Calder, the author devised a concept for merging photographs with three-dimensional forms: MOBILE AND STABLE. Visualisations of these three-dimensional forms are ready for use, and they can be presented either in an indoor or open air setting. As the name suggests, some of these works are intended to be three-dimensional static forms, while others are mobile when agitated by wind. In each case photographs are fundamental for the expression of such a form.

For 24 years (1991-2015) the author had been running STUDIŌ'Vi, an advertising agency offering complex services in the preparation of high-quality printed materials such as posters, brochures, product catalogues and various types of calendars. For his designed poster and multipage wall calendars he has been given many Polish and international awards, including an award for Excellent Design in the European Design Annual competition, the European part of the international competition for designers organized across the world by the American PRINT journal.

The author has used this professional experience in his artistic work. Using the acquired editorial skills, and in cooperation with graphic designers at STUDIŌ'Vi, he has designed printed albums featuring his own photo collections: THE COLOUR OF THE WIND, THE LIGHTNESS OF THE EARTH – including poems by R.M. Rilke, MAGIC TORUŃ, and GOTHIC – SHAPE AND LIGHT, and the album THE CRUCIFIX – with incorporated intellectually relevant passages of poetry selected by a literary historian, Prof. Hanna Ratuszna

from Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń. The latter photo collection was found online by a composer from Mexico, Dr Mariana Villanueva, who was searching for visual inspiration, and who eventually composed several pieces of modern symphonic music inspired by it. These musical compositions can be used as a CD supplement to the printed album. Talks with potential publishers of these albums about the terms and conditions of this venture are in progress.

I.4. PHOTOGRAPHY TOPICS IN THE ARTIST'S PORTFOLIO

The range of topics that has preoccupied the author throughout his long artistic career is extensive. At the beginning of his artistic career in the late 1970s and early 1980s these were mainly the interiors of Gothic churches photographed in black-and-white and developed personally in the bromine-silver technique in large format size 70 cm x 100 cm. One photograph from THE CRUCIFIX collection was even magnified to the format size ca. 120 cm x 220 cm. The multi-element collection of these photographs taken in 1976-1991 was named in 2010 THE GOTHIC SACRUM.

Because of the close contact with nature when climbing different types of mountains, including glaciers, and geographical studies related to this activity, for many years landscapes had an important place in shaping the artistic approach of the author to photography. This topic is reflected in several photographic collections, e.g. THE COLOUR OF THE WIND, and THE LIGHTNESS OF THE EARTH, or two collections awaiting completion: THE ALCHEMY OF THE SEA, and MOBILE AND STABLE. In each of these collections the visual form of the image created using photography, and in some cases also digital tools, has more important qualities than the topic itself.

The author's attitude to other people is manifested primarily in relation to befriended artists, including outstanding ones such as Władysław Hasior, Tadeusz Brzozowski and others. The strongest expression of the portraits was achieved when establishing a dialogue between the photographer and the portrayed artist, Franciszek Starowieyski, invited to work on the project FACE – IN DEFIANCE OF WITKACY. A dialogue with Antoni Fałat is at an advanced stage, and a preliminary photo session and arrangements have been made with Edward Dwurnik.

The author also gets inspiration from world culture, materialized in the IDEA OF THE PYRAMIDS (PhD dissertation), and the PYRAMIDS, PYRAMIDS collection that followed it. Inspiration with art, in this case the works by Witkacy, was reflected in an extensive photographic collection THE WACKY LOCOMOTIVES, whose name refers to Witkacy's play of a similar title. This play inspired the vision of a locomotive impersonating a demonic female. The exhibition had its vernissage in 2006 at a railway station, Carski Dworzec Kolejowy in Aleksandrów Kujawski. The event, gathering almost a thousand local people, featured the arrival of a steam train which was welcomed by a fire-fighter orchestra and other attractions. This magnificent railway station, once on the border of the Russian Empire and the Kingdom of Prussia, is also known as a place where the Polish poet Edward Stachura used to sit in a waiting room by the tiled stove. Perhaps this was where he wrote his poem THE WHITE LOCOMOTIVE, which was also emphasized at the exhibition using a special arrangement and annotation.

I.5. URBAN PHOTOGRAPHY – COGNITIVE AND CREATIVE ASPECTS

Urban photography is the topic which ultimately resulted in the artistic achievement consistent with the requirements of the procedure for granting the degree of doktor habilitowany. The development of a visual format and cultural scope of this topic will be discussed in detail in further sections. The first black-and-white collection on this topic, currently called THE CITY – YESTERDAY was created in 1988–1992. 'Yesterday' refers to communist Poland and was added later, in democratic times, just before the accession of Poland to the European Union. Subsequent collections, this time in colour, were created after 2000: THE CITIES OTHERWISE, THE CITY – PARIS, THE CITY – ASTANA, WARSAW – SUCCESS CITY, MAGIC TORUŃ and others, which exist only in digital format.

A city is a complex natural and cultural phenomenon, difficult from the cognitive point of view. Each urban system functions in the historic perspective of the generations that have created it. This aspect makes the understanding of a city at a given location and time point even more difficult. Because of the dynamic temporospatial functioning, each urban system is a source of cultural and visual inspirations.

I.6. CITY DYNAMICS PHOTOGRAPHIC COLLECTION – AN EXPANDED VISUAL FORMAT

When travelling for artistic purposes, especially after 2010, the author accumulated a lot of cognitive experience about various cities around the world. Because of the profound nature of this experience, the author departed from his earlier artistic experiments in the late 20th and early 21st centuries, and when in Sydney he began, in June 2014, work on an entirely different collection, later called CITY DYNAMICS. The novel feature of this collection is first of all the visual format achieved through a technique of multiple exposure. The first photographs were taken in 2014, and further work on the collection was mainly continued in 2015. Single photographs supplementing the collection were taken in 2016, and the same year the basic selection of photographs was processed using computer technology. Photograms on a transparent substrate were finally prepared in late 2016 and early 2017.

The herald of the collection, a single triptych depicting Warsaw, was presented to the public at the Festival of PHILOSOPHY and ART at the University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn in September 2015. The vernissage of the complete photographic collection CITY DYNAMICS took place on 20 January 2017 at the IMAGINARIUM Gallery in Łódź.

Considering the whole artistic portfolio of the author, CITY DYNAMICS is the most complex photo collection in formal terms. It has been prepared mainly using a difficult and complicated technique of multiple exposure, and the process of creation harmoniously combines traditional photography (at the stage of shooting) with complicated digital image processing and a unique format in which the photographs are presented, i.e. direct prints on transparent substrates.

2.

URBAN PHOTOGRAPHY – THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS

2.1. PHENOMENON OF THE CITY

The city is an exceptionally complex and dynamic phenomenon, developing over centuries and even millennia. The first towns emerged in the Neolithic era, about 10,000 years BCE, in several centres of civilisation: Mesopotamia, Egypt, north India, and China*. Undoubtedly, the phenomenon of the city has been under the strong influence of natural factors: latitude (and thus climate), the landscape where the city is located, and the position with respect to rivers or other water bodies: lakes, seas and oceans. The size of a city is determined by factors such as population, the urban plan, shaped over long history, and natural features. The dynamics of the urban system depends primarily on its population, economic and administrative functions, and the level of cultural development.

The diversity of urban systems across the world is enormous. Let's compare Alice Springs, a town in the Southern Hemisphere (ca. 25,000 population) in the heart of Australia – a lively centre of Aboriginal culture, and huge Chicago (2.7 million population), in the Northern Hemisphere, by the Great Lakes, one of many symbols of successful American civilization. Interestingly, the age of these entirely different urban systems is almost the same: Alice Springs was established in 1872, Chicago about 40 years earlier, in 1833. This simple comparison of two cities shows how difficult it is to explore the city, especially during a short visit, and to find its essence.

While working on the CITY DYNAMICS collection the artist put forward the following questions in the context of the photographic analysis of the phenomenon of the city:

- What is the potential role of photography in the process of exploring a city?
- Is it possible to show the three-dimensional city dynamics using a static two-dimensional photographic image?
- Is it possible to show, using photography, how the city developed over time?

* Jewtuchowicz A., Sokołowicz M. E., Zasina J., *Zrozumieć fenomen miasta*, w: *EkoMiasta #Gospodarka* (ebook), Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Łódzkiego 2016..

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- How can we, through photography, identify and expressively show *the essence of the city*?

The answers to these questions are provided in the further part of this presentation and in the photographs from the CITY DYNAMICS collection.

2.2. THE ESSENCE OF THE CITY

The artist understands *the essence of the city* as a unique natural or cultural feature that gives a clear characteristic of a particular urban system. In the artist's opinion, *the essence of the city* is defined in a subjective way, assuming that this feature should refer to the identity of the whole urban system. The choice of an urban feature reflecting this essence is determined by the current but also past socio-economic events, associated with local history, cultural heritage and the natural environment where the city is located.



Fig. 1. The Panorama of Gothic Torun, from the collection MAGIC TORUN, traditional photography, Poland (photo by T.S. 1993)

In a similar way *the essence of the city* is defined by Jan Tyliszczak, who believes that the perception of the city is determined mainly by its identity, i.e. certain existing, characteristic features and values distinguishing it from other cities. And, importantly, Tyliszczak claims that the visual image is an external feature while the identity is what makes the essence of the city**.

As with the importance of the city image for the essence of the city, the artist has a slightly different view to that of Tyliszczak. Concerns may be raised that photography is able to register only visual features of the city, while *the essence of the city* is a multidimensional

** Tyliszczak J. J., *Tożsamość wizualna miasta*, w: *Wizerunek miasta, co, jak, dlaczego* (ebook), <https://www.e-bookowo.pl/poradniki/wizerunek-miasta.html>, Wizerunek Miasta 2016.

concept that certainly refers to its identity. However, visual features are the exemplification of the cultural heritage and natural setting integral for the urban system, and also present its dynamics. And it is up to the artist and his subjective approach whether he can, through the cognitive process, reach to the essence of the city and capture it in a photographic image.

Expressions such as GOTHIC TORUŃ, CHICAGO – WINDY CITY, VENICE – CITY ON WATER, BRASILIA – FUTURISTIC CITY and others are examples of the precisely defined *essence of the city*. The final judgement of the photographically captured *essence of the city*, the accuracy of the photographic form, reflecting the city's identity, is left by the artist to the viewers of the photo collection presented herein.

2.3. THE ESSENCE OF THE CITY AND PHOTOGRAPHY

How can we find and present *the essence of the city* through photography? This is a vital and difficult question. The artist's portfolio, created between the early 1980s and 2012, includes several photo collections addressing the phenomenon of the city:

- CITY (1988–1992)
- CITY – TORUŃ (1992–2010)
- CITIES – OTHERWISE (2000–2005)
- CITY – PARIS (2005)
- CITY – ASTANA (2011)
- CITY – WARSAW (2005–2012)



Fig. 2.

La Défense – 6, from the PARIS – THE CITY collection, traditional photography, France (photo by T.S. 2005)

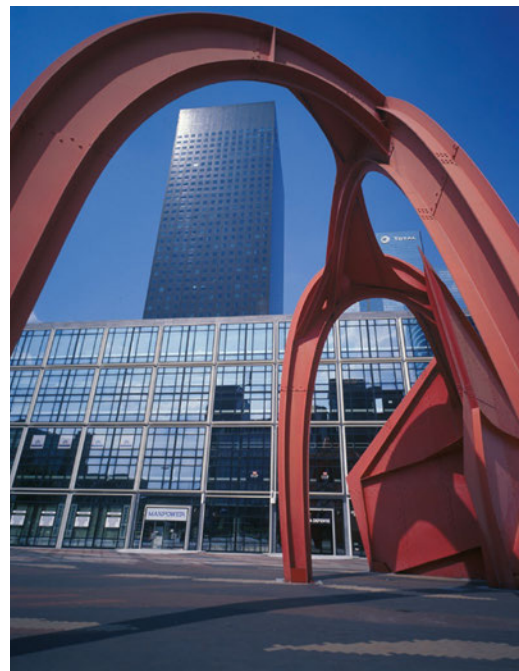


Fig. 3.

La Défense – 9, from the collection PARIS – THE CITY, traditional photography, France (photo by T.S. 2005)

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These collections have been executed using different art forms. When working on each of these collections the artist tried to tackle the problem of *the essence of the city* formulated using a photographic medium. Because a variety of forms of expression were used, the photographic images of the cities included in these collections differ significantly from each other. There are photograms executed on black-and-white and also coloured materials, using different cameras, sometimes unique ones, e.g. with a mobile camera lens. Therefore, *the essence of the city* presented in the photographs from these collections has gained a different visual character. These experiments confirm the previously pinpointed subjective nature of *the essence of the city*, whose integral part is the creation of a visual form.

When working on the CITY DYNAMICS collection the artist had already realized that



Fig. 4. The Old Market Square, Cracow (Poland) CITIES – OTHERWISE collection, HORIZONT camera (photo by T.S. 2005)



Fig. 5. The Castle Square in Warsaw (Poland), CITIES – OTHERWISE collection, HORIZONT camera (photo by T.S. 2005)

in visual terms he failed had to capture *the essence of the city* for Łódź using the multiple exposure technique, although in his earlier collection, CITIES – OTHERWISE, in which perspectives were changed dynamically, the effect of his attempts was satisfying. This example shows that photography is an integral part of the cognitive process, and also of the visual creation of *the essence of the city*.

Shortly after defending his doctoral thesis in 2013 the artist took up further explorative and creative steps in order to define *the essence of the city* for two metropolises on the American continent: Chicago and New York. After this exciting experience, he continued exploring the problem of how to merge *the essence of the city* and photography, and

searched, when visiting Sydney in 2014, for an entirely new art form to present *the essence of this city* located on the other side of the globe. After the first experiments with photographing Sydney using multiple exposure the artist concluded that the intensity of the image offered by this technique would be the most suitable for revealing *the essence of the city* and finding a form of its visual creation for the whole collection later entitled CITY DYNAMICS.

2.4. PHOTOGRAPHIC TERMINOLOGY

Considering the need to systematize photographic terminology and the fact that some chemical-based techniques are now forgotten, and at the same time modern printing techniques are being developed, with a wide variety of plotters enabling reproduction of a photographic image on a variety of substrates (paper, cotton textile, aluminium, glass, Plexiglas, wood, and practically any flat surface), the artist decided to standardize, at least to a small extent, the photographic terminology used in this self-presentation.

This attempt was also strongly inspired by the fact that when the multiple exposure technique is used, the process in which the target art work is created consists of many more steps than in classical photography.

The photographic terminology used in this self-presentation is explained below.

PHOTOGRAPH – a photographic image edited using traditional or digital methods, regarded as completed (approved/authorized) by the artist as to the concept of composition, colour range and target format. It can be executed as a photo index print or electronic file with a relevant description.

PHOTOGRAM – a physical photograph in its target format, executed using a chemical-based method on a photosensitive material or in a relevant printing technique on a specific substrate.

PHOTOGRAPHIC FRAME – a fragment of reality selected using optical devices, and intended for photographing, or a secondary image cropped on a computer or paper print.

PHOTOGRAPHIC TAKE – a fragment of reality selected during the registration of an image using traditional or digital methods.

3.

CITY DYNAMICS PHOTO COLLECTION – EXPLORING CITIES THROUGH PHOTOGRAPHY

3.1. INSPIRATIONS

Due to his professional activity the artist had the opportunity of visiting, in a relatively short time, many cities on culturally different continents, such as Barcelona and Pamplona in Spain, Europe (2010), Astana in Kazakhstan, Asia (2011), Sousse in Tunisia, North Africa (2012), Chicago and New York in North America (2013), Sydney in Australia (2014), and Hyderabad in India (2015). Each of these cities is fascinating in its own way, has its own history and daily rhythm, and different roles in national or international arenas. Local people create their environment to reflect their civilisational aspirations, but also satisfy their normal pursuit of happiness.

The diversity and complexity of the visited urban systems, their local colour and the degree of development, traces of history and dynamics of contemporary life stimulated the desire to explore each of these cities, find their essence, and show in a very expressive way the results of cognitive processes by means of photography.

Since 2015 people have been exposed to a glut of visual messages in mass media and the internet, a multitude of photographic images recorded with easily available and highly automated electronic devices. On one hand, this wide availability of photographic tools is satisfying in terms of civilisational progress, but in aesthetic terms the dominance of the simple registration of images, including urban ones, over the creative use of photographic techniques is bothersome.

In June 2014 in Sydney, where the Opera House cutting into the harbour is an obvious symbol and a visual exemplification of *the essence of the city*, merging nature with culture by the topic and art form, the artist tried to find a new visual form to show the city through photography. He assumed that the target art form of expression should be adequate to communicate strong impressions provoked by the cognitive process, the effort made when looking for *the essence of the city*, and reflections about the phenomenon of the city.

The natural way to search for an art form was to compress many pieces of information in a single photograph through the intensity of the image. The multiple exposure of a photographic film was found suitable for this purpose. Using this technique, the artist worked out in 2014–2016 an extended art form in a collection entitled CITY DYNAMICS. When working on this collection, the artist used a wide range of creative photographic tools at the stage of shooting, and later, during post-processing, he harmoniously incorporated digital tools into the creative process, to edit and transform images.

The CITY DYNAMICS collection reached its target form at the end of 2016, 2.5-years after the photographing process started, but most of the photographs were taken in 2015. About 50 photographs were preselected for this collection. To herald the collection, three photographs depicting the Palace of Culture and Science in Warsaw were shown at the Festival of Philosophy and Art in Olsztyn (2015), where the artist gave a lecture on "Urban photography – in search of an art form", and presented his exhibition CITY DYNAMICS IN PHOTOGRAPHY. After many talks with other artists – photographers, painters and art historians – 36 photographs were selected to be reproduced as target photograms to build the CITY DYNAMICS collection. The exhibition had its vernissage on 20 January 2017 at the IMAGINARIUM Gallery in Łódź.

3.2. SYDNEY 2014

Sydney was the first city photographed using the multiple exposure technique. Only a few experimental takes were made during three photo sessions using this technique, and two film rolls were used for that. The subject matter of the first photograph, in which many frames are combined into one image, was the historic building of the Museum of Sydney, with people resting in front of it and a pedestrian. By combining these entirely different



Fig. 6.

The Museum of Sydney, the first photo taken with the multiple exposure technique, Australia (photo by T.S. 2014)



Fig. 7.

Sydney – the City Centre, multiple exposure technique, Australia (photo by T.S. 2014)

topics, the artist through photography intended to give an account of the effort made by local citizens in building a historical identity, and, through a photographic image, to point out the significance of this problem to people living now in Sydney.

In Sydney, this very difficult method of the superimposition of subsequent photographic images and their free penetration was used for several other takes. The results of this experiment using the multiple exposure technique were promising but not fully satisfactory. Eventually, only one photograph of Sydney, in which office buildings in the city are combined with the characteristic Opera House building and ferry boats passing by in the foreground, was shown at the premiere exhibition. In the artist's opinion, this photograph accurately presents *the essence of Sydney*, in the beautiful setting of the harbour, where daily transport by ferry boats is obvious, citizens of this distant corner of the world cherish culture, as evidenced by the modern Opera House, and the city is an important centre for the international economy, as signified by multiple office buildings.

3.3. TORUŃ 2014–2016

The artist lives in Toruń, and could easily plan photo sessions in his home city. Therefore, the photographs making up this collection were taken between 2014 and 2016, but mostly in 2015. In this case, the artist was not so much motivated by the need to explore Toruń or find *the essence of the city*, but wanted to create its vision using the multiple exposure technique.

Toruń's Old Town, with its medieval buildings, predominantly in Gothic style, has been designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site. In a nutshell, Toruń means Gothic, and the artist focused attention on this architectural style when choosing topics for his photographs. Buildings in the Old Town, usually rendered in light colours, like the Baroque Dąbowski Palace, create an excellent background for the brick Gothic buildings in Toruń, emphasizing its characteristic red colour. In one of the photographs the Gothic St. Johns' Cathedral is presented as the central building in the frame, and thus the most important for the city, haloed with Baroque structures through image multiplication.

The Gothic red-brick buildings in Toruń are monumental and have scarce architectural details. By combining many photographed fragments of Toruń's churches into a new image, the architecture has gained a richer look. Through the combination of several interlacing images the texture of the large flat red-brick walls of churches has become novel and complex. The use of camera lenses with different focal lengths allowed for the presentation of whole buildings, but also for the accentuation of details, e.g. the beautiful portal of the sacristy on the background of the outer presbytery wall.

Features characteristic of Gothic churches include pointed arches and windows, monumental size, and flying buttresses, giving them a slightly lighter look. For example, by using the multiple exposure technique, changing exposure parameters in subsequent takes, and the intensity of image fragments, the presbytery of St. Jacob Church in the photograph seems to be flying up into the sky. In this creative way, the photograph gains a symbolic aspect, and is no longer an obvious representation of physical reality.

The multiple exposure technique used when photographing Toruń helped in emphasizing the Gothic *essence of the city*. There were significant problems with controlling the base of Gothic buildings in subsequent geometric frames, especially when the camera was not mounted on a tripod, but it seems that the artist handled this task with satisfying results.



Fig. 8.
The Historical Town Hall of Torun,
multiple exposure technique, Poland (photo by T.S. 2015)

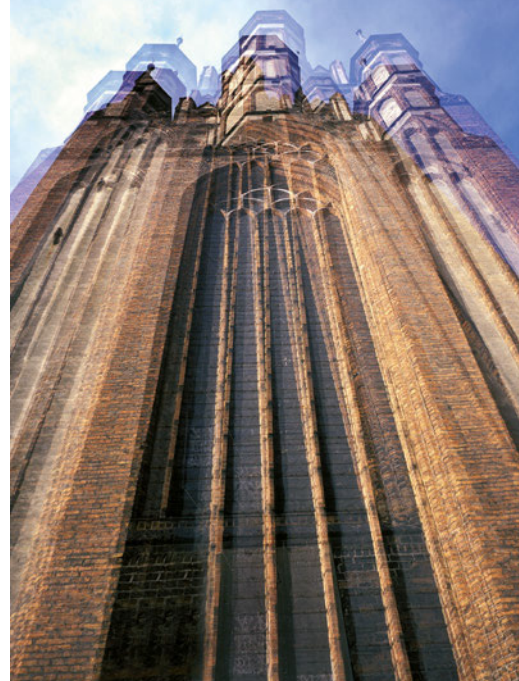


Fig. 9.
The Towers of St. Mary's Church in Torun,
multiple exposure technique, Poland (photo by T.S. 2015)

The sequential superimposition of photographic images of Gothic buildings and their fragments has not diminished the fine qualities of this architectural style. The merging of many images of Gothic churches into a new art work made them even more poetic and enhanced the expression of the medieval spirituality that inspired their construction.

3.4. HYDERABAD 2015

Hyderabad is a large city, with a population of over 10 million, the highest population density in India, and an effervescent, dynamic crowd of people. Half a year after visiting Sydney, the artist went to the Indian subcontinent and led classes in urban photography for students of the Indian Institute of Technology.

All visitors to Hyderabad are very impressed by the crowded streets of this historic but also modern urban system. To a single human being crossing the street is a serious challenge, especially in the afternoon and evening. Because of the vast swarm of people, scooters, motorcycles, tricycles, large and small cars flooding the streets of Hyderabad's Old Town, specific means of photographic expression had to be used to convey the dynamics of this city.

Therefore, the artist again resorted to the multiple exposure technique, which could capture the whole crowd of people and coexisting cultures, reflected in the diversity of architecture, human behaviours and clothing styles. During the photo session in the historical centre, held despite administrative restrictions and the ban on taking pictures from a terrace inside the characteristic Charminar mosque with four minarets, the artist used a camera tripod for the only time when making the whole CITY DYNAMICS collection. The aim of this was to show in an expressive way the perspective of the main street – the

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Fig. 10.
Hyderabad – a street in the Old City,
traditional photo technique, India (photo by T.S. 2015)



Fig. 11.
Hyderabad – a Street in the Old City,
multiple exposure technique, India (photo by T.S. 2015)

Old Town of Hyderabad, photographed from the historic mosque using camera lenses with different focal lengths for subsequent exposures. The camera was mounted on a tripod, and after each take and exposure a lens of a different focal length was attached.

To make sure that the multiple exposure technique was sufficiently expressive, the artist did double takes: with a classical method, and by adding up many frames into a single image. When the slides were developed in Poland, this strategy was found appropriate for searching for strong expressiveness to present the phenomenon of the city by using a multiple exposure technique, and the decision was made to use it again when executing the whole collection.

As in the case of Sydney, the artist concluded that the photographs of the historic part of Hyderabad, taken using the multiple exposure technique, give an adequate visual representation of *the essence of the city*. They expressively capture Hyderabad's phenomenon, history, dynamics and multiculturalism in images. On one side of the photographed street there is a Hindu temple, and across from it a Muslim mosque, which once was the target of a bomb attack. Takes were done in the afternoon, on a holiday, and even then the traffic on the street was heavy, jamming the city. The street is filled with a multitude of vehicles, all types and colours, including yellow motorickshaws, bicycles, scooters, vans loaded with cargo, and white off-road high-class passenger cars. People rushing in different directions, usually carrying bags, move on sideways and between vehicles. There are also street merchants, pushing trolleys on four bicycle wheels loaded with goods, mainly fruit in this part of the city. The city lives its fast rhythm and is very dynamic.

3.5. GDAŃSK 2015

Photographs of Gdańsk were prepared in spring 2015. They address three cultural aspects of the city: the Gothic Old Town, Gdańsk as a sea port, also used by yachts, and the Monument of the Fallen Shipyard Workers next to the historic gate of the former Lenin Shipyard in Gdańsk. Gdańsk's history is so rich and complicated that, in the artist's opinion, a single motif cannot fully convey *the essence of the city*. For centuries this city was one of the richest economic centres of Poland. It is still a window on the world in the economic and

tourist sense because of its seaside position. There were several periods when Gdańsk had an extremely important role in the post-war journey of Poles towards independence and democracy. The space of this city, packed with historical connotations, visited by tourists from all over the world, is also a home for ordinary, simple people, who give the respectable brick facades a dynamic and colourful local feel. For these reasons, photographs of Gdańsk show a spectacular combination of monumental Gothic old buildings and the daily struggles of ordinary local citizens. To communicate these messages the artist for the first time combined vertical and horizontal frames during subsequent exposures. When doing individual takes, he also used camera lenses with different focal lengths, combined vertical composition with diagonal composition, and used other means of expressive creation of photographic images.



Fig. 12.
The Monument to the Fallen Shipyard Workers 1970,
multiple exposure technique, Gdansk, Poland
(photo by T.S. 2015)



Fig. 13.
The Monument of Neptune in front of the Artus Court,
multiple exposure technique, Gdansk, Poland
(photo by T.S. 2015)

A photograph of the Monument of the Fallen Shipyard Workers, together with the SOLIDARITY Gate and a person rushing in an unknown direction, gives an intriguing image of contemporary Gdańsk. The photograph of this Monument was used to create a triptych, but at the premiere exhibition only one of its fragments was presented, which was put into a polyptych depicting Gothic architecture in Gdańsk and present daily life there, as well as a memory of SOLIDARITY as an accent complementing the history of both this city and Poland.

The artist produced the visual presentation of *the essence of the city* of Gdańsk in not just one photograph, but four arranged in a polyptych. They were executed using the multiple exposure technique and together showed different cultural periods. Other takes made in Gdańsk are still awaiting to be used when the collection is extended with further photograms.



Fig. 14. The historic harbor quay with a crane, multiple exposure technique and digital solarization, Gdansk, Poland (photo by T.S. 2015)

3.6. WARSAW 2015

When photographing Warsaw several times in 2015. The artist focused both on the modern centre overlooked by the relic of old times, the Palace of Culture and Science, and on the picturesque Old Town, reconstructed after World War II. This was an attempt to verify the power of expression offered by the multiple exposure technique with respect to the historical and contemporary urban fabric.

As it turned out, merging images of different architectural styles in one frame strongly voiced the rich history of the Warsaw Old Town. The combination of shapes of different fragments of the Barbican in one image stimulates the imagination, envisaging, in contrasting light, the historic military function of this building.

The Palace of Culture and Science, a symbol of hated communist times, and the landmark building in the city centre, gained a special character in photographs merging multiple frames into one new thing. In this case the artist reached for yet another tool of creation and gave the building unrealistic colour through digital transformation. Perversely, green was chosen as the dominant colour to deprive the building, in a symbolic way, of its former function, linked with the communist regime, which was supposed to last forever. Only the base of this structure built in the era of social realism was coloured in vivid red, as a trace of the invasive dominance of communists in the capital of Poland.

The roundabout at the intersection of Aleje Jerozolimskie and Marszałkowska street is one of the most distinctive places in Warsaw. Its round shape and considerable size emphasizes the architectural features of the neighbouring Eastern Wall (*Ściana Wschodnia*), built in communist times, in the 1970s. Characteristic buildings directly neighbouring this junction include Rotunda PKO and the former Hotel Forum (now Novotel). Beyond any doubt this



Fig. 15.

Warsaw – the city centre, multiple exposure technique, Warsaw, Poland (photo by T.S. 2015)



Fig. 16.

The Old Town in Warsaw, multiple exposure technique, Warsaw, Poland (photo by T.S. 2015)

is one of the busiest junctions in Warsaw's centre, where city dynamics can be easily observed. This place has been transformed significantly since the time when the artist photographed it, because Rotunda PKO is being rebuilt. In this way an important historical aspect of photography has been revealed in a short time since the image of passing away reality was registered.



Fig. 17. The shopping center Złote Tarasy, multiple exposure technique, Warsaw, Poland (photo by T.S. 2015)

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The CITY DYNAMICS collection also depicts other characteristic sites in the capital of Poland, but the photograph of the Palace of Culture and Science in green defines *the essence of the city* for Warsaw with its complicated post-war history. This very photograph was chosen by the IMAGINARIUM Gallery in Łódź as the poster promoting the exhibition's premiere, and also by the artist for the cover of this presentation.

3.7. VENICE 2015

The artist photographed Venice for 5 days in interesting sunny November weather. A trip for academic staff from the Faculty of Fine Arts, NCU for the 56th Biennale in Venice gave an inspiring opportunity for photographic sessions. Frequent contact with contemporary art at this international event had an unquestionable effect on the final art form of the works that were prepared. Over four shooting days 12 rolls of film were used, i.e. 120 frames in total.

The films were developed later in Poland, and the results of several photo sessions held in Venice at different times of the day were found to be a very promising starting point for further stages of creating photographic images. The captured frames depicted, in a very expressive way, the unique setting of Venice by the sea, its rich history, daily rhythm, crowds of tourists from all over the world and, simply, the appealing Mediterranean culture. In some cases as many as several takes of the same fragment of the city were found equally interesting, and it was necessary to differentiate their final art form in order to use the advantages of most of them and include them in the final photo collection. Therefore, specifically when working on the photographs of Venice, the artist mostly utilized the options offered by conventional photographic techniques, but also digital tools of creation.



Fig. 18. Canal Grande, multiple exposure technique and electronically modified colours, Venice, Italy (photo by T.S. 2015)

Photographs of historic parts of Venice, together with those of the old towns of Hyderabad, Warsaw and Toruń, were included in the CITY DYNAMICS collection. This city is very famous for obvious reasons. It has the status of a UNESCO World Heritage Site, is exceptionally positioned by the sea, is a very popular tourist destination known worldwide, and attracts a multitude of artists and art connoisseurs because of the art festivals organized locally. For all these reasons a novel, even more intriguing and expressive visual art form had to be invented to present it in photographs. Also in this case the multiple exposure technique, in which many photographic takes are merged into one image, was the right choice as the main tool of creation and the way to pursue *the essence of the city*. For example, the Bridge of Sighs, combined with the image of the sea opposite it, gains new symbolic features. It gives a sense of space unavailable to convicts – as the legend says – who were going to spend years in prison cells, and at the same time loses its obvious visual qualities normally appreciated by tourists.

Another well-known building is St. Mark's Campanile, the bell tower in St. Mark's square. Thanks to various operations, and again the use of the multiple exposure technique, including the combination of differently framed images, it gained new expressiveness in photographs. In this case vertically oriented frames were combined with horizontally oriented frames, or horizontals were combined with diagonals. The creation process was continued using a digital technique: in some photographs real colours were kept, while in other takes of the same motif the colours were transformed to make a reference to the mysterious and fabulous events taking place during the Carnival of Venice. The artist made these transformations relying on common cultural knowledge, because he had no opportunity to take part in the Carnival of Venice.

While working on the photographs of Venice the artist explored various art forms, and therefore the photographs of this city are the most numerous. In this situation an important element of creation was to integrate photograms in larger sets. Both classical and less conventional combinations were made, such as the triptych, where the central photogram

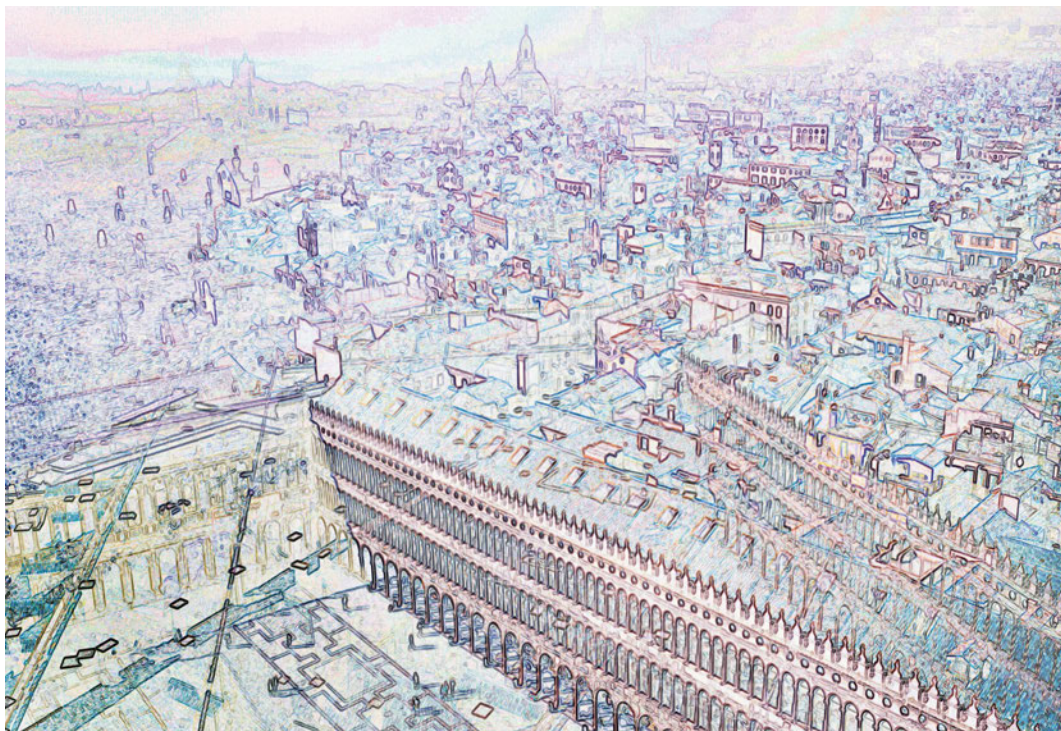


Fig. 19. A view of St. Marcus Place, multiple exposure technique and digitally transformed colour edges, Venice, Italy (photo by T.S. 2015)

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is vertically oriented, and two on each side are oriented horizontally. Finally, a mini-collection on Venice, consisting of 12 photographs, includes works dedicated for different displays: as single works, diptychs, triptychs and polyptychs.

Photographs from one of the polyptychs were, for the first time in the history of the formal search by the artist, graphically transformed to resemble architectural drawings. All the photographs from this set were taken from the Bell Tower in St. Mark's Square, and usually depict the roofs of houses in Venice, covered with red tiles. Uniform patches of red tiles, with their attractive texture, emphasized with shadows cast by November light, gave inspiration for the search for new formal solutions. After many different experiments with digital transformation the artist eventually generated an appealing colourful linear form, accentuating the outlines of buildings and many minor details. This form makes a reference to architectural drawing in a diversified but subtle colour range. After graphical transformation, the sea on the horizon depicted in these works gained a new visual dimension – it became surreal. This visual form, having nothing in common with manipulating colour and grey patches characteristic for photography, added an intriguing expressive motif, stimulating reflections on the future capabilities of this discipline of art in relation to digital tools of creation.



Fig. 20. The View on the Sea, multiple exposure technique and electronically modified colours, Venice, Italy (photo by T.S. 2015)

The liberal use of typical photographic and digital means of image editing made the photographs of Venice the most complex in terms of creation and expression: they convey melancholic gondolas, floating peacefully on the blue sea waves, but also bring vibrant associations about people in surrealistic colours gathering in St. Mark's square during the carnival. It could be said that in this way many faces of *the essence of the city* have been captured, doing justice to the rich culture of Venice..

4.

CITY DYNAMICS PHOTO COLLECTION – SELECTED TOOLS FOR CREATION

The CITY DYNAMICS collection represents a condensed art form achieved by various means of creation. When working on it the artist harmoniously combined a wide range of means of expression specific for traditional photography, but also digital methods for image editing and digital tools of creation that allowed him to achieve an art form referring to painting, drawing and graphic art, but which still remained photography.

The art form used in the CITY DYNAMICS collection relies on a variety of elements of creation:

PHOTOGRAPHING

- multiple exposure
- optical photographic equipment
- orientation of a frame
- shape of a frame
- use of contrast

DIGITAL EDITING AND PROCESSING

- setting the format of a photograph
- technical and compositional retouching
- correction of linear compositions
- correction of colours
- change of colours
- transformation of colours
- special digital techniques referring to graphic art, painting and drawing

PREPARATION OF PHOTOGRAMS

- transparency of photograms
- execution technology in combination with a substrate of a photographic image
- framing of photograms

DESIGNING THE DISPLAY

- polyptychs as a form of display
- architectural context of display
- role of lighting in display

4.1. MULTIPLE EXPOSURE AS THE BASIC TOOL FOR CREATION

The multiple exposure technique was used by the artist for the first time when searching for *the essence of the city of Sydney* in June 2014, and then consistently adopted as the basic tool for creation when making the CITY DYNAMICS collection.

This technique, in its original sense relying on the registration of many images in a process of physico-chemical reactions, is closely linked with traditional photography. Essentially, subsequent images of the real world created in a photochemical reaction are superimposed and combined on the same exposed photosensitive substrate.

Currently available advanced solutions in digital photography, first of all techniques for digital image editing, allow for achieving effects similar to those in traditional multiple exposure, but the artist recognizes the unique nature of this technique as an integral value of photography and appreciates its great potential in the process of artistic creation.

4.2. MULTIPLE EXPOSURE AND PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPOSITION

4.2.1. DIFFERENT TOPICS – DIFFERENT CAMERA LENSES AND A SINGLE COMPOSITION

Registration of images on different topics using multiple exposure and camera lenses with different focal lengths to obtain a single photograph is a very complicated variant of the technique. In this way a single photographic image is created by blending entirely different images as to their subject matter, captured in different takes with camera lenses of different angles of view.

One example of this is a photograph of a church which was created by blending a wide image taken with a camera lens with a short focal length, an image of a portal taken with a standard lens, and an image of a turret – a signature feature, taken with a telephoto camera lens at the last exposure. The artist used a similar technique when photographing Gothic churches in Gdańsk and Toruń.



Fig. 21. WARSZAWA – 4, The Palace of Culture and Science, CITY DYNAMICS collection, Warsaw, Poland (photo by T.S. 2015)

This creative technique, in which photographs on different topics were taken (freehand) using camera lenses with different focal lengths, was most frequently employed by the artist when making the CITY DYNAMICS collection.

4.2.2. DIFFERENT TOPICS – DIFFERENT CAMERA LENSES AND DIFFERENTLY COMPOSED IMAGES

Change of a topic when taking subsequent photographic images and the use of camera lenses with different focal lengths and differently composed images – e.g. by changing frame orientation, makes the final result of photographing extremely difficult to predict but may produce a strongly expressive image.

Each of the described means of expression is well-known, and when used alone is not particularly difficult to handle. Problems emerge, however, when these means of expression are combined, and the results of subsequent exposures on the same film cannot be controlled. Each subsequent image may be conflicting when making a composition and, since the way the images blend cannot be controlled, is beyond the photographer's influence.

For example, an image of pedestrians walking down the street can be captured with a standard camera lens in a horizontal composition, then blended with a horizontal image of a building in this street taken with a wide-angle camera lens, and another image of a pedestrian's face taken with a telephoto lens. The number of creative options for a single photograph is much greater than in classical photography.

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Fig. 22.
GDANSK – 2, CITY DYNAMICS collection,
Gdansk, Poland (photo by T.S. 2015)



Fig. 23.
GDANSK – 3, CITY DYNAMICS collection,
Gdansk, Poland (photo by T.S. 2015)

4.2.3. EXPOSURE SEQUENCE OF INDIVIDUAL TAKES AND PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPOSITION

The sequence of exposure of individual takes is important for the final result of photographing in the multiple exposure technique because of irreversible photochemical interactions between images that take place before the photographic film is developed. These interactions are beyond the control of the artist. It can only be expected that strongly-lit areas of the frame will have a stronger impact on the final features of the image, and in this way they will dominate the final composition of the photograph. This aspect should be considered, and the results of blending subsequent images of different features imagined.

To compare the effect of exposure sequence on the final features of an image the artist usually photographed the same topic at least twice, changing camera lenses in the reverse order to the exposure of individual takes. This process offers many combinations of potential compositions which are almost impossible to repeat. For this reason the artist took the same photograph twice in the reverse sequence in order to minimise the risk of failure.

4.3. MULTIPLE EXPOSURE AND THE INTENSIFICATION OF A PHOTOGRAPHIC IMAGE

In a natural way, the multiple exposure technique blends many frames – selected fragments of reality – into a single very intensive image.

The fundamental problem in using this most important feature of multiple exposure in the creation process lies in the composition of blended images (without image preview) into the final photograph to achieve the desired visual effect. The final photographic image is created entirely in the artist's imagination, because in traditional photography the results of blending subsequent images on a photosensitive film cannot be previewed.

When working on the CITY DYNAMICS collection the artist was able, in his imagination, to control the blending of the two first registered images into a new composite image. However, when 3–4 exposures were combined, the produced photographic image remained largely a matter of intuition.

The multiple exposure technique used in the creation process intensifies the image many times in proportion to the number of exposures, but also increases the degree of difficulty with controlling the composition of the target photograph.

When making the whole photo collection the artist had not prepared a sketch or taken notes which would have helped to create individual photographs. This approach stemmed from the assumptions on the artistic process, placing special emphasis on emotions and the role of random events in the process of creation.

Despite all the difficulties related to technical and compositional aspects, the intensification of a photographic image is the key element of the formal concept for the CITY DYNAMICS photo collection.



Fig. 24.
WENECJA – 16, CITY DYNAMICS collection, Venice, Italy
(photo by T.S. 2015)



Fig. 25.
WENECJA – 16, CITY DYNAMICS collection, Venice, Italy
(photo by T.S. 2015)

4.4. MULTIPLE EXPOSURE AND IMAGE DYNAMISM

In the case of the CITY DYNAMICS collection, photographed in the multiple exposure technique the photographs are very dynamic. Photographic dynamism was achieved, first of all, through the multiple registration of the same static or mobile objects (e.g. buildings, people, cars) in different areas of the image:

- An object is in motion and the subsequent images are captured at time intervals with the same camera lens, and in this way a moving car or another object is photographed three times, and each time its position within the frame, as well as details of the perspective and lighting of the object change.
- A building or another structure is static, but when three camera lenses with different focal lengths are used for exposure, then it appears in a photograph in three different locations and in three different sizes; this gives the impression that the same building is moving in space or time.
- Two techniques can also be combined: an object in motion can be photographed on the same frame of film and photographed with camera lenses with different focal lengths. This technique was used many times by the artist when working on the CITY DYNAMICS collection.



Fig. 26.
WARSZAWA – 22, CITY DYNAMICS collection,
Warsaw, Poland (photo by T.S. 2015)



Fig. 27.
WARSZAWA – 21, CITY DYNAMICS collection,
Warsaw, Poland (photo by T.S. 2015)

4.5. TRANSPARENCY OF PHOTOGRAMS – CREATION OF A THREE-DIMENSIONAL IMAGE

Transparent photograms were used by the artist for the first time as an element of photographic creation when making the CITY DYNAMICS collection. The intention behind this form of presenting photographs was to give an impression of their three-dimensionality in relation to intensive images of cities captured in the multiple exposure technique.

In the 1980s the artist prepared over ten experimental enlarged works on transparent print films, but they were in the black-and-white technique, further coloured in blue, green and, most popular, sepia.



Fig. 28. GOTYCKIE RUINY – 16, Swiecie n. Wisla, Poland, colours chemically transformer (photo by T.S. 1980/1983)

The CITY DYNAMICS collection includes colour photographs in a precisely defined colour range and degree of transparency, verified based on proof prints. In principle, this effect should increase the impression of three-dimensionality and consequently the dynamism of processes that take place within urban systems.

The essential aspect of the expression of photograms was the transparent frame around a photograph, designed by the artist, serving as a passe-partout. This formal operation makes the compositions of photograms open, and enhances the impression of three-dimensionality even more. Because of the openness of composition in individual photograms, a visual relationship between them is established during their display, and this will be discussed further in this presentation.

For experimental purposes one of the photographs of Venice included in this collection was printed on glass and placed in an aluminium frame in an appropriately matched colour.

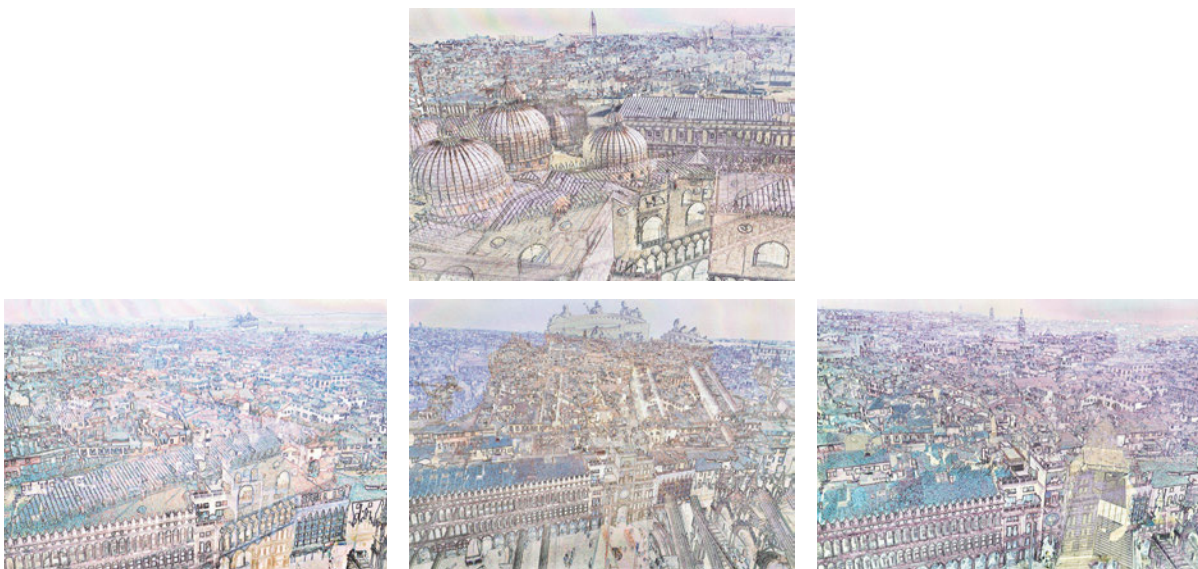


Fig. 29. POLYPTYCH – 11, Venice – digital drawing, CITY DYNAMICS collection, Venice, Italy (photo by T.S. 2015)

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The display effect of such a presentation format differs significantly from the previously prepared variant of the unframed photogram. The frame makes the viewer more focused on the image, but the context of space as an element of creation is limited to some degree.

Just like the choice of format, the concept of using transparent photograms to present the three-dimensionality and dynamism of a city was verified during the exhibition of the signature triptych and the artist's lecture given at the Festival of Philosophy and Art in Olsztyn in 2015. Because the WARSAW – PALACE OF CULTURE triptych was displayed in a glazed inside courtyard, new visual effects were achieved when natural light penetrated the building walls, and this cast shadows on the photograms. This further intensified the image through its integration with urban architecture and the exhibition venue. Sunrays moving because of the rotation of the Earth increased the dynamism of photographs in this exhibition setting. Consequently, a new relationship was created between photograms from the CITY DYNAMICS collection and structural elements of the glazed building, a typical example of local urban architecture.



Fig. 30. POLYPTYCH – II, Venice – digital solarization, CITY DYNAMICS collection, Venice, Italy (photo by T.S. 2015)

5.

CITY DYNAMICS – CONCLUSIONS ON THE PHOTO COLLECTION

5.1. THE ROLE OF PHOTOGRAPHY IN EXPLORING AND PRESENTING THE PHENOMENON OF THE CITY

The complex art form used for making the CITY DYNAMICS collection, presents the phenomenon of the city in its geographical, cultural and historical contexts. Each city is a multifaceted system, changing in time and space.

PHOTOGRAPHY as a method of exploration, because of its authenticity arising from the fact that it can register images of real world at a certain point of time, is particularly well-suited for the exploration of the city, including its dynamics, as well as for the analysis of its phenomenon and refining *the essence of the city*.

PHOTOGRAPHY as a method of creation, with a wide range of traditional means of photographic creation and in combination with digital tools for image editing and processing, offers the expressive presentation of the city with reference to its history, and puts emphasis on the subjective vision of its development.

From the beginning of his activity the artist has paid special attention to the formal possibilities inherent in photography. He tries to find and use means of creation that are relevant to this discipline of art, and at the same time unique compared to other visual arts. The aim of this pursuit is to achieve a unique expression, unavailable in other visual arts. In this sense, these means of creation were used when working on the CITY DYNAMICS collection.

5.2. MOST IMPORTANT QUALITIES OF THE CITY DYNAMICS COLLECTION

- It explores the possibilities of using the multiple exposure technique in traditional photography in combination with methods of digital image transformation for the purpose of understanding the city and the expressive presentation of the phenomenon of the city, the search for *the essence of the city*.
- It shows how very intense and strongly expressive photographic images can be obtained through the multiple exposure technique.
- It shows how several takes done with camera lenses with different focal lengths can be blended in a single photograph to achieve a very dynamic image.
- To attain new artistic qualities it integrates very differently composed photographic takes in order to create an intensive image and impression of dynamics.
- It proves that means of creation specific for traditional photography can be harmoniously combined with a wide range of digital tools for image transformation to produce new expressive visual qualities.
- By blending many images into one picture it goes beyond the characteristic feature of photography – stopping time in single frames – and makes them very expressive in terms of chronological and spatial dynamics.
- Because of the transparency of photograms, two-dimensional photographic images gain the third visual dimension to reflect the spatial and chronological dynamics of the city.
- The combination of photographic images into polyptychs at the stage of work display creates new links between individual photographs and thus new visual artistic qualities.
- Because of the variety of information conveyed by photograms and the power of expression, it proves the right choice of this method of exploration and creation for presenting the phenomenon of the city.
- By combining means of expression specific for traditional photography and optical equipment with digital image editing and transformation, it represents a search for new areas of creativity and a new status for photography among other visual arts.

5.3. UNIQUE FEATURES OF THE ART FORM IN THE CITY DYNAMICS COLLECTION

The main art form used in the CITY DYNAMICS collection is the multiple exposure technique known from traditional photography. This complex method of creation used to tackle the phenomenon of the city, in combination with a spontaneous response of the artist to changing reality, allowed the consistent conflation of emotions and intellect in the process of creation. The use of multiple exposure as the main tool for creation was a significant technical and intellectual challenge, but also a creative adventure.



Fig. 31. POLYPTYCH – 5, The Palace of Culture and Science, CITY DYNAMICS collection, Warsaw, Poland (photo by T.S. 2015)

As research revealed, there are very few artists in Poland using the multiple exposure technique in traditional photography as the basis of the creation process. Transparent photograms as a form of expression in artistic photography are uniquely used by the artist.

Tomasz Sobiecki
15.04.2018
Tomasz Sobiecki



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