

LENS & LEGACY

WHAT'S INSIDE
BEHIND THE FRAME
the why behind
the photograph

5 QUESTIONS
honest answers from
the human behind
the lens

THE FRAME
the photographer
his picture
the story behind

THE ARTIST
AND HIS CAMERA
the camera
why it matters
the story behind

THE SHOTS
5 shots
5 stories

BEHIND THE LENS The story behind Lens & Legacy

Real stories. Honest insight. Lasting impact.

© quiet_grain — Eliah CK



Behind the frame

THIS TIME, THE QUESTIONS ARE MINE.

Normally, I am the one asking the questions.

I ask photographers why they photograph, what they see, what drives them and what makes a particular image meaningful to them. I look at their work, listen to their stories and try to understand what exists behind the frame. For the fifth issue of Lens & Legacy, I decided to turn things around. This time, I am the one stepping in front of the questions. My name is Eliah GK. I am 44 years old, from Austria, a photographer and the founder of Lens & Legacy. For the first four issues, I have spent most of my time looking at photography through the eyes of others. Issue 005 is a little different.

This time, I want to show you the person behind the magazine. The photographer behind the camera. And, perhaps most importantly, the reason why I started Lens & Legacy in the first place.



WHO I AM

I don't think I have ever had a simple definition of what photography means to me.

I am a photographer, but I am also an observer. I like to walk without necessarily having a destination. I like to let a place reveal itself instead of deciding beforehand what I want to photograph. Sometimes it is a person. Sometimes architecture. Sometimes a shadow falling across a wall. Sometimes it is nothing more than the way someone happens to stand in a particular place at a particular moment. Those are the things that make me stop. I have become increasingly interested in the things that happen quietly. The moments that are easy to overlook. Photography gives me a reason to notice them. And perhaps that is one of the things I love most about having a camera with me: it changes the way I move through the world. I don't simply walk through a place anymore. I look.



WHAT I SEE

My own photography moves between street, documentary and minimal photography.

I am drawn to clean compositions, strong light, architecture, shadows and the relationship between people and their surroundings. But genres have never been particularly important to me. I don't walk around thinking: Today I am going to make a street photograph. I simply look for something that makes me feel that a photograph is there. Sometimes that photograph is incredibly simple. A person against a wall. A figure disappearing into a shadow. A building reduced to lines and shapes. A small human presence inside a much larger space. I like photographs that leave room for the viewer. I don't always want to explain everything. I would rather give someone enough to become curious. For me, a photograph becomes interesting when it creates a second look. When you think you have seen it — and then you notice something else.



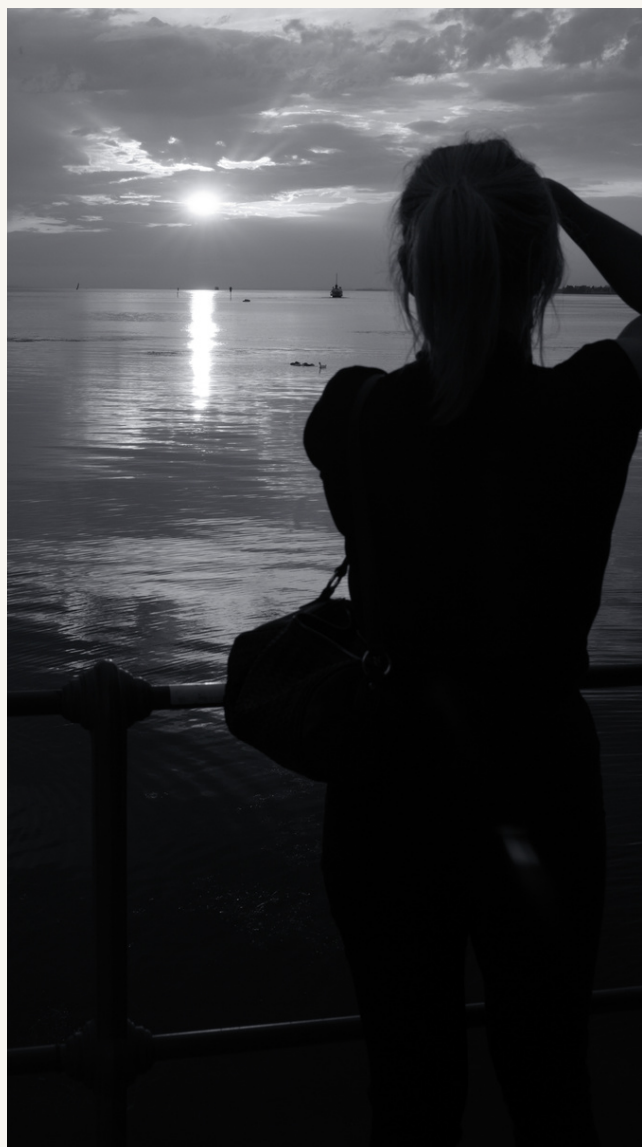
WHY I PHOTOGRAPH

I photograph because it makes me pay attention. The world moves quickly. Photography forces me to slow down. When I have a camera with me, ordinary things become interesting. Light becomes something I actively search for. Architecture becomes a collection of shapes. A person walking through a scene can suddenly change everything. And a moment that would otherwise disappear can become something permanent. I don't photograph everything I see. In fact, I probably photograph only a fraction of the things that catch my attention. Sometimes I don't even take the picture. But the act of seeing it is already valuable. Photography has taught me that not every moment needs to become an image. Some moments are simply there to make you look. And sometimes, when the conditions are right, I press the shutter.



MY PHOTOGRAPHY WHAT I TAKE

I am attracted to photographs that don't immediately give everything away. There is something about ambiguity that I enjoy. A silhouette without a face. A person whose story we don't know. A place that feels familiar but cannot quite be identified. A photograph can be documentary without telling us the entire story. It can be minimal without being empty. It can be quiet and still have tension. That balance is something I keep searching for in my own work. I also like the relationship between the human figure and the environment. Sometimes the person is the subject. Sometimes they are simply a small element that makes the entire composition work. And sometimes the absence of a person says just as much as their presence. I think my photography is ultimately less about what I photograph than about how I choose to see it.



WHY LENS & LEGACY?

There was a point when my interest in photography became bigger than my own photographs. I found myself becoming increasingly interested in other photographers. Not only in their images, but in the people behind them. Why did they take that photograph? What were they thinking? What were they trying to communicate? What happened before the shutter was pressed? And I realised that there was something missing. There are countless places where photographers can show their work. But I wanted to create a place where people would actually stop and look at it. That became the idea behind Lens & Legacy. I didn't want to create another feed. I wanted to create something slower. Something with room for photographs, stories, conversations and the people behind them. Something that could be held, read and returned to.

ISSUE #001

SUMMER 2026

LENS & LEGACY

A MAGAZINE FOR VISUAL STORYTELLERS

BEYOND
THE FRAMEEvery image
deserves
a story.

5 QUESTIONS

Five questions.
Honest
answers.

IN FOCUS

The art behind
timeless
photography.A Photographer's
Portrait.

Real stories. Honest insight. Lasting impact.

Five Questions.
Five Answers.
One Story.

📷 quiet.grain — Eliah

WHAT PHOTOGRAPHERS DESERVE

Attention. That word is probably at the heart of everything I am trying to do with Lens & Legacy. Photographers deserve attention. Not just likes. Not just numbers. Not just another quick scroll past an image. They deserve people who are willing to look at their work and appreciate the thought, time, emotion and experience behind it.

That is what I want this magazine to contribute to the photography community. I want photographers to discover other photographers. I want different styles and different perspectives to exist next to each other. I want someone to open an issue and find a photograph that makes them stop — perhaps from a photographer they had never heard of before. And I want the photographer on the other side of that photograph to feel that their work has been genuinely seen. For me, that is what community should be. Not competition. Not constantly trying to be louder than everyone else. But photographers looking at other photographers and saying: I see what you are doing. And I appreciate it.



© by Mike Kavouras

BRINGING PEOPLE TOGETHER

Photography can sometimes feel strangely individual. We go out alone. We make our photographs alone. We edit alone. We post them. And then we wait to see what happens. But photography becomes much more interesting when we start talking to each other. When one photographer sees something in another photographer's work that they had never considered. When different approaches meet. When someone else's photograph changes the way you look at your own.

That is the community I want Lens & Legacy to help create.

A place where photographers don't only present themselves.

They discover each other.

The magazine is my contribution to that idea.

Every photographer I feature adds another perspective.

Another story.

Another way of seeing.

And together, those perspectives become something much bigger than any single photograph.



NOW I AM THE PHOTOGRAPHER BEING INTERVIEWED

For the first four issues of Lens & Legacy, I asked photographers the same five questions — about experience, perspective, mistakes and what shapes the way we photograph. For Issue 005, I decided to turn the questions on myself. Not as the founder of Lens & Legacy, but simply as a photographer. For once, I am on the other side of the interview.

What's one piece of advice that quietly changed the way you photograph?
Do not photograph everything you see just because you think it might be interesting to others. Walk around. If something catches your attention, stop. Watch it. Find a perspective or angle that feels right — and click.

Which photograph changed the way you see the world?

A portrait of my wife that I took in an urbex location.

Honestly, I hated urbex. But my wife loves it, and she took me there. There was a room with an old window and amazing light. She was standing in front of it, looking out. I remember thinking, Wow, how beautiful is this scene? Then I suddenly realised: Oh hell, your camera. Use it. That moment changed the way I see and experience the world forever.

What's one photography rule you happily ignore — and why?

That's simple: all of them. I have taken so many photographs that don't follow any particular rule, and I love them precisely because of that.

What's one mistake every photographer should make at least once?

Not taking the shot because you weren't sure it would be good. Sometimes you simply have to press the shutter. You might get a great photograph. You might get nothing. But if you don't take the shot, you will never know.

Looking back to when you first started photography, what advice would you give your younger self — and aspiring photographers today?

Buy a camera. Don't worry about megapixels or technical specifications. A good photograph is created by the artist's way of seeing — and their ability to capture what they see. So go out. Look. See. And photograph.

WHERE I WANT TO TAKE IT

After four issues, Lens & Legacy is no longer just an idea.

It exists. It has its own visual language, its own rhythm and, most importantly, its own community of photographers and people who care about photography. But I don't want to lose the reason it started. I don't want it to become just another publication. I want every issue to feel personal. I want the photographs to have space. I want the stories to matter. And I want photographers to feel that there is a place where their work can be looked at without immediately being reduced to numbers. I don't know exactly where Lens & Legacy will be in five years. And honestly, I don't think I need to know. I would rather allow it to grow naturally. The important thing is that the idea remains the same: Give photography the attention it deserves. Bring photographers together. And create something that lasts a little longer than a post in a feed.



KEEP LOOKING.

Photography has changed the way I see the world. It has made me slower.

More curious. More aware of small things. And it has introduced me to people whose work I might otherwise never have discovered. That is probably the reason I continue to photograph. And it is the reason I continue to make Lens & Legacy. Because there is always something else to see. Another photograph. Another photographer. Another story. Another way of looking at something I thought I already understood. I don't know what my own photography will look like in ten years. I don't know what Lens & Legacy will look like either. But I hope both continue to do the same thing. To make me — and hopefully everyone who opens these pages — stop for a moment. Look closer. And see something differently. Keep looking.

Elijah GK

Photographer · Founder & Editor of
Lens & Legacy



THE FRAME

Sara Jalkanen

"To me, this photo represents the faceless humans of the streets, with their own troubles. You never know what is going on inside their heads, how their day has gone, are they happy, are they tired? Are they coming or leaving?

Which one won today, light or dark? Did they answer with hate when patience was needed, or did they find grace where others would have answered with fear?

It is fascinating to me when the picture has something enigmatic in it, some puzzling factor that awakens questions in the viewer.

I love contrasts and strong elements, and I think I found them in this piece.

More and more, I try to find different stories all around me so I can present them in my work."

find Sara on instagram: @valotettu





© Sara Jalkanen
Fujifilm XT-3, Fujinon XF 50mm

The Artist and his Camera

I had the pleasure of talking with the great Vlad Ionita (Instagram: @thewonderingvlad) about his relationship with photography and the camera he enjoys shooting with the most - and why it has become such an important part of his creative process. Vlad is an amazing street photographer and I am proud to present you his story here!

Which camera do you currently enjoy shooting with the most — and why?

I have to emphasise the “currently” part of the question here! Currently, it's the Fujifilm X100VI. Gear doesn't matter nearly as much as we sometimes like to think when it comes to the results you can get. But the right camera can make you shoot more, experiment more and simply enjoy photography more. Right now, the X100VI does exactly that for me.

What originally made you choose this camera?

This one has a slightly more complicated story. I used to own a Fujifilm X-E4 alongside my Nikon Zf, but investing in two lens systems didn't make much sense, so the X-E4 eventually had to go. The soft spot I had for Fujifilm never did, though.

Later I spent an evening with both a Leica Q2 and an X100VI. I think I used the Q2 for maybe thirty minutes and spent the next three hours with the Fuji. I just had an absurd amount of fun with it.

So when I decided to fill that Fuji-shaped gap again, choosing the X100VI was easy.

How does this camera influence the way you photograph? It's a complete change of rhythm for me. With the Zf, I enjoy the physical dials, shooting EVF-only and generally slowing myself down. The X100VI is almost the opposite. It's my just-go-shoot camera. Most of the time I control the aperture, choose a shutter speed when I need one, leave ISO on Auto and get on with it. I don't overthink when I use it. I react faster, experiment more and probably take photographs I would otherwise think myself out of.

Which lens do you use most with it, and why?

It's a fixed 23mm f/2.



The Artist and his Camera

What do you personally love most about this camera?

There are so many little things I love about it — the size, the hybrid viewfinder, the film simulations, the built-in ND filter and the way the images render.

But what makes it feel right to me is how uncomplicated it makes photography feel. I can throw it over my shoulder, walk out the door and basically forget about the camera until something catches my eye. There's no lens choice to make, no bag full of gear and no wondering whether I brought the right setup.

That simplicity is probably what I love most about it.

Is there a particular feeling, memory, or moment you associate with this camera?

I went through a strange phase with my Nikon Zf after I started using the 105mm. I loved the compression, but to me, the lens felt huge.

I took a day trip to Varna, Bulgaria, to shoot with it and suddenly got this spotlight effect every time I raised the camera. I became uncomfortable photographing people, and the feeling stayed with me even after switching back to the smaller 40mm and 28mm. This went on for almost a month.

A friend then lent me his XIOOVI for a weekend, and I decided to go back to Varna.

It was liberating. The camera felt small, casual and unintimidating. Within minutes I stopped thinking about being noticed and started thinking about photographing again.

I had one of the most fun days of shooting I'd had in a long time. That weekend probably has a lot to do with why I bought one.

If you could keep only one camera and one lens, would this be the ones you chose?

This is a hard one, because right now the XIOOVI is the camera I have the most fun shooting with...

But if I could only keep one camera and one lens, I'd still choose the Nikon Zf with the 40mm f/2 SE.

Part of it is the experience of shooting with the Zf. The physical dials, the viewfinder with the screen flipped away, the shutter — that process has become such an important part of how I enjoy photography that I'm not willing to give it up.

Then there's the 40mm itself, which is basically the XIOOVI lens but for the Zf.

Being full frame also gives me more flexibility in low light and better high-ISO performance.

Besides, the Nikon Zf might just be the best full-frame camera that Fujifilm ever made.



4 shots, 4 stories

These four shots, and the stories behind them, are by Mike Kavouras — a photographer I deeply admire and, in many ways, look up to. What I especially love about his work is that he still works extensively with analog photography in a time when everything has become so instant and digital. His analog work is, in my eyes, simply outstanding. That's exactly why he deserves this place in Lens & Legacy. Thank you, my friend.

Instagram: @m.i.k.e._photography



Puff and a Sip

Street photography is where I feel most "at home". Catching the world in motion, while trying to disappear into the madness. Most of all, I love capturing people in "their" world, as it revolves around them. It's where I feel my photography is most authentic. Little to no interactions, just raw emotions and stories. As I landed on European soil one year, outside the doors of a busy and chaotic airport, I glanced over and life presented me with one of those moments. This man, alone, in thought, watching the world buzz around him. Taking in the cigarette smoke as he was taking in the world. His aura seemed calm and care free, but what was he thinking? Could his mind be in chaos as well, and this moment was his escape?



Instant connection

Wildlife and nature photography is my "zen". It's not a race against time, but becoming one with my surroundings and capturing their beauty. I've photographed many creatures, near and far, but squirrels always make me laugh with their curiosity and fear. I caught this plump one eating on a stump. When it noticed me, it waddled across the street and up a tree. I followed, and BOOM — it wrapped around the trunk and stared straight into my lens with that "Hey you!" look. I said the same out loud. Capturing a moment is one thing, but making a connection is another. One of my most memorable animal interactions.



A World Within a World

In a world of "we need bigger, and better", we often forget about the universe that exists below our own feet. So when I need a real challenge, I grab my macro setup and go hunting. One of my favorite things to capture are morning dew drops on leaves or blades of grass. Perfectly suspended or undisturbed. On a grander scale, I'd like you to think about it. In this shot, just this simple drop of water not only sustains life for the plants and bugs, but the possibility or pretty high chance that it holds life. What my lens sees here is basically the world within a universe, what it doesn't see is tiny microscopic organisms within it, kinda like us here on earth. Makes you think what worlds hide beyond us as well.



Mirrored Worlds

Back where it all started. Film photography is where my roots begin. I probably shoot more film now than I did in the last 30+ years combined. We've become too used to the "instant" aspect of life. Film removes all that, forcing me to slow down, be precise, and use my creative brain. One of my favorite ways is through double or multiple exposures. Drawn to cemeteries with black and white film, I came across this monument. The rising sun behind it blinded me, turning the stone black. The frame was conceived. I took the shot as my eyes saw it, flipped, recomposed and reshot. The frame was born — a symphony of chaos, like an alternate world our eyes can't see or minds comprehend.

WHAT WE SEE MATTERS.

Every photograph
is a small piece of time.
Some disappear.
Some stay with us.

Thank you for looking.
Next Sunday,
we continue.

Quiet Grain
Issue 006 — next Sunday



THE FRAME ENDS.
THE STORY DOESN'T.

Lens & Legacy
#issue 005
Autumn 2026