

STREET PHOTOGRAPHY

STORIES TOLD IN PHOTOS

BY DANIEL HOFFMANN



ISBN 978-87-996850-6-6

Street Photography

Stories told in photos

by Daniel Hoffmann

Translated by Julie Loring

© 2021

ISBN 978-87-996850-6-6

Table of Contents:

Foreword by Gunner Byskov..... 4
About the author..... 5
Why this book?..... 6
How do I work with street photography?..... 7
“Behind the photo”..... 10
 Photo examples, where I will elaborate on my own thoughts on the photos,
 why I took them, and why I selected them for the book.
Contact sheets..... 71
Epilogue..... 74
Other downloads from streetphotography.dk.....75



FOREWORD

Shakespeare believed that the question was to be or not be, but when we are faced with a photograph, we are reminded to ask yourself the question: To see or not to see!

When a photographer releases the shutter button, that photographic moment is more important than anything else – and for that brief moment, the only thing that exist. A photographer will always observe a scene using his or her photographic gaze. That scene results in a photo, which expresses the intense sensory perception of the moment. If the photo is successful, it is possible for us as onlookers, who enjoy the privilege to see the photograph, to get a glimpse of the sensory perception and the intimacy of the watchful photographer. We borrow the photographer's gaze that he or she offers the object. In other words, we are included in the photographic moment.

Afterwards, we can look at the photograph and conclude that the photographic moment is the moment where our memories, lost in the gaze, disappear into a zen-like intimacy while simultaneously offering themselves as a greeting to eternity. It is also the self-centred moment, where the subject's intense sensory perceptions are appealing to objectivity and gives us an opportunity to look into the common unseen. And that moment carries eternity with it and makes the dead come alive forever.



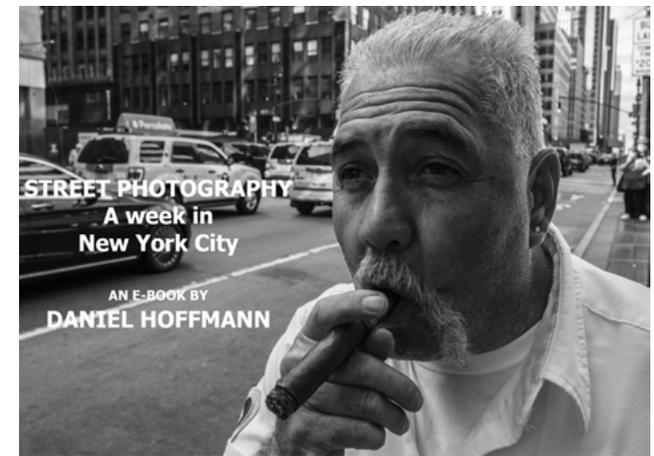
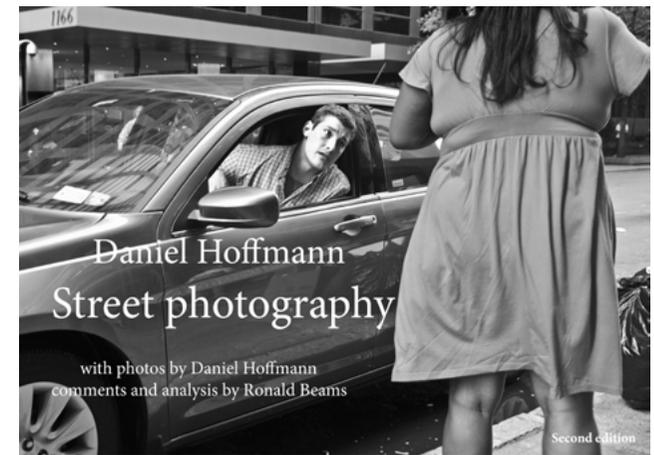
Foto: Laura Guldhammer

There is no other place where the intensity of this moment is more apparent than in street photography, which lives in and by a photographer's absolute attention on everything we usually overlook and walk by: A quick gaze from a man to a woman, a postulating posture for a second, crooked glasses in a crash helmet, threatening posters, reflections and much more. Exactly this kind of sensory details, which Daniel Hoffmann shows us in his new book "Street Photography – Stories told in photos" and generously passes on to us.

It is a gift, a photographic gift, and there is reason to be excited about taking part in the attention that Daniel offers all life surrounding him.

Gunner Byskov

Director of studies and teacher at Media College Denmark



About the author:

I was born in 1959 and live in Viborg.

I have been an amateur photographer since 1973. Since then, I have worked with many different areas and motives.

At the end of the 70s, I became interested in documentary photography. Particularly the Magnum Group had my attention.

It was not until 2011 that I started to take street photography more seriously, and it is today the category that interests me the most.

If you want to learn more, you can read my first two e-books from 2013, "Street Photography", and from 2016 "Street Photography – A Week in New York City", which you can download from my website for free: www.streetphotography.dk.

The photo above:

A self-portrait I took in a mirror in 2018. The photo on the photo is a similar one from 1982.

Links:

www.streetphotography.dk

www.danishphoto.dk

www.500px.com/danishphoto

www.instagram.com/streetphotographydk

If you have any comments or questions about this book, you are welcome to write to me: daniel@streetphotography.dk

Why this book?

The interest in street photography is quickly growing these years. When street photography became my favourite category of motives in 2011, there were very few street photographers in Denmark. Since then, the number has increased both nationally and globally, alongside the number of groups for street photography on social media.

When I published my first two books on street photography in 2013 and 2016, I had hoped for 20.000-30.000 downloads. But in 2019, the number of downloads has passed half a million, and the books are also available on many other sites, where I can not follow the number of downloads.

Because of the interest in these types of books, I wanted to write another one.

The book is based on some of my many street photographs, which I want to write more about. A type of “the story behind the photo.”

I’ll explain how I saw the motive, how the conditions were on the location, and which reasons for these photos to be included in the book. We’ll touch upon interpretation, what can be learnt from the photo and its content.

It can be difficult to write down words about photos. Many of us, who are members of different photo groups on social media, can relate to that when we see the comments on the uploaded photos. You often receive comments such as “nice photo”. That is obviously a nice comment, but it would be better to receive a more in-depth analysis of your photos. Something that I, and many others, are not very good at providing. Some photos can be difficult to write about, while it is easier with others.

It also applies to my own photos in this book. The text will also just be a supplement, and the photos should be carrying the book.



How do I work with street photography?

What makes street photography interesting to me is the ability to portray regular situations in everyday life in a way that makes that split second and the person you are watching interesting – preferably with a sense of humour.

All my street photographs are real. It means that nothing has been staged – and, therefore, no one has been instructed to pose in a specific way. To stage or provide instructions for a street photograph would, for me, be the same as being a hunter in a deer park.

It also means that I have a rule of thumb that says approx. 150 clicks on the release button will often provide a street photo that I can show on social media for street photographers that I participate in. Of course, that requires that I continuously try my best and look out for the next photo – often by “scanning” the street further ahead and have a far-sighted mindset. If you can predict a situation before it occurs, you can bring yourself in position to the optimal shooting angle.

I prefer street photographs of people that react as if the camera wasn't there. That is why I often shoot from the hip. I usually use a focal length of 18 or 23 mm (28/35 mm full-frame). I try my best to be “invisible”. Therefore, I often pretend that I am photographing something entirely different so that the other people present that have spotted my camera believes that I am shooting a building, a statue or something else. Other times, I use my folded tilt screen. I often avoid eye contact with the people I photograph and look past them.

Other times, I greet people or nod when I get eye contact and then take a photo from the hip the moment they look back.

On rare occasions, I talk to people, and after a good talk, I ask if I can take a photograph, which they usually agree to. I avoid giving instructions but allow them to look into the camera, at most.

I often participate in different street photography groups on Facebook – mainly Danish. I have had the pleasure of meeting several members at different related events. 500PX is probably my preferred site to showcase my photos. On 500PX, there is consistently high quality and a good, friendly tone. The photos are not compressed in the same way as on Facebook.



Photo: Søren Brøndum Christensen

An opportunity to pursue your interest in street photography is by participating in “Street Photo Walks.” I have arranged quite a lot of these. It happens through a street photo group on Facebook. The participants meet up at a location in a larger city, and then the participants walk around and take photos in the city. The participants meet up once an hour on selected spots, where they can have fun and be social. When you get home, you upload some of the day's photos to the Facebook group, where you can have a discussion about the photos. It is important for me to share an interest in street photography with other likeminded people.



An excellent way to get inspired is by watching videos on YouTube about street photography. If you search for “street photography”, you do get a lot of hits that have nothing to do with the subject or has poor quality. But if you often search for the most recent uploads, you can be lucky and find some good ones. I like those where the photographer has placed a small video camera above the camera, so you feel that you are watching the video from the photographer’s finder.



Street Photography - Street Hunt #23 - Spyros Papaspyropoulos & Greg Antikian in Athens, Greece
Here: “Street Hunters” på YouTube.

Another good way to stay updated and get inspiration is by subscribing to a magazine about street photography.

I have subscribed to the American “Street Photography Magazine”, which, besides containing a lot of interesting articles, also has a good podcast. It can usually be an almost hour-long interview with an interesting street photographer, but plenty of other relevant and interesting topics are also included.

Many years ago, before the age of the internet, books about the press and documentary photography was part of what inspired me the most. That was before I knew there was something called street photography. I think I have borrowed all the books about the subject from the local library.



Photo: Niels Linneberg, Esbjerg Fotoklub

I think that a presentation is a good way to showcase your photos. I often attend presentations with other photographers, whenever I have the opportunity. The audience is able to ask questions to the photographer and dive into the deeper meaning of the photo. I have also been a presenter quite a few times - mostly in camera clubs. Although there are seldom many street photographers among the audience, there is still a huge interest in these types of photos.”



Photo: Michael Trebbien, Fotoklubben ISO8000.dk

In the digital age, you can often forget the joy of getting your photos printed on a good piece of photo paper. Therefore, this will be an encouragement to the positive experience it can be to go to exhibitions. I have realised, that despite there are not a lot of people pursuing street photography, then there is still a huge interest in watching photos of people's behaviour in the public space, which can document and mirror our contemporary lifestyle. I think that many can relate to the different situations in the photos, which can help to create a broader audience. Although you don't reach as many people through a photography exhibition compared to exhibiting them online, then the benefit is that people often view and immerse themselves in each photo when they are standing in front of it. When you are online, it can often be tempting to press "next", so it becomes quantity instead of immersion and quality. Personally, I enjoy attending photography exhibitions for those reasons. I have also participated in exhibitions – mostly with other street photographers.

Jan Jespersen: <https://www.janjespersenphotography.dk>
Søren Brøndum Christensen: <https://500px.com/sbc9>
Niels Linneberg: <https://500px.com/atempo>
Jacek Szkudlarek https://500px.com/jacek_s
Daniel Hoffmann: <https://500px.com/danishphoto>



Here are some photos from a photo exhibition I participated in, along with four other Danish street photographers: Jan Jespersen; Søren Brøndum Christensen; Niels Linneberg; Jacek Szkudlarek. On the next page, you can find links to their photo pages.

“Behind the photo”

Photo examples, where I will elaborate on my own thoughts on the photos,
why I took them, and why I selected them for the book



Photo: Ghaida Dirani, Media College Denmark.



Outside this hairdresser, in a smaller town near Napoli, a customer was sitting and waiting. There was loud music coming from the radio inside the salon. Suddenly, the young man entered from an entry next to it. He clearly enjoyed the music, and he spontaneously started dancing and act up in time with the music. It annoyed the waiting customer in the chair. In the end, the hairdresser also had to see what was going on. I managed to get 10 exposures of the situation, and I selected this because of the expressions and dance gestures, which are quite visible here. At the same time, the customer is making a discouraging gesture with his hand.



I passed this young woman sitting on her scooter by the kerb in a town near Malaga. I noticed her glasses that were crooked because of the helmet. Just when I walked past her, I took a couple of shots – and this is the shot where I was closest to the woman. I like the photo because of the humour in it, which can provoke a smile from the viewer. The takeaway from this photo must be: Don't use glasses and a helmet at the same time!



This photo from New York City is a good example of how you do not necessarily need to have a face on street photography. The photo still tells a lot about the woman. In Denmark, we have a TV-program called “Do you know the type?“, where a couple of lifestyle experts try to guess what types of people are living in the houses that they are being shown around in. Such a lifestyle expert will be able to say a lot about the woman in the photo, just by looking at the clothes, the bag, the dog and so on.



This photo is from a smaller town close to Naples and depicts, which I assume, a grandmother and her grandchild. This is the best of 5 photos. The woman was sitting and talking to the passers-by, having a good time. However, the boy looked bored and didn't participate in the talks. Maybe that is why he has a worried expression on his face.



This photo is from a Danish town, where I spotted a man waiting outside a women's clothing store. He was bored. Maybe his wife was inside shopping in the store? He spent the time with his phone and yawned every now and then. I could recognise myself in the situation by sending your wife into a women's clothing store – and then time passes. As a man, you are lost among the women's clothes and are just waiting. It has not been a problem for me over the last few years since I can spend the time outside wisely by taking photos while my wife takes her time inside the store – and everyone is happy.



Near a bus stop in Manhattan, New York City, I noticed a man with a pipe in the mouth and a cane. I thought he could be a good “street photo character”. There was also a woman talking on the phone in front of a poster near the bus stop. I took several photos here, but this was definitely the best one. When I took the photo, I had not noticed the man, which is walking out of the frame behind the glass in the bus shelter. Suddenly, I saw a man and a woman that were both talking on the phone and standing up or walking. At the same time, there was the man with the pipe and the woman on the poster sitting down. For me, it created across the composition. When I view the photo, I think there is some sort of cohesion between them, two by two.



I took this photo at a Christmas market in Germany. I thought I could use the mannequin heads as the foreground for a photo of the hat seller. Then the girl showed up on the left side with a hat on, so her head was placed between the mannequin heads with the hats on. Many know about the children's book "Where's Wally?" – I think that is the theme for the photo. Here, Wally is just replaced with some real heads.



This square in Barcelona was filled with pigeons. Many people were feeding the pigeons, and I noticed that most people had a startled look on their faces when the pigeons took off from the ground and flew close by. Therefore, I walked straight towards some pigeons that were looking for something to eat on the pavement. The pigeons took off, away from me, and flew close to the small family in the photo. I like the different ways they react. The girl on the right with a startled expression, the mother with a confused look – as if she is trying to hold back a laugh, and the small child, who does not register the situation.



I passed this man on a pedestrian street in a small Danish suburb. He enjoyed a cup of coffee in the sun. I quickly noticed the bald mannequins that were standing around him. I could see a similarity concerning the lack of hair, which I best emphasised in this exposure of the four of them. Therefore, I think the man blends in nicely with his surroundings.



It is said that Italians speak with their hands. I have also noticed that during my many trips to “The Boot Country”. This photo of four Neapolitan women is no different, in which two by two are almost using their index fingers synchronously to explain themselves. Maybe they are two mothers with two daughters?



I like having several stories or layers in a photo. Here, I have managed to get five independent layers. The family with the stroller, the cyclist, the single man, the walking family, and the main motive: The mother swirling her son around. Without them, the photo would not have reached sufficient depth and quality.



As I previously mentioned, I like humour in street photography. It can be challenging to define what is actually making people smile from a photo. I had initially picked a different photo – shot a second before, where the man is looking straight ahead, as the best one. My intention with the photo was the similarity between the mannequin's and the man's jacket. But the more I looked at the photo and the girl that suddenly appeared on the right with the curious look, the more it brought a smile to my face even if she is out of focus, which only shows that it wasn't the intention to get her in the photo.



I have chosen this photo because of the expressions and gestures it contains. I ran into these two gentlemen in Naples, who were immersed in a conversation by a street stall. I have no idea what they were talking about, but I think both the man's expression and gestures are shown in a way I rarely capture with the camera.



I had first thought of this photo as a street photo with humour. The man is standing next to a white headless mannequin boy, who has eyes, nose and mouth on the t-shirt as compensation for his lack of head. But the more I view this photo, the more weird and macabre it becomes. No one likes the thought of a headless child.



The photo has been taking in a bigger, Danish city – and is to be a photo that illustrates the multicultural society. The woman on the left is from a Middle Eastern culture, and the women on the right are from Western culture. Although they are of the same age and live differently, they do live side by side and accept each other's differences, conditions of life, faith and political convictions.



This photo from Central Park in New York is a different version of the same situation that occurs in “Street Photography – A week in New York City” page 24. It shows how difficult it can be to decide which photo is the best. Back then, I preferred the other photo, but now I am not so sure. Where the photo in my previous book contained one layer and, thereby, one story, I think this photo contains two stories. On the one side, the “Bubble Lady” and the excited children around her. On the other side, the girl with the braids who are trying to catch a bubble in front of her family. It can often be a good idea to look back in your old folders and look at the photos with fresh eyes. I often find a photo I overlooked the first time, like this shot from Central Park.



I enjoy bringing the camera to meetups with veteran cars. Here are cars that have been designed like the designer thought they should look, with their own characteristics. Today, cars look much alike, and you can almost not tell the difference between them if you take off the emblems. The veteran car owners are very enthusiastic and always ready to talk about their cars. During a local meetup, I took this photo, where I tried to include the cars, so you can see what the talk is all about. The sun was getting low and provide a nice light from the side. The people in the photo were immersed in a talk about their vehicles and did not notice that I was standing there with my camera.



The photo here has been shot in an Italian city. I stopped for a second on a crosswalk, took the photo, and continued to walk. I like the three vastly different types in the photo; The middle-aged woman, the happy backpacker and the “cool” gentleman to the left, which could appear as a mafia boss in a movie. Together, they create a photo that, with its slightly crooked angle and cut-off hair, has a realness and spontaneity to it, which I like.



I have sometimes been standing in front of a train station and waited. Not because I was picking someone up, but because you can stand and wait with your camera without anyone noticing. There are often opportunities for a good street photograph. I first spotted the man to the left on the photo. He was standing and waiting with a newly purchased painting resting on his suitcase. The man on the right was standing closer to me. I think he fits well into the photo as a completely different type, which probably doesn't purchase paintings but is rather his own master, which you have to be if you walk around with a sweatshirt saying: "I hate everyone". Not because I think he does that, but I interpret it as if he wants to show that he is rebelling against authorities and doesn't care about what others think.



I took this photo in an outdoor market in Croatia. When I went through my photos from there, I discarded the photo since I hadn't gotten the person on the left in it. When I went through the folder six months later, I could still see options in the photo. Suddenly, I didn't see that a person lacking on the left, but instead the humour: A man talking to a hand. I was also quite satisfied with the fact that all three hands had the same gesture.



Sometimes a sign or a text can have a huge impact on the photo. I think this photo from Barcelona's subway station, on the "Paral·lel" stop, is a good example of that. I was standing on the other side of the rails and noticed that the six people were sitting with a somewhat similar distance between each other, all in a row.



I took this photo of the two hawkers on a flea market in Hungary. I especially liked their expressions, and I can almost hear the man to the right saying: "I am sure that you cannot fit my overalls." It is my experience that there are often many great street photo characters among hawkers. Therefore, a flea market is usually worth visiting with your camera.



This photo has been taken at the bus station in San Francisco. When I saw the man sitting underneath the poster, I was immediately aware that I had to catch it on camera. He was sitting on the chair with his phone and earplugs as if he was trying to shut himself out of the surrounding world and not respond to the ambush from the “lightsaber man.”



I found this photo in a folder which I had already looked through many times, and suddenly, I saw something in the photo I hadn't seen before. When you look at the photo, you may think there were some relationship problems. The wife has turned sour, and the man, symbolised by the missing head, has become an insignificant doormat. But in reality, the woman may only have had that expression in a split second I took the photo – and the man behind her may just be some random man without any relation to the woman. Yes, I know these are all guesses and interpretations, but that is what makes street photography interest – both practising and viewing.



The woman in the photo had a stall on a Croatian fruit and vegetable market. Although she could probably have retired long ago, she had a stall where she sold flowers. The market was close to our vacation apartment, so we often stopped by. Today we walked past her in the morning. When we came by again around midday, she was sleeping in a chair. When we came back once again around 6 PM, she had, as one of the last people, closed her stall with the help of her husband. She was sitting and resting, getting ready to get up. Her man was on his way. I just managed to get three photos of her. In the beginning, I liked it the best on the front page of this book. She looks up and straight into the camera, and I like her expression. When I later took a closer look at the photo on the page, I changed my mind and liked it more. I think it has a sense of drama and a story with a lot of unanswered questions that you can keep thinking about.



I couldn't help noticing this colourful and well-dressed married couple that was visiting Denmark as tourists. They immediately reminded me of Richard and Hyacinth Bucket from "Keeping Up Appearances". I heard them speak British English. When I say "they spoke", it was actually mainly the woman that I could hear. It is here you can see in the photo, setting a direction and deciding how things would go, while the man walked a step behind her the whole time.



Many children enjoy living close to their grandparents. I think that might also be the case with the girl, who is sitting and eating, while the grandmother takes care of her – and particularly the doll. I think it adds another dimension to the photo because she, an adult, is almost squeezing the doll.



I call this photo “A hug for Dad and a dress for Mom” when I uploaded it to my 500px-account. All things considered, I do not actually know whether the woman, who is looking at dresses, actually has anything to do with the girl and the father, but I interpret it that way when I look at the photo. That is often how it is. Reality is frozen in a split second; it becomes a photo, and then you interpret the photo in exactly that formed which has been created. If the photo had been taken a few seconds later, the story could have been entirely different.



When I saw this street stall with the mirror, I thought I could use the mirror. I positioned myself in a way so that the customer's face was in the mirror. When the woman in the stall then explained something with gestures, I took the photo – and the women's reflection in the mirror does add an extra dimension and depth to the photo.



I often stand by bus stops and patiently wait. Not because I am going on the bus, but because it is often a nice space to take street photos since many people walk in and out of the buses. Where are they going? You can stand there for quite a while, close to others with your camera, without creating any suspicion. I usually spend some of my time looking at the departure times and looking in the direction of where the bus is coming from since you cannot be pointing at the others waiting with the camera all the time. On this photo of the waiting elderly couple, I tried to bring some humour into the shot with the poster in the background, where the six different faces are laughing behind the backs of the two seniors – without them being aware of it.



I walked past this elderly lady near an outdoor fruit, vegetable and flower market. Just a few minutes before, I had shot some photos of her near the stalls where she was shopping, but without any useful photos. I thought she was an interesting character to a street photo with the hat pulled firmly down over her furrowed and ageing face. From a few shots, I finally got this photo, which I like because she, despite the serious expression, seems like a nice grandmother type, which despite her old age, still takes care of herself in everyday life.



There was a meetup for American cars in town. Beautiful vehicles. Everything from the 1940's cool and rebuilt Chevrolet V8 pickup truck to the newest Ford Mustang was displayed. This little guy, who was pushed around in his own little American car by his parents, caught my eye. I tried to get a photo where there was also real American cars in the photo. I also think the parents had a car in the exhibition since, particularly, the mother was dressed in a 1950s style with a dress straight out of the movie "Grease", which takes place at the end of the 1950s. We as parents are very likely to influence our children with our own interests, which there is nothing wrong with. It is always good for people to have interests and passions for things that mean something to them. I think the boy might later in life buy his own "full size" American car.



On a sunny Saturday morning, I walked by this café. A smiling waitress was walking around outside. She talked to the customers and seemed to have things under control. Out of 8 shots, I got this one, where I think she is telling a customer: “Just a moment, then I’ll be there.” I did not notice while I took the photos, but when I later looked through my photos on my monitor, I saw that the stretched out hand is placed in front of the poster, so it looks like she is reaching out for the coffee cup.



In the old part of a small Croatian town, this couple was sitting and resting on a chair and a stool. The man spoke on the phone, and suddenly, the woman stood up and gestured with her arms, saying something. I never found out what she wanted and who she was addressing. But I did get this photo, and I think the expression and gestures from the woman are interesting. At the same time, I think it is possible for the viewer to keep building on the story in the photo.



In a smaller town in southern Italy, I spotted these two men that were chatting on the other side of the street. I liked the standing man's rather thoughtful expression and the repetition of the sitting man's scooter in the form of the children's bike on the right side of the photo, which is parked in the same direction. If one should also include the sign "New Style" in one's considerations, is a question of considerations, but he might have exchanged the bicycle for the scooter and wanted to show it to his friend.



Where else than in Las Vegas can you meet such a couple? The woman with her plastic guitar and the man with his cigarette. I liked each of their expressions. Particularly the woman's rather twisted expression, which leads my thoughts towards a rockstar guitarist, which with a twisted face is about to go crazy in a guitar solo, and the man's cool attitude. The woman has also gotten a hat in the form of the Chrysler Building in the background, Vega's version of New York.



Coney Island, on the south side of Brooklyn, is a great place to take photographs. It is particularly lively on the weekends. I think the boy in the photo was some type of Michael Jackson “wannabe”. It was quite entertaining for the other children. When you are imitating like that, it doesn’t matter that you have the guitar in the form of a tennis racket in a bag.



Time has frozen for a split second in a normal, everyday situation, as you can see in any larger Danish city during a busy Saturday morning. If you had been present at the time, you probably wouldn't have noticed the situation. But to make this ordinary situation and the people interesting – that is a special ability of street photography. The young woman symbolises busyness. She has probably done some shopping and is walking briskly. On both sides of her, people are taking their time – both the young ones, who are sitting and enjoying the moment with their fast food and the older woman who is dragging herself along – maybe with her daughter.



This escalator goes up from the metro in Barcelona. I thought that the metro and the lines of buildings provided some great lines and composition since they point towards the person in the photo. The photo is probably in the grey zone between street, cityscape and architectural photos. I think the photo expresses a person's loneliness in a city with millions. Maybe because you would usually expect far more people present on an escalator to the metro.



You can find many interesting characters in Harlem, New York City. I had stopped on a street corner, where the two women were sitting outside a store and enjoyed the sun. My thought was to have some other people walking by who could interact with them – for instance, by greeting them with a gesture. Instead, this man walked in from the left. I think you need to search for a long time before finding someone with an outfit like his. I think he was a perfect street photo character – and he had that cool attitude that works so well on a street photo.



I took the photo on a street where there was a lot of cycling traffic. I had planned to use the couple, which was standing on the corner, as a background to two cyclists passing each other. The photo I got out of it displays the chaos and business of a city – while the four main characters are positioned symmetrically in the photo.



On a weekend trip near Esbjerg, I passed the statues “The Human by the Sea.” I brought my converted infrared camera along and thought I should take a photo of the statues. I did, but I also thought it had the character of a street photo, so I included it in this book. At the same time, I think there are so many things happening in the photo that the viewer can spend a long time studying the details. Due to the infrared camera, it is a slightly different distribution of the black/white tinge in the photo than usually.



Photos are not always what they seem like. Is the woman threatening bystanders with the knife? No, but the woman in the outdoor stall had just sold her last watermelon. The knife she cut the watermelons with had to be cleaned, and just when she held it in front of her to ensure it was clean, I took the photo.



I was on vacation in Croatia during the World Championships in football. The Croats went all the way to the finals. You met excited football fans everywhere you went. On the train station, these guys were waiting for the train – and what better way to spend time than playing football? They had put their suitcases like barriers, which the ball had to cross – of course, it had to be played at all times. I took quite a few shots since I know from experience that it can be difficult to predict the result of this type of photos. I prefer this photo, where the ball is floating above the two young men, who used both legs and headbutts.



A father and son were having fun playing cowboys in a shooting duel during a summer evening in an Italian town. Both were ready to pull their six-shooters and shoot first. I only managed to get a few shots of this scene, and this was the only one I could use. I always find it great to see parents play with their children and get down on their level.



Newspaper kiosks, which are standing in the middle of the pavement in the larger cities, are slowly disappearing – unfortunately. However, that might also be in sync with the decline of physical newspapers and magazines, while more and more people stop smoking. When the turnover from cigarettes and magazines/newspapers decrease, most try to sell other things, such as toy cars, SIM cards, tourist merchandise, and so on. That is also the case for this Polish salesman. I pretended that I was looking at something over the counter and couldn't see the kiosk owner, hence why I took a blind shot with my camera hanging in front of my belly. I was lucky since I am quite satisfied with the rather puzzled expression while he is looking at the camera. The low afternoon sun was shining from a window to the left.



It can be quite giving to reflect on your style, habits and challenge yourself with the camera so you can improve your skills as a street photographer. At some point, I became aware that I had a habit of photographing people close-up. Therefore, I used an 8 mm (12 mm FF) right-angled fisheye lens for the camera. Then I had to get extremely close. I quickly stopped doing it, as I didn't get the results I had hoped for, but I did have a few fun hours with it.



It is said that women talk twice as much as men. Whether that is true, I don't know, but when you look at this photo, you may be inclined to believe it. It also shows the differences between the genders when we talk about big teenagers. The boys are fooling around and are often not quite serious during that age. The photo is from an Italian town and has been shot at the end of the day, where the sun is coming down. The bad lighting required that the shutter speed was reduced to 1/160 sec. On the one hand, it provides more blurry movement – on the other hand, the movements gave the photo some dynamic..



I liked the quite simple story in this photo from a bus station, where the polite young man gave the girl a goodbye kiss before she had to take the bus. The photo is cropped and has left out the many people waiting on the benches to provide a more simple composition, where there were only a few elements in the photo, although it was taken at one of the big city's most busy places.



Right from the beginning, I was dissatisfied with this photo of the coffee-drinking man. I was disappointed that there had been leaves or something else included in the frame, both at the bottom and in the upper corner, which makes the photo look like I was sitting behind some bushes and hiding. I still uploaded it to several social media for photographers, and the photo ended up receiving quite a few positive comments. It is perhaps also a good example of a circle composition. I have tried to drink coffee from a disposable cup, exactly like this one. It is very unstable, and you can easily spill with it – therefore, I understand why the man is bending over it.



I took some photos of the young man talking to a young girl. In this photo, I was lucky that a girl was passing by with a huge, inflatable heart. I liked it because it provided an option for interpretation in the photo. The love is symbolised in a heart being carried away, and there will, therefore, not become a couple out of the two young people.



This photo, taken in a pedestrian zone, I find it interesting because of the graphic element in the composition. Without the umbrellas, which repeat the pattern of the crosswalk, I probably would not have used them. There is not a lot of action in it, but I still think it should be included in the book since it is the type of photo that I seldom have any luck with.



Much like the previous photo, this one comes to life thanks to the black and white repetition, which also occurs on the woman's clothes and equipment.



This photo and the next one has been shot in the same place. I have selected them to show how I also work from time to time. A few mannequins, or rather the lower half of them, were standing outside a men's clothing store. It was my intention to use them as a photo element along with the passers-by, and I managed to get two useful photos within a minute. I like the woman's slightly scowled expression. At the same time, the lower body has become a "container" for smaller people, who are actually walking around far away.



Here I saw a connection between the girl on crutches and the mannequins. Today, where you can transplant different parts of the body, such as heart, kidney, fingers and so on – you could imagine that one day it will be possible to transplant a leg as a spare part, if necessary. Fortunately, it is probably not that serious with the girl on crutches. The text on the mat, “tiger”, must indicate that she will soon be back on her feet again.



There were quite a few outdoor paintings in a Dutch city, especially on doors, among other places. One of them, as pictured here, is a silhouette that must be “Death”. Death is visiting a home where the man is in bed, but Death is looking outside the door and in the direction of an older man a few meters away on the street, with a dog and a bicycle. When I saw it, I thought that I needed a photo of it. I am happy that I took the photo, but I cannot quite figure out whether I find it funny, sad or tragic. In the end, that is up to the viewer.



This photo and the one on the next page have been taken with five days in-between. It is from an indoor market in Poland. I thought the man, who was in the tobacco stall, was a good character for street photography. I also like the humour in that fact that he is selling cigarettes while smoking. When I took this photo, it was cloudy outside, and the tall windows in the hall provided a nice, shaping light from the right.



Five days later, the sun was shining outside, so the light was completely different. I have a hard time deciding which of them is better. However, that is not why I have included them in this book, but rather to inspire you to return to the place you have previously photographed. Next time it can provide a completely different photo.



Some photos just HAVE to be in colour and work best that way. That is also what I thought of this action street photo, which I shot during a vacation in Croatia. Croatia had just won the World Championships' semifinal against England (2-1), and the city was filled with happy Croats celebrating the victory. I had put the camera on 6400 ISO since there was not a lot of light in the streets – but just enough to capture this happy young Croatian men, celebrating with a burnout on a side street.



Where is the border for when a photo is street photography, and when it is not? That is a good question, which I cannot answer. There are no official rules, and there are many opinions on it. I have my own suggestions: (1) Street photography is photos of people in the public space. It does not have to be a street, but it can also be a train station or a beach. (2) The photo must not be staged or fabricated. (3) It must not be the photographer's family, friends and acquaintances. (4) The person/people must have value for the story in the photo. See a more detailed description of the topic in my book "Street Photography – A week in New York City) on page 8.

I have chosen the photo on this page to illustrate a photo that is bordering on street photography. Is it a landscape or street photo? The photo has been shot in the countryside, outside a village that is visible in the background. The person is an elderly lady, taking a morning walk with her walker during a clear and frosty morning. I have several photos of her all the way along the side road to the left, where she turned around. Still, I have decided to use one of the photos where she takes up the least space on the composition. Despite that, she is an important part of the story in the photo and displays her lonely walk in the landscape. So maybe it is both a street and landscape photo?

Contact sheets Kontaktark

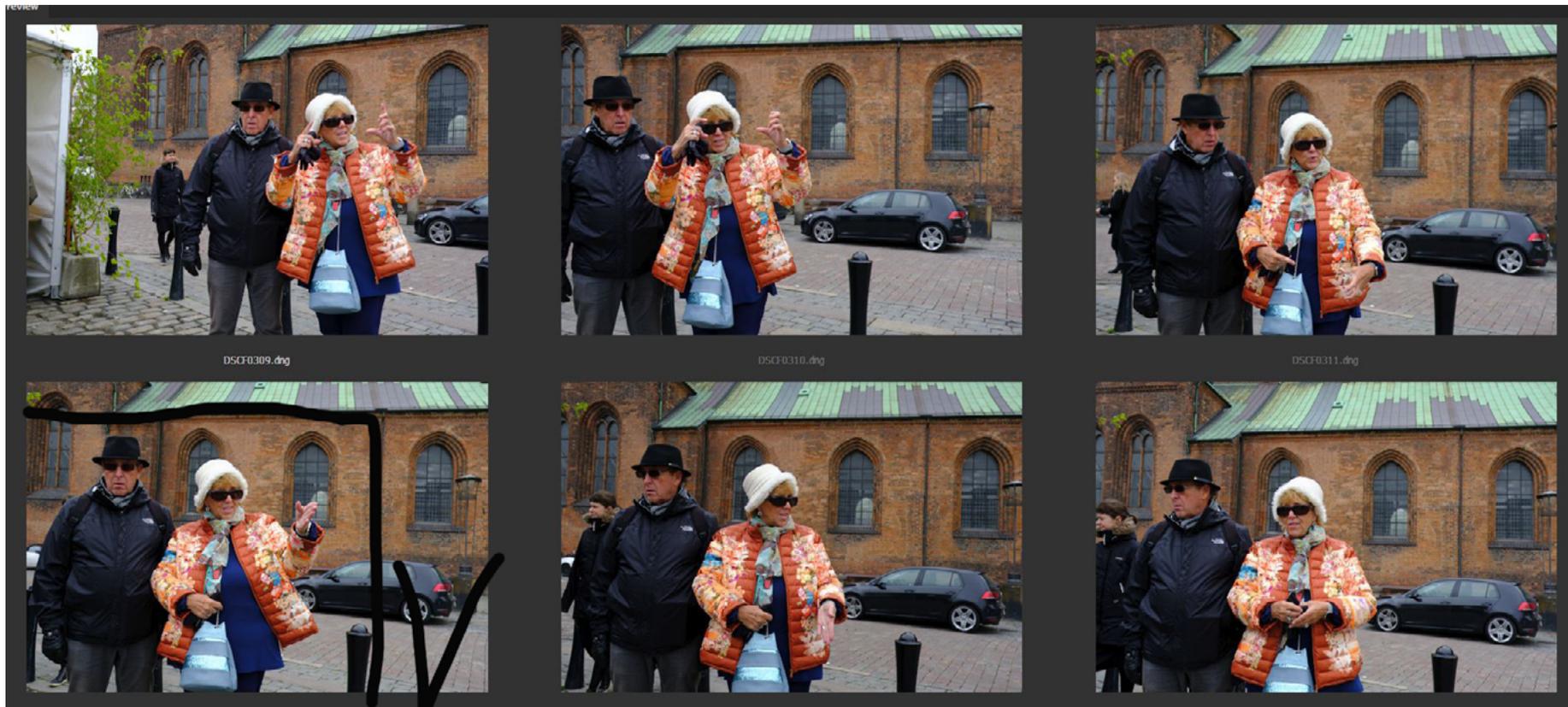
Historically speaking, then contact sheets were something you used in analogue photography when you had exposed a film and tried to get an overview of what negatives you wanted for copying. You put your negatives on a piece of photo paper and exposed it, so you got a piece of paper with small thumbnails on the paper. The Magnum Group made a great book with the title: “Magnum – Contact Sheets”, which can also be found as a video.

On the following pages, I have chosen to show some contact sheets of selected photos from the book. I do that to show more of how I work and that most of the book's photos have not been created with a single shot. They also show that you can stay close to a situation and wait for it to develop. If you practice shooting from the hip, you can get pretty decent accuracy, and if you are discrete or pretend to do something else, then no one will realise that you stay there to take more exposures and capture the “Decisive Moment”.

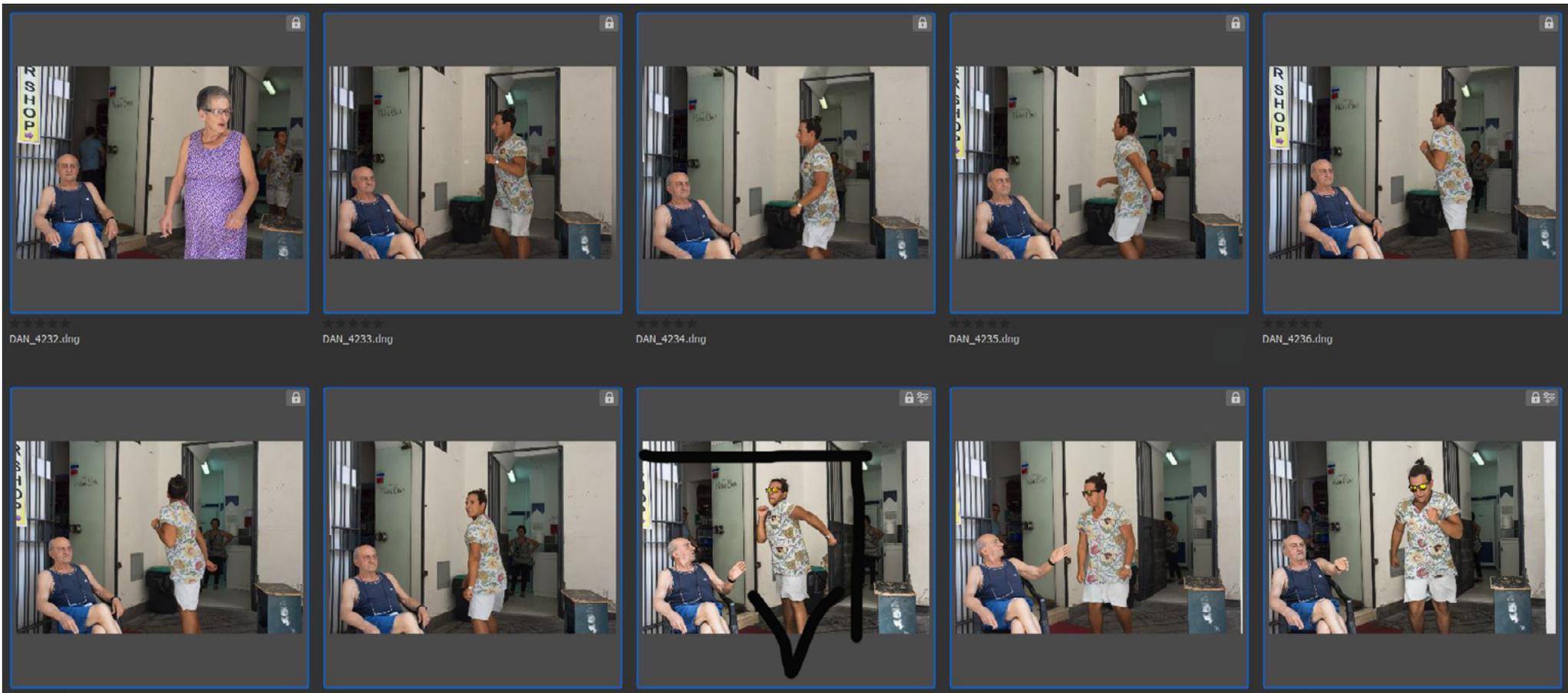
Despite the many exposures I have created in the public space over the last many years, I have still not had a single confrontation with some of the people I have photographed.

The contact sheets, which can be viewed on the next pages, are screenshots from my photo organisation program. I had decided to “write” on them with a “marker”, as you did with analogue cameras when you were selecting the photos you wanted to copy in the darkroom.

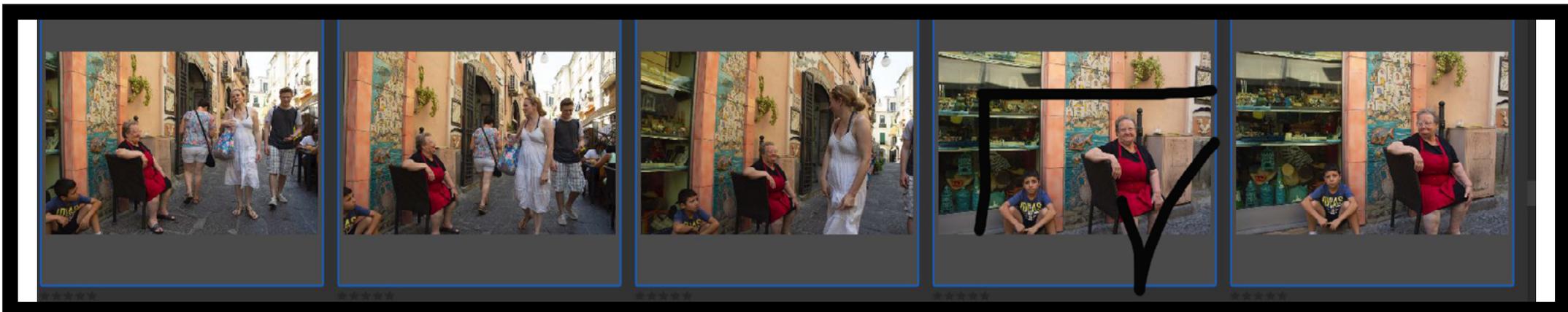
Contact sheet 1 for the photo on page 35.



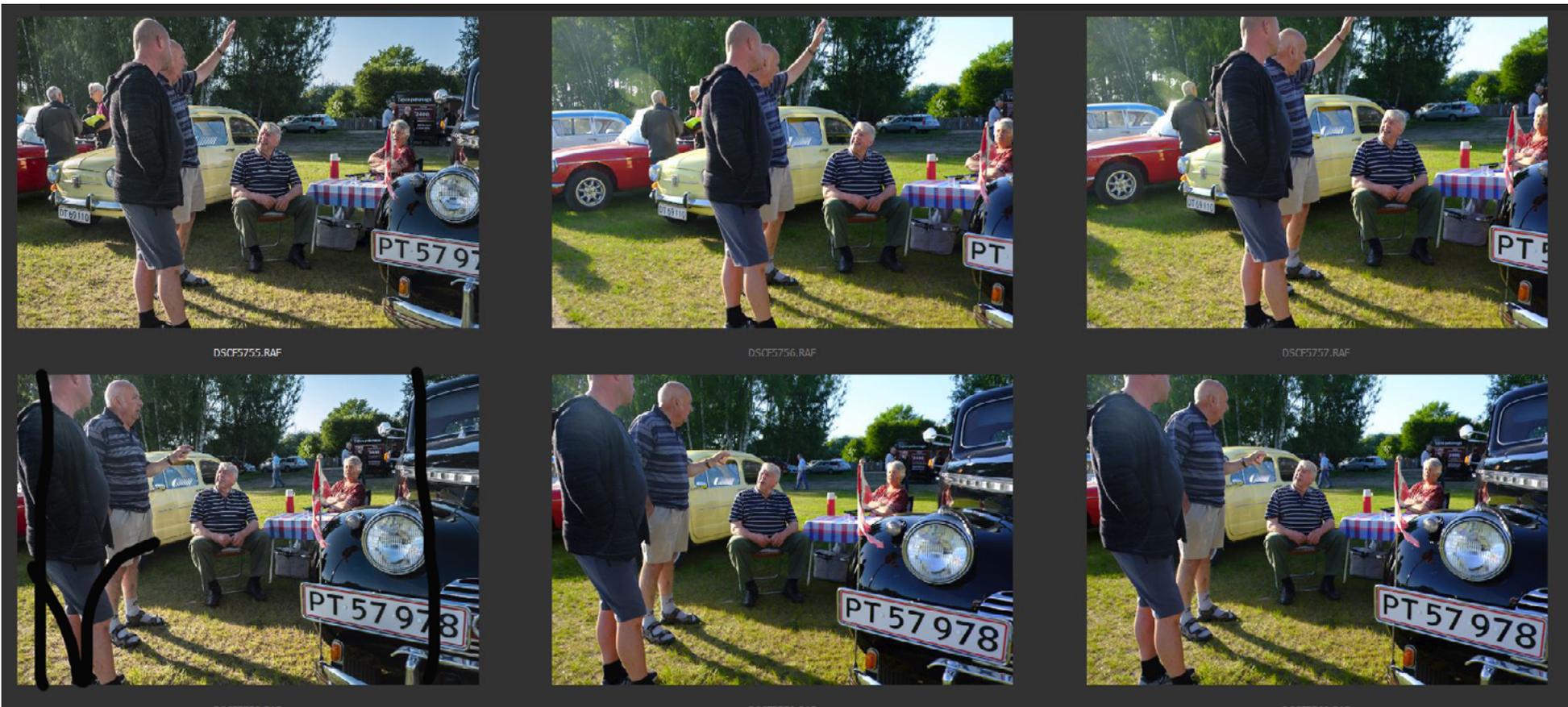
Contact sheet 2 for the photo on page 10.



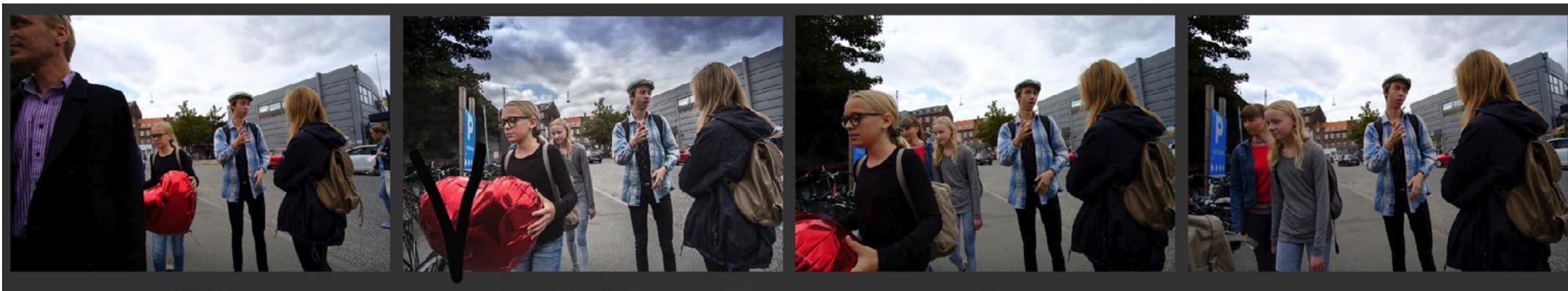
Contact sheet 3 for the photo on page 13.



Contact sheet 4 for the photo on page 26.



Contact sheet 5 for the photo on page 60.



Epilogue

This is now my third e-book. The two biggest challenges I have encountered has been the text and selecting the right photos for the book. I have had many photos to choose from, but it has not made the choice any easier, quite the opposite. Many photos have been changed during the process towards the finished book. A few photos have been changed because I could not come up with a lot to write about them.

I would usually prefer the photos to speak for themselves without text so the viewer can make their own interpretations of the photo. But no book without text. If there was no text to the photos – why would you “read” the book? Then you might as well view the photos on a website. I have gotten a lot of feedback from people on the previous books who have read them and appreciated the texts to gain insight into the creation of the photos.

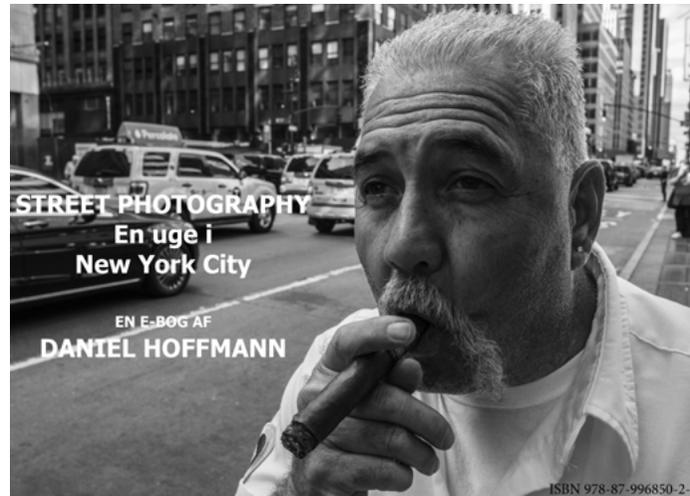
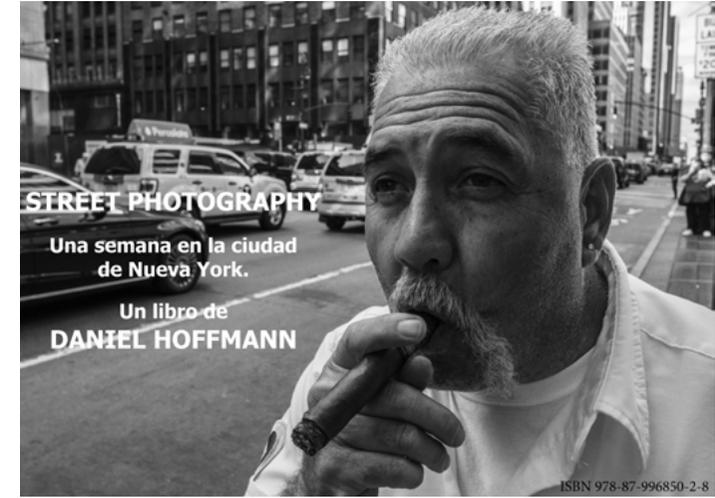
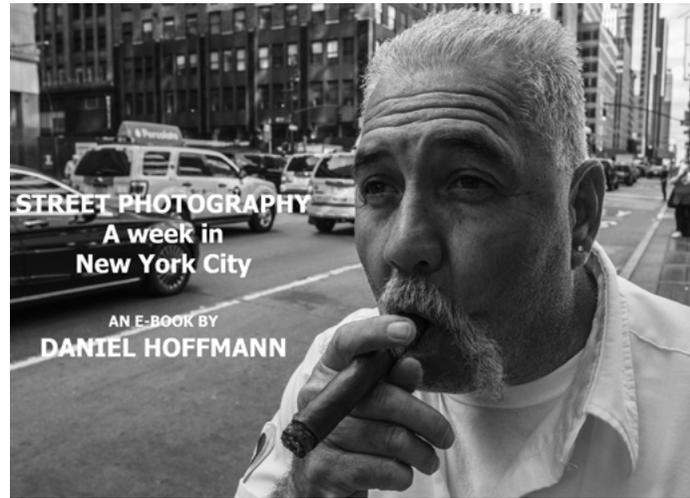
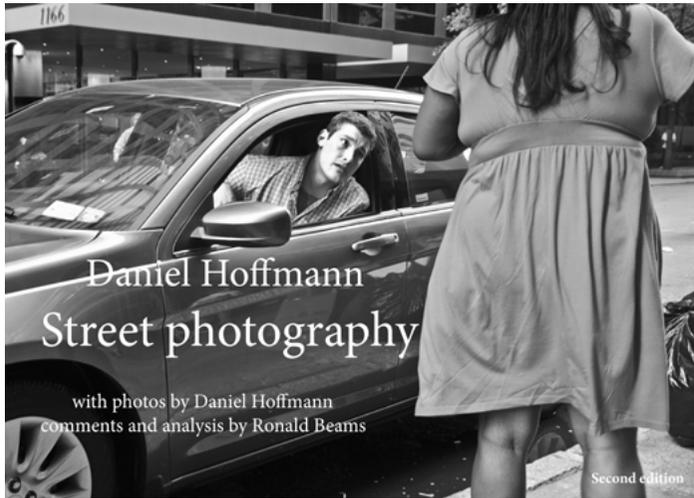
I have given you an option to make a voluntary payment if you appreciate the book or think you have learnt something. Any payment – large or small – would be appreciated. You can do it via PayPal or Payhip by pushing one of the buttons below:



Thanks for taking the time to read this e-book.



Other downloads from streetphotography.dk



500PX

