

# PHOTOGRAPHY AS FORM OF ART

Album created by Greg Brave  
[www.photopathway.com](http://www.photopathway.com)





# FOREWORD

Photographic album you are holding in your hands represents a unique piece of photographic history. But I didn't create it merely for historical reasons: these photographs, created in the 1960s, still possess just as much of artistic value now as they did back then.

Ok, let's start from the beginning. I am Greg, an avid photographer living in Melbourne, Australia. I strongly believe that in order to advance in photographic vision and skills, one has to learn from the masters. Not to copy their work, but to understand what actually good photography is. Looking at good photographs one can begin to understand what do the words 'photographic vision' mean, and also to learn how to powerfully express thoughts, feelings, and emotions through a photograph.

Nowadays, one of the most serious problems lying on the path of any aspiring photographer, is the enormous amount of mediocre photographs presented everywhere, making it hard, especially for the beginner, to distinguish between real works of art and a 'nice wrapping without the stuffing'.

So what am I presenting in this photographic album?

To explain that, first I have to tell you about a



photographic magazine "revue Photographie" that was published four times a year in Czechoslovakia between 1950s and 1990s in several languages. Don't even try to compare it to most of currently published photography magazines, which are filled with advertisement and "shoot like a pro" articles!

In its early years "revue Photographie" was considered one of the (if not THE) best photo magazines in the world. Founder and editor-in-chief of the magazine during 1950s and 1960s was Václav Jírů, a very talented photographer himself, whose photographs are now being displayed in museums and sold on auctions.

Václav Jírů selected and approved most of the photographs, making the magazine a true work of art. In today's terms it would be comparable to 1x.com. Of course photographs

weren't the only asset of the revue. The articles too were very educational and informative, dealing not only with questions of photographic techniques but also with more important issues such as:

- Photography as form of art
  - Moral obligations of the photographer
  - Place of photography among other art forms
- and many more.

Even during the time it was published, "revue Photographie" was very sought after, and not easy to acquire, not to say about nowadays.





I got very lucky to lay my hands on one of the issues. It is the third issue of the year 1961, published in Russian. I happen to know Russian so I had an enormous pleasure reading it. One of the articles was simply too good to not share it, so I translated it to English and you will find it on the next page. The photographs, on the other hand, don't require my translation, and are there for everybody to look at, learn, and appreciate.



In this photographic album I arranged most of the photos from the 3/1961 issue of the revue. I hope that many aspiring photographers will get to see this album, enjoy, and learn from the photographs presented in it.

I will continue my search for other issues of "revue Photographie", translate its best articles, and put up its photos on the pages of my blog:

[www.photopathway.com](http://www.photopathway.com)

I would appreciate any feedback in the comments to my blog posts, or my email [greg@photopathway.com](mailto:greg@photopathway.com)

Greg Brave



## ABOUT THE ATTITUDE TOWARDS ONE'S OWN ARTISTIC ENDEAVOURS

One of the most gratifying things in our work as editors of the “revue Fotografie” are the letters from our readers, and whole stacks of them! In these letters many photographers share with us their plans and views on photography. Often they write about their lives, and are being very demanding, as only sincere friends can be, towards the work of our magazine. The sincerity and friendliness of our addressees pleases our editorial staff, and countless praises awakens the desire to devote ourselves even more to our work.

Often, however, warm, friendly, and sincere letters are accompanied by poor, indistinctive, similar to hundreds other, photographs. One couldn't help not to think about it. Why it is so? Why in such a wealth of different destinies, characters, and points of view, people who pick up cameras, try to reproduce overused themes or to emulate the masterpieces instead of revealing their own true selves?

Here we will not touch on the subject of talent and lack of it. In any case I don't think the question of talent should be only regarded as a “gift of God”.

As we all know, Leonardo da Vinci was the first to develop laws of perspective for painting. And since then young artists don't need to wait for “divine intervention” in order



to rediscover these laws as they can all be learned from Leonardo. The cultural heritage of humanity is freely available to everybody. Therefore, looking through hundreds of photos, again and again I wonder if the inexpressiveness, impersonal nature, and similarity of them is in reality a **hypocrisy and insincerity of the photographer towards himself?**

Such an amateur photographer, having read on the front page of our magazine the words “review of artistic photography” immediately decides: “let's send them photos of trees, water, sunset, or cloudy skies”... and our editorial office receives hundreds of photos of trees, water, sunsets etc. as if these subjects are the true discovery and revelation to the people.



Art arose from the desire of the artist to tell about himself. After all, even when artist speaks about his surroundings, or events that he witnessed, he in fact tells us about himself, about things seen through his own eyes. And magnificent art, which survived its creators, was created by the artist's ability to see things so originally and so deeply, as nobody saw ever before him.

If a person does not want to talk about himself, he is silent. But if a person is not silent, if he picks up a camera and tries to use photography as an art form because he feels that its means of expression fit him the most of all other forms of art, such person should not be afraid to create his own artistic statement. It is the right and the privilege of any human being of our modern times - to find and acknowledge the meaning of his own life, express it, and strive to live the life of significance, brightness, and excitement, to find one's self.

Of course, one should still photograph trees, waves, and sunsets, but the photographer must be an artist, a person who can see the landscape in his own original way. We are surrounded by a huge variety of things, creatures, and destinies, but we ignore them, hiding behind the undeniable beauty of the generally recognised subjects. In our photographs we avoid expressing the controversial, the unresolved issues within and around us. We often comfort our self-



esteem with the dream of our existence in true art by imitating famous photographs thinking that by doing that we can't go wrong.

Equally wrong is the way of those who constantly increase the colour saturation of their photographs (this can be understood not only directly, but also metaphorically - Greg's note). This is an evidence to one's inability to appreciate the beauty of life, to prefer real life's beauty to the artificial one.

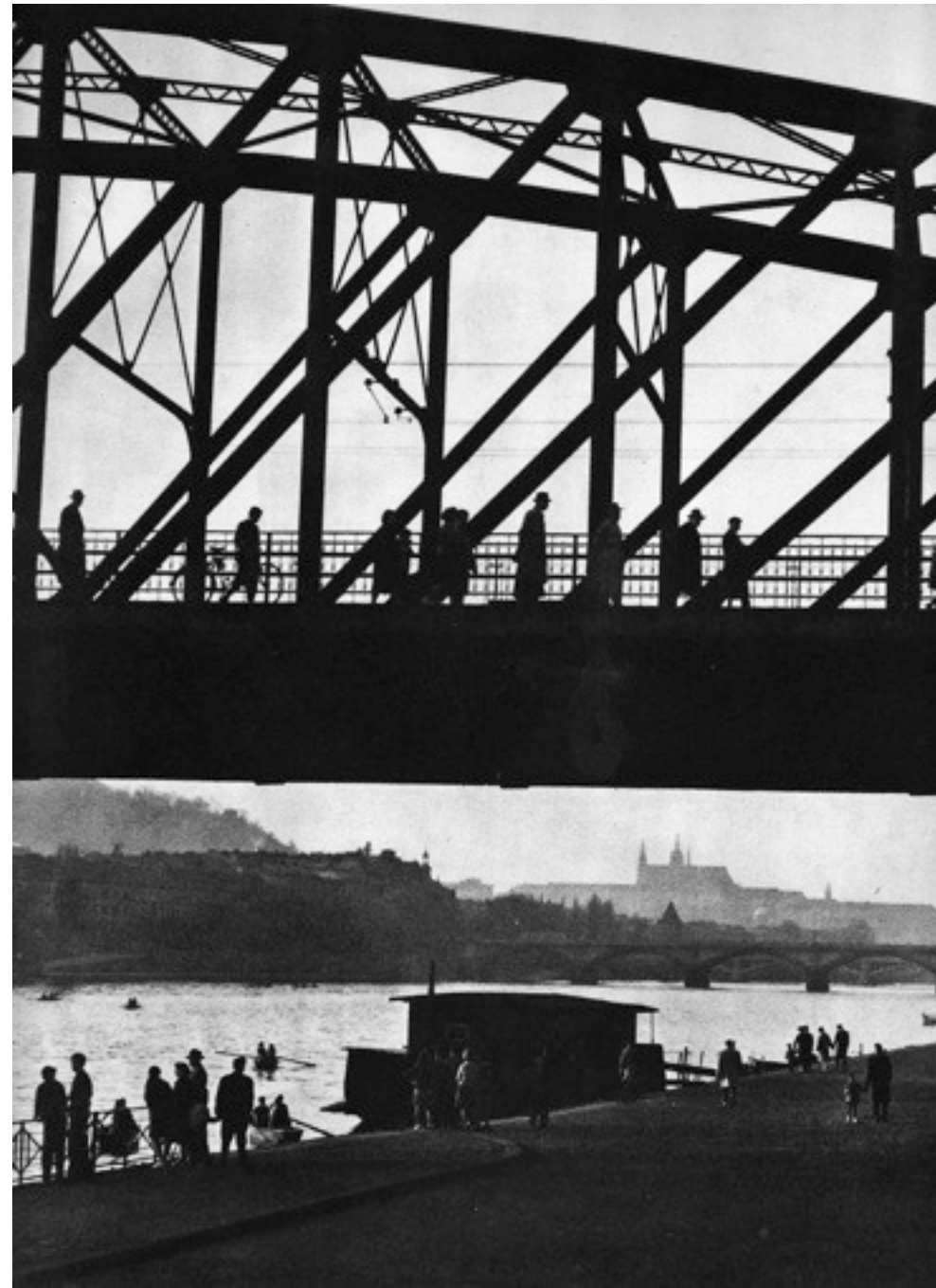
Our editorial office received one curious objection from one of our readers,

condemning the photo of patterns created by foam on water, and other similar photos in our magazine, which the reader personally didn't like. From his letter I understood that many years of age separate this person from his childhood, and apparently also from the fresh, lively, and direct perception of the things around him. Childhood memories, though naive, are very profound. In childhood one sees things, so to say, up close (like in macro - Greg's note). A small blade of grass is visible down to its root, a crack in the pavement is scary because it is deep and unexplored, thick walls of old buildings - what a fertile ground for imagination! These were just a few examples of course. Over time a person learns to evade the puddles, not to climb up on every obstacle on his way, not to drag a stick along the fence. And learning manners is generally a good thing. But how many interesting things start to slip away from our attention as we grow up! In true artists many recognise soul of a child. Maybe this "childness" actually is a profound understanding of things around us, the ability to see them "up close".

**Therefore isn't it better to be more curious of things surrounding us, which may even sometimes irritate one's "untrained" perception, and not condemn them unconditionally just because they are perceived as something not usually shown in photographs?**

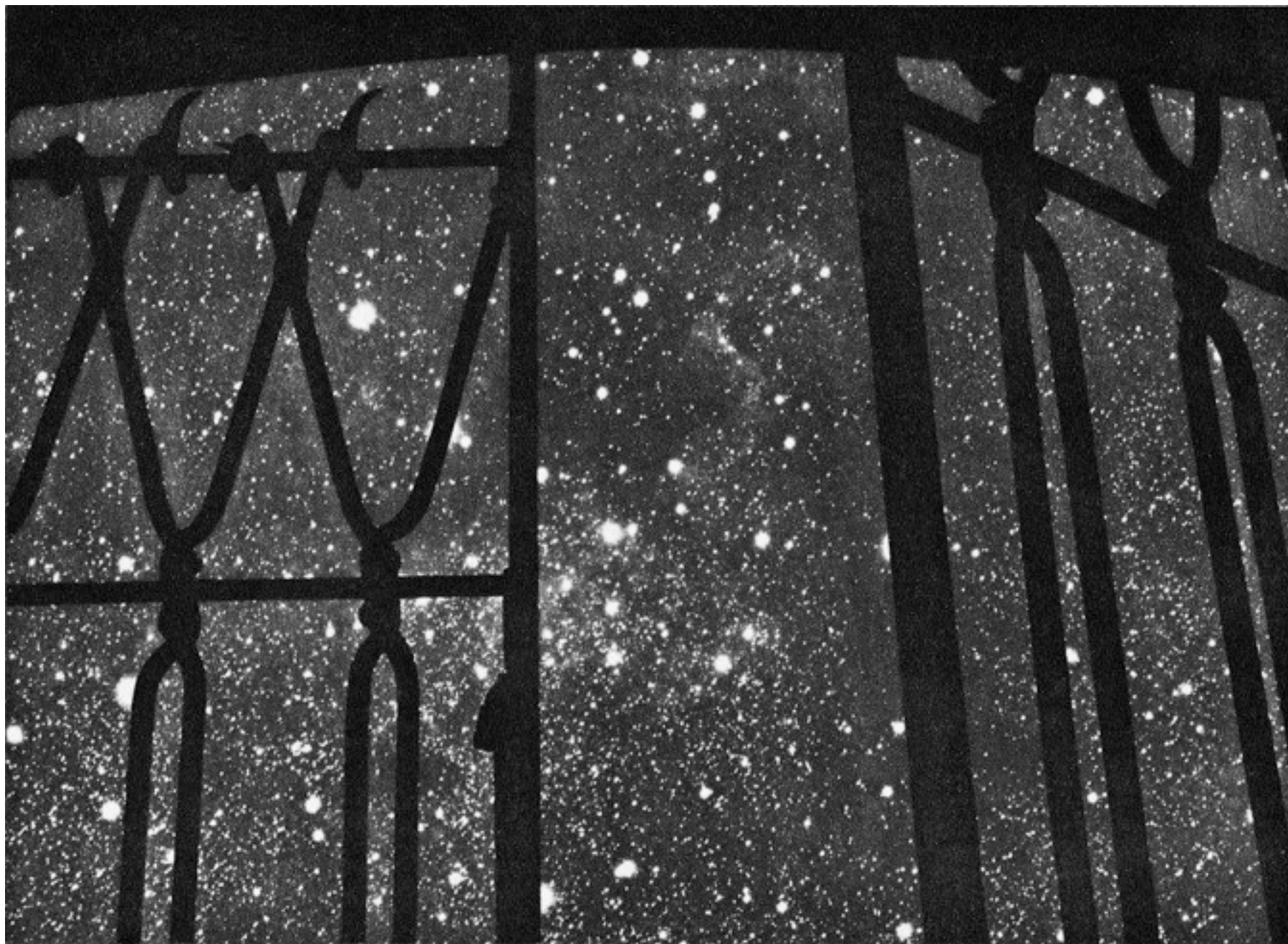
By Tamara Shevchenko.





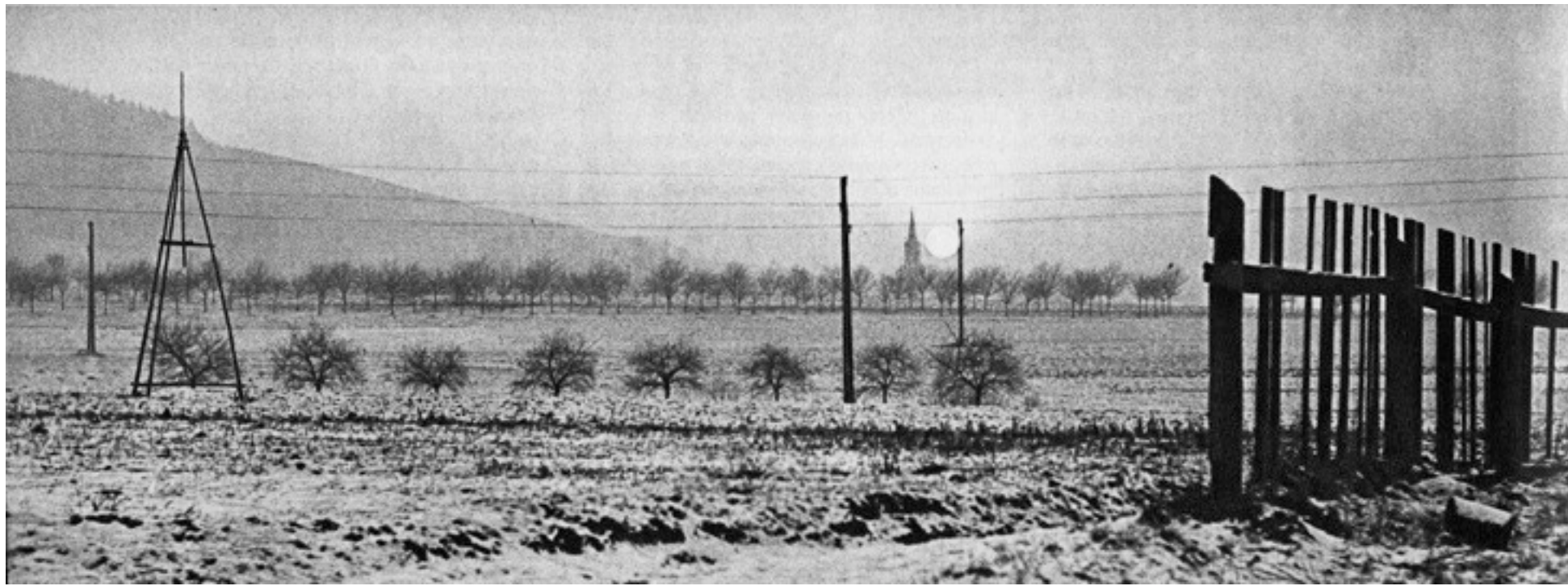
YAROSLAV KUNA | 'PRAGUE WATERFRONT'





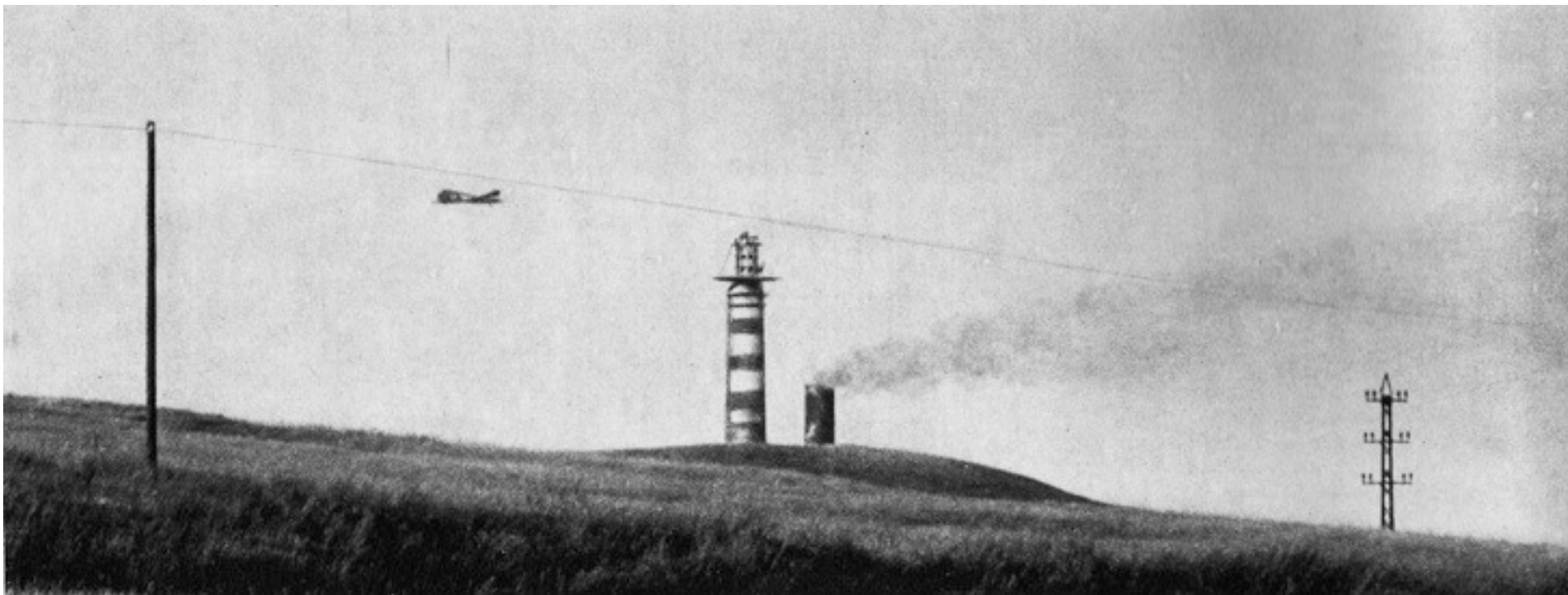
MILAN SPUREK | '12TH OF APRIL 1961'





MILOSLAV KUBES | 'COLD DAY'





CLIFFORD SEIDLING | 'LANDSCAPE WITH A PLANE'





VACLAV JIRU | 'LANDSCAPE WITH TRACTOR'





B. KREJCI





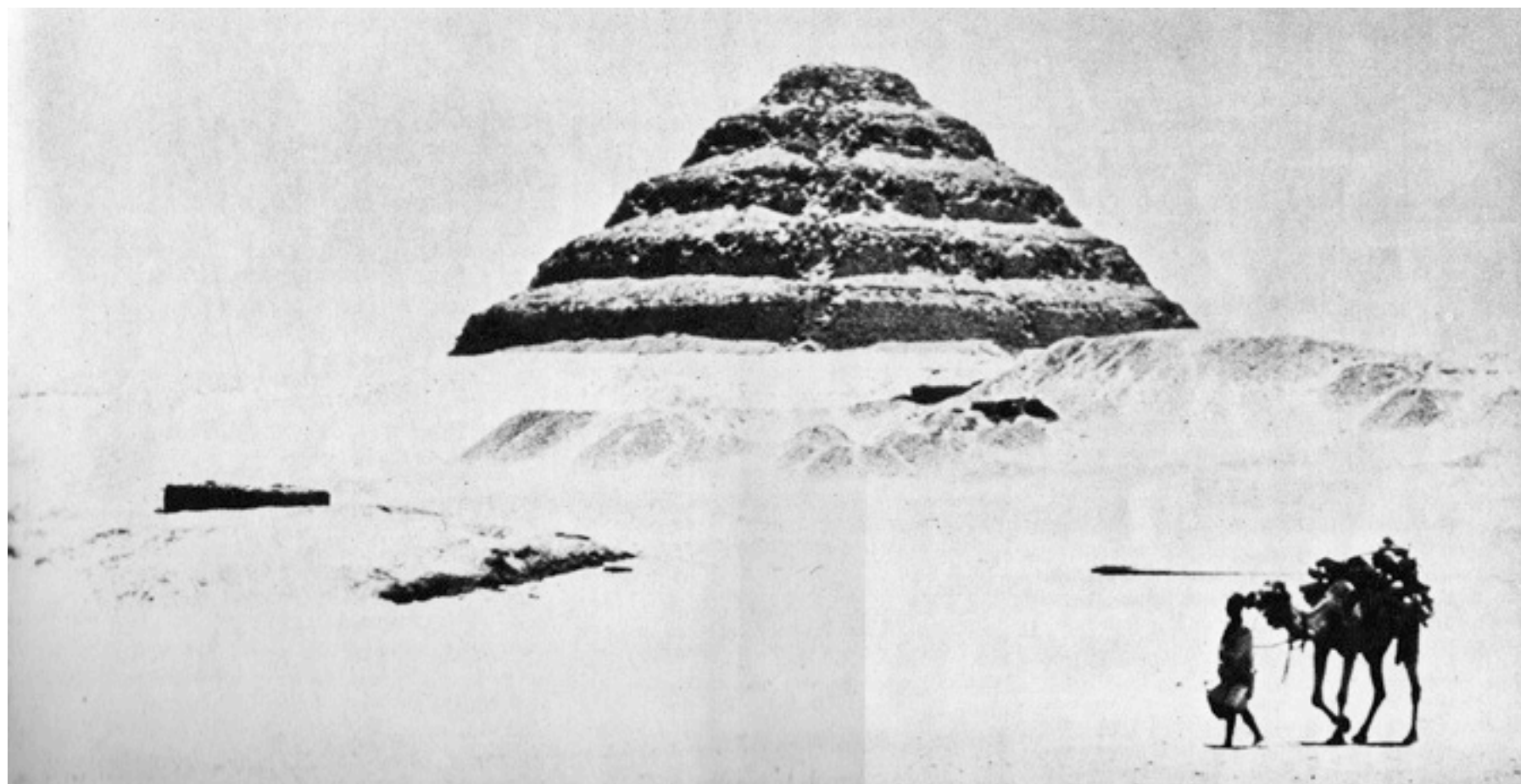
LUDEK PESEK





LUDEK PESEK





LUDEK PESEK





SLAVA PRAVEC | 'HARVESTING'





I.N. ALEKSEYEV | 'MORNING'





K.O. GRUBY | 'STALLIONS'





VLADIMIR JANSIK | 'SPIŠSKIJ ŠTVRTOK'





YURI GANTMAN | 'IN THE MORNING'S SILENCE'





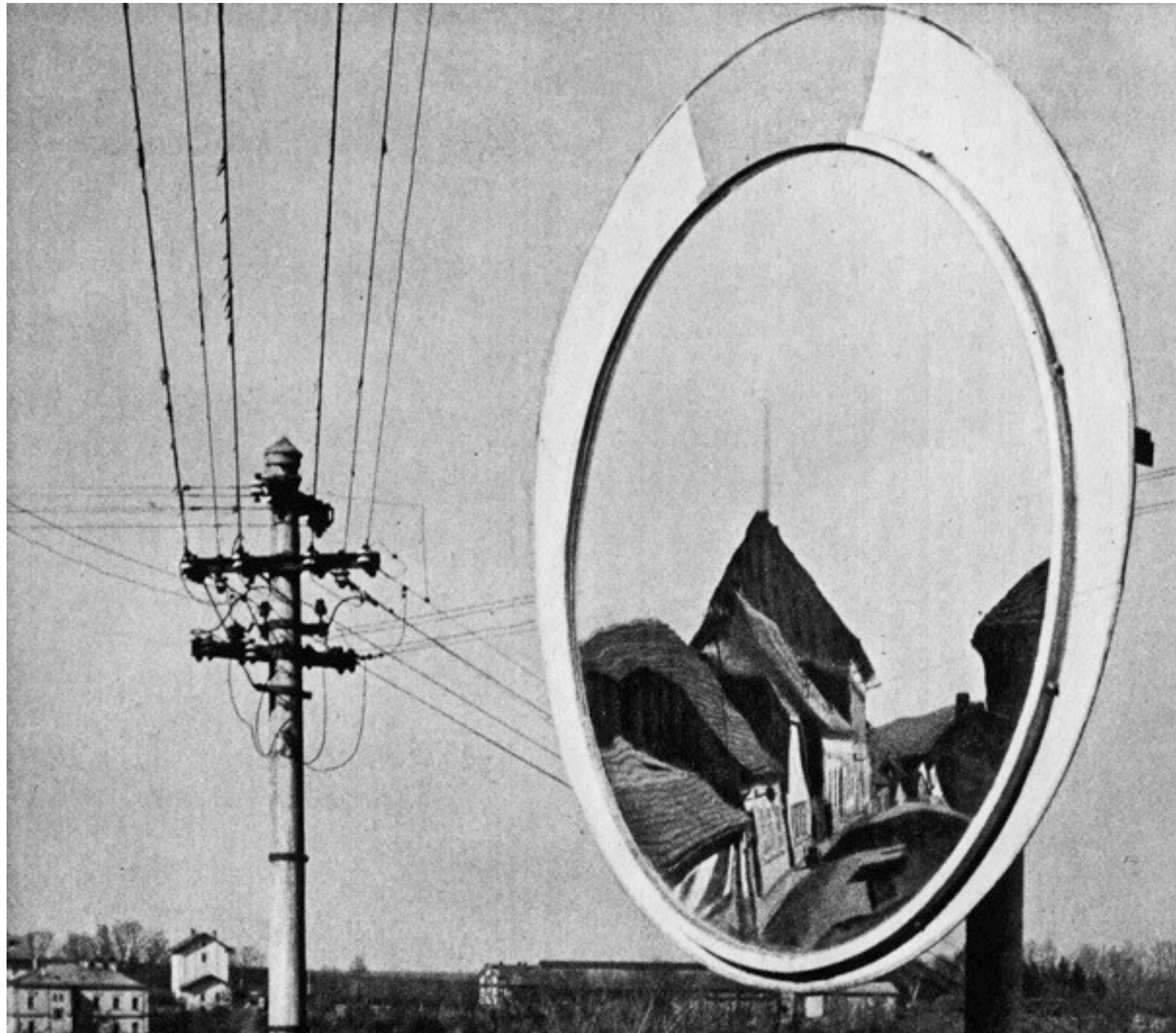
K.O. GRUBY | 'HARVESTING'





M.SPURNY | 'LANDSCAPE AT SLAVKOV'





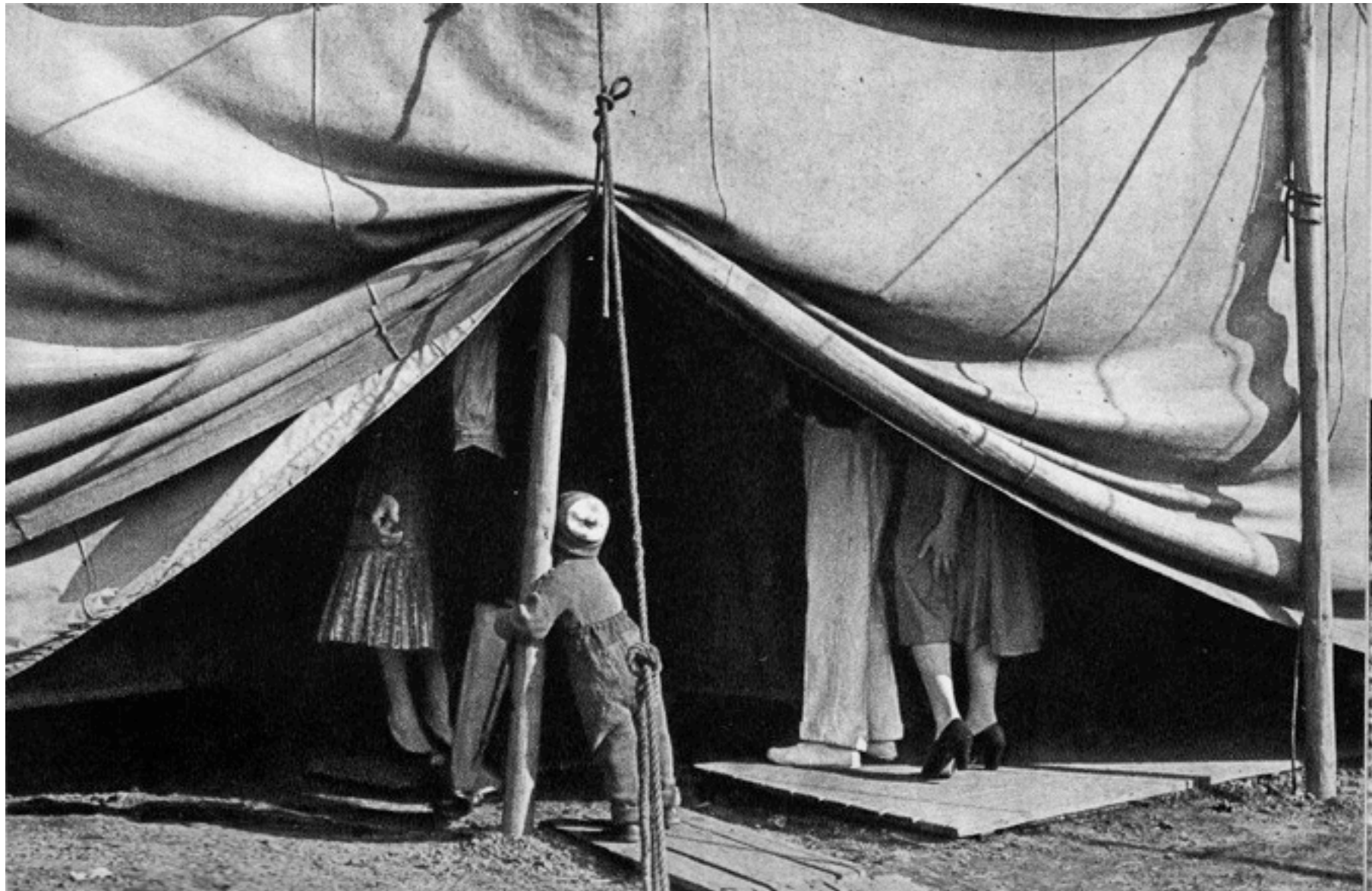
ZD. VLACH





R. PILAR





ZD. VIRT





ZD. HOLOMY | 'MORNING SONG'





G. KONOSOV | 'PEACEFUL BATTLE'





ZD. MARTINOVSKY





ZD. MARTINOVSKY





ZD. TREYBAL | 'COUNTRYSIDE'





KAREL HYBNER | 'AN AREA'





M. JODAS | 'CONSTRUCTION'





J. PACOVSKY | 'TIME WALKS THE EARTH'





J. KOUDELKA





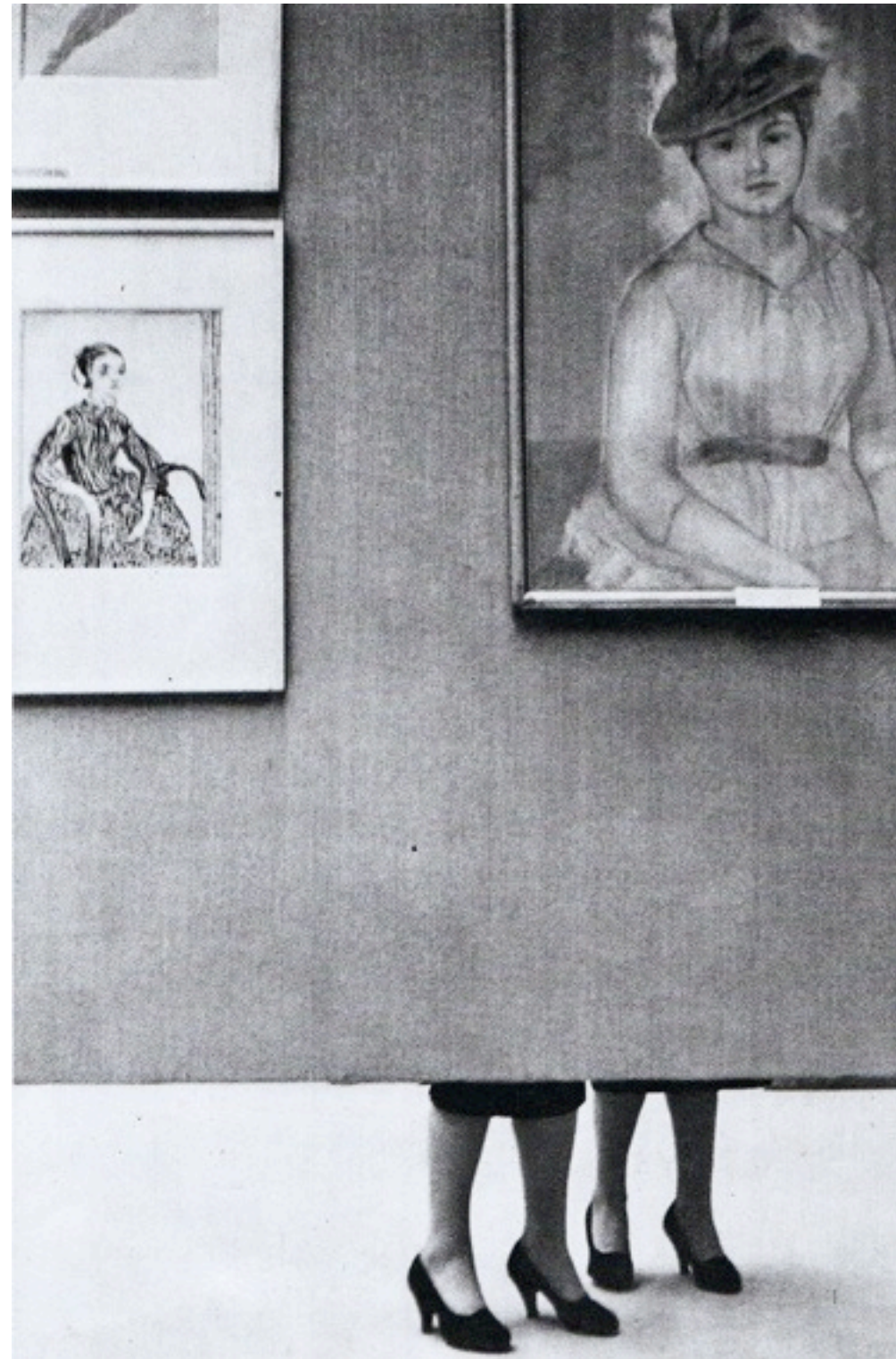
I.G. LEVIN | 'AUTUMN IN YEREVAN'





VICTOR JACOBSON | 'ETERNITY'





A.ZYBIN | 'IN ART GALLERY'





LEOPOLD FISCHER 'STORM'





ADOLF MASHIN 'INTEREST'





LEOPOLD FISCHER 'SECRET'





LEOPOLD FISCHER 'CURIOSITY'





A.N. POLYAKOV | 'YOUNG HERD'





Album created by Greg Brave  
[www.photopathway.com](http://www.photopathway.com)