

# Oleg Friga – Velikiy Novgorod, Russian Federation

*(This translation into English is not based on the Russian original but on its German version)*

**“In the broadest sense, a great photography is to comprehensively express the photographer's feelings – not merely for the object being photographed, but with regard to life as a whole.” (Ansel Adams, 54-17)**

Everything started with ... No, not with the biblical Great Flood, and not with the Big Bang, either. Instead, it was something unexpected: In 1999, on 8 November, a fine autumn day, Oleg Friga was born, “your obedient servant”.

Considering that my mother was a fine-arts teacher and that my father ingeniously developed new technologies, and considering that I was thus born into a creative family, one might perhaps argue I had no choice but to devote my life to creating things. That, however, is not entirely the case. Until my 16<sup>th</sup> birthday, I had seen myself as an up-and-coming programmer or at least as a future President. But, as became clear later on, things turned out differently – and probably no wonder, as it may always have been there inside of me, just taking its time to grow.

Now I am twenty, which means I have occupied myself with the art of photography for four years. But let us start in the past. In a way, I have a feeling that in those early years I simply existed, fostering the artist inside of me. I have the impression that at first I just photographed with my eyes, then tried to take snaps of things in our village during the summer, after that shoot pictures in the city. Those first steps were take unconsciously. In those days, I did not give much thought to what I was doing and why. Then, having turned sixteen, I was back in the countryside, photographing more than usual. And when, after that, I returned to the city and school started again, I became aware of something: Besides the fact that our house was a fifteen minutes' walk from school, I could not go cold-bloodedly from point A to point B without noticing all the beautiful things around me. I started to be late for class much more often. I can say that those were the days when I took my first steps in the art of photography. In 10<sup>th</sup> grade I already held a Nikon COOLPIX S82000 in my hand, the best of cameras. Some might argue it's just a simple one, but I disagree. I value this camera as a gateway to an admirable new world it had opened up to me.

With this motto in mind, I completed my last years at school; after graduation I began to detect photography for myself. I also became a member of the “Alexandr Ovtchinnikov House of Photographic Art” (this society helped me to realise myself, to discover photography as an art. In short, it is the place where I detected many things and

to which I feel attached for various reasons). And there was more. I realised that to me, photography meant more than merely a hobby: It had become “the heart's instinctive witness”.

At present, I am studying cinematography at the Academy of Cinematic and TV Affairs in Saint Petersburg with Master Cinematographers N.V. Volkova and S.M. Lando. Thus, in the care of experienced hands, I can delve deeper into the art of photography, now with a focus on the motion-picture scene.

## **Artistic Statement**

Today, the city has become an integral part of life for many people. Now and then, in day-to-day pictures of the city forming an unstoppable flow, there is a touch of inconspicuous, mysterious beauty shining through. Wandering along the “secret footpaths” of the metropolis, one will realise that the most important things are indeed well hidden, but some will catch the photographer's eye all the same.

I tend to take snapshots of people striving for knowledge and new inventions, people who have not yet lost their sense of curiosity and who, with their own fresh energy, revive the monotonous urban space with courageous ideas and desires.

In my photographs, the picture of the city is closely connected to the people and incorporated by them. These people are like city souls, rhapsodising and wide, filled with emotions and life, souls without whom urban life as such would not be possible. And part of it is filled up with the youth and energy of the dreamers, the golden thread of the photo

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