

Peter Lančarič

Between Light and Trace

Abstract

Peter Lančarič (b. 1989) works at the intersection of identity, intimacy, and public space, moving fluidly between analog photography, staged tableau, documentary, video, object, and performance. His long-term series probe how images rewrite self-narrative and relationships: REM Frame treats dreams as cartographies of the unconscious; Anything Else or Will That Be All? (2012 – 2016) binds analog photographs with scanned diary pages into an intimate score of tensions (light/dark, closeness/distance); The Stairs on a Street Corner builds a diaristic black-and-white grammar of vulnerability; Autobiography 1316 expands self-portraiture into cinematically lit reconstructions where props and gesture carry meaning. Exhibition projects such as Until ___ Do Us Part and The Exposition test thresholds of sharing and voyeurism, using architecture and “exhibition light” to question truth, spectacle, and the ethics of looking. In public space he works critically and participatorily – The Exhibition in the Crapper (an illegal intervention

during a mall opening) and Special Commemorative Operation (a temporary memorialization of war) confront institutional narratives. A documentary strand – Coma Vigile and Mapping Another Culture – extends his practice toward care, social critique, and living DIY archives. Across projects he maintains a rigorous visual grammar (situational readability, calibrated light/time) and restrained post-production, joining lived rawness with precise editing while asking what images remember, whom they serve, and how much intimacy a public image can bear.

Key words

Analog Photography. Diaristic Photography. Identity. Intimacy. Performance. Public Space. Self-Portrait. Social Critique. Staged Photography. Unconscious.



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REM Frame, 2023 – present

I have been keeping a dream journal for years. I write down the scenes that come to me at night from the unconscious – just as they arrive, uncensored. Over time I’ve accumulated an archive of dreams – some are elusive and symbolic, others uncomfortably concrete. The photographic series *REM Frame* grew out of a selection of dreams I recorded during a period of profound relationship crisis after ten years with my partner. At that time my dreams began to fill with images charged with intense emotion and often sexuality. Repressed desires returned, along with reproaches and things left unsaid. Some dreams were strange, unsettling, at times frightening. The inner conflict between what I consciously allowed myself to acknowledge and what surfaced in dreams became increasingly clear. The unconscious spoke in a way consciousness does not want to hear – but cannot ignore.

I focused on dreams that carried tension – not straightforwardly erotic ones. I don’t see them as random by-products of sleep, but as images that demand attention. I titled each photograph by the date on which I dreamt it.

Photographing is, for me, a way to honour the dream and to signal to the unconscious that I am taking it seriously.

I stage the photographs as faithfully as possible to how I dreamt them – even when they are unpleasant, even when I consciously resist them. It is precisely in that tension between what consciousness accepts and what calls

from the depths that the meaning of this work emerges for me. By staging these scenes, I try to look “behind the curtain” – to where lie the things consciousness would rather not admit, yet which shape me nonetheless.

Carl Gustav Jung spoke of the dream as a message from the unconscious with the potential to transform consciousness – if we can accept and integrate it. My photographs are a dialogue with the imagistic logic of dreams. Their sequence does not build a story, but a map. A map of a psychic space where shadow meets persona, and where archetypes appear without names – only forms.

Freud might say that in this way I confront repressed wishes, staging the latent content of dreams – but my aim is something else: participation. An acknowledgment that even the images consciousness rejects are still mine. In this sense, photography becomes an act of psychic integration – a way to learn to see not only outward, but inward.

Anything Else or Will That Be All? [Ešte niečo alebo všetko?], 2024

This is an intimate photobook about living between light and darkness. Composed of analog photographs and scanned diary pages from 2012 – 2016, it maps an inner territory shaped by two identity tremors. A small camera and a notebook function as therapeutic tools: the image captures the raw instant, while the handwriting is its pulse. Fragments – memories, dreams, objects, bodies, spaces – are layered into a sequence where document and fiction interweave, not to soften reality, but to make it

bearable and legible. The book returns to what remained unprocessed: traces that cannot be silenced, only reread. It brings quiet situations and threshold moments, tenderness and grit, and poses the titular question: is “anything else” enough, or do we lay claim to “everything”? In this ambiguity an ethical dimension opens up: owning versus sharing, having versus understanding.

This book is not a linear story but a score of tensions – light/dark, closeness/distance, fact/inscription. It is a personal dispatch from the past and an invitation to dive into one’s own: through images that do not say “how it was”, but “where it hurts and what still holds”.

The Stairs On a Street Corner [Schody na rohu ulice], 2013 – 2015

This series was my debut – an intimate diary from a time when photography became essential to me. I assemble black-and-white, mostly analog images as fragments of a personal crisis and a search for identity through a relationship with another person. I shift angles and distances to open parallel planes of space and experience; I don’t use nudity for effect, but to shed poses and admit anxiety, quiet, touch, and estrangement.

Nostalgia and aesthetics are only tools for me – they translate images from the unconscious into visual parables. I deliberately disrupt “smooth” communication and construct a cold yet vulnerable space in which two people can be very close and very far at the same time. You might hear echoes of artists I admire (Nan Goldin, Francesca Woodman), but I’m looking for my own

language of restrained candour. *The Stairs on a Street Corner* is, for me, a cautious yet resolute beginning – a record of a rapid inner transformation that joins the rawness of what was lived with a disciplined photographic expression.

Autobiography 1316 [Autobiografia 1316], 2016

This project expands self-portraiture by reconstructing lived events across time and space. Carefully staged, cinematically lit scenes turn the everyday into a set where props and gestures carry meaning – sometimes amplified, sometimes withheld. Each photograph functions as a privileged slice of time, intensifying the event it depicts and composing a visual autobiography. The project moves from “the self in an instant” toward an epic narrative of identity.

Until ___ Do Us Part [Kým nás ___ nerozdelí], 2018

This joint exhibition with Martina Chudá was a spatial essay on a partnership – on how the romantic myth of “forever” unravelled into a sequence of everyday gestures, power games, appeasement rituals, and intimate crises. The architecture (a spiral staircase with landings and a dark side-room) became part of the dramaturgy: visitors ascended a “story” from material traces, through diaristic imagery, to a dark zone of personal trauma. Instead of a finale, a loop emerged – a circle in which the relationship repeatedly broke apart and reassembled.

With the installation *Footprints*, I worked with gifts we had made for

each other. We arranged them with near-archival precision: inventory, not sentiment. The aesthetics of “evidence” transformed intimate artifacts into corpus delictifragments of a shared life. The work shifted attention from function to symbol: what was meant to spark tenderness read as an index of traces by which one could reconstruct the relationship’s dynamics – gestures of affection, micro-power, and the banalities of consumption.

The photographic series *Turn Off the Lights* assembled a diaristic mosaic of places and times: interiors, exteriors, fragments of the body, and the in-between spaces of “events”. Rather than one grand image, it offered a rhythm of hints – atmospheres in which the relationship was enacted rather than displayed. Within the exhibition, the series served as a passage from factual inventory (*Footprints*) to subjective experience: light/dark, presence/absence, touch/distance. In the dark side-room we sharpened this register with a luminous cross – a light sign that, in projection, shifted into a “plus” – and a series of intimate hospital photographs. Images of a hospital room, our flat, and my partner’s clothes marked by spontaneous lactation created a quiet, bodily trace of loss; the cross’s glow operated as an ambivalent symbol of faith, hope, and a final threshold.

The video installation and performance *Plush* ironically refused any “grand finale”. Wearing plush costumes, we cycled through simple gestures (embracing, circling), creating a precise rhythm reminiscent of classical drama – without catharsis. The infantilized aesthetic (a nod to kitsch gifts and couple talismans)

revealed how easily romantic pathos slips into childish break-up/make-up games. *Plush* mirrored the relationship loop: instead of “till death do us part”, an endless cycle of repetition in which partnership legitimizes itself through objects and rituals – and exhausts itself in them.

At the opening we activated the space with a live performance: standing face to face in a doorway, paraphrasing the iconic gesture of Abramović and Ulay. Combined with the plush costumes, this “threshold crossing” between two bodies expanded the exhibition’s meaning – linking intimate ritual with a public situation, amplifying the motif of the loop, and allowing viewers to pass “through the relationship” as through a threshold. The performance intensified the exhibition’s questions: what binds us, what divides us, and which of our gestures are truly our own?

The exhibition deliberately omitted “death” from the familiar clause to open a field of possibilities: what else might part us – work, property, religious habitus, gender roles, or, paradoxically, love itself?

The Exposition [Expozícia], 18 January – 18 February 2017

I keep returning to themes of identity, intimacy, and privacy – from direct interventions (*The Exhibition in the Crapper*, City Arena, 2015) to metaphorical works in public space (*Bridges of Small City*, 2015). In this project I deliberately stepped away from “pure” photography toward video and object, and began to play with the polysemy of light: as physics and optics, but also as a metaphor for disclosure – bringing things “to light”. I’m interested not only

in the medium of photography, but in the mechanics of the gallery apparatus that turns the unseen into the exhibited.

I split the exhibition space into two poles to highlight different regimes of identity. The enlarged ID card stands for institutional ways of seeing a person – reducing being to a handful of verifiable data deployable by state or private systems. The second niche became a “domestic” interior with a live bedroom feed, placing the viewer in a voyeur’s position and testing the line between sharing and exhibitionism. At the same time, I question authenticity: to what extent is the “courage” to show one’s private life and personal data a truthful gesture – and when is it a learned pose? I know an ID can be simulated in software and a bedroom is empty most of the day; it’s precisely this ambivalence I want to use to undercut the initial sensation and show how quickly a grand reveal can collapse into an empty headline.

I also point to the illusory reality of TV shows, networked fame shaped by algorithms, and the vulnerability of data online. I’m fascinated by our weakness for the overexposed image – what Paul Virilio would call optoelectronic fetishism. In this project, light isn’t just a technical parameter; it’s a test of truth. I’m interested in how much truth the exhibition light can bear – and whether, in its glare, we’re not simply seeing our own desire to look rather than something truly worth seeing.

The Exhibition in the Crapper [Výstava na hajzli], 22 August 2015

This illegal exhibition is not only about the series of photos itself, but mainly it

is about the entire course of the event. The expressive name reflects a critical response to the construction of the City Arena in the historical city centre of Trnava. The key idea was to organize the exhibition illegally, to set it in the festive opening programme without any permission or announcement, so that the exhibition would be set in the bigger event to which it reacted and became its part. In the series of photographs called *The Unveiling*, I created a sheet made of various “branded” plastic bags with dimensions of 3,5m x 2,5m. I used this sheet to cover the forgotten statues hidden in housing estates. The covering with the sheet is a symbolical way to bring these monuments back to the moment before their unveiling. The shopping bags with the logos of global sales networks refer to overproduction and the constant process of creating new wants and needs. Under the “weight” of new things, we forget the old ones.

Special Commemorative Operation [Špeciálna pietna operácia], 17 November 2023

On the Day of Freedom and Democracy (17 November 2023, 1:00 PM), together with Martina Chudá, we carried out a commemorative intervention at the socialist monument Mier [Peace] near Trnava. By partially veiling the monument and adding the date of the Russian Federation’s invasion of Ukraine, we temporarily transformed a peace monument into a memorial to an ongoing war. The red velvet and gold numerals allude to the Red Army as well as to blood and violence – at odds with the monument’s original message – while the gesture critically points to the

invasive tactics of “unwelcome guests”. Framed as a silent vigil, the happening created space for collective reflection and solidarity with the victims; its aim was to counter public apathy and re-sensitize our perception of the conflict’s reality.

Coma Vigile [Bdelá kóma], Selection from the Documentary Project, 2018

This documentary project sought to raise public awareness and support families caring for patients on the threshold between life and death – those diagnosed with “coma vigilie” – as well as families raising children with disabilities. It also publicly pointed to failures of Slovakia’s social and healthcare systems and aimed to connect people in crisis with experts and policymakers whose decisions shaped their lives. The diagnosis affected not only patients but entire families; treatment and daily care were exceptionally demanding. These photographs did not look from the outside in – they spoke from within, revealing intimate realities, inner strength, and a persistent sense of hope.

Mapping Another Culture [Mapovanie inej kultúry], 2012 – present

Since 2014 I have been documenting Slovakia’s independent DIY culture and the community behind it through reportage photography. Another Culture spans skateboarding, music, art, zines, socially engaged actions – and the raw chaos in between. It grows from the bottom up, out of freedom and resolve, not by commission. Alongside the photographs, I collect, archive and digitize related artifacts to build a living memory of this scene.



REM Frame, 24 March 2023 – 2024



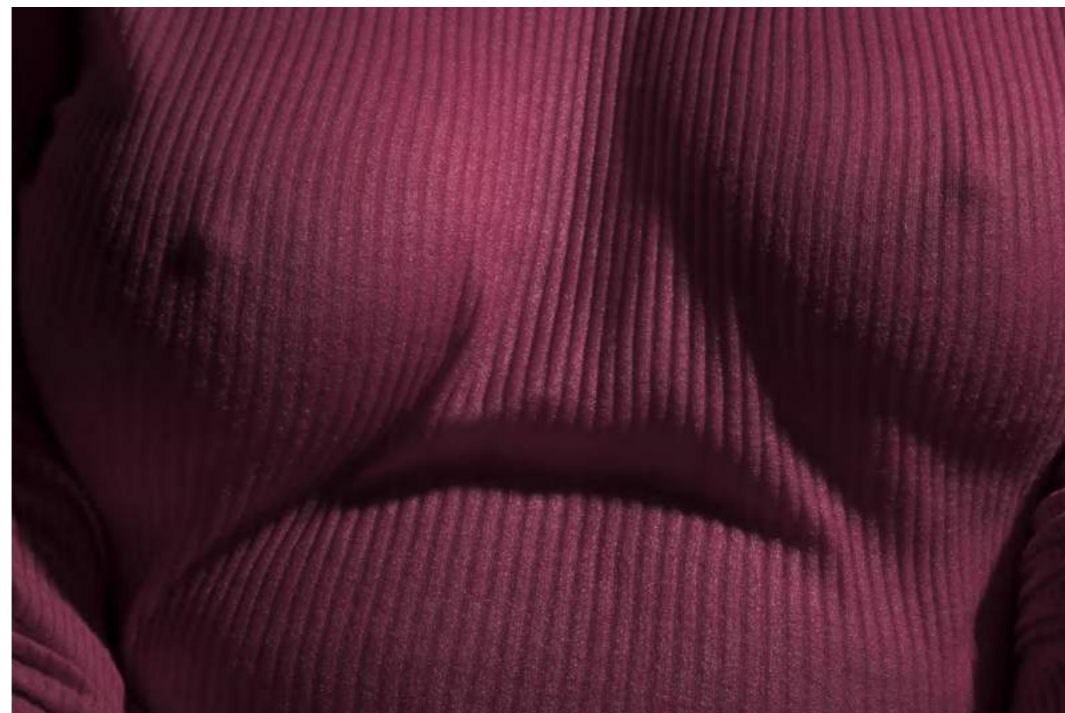
REM Frame, Self-portrait, 2025 (from a dream dated 28 January 2024)



REM Frame, Self-portrait, 2023 (from a dream dated 11 October 2022)



REM Frame, 2024 (from a dream dated 24 February 2024)





REM Frame, 2025 (from a dream dated 26 June 2023)

REM Frame, Self-portrait, 2025 (from a dream dated 5 November 2022)



REM Frame, 2024 (from a dream dated 5 October 2022)



REM Frame, 2025 (from a dream dated 19 November 2022)



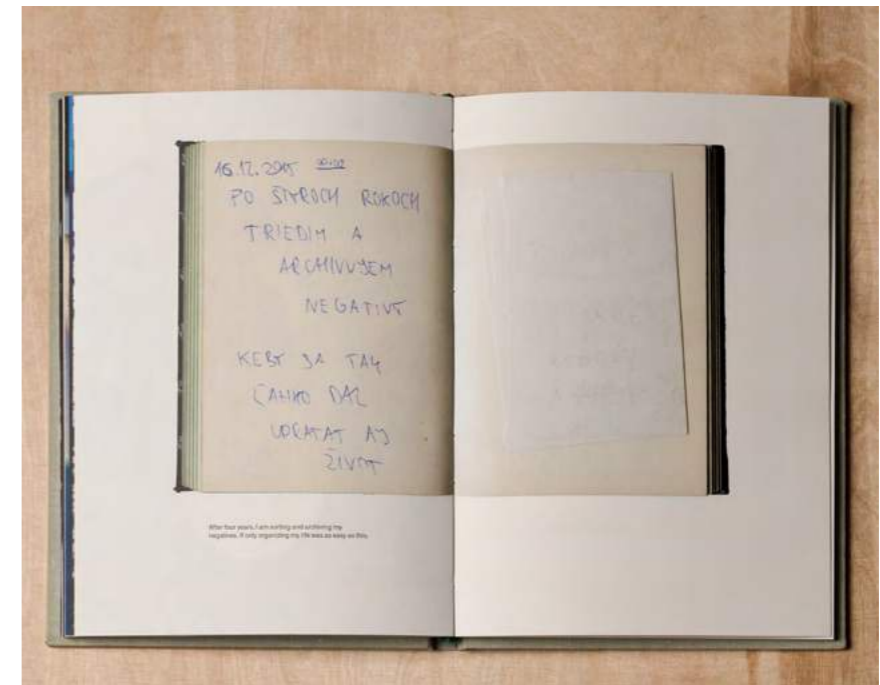
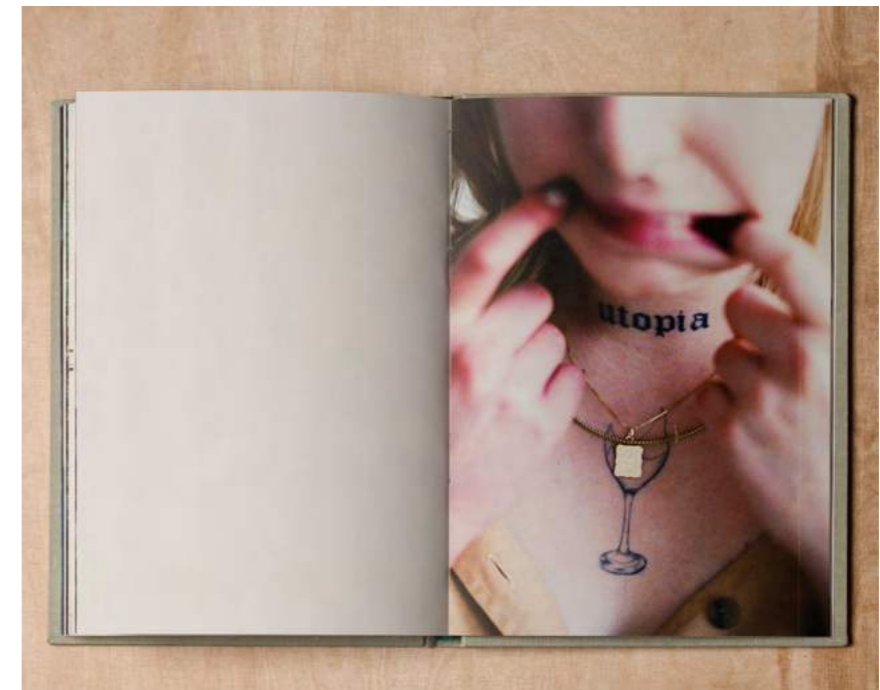
REM Frame, 2023 (from a dream dated 4 January 2023)



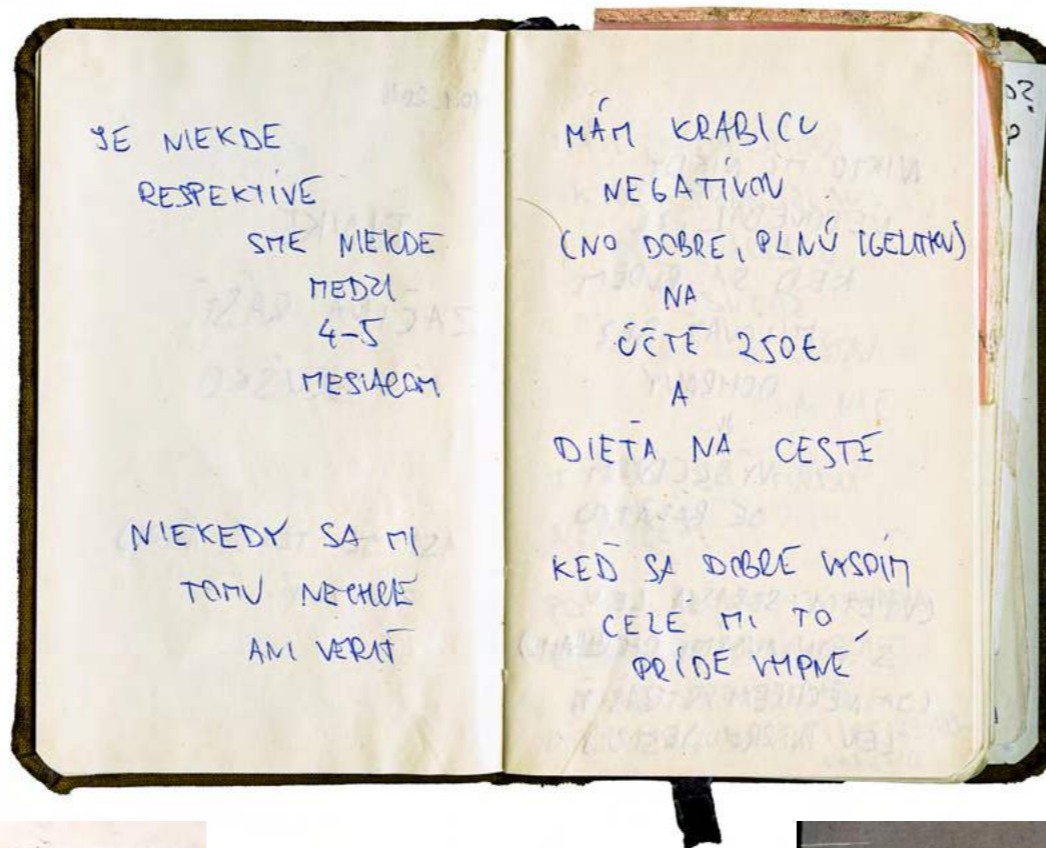
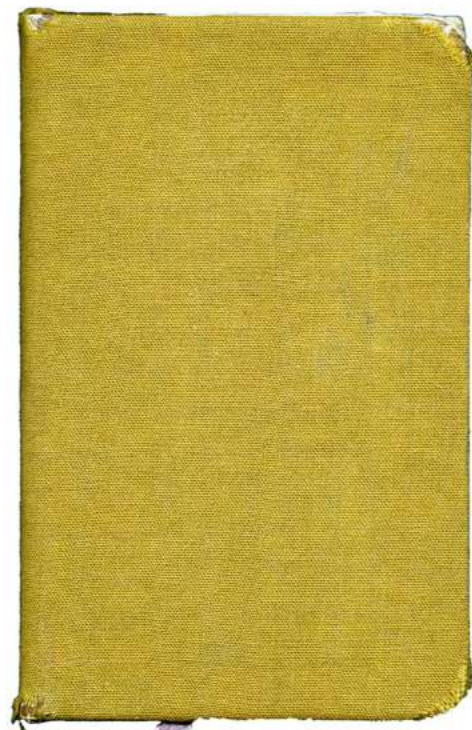


REM Frame, 2023 (from a dream dated 24 March 2023)

Anything Else or Will That Be All? [Ešte niečo alebo všetko?],
analog photographs and diary scans, 2012 - 2016 (artist's book, 2024)



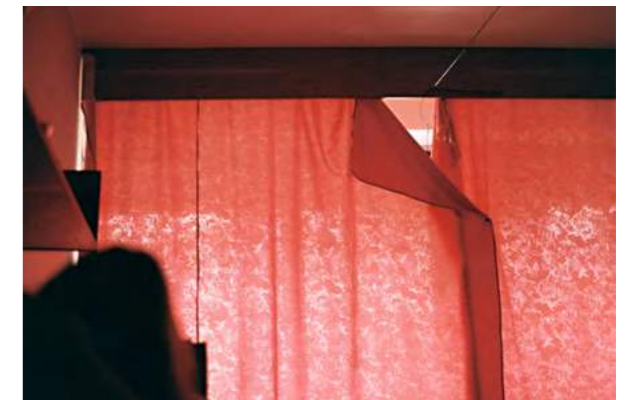
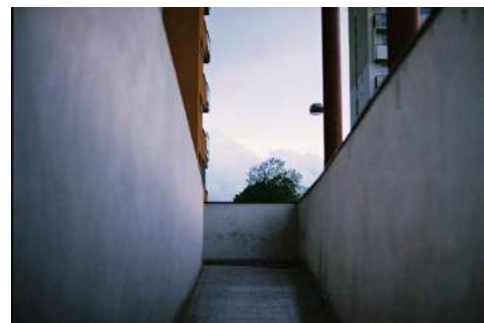
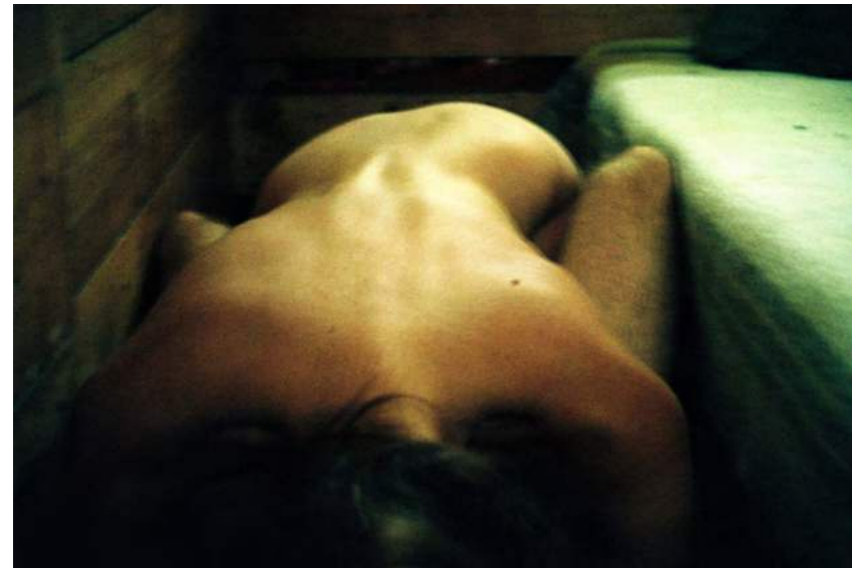
Anything Else or Will That Be All? [Ešte niečo alebo všetko?],
analog photographs and diary scans, 2012 - 2016 (artist's book, 2024)

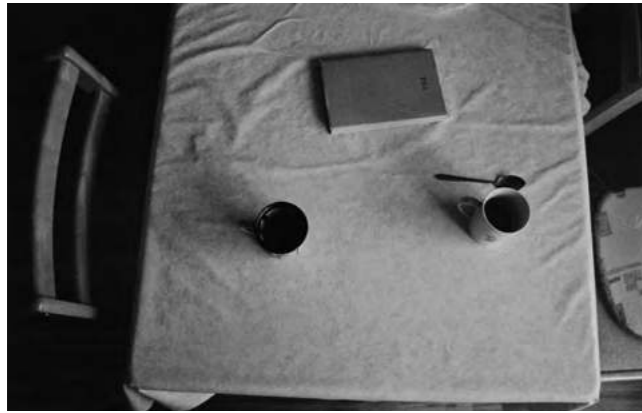


She's somewhere, or I should rather say, we're
somewhere between the 4th and 5th month.
Sometimes it's impossible to believe.
I have a box (well, more like a bag) full of negatives,
250€ in my bank account, and a baby on
the way. When I get a good night's sleep, I find it
all pretty funny.

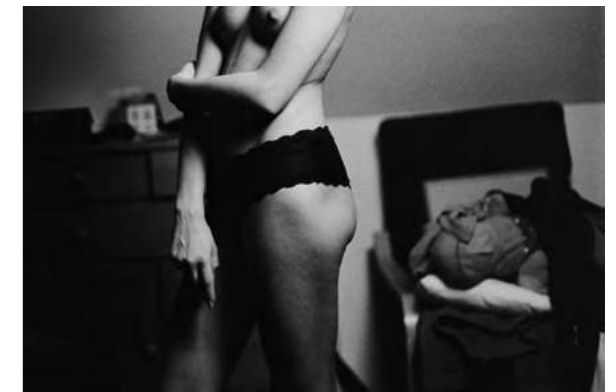


Turn Off the Lights [Zhasni],
selection from the analogue diaries, 2013 - 2015





The Stairs On a Street Corner
[Schody na rohu ulice],
selection from the analogue diaries, 2013 - 2015



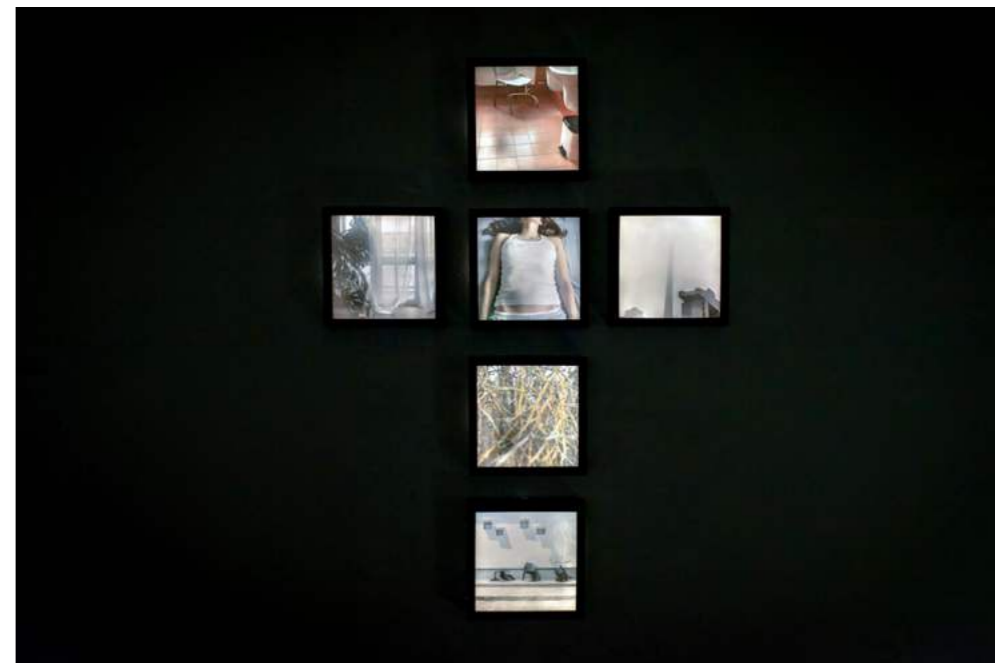
Autobiography 1316 [Autobiografia 1316], selection of photographs, 2016



Plush [Plyšé], performance, from the exhibition Until ___ Do Us Part [Kým nás ___ nerozdelí], 2018
Martina Chudá & Peter Lančarič, Nitra Gallery, Nitra, Slovakia



Until ___ Do Us Part [Kým nás ___ nerozdelí], installation view, 2018
Martina Chudá & Peter Lančarič, Nitra Gallery, Nitra, Slovakia



The Exposition [Expozícia], 18 January - 18 February 2017
Site-specific installation in public space - ID card, livestream



The Exhibition in the Crapper [Výstava na hajzli], 22 August 2015
Illegal exhibition - intervention during the grand opening of the City Arena shopping mall, Trnava



Special Commemorative Operation [Špeciálna pietna operácia], 17 November 2023
Happening and intervention in public space, Martina Chudá & Peter Lančarič



Coma Vigile [Bdelá kóma], selection from the documentary project, 2018



Mapping Another Culture [Mapovanie inej kultúry],
selection from the ongoing documentary project, 2012 - present



Mgr. BcA. Peter LANČARIČ, PhD.

(Slovakia, Trnava, 1989)

Studies, Charles University,
supervised by Assoc. Prof.
Filip Láb, PhD., Prague, CZ**Individual Exhibitions****2011 – 2016** Bc. & Mgr. in Mass
Media Communication
University of Ss. Cyril
and Methodius in Trnava,
Faculty of Mass Media
Communication, Trnava, SK**2016 – 2018** Ph.D. in Mass Media
Communication, University
of Ss. Cyril and Methodius
in Trnava, Faculty of Mass
Media Communication,
Dissertation: *Portrait as a
Sociological Communiqué*,
Supervisor: Assoc. Prof. Jozef
Sedlák, Trnava, SK**2022 – 2025** BcA. in Creative
Photography Institute of
Creative Photography,
Silesian University in Opava,
Opava, CZ**Teaching Experience****2018 – present** Faculty of Mass
Media Communication,
Trnava, SK**2018 – present** Head of Applied
Photography Studio**2018 – present** Advertising
Photography**2018 – 2022** Photographic
Practicum**2019 – 2023** Production of
Promotional Materials**Artist Residencies****2015** *Les 400 vues*, Paris, FR**2018** Institute of Communication**Lecturing (selection)****2021** *Mask – Limits*, Academy
of Fine Arts and Design in
Bratislava (VŠVU),
Studio of Textile in Space,
Bratislava, SK**2018** *Po gotickej ceste*, lecturer in
documentary photography,
Gallery of Spiš Artists,
Spišská Nová Ves, SK**Invited Talks****2023** Cultural Centre of
Medzibodrožie, Kráľovský
Chlmec, SK**2019** Ján Koniarek Gallery, Trnava,
SK**2017** Gallery of Spiš Artists,
Spišská Nová Ves, SK**Co-Founded Projects****2016 – present** Výklad Gallery,
presenting contemporary
visual art in public space,
Trnava, SK**2012 – present** Kubik Nápadov,
art & community centre in
Trnava, Trnava, SK**2009 – present** Bronco, non-profit,
cultural & community events,
Trnava, SK**Grants & Research Projects****2021 – 2024** KEGA, Projection of
Digital Technologies within
the Expressive Means of the
Photographic Medium**2022 – 2023** Slovak Arts Council,
project lead, Shopwindow
gallery grants**2018** Research Support Fund 2018,
Reflexive Analysis of the
Photographic Work of Petra
Cepková and Jozef Sedlák**Professional Affiliations****2020 – present** Association
of Slovak Professional
Photographers**2020 – present** Slovak Union of
Visual Arts**2020 – present** Register of
Professional Artists, visual
art – Slovak Arts Council – ID:
PU#2226**Editorial Work****2019 – present** *Muuza***2018 – 2021** *Nádvorie* –
Magazine of Contemporary
Culture**Solo Exhibitions (selected)****2023** *Special Commemorative
Operation [Špeciálna
pietna operácia]*,
happening, public space,
with Martina Chudá,
Review Profil súčasného
výtvarného umenia 4 (Jana
Geržová), 48°21'47.7"N
17°27'57.2"E, SK**2022** *Goral Everywhere/Die Welt
der Goralen [Goral všade/
Die Welt der Goralen]*, with
Jozef Sedlák, curated by
Livia Gazdíkova, Galéria
na pavlači, University of
Vienna, Vienna, AT**2021** *Zones of (Un)Rest [Zóny (ne)
pokoja]*, with Milan Illík &
Laura Wittek, curated
by Petra Cepková, Galéria
Umelka, Bratislava, SK**2018** *Till __ Do Us Part [Kým nás
__ nerozdelí]*, with Martina
Chudá, Nitrianska galéria,
Nitra, SKAbkhazian National Gallery,
Sukhumi, RU**2017** *Vigil Coma/Hold Together
[Bdelá kóma/Držme spolu]*,
with Jindřich Štreit, Gallery
of the National Council of the
Slovak Republic, Bratislava
Castle; Slovak Radio Gallery,
Bratislava, SK**2017** *Anything Else or Will That
Be All? [Ešte niečo, alebo
všetko?]*, curated by Klára
Kubíková, Ján Palárik
Theatre, Trnava, SK**2017** *Exposure [Expozícia]*,
curated by Peter Molari,
Galéria Výklad, site-specific
installation in public space,
Trnava, SK**2016** *Young Csordák [Mladý
Csordák]*, curated by Tomáš
Agat Blonski, Galéria Búdka/
DIY Gallery, KZN Skatepark,
Spišská Nová Ves, SK**2015** *The Exhibition in the Crapper
[Výstava na hajzli]*, illegal
exhibition, CA, Trnava, SK**2015** *Bridges of Small City [Mosty
malého mesta]*, site-specific,
curated by Peter Molari,
Družba open staircase,
Trnava, SK**2014** *They Create the World and
Happiness [Tvoria svet a
šťastie]*, curated by Jozef
Sedlák, Chapel of the City ofTrnava, Trnava, SK
2012 *The Stairs on a Street
Corner [Schody na rohu
ulice]*, curated by Petra
Cepková, Trnava Antiquarian
Bookshop, Trnava, SK**Group Exhibitions (selection)****2025** *Intertwining in Art [Prelínania
v umení]*, curated by Tereza
Tomešová, Slovenian
Association of Fine Arts
Societies Gallery, Ljubljana, SI**2024** *House of Mine – Echoes
Within*, curated by Štefánia
Đuricová & Korinna Tánczos,
Virág Benedek Ház,
Budapest, HU**2024** *Echoes Within [Ozveny
zvnútra]*, curated by Štefánia
Đuricová & Korinna Tánczos,
East Slovak Gallery, Košice,
SK**2023** *Inside [Vo vnútri]*, Month of
Photography, 33rd edition,
curated by Vladimír Birgus
& Ondřej Durczak, Open
Gallery, Bratislava, SK**2021** *Image/Pouring of Realities
[Obraz/prelievanie realít]*,
curated by Petra Cepková,
Central European House of
Photography, Bratislava, SK**2020** *VIII. Biennial of Free Fine
Arts [VIII. Bienále voľného
výtvarného umenia]*, curated
by Roman Popelár & Dagmar
Kudoláni, Umelka Gallery,
Bratislava, SK**2018** *World Biennial of Student
Photography*, curated by
Ivana Tomanović, Museum
of Contemporary Art of
Vojvodina, Novi Sad, RS**2018** *Street Photography 2018*,
curated by Markos Dolopikos,
Blank Wall Gallery, Athens,
GR**2018** *Chania International Photo
Festival*, Center of the
Mediterranean Architecture,
Chania, GR**2016** *Les 400 vues* – exhibition
series:*Alliance Française de Dublin*,
Dublin, IEUniversité Sorbonne
Nouvelle, Paris, FRUniversité Paris Descartes,
Paris, FRCentre d'animation Reuilly,
Paris, FR**Scholarly Monographs**Lančarič, P. (2023). *Portrait – Historical
contexts and creative foundations
[Portrét – historické kontexty a tvorivé
východiská]*. Faculty of Mass Media
Communication, University of Ss. Cyril
and Methodius.**Art Monographs**Lančarič, P. (2024). *Anything else or will
that be all [Ešte niečo alebo všetko]*.
Bronco.DOI: [https://doi.org/10.34135/
ejmap-25-02-02](https://doi.org/10.34135/ejmap-25-02-02)**Contact**Peter Lančarič
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