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Contemporary DIY Photography in a Historical Context

DIY v současné fotografii v kontextu historického vývoje

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Abstract

The thesis primarily aims to analyze the situation of DIY culture on the specific case of contemporary DIY photography through a research focused on photography students and alumni at Czech photography programmes. The research consists of fifteen in-depth interviews conducted with the students or alumni providing qualitative data that is analyzed quantitatively using the interviewees' coded answers. The secondary aim is to provide a theoretical background to the topic of DIY photography, exploring the connection between photography and DIY (Do It Yourself) in its historical context, as well as its current standing, as well as to introduce the photography medium's evolution briefly, focusing on the methods that were discovered, or applied, with a certain level of amateurism or through contribution from another field. Later, it explores the concept of DIY in different forms, subcultures, and contexts to draw a conclusion of how photography and DIY relate. The thesis' findings are centred around the struggle photographers feel when it comes to DIY in digital technologies, mainly due to limits in their skills in hands-on processes compared to analogue photography and the overall level of satisfaction with the available technology.

Keywords

DIY Photography, Photography, DIY, Do It Yourself, DIY Art, DIY Ethic, Maker Culture, Photography Studies, Hacker Culture

Abstrakt

Prvotním záměrem diplomové práce je analyzovat situaci DIY (Do It Yourself – udělej si sám) kultury na konkrétním případu současné DIY fotografie pomocí výzkumu zaměřeného na studenty a absolventy fotografických oborů na českých vysokých školách. Výzkum se skládá z patnácti hloubkových rozhovorů se studenty a absolventy a poskytuje kvalitativní data, která jsou kvantitativně analyzována pomocí kódovaných odpovědí. Druhotným záměrem je poskytnutí teoretického podkladu pro téma DIY fotografie, zabývající se propojením fotografie a DIY v historickém kontextu, ale také v současnosti. Práce se ve stručnosti zabývá evolucí fotografického média a zaměřuje se na metody, které byly vynalezeny nebo používány s jistou dávkou amatérismu, případně ve spolupráci s jiným oborem. Práce dále zkoumá koncept DIY ve smyslu různých forem, subkultur a kontextů, jejichž prostřednictvím vyvozuje závěry o propojení fotografie a DIY. Závěry práce se zaměřují na obtíže, které fotografové pocítují vůči tématu DIY a digitálních technologií, hlavně pocit omezení možností kvůli malým zkušenostem s ručním procesem, v porovnání s analogovou fotografií a celkovou spokojeností s dostupnou technologií.

Klíčová slova

DIY fotografie, fotografie, DIY, kultura svépomoci, DIY umění, DIY etika, Maker Culture, studium fotografie, hackerství

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Introduction

In my diploma thesis, I introduce the topic of DIY Photography, where it stands today and the impact it had in the past, when photography was being invented and perfected. DIY (do it yourself) stands for the idea of amateur making, in opposition to professional production, as well as an ethical framework of the maker culture and various subcultures. Both the DIY movement and DIY photography are being redefined in the twenty-first century - some areas of both are on the rise, while others are slowly disappearing. In my thesis, I look at the connections between the two worlds and how one influences the other. I consider the topic of DIY culture to be a very relevant topic to address in the twenty-first century, and the connection with photography provided me with a framework in a topic perhaps too broad to be otherwise analyzed in one work as a whole. The thesis is based on addressing the following main research questions:

1. What is the motivation of photographers to apply DIY in photography practice?
2. To what extent is DIY present in contemporary photography?
3. What is the difference between approaches to DIY in analogue and digital photography?
4. How is DIY photography seen today?

The primary aim of the thesis is to analyze the state of DIY culture as it relates to the specific case of contemporary DIY photography through research focused on photography students and alumni at Czech photography programmes. The secondary aim is to provide theoretical background to the topic of DIY photography.

In the theoretical part, I address three main pillars of my theoretical research: photography and its history and context, defining DIY, and DIY and photography. In the first chapter, I introduce a brief history of photography, with a focus on prehistoric photography techniques, and observe how they are being revisited today. In the second chapter, I look at different definitions of what DIY stands for, the ideology of DIY ethic and the different communities influenced by the movement and specifically, what the connection has been between DIY and the Czech Republic. In the third chapter, I connect both topics, firstly through a theoretical approach to uniqueness in the photography medium, and

secondly by explaining what options photographers have when practicing DIY photography, what can motivate or demotivate them to use DIY practices, as well as presenting photographers who practice DIY methods in their work. The research part consists of collecting qualitative data gathered from in-depth interviews with students and alumni of photography programmes of four Czech universities, and then finding how they approach the topic of DIY in photography, what their understandings are of the methods and what their experience is with such techniques. By using a mixed methods approach, I analyze the qualitative data using quantitative analysis of coded answers, later compared to hypotheses as well as analyzed separately.

The motive behind choosing this topic was to introduce the opportunities, as well as the current situation on the DIY scene as it relates to photography, both locally in the Czech Republic and, through theoretical research, also globally. The topic of DIY Photography is, as became evident during my research and interview process, a difficult topic to communicate, especially due to the broad sense of DIY and its different interpretations - different backgrounds can influence how different people approach DIY and what it means to them. Personally, I see the DIY culture as a force bringing progress into any field, and something that allows amateurs to be involved in the process of understanding technologies and activities that are otherwise performed only by professionals. At the same time, I notice the decline of DIY activities around me, something that I account to both a change in conditions in the Czech Republic, and also to the transition from an analogue to a digital age, as well as constant progress in the digital technologies. It is generally being accepted as fact that something like a DSLR camera is something we use as a device, perfect as-is, where nothing can be refined, or repaired, by its user.

Based on my findings, photographers are interested in DIY methods in digital technologies but struggle to combine their work with the work style of the maker culture. Also, they often feel limited by their own skills, especially not being technically-minded. Overall, they tend to be satisfied with the available digital technology and, therefore, do not feel challenged to experiment with it. The analogue, in comparison, is much easier for the photographers to approach and, in case of photography students, is something they usually are trained on in a more hands-on manner than in digital photography.

1. Introduction to Photography in History and the Present

In this chapter, I will introduce a timeline of the most important techniques, inventions and events in photography history that, I believe, are essential to understanding the evolution of DIY practice in comparison to professional practice in the photography medium. I base my research in this chapter on the works of Willfried Baatz, Vilém Flusser, and Pavel Sheufleur; whom I have researched both as an actual source of information, as well as a frame of history and theory of photography. To stay in line with the nature of my research topic, I have decided to focus closely on the early techniques of photography as well as on the “prehistory of photography”, looking at techniques that became important steps in inventing the medium of photography as such, without aiming to provide a full and detailed history of photography. These techniques are still relevant to contemporary photographers, especially to those experimenting with DIY techniques. The people who have made a large impact on the invention of photography and its development were often driven by their limitations to draw what they saw realistically enough, and this vision motivated them to create new methods of documenting reality and perfect the existing ones, as explained in section 1.2 in the example of Nicéphore Niepce.

Vilém Flusser explains that, in his opinion, the intention of the photographer is to code his impressions of the world into pictures, to use a photography machine to do so, to show the others the pictures made this way so that they can share the impression, and to make sure the pictures stay in good condition for as long as possible. (Flusser, 2013 pp. 51-52) Pavel Scheufler describes the changes in photography over time as: “the 19th century was a century marked by revolutions - industrial, social, as well as a revolution of approach to visual culture, creating a new type of image”. The twentieth century brought the invention of colour photography, new aesthetics, new roles for photography and yet another technological revolution - digital photography. In the twenty-first century, we have – so far – seen a huge rise in smartphone photography, action cameras and a new way of photography presentation arising from the spread of the internet and a new individualistic approach to photography interpretation. (Scheufler, 2000)

1. 1 Prehistory of Photography Techniques

There is no date we could consider as the date of the invention of photography. It has been a developing process during a large part of our history, and the journey was paved by many techniques and processes that cannot be considered photographic, but still had their crucial role to play on the way to its invention. In this chapter, I will introduce some early techniques that contributed to the invention of photography as we know it today. Willfried Baatz explains that there were three instances necessary for the medium of photography to be invented: an optical system to capture the scene, a chemical substance to develop it, and a tool that would be able to stabilise it. (Baatz, 2004 p. 10) Most of the techniques preceding the invention of photography shared a common goal - to capture the world in a more realistic way, usually as a support tool for painting or as a stand-alone art form, as explained in the following section.

1. 1. 1 Camera Obscura and Camera Lucida

Camera Obscura, also known as the pinhole camera, is one of the first techniques that can be considered one of photography's roots. Its history is connected and often mistaken with another technique - Camera Lucida. The confusion between these two techniques is described by Erna Fiorentiny in her paper *Camera obscura vs. camera lucida - distinguishing early nineteenth century modes of seeing*. Camera Obscura works on the principle of letting certain amounts of light enter a closed space through a tiny hole, which creates a reflection inside. (see Figure 1) This concept had been known for a long time, however, the first proper description of the mechanism dates back to the Renaissance movement. Camera Obscuras were either portable devices, which can be seen as a direct predecessor of later photography cameras, or in the form of little rooms or tents, mostly used as support for painting and sketching. Due to its long history, there is no single method of using and building Camera Obscuras. In different eras, the tool had different shapes and uses, but the principle has remained the same. (Janda, 1982 pp. 13-14)

Camera Lucida, on the other hand, works on a principle of a four-sided glass prism using various angles that permit light to travel from the object to the viewer's eye. The instrument was first officially introduced by William Hyde Wollaston in 1807, but the principle was previously known for a long time. (Kenyon College, 2017) Both techniques

originated as support tools, mainly for painters, and had a large impact on the visual culture of the nineteenth century. The difference between Camera Obscura and Camera Lucida is that Obscura, unlike Lucida, is an actual photography tool,¹ while Lucida is just a prism operating with different forms and marionettes. Another differentiating element of the two techniques is their purpose - while Camera Lucida has been considered throughout history to be a tool of culture, art or entertainment, Camera Obscura found its application in various different areas, most visibly astronomy. (Fiorentini, 2006) Some of them also mapped life in cities and can be considered predecessors to urban CCTV systems (one example can be the Camera Obscura in Edinburgh Royal Mile that is open to the public today). (Damjanovski, 2013 p. 153)

Camera Obscura is one of the more commonly used techniques amongst analogue DIY photographers today, usually in combination with an analogue film. One such photographer, Yaz Norris, used the technique to transform her entire flat into surreal-looking Camera Obscura rooms and then proceeded to take images of her life scenes using a large-format camera and a pinhole camera system. (Norris, 2014) The photographic result of the process (see Figure 2) creates an atmospheric work due to the slow shutter speed, which allows the photographer to communicate the mood and feeling of the moment captured in the photograph.

1. 1. 2 Laterna Magica

Laterna Magica, also known as magic lantern, was an early method of projecting transparent slides with illustrations onto walls and canvases, mostly used for entertainment and later education purposes when it was invented in the seventeenth century. The way people spent their leisure time changed in the eighteenth century, focusing on incorporating meaningful activities to both the leisure time of adults (of the social groups that could afford it) and into children's school systems, using Laterna Magica as a tool to both catch the attention of the children and teach them, in-depth, about the topic. (Poppo, et al., 2000 p. 43) Laterna Magica can be seen as a more sophisticated Camera Obscura mechanism, operating as a simple version of modern projecting tools consisting of separate plastic or

¹ Camera Obscura is a tool in the form of a box or room, equipped with lenses, or lens substitutions.

glass slides, a lamp, a reflector, a condensing lens, a lens tube, a body, a base, and a smokestack. (NCSSM, 2017) In his publication *Deep Time of the Media*, Sigfried Zielinski explains how *Laterna Magica* has been present in different forms in the art world for centuries before photography was first invented. He uses the example of Giovanni da Fontana, a fifteenth-century Venetian physician, who had been using *Laterna Magica* to project his sketches resembling a female devil creature onto a wall. He had caused an outrage but provoked a fascination towards the technology he was using and increased the media potential of *Laterna Magica*. (Zielinski, 2006 pp. 128-141)

More than photography, *Laterna Magica* influenced the method of projections used in art in general. (Batz, 2004 p. 12) Also, even though *Laterna Magica* did not have a very strong influence on the invention and development of the photography medium as such, it remains one of the techniques being revisited nowadays, mostly in scenography.² The technique also remains symbolically connected to the photography medium - for example, a popular software enhancement for Canon cameras is named *Magic Lantern*, created by photography enthusiasts, allowing users to use their cameras in a more creative manner. (Magic Lantern, 2017) *Laterna Magica*, a multimedia theatre within the National Theatre in Prague, performs *Human Locomotion*, a play based on the life and of Edward Muybridge, an important figure in early photography. The play features various tributes to early photography and pre-photography techniques, including *Camera Obscura*, *stereoscope*, or *Collotype*. (*Laterna Magika*, 2017)

1. 1. 3 Diorama and Panorama

Other techniques and methods invented before the first actual photograph include the diorama and panorama techniques. Both techniques worked with a combination of painting and lighting, aiming to achieve the most realistic effect for its viewers (panorama by creating a panoramic painting around the viewer, and diorama by creating layers of canvasses and

² The big breakthrough was in 1958 when the Czechoslovak Republic presented at Expo 58 in Brussels. At the Expo, Czechoslovakia presented the *Laterna Magika* show created by Alfréd and Emil Radok in cooperation with Josef Svoboda. The show combined elements of a dance performance and film images, giving an impression of cooperation between the two, as well as an almost-improvised natural performance despite the extreme technicality of the performance. (Havránek, 2003)

other materials to achieve a 3D effect). It can be argued that this method is not really connected to photography as such. However, its philosophy of striving for realistic impressions of the world is connected to what early photography brought as the medium's main asset. Also, one of the most renowned diorama artists was Louis Daguerre, inventor of the daguerreotype and one of the pioneers of photography technology. (NYU dpt. of Media, Culture and Communication, 2010)

The diorama is one of the techniques that resonates with certain contemporary artists' approach to DIY in photography in terms of creating scenes for their photographs. One of them, Florian Tremp, makes miniature movie scenes for his project *No Country for Small Men* and, thanks to the diorama technique, is able to create awe-inspiring scenes in the comfort of his own home. (Galperina, 2011) Using this technique, Tremp can use photography to safely comment on sensitive issues, such as crime or traffic accidents; and at the same time avoid disrespecting actual people who could be involved in such a scene. Another artist working with the diorama technique is Matthew Albanese, who creates dramatic landscapes using DIY dioramas for his projects *A New Life #1*, *A New Life #2*, *D.I.Y. Paradise* and others. One particular piece of Albanese's work is illustrating the essence of how the diorama can be used to achieve a creative freedom that would normally be off limits – a piece called *Burning Room* (see Figure 3). The photograph has been made using a diorama of a house, filled with doll-house furniture, that has actually been set on fire to achieve the effect. (Albanese, 2013)

1. 2 Important Milestones in Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Photography

In this chapter, I will point out only a few important milestones of this crucial photography era, during which photography, camera film, the digital camera and editing software were all invented. Similar to section 1. 1, I will focus only on certain areas of this era of massive change in the world of photography.

The *View from the Window at Le Gras* by **Nicéphore Niépce**, made around 1827, is considered to be the first permanent photograph - in today's sense of the word - that has been preserved. Niepce used a combination of Camera Obscura and **heliography**. Heliography is

a process of obtaining contact prints³ on the surface of a pewter plate using Bitumen of Judea. Niepce can be seen more as a scientist than an artist - his motivation to create permanent prints from Camera Obscura was, to an extent, a frustration since his drawings and sketches were not precise enough, but his scientific skills have allowed him to achieve precise results with his prints. His fascination with light has been a foundation for many scientists' later research. (Harry Ransom Center, 2017)

1. 2. 1 Daguerreotype, Ferrotypes and the First Democratisation of Photography

The Daguerreotype, invented by Louis Daguerre, is usually considered to be the first recognised and standardised photography technique. Daguerreotypes mostly captured portraits and still lifes,⁴ had a soft focus but high sharpness, and good details in midtones. Daguerreotypes were usually unsigned, which suggests a different approach to photography at the time in contrast to “high art”. If a family went to get their portrait done, the author would not necessarily be their priority, rather the miracle of seeing their loved ones in such a realistic picture would be a value of its own. Daguerreotypes were very sensitive to touch and had to be protected with a layer of glass; therefore, the idea we have today about what daguerreotypes look like might be misleading. (Scheufler, 2000 pp. 11-12) In the beginning, Daguerreotypes were labelled as the new wave of social art, making art available to a much larger part of society than before. (Cassigneul, 2016) This shift, when in a relatively short period of time art became available - still as a luxury, but affordable nevertheless - is an important step in the democratisation of art. On the photographers' side, the process was very difficult and required a lot of knowledge and skill compared to later methods.

Ferrotypes, also known as tintypes, was a technique that introduced new elements to photography. Its production was much faster and done on location (the entire process could be done in just five minutes), and was also available for a very low price compared to Daguerreotypes, pushing the democratisation of photography even further. Concurrently, it is considered by some as one of the techniques that started a certain degradation of the visual

³ A type of print when the print is as large as the source it is being enlarged from (an example is 35 mm film being printed into contact prints before the photographer chooses which photos he will enlarge).

⁴ Exposure times were very long and at the early stages could take up to thirty minutes, so models often used tools to keep them from movement (head resters, etc).

value in photography, putting the practical aspect and cost above aesthetic quality. (Scheufler, 2000 p. 13) It is not just a visual degradation that is, to some extent, connected with the nineteenth-century photography – the rise of photography meant the death of traditional crafts that could not compete with the new medium. Techniques such as miniature drawings or artistic engraving were no longer appealing to the majority of people, as all of their appeals were included in the new medium of photography. (Walsh, 2007 pp. 34-39)

1. 2. 2 Colour Photography

The early methods of colour photography are the most interesting from today's perspective - from a scientific and, to an extent, historical point of view. The first colour photograph was taken by **James C. Maxwell**, a Scottish scientist and the inventor of electromagnetism. Maxwell was researching the phenomenon of colour perception and produced the first colour photograph in 1861⁵. The photograph depicted a motif of a Scottish tartan rosette, using the **trichromatic process**. A combination of three black and white photographs using three different colour filters (red, green and blue) can, in this way, result in colour photography, even though the results are imperfect. Maxwell's experiments were huge steps towards modern colour photography. (J. M. Clerk Foundation, 2017) The trichromatic process was later used by **Sergey Prokudin-Gorsky**, a photographer who assembled a unique collection of colour photographs from all over the Russian Empire between 1909 and 1915. The collection was practically unknown until an exhibition in Moscow in 2003, where the large restored collection⁶ quickly gained the attention of the photography community. (Hubička, 2017) Gorsky described colour photography in a letter addressed to Leo Tolstoy in 1908 as: *"It seems to me that, by reproducing your image in true color and its surroundings, I will perform a service to the whole world. These images are everlasting - they do not change. No painted reproduction can achieve such results."* (Garanina, 2003)

⁵ 1861 is the year when the permanent photo was made, the method was outlined already in 1855.

⁶ The collection contains photographs from remote parts of the Russian Empire, including a documentary about the life of many religious and ethnic groups of people living in the Empire.

Colour photography had, despite its good quality and results, not been prevalently used in the first half of the twentieth century. Both World Wars are mainly seen in black and white, even though exceptions exist. The slow incorporation of colour into mainstream photography production had few reasons – amongst others: aesthetics, better technical quality of the black and white photos at the time, they were cheaper to produce and they took less time to develop. (Bitoun, 2015) Throughout the second half of the twentieth century, colour photography kept gaining importance but alongside the supporters, a strong opposition - or rather scepticism towards colour in photography - can be observed. Black and white photography is, even today, more than common in a documentary, portraiture, and fine art photography, but has also been used in company branding as an element of visual identity. Even on Instagram, a popular application for sharing photos and short videos, three of the twenty-three filters are black and white.⁷ While in film production the use of black and white only is more or less an exception, in professional photography it is common practice.

1. 2 Digital Photography

The new century has brought a new approach to amateurism – if we could see the nineteenth century as an age allowing a certain presence of amateurism in science, the second half of the twentieth century had shifted this tendency largely into the art and culture scene. This trend has continued in the microelectronics field and inspired artists to experiment with new technologies, while the technologies themselves were becoming too complex for amateur scientists. (Haskovec, et al., 2006) However, this does not necessarily mean that art photographers would be drawn towards experimenting with digital photography, especially in the early years, as much as in other fields – such as music, performance, or film. To make even a simple digital camera in its established form from scratch is nearly impossible even today, when artists have access to a large selection of tools allowing them to create more simple photography machines. Back in the second half of the twentieth century, the situation was even more difficult.

⁷ This information was taken on 14th of November, 2017 and will probably change in the future.

Sean Cubitt explains the journey from analogue to digital photography in his publication, *The Practice of Light*. He follows the work of Vilém Flusser, who has been comparing the medium of photography to drawing. In this comparison, he sees drawing as “substitution for the world”, while photography represents “substitution for concepts about the world”. If this concept is true, the evolution of photography, analogue to digital, can be - according to Cubitt - described as “decreasingly semiotic and increasingly arithmetic”. (Cubitt, 2014 pp. 80-111)

The origins of digital photography in the fifties are, from a technical point of view, closely connected to the history of recording pictures for television broadcasting. (Bellis, Mary, 2017) Later, in the sixties, there was a close connection to science, including cooperation with NASA. Eugene Lally, an engineer in the Jet Propulsion Laboratory, has described the use of mosaic photosensors and their application in the digitalization of light signals and the production of still images. This legacy continued in 1995 when, together with his colleagues, he founded Photobit, the first company putting CMOS (complementary metal-oxide semiconductor) image sensors on the market. (NASA, 2017) **Mavica**, created by Sony, is often believed to be the first digital camera on the market, introduced in 1981. Mavica was not, however, a digital camera as such, since it worked on a principle of freezing analogue video frames and saving them on a floppy disk. Therefore, even though it cannot really be considered a digital camera, it was probably the first camera available on the market to allow the producing of the final photographs electronically. (Atherton, 2013)

William Mitchell writes in his study on digital photography, *The Reconfigured Eye*, that the early digital cameras were nowhere near the quality of their silver-based alternatives in analogue, but as he points out, the improvement of the digital image is connected to digital storage capacity and processing speed. Both of those qualities were, back at the time, presumed to improve rapidly, promising a steep improvement in the digital image in the near future. (Mitchell, 1994) Digital cameras became more commonly available in the nineties and managed to almost replace analogue cameras by the mid-two-thousands, making shooting on film a choice, rather than a necessity. The approach to digital photography changed in recent years when, by the mid-two-thousands, we have seen a huge success of DSLR cameras. The early twenty-tens brought a boom of mirrorless cameras and recently, smartphone photography is getting more and more recognition, amongst other emerging camera types.

1. 4 Latest Developments

'We have moved on from "I think therefore I am" to "I document therefore I exist".'
(Shore, 2014 p. 7)

In the recent boom of smartphone photography and internet sharing, photography has become a very confusing medium to work with to some photographers. There have never been such large amounts of photographs as there are today and, especially in fine art, the standards have changed for how photographs are being perceived. As Robert Shore explains and presents in his book *Post-Photography*, contemporary photographers, more than ever, distance themselves from the role of traditional photographers and experiment with different media that they can incorporate into their photography practice. (Shore, 2014)

1. 4. 1 Emerging Camera Types

Apart from the steep rise in popularity of smartphone cameras, there are other emerging camera types that gained enormous popularity in recent years. In general, the camera devices tend to be smaller, wearable and compatible with related applications on mobile devices, allowing easy access to photographs. At the same time, the devices are becoming more difficult for its end users to understand and are approached as final mechanisms to work with by most of them. In this section, I chose two examples to illustrate different approaches to new trends in photography today – action cameras and visual lifelogging.

Action cameras bring an opportunity to create good quality action photographs and videos for an affordable price. The most popular brand connotated with action cameras is GoPro, but other companies create similar devices. Action cameras usually carry certain common attributes: reduced size of the camera body, resistance to physical damage, wide-angle lens with a fixed focal length and compatibility with accessories allowing the photographer to use the camera in unusual and extreme conditions. Cameras are usually attached directly to the body of the photographer, creating a new visuality of mirroring what we are used to seeing with our real eyes into the visual photography/video aesthetics. Photographs and videos taken with action cameras give the feeling of a reproduction of

reality with minimal distortions. (Ortiz, et al., 2015) Action cameras are extremely user-friendly and intuitive in its use, as well as relatively financially accessible.⁸

Visual lifelogging is an activity of acquiring photographs representing the daily experience of an individual person wearing a camera device. (Bolanos, et al., 2015) Unlike the action cameras, lifelogging aims, in most cases, to represent life as it is being lived by the maker, not to highlight a selection that he wants to share or an aspect of life he is proud of. Lifelogging cameras are, in one way, an extension of the individual approach we can see in action cameras, but on the other hand, the photographer has less influence over the final collection of photographs created. Unless he turns the device off for some time, the camera simply continues making photographs in a certain time frame.

Sara Ljungblad conducted a research in 2009, aiming to explore the experience of users of what she describes as passive cameras, in this case, Sensecam lifelogging camera. She describes, how people can forget they are wearing the device, especially if engaged in an activity that distracts their senses. However, Ljungblad points out, that the photographers in the situation are not automatically passive photo takers because they are still in charge of placing the camera, turning it off and on depending on a situation and, finally, commenting on the photos that have been taken. (Ljungblad, 2009)

1. 4. 2 Analogue Photography in the Digital Age

Digital photography aside, analogue photography is making a significant comeback in the twenty-first century, with the return of cameras like Polaroid or Diana. Many photographers long for the tangibility of analogue photography, and the sales of analogue cameras are recently on the rise. Also, the aesthetics of analogue photography is appealing and works well with the nostalgia for retro that we are experiencing in the twenty-first century and photographers gain feeling that shooting with an analogue camera gives them a chance to differentiate themselves amongst the rising number of other photographers. Olivier Laurent, the editor of photography section of Time magazine, points out that some

⁸ To illustrate this, we can compare the prices of different cameras in a popular photography shop in Prague, Fotoškoda, as stated on their website as of December 7th, 2018. The latest and most expensive model of GoPro, Hero 6, costs 14 990 CZK, a price comparable to the DSLR Nikon D3400 with a basic lens, or a mirrorless camera Panasonic Lumix DMC-G7 camera; both on the low end of price spectrum. (Fotoškoda, 2017)

photographers feel more challenged when using analogue photography, quoting Dennis Olbrich, president of Kodak Alaris: “*Film forces you to think about the image, plan the image and really create the image mentally before you actually do the shoot. Film photographers believe that this process results in much more artistic and, in some cases, much more spectacular images.*” (Laurent, 2017)

The taste for retro photography aesthetics is also visible in applications such as Instagram or Hipstamatic, where users can select different filters imitating specific visual aspects of analogue photography. In case of Hipstamatic, users can even select specific well-known lens and film from different eras of photography history, which creates a visual effect based on their selection. Susan Luckman writes in her article *The Aura of the Analogue in a Digital Age*: “*...I found myself looking out for good deals on film for an old-school Polaroid instant camera because of my teenage step- daughter’s interest in analogue photography. This particular retro technology valuably combines the instantaneity of the digital photo (taken for granted by generations unaccustomed to waiting for their holiday snaps to be developed) with the material artefact of the actual photo. When you are a ‘digital native’, analogue is new.*”. (Luckman, 2013 p. 250)

2. Defining DIY

DIY, an abbreviation for do-it-yourself, is a widely used term connected to the amateur production of tools or practices commonly performed by skilled professionals. According to the Cambridge Dictionary, it is “*The activity of decorating or repairing your home, or making things for your home yourself, rather than paying someone else to do it for you*”. Oxford Dictionary describes DIY as “*Done in person by someone without the relevant qualifications.*” DIY as a term is believed to have been used for the first time in 1952. (Merriam-Webster, 2017) DIY also stands for a way of life, a means of self-expression and, for many people, a freedom to live their lives more in line with their personal beliefs and preferences. In this chapter, I explore different aspects and points of view on DIY culture and ethic, describe examples of important DIY projects from the past, and focus on the situation in the Czech Republic and former Czechoslovakia.

When we look at the reason why people start with DIY, we can see a range of reasons: from cost saving, gender appropriation,⁹ hobby & leisure, reaction to consumerism, to resistance to mainstream society. The seventies are also the time of the emerging punk movement and punks shaping the character of DIY, pushing it to be seen as an alternative form against consumerism, as described further in section 2. 2. 1. (Maldini, 2014)

2. 1 DIY as a Democratic Movement

The culture of DIY is often seen as a democratisation of technology – giving access to technology to a large proportion of society and allowing them to tailor it to their needs. There is a pattern we can observe in a similar ideology at the peak of DIY culture in the seventies, and its echoes in the more contemporary movement of digital DIY in open design and the hacker culture (as explained in section 2. 2. 2). Andrew Wagner explains in her book, *Handmade Nation: the rise of DIY, art, craft, and design*, that DIY ideology leads its makers towards a particular outlook on the world and notes that digital technologies can help the

⁹ We can observe a movement of feminine domestic DIY in the twenties and the thirties, as opposed to the masculine “reconstruction persona” of the postwar period.

craft skill of an individual to be once again recognised as a “*uniquely qualified leader and grounded member of a society that often seems on the verge of chaos.*” (Levine, et al., 2008)

In digital DIY, especially in the case of consumer electronics that are becoming an increasingly large part of our lives, it is argued just how important it is for users not only to understand but to be able to take a better control over their devices. Whether the users are supposed to be allowed a full and free use of a device, including self-repairs and adjustments, rather than just borrowing the device from professionals and companies, is a discourse that divides the users. Bas van Abel stated in 2012, “*If you can’t open it, you don’t own it*”, a statement presumably even more relevant in 2017 than it was five years ago. (van Abel, 2012) Jaymi Heimbuch also points out that the DIY principle empowers both individuals and communities and encourages alternative approaches. This means that even though financial reasons may be among the motivations, it also enables people to be more in control of their consumerist versus ecologically conscious behaviour. She focuses on the DIY approach towards electronics, in a similar way as van Abel, supporting her stance by pointing out how limited and powerless users feel about making modifications and repairing electronics, and that in the situation when users feel restricted from even opening their electronics, they cannot be considered the real owners, but merely borrowers. (Heimbuch, 2012)

2. 2 DIY Ethic

“Making is fundamental to what it means to be human. We must make, create, and express ourselves to feel whole. There is something unique about making physical things. Things we make are like little pieces of us and seem to embody portions of our soul.” (Hatch, 2014)

The term DIY Ethic stands for a self-sufficient lifestyle, when, as mentioned before, certain tools or practices are performed by amateurs rather than professionals. It is a framework applicable to various aspects of lifestyle choices. **The Maker Manifesto**, published in 2014 by Mark Hatch, is one of the examples of a written description of the DIY ethic. He describes the maker culture¹⁰ as having nine main principles: *make, share, give,*

¹⁰ “DIY” culture and “maker” culture stands for the same meaning in the book.

learn, tool up, play, participate, support, change. The author points out that many makers meet and participate in the process of making in places that he describes as “makerspaces” and a large proportion of these people can be described as white-collars, as he says: “*They don’t need to make Christmas presents; they want to.*” Hatch refers to Abraham Maslow, Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel and Carl Jung when he states that: “*Being creative, the act of creating and making, is actually fundamental to what it means to be human.*”. He also points out that Judeo-Christian culture has a common element in the Book of Genesis that in both literal and abstract interpretations God is introduced as “The Creator”, which is also, in our cultural background one of the first stories we learn when approaching literature and culture in childhood. (Hatch, 2014) Makerspaces, are of great importance to the DIY community, besides the practical point of having access to tools and technology that is hard to obtain as individuals, the members meet other people aiming to keep DIY ethic in their life, which motivates and inspires them; and also, they can learn from each other.

2. 2. 1 Punk and DIY Ethic

DIY culture also had a huge impact on the Punk movement, especially when it comes to the Straight Edge philosophy of Hard-Core Punk. Straight Edge refers to refraining from alcohol, cigarettes, drugs, and in some cases also a commitment to a vegan diet. This allows its followers to live life their own way, in accordance with DIY ethic and free from the capitalist culture they wish to expel from their lives. Anti-consumerism in Straight Edge, ideally, does not compromise. Therefore, DIY is essential for living life according to one’s own principles and adjusting the reality around oneself. DIY ethic also have a great importance when it comes to Punk culture production, be it concerts, exhibitions, or any other cultural events.

In visual aesthetics specifically, the role of DIY is deeply rooted in the process as well as the visual outcomes. Teal Triggs observes in *Punk Fanzines and the Creation of a DIY Aesthetic* that Punk zines and fanzines have a distinctive use of typefaces, combining different typographical elements and a potential to carry a semantic message in its revolting aesthetics, reminding its viewer of the menacing anonymous threats. (Triggs, 2015) Photography specifically is used mostly as part of collages or montages and is displayed in fotozines. Artist Linder Sterling, linked to the Manchester Punk scene, has combined photography and DIY aesthetics of Punk related graphic design in her work. Her

photomontages are full of shocking scenes, but also fragile female perspective. (see Figure 4)

DIY ethic often meets Punk movement in squats culture, where squatters meet with other members of the subculture. Milan Trachta (known as Banán) is one of the most important persons on the Czech Straight Edge scene. In his interview for A2 magazine he said that: *“Straight Edge is a pure DIY approach and ethic, what I can do on my own I simply do on my own.”*¹¹ and he also pointed out, that while abroad in some countries, Straight Edge leads to the setting up of manufactures producing organic cosmetics, vegan diners or publishing houses, in the Czech Republic the scene is relatively small and therefore mostly focuses on the creation and distribution of fanzines.¹² (Trachta, 2009)

2. 2. 2 HCI, Hacker Culture

DIY in connection with HCI (human-computer interaction) can be seen as the delineator between analogue and digital DIY, since, in principle, it always involves some practices concerning digital technologies in combination with personal inputs. HCI researchers have been observing the DIY community development for decades, and as Rachel Maines explains: *“any technology that privileges the pleasures of production over the value and/or significance of the product can be a hedonizing technology”* but also explains that pleasure in the making process is not in opposition to the ethic of makers and hackers, just a shift in the approach towards the process. (Maines, 2009 pp. 3-18)

Hackers are the subculture most adapted to the world of emerging technologies. Usually, hackers are computer experts that connect their knowledge with traditional DIY values. The subculture has evolved from amateur radio and car adjustments in the twenties and has later spread among the academic community that had access to computers. Since computers became massively available to the public, the practice took a form of a hobby

¹¹ In original “Je to skutečně ryzí DIY přístup i etika. Co je možné si udělat sám, si zkrátka sám udělám.” (Trachta, 2009)

¹² In original “V Česku to příliš nefunguje a týká se to vlastně pouze fanzinů. V zahraničí ale existuje řada projektů kolem hardcorové scény, které nemají s muzikou nic společného. Jde o nejrůznější manufaktury na biokosmetiku, nakladatelství, veganské jídelny atd. To souvisí s tím, že česká autonomní scéna je prostě slabší, máme tu jediný squat, takřka žádná sociální centra, a to jsou právě místa, jež venku fungují jako základny pro podobné projekty.” (Trachta, 2009)

activity. Hackers are often mistaken with crackers; the difference can be described as that hackers aim to "build things" and crackers intend to "destroy things". (Busch, et al., 2006 pp. 16-29) Hackers are often extending their expertise into projects they find personally interesting but that are not necessarily useful and therefore miss the commercial application.

2.3 Important DIY Projects

DIY is throughout the history traditionally linked with household adjustments. We can find many blogs, vlogs, websites and other content related to this topic on the internet. While some of these authors simply advise their readers how to transform a bean soup can into a pencil holder, some go further and advise how to adjust the technological aspect of the gadgets they use. Understanding how gadgets work can help people to have a more confident approach to any kind of technology, or allow activist groups to be able to communicate and pursue their cause more effectively. In art, DIY represents the independent approach to production, zine culture of self-publishing and also the power to use custom design tools to create a more unique art piece.

When talking about DIY projects in their historical perspective, *Autoprogettazione* was one of the legendary projects by Enzo Mari, Italian artist and designer, from 1974. The project consisted of a book manual for nineteen designs that used ready-made parts to construct different types of furniture (tables, shelves, beds, etc). (Normal, 2013) With *Autoprogettazione*, Mari showed that unique, designer tables can be for everyone, and due to its simplicity, it was easy to change its appearance over time. The project created a discussion about consumerism and design at the time.

As mentioned in section 2.1, DIY can be used as a powerful tool for individuals and groups who might, for different reasons, struggle to get the tools needed to pursue their cause. One example of such project, where DIY has been used in this manner, can be found in Guyana, where a small forest tribe decided to construct a drone based on a Youtube tutorial to fight illegal deforestation in the area. The tribe used parts donated by Digital Democracy¹³ to create the drone, which they controlled with open-software, Mission

¹³ Digital Democracy is a Boston based organization aiming to help early-career journalists and participating in global social and environmental issues. (The GroundTruth Project, 2017)

Planner, and combined the drone with a camera donated by GoPro that was programmed to take a photo once in every two seconds. This mechanism allowed the tribe to make a multi-dimensional interactive map, helping them to push their cause and prove the illegal deforestation. (Schreiber, 2016)

2. 4 DIY in the Czech Republic and Former Czechoslovakia

DIY in socialist Czechoslovakia had a nature of a useful hobby, in some cases almost a necessity. After the Velvet Revolution DIY started to define itself more visibly as a form of a cultural movement¹⁴, as I have already partially covered in section 2. 2. 1, Punk and DIY Ethic were already included as a philosophy in some movements before the revolution as well, but became more wide-spread and got more mainstream attention. The business aspect of DIY culture is quite strong both in the Czech Republic and in former Czechoslovakia. (Daniel, 2016)

I am illustrating the DIY situation in the Czech Republic and former Czechoslovakia on the examples of Miroslav Tichý, squatting activity in the nineties and contemporary hackerspaces. Miroslav Tichý represents the DIY as a way how to ensure artistic freedom in a restrictive society, such as normalization era of the seventies in Czechoslovakia. Squatting culture follows up as a phenomenon of the nineties, when squatters have greatly incorporated the DIY ethic in their lifestyle choices and creative work. The contemporary hackers culture in the Czech Republic stands for the DIY applied in line with the current age and represents the approach of maker culture in connection with digital technologies.

Miroslav Tichý, a Czech photographer famous for his voyeur photographs, built his cameras and other photography equipment on his own. Most of his photographs have women of his hometown, Kyjov, as the main subject. His cameras, often made from garbage or leftover tools in his house, were hidden underneath his jumper with a system of wires and he took the photos without looking into view-finder. (Hobden, 2012) (see Figure 5) Quentin Bajac, curator of Tichý's exhibition in Centre Pompidou in 2008, says that Tichý has managed to reinvent the entire history of photography on his own and for himself.

¹⁴ DIY had its role as a cultural movement before the Velvet Revolution too, in the form of an underground subcultures, but grew stronger in the nineties.

(Bauxman, 2008) His photographs often went through a manual post-process when he would draw on the prints to highlight contours and add fine art quality to his work. Roman Buxbaum remembers Tichý and his technique: *“On principle, Tichý refused equipment that was offered to him. Making things himself was a demonstration of his independence. He foreswore the conveniences of the modern world so he wouldn’t have to accept the demands that the world made of him. That’s fine. It’s good enough, he repeated.”* (American Suburb X, 2017)

An important moment for the DIY scene in the Czech Republic was **the squatting activity** in the nineties. The group of squatters was very diverse and included many figures from the Czech underground culture. There have been larger numbers of squats, but two, in particular, had an impact not only on the underground movements but on society as a whole - Ladronka and Milada. Vladimir 518, an important figure of the Czech cultural scene, spent two years in Ladronka squat and described his view on the situation as: *“A squat can be a refuge for people who want to slack around and get drunk in the grey zone and margins of society, but it can also stand for an unbelievably well-built environment for those who want to experience what it is like to stand on your own two feet in any original work or other social activity. The difference from a school education is that this is a real environment.”*¹⁵ (Vladimir 518, 2012)

Paralelní Polis is a Prague-based institution, backed by the group **Ztohoven**. They became well-known after their activities commonly associated amongst people with hacking and in 2014 they have decided to create a physical space that would represent the ideas of the original philosophy of Parallel Polis,¹⁶ consisting of four different parts: a 3D maker club, a bitcoin cafe, a co-working space and a hackerspace. The hackerspace is described by the community as a cryptoanarchy institute, which aims to enable physical building of people who are interested in educating themselves, to explore and discuss the philosophy of Parallel Polis. In the hackerspace, members of the community cooperated on a number of projects in the past, many of them concerning the physical house of Paralelní Polis – hacking the house

¹⁵ In original: *“Squat může být útočiště pro lidi, co se chtějí flákat a chlastat v šedý zóně na okraji společnosti, ale i neuvěřitelně správně postavený prostředí pro ty, kteří si chtějí vyzkoušet, jaký je to stát na vlastních nohách skrze jakoukoli vlastní tvorbu nebo jinou sociální aktivitu. Na rozdíl od školy se jedná ale už o reálný prostředí.”* (Vladimir 518, 2012)

¹⁶ Parallel Polis is a term coined by Catholic philosopher Václav Benda during the normalization in the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic which refers to an idea of an alternative society and culture in an oppressive regime. (Benda, et al., 1988)

to function better, such as unlocking the doors in the building with a microchip implant in accordance with the transhumanist philosophy. (Paralelní Polis, 2017) Another important hackerspace in Prague is Brmlab, which is currently looking for a new location and operated previously in the Holešovice district, sharing the same neighbourhood with Paralelní Polis. (Brmlab, 2017)

3. DIY and Photography

After looking at the context of both photography and DIY culture, this chapter looks at the way how DIY in photography can function and what can it stand for, as well as what motivates or demotivates photographers from applying DIY in their work. Starting with a section focusing on the topic of uniqueness and originality in photography, as a context to following section, dealing with motivation and demotivation of photographers to do DIY photography today. The chapter concludes with topic of DIY photography options, serving as a base for the research.

3.1 The Uniqueness of Form

“Digital photographs function in an entirely different way from traditional photographs. Or do they? Shall we accept that digital imaging represents a radical rupture with photography? Is an image, mediated by computer and electronic technology, radically different from an image obtained through a photographic lens and embodied in film? If we describe film-based images using such categories as depth of field, zoom, a shot or montage, what categories should be used to describe digital images? Shall the phenomenon of digital imaging force us to rethink such fundamental concepts as realism or representation?”
(Manovich, 1994)

Photography as a medium is based on reproduction, a fact that becomes ever more visible since digitalization. The feeling of the physical analogue prints, of having something real in your hands, is hard to replace in the digital era. The digital photographs can, of course, be printed out, but the originality cannot be guaranteed and if the artists keep record of their prints, it is more or less based on trust of us, viewers or buyers, to believe them. In the world filled with picture material, what can qualify photography to be a fine art? Photography is commonly compared to painting, thanks to the history of the invention of photography, aim of photographers, and the form itself. Frank Mercado argues that painting can only be created intentionally, with an aim to have a piece of art as a result, while vast majority of people use cameras with intention other than art creation. He also points out, that photography was not seen as an art until beginning of the twentieth century and art in photography had to gain a new sub-category, art photography (or fine art photography). (Mercado, 2011)

Susan Sontag discusses similar issue in her book *On Photography*, where she states: “*Photography has the unappealing reputation of being the most realistic, therefore facile, of the mimetic arts. In fact, it is the one art that has managed to carry out the grandiose, century-old threats of a Surrealist takeover of the modern sensibility, while most of the pedigreed candidates have dropped out of the race.*” Later, Sontag goes even further, stating that photography is the only art that is naturally surreal but doesn’t share the destiny of the Surrealism movement. In opposition to the tradition of surrealism, Sontag sees photography as being surreal for creating a duplication of reality, secondary view of our own perception. (Sontag, 2005 pp. 39-40) Lev Manovich stated in his essay *The Paradoxes of Digital Photography*, published in 1994, that the analogue photography once represented the almost inhumanly perfect caption of reality, something that can seem very familiar to us today, when the inhuman position in our perception was replaced by the computer screen and its resolution. (Manovich, 1994)

3. 1. 1 Art and Technology

Photography is traditionally a field of art that, by its nature, requires a certain level of technical knowledge and skill from its makers. Martin Heidegger was one of the philosophers exploring the philosophy behind the photography media in sense of connection between art and technology. Diarmuid Costello writes in his paper, *The Questions Concerning Photography*, “*Heidegger thinks art (techne) and technology (Technik) have in common, and within that commonality, what sets them apart. What they have in common, for Heidegger, is that both art and technology are “modes of disclosure” (aletheuein), ways in which beings in general are brought to light, together with the underlying assumptions as to what beings are, that such modes of disclosure reveal. What sets them apart, accordingly, is what differentiates them as modes of disclosure.*” (Costello, 2012)

3. 2 Motivation and Demotivation to do DIY Photography Today

DIY has had a crucial role in photography over the years. As introduced in the previous section, 3. 1, photography as an art form struggles to deal with the concept of originality in art by allowing practically infinite number of reproductions and by often not being practised with an intention to create art. DIY has the ability, to differentiate artists from mainstream production, or be a playful activity on its own. On the other hand, it may also become technical into an extent in which photography as such is almost meaningless in the process.

Motivations towards starting with DIY for photographers can be, apart from the question of originality, the basic motivation of hacker culture – to play and have fun, to understand the technology, to adjust the tools to one’s specific needs, and to create new ways how to do things. Lindtner, Hertz and Dourish observe the return of importance of tangibility in technologies and the fact that DIY provides the makers with just that – the materiality of making. (Lindtner, et al., 2014)

On the other hand, photographers may feel demotivated by the difficulty of the process and the complicated access to tools, something that has considerably changed with the transition from analogue to digital.¹⁷ Costs can present a problem as well, and unlike DIY in the second half of the twentieth century, it does not automatically create savings.

3. 2. 1 Specifics of DIY Photography

As is the case with many other DIY activities unrelated to photography, if a person chooses to use DIY technology, one of the likely motivation is a joy he feels when participating in the process – we can call such a person a DIY hobbyist. This phenomenon is causing some inconsistency between professional and hobby production because while in a professional production result is the main outcome, for hobbyist this applies to the process itself and therefore the process needs to be interesting and pleasant on its own.

When looking at the DIY digital photography, one of the specific element is a digital divide – a gap that is created between certain groups of people based on their access to digital

¹⁷ As mentioned before, hackerspaces still consist mainly of computer experts, possibly making the spaces intimidating to others to join the communities.

technologies, as well as their knowledge and skillset, creating incomparability between certain groups. Different groups of people can be affected by the digital divide based on their financial situation, country they live in, gender, age or education. When looking at the topic of DIY in digital photography, the digital divide can be an aspect of demotivation for certain photographers – both due to their lack of technical background and focus on analogue technologies. This being said, DIY can also enable makers to pursue something they would under normal conditions lack funds to make, or found themselves discouraged from doing.

In general, individuals can start their DIY projects easier if they are associated with an established makerspace, which requires a number of like-minded people aiming to work in similar field to be able to afford to create such a space, which can be complicated for people interested in DIY photography, as it is not a large field within the maker community and DIY is not being encouraged in photography community on an equal level to analogue. Also, within a university environment it is more likely to associate DIY with different primary focus, such as intermedia studies, rather than photography.

3. 3 DIY Photography Options

In analogue, the options for the manipulations of every part of the photography making process are widely being experimented with by many photographers. In analogue photography, any darkroom process where the photographer himself is in charge of doing the tasks, rather than a machine or professional photo lab employee, can be considered as DIY. The second option is to perform a so-called “operative hacks”, when photographer adjusts the technology to better fit his intentions. A common "operative hacks" in analogue photography are to experiment with distressing the negatives - scratching them with a needle, rubbing them against rough materials, burning, or freezing the negatives. Another option is to experiment with slit-scan cameras, a method taking the creative advantage of the moment when the film moves past a narrow slit in the back of the camera, resulting in "sliced" visuals of the photos taken with different exposures assembled together, rather than a single exposure photograph. (Antonini, et al., 2015 pp. 92-97) Finally, photographers can decide to create the whole camera device on their own, which can be seen as the strongest implementation of DIY in analogue photography.

3. 3. 1 Digital DIY Options for Photographers

In digital photography, the photographers can experiment with their own photography equipment, open source softwares or build a basic camera from components. For example, companies like Arduino or Raspberry Pi offer a range of single-board computers that photographers can use when hacking digital photography. Makers using similar products communicate and connect in online communities, one of them set directly on the official Arduino website where users can feature their own projects. (Arduino, 2017) However, as the nature of the technology itself suggests,¹⁸ the projects featured on the website are mostly using photography as a technical element, not really trying to establish new ways of photography making or a new approach to visuality in photography.

One of the options photographers have in DIY digital photography is smartphone hacking. Smartphone photography is on the rise and DIY allows authors to give their work a unique visual form as well as the experience of taking part in creating the tool and operating it. One of the options for how to hack a smartphone is to combine it with a lens, either bought specifically for the purpose¹⁹ or any lens adjusted to function accordingly. Analogue or digital lenses can be mounted to smartphones when putting a telescope eyepiece between the camera and the lens. (Instructables, 2017) This option can turn out to be very inflexible and difficult to carry around, but can be adjusted to older devices kept just for experiments while using a second-hand lens for an affordable price (the price can be low especially if the lens is not easily compatible with common brands of cameras). Photographers who decide to do this often do so because of the accessibility of smartphone devices, not always having camera on them and, also for the possibility of synchronization with different applications allowing them to experiment with various concepts they can later apply to more traditional technology if they decide to.

Camera Traps, another popular photography tools which can be made or adjusted using DIY, are remote operated cameras (usually very basic) that capture their surrounding. They are most typically used to capture wildlife animals, but can serve many purposes. Camera traps can be used to raise awareness about ecological issues as well as to simply entertain its viewers. They can be paired with a single-board computer, and adjusted in a way to react to movement,

¹⁸ Arduino is a company focused primarily on the maker community, not the artistic community.

¹⁹ There are many ready-made lenses for smartphone models on the market, for example Moment, Olloclip, Photojojo, or Mpow and come in various types including Fisheye, Macro and Wide-angle.

temperature and other changes of conditions. Camera Traps using DIY in their production usually have a lot of focus on technicality and functionality of the result, rather than aesthetic value, the information is appreciated.

The Camera Obscura has already been described in section 1. 1. 1, digital version of a Camera Obscura functions on a similar basis to the analogue one, the difference being only in the final step of the process, when sensitive film or photographic paper is replaced with camera sensor capturing the image. As Jason Fitzpatrick, DIY blogger, explains, this method is for people who want to play and experiment with the form, accepting the fact that it is almost impossible to create a technically perfect photograph this way. The results look very similar to the photographs taken with analogue pinhole camera, but the cost of the digital version is much lower - when using analogue version, there is (especially in the beginning) a lot of waste of film, something that does not cost anything when using a digital camera. Fitzpatrick describes the process of making digital pinhole camera in following steps: preparing pinhole lens cap (reducing shine, drilling a hole and cleaning up the cap area), cutting a soda can to get aluminium strips and securing it as a blank to the cap and lastly piercing the pinhole itself into the blank using a pin. (Fitzpatrick, 2013)

3. 4 Examples of an Alternative Approach in Contemporary Photography

When looking at the way how DIY and photography influences one other, we can observe a number of meanings that can be attributed to alternative photography created this way. However, it can be hard to imagine what the DIY photography, or alternative approach to photography, actually stand for. In this section I introduce different attitudes towards DIY in photography practices, focusing on contemporary photography scene.²⁰ For the means of this brief introduction to alternative approaches to contemporary photography, I have defined three ways of looking at DIY processes in photography, into some extent inspired by the book *Post-Photography: The Artist with a Camera* (Shore, 2014): **the new readymade, DIY tools in photography** and **DIY in photography exhibition practices**. For all three I have selected specific artists as examples to illustrate them, aiming to find artists that would be a clear representation of each.

²⁰ In this case I consider the timeframe for contemporary photography to be photography created between 2008 and 2018.

3. 4. 1 The New Readymade

With the accessibility to all sorts of visual material on the internet, photographers also often use already finished photography-related material found online and recreate it in their work, something that can be described as the new readymade.²¹ Other techniques, such as scanography, can also be considered to be the new readymade, in the sense applied in this text, since they include digital technology in the process as well as featuring ready-made objects, therefore using - in most cases - different subject-matter elements than photography in its traditional means. One of the distinctions between the two areas of readymade photography is their original aim – while the first one follows, in a sense, the legacy of dada and anti-art movement, with its unconventional approach to originality in art as well as value in art works; the latter is using the technique simply to achieve the desired effect.

An example of the first case, working with found visual material online, is **Mishka Henner** and his series *Fields*, in which he has captured and cropped Google Earth satellite photographs of the landscape in different locations. (see Figure 6) In his own words, he explains how he sees the main problem with people perceiving similar kind of visual information and “*how to frame it, title it, all those things that bring simplicity and coherence to something that’s otherwise daunting and complex.*” (Shore, 2014 pp. 14-19) Henner’s photographs, or more specifically edited screenshots from the satellite images, enable the viewer to question both the visual quality of a found composition in the landscape, as well as the approach towards technology and ownership in the twenty-first century. Another example of the new readymade in Henner’s work includes the series *Film Stills (2016)*, in which he presents ending of different films in different languages that function as a standalone form of art, and *Bliss (2011)*, lightbox installation consisting of TV personalities shots capturing rare moments that change their meaning when taken out of context. (Henner, 2018)

²¹ Readymade is a term coined by Marcel Duchamp describing an art recreated from already manufactured objects, giving them a new meaning by using them as art objects. (Tate, 2018)

An example of **scanography**, also known as scanner photography, a technique using the principle of capturing objects²² with a scanning machine²³, when author is using the specific visual aspects and limitations as an advantage, can be found in the work of various photographers, usually as a separate project. Scanography has been preceded by the Xerox art movement starting in the sixties that has been using similar principles as scanography in its principle, but had much more radical visual style, relevant to its time aesthetics and, also, to the context of a digital copy technology representing a groundbreaking novelty in many fields. (Smith, 2016) If Xerox art can be seen as a celebration of invention, the scanography can be seen as its reflection. **Rebecca Wild**, an experimental artist using scanography technique in some of her projects, is creating abstract drawings with multiple liquids she later scans in her project *Fluid Smoke (2014-2017)*. (see Figure 7) For the series, she used her own saliva as a base for her work, resembling the outer space and outer space surfaces. (Wild, 2018)

3. 4. 2 DIY Tools in Photography

Another approach, using DIY principles, can combine photographic and non-photographic tools, as well as combination of multiple photographic tools in one process. Constructing whole camera or camera-like device from scratch can also be considered to be a part of this, as well as creating separate photography equipment. Using this approach in photography can help the author to capture the atmosphere in a more authentic way, as well as to customize the visual outcome to a more personal style.

One example of combination of photographic and non-photographic principles in DIY photography is **Benjamin Lowy**, a photographer who has been stationed with the U.S. Army in Iraq. He has been using different photography approaches, including use of military night vision goggles, as he describes “*firmly attached to my camera by means of duct tape, dental floss, and occasionally, chewing gum*”. His photography work offers a chilling experience of terrified people on both sides, the confused and anxious life of soldiers on one side and terrified civilians on the other. (see Figure 8) Use of the alternative techniques has allowed Lowy to get close to the scenes he wanted to share with the world, capturing the atmosphere of the horrors

²² Scanography mostly uses objects as a subject matter, but can also include body parts, abstract motifs, or even portraiture.

²³ In some cases, the process can involve first making copies that are later adjusted before the final scan.

of the situations he had witnessed. He describes his work in his own words as an aim to create an “aesthetic bridge” and an “illumination about the fear and desperation that is war”. (Lowy, 2011)

Michal Kindernay is a Czech multimedia artist and also one of the artists experimenting with DIY cameras in their work. Kindernay explains his stance towards DIY camera making and art in his essay, *Camerae Alterae*, writing: “During the experiments and long-term use of DIY cameras, I have realized how important sharing of codes and hacking DIY approaches is, their modular equivalents and support communities on the internet are helping artists and musicians in their ways to a variety of innovative approach in art. This is an important balance to increasingly aggressive and monopolizing tendencies of the corporations and their consumerist politics of camera production.”²⁴ In his project carrying the same name, he creates a non-linear audiovisual diary with his self-made camera, equipped with a number of sensors that define the way, and timing of the audiovisual material being recorded,²⁵ something he describes as “autonomous photography” - photography that is being created independently from its maker, in its own ways. The project can be described as a diary, because the owner is meant to be carrying the camera with him at all times, but has no direct influence over the result. However, he can shape the way it works with his own behaviour – for instance by choosing the places he is at, or the way he presents the results. Kindernay has started his work on the device in 2012 and has been experimenting with various approaches and different ways of using the camera in different projects ever since. (Kindernay, 2016)

3. 4. 3 DIY in Photography Exhibiting Practices

When it comes to alternative approach in photography exhibiting practices, artists have fewer limits regarding the technique and methods, but face the challenge of being original in an art world that has seen an increasing number of approaches to exhibiting throughout the

²⁴ In Czech language original: “V průběhu experimentování a dlouhodobého užívání zmíněných aparátů jsem si uvědomil, jak důležité je sdílení programových kódů a DIY přístupů. „Hacking” dostupných technologií, jejich modulární ekvivalenty a rozsáhlé podpůrné komunity na internetu pomáhají umělcům a hudebníkům na cestách k rozličným druhům inovativních přístupů v umění. Todůležitou protíváhou k stále agresivnějším a monopolizujícím tendencím průmyslových korporací a jejich konzumní politice výroby aparátů.”

²⁵ The sensors are measuring information about light, temperature, humidity, sound, etc.

history. Artist can also work with emerging technologies such as virtual reality, or live streaming, which can completely transform the viewer's experience. DIY element in exhibiting and curating practices can allow emerging artists to produce an event they would normally lack funds for and, at the same time, gives them a better control over the way how the work is being exhibited. Artists in general can use DIY methods in exhibition practices to follow their personal visions and do not restrict them to be limited by professional production.

Creative duo **Hynek Alt & Aleksandra Vajd**, lecturers at the New Media department at FAMU school of photography and photography courses at UMPRUM, are the photographers whose work is defined by its intermediality – connecting media of photography with others to create a new form of media. They use the means of presentation and curating as one of the elements of intermediality of their work. The duo often questions the concept of photography media and its place in the world nowadays in their exhibitions, such as *Systems' Decomposition* held in Drdova gallery in 2014. (Buddeus, 2012)

K-Narf, a French-Australian artist who is in recent years based in different locations in Southeast Asia, has been experimenting with DIY approach to presenting photos, calling himself a photography maker rather than a photographer. He describes his work as neo-vintage. In his mobile exhibition that took place in Hong-Kong in 2015, he aimed to present the local culture of Hong Kong in the most relevant way considering the location. The exhibition was showing his observation of the city inside a tram, combining the observation in a photography form, with the real-life inspiration outside. The exhibition featured photographs taken with non-professional low-cost digital cameras and the artist was only using simple DIY tools, that can be cheaply purchased in the local stores, aiming to inspire the visitors to become makers too. (Hong Kong Tramways, 2015)

4. Research

In my research, I explore the connection between DIY and photography, specifically in the case of photography-related higher education, using the example of the photography related programmes at four universities in the Czech Republic. The aim of the research is to analyze the situation of DIY culture through the specific case of contemporary DIY photography. The main questions the research deals with are:

1. What is the motivation of photographers to apply DIY in photography practice?
2. To what extent is DIY present in contemporary photography?
3. What is the difference between approaches to DIY in analogue and digital photography?
4. How is DIY photography seen today?

This research supplements my theoretical research, especially the third chapter, DIY and Photography.

4.1 Methodology

I decided to base my research on in-depth interviewing of students and recent graduates of photography programmes at different Czech universities, as described later in section 4. 1. 3. I applied a mix of research methods, using both qualitative and quantitative research.

Opting for the method of **in-depth interviewing** I was able to **collect qualitative data**. I assumed that the topic of DIY might be difficult for others to understand and that results from questionnaires might therefore be misleading. The in-depth interviews allowed me to talk to the interviewees in an informal manner and understand both their work²⁶ and their stance towards the topic of DIY. Prior to collecting the interview material, I conducted two **pilot interviews** to help me create the structure of my questions, understand possible complications connected with conducting the actual research interviews and **create hypotheses**. After the pilot research, described in section 4. 1. 2, and defining hypotheses (section 4. 2) I started contacting my

²⁶ It is important for me to be familiar with the photographer's work in order to connect what he says with what he does, and to allow me to analyze their answers better. At the same time, I have not researched the artists' work upfront so as not to jump to conclusions before speaking to the person.

interviewees and conducting the interviews. I have personally transcribed the interviews from recordings with a selective protocol method.²⁷

Even though I work with qualitative data, I decided to use a **quantitative analysis** of my findings, using **coded answers**. This allowed me to come to more specific outcomes in connection with my hypotheses and, at the same time, **analyze questions of my interviews separately**, in order to use the qualitative method to arrive at conclusions which I would have missed if I had only focused on my hypotheses. These conclusions are included in section 4. 4, together with coded answer tables.

4. 1. 2 Pilot Interviews

To be able to successfully pursue my research, I decided to conduct two pilot interviews with two professional photographers working in different fields.²⁸ This helped me to prepare the interview questions and also to support and form my hypotheses. This decision helped me to see how valid my questions are for the actual research. The photographers were not chosen based on their association with the topic as I wanted to test the relevance of the DIY topic in contemporary (not necessarily experimental) photography. Firstly, I asked general questions – their focus in photography, common technology they use in their work, ways of presenting. Secondly, I asked questions directly related to DIY photography – what associations they have with DIY, how they see the differences between analogue and digital DIY, what experiences they have and what they would be interested in trying. I decided to present only a brief summary of the interviews, not their whole transcripts because the interviews are not part of my final research. Below, I present basic information about both of the photographers and a brief summary of the interviews.

Andrew Moore is a Scottish fashion photographer who specialises in digital black and white photography and experiments with various analogue technologies. In his practice, he does

²⁷ Selective protocol is a method that allows transcribing only relevant parts of interviews that are connected to the topic, leaving out the parts that are irrelevant. (Hendl, 2016 p. 210) This method of transcription is relevant to my research due to the broad topic I discussed with my interviewees. To avoid losing context, I include a short introduction to each of the interviews, explaining the artist's work and approach to photography, as well as specifics of the interview.

²⁸ One of the pilot interviewees is Czech, and one from the UK. I have selected two different nationalities in order to have a broader perspective on DIY perception, and so that I can formulate my questions as clearly as possible.

not really need to use any DIY, but appreciates the fine quality of analogue photography and develops most of the films at home. He also paints on his photographic prints and creates his own backdrops, and later digitalizes his work by scanning or photographing the prints (he mentions that if he paints on the prints, photographing works better for him than scanning because it creates better a “3D” feel to the photograph). In conclusion, he uses DIY techniques for practical reasons (developing films at home) and for aesthetic reasons (creating and adjusting photography equipment).

Anna Červinková, a Czech photographer, focuses on portraiture and her own personal photography projects, including analogue photography. She pointed out that she is developing analogue films herself, but once she graduates she does not plan to continue doing this²⁹ as it is time-consuming. She admits that DIY for her is now purely practical, and she does not see much value in it. When I asked her about DIY and what it means to her, she saw the topic as being largely connected with analogue films, and mentioned the collodion process and pinhole cameras. She explained that the topic was actually appealing to her in theory, but seems hard in practice (especially in digital photography). She mentions that analogue DIY seems more approachable to her since she is familiar with the processes that she is not forced to deal with in digital photography.

After the pilot interviews, I came to a conclusion that the people I am interviewing for the research need a more structured explanation of the definition of DIY and that I need to ask more direct questions in order to avoid confusion and not lead the respondents to subjective answers.³⁰

After considering the problems I encountered during the pilot interviews, I have support questions to ask if the interviewee was unsure about the meaning of the primary question. In the first question, “*What does DIY photography mean to you and what do you associate it with?*”, I would ask if they also connect DIY in photography with a particular artist. In the second question, “*When you think about DIY photography techniques in digital vs analogue, which one sounds more attractive to you?*”, if the interviewee was confused or could not imagine what one or the other option could be, I would describe examples of analogue and

²⁹ Photography students typically have access to darkroom facilities in their department.

³⁰ To avoid leading the interviewees to answers, I have not explained what is considered DIY method in Photography before the interview, which leads to certain inconsistencies in answers when compared as a whole sample.

digital photography DIY workshops to them and ask which one they would rather join and what the motivation for their answer would be, in order to give them a more specific idea. In the fourth question, “*How important is the process of photography-making to you? Do you connect the uniqueness of your work with form and to what extent?*”, if the interviewee was unsure, I would ask them directly about situations they have already addressed during the interview and ask them to talk more about this in relation to the importance of process and photography form.

4. 1. 3 Interviewee Sample

The final group of interviewees consisted of four FAMU students, one FAMU alumna, two UMRUM students, four UJEP students, two ITF students and one ITF alumna. In total ten of the interviewees were Czech, two Polish, one Russian, one Slovenian, one Mexican and one Swedish. The interviews were conducted in September and October 2017, either in person or via Skype.³¹ All of the interviews have been recorded and transcribed and can be found in the appendices. All interviewees were informed about the purpose of the interview, and agreed to its application in the thesis as well as the use of their name and selection of their portfolio.

As the theoretical part of the thesis suggests, the topic is very specific and according to my hypothesis will most likely not resonate with the majority of interviewees, however, I did not want to select the students/graduates based on their focus and work to ensure objectiveness in the interviewee sample. Therefore, I used the lists of students published on the university websites,³² or social media³³ to randomly choose my interviewees, contacting them via email or social networks. I interviewed the first people I got a positive reply from with the restriction to follow the proportions of the interviewee sample (keeping similar number of interviewees

³¹ The ITF program in Opava operates on a distant learning system, where students meet only a few times per year in person and many of them are based abroad, mostly in Poland.

³² The lists of students can be found on the following links:

FAMU students <https://foto.amu.cz/studenti/>, UMRUM <https://www.umprum.cz/web/cs/volne-umeni/fotografie>, UJEP <http://fud.ujep.cz/fotografie/>, ITF <http://www.itf.cz/index.php?clanek=21>.

³³ This was the case of UJEP and the programme held in English. After struggling to find a list on the website, I found a group on Facebook consisting of students of the programme called “Photography in English FUD UJEP 2017-2018”.

from each university, avoiding contacting students of the same studio when applicable,³⁴ and making sure to interview students from at least five countries).

4. 2 Formulating Hypotheses

Hypotheses for the research were defined based on the theoretical research and pilot interviews. In the section 4. 5, I validate the hypotheses based on the results of the coded answers from the interviews.

Hypothesis 1 - Photographers apply DIY methods in their practice for practical reasons.

I base this hypothesis on the presumption that photographers feel limited by the technologies they use and turn to DIY technologies to improve the techniques, both in their own personal style and when they need to use “hacking” to achieve something the technology does not allow them to do. In analogue specifically, I expect the students to have a motivation to apply DIY in their practice because of the non-individual approach employed by professional photo labs, financial reasons and in order to be in control of the process. Also, as the students of the university programmes are supposed to master analogue photography techniques, DIY can allow students to achieve better results. I base this assumption on my experience as a student of photography and the fact that Czech photography programmes still push students to gain knowledge about analogue processes and experiment with different analogue techniques.³⁵

³⁴ This is relevant mostly in the case of FAMU, where the students are in different studios, and taking more students for a studio such as intermedia could influence the overall results.

³⁵ As based on the modules, harmonograms and schedules for the four universities the interviewees attend/attended. (FAMU, 2017) (UMPRUM, 2017) (FUD UJEP, 2017) (ITF, 2017)

***Hypothesis 2** - Photographers are drawn to DIY because of its artistic value and to differ from the mainstream production.*

Nowadays, photography faces a challenge of mass production and art overload. Presentation of photographs in combination with DIY processes can be a method to distinguish a photographer's work from the mainstream production, using unorthodox methods and creating outstanding visual styles. In analogue photography, the use of alternative and DIY techniques allows photographers to take control of the processes and to pursue their personal visual style. Use of alternative methods in photography can also be a partial solution to the problem of originality in digital photography, as described in section 3. 1, especially if involving unorthodox printing methods.

***Hypothesis 3** - DIY techniques are more likely in analogue than digital, with digital DIY techniques being seen as more difficult to practice or less obtainable.*

Even though photographers nowadays are more likely to be surrounded by digital non-photography technologies than analogue ones, it is my belief that they still feel closer to analogue technology when it comes to photography, especially in the case of DIY. It is my expectation that the interviewees will see DIY digital photography as something too difficult for them to practice, even impossible for them to try, partially because of the focus of the hacker community on programmers and IT experts, as explained in 2. 4. Also, it is my presumption that the photography students might not feel welcome in such communities, or feel like they would lack the necessary expertise.

***Hypothesis 4** - Analogue DIY techniques are familiar to users because they are forced to use them since analogue photography is generally decreasing and getting more expensive.*

As mentioned before, analogue photography is still considered by most photography programmes in the Czech Republic to be the base for any photography technique, and therefore I believe that most of my interviewees will have a strong background in analogue practices, including work in the darkroom. I expect they would feel more comfortable to experiment in their familiar environment. Furthermore, as analogue photography is changing in nature in the digital age, certain aspects of it might become more expensive due to lower demand and might

push photographers, especially photography students, to choose to do more photography processes on their own. Another motivation for the photography students to do darkroom processes on their own could be the nonindividual approach in the photo labs, where the results can be seen as of unpredictable quality, or generic.

***Hypothesis 5** - Presenting behind the scenes photos of DIY photography processes can be seen as attractive content for photographer's presentation.*

I believe that the process as such can be interesting content for both the photographer and the viewer. Nowadays most of the photographers present their work on their social media profiles, blogs, or websites. Using DIY methods in their photography practice can, therefore, be an interesting novelty that enhances their portfolio and brings a different perspective to their work. This hypothesis is based on my personal experience from previous studies as well as researching the work and presentation of photographers using DIY methods in their practice.

4. 2. 1 Formulating Questions

I formulated the questions in accordance with my theoretical research. For the pilot interviews, I divided the questions into two sections, general photography-related and DIY-specific questions. After conducting the pilot interviews, however, I decided to leave out the general photography questions and instead to start every interview with an informal talk about the interviewee's photography work, serving as a basis for the introduction of the interviews. The DIY-specific questions were formulated in such a way that allows open answers and, at the same time, ensures that the interviewees do not repeat themselves. Also, with asking the same questions in the same order, I aimed to keep a structure for the later analysis of the answers.

The questions were also formulated in connection with the hypotheses. H1 and H2 are mostly connected with Q3, where interviewees are expected to talk about their experience with specific techniques and provide context for the techniques in their overall work. H3 is a mostly answered in Q6, focused specifically on DIY in analogue photography. H4 is connected to Q3 and Q6. H5 is expected to be addressed by the interviewees when generally talking about their work.

4. 4 Coding Interviews

In this chapter, I have coded the answers of all my respondents into keywords in order to present the patterns in the answers, make a comparison to the hypotheses, and draw conclusions. For transcripts of the interviews please see the appendices.

Question 1, “*What does DIY photography mean to you and what do you associate it with?*”

Table 1: coded answers for the question 1

I 1	DIY production, fanzines Miroslav Tichý
I 2	creating objects and installations for photoshoots Gregory Crewdson
I 3	DIY production Stanislav Petera
I 4	darkroom processes experimental techniques Jáchym Myslivec
I 5	Polaroid simple DIY setup Philippe Halsman Michal Batory
I 6	doing the whole process on her own
I 7	creating cameras from objects non-art photography experimental techniques
I 8	creating objects and installations for photoshoots Juno Calypso Weronika Gesicka
I 9	home processing analogue photography Miroslav Tichý
I 10	independence autonomy over work
I 11	internet environment - hacking, sharing replacing professional products darkroom processes
I 12	creating cameras creating objects and installations for photoshoots
I 13	darkroom processes flea market photography equipment improvisation Miroslav Tichý
I 14	darkroom processes experimental techniques home processing analogue photography
I 15	scrapbooks darkroom processes hands-on process

Based on the answers, the majority of associations people state when addressing the topic are analogue photography-related associations such as darkroom processes, experimental & alternative techniques and home-processed photography. An exception can be found in interview 11, where the interviewee stated that he connected DIY in photography with the internet environment; specifically hacking and sharing, as well as analogue processes. Darkroom processes are seen as DIY (five respondents), mostly due to the photographer's involvement in the process and the hands-on style of work. As T. Bonaventurová stated, "Working in a darkroom I was closer to DIY during my high school studies - I did all sorts of experiments - collages, painting with fixer, all sorts of stuff. It was all part of some search, a game". For many photographers, darkroom processes are something that they deeply connect with the basics of the photography medium.

Support functions using DIY in the photography field were mentioned in forms of DIY production, creating objects and installations for photoshoots, scrapbooks and the element of improvisation in photography practice. DIY production is seen as a process of self-publishing or self-curating, including tasks normally performed by professionals from other fields. Respondents also mentioned the element of independence and control over the production of their work.

When asked if they connect DIY in photography with a certain author, the only photographer mentioned more than once was Miroslav Tichý (three times). Other than him people seem to be connecting DIY photography works mostly with photographers they know on a personal basis, leading to an idea that these authors might not present the work as being DIY to the public, but reveal the process to people close to them, as Dominika Gesicka explains: *"I understand the term very literally - for instance my sister is a photographer too and she creates objects and installations that she takes photos of."*

Question 2, “*When you think about DIY photography techniques in digital vs analogue, which one sounds more attractive to you?*”

Table 2: coded answers for the question 2

I 1	analogue
I 2	both
I 3	digital
I 4	analogue
I 5	digital
I 6	analogue
I 7	digital
I 8	analogue
I 9	digital
I 10	analogue
I 11	digital
I 12	digital
I 13	neither
I 14	analogue
I 15	analogue

Answers to this question were equally distributed between analogue (seven answers) and digital (six answers), with one interviewee stating that both sound equally interesting (explaining that she sees options for analogue photography to be mixed with digital technologies and recognizing the limits of analogue photography due to financial demand). One regarded both options as equally uninteresting (favouring concept over process, not really interested in the technical aspects of photography).

The most common reasoning included the fact of not being technically-minded or due to lack of experience (six answers, four of them stating that DIY in analogue photography sounds more attractive). One interviewee pointed out that not seeing the photographs instantly in analogue photography was actually a plus to her, since she likes the slow work process.

Three interviewees talking in favour of DIY in digital photography regarded it as something new, all of them pointing out that their lack of knowledge in the field would actually be a plus for them in case of having an option to try both. One respondent stated that she would choose digital DIY, because she feels she would never achieve the perfection she expects in analogue. Another one explained that he feared that analogue DIY would make his work just like anybody else's (*"I think that if I enter analogue DIY I would just end up like most of the people. With digital, I think there are a lot of opportunities."*)

There was no pattern in this question in relation to different universities or based on the nationality of respondents, however, both of the recent alumni did not answer in favour of analogue (one stating digital and the other not being interested in either option).

Question 3, “*Have you tried any DIY techniques in both analogue and digital and if yes, can you please describe them? How often do you use these techniques (in a context of your work)?*”

Table 3: coded interviews for question 3

I 1	DIY production & distribution - fanzines and exhibitions
I 2	Camera Obscura darkroom processes - cyanotype, gellage one-pixel camera
I 3	darkroom processes - photograms self-taught Photoshop
I 4	Camera Obscura experiments
I 5	darkroom processes - cyanotype self-taught Photoshop in graphic design hands-on processes
I 6	Camera Obscura (made from Diana camera) experiments - multiple exposures, Van Dyke method
I 7	darkroom processes
I 8	minor adjustments of equipment - colour flash darkroom processes (experience with it, but not enjoying it)
I 9	darkroom processes - cyanotype
I 10	darkroom processes (if for previews)
I 11	darkroom processes experiments adjusting equipment
I 12	darkroom processes not interested in experiments minor adjustment of equipment - cable for digital medium format camera
I 13	darkroom processes - photograms home-made studio equipment
I 14	darkroom processes (started at university, before that using photo labs) combining virtual reality with traditional analogue photography
I 15	darkroom processes - photograms (using fire)

Darkroom processes are mentioned by majority of the interviewees (twelve), while the other three respondents indirectly state darkroom processes in their other answers, making it clear that they have experience with it as well. This might be due to the general focus on analogue photography in the Czech photography scene, including university photography

programmes.³⁶ D. Smodej stated that he felt like he could develop the films better than he would in a photo lab, where there is no personal approach to individual films, and that he had an opportunity to save money at the same time. Darkroom processes mentioned by interviewees include techniques such as cyanotype, gellage and photograms.

Digital techniques were rarely mentioned by respondents. E. Haust shared an experience from FAMU, where she was using a one-pixel camera and was very happy with the results, saying *"It was great, completely different atmosphere, it feels like an old analogue film, even though it is digital"*. Another respondent who included digital technologies in his experience was L. Novotný who combines traditional analogue techniques with virtual reality.

Three respondents listed an experience with constructing Camera Obscura, or transforming other cameras into one. T. Bonaventurová explains that she was experimenting with Camera Obscura during her high school photography studies, enjoying the playfulness of the technique. Only two interviewees mentioned trying to make any adjustments to the equipment they otherwise use.

With regards to DIY photography production, M. Pavlík talked about creating fanzines and forming a creative community through the process and V. Janů explained that most of her work was created in an improvised home environment, due to financial reasons. Two respondents mentioned self-taught photography support skills as part of their DIY photography experience, specifically learning how to use Photoshop and studio lighting.

³⁶ At least one respondent from UMPRUM, UJEP and ITF has stated that they conduct experiments or even basic developing in the darkroom because it is a task or they feel pushed by their tutors (I3, I5, I9).

Question 4, “*How important is the process of photography-making to you? Do you connect the uniqueness of your work with form and to what extent?*”

Table 4: coded interviews for question 4

I 1	form and content are both important they have to be in balance
I 2	ideas and atmosphere more important than the form and process of getting the picture
I 3	important stories behind the photography making the form is not separable from content
I 4	not very important idea how the final photograph should look like influences choice of technique
I 5	usually chooses digital to have options for postproduction content more important than form
I 6	important the element of a game it is important why an author chose a specific technique
I 7	very important depends on a concept aesthetic quality is important
I 8	in her work, it is important to do everything at photoshoot, not in postproduction in other people's works, it depends on various aspects
I 9	form and process choice is connected with concept
I 10	very important the technique can strengthen the message
I 11	process concept should not justify the work if explanation is necessary depends on how informed the audience is Barbara Probst - example of when the process and form is crucial
I 12	important - mostly uses analogue, in digital he would have to compromise
I 13	not very important if the work is based on experiment it is not interesting enough with another people's work not so important, how she feels is more important if the author chose analogue she is interested in the reasoning
I 14	in the past final photo was more important recently it is about questioning concept through the process of making with author people's work, it is important for him, but only to an extent
I 15	form and content are both important they have to be in balance

When asked about how important the form is in relation to content, most interviewees answered in favour of a balance of form and content, ensuring a balance of the final image (seven answers), the rest claimed that either form or content was more important to them (four answers each). Out of the four respondents who stated that process and the choice of technique were very important to them, M. Králíček stated that he felt like he would need to compromise if he switched from analogue to digital, because he would not be able to afford digital equipment

on the same level as he is used to in analogue, such as a medium format camera. L. Korečková considers the process and choice of technique and form to be one of the main elements of reading a photography, giving an example of using historical techniques with specific reasoning. K. Racon gave an example of a project where the choice of technique strengthens the message. The four answers that stand more on the content side can be summed up by E. Arambarri's statement: "In general, what you are saying is more important to me than how you are saying it." All of the respondents agreed that process and form are important too, but the content and concept is, to them, the main value of photography.

Question 5, “How do you perceive DIY technology in digital photography/digital technology in general?”

Table 5: coded interviews for question 5

I 1	experiments can support critical thinking important to understand how the technology works
I 2	important to understand how the technology works
I 3	important to understand how the technology works
I 4	probably important, but not to her personally DIY can lead to innovation
I 5	DIY can lead to innovation important to people not happy with the technology available on the market can lead to new ways of expression and more unique approach important when other people do it, not her personally
I 6	understands how to use it but not interested in developing
I 7	most of the technological advancements are DIY basis for possible professional production
I 8	important to experiment fun
I 9	hard to understand the options happy about the existing technical tools postproduction if adjustment needs to be made
I 10	hard to understand the options important when other people do it, not him personally expanding options
I 11	hard to understand the options interesting when combined with analogue techniques might be financially difficult
I 12	sees it as something that requires professional background happy about the existing technical tools
I 13	hobby DIY created conditions for home-made photography valid if it is the only way to achieve something old fashioned approach
I 14	interesting when combined with analogue techniques good form of presentation no desire to experiment
I 15	more relevant than ever can lead to new ways of expression and more unique approach important when other people do it, not her personally

The majority of my respondents found DIY in digital technologies important and relevant (nine), while several regarded the topic as more or less irrelevant, or uninteresting to them personally (six). Out of the group that finds DIY in digital technologies (DIY in DT) important and relevant, the most common answer was that DIY in DT can be important to understand how the technology works, followed by DIY in DT leading to new ways of expression and a more unique approach (two), and DIY in DT leading to innovation (two).

D. Smodej explains his view on DIY in DT and the difference between DIY in analogue and digital like this: *I think the whole thing is based on DIY culture but I think that the DIY digital culture is very different from before. Most of the technological advancements are DIY. Before in the pre-digital era, DIY for me was just not something that was that important for progress, it was more a subculture for the people to have fun with, or save money. In post-digital art especially and post-humanism, everything is based on DIY and maybe later it goes to professional production because the artist himself is not capable of doing something that well.*"

Four respondents have stated the importance of DIY in DT is important, but that they did not feel like practising it themselves, P. Åslund said: *"I think it is more relevant than ever, I think it is about finding your way around technology to make it work for you the way you want. For instance, I see how coding is important but also it is incredibly scary for me. I can feel the limits of digital technologies, but it has never really pushed me to get into it. I love when the other people do it, but it is difficult for me personally."*

Four respondents described the options they have in digital technologies as sufficient and stated that they did not see a way to improve, and that they were happy using the technology as it is. Even though just four respondents mentioned this directly, it reflects an overall approach hinted at by the majority of the respondents.

When looking at the answers that were sceptical towards the importance of DIY in DT, the majority of the answers express the view that the process of DIY in DT is not something of interest to the respondents, for reasons such as difficulty, need of professional background, or options being too difficult to understand. V. Janů claimed that she found the basic idea of DIY in DT a bit unprogressive in nature but valid if it is the only way to achieve something specific.

Question 6, “How do you perceive DIY technology in analogue photography?”

Table 6: coded interviews for question 6

I 1	important can lead to isolation important to understand how the technology works (including how the contemporary technology works)
I 2	not as important as in the past depends on photographer important to understand how the technology works
I 3	it is important, but not more than in any other field
I 4	not as important as in the past highlighting importance of DIY in history of photography (example of Daguerre) returning to traditional processes
I 5	not as important as in the past feels the popularity of DIY in analogue is connected with nostalgia today everyone is a photographer analogue DIY give feeling of something extra
I 6	not expecting any large inventions good way to learn something new retro differentiating from digital photography chemical processes fun
I 7	in art, the only option how analogue photography can be relevant
I 8	important needs justification important to understand how the technology works
I 9	important to understand how the technology works
I 10	not as important as DIY in digital photography
I 11	elements of game, chance and mistake hands-on process financial reasons if DIY is too technical it can lose some thinking process
I 12	more subjective in comparison with digital more personal and adjusted not necessarily relevant to every photographer
I 13	obsessive style of work relevant if it stimulates creativity of author not necessarily relevant to every photographer
I 14	relevant to all history of analogue photography (important for innovation) limitation by material as a good thing to understand the process
I 15	important hands-on process can lead to new ways of expression and more unique approach feels limited because of not being "technically-minded"

When comparing answers to the same question regarding digital photography and technologies, respondents were more in favour of the importance of DIY in analogue photography, most of them stating that DIY in analogue photography (DIY in AP) is important in order to understand how the technology works (nine answers). As an example of why DIY in AP is important, D. Smodej states *"I would say that analogue photography can only live that*

way, in art. Otherwise, it is boring. By itself, it doesn't have any quality that digital photography wouldn't have. It is only interesting because of the process and the process itself is boring because it has been used a million times. But if you make it complicated and you make something new out of it, which is DIY, then it could be still interesting."

Four respondents were unsure about the importance and relevance of DIY in AP, explaining that in their opinion it is important and relevant, but not necessarily to every photographer, depending on their style of work. M. Köhlerová also mentioned that DIY in AP is important, but no more than it is in any other field. T. Bonaventurová highlighted the importance of revisiting traditional techniques and processes, but finds DIY in AP generally not as relevant as it was in the past.

Only two interviewees answered in a way that can be considered skeptical towards DIY in AP. E. Arambarri explained that he sees it as important in the past and has a feeling that the people tend to choose DIY in AP because of a sense of nostalgia and an aim to add something extra to their work. K. Racon stated that DIY in AP was not as important as in DP, and thinks we have already seen the limits of what can be done in AP.

4. 5 Comparison of Results and Hypotheses

In this section, I draw conclusions from the questions and answers of my interviewees. Also, I look at the results and how they compare to the hypotheses formulated earlier. Taking into consideration the nature of my interviews I base the hypotheses' validation on the coded answers and go to the full-text interviews when more context is necessary to come to a conclusion. The system for proving hypotheses is explained in section 4. 2.

For **H1**, "*photographers apply DIY methods in their practice for practical reasons*", I used mainly the conclusions from the third question, focused on responding photographers' experience with DIY and its place in the context of their work, but also answers to other questions when relevant. As mentioned in the analysis of the results of this question, most of the respondents stated that they have some experience with darkroom processes. D. Smodej specifically mentions that he develops his own films because he is more satisfied with the results in comparison to using a photo lab. (Interview 7) Four respondents answered in a way that strongly agrees with H1, seven as agreeing to an extent and four respondents did not touch

the subject of practicality in connection with DIY at all. Overall, with fifteen points I have marked H1 as *proven*.

H2, “*photographers are drawn to DIY because of its artistic value and to differ from the mainstream production*”, is similarly to H1 mostly related to the third question, but also to the fourth question, regarding the importance of process and form in the medium of photography. L. Korečková, for example, mentions her projects using alternative methods, such as pinhole camera or reloading films to achieve multiple exposures, pointing out the importance of the element of chance in her work when using such methods. (Interview 6) This can be seen as a common pattern in the interviews; respondents did often mention alternative processes and highlighted the uncertain results as a necessary part of the process. Six interviews were strongly in agreement with H2, and another six in some agreement, while two did not mention the artistic value in connection with DIY at all. With eighteen points H2 can be considered *proven*.

H3, “*DIY techniques are more likely in analogue than digital, with digital DIY techniques being seen as more difficult to practice or less obtainable*” deals with the specific situation of DIY in analogue photography, mostly concerning answers to the sixth question, “*How do you perceive DIY technology in analogue photography?*”. In this case, six interviewees responded strongly in favour of H3, two were in some agreement, and seven people did not voice stronger confidence in analogue photography DIY over digital. With fourteen points, this hypothesis is *disproven*. With regards to this hypothesis, six people specifically stated that they would rather experiment with DIY in digital photography, and three mentioned the fact that the lack of knowledge and experience in the digital technology field would actually be a plus to them because they would learn something new.

H4 and H5 turned out to be quite irrelevant to my interviewees, this can possibly be because of the limited interviewee sample I spoke to as well as the way the interviews were conducted – the nature of open answers in connection with the topic caused the interviewees mostly not to touch the subject of the two hypotheses.

For **H4**, “*Analogue DIY techniques are familiar to users because they are forced to use them since analogue photography is generally decreasing and getting more expensive*”, this has been to some extent acknowledged only by three interviewees, while twelve did not mention finances as a reason to do DIY at all. One of the interviewees who mentioned finances as a motivation, D. Smodej, stated: “*I developed photos in a darkroom - first I did it because it was*

fun, now I do it mostly because it is cheaper and I usually do it better than the people I pay.” (Interview 7) With only three points, this hypothesis is **disproven**.

H5, “*Presenting behind the scenes photos of DIY photography processes can be seen as attractive content for photographer’s presentation,*” has been to some extent mentioned by only one respondent. M. Köhlerová described how the process of making is important in her photography practice through the stories that lead her to the final photograph and how she feels limited when trying to explain the story in an exhibition space. (Interview 3) This hypothesis is **disproven**. It has been problematic to address this hypothesis during the interviews. I believed that a direct question would lead the interviewee to answer in favour of it and I wanted to avoid that, which eventually caused the interviewees to not mention the topic at all.

4. 6 Conclusion and Reflection on the Research

Despite the research conclusions resulting from the hypotheses, the interviews suggest that photography students have much stronger experience with hands-on processes, and to some extent DIY processes, in analogue photography in comparison to digital. Based on my research, this can be caused by multiple factors, such as larger exposure of the technicality of analogue processes to photography students,³⁷ digital divide in maker culture,³⁸ and overall satisfaction with digital tools that can be purchased.³⁹

The majority of the respondents did not know how to approach the idea of DIY in digital technologies and they were not well aware of the makerspaces options in their location or did not connect the maker & hacker culture with the medium of photography. They did, however, express a wish to try DIY in digital photography, if they have a chance to – they just never have and feel like they cannot start without assistance. An important aspect of the approach by the majority of my interviewees is their overall satisfaction with the tools they can work with. For

³⁷ As explained in section 4. 2, H4.

³⁸ Digital divide and the issue of digital literacy is meant in a different reasoning behind the uncertainties photography students might be experiencing when joining a maker or hacker community, as the technological aspect of digital technologies is not incorporated in the study programmes related to photography.

³⁹ As described in section 4. 4, question 5 “How do you perceive DIY technology in digital photography/digital technology in general?”

that reason, the motivation that resonated with the photographers in the early years of photography, as well as, for example, in socialist Czechoslovakia, to improve their tools, simply does not apply in the digital world of the twenty-first century.

With regards to the differences between the programmes my interviewees came from, whether they were students or alumni, and which year they studied at the moment there was no significant change in approach to the topic. Comparing the results of Czech versus foreign students also did not show any significant differences when it comes to DIY photography. The conducted research in its current form has many limitations, especially due to the number of interviewed people. In its current stage, it can be considered as a pilot research for a larger scale of research, with a larger interviewee sample.

5. Conclusion

There were two main goals addressed in this thesis. The primary aim of the thesis was to analyze the state of DIY culture as it relates to the specific case of contemporary DIY photography through research focused on photography students and alumni at Czech photography programmes. In the research, I presented in-depth interviews with students and alumni of Czech university photography programmes and used the coded answers to prove or disprove hypotheses and arrive to conclusions. The research has revealed that, in many cases, the problem lies in the low chance of photographers to be attracted to apply DIY methods in their practice – quite often due to the reason of not being technically minded, or that they just never thought about digital DIY options in their practice. There is a huge difference in approach when comparing attitudes towards analogue and digital photography, since photographers nowadays feel more satisfied with the digital technology that is already available to them, as-is, in an affordable price range. Also, they feel more insecure about experimenting with digital technologies in general, since they do not see a space for improvement they could make to the technology. Analogue photography is also seen as more playful and has a retro atmosphere to many, something that is exotic to the population of digital natives.

The secondary aim was to provide a theoretical background to the topic of DIY photography. In a broader sense, I aimed to provide an overview of how the medium of photography and DIY culture co-existed in history, and what the relationship is between them in the world of contemporary photography, reflecting the research questions described earlier in the thesis.⁴⁰ In the theoretical part, I have provided a brief overview of the history of photography, DIY culture and its connection to different cultures and subcultures, and the connection of DIY and photography from the artistic, technical and production point of view. As described in the section 2. 2. 2, the hacker culture could possibly form a bridge between art and DIY in digital technologies, which is into an extent true, but currently prevalently in areas other than photography, such as intermedia studies. Also, in the context of the Czech Republic, there is an emerging scene of hacker and maker spaces - this year (2018) the international Maker Faire will be held in Prague for the first time, perhaps promising broader cooperation between the world of technology and the world of art. As is evident in the research, many photographers

⁴⁰ The main research questions as defined in the beginning of the thesis are: what is the motivation of photographers to apply DIY in photography practice, to what extent is DIY present in contemporary photography, what is the difference between approaches to DIY in analogue and digital photography, and how is DIY photography seen today.

are interested in experimenting with the technology, but feel like they have no opportunity to start and feel like it is too demanding and they do not have the necessary education background, knowledge, and equipment. Connecting the hacking community with the art one could provide photographers with motivation and the technical support they need, while the hacking communities could profit from the cooperation by way of new conceptual thinking and a different perspective on the process of making.

On the contemporary photography scene, smartphones and other multifunctional devices are becoming more and more important. As it gets easier to produce technically good high-quality photographs, it can be argued that the hacking of technology and the skill to adjust or repair a camera is not necessary anymore – the subject matter, the content, the message is what matters, the rest can be edited with a few clicks later. On the other hand, it can also be seen as if the personal touch in regards to technology is, thanks to the extreme rise of the quality of affordable photography tools, the key that DIY can provide, and therefore represent the added value that can differentiate the photographer from the mainstream production.

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Figures

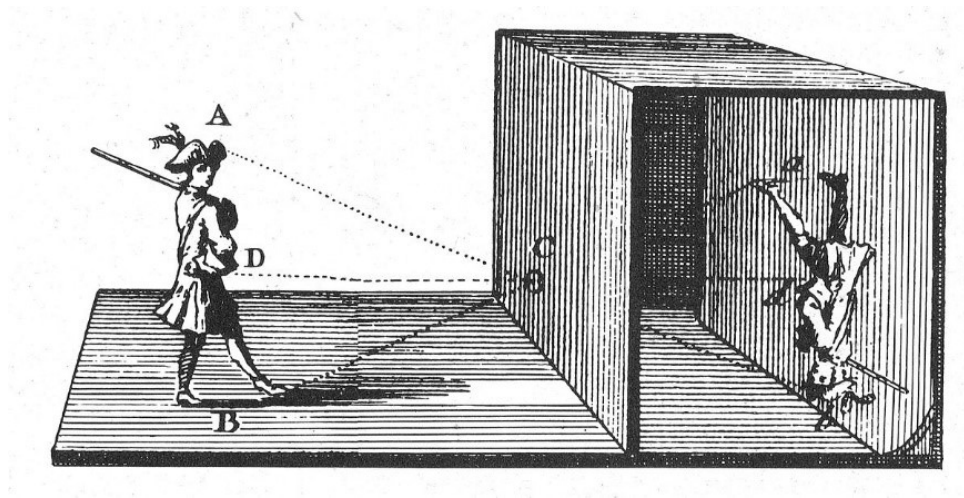


Figure 1

Unknown. *Illustration of the camera obscura principle.* [online] 2016. [cited: 21 8 2017] Retrieved from https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:001_a01_camera_obscura_abrazolas.jpg.



Figure 2

Norris, Yaz. *Enduring Light.* [online] 2014. [cited: 3 12 2017] Retrieved from <http://www.yaznorrisphotography.co.uk/Projects/Enduring-Light-1>.



Figure 3

Albanese, Matthew. *Burning Room*. [online] [cited: 3 12 2017] Retrieved from <http://www.matthewalbanese.com/gallery/burning-room>.

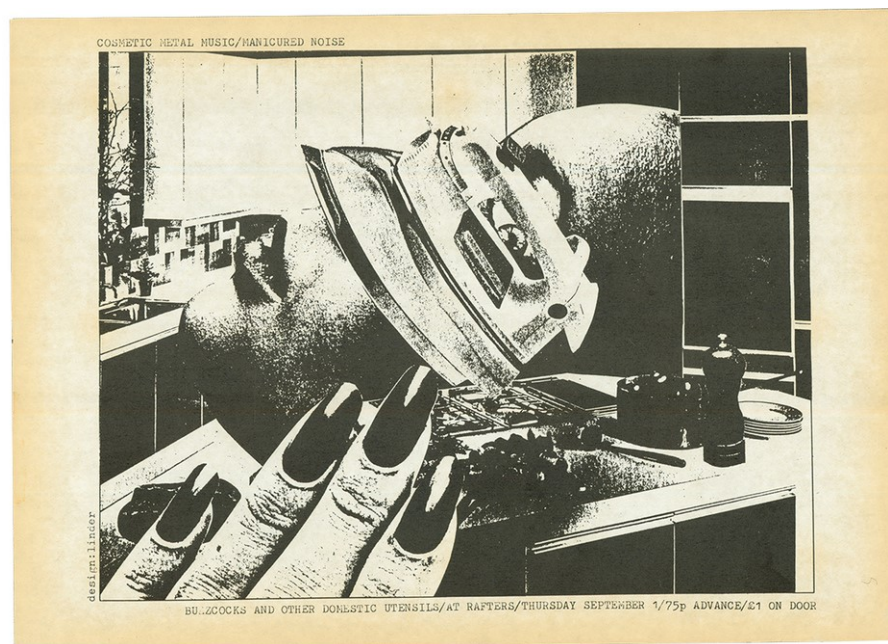


Figure 4

Sterling, Linder. *Buzzcocks and Other Domestic Utensils*. [online] [cited: 7 12 2017] Retrieved from <http://www.booo-hooray.com/linder-sterling-and-jon-savage-the-secret-public/>.



Figure 5

Bauxman, Roman. *Miroslav Tichý and his homemade telescope camera.* [Online] 2016. [cited 20 11 2017.] Retrieved from <https://www.tresbohemes.com/2016/03/tarzan-retired-the-work-of-miroslav-tichy/>.

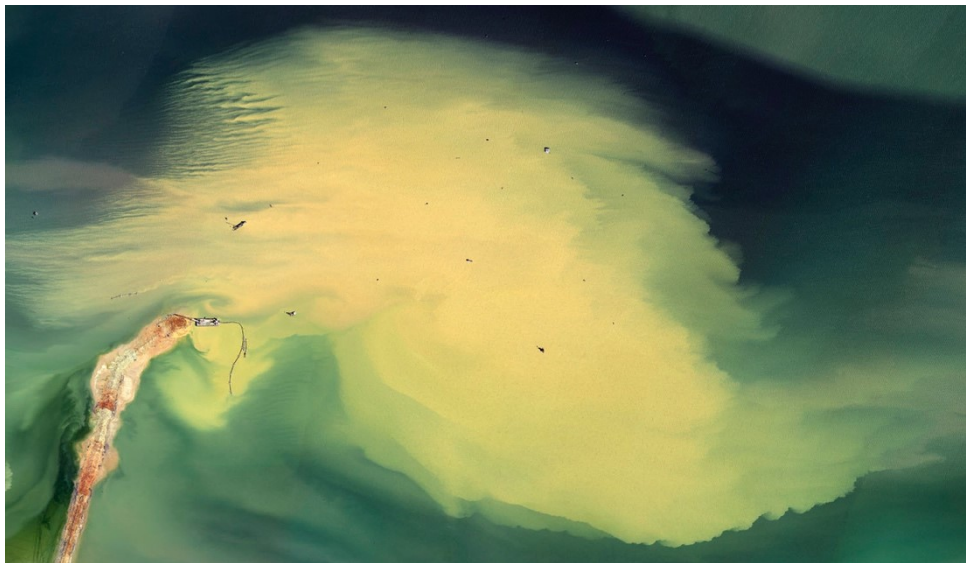


Figure 6

Henner, Mishka. *Cedar Point Oild Field, Harris County, Texas.* [online] [cited: 16 1 2018] Retrieved from <https://mishkahenner.com/Fields>.



Figure 7

Wild, Rebecca. *The Vulture, Liquid Fluids*. [online] [cited 19 1 2018] Retrieved from <http://scanography.tk>.



Figure 8

Lowy, Benjamin. *Iraq Perspectives II*. [online] [cited: 3 12 2017] Retrieved from <http://www.benlowy.com/iraq--perspectives/iraq--perspectives-ii/>.

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Abbreviations and Terminology

Abbreviations Used in the Text

AP *Analogue Photography*

DIY *do it yourself*

DP *Digital Photography*

DSLR *digital single-lens reflex camera*

FAMU *Film and TV School of Academy of Performing Arts in Prague*

FUD UJEP *Faculty of Art and Design at Jan Evangelista Purkyně University in Ústí nad Labem*

ITF *Institute of Creative Photography in Opava*

UMPRUM *Academy of Arts, Architecture and Design in Prague*

Terminology

Collotype *photomechanical printing process using light-sensitive gelatin coated plate* (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2007)

Gellage *photography method of collage and use of gellatine in the printing process, invented by Michal Macků* (Macků, 2014)

Stereoscope *device that enables in-depth view of the scene made from two photographs, creating a 3D effect* (The Turing Institute, 1996)

Appendices

Table

Table 7: Comparison of results and hypotheses

	H 1	H2	H3	H4	H5
I 1	1	1	1	0	0
I 2	2	1	0	0	0
I 3	1	0	0	0	1
I 4	0	1	2	0	0
I 5	1	2	0	0	0
I 6	0	2	2	0	0
I 7	2	2	0	1	0
I 8	1	1	2	0	0
I 9	0	0	0	0	0
I 10	2	1	2	0	0
I 11	1	2	0	1	0
I 12	1	1	0	0	0
I 13	2	0	1	1	0
I 14	0	2	2	0	0
I 15	1	2	2	0	0
	15	18	14	3	1

Interviews

All interviews have been recorded in September and October 2017, either in Prague or via Skype, as described with each interview. All interviewees were informed about the use of the interviews for this thesis and have approved the final transcripts. If the interviewees referred to a specific photograph, or the photography style is important to be shown in context of the interview, examples from their portfolio is presented in the end of their interview.

Some interviews were conducted in Czech and some in English language and the transcripts are not translated. Coded answers for all interviews are in English and can be found in section 4. 4.

List of Interviewees:

1. Matěj Pavlík
2. Elizabeth Haust
3. Mia Köhlerová
4. Tereza Bonaventurová
5. Eduardo Barrera Arambarri
6. Lucie Korečková
7. Dusan Smodej
8. Dominika Gesicka
9. Anna-Marie Berdychová
10. Krzysztof Racon
11. Jáchym Myslivec
12. Michal Králíček
13. Valentýna Janů
14. Lukáš Novotný
15. Petronella Åslund

Interview 1

Matěj Pavlík

Recorded in Prague, 20th of September 2017

UMPRUM Master Student

Matěj Pavlík focuses mainly on documentary photography and video-making. He also works with fiction-related documentary subject matter and combines conceptual art with documentary. Before settling into digital photography and video editing, he used to develop and enlarge his own photos in darkrooms at home and at university, as well as creating fanzines and other projects. His works go through only minimal edits – no large-scale retouching, with a preference for exhibitions and screenings over online presentations (with certain exceptions, such as a digital-only book he authored that outlines the role of Vimeo and YouTube in video-making).

Co pro Tebe DIY fotografie znamená? Spojíš si to s něčím konkrétním?

Třeba mě napadají fanziny, pro mě tam ten DIY proces byl v té distribuci. Většinou jsme to dělali ve vícero lidech, občas já sám, taková výstava v knížce. Je to levné, docela nízkonákladové, třeba 60 kusů, potom se to distribuuje třeba na koncertech nebo jinými kanály, třeba to někomu předáš. Tohle jsme dělali na základce, nedávno jsem si chtěli znovu najít cestu, jak se k tomu vrátit a proč. Vydali jsme fanzin Pavlovi Sterecovi. Dali jsme tomu ISBN, aby to mohlo být i v knihovnách a museli to kategorizovat, zajímalo nás, jakým způsobem to knihovna přijme. Byly tam fotky důlních šachet, doufali jsme, že to třeba zařadí do dělnictví, ale bohužel, zařadili to jen do umění. Potom mě napadá třeba Miroslav Tichý, ten dělal pro svoje vlastní potěšení sám foťáky.

Když přemýšlíš o DIY fotografických technikách v digitální fotografii ve srovnání s analogovou, která je pro Tebe atraktivnější?

Analog pro mě byl vždycky takovou archivní prací, tohle pro mě bylo až donedávna důležité, že je to práce se záznamem mého pohybu, nemůžu se vrátit zpátky. U digitálu můžu naopak měnit hodně. Digitální technologie jsou pro mě snadno přístupné a ovladatelné, proto bych si možná radši zkusil experiment s analogem, přece jenom jsou to většinou nové informace, skrz staré médium.

**Vyzkoušel jsi nějaké DIY v analogu, nebo v digitálu a pokud ano, můžeš to popsat?
V kontextu Tvé práce, jak často používáš tyto techniky?**

Jak jsem říkal, vytvářel jsem fanziny. Dávalo to dohromady lidi, kteří by se jinak dohromady nedali. Nahrazovalo nám to školu, dříve než jsem začal studovat. Na UMPRUMce jsem se v prváku s lidmi pokoušel vést blog, chtěli jsme něco podobného vytvořit, z toho vznikali společné fanziny a výstavy, byla to pro nás komunikace vnitřní i navenek.

Jak důležitý je pro Tebe proces výroby fotografie? Máš pocit, že forma je určitým způsobem součástí unikátnosti Tvé práce a do jaké míry?

Využíval jsem většinou formu tak, abych se dobral k tomu, co chci říct. Občas experimenty s formou můžou překvapit a můžeš se dostat k něčemu jinému, můžeš se vzdálit prvotnímu předpokladu, může to být souběžné - téma objevuješ současně s formou. Jde to ruku v ruce.

Jak vnímáš DIY v digitální fotografii a digitální technologii obecně?

Těžko říci, co DIY znamená v digitálních technologiích - myslím si, že by se mělo s digitálními technologiemi určitě experimentovat, většinou se to bere jako dané a dostáváš návod, jakým způsobem to používat. To experimentování tě může dovést k určité kritičnosti. Všichni používáme Adobe programy, přijali jsme je za vlastní a přitom to spravuje nějaká firma, korporace. Myslím, že ten experiment může přivést k poznání, jak technologie funguje, hlavně když dnes nemáme od technologie odstup, je naší součástí. Vždycky mě fascinovalo programování a programovací jazyk, ale nemám žádnou znalost a vždycky jsem spíše používal nějakou "krabičku", naposledy termokameru, ale nijak jsem jí neměnil.

Jak vnímáš DIY v analogové fotografii?

Je to pro mě důležité, může se to stát až nesnesitelným. Když jdeš do fotolabu, občas je to hrozný, občas naopak, myslím si, že je důležité mít kontakt s vyvoláváním fotek, máš prostor pro náhodu. Na škole jsme měli kurz v Technickém muzeu, vyvolávali jsme tam úplné bizáry a zkoumali archaické metody a asi to pro mě v něčem bylo zajímavé, poznat historii toho média. Zároveň si myslím, že zpětně dostaneš kontakt s materiálem, můžeš u toho víc experimentovat, měnit to, to u toho digitálu mizí, i ta náhoda. Pro mě jsou důležité procesní smyslové vjemy, kupuješ třeba chemikálie, ono to nějak smrdí. U digitálu tam pro mě mizí hranice, analog je materiálnější, můžeš se přes to dostat k lepšímu poznání současných technologií a poznat, co je materiálem u digitální fotografie, která má v sobě taky nějakou materialitu, která se dá uchopit.

Interview 2

Elizabeth Haust

Recorded via Skype, 13th of October 2017

FAMU Undergraduate Student

Elizabeth Haust is a photography student originally from Russia, currently residing in Prague and Paris. She describes her work as “photography of emotions” and emphasizes the importance of using static photography media to inspire feelings in the viewer. She would rather create the set for her photographs than document an already made scene. She describes her genre as “too fashion-like for art schools and too artsy for fashion magazines” and uses both digital and analogue cameras, with no significant edits in post-production. She likes to present her works at exhibitions but sometimes doesn't like the atmosphere - when presenting online she feels like she can communicate more easily with her audience.

Co pro Tebe DIY fotografie znamená? Spojíš si to s něčím konkrétním?

Pro mě je fotografie v podstatě celá o tom, to že zmáčknou čudlík a vyfotím fotku je pro mě jediná věc, kterou sama nevytvářím. Vytvářím si i kostýmy, nebo kombinuju ze second-handů. Nikdy to nebylo tak, že by někdo přišel už s hotovým kostýmem, já to vyfotila a konec. Je to vždycky o tom, že něco vytvářím. Hodně lidí fotí jenom něco, co už je, což je pro mě návrat k dokumentu - jako opak mě napadá ze známých fotografů Gregory Crewdson, o kterém ještě před 5 leti nikdo nechtěl říct, že je to umění a který vytváří všechno pro svoje fotografie.

Když přemýšlíš o DIY fotografických technikách v digitální fotografii ve srovnání s analogovou, která je pro Tebe atraktivnější?

Já si to nedokážu právě v digitální fotografii vůbec představit, jak bych vytvořila třeba přístroj. Je to pro mě stejně zajímavé, je tam milion možností, jak i posunout analogovou fotografii do digitální, proto v tom vidím nějaký smysl. Teď třeba začali prodávat Kodak PRO, nebo jsem to aspoň slyšela, ten stejný film na který fotili v osmdesátkách, geniální barvy, ideální červená, a já si myslím, že ho přestali prodávat, protože to bylo strašně náročné na vyvolávání, citlivé na jednotlivé odstíny, ne jako u černobílých fotek. Mě to třeba před pěti lety strašně lákalo, koupit si nějaký takový film, ale jediné místo, kde to šlo vyvolat bylo v Americe a vyšlo to velmi draze - často prostě ten analog je velmi finančně náročný. Nemůžeš prostě fotit na stříbro, když na to nemáš peníze.

Vyzkoušela jsi nějaké DIY v analogu, nebo v digitálu a pokud ano, můžeš to popsat? V kontextu Tvé práce, jak často používáš tyto techniky?

Na FAMU jsme zkoušeli Cameru Obscuro, geláž, kyanotopie a tak dále. Vytvářet nové přístroje, to jsem nikdy nezkoušela. Pro mě je zajímavější co na té fotce je, než jak je udělaná. Ale pokud to bude zapadat do atmosféry, které se snažím docílit, tak právě to budu používat. Teď jsem třeba fotila na FAMU do jednoho časopisu na foťák, který byl jenom jednopixelový, to už prakticky neexistuje, ani na mobilu, ale je to super, je to úplně jiná atmosféra, působí to jako starý film, přestože je to digitál.

Jak důležitý je pro Tebe proces výroby fotografie? Máš pocit, že forma je určitým způsobem součástí unikátnosti Tvé práce a do jaké míry?

Jak jsem řekla, pokud potřebuješ, aby to vypadalo jako z osmdesátek, tak potřebuješ nějaký starý film nebo fotoaparát, ale pokud to není na snímku tak důležité, nebo je tam něco jiného zásadního, tak spíš fotíš digitálně nebo na lepší analogový fotoaparát.

Jak vnímáš DIY v digitální fotografii a digitální technologii obecně?

Moc tomuhle nerozumím, je jasné, že pokud jde o digitální fotku, tak jí sama vyfotím a sama upravím, ale do foťáku nebudu zasahovat, vím jak to funguje, ale myslím si, že můžeš pouze ovlivnit, že tam třeba dáš filtr, nebo tam něco nastavíš, dáš tam specifický objektiv. Je to důležité, jestli vůbec chápeš co děláš - co fotíš, čím fotíš, jak fotíš; ale to si myslím, že je spíše obecné.

Jak vnímáš DIY v analogové fotografii?

Nemyslím si, že by to mělo dnes velký význam, ale záleží na každém zvlášť. Pokud chceš fotit na analogový fotoaparát a nevíš, jak funguje, anebo jakou máš nastavit expozici, tak je jasné, že to nevyjde dobře. Pokud jo, může to vyjít skvěle. Proto si myslím, že pokud fotíš na analog, musíš vědět přesně co děláš, aby to vypadalo dobře, ale to je stejné u digitálu.

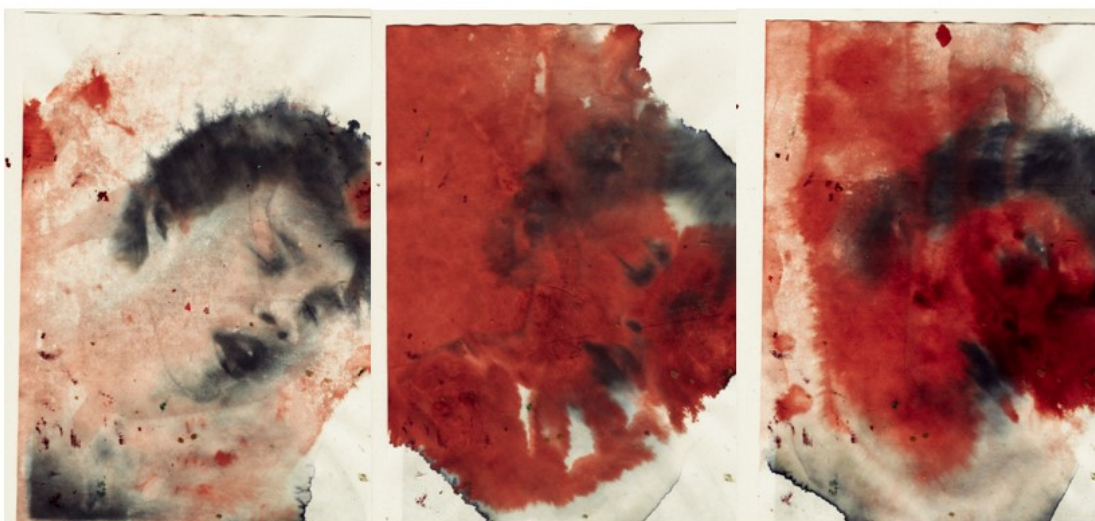


Figure 9

Haust, Elizabeth. *Destruction*. [Online] [cited: 26 11 2017.] Retrieved from <http://cargocollective.com/ElizabethHaust>.

Interview 3

Mia Köhlerová

Recorded in Prague, 17th of October 2017

ITF Alumna

Mia Köhlerová is a recent graduate of ITF in Opava. She describes her work as a magical and mystical way towards a meditation, finding answers to her past and sometimes as a scary intuitive line between truth and reality. Her portfolio mostly consists of staged portraits, especially children's - she aims to profile herself as child fashion photographer. Mia started with analogue photography, but quickly switched to digital and stayed. She uses Photoshop and other Adobe programs for postproduction. She mostly exhibits via ITF, but made a number of exhibitions in the past, as well as photo festivals; online she presents her photos on Instagram, Facebook and her own website.

Co pro Tebe DIY fotografie znamená? Spojíš si to s něčím konkrétním?

Představím si pod tím to, že je člověk schopen zajistit celou produkci sám, možná bych do DIY přidala i to, když člověk pracuje se známými, nepotřebuje žádný velký tým. Někdo fotí

způsobem, že třeba nenastaví ani světlo, jenom cvakne foťákem, ale studenti většinou dělají všechno sami. Napadá mě k tomu třeba Stanislav Petera, kvůli tomu, jakým způsobem začínal.

Když přemýšlíš o DIY fotografických technikách v digitální fotografii ve srovnání s analogovou, která je pro Tebe atraktivnější?

Jako student fotografie projdeš oběma, ať chceš nebo nechceš. Jelikož se analogu nevěnuju, bylo by pro mě zajímavější zkusit digitální DIY. Já si myslím, že nejsem schopná udělat úplně dokonale ostrou a barevnou fotku na analog a mám ráda perfektní obraz - jsem strašný detailista a vadily by mi tam ty malé špíny. Kdybych měla velkou deskovou kameru, tak to bych klidně fotila na analog, ale musela bych se to znova učit.

Vyzkoušela jsi nějaké DIY v analogu, nebo v digitálu a pokud ano, můžeš to popsat? V kontextu Tvé práce, jak často používáš tyto techniky?

Vyzkoušela jsem všechny možné typy analogových foťáků, vyvolávala jsem si sama, dělala jsem fotogramy, různé experimenty ve fotokomoře, včetně ručních retuší. Dělali jsme spoustu věcí, ale nikdy jsem se tomu nevěnovala sama od sebe, spíše to byl vždycky školní úkol. Potom už jsem se k tomu úplně nevracela. V digitálu jsem se učila sama ve Photoshopu, jak svítit. Když se mi nechce moc upravovat ve Photoshopu, tak použiju akci z předchozí fotografie a občas vznikne něco zajímavého, protože u každé fotky to zafunguje trochu jinak. Baví mě ta hra s tím.

Jak důležitý je pro Tebe proces výroby fotografie? Máš pocit, že forma je určitým způsobem součástí unikátnosti Tvé práce a do jaké míry?

Je to pro mě důležité, jsou fotky, které mám ráda, protože znám silný příběh, který za nimi stojí. Na druhou stranu zjistíš časem, že bys musela ten příběh k fotkám dopsat, aby ho lidi znali. Mám třeba fotku mrtvého netopýra s roztaženými křídly, to je netopýr, kterého jsem získala od jedné paní, která se tomu věnuje. Ten netopýr umřel, protože nemohl létat a já jsem měla pocit, že tou fotkou jsem mu dala post život. To ale musíš někomu odvykládat, na výstavě by bylo potřeba si s každým sednout. Je to spíš na knížku. Co se týká formy, ta podle mě dodává fotografii hloubku, to se nedá oddělit od obsahu a příběhu. Vidíš třeba, že na té fotce prostě něco je, i když neznáš příběh - teď se mi třeba stalo v galerii, že mi jeden sochař řekl, že neví, co na mé fotce je, ale že tam něco prostě je. A to je přesně to, lidi to nějak cítí, i když to fyzicky nevidí.

Jak vnímáš DIY v digitální fotografii a digitální technologii obecně?

Já si myslím, že je potřeba s DIY začít, všechno si vyzkoušet, vědět co je všechno potřeba pro ten skvělý finální snímek. Dělal jsem asistentku jednomu fotografovi a to mi pomohlo porozumět tomu, co všechno je potřeba umět. Posouvá to dál.

Jak vnímáš DIY v analogové fotografii?

Já v podstatě používala analogovou fotografii sama jenom na dokument, nebyla tam žádná produkce k tomu, byly to jenom takové cestovní momentky. Myslím si, že je důležité ovládat DIY v analogové fotografii, ale stejně tak v jakémkoli jiném oboru.

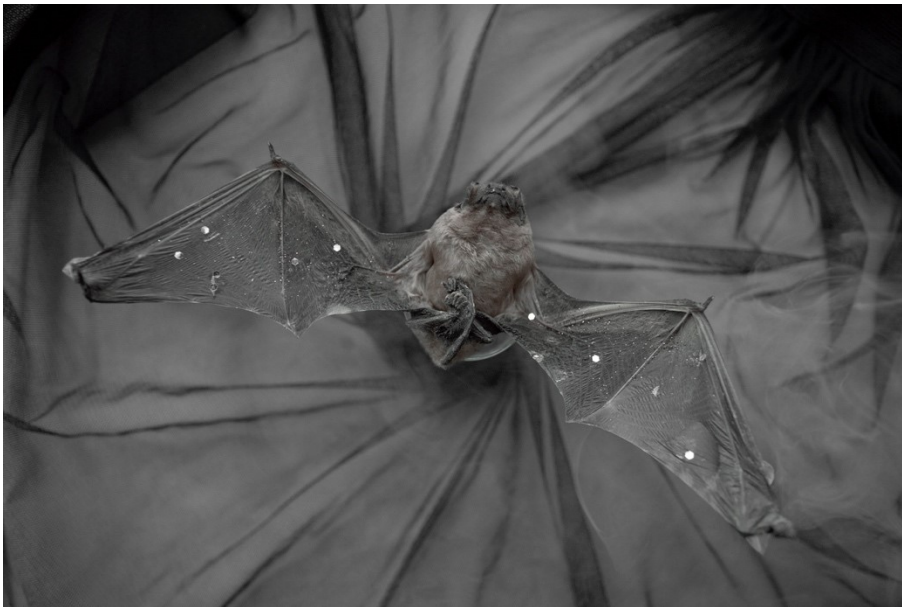


Figure 10

Köhlerová, Mia. *Iluí Neshama*. [Online] [cited: 26 11 2017.] Retrieved from <http://www.miakohlerova.com/>.

Interview 4

Tereza Bonaventurová

Recorded in Prague, 17th of October 2017

FUD Master Student

Tereza Bonaventurová creates conceptual projects inspired by the city and urban spaces, she looks for absurd and bizarre situations in architecture and urbanism. Usually, she uses analogue, now starting with Hasselblad camera (medium format), but also uses digital, depending on the situation. She is retouching her photographs in Photoshop and “correcting the reality”, especially in the urban settings. She prefers to show her photos in galleries or public spaces, and also has her profile on Tumblr, but does not use it very much.

Co pro Tebe DIY fotografie znamená? Spojíš si to s něčím konkrétním?

První, co mě napadá je práce v temné komoře, k tomu jsem se asi nejvíc blížila na střední fotografické škole, kdy jsem dělala všechny možné experimenty v temné komoře - koláže, malování ustalovačem, všechno možné. Bylo to v rámci nějakého hledání, hry. Napadá mě spolužák Jáchym Myslivec, ten dělá “fotogeologii”, vytvořil si kabinet, kde má “fotosediment” všech fotografií za devět semestrů. Potom mě napadají fotografové, co se věnují kyanotopiím a jiným experimentům, kteří se vrací jakoby na začátek.

Když přemýšlíš o DIY fotografických technikách v digitální fotografii ve srovnání s analogovou, která je pro Tebe atraktivnější?

Přemýšlím, co to vlastně v digitální fotografii - je to třeba vlastní vymaskování fotky? – To mě určitě více láká analog, ale já prostě digitálu a všem digitálním médiím moc nerozumím. Ne do takové hloubky, abych s tím potom byla schopná pracovat dál. Nejsem ani moc šikovná manuálně, ale pořád je mi to bližší udělat něco ručně, než třeba v postprodukci. Vytvářet něco od základu v digitálu mi přijde náročné, nemám na to hlavu ani ruce, moc mě to neláká.

Vyzkoušela jsi nějaké DIY v analogu, nebo v digitálu a pokud ano, můžeš to popsat? V kontextu Tvé práce, jak často používáš tyto techniky?

Vyráběla jsem si Cameru Obscuru, někdy kdy mi bylo třeba 15, zkoušela jsem více takových DIY experimentů. Byla to hra, bavilo mě to - já v tu dobu už studovala střední školu

s fotografickým zaměřením, tam jsme měli nějaké úkoly a já si tohle dělala stranou, takové surrealistické projekty. Také jsem měla pocit, že je to nějaká opravdová tvorba. Dneska už to pro mě důležité není. U přijímaček do Ústí jsem měla i nějaké tyhle starší projekty a bylo mi řečeno, že bych se měla věnovat něčemu současnějšímu. Takže je to v tuhle chvíli spíš taková hezká vzpomínka.

Jak důležitý je pro Tebe proces výroby fotografie? Máš pocit, že forma je určitým způsobem součástí unikátnosti Tvé práce a do jaké míry?

Moc to pro mě důležité není, jde mi spíš o to, co na té fotce je. Je samozřejmě důležité jak je to adjustované, jak to vizuálně vypadá, ale to jakým způsobem se to vyfotilo/zaznamenalo na film, nebo čip, to je mi jedno. Jsem takový ten typ fotografa, kterého foťáky ani moc nezajímají, ani nevím, jaké mám číslo Hasselbladu. Vždycky mám ale představu, jak má fotka vypadat a přizpůsobuji tomu proces výroby.

Jak vnímáš DIY v digitální fotografii a digitální technologii obecně?

Moc jsem nad tím nikdy nepřemýšlela, ale důležité to asi je, aby lidé technologie jenom tupě nepoužívali. Pro někoho to asi význam má, ale pro mě ne, já jsem jenom uživatel. Obecně si ale myslím, že ta schopnost potřeba, aby bylo možné si s tím hrát, posouvat technologie dál, podmaňovat si a upravovat přístroje.

Jak vnímáš DIY v analogové fotografii?

U analogu si myslím, že už to dneska není tak zásadní, ovládat DIY techniky. Ale na počátku to byli právě tihle lidi, kteří umožňovali vývoj fotografie - třeba Daguerre. Navíc si myslím, že je důležité se vracet k tradičním postupům.



Figure 11

Bonaventurová, Tereza. *In Search of Lost Space.* [online] [cited: 26 11 2017.] Retrieved from <http://terezabonaventura.tumblr.com>.

Interview 5

Eduardo Barrera Arambarri

Recorded via Skype, 20th of October, 2017

FUD Master Student

Eduardo Barrera Arambarri is a Mexican graphic designer currently studying Photography and Time-Based media at FUD. He is especially focused on posters for cultural institutions and also their relation to the public spaces. He describes that he joined the course because his interest in time-based visual creating, but he also aims to develop his photography skills.

What does DIY photography mean to you and what do you associate it with?

You know, I am a bit older so for me DIY photography it really means instant photography and this type of technology. I also prefer simple do it yourself image making, just a simple tripod, daylight, no big setup. In regards to artists, I really admire Philippe Halsman - he was pushing the limit of what you can do with the photos, with surrealism and at the same time he was, of course, a very professional photographer. He would not stop and say: "This is what I can do with my camera.", he really explored the limits of what can be done. I would also mention Michal Batory, he is a graphic designer and most of his posters are photographic or photo-montages. He told me he used to do the photos himself and now he is hiring someone to do it for him.

When you think about DIY photography techniques in digital vs analogue, which one sounds more attractive to you?

For me definitely digital. I know there is a beauty and a nostalgia about using an analogue, but for me, I just do not have time to build a camera or even to develop films.

Have you tried any DIY techniques in both analogue and digital and if yes, can you please describe them? How often do you use these techniques (in the context of your work)?

In graphic design you can draw, or cut paper, or create an object, we do a lot of DIY because we try to find images that are not there in real life, we have to create them. I would not think about building a camera from scratch, but for three years I have been doing analogue

photography for my studies in Mexico. I even had a dark room in my parents' house, to do photography homework. Now we have to do cyanotypes for our studies and it is an obligatory assignment for the semester, but I only do it because I have to. I learned Photoshop myself when I was learning, there were no tutorials.

How important is the process of photography-making to you? Do you connect the uniqueness of your work with form and to what extent?

Unless it is something really specific, I use digital and it is important for me to have full coverage, to avoid repeating the photoshoot. Because sometimes with commercial photography, I do not know in advance how exactly should the result look like, so I like to have good resolution and lots of shots to have a lot of material. In general, what you are saying is for me more important than how you are saying it.

How do you perceive DIY technology in digital photography/digital technology in general?

For me, it is really important that people try to innovate, find ways to express themselves. I agree with someone who is not happy with the commercial options and is looking for a way to make new visual languages. Visual languages from the beginnings of time are always DIY. I think innovation is super important, especially now in a time when everyone strives to do everything as simply as possible. If we stay and keep using what we have, we will eventually all be the same. I am not a developer, but I really admire people who develop things, I think that is what makes the world advanced.

How do you perceive DIY technology in analogue photography?

I think we have seen everything, or at least most of it. Now there is a trend to go back, because of nostalgia, because it is cool, because it is hipster, I don't know... The experience is what makes the difference - people want to have the feeling again that they are actually in charge of making the picture, they are involved in the process. In a world where everyone constantly takes mobile pictures and makes them look good, or decent at least, with applications, photographers feel like they need to do something more professional.

Interview 6

Lucie Korečková

Recorded in Prague, 22nd of October 2017

FUD Master Student

Lucie Korečková practices both commercial work (portraits, weddings) and her personal projects. She mostly uses digital cameras, but also experiments with analogue cameras, such as Diana camera for her abstract works. She does not edit her photos more than she considers necessary and uses Lightroom and Photoshop. She communicates her work via social media and likes to exhibit her photos when it comes to personal projects. She also enjoys curating.

Co pro Tebe DIY fotografie znamená? Spojíš si to s něčím konkrétním?

Asi dělat si co nejvíce věci sám. Od vymyšlení konceptu až po tisk, zvládnout celý proces.

Když přemýšlíš o DIY fotografických technikách v digitální fotografii ve srovnání s analogovou, která je pro Tebe atraktivnější?

Nemám preferenci. Zvolím vždycky to, co se mi zrovna v dané situaci hodí. Kdybych s tím měla vysloveně experimentovat, tak určitě analog - digitálními technologiím nerozumím, umím to využívat, ale neumím se o to starat a řešit opravy. Když se mi třeba stane něco s autem, hned volám ostatním, co mám dělat, nejsem vůbec technický typ.

Vyzkoušela jsi nějaké DIY v analogu, nebo v digitálu a pokud ano, můžeš to popsat? V kontextu Tvé práce, jak často používáš tyto techniky?

Dělala jsem třeba jeden projekt, kde jsem používala dírkovou kameru přetvořenou z fotoaparátu Diana, sundala jsem z toho objektiv a byla to jednoduchá dírková komora. Zaměřila jsem se na charakterové profily (sangvinik, melancholik, choleric, flegmatik) a u každého tohoto profilu existuje charakteristika. Já jsem to pojala tak, že jsem pomocí baterky kreslila, jak na mě jednotlivé povahy působí. Potom jsem oslovila několik lidí a poprosila je, aby mi abstraktně nakreslili sebe a ty kresby jsem naskenovala a převedla do vektorů. Nakonec jsem skombinovala grafiku s fotografiemi. Původně jsem chtěla použít sítotisk, ale z finančních důvodů jsem z toho vycouvala. Potom jsem dělala jeden projekt, kde jsem pomocí toho stejného

fotoaparátu dělala několikanásobné expozice. často jsem to fotila s velkým odstupem, líbil se mi tam element náhody a překvapení. Také jsem pracovala s lomografickým fotoaparátem, na který se vejde 72 snímků, ty snímky jsou maličké. Takto jsem fotila na brigádě při prodeji zmrzliny, fotila jsem špínu na talířích a vznikaly z toho takové abstraktní obrazy, vyvolala jsem to Van Dyke metodou. Potom jsem z toho udělala knihu propojenou s hudbou, dávala jsem tam poznámky, kam přesně to v rámci skladby zapadá.

Jak důležitý je pro Tebe proces výroby fotografie? Máš pocit, že forma je určitým způsobem součástí unikátnosti Tvé práce a do jaké míry?

Pro mě je to důležitá část, je to určitá hra. Pro mě je důležité, proč si autor danou techniku vybral, mělo by to mít nějaký důvod. Pro mě je to jeden z určujících faktorů, jak dílo číst. Třeba pokud dělám fotografii historickými technikami, tak to k něčemu odkazuje.

Jak vnímáš DIY v digitální fotografii a digitální technologii obecně?

Já se dokážu s digitálními technologiemi naučit, ale rozhodně nebudu nikdy pracovat na jejich vývoji, ani mě to neláká. To je oblast, která je pro mě pasé. Pro někoho je to nepochopitelné, ale když jsem si kupovala foťák, vrátila jsem ho, protože mi prostě neseděl do ruky. Musí to být dobrý fotoaparát, ale nejdůležitější pro mě je, abych se s tím přístrojem sžila.

Jak vnímáš DIY v analogové fotografii?

Nečekám nějaké průlomové objevy, ale myslím si, že je to dobrý způsob, jak zkusit něco nového a něco sdělit. Pokud to někoho baví, tak je to super, něco ho to naučí. Vidím to jako takové retro, vymanění se z digitálu. Někoho zajímá, jak se ta technika vyvíjela, někdo chce vysloveně pracovat s chemií a pro někoho je to prostě zábava.

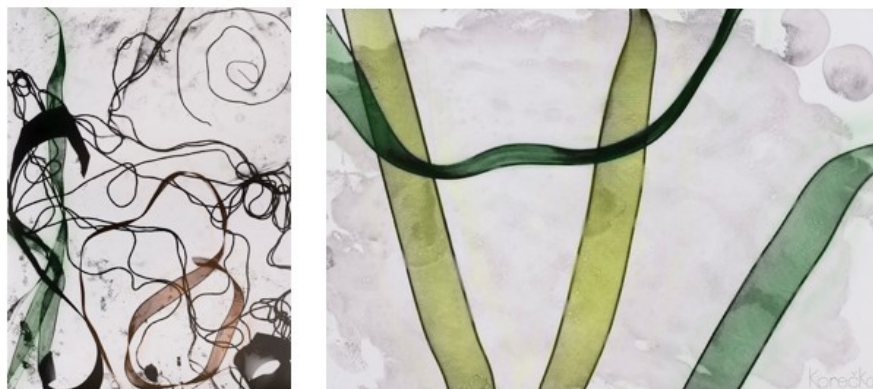


Figure 12

Korečková, Lucie. *Photograms*. Retrieved from [online] [cited: 26 11 2017.] <http://www.babakuk.com/koreckova.php>.

Interview 7

Dusan Smodej

Recorded in Prague, 20th of October 2017

FAMU Undergraduate Student

Dusan Smodej is a Slovenian photography student but does not consider himself to be a photographer but rather a visual artist. He is the managing director of Fotopub, photographic festival in Novo mesto in Slovenia and work as a producer of multiple art projects. He usually does not publish his work online, because he sees it more like a physical work and also often exhibits in non-gallery spaces.

What does DIY photography mean to you and what do you associate it with?

I remember some artists from Hong-Kong they did a project combining DIY and photography, creating cameras and photo machines from random objects. Also, I remember a movie from Slovenia about people who were making cameras from potato cans. It was not really art, just people having fun. That is what I feel about DIY photography - usually it is done by non-art people. It is quite rarely represented nicely in fine art. I have a friend who takes a piece of paper and keeps scanning and printing it until it gets colourful.

When you think about DIY photography techniques in digital vs analogue, which one sounds more attractive to you?

Digital, definitely. I think that if I enter analogue DIY I would just end up like most of the people. With digital, I think there are a lot of opportunities. Of course, I do not have the skills or technical knowledge to do anything like this, but I also like to collaborate with others. I have a friend who is developing software for someone else and the project is about living in a body of another person for a month in virtual reality. So, he is making a helmet with a lot of little cameras attached to it.

Have you tried any DIY techniques in both analogue and digital and if yes, can you please describe them? How often do you use these techniques (in a context of your work)?

Not really. I developed photos in a darkroom - first I did it because it was fun, now I do it mostly because it is cheaper and I usually do it better than the people I pay.

How important is the process of photography-making to you? Do you connect the uniqueness of your work with form and to what extent?

It depends on a concept. For me the process is very important - the concepts deal a lot with the process. But if I see a traditional photo on the wall, I do not care at all. If the concept doesn't need the process, I don't care. For instance, with art I have at home - the concept is important, but without a strong aesthetic notion, I just would not look at it all day.

How do you perceive DIY technology in digital photography/digital technology in general?

I think the whole thing is based on DIY culture but I think that the DIY digital culture is very different from before. Most of the technological advancements are DIY. Before in the pre-digital era DIY for me was just not something that was that important for progress, it was more a subculture for the people to have fun with, or save money. In post-digital art, especially, and post-humanism everything basis on DIY and maybe later it goes to a professional production because the artist himself is not capable of doing something that well.

How do you perceive DIY technology in analogue photography?

I would say that analogue photography can only live that way, in art. Otherwise, it is boring. Itself it doesn't have any quality that digital photography wouldn't have. It is only interesting because of the process and the process itself is boring because it has been used million times. But if you make it complicated and you make something new out of it, that is DIY, then it could be still interesting.

Interview 8

Dominika Gesicka

Recorded via Skype, 23rd October 2017

ITF Undergraduate Student

Dominika Gesicka is a Polish photographer studying in Opava. Her projects are very diverse and she does not like to limit her work to only one genre. She uses both digital and analogue techniques depending on the project. She publishes her work online and also exhibits in galleries. She is a member of People You May Know Polish photography collective.

What does DIY photography mean to you and what do you associate it with?

I am not sure if I understand what DIY in photography could be, I am not sure if it relates to my work. I understand the term very literally - for instance my sister is a photographer too and she creates objects and installations that she takes photos of. In my project, I was using colour flash to a camera. When thinking about photographers, I would mention Juno Calypso and probably my sister. She is buying old photos and editing them in Photoshop in a very special and unique way.

When do you think about DIY photography techniques in digital vs analogue, which one sounds more attractive to you?

Analogue. I like the quality of the image but also, I like the process of work with analogue - you cannot see the results straight away.

Have you tried any DIY techniques in both analogue and digital and if yes, can you please describe them? How often do you use these techniques (in a context of your work)?

In the project with the colourful flash, I was experimenting with different colours. It was initially just for fun, but it gave me some nice results. I think it was playful, I did not know what the result will look like. I also don't feel like I have the kind of imagination to imagine what I can do in Photoshop afterwards. I also developed photos in the darkroom, but probably every photographer born before the nineties did - if I am honest, I do not like to develop pictures myself. I find it boring and I am impatient.

How important is the process of photography-making to you? Do you connect the uniqueness of your work with form and to what extent?

In my work, for instance, with the colour effects, I tried to achieve all the effects during the photoshoot. I am not adding it in Photoshop. But for instance, it is a completely different story with my sister's work and I must say I really appreciate her work.

How do you perceive DIY technology in digital photography/digital technology in general?

I think it is important and can be fun. I have never tried any hacking, but now I got some ideas. It is always good to try new things and experiment, especially when you don't know what will be the result.

How do you perceive DIY technology in analogue photography?

I think it is important, but also tricky. I like for instance pinhole camera, but it needs to be used for some reason. In general, I think it depends on the photographer, everyone can find their way of working. Also, I think it is important to know the basis of process, so it is important to know how the camera and darkroom work.



Figure 13

Gesicka, Dominika. *This is not a Real Life.* [online] [cited: 26 11 2017] Retrieved from <http://www.dominikagesicka.com/index.php?/projects/this-is-not-real-life-on-going/>.

Interview 9

Anna-Marie Berdychová

Recorded in Prague, 25th of October 2017

UMPRUM Undergraduate Student

Anna-Marie Berdychová works on her personal projects and experiments with various techniques. She uses both digital and analogue camera and does not publish her photos on internet - she waits until she will be more confident about her focus in photography, for now she prefers discussing her work offline.

Co pro Tebe DIY fotografie znamená? Spojíš si to s něčím konkrétním?

Napadne mě třeba práce Miroslava Tichého, protože si sám vytvářel fotoaparáty ze zbytkových materiálů. Potom obecně doba před více než třiceti lety, kdy bylo běžné, že si každá rodina podomácku vyvolávala fotky.

Když přemýšlíš o DIY fotografických technikách v digitální fotografii ve srovnání s analogovou, která je pro Tebe atraktivnější?

To nedovedu říct, mám to stejně. Radši bych si asi vyzkoušela digitální DIY, protože s tím nemám zkušenost a bylo by to pro mě něco nového.

Vyzkoušela jsi nějaké DIY v analogu, nebo v digitálu a pokud ano, můžeš to popsat? V kontextu Tvé práce, jak často používáš tyto techniky?

Já mám ten pojem spojený s alternativními procesy, k tomu jsem zatím cestu nenašla. Ve škole jsem zkoušela kyanotypii, ale i tam jsem se částečně spoléhala na rady ostatních. Sama vyvolávám fotografie v černobílém procesu, studovala jsem fotografii už na střední škole, takže to mám docela zažité.

Jak důležitý je pro Tebe proces výroby fotografie? Máš pocit, že forma je určitým způsobem součástí unikátnosti Tvé práce a do jaké míry?

To hodně záleží na tom, jak to v té práci je reprezentováno. Když zpracovávám téma, tak se až později rozhoduji jakou techniku využiji, ale vždycky to souvisí s tématem projektu.

Jak vnímáš DIY v digitální fotografii a digitální technologii obecně?

Upřímně si pod tím nic moc nepředstavím. Přijde mi, že u digitální fotografie mám už teď možností hodně, necítím, že by mě něco omezovalo. Co potřebuji změnit, mohu změnit v postprodukcii.

Jak vnímáš DIY v analogové fotografii?

Pokud tomu člověk dobře rozumí, tak lépe chápe, jak to má ovládat.

Interview 10

Krzysztof Racon

Recorded via Skype, 25th of October 2017

ITF Undergraduate Student

Krzysztof Racon is a Polish photographer studying in Opava. He mainly describes his interest in photography as social documentary. He uses both digital and analogue cameras, including medium format if it fits the project aspiration. He is interested in doing exhibitions as well as online publication, where he feels he can talk to a larger audience.

What does DIY photography mean to you and what do you associate it with?

The first thing that comes to my mind is how independent you can get from other people when creating your work. In analogue, for instance, you don't see your work straight away and maybe some of the photographs you are not so proud of when you go through the whole process of developing and enlarging on your own, you are in control and nobody else can see it. For me, DIY is in a sense not losing autonomy over my own work.

When do you think about DIY photography techniques in digital vs analogue, which one sounds more attractive to you?

I would explore specific techniques connected with large format camera. Generally speaking, both are interesting but analogue sounds like safer choice since I understand the technique better.

Have you tried any DIY techniques in both analogue and digital and if yes, can you please describe them? How often do you use these techniques (in a context of your work)?

To some extent I had, but there are fields that I outsource, that I can possibly cover on my own. In analogue, I have been developing black and white films on my own, but later I opted for a good photo lab to do both developing and scanning because I was struggling with it. Usually, I did it myself if it was just for preview, but I looked for professionals if it was for an exhibition. Other than this I feel like the technique I use serves me well and I don't need to adjust it.

How important is the process of photography-making to you? Do you connect the uniqueness of your work with form and to what extent?

Of course, the choice of process and tool is important. It is crucial to know how you expect the final visual effect to look like. I remember a project from Congo, the project was using colours in photography development process and for me, that is an example when the technique is important in the concept, even though it is not the main message. In examples like this, the technique can strengthen what I want to say.

How do you perceive DIY technology in digital photography/digital technology in general?

To be honest, I don't feel like I understand it well enough to work with it. It is inspiring to me when the other people do it but I don't really feel like doing it myself. I think it expands the options for what photography could be.

How do you perceive DIY technology in analogue photography?

I have the impression that we have seen limits to how much impact can we have, in comparison to digital where we are still exploring that.

Interview 11

Jáchym Myslivec

Recorded in Prague, 26th of October 2017

FUD Master Student

Jáchym Myslivec is student of FUD. He describes his work as a visual work affected by his photography studies. For him the specific of photography in art is that it often is both an art and commerce. He describes the difference between exhibiting work in galleries and on the internet in the way how the attention is divided.

Co pro Tebe DIY fotografie znamená? Spojíš si to s něčím konkrétním?

Spojím si to s tématem hackerství, internetovým prostředím, sdílením a obcházením běžného produktu nebo vizuálního zisku. Třeba u černobílé, ručně zvětšované, fotografie by se to dalo považovat také za DIY, ale ta technologie je známá, tak nevím, zda se to tam přímo řadí.

Když přemýšlíš o DIY fotografických technikách v digitální fotografii ve srovnání s analogovou, která je pro Tebe atraktivnější?

Já se v digitální sféře moc nepohybuji, ale na druhou stranu, kdybych si mohl zkusit experiment a byly by pro to podmínky, tak bych si radši zkusil digitál, právě proto, že tomu nerozumím.

Vyzkoušel jsi nějaké DIY v analogu, nebo v digitálu a pokud ano, můžeš to popsat? V kontextu Tvé práce, jak často používáš tyto techniky?

Poměrně často pracuju v temné komoře, ani mi nejde o tom, aby to bylo vše skvěle podle parametrů, naopak se snažím do toho procesu vstupovat. Jednou jsem třeba měl zadání portrét, ale vyšla mi z toho krajina. Vyšlo to tak, protože jsem místo toho abych normálně zvětšoval, nanášel chemikálie na tělo a tiskl pomocí ustalovače a vývojky. Reakcí na světlo vznikaly krajiny, které vypadaly trochu jako japonská kaligrafie. Vyvolávám ručně i barevnou fotografii.

Další projekt, co mě napadá, byl kamarádův. Pomáhal jsem mu s bakalářkou a bylo potřeba změnit přístroj, který k tomu používal - změnili jsme to na ruční pohon.

Jak důležitý je pro Tebe proces výroby fotografie? Máš pocit, že forma je určitým způsobem součástí unikátnosti Tvé práce a do jaké míry?

Obecně mi nepřijde vhodné, když koncepce obhajuje dílo do té míry, že potřebuji znát obhajobu, abych byl schopen vnímat to dílo. Samozřejmě u některých odvětví výtvarného umění je to důležité, ale mám pocit, že se to dneska přetočilo a je samozřejmostí, že se ke každému dílu píše stať. Jinak mi přijde důležité, jak vzdělané je publikum. Pro někoho, kdo v životě nezvětšoval, bude zajímavá černobílá zvětšenina už jenom kvůli tomu, že je to černobílá zvětšenina. Napadá mě projekt Barbary Probst, kdy autorka snímala fotky stejného místa různými technologiemi, tam to samozřejmě význam má, ale musím to sám rozpoznat a musí to to dílo někam posouvat.

Jak vnímáš DIY v digitální fotografii a digitální technologii obecně?

Jsem pořád zmatený, co to v digitálu znamená, představuji si nějaké hacklaby a napojení na umění. Napadá mě k tomu ještě jeden projekt z USA, kde vydali manuál pro DIY převádění archivů s 16mm snímky do digitálu. I to je pro mě vlastně nedosažitelné, za prvé tu takový archiv není, za druhé je to i s tím DIY pořád hodně finančně náročné.

Jak vnímáš DIY v analogové fotografii?

Nikdy jsem neuvažoval o tom, že bych to někde sdílel, proces výroby je pro mě důležitý, ale necítím potřebu to publikovat. Jde mi o hru, oceňuji, když do práce vstoupí náhoda nebo chyba. Líbí se mi, že temná komora vlastně funguje podle vlastních zákonů. Důležité je pro mě hodně to, že si na to člověk na všechno šáhne. Důležité jsou i finanční důvody, ale není to to hlavní. Občas, když vidím hodně technologické DIY procesy v analogu, tak v tom jsem schopný identifikovat jenom to, co na té fotce je, je to ochuzené o určité uvažování nad rámeček toho technologického procesu.

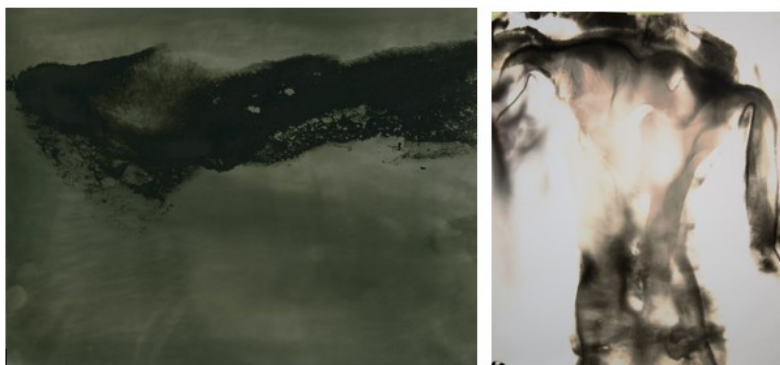


Figure 14

Myslivec, Jáchym. *Untitled.*

[online] [cited: 26 11 2017] Retrieved from <http://fud.ujep.cz/fotografie/portfolio/jachym-myslivec/>.

Interview 12

Michal Králíček

Recorded in Prague, 28th of October 2017

UMPRUM Undergraduate Student

Michal Králíček doesn't define his work as one genre and experiment with different techniques, including non-photography ones. He aims to get as many impulses from the studies and it is important to him to capture feeling in his work and also experiments with different approaches to fashion photography.

Co pro Tebe DIY fotografie znamená? Spojíš si to s něčím konkrétním?

Vyrobít si foťák. Dále mě napadá propojení s uměním, třeba vyrobení objektu, ale to nevím, jestli se tam dá zařadit. Přímo k fotce mě napadá ještě třeba modifikace papíru, ale to bych asi nenazýval přímo DIY.

Když přemýšlíš o DIY fotografických technikách v digitální fotografii ve srovnání s analogovou, která je pro Tebe atraktivnější?

Možná paradoxně radši digitální, protože je to pro mě hůře dosažitelné, lákají mě věci, u kterých na počátku nevím, jak je udělat.

Vyzkoušel jsi nějaké DIY v analogu, nebo v digitálu a pokud ano, můžeš to popsat? V kontextu Tvé práce, jak často používáš tyto techniky?

Mě třeba vyrábět něco od základu, nebo zkoušení experimentálních technik (jako třeba piktorialismus), nikdy tolik nebavilo. Vůbec se mi nelíbí výstupy, které jsem z toho viděl. Ten samotný proces by mě nebavil, když bych si představil, že to ve finále nebude dobré. Vyvolávám v temné komoře a nazvětšovávám, pokud mám čas. Jednou jsem si objednal kabel k foťáku a musel si ho ořezat, aby se tam vešel, ale nevyšlo to úplně dobře.

Jak důležitý je pro Tebe proces výroby fotografie? Máš pocit, že forma je určitým způsobem součástí unikátnosti Tvé práce a do jaké míry?

Já fotím hlavně na analog, u digitálu mám problém s kompromisy - abych s tím byl spokojený, potřeboval bych třeba digitální středofórmát, a to je strašně drahé.

Jak vnímáš DIY v digitální fotografii a digitální technologii obecně?

Vidím v tom inženýrství a další profesionální postupy, vnímám to jako něco, kde člověk musí rozumět danému odvětví. Navíc mi ty technologie takto přijdou tak dokonalé, že v tuhle chvíli nevím, co bych tam zlepšoval.

Jak vnímáš DIY v analogové fotografii?

V porovnání s digitálem se mi tam zdá, že člověk má větší dávku subjektivity ve svojí práci, je to osobitější, přizpůsobenější. Je to ale podle mě každého volba, jestli se tomu bude věnovat, nebo ne.

Interview 13

Valentýna Janů

Recorded in Prague, 30th of October 2017

FAMU Alumna

Valentýna Janů uses her photography background in combination with multimedia art. She is alumna of photography at FAMU and now continues with her studies in intermedia programme at AVU. She uses both analogue and digital cameras in her photography practice and often combines photography with other art forms.

Co pro Tebe DIY fotografie znamená? Spojíš si to s něčím konkrétním?

Asi prvotní experimentování s vyvoláváním v temné komoře, třeba doma v koupelně. Myslím si, že hodně lidí zkoušelo různě experimentovat, nebo třeba kupovat foťáky na blešáku, prostě situace, kde je nutné trochu improvizovat. Z autorů mě napadá Miroslav Tichý, ale myslím, že na české scéně se DIY více či méně věnují všichni umělci fotografové.

Když přemýšlíš o DIY fotografických technikách v digitální fotografii ve srovnání s analogovou, která je pro Tebe atraktivnější?

Asi by mě nezajímalo ani jedno, mě ta technická stránka tolik neoslovuje. Daleko víc mě zajímá konceptuální myšlení. Nakonec bych si asi zkusila radši analog, protože mám pocit, že tomu rozumím víc a spíš bych k něčemu došla.

Vyzkoušela jsi nějaké DIY v analogu, nebo v digitálu a pokud ano, můžeš to popsat? V kontextu Tvé práce, jak často používáš tyto techniky?

Kvůli financím jsem nikdy neměla své vlastní studio, všechno vznikalo na podlaze. Když se mi nechtělo, nebo jsem nemohla jet do školy, tak jsem si tvořila nekonečné pozadí doma v pokoji. Postupem času to ve své tvorbě občas přiznávám. V temné komoře pracuju hodně, zkoušela jsem fotogramy a celkově mě u toho baví element chyby.

Jak důležitý je pro Tebe proces výroby fotografie? Máš pocit, že forma je určitým způsobem součástí unikátnosti Tvé práce a do jaké míry?

Ten proces pro mě vlastně důležitý není, těžko říct. Kdybych viděla snímek založený pouze na experimentu, tak by mě to asi neoslovilo, muselo by to být rozvinuté dál. U jiných autorů to taky moc neřeším, nejsem úplně technický člověk, spíš to soudím podle citu - občas mám dojem, že mohl autor použít jinou techniku. Pokud je to na analog, tak ráda vím, proč si fotograf vybral právě tuto techniku.

Jak vnímáš DIY v digitální fotografii a digitální technologii obecně?

U digitálu to vůbec nevnímám jako DIY klasicky, vnímám to spíše jako hobby. Umím si to třeba představit jako DIY vytváření podmínek pro domácí fotografii pomocí digitálních technik, spíše než vysloveně vytváření nových přístrojů. Vidím v tom smysl, když to člověk dělá, pokud nemá jinou volbu, ale jinak mi to přijde trochu zpátečnické.

Jak vnímáš DIY v analogové fotografii?

Vnímám to jako obsesivní způsob práce. Připadá mi to jako relevantní způsob tvorby, pokud to autora stimuluje v jeho tvorbě. Nemám pocit, že je nutné se tomu věnovat, aby se tomu věnoval každý fotograf pracující v analogu, někdo to podle mě nepotřebuje a neznamena to, že by byl horší fotograf.



Figure 15

Janů, Valentýna. *Basics of Photography*. [online] [cited: 26 11 2017] Retrieved from <http://valentynajanu.com/basics-of-photography>.

Interview 14

Lukáš Novotný

Recorded in Prague, 30th of October 2017

FAMU Undergraduate Student

Lukáš Novotný has just started to study photography at FAMU. He originated in fashion photography but now works mainly with conceptual photography. He prefers analogue to digital photography and recently started to work with virtual reality.

Co pro Tebe DIY fotografie znamená? Spojíš si to s něčím konkrétním?

Spojím si to třeba s tvorbou mého spolužáka z FAMU, který provozuje prostor s temnou komorou, je to plně funkční a celé si to zařídil sám. Taky mě napadá můj profesor klasické fotky, který si svépomocí vytváří daguerrotypie, kyanotypie, ferrotypie v domácích podmínkách.

Když přemýšlíš o DIY fotografických technikách v digitální fotografii ve srovnání s analogovou, která je pro Tebe atraktivnější?

Určitě ten analog. Viděl jsem třeba projekt, kde vyráběli mini fotoapráty z krabičky od sirek, to byl docela punk, ten digitál mě moc nebere.

Vyzkoušel jsi nějaké DIY v analogu, nebo v digitálu a pokud ano, můžeš to popsat? V kontextu Tvé práce, jak často používáš tyto techniky?

Zkoušel jsem si vyvolávat a zvětšovat fotky sám, teď budeme zkoušet ferrotypie ve škole. Sám teď dělám projekt, který kombinuje klasickou analogovou fotografii a virtuální realitu, chci spojit ty nejstarší a nejtradičnější techniky s těmi nejnovějšími. Vždycky jsem si to nechával vyvolávat, začal jsem vyvolávat až teď na škole.

Jak důležitý je pro Tebe proces výroby fotografie? Máš pocit, že forma je určitým způsobem součástí unikátnosti Tvé práce a do jaké míry?

Na začátku pro mě byla důležitá fotka hlavně jako výsledek, soustředil jsem se na to, aby to vyšlo. Teď se soustředím na, dejme tomu, zpochybnění konceptu, jde tam spíše o ten akt, jak to fotím. U ostatních fotografů se dívám i na techniku, občas vidím, že to třeba není úplně ono, ale je tam ta myšlenka. Pokud se ta technická stránka neodchýlí moc, tak je to podle mě v pořádku. Můj kamarád se třeba zaměřuje na focení do taveného skla. To mě inspiruje k tomu taky něco zkoušet - teď chci třeba vyvolávat do kafe. Exponovat do něčeho nestandardního, kde není ani papír, je pro mě vlastně také zpochybnění konceptu.

Jak vnímáš DIY v digitální fotografii a digitální technologii obecně?

Baví mě to jako podpora pro analog, takhle to třeba mám u té virtuální reality. Doufám, že skrz to přitáhnu lidi k tomu filmu a analogu, je to výborná prezentační forma. Necítím potřebu experimentovat s technologiemi, využívám je tak, jak je mám.

Jak vnímáš DIY v analogové fotografii?

Vidím v tom vývoj celé analogové fotky, lidé pořád přemýšleli, jak to udělat lepší a lepší. Přijde mi skvělé, že je tam limitování materiálem, takže člověk více přemýšlí o zákonitostech fotografie jako takové.

Interview 15

Petronella Åslund

Recorded in Prague, 31st of October 2017

FAMU Undergraduate Student

Petronella Åslund studies at FAMU. She mostly works on personal projects and does not see herself as being defined by any genre. She considers her work to be classical in the sense that the result is always a picture. She prefers analogue photography and almost never uses digital camera, unless she cannot avoid it. She considers exhibition as more interesting way of communicating the work, but online accessible to larger audience.

What does DIY photography mean to you and what do you associate it with?

I imagine something like scrapbooks, darkroom, hands-on-process.

When you think about DIY photography techniques in digital vs analogue, which one sounds more attractive to you?

The analogue would always be more interesting for me. The digital also sounds interesting, but I don't feel like technical person at all.

Have you tried any DIY techniques in both analogue and digital and if yes, can you please describe them? How often do you use these techniques (in a context of your work)?

I always wanted to make a camera, something like pinhole. I tried photograms, with fire - I wanted to use alternative light source and it worked really well. But you had to alter the whole process, because it was much more of the light than usual. I always try to process the film on my own. I like to develop it on my own, because than I am in control of the process.

How important is the process of photography-making to you? Do you connect the uniqueness of your work with form and to what extent?

Not that much I think. I think my projects are very personal, I use different techniques and visualities, so I will never be one of those artists that you can say: "this is definitely her", it just wouldn't work. I think process is important. Not necessarily in the final work, but how you got there is important to me. When I go to gallery and I see two similar projects, one in

digital and one in analogue I appreciate the analogue one more, because I see the added value in the process, I see the craft behind it. I know it is nonsense, but it is how I feel.

How do you perceive DIY technology in digital photography/digital technology in general?

I think it is more relevant than ever, I think it is about finding your way around technology to make it work for you the way you want. For instance, I see how coding is important but also it is incredibly scary for me. I can feel the limits of digital technologies, but it has never really pushed me to get into it. I love when the other people do it, but it is difficult for me personally.

How do you perceive DIY technology in analogue photography?

In darkroom, you are in control, it is closer to craft. I think DIY in analogue is very relevant. Today almost everything has been done, so it is all about finding out how to do it differently. DIY helps you to find your own technique and makes your work stand out. Always when I see someone doing some DIY in analogue, I am jealous and wish I had done that. But usually when I try, I get stuck.



Figure 16

Åslund, Petronella. *Examples from portfolio*. [online] [cited: 26 11 2017] Retrieved from <http://petronellaaslund.com>.