

SIMONE MARCHETTI

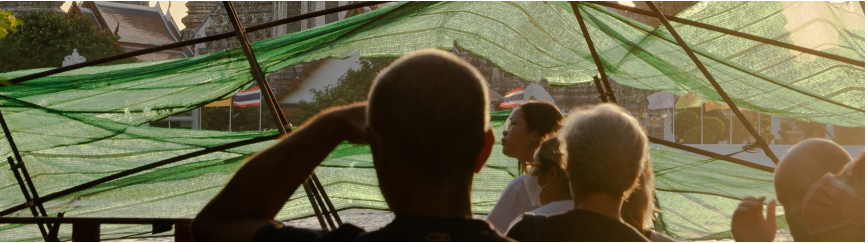
DOCUMENTARY 2024  
FINE ART

# PORTFOLIO





SUMMARY



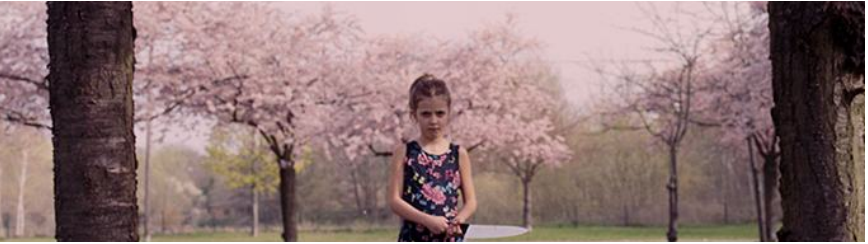
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My name is Simone Marchetti and I am a freelance photographer based in Berlin.

My approach to documentary photography is strongly linked to my background in anthropology. The study of the individual within complex social dynamics represents for me an inexhaustible source of narrative inspiration. Every subject I encounter, every scene I photograph, offers me a new starting point to explore the many facets of the human experience.

I am particularly attracted to the socio-cultural dynamics that shape our daily lives. Exploring the subtleties of human interaction, how individuals adapt and react to their surroundings, inspires me to seek fresh and compelling narratives in my photography.

I collaborate with photojournalistic agencies such as Sopa Images in the role of freelance photographer. My images have been featured in publications and periodicals, including Witness Journal, Ev-magazine, Unesco, Ansa, and EFTI's Madrid's International Center of Photography.

Regarding my recent assignments, I was contacted by Cinecittà, Rome, as official photographer to document Italy's participation in the Berlinale as Country in focus.



In this portfolio you will browse through a general overview of my work. It starts with a selection of images captured during an extended working trip to Southeast Asia, during which I delved into the study of people within their communities.

It continues with a series of images focusing on an exploration of alienation among Italian expats in Berlin, alongside an overview of my fine art projects. Among these, a long-term study that examines the role of the individual and the responsibilities arising from the influence of modern society on their identity.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my work with you.

Enjoy browsing!



# S.E.A.

From the vibrant Bangkok of the days of the Chinese New Year to the fishing communities of southern Cambodia, up to the foggy mountains of northern Vietnam, this documentary journey allowed me to get closer to the local populations and to study, through images, their habits and their lifestyles.

How do the inhabitants of the large and chaotic metropolises of Southeast Asia, such as Phnom Penh and Hanoi, seek out physical and mental rejuvenation? What aspirations do the young people from the mountain villages of Hà Giang province have? What is the lifestyle of the inhabitants of the remote areas surrounding the monumental complex of Angkor Wat?

These, as well as many other questions have been answered and through my interactions and images I offer here a glimpse of this work.







Hanoi, capital of Vietnam.

Levels of small dangerous particles known as PM2.5 in the air can rise to nearly 200 micrograms per cubic meter, putting the capital at the top of the list of the most polluted international cities.

In a context where many of the hospitalizations are due to lung problems and suffocation because of the deterioration of the surrounding environment, many people are looking for a moment of tranquility. Fishing and walking around the West Lake (Ho Tay) on weekends, where traffic eases slightly, offers residents a chance to regain physical and mental energy.







The salt fields of Traeuy Kaoh, southern Cambodia.

The precious mineral, fundamental for local economies, is extracted from the seawater through salt evaporation ponds in the coastal Kampot and Kep provinces.







Ninh Binh, Việt Nam.

A peasant woman shuttles from the rice field to her motorcycle, where she loads large quantities of grain. I took this image firstly because I noticed the red of the lady's plastic baskets, contrasting with the green, marshy background.

Secondly because this image is an almost perfect mirror of the past, only the plastic of the baskets has changed.

This area, located on the southern bank of the Red River delta, has traces of human settlement dating back to nearly 30,000 years ago while rice cultivation dates back about 15,000 years.

Behind her on the right is the Bái Đính temple complex, the largest complex of Buddhist temples in Vietnam, exactly where it once stood. The area was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2014.





An elderly woman returns to her home after visiting the market in the foggy city of Sa Pa, while a mother with her children stops along the roadside to speak with a farmer, in the heart of the Lao Chai valley. The indigenous Hmong group, one of the largest ethnic minorities, is principally concentrated in the mountainous north of the country. They engage not only in cattle breeding and agriculture but also in craftsmanship and weaving.







A group of kids met at dusk, while crossing the Ha Giang loop in the rural district of Mèo Vạc. The route taken by locals to move from one village to another passes through high-risk, rugged, and treacherous paths. As night falls and artificial lights are absent, darkness envelops the surroundings entirely. During my crossing, one local and one foreigner lost their lives, having fallen from the cliff.



According to a highly controversial cultural practice known as "early marriage", still being investigated by UNICEF and NFPA, underage girls are compelled to attend markets where they will be chosen by adult men as their future spouses. These minors cannot rebel against the selection, and the only way to express their discontent is through complete abstinence from food and water for two weeks.







# (IT)ALIEN

The term alienation – derived from the Latin adjective *alienus*, in turn from the indefinite pronoun *alius* (in Greek ἄλλος) 'other' – is used in philosophy to indicate the discomfort of modern man in industrial civilization, in which the artifice that it really makes him feel far from his natural roots.

The topic of expatriates has always interested me, since first and foremost I am one myself. I have lived in some large European cities and for some years I have been living in Berlin, a large, frenetic and constantly renewing capital. As globalization continues to accelerate, more and more young people are abandoning their roots in search of a new beginning. As an Italian citizen, I wanted to know first-hand the motivations that push many other compatriots to move abroad. At first glance it is clear that the main purposes are purely economic and linked to the acquisition of new experiences, but what I am interested in knowing is the state of mind of the interviewees, how they feel internally after a few years spent abroad, without their families and their closest acquaintances? What type of change does the lack of affection, objects and places dear to the interviewees and their home entail in their lives?

I've spent time with many of them, listening to their opinions, impressions, and stories about their lives abroad. Through these interviews, I've learned that within each of them, a new understanding was growing—a completely fresh perspective on their experience, namely, the discovery of alienation.





"At work, people don't talk to me. I think it's due to the fact that people who were born and raised here never left the city. People who judge us because they believe that we come here to be supported by Germany. The Germans like to know the world, but they don't like to know people. Here we talk about work but not about feelings. Maybe we, as Italians, give greater value to friendship, affections, family. On the other hand, the German system is a much more honest system. Things are like this, they have to be done like this, that is, without errors in between, and the result is that things work."

- Alice M.

"When interacting with Germans, I have experienced great cultural differences in their approaches to friendship. I always feel an emotional detachment. Fortunately, I never had to adapt or integrate necessarily because as an engineer, I was enough. I never needed to speak the language, I have been able to avoid experiencing those situations, that effort to overcome alienation, that effort to adapt and integrate into that culture, because basically I don't need to. As an Italian, I've experienced being judged by stereotypes. It simplifies a person, takes away their individuality and places them within a category."

- Antonio D.

"Every time we approach something new, even the experience of going out of our comfort zone and being an immigrant in a foreign country, basically every time we have a new experience, we feel like we are a little alien. Alien is what is outside of your knowledge and experience. Once you experience something and that becomes a routine it is no longer unknown because it gets into your knowledge and is probed by your mind. While anything you do that takes you out of your comfort zone and your practical knowledge is alien. Despite that, there are still things that continue to be inconceivable tho I have lived here for three years."

- Alex G.

"Alienation is the inability to share a burden or a problem. In a cohesive family unit problems are shared amongst members because of their shared sense of belonging. I never felt at home in Italy. I experience the same feeling here too, there are absolutely no differences. For me, a home is made by the people within. My parents love me but they are not my home. They have been separated since I was three, so I never had a home. I have always been between my mom and my dad. When you grow up knowing that people are your home and people aren't always there, you develop a much more abstract concept of home. In Germany I am not recreating my home, I am creating it."

- Tai B.





# ZEITGEIST

Influenced by the spirit of our time, mankind finds itself at a crossroads where the pursuit of individuality clashes with societal progress. While the human capacity for thought and knowledge remains intact, these faculties are undeniably constrained by the rapid evolution of society. In this shifting landscape, the identity of the individual becomes uncertain. From the crucial phase of transitioning from adolescence to adulthood in a highly competitive world, to the role of social media in shaping the concept of female beauty, up to the responsibilities of multinationals in capitalizing at the expense of increasingly insecure individuals, questions of who we are and where we are headed loom large, compelling us to adapt our very being to the demands of the collective.



This ongoing series delves into the profound search for identity amidst the loss incurred by conformity—a loss of personal uniqueness sacrificed at the altar of societal uniformity. It reflects upon the intimate aspects of our humanity that erode as we conform, highlighting the paradoxical reality where society now molds individuals, rather than the other way around.

Where once it was the collective amalgamation of individuals and their customs that shaped society, now it seems the reverse holds true. Through this body of work, I aim to explore the subtle nuances of this phenomenon, capturing the essence of what we forfeit in our quest to assimilate.



# DREAM (LAST NIGHT)

This series is the tale of a dream shared between a man and a woman. The male presence embodies awakening and consciousness, endeavoring to decipher the myriad references and signs encountered within the dream realm. Conversely, the female counterpart represents the subconscious and the realm of dreams itself.

This narrative serves as a metaphor for our journey toward a higher state of universal consciousness, transcending the confines of daily interpretation and reference. In this ethereal landscape, dreams shatter the linear timeline to which we are accustomed, leaving us vulnerable to their enigmatic symbolism. Through this process, we gain insight into the depths of our own being, as dreams reveal the profound truths that lie beneath the surface of our consciousness.

As temporal beings navigating the vast expanse of eternity, we often perceive the eternal through the limited lens of time. Yet, within the realm of dreams, we are offered glimpses of our timeless essence, glimpses into the eternal nature of our existence.









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