
Shop

Time is of the essence

A photographic art book about Hauptbahnhof Zürich.

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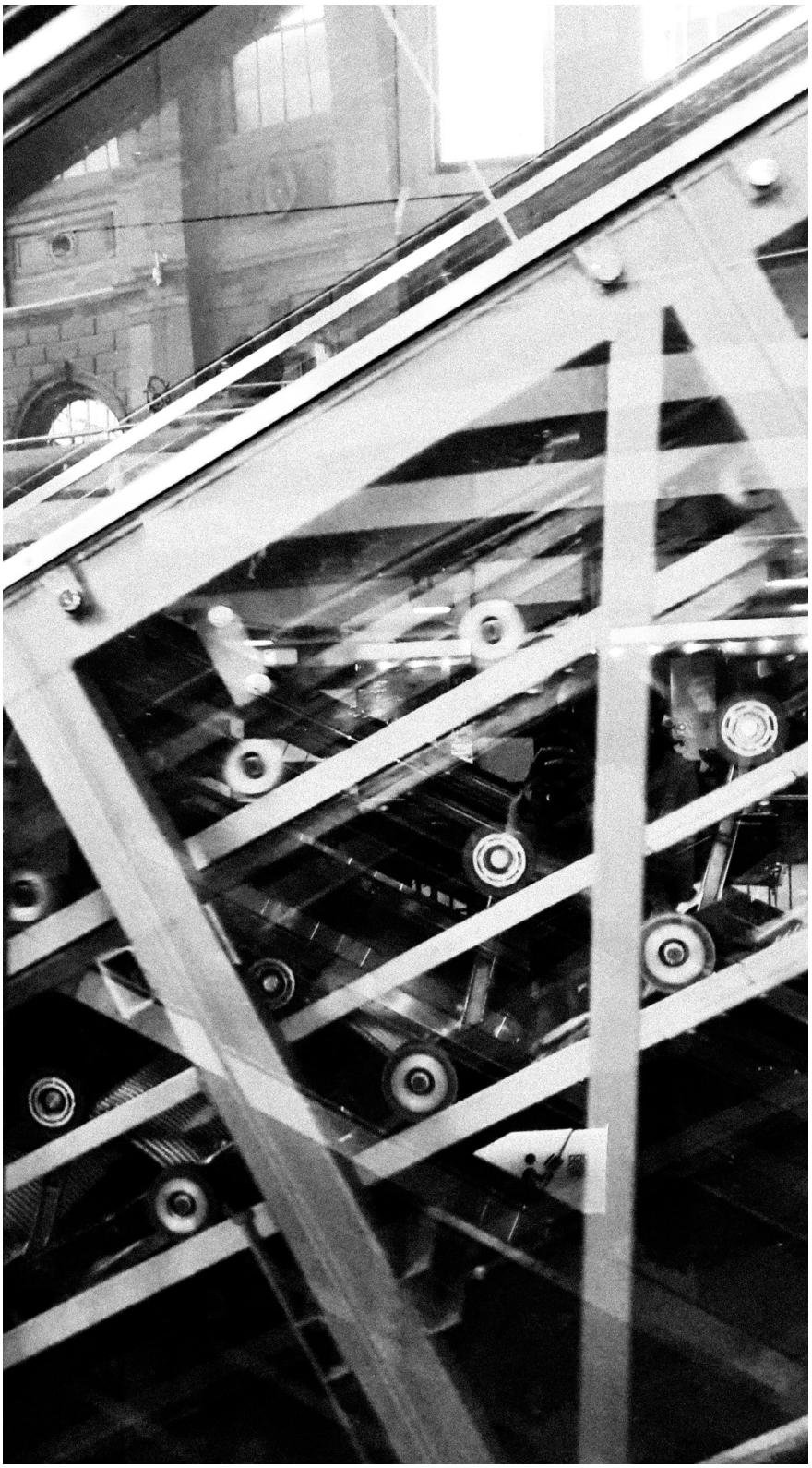
‘Well, the first thing I always tell anyone who asks me for advice is: Get outside. It’s all about getting out and walking. That’s the first thing. The second thing is, forget everything you’ve learned on the subject of photography for the moment, and just shoot. Take photographs – of anything and everything, whatever catches your eye. Don’t pause to think. That’s the advice I give people.’

Daido Moriyama

How I Take Photographs.
Daido Moriyama & Takeshi Nakamoto







Time is of the essence

Timing is everything. But you can only time it right by taking photographs. According to Moriyama, snapshots are all about capturing subjects' expression, movement, and natural being in a particular moment. We kept this in our minds and wandered around the Hauptbahnhof Zürich. We took quick photos with any camera available. Sometimes it was the camera of a smartphone, other times an SLR camera… As long as one had the camera with them, the only thing that mattered was using it.

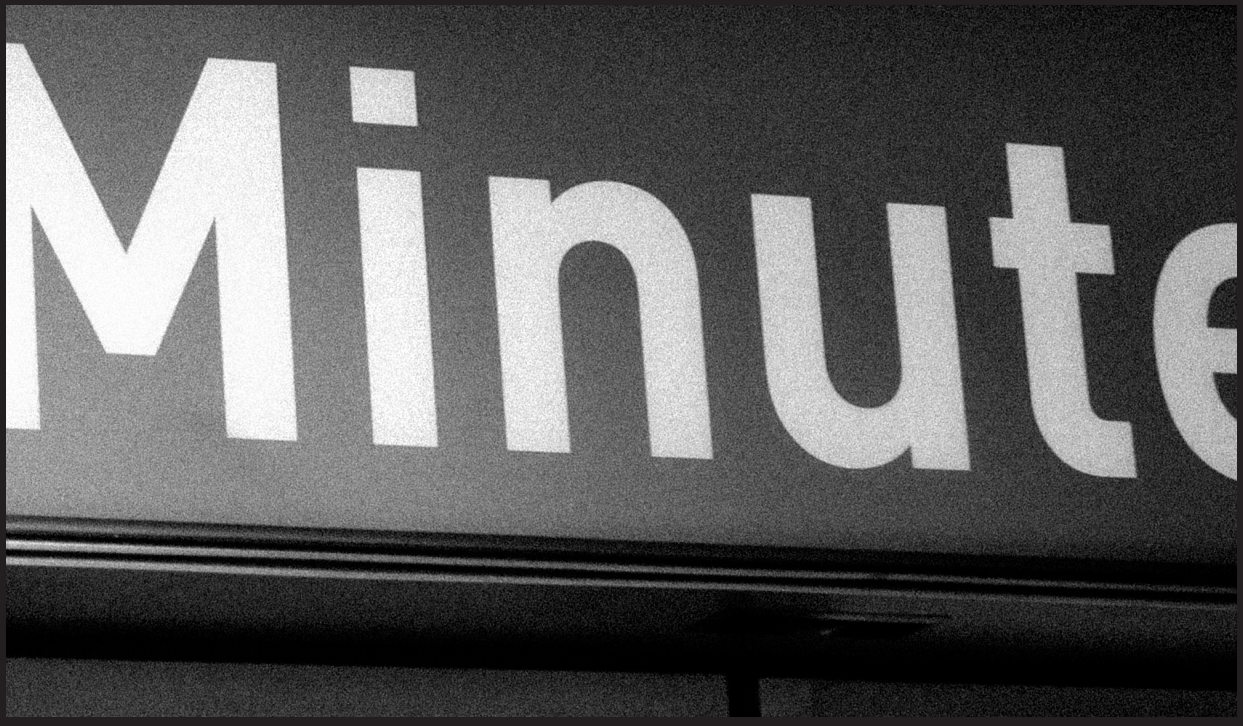
It is an annihilation. No meaning, no expression, no sense of the photographer. If I drain out the color, the only thing left is an impression. The brain works through it with imagination. It puts the missing pieces together. Brain creates reality. Just like with time. It is reconstructed by the brain. I try to get rid of themes. I just shoot whatever I find intriguing in that particular moment. I walk around. Stop and observe. I do not even look at the screen or the viewfinder. Sometimes I do, but often the best practises for capturing something natural, such as an expression or moment, is to not reveal that one has a camera with them. Most of the time the camera doesn't even react to my touch. Especially in the rain. The screen is wet and won't sensor the pressure of my fingers properly. I take photos. I ask questions. I walk a little bit more. I don't have a theme. I don't know what I am exactly doing, but by just living in the moment and exploring myself, the camera, the environment, I will come to a conclusion and find the meaning for this experience.

It is based on sequences, separated by durations of various lengths. I cannot say that I know what it is, but I am aware that it can be measured in different ways. I believe it is a subjective experience. To me it is something else and to someone else it is their matter. I cannot see it. I mean I can, but then I have to wait and compare. I can compare the positions of shadows from one point to another. But there has to be a period between the moments of comparison. I suppose I can feel it, but then again, not. I can recall the passing of it through my memories. It was that sunny day last summer. The summer before that was even hotter. Yesterday I did not sleep enough. Today I am more relaxed. Soon I have to eat, I am hungry. I complete this first, then I begin the next thing. There was an interruption. I am flexible. I change tasks as the opportunities arise. He is adaptable. She worries for the outcome. But that is in the future. Let's talk about what happened. Time is linear. Time is Flexible. I am constant. We are now.

TIME

The indefinite continued progress of existence and events in the past, present, and future regarded as a whole.

The system of recording hours used in different parts of the world.




HOTEL
Alsterdorf Nord
Alsterdorf Nord











1 MINUTE OR SO

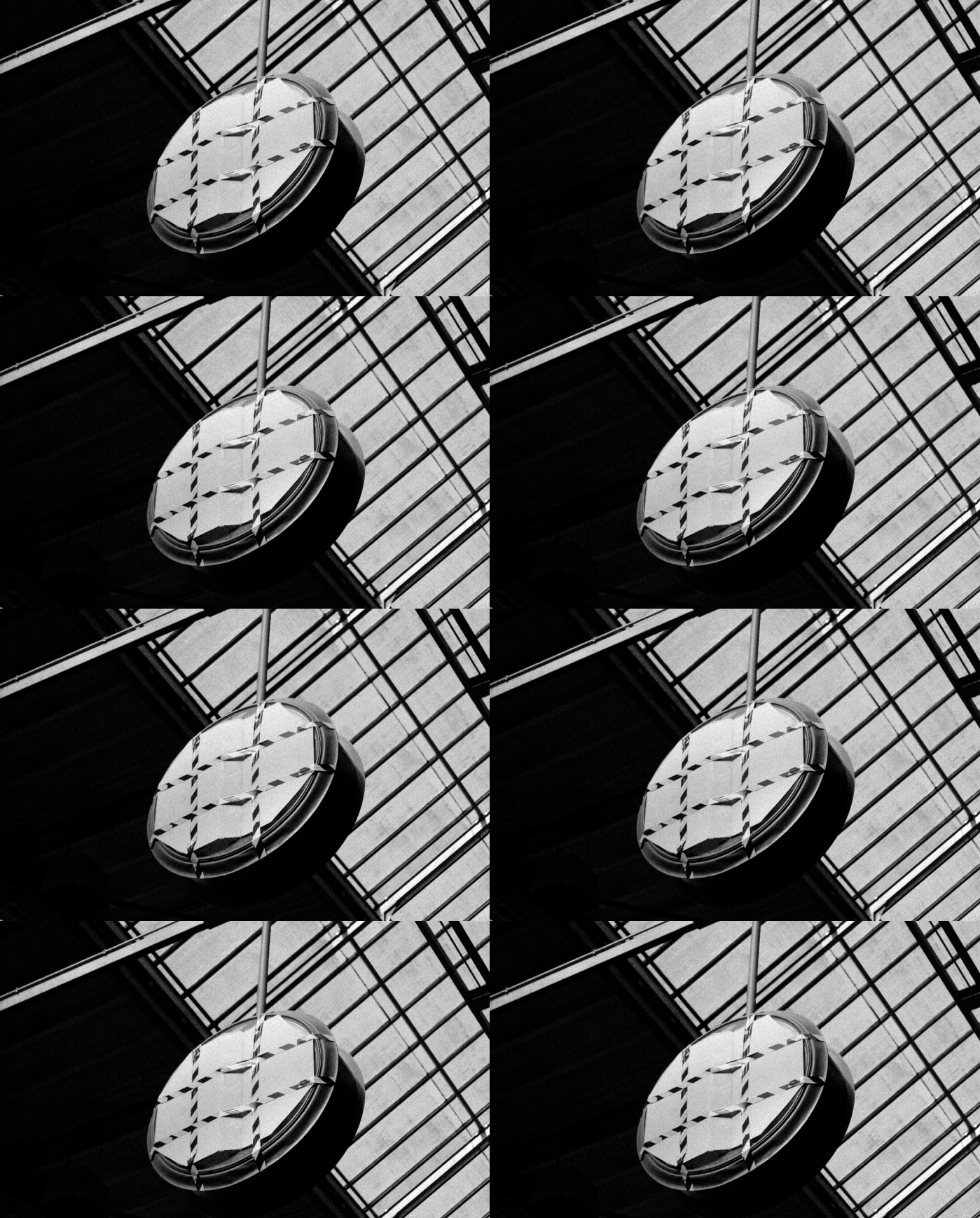
I remember that someone gave me a pink Magnum-ice cream at the station. I had never seen one in that colour before. I did not open it but placed it in my handbag. I met an SBB-worker. She smiled at me, 'Grüezi,' and told me to take a queue ticket. In the ticket office they also sold large, expensive clocks. They had price tags on them. '150 chf,' '200 chf,' and '250 chf.' They must have been very important as they had them everywhere.

My turn came quite fast. I think I only waited for 1 minute or so. The lady at the counter was lean and had dark brown hair. She used to dance ballet as a kid. She told me her ballet teacher was called Kerttu Virta. I confirmed that the name was finnish. 'You have the same accent,' she said and explained in detail what the teacher was like. I thought it was sweet, also strange. Obviously I did not know her. I only imagined what she was like. When I told her my home address, she said 'That is a very lovely street. You live in a very nice area in Zürich.' I do not remember ever meeting someone, who knows addresses by heart. It was a very peculiar confrontation. Maybe she knows someone living there. The whole experience was a bit absurd. When she was finished with the tickets, she wished me a nice weekend and hoped that I would enjoy the city very much. 'Do not lose your accent. It is unique.' I smiled and walked away. By that time, the ice cream in my bag had already melted.


Schalter
geschlossen.
Counter closed.




8










DIE POST







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Baugeräte · Baugerüste
TAXI






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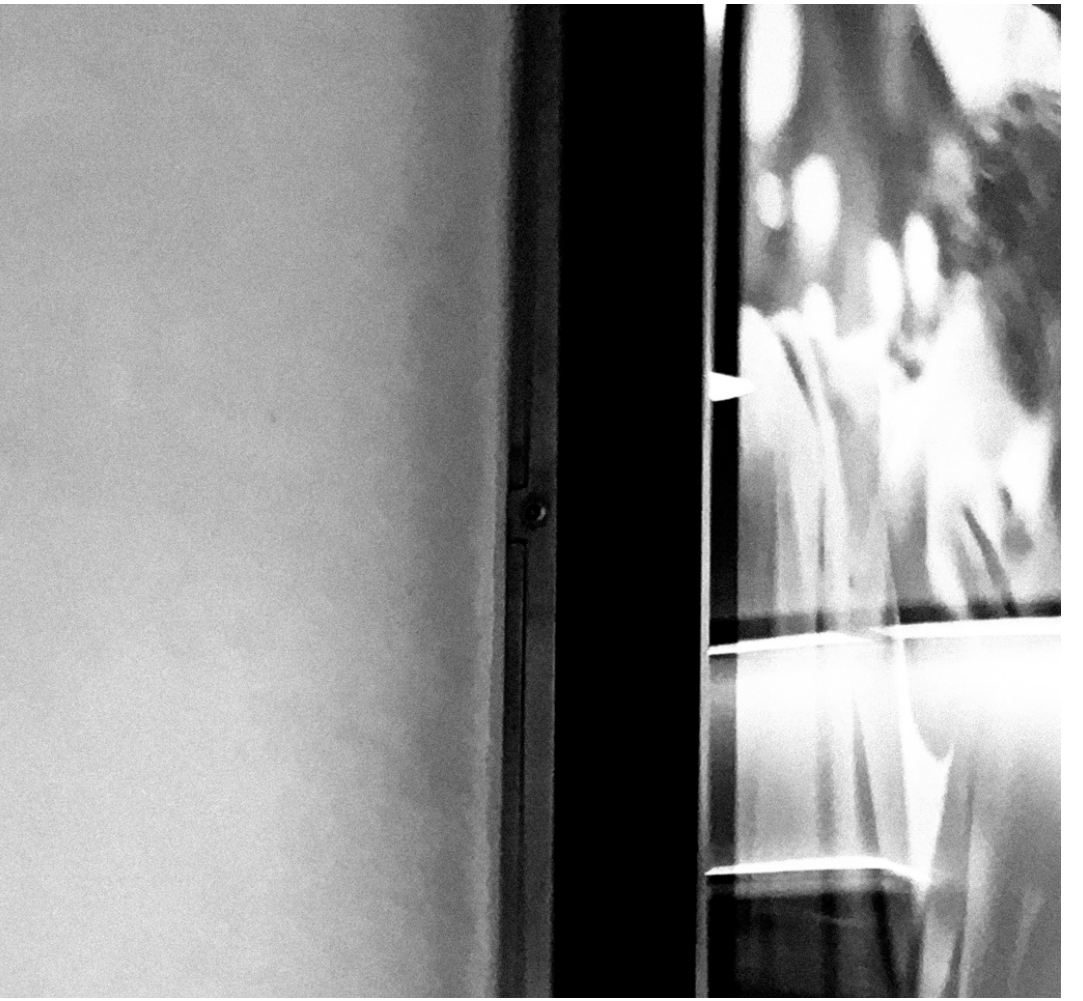


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CHF 19.00
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CHF 4.50
CHF 2.60
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What a waste of happiness

I love flowers. They bring me so much joy. The bright, vivid colors and the attempt of keeping them alive, even when they are just cut flowers, is intriguing. I had a friend once who said he does not want to buy flowers as someone might see him doing it. He explained that giving someone a flower is so personal that he does not want outsiders seeing the act of buying them. 'Then it is not personal anymore,' he said. Maybe he is right. I enjoy looking at people who buy them. On many occasions I would like to ask something about it. 'Why did you buy a white rose and not an orchid?'

Everytime I see a person with a flower bouquet I have this feeling that I should buy one as well. Sometimes I just pop in to a shop to smell and look at them. I have seen others doing the same thing. I think about the people who I would like to give flowers to, and then I mentally picture myself doing it. It gives me pleasure. If someone looks lonely, I wonder if receiving a flower could make her happier.

I know plenty of people who can not take care of flowers or plants. Although they say to enjoy flowers, I often find that they forgot the total existence of them. They figure out later that they have had dead roses on the table for an extensive period of time. I once even knew a person, who threw them away before they were even dead. What a waste of happiness.

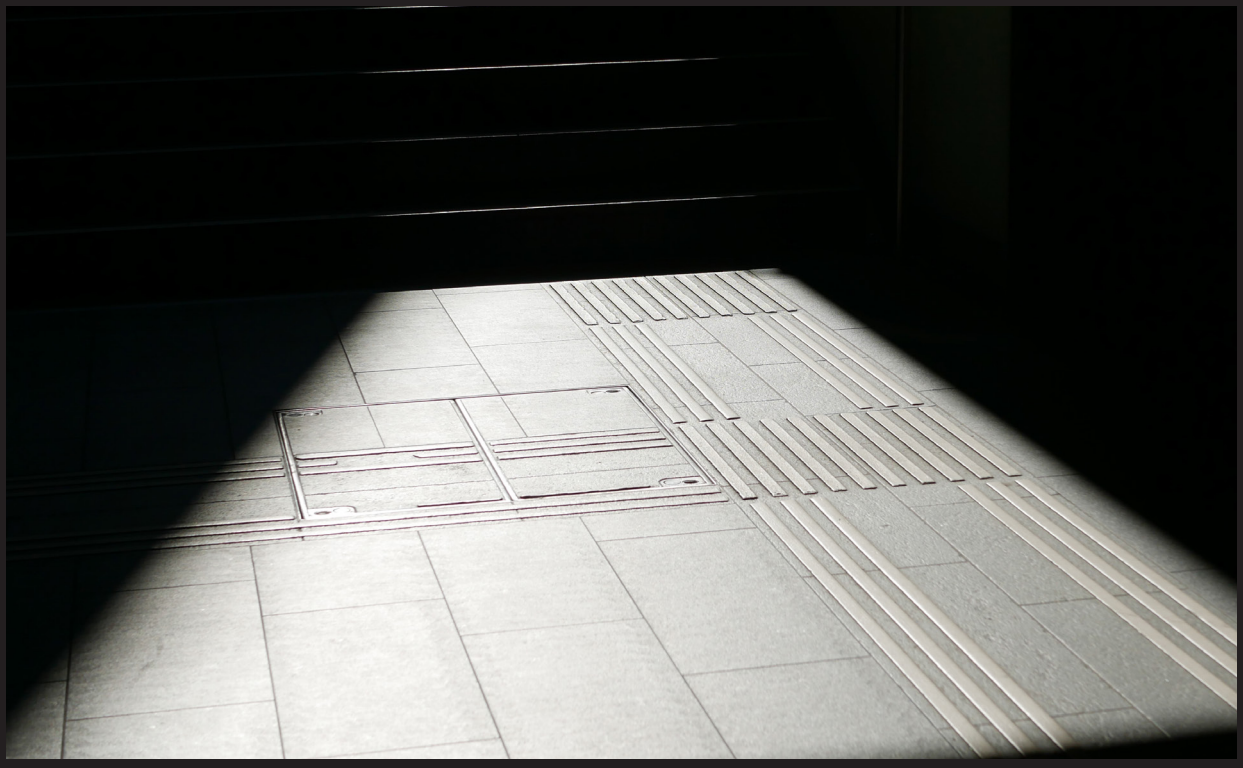



Zweifel Chips Nature 30g
Fr. 2.00
Zweifel Graneo Chili 27g
Fr. 2.00
Zweifel Chips Paprika 30g
Fr. 2.00
Zweifel Peanuts Salted 50g
Fr. 2.00
Snyders Honey 125g
Fr. 4.50
Snyders Jalapeno 125g
Fr. 4.50
Ihr Centerguide. An 365 Tagen.














Blumen Kramer
25.-


Blumen Krämer
um Tulpen
aus
olland
12 Tulpen
















Good Morning
Zurich


SALE
ville


davidoff


davidoff



No daylight in this glass cubicle

I wanted to know what it feels like to be in here. At first she seemed a bit confused. 'I am not sure if I can really tell you anything. I mean, I only know this part of HB, this aquarium I'm in. People walk by. They see me and I see them.' But as she started talking, she made remarks that got us thinking. Her voice was gentle. It reminded me of my mother. Or maybe a mother of my childhood friend. She used expressive language and explained 'One cannot see the movement of the sun underground. There is no daylight in this glass cubicle. In a way there is no real sense of time in here and on the other hand the customers are extremely aware of the time.' Her words stirred me up, as if I just opened my eyes and woke up there. I have never looked at the shopping area from that point of view before.

In a sense it would be impossible to keep track of time without clocks. Then on the other hand, I see clocks everywhere and paradoxically, people act as clocks. They are representatives of time. In most of the cases what they wear can indicate the season and the weather outside. Their behaviour suggests the time of the day. At certain times they would eat, go to work, go home and sleep.

I read from somewhere, that all living creatures have internally synchronized circadian clocks, that aid our inner organisms and cells to anticipate the environmental changes. Then our bodies adjust its biology accordingly and correspond to the day-night cycle. In order to let the inner clock to work, one needs to receive signals from the environment - signals of daylight and darkness. I wonder what will happen to our bodies and minds, if we spend all the light hours of the day underground. Would this disruption in the circadian rhythm affect our wellbeing? Should the people working in such environments be more concerned about their health? Apparently she is a sporty person. 'During the weekends I tend to go to the mountains, where I can enjoy the outdoors and fresh air.' Well, good for her.




09.53 Bern
10.00 Frankfurt
Basel SBB














Sektor
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Sektor
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Gleis
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A
9


Groups




6.50


Heisse Marroni
100 gr 3.50 Fr.
150 gr 5.00 Fr.
200 gr 6.50 Fr.
250 gr 8.00 Fr.
300 gr 9.50 Fr.
400 gr 13.00 Fr.
500 gr 15.00 Fr.


Heisse Marroni
100 gr 3.50 Fr.
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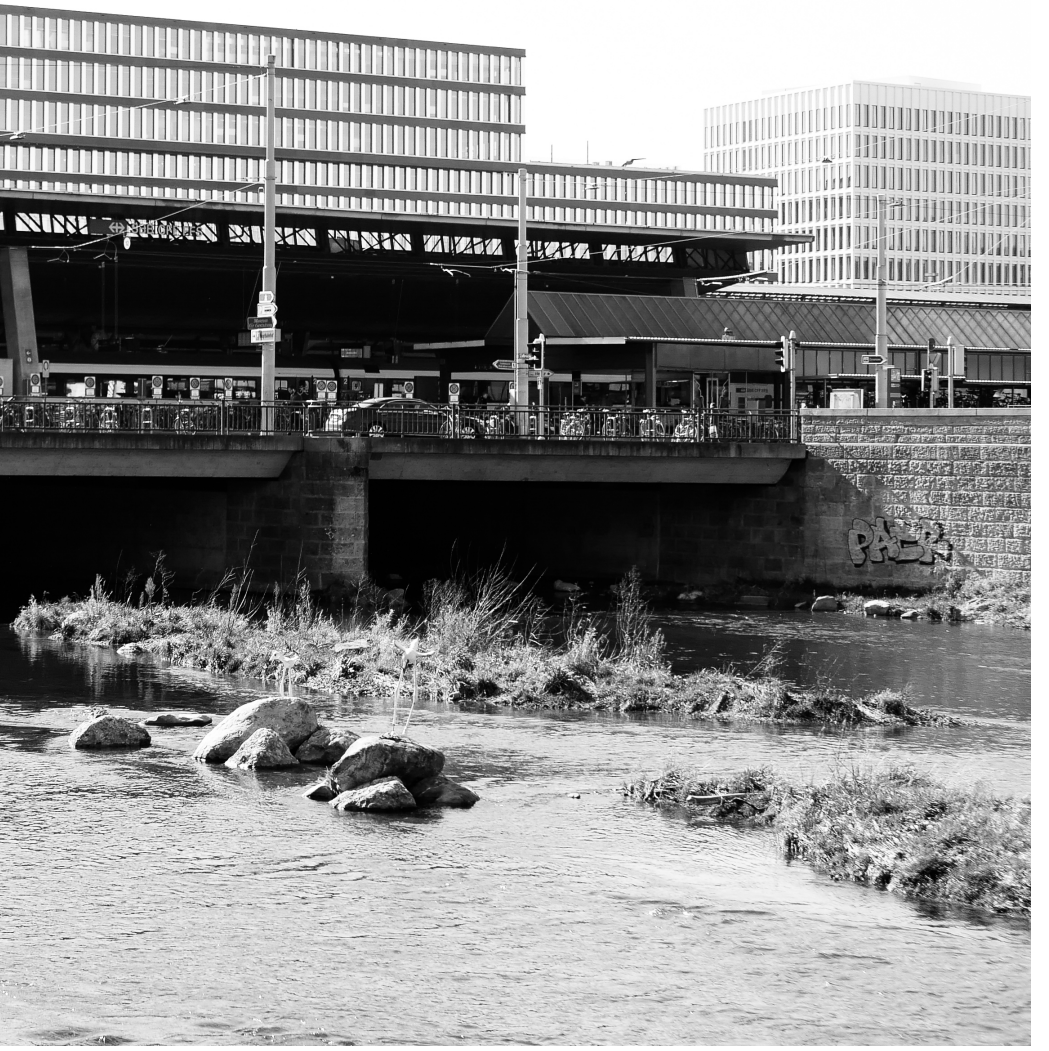
1ARD FOR
HOLLANDER

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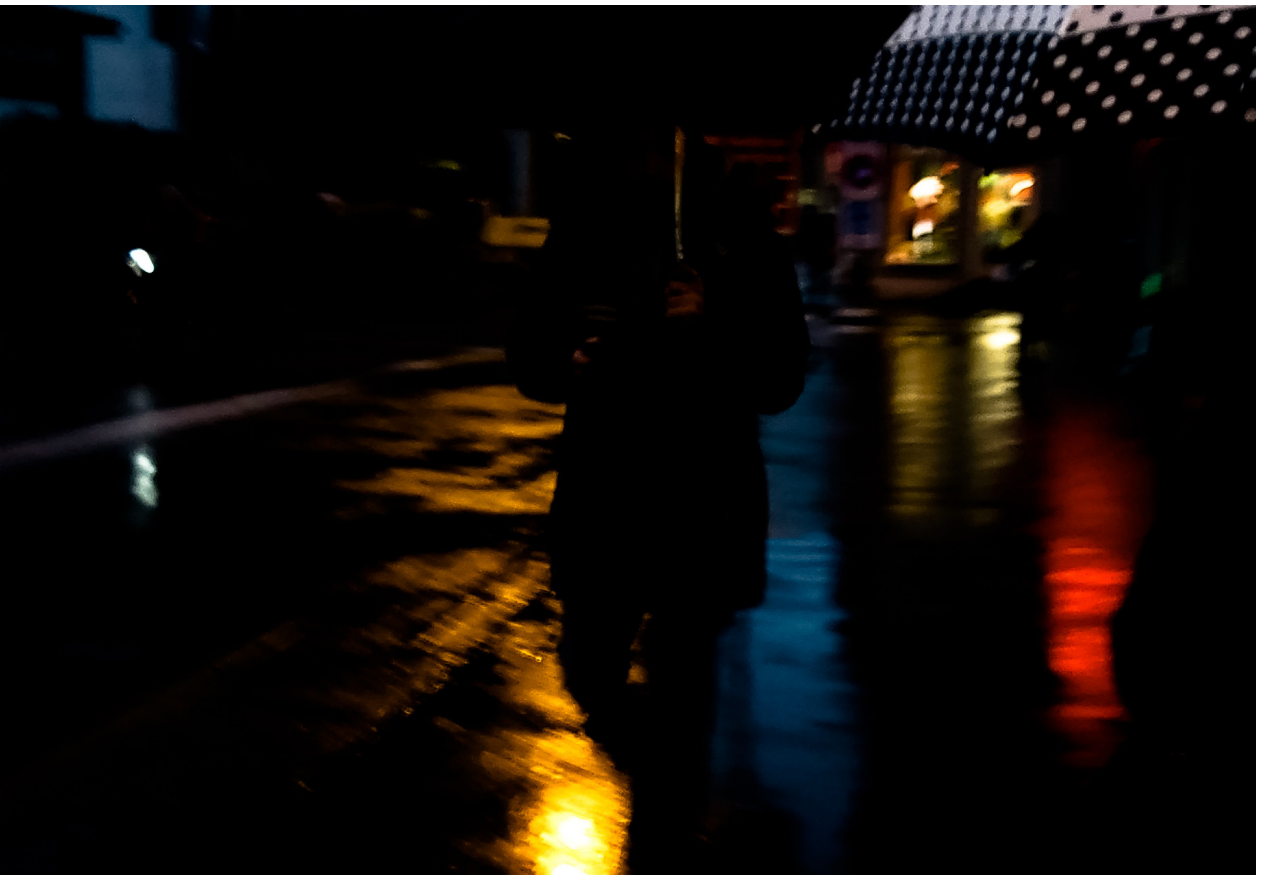

A tenth of a second for an endless eternity

I stand on the platform. I am surrounded by a mass of people. They are everywhere. Like waves on the ocean, they are in a continuous set of motion. I find it difficult to differentiate an individual traveller from another in this mesmerizing sea of bodies. Some of them look disoriented. Lost souls on the water. They scan the space with their eyes, searching for signals and clues of the right direction. Some of them look apathetic but the expressions on their faces make their movement seem purposeful. It is the determined look of someone who knows their destination. The goal is to reach the destination as fast as possible. The journey continues as soon as they get off the train. The travelers move on as if they had invisible rails underneath them. I try to speak to one of them. I quickly notice that they do not recognize me as a person to socialize with, but rather perceive me as an obstacle to avoid. It seems as their bodies are programmed to walk on an invisible track while they are mentally absent. They are machines. Intelligence in perpetual motion. I had to realise that it is impossible to stop a passing traveler. On an empty platform, away from the crowds of people, I finally meet a stranded person. He tells me that he missed a train for a tenth of a second and has to wait an endless eternity for the next one. Someone stole an hour from him. 'You are not on the left side,' he repeated with some irritation in his voice. 'That is the law!' He explained that another man disregarded this rule and made it impossible for him to overtake him on the escalator. One can say he was still furious. I wonder where this law is written and how heavy are the penalties for breaking it. In today's trial that misbehaviour costed him the chance of catching the train and the penalty is a one hour of unnecessary waiting.
















A 3
01


TIME










HOTEL
MARRONI


Abfahrt
Bahnhof Zürich HB
Abfahrt
Bahnhof Zürich HB
Mobile 079 505 08 36
zurück um / retour à / back at
Bitte anklop

OBSERVING

‘This is what it might feel like to be the protagonist of a painting by Salvador Dali,’ I thought as I looked around this black and white, tiled, almost surreal looking level. A praise for gravity, otherwise I would not know where is “up” and where is “down”. This floor seems to have fallen out of time. I see a waiting room, where a dozen people sit in the same direction and stare at the same wall. There is a station chapel for all beliefs and gods, as well as the chargeable sanitary facilities, where nature’s call becomes a business. An orange juice vending machine. This level is a smorgasbord of strange spaces and oddities.

In the next room sits a woman. She is behind a window, under a sign which bears the word: Bahnhofshilfe. Next to her is a large clock that is not moving. I ask her, what is she doing? She tells me that she is helping everyone and always. Although the “Always” is limited to the opening times between 7 a.m. and 9 p.m. I consider it a remarkable and exhausting achievement to help “everyone and always”. I ask, if I can help her? She smiles, nods her head up with “no”. Next we are interrupted by a homeless person. At least to me, he appears to be one. The lady greets him like an old acquaintance. They exchange a few sentences of small talk and without any further explanations, she hands him a meal package. It appears to be a routine process that requires no requests. Now the homeless man turns to me and asks what I’m doing here. ‘Observing,’ I reply. He tells me that he also does that often. ‘Observation is one of my main activities’. That phrase catches my interest. I want to know more and ask him, ‘how many hours a day do you spend observing then?’ He explains that this activity was less about the amount of time and more about the interesting occurrences. Then he left


SBB CFF FFS
Shop Ville
Zürich Hauptbahnhof
Öffnungszeiten
Bahnhofkirche &
Raum der Stille
Mo – Fr 07.00 – 19.00
Sa – So 10.00 – 16.00
Feiertage 10.00 – 16.00















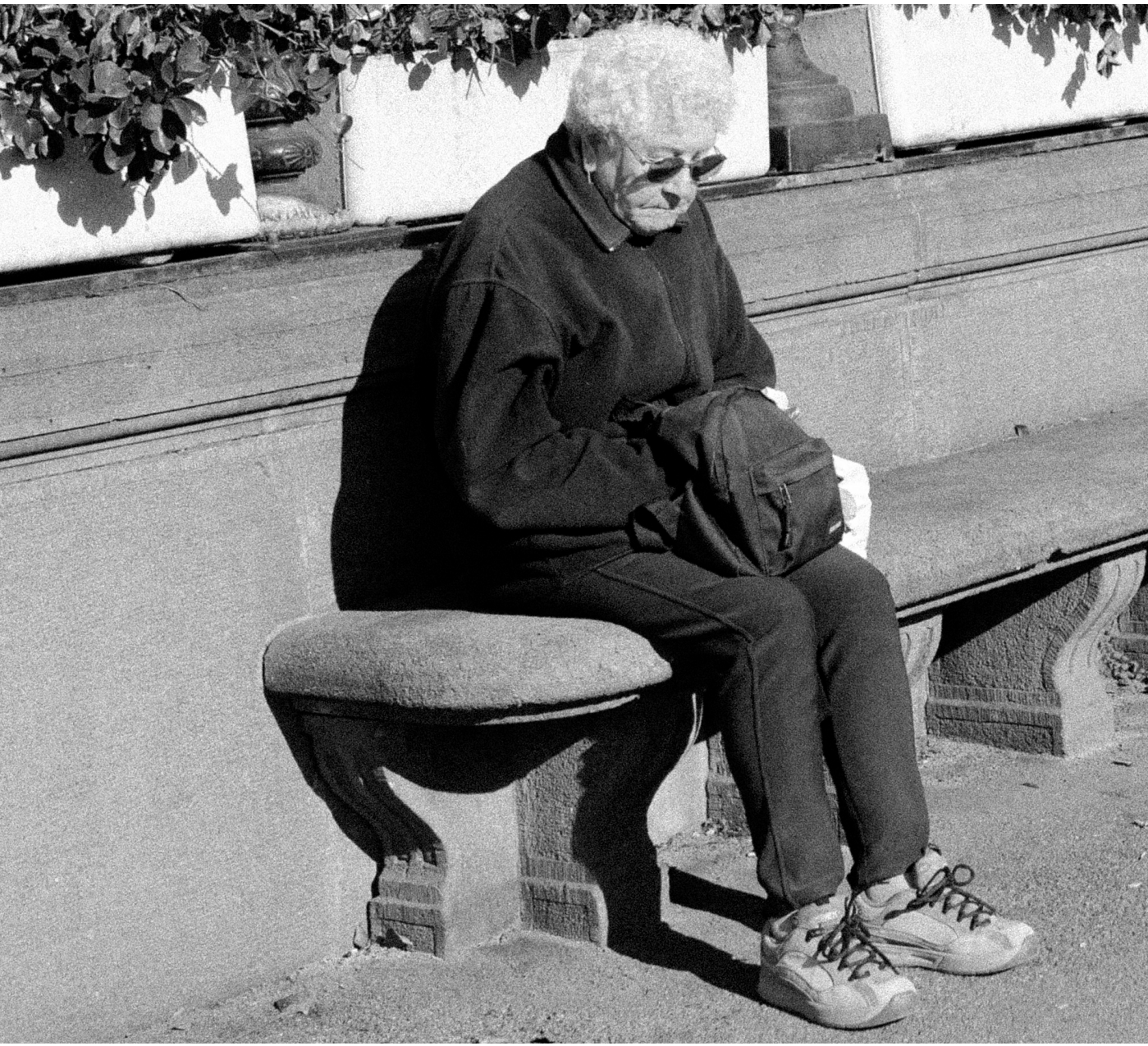


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ATM zone


SBB CFF FFS
Bt DPZplus 50 85






ONDAINE
Ankunft

WAITING

A man stands in the middle of the passageway. He says 'The Drinks of The World is a great place.' I have passed it many times. I often wanted to go in to buy something, but I did not know if I should drink without an occasion. I think many friends of mine would love that shop. Actually I was there already but I did not buy anything. The cashier was alone and had many customers coming and going in. The bottles are neatly organised and the labels face me. I have always found the labels interesting. I would definitely buy a bottle based on its looks.

He says that he does not drink that much anymore. I guess that's because he is in his 30's. It brings me to a conclusion that maybe he has grown too old for partying. I would not dare to ask such a thing from a stranger. He is with a friend. The friend is quiet and just listens and does the occasional nodding of the head when he agrees to something. Maybe he wanted to say something but decided to observe instead. Apparently HB is a great place for meeting. I heard someone once had a job interview here. They must be waiting for someone. I mean they stand in the middle of everything, in a point where every now and then someone stops to stare at their phone or to wait a while. It is a junction where two corridors join together. Shops everywhere. He tells me, "the narrow transit ways are the worse as there are so many people moving at the same time." Yet, he stands in one.




TIME....
BAR/LOUNGE
























16










BLAH, BLAH, BLAH
COMMERCIAL
BLAH, BLAH
ESCALA
























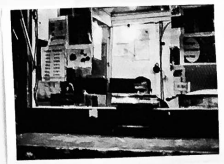




Art of fixing time

We always had cameras with us. But as we wandered around snapping photos and trying to talk to people. About anything really. We often discovered that people were too busy to talk to us, especially if we weren't casual enough or did not intend to buy something. When one buys something, it seems that one also buys the right to use the time of those who are working. The wrong way of approaching people is to start by telling them who you are or asking if they have time to talk to you. It is important to be spontaneous and just casually start with small talk. Just ask something. Give a compliment. 'What is the time? What is the best place for having food here?' Anything spontaneous, neutral, or even unexpected. Through casual talk, or small talk, people do not acknowledge that there might be meaning of some sort behind the conversation. Frankly, there was no meaning or plan anyways. The same goes with taking photographs. One does not ask for permission to shoot. One just takes photos of anything based on intuition. Just go with your gut feeling. That's what we did. It works anywhere, on everything and every time. In the postwork process we realized how many amazing, rare moments and experiences we managed to capture through spontaneous photography. We agree with Moriyama. 'Photography is the act of 'fixing' time, not of 'expressing' the world.'

"Photography is the act of 'fixing' time, not of 'expressing' the world. The camera is an inadequate tool for extracting a vision of the world or of beauty... Photography is a medium that only exists by momentarily fixing the 'discovery' and 'cognition' to be encountered in the ceaselessly moving exterior world."

Daido Moriyama

Moriyama, 2007, p. 210
Daido Moriyama & Takeshi Nakamoto