

The Frontier

New York's Treatise

"America gives a chance to everyone. To deserve it, an individual has to be ready to go beyond his geographical and psychological horizon. This is the origins and importance of the Frontier myth".

Rémi Clignet

New York. The mythical name that evokes so many images for millions of people around the world. For me, born in Poland, a communist country on the edge of Europe, New York, as well as America, was the Promised Land, the Land of Liberty, the Land of Unlimited Opportunities... I had this fascination as a teenager, I kept it during my studies and my life in Paris, and I still have it in my new current life, as a New Yorker and recently naturalized American. Existing only in my dreams in my European life, this fascination was present in my first works about New York in the 1990s, and finally imposed itself during the preparation of "Frontier": my vast photographic monograph, conceived as a representation, a portrait of New York.

My image of New York. It will be made with numerous photographs, having very varied characteristics in terms of content, aesthetics and the specificity of my medium. I hope to be able to achieve many of them using resourcefully my geographical, very detailed scenario and much more by chance. According to my iconographic scenario, "everything" that is undoubtedly characteristic of New York could become a source for my images, directly as a preliminary documentary part of my work or indirectly, as an inspiring material. But the essential objective will be to go beyond the existing and recorded appearances, to "discover" and "understand" this city in its natural context and its inhabitants, as well as all that they have managed to achieve, today and in the past, their culture and civilization. The next step will be to present everything clearly, together with my editorial comments and conclusions, in the form of an iconological synthesis.

My image of New York. First of all, it has to be a portrait of New York, "documentary" in its appearance and "anthropological synthesis" in its essence, but above all it must be my vision of New York. I am aware that my vision of New York – a vision that has changed over time – is composed of various more or less objective opinions, shared with others and of my very personal feelings of admiration for this city. *Nota bene*, this project is based on my deep conviction of the need to act independently without being subject to dominant, general and photographic dogmas and ideas, including those considered politically and artistically correct. As an author and producer, I

decide on my own about the content and aesthetics of my images as well as their next presentation, and I have no intention of copying what is recognized and rewarded, including financially in the world of contemporary art.

I think that this monograph, prepared for many years, will be my diary of my work, my research, my achievements and my memories of moments lived during the making of "The Frontier" and indirectly an expression of my values, including my artistic philosophy. Decoding it will reveal that "The Frontier" is as well my tribute to my New York, New York, dreamed, studied and real. My New York, a place of my own. New York that gives me so much.

Now, when I prepare my New York's Treatise, I often remember the New York State motto: "Ever upward." Ever upward, ever further, to the border, to cross it...

I do not want be trapped by any border, neither by unimaginable size and complexity of this subject nor by the limitation of my medium: a two-dimensional, mute, "dead" photographic image versus the reality of New York, this "living image".

As the myth says, I must... "have to be ready to go beyond my geographical and psychological horizon."

Andrew Aitch

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