

Lens
MAGAZINE

Fine Art Photography Magazine

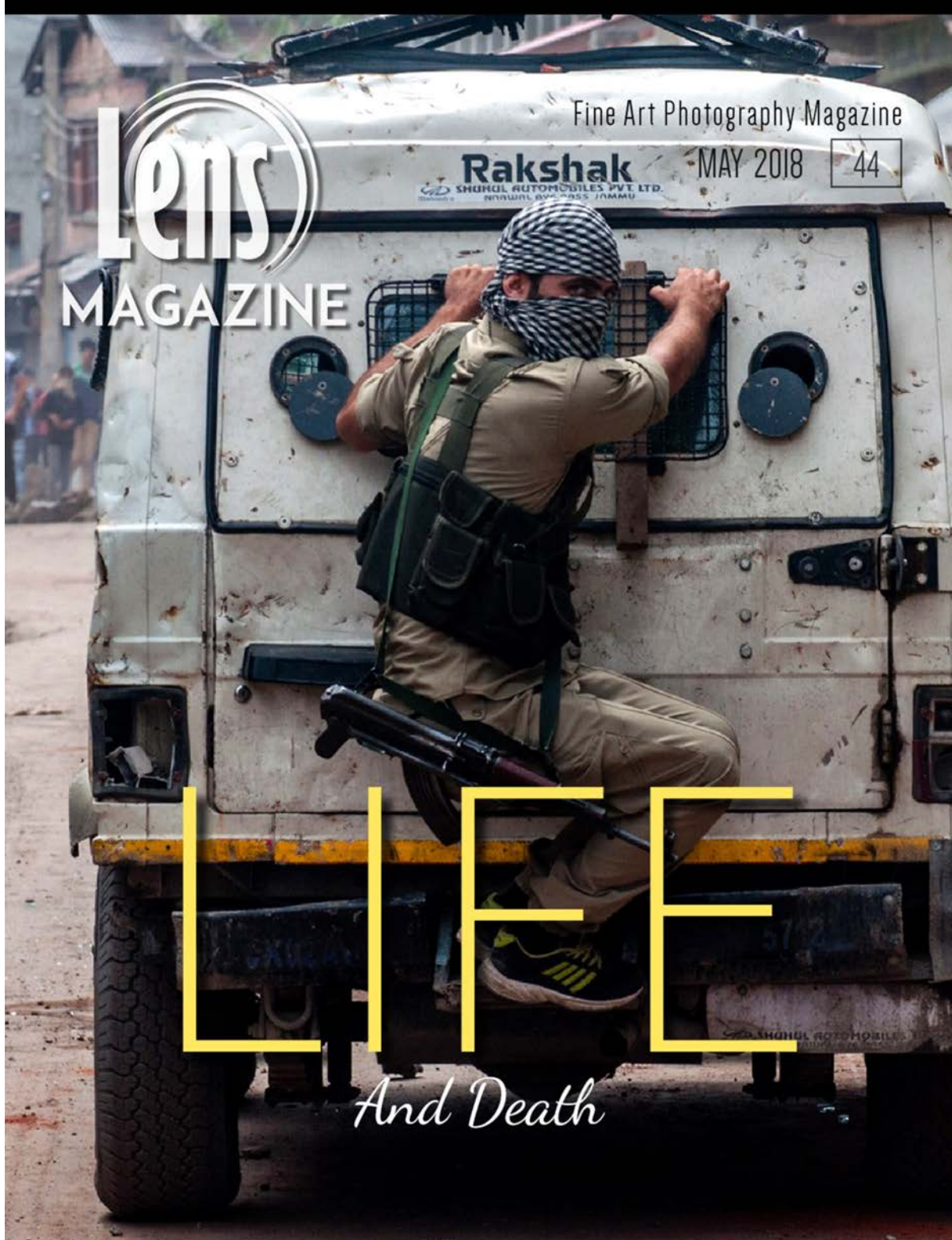
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44

LIFE

And Death



LIFE IN JERUSALEM

— *by Neta Dekel*





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LIFE IN JERUSALEM

— *by Neta Dekel*

” The old city of Jerusalem is one of the most fascinated places on earth. The area of the old city, between the walls, is less than 1 square kilometer, but is sacred to the 3 largest religions – Judaism, Christianity and Islam.

The Old City is home to several sites of key religious importance: the Temple Mount and Western Wall for Jews, the Via Dolorosa and the Church of the Holy Sepulcher for Christians and the Dome of the Rock and al-Aqsa Mosque for Muslims. It was added to the UNESCO World Heritage Site List in 1981.

The Old City is roughly divided into four uneven quarters: the Muslim Quarter, Christian Quarter, Armenian Quarter and Jewish Quarter. There are dozens of churches, mosques, synagogues and other holy places scattered in the small area between the walls, creates endless possibilities for strife.

But, despite this delicate structure in a very small area, most of the people want to live peacefully, work, worship their god and make a living.

Living together in such a small place with a lot of adversaries is a challenge, especially because there are few, but loud, groups of people that try to hurt this delicate co-existence.

I am a street and cultural photographer, and as such the old city of Jerusalem fascinates me. Going in the small alleys of the historical city, feeling the heart-pulse is a unique feeling.

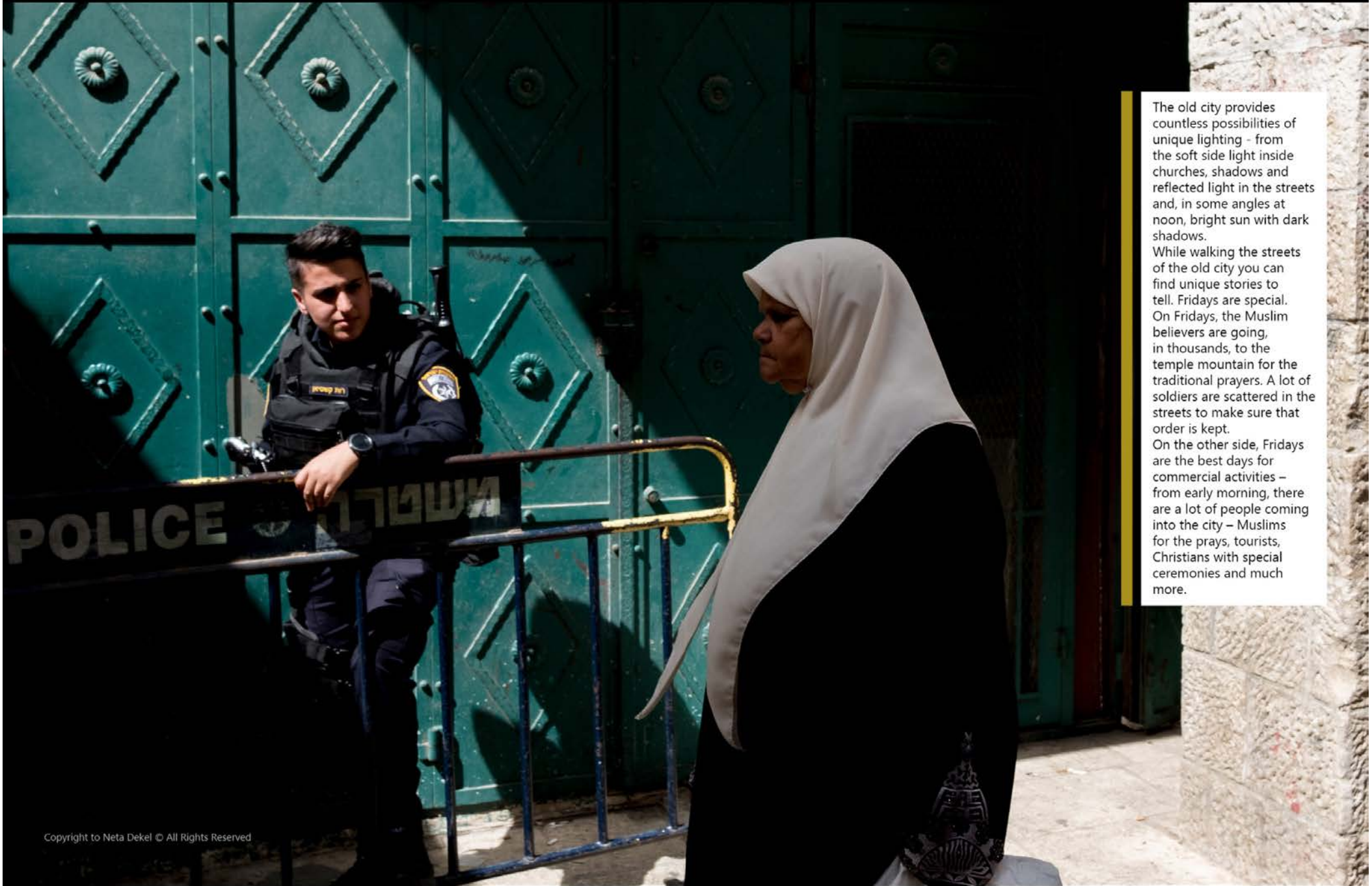
Just imagine that you are standing where King David was living... you are walking exactly where Jesus Christ walked with his believers... it is exiting.

This series of photos is a small selection from my last visit in the old city of Jerusalem, but just a fraction of the photos I have taken in the last 20 years.

My photography strategy is using a small (but powerful) camera (Fujifilm X-T2) with a wide prime lens (23mm, f2) – and getting close. Getting as close as possible to the subject, without losing the context, the environment and the story. Most of the subjects are aware that I am there and taking the photograph. Most of them don't care to be photographed. The secret for that is to be visible, initiate personal contact and give respect to the people. A smile, a small gesture is enough to establish a short-term relationship, and get consent for the photograph.







The old city provides countless possibilities of unique lighting – from the soft side light inside churches, shadows and reflected light in the streets and, in some angles at noon, bright sun with dark shadows.

While walking the streets of the old city you can find unique stories to tell. Fridays are special. On Fridays, the Muslim believers are going, in thousands, to the temple mountain for the traditional prayers. A lot of soldiers are scattered in the streets to make sure that order is kept.

On the other side, Fridays are the best days for commercial activities – from early morning, there are a lot of people coming into the city – Muslims for the prays, tourists, Christians with special ceremonies and much more.



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The selected photographs are part of the daily life in one Friday in Jerusalem – from ceremonies in churches, to street regular scenes to an interactions between soldiers and local Muslims around the Temple Mountain.





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NETA DEKEL

CONTRIBUTOR

“ Photography has been my passion since I started studying it in the early 80's when I was 20-year old. In the early years, I have studied in "Camera

Obscura" - a well-known photography and art school in Tel Aviv.

In those days, I worked with a film-based camera (Nikon FE2) and printed my photography in my own home laboratory. Since then, I specialized in geographic and cultural photography - people, places, nature and landscapes. Although I sometimes experience with other fields of photography, this is my main and most preferred area of photography.

Today I shoot with a Nikon D800, with several lenses. The main lens is Nikon 28-70 F2.8. It gives me the quality of a prime lens with some flexibility to the rapid changes of my subjects. In cultural photography, I believe that if you are not close enough to your subject, the photo cannot be good enough.

For other types of photography, in order to keep my flexibility to the maximum, I carry with me the Nikon 70-200 F2.8 and the Sigma 12-24.

Beyond the technology, Photography is an art, a passion, a way to express myself. When I am holding a camera in my hands, the whole view of the world is changing. I am seeing the world as a sequence of singular frames, instead of a continuous motion.

Frames of impressions, lights, textures, situations - frames of special moments.



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