

“Ula Wiznerowicz’s photographs in *Behind the Curtain* come together in the way a collection of short stories might, stories woven together to tell a larger story both elusive and straight-up sad and difficult (...). This understanding is manifest in her pictures. Rather than put a frame around public, more predictably dramatic, portrayals of her subject, she shares with us a private view, an atmosphere, a way of being that she both reveals and creates. The formalism of the photographs plays both against and with the tumult, resignation, and loneliness of these very particular lives lived out in a quiet, slowly disappearing community. I found myself revisiting this world behind curtains over and over. The quotes that accompany the photographs—as spare yet revealing as the images—drew me further into these rooms where people sit, wait, sleep.”

- *Alexa Dilworth, Centre of Documentary Studies at Duke University, NC, 2012*

Ula Wiznerowicz's is an intensely personal brand of photography. Growing up in the Polish countryside before moving to England in 2006, her work is consumed by ideas of belonging and home and the individual lives that sit under our abstract discussions of economics and progress. Set amidst a stark, often beautiful nation in the middle of a social upheaval, hers are quiet photographs that speak to the breadth of human experience in an oft-ignored land, as well as to photography's surpassing capacity to tell stories that extend beyond the frame of any one image.

- *Smith Journal, Australia, 2012*

As a photographer Wiznerowicz doesn't take pictures from the front row, she rejects her privileges, free passes to an unfamiliar world. She feels the chill of the stage along with the actors, touches the props but doesn't move them, doesn't interfere, doesn't impose. She tries to gently knit her presence into the tattered hair of these difficult human stories. She looks and immortalises. The faces and objects say all there is to say.

What is captivating about the work of Ula Wiznerowicz is a lack of engagement with technology, an honest tolerance of imperfection whenever it appears. This is a cautious approach to photography, observant of the limits of good compositional taste but also of the right of objects to exist in the frame. The faces of the subjects of this sorry tale have not had the signs of their difficult experiences edited out, Wiznerowicz does not taint them with fakery.

- *Jola Sowińska-Gogacz, poet, Poland, 2012*

“Beautiful images submitted by Polish photographer Ula Wiznerowicz belie the underlying reality of alcoholism that pervades the community and culture in which she grew up (...) The disease of alcoholism is often hidden from plain sight, and requires sometimes very subtle observation to detect by outsiders. The images are hiding something from us in the same way that families of alcoholics hide the reality of their lives to the outside world.”

- *Christopher H. Paquette, editor of PHOTO/arts Magazine, 2012*

“This lovely and heartbreaking series of photographs by Poland born artist Ula Wiznerowicz deals with alcoholism and the effect it has on people in a small Polish village. Ula does an amazing job of creating beautiful compositions while capturing emotional and physical turmoil in her work.”

- *Cassandra Smith, Fine Line Magazine, 2012*

“Narrative is a form of secondary payoff, which means we don't pause to look at a mere pretty landscape. Beauty carries a price and in the case of the narratives of Ula Wiznerowicz, it is a very high price (...). The title Behind the Curtain brutally transports the viewer from an aesthetic experience to an existential one. It suggests that the images carry a double meaning. We are confronted with the first circle of (Dante's?) hell. Beautiful landscapes introduce a visual dissonance. Cruel nature, indifferent to human fate and the losing battle fought by the subjects (often absent from the images) against their own weakness. Nature doesn't judge or assess value. Intruding into this record of the external world we find still life images taken indoors - spaces seen through the eyes of an artist. These compositions, while made up of modest everyday objects, can be beautiful too.”

- *Grzegorz Malkiewicz, Nowy Czas Magazine, 2011*

“Walter Sickert said, "An artist must have a good eye, a good hand and a good heart". Yes, I understand why Ula Wiznerowicz won New Sensation 2010. Her good eye is clearly evident while her good heart stands out above all else. Are these Polish photographs? Firstly, they are very painterly. This is no mere photography – it's pure Vermeer (...) These photographs are so painterly that they don't really resemble naturalistic photography. Perhaps because certain shadows have been removed, the colour and light have been subtly manipulated. If it's Photoshop then it's brilliantly used – and does that even matter? Does anyone look at Vermeer and think: "Here he's obviously used a thin brush and palette knife and this stroke is smudged with a cloth." Does that make it a worse painting?”

- *Joanna Ciechanowska, Nowy Czas Magazine, 2011*

“The images presented by Ula Wiznerowicz are, instead, a window onto a distant world, nearly forgotten by the majority of emigrants. It is a cruel world, an empty void in which the only cure for our painful grey of existence is alcohol, a wretched world devoid of content. The artist has made this world more palatable with a subtle palette of colours, which sometimes make it hard to tell if we're looking at a photograph or a painting.”

- *Michal Sedzikowski, Nowy Czas Magazine, 2011*