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IAPP e-Monitor

The monitor on the rear of a digital camera is a device we use to quickly examine information about our photos. The IAPP e-Monitor was designed to give our membership a quick look at what is going on with the IAPP and with panoramic photography in general. It was originated to give our membership quicker information while they await the release of the PANORAMA.

We welcome any and all articles and photos from IAPP members for inclusion into the IAPP e-Monitor. This is a publication for the IAPP, by the IAPP, and about the IAPP.

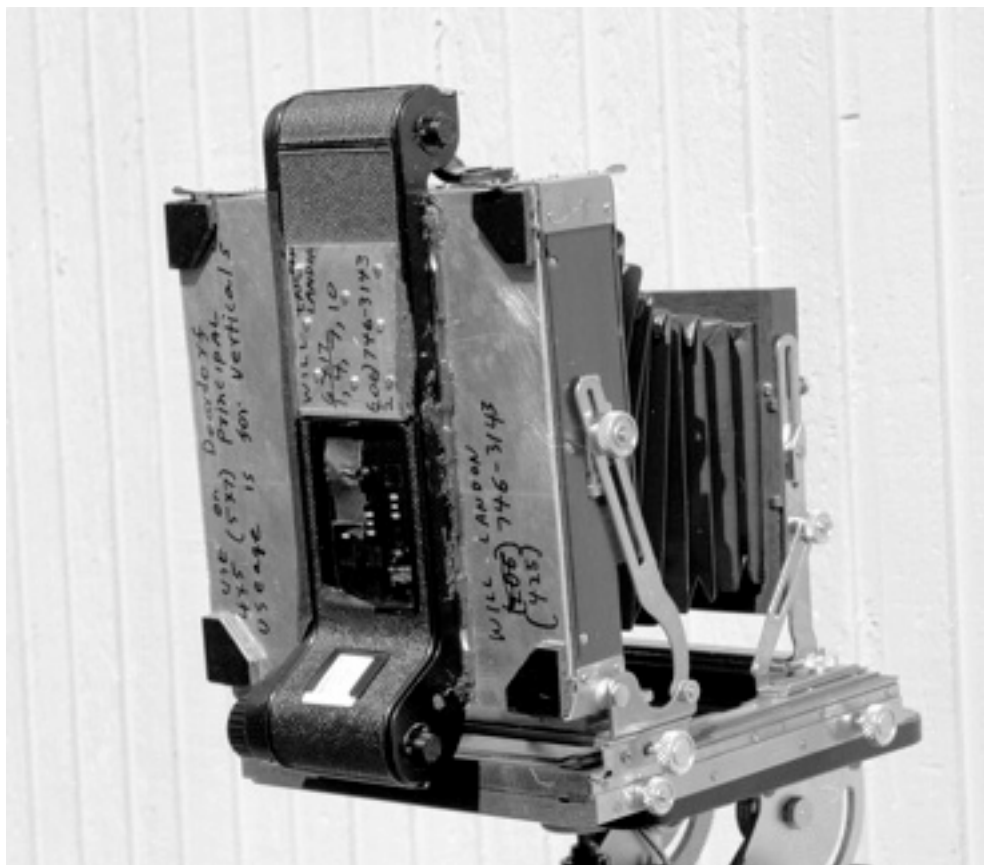


6x17 Vertical Roll Film Back for a 5x7 Deardorf Camera

A vertical 6x17 cm scene is difficult to photograph because it usually requires tilting both the lens and the back to get front to back sharpness. The tilts become more extreme when a longer focal length lens is needed. I located a vertical tulip farm composition with changing colors from near to far, ending up with a back stop of two barns. The public viewing time closed at five PM and the farmer let me drive to the best spot to make the photo. I set up a ten foot ladder with a platform head on top, and mounted my 5x7 inch format Deardorf field camera. I installed a 450 mm lens and tilted both the front and the back considerably in order to get all the rows

included as a sharp composition. I had made a 6x17 roll film back out of two Mamiya backs that was just the ticket for this photo. Most Mamiya backs have a lever arm film advance mechanism that couldn't advance the film in seven inch increments properly. An early version of their roll film backs had sliding window blinds covering a red square that was perfectly suited for manual visual film advance. The resulting photograph was called "Rainbow of Tulips", and for good reason, as section after section was a changing color mirage.

Perhaps of interest was a parking lot drama at the tulip farm after we drove through the gate to the public parking area. There was a lone station wagon parked there with the driver anxiously looking through the drivers side window at his jacket, which contained his car keys. The door was locked, with his family standing nearby, and the farmer willing to help in what ever way that would be needed. We were driving our tent camping vehicle, a 1987 Toyota four runner. We had aluminum stakes, gaffers tape, and the always useful vise grip pliers with us as always, so we lowered the tail gate and got the tools from the tool well. The farmer had used 1.x 2 inch slats to hold up some newly planted shade trees, so he

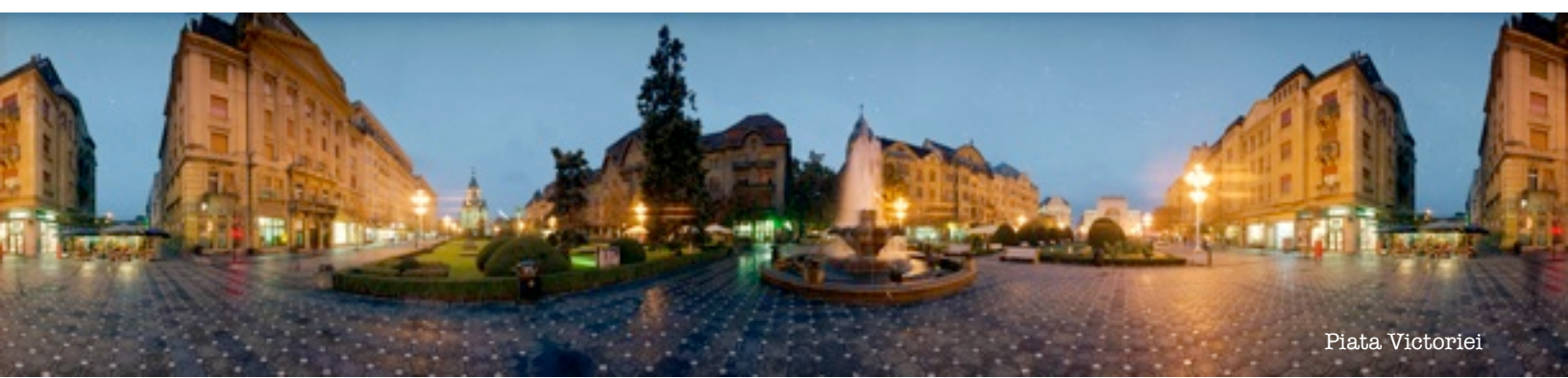


permitted me to use an extra slat for an attempt to open the door.

The vise grip pliers bent the head of the tent stake into a hook on one end and a flat spiral on the the other end. The hook was pushed through the rubber window gasket on the rear seat passenger vent window, and twisted to unlock it. Though a crank window, it could be pushed hard enough to slide the slat through towards the driver's seat and the neatly laid out jacket. The spiral was firmly taped down to the flat slat, so that it would not twist and the hook could be used confidently..

This was done and the hook/slat combination reached the jacket , hooked onto a cuffed sleeve, and pulled to the vent window and extracted it into the anxious hands of the driver. With keys and family in hand, off he went after his encounter with a helpful farmer, and the chance availability of a photographer delayed by the time it took to take a very difficult panoramic photograph.

— Will Landon



Piata Victoriei

Touring the Balkans

Part II: Timisoara

After 6 days in Bela Crkva (including two in Belgrade) I made plans to travel to Timisoara, Romania.

Timisoara is the largest city in western Romania and its culture has been influenced by many nationalities. It was used by the Romans as a crossroads fortress until destroyed by the Tartars in the 13th century. In 1552 it was conquered by the Turks and in 1718 it came under the rule of the Austro-Hungarian Empire where it remained until the end of WWI.

Timisoara was the first European city to illuminate its public streets (1889) and second in the world after New York. It was also the first European city to introduce horse drawn trams (1869). More recently, the revolutions to overthrow Communist rule in Eastern Europe started in Timisoara in 1989.

There are no buses to Timisoara from Serbia and the only train leaves from Vrsac (two hours north of Bela Crkva) at 6 PM. However, the train arrives in Timisoara after midnight and I had visions of sleeping in the train station since, I would have no idea of how to find the hostel.

My Serbian friend, Feri, suggested I take a taxi so I could arrive during the day. His friend in Bela Crkva operated one and would only charge 50 euro (\$70). I accepted and had a pleasant 3 hour drive through the rolling farmlands between Serbia and Romania.

At around 2 PM I was let off about a mile from city center in a light drizzle. Since I was

unfamiliar with the town, I had to inquire as to the direction of city center and the location of the hostel.

It turned out that the hostel was fully booked out. I was given the name of another hostel – again about a mile away – that had plenty of room. I arrived at Hostel Costel a little wet, changed into dry clothes and hung my damp clothes up to dry.

One of the main advantages of staying in hostels, besides the nominal cost, is that almost without exception everyone speaks English. A common language is necessary since travelers come from all parts of the world and speak a wide array of languages. In this hostel, as in all that I stayed in, I was easily the oldest guest. After a light snack and not wanting to miss a moment of photo opps, I headed back to the center of town.

The mild climate and wet pavements, along with illumination from the lights just coming on, made for a beautiful panoramic moment in the Piata Victoriei. Piata Victoriei (above) is lined with beautiful Secession palaces and in the middle is the Lupa Capitolina (Romulus & Remus column) that was a gift from Rome in 1926.

The Piata is anchored on the north with the Romanian Opera House and on the south by the Romanian Orthodox Metropolitan Cathedral. The rain had ceased and families were enjoying the opportunity to spend the evening window shopping while their children fed (P2, next page) and chased the friendly pigeons in the square.

Since the Romanian language uses the Roman alphabet, rather than the Cyrillic alphabet used in most Balkan countries, it was



relatively easy to get along, and with only some difficulty, understand their signs.

The next morning I returned to central Timisoara where I revisited Piata Victoriei along with Piata Unirii and Piata Libertatii that are highlighted on the city center walking tour. Since it was the weekend, there were lots of people visiting the city sites. I had the opportunity to photograph a bride being “officially” photographed in Piata Unirii, although I wasn’t impressed with either the posing or the background.

My modus operandi on this trip, as in past ones, involved carrying approximately 100 contact prints (with my contact info on the back) that I handed out to individuals who showed an interest in the panoramic process. Some of the images were from my previous Balkan trips, while others were from the USA and other recognizable places. Fortunately, many people, usually under 30, asked questions about the panoramic camera and panoramic process.

Graffiti seems to permeate many areas of the Balkans and Timisoara is no exception.

Since some graffiti is quite artistic, I started recording some images using the Fuji 6x17 camera. This format is ideal for capturing the images posted on fences, buildings, and walls where the artists work as high as they can reach while inscribing their message along the length of their chosen canvas. The first image (P-3) was taken on the side of a building fronting on Piata Unirii and the second (P-4, next page) was taken on a fence near the train station.

Piata Unirii (P-5, next page) is called “Timisoara’s Baroque Treasury” by the poet Franz Liebhardt. The impressive 18th century Baroque Palace dominates the square’s south side while the magnificent Scout Bank, an art nouveau building, stands on the northwest corner. The Baroque, Serbian Orthodox Cathedral, built in 1745 – 48 and the Serbian Bishop’s Residence are located on the west side of the square. A short distance from the square is the Banat Ethnographic Museum, the oldest building in Timisoara.

Piata Libertatii (P-6, next page) includes many buildings displaying Secessionist



P4



P5



P6



architecture. The middle of the square is dominated by the Mary-Nepomuk Monument which was brought by water from Vienna in 1756. The military headquarters of the Banat was located in the Piata and for a long time the square was known as “Parade Square”. On the north side of the square stands the “old city hall” which was built in 1731 as the German Community Hall.

Bucharest

After 3 full days in Timisoara I caught the afternoon train to Bucharest where I had

booked a bed at the Butterfly Villa Hostel. The train arrived at 10 PM. I had directions to the hostel which read:

“From the train station catch bus no. 178 and take it to the 4th stop. The hostel is a short walk back, past the intersection of STIRBEI and PARA TATU. Take the next right into the little side street (Str. C. Stahi) with a paint store on the corner. Walk 50m and the hostel will be on your right opposite a little shop. Enter through the big black gate set in an arch.”

Amazingly, I was able to find the hostel with little trouble, even though it was night and the street signs were difficult to make out. Arriving



P7

late in the day never seemed to be a problem since hostel caretakers were usually up late, along with travelers who were preparing a late night snack, reading, or working on their laptops.

I was late rising the next morning and, as usual, elected to get a little to eat from a street vendor or a small café while walking into town. The Cismigiu Garden Park, that I walked through every day on my way to downtown Bucharest, provided me with a multitude of panoramic photo opportunities. The main walkway through the park (P7) reminded me of the Dark Hedges in Ireland, while its many paths were filled with pleasant surprises.

In one alcove, furnished with concrete tables and benches, a large group of men (P-9) were engrossed in games of checkers, chess, mahjong, dominos, and backgammon. When I asked to take some photographs no one objected. Of course, I was very free with my panoramic contact prints which were greatly appreciated. After stopping morning and night to record the ever-changing gaming scenes, the players hardly noticed me.

The various paths also led me to the lake, the children's

playground, sculpture garden and the memorial to the 378 USA soldiers who died in Romania in WWII.

Bucharest has many grand boulevards as a result of Nicolae Ceausescu's grandiose visions. In one case he mimicked Paris's Champs-Elysees, including the Arc d'Triumph. Another excess resulted in his building the Palace of Parliament at a cost 5 billion dollars, even though Romanians were starving. It is the second largest building in the world, next to the Pentagon. All of the attractive buildings in present day Bucharest pre-date the reign of communism.

Revolution square (P10, next page), where the revolution to overthrow the communist government began in December 1989, is home to several memorials that honor those who lost their lives during the revolution. The Memorial of Rebirth, an 82 foot pillar, is the centerpiece of the square and honors the patriots of the uprising. The square also houses the former Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party building where Nicolae Ceausescu gave his last speech on 21 December 1989. He managed to escape the booing crowd and was later captured and shot on 25 December. My guide, who gave a very detailed



P9



P10



P11



P12

description of the events, and I later had lunch (P11) at a nearby eatery.

I then journeyed to University Square where an enormous bronze sculpture (P12) titled "Caruta cu Paiate" was created in 2010 to honor Romania's favorite playwright Ion Luca Caragiale. This sculpture features characters from his plays. Beside this sculpture sits a 20 foot bronze statue of Caragiale seeming to admire his characters.

In order to get across the street after leaving the sculpture, I had to use the underground passage that was filled with retail stores and the entrance to the metro. Happily, a couple stopped to chat as I was taking a

panoramic photo of the space. After an hour of conversation I asked them to pose for a photo (P13, next page).

A trip to Romania would not be complete without a visit to Bran Castle. This castle with its towers and turrets is perched on a 60m high rock overlooking the town of Bran and is better known as Dracula's Castle, thanks to a myth created by Bram Stoker in his book which was first published in 1897. I found the castle unremarkable and difficult to photograph using my panoramic camera. My point and shoot had to suffice.

However, 35 miles away was The Peles Castle, in Sinaia, the most spectacular castle I



have encountered in Europe. Not only was it beautiful from the outside, but the carved wood interior, sculptures, furniture, and furnishings were magnificent.

Our group stopped in Brasov after seeing the castles. We visited the Biserica Neagra (Black Church) which got its name due to the blackening of the exterior stone wall during a fire in 1689. We then had a bite to eat in the

town square (Piata Statulul) (P15) before the 2 hour drive back to Bucharest.

The next day was one of relaxation and just strolling through more old parts of the town. It seemed that each little side street was filled with a surprise (P16). Toward evening I packed up and said goodbye to my hostel hosts as I left to catch the night train for Tarnovo, Bulgaria

Next month – Part III - Bulgaria

—Dave Orbock



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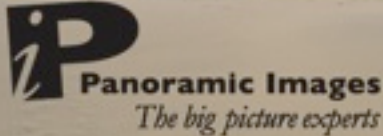
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