

What are the most vibrant memories from your childhood in Bulgaria?

There is a lot. There are memories of different periods of my adolescence, but there is that particular memory that I recalled recently, after a talk with my father. It's a memory from the time that I grabbed a spray can for first time. I was maybe ten or twelve years old. I wrote the name of the local football club along with some penises around. My father was always hard with me, but that time he didn't punished me for it. I recall this memory because now, after going out of prison, for the graffiti of others, my father told me how he will never forgive himself for not punishing me that day. In fact i did stopped painting that day and the day i restarted doing graffiti, the american way, was not connected to that first action... But this is something that he still can not understand.

Why did you become a Journalist?

I started documenting graffiti when i was a teenager. I was a graffiti writer myself and like every other writer i had to photograph what me and my friends did. It is the way the graffiti artist are archiving their works and adventures. The graffiti are ephemeral and they don't last long. You have to get a photo before its gone. With the time i started to be more interested in not doing but of documenting the life that we lived - instead of the finished graffiti pieces. The movement of graffiti had something special and what was interesting to me was the personality and the energy of the graffiti artists. The transformation of being actor into being a spectator took several years. It was not a decision, at least not a conscious one.

Later when i created The Grifters and I stopped writing and i continued following and discovering new artist that have dedicated their lives on what they do... Becoming a journalist was a process that took time. It wasn't something that happened on purpose and I can't tell why i became a journalist. I don't like titles and i don't want to be labeled. Neither as a photographer or writer or journalist or curator or whatever else. Accepting a certain title has always being equal to putting myself a borders and limits. I prefer to be free and to do whatever i like to do without borders. In moment that the police knocked down my door, they put me, my fiancé and my friend into custody, they pressed charges against us and what i have posted on my website i felt for first time that my journalistic rights were violated. That is the moment when i allowed myself and other to call me journalist. What i did with The Grifters and what i still do is a work of a journalist.

Can you remember the first day you arrive in Paris?

I remember the first day when i arrived in Paris, yes. As most of the people who are arriving in the Air Port of Charles de Gaulle, taking the s-train to the city of Paris - i was shocked. The

first impressions were bizarre - long ride through the suburb ghettos in a train full of weird people. "Train-musicians" singing songs in french with east european accent and begging for money the lost tourist with their face expressions of fright and surprise caused from the the image they had of Paris from the movies and the photos they have seen. The first meeting with reality is a shock. Could you tell us about the reason of your imprisonment? It had to do only with the photos and your site only? The reason of my imprisonment is The Grifters. The website, the clothing brand the Facebook page, the twitter account, the Instagram profile and everything that get posted on that platforms. Without any solid proofs, except the materials shown on that medias, in a country as France - that pretends to be developed, to stand for an example of democracy and tolerance, freedom of speech and expression - in 2014 a team of "specialised" police, build a case based on screenshots from the internet. The result was 4 months remanded in custody with the accused for conspiracy (same accusation that is given to terrorists), vandalism and provocation for drug using. The story doesn't end there - I am still under investigation, the case hasn't moved, there is still no date for a trial and the most ridiculous part - i am being separated from my fiancé by law - We are not allowed to get in touch by any form of communication since the month of May 2014... Today is March 2015.

What are new things that you learn about the people during your imprisonment?

It might sound horrible, everyone has to go to prison for a certain period of time in order to understand the true meaning and value of freedom. It is strong experience to be taken out of your comfort zone, to be put by force in a cage with other people, completely different from you and to be told when to eat to sleep, to wake up and when and how to walk. It is astonishing to meet the people in prison and to hear their stories. To see that prison is full only with poor people and only small time crooks from any race and nationality but french.

It is good to see where people taxes are going and how bad human life can be treated. What is terrifying is not the criminals that you think you will be in prison but the reality-check that you do when you realise how the system works and how the law does not apply equally to everyone. Nothing new to say than what we have heard or read but when you see it from your own perspective it will blow your mind. The topic is huge, but for a conclusion i would say that real criminals are not yet in prison and if you have never experienced and seen with your own eyes what is happening inside, between the walls of prison you should never open your mouth to talk about justice and freedom, freedom of speech and freedom of expression.

What are new things did you learn about yourself during your imprisonment?

I have learned to forgive and to be patient. More than before. Also i learned to be more tolerant. Those are the skills that are in first need for your stay in prison, and if you don't have them, if you refuse to learn them - you will become crazy and, that, could even bring to an emotional crush or a suicide. I used the time only to observe my self, to train my body and mind. Physical and mental training everyday. I will tell my children that jail was the university that i never did.

What were the reactions of your own people during your imprisonment?

My friends and my beloved ones were shocked. They where really angry how the story ended and my close friends have changed their own perception about freedom. My family didn't believed me when i told them the reason i was put in prison. They thought i am hiding something - where i come from, a country that is corrupted and no better developed - it is not possible to get a sentence like that. The biggest nightmare was for my fiancé. She was left alone and blocked in Paris. She organised friends and family to help out and until today she stay strong, supporting and waiting for this story to be over. That is true love and something that really few people are capable to do. This is the thing that keep me going on! I am very grateful to the people who wrote me frequently and my friends who traveled each week 200km to bring me clothes and books. Also the people who send me money, so i can eat good in prison. This are things that i will never forget along with the people who spent hours in their busy lives to write me letters. My lawyers and the countless hours spent on working and trying to put me out... The list goes on and on but yes, with two words i have seen only good things from my people, and that things were amazing.

I saw a photo of you holding books after leaving prison. What books did you read during your imprisonment?

Yes that is photo i took when i went out of prison for a souvenir of my "summer holiday". My life is documented with photographs. I love to do pictures to remember the important moments. The book i held is one small part of books that i read in prison. Books for self development, marketing and behavioural psychology. I didn't knew how long i would stay there but i turned the lost time into something positive that would be helpful for the future.

Who was the worst prisoner that you met?

Really hard to tell not because the prison was full of bad people, but because i really there was't anyone bad with me or the rest of the people. People usually imagine prisons based on what they saw in movies - dirty place, full of ugly people with tattoos and hidden knives everywhere. What i saw in Fleury-Merogis was different - there was a tolerance between the inmates, they were almost all united because of the fact they were victims of the system.

There was not lot of troubles between prisoners. The community was strong and people were helping each other - with a advices about law and how to deal with your legal and other prison paper works. Problems were always caused of the prison wardens and prison regime itself than the prisoners. The worst prisoner i met was a fat Romanian dude, who was there for rape and not because of that fact, but because he recently discovered God and he thought now, that he is a prophet and he have to convert everyone else. It was funny at first place to listen his nonsense but later started to annoy me.

Did your view on life change after your release?

Yes my view changed, of course. My life itself changed and it will never be the same. I look positive on what have happened and i am keeping forward with all my forces.

Tell me a little bit about your last exhibition “Paradigm Shift”.

The Paradigm Shift is a scientific term that i found explained in the book “The 7 Habbits of highly effective people” - “A paradigm shift is when we abandon an incorrect paradigm for a correct one. Covey describes how once he was frustrated in the subway to see the very bad behaviour of a man's children, but when he found out that they were coming from the hospital where the mother had just died an hour before, his perspective changed completely.” - Something similar that i have noticed in the world of art/graffiti and how the people understand the work of the artists. Using only the pieces of information that they are given by medias, family friends and etc. People build their paradigms from that information and they put stamps like “legal” ”illegal” “good” or “bad” on things that they don't understand. They don't look deep to understand the meaning of the things because they are also ignorant. In that exhibition i exposed 42 film photographs of my personal archive that represents an utopic view of the ambience and the adventures, that i have followed the graffiti writers. That exhibition was a great success and people from all layers of the community including lawyers and justice workers have appreciated my work, the same very work that have placed me in prison at first place. For the promotion of the show i made a video, where i asked pedestrians about graffiti and street art. We saw how confused people are in their understanding on this topic and how their own opinion is manipulated by social norms and what they have been told.

How easy was to restart “The Grifters” after your release? Did you find the support you expected ?

Restarting The Grifters was not an easy job and is still not done on 100%. I am still working and developing the new website together with a brand new concept. It takes time and a lot of energy but yes, i have found the support i needed, i always had it from the people i work with, and my friends. The fact that they tried to shut down The Grifters it means that what i have done through the years, actually matters more than i thought. Choosing "Freedom is not defined by safety" as a motto of The Grifters was kind of a prophecy.

What influence you most in your life?

Love influence me mostly in my life.

Who are your heroes?

Jesus.

Tell me a little bit about your travel in Greece.

Greece is my favourite country in the world. I have been to Greece many times and one day i want to live there again. I love the country and i love the people of Greece.

What do you think about Greek Crisis?

I am not happy about it. When i called my video "What crisis?" it was when we visited in 2013 an i really didn't saw crisis. I saw happy people. Full cafeterias and restaurants. People dancing and trowing flowers in the "Bouzuki" and i definitely didn't have the image of seeing a country in crisis. The sad depressive people of Paris give me impression more of a crisis than what we saw in Greece. I love the mentality of the Greek people and their freedom-fighting spirit.

Have you ever been in danger on the streets?

Not really.

How are the things in Paris after the Charlie Hebdo terror attack?

There is more police everywhere. The army is walking around with machine guns. Thats it. People were talking a lot about it and hashtagging on the social networks. What actually was more interesting to me was that people started to talk more about the freedom of speech and

expression. What happened to Charlie Hebdo is no difference to me than what police did to The Grifters - just another hit against the freedom of speech.

Complete the phrases

Art is... FART

Graffiti is... GAY

My life is... GOOD

Think yourself as time traveler. What would you say to 16 years old self?

Go home Boris, you are drunk.