



PHOTOGRAPHY

Frankfurt Through My Lens

Most people only pass through Frankfurt. I lived there for the length of a research project, and these are the photographs I like best from that time.

BY ANDREA ESPOSITO · OCTOBER 24, 2026

Frankfurt has a reputation, and it is mostly a transit one. It is the airport where you change planes, the skyline of banks that people call “Mainhattan,”¹ the home of the European Central Bank. It is a city that many people cross without ever really arriving in it.

I did the opposite: I stayed. For the length of a research project at the university, my work took me to Pfungstadt, a small town south of Frankfurt.² I chose to live in Frankfurt anyway and to commute. I **have written before** about how quickly small towns bore me, and I wanted to come home, at the end of the day, to a place that had something going on in it. Between conferences, trips to see my girlfriend, and visits to my family, Frankfurt became the place I kept returning to.

I did not go there to take photographs—still, the camera came along, as it always does, and every so

often the city gave me something I wanted to capture. What follows is a selection: the frames I like most, shot on the days I felt inspired. There may be others scattered around my hard drive, but these are the ones I keep going back to.

¹A nickname that combines “Main,” the river, with “Manhattan,” on account of the skyline.

²Pfungstadt is a small town south of Frankfurt, in the state of Hesse.

Home

Briefly after my arrival, I was immediately greeted by the stereotypical German weather of March. As such, part of my first days were spent at home. Needless to say, boredom was quickly taking a hold of me—especially since I come from the south of Italy and I am really used to enjoy an averagely-good weather. Until, suddenly, a shy sun was creeping past some clouds.

The late-afternoon light was crossing the floor of the living room in a way that was *beautiful*. I was extremely bored in a house that was new to me. So I took my camera and started searching for spots of light that caught my interest. There they were. A tray of candles in moss, some glass details, and some TV remotes.



Still Life - Calmness in Frankfurt

March 18, 2026 · Frankfurt, Germany
Fujifilm X-T30 II · XF35mmF1.4 R ·
35mm · f/11 · 1/20s · ISO 800

It may seem stupid, but those details spoke to me. It is the sort of things that tells you someone really *lives* here, and not only *sleeps* here. Outside, Frankfurt was quiet (I was staying in the periphery of Frankfurt, so traffic was much less than you could expect from such a city). This calm, warm, and cozy detail played

into it. Every other photograph in this post exists, in a way, because I had somewhere quiet to come back to. This photo, for simple that it is, reminds me of appreciating the place I live in.

From Above

Luckily, the weather got better. I went around in the city, going into the city center and enjoying the romantic old town. Obviously, I stopped at the Dom. The Dom is one of the few places in the city where the old and the new fit in the same frame, and it lets

you climb up to see it. From the top of its tower, I took two photographs a few minutes apart, standing more or less in the same spot. I basically only had to turn around.

Frankfurt Skyline March 22, 2026 ·
Frankfurt, Germany
Fujifilm X-T30 II · XF35mmF1.4 R ·
35mm · f/13 · 1/280s · ISO 320



On one side, the towers. The skyline. I did not want to take yet another postcard-like shot of this same place, so I was looking at the crowd of shapes leaning on each other, leaning into the cacophony of the big

economics buildings against the smaller residential ones.



Frankfurt am Main March 22, 2026 ·
Frankfurt, Germany
Fujifilm X-T30 II · XF35mmF1.4 R ·
35mm · f/11 · 1/600s · ISO 320

On the other side, the Main, the river that gives the city half of its name. The iron footbridge crosses it in the foreground, the other bridges fade into the haze, and the light turns the water into glitter.

Both shots are in black and white. I reach for black and white because I was respectively captured by the “brutalism” of concrete patterns and shapes, and by the contrast between land and bridges and water. I feel like colour would only have been noise in these.

From the River

I continued walking around, descending towards the river bank and walking for quite some time.

European Central Bank Building
March 19, 2026 · Frankfurt, Germany
Fujifilm X-T30 II · XF35mmF1.4 R ·
35mm · f/4 · 1/1800s · ISO 320



A great deal of Europe's economic news is born inside this building. It is strange to stand in front of something you have only ever seen in headlines and discover that it is a tall, slightly twisted box of glass with a cheerful little antenna on top. I shot it in colour

because the colour was the point: a teal sky, teal glass, and a dark wedge splitting the façade in two. The contrast was already built into the architecture, and I did not have to look for it.



A Very Punctual DB Train March 19,
2026 · Frankfurt, Germany
Fujifilm X-T30 II · XF35mmF1.4 R ·
35mm · f/4 · 1/3800s · ISO 320

While walking, I also noticed this bridge. I got curiously attracted by two balloons—or whatever they are—on its railings. I was wondering how they got there, and whether they serve a purpose or are there just because someone left them. I raised my camera, to capture them. And suddenly, a Deutsche Bahn train

(I suppose an S-Bahn by the look of it) goes through the bridge. I said (sarcastically) to myself that *that* was perfect: the only time a Deutsche Bahn train is punctual³, is for ruining a photo. But then I looked at it, and for some reason I liked the picture even more.

³It is kind of a running joke that Deutsche Bahn trains are always late or with problems. I will be honest and say that I do not feel like it was that bad, but maybe I got lucky.

Underneath

Needless to say, during my stay there I took the S-Bahn some time. Admittedly, not as much as I expected (I also spent 6 months in Munich—there I really abused the underground stations and the

Deutschland Ticket). One day, I was going to the airport to reach a conference. I got to the station, and I looked up.

Patterns Towards Darkness April 11,
2026 · Frankfurt, Germany
Fujifilm X-T30 II · XF23mmF2.8 R WR ·
23mm · f/4 · 1/850s · ISO 320

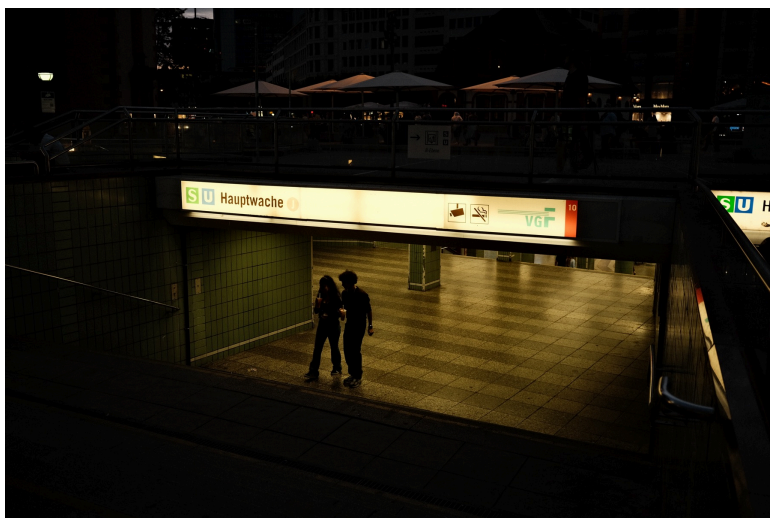


Here the brutalism rule applies in its purest form. Concrete openings sit inside one another like frames within frames, each smaller than the last, until they dissolve into black. Scaffolding shows through the first one, and a patch of light and shadow falls on

the wall. Stations are designed to be walked through quickly, with your eyes on a screen or a timetable. I am glad I was early enough to allow myself to loop up.

After Dark

I will end where the day ends.



Hauptwache September 11, 2026 · Frankfurt,
Germany
Fujifilm X-T30 II · XF23mmF2.8 R WR · 23mm ·
f/2.8 · 1/100s · ISO 400

There is no real story behind this one. I fell in love

with the light of the Hauptwache station: the green

tiles, the glowing sign, the floor that looks wet even when it is not. I took a handful of shots from different angles, trying to get the camera to see it the way I did. Then a couple walked into the frame, and in some way I feel like they completed it. I do not know them, and they will never know that they are in my

favourite photograph of the station. Somehow the empty version of the shot was missing something, and they supplied it.

What stayed

Looking at the photos together, I notice that they are arranged by distance. A living room, a view from above, a façade, a distant bridge, a ceiling, and finally, small and in silhouette, two people. I did not plan any of it. I went to Frankfurt for work and expected to take photographs only when the work allowed.

What I took away is that a big city rewards looking. It does not hand you its frames, and you have to be willing to stop, look up, and turn around. I am grateful that I got to live in this one long enough to do so.

The photos I chose here kind of reflect what I think about Frankfurt. A cacophonous city. A mix of cement and glass, but also the natural river. A mix of modernity, but also romantic architecture. A mix of noise, but also silence.

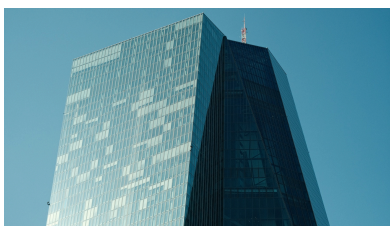
There are more frames on my hard drive, and perhaps some of them will find their way here another day.

Until next time!

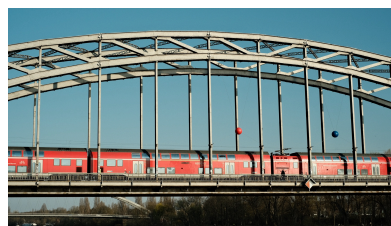
Photographs



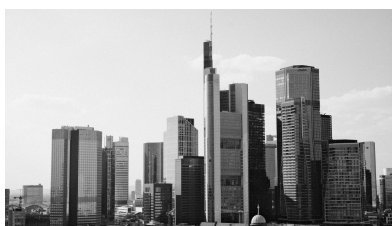
01 Still Life - Calmness in Frankfurt
Frankfurt, Germany · p. 2



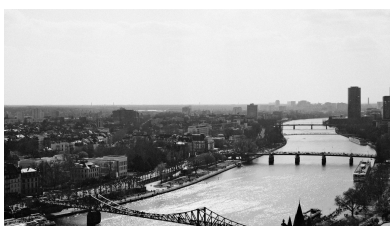
02 European Central Bank Building
Frankfurt, Germany · p. 4



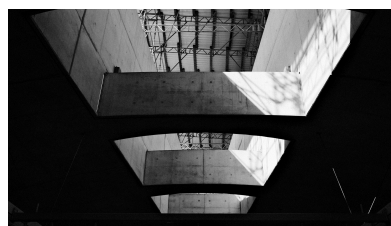
03 A Very Punctual DB Train
Frankfurt, Germany · p. 4



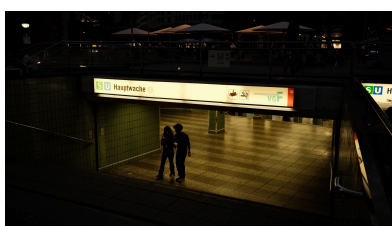
04 Frankfurt Skyline
Frankfurt, Germany · p. 3



05 Frankfurt am Main
Frankfurt, Germany · p. 3



06 Patterns Towards Darkness
Frankfurt, Germany · p. 5



07 Hauptwache
Frankfurt, Germany · p. 5

This story was originally published on **Substack**. [Read the original](#).
Text and photographs © 2026 Andrea Esposito. Find more at <https://espositoandrea.github.io>.