

Franz Kafka ...

# Whispers in Prague

Šeptání v Praze · Flüstern in Prag



JP Beukes Jr



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available as  
e-book.



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The city of Prague is undoubtedly any photographer's nightmare. Where do you start? What to capture or to ignore? The themes that can be pursued are endless.

Prague is about people, people who come to experience its otherworldly grace, as well as, sometimes, its unavoidable soulless tourist kitsch. Regardless, people can only experience Prague through myriad emotions: from joy through to anguish. Ultimately, Prague in all its forms can only be loved.

Prague leaves me speechless; and so, naturally I was drawn to cementing my memories and my emotions by combining Prague – the city of Franz Kafka – with its people.

I have captured Kafka's Prague in a grainy black and white style, emulating the sombre moods that are so beautifully portrayed in his writings. This was a change from photographing popular tourist sights, to observing people and their constantly changing moods, and instead, matching these images to Kafka's words.

All the photos in this book were taken in Prague and in Terezin. The only exception is the photo of the praying mantis (page 123), which came and sat on my breakfast table in a town called Siteki, in The Kingdom of Swaziland, Africa. This incident and photo inspired me to create this book.

*JP Beukes Jr*

*For Glenda, Natalie and Liesel*

Franz Kafka

“We photograph things in order to drive them out of our minds.  
My stories are a way of shutting my eyes.”

*Franz Kafka*











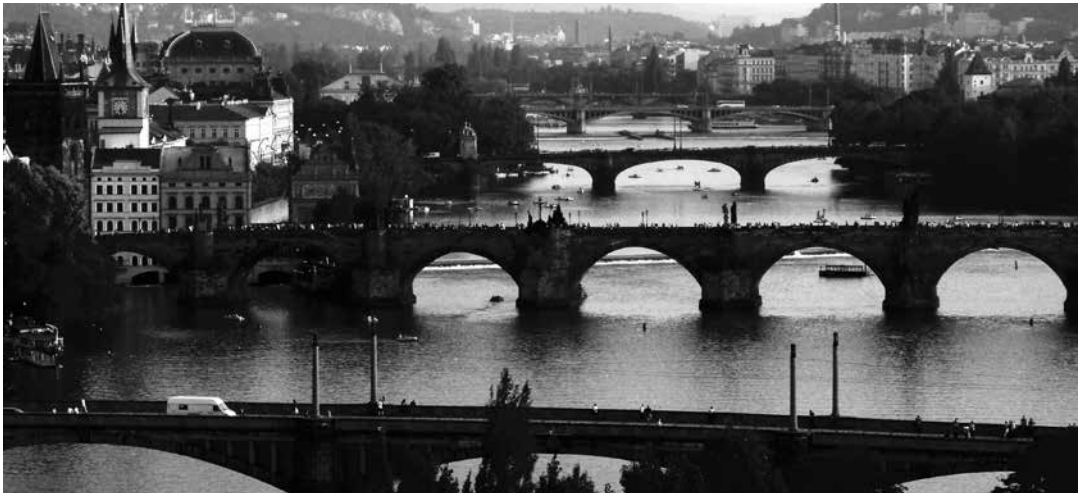
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PART ONE

# **STREETS of PRAGUE**



Page 15 “I never wish to be easily defined. I’d rather float over people’s minds as something strictly fluid and non-perceivable; more like a transparent, paradoxically iridescent creature, rather than an actual person.”

Page 16 “Association with human beings lures one into self-observation.”

Page 17 “‘What has happened to me,’ he thought. ‘It was no dream.’”

Page 18 “Everything that you love, you will eventually lose, but in the end, love will return in a different form.”

Page 19 “I think that we ought to read only the kind of books that wound or stab us. If the book that we’re reading doesn’t wake us up with a blow to the head, what are we reading for?”

Page 20 “You are so vulnerably haunting. Your eeriness is terrifyingly irresistible.”

Page 21 “The history of mankind is the instant between two strides taken by a traveller.”

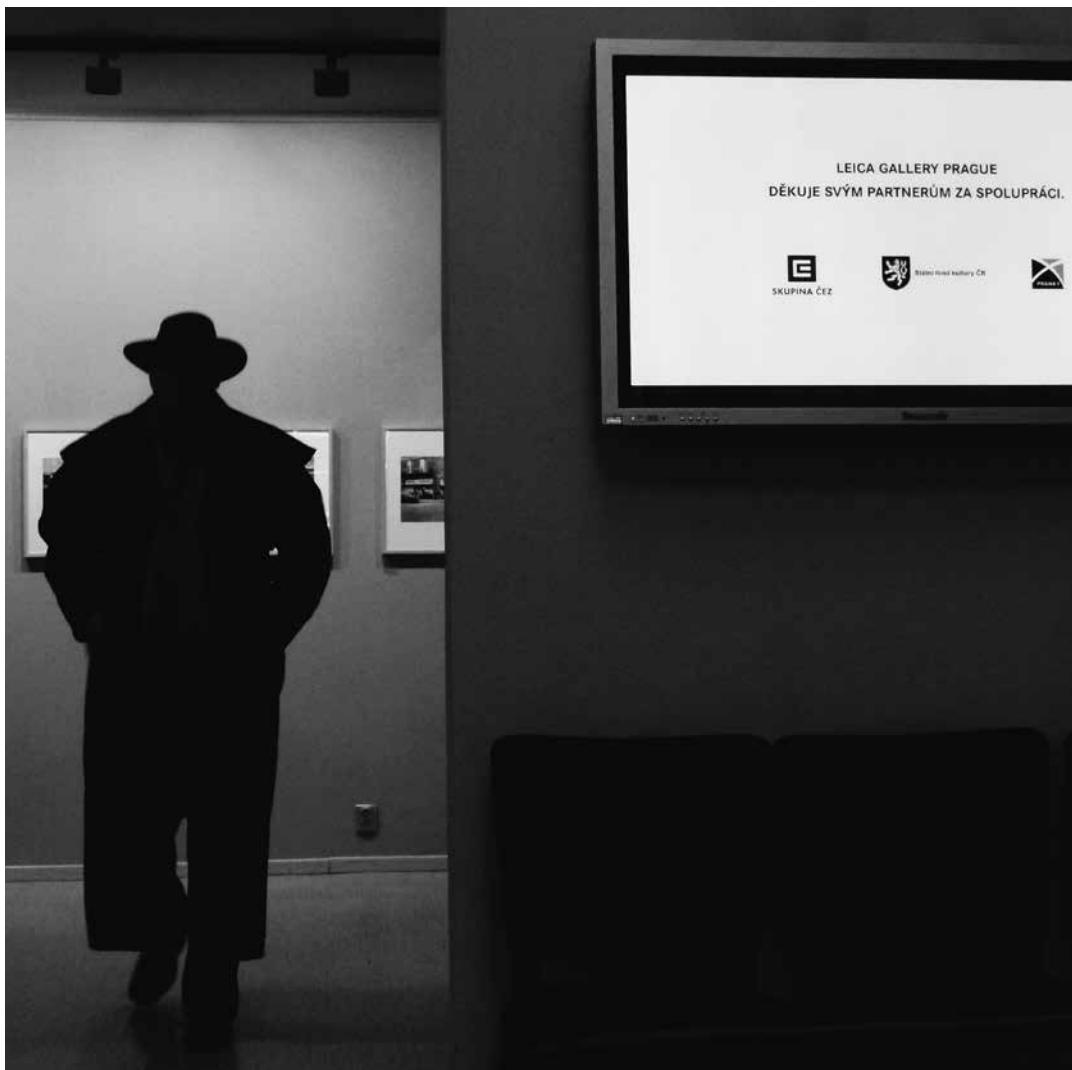
Page 22 “I’m tired. I can’t think of anything and want only to lay my face in your lap, feel your hand on my head and remain like that through all eternity.”

Page 23 “If the literature we are reading does not wake us, why do we read it? A literary work must be an ice-axe to break the sea frozen inside us.”

Page 24 “I dream of a grave, deep and narrow, where we could clasp one another in our arms as with clamps, and I would hide my face in you and you would hide your face in me, and nobody would ever see us any more.”

Page 25 “I no longer know if I wish to drown myself in love, vodka or the sea.”

*Franz Kafka*



“I never wish to be easily defined. I’d rather float over people’s minds as something strictly fluid and non-perceivable; more like a transparent, paradoxically iridescent creature rather than an actual person.”



“Association with human beings lures one into self-observation.”





“‘What has happened to me,’ he thought. ‘It was no dream’.”