

«So far as we feel sympathy, we feel we are not accomplices to what caused the suffering. Our sympathy proclaims our innocence as well as our impotence.»

–Susan Sontag in *Regarding the Pain of Others*

Most art documenting the suffering of others ends up being, to a great degree, about us, instead of them. We are talking about how it is hard to look at the depicted poverty, how we feel about it. How we feel creating the art.

Offering some minor help by donating to the poorest amongst our society ends up being about us. About our feeling better. About our being a good person.

To underline this, to address this topic in practice, I asked three beggars on the streets of Gothenburg to take a photo of me, in place of me taking theirs. I am trying to shake off a bit of the vanity, and I am paying for it by not having these dramatic, aesthetic portraits of the poor as a result. At the same time, I am introducing another layer of vanity – not regarding the work anymore, but myself – by displaying depictions of my own face as art.

The titles of the pictures mark their photographers' names.

None of the photographs, taken with a Hasselblad 503CW medium format camera on Ilford XP2 Super 400 film, have been cropped.