

odloty² hesji



Sławek "hesja" Krajniewski

Photos, contents, cover design: Sławek “hesja” Krajniewski • www.hesja.pl

Publisher: Invert Marketing

Layout and printing: Marcin Saldat • www.saldat.pl

Translation: Jacek Siminski • jsiminski@gmail.com

Editing and Proofreading: Ian Piper

Support: “foto-tip” Photo Store

Partners: “Fly Film” foundation, Association of Polish Aviation Photographers AIR-ACTION

Website: www.odlotyhesji.pl

Warsaw, April 2013

“Rarely have I seen a collection of images that encapsulates my passion, taken by a man who shares the same aviation ethos as my own. I defy anyone with even a passing interest in aviation... not to be seduced at what lies within these pages, you will sense the power, hear the roar, smell the AVTUR, appreciate the passion and fall in love.”

Ian Piper



Ladies and Gentlemen! It is a pleasure for me to invite you to yet another adventure with “Hesja’s Highs” (“Odloty hesji”). The message behind this new edition of the album is defending a quite brave thesis, a statement which is going to be unveiled in the following pages and defended, using yet another set of my favorite aviation photographs, most of which were taken between the years 2010 and 2012. The story is completed with excerpts of my reports from the events from which the photos were taken.

I strongly believe that encountering my aviation photography will be a true pleasure for you, and what is more you will appreciate aviation even more looking at it from a slightly different, artistic angle. I sincerely hope that “Hesja’s Highs” becomes a stimulus, which will change your perception of aviation.

The “Hesja’s Highs 2” album would not have been possible without the kind help of Foto-Tip photo store, and thanks to them, I am able to present my aero-photo-passion to you, by offering you a unique opportunity to ex-



fol. Tomasz Szczęch

perience it directly through this book. The Fly Film foundation I had pleasure of working with during the unique Fly Film Festival for the another time in a row is also a partner of the present edition of “Hesja’s Highs”.

The list of supporters would not be complete without mentioning the participation and assistance from the AIR-ACTION Association of Polish Aviation Photographers (spfl.pl). Without the special atmosphere that comes with the company the association provides when we get involved in photographing the flying machines, most of my photos would not exist! Thank you my friends! :)

Dear aviators! Do not ever forget the art of aviation photography! Thanks to us, the photographers, any person on Earth has the opportunity to appreciate and admire your passion! Meeting the group SPFL Air-Action photographers you can be sure that you, and your aircraft will be presented in the best possible way and in the highest possible quality! :)



Between East and West...

In the last couple of years, my photo-aviation activity together with all the experiences and thoughts connected to this, have led me to a nice, but also quite brave hypothesis. I would risk saying that being a Polish aviation photographer nowadays provides the best and the most varied opportunities to take aviation photos.

After years of struggling with the, cameras prohibited' signs, the Polish aviation photographer finally has new opportunities—all thanks to the current Polish geopolitical setting and, what is more thanks to our very own national identity and mentality.

We live in Europe. It is a place, where, when it comes to aviation, most of the interesting things happen. We live right in the middle of Europe, and thanks to that, the distances to any place are not a problem. We can travel in every direction. Mentally we are close to most of the European nations too. The political transformation has made the whole

of Europe open for us! European Union membership has allowed us to go West, but on the other hand it has not cut us off from our Slavic roots. Our Slavic roots make it easier for us to feel comfortable beyond our eastern borders. Another advantage stemming from the above-mentioned transformation is our linguistic competence. Poles are proficient both in Russian, having been imposed on us for many years, as well as English, which we were always willing to learn. Thanks to the above we have the freedom to photograph events both behind our Eastern borders, as well as in the West, both Western and Eastern aviation technology, visiting all of the air shows in Europe as well as those on New York City beaches, at the air bases located in the Swiss Alps and at the military airfields in the Moscow suburbs. To make it even more interesting, our very own Polish Air Force provides us with an opportunity to see both classic Eastern and Western aircraft designs. Is there a better place right now that we find ourselves?



F-22 Raptor showing a dynamic maneuver during Jones Beach Air Show, near New York City (2012).



Russian Su-34 appearing out of a rain cloud (MAKS 2011).

Swiss F/A-18 Hornet making a high-speed, almost supersonic pas, launching flares (Axalp 2012).





Pride of the Russian Air Force, T-50 PAK FA—our first encounter (MAKS 2011).



Saab JAS-39C Gripen (RIAT 2012).



Rooster from the 32nd Tactical Air Force Base in Łask greets the aviation photographers during the Zlot 2011 event—annual gathering of commanders of all the Polish Air Force units.

Republic of Poland Air Force...



Back in the days when I was a young aviation enthusiast and Poland was trapped in the Warsaw Pact, our airfields were home to more than a thousand military aircraft. Despite that, no one could get close to them, and all that we could see, at our airfields, were the “cameras prohibited” signs. All we were left with was the spectacle of aviation parades on our TV screens and reading all of the books and magazines regarding our Air Force.

Nowadays the Polish Air Force is the best depiction of Poland being located between the West and the East. After many years of using equipment coming from our Eastern big brother, the time came to use our own

Polish and Western aircraft. We are one of the few countries in which both Eastern and Western designs are in service in our Air Force. It gives us an opportunity at our Polish air bases, to take pictures of both Western Hercules's and Eastern Su-22's, both beautiful MiG-29's and modern F-16's! What is more, our fleets of Polish and Post-Soviet helicopters are complemented with a whole armada of the Western rotary-wing aircraft. And most importantly, the authorities' attitude towards photographers at our military airfields has changed significantly.

I invite you to a photo-visit in the bases of the Polish Air Force!



PZL W-3 Sokół from the 2nd SAR Group in its Minsk Mazowiecki base (2012).



The first Polish C-130E Hercules right after arriving in 33rd Air Force Base in Powidz (2009).

Orlik aerobatic team flying the turboprop PZL-130 Orlik during a Slovakian Air Show (SIAF 2012).



Solo show of White-Red Sparks pilot—a low pass in Brno—Turany (CIAF 2008).



Su-22 take-off in Mirosławiec 12th Air Force Base (2010).



Su-22 taxiing after landing in RAF Fairford (RIAT 2010).





Su-22 and a flare show during Radom Air Show (2011).



Beautiful show by Polish Su-22's during Ostrava NATO Days (2012).



MiG-29 full afterburner take-off in 22nd Air Force Base in Malbork (2012).



Monster engine exhausts of MiG-29 seen through a fish-eye lens (Mińsk Mazowiecki 2012).



Training of the famous 15 MiG for 2012 air show season over the 23rd Air Force Base in Minsk Mazowiecki (2012).



Quite spectacular take-off of a MiG-29 using a wet Runway in Malbork, seconds after the rain started (2012).



Low-pass right over our heads! Unforgettable moments! MiG-29 passing us during the Nikon Academy workshop in Minsk Mazowiecki (2011).

Air Tattoo 2012. Kościuszko back over Britain!



It is a Saturday, just before noon. Soon we see the well-known silhouette of a MiG-29 rolling down the runway. You can hear the afterburners that Lieutenant Colonel Artur Kałko uses to light up the hearts of the aviation enthusiasts gathering at the Royal International Air Tattoo. The MiG goes straight up into the blue sky, making the beautiful painted 111 number perfectly visible. On top of the airplane we can see, already well known at Fairford, the Kościuszko 303rd Squadron badge. What is more, the vertical fins feature Mirosław Ferić—one of the pilots. It was a perfect choice to let him, the famous author of *The Memoir of 111st Fighter Squadron*,

“fly” the aircraft with the 111 tactical number. The concept of this kind of painting is unparalleled. It is a great form of catching one’s eye and underlining the huge tradition of Polish aviation, deeply rooted in history and connected with the modern times, so visible. My foreign colleagues keep on congratulating me and giving me pats on the back. What a unique moment! I can’t imagine a better way of promoting the Polish Air Force. After the show we can hear... a round of applause!? Applause from experts? From the reserved, not to say phlegmatic English? It is a rarity here! Applause! Applause for Poland!



MiG-29 just after landing in 23rd Air Force Base (Mińsk Mazowiecki 2011).



Phenomenal take-off of MiG-29 for a night flight during the Nikon Academy workshop (Mińsk Mazowiecki 2012).

MiG-29 taxiing down the Mińsk Mazowiecki Air Force Base runway (2011).



Polish F-16 and its beautiful silhouette in a winter scenery of 31st Air Force Base in Krzesiny (2011).





Polish F-16C right after taking-off in Krzesiny near Poznan (2011).



F-16D in a dynamic maneuver during Zlot in Krzesiny (2011).



F-16C taking-off for a night flight in the 32nd Air Force Base, Łask (2010).

F-16 low pass in Łask, 32nd Air Force Base (2010).





Landing pair of F-16 in the 31st Air Force Base, Krzesiny (2010).



Landing of F-16D in a winter setting in Łask (2010).



Mahb during the pre-flight checks in 32nd Air Force Base, Łask (2011).



Alamo greeting the aviation photographers in 32nd Air Force Base, Łask (2010).



Belgian F-16 shooting out flares during an air show in Kecskemét, Hungary (2010).

Air Shows...

Poland's location in the centre of the aviation world is something that many people are jealous of and it often happens that I get contacted by many friends from all around the world. They ask for help. The Russians often ask me to help them in organizing aviation photo-trips to the West. They are envious of the photos from the Air Tattoo or Axalp. The British are wary of traveling to Russia, but on the other hand they marvel at the Russian aviation photos we take—for example the ones from the MAKS Expo in Moscow. The Americans would love to have access to such a variety of aviation events as we, the Europeans have. The same applies to Australians, Brazilians, Japanese and South African enthusiasts. For all of them, participation in aviation events, that are on the other hand, so close to us, is very expensive and complicated and not available to everyone. The following pages of the album present a photo trip around the aviation events, both “Eastern” and “Western”. We will start with Poland, where besides the most important Radom Air Show, many fantastic but smaller air shows also take place. Next we are going to visit the Austrian city of Zeltweg with its world-famous Airpower. Right away



we are going to jump to Czech Republic and Ostrava, where we will see what happened lately during the famous NATO Days. Just for a moment we will visit the Southern part of Europe and an air show on the beaches of Rome, in Lido di Ostia. Then we go through the Czech Brno and Slovakian Piešťany and Sliač, to reach outside the polar circle and visit Norwegian Bodø. After that wonderful Scandinavian visit we are going down to the beautiful Belgian Koksijde. On our way we are going to hang out in Kecskemét, Hungary and Albacete in Spain. Later, we will cross the English Channel and see

world's largest military air show, The Royal International Air Tattoo, which takes place annually at RAF Fairford. While visiting Britain you cannot miss the Duxford Legends air show, near Cambridge. From Great Britain we will fly across the Atlantic to visit air shows on the Eastern Coast of the USA, along with a unique visit to an aviation Museum near Washington. When we have had enough of the Western culture, it will be nice to jump to the exact opposite geopolitical side of the World—right into the heart of Russian aviation, to Ramenskoye airfield, close to Moscow. Our trip will end with a marvelous trip to the wonderful Swiss Axalp and reaching the highest peak of that air-show (literally) — the Wildgarst mountain. A feast for your senses is guaranteed! Please fasten your seatbelts, turn on some music and prepare for take-off—we are departing and we are going to get high ;)

Our photo-trip is going to be accompanied by Vincent teddy-bear. This unique mascot has flown in almost every aircraft, documented in his very own flight-log book. The following photo depicts Vincent preparing to fly in the MiG-29.



Żelazny (Iron) aerobatic team pilots—Wojciech Krupa and Piotr Haberland—during a spectacular show of Extra 330LC during the meeting of SPFL Air-Action on Żar mountain (2011).



Jerzy Makula doing a beautiful low-pass in a FOX sailplane at the feet of Mt. Żar (2011).



Marek Szufa flying Christen Eagle near another pylon of the Płock Air Snake (2010).



Marek Szufa flying Yak-18 during, Płock Air Show (2011).



Marek Szufa

It was Saturday, June 18th 2011, during the 5th Plock Air Show, when Captain Marek Szufa crashed into the Vistula river and was sadly killed. He was an experienced and versatile aviator, an expert, driven by his passion. He was very well respected, well-reputed and was an award winning model airplane builder. And what is most important—an incredibly nice and easy-going human being.

What Marek Szufa was doing when sitting in the cockpit during the air shows could only have been fully experienced live. His flying included everything. Incredible acrobatics, unique control and finally, huge passion. Mr. Marek was not only a good pilot, he was a true artist. He was doing the thing he loved, and he spread the love among others. Often during a single air-show he was in the air six times, just because we, the people on the ground, asked him to fly for us. He loved photography and photographers.

Mr. Marek, you will be eternally alive in our photos and in our hearts! Blue Sky! And may the blue side always be up for you!



S-38 Sikorsky landing on Niegocin lake in Giżycko, Mazury Air Show (2011).



CSS-13 in a spectacular run directed at the audience, Plock Air Show (2010).



SB Lim 2's first public appearance—Góraszka Air Show (2010).



Patrouille de France aerobatic team in their incredible display during the Radom Air Show (2011).



Frecce Tricolori honoring Patrouille de France pilots after their incredible display under the Radomian skies (Radom Air Show 2011).



Airpower. The land of Red Bull.

Airpower is a word that has been electrifying the aviation enthusiasts since it first started. It is a name of a huge air show that takes place usually every two years in Zeltweg, Austria. What makes this air show so breathtaking is not only the incredible number of aviation related attractions, but also an unique mountainous scenery and incredibly good event organization. Red Bull, a great supporter of aviation and air shows, are the main sponsors of this show.

Red Bull F4U-4 Corsair (Airpower 2011).



A bunch of ZLIN-50 LX—Czech Flying Bulls aerobatic team (Airpower 2011).



Mighty German VFW-Fokker CH-53G Helicopter during its remarkable show (Airpower 2009).



Messerschmitt Me-262 flying right beside us (Airpower 2011)!



Austrian Eurofighter Typhoon (Airpower 2011).



Slovak MiG-29 (Airpower 2011).



Frecce Tricolori and a beautiful, varied Austrian Zeltweg scenery (Airpower 2011).

NATO Days.

NATO Days in Ostrava is an event which cannot be missed! It is great to see how this event has evolved over the years and how, from a small local event, it has become one of the biggest military shows in this part of Europe. NATO days include an airshow, which is unique due to the direction of flying perpendicular to the runway. Thanks to that, standing close to the airfield's fence you can be directly under the flying machines. It is a unique feature, that legally, freely, and without a press pass, one has only to reach out to get unique views of the aircraft taking part in the show. Such opportunities should not be missed by European aviation enthusiasts. As the event unravels it becomes more attractive for the assembled crowd, as more

and more interesting aircraft appear in the Ostravian skies. And this is the reason why the audience grows year on year, making the show more and more profitable. There is one more aspect that makes this event so popular. It is not only an aviation event. The air show is combined with ground presentations within the airfields' demonstration area. There are many breaks in the show, as it does not take place in the air constantly—standing in the field to see the aircraft in the air we have some time, when ground presentations take place. This is a perfect opportunity for people like us, who do not meet each other every day, to chat and to take photos and have fun. These breaks allow us to bond even more. There is time for everything!



Czech Mi-17-1 choppers after taking the commandos from the ground (NATO Days 2011).

Hawker Hurricane Mk.I (NATO Days 2010).



Red Bull B-25 Mitchell (NATO Days 2012).

Slovakian Pixel MiG-29 (NATO Days 2010).



SOLOTÜRK! Turkish F-16 DEMO (NATO Days 2012).





Spectacular as always—Italian Eurofighter Typhoon (NATO Days 2012).



Beautiful Mirage 2000N (NATO Days 2012).



Ramex Delta Mirage 2000N from France (NATO Days 2012).





Dutch F-16 DEMO Team—spectacular as usually (NATO Days 2012).



Turkish Stars—courage and precision (NATO Days 2011).

Red Arrows (NATO Days 2012).





Breitling Jet Team flying L-39C Albatros during a magical show over a beach in Lido di Ostia (Roma International air show 2012).



Roma International Air Show 2012

The Creation of Viper

A Belgian F-16 fires off flares and turns upside-down. At the moment of taking the photo the way the flare smoke looked seemed quite familiar to me. When I viewed the camera's display I was almost sure. It looks exactly the same as hand of God, on the famous Creation of Adam fresco in the Sistine Chapel painted by Michelangelo. Is it a suggestion that perhaps God had a hand in creating the Viper in the mystical Roma sky?



F-4F Phantom II flying away after the Air Show from Brno—Turany airport (CIAF 2008).

Dutch F-16 painting the Sky over Slovakian Piešťany (NLD 2010).



A pair of Slovakian MiG-29's taking-off for their display in Sliač (SIAF 2012).

Frecce Tricolori posing with the sun in the background (SIAF 2012).



Slovakian L-39 Albatros' low pass over Piešťany airfield (NLD 2010).

Bodø International Airshow 2012

It has been a while since I had an idea to visit a unique air-show. I came to the conclusion that lately, I had been using my well-trodden paths, so according to the rule—if you want to get something unique, you have to do something unique—I was looking for something really extraordinary. When I read a thread by Eskimo (a friend who lives in Norway) on the spfl.pl online discussion board, which mentioned the Norwegian Bodø air show, I thought that it might be just the opportunity I was looking for. The satellite maps of Bodø show that the place to be breathtaking. Bodø is located far beyond the polar circle, on the coast, surrounded by snowy mountains and with daylight around the clock. A fairy-tale! I was following the list of the aircraft that were to partake in the show, and it was the moment when the F-104 Starfighter and SAAB JA-37 Viggen appeared on the list—my head reached critical mass. Enough, I have to go there!



Boeing C-17 Globemaster III taking-off for its display—Bodø International Air Show 2012.



Lockheed P-38 Lightning Red Bull under the Norwegian sky (Bodø International Air Show 2012).



JA-37—an unique airplane—taking-off to perform its display (Bodø International Air Show 2012).



Norwegian F-16's scramble! (Bodø International Air Show 2012).



F-104 Starfighter, a historical icon, taxiing (Bodo International Air Show 2012).



Finnish F/A-18 Hornet and a festival of flares (Bodo International Air Show 2012).



Grumman G-164A Super Ag-Cat in two shots during her magical display (Bodo International Air Show 2012).





East meets West in Hungary—MiG-29 and Gripen under the sky in Kecskemét (2010).



Spanish Mirage F1CE taxiing after the show (Kecskemét Air Show 2010).



F-16 in the rain in Albacete Air Force Base, where supposedly it never rains. Albacete is a place where TLP (Tactical Leadership Programme) takes place, it is a European Top Gun's counterpart (TLP Albacete 2010).



Majestic Avro Lancaster and beautiful Belgian sunny weather (Koksijde International Air Show 2011).



Dutch F-16 in a dynamic maneuver directly in front of our cameras (Koksijde International Air Show 2011).



A close-up of Red Arrows Hawk TMk1 (Koksijde International Air Show 2011).



Saudi Hawks flying BAe Hawk T1A (Koksijde International Air Show 2011).





Unique guests in Europe - USAF Thunderbirds! (Koksijde International Air Show 2012)



The day was slowly coming to an end; the light conditions were getting warmer. A sailplane appears. Nothing unusual in this despite the fact that during the show whole showers sparks were coming out of its wing tips as if some magic wand of some fairy was installed at the end of the wings, as if the whole scene happened in some far-away land. An incredible vision!



MDM1-Fox Sailplane from GliderFX team during its magical display (Koksijde International Air Show 2011).



Magical as well, but entirely different show of Apache AH-64D (Koksijde International Air Show 2011).



Michel Beulen aka “Mitch” comes down the runway in his beautifully painted F-16. He waits one more second till the sun goes down and... and then he takes-off. Such a display during at such a unique time of the day is a marvelous idea! When Mitch starts his flare festival in the sky, there is nothing more to do but to watch, mouth wide open, in awe!

odlotyhesji.pl



odlotyhesji.pl

Once, when on the Western side some clouds appear a perfect setting for photos is created. The clouds cover the blinding sunlight and introduce a bit of variety with their highlighted structure. It is a perfect setting for the display of the Swiss F/A-18 which enters our open-air studio a couple of times and poses for us.

odlotylnesji.pl



Historical Twin Beech 18 departing from Royal International Air Tattoo 2012.



Dangerous WAH-64D Longbow Apache, luckily it has friendly intentions towards the photographers (RIAT 2012).



A pair of Supermarine Spitfires (RIAT 2012).



Majestic, beautiful, expensive - Avro Vulcan XH558 (RIAT 2012).



Mirage 2000 after landing at RAF Fairford base (RIAT 2010).



Dassault Rafale C—dynamic as usually (RIAT 2012).





Italian Eurofighter Typhoon (NATO Days 2012).



Mighty Airbus A400M taking off creating spirals of vapor using the ends of its propellers (RIAT 2012).



British Harrier in the heavy rain during the show (RIAT 2009).



One of my favorite airplanes, F-15E Strike Eagle, departs after the Air Tattoo 2012.



MV-22B Osprey one of the Air Tattoo 2012 highlights, presenting its unique capabilities.

Air Tattoo 2010. Raptors' arrival!

Thursday morning. Park and View East, an area at the eastern end of the airfield designed specifically for photographers, allowing you to park your car and take photos at the end of the runway. It is filled with the aviation enthusiasts from all around the world. Since early morning we had been taking photos of the arriving aircraft that were to be a part of the largest military air show in the world—The Royal International Air Tattoo. At around 9 am a strange atmosphere manifests itself. Everyone prepares and checks their equipment and all eyes look to the east. There is one reason for such behavior, the reason why most of us woke up early that morning to get the best place to take photos. Raptors are coming! We can hear the ATC speaking to the pilots who are getting their landing directions.



Who knows, maybe I am one of the most excited photographers here. After failing in 2008 and 2009 I finally have a chance to photograph the F-22. Nothing is going to stop me now. Just one more moment, just a few more seconds. There they are. Two small dots appear in the horizon, the closer they get, the more they resemble the shape of the Raptor. Finally, they come, looking so majestic, heading towards the runway. They are wonderful. So ugly that they look

beautiful. It is incredible to see these planes, that fascinate the whole world. The 5th generation fighters that are unsurpassed in the Battlefield, and probably will not have any adversary for a long time. Their appearance stolen from a sci-fi space-ship, beautiful sounding engines. They appear over the airfield and then break formation, in order to land separately just in front of our lenses. We get shivers down our spines, and we want more! :)



F-22 Raptor preparing for take-off (RIAT 2010).



F-22 Raptor and its unique, rectangular eyes (RIAT 2010).



Dynamic Raptor Take-off in the heavy rain (RIAT 2010).



F-22 Raptor caught in a dynamic maneuver (RIAT 2010).

Air Tattoo 2012. An extraterrestrial visitor.

The rain is getting heavier and heavier. Silence is the only thing one can hear. People are starting to leave the show. Do we? What for? The atmosphere is great, we have everything we need. Let's stay! As each minute goes by fewer and fewer of us are left on the airfield. We are not sure whether the B-2 will even appear. Besides us, a small group of British enthusiasts remain. They also don't know anything and are considering going home. It is getting darker and darker, as the rain gets heavier. Our moods slowly worsens. We try to contact the rest

of our crew. It turns out they had left the Park & View enclosure some time ago, and already were at the hotel. We keep giving ourselves final time periods. OK, half an hour and we're gone... fifteen more minutes, ten more minutes. Suddenly, far away over the horizon a small black point emerges. Maybe a Hercules or something similar. I get out of the car and aim my 500 mm lens at that point to confirm that it is the C-130. Just a second to get focused and surprise... yes, that's it! I am yelling out "the B-2 is coming!" It looks amazing through the lens, so far away!

The point is not a point but a thin line with its landing lights turned on. We run towards the fence, excited like Bono fans just a few moments before his gig. I am looking for a place where I will be able to keep the high fence out of my view. It's a shame that I do not have a step ladder with me. Nevertheless, the photos are not important, nor is the B-2 that I encountered a few weeks earlier at Andrews AFB. What's important is the unforgettable atmosphere of this moment. The joy and excitement of a bunch of aviation enthusiasts who have been waiting in the rain

and the cold, to finally get what they had been waiting for, this out-of-this-earth visitor. The B-2 is getting closer and closer and does not resemble anything that had landed on the Fairford runway that day. It is a truly an extraterrestrial visitor! It is above runway and lands, creating fountains of water from the rain water that had pooled on the tarmac. It is hurtling down the runway using brakes to stop. The water is splashed beautifully by its undercarriage. Finally it stops, turns back and parades right in front of us! A beautiful sight! Pure science fiction :)





B-2 Spirit arrives at RAF Fairford (RIAT 2012).





Panavia Tornado GR4 taxiing to the Runway during Air Tattoo 2010.

Air Tattoo 2012. RAF Tornado Role Demo Team!

It is during the Gripen display, when I hear the long-awaited hiss that transforms itself into a thunder! The unique thunder of the engines of a Tornado GR4. Two of them take-off, ready to create their role-play. This will not be child's play. We will experience war! A real one, contemporary, straight from Afghanistan or Libya, where incredible machines do the work they were designed for. And now, they take-off, full afterburners, one after the other. As always, this is something I love to watch. After their take-off they do a low-pass, so low that you can create a panoramic shot of both with the FRIAT visitors in the background. It is not unusual that nobody cares about the Gripen's circus up there. It is here, down on the runway where true warriors take to the air. Their airframes do not smell like models who pose for aviation glamour photos, they rather

smell like gunpowder remaining there after the true combat. The Gripen finishes its display, while the commentator is announcing what will happen next. The Tornados are going to present a typical ground attack that they usually carry out during their close air support missions, supporting the soldiers on the ground. After a while two points appear on the horizon, getting bigger and bigger incredibly

fast, which means that their speed is very, very high! They fly so low that they disappear behind the trees a few hundred meters from us. Our excitement reaches its climax. I am loving this moment! There they are! This is what you call a show of force. Mighty machines, tremendous thunder, the flames of the afterburners, clouds of vapor on the wings! Woooooooooow! I love it! The Tornados go on simu-

lating several kinds of ground attack again and again. No way! The enemy is still there?! It's time for the grande finale and a Paveway solution! A huge explosion rattles the airfield, and the Tornados fly straight through the smoke from the explosion. Mission accomplished! The Tornados have eliminated the threat and I have a few shots that I am more than satisfied with!





RAF—Tornado Role Demo Team and their show (RIAT 2012).





The British Pride—Red Arrows!



For the first time in Europe, Korean Black Eagles display team, flying KAI T-50B Golden Eagles (RIAT 2012).

Duxford Flying Legends 2011. A Date with History.

“Bad guys to the right! Good guys to the left!”—this is what we hear from the speakers when three Messerschmitt Bf 109’s make a right turn, while the Spitfires and Hurricanes behind them go left at the same time. If this is not



a dream or you’re not watching an historical documentary you can be certain that you are at Duxford, where an airshow with the electrifying name—The Flying Legends, takes part! It is a Mecca for people who love a unique vibe, which comes together with the old airplanes from World War 2. Young people

who have read of the Duxford machines from books also come here. And the final group of visitors include the people who devote every moment of their free time to breathe new life into these aging airframes, so that they can shine and reproduce their incredible sound once more. This place is truly magical! It is not enough to listen closely and open your eyes wide, besides the unique sounds of the engines and the majestic look of the

machines, to see and hear history and stories from the days when these machines were in their element. No matter who you are, no matter if you remind yourself of good times, or you remind yourself of the books that you have read, or you simply love aviation—The Imperial War Museum at Duxford dur-

ing The Flying Legends is the place to be—to have a date with history!

And now is the time to watch what we came for—the air show! As usual, the show starts with a mass take-off of Spitfires and Hurricanes... Messerschmitts are right behind them... let’s get this party started! One by one, aircraft take to the air and fly solo or in groups. Aircraft from the European theater, the Far-East theater, the English, the Americans, the Germans, the French—the incredible sound of their engines does not stop. The beautiful shape of the Spitfire and Hurricane make me remember the stories about the Polish aces, stories about the battles on every battlefield of WW2, with The Battle of Britain the most important of all. Low passes by a group of four Mustangs, airplanes named Cadillacs of the Sky remind me of the scenes from the classic film Empire of the Sun. The dynamic display of the P-40 Kitty Hawk makes me think of

Pearl Harbor or Wiktor Urbanowicz’s memories from the Far East, while the MS.406 reminds us of Waclaw Król’s book I Was Fighting Under the Sky of France. Well, it would be wonderful to spot P-11c, Karaś or Łoś in such elite company. Maybe someday. Meanwhile in the air we can see the Fokker Dr. I, that automatically makes us think of an incredible aviator and human being, Manfred von Richthofen, who’s known better as the Red Baron. Sally B and I think of Memphis Belle. The Yak-9 makes me remember the successes of the Normandy-Niemen fighter unit and knowledge contests about the People’s Republic of Poland Army, I won when I was a child. A moment later we move on from the cold Eastern front to the hot and humid Vietnam thanks to two Skyriders, and moments later a Hawker Sea Fury transfers us to the Korean War. The magic happens! With all of my senses working, that date with history is incredible!



Three Belles—B-17G Flying Fortresses—during The Flying Legends air show in the year 2008 in Duxford.



Pilot of Douglas A-1 Skyraider preparing himself for flight (Duxford 2011).



An unique formation! (Duxford 2011).



A-1 Skyraider and P-51D Mustang Big Beautiful Doll during a break before the landing. They crashed mid-air the next day during this very maneuver. P-51D Mustang was entirely destroyed, and Skyraider landed without a half of its wing. The pilots survived and were not hurt (Duxford 2011).



Last picture of the Big Beautiful Doll :(

F-22 Raptor waiting for its display (JSOH 2012).

Andrews AFB Joint Service Open House 2012. Static Display.

So this is it! We have made it! My first air show in the USA. I am more than excited. I go straight away to the static display trying to remain calm, just like the Americans who are walking around... but it is not easy! I can't stop smiling; everything here is so different, new and unique for me! Moreover we have amazing weather! Nothing else is needed, is it? I am in a genuine aviation photography paradise! Right after entering the static display I am welcomed by a P-47 Thunderbolt, a B-25 Mitchell (Panchito) and a P-40 Warhawk, beautifully highlighted by the morning sun! Right beside them—a Japanese Nakajima B5N Kate and a Mitsubishi A6M Zero. Man, it's so awesome! And it is just the beginning. The sun

is slowly starting to scorch the Earth, but our lenses are already hot, not necessarily due to the temperature. It's high time to cool down our emotions with some cold beer. Looking for the watering hole, we spotted an amazing thing! Two... F-22's standing right behind the fence that separates them from the visitors area. They stand there and no one is interested. Literally! No one! Americans! If they only knew how desired these aircraft are in Europe! Beer can wait. We run there and shoot Raptors using our photo-artillery! 200 meters away we can see the Blue Angels. It is my first time seeing them live. Shivers go down my spine yet again! I can't do without a cold beer that would cool me down. :)





Aero Spacelines NASA Super Guppy used to transport high-volume cargo (JSOH 2012).



North American B-25J Mitchell "Panchito" (JSOH 2012).

Andrews AFB Joint Service Open House 2012. F-22 Raptor.



The engines of the F-22 make the plane disappear in the vapor. Moments later it proudly taxis right in front of us, totally gaining the attention of the people who ignore the Mustang flying above. What a beautiful plane it is! Its capabilities are the only thing that is bet-

ter than its looks. The Air Combat Command F-22 Demonstration Team pilot flying Raptor in the year 2012, Major Henry "Schadow" Schantz, greets the airshow visitors. It must be an incredible feeling to be one of the best pilots in the world! To fly the most modern

fighter in the world! I can only begin to imagine. The speakers blare with the voice known from Fairford 2010—the narrator of F-22 Demo Team. Madness starts! Anyone who has seen F-22 knows what I am talking about. A truly unique piece of engineering in a truly unique dance. It looks insane! I love the F-22's shape, ending its unique engine exhausts. It looks beautiful at high speeds and when it faces us with its back using its afterburners. After the show the Raptor disappears for a moment only to return in formation with the Mustang! Magical things happen above our heads! The legendary P-51D and the modern F-22A—an unprecedented compilation of fighters!



F-22 Raptor starting its engines (JSH 2012).



Lockheed F-22A Raptor and P-51D Mustang in USAF Heritage Flight (JSOH 2012).



F-22 Raptor doing its tricks!



Andrews AFB Joint Service Open House 2012. Blue Angels!

Meanwhile the show heads towards the last display and its climax, the Blue Angels, the US Navy aerobatic team show! I can't wait to see this! Never before have I seen the Blue Angels live and I know that the team is the pride of American aviation, often thought to be the best aerobatic team in the world. I have seen many aerobatic teams in many situations and I can't wait for this ultimate comparison. Preparations are on-going. On the right of the planes a group of people wearing blue suits appear. These are the pilots—the main actors of this show... but they are not the only ones. The show starts, not in the air, but on the ground. The pilots already stand proudly besides their planes, and the same applies for the ground crews. A second later they start marching along the planes, and each one breaks right and stands in front of the ladder near the cockpit. The narrator introduces them. They get in. It looks in-

credible! Everything they do is perfectly synchronized. Not only getting inside the cockpit, but also taking off the sunglasses, hiding the cap, putting on the helmet—



every small detail is done simultaneously. It is awesome! The engines start, Eminem's Lose Yourself is blaring from the speakers and the Blue Angels start taxiing down the runway; in a majestic, coordinated, slow pace, trailing one behind

the other. We can hear both the voices of the commentator and the commands from the flight leader. Both are incredibly professional and perfectly prepared to

do their jobs. We could learn a lot from them! The Blue Angels are not even in the air, and we all are already extremely impressed. And that's it! They go up in the air! After the first two passes, especially the tight diamond formation of

four planes flying just half meter from each other, I realize what Blue Angels precision is all about. They show us an incredibly coordinated and close dance, which turns into madness! A whole array of passes and near misses in several different formations. It is definitely not boring! Some of the tricks are new to me, what makes me enjoy the show even more. I yell out of joy, it is poetry in motion! The end of the show slowly comes, the final break, and then the landing approach. The ground crew reappear, waiting for the fighters to land. Kings Of Leon with their song Use Somebody provides the soundtrack. The music is a perfect accompaniment to the show, and it creates an unforgettable atmosphere! It is a part of the American Blue Angels phenomenon that the Americans are so proud of. They should be! I am really impressed! Yes, it is the best aerobatic team I have ever seen!



U.S. NAVY Blue Angels show which starts already on the ground (JSOH 2012).



Diamond—a formation that is peculiar because of the fact that the distance between the planes is no more than 2 feet (JSOH 2012).





Beautiful, unique, precise, professional, spectacular—U.S. NAVY Blue Angels!



One of the main exhibits in the National Air and Space Museum in Washington—SR-71A Blackbird. In service it has been a fascinating secret to the entire world. It is no less interesting on its well-deserved retirement (2012).

The Smithsonian's National Air and Space Museum. F-14 Tomcat.



I look towards the end of the alley and I notice a shape that makes my heart beat a little faster. I hear Harold Faltermeyer's music in my ears. I quickly take pictures of the MiG-15bis, F-86A Sabre, MiG-21F and the F-4S Phantom II, in order to finally get... yes! The Grumman F-14D Tomcat! I encounter it live for the first time, and I am

very, very impressed. What a beautiful airplane! The lines, the angles, as if I was a part of some fairy-tale! No wonder the whole world loves the Tomcat. It's wonderful! When standing near to the F-14 I start to think that despite the fact that thousands of aircraft were designed, not all of them have become cult figures. These unique aircraft were designed

by engineers who as well being called true artists; they had their own vision on how a fighter jet should look. Thanks to them, their designs were not only compliant with the tactical and technical requirements, but they also spoke to our senses. They were... unique and beautiful! It surely is the case when it comes to the Grumman F-14 Tomcat.



Enola Gay

I am taking photos of a Boeing Superfortress No. 82, named Enola Gay! Yes, she's the one! One of the most important actresses of the events that took place on August 6th 1945. That day in Hiroshima, for the first time in the history of warfare, using the above-mentioned airplane, a nuclear bomb innocently named Little Boy was dropped. Several seconds later Little Boy took away lives of 70 thousand people. I am an aviation photographer, and I take photos of mainly military airplanes. I often reject such thoughts, but let's face the truth—a vast majority of military aircraft were created for the purpose of killing. Of course, in many cases lives were saved with the good intention of protecting others, nevertheless it is the main reason military aviation exists. As far as I can understand, killing on the ground, during a fight, when soldiers have similar chances and the cleverer, quicker, better trained one is the winner, I can't understand why aviation is used to kill innocent, ordinary, defenseless civilians. Mothers, children, the elderly, who die in the so called name of politics carried out by other. It is a hot topic of discussion. Had it not been for the victims of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the war would have lasted longer and cost more lives. Despite everything, the politics look very different back in the headquarters, where generals sit at their tactical tables, things look very different from the cockpit of a bomber, and finally they look different from the point of view of a mother carrying her child who sees death raining down on her city. :(



B-17 Yankee Lady Flying Fortress over the Ocean (Jones Beach Air Show 2012).



Ameryka— —Where it all began!

Whatever is said or thought about America, it all began right here. I appreciate America for being pioneers. For the fact that it gave us the Wright Brothers, the Mustang, the Tomcat, Discovery and the Raptor. I appreciate America for being the pathfinder of world aviation and contributing to aircraft development! Thank You America!



F/A-18F Super Hornet from VFA-106 Gladiators unit caught in a high-speed, almost supersonic pass (Jones Beach Air Show 2012).

Jones Beach. Super Hornet!

Suddenly, behind MarS' back I can see a fast-moving bright object. MarS! Incoming Job! :) The object quickly becomes an F/A-18F Super Hornet. The first high speed pass, and a mass of incredible breaks. Well, I can't say anything but that I like it! In general I love the way American military jets are displayed at air shows. They do not focus on sophisticated aerobatics, rather they display a variety of maneuvers that come straight from the dogfighting manual and have typically military relevance. The Super Hornet does not side step what people are waiting for the most—high speed passes and dynamic maneuvers that force the air to get out of the aircraft's way! I haven't even thought about it, as the Hornet starts to ready itself to pose for the photos for which it has become famous for. Oh yeah, here it comes! A high speed pass parallel towards the coast line and... the air explodes in the around the plane, creating the Prandtl-Glauert singularity, which forms a vapor cone around the fuselage! People yell out for joy! Why in Europe



are such high-speed passes so uncommon? It must be such fun for the pilot, not to mention the audience. The best evidence supporting this theory is the reaction of the crowd; people talk about these very passes, they talk

about the afterburners, the dynamic breaks... and nobody discusses planes doing long, beautiful slow barrel rolls or a low-speed pass. The Super Hornet executes a series of dynamic maneuvers and flies away. Everyone is amazed!



Flares salvo by the Russian Strizhi aerobatic team and a Russian flag made using smoke from Sukhoi Su-25 planes during the 100th Anniversary of the Russian Air Force air show in Ramenskoye near Moscow (2012).



Tu-160 Bomber on the static display (100VVS 2012).



Soviet Concorde Counterpart—Tupolev Tu-144 (100VVS 2012).



French Dassault Rafale high-speed pass. Note a beautiful painting scheme (MAKS 2011).





McDonnell Douglas F-15 Eagle during its show—MAKS 2011 Expo.



Precise flying by Italian Freccie Tricolori. A 100 years anniversary of the Russian Air Force in Ramenskoye Airfield, near Moscow (2012).



Midnight Hawks—Finnish Aerobatic Team flying BAE Hawk, celebrating 100 years of Russian Air Force (2012).



Russian Aerobatic Team flying L-39C aircraft (MAKS 2011).



Baltic Bees solo flying around the smoke left by his teammates (MAKS 2011).

100 Years Anniversary of the Russian Air Force. A unique performance!

After the MiG and Yak-130 shows, the Ramenskoye Theater stage is entered by a unique formation! A monster diamond created by nine mighty twin-engined MiG-29's and Su-27's, Strizhis and Russian Knights flying together in one big formation! The weather is beautiful—a warm afternoon, great light conditions. Some contrast appears into the bluest of blue skies by some little clouds traveling low across the horizon. This makes a beautiful backdrop for this unique performance accompanied with the thunder of 18 jet engines working at high RPM. Firstly a low-pass right over us, as if the actors want to introduce themselves to the audience. Next a barrel roll—a whole formation barrel roll. Next—a loop. The planes fly in a very stable and precise way, as if some puppet master was guiding them through the sky. At the top of the loop the formation vanishes into the cloud to face us seconds later, with beautiful vortexes trailing behind them. Everything seems to be so light, so delicate. The maneuvers resemble a unique dance. A dance just for us, the magic which is due to who the dancers are. They are not ordinary ballet dancers. They are these mighty, heavy, combat machines! Machines with the best of the best in their cockpits, and

the apparent ease of their performance stems from hundreds of hours spent in training formation flying and flying individually. The incredible effort of every pilot and a full focus is what is needed up there in order to keep a balance between life and death! The dance is unique due to the huge costs involved. One thing is a price of a single plane, and the second is the price of the fuel burnt during the flight, be it in training or during the show, and the third element is the cost of pilot training. If multiplied by the number of aircraft it may make one get dizzy. And yet, they are doing it! And yet, the pilots dance this incredible dance at every air show. Against all the odds. Being aware of what is happening above my head I conclude that this is it. This is the goal of my presence at every aviation event in Europe or around the World! This incredibly beautiful but dangerous, fascinating, difficult to recreate and very expensive performance! Performance that is unparalleled by nothing and nowhere else, I love the excitement, I love the shivers going down my spine, I love the thunder! My thoughts are confirmed by hundreds of flares launched by the planes. This kind of grande finale is a rarity, even in the Bolshoi Theater! :)





Ruskiye Wityazi—the Russian Knights—majestic and in sync!





An unique formation which consists of Strizhi and Russian Knights flying MiG-29's and Su-27's coming out of the cloud. The 100th Anniversary of the Russian Air Force, Ramenskoye (2012).





Strizhi—was this photo taken in the air? ;) (100VVS 2012).



Su-27 as an artist painting the Russian sky (MAKS 2011).



Another new plane in the market, MiG-29 M2 the most modern derivative of Fulcrum (100VVS 2012).



MiG-29 in a dynamic maneuver simulating air-combat (100VVS 2012).



Mighty multi-role Su-34 during the 100th anniversary of the Russian Air Force, Moscow, Ramenskoye (2012).



Su-35 with Sergey Bogdan, a test pilot we've met at a party which started the expo, in the cockpit (MAKS 2011).



T-50 PAK FA. The latest Russian Sukhoi made design. Sergey Bogdan in the cockpit. (MAKS 2011).

What Axalp really is?

It is a peculiar kind of drug that gets you, sucks you in and does not let you go! Especially if you are a true aviation freak. It is a drug of quadrupled impact! Firstly, it is a great friendly atmosphere, both in the places of residence as well as on the peaks of the Alps. Secondly, it is

the mightiness, beauty and uniqueness of Swiss aviation. Thirdly and finally—the magnificent Alps, which let you test yourself during a hike. It is a drug that lets you take unique, unparalleled aviation photos that cannot be taken anywhere else by an average human being!



Axalp Style

It is wonderful! The sky is covered just by a few clouds, only those sent by gods, so that the photos are even more beautiful. The atmosphere is unique. Everyone is sure that the flights will take part, but the organizer has not confirmed it yet, announcing that the decision will be made after 8 am. We are waiting but in our heads we already know. 8 am and the website confirms what we already knew. The show will take place according to schedule. Great news. Amazing things are going to happen! In fact, they are already happening. More and more people climb the mountain, together with deoc, spfl.pl member, who was late supposedly because he was pouring lime over the mountain tops, so that they look as if they were covered in snow! :) Indeed, the mountain tops are beauti-

fully white, the sun is shining, we all smile! It's amazing...

Our Joy grows just seconds before 9 am—the Hornet hour. Everybody has their camera ready for an immediate shot. Everybody seems to be calm, but the atmosphere gradually starts to get tense—we don't want to miss the Hornets' strafing run. If it is anything like the last few years, in just a few seconds a pair of F/A-18s are going to enter the valley and fly past over us launching hundreds of flares! This very phenomenon lasts only a few seconds, so it is easy to be missed. Therefore we are fully alert. Our eyes and ears are working even more intensely. Emotions are running high. I love that feeling! Just a few more seconds and... there they are. A pair in a close formation roars



through the valley at an insane speed. One more second and... the flares are launched highlighting the slope in the shadow! They go right over us! It is really a brilliant manoeuvre. Add good light conditions and right setup of your

equipment to the equation, and the result must be great! There is no time though to go through the taken photos. More Hornets appear and they start shooting their targets in the valley using their cannons! Axalp Style! :)



Tens of flares from Swiss F/A-18's being a sign of opening the Axalp 2012 Air Show!



Hornets maneuvering through the Alps after shooting the targets (Axalp 2012).





Interesting highlight of Axalp 2012 show—JAS-39C Gripen, which is to replace Swiss Air Force F-5E Tigers II soon.



Northrop F-5E Tiger II after shooting (Axalp 2012).



Swiss aerobatic team—Patrouille Suisse—looks best here, with the Alps in the background.





F/A-18 Hornet and vortexes highlighted by the sun (Axalp 2012).

Wildgarst!

However, in Axalp there is one more mountain. A mighty one, one looking very dangerous. A mountain that makes all the others look like hills. A mountain which is located at the route of most passes, and a mountain over which the fighters fly after attacking their targets in order to pass over it, inverted, as if it was a bar in a high jump competition. A mountain that everyone who ever has attended Axalp dreams about and wonders, how great it would be to get up there. The mountain that appears in almost every Axalp photo. The Wildgarst Mountain!

The Axalp KP is located quite far away from Wildgarst, so anything that happens there is very far away. Even using

a 500mm lens (DX format—750mm) it is very difficult to get an interesting shot. We are all waiting for the moment, when the planes shoot their targets on the slope of the mountain. I have seen a lot, I have experienced many low high-speed passes, but Wildgarst is truly unparalleled! Far beyond the clouds you can see a small point flying towards Axalp. At a certain moment the dot starts to show smoke, signs of shooting from the onboard cannon. Next it goes towards us and grows really, really fast! From a little dot it transforms into a beautiful F/A-18. At the last minute, when it seems like it is going to hit us it inverts and goes over the ridge! There are no heroes! Everyone flinches and sees the pilot



with a corner of an eye and the airframe right over us, as if it was a roof! After just a second you can stand up and take a

photo of the Hornet going through the rocky valley behind Wildgarst! You feel so alive in such moments! :)



F/A-18 Hornet posing almost 3000 meters above sea level, going inverted right over our heads (Axalp 2010).



Northrop F-5E Tiger II approaching us very, very, VERY quickly (Axalp 2010).



F/A-18 Hornet in a rocky maze of the Swiss peaks (Axalp 2010).



foto-tip mecenasem dobrej fotografii

odwiedź nas na stronie internetowej
www.foto-tip.pl

foto-tip
więcej niż pasja

Flyfilm FESTIVAL

MIĘDZYNARODOWY
FESTIWAL FILMÓW LOTNICZYCH

JEDYNY TAKI FESTIWAL W EUROPIE

www.flyfilmfestival.pl

WSTĘP WOLNY



“Odloty hesji 2” (“Hesja’s Highs 2”) is a vast, second edition of my own aviation photography album. Throughout the contents I argue that Polish aviation photographers are in the best place and have the best working conditions that let them pursue their passion! In order to defend the thesis above I want to take you on a photo journey of not only Polish Air Force bases, but also to a trip around the aviation events—from the Southern

part of Europe to the Polar Circle, from Moscow to New York! “Hesja’s Highs 2” contains over two hundred unique aviation pictures and twenty excerpts of my reports from the aviation events during which the photos were taken. Everything is beautifully presented! The book is a precious publication, the aim of which is to not only reach aviation enthusiasts, but to inspire those who have yet to wake to our passion.

HESJA.PL
AIR-ART PHOTOGRAPHY

foto-tip

Flyfilm
FESTIVAL

AIR ACTION
STOWARZYSZENIE POLSKICH
FOTOGRAFÓW LOTNICZYCH