

# ALA'S WORLD

**AM I WIFE? MUM? FRIEND? OR ALA? IT'S ALL PRIORITIES, BUT I'D RATHER BE SEEN AS ALA, SIMPLY. ALA IS MY BRAND NAME. IT'S ALL OF THE ABOVE PLUS MY HARD WORK.**

**MY PASSION FOR PHOTOGRAPHY STARTED A BIT ACCIDENTALLY, A FEW YEARS BACK ALREADY! AND PEOPLE KEEP ASKING: "WHAT FOR?". WELL, MY WORKS TRAVEL THE WORLD, ALREADY WINNING INDUSTRY PRIZES. I NEED TO LEARN MORE STILL, BUT THERE IS NO RUSH.**

**ALL I DO NOW, I DO CONSCIOUSLY. UNLIKE UNTIL RECENTLY, WHEN I RUSHED WITH EVERYTHING.**

**I AM ALA. I AM THE WIFE, MUM, LOVER, HOUSEWIFE, EVEN OUR PETS' VET - BUT IT'S MY TIME NOW. I AM ONLY HUMAN, I NEED MY BREATHING SPACE TOO.**

*BEATA TOMCZYK,  
PHOTOGRAPHS BY ALA BER  
MAIN TEXT TRANSLATION  
BY KASIA GRAJ,  
CAPTIONS BY ALA BER*

*Taken by Ala  
macro photos of  
micro world.  
This way of  
capturing nature is  
Ala's passion.*



**The house, just before Ala's family moved in 11 years ago was a ruin. Today overlooked with loads of TLC (Tender Loving Care) love and hard work. The house has got a companion (an eye) that overlooks straight from the kitchen window.**

**W**e meet at nine in the morning. Not many people would be very chatty so early, but Ala appears in full swing. She got up before five today to “hug and walk” their puppy Yogi Bowie. Maybe he really needed to go?” – Ala chuckles. The English Springer Spaniel is a family 3rd child, if not 4th actually – there is a mature feline Coco. She is dominating, but has greeted a new arrival very democratically and lets Yogi steal the show for now. And doesn't he make sure! He is everywhere – here chomping on the piano, there nearly munching on the kitchen table legs. Yogi won everyone's hearts! Born on the 12th of December he is Sagittarius and astrologic Number 6. “All living born in our galaxy in under the influence of planets” – sums up Ala.

## STATE OF THINGS

Five years ago Ala lost her dad. Soon after, her mum and a close colleague lost their battle with cancer. To top it all, difficult times have come at the Uni she has devoted to for nine, long years.

“Last summer I decided to stop unhappy work. Here I am at home with my beloved family, photography, music and lovely pets as well as other things, including memories form a recent trip to India”. This journey has turned to be so right for Ala. She had started her spiritual self-discovery when her dad passed away. However, it was the loss of mum, this shattering pain that marked a new beginning, a new life journey. Indeed, the spiritual call which has brought relief. “Through this spiritual experience I

rejoin my parents. I stopped hiding from myself and channelled this into self-discovery. All pieces now fall in” – adds Ala. Buddhist friend has helped a lot. He saw in Ala a spirit of Rhubarb, which grows when he wants, regardless of the environment and its conditions.

The whole family went on a trip to India, so they made it safe. But there was also time to do crazy things, to open up senses, wake up intuition. “I tried things, roamed about temples of all sorts; in one of them I received a special blessing, I felt the Energy. Taj-Mahal left me motionless. How can love to somebody inspire such a beautiful creation! I had not expected these breath-taking spectacles of the smells, the colours, streets teeming with people, rapeseed fields stretching along the roads from one city to another. But the women! Yes, men dominate in

their society, but it's all balanced out by mothers' central position. No guide could prepare me for all this!” Ala is charmed and encourages everybody not to be afraid in any journey and to open up heart.

## LIFE IS TO BE FAITHFUL

“I believe in Jesus. According to sources, he was close to Buddhism by nature. My children are in Catholic schools. I think that all religions give us an important foundation. Faith is a kind of a beautiful story to help us live life full of love. From a certain point, however, one has a choice. As its not all just serious stuff, it should be taken with a pinch of salt, if you get me. My children enjoy Catholic faith and I have nothing against it. I help



**Ala in her atelier with the newest addition to the family - English Springer Spaniel Yogi Bowie, with whom, like with any animals, there is need to talk.**

them in it, I am very open-minded. I don't push them. I don't want anybody to push them."

Ala's house allows for a peaceful coexistence of Michael the Archangel, family nurturer and protector. Beautiful Icon of Mother and Jesus, in turn, symbolises innocence. Buddha in company of green and yellow colours and wooden details looks down on a bed, the source of Energy. Ala's husband hand-made it from Indonesian wood boards. A figure of Ganesha, when touched by visitors sends good wishes of luck to the home-makers.

"I am a modern witch" – laughs Ala in a tone suggesting both satisfaction and playful irony. We move on. There is a stall full of earthly necessities complemented with a number of books, which inspired and created Ala. Aloe Vera waits always in family bathroom to alleviate pain of burns and scalds. Not less important is the family 'photo altar' of loved ones. Family is the first thing on Ala's mind when she wakes up each day. "It gives me

strength and I thank the Creator every day for the gift of breath'.

Breathing gets deeper with meditation, singing mantras and Gongu vibration. Love to music, plays a vital role too. "I was thirteen when I heard Depeche Mode, and I instantly fell in love with the rhythm. I knew I would come to London, learn English and meet them in person. If I was to have a son, I would call him Alan. And so it has materialised! I am friends with Alan Wilder. I took pictures of him, which are on his website. In the past I did not brag about it - their fans, women especially, would be up to scratch their eyes out for it! But well, I guess we can let them know..."

## PUT OUT THE FLAME OF DESIRE

"Successfulness is in ambition of people who desire. Both me and my husband Rafal have always worked towards a certain level of comfort so that we would have as much fun as our kids. One may want to grab

life with full hands, but it needs to be balanced. We have found and keep this balanced level. Also, thanks to my husband's hard work and sacrifice. He is a beautiful soul, a powerhouse of our home – very energetic, progressive man who cares for his reputation. Meanwhile, I have taken a role of family patron. My husband loves it and I enjoy it for now.

Indeed, I have now found time to enjoy our achievements so far. Luxury holidays, cars and retail therapy don't matter anymore. I don't spend recklessly – I'd rather buy new lens for my camera. It's a new era of self-love again. When you re-discover your inner beauty, as if by default you care for your body more, join yoga classes, cycle, swim..."

## THE EXPANSION OF CONSCIOUSNESS

Ala and Rafal have created atelier in

a hut at the back of their garden. It is not huge, but ever so important. It is their retreat from the fuss and noise of daily home life. It is more than just their creative space - it's an occasional guest house; sometimes it serves as a DJ station for the hubby; it is his office; but above all it is a calm area to edit photos (and there are lots of them). In fact, Ala has a few photo blogs. Blipfoto is more of a photo diary with its sentimental flavour whilst Instagram is loved for its unrestrained craziness. "Atelier is my peaceful corner. Kids know that when either me or hubby work here, their access is very limited. If they need me, they come or call and ask, but this is not their play area.

The hut can be easily seen from the house and it is separated with a garden teeming with flowers blooming in summer. Ala describes how swarms of butterflies, bumble bees and other tiny creatures hustle and bustle around the beautiful flowers she looks after. It is an endless inspiration for her macro photography. Atelier is made from wood – a hopeful reminder of their

retirement plan: an eco cottage somewhere in the mountains, where they will enjoy raising chickens and ducks. "Universe shall be merciful over our humble dream, i know that. I know that angels do listen, they wait for such challenges to help us, humans. All we have to do is to create, inspire – the rest will follow.

## WHAT TO WORK FOR?

"Tenderness and love given by another human – this is what creates us. I wish people were more outspoken about their feelings. We should be more open-minded and we need to learn to love ourselves. My mum gave me the flame of love and I pass it on. My teenage daughter, Helena has it. And it won't be put out, I let it be, but I am close and I make sure she doesn't burn out. I watch her and give her space. Mother-son relationship, on the other hand, is completely different. Marvellous! I used to be jealous for my younger brother as mum would be a lot more tender with him, and I now see the consequences. Girls are to be strong, boys often get special treatment, as if to create a perfect partner for yourself, an ideal man! This can be quite damaging for these boys. That's why I try to be different with Alan. Although he comes for an occasional hug, I try to raise him for emotional independence, so I limit these. He actually should forget about me from time to time" – says Ala, confident about her method.

## PAINTING WITH FOOD

Today it is a tomato soup for dinner. Polish traditional soups are very popular in the household and so are pastas. Simple recipes, healthy ingredients; organic if possible; lots of vegetables for kids. "There is, however, time to include more delicate flavours for my hubby, especially exquisite sauces". "Turmeric is our king of spices. Ahead of trip to India, Ala experimented with curry dishes.

"I am rational. I like to be in control, although it is not always possible. But the view of a sunny garden, where fresh herbs and vegetables grow helps. And it is



**Ala's teenage love for Depeche Mode lasts until today.**

all complemented by an open entrance to the living room. Ala likes refreshing her cuisine with book recipes. "I never cook the same dish twice - I always add something new. It's like painting - each stroke of a brush is different.

It's time to part. With goodbye I also hear from Ala "It is all very nice and pretty and I am grateful, but it is not granted, and I am at peace with that".