

«The girl in front of the lake»

Artist statement

I was born in Moscow in the 80s. In 1991 I went to sleep in the Soviet Union and woke up in Russia, and since then things started changing rapidly. People say my generation was born on a train - traveling bluntly from one country and epoch into another one. Right now when I'm grown up and still live in Moscow I often hear that many things have suddenly come back from the past into the present. I can feel what they say, on a sort of genetic level, even if I can't confirm or deny or debate their opinion - I was too small to remember those things from the past people talk about. Reading the news and watching the current events I have a sort of a *deja vu*, a strange and sometimes frightening experience. There is a book by Victor Pelevin called "The Yellow Arrow" written in 1993 which tells about a Russian train with no visible beginning or end, hurtling somewhere sort of eternally, and it's impossible to get off because the train makes no stops.

«The past is a locomotive that pulls the future after it -
Sometimes this past might even not be your own -
You are traveling backwards and see only what has already disappeared» -
Victor Pelevin, «The Yellow Arrow».

Some time ago I found a box of old slides at my parents. They show my early childhood which I do not have any memories of. Seeing these slides I was quite surprised - they show an absolutely incredible unexpected way of life, which I could not have even dreamt of - those are very romantic, beautiful pictures, a kind of happy moments from a roadtrip movie. I understand that photos may be deceptive and that it is impossible to judge from them if my childhood was really that good - that was hardly a possibility in the reality of the late USSR years. I still do not remember anything about my childhood, but with pleasure I surrender to the power of images. My parents created this magic for me. These constructed memories of the past give me new strength in my present reality.

The images in the project come from three sources and two types of paper are used - the box of slides and my personal daily snapshots are printed on matt tactile paper, while the black landscapes I construct digitally from my photographs are printed on a glossy paper.

Project tags

#dejavu #genetic memory #loop #atmosphere #elusive #fantasized #neurotic

Lena Kholkina, 2015-2018

