

IN-SPHERE

a world behind curtains | july 2010

FEATURING



SUSU LAROCHE



FRANZ VON STUCK



DROWNING BY NUMBERS



NEUE SLOWENISCHE KUNST



GARY HEAYES



JEEP NOVAK



CAFÉ CHANTANT



N-SPHERE

JULY 2010

EDITORIAL

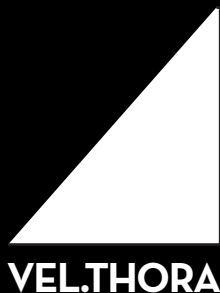
TRANQUILIZERS

The twilight is a time when *the obscure* comes to life. It crawls silently from under the wet stones of the pavement and shines darkly well into the night. The guardians of the unknown, the lost fragments of art inside a multitude of new ideas can thus be found and brought into a perfectly shaped sphere of vision.

Intertwining the matter with the ethereal, *Susu Laroche's* pieces form a middle ground between creation and destruction. Fighting light with fire, burning away perfection, the scars of the crepuscule dig deep into the flesh of her photographs. Pulsating through the night, perception slides quietly into the secrets of the human mind, be they frail or distorted, depicted under the conceptual perspectives of *Gary Heayes* and *Jeep Novak*.

One street over, jumping around a water pool, a girl is counting to one hundred. Indeed, the night has its stars, millions and millions stretching out beyond infinity. *Greenaway's* motion picture *Drowning by Numbers* is reflected on the sidewalk as the artistic boots of the *NSK* troops march forward, opening gates and cutting off invisible chains of oppression. Looking up, an open window lets out an imperceptible melody, a piano cries into the distance and laughter is heard from inside smoky café, while centuries overlap in silence.

Light a match for all out there looking for a road to trample, hold a candle for all those who forgot their way and turn off the lights at dawn. *The obscure* sleeps.



VEL.THORA

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GLASS
SHOWCASE
U LAROCHE

»THE GREAT CRIMINAL, THE GREAT SICKMAN, THE UTTERLY DAMNED«

Name:

Susu Laroche

Location:

London, United Kingdom

Occupation:

Artist

Definition of personal sphere:

»The poet makes himself a seer through a long, prodigious and rational disordering of all the senses. Every form of love, of suffering, of madness; he searches himself, he consumes all the poisons in him, keeping only their quintessence's. Ineffable torture in which he will need all his faith and superhuman strength, the great criminal, the great sickman, the utterly damned, and the supreme Savant! For he arrives at the unknown! Since he has

cultivated his soul – richer to begin with than any other! He arrives at the unknown: and even if, half crazed, in the end, he loses the understanding of his visions, he has seen them!«

Arthur Rimbaud

Artwork in 4 words:

Like a double espresso?

What is inspirational for you:

Chaos

Currently favourite artists:

Alfred Jarry and Nijitsky

Tools of trade:

Nikon F2 and Bolex H16

Current obsessions:

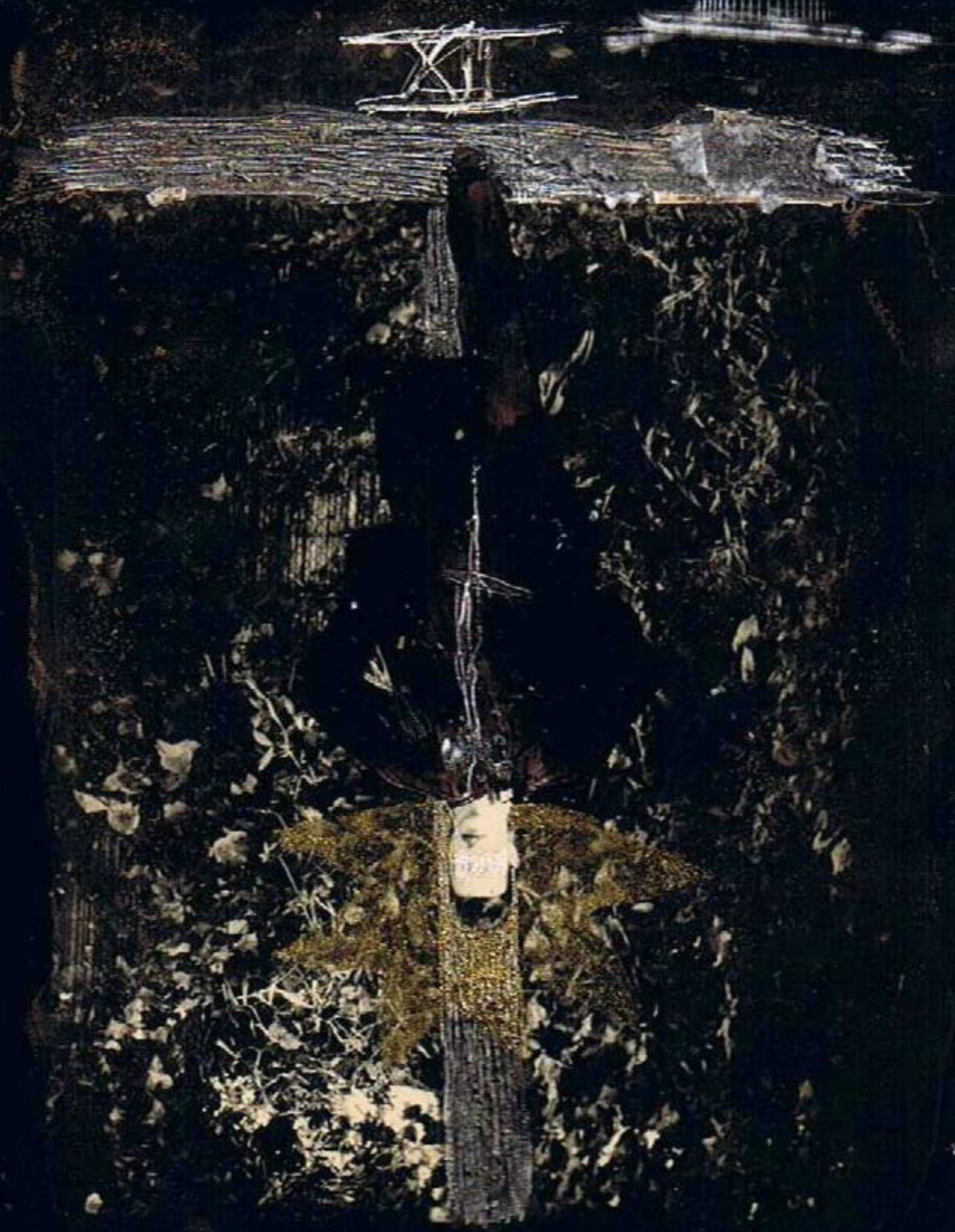
Italian icecream and

Georges Bataille

Personal temptation:

Delirium





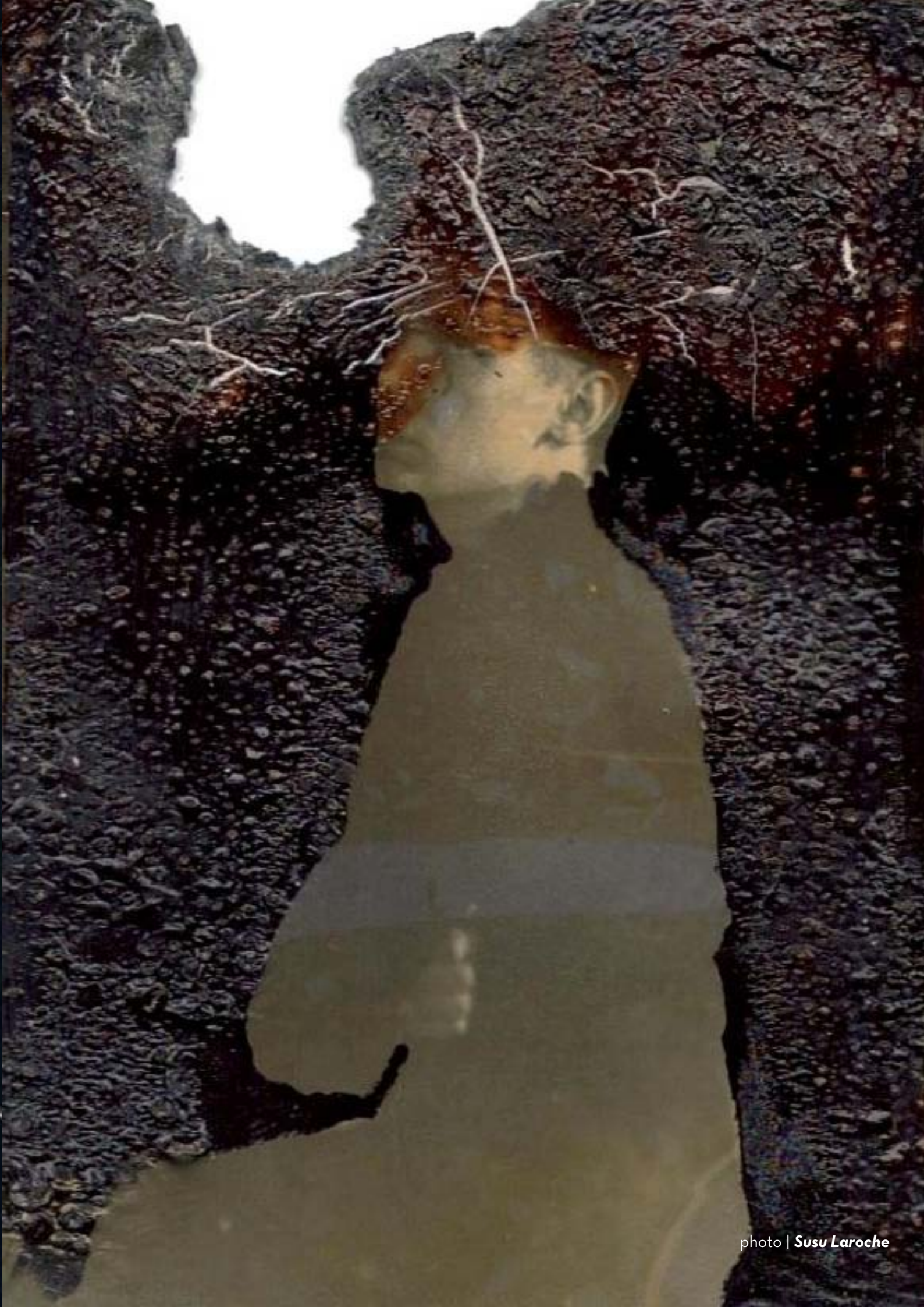




photo | **Susu Laroche**



photo | **Susu Laroche**

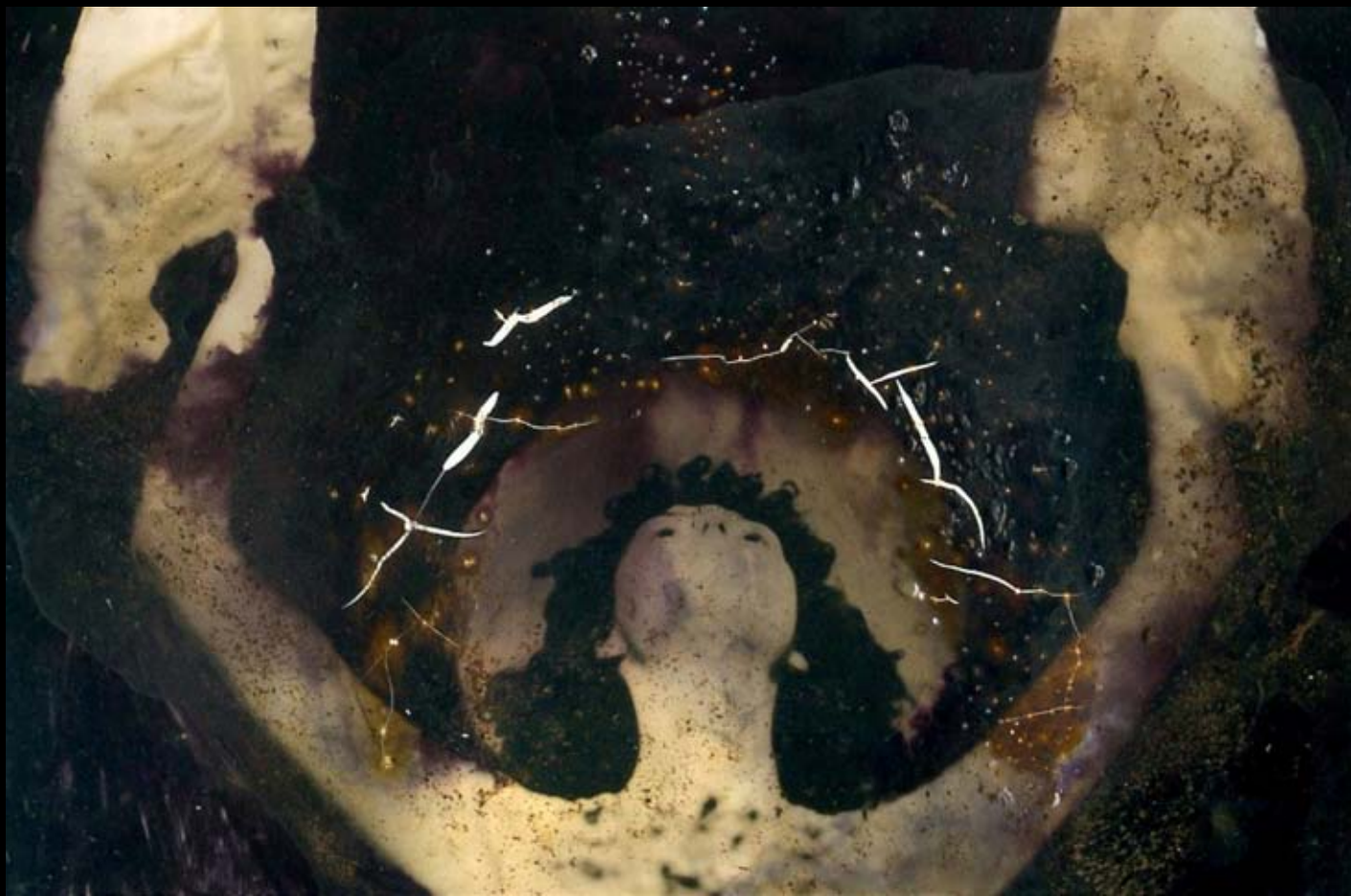


photo | **Susu Laroche**




photo | **Susu Laroche**





FRANZ

STONE
SHOWCASE
VON STUCK



»INTO THIS WILD ABYSS, THE WOMB OF NATURE AND PERHAPS HER GRAVE«

Name:

Franz Von Stuck

Lived:

24th February 1863 - 30th August 1928

Location:

Tettenweis, Germany

Occupation:

Painter, Sculptor, Engraver, Architect

Influences:

Arnold Böcklin

Influenced:

Egon Schiele, Paul Klee, Wassily

Kandinsky, Josef Albers, Luigi

Bonazza, Luigi Ratini.

Associated with:

Munich Secession, Art Nouveau,
German Symbolism, Genossenschaft
Pan

Obsessions:

Mythological creatures, Snakes,
Femmes Fatales, Sphinx and Lamias,
Occultism, Lucifer, Severed Heads,
Death and Open Wounds

quote | **John Milton. *Paradise Lost. Book ii: 910***

FRANZ
STUCK



photo | *Franz Von Stuck. 1893. Die Sünde*

HOW
MY

MOVING
SHOWCASE
**GREEN WAS
DROWNING**

For those with a sweet tooth for cine-narcotics Peter Greenaway's films are a worthwhile feast.

While ignoring traditional narratives, they maintain its solid structure, while often visually stunning, they refuse to share the same ground with directors such as Sokurov, Tarkovsky or others alike. Greenaway's films are not lyrical, they are more didactic, and yet there is a sense of freedom and outlandishness that prevents them from being dull.

Drowning by numbers is a good example in this sense. The story revolves around three women: grandmother, mother and daughter, having the same name and apparently the same amusing habit of drowning their husbands.

The film opens with a typical Greenaway scene: that of a little girl in a huge hoop skirt skips rope in front of a country house, illuminated by constantly shifting lights, counting the stars by name. After reaching 100 she stops claiming that »one hundred is enough. Once you've counted to one hundred, all the other hundreds are the same«

This scene sets the film's tone and gives the viewer a clue of what he's about to see. The film involves repeating drowning, and since its tone is not a dramatic one, one may assume black-comedy and indeed the overall manner seems to fit the profile, but Greenaway is not interested in that particular aspect very much either. By starting the movie like that, by throwing inside different kinds of obscure games, he invites the viewer to play. And it is the only way the whole structure makes sense. It is a game. There is no dramatic tension, and even if the comedy may have its target, it







does not go as far as aimed. It is present, because games are supposed to be funny.

Throughout the film we see... numbers, nearly everything is numbered. Again it gives an interactive feel to the whole material because after you see five scenes which have a number hidden somewhere, you may become worried when you don't find it.

Another aspect is the film's setting. It is not the-right-in-your-face outlandishness you see in nearly every SF film with fading surrealist stains, it looks real, it looks possible, and yet it gives you a pronounced eerie sensation.

As I mentioned in the beginning, the film is very rich both in visuals and substance, like many of Greenaway's films are. There is no way one can cover that in a review. There is no point: it should be the viewer's delight of unmasking symbols, and following tracks.

Another aspect is the approach towards sex which is a distant one: they're not scandalous events, they are not met with a dramatic look; instead, they are met in a casual manner, just like any other mundane event is.

To some people, this film may be very difficult to penetrate, due to

its outlandish approach towards a not-so-outlandish subject of matter, some people may question its plausibility, but games aren't always plausible in the mundane context, they follow their own logic, just like this film does. One must bear in mind that Greenaway was trained as a painter; thus his movies should be evaluated likewise. What we have here is a moving painting, one that illustrates a game. And, as in many paintings, we have patterns: visual ones, verbal ones and so forth.

In games there are no ultimate consequences, so the film doesn't need a dramatic tone.



All in all, if you have encountered Greenaway's earlier works (or not necessarily earlier) and if you have liked them, this one deserves a shot (at least); or if you like English humor, filled with great visuals, riddles and games (nevermind the plot) this call may be for you as well.

Till the next transmission, pleasant (out)numbering.

text | **shade**

photo | **Drowning By Numbers. 1988.**

Screenshots

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N

DIALECTIC

LOCKWORK
SHOWCASE
**SK AND THE
S OF POWER**

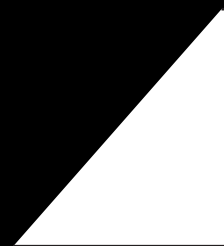
»WIR TANZEN MIT FASCHISMUS UND Roter ANARCHIE«

Trbovlje, a small industrial town in ex-Yugoslavia, now in Slovenia, boasts with its enduring coal mining activity and the tallest chimney in Europe. One could hardly suspect that it's now famous for being the birthplace of NSK or Neue Slowenische Kunst (New Slovenian Art), one of the most compelling and controversial art movements in post-war Eastern Europe.

During the early '80s, when NSK was formed, Eastern Europe witnessed a period of intellectual fervor and strengthening of the civil society, as well as constant repression of the communist regimes. Despite being

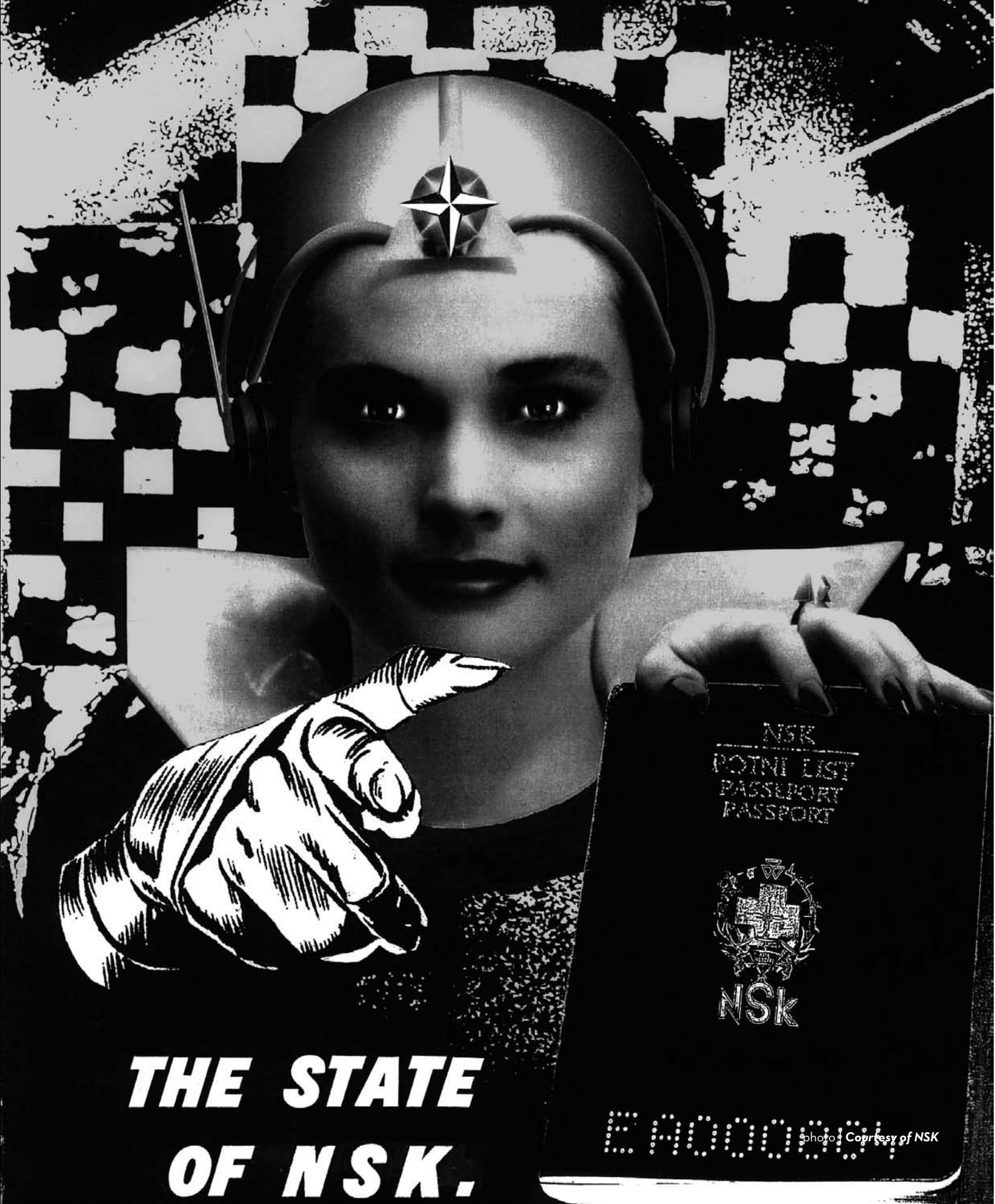
the first socialist republic to refuse the Soviet hegemony and advocating »socialism with a human face«, Yugoslavia was not exempted from the predicaments of totalitarianism.

The cultural scene responded to this oppressive context through a vibrant student movement (as observed from Mladina journal or Radio Student), an emerging alternative culture [Marina Gržinic] in Slovenia and the Lacanian School, led by influential theoretician Slavoj Žižek. Fueled by this newfound creativity, NSK coalesced in 1984 around the industrial band Laibach (founded in 1980), the art collective Irwin (1983) and the theatre group



SIMINA NEAGU

**BECOME A CITIZEN OF THE
FIRST GLOBAL STATE OF THE
UNIVERSE**



**THE STATE
OF NSK.**

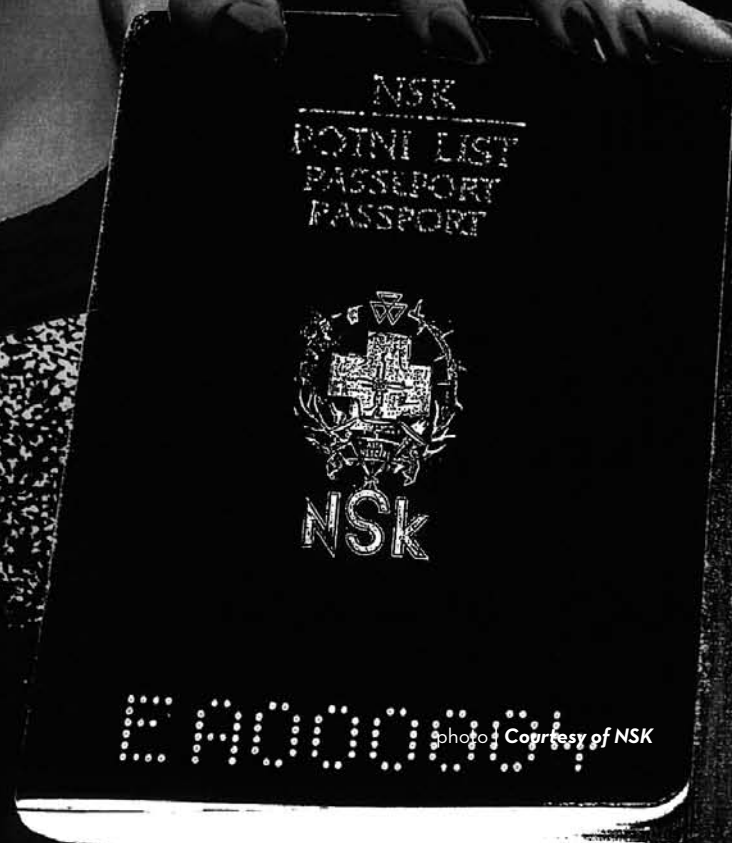


photo Courtesy of NSK

Scipion Nasice Sisters (1983-1987). Immediately, the design group New Collectivism was formed by members of the other collectives. Later, more subdivisions were established, such as the Department for Pure and Applied Philosophy. Thus, the organization of NSK grew and developed, broaching almost every cultural field, from fine art and architecture to philosophy and politics. Roles were assigned to each member of the group, Laibach being considered the politicians, Irwin the state artists and Scipion Nasice Sisters Theatre representing religion. As the founding members recall in an interview given in 2000, NSK was finished as a movement in 1990, when the state of Yugoslavia collapsed and Slovenia proclaimed independence. New issues needed to be assessed after the fall of the Berlin Wall, taking into account the retracing of European state borders and the resurgence of nationalism, following the imposed communist internationalism. Thus, the NSK State in Time project was initiated, accompanied by a whole range of state symbols and actions, from establishing a constitution and embassies to issuing passports.

Appropriating totalitarian imagery from both sides of the political spectrum, NSK was criticized by the left, as well as the right. »Are they fascists?« or »Do they serve as communist propagandists?« were recurrent inquiries. Slavoj Žižek, usually considered the theoretical counterpart of NSK, stepped in and introduced the concept of *over-identification* [Slavoj Žižek, *Interrogation Machine, Laibach and NSK*]. Instead of assuming critical distance from its subject, namely the internal mechanics of authority, NSK adopted an even more subversive strategy, by over-identifying with the structure and taking it more seriously than it takes itself, as Žižek explained. In the words of Laibach »Art and to-

talitarianism are not mutually exclusive. Totalitarian regimes abolish the illusion of revolutionary individual artistic freedom. LAIBACH KUNST is the principle of conscious rejection of personal tastes, free depersonalization, *ultramodernism*...« This brings

**»ART AND
TOTALITARIANISM
ARE NOT
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TASTES, FREE
DEPERSONALIZA-
TION«**

to mind both the stunted process of modernization in Eastern Europe as well as the impossibility of implementing utopia. Hence, it rendered visible the unspoken, obscene undertones of the establishment. And as every system contains its own breach, NSK seized this opportunity, by exposing the gap between state ideology and reality, defined by tacitly accepted transgressions of the official communist agenda. But following their pro-

cedure of unfinished and suspended dialectics, the conflict was neither resolved, nor assimilated.

This brings us to another concept introduced by NSK, retro-avantgarde. As Eda Cufer and Irwin wrote in 1992 »Neue Slowenische Kunst – as Art in the image of the State – revives the trauma of the avant-garde movements by identifying with it in the stage of their assimilation in the systems of totalitarian states.« [Joanne Richardson, *Irwin & Eda Cufer Interview*] This is why the NSK insignia contains references to avant-garde symbols such as Kazimir Malevich's 1913 suprematist painting, *Black Square*. One of Irwin's performances, during the NSK Moscow Embassy action in 1992, consisted of placing a black cloth in the shape of a square on the symbolically laden ground of the Red Square in the Russian capital. Thus, an aesthetical supremacy was asserted, reversing the historical process of avant-garde assimilation. Malevich's black square on Moscow's Red Square suspended for a few moments the hierarchy of politics and aesthetics, positioning the former in the service of the latter. For a brief instant, the utopian avant-garde of early 20th century was revived, before its denouncement as merely *bourgeois* art by the communist establishment and its replacement with Socialist Realism.

German theoretician Boris Groys further elaborated on the Eastern and Western avant-garde. [Boris Groys, *Primary Documents: A Sourcebook for Eastern and Central European Art since 1950s*] In spite of their formal similarities, Groys sustains that the movements had very different goals on each side of the Iron Curtain. While Western artists were mainly seduced by Marxist ideals, their Eastern colleagues were more interested in affirming their individuality. Therefore,



the critical stance was unequivocally assigned to avant-garde procedures, while traditional attitudes were associated with affirmative actions. NSK, on the other hand, questioned precisely this opposition between critical and affirmative, between collectivity and individualism, between East and West. Negating the conflict while at the same time expressing it proved to be a difficult position to understand for many.

Nonetheless, NSK was never short of followers and in October 2010, the

First NSK Citizens Congress [congress. nskstate.com] will be organized in Berlin at Haus der Kulturen der Welt. The program will include lectures, concerts and exhibitions, all centered around the main interests of the collective. Whether or not the movement has maintained its vitality and relevance, while preserving its penchant for uncomfortable issues remains to be seen, but it is beyond doubt that since the '80s NSK had a massive influence on the European cultural scene and its uncompromising methods are still a model for contemporary artists and intellectuals.



NSK GARDA

PRISTINA



photo | Igor Andjelic. IRWIN, in collaboration with Kosovo Army, Exit, 8.11.2002

IRWIN in collaboration with Kosovo Army, November 8, 2002

MO

HANGING
CAGES
NOCHROME
RED

»STILLNESS REIGNED HERE FOR CENTURIES«

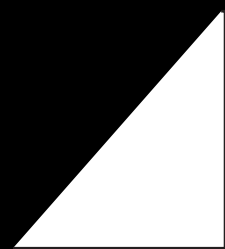
The old man plunged to his fate, enraged at the earth that would not have him. Heavens laughed, and his friends found themselves saddened by what they would later call “his great moment of weakness”. His story was passed on, as the seasons kept chasing each other amongst the crimson lamplights spread across the vast gray plains of remembrance. Stillness reigned here for centuries, now a spider’s web’s kingdom, and yet, countless eyes whispered counterclockwise, waters ran upwards, and every time the peace of mind was in his grasp, it would elude him with unflinching stubbornness rooted in dark despair.

He meditated upon the prospect of abandonment, the urge of letting go and throwing it all to hell. But even that in itself required a certain

amount of energy he did not possess at such a time. He sought comfort in the unanswered icy clouds brewing fearful cries, filled with unnatural ethereal light.

A strangled voice slowly turning into a screeching ugly howl drew his attention away from the wonders at his feet. He had nothing to say, nothing to share with others. Why was he troubled with triviality and nonsense? He told himself ‘Listen to the rain, listen to the stones grow’, maybe something good will come out of that. But for now, he felt... depleted. That would best describe the state he felt inside and around him.

Letters were swept away from parchments, dancing vigorously around a blank, pitch black mind, as he walked away with a faint ‘Insha’Allah’ carved on his lips.



BAHAK B



G

NOX
SHOWCASE!
ARY HEAYES

NAME:

GARY HEAYES

LOCATION:

TOKYO, JAPAN

OCCUPATION:

SALARY MAN

WEBSITE:

WWW.HEAYES.COM





photo | Gary Heayes. Sanatorium Series

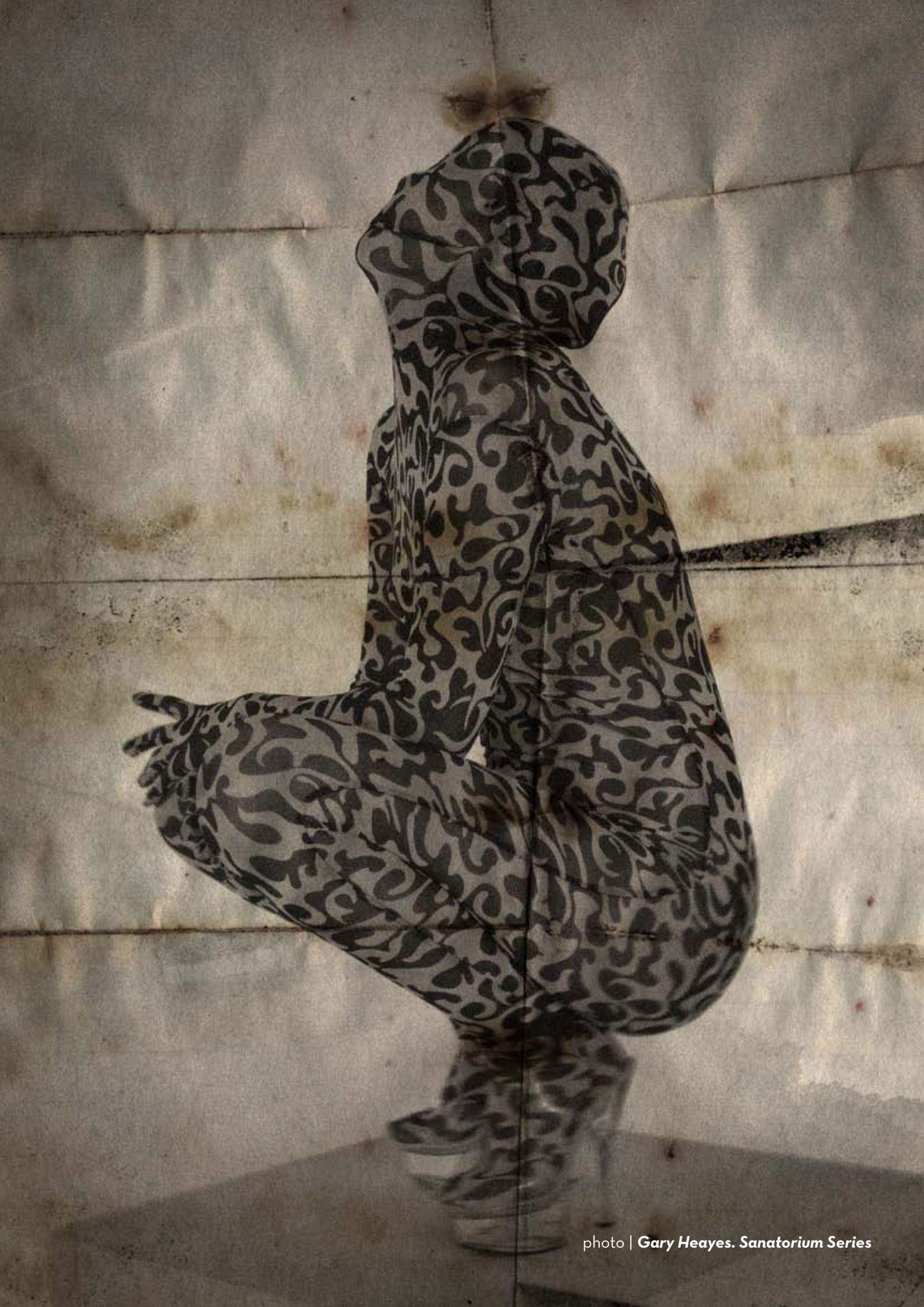


photo | Gary Heayes. Sanatorium Series



photo | **Gary Heayes. Sanatorium Series**



photo | **Gary Heayes. *Sanatorium Series***

AN EVE
THE 20

ABUSE
SHOWCASE
**NING FROM
TH CENTURY**

»TEA, COOKIES AND MUSIC: AN EVENING FROM THE TWENTIETH CENTURY«

WHEN

June 30th

WHERE

Sala de Lectura Bucharest

WHO

Alexandru Raileanu

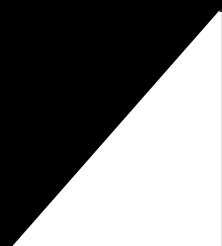
Piano, classical and jazz

National University of Music, Bucharest

Cristina Pasa

Violin, classical and jazz

National University of Music, Bucharest



VEL.THORA



Squeaky floors, a long line of tables, a black concert piano and the smell of tea and cookies paint out the first image inside the teahouse. Amongst dried roses and red pillows, there is a slight whisper that raises up in the air as one awaits for the concert to begin. The host moves around, lighting small candles on the low tables and the light goes off. Welcome to the '20s.

Located in the middle of old Bucharest, *Sala de Lectura* (a Tea House and Reading Room from ACT Theatre) is a place where music, drawing, radio theatre and reading gather round, have tea, shake hands and tell each other old stories. Bringing forth young talented artists, the teahouse hosts daily events, a lookout point into the world of undiscovered talent and fresh ideas. Hosting both visual arts (a photography exhibit and a drawing contest) and weekly impro-

visation acts, the teahouse ended the season with an exquisite piano and violin concert.

Enticing the mind to dream and succumb into the dazzling air of the '20s music, the café-concert starts slow, creeping under the skin, taking its time to grab and hold tight to imagination. Closing eyes, one can almost see the exuberance and free spirits of an inter-war setting, as the sounds of the violin reverberate into the room. The air is still and light, a couple holds hands in a corner, friends forget about chatter captivated by the show, a fan slowly opens in the silence and the sounds dance into the distance.

The concert is held by a violin-piano duo, Cristina Pasa and Alexandru Raileanu. Both studying music since childhood, with numerous concerts and awards, they present a tight stage connection and amazing har-

mony. Spicing the café-chantant with brushes of the roaring twenties, the jazz innuendos fit perfectly into the evening air, the taste of the cooling tea and a subtle frolic around the rooms. The piano slides in unnoticed under the crisp trills of the violin, only to return in full force and steal the attention away. It is a delighting back and forth between frequencies, keeping up with one another, following closely both measures and rhythm.

The evening ends long after the applause is over, the atmosphere is still inviting to pleasant conversations, faces return to their companions. But smiles linger on and walking outside in the twilight on the narrow street only adds to the brief incursion in the past. Welcome to the present.

photo | **vel.thora**





S
J

NOX
HOWCASE"
EEP NOVAK

NAME:

JEEP NOVAK

LOCATION:

BRUSSELS, BELGIUM

OCCUPATION:

PHOTOGRAPHER

WEBSITE:

WWW.FLICKR.COM/PHOTOS/JEEP_NOVAK/







photo | *Jeep Novak. Keep The Wax*



ugh! free brylcreem FOR **Acid Angles!** an experience that **YOU** will never forget.

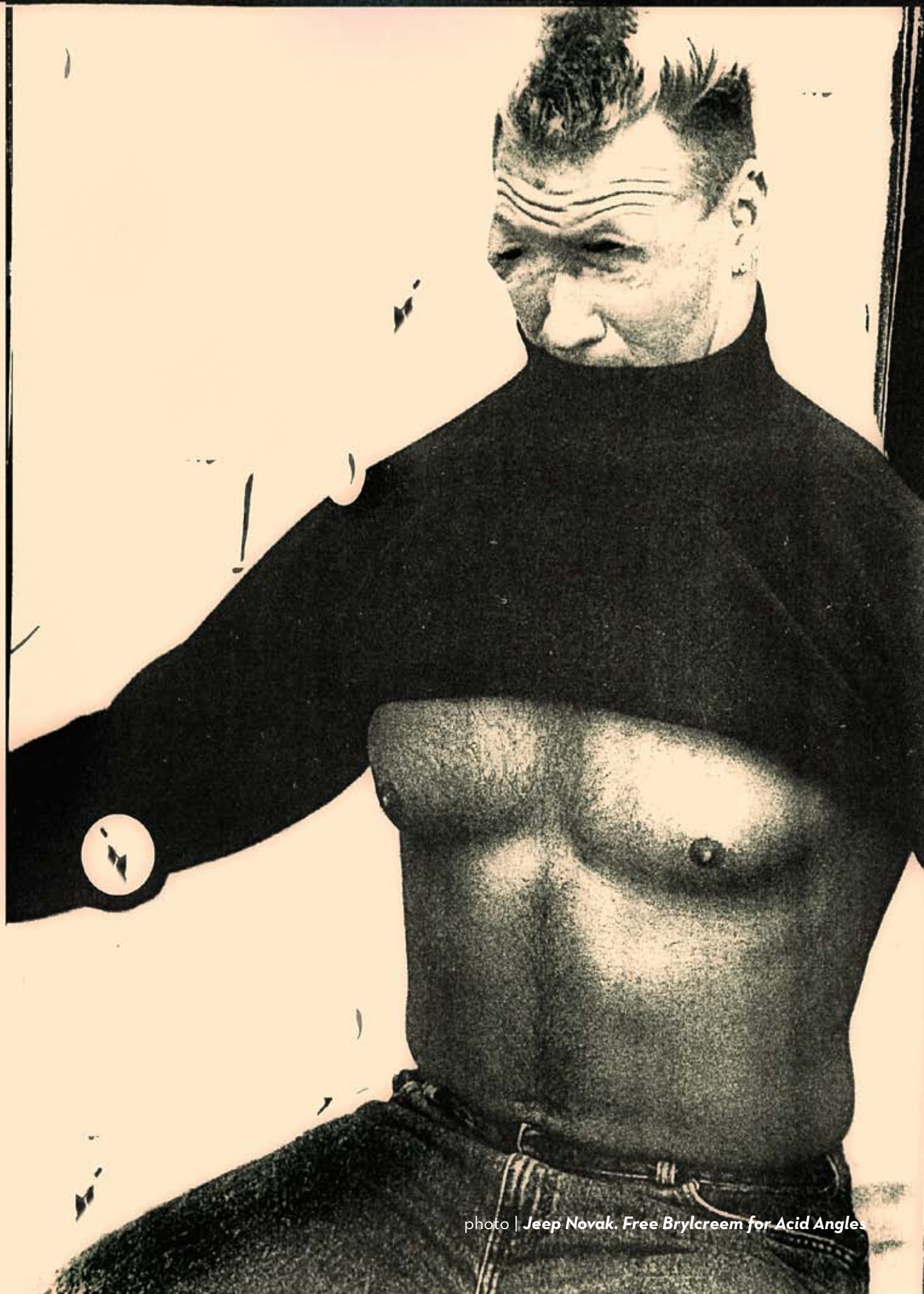


photo | Jeep Novak. Free Brylcreem for Acid Angles



photo | **Jeep Novak.** *It Started With A Kiss*

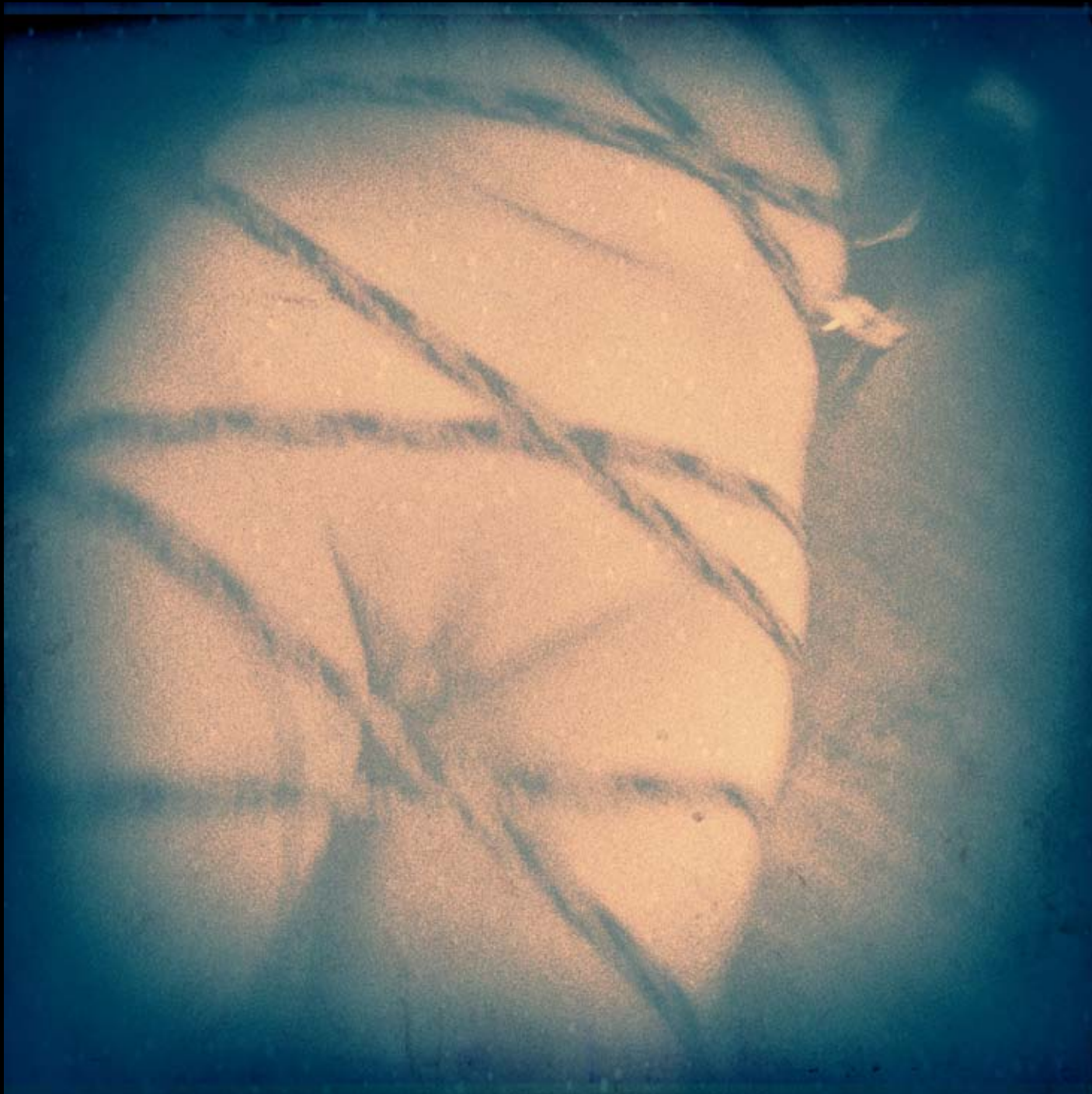


photo | **Jeep Novak. Sunday 8 PM**

CHAI

NZ CISSORS





EYE TEASER

CHRISTOPHER ILTH

United States

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