

Petersburg Places and Paintings



'I don't paint the people themselves. Rather, I paint the public places through which they move en masse, bearing their emotions and cares with them. Stations, parks, cafes, waiting rooms.' Tatyana Yassievich

Petersburg Places and Paintings is a visual documentary about the work of the young Russian-Dutch painter Tatyana Yassievich, who travels between her native St. Petersburg, Amsterdam and Berlin, between her past and her future, in a ceaseless effort to register what remains of Soviet aesthetics in the public space, before it disappears entirely.

"Petersburg Places and Paintings" is a visually oriented documentary about the work of the Russian-Dutch painter Tatyana Yassievich, who travels between St. Petersburg, Amsterdam and Berlin, between her past and future, between what is gone and what is still to come. Her work is a ceaseless effort to register what remains of Soviet aesthetics in the public space, before it is replaced entirely by 'Eurorenovation', the widespread and arbitrary aping of Western European examples.

The film takes viewers into public spaces still pervaded by the history of the Soviet era. They combine with Yassievich's personal memories to create a tangible experience of the

drastic, ongoing changes set in motion by the recent collapse of the Soviet Union.

The film does not show the well-known imperial grandeur of St. Petersburg, but rather a more everyday landscape of high-rise neighbourhoods, stations, waiting rooms and cafeterias. Amsterdam and Berlin also occupy an important place in Yassievich's life and work. There, at a distance, she works on the completion of her idiosyncratic paintings. The three cities overlap in the film. Yassievich seems to move through one, giant city, through a dynamic, sometimes desolate, but always inspiring and changing organism.



CREDITS

Netherlands 2004
68 min. / color
Russian spoken,
subtitled in English and Dutch
Digibeta / Beta SP / DVD

Director & producer

Ben van Lieshout

Photography

Stef Tijdink (N.S.C.)

Ben van Lieshout

Editing

Jan Ketelaars

Voice-over

Tatyana Yassievich

Sounddesign & mix

Klink

Marc Lizier

Music

Michel Banabila & Eric Vloeimans

Aleksei Khvostenko

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