



The Brave Seven

Seven

In August 2004, Andrey Sherbinin and Ulugbek Ahmedov tried to get hold of two Soviet movies, *The Brave Seven** and *The Seventh Bullet***. Their idea was to refer to collective and individual memories of the diverse, far-apart Soviet landscapes and their characters.

A video tape of *The Brave Seven* was ordered on the Russian Internet, but had to be transferred from Moscow to Hamburg with the help of several friends. This is a short version of Andrey Sherbinin's recollection of how they procured the film:

Mobile call

- Who is there?
- It's me, Andrey. Listen, I need your help. A transfer Moscow – Hamburg.
- Sorry, Andrey. I am on the Azores on holidays. The call will be expensive for you...

Crisis meeting in Hamburg

- It is too late to send the video by mail. We have to ask L. to give it to somebody at the airport.

Mobile call

- L.! Where are you?
- Hello, hello?
- Are you at the dacha?
- Andrey? Louder! We are at the dacha! I can hardly hear you!
- When are you back in Moscow?
- I can't understand you! Call me back in three days when we will be in Moscow again!

Crisis meeting in Hamburg

- Only 10 days remain until the opening. Good, that L. already has the film.

L. to her husband

- Imagine! I would ask a person: "Could you take the parcel to Hamburg? It is only a video!" Suddenly I'd feel somebody taking my arm and guiding me away. Then it starts: "What do you have there? Drugs or dynamite?" Me: "Of

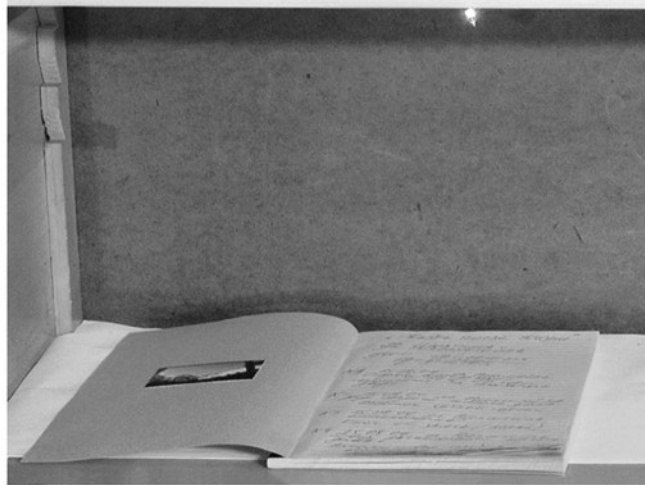
Life after life

by Igor Lebedev

Since I was born and grew up not far from this area, I have been observing life here for a long time. For me, this area is not simply a "bad neighborhood," a "reservation," or a place of ecological and social catastrophes. It is loaded with an extremely rich, ambiguous history, interwoven with small snippets of my own experiences. Life between Shkapin and Rosenshtein changes so slowly that its transformations go unseen, even by people who rarely visit, not to mention the locals who live here permanently. It is as if life here had been suspended and preserved in time, much like the local apartment houses, which were recognized as unfit for housing some time long ago and, designated for complete renovation. This preservation – in which the renovation is never

completed – gives rise to real cultural sedimentations. Strolling through the labyrinth of yards, front doors, and back entrances, I constantly dredge up this sediment and its many cultural layers.

Life after life tells the story of a neighborhood that has survived its own history. It looks at ordinary, everyday objects that are no longer in use. Torn from their context and having lost their initial designation, these things become the objects of a laboratory examination. Placed into jars originally intended for chemicals, labeled with photographs of the places where they were found as well as the local population's comments, these random objects take on a new quality. Here, it is possible to analyze them and catalogue this disappearing world.



Watchtowers

by Alexander Florensky

An architectural phenomenon that I have named "watchtowers" is found fairly often in St. Petersburg. I assume that these turrets were built after the last war – in case of another war to come. Their precise purpose is not very clear to me, although the mili-



Maklina prospekt

The development of

from a video interview with Maria Makogonova

by Chto delat? - What is to be done?

Around 1900, the historical center of Petersburg with its famous ensembles, palaces, churches and theaters found itself girded by an enormous industrial ring, far exceeding the surface area of the central city. It was dominated by red brick and brown-stone industrial buildings, factories and workshops, and interspersed with residential housing. Frequently, these houses were slums. Characteristic of the city's proletarian outskirts, one of these neighborhoods sprang up on the banks of Obvodny Canal. The poverty and unsanitary conditions that reigned here drew a great deal of protest and dissatisfaction, so much that the first Russian urban planners were already proposing measures for the redevelopment of Petersburg as early as the 1900s.

course, opium for the people. It is a Soviet classic!" Laughing.

K., the daughter of the artist A., tells her friend P. about it all

- Why didn't you tell me earlier? I have a friend who is working at the airport customs. He knows a friendly pilot whom he can give the video. At the moment, the guy is flying the Baku line, but he will be back tomorrow.

E-mail to Hamburg

- Flight number SU 102, departure Moscow 10:40, arrival Hamburg 11:30
- Thank you!"

The Seven Brave was successfully screened at M6 gallery, Hamburg. The

film was shown together with imagined portraits of the movie's protagonists by Andrey Sherbinin, who before the screening only knew descriptions of the characters.

A copy of *The Seventh Bullet*, however, could not be found in either Germany or Russia. So Ulugbek Ahmedov made portrait drawings of the film characters he remembers from his youth.

- * *Semero smelykh* [The Brave Seven], UdSSR 1936, directed by Sergey Gerasimov and made by Mosfilm, chronicles a heroic expedition of seven komсомолtsy (members of the Communist youth league) to the Soviet North, and was filmed in the extreme conditions of the Arctic.

- ** *Sedmaya pulya* [The Seventh Bullet], UdSSR 1972, directed by Ali Khamraev, is a Soviet eastern made by film studios of Uzbekistan. The movie, staged in

the desert landscape of Central Asia during the Civil War, stylizes the story of a Red commissar hunting for a big landowner, a basmach.



Andrey Sherbinin, Member of the Komsomol



Ulugbek Ahmedov, The Red Commissar