

Donetsk: More Than Smoke

an artistic project by Lionel Favre (Austria / Switzerland)

Organizer:

Austrian Cultural Forum in Moscow

Curators:

Kiki Lippert, Simon Mraz

About the Project

The idea for this project was born five years ago, when the artist Lionel Favre, who lives in Austria and Switzerland, took a trip to Donetsk. This trip left a deep impression on the artist, who came back with many gigabytes of photographs, as well a dozen or so sketchbooks with illustrations, and an idea for a new project. The materials that Favre collected during his trip inspired him to create an exhibition dedicated to the history of one city and its residents. It is a completely different Donetsk: In photographs the city did not yet know such pain and suffering as happens in it now. "Donetsk" is a personal, intimate story of people living in a lively, peaceful city.

The exhibition consists of two parts: a series of drawings, and photographs. Favre creates his graphic works by overlaying drawings on old construction sketches and blueprints. But in "Donetsk" the meaning of that framework — of the finished sketch — changes. Now the blueprints of homes and stadiums are evidence of the fact that creation is the opposite of destruction brought by war, and photos of Donetsk, caught in the lens as a city full of life, seem very far from the horrors of the special operations of today.

About the Artist

Lionel Favre was born in 1980 in Morges, Switzerland. He lives and works in Vienna, Lausanne and Geneva.

Construction plans and technical sketches form the foundation of Lionel Favre's work. He spontaneously fills up their surface with narrative drawings done in black ink. The blueprints and sketches give the compositional frames their pattern, and he uses those limits with a lot of imagination as a space to play in order to realize his surrealist scenarios. Various objects and figures appear before us on the page, enlivening it, settling into spaces made visible and, in so doing, give cause for new interpretations. Having long since yellowed and become useless in the course of time, the plans are not only made unreadable by the drawings, but also lose their original function. Scales become distorted, perspectives shift. The drawings, transforming the basis for the image, take on new significance." — Elsy Lahner, curator at the Albertina museum in Vienna.

Venue

The project will be open to public in an apartment at the legendary House on the Embankment at the address 2 Serafimovich Street, 2nd Entrance, Code 33, 6th Floor, Apartment 33.

Dates

Press viewing and visit with the curators and the artist: March 26 at 17:00

Opening: March 26, 18:00 to 23:00

The exhibition will then be open for visitors only on preliminary accreditation
by e-mail: moskau-kf@bmeia.gv.at

Quoted Speech

Simon Mraz, director of the Austrian Cultural Forum in Moscow:

“Art is not decoration — by its own nature it shows us life. That is especially important when we talk about those places that change from places of life to places of death. We dedicate this project to a city of people, Donetsk. In the flood of analytical articles, reports, statistics, maps and strategies we do not want to forget the simple humanity of the city. We want to concentrate on the individual, particular experience and show what Donetsk is through the help of photographs and works of art. Our exhibition is open to all visitors, regardless of where they are from. It is a small but honest project. Let us not turn a blind eye, but open our eyes wider in order not to forget, not only the tragically unfolding story, which in itself should serve as a lesson to us, but the times of peace in order to remember what we’ve lost and what we owe those people who are bearing losses now.”

Lionel Favre, Artist:

"In 2010 I had the chance to stay in Donetsk for three weeks in the framework of an exhibition project involving 12 artists from all over the world. I used that trip to perform active research and collect various artifacts. I brought back thousands of maps and photographs I did in Donetsk, as well as many old and new construction sketches, to my studio in Vienna. But the strongest impression that green and lively city made on me was in talking with its inhabitants. The photos I took during that trip are very different from those I see today, onto which are printed the horrors of war. The free and peaceful Donetsk can be seen on my photos. Art struggles to show different life developments without distortion. Thanks to its ability to reflect the world, art introduces rays of light and hope even in the darkest corners."

Additional Information:

An illustrated catalogue will be prepared for the exhibition.

Idea and Realization

Lionel Favre and Simon Mraz, Austrian Cultural Forum in Moscow

Project Managers: Ekaterina Ehm and Julia Tauber, Austrian Cultural Forum in Moscow.

Additional Information, Accreditation, Interview Organization:

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<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/qb10mw57wdhz0nt/AAD5ZsJP2tw0Ucqtkc-ZbS1pa?dl=0>

www.akfmo.org