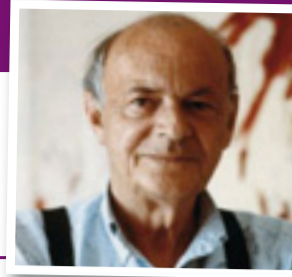


ART



It takes a long time for a man to look like his portrait.

Cy Twombly

By means of photography: London spaces and portraits

Dmitri Kasterine, British photographer of Russian origin has his first show in the UK at the National Portrait Gallery. Famous in the entertainment art circles for his portraits, Dmitri's work was to be defined by his friendship with Stanley Kubrick. Tot Taylor, curator of the exhibition ANALOG at the Riflemaker gallery, speaks to London Info about his curatorial thoughts of what ANALOG is to him.

Xanthi SKOULARIKI
art@russianmind.com

As the new art season is commencing, the shifting dynamics of gallery action are continuously making a strong presence via a plethora of openings as from this week. Riflemaker gallery opens the month's agenda with a photography exhibition that sheds light on the photographer's royaume: the darkroom.

The impact of digital technology on print photography and music production is the subject of ANALOG at Riflemaker, Soho from 10 January 2011. The exhibition invites us inside the last of London's photographic darkrooms as well as taking a visit to a working reel-to-reel music studio, courtesy of an installation by Lewis Durham of the band Kitty, Daisy & Lewis.

When Richard Nicholson started the project in 2006, he recorded about 204 darkrooms in London alone and by the time he had completed his work, only 12 remained. ANALOG is dedicated to a dying technological era, perhaps a glimpse in a world that seems to be certainly over: in December, Kodak announced the end of Kodachrome film manufacturing and processing, after a its first sale in 1935.

This doesn't make for the only reason that ANALOG comes at a good time. In tune with the fashion du jour on the aesthetics and products of the last decades of the twentieth century, even the word itself sets the mood for a bygone time that for some evokes nostalgia and for some others really much younger speaks of 'cool' or simply 'unknown, maybe never heard of'. Certainly from a language point of view, it doesn't mean anything specific, same like its successor, digital.

A very different display is ongoing at the National Portrait Gallery showing for the first time in the United Kingdom works by Dmitri Kasterine, a London born, New York based photographer, son of White Russian army officer and a British mother. The collection of twenty photographs of Francis Bacon, Stanley Kubrick and David Hockney among others, is a recent acquisition of the National Portrait Gallery. Stateside, Kasterine's portraits have entered the permanent collection of the Smithsonian Institution in Washington DC.

ANALOG as curated by Tot Taylor, together with Virginia Damtsa founders of the Riflemaker gallery, looks into a wider range of questions. In Tot's verbatim, 'the dark room is one of the few interior spaces that are not decorated. So what is this?' In the case of the exhibition and as nearly all London darkrooms have shut down,

the question is naturally answered through photography. On one side is the purposeful aesthetics or rather the lack of, producing a unique environment that can be appreciated in various ways: the curiosity of peeping through a modern camera obscura, the stillness of the equipment -haunting or spiritual-, the ex-functionality of these little spaces.. Richard Nicholson's definition speaks of 'spaces I discovered that were often haphazard and brimming with personal details: coffee cups, CD collections, family snaps, unpaid invoices, curious knick-knacks brought back by globe-trotting photographers. These human elements transformed what might have been a detached typology of modernist industrial design into something more intimate and nuanced.'

ANALOG exhibition at Riflemaker: 10 Jan-3 Mar www.riflemaker.com and Twentieth Century Portraits: Photographs by Dmitri Kasterine at the National Portrait Gallery until 3 Apr www.npg.org.uk

After hopping through a variety of professions including wine trade, Lloyd's, racing and selling cars and flying aeroplanes to Australia, Kasterine started his career as a photographer in 1961 working for UK publications such as Queen magazine. He, however, recalls his first interest in photography at the age of eleven when he was not always successfully photographing birds and cows in the countryside of Kent where he grew up.



Dame Beryl Bainbridge

His long association with Stanley Kubrick that started in 1964 was to set his career for a takeoff, at first working on Dr Strangelove, followed by A Clockwork Orange and 2001: Space Odyssey where he acted as the in situ photographer during filming. Kubrick told him once that he had the way of being at the right spot in the right time -every time. Having photographed artists, musicians, writers, directors and performers, Kasterine developed the ability to capture with his lens a more real image of the person instead of the famous replicated trademark image. This has resulted in unexpected portraits, even awkward at times, but always captivating with their intensity and 'true value'. Kasterine is currently working on a book documenting the residents of Newburgh, New York; his series of portraits of Brooklyn residents are published on-line at www.kasterine.com.



Roy Snell

LONDON ART AND EXHIBITIONS CALENDAR

Openings of the week

12 Jan - 26 Feb	Christopher Thomas: New York Sleeps at the Wapping Project Bankside. www.thewappingprojectbankside.com
12 Jan - 19 Feb	Cindy Sherman at Sprüth Magers. www.spruechmagers.com
12 Jan - 27 Feb	Erik Van Lieshout: How Can I Help You? at The Hayward. www.southbankcentre.co.uk
12 Jan - 3 Apr	From Morandi to Guttuso: Masterpieces from the Alberto Della Regione Collection at the Estorick Collection. www.estorickcollection.com
19 Jan - 24 Apr	Gabiel Orozco at Tate Modern. www.tate.org.uk
14 Jan - 19 Feb	Gilbert & George: Urethra Postcard Pictures at the White Cube, Mason's Yard. www.whitecube.com
14 Jan - 19 Feb	Light- Part 1 at Paradise Row. www.paradiserow.com
19 Jan - 23 Jan	London Art Fair at Business Design Centre. www.londonartfair.co.uk
10 Jan - 4 Feb	Patricia Valota & Aigana Gali at Hay Hill Gallery. www.hayhillgallery.com
14 Jan - 15 Feb	Rob & Nick Carter: Postcards from Vegas at the Fine Art Society. www.faslondon.com
19 Jan - 19 Feb	Robert Mapplethorpe: Night work curated by the Scissor Sisters at Alison Jacques Gallery. www.alisonjacquesgallery.com
10 Jan - 21 Jan	The Ingram Collection exhibition at Sotheby's. www.sothebys.com
Last chance to see this week	
Until 16 Jan	Cézanne's Card Players at Courtauld Gallery. www.courtauld.ac.uk
Until 16 Jan	Damián Ortega at Barbican Centre. www.barbican.org.uk
Until 16 Jan	Gauguin at Tate Modern. www.tate.org.uk
Until 17 Jan	Venice: Canaletto and His Rivals at the National Gallery. www.nationalgallery.org.uk