

TANKS AND NESTING DOLLS

THE RUSSIAN CAPITAL FROM THE TRADITIONAL TO THE MODERN

In *Moskau Moskow Mockba* the photographer Sandra Ratkovic documents life in the Russian capital. The result is a portrait of everyday life, ranging from the military cult to pop patriotism, accompanied by an essay by the author Wladimir Kaminer.

Berlin, January 26, 2017 – Sandra Ratkovic's (*1980 in Frankfurt am Main) new series of photographs taken in Moscow has its origins in Germany. Ratkovic has previously photographed abandoned military airports, barracks, and other remains of the old Soviet regime in and around Berlin. Murals featuring cosmonauts, rockets, and portraits of Lenin, which she discovered in these buildings, spurred a curiosity about Russia and contemporary Russian culture. Ratkovic wanted to find out if similar remains of the Soviet aesthetic were still in existence in Moscow.

In 2015 she took her first trip to the Russian capital. She returned with an absurd, colorful, disturbing, and touching cycle of pictures: tragi-comical color photographs reflecting a metropolis where Orthodox churches and gray apartment blocks stand opposite the insignia of globalization, where the omnipresent military and ubiquitous Putin cult meet kitsch and folklore.

“The weapons do not interfere, they are part of it all, are part of the façade, have always been there, and are the pride of Russian industry,” writes the author Wladimir Kaminer in *Moskau Moskow Mockba*, explaining the phenomenon of ever-present weapons. He adds, “Nearly every day in the Russian calendar is a holiday: Police Day, State Security Day, Army and Fleet Day, Artillerymen’s Day, Missile Defense Day.”

These displays of patriotism can also be found everywhere in the streets of Moscow, and are hardly distinguishable from the things marketed to tourists. At Red Square, passersby can be photographed with doubles of Lenin, Stalin, and Putin. At the same time, T-shirts with portraits of Putin or slogans such as “Go, Russia!” are sold on every street corner. “Putin is presented as if he were a pop star,” says Ratkovic.

With tongue firmly in cheek, the young photographer works in a documentary style to present an ambivalent portrait of everyday life in the post-Soviet state in her book *Moskau Moskow Mockba*, inspiring thoughtful reflection, while also coaxing smiles from readers.



SANDRA RATKOVIC
MOSKAU MOSCOW МОСКВА

Text by Wladimir Kaminer
German, English, Russian
2017. 96 pp., 58 ills.
softcover
21.00 x 28.00 cm
ISBN 978-3-7757-4256-6

29,80 EUR

ABOUT HATJE CANTZ

Hatje Cantz is a groundbreaking international publishing company specializing in art, architecture, and photography. Since 1945 Hatje Cantz has been using its profound expertise and enthusiasm for craftsmanship to produce and publish books of the highest quality. We currently release around two hundred new titles annually.

Especially in the digital age, Hatje Cantz regards itself an element linking museums, artists, galleries, collectors, and art lovers. Conveying knowledge - in terms of both content and visuals - as well as an enthusiasm for art is always at the heart of our engagement.

In keeping with our ambition to make it possible to experience art beyond the medium of the book, Hatje Cantz has launched the EDITION GERD HATJE as we continue to expand our portfolio of strictly limited, signed editions featuring works on paper, photographic works of art, and art objects.

www.hatjecantz.de
www.editiongerdhatje.com

PRESS CONTACT

Sara Buschmann
Head of Press Department
s.buschmann@hatjecantz.de
Tel. +49 30 3464678-08

Jennifer Berndt
Junior PR-Manager
presse@hatjecantz.de
Tel. +49 30 3464678-23

**HATJE
CANTZ**