

# You've got 1243 unread messages

## Andrejs Strokins about his found objects collection encontrados

**Andrejs Strokins:** My name is Andrejs Strokins. I'm a photographer and also a found photography collector from Latvia and the Baltic region. For this exhibition, I will show some of my archives. Basically, it's an archive from 60s to 80s. I have a huge archive of different archives. I started four years ago and the reason why is that I really was interested for a long while in found images and vernacular photography. But I was sure that we didn't have such things in Latvia, that there was no huge market for vernacular photography and you just couldn't find it on the street or whatever. But then bit-by-bit, somehow, I started to find trades and places where I could find something like this. And then after a while people knew that I'm searching for that kind of photography and they started to bring me stuff and sometimes also I'm finding them by accident. So yeah, it's just a matter of working and knowing where to work.

There is no particular subject I'm interested in photography or in vernacular photography. In general, how amateur photographers were approaching things, approaching photography without this ego to be an artist. In many cases, they are more creative than most of the artists nowadays. This is kind of always interesting to find something new, something unexpected. And I always ask when I go to a free market or an antic shop, I always ask to show me everything because I never know what is there, and sometimes the most uninteresting things for the seller are the most interesting things for me. So yeah, it's this digging and searching for something. When you see it you kind of know that this is good and this is kind of maybe too ordinary. I also think that I'm searching for things that are neglected from the History point of view. Things that are not so important but at the same time if you gather like a large pile of these photographs suddenly they start to work and make sense in a historical way also. I will have a book published in a week or two weeks on found archive, about Palladium in Riga, a cinema theatre from the 60s. The photographers are unknown, but the photographs are quite amazing and they were made with different intentions. From that time, the 60s, all pictures that we see nowadays are this kind of beautiful propaganda images from how nice the life is in the theatre and, in general. Everything is so beautiful, everybody is happy, everybody has work and yeah, and so on. But here there's a twist a little bit. These images are snapshots from the backstage of the cinema. In most of them you can see the workers there. These are slides, yeah. They were sold in a shoebox, just random images. And then I put them together. I'm still sorting them out. The Moskvitch is this car.

Here there is one bookshop and antic shop, in Riga's centre and I'm visiting it from time to time. You never know what people bring there and one day there was this shoebox full of slides and I just took the risk, bought them and then I went through everything. And I, of course, I tried to ask any information that the seller had about who those people were. He told me everything that he knew. It was a Russian-Latvian family. In the exhibition I will show slides from the family archive. It was quite an interesting find amongst regular images from everyday life. There was a huge part of slides with car called Moskvitch. For soviet people, it was quite a special thing to have. It was quite hard to get the car, so people were really proud of it. There are maybe 100 images with a Moskvitch and a travelling family, wife and husband. Everything that I know about this archive is that the husband was Russian and the wife was Latvian and they were travelling around Latvia and photographing themselves with this car, with this Moskvitch. Travelling from 70s to 80s around Latvia. It was uncommon to have such car in those days, in the 60s. It was a luxury to have it. Everybody was the same, but at the same time some people got more and some people got less. And of course when you had the car, you were special. It didn't matter if you have a family or not. If you didn't have a family, you got attention from girls and so on. So it was a luxury and a cool thing to have, but this was quite a shitty car and you had to repair it all the time and constantly work with it. I don't know it's hard to explain images and you have to see them.



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