

## Джон ПЕППЕР (Италия)

F

Надо отдать должное Иркутскому областному художественному музею имени В. П. Сукачёва – он регулярно представляет нам фотовыставки известных зарубежных и российских мастеров фотографии. Правда, далеко не всегда с выставками приезжают их авторы. Не каждый готов пожертвовать своим временем на длительную поездку

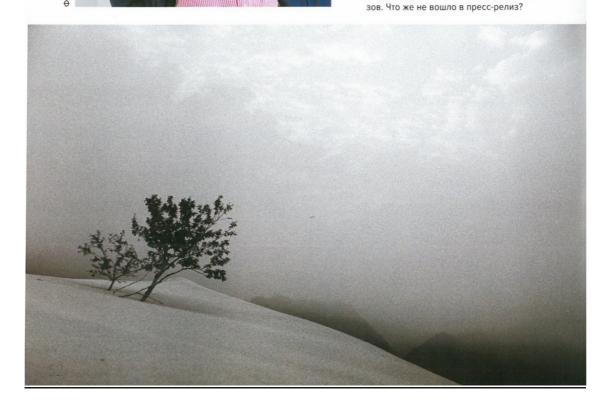
по нашей огромной стране. Поэтому коллекция итальянца Джона Пеппера «Испарения» и его персона привлекли такое внимание иркутских фотографов. Личное общение всегда лучше любых пресс-рели-

ç

ВОЗРОЖД

Фото Арианны Одон

 $\bigcirc$ 



## **ВЫСТАВКИ**

Nº 1/2016

День открытия выставки не заладился у Джона Пеппера с утра – проверенная годами «Лейка» отказалась работать. А впереди – ответственная съёмка в Чарской пустыне в Забайкалье, из-за которой он и приехал в Сибирь. Татьяна Петровна Огородникова, зам. директора музея, позвонила нам и спросила:

- Кто-нибудь в Иркутске может отремонтировать фотоаппарат Джона?

Мы подумали и связались с Владимиром Иовлевым.

- Странно, - ответил он, - «Лейка» по определению не может сломаться. Это как

автомат Калашникова. – Тем не менее...

 – К тому же я эту модель «Лейки» никогда не видел. Но съезжу.

На пресс-конференцию Джон пришёл в хорошем настроении, фотоаппарат уже работал. Оглядев большой зал музея и проводив глазами эхо, он предположил, что это бывший дворец генерал-губернатора всей Сибири.

 Думаю, что он остался бы доволен моей фотовыставкой. Но, имея представление о таких дворцах, думаю, что здесь была его столовая.

Татьяна Огородникова смело разрушила созданный Пеппером образ просвещённого сибирского монарха, гуляющего с десертом вдоль фотографий:

 В этом здании до революции была классическая гимназия, а в этом зале размещалась домовая церковь.

 Тогда сегодня здесь вы можете меня распять! – нашёлся Джон. – Со мной вы можете делать всё, что хотите, но с моими работами обращайтесь, пожалуйста, аккуратно.

Как в воду глядел. Мы сидели вечером в ресторане и не подозревали о том, что на иркутском «Фейсбуке» уже закипели провинциальные страсти по поводу столичной знаменитости:

«Нам навязывают европейские ценности!».

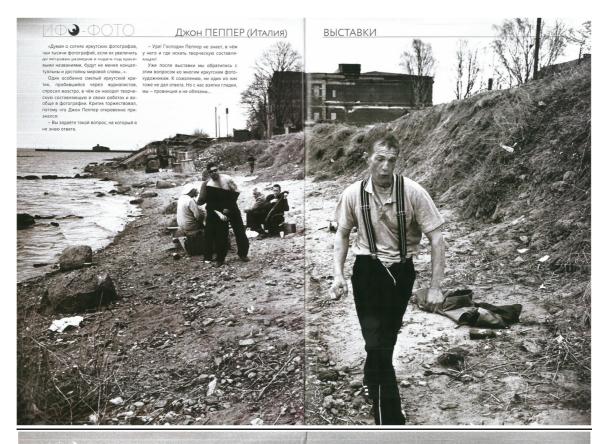
«С другом-художником ходили по выставке, пытаясь хоть что-то понять... Так ничего и не поняли...».

«Лично у меня в моём Творчестве зачастую вообще не возникает желания быть понятым всеми».









амечали. Моя задача — украсть немного их личного чтобы вернуть его обратно в изображении. Я только писанную фл к». ал Анри Картье-Брессон, «фотография – этс неотделимое от прочих визуальных средст 6 выкрикнуть, освободиться, а вовсе не до ение собственной оригинальности». кой «Исларении». Джон Пеппер отдол дань уг

и утвержд

ечатку фотографии, всю ис омастером: где, что и кан Причём Джон

В этом смысле директор художествен-ного музея Александр Гимельштейн, на-верисе, был прав, назвав Джона Пеп-пера, «итальянским фотографом эпохи Возрождения». дения». ак за пивом мы вдруг ответили на кутянина. ъ на открытии о в России выосы требовательного ирк I хотел всё это рассказать івки, — сказал Джон, — но еп вс. – сказал Джон, – роходят по-другому: по а в Италии полдня обща тобно разбираем все рг – пестора мотрели и н. Я считан

ми? – спросили мы у мазстро. - Очень просто. Сейчас без проблем можно организовать и провести фотовы-ставки в Санкт-Петербурге, Москве, Ев-ропе, Америке. И нужен свой авторский

1



# IFO-FOTO" MAGAZINE

by Vladimir Nevzorov #1/2016

## " A RENAISSANCE PHOTOGRAPHER "

We have to pay tribute to the "Irkutsk Art Museum V.P. Sukachev". The museum regularly presents us exhibitions of famous Russian and foreign masters of photography. However, the authors do not always come to their exhibitions. Not everyone is willing to 'donate' his or her time for a long trip around our great country. Therefore, the collection "Evaporations" by the Italian photographer John Pepper and his personal presence attracted many Irkutsk photographers - personal communication is always better than any press releases. What was this not included in the press release?

On the opening day of the exhibition John Pepper got off on the wrong foot; his trusted 'Leica' refused to work. And ahead him is the long planned shoot in the Chiara desert in the Trans-Baikal region - -another reason that brought him to Siberia. That morning, Tatiana Petrovna Ogorodnikova, Deputy director of the museum, called us and asked:

- Can anyone in Irkutsk repair John's camera?

We thought and got in touch with Vladimir Iovlev.

- "Strange", he replied, - A 'Leica', by definition, cannot break down. It's like a 'Kalashnikov'.- Nevertheless...

- Besides, I have never seen this model of "Leica" before. I'll go.

John arrived in a good mood at the press conference; the camera was working again. Looking around the large hall of the museum he supposed that it was the former palace of the governor-general of Siberia.

- I think he would be satisfied with my photo exhibition. From what I read and saw of the palace, this might be the dining room.

Tatiana Ogorodnikova safely corrected the image that Pepper had created:

- "This building, before the revolution, was a classical school and at this hall was its church."

- Then, for my historical mistake you can crucify me!" was Pepper's reply, he paused then added: "You can do whatever you wish to me but please be gentle with my work...!"

As though looking through a crystal ball...

Later that evening we sat in a restaurant and didn't know, that the Irkutsk "Facebook" had already boiling with provincial passion comments about the celebrity:

"...Imposing their European values on us...!"

"...With an artist friend of mine, we went to the exhibition, tried to understand something... And left non the wiser..."

"...Personally, I too, in my work, don't need to be understood by everyone..."

"...Hundreds of Irkutsk photographers have thousands of photographs; if they too increased their images to the size of one meter and applied beautiful names, they wouldn't be less conceptually and they too would be worthy of world fame...

One brave Irkutsk critic, fought her way through the journalists and asked the maestro, where he finds the creative components of his work and photography, in general. The critic triumphed, because John Pepper openly admitted:

- "You are asking a question, that I do not know the answer."

- Hooray! Mr. Pepper doesn't know where to look for creative components!

After the exhibition, we asked the same question to many Irkutsk photographic artists. Unfortunately, none of them were able to answer the question!

Meanwhile, in the evening at the restaurant, John Pepper, gesticulating with his arms, doesn't behave as though he were a celebrity. If he had been born into a family of fishermen on cost of the sea, he would probably have become a fisherman. But he was born into a family with a father who was a photojournalist, and his parent's friends were the (not yet famous) photographers like Henri Cartier-Bresson, Sam Shaw, Ugo Mulas and others. They taught him to shoot, to work on photos, look for images and put meaning into them.

For the street photographer it is important to capture a moment of life in the surrounding world: please understand the duality of it. Cartier-Bresson came up with this theory: on the one hand it is the reality of what is happening, and the other side is the absolute autonomy and independence of the image. The event and the image frozen in time are not the same things. The first is a story; the second is artistic image, an impression, and an emotion. The story has become this moment and it will never exist again.

John Pepper underscores this: "I take photos people and try to ensure that they don't notice me. My job is to steal some of their personal space and to bring it back to the image and then give it back to the viewer. I'm a conduit".

Henri Cartier-Bresson, "Photography is a means of understanding, separate of other visual means of expression. It is a way to shout, to free yourself, it is not a proof of one owns originality".

In "Evaporations" John Pepper has paid his respect to all of his teachers. "Evaporations" is a *mirage* or impressions, an invisible curtain between the artist and life, in man's constantly changing background. Pepper has developed for himself a more detailed concept of human space and water in all its forms. He looked for images and stories as traveled around the world. And after, when the images have been collected, the depth of the concept is suddenly exposed.

"Water, is an integral part of man but not the only condition for his existence; yet it is also a gift given him by nature and God. Water and the desert remain immutable; they are like the background for a person. Man is constantly changing. I want to reflect this in my pictures. "I was surprised when I saw a large prints of photos, covered with writing with a magic-marker indicating where, what and how to modify" says Arianna Odon - -a young, talented photo artist, who works together master. "John doesn't use Photoshop; it is all done by hand, over and over again, until he achieves "cleanliness of sound". It makes sense when he says that "in real black-and-white photography all colors are visible and music is audible".

In this sense, the director of the Art Museum Alexander Gimelshteyn was right, called John Pepper as "Italian photographer of the Renaissance".

Around the table with a beer, answering the questions of this demanding citizen of Irkutsk: "I wanted to say all of this at the opening of the exhibition..." says John, "...but in Russia the exhibitions are structured in another way: the audience looked at the show and then left. In Italy we talk, argue and review the details all the works. Then we all go together to a restaurant. I believe that Italians and Russian like the cousins!"

We asked the maestro: "But how can a citizen of Irkutsk become famous?"

"Very simple. These days, with few problems you can organize and conduct a photo exhibition in St. Petersburg, Moscow, Europe, and America. But you need your own book of photographs to do that."

"But it's so expensive..."

"Do you want to become rich or famous?"

\* \* \*

John R. Pepper (Italy).

John Randolph Pepper was born in Rome in 1958 in the family of the photojournalist Curtis Bill Pepper. He began photography at 11 years old. When he was 13, he became an assistant to the master of 'street photography' Ugo Mulas. His artistic vision was shaped under the influence of Henri Cartier-Bresson, Sam Shaw, John Ross and David Seymour, who were frequent guests of his family. John picked up from them the basics: he only takes photographs with black and white film.

John Pepper finished Princeton University with a degree in History of Art, worked as a photographer, film and theater director, and produced many successful theater plays. Pepper regularly exhibits in Italy, France, Russia and the United States. The exhibition "Evaporations" has been already in St. Petersburg and Vladivostok. After Irkutsk continues in several Russian cities: Novosibirsk, Omsk, Yekaterinburg, Samara, and in 2016 the audiences can see it in Moscow and New York.

The exhibition presents 42 black and white photographs, in which you can feel the artist's love for cities and the coasts of seas, of coastlines and the water's surface. The sea and river seem immense and eternal while man seems like a grain of sand and the feeling of vulnerability and loneliness of that grain of sand becomes the epicenter of all the images - even if 99 % of the images are of water. "Evaporations", an international project, is supported by the Italian Institute of Culture in Moscow and the Italian Institute of Culture in St. Petersburg.

\* \* \*