

City by the Sea | Город у моря:

Two-person Exhibition with Julia Sidorskaya, in memoriam.

I'm privileged to be a part of a very special exhibition, dedicated to the memory of a fellow artist from Odessa, a photographer with a remarkable eye for beauty, someone who loved this world and left it far too soon, my sister's best friend, Julia Sidorskaya. This is an exhibition about her photographs-and my sculpture-and the search for extraordinary, lasting beauty that reveals itself in ordinary life to those willing to look. It is also an exhibition that makes evident the profound effect that Odessa, the city by the sea in which we both grew up, had on our artistic development.

For Julia Sidorskaya, Odessa was an endless source of inspiration. She sought out our city just waking up in early morning light, captured ever changing colors of the sea, tried to pierce mysteries it held while napping quietly in the fog. Her photographs reveal a universe that is beautiful in the range of emotion it conveys: passion and longing, solitude and the sense of passage of time, tenderness and profound philosophical reflection, seen through a lens of an optimist who considered life as a unity, rather than a series of unrelated fragments, where each period grows out of the last and there is always another one to come.

The presence of Odessa is implicit in my work as I am inspired, challenged, moved to my deepest core by the beauty present in ordinary existence. I strive to convey the awe I experience through my sculptures. Among some of its recurring themes are a kind of a quest for wisdom, a nod to the disappearing old world, an attempt to resuscitate beauty. Talking about my bronze, "Old Man & Sea," someone once asked where the sea was. For me, the sea is everywhere. It lives, it moves, it illuminates. My work begins and ends with it, as I try to capture everyday moments that are at once transient and transcendent, that may easily go unnoticed but that turn out to have universal significance when perceived.

City by the Sea is a testament to beauty that had always been the beginning and the end of art.

This is a remarkable exhibition also in that it stems exclusively from the love that Julia brought to people around her and left behind in spades when she was gone. It would not be possible without a series of complicated international collaborations, unconditional good will of our families and friends, and endless generosity of the Stanek Gallery. My only regret is that Julia Sidorskaya will not be present at the opening to fully appreciate just how astounding her work looks on display.

Julia Levitina,
Sculptor.

Marnay-sur-Seine, 2018.