

ORPHAN MONUMENTS: The forgotten Vestiges of Communism, 1970-1989

Soviet architecture materialized in three distinct movements of both expression and subsequent documentation. First, the overtly documented, perpetually *en vogue* avant-garde period—represented by Kandinsky, El Lissitzky, Malevitch—lasted from the foundation of USSR until the advent of Stalin. The second period, Socialist Classicism, aimed at immortalizing Soviet success through heavy use of stone and stucco. Nikita Krushchev precipitated the third period in Soviet Architecture by stating the goal of “eliminating all unnecessary exuberance” in his 1954 all-union conference speech. This period resulted in an era of prefabricated panel housing which can be found in about every city in the Eastern bloc.

The “Orphan Monuments” proposal takes on a set of buildings which do not fall into any of the above periods. It aims to investigate the most underdocumented and misunderstood period of the Soviet architecture of the late Brezhnev era until the collapse of the USSR. Arguably, the most daring architectural investigations were carried out during this period. Yet, this cultural heritage remains ignored. The legacy of these architectural styles was and still is overlooked—almost as a form of self-induced amnesia—in the public realm, architectural discourse, and historiography. As the Soviet machine became overtly focused on delaying its own demise, room is created for experimental architectures. These new architectures, architectures of utopias, architectures of subtle rebellion, and architectures of speculation arose far from the centralized power in Moscow. These experiments find themselves scattered across the Satellite Soviet Republics be it near the Issyk-Kul lake in Kyrgyzstan or on the tips of Caucasus.

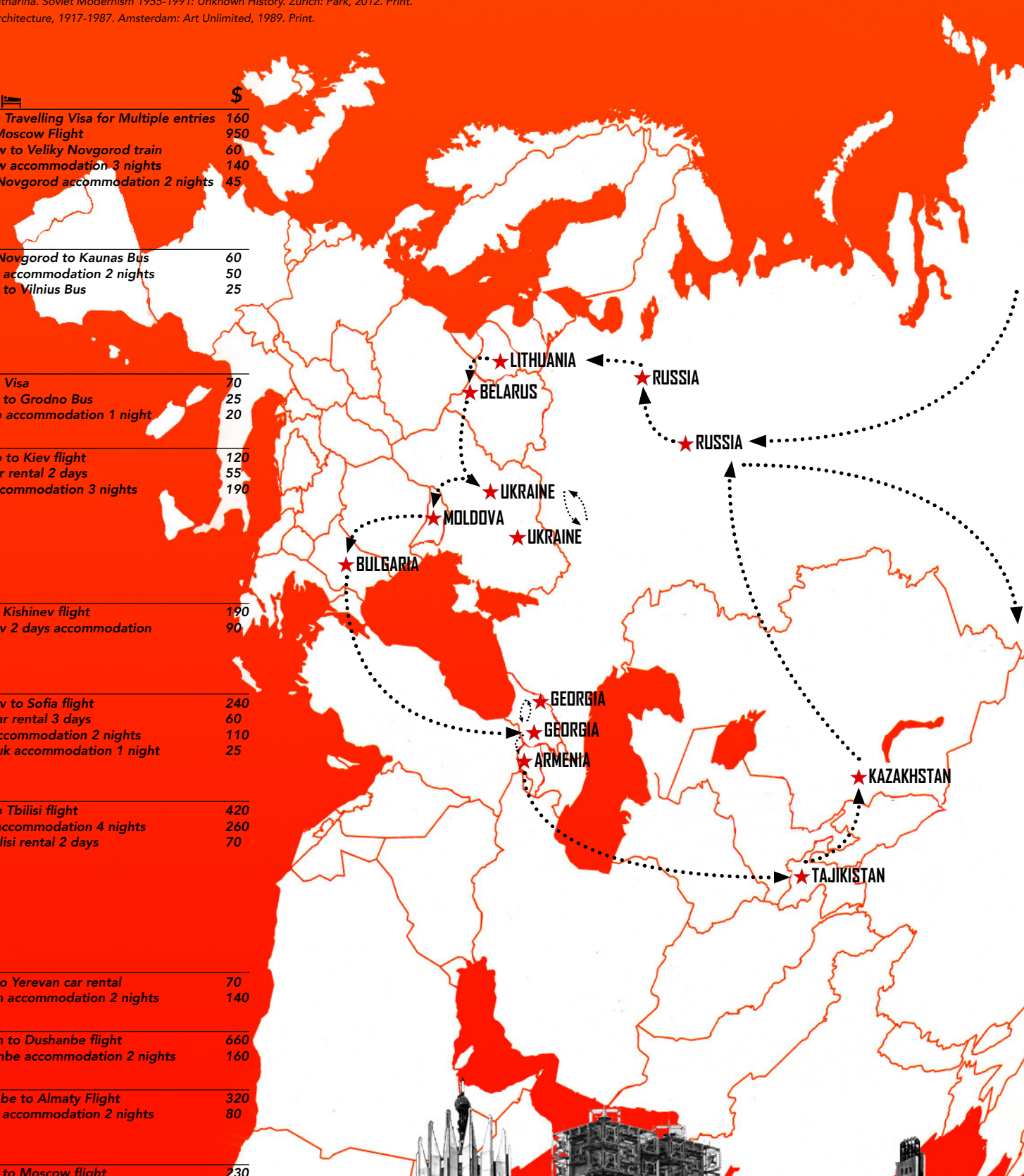
This project aspires to unpack projects by a number of dissident architects in order to construct a cohesive understanding of the meaning and motivations of the Brezhnev era Soviet architectural discourse. The subjects for this investigation were selected according to several criteria. Among the Soviet constructions of the 1970-1898, buildings delineating from Krushchev induced architectural monotony characterized by dictatorship of right angles and repetition of the same urban models were targeted. “One common feature of these burgeoning elements is exuberant the use of curves” (Chaubin). Another common thread to the selected architectures consisted of an evident manifestation of their local specificity opposing an architectural uniformity and ultimately the falling uniformity of the USSR.

“Orphan Monuments” becomes an archaeological investigation of the present on one hand and given the cues in the projects themselves, a speculative history on the other hand. It will investigate the dreams of the forgotten and the aspirations of the unknown. The proposed travelling will take place in Russia and its eight Satellite Republics where some of the most daring, bold avant-garde architecture arose on the backdrop of the gray sea of the Soviet conformism. Twenty-four buildings fallen into oblivion from the late Soviet era will be documented. The spatial quality of these orphan constructions is characterized by a distinct monumentality, coupled with a flare of sci-fi futurism. These two-pronged stylistic expressions will be examined in the project.

The goal of this investigation is two-fold. First, it seeks to preserve and document the ambiguous heritage of these radical architectures and their authors in a publication in order to avoid a historical void. The second objective of this research is to trace similitudes of these forgotten Soviet remains in order to be able to speculate on their possible impact in the demise of the USSR. This proposal hypothesizes these orphaned monuments to be expressions of subversion to a dying Communist regime. Their spatialized sedition has expedited their abandonment. It is thus imperative that their legacy is examined and documented before they disappear into historical and cultural oblivion.

Boym, Svetlana. *Architecture of the Off-modern*. New York: Temple Hoyne Buell Center for the Study of American Architecture, 2008. Print.
 Chaubin, Frédéric. *CCCP: Cosmic Communist Constructions Photographed*. Köln: Taschen, 2011. Print.
 Kiernan, Maria, and Keith Collie. *Moscow: A Guide to Soviet and Post-Soviet Architecture*. London: Ellipsis, 1999. Print.
 Rabinus, Aleksandr Vasilevic., Nadedda Ivanovna. Smolina, and Vieri Quilici. *Landmarks of Soviet Architecture: 1917-1991*. New York: Rizzoli, 1992. Print.
 Ritter, Katharina. *Soviet Modernism 1955-1991: Unknown History*. Zurich: Park, 2012. Print.
 Soviet Architecture, 1917-1987. Amsterdam: Art Unlimited, 1989. Print.

<p>★ RUSSIA (DAYS 1-5)</p> <p>Moscow The Central Puppet Theater of Moscow by Y. Sheverdyaev, V. Utkin, A. Melikhov, 1970 Children’s Musical Theatre by A. Velikanov, V. Krasilnikov, 1979</p> <p>Veliky Novgorod Fyodor Dostoevsky Theater of Dramatic Art in by Vladimir Somov, 1987</p>	<p>✈️ 🚗 🏠</p> <p>Russian Travelling Visa for Multiple entries 160 US to Moscow Flight 950 Moscow to Veliky Novgorod train 60 Moscow accommodation 3 nights 140 Veliky Novgorod accommodation 2 nights 45</p>
<p>★ LITHUANIA (DAYS 6-7)</p> <p>Kaunas Museum of the Ninth fort by A. Ambraziunas, 1984</p> <p>Vilnius Lithuanian National Gallery of Art by Gediminas Baravykas and Vytautas Vielis, 1980</p>	<p>Veliky Novgorod to Kaunas Bus 60 Kaunas accommodation 2 nights 50 Kaunas to Vilnius Bus 25</p>
<p>★ BELARUS (DAYS 8-9)</p> <p>Grodno Academy of Dramatic art in Grodno by G. Mashulsky, G. Kalashiova, 1984</p>	<p>Belarus Visa 70 Kaunas to Grodno Bus 25 Grodno accommodation 1 night 20</p>
<p>★ UKRAINE (DAYS 10-13)</p> <p>Kiev The People’s Friendship Arch (Druzba) by I. Ivanov, S. Mirgorodsky, K. Sidorov, 1982 Park of Memory (Crematorium) by A. Miletskyi, V. Melnychenko, 1980</p> <p>Dnipropetrovsk (subject to change) Poplavok Café by Oscar Grigorievich Havkin, 1976 Palace of the Pioneers by Y. Amosov, 1990</p>	<p>Grodno to Kiev flight 120 Kiev car rental 2 days 55 Kiev accommodation 3 nights 190</p>
<p>★ MOLDOVA (DAYS 14-16)</p> <p>Kishinev Circus by S. Shoykhet, A. Kirichenko, 1984 Children’s Hospital by G. Solominov, 1972 Communist Party Central Committee by G. Solominov, 1975</p>	<p>Kiev to Kishinev flight 190 Kishinev 2 days accommodation 90</p>
<p>★ BULGARIA (DAYS 17-20)</p> <p>Plodiv The Hillock of Fraternity by Bogomil Davidkov, 1978</p> <p>Kazanluk The derelict amphitheater of Mount Buzludzha by G. Stoilov, 1981</p>	<p>Kishinev to Sofia flight 240 Sofia car rental 3 days 60 Sofia accommodation 2 nights 110 Kazanluk accommodation 1 night 25</p>
<p>★ GEORGIA (DAYS 21-25)</p> <p>Near Gaudari, on the Georgian Military Highway Monument of Georgian-Russian Friendship Kretkovsky Pereval by G. Chakhava, 1983</p> <p>Tbilisi Andropov’s Ears by O. Kalandarishvili, G. Potshkishvili, 1983 Central Aquatic Sports Center by S. Kavlashvili, G. Abuladaze, R. Kiknadze, 1978 Restaurant Aragvi by O. Machabeli, 1970 Ministry of Transportation by G. Chakhava, 1974</p>	<p>Sofia to Tbilisi flight 420 Tbilisi accommodation 4 nights 260 Car Tbilisi rental 2 days 70</p>
<p>★ ARMENIA (DAYS 26-28)</p> <p>Near Alaverdi Monument to the Battle of Bash-Aparan by R. Israelyan, 1979</p>	<p>Tbilisi to Yerevan car rental 70 Yerevan accommodation 2 nights 140</p>
<p>★ TAJIKISTAN (DAYS 29-31)</p> <p>Dushanbe Concert Palace by S. Sutyagin, 1984</p>	<p>Yerevan to Dushanbe flight 660 Dushanbe accommodation 2 nights 160</p>
<p>★ KAZAKHSTAN (DAYS 32-34)</p> <p>Almaty The Palace of Lenin by N. Ripinskiy, A. Sokolov, V. Kim, 1970 in Almaty</p>	<p>Dushanbe to Almaty Flight 320 Almaty accommodation 2 nights 80</p>
<p>★ RUSSIA (DAYS 35-36)</p>	<p>Almaty to Moscow flight 230 Moscow accommodation 1 night 60 Return flight to US</p>
<p>★ BUDGET</p> <p>Total transportation 3416\$ Total Lodging 1740\$ Food 36 days * 40 \$/Day 1440\$ Total Visa 390\$ Publication Cost 1200\$ Grand Total 8186\$</p>	



★ The People's Friendship Arch (Druzba)

★ Amphitheater of Mount Buzludzha



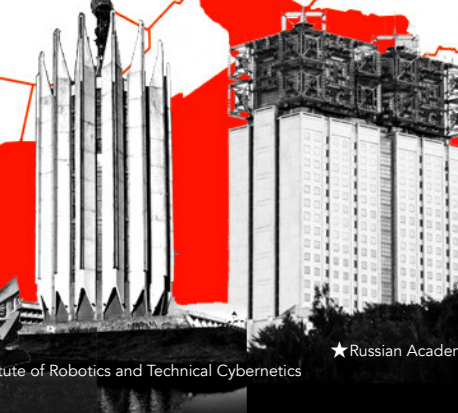
★ Kretkovsky Pereval



★ Monument to the Battle of Bash-Aparan by R. Israelyan



★ Museum of the Ninth fort



★ Institute of Robotics and Technical Cybernetics



★ Russian Academy of Sciences

★ The Palace of Ceremonies