



LEIDERMAN Yuri
Russia

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PLACES WHERE I WAS HAPPY, 1995-99
Installation: photographs, paper, objects
Dimensions variable
Courtesy Michel Rein Galerie, Tours

Yuri Leiderman first started making art in the middle of the 1980s when Moscow Conceptualism was in the mainstream and Ilya Kabakov was accepted as the main authority. However he was more influenced by Andrei Monastyrsky, leader of the *Collective Actions Group*, which was not so much involved in visual and representative issues, but worked more as if it was a hermetic laboratory of conceptual poetics. The main goal of the resulting group *The Inspection of Medical Hermeneutics*, which Leiderman founded in collaboration with Pavel Pepperstein and Sergei Anoufrieu, was to develop conceptual analyses. These young artists started to work with conceptual texts, constructing legendary histories and mythologies for their movement. Their final aim was to create a new conceptual orthodoxy and canon.

In 1990 Leiderman left *Medical Hermeneutics* owing to the fact that the inner polemics of the group had reached an impasse: what was more important – text, language, subjectivity or personal statement? No agreement could be found. Being open to new ideas, Leiderman decided to reject the linguistic metaphysics of the group in favour of individual development. Since then his main goal has been an attempt to rid himself of external influences, both the orthodoxy of the conceptual tradition, and the stereotypes of the Western art industry. His art tries to escape from any stable representative schemes, he does not want it to speak on behalf of any group, tendency, school or situation; he defends his right to have an individual fortune.

Since this time his work has been built on the crossing-point between two contradictory ideas. On the one side, he moves towards subjective depth, trying to escape any stable model of communication. Accordingly, his art is becoming more enigmatic and hermetic, increasingly closed to outside understanding. On the other side, his escape into subjectivity does not mean that his work dissolves into semantic chaos and senselessness. Step by step, with refined analytical logic, he is building an individual language, his personal model of communication. In this way he has reconciled in his work the co-existence of deconstructive procedure with constructive power.

Viktor Misiano