

Work in Progress Portfolio

Sustainable Strategies PH0730

Iris Maria Tuşa

THRESHOLD

Statement of Intent

The photographic project Threshold was inspired by and created in the south-eastern Romanian region of Dobrogea, where I grew up.

Dobrogea is a place characterized by hills, desert, and wind, with the most humidity coming in from the Black Sea and the Danube, which sharply contrasts the rest of the dry, barren land. Dobrogea boasts a rich history that spans over 2500 years. Turks, Tatars, Greeks, Armenians, Bulgarians, Romanians, and Jews intermingle in its history. Among the hills of Dobrogea lie the villages Threshold was born in Lespezi, Dobromir, Valeni, and Faurei, where I focused most of my work. Threshold evolved as a project as much as Dobrogea did throughout its history.

I explore the villages of Dobrogea by foregrounding my vivid, yet abstract memories related to childhood. The polaroid photos best served my purpose to capture the idea of personal memories associated with this space that represent an immediate imprint of reality with a power of a medium for nostalgia and, also, as a medium with subversive effect through the aesthetics of visual romanticism.

When I immortalize quotidian scenes with Polaroids, it's as if my childhood memories manifest themselves before my eyes – a snapshot of the present, but with a faded nostalgic quality. The details of time and place are not in the pictures but supplied from elsewhere – from a store of childhood memories that might be anybody's. The polaroid film's imperfect and unpredictable qualities are best suited to unveiling them.

The Polaroids can showcase the sense of known I feel when I go to Dobrogea.

My intent as an artist is to awaken in my audience the childhood memory that lies within all of us even if it comes in a different shape. The photography is used more as an artistic and metaphorical tool rather than an instrument of documentary evidence.

I attempted an image transfer on an organic cotton fabric to emphasize the dream-like Polaroids. This was both a sustainable choice and a perfect way to obtain the wanted nostalgia and fade of concrete memories in time effect. Creating a handmade photo book in the shape of a journal was also a sustainable choice meant to strengthen the idea of personal and intimate memories.

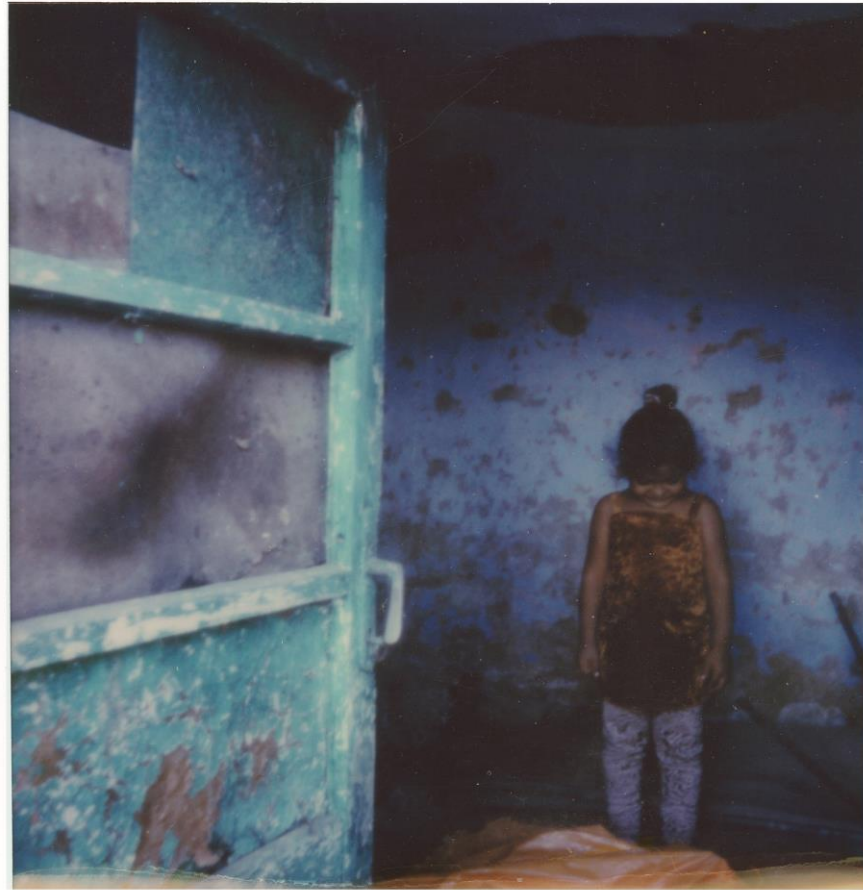
The images transferred on canvas respect the exact size and shape of the polaroid and have handmade fringes, alluding to them falling apart, just like memories. Our memories are knitted together in our minds in a very similar way to how the fabrics are knitted from a lot of smaller fibers.

The current Polaroid approach therefore completes Threshold in a similar way to how time erodes memories – they dissipate from sharp portrayals to vague recollections.

Link to Photobook dummy: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cjd7UMs5c48>





















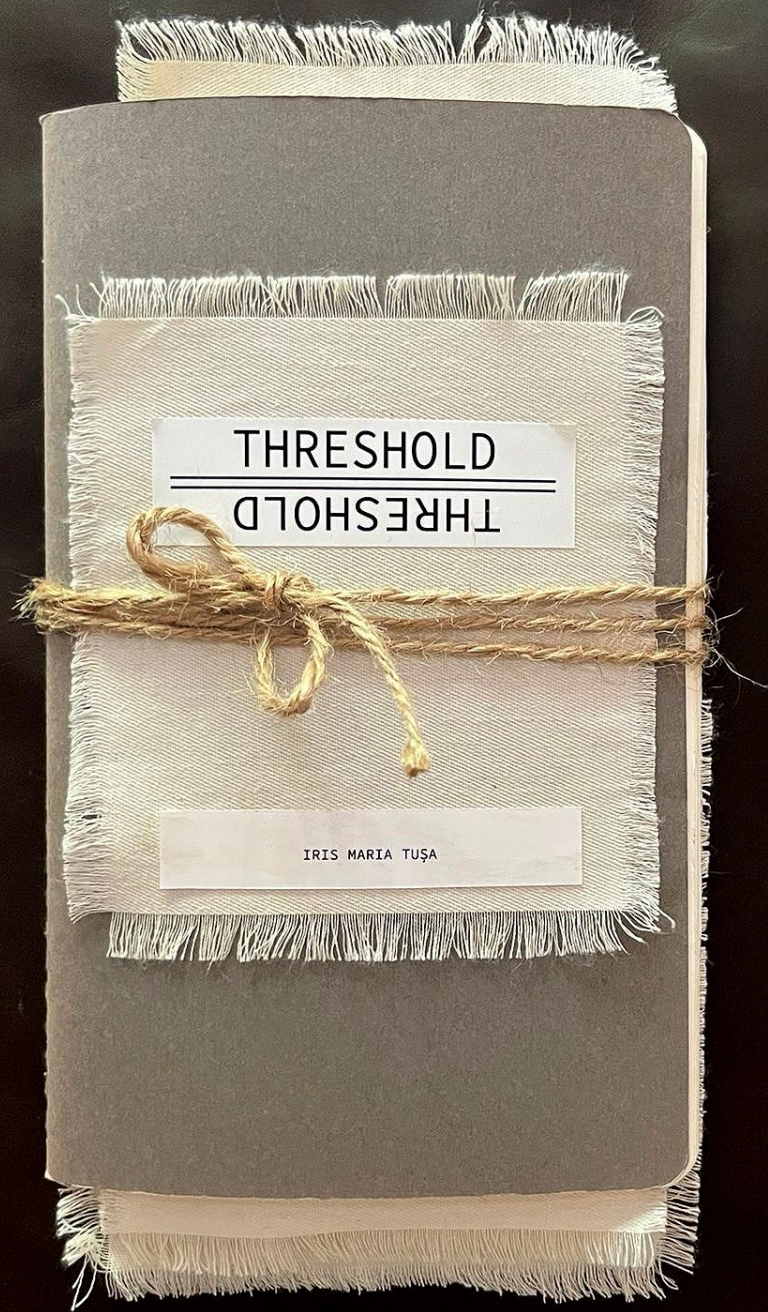












THRESHOLD
THRESHOLD

IRIS MARIA TUŞA

Childhood shapes us and later
we shape our image of childhood.
All that is recorded and all that
lies as memories in such a way
that we know that the chapter
is closed. It is no longer like that.
I want to recreate such memories,
translate them into the visual
language of photography.

Sânziene, 2023.



Fete fotografate de Sânziene
în satul Văleu. Sânziene 2023
Polaroid One Step Easy 2.

In a certain sense the past is far more real, or at any rate more stable, more resilient than the present. The present slips and vanishes like sand between the fingers, acquiring material weight only in its recollection.

My whole being was seeking for something still unknown which might confer meaning upon the banality of life.

- Carl Jung



11d12, despezi
Polaroid OneStep Easy 2.
Casa bunicilor.

A strong experience in the present awakens in the creative writer a memory of an earlier experience (usually belonging to his childhood) from which there now proceeds a wish which finds its fulfillment in the creative work.

- Sigmund Freud

Memories may be screens behind which the forgotten elements of the experience are hidden, thus, they cannot be considered childhood memories but memories about childhood.

- Sigmund Freud



despezi

We can express our feelings regarding the world around us either by poetic means or by descriptive means. I prefer to express myself metaphorically. And let me stress: metaphorically not symbolically. A symbol contains within itself a definite meaning, certain intellectual formula, while metaphor is an image. An image processing the same distinguish features as the world it represents. An world by applying tools that define and finite. We can analyse the formula that constitutes a symbol, while metaphor is a being-within-itself, its a monomial. It falls apart at any attempt of touching it.

- Andrei Tarkovsky



Fântâna

The sight of a child will arouse certain longings in adult, civilized persons - longings which relate to the unfulfilled desires and needs of those parts of the personality which have been bottled out of the total picture in favor of the adapted persona.

- Carl Jung

There is childhood, and the attachment we all feel towards our formative years and the nostalgia associated with its loss.

-Threshold-

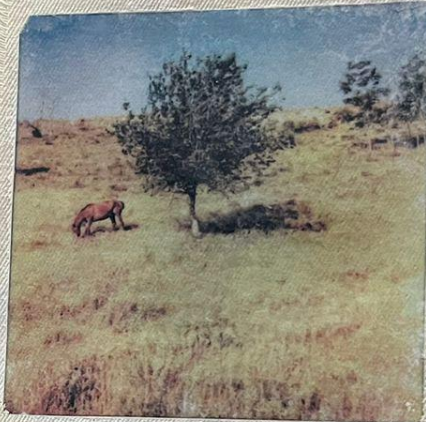


AKar, despezi, 2023
Polaroid SX70

o Jung theory on shadow.
"the thing a person has no
wish to be."

My objective is to create my own world and these images which we create mean nothing more than the images which they are. We have forgotten how to relate emotionally to art: we treat it like editors, searching in it for that which the artist has supposedly hidden. It is actually much simpler than that, otherwise art would have no meaning. You have to be a child - incidentally children understand my pictures very well, and I haven't met a serious critic who could stand knee-high to those children. We think that art demands special knowledge; we demand some higher meaning from an author, but the work must act directly on our hearts or it has no meaning at all.

- Andrei Tarkovsky



Camp unde am
și filmat.
Copaul de lângă
fântână.
Polaroide One Step Easy 2
iType Film.

The Polaroid's immediateness, its physical uniqueness, and its ethereal image quality are responsible altogether for creating emotional depth and even spiritual evocation. The concrete process of the chemical reaction to light is thereby essential to the revelatory potentials of the polaroid picture.

- o Câmp de Floarea Soarelui lângă satul Rașova.
- o Iulie 2023
- o Ap Foto : Polaroid SX2



Dobromir
Valeriu
Despeza
Făurei

When time finally stood still,
I saw the light and shadows
embrace me, and I could finally
smell the summer's sweet
fragrance. It smelled of rain
and wildflowers, of laughter
and dust. It smelled of
dry grass and old walls,
all that was meaningless left
my heart then and there
can be found in the most joy
simple things and in the
strangest places.



Melisa, Lespezi
Julie 2023
Polaroid 8x70

We meet ourselves time and again
In a thousand disguises on the
path of life.



Fântâna tradițională
din Dobrogea pictată
de copii anual.
Polaroid OneStep F&S
Mai 2023



Fântâna

When I immortalize quotidian scenes with Polaroids, it's as if my childhood memories are manifesting themselves before my eyes. A snapshot of the present, but with a faded, nostalgic quality. The details of time and place are not in the pictures but supplied from elsewhere - from a store of childhood memories that might be anybody's.

If you listen close enough, the past starts whispering to you, and your eyes can watch what once was.



Rima fotografiată într-o
seră părăsita. Iunie 2023.
Loc ideal pentru instalație
Polaroide.

There are memories, ever-present
and informing our everyday
choices, and yet tantalizingly
out of reach, warped by
time spent away from
them.

The unsettling feelings we
have when something is
familiar yet far away, the
sense of known unknown -
- it takes a different shape
for everyone. For me it is
Dobrogea.

Fragments of Memories

- Dobrogea -



Copil, Valeni
Aprilie 2023
Polaroid One Step Easy 2
iType Film



Balta lângă localitatea
Rașova
Polaroid oneStepEasy2
Film iType

There is an infinite empty
space under as well as
above.



Arza, despezi, 2023
Dormitorul Parinbilor
Polaroid SX 70
Film 600 + filtru

The sky is already purple; the first few stars have appeared suddenly, as if someone had thrown a handful of silver across the edge of the world.

- Alice Hoffman.

"Thresholds" exist between the old and the new, between the past and the present, here and there, between the sense of togetherness and of loneliness. These states of mind emerge when I find myself in the old multi-ethnic environment of the Dobrogea region that bring back memories about childhood.

- Dobrogea -



Aylin fotografator
la marginea satului
despezi, sus pe deal.
Polaroid One Step Easy 2
iType film.