

For immediate release

***Neither* (2009-2012): Photographs exploring the lives of the women of Kaliningrad**

The photobook by Kate Nolan, designed in collaboration with the award-winning Dutch designer SYB, is available now for pre-sale

Kate Nolan's *Neither* is the culmination of a four-year exploration into the hearts of young women in Kaliningrad, the isolated Russian enclave once known as Königsberg. Part of the first post-Soviet generation of Kaliningrad, these women look to define their identity within this small 'island' of Russia within Europe.

Wedged between Poland, Lithuania and the Baltic Sea, Kaliningrad's history has been fraught with great transformations. Once a major city of Prussia, the Red Army invaded in 1944 and the German and Lithuanian populations fled or were killed. Those who live here tell how Stalin proclaimed to the rural and the poor of Russia, "Come to Königsberg - choose your home and build your city."

During the cold war, the region was closed to foreigners, and though it re-opened after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, Kaliningrad was severed from Russia by the newly-independent Baltic states. Now, one must cross over 800km through Lithuania and Belarus to get to 'Big Russia.' It is this geographic isolation of being neither a part of Europe nor physically connected to motherland that gives Kaliningrad its uniqueness.



Granted only a one-month tourist visa at a time, Kate Nolan began visiting Kaliningrad in 2009 to explore and try to understand this isolated and uncertain place. She stayed with local women, drinking tea and listening to their hopes and expectations, tales of the past and stories of lost love and found love.

Kate explains: "The women I have been living and sharing with have generously opened up their homes and their minds to allow me to better understand this link between place, identity and history."

"With this project, I am seeking to give a voice to the amazing women who I spent so much time with, who brought me into their homes, and told me of their dreams and fears."

The self-published photobook is the final stage of this project, as Kate believes that the book form allows a greater opportunity than the gallery space to provide the women with that voice. Working with the internationally renowned Dutch designer Sybren Kupier, SYB, Kate has developed a book concept that interweaves the words of these women with her arresting and powerful images.

The book opens with an in-bound booklet of eyewitness accounts from the Oral History Archive of Kant University, Kaliningrad, of women's experiences of first arriving in Kaliningrad in 1945 from 'Big Russia'. Kate's photographs of the region and the women who now live there are then intertwined with handwritten excerpts from the personal account of a woman's life in contemporary Kaliningrad, printed on tabs between the images. The book closes with another in-bound booklet of diary entries of the women depicted in the photographs. Juxtaposing these texts – both historical and contemporary – with Kate Nolan's images, the book seeks not to answer any questions, but rather to give a voice to the experiences of the women of Kaliningrad.

The book is available for pre-order until May 18th in a variety of formats, including two special editions with prints from <http://www.indiegogo.com/projects/neither-photobook>.

Neither was recently shortlisted for the Alliance Française Photography Prize and has been exhibited in London, Cardiff, Dublin, Minneapolis and Kaliningrad, Russia.

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About the artist and designer

Kate Nolan is an Irish photographer based in Dublin, Ireland. She graduated with a BA (Hons) in Documentary Photography from the University of Wales, Newport, 2010. Kate combines her art practice with commissions, workshops and is the director of Slideluck Potshow Dublin. Her long-term project, *Neither* was recently shortlisted for the Alliance Française Photography Prize and has been exhibited in London, Cardiff, Dublin, Minneapolis and Kaliningrad, Russia. This work has been reviewed in several international magazines and a selection was chosen to be included in the book 'Context and Narrative in Photography' by Maria Short.

www.katenolan.co.uk

Sybrein Kupier, SYB, has been working as a graphic designer in the Netherlands since his graduation from The Royal Academy of the Arts, Den Haag in 2007. He has had clients such as Bertien van Manen, Vivianne Sassen, Valerio Spada, Rob Hornstra and Carolyn Drake. His many awards include six-time Selection of Best Designed Books, Amsterdam; three-time Honorable Mention, *Schönste Bücher Aller Welt* (Most Beautiful Books); and selected for Best photobook of 2012 by Remi Coignet and Sören Schuhmacher.

<http://www.sybontwerp.nl/>

