

international art project

CAUCASUS



MORPHEUS

CAUCASUS SLEEPING

photography video painting

Caucasus Morfeus. Sleeping Caucasus. What do we know about the Caucasus?

Everything and nothing. About it wrote Pushkin, Lermontov and Bestuzhev-Marlynsky. But also Beslan, Grozniy and Sukhumi. To the Russians Caucasus is a kind of dream, left in the Soviet Union, to the European - an exotic land, between the Caspian and Black Seas, which marked the beginning of our civilization and the hot point of the interests of the world powers. It was and always will be. But besides a beautiful land, filled with history, myths and fairy tales, it is currently a black hole in our memories, which we hurry to forget and to change the subject of conversation.

But once this conversation has to begin.

Caucasus vindictive, Caucasus frightening. But also deeply rooted into the history and pure as a mountain stream. Caucasus - is a territory from Asov Sea to Azerbaijan, from Sochi to Lake Sevan, and not just a piece of towering cliffs somewhere on the horizon. Caucasus - near. This is a danger for us, but also the richness that we still have to discover for ourselves.



...Returning Memory to return Soul...

This project has begun with a trifle, as usually in our life important things begin, namely from the letter of artist Elena Asseeva, born on Russian Black Sea coast of Caucasus, in Gelendzhik resort, and living in Rome, to another woman, the writer and the literary critic, the Doctor of Philology from Nalchik, grand-daughter of legendary Kabardinian poet Ali Shogentzukov, Madina Hakuasheva. The letter theme has arisen by itself, after reeding the book "Way to home" by M.Hakuasheva, but it was preceded by years of searches and internal incompleteness on the one hand, and kilometers of exile, sufferings and almost a total disappearance of basic ethnos of the Western and North Caucasus – Adyge (Circassians).

Where men take up arms and try to find political sense, these two women have decided to begin a conversation, having chosen an Art as a mediator. Gradually not indifferent people began to be connected to the project from both parties. New sources, pre-revolutionary historical documents, contemporary records, myths and epos.

This conflict, ended 150 years ago, in 1864, is easy to ignite. And only dialogue, acceptance, combination to which we have just started to study at the times of the Soviet Union, can pacify Caucasus which wakes up from a dream of oblivion.



...Returning Memory to return Soul...

Asseeva Elena, www.asseeva.com

Painting, video

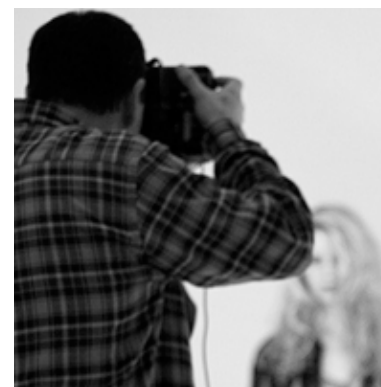
Was born in Russia in 1975. Visual Artist, Designer, Ph.D. in Art History & Criticism (St. Petersburg, 2002), Member of the Union of Professional Designers of Russia (St. Petersburg Regional Union, 2001). Asseeva Elena is a graduate of St. Petersburg University of Humanities and Social Sciences (Art History) and Kuban State University (Graphic Design), Research Associate at Harvard University (Davis Center of Russian and Eurasian Studies, 2001-2003), winner of several grants of G. Soros Center of Contemporary Arts (St. Petersburg). Works are in private collections and galleries in USA, UAE, Russia, Italy, India and Belorussia. Participant of numerous exhibitions and art projects in Russia and Europe. Lives in Rome (Italy).



Paolo Miserini, www.paolomiserini.it

Photography, video

Paolo Miserini was born in Rome in 1963 where he works now as the photographer. His career has begun in 20 years with an underwater photo. This passion has led to his first publication in magazine "Acqua". From 2000, its reference to a photo becomes more frequent, and with a meeting with school "Officine Fotografiche" he has begun career as the teacher of a photo and the photographer. Within 10 years in addition to training he opens new horizons in a photo, including an art photo. In 2008 he realized a fundraising project «Smiles of the Nor Harberd» in which children of two orphanages of Armenia took part. Project photos have been exposed at personal exhibitions in Italy and France and the funds earned from sale of works have been sent to Armenia for theater restoration and the help to children. Works Paolo Miserini are published with several books on an art photo in Italy, it cooperates with many magazines of Europe and Italy, participant of numerous exposition in the world.



Madina Hakuasheva, www.kbigi.ru

Historical consultant, co-author, literature part

The Doctor of Philology, the leading research assistant of sector of Kabardian literature in KBGIG (institute of humanitarian researches at Government KBR and Caucasus research center of the Russian Academy of Sciences (the Kabardino-Balkarian Centre of science of the Russian Academy of Sciences)). Was born in Nalchik. In 1997 has defended the master's thesis on a theme «Ontologic bases of Adyge mythology». With 2003 on 2006 – the doctoral candidate of faculty of Russian literature KBGU. In 2007 a monography «Literary archetypes in works of art of Adyge writers» has entered into a selection of «The Basic achievements of the Russian Academy of Sciences for 2007». In 2008 has defended the Doctor of Philology thesis on the same theme. In 2009 was published a book "Wayto home" (Nalchik, Elbrus Publishing). Was publishing prose in "Literary Kabardino-Balkariya" under a pseudonym of Ashad Guazov, "Way home" was published in Russian thick literature magazine «Friendship of the Nations». The prose writer, the literary critic, the grand daughter of the classic of the Kabardian literature Ali Shogentsukov, the Clubman of writers of Caucasus, a member of the Union of Writers of Russia. The author of more than 60 scientific publications and articles.



The project «CAUCASUS MOPHFEUS» consists of a mobile exhibition, on type of «a nomadic museum» of well-known modern photographer and artist Gregory Colbert. The exhibition is very approximate definition to this multimedia project that unites in itself not only painting, text, photo, video, performances of historians and philologists, Internet resource. It unites authors from different genres and different cultures.

The first stage of the project should take place in Rome, (Italy) in September 2012 and consist of an exhibition (painting, video, photo) during which will take place round tables and discussions. The exhibition will be accompanied by documentaries and performances.

Further, in October 2012, the project exhibition will take place in Russia, in Caucasus Region, in Republic of Kabardino-Balkaria (Nalchik State Museum), in Republic of Karachaevo-Cerkessia (State Historical Museum of Karachaevo-Cerkessia) and in Republic of Adygea (Caucasus Branch of Russian State Museum of Eastern Art, Moscow). In future the exhibition should take place in New Orleans (USA) and Moscow (Russia) and perhaps in other cities of Russia and Europe.



REFERENCES

«I well understand and I feel, in what direction it is necessary to move – to expand knowledge of the North Caucasus, about Adyge (Circassians). Simply to tell about them through art, the literature. But I am assured that those numerous wouldn't like to be shown as victims of Circassian tragedy. I think, about them it is necessary to speak as about representatives of the nice people, there is no time unique rich culture which partly still remains, as about surprising spirit which can't be exterminated. These people were sincerely loved in Europe and the whole world, their sons and daughters were admired, it has found rich reflection in art and literature of European and eastern authors. Today, unfortunately, we have almost forgotten, don't know because, few artefacts of historical circumstances of Circassians remain, we are very separated. But it is necessary to tell about it to the whole world also in order that such tragedies, like Circassian, has never been repeated again. Our modern drama consists that Caucasus is like under the silent contract has been declared a Black Hole zone... This persistent, bashful, cowardly «hole» in historical memory puts a basis for new conflicts and troubles. Caucasus is obliged to find a voice, obliged to wake up and open to the world the real face, which nobody had seen yet. And this face is beautiful».

Madina Hakuasheva, the writer, the Doctor of Philology, the research assistant of department of philology KBGI of the Russian Academy of Sciences, the clubman of writers of Caucasus, a member of the Union of Writers of Russia, from the letter to Elena Aseeva.

«Unfortunately, in Adyge historiography the horseman with a draft in a hand has covered all other aspects of material and spiritual culture of our people. This tradition has arisen still at the time of when Circassians accused (sometimes of romantic spirit) in "injurious" bents. Remember -" the Circassian is covered by the weapon... " ? Then ourselves we were fond of romanticism of eternal war for independence. It doesn't mean that it wasn't. But is more important with what sense filled the political independence Adyge. But you are the artist, and, probably, therefore have intuitively begun with the most important - from the Soul ...».

Zaurbek Kozhev, the candidate of historical sciences, the senior research assistant of department of history of Institute of humanitarian researches at Government KBR and the Kabardino-Balkarian center of science of the Russian Academy of Sciences), from the letter to Elena Asseeva.



...Returning Memory to return Soul...

«Now the Circassian question, a genocide, is actively exaggerated in the West. All of us should understand that main goal is a returning to the person a spirituality, instead of escalation of the conflict or failure of the Olympic games in Sochi in 2014. Attraction attention to tragedy of the Circassian people should be carried out in other ways not to lose that small that we have».

Ruslan Gvashev, the vice-president of confederation of the mountain people of Caucasus, the non-staff research assistant of Lazarevsky ethnographic department of the Museum of history of a city-resort of Sochi and the National museum of Republic of Adygea

«Causes anxiety a condition of language of the earth – toponymics or as it still name, landscape memory. Already during the Russian-Caucasian war and right after its termination on the Western Caucasus, including at coast, at first gradually, and then all local historical names faster began to disappear. The majority remained to some extent are deformed by Russian, at times to unrecognizability. Together with names memory about numerous once Circassian people disappears also. One person has told about it: from toponymics traces of presence are withdrawn. It is promoted by everywhere widespread distortion or concealment of history of indigenous population, up to its dark oblivion».

Tamara Polovinkina, the senior research assistant of Lazarevsky ethnographic department of the Museum of history of a city-resort of Sochi

«The children's consciousness is the future our country, children should become carriers of the forgotten mythology of region, after all without having the strong base underfoot, it is impossible to construct anything in the present».

Larissa Asseeva, the principal of school of languages and design in Gelendzhik, the organizer and the curator of children's competition of a sculpture
« Nartsky epos: the forgotten fairy tales of Caucasus»



THE INITIATORS AND ORGANIZERS OF THE PROJECT:

Paolo Miserini Production (Rome)

www.paolomiserini.it

Artist Asseeva Elena (Rome)

www.asseeva.com

PROJECT PARTNERS

Institute of humanitarian researches (KBIGI) at Government KBR and KBNC the
Russian Academy of Sciences (Kabardino-Balkarian Centre of Science of the
Russian Academy of Sciences)

www.kbigi.ru

Cultural Association Officine Fotografiche (Rome)

www.officinefotografiche.org

Design studio Resort Design (Gelendzhik)

www.resortdesign.ru

WITH SUPPORT OF:

Government of Republic of Kabardino-Balkaria (Russian Federation)

Municipality of city Gelendzhik (Russian Federation)

State Museum of city Nalchik (Russian Federation)

Historical Museum of city Gelendzhik (Russian Federation)

...Returning Memory to return Soul...

Realization of the project: May 2011 – December 2011

Preparation of exhibitions: January 2012- August 2012

Exhibition in Italy: September 2012 (Rome, Italy)

Exhibitions in Russia: October 2012 - January 2013

Paolo Miserini
PEOPLE OF THE SKY



photo, video

...Returning Memory to return Soul...

«I have never heard about Circassia and Adyge people. When I began to read, I have been amazed not only by their tragedy, but also by their culture and moral, their code of honor - Adyge Habze. I perfectly understand that Russia is full of various unique nations but if there are people who want to be heard, and trust in art, instead of politics or wars, I will do the utmost to help them».

Paolo Miserini, photographer, Rome

Components of the project:

30 photographs 100 X 75 cm,
video-installation Three Questions,
documentary Caucasus Morpheus.

Project requirements:

70 m of exposition wall;
video screen or big screen TV

Circassia has never been a state, it were the people Adyghe, indigenous ethnic group in the Caucasus, presented by 12 sub-ethnoses (tribes), which united in a language Adygabze, mythology (Nart Epos), cultural and community ties. But the main element, which is still the core of Circassians, both in Russia and abroad, was a unique knightly code of honor - Adyghe Habze. After a century of the Russian-Caucasian war, ethnic group, first beset on territory of Elbrus to the Kuban and from Anapa to Abkhazia and lost as a result of the war 90% of the population was divided between the three republics - Adygea, Karachay-Cherkessia and Kabardino-Balkaria, where most of the Circassian Diaspora (about 5 million) was due to forced exile in 56 countries. Russia is a home to about 700 000 Circassians now.

In August 2011 Paolo Miserini and Elena Asseeva visited Republic of Kabardino-Balkaria, where Kabardian (Circassian) people until this day are numerically dominant. Thanks to the co-author of the project, Madina Hakuasheva, they were able to meet and record a lot of people in Nalchik. The simplicity of the idea was so attractive and topical, that the authors started to get interviews from all over the world. The unifying element in this project were 3 questions that were asked everyone without exception: 1) Your roots and family?; 2) What is Adygaghe (being Adyga)?; 3) The future of the Caucasus and the Circassians?. In the photo and video not the mythical Circassians from the romantic poetry of the 19th century, but our contemporaries, compatriots, adherents of a rich ancient culture of the Caucasus: artists, writers, and residents of villages, teenagers. Simple people who are most in the world love their homeland.

Tell about your roots and family?

What sense makes for you
ADYGAGHE?

Whats is a future of Adyge
people and Caucasus in your
opinion?



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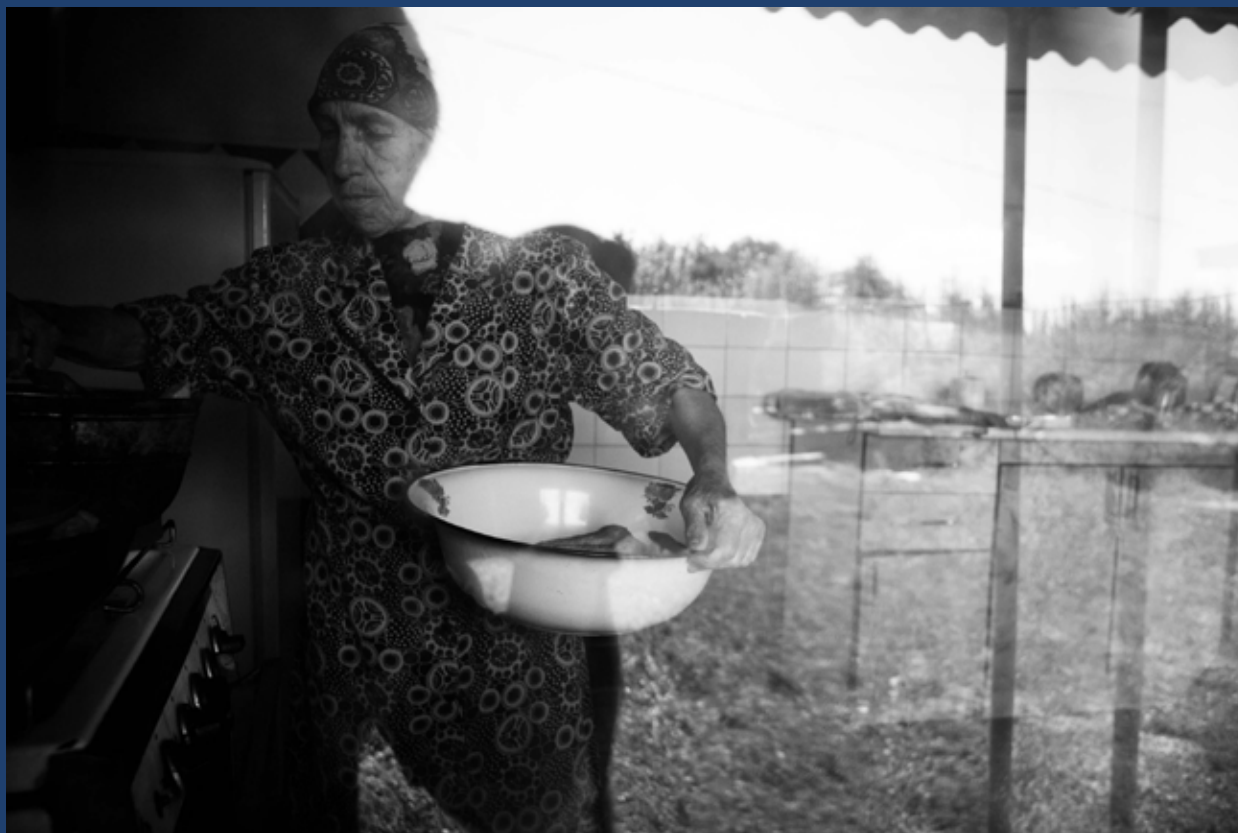
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...Returning Memory to return Soul...



Video Installation

“Caucasus Morpheus. 3 questions”:



Link to Video Trailer:

Vimeo <http://www.vimeo.com/29164066>

Youtube <http://youtu.be/42M7IGgEgFE>

Elena Asseeva
TREASURES OF MEMORIES



painting, video

...Returning Memory to return Soul...

«Under me there was a blood sea. In it there were no heroes, there were no voices, there was no future. I was born in a city with an Adygea name Gelendzhik, Hjulendzhi, « a picturesque meadow ». Lev Tolstoi and followers of his philosophy of “ a simple labor ” have based settlements in a district, brought up children, apple-trees, but for some reason were silent about ethnic emptiness. In my class were Greeks and Ukrainians, Germans and Russian, but not those in what language trees were speaking. I didn't know about them anything, the Caucasian war has ended for a long time and after it have come other shocks, so huge that the tragedy of the people once living at the Black Sea coast, didn't seem actual anymore».

Elena Asseeva, “Treasures of Memories. Earth”

The project is an internal conversation of the author not only with himself, but with the soul of the land on which he was born. It is this inner voice led the artist, seeking answers to many troubling questions not only his, from the Black Sea coast of Krasnodar region to the heights of the Caucasus.

The project “Treasure of memories” (painting, text, video, 2011) consists of 40 works (acrylic on canvas), and 40 stories thematically linked to the sub-theme of “Heaven,” “Earth”, “Water,” “Fire” “Man.”

Text and image together in a video installation.

«I read about my land and it came to life. Here were married women, somebody was waiting in a boat near the shore, squinting at the sunset in the sea, baking bread, roding in a carriage on the mountain passes. Here were Bella and smugglers sail of Lermontov, Gorky's bare feet, old woman Kir of Dzhangirov. Here were all merged together - the blood, the sky and tears.

We have successfully figured out that “not remember” is a solution.

I miss my city. My men. My silence lasted 10 months. During this time you could have a child. And it was - this kid was myself. Me myself, but slightly different».

Elena Asseeva, “Treasures of Memories. Salt”

Components of the project:

40 painting (canvas, acrylic, 120 X 80 sm.);

Video Installation “Treasures of Memories”

(16 parts, each part is 8 minutes).

Project requirements:

100 м of exposition wall ; video screen or big screen TV

“Treasures of Memories” Text:

http://www.caucasusmorpheus.org/ru/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/treasures_book1.pdf

TREASURES OF MEMORIES. SKY



Sky

120 X 80 sm, canvas, acrillic, 2011



Mama

120 X 80 sm, canvas, acrillic, 2011

TREASURES OF MEMORIES. SKY



Sea

120 X 80 sm, canvas, acrylic, 2011



Wind

120 X 80 sm, canvas, acrylic, 2011

TREASURES OF MEMORIES. SKY



Odour

120 X 80 sm, canvas, acrillic, 2011



Bird

120 X 80 sm, canvas, acrillic, 2011

TREASURES OF MEMORIES. SKY



Spring

120 X 80 sm, canvas, acrillic, 2011



Memory

120 X 80 sm, canvas, acrillic, 2011

TREASURES OF MEMORIES. EARTH



Hairs

120 X 80 sm, canvas, acrillic, 2011



Funnel

120 X 80 sm, canvas, acrillic, 2011

TREASURES OF MEMORIES. EARTH



Prayer

120 X 80 sm, canvas, acrylic, 2011



Mountain

120 X 80 sm, canvas, acrylic, 2011

TREASURES OF MEMORIES. EARTH



Stone

120 X 80 sm, canvas, acrillic, 2011



God of the animals

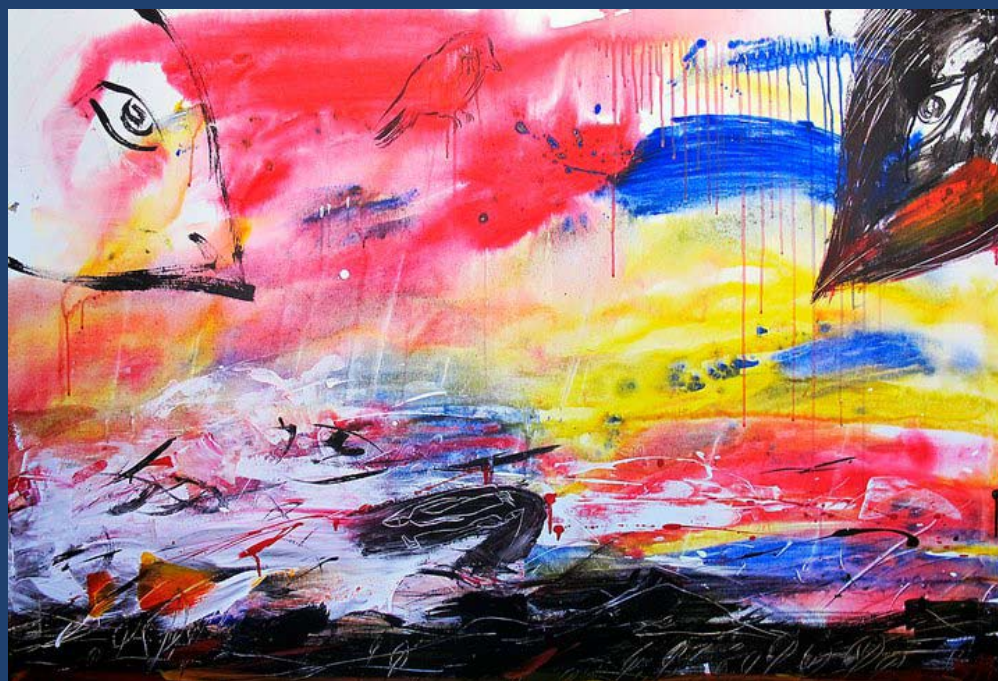
120 X 80 sm, canvas, acrillic, 2011

TREASURES OF MEMORIES. EARTH



Voices

120 X 80 sm, canvas, acrillic, 2011



Earth

120 X 80 sm, canvas, acrillic, 2011

TREASURES OF MEMORIES. FIRE



Fire

120 X 80 sm, canvas, acrillic, 2011



Sun

120 X 80 sm, canvas, acrillic, 2011

TREASURES OF MEMORIES. FIRE



Fireplace

120 X 80 sm, canvas, acrylic, 2011



Blood

120 X 80 sm, canvas, acrylic, 2011

TREASURES OF MEMORIES. FIRE



Sand

120 X 80 sm, canvas, acrillic, 2011



Bread

120 X 80 sm, canvas, acrillic, 2011

TREASURES OF MEMORIES. FIRE



Salt

120 X 80 sm, canvas, acrillic, 2011



Road

120 X 80 sm, canvas, acrillic, 2011

TREASURES OF MEMORIES. WATER



Rain

120 X 80 sm, canvas, acrillic, 2011



Water

120 X 80 sm, canvas, acrillic, 2011

TREASURES OF MEMORIES. WATER



Words

120 X 80 sm, canvas, acrylic, 2011



Garden

120 X 80 sm, canvas, acrylic, 2011

TREASURES OF MEMORIES. WATER



Home

120 X 80 sm, canvas, acrillic, 2011



Time

120 X 80 sm, canvas, acrillic, 2011

TREASURES OF MEMORIES. WATER



Stars

120 X 80 sm, canvas, acrillic, 2011



People

120 X 80 sm, canvas, acrillic, 2011

TREASURES OF MEMORIES. PERSON



Tears

120 X 80 sm, canvas, acrillic, 2011



Wings

120 X 80 sm, canvas, acrillic, 2011



Legs

120 X 80 sm, canvas, acrylic, 2011



Lashes

120 X 80 sm, canvas, acrylic, 2011

TREASURES OF MEMORIES. PERSON



Spider net

120 X 80 sm, canvas, acrillic, 2011



Death

120 X 80 sm, canvas, acrillic, 2011

Night dream

120 X 80 sm, canvas, acrillic, 2011



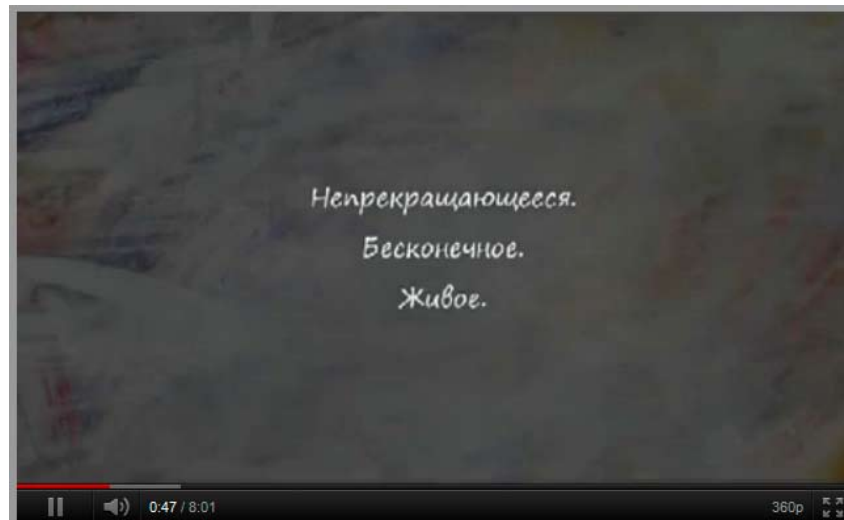
Infinity

120 X 80 sm, canvas, acrillic, 2011



Video Installation

“Treasures of Memories. Sky”:



http://youtu.be/33C9y_LFOP8
or from the site: www.asseeva.com on link Video

Caucasus Morpheus Group on Facebook:

<http://www.facebook.com/groups/149053431854247/>

Link to Video Trailer:

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CAUCASUS



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CAUCASUS SLEEPING

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www.caucasusmorpheus.org