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Soviet Bus Stops



Synopsis

Photographer Christopher Herwig first noticed the unusual architecture of Soviet-era bus stops during a 2002 long-distance bike ride from London to St. Petersburg. Challenging himself to take one good photograph every hour, Herwig began to notice surprisingly designed bus stops on otherwise deserted stretches of road. Twelve years later, Herwig had covered more than 18,000 miles in 14 countries of the former Soviet Union, traveling by car, bike, bus and taxi to hunt down and document these bus stops. The local bus stop proved to be fertile ground for local artistic experimentation in the Soviet period, and was built seemingly without design restrictions or budgetary concerns. The result is an astonishing variety of styles and types across the region, from the strictest Brutalism to exuberant whimsy. Soviet Bus Stops is the most comprehensive and diverse collection of Soviet bus stop design ever assembled, including examples from Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Ukraine, Moldova, Armenia, Abkhazia, Georgia, Lithuania, Latvia, Belarus and Estonia. Originally published in a quickly sold-out limited edition, Soviet Bus Stops, named one of the best photobooks of 2014 by Martin Parr, is now available in a highly anticipated, expanded smaller-format trade edition.

Book Information

Hardcover: 192 pages

Publisher: FUEL Publishing (September 29, 2015)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 099319110X

ISBN-13: 978-0993191107

Product Dimensions: 7.9 x 1 x 6.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.4 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (21 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #115,949 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #4 in Books > Arts & Photography > Photography & Video > Architectural > Monuments #11 in Books > Engineering & Transportation > Transportation > Mass Transit #16 in Books > Arts & Photography > Architecture > Buildings > Landmarks & Monuments

Customer Reviews

Christopher Herwig has produced an amazing photographic journal of an utterly unique Soviet architectural art form, the bus stop. To get these photographs Herwig traveled to 14 countries including difficult to access Moldova, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and

Tajikistan (not to mention his treks across Ukraine, Lithuania, Latvia, Belarus and Estonia among others). Herwig's text and the introduction by Jonathan Meades are illuminating and the essay "The Bus Pavilion: A Minor Architectural Form" by Vera Kavalkova-Halvarsson is especially insightful and explains how in a sea of ugly Brutalist architecture (particularly under Khrushchev and Brezhnev) big budget construction was tightly regulated, but smaller inexpensive projects like bus stops were not considered terribly significant and flew under the radar of the bureaucrats allowing an astonishing array of creativity from mostly young designers and architects with considerable help from local communities. I am genuinely astonished at the creativity on display here, and Herwig's photography is more than up to the challenge. The contrast between the diverse bus stops (many of which are now unserved and abandoned) and their settings are frequently amazing and definitely helped me have a more considered appreciation of this unusual architectural form as a mode of artistic expression. My favorites in the book were concentrated in Kazakhstan (particularly the unusual installation in Astana) and Lithuania, although for sheer diversity of design and astonishing concepts, the bus stops of Abkhazia (especially in Pitsunda and Gudauta) are unbeatable. From both a photographic and architectural viewpoint, Herwig has created a truly unique gem with "Soviet Bus Stops" and I recommend it highly.

This is a great photo book. Definitely recommended for any Soviet history nerds. It's worth pointing out that there are no pictures of Russia, but every other Soviet satellite state is included. Served as the catalyst for an upcoming journey in the region. Unfortunately my copy came with a bent front cover and a little spot scratched off, which is a little disappointing given the price of the relatively small/short book, but that is a criticism of the seller and not the content.

I've had my eye on this book for a while and I'm glad I finally bought it. It's smaller than I would have imagined, but it's the perfect size for a guest to pick up and flip through at a house party. The foreword and author's introductions are interesting, but I wish there was a bit more text to go along with each image.

What could be more adventurous than crisscrossing ex-Soviet Republics in search of that which has been forgotten? Hats off to the author for sticking with this project for over a decade.

the bus stops really ranged from intriguing to pure insanity it would have gotten 5 star from me if it had bus stops from Russia this entire book for some reason excludes any and all bus stops inside

Russia

I purchased this book for my boyfriend as a gift. The book is small, which is actually quite nice- it's compact but not lacking in substance. It's made well and the pictures are beautiful. The printing is nice, and I really like the red binding. Very sturdy.

Giving it as a birthday gift for my friend from Russia....I love it, and I hope she does, too!

Amazing variety of bus stops in former CCCP countries, from cute to spectacular

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