

THE AFTERMATH PROJECT

HIDDEN SCARS

STANLEY GREENE, 2013 AFTERMATH PROJECT GRANT WINNER

INTRODUCING "HIDDEN SCARS"

Conflict photographer Stanley Greene returned to the Caucasus - a region he had covered as a war photographer - to explore the question "Can one rebuild the soul of a people the same way one can rebuild a country?"



Grozny, November 1995. The presidential Palace served for many years as the nerve centre of the Chechen resistance. Pdt Dudayev used it as his head-quarters during the defence of Grozny owing to its extensive, well-protected bunkers.



Grozny, July 1996. Markha Mutapiloum, 3, lost both her legs - her mother was killed as she tried to shield Markha during a rocket attack. Today Markha lives in Grozny with her father and sister.



Sergenyurt, July 1996. Belita holds a picture of her parents, both of whom died en route to Kazakhstan during Stalin's mass deportation of February 23-29, 1944. Nearly half a million people were gone, and Chechen-Ingushetia region suddenly ceased to exist. In 1994, on the 50th anniversary of Stalin's mass deportation, General Dudayev cited the event as proof of why Russia can never be trusted. He ominously stated: "Over the past two or three hundred years we have always acted on the assumption that Russia wishes to occupy Chechnya and expel the Chechen people from its territory. This factor is always present, consciously or unconsciously."



Grozny, August 1996. A woman comes out after the bombing. The hands on the door are a traditional muslim symbol of protection.



Grozny, May 2000. Presidential palace reduced to rubble. Even in ruins the palace remained a powerful symbol of the Chechen fight for independence.



Chechnya, Grozny, young woman looking out of window.



Grozny. January 1995. A Russian Sukhoi roars out of nowhere. A Russian civilian lies dying, his legs blown off. There is no help, only journalists who are survivors, trying to record what happened, helpless to do anything else. The Russian military killed more Russian civilians than Chechen fighters during the battle for Grozny. The shelling of Grozny in the first few months of 1995 was both futile and ironic. The city was largely deserted with the exception of elderly Russian civilians numbering in the tens of thousands. These pensioners had been physically unable to escape in previous months while the city was being surrounded. In a perverse twist, Yeltsin's Sukhoi jets were bombing Russian grandmothers and grandfathers whose only protection was a handful of Chechen rebels.

See the full project: <http://theaftermathproject.org/project/hidden-scars>