From an Auction Lot to a Leningrad Photo Club

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In August 2026, a Massachusetts auction offered twenty-eight black-and-white photographs from the Soviet Union. Following the clues on the prints led the collector to Alexander Roshchin, a photographer in St. Petersburg whose own work was in the lot. These twelve prints tell the story of what they learned through their correspondence.

Photographs

Non-Black Earth Region

Protect Peace

Autumn

These Old, Old Photographs No. 3

Protected Kyrgyzstan: Morning in the Pamir-Alay Mountains

Funeral 1

Funeral 2

Funeral 3

from the series “Jazz Never Grows Old”

Untitled

Sack of Onions

Zyuratkul Settlement

The auction lot

In the auction photograph, several prints lay in a stack. The listing for lot 387 at White's Auctions mentioned Leningrad and gave a broad date range. It supplied no names for the individual photographs.

The backs gave the collector somewhere to start. Handwritten titles, names and club stamps tied some prints to particular photographers. The reverse of Non-Black Earth Region, for example, gives both Viktor Orlov's name and the Russian title.

Finding Alexander

The search led online to Alexander Roshchin, who had joined the photo club at the Vyborg Palace of Culture in 1985. The collector sent him scans of the front and back of all twenty-eight prints. Some were Roshchin's own photographs. He recognized work by fellow photographers and began sharing what he remembered about the people, places and exhibitions connected to the prints.

What the photographs revealed

Karlov's stamp and the photo studio inscription identify the maker of the three Funeral photographs. Roshchin supplied their order. He placed Nikolai Pimenov's jazz photograph at a Leningrad festival. An archival photograph of a March 1989 exhibition shows the same composition as one of Karlov's untitled works in the collection.

Among Roshchin's own prints, one reverse carried the earlier wording Sack of Flour. Roshchin identified the subject as onions and supplied the corrected title. The record preserves both wordings so readers can see how the identification changed.

Back to the photo club

The correspondence became an exchange about photography. Roshchin shared photographs he still returned to, including one he made in 1988 of children in front of the cruiser Aurora. The collector sent photographs of New York by Berenice Abbott, Sid Grossman and Leon Levinstein.

Roshchin wrote that he planned to introduce the collection and tell the story of how it came together at a November 2026 meeting of the Vyborg Palace of Culture photo club, known as VDK. The prints had traveled far from Leningrad. He wanted their story to reach the club's current members in St. Petersburg.

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Non-Black Earth Region



Viktor Orlov · c. late 1970s-early 1980s · ORL1

The handwritten reverse identifies Viktor Orlov and gives the title «Нечерноземье». Alexander Roshchin estimates the scene dates to the late 1970s or early 1980s.

Sources

1. Verso of the collection print
2. Alexander Roshchin, correspondence on photographs from the collection, September 30, 2026.

Viktor Orlov. “Non-Black Earth Region.” c. late 1970s-early 1980s. Silver Gelatin Street, object ORL1. https://silvergelatinstreet.com/works/orl1

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Protect Peace



Valery Degtyarev · May 9, 1975 · DEG4

The verso credits Valery Degtyarev. Alexander Roshchin dates the scene to May 9, 1975, and identifies the boy as part of an honor guard. The collection research records a ROSPHOTO interview showing Degtyarev holding the matching negative.

Sources

1. Verso inscription on the collection print
2. Alexander Roshchin, identification and historical context for Protect Peace, September 30, 2026. Correspondence in the collection archive.
3. ROSPHOTO, interview with Valery Degtyarev. At approximately 7:18, Degtyarev holds the negative identified in the collection research.

Valery Degtyarev. “Protect Peace.” May 9, 1975. Silver Gelatin Street, object DEG4.
https://silvergelatinstreet.com/works/deg4

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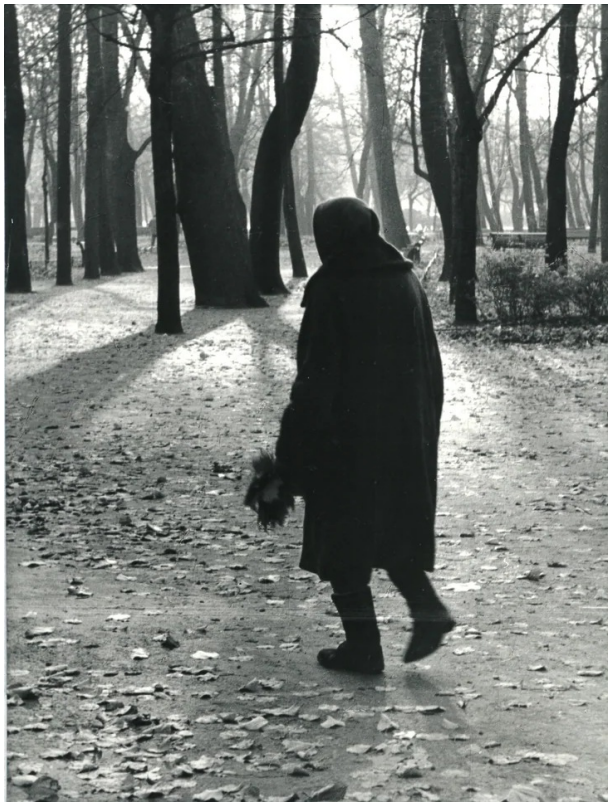
Autumn



Tatiana Anikhova · circa 1983–1985 (autumn; Roshchin recollection) · ANI2

The verso gives the Russian title and identifies Tatiana Anikhova and the Vyborg Palace of Culture photo studio. Alexander Roshchin identifies the setting as Leningrad's Summer Garden and dates the image to around 1983–1985.

Sources

1. Verso of the collection print
2. Alexander Roshchin, correspondence on Anikhova and the Summer Garden identification, October 17, 2026.

Tatiana Anikhova. "Autumn." circa 1983–1985 (autumn; Roshchin recollection). Silver Gelatin Street, object ANI2. https://silvergelatinstreet.com/works/ani2

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These Old, Old Photographs No. 3



Alexander Roshchin · November 1986 · ROS3

The reverse identifies the work as No. 3 in These Old, Old Photographs. Roshchin dates the four-image series to November 1986.

Sources

1. Verso of the collection print
2. Alexander Roshchin, correspondence about his own photographs, October 25, 2026.

Alexander Roshchin. “These Old, Old Photographs No. 3.” November 1986. Silver Gelatin Street, object ROS3. https://silvergelatinstreet.com/works/ros3

FROM AN AUCTION LOT TO A LENINGRAD PHOTO CLUB

Protected Kyrgyzstan: Morning in the Pamir-Alay Mountains



Alexander Roshchin · September 1986 · ROS6

Roshchin corrected the title recorded on the reverse and identified the mountains as the Pamir-Alay. He made the photograph during a September 1986 group hiking trip.

Sources

1. Verso of the collection print
2. Alexander Roshchin, correspondence about his own photographs, October 25, 2026.

Alexander Roshchin. “Protected Kyrgyzstan: Morning in the Pamir-Alay Mountains.” September 1986. Silver Gelatin Street, object ROS6. https://silvergelatinstreet.com/works/ros6

Funeral 1



Konstantin Karlov · c. 1983–1986 (series estimate) · KAR1

The reverse carries Karlov’s name stamp and a Vyborg Palace of Culture photo studio inscription. Alexander Roshchin identifies this as the first of three rural funeral photographs and estimates the sequence dates to 1983–1986.

Sources

1. Verso of the collection print
2. Alexander Roshchin, correspondence on the Vyborg Palace of Culture photo club, Karlov, and Peigin, October 6, 2026.

Konstantin Karlov. “Funeral 1.” c. 1983–1986 (series estimate). Silver Gelatin Street, object KAR1. https://silvergelatinstreet.com/works/kar1

Funeral 2



Konstantin Karlov · c. 1983–1986 (series estimate) · KAR2

Karlov’s stamp and the photo studio inscription appear on the reverse. Alexander Roshchin identifies the frame as the second in the three-image Funeral sequence.

Sources

1. Verso of the collection print
2. Alexander Roshchin, correspondence on the Vyborg Palace of Culture photo club, Karlov, and Peigin, October 6, 2026.

Konstantin Karlov. “Funeral 2.” c. 1983–1986 (series estimate). Silver Gelatin Street, object KAR2. https://silvergelatinstreet.com/works/kar2

Funeral 3



Konstantin Karlov · c. 1983–1986 (series estimate) · KAR3

The reverse identifies Karlov and the Vyborg Palace of Culture photo studio. Alexander Roshchin places the photograph third in the Funeral sequence and dates the sequence to the mid-1980s.

Sources

1. Verso of the collection print
2. Alexander Roshchin, correspondence on the Vyborg Palace of Culture photo club, Karlov, and Peigin, October 6, 2026.

Konstantin Karlov. “Funeral 3.” c. 1983–1986 (series estimate). Silver Gelatin Street, object KAR3. https://silvergelatinstreet.com/works/kar3

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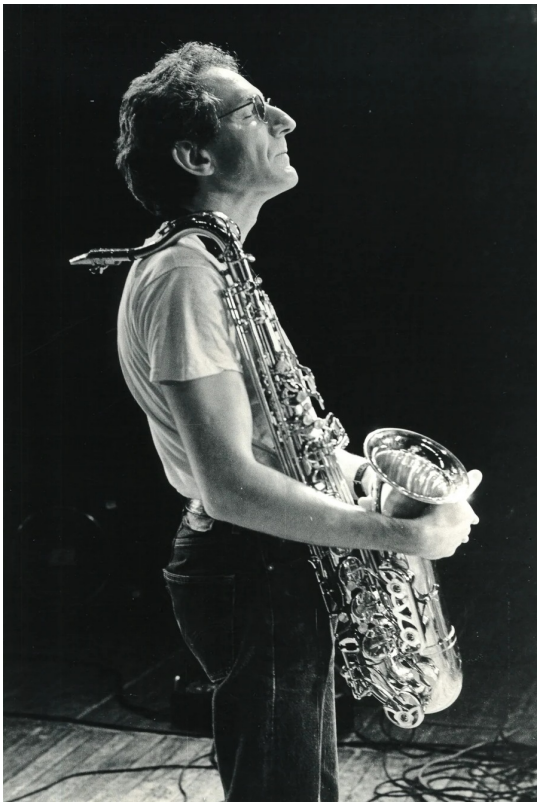
from the series “Jazz Never Grows Old”



Nikolai Pimenov · 1987–1988 · PIM2

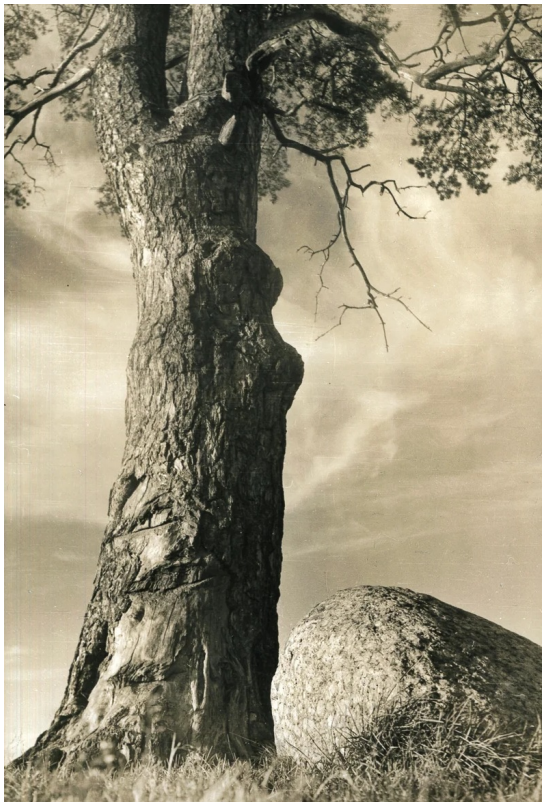
The reverse identifies Pimenov and the Jazz Never Grows Old series. Alexander Roshchin places the musician at a Leningrad jazz festival and estimates 1987–1988.

Sources

1. Verso of the collection print
2. Alexander Roshchin, correspondence identifying Pimenov photographs, September 21, 2026.

Nikolai Pimenov. “from the series ‘Jazz Never Grows Old’.” 1987–1988. Silver Gelatin Street, object PIM2. https://silvergelatinstreet.com/works/pim2

Untitled



Konstantin Karlov · 1987–1988 (Roshchin estimate) · KAR5

Alexander Roshchin dates the image to 1987–1988 and identifies sodium-sulfide sepia toning. A March 1989 exhibition photograph shows a matching composition. The impression exhibited has not been identified.

Sources

1. Verso of the collection print
2. March 1989 exhibition photograph showing the same composition. The exhibited impression is unidentified.
3. Alexander Roshchin, correspondence on the Vyborg Palace of Culture photo club, Karlov, and Peigin, October 6, 2026.

Konstantin Karlov. “Untitled.” 1987–1988 (Roshchin estimate). Silver Gelatin Street, object KAR5. https://silvergelatinstreet.com/works/kar5

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Sack of Onions



Alexander Roshchin · March 1989 · ROS14

The reverse preserves the earlier wording Sack of Flour. Roshchin identified the subject as onions and gave the corrected title Sack of Onions. He dates the image to March 1989.

Sources

1. Verso of the collection print
2. Alexander Roshchin, correspondence about his own photographs, October 25, 2026.

Alexander Roshchin. “Sack of Onions.” March 1989. Silver Gelatin Street, object ROS14. https://silvergelatinstreet.com/works/ros14

FROM AN AUCTION LOT TO A LENINGRAD PHOTO CLUB

Zyuratkul Settlement



Alexander Roshchin · March 3, 1985 · ROS8

Roshchin identified the scene as Zyuratkul Settlement and dated it to the evening of March 3, 1985, during a ski expedition in the Southern Urals. The reverse records an earlier title.

Sources

1. Verso of the collection print
2. Alexander Roshchin, correspondence about his own photographs, October 25, 2026.

Alexander Roshchin. “Zyuratkul Settlement.” March 3, 1985. Silver Gelatin Street, object ROS8. https://silvergelatinstreet.com/works/ros8