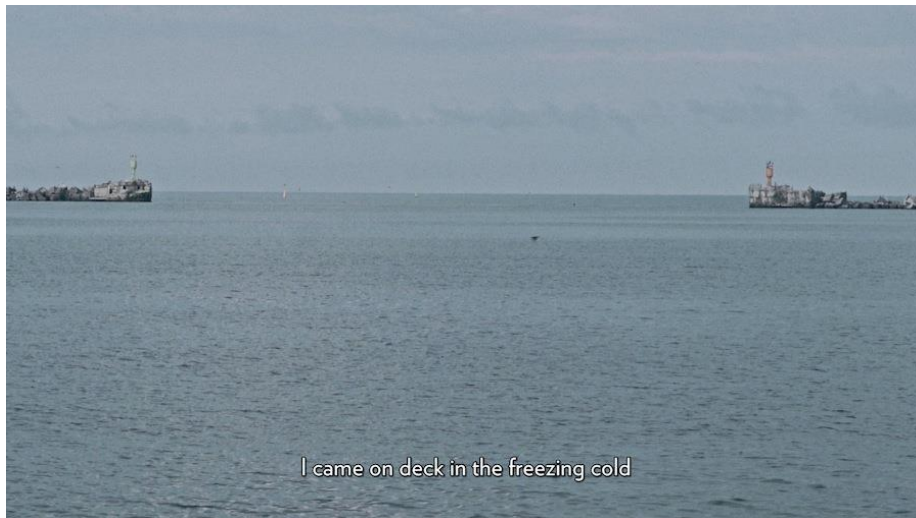




ARTFORUM

Ieva Epnere
Art in General
145 Plymouth Street
September 17–November 5

Lara Atallah
October 7, 2016



Ieva Epnere, *Sea of Living Memories*, 2016. Three-channel HD video, sound, color, durations variable.

Memories are shape-shifting narratives that time can ruthlessly mold and alter. Much like the sea, they are a force to be reckoned with, and if we are not cautious, they can drown us. To an image maker, memories can be extraordinarily useful weapons, as they have the power to dismantle the lines between fiction and reality.

In Ieva Epnere's video *Sea of Living Memories*, 2016, Latvians remember when their small country was under Soviet rule, which started in early World War II and lasted until 1991. Military maps, footage of the sea, black-and-white photographs, and the aged faces of citizens suffuse this work. The accounts we hear, especially those from former soldiers, are cut through with world-weariness, despair, and occasional moments of brightness. After all, what are these fighters left with but their recollections, once the battle is over? For the veterans who stayed and built lives on these shores, tales are a refuge.

Among them is Ivans, a man who worked as a cryptologic technician for the Soviet army, disguising information so that it could not be intercepted. As he muses about the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis, his tone fluctuates—we detect a strange excitement as he relives this dangerous bit of history. The Baltic Sea fills the screen with its grayish-blue hues, which reminds us that the vastness and unpredictability of such a large body of water can break lives. Beneath its serene surface, the sea carries its own strange codes and secrets, faint whispers trapped in waves, rippling across time.