



Kronstadt, Russia, 2002

GALLERY

*Photograph by***URSULA SCHULZ-DORNBURG**

Throughout her working life, the German photographer Ursula Schulz-Dornburg has found herself drawn to those places in-between. Borderlands; areas of transit and transition; abandoned, inaccessible sites that have been forgotten.

Whether documenting temporary marsh dwellings in what was ancient Mesopotamia or decaying Soviet bus stops in Armenia, Schulz-Dornburg's predominantly black and white architectural photographs seem to inhabit their own temporal reality. Familiar structures long

left uninhabited, they appear like relics from the future.

This photograph, part of a current exhibition of Schulz-Dornburg's work in London, was made in 2002. She was on her way to Murmansk in Russia. Her plan was to photograph abandoned nuclear submarines, a project that would never materialise. Just outside Kronstadt, she stumbled across these structures. "They looked like a dismantled world," she says in an interview in her 2018 book *The Land In Between*, "like a city that had been taken apart."

What are they? Schulz-Dornburg won't say. "That would break the spell. Anyone looking at these pictures should have the same feeling that I had." The structures looked as if they were dropped from space, or washed up by some long-vanished sea.

In the exhibition, *Memoryscapes*, these other-worldly photographs sit alongside a series made in 2012 in Kazakhstan, on the site of the Soviet Union's largest nuclear weapons programme, and another made at the Russian State Museum of the Arctic and Antarctic.

This constant re-examining and reorganising of her archive is an important part of Schulz-Dornburg's practice. The act of placing images from different decades and locations alongside each other allows her to open up new dialogues; ones that shift through time. By looking into the past, she invites us to imagine possible futures – some more frightening than others. **FT**

Words by Josh Lustig.
"Memoryscapes" is at Large Glass, London, until July 1; largeglass.co.uk