

IKOMEN

IKONMEN

ANTON
CORBIJN

HANNIBAL

Foreword

Anton Corbijn

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David Sylvian. Paris 1983

The title is an old spelling variant of the Dutch word for 'ICONS', and it is meant to be a title that wrong-foots you, especially when you consider it in terms of the work I have done and that people are familiar with. The term 'iconic' is often used to describe what I create. It is such an over-used word that it has become meaningless and devoid of any depth, and I have come to dislike it due to its popular associations.

I grew up in a household in a village where there were no icons in terms of religious artefacts or images of Christ with a halo. We just had empty crosses in my father's church. He was the pastor, Dutch Protestant.

My world was small, we lived on an island just north of the rivers that in the old days separated the Protestant from the Catholic part of the Netherlands. That was, to a large degree, still the case in the 50s. Behind our house was the cemetery, so death was around the corner as it were. And with my parents being very religious it was always there as they were focused on life after death, at least in my perception.

So because of all this, I was fascinated by Catholic cemeteries where a sense of life and death seemed to be played out in the sculptures the rich had built for themselves so we would remember them in a certain way. A lot less dull than 'our' cemetery.

When, in the early 80s, I went through a period of feeling sorry for myself, a little lost, I had thoughts of being dramatic and doing a series of images on cemeteries - Catholic ones, of course! I went with a writer friend: he wrote poetry and I photographed 'stones'. We drove to Italy and Austria to visit famous cemeteries: Milan, Genoa, Venice, Vienna. A good year prior to this I had gone to Vienna with Ultravox to be their photographer for the 'Vienna' video recording, and part of that was shot in a cemetery. So that was the start, in a way. Later, I photographed musicians in cemeteries, such as Echo & the Bunnymen in Bologna, David Sylvian in Paris, Joe Cocker in Paris, The Waterboys in London etc., but it was a phase and I haven't been to one for years now. But the idea of memory, how we want to be remembered, is interesting. That logic is also applied to the Lenin series that I shot in 1982 in Leningrad, now St Petersburg.

The propaganda machine was in full swing to push Lenin's image as one of hope, of a great past as well as a cornerstone for the future - to eradicate any blemishes and present him as a strong coherent person. It was impressive to see this figure on huge banners and posters throughout the city, especially if you add in the fact that there was no advertising in those Soviet days, just some neon letters on buildings and shops to describe what the shop was. So they really stood out and I, for one, loved these neon days at that time in Eastern Europe.

The self-portraits of me as musicians that I loved, but who had passed away, were shot in 2001-2002 in the village of Strijen, where I was born. It combined my parents' focus on (life after) death and my love of music that had started in that village in the mid-60s. It was partly to keep these musicians alive and partly to show how obsessed I was with music as a young man, and still was when I took these pictures. It was kind of my mid-life crisis, where I was wondering how come I am still so taken by these musicians.

Together, these series in *IKONEN* deal with how we remember or want to remember those who have passed away. I feel in this instance it is the right title.

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Ultravox's Midge Ure, Vienna 1981

Nothing is Frozen

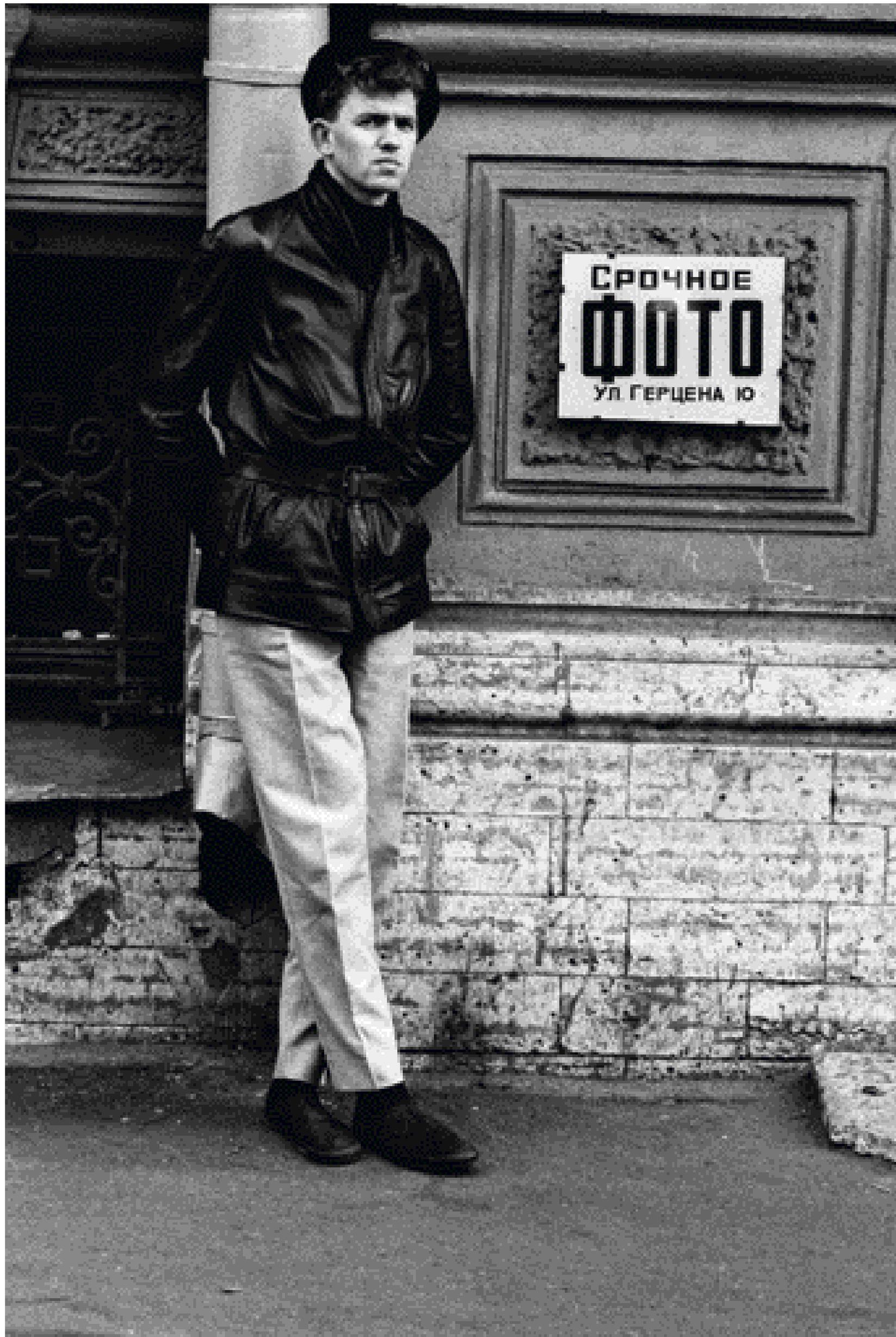
Dominic
Eichler

6

I travelled far and wide
through many different times/
What did you see there?/
I saw the saints with their toys/
What did you see there?/
I saw all knowledge destroyed

Joy Division, *Unknown Pleasure*, 'Wilderness', 1979

13 Cemeteries
73 Lenin, USSR
121 a. somebody
studio
149 a. somebody
strijen



СРОЧНОЕ

ФОТО

УЛ. ГЕРЦЕНА Ю

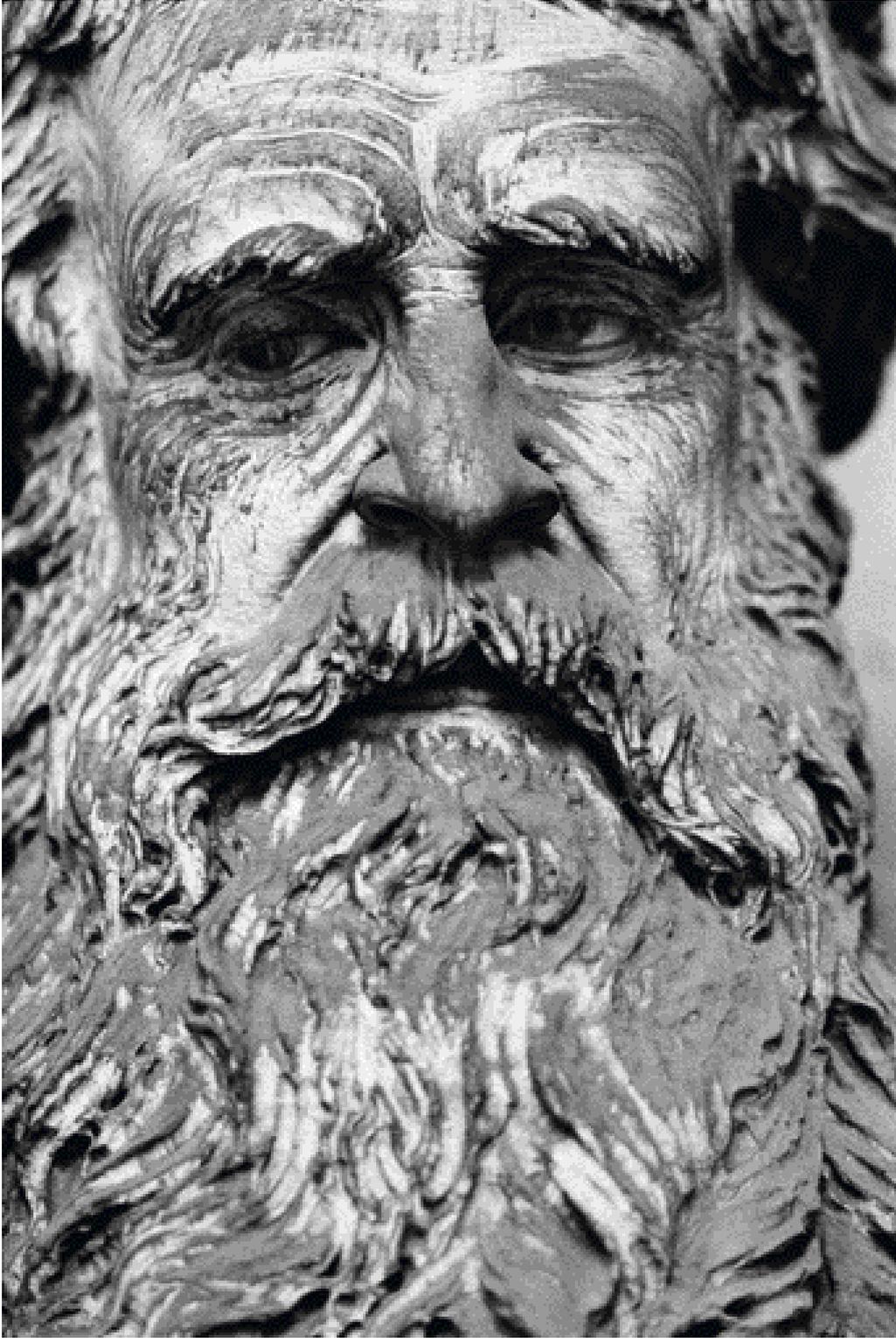
Cemeteries





FABRIKA

1830







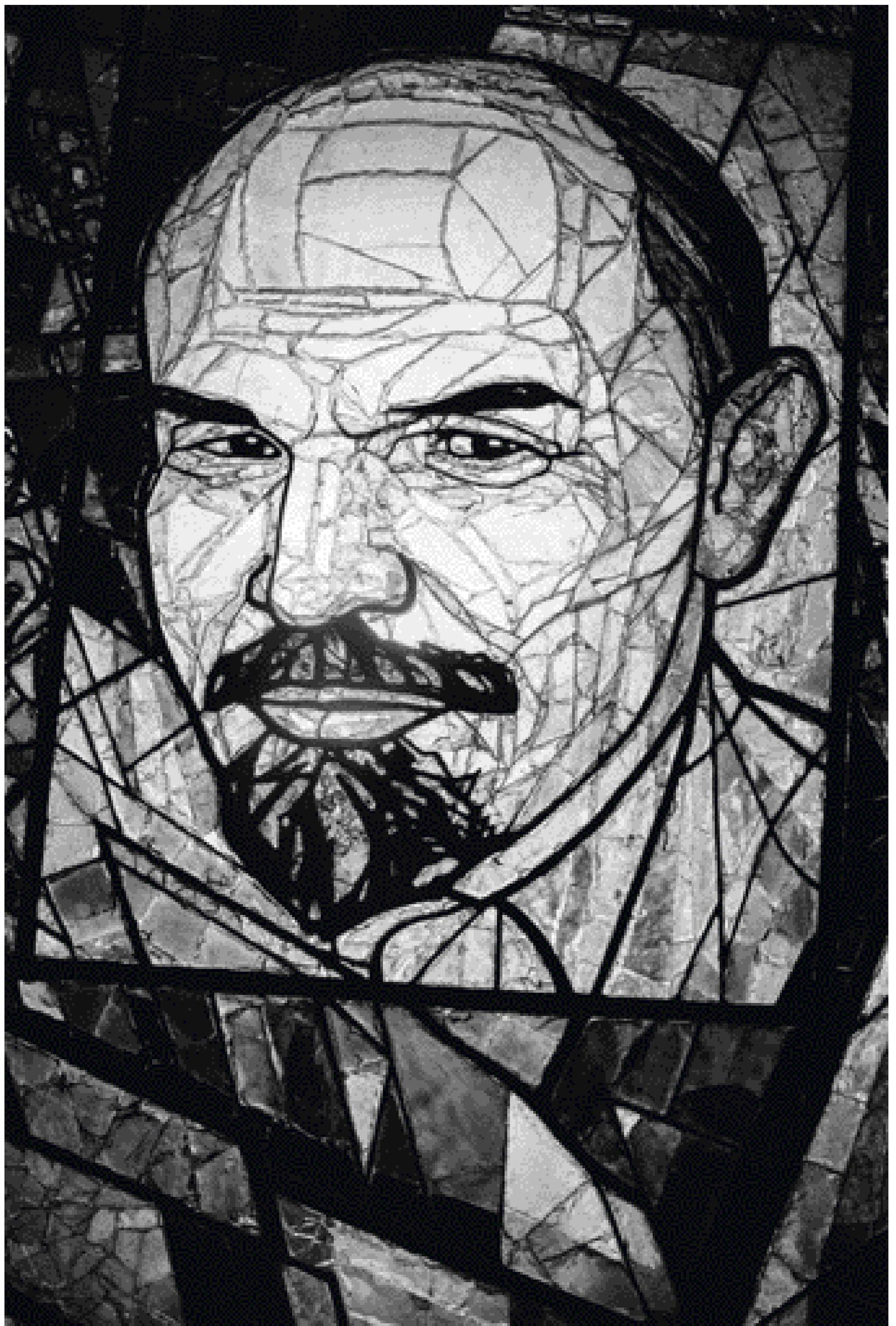






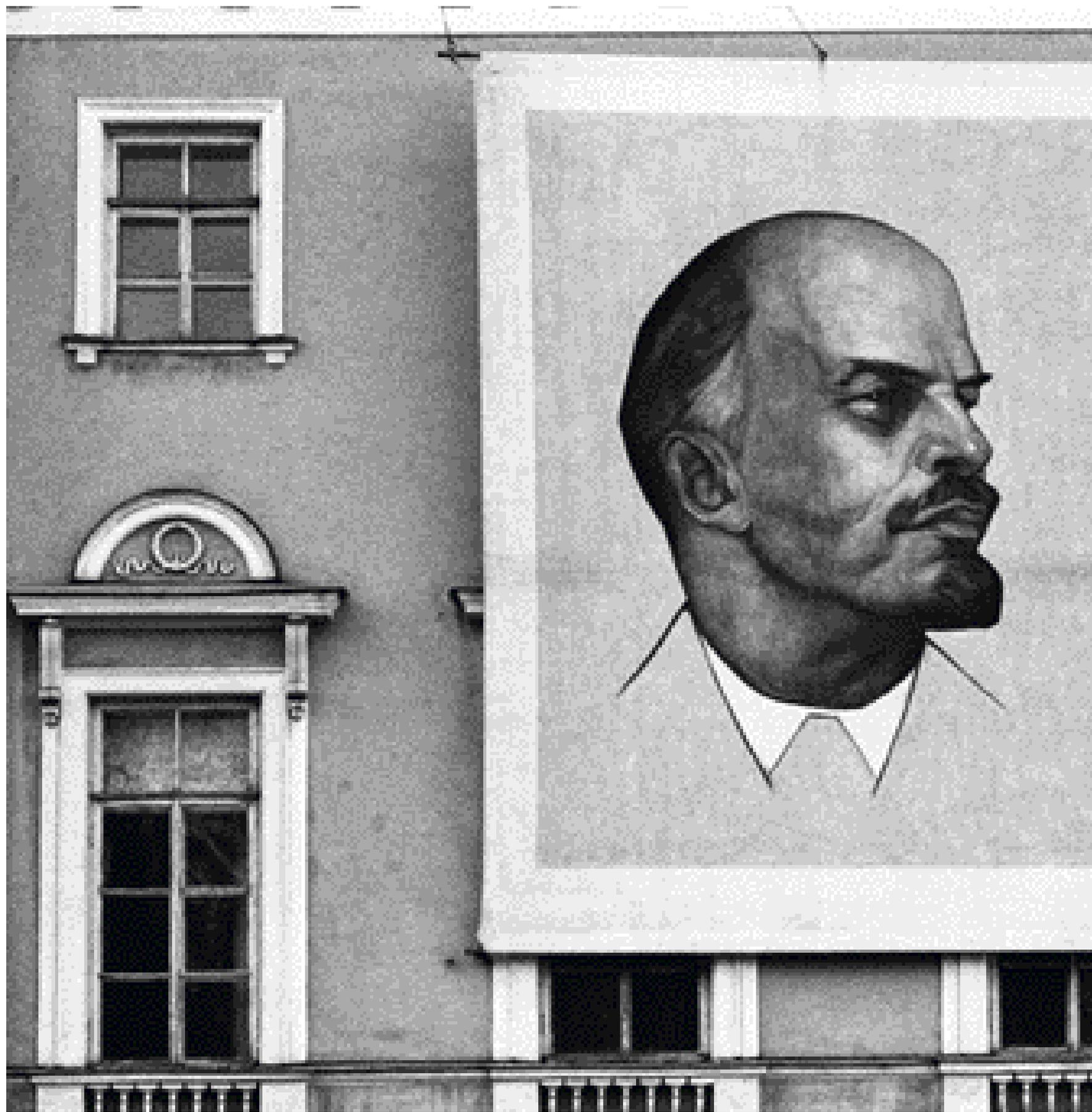






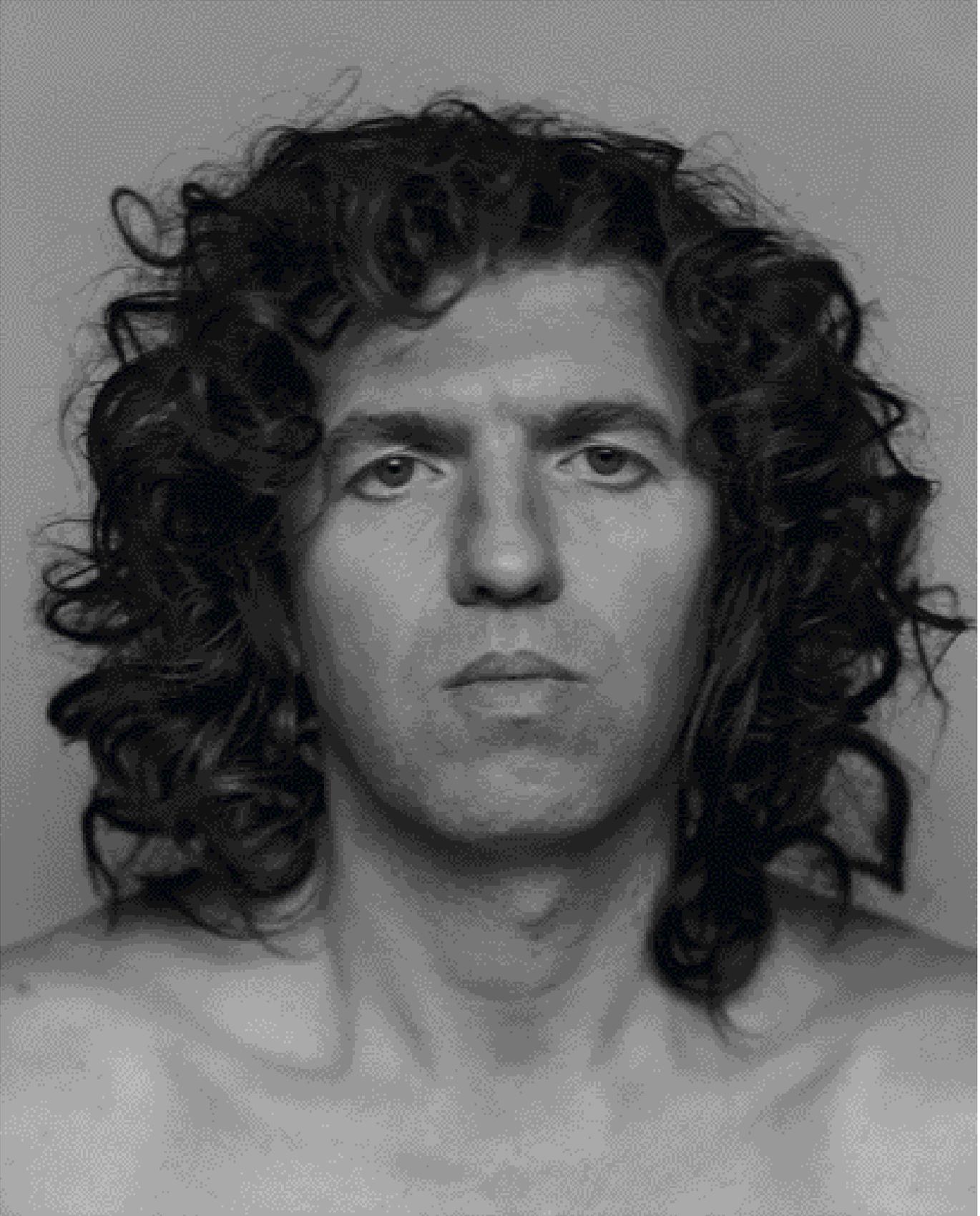






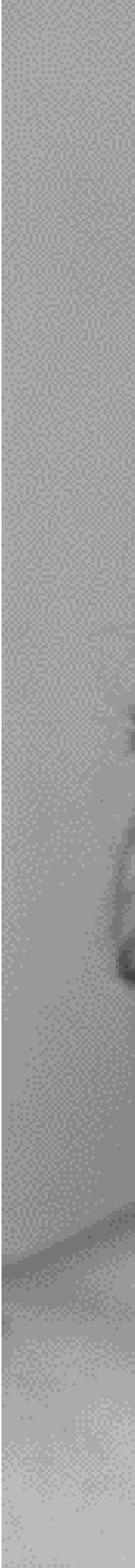


a . somebody
studio





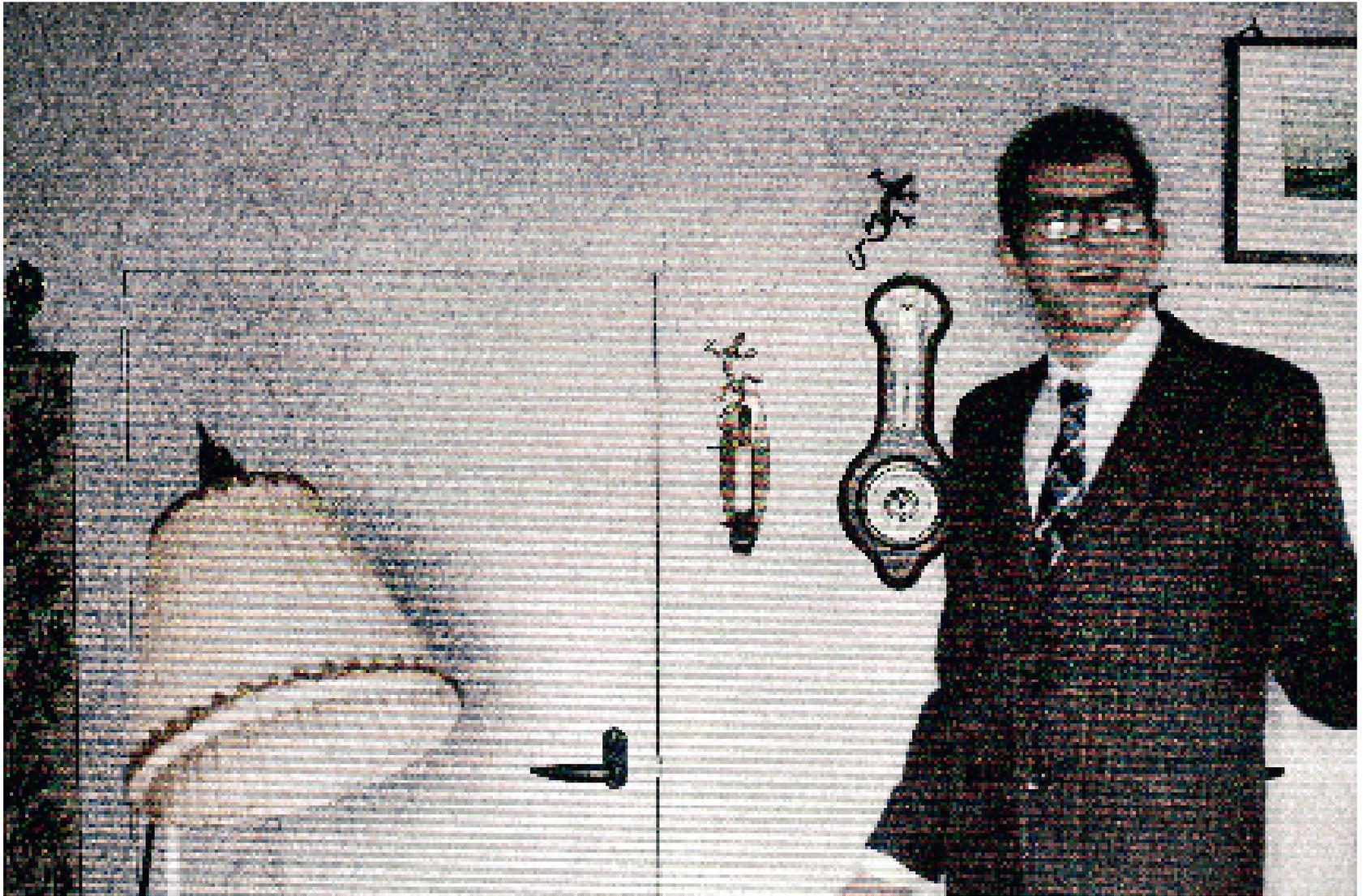






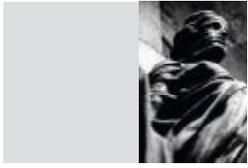
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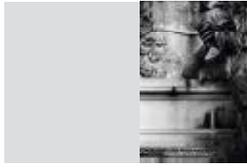




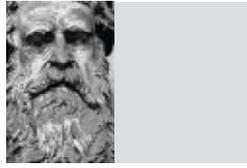
Cemeteries



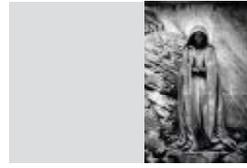
p. 15
Untitled 25
Italy 1982



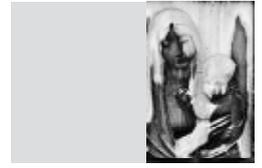
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Untitled 32
Austria 1982



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Deus
Italy 1982



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Untitled 23
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Untitled 6
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France 1983



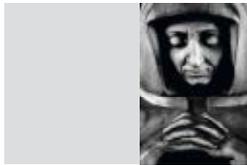
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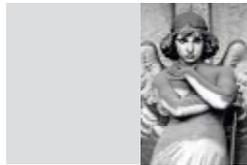
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Untitled 1
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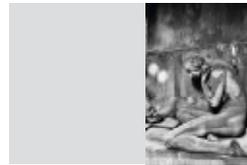
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Untitled 8
France 1983



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Untitled 24
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Untitled 22
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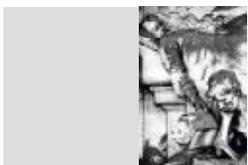
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Italy 1982



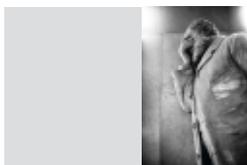
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Untitled 13
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Untitled 5
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Untitled 16
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Untitled 2
Austria 1982



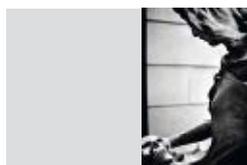
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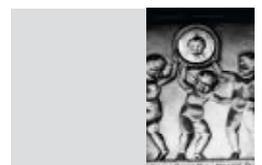
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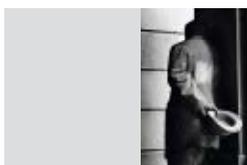
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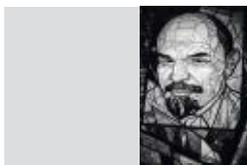


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Lenin, USSR



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Anton Corbijn
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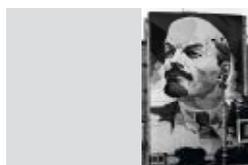
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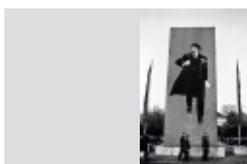
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a. somebody
studio



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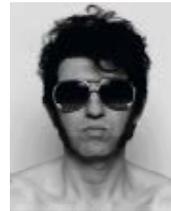
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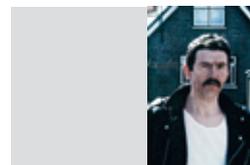
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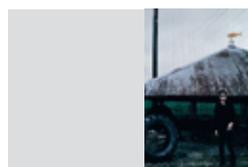
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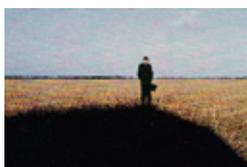
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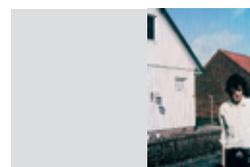
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Colophon

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