

Special event feature: Yelena Popova at RCA

By Gill_Williamson
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It's a beautifully hot July day in London, the sun is out and the city is buzzing, and strangely, it feels friendlier too! As a tourist, the usual 'vibe' I sense in our great capital is that of alienation – but today is different – there's a 'friendly' spring in the London step, maybe thanks to the forthcoming 2012 Olympics.

My mission today, in addition to a 'must see' visit to the amazing Miro exhibition at Tate Modern, is to hop over to the Battersea RCA site for the MA Final Exhibition, and to see the work of Russian-born, Nottingham Fine Artist, Yelena Popova.

Reaching the vast campus at Battersea, I am greeted by a number of bizarre and wonderful works of fine art – it's pretty impressive in its oddness, as a vast and colourful 'artscape'. Yelena's main work is in the Turbine building and is well worth the visit, as the culmination of a brilliant project that delves into the secret history of a nuclear village in Russia – the village of her birth – she directs me to the film room, where she has produced a documentary about her investigations. Scripted, filmed and produced by Yelena, it is a captivating story in which her voice guides the viewer through her emotionally charged ideas and theories on events in the village. As she poses questions she has interrogated through her research journey – questions which may never be resolved, the film closes, and I leave the room wanting to know more. Delivered through her unique perspectives on the human condition, this is a highly intriguing and meaningful production, and a remarkably well written script.

To tell you too much may spoil the surprise of this unique work, which represents a revealing of a secret past. I hope that she has plans to view it in Nottingham, so that I may have the opportunity to see it again – if she does, I would recommend you go and see it.

Her remaining work in the exhibition is beautiful, meaningful and unique. This has been a day of observing life through the unusual observations and vision of the fine artist. Through their eyes, we are offered alternative perspectives on life, with all its curiosity and fascination.

Yelena has a studio at Nottingham's Oldknows artists group. You can find out more about her work at her website.

Source: creativenottingham.com