The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Portraits of New Emigrants Fleeing War and Repression

November 22, 2024

In a quiet corner of Riga the Vilki Books shop just opened an unusual art show called the "Faces of Emigration Project." Hanging above bookshelves filled with brightly colored Russian-language children's picture books are portraits of two dozen people who fled Russia's war on Ukraine or other conflicts and repression of journalists and dissidents. Artist Daniil Viatkin, who goes by Daniil V. professionally, left Russia when the war began. The artist and graphic designer wanted to "make sense of what is going on in others and in myself" in this state of forced and unexpected exile. He wanted the portraits of Ukrainians, Belarusians, Russians and Uzbeks to capture the "people, their stories, their attitude towards emigration in the moment." His portraits are both substantial and ethereal, as if the people they depict are still taking form in their new circumstances. For a small show in a bookstore, the exhibition makes a powerful impression. When asked to say a few words about their unexpected emigration, some of the subjects gave their names, country of origin and the media they work for. Others asked to be identified by initials. Still others asked to remain anonymous — perhaps because they have relatives left behind to protect, or perhaps for other reasons. This, too, is a portrait of emigration.



A reading during the exhibition at Vilki Books, Riga. **MA Berdy**

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2024/11/22/portraits-of-the-new-emigrants-fleeing-war-and-repression-a87101