



Das entzweigebrochene Land

Die Geister

Das zu Stein erstarrte Land

Das Alphabet : Das Beschütze

Die Sedimente

Der Tod

Der Raum : Der Gott

aktuelles Projekt : Armenien 2014 - 2022, gescannte analoge 6x6 Fotografien





## What happens to a city that is bereaved of its intended purpose?

Built in 1969, Metsamor, Armenia (then the Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic) was intended as a settlement for employees of a nearby nuclear power plant. But the power plant would never come to fulfill the ambitions of its creators, and in 1988 an earthquake caused the facility to be shut down. The onset of the Soviet Union's collapse in 1989 prompted a complete construction freeze for Metsamor. A symbol of the dream of a technologically advanced nation, the city remained incomplete and fell into decay undiminished by the recommissioning of the power plant in 1995.

This book documents the rise and fall of Metsamor, bringing together an oral history of the place and a photographic research project by Katharina Roters with topical essays discussing Armenia's cultural and architectural history; the typology of Soviet *Atomograds*, or atomic cities; and the phenomenon of modern ruins. Although today the power plant's workers live in a partly built failed utopia, Metsamor stands as an example of the highly idiosyncratic Armenian variety of Soviet Modernism of the 1960s and 1970s, making this a fascinating read for anyone with an interest in Soviet-era buildings and architecture.

**First book** on the *Atomograd* (atomic city) Metsamor in Armenia

A unique, fascinating study on **Soviet idealistic modernism** and **failed utopias**

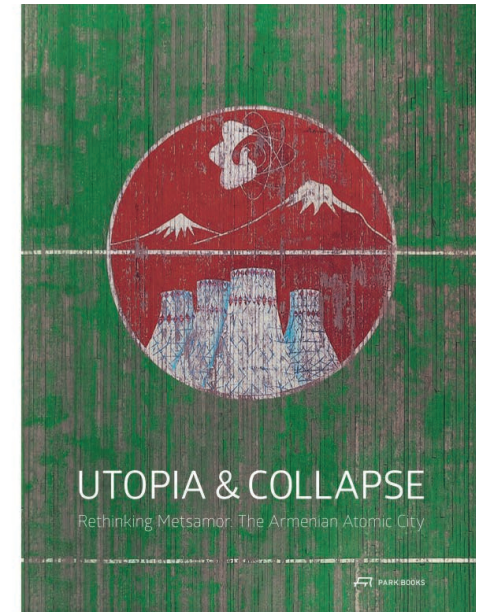
Featuring the most recent artistic project by award-winning **Hungarian artist Katharina Roters**

Katharina Roters, Sarhat Petrosyan (eds)

### Utopia & Collapse

Rethinking Metsamor: The Armenian Atomic City

Hardback  
236 pages, 229 color and  
82 b/w illustrations  
22 x 29.5 cm (8¾ x 11½ in)  
978-3-03860-094-7 English



 **PARK BOOKS**

#### Shortlist DAM Architectural Book Award and German Photobookaward 2018

[https://park-books.com/index.php?lang=de&page=books&view=li&booktype=order\\_1\\_releasedate&subject=1&artist=all&author=all&pd=pb&book=921](https://park-books.com/index.php?lang=de&page=books&view=li&booktype=order_1_releasedate&subject=1&artist=all&author=all&pd=pb&book=921)

Rezensionen (Auswahl)

<https://www.bbc.com/worklife/article/20190527-the-city-in-the-shadow-of-an-ageing-nuclear-reactor>

<https://evnreport.com/podcasts/evn-talks/metsamor-utopia-and-the-nuclear-power-plant/>

<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/travel/metsamor-armenian-atomic-city-utopia-180970264/>

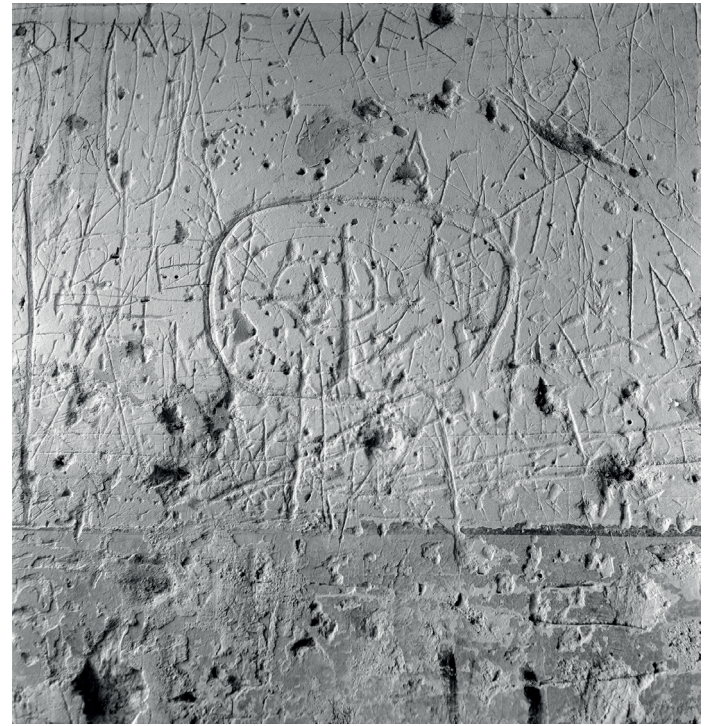
[https://www.baunetz.de/meldungen/Meldungen-Utopia\\_Collapse\\_Rethinking\\_Metsamor\\_The\\_Armenian\\_Atomic\\_City\\_5484511.html](https://www.baunetz.de/meldungen/Meldungen-Utopia_Collapse_Rethinking_Metsamor_The_Armenian_Atomic_City_5484511.html)

<https://alexanderadamsart.wordpress.com/tag/katharina-roters/>

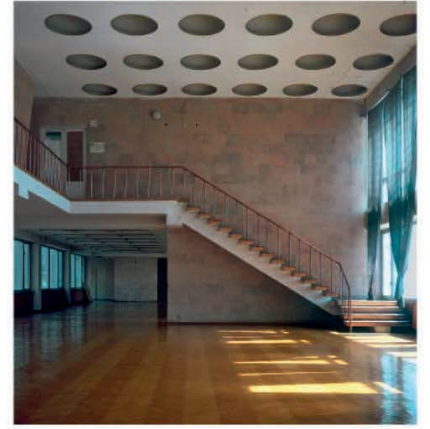
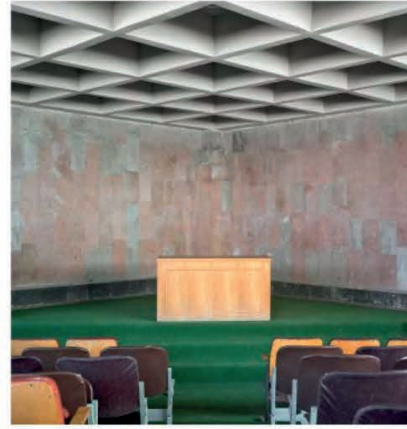
[https://ludwigmuseum.blog.hu/2016/11/24/magyar\\_muvesz\\_posztszocialista\\_varoskepei\\_a\\_velencei\\_biennalen](https://ludwigmuseum.blog.hu/2016/11/24/magyar_muvesz_posztszocialista_varoskepei_a_velencei_biennalen)

<https://www.independentlandscape.am/en/press>











exhibition 2000:

*Anatomy of a Dream. Architectural phantasms and urban utopias in Armenia*  
Hungarian House of Photography - Mai Mano House / Budapest (H)

The exhibition *Anatomy of a Dream* presents my visual investigations pursued in Armenia since 2000. My interest for the cultural, ideological contexts and architectural processes that have reshaped the natural and urban landscapes of the country unfold in three distinctive bodies of works: In the photographic notes compiled in the early 2000, which explores the urban surfaces of Yerevan and elaborates a visual dictionary of architectural characteristics. The photographic explorations until today, how the urban tissue transforms, how its rules and codes are rewritten, how Yerevan itself has become an architectural palimpsest in permanent mutation. The case-study of Metsamor, the atomic city which was to be accomplished as a soviet utopia.

<https://www.maimano.hu/programs/katharina-roters-anatomy-of-a-dream>

[https://index.hu/nagykep/2020/02/26/katharina\\_roters\\_egy\\_alom\\_anatomiaja\\_cimu\\_kiallitasa\\_a\\_mai\\_mano\\_hazban/](https://index.hu/nagykep/2020/02/26/katharina_roters_egy_alom_anatomiaja_cimu_kiallitasa_a_mai_mano_hazban/)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kq7aiweo0lY>

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4C9m7\\_mkQXY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4C9m7_mkQXY)

[https://nepszava.hu/3066879\\_az\\_egesz\\_panelvilagot\\_nem\\_lehet\\_ledozerolni](https://nepszava.hu/3066879_az_egesz_panelvilagot_nem_lehet_ledozerolni)

<https://epiteszforum.hu/katharina-roters-egy-alom-anatomiaja>

KATHARINA ROTERS

## EGY ÁLOM ANATÓMIÁJA ANATOMY OF A DREAM

2020/01/29–2020/03/08

A Magyar Fotográfusok Háza – Mai Manó Ház tisztelettel meghívja Önt és barátait  
**KATHARINA ROTERS: EGY ÁLOM ANATÓMIÁJA**  
ÉPÍTÉSZETI ILLÚZIÓK ÉS VÁROSUTÓPIÁK ÖRMÉNYORSZÁGBAN  
című kiállításának megnyitójára

2020. január 28-án, kedden, 18 órára

Köszöntőt mond: Bakó Péter,  
a Magyar Fotográfusok Háza – Mai Manó Ház igazgatója

A kiállítást megnyitja: Jász Borbála filozófus,  
művészettörténész

Kurátor: Kopeczky Róna

A kiállítás megtekinthető:  
2020. január 29. – 2020. március 8.  
Keddtől vasárnapig 12 és 19 óra között.  
Hétfőn és ünnepnapokon zárva.



The Hungarian House of Photography – Mai Manó House cordially invites you and your friends to the opening of the exhibition  
**KATHARINA ROTERS: ANATOMY OF A DREAM**  
ARCHITECTURAL PHANTASMS AND URBAN UTOPIAE IN ARMENIA

on Tuesday, January 28, 2020, at 6.00 pm

Welcome by Peter Bakó,  
director Hungarian House of Photography – Mai Manó House

Opening speech by Borbála Jász philosopher, art historian

Curator: Róna Kopeczky  
The exhibition is open to the public:  
January 29, 2020 – March 8, 2020  
Tuesday – Sunday 12 noon – 7 pm  
Closed on Mondays and public holidays.

mai  
manó  
ház

Magyar Fotográfusok Háza – Mai Manó Ház  
Hungarian House of Photography – Mai Manó House  
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Tel.: +36 30 505 0455  
maimano@maimano.hu | www.maimano.hu











## Photography and architecture in dialogue

During Hungary's communist era after WW II, many villages were rebuilt on uniform schemes of single-family homes and the *Magyar Kocka*, the Hungarian cubic house, became ubiquitous. A unique characteristic of this housing type is the ornamental decoration of its facades. The façade thereby became an opportunity of both individual and collective expression within uniformity. The ornament is not merely an aesthetic sign. It rather creates meaningful identity and distinguishes the appearance of entire dwellings across the country. Often this individualized ornament can also be read as an act of subversion against the pressure of conformity in the socialist system.

*Hungarian Cubes* proposes an aesthetical typology of the ornamentation of cubic houses from the 1960s–70s in Hungary. It is based on the artistic project "Magyar Kocka – Hungarian Cube", which German-Hungarian artist Katharina Roters has been pursuing since 2005. Roters's images show the houses "cleaned" of all surplus information: fences and railings, antennas, road signs, electric power lines etc. have been removed. The serial composition of her photographs is combined in the book with essays on various aspects of this unique architectural phenomenon.

### DAM Architectural Book Award 2014

[https://park-books.com/index.php?lang=de&page=books&view=li&booktype=order\\_1\\_releasedate&subject=1&artist=all&author=all&pd=pb&book=557](https://park-books.com/index.php?lang=de&page=books&view=li&booktype=order_1_releasedate&subject=1&artist=all&author=all&pd=pb&book=557)

### Rezensionen (Auswahl)

<https://edition.cnn.com/2014/09/04/world/gallery/hungarian-cubes-communist-homes/index.html>

<https://www.wired.com/2014/08/the-amazing-art-on-these-communist-era-houses-was-a-rebellion-back-then/>

<https://www.uncubemagazine.com/blog/13859361>

<https://www.dezeen.com/2014/08/17/hungarian-cubes-by-katharina-roters/>

<https://www.zeit.de/reisen/2014-05/fs-katharina-roters-hungarian-cubes>

[https://index.hu/nagykep/2014/07/08/magyar\\_kocka/](https://index.hu/nagykep/2014/07/08/magyar_kocka/)

<https://epiteszforum.hu/a-gulyasmodern>

<https://epiteszforum.hu/hungarian-cubes-kiallitas>

<https://casavogue.globo.com/LazerCultura/Fotografia/noticia/2014/12/arte-dos-anos-1920-em-fachadas-hungaras.html>

[https://cloud-cuckoo.net/fileadmin/issues\\_en/issue\\_38/abstract\\_roters\\_szolnoki.pdf](https://cloud-cuckoo.net/fileadmin/issues_en/issue_38/abstract_roters_szolnoki.pdf)

[https://cloud-cuckoo.net/fileadmin/hefte\\_de/heft\\_38/artikel\\_roters\\_szolnoki.pdf](https://cloud-cuckoo.net/fileadmin/hefte_de/heft_38/artikel_roters_szolnoki.pdf)

An artistic research project on **sociological aspects of architecture**

Investigates a **unique and so far neglected phenomenon** of socialist architecture

Shows individual and collective **expression between conformity and subversion** in villages and suburbs of post-war Hungary

The project and book also serve as an **archive of a vanishing local culture**

Presents **previously unpublished** material

Katharina Roters (ed.)

## Hungarian Cubes

Subversive Ornaments in Socialism

Hardback

approx. 176 pages, 200 color illustrations

22 x 25 cm (9 x 10 inch)

978-3-906027-38-8 English / German

€ 38.00 | £ 30.00 | \$ 49.00

January 2014 (Europe) | August 2014 (US)



KATHARINA ROTERS | HUNGARIAN CUBES

PARK BOOKS

PARK BOOKS









## HUNGARIAN CUBES

exhibition acb gallery / Budapest (H) 2017

[https://acbgaleria.hu/en/exhibitions/katharina\\_roters\\_szolnoki\\_jozsef\\_hungarian\\_cubes](https://acbgaleria.hu/en/exhibitions/katharina_roters_szolnoki_jozsef_hungarian_cubes)



## COLLABORATION WITH MEDIA ARTIST JÓZSEF SZOLNOKI

Since 2010 in my joint practice with József Szolnoki, we have been working with archival, objectified documents that reveal transfers between ideological and cultural spaces, as well as transitional states. In our projects, we present how official and private interpretations in the cultural memory of societies and ideological systems compete with each other.

exhibition 2019:

### ROTTERS & SZOLNOKI: **WUNDERBLOCK**

MODEM Modern and Contemporary Arts Centre / Debrecen (H)

The exhibition examines the construction and rewriting of personal, collective and national identity in the often turbulent social-historical circumstances of the 20th century. We exposed the blind spots concealing the collaborative elements of our own family memories related to the Nazi and Communist dictatorships. The exhibition adds to the allegory of the blind spot by linking private examples with public ones. What kinds of individual or social processes take place, if we unexpectedly face a traumatic and silent event in the past of our family or community? What kinds of documents mediate the forgotten or silent events of the recent past and how can they integrate into the memory of the individual or the community?

*„A negative arabesque,  
whatever stands before us is what is no more.  
We are what we have lost” \**

And here we stand without any provisions for the journey,  
sentenced to continuous improvisation.  
Because the eclipsed memory of the trauma  
keeps casting its shadow over generations  
until the heir returns and breaks up the past  
through a blind spot drifting along the diffuse borderline  
between forgetting and remembering.

\* Yvette Biró: The Runner

<https://balkon.art/home/ujrairhato-tortenetek/>

<https://issuu.com/elnfree/docs/balkon-2019-06-07>

<https://www.es.hu/cikk/2019-05-24/szeplaky-gerda/visszapillanto-tukor.html>

<https://www.artmagazin.hu/archive/3593>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OTuBNhf7Xi4>

[http://epa.oszk.hu/03000/03024/00010/pdf/EPA03024\\_uj\\_muveszet\\_2016\\_11\\_016-017.pdf](http://epa.oszk.hu/03000/03024/00010/pdf/EPA03024_uj_muveszet_2016_11_016-017.pdf)

<http://tranzitblog.hu/a-kulturalis-forradalomtol-a-multfeldolgozasig/>

<https://www.boell.de/en/2016/12/22/hungarian-uprising-blind-spot-1956>

[https://index.hu/tudomany/tortenelem/2016/12/09/a\\_salgotarjani\\_sortuz\\_epuleten\\_van\\_ma\\_is\\_az\\_oroszag\\_utolso\\_rakosi-cimere/](https://index.hu/tudomany/tortenelem/2016/12/09/a_salgotarjani_sortuz_epuleten_van_ma_is_az_oroszag_utolso_rakosi-cimere/)

[https://index.hu/tudomany/tortenelem/2017/11/21/hackeld\\_a\\_multat\\_rakosi-cimer\\_gyor\\_szolnoki\\_jozsef\\_katharina\\_rotters/](https://index.hu/tudomany/tortenelem/2017/11/21/hackeld_a_multat_rakosi-cimer_gyor_szolnoki_jozsef_katharina_rotters/)









Opa Max  
My German Grandfather by Two  
Times.  
1942 / 1948

Max with and without badge

The portraits of Max, the German grandfather, that is Opa. The two photos were inherited by the two healthy children of Max. One of the photos, in which Max is wearing a badge, was hanging behind a door for a long time, barely noticeable. Max himself retouched the other photo, removing the tiny badge. He found the photo advantageous, as he looks out of it self-confidently and vigorously. They symbolised the membership of the NSFC, the National Socialist Flyers Corps. The retouched photo places one back into safe timelessness.



Relief / 1956, County Hall, Salgótarján

### Anamnesis

The last Rákosi coat of arms (Stalinist period) that remained in a public place was on the relief of the façade of the County Hall of Salgótarján. They shot from this building into the crowd on 8th December 1956 during the Hungarian Uprising. Trees were later planted here, the branches of which almost completely covered the relief. Later these trees had to be cut down after a storm in 2011. That is when the political scene came to light again.



The participants who got together temporarily for the drama in education event reconstructed the relief in the form of a living picture.

The video documentation of the drama in education event: *Anamnesis*, 2016, 6'53"

[https://www.boell.de/en/2016/12/22/hungarian-uprising-blind-spot-1956?utm\\_campaign=ds\\_hungary\\_1956](https://www.boell.de/en/2016/12/22/hungarian-uprising-blind-spot-1956?utm_campaign=ds_hungary_1956)





### Uncovering

The block of flats was consigned in 1953 to the workers of the Machine Tool Factory. In the course of the renovation of 1984 one of the reliefs of the façade depicting a Rákosi coat of arms (Stalinist period) was walled-in, and later in 2016, we revealed the coat of arms.



*Uncovering*, 2016

Rákosi Coat-of-Arms, Győr, 15 Attila Street, video documentation, 1'55"

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tlh17\\_wRPXA&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tlh17_wRPXA&feature=youtu.be)