

THE EYE OF PHOTOGRAPHY

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L'Œil de la Photographie

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On the "Road of Bones"

We are in Siberia, not far from the Pole of Cold. It is winter and it snows, the longer the harder. The roads are, if not icy, then drifted with snow. The trucks have long since given up fighting the snow and are parked on the side of the road, snowed in. We are sitting in a UAZ 452, the indestructible Russian 4wd minibus, and are driving on the notorious Kolyma Road. It connects Yakutsk with the port of Magadan, 2'000 kilometers away. It was built by Gulag prisoners from the 30s to the 50s. Since hundreds of thousands of forced laborers who were interred in the pavement after dying during its construction, it went down in history as the "Road of Bones". At first the drive takes us through a beautiful landscape with frozen rivers and snow mountains covered as if with sugar icing, then it changes to deserted valleys with larch forests. For hours no car comes towards us, only trees left and right of the road. From time to time I hold the camera up to the windshield and press the shutter.

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