

Freetheme: ORDINARY PEOPLE

The ban on "propaganda of non-traditional sexual relations" was signed into the Russian federal law by Vladimir Putin in June 2013. This law, also known as the "anti-gay law", is just one more example of a tendency to regression to a more intolerant society and the attempt of the Russian government to redirect attention away from more serious problems.

It's no longer illegal to be gay (the restriction was lifted in 1993), a homophobic atmosphere is still there. After all stories about chechen gay men it has become a big issue in Russia.

I aim to document everyday life of couples of different ages, make (video-) portraits and to photograph private and hidden public venues. Little attention was paid to trying to find a new angle for this topic. In my work I want to discover an ability of 'ordinary people' to enjoy the moment and value the happiness and joy of everyday life despite an open homophobia on the television, by politicians in the media and the Russian church. My protagonists still care about not showing their feelings in public but I am happy to say that they are not afraid to show their faces in my story.

My growing network of contacts opens access to the smaller cities and helps me to further diversify my project. I'm looking forward to continue working in different regions of Russia, which I believe is very important for the completeness of the project.

I believe that our world needs another approaches, perspectives and solutions. This project is a continuation of my attempt of trying to find something positive even in the worstest situations. My work aims to show to the international community the deeper insight to the topic, to take steps toward a more tolerant Russian society, to start discussions and debates. I'd be very happy if IWPA will support my project.