

Edited by Katharina Stadler
and Data Chigbolashvili

turn

Dead End

city

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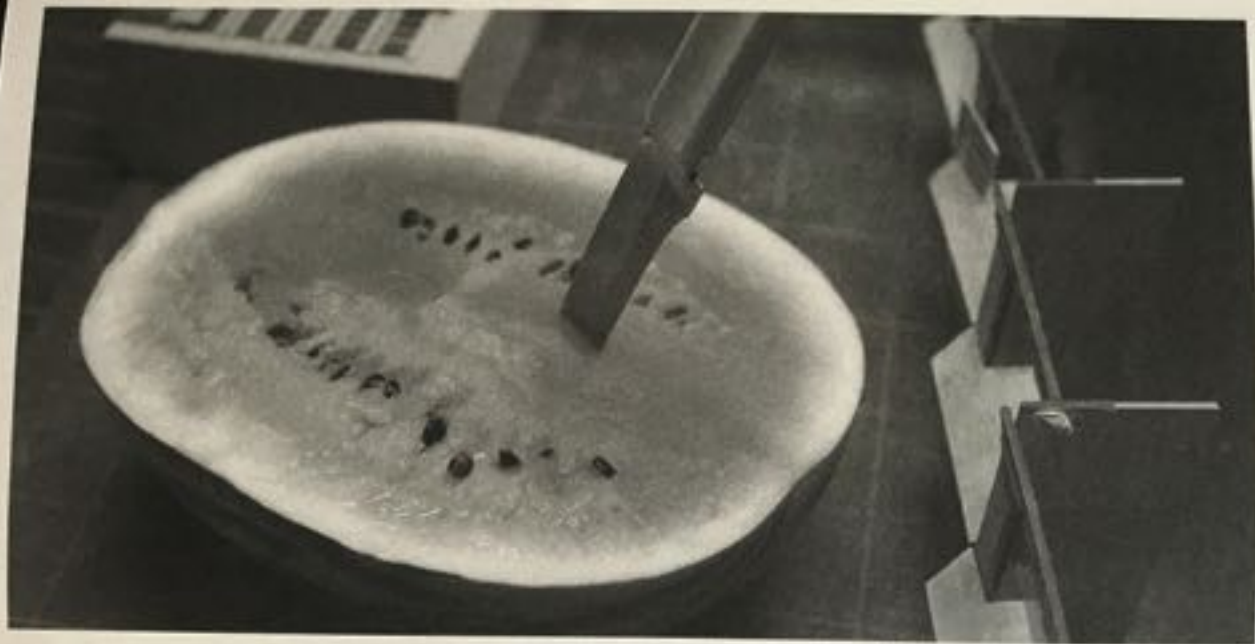
street

street

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10 10 10 21 29
9 7/9 8
7 5 6 3a 4 4 20 16a 19
5 55-51 3 49
78 45 43 41
76 69/1 66/68 60 54b 54a 52 50
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Pirimze

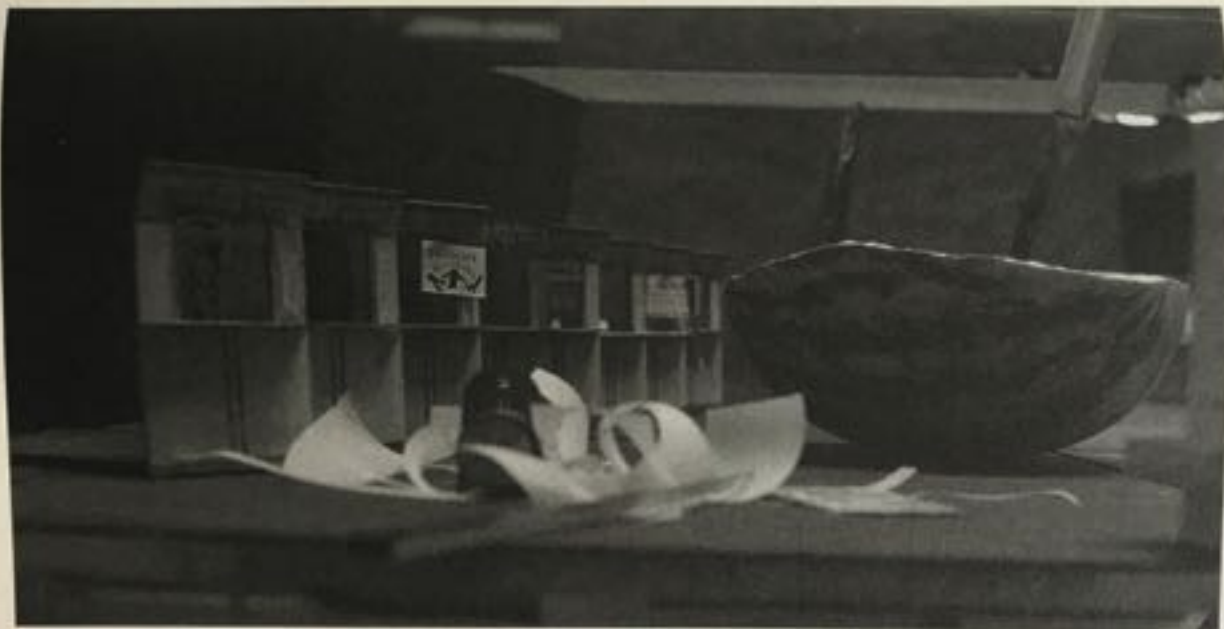


It was the hot summer of '86. The director of Pirimze was at home with her lover eating watermelon, when a third person came to fix unsettled business.

They started arguing. The director's lover, who was also her right hand man, was killed with the knife that had been used to cut up the watermelon.

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Pirizze

A domestic knife...

Domestic goods were the specialty of Pirizze,
it was a paradise, for repairing domestic goods.



Shoes, watches, glasses, jewelry, bags, zippers, suitcases, belts, hairdryers, kitchen appliances... It was possible to get almost anything repaired in Pirimze, a six floor building designed and built especially for craftsmen in the center of Tbilisi, the capital of Soviet Georgia.

Besides repair, knives and scissors could be sharpened, hair could be cut and shoes polished in Pirimze. Furriers and tailors would fashion clothing from fur, leather or cloth for individual customers.



On the ground floor of Pirmze there was a semi-dark corridor with private-like booths on both sides where craftsmen worked. One could get a glimpse inside these booths, and discover personalized interiors, covered with cut-outs from foreign glossy

magazines and photos of naked girls. One had to be careful not to get lost in the dark corridors of Pirmze, where one's foreign watch batteries would surely get lost in the hands of anonymous men, that all looked the same.

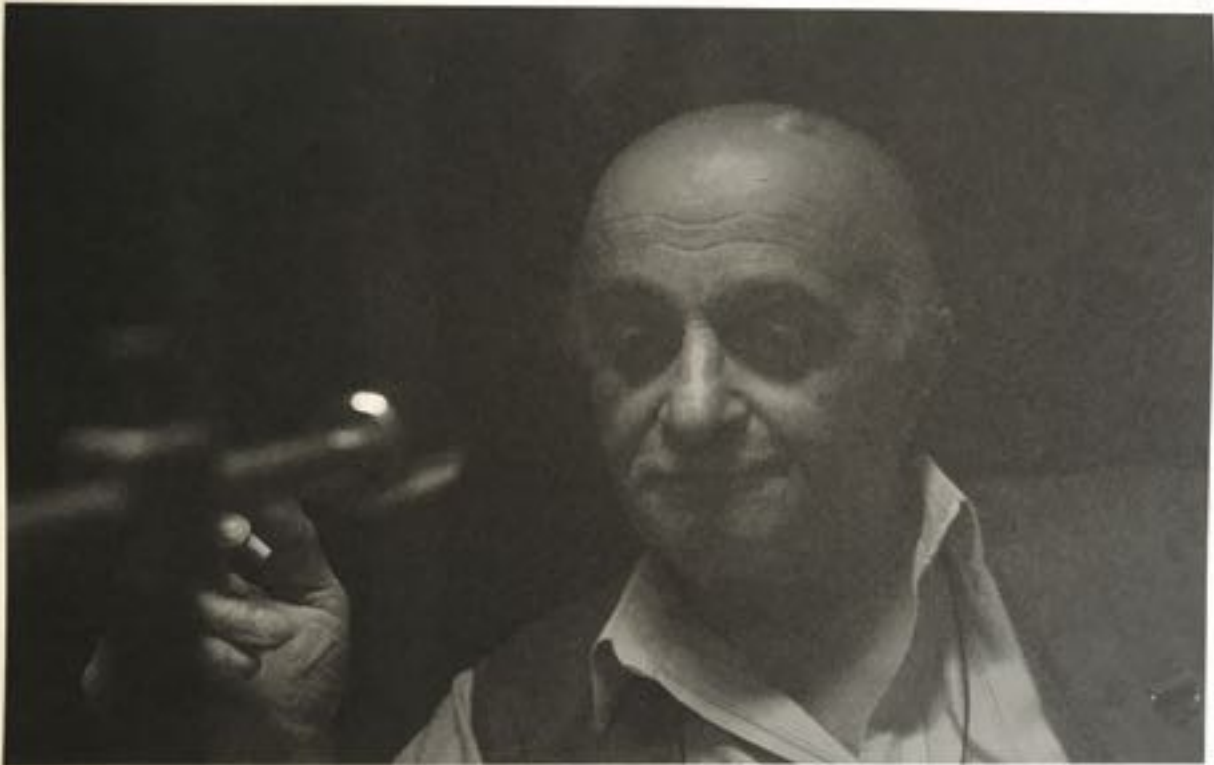
Pirmze

Upon entering the building, already at the entrance numerous workmen would ask where you were going and what you needed to repair. And unless you knew exactly who was your personal "fixer" they would direct you. It was as if your will was

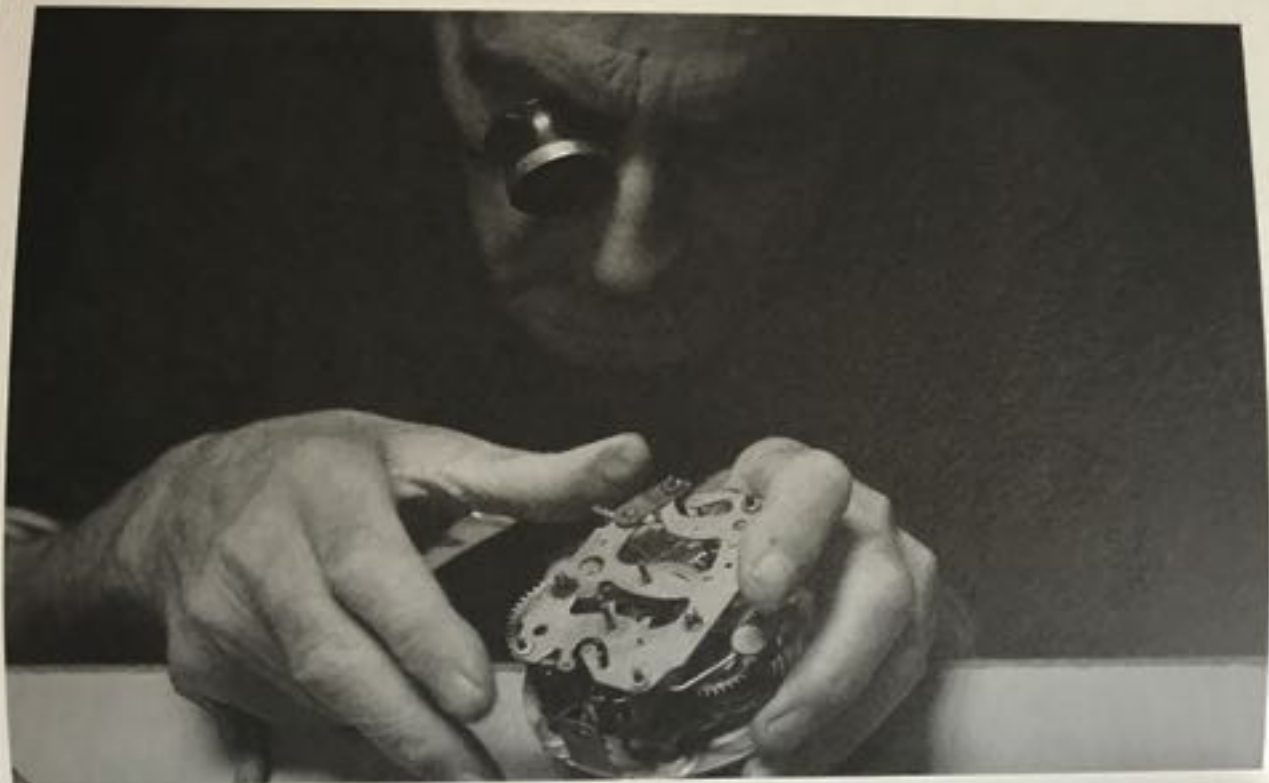
taken away the moment you entered the building and from there on you were not capable of making decisions on your own. It was not always pleasant to be there, but it was always lively, noisy and busy.

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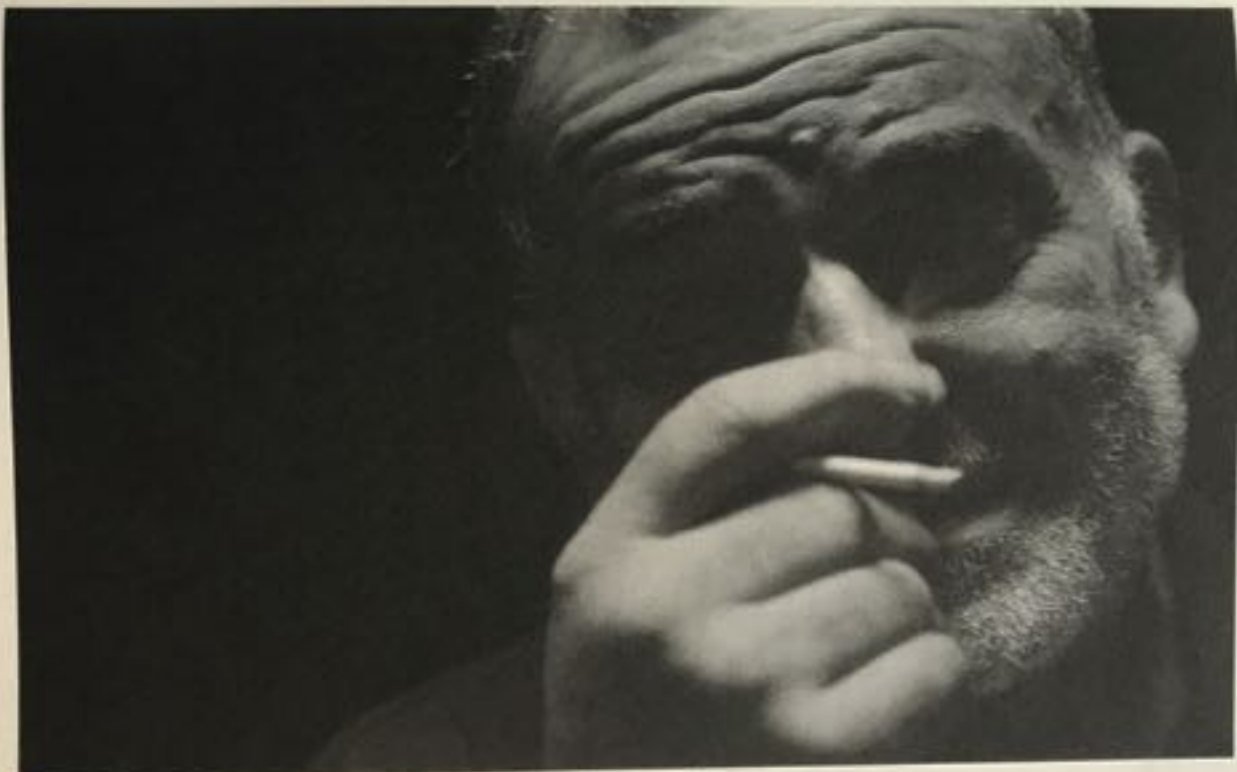


Button-maker Koki Beridze



Watch-maker Guram Megreladze

პირიზე



Suitcase-maker Sergo Sarajev

Epilogue:

Though a product of the Soviet era, Pirimze didn't exactly function according to its rules; people working there were entrepreneurs, handled money, bootlegged and worked according to the rules of market economy. In the '70s this luxuriously designed edifice served as an exemplary building, in the '80s it made an incredible amount of money and decayed in the '90s, when it operated in an improvised and shady way. Following the

independence of Georgia, the building turned into a shareholding entity but could not stay intact. Just as the Soviet Union collapsed and broke up into different countries, Pirimze "exploded" and smaller workshops with identical names sprung up in the surrounding neighborhood, where the "debris fell." Reconstructed to house a new business center, "Pirimze Plaza" now stands empty where the old building used to be, claiming the same name and fame the former Pirimze enjoyed in the past.