

COLLECTED FRAGMENTS ISABELLE VIGIER

Photographs, ongoing series, 2024

I can't recall when I started picking broken fragments of crockery from the dirt of the paths, on my walks throughout Europe, from Eastern Europe to Portugal and Iceland, and very often in France over the years. But I have been consistently keeping those modest treasures in glass jars in my studio over the years, until they started to make sense as a collection. I started the photographic series as an on-going project, as I keep collecting the fragments during my walks in remote places to this day.

During a long walk in the mountains or in a forest, a tiny flash of color will catch my eye, breaking from the monotony of the wet mud or the grey sand of the path, and I will break my stride to unearth a small fragment of pottery, maybe a piece from a broken cup or a saucer that will have me speculate: the fragment of smudged porcelain is so out of place in the middle of nowhere, how did it get here? and how long has it been buried before resurfacing for me to find it? Those small fragments of history are wonderful vessels for day dreaming as I continue walking, and as I take them away, on my way back home, to a domestic world where they once belonged.

Paths exist where people have the need to continue using them over time. They are the historical manifestations of an enduring relationship between their users and nature, which never stops growing if you let her. They have been maintained over time by their users, often a very small group of villagers, a family, who have mended them and taken care of them. In the small broken objects arising from the mud and the dust, I catch a glimpse of a patient relationship that has unfolded and has been passed from generation to generation.