

PRESS RELEASE
August 3, 2016
St Petersburg

EXPERIENCES OF THE IMAGINARY

Garage Museum of Contemporary Art at New Holland

Garage Museum of Contemporary Art and "New Holland: Cultural Urbanisation" have joined forces to present the group exhibition, "Experiences of the Imaginary," which showcases the works of recipients of Garage's grant program for the support of emerging Russian artists.

Building on its regional program, Garage will open its first exhibition on New Holland Island in St Petersburg. The exhibition runs from August 27 until September 25 in the park's temporary exhibition space, Pavilion.

Nine emerging Russian artists – Nikolai Alexeyev, Aslan Gaisumov, Yevgeny Granilshchikov, Ilya Dolgov, Anastasia Kuzmina, Kirill Makarov, Ivan Novikov, Alexandra Sukhareva, and Anna Titova – will give the audience a glimpse of their inner worlds, as they try to define the place of the artist in the contemporary world, through the prism of personal experience and inner feelings.

In the rapidly changing reality, the professional life of artists is bound up in an endless articulation and struggle for representation in virtual space. This is why curator Andrey Misiano decided to draw attention instead to the interior state of the artist and take a closer look at feelings, rather than the strictly analytic or formal elements of the artistic process. At first glance, this approach might seem conservative, taking us back to the classical perception of the artist as the lone genius, slaving away in the quiet of his studio. At times, it may seem like the art of the 20th century has given way to manifestos, political or social critique, or research projects. But despite these external changes, art remains as before, a holistic practice generating space for sensual encounters and the creation of empirical models of knowledge. In the selected works, the artists in this exhibition each consider the phenomenon of interaction between the outer environment and inner feelings.

This exhibition was organized by Garage of Contemporary Art

Curator: Andrey Misiano

Composer: Nina Karlsson

Exhibition Design: Lyubov Leontieva

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ABOUT THE WORKS PRESENTED IN “EXPERIENCES OF THE IMAGINARY”

For his series, *Encounters*, 2016, Nikolai Alexeyev seeks out the beauty in everyday life. From the general mass of objects and events, he picks out the most unexpected things and invests them with a certain symbolism: like for instance, a rickety old chair with a ribbon tied to it, or the patterns on ceramic tiles, quite ordinary and all pretty much alike, but also very dear to the hearts of those who remember these tiles from life in the Soviet Union.

The intensity in the life and labor of the artist in a rapidly changing world reflects in the work of Anastasia Kuzmina. Her multimedia installation, *Search Engine Malik* (2016), riffs on the search for one's place in a new city and the process of overcoming feelings of alienation.

Yevgeny Granilshchikov approaches the same topic of cities from a different perspective. His new work, *Untitled* (2016), a geometric architectural object made from transparent glass, pushes the hypothesis that memories and feelings constitute the substance that makes up the image of a city. In this case, you could say that the interior glass space is not empty, but rather just waiting for the events that will fill it with unique imagery.

Ivan Novikov turned his sights on St Petersburg – and New Holland Island in particular – for his work *Đà Nang, I Will Be Out in the Rain* (2016), which was specially created for this exhibition. The artist produces a series of historical and cultural parallels between the projects of Russia's pivot towards European modernity – the city and the island – and Đà Nang, one of the largest cities in Vietnam, whose traditional architecture started to see incursions of Western modernism during the 20th century.

Ilya Dolgov's interest lies in the natural world. He continues to develop his ongoing series, *Herbarium* (2012-), which explores interaction with the outside world, while also referring to the interior space of the artist. For Dolgov, the gathering of plants or jotting down observations on fauna is akin to a kind of meditation.

Anna Titova's work, *The Last Colony* (2016), questions the conditions of existence in a postglobal world. The configuration of the piece, which brings together five different shells, engenders a sensation similar to the feeling one gets from reading J.G. Ballard's novel, *The Drowned World*, which imagines the demise of civilization.

In his practice, Kirill Makarov conducts experiments that challenge the canons of painting. For instance, he studies the synthesis of screen printing and painting, or the underlying principles of computer modeling of the body. His piece, *Vortices in Sandboxes* (2016), bears witness to how advanced technology is still very human at its core, requiring communication with other people.

Aslan Gaisumov's latest work in his “Manuscripts” series, triptych *Untitled* (2016), touches on the merging of the object and its history, an analysis of sensations the memories associated with objects, and an attempt to comprehend what has been lost. By attempting to inscribe bits of reality within the museum, the artist is fixing them in the memory of a fleeting moment, beyond retrieval.

Work within the semantic field lies at the heart of Alexandra Sukhareva's ongoing series, *Bracket* (2012-), which has the artist leaving a small construction bracket (*Between Two Pleasures*, 2016) in the structure of different historical and architectural monuments. This spare, almost invisible gesture yields a particular choreography of meanings. Sukhareva “does not destroy the object and does not restore it”; all she does is slightly undermine its foundations, subjectively correcting the vision projected. For New Holland Island, Sukhareva has placed one of these brackets at the base of the big archway, which will be temporarily blocked from view until the reconstruction work is completed.

ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES:

Anastasia Kuzmina (b. 1989, Ulyanovsk) studied at the A. N. Kosygin Moscow State University of Textiles before graduating in 2014 from the Rodchenko School of Photography and New Media (where she was part of Sergey Bratkov's Photography, Sculpture and Video studio.) In her videos, installations and performances, she questions and reworks images of the everyday. Kuzmina has participated in group exhibitions across Russia and Europe. The artist lives and works in Moscow.

Nikolai Alexeyev (b. 1986, Voronezh) graduated from the Voronezh Art Academy. In 2011, he was nominated for an Innovation prize for Regional Project and in 2013, he was nominated for a Kandinsky Prize for Emerging Artist. Alexeyev works with found objects, forms, videos, imagery and history, accumulating various collections and using them to develop fictional fantasy narratives. Since 2008, he has organized exhibitions for young artists in Voronezh, helping to create and maintain the Voronezh Center for Contemporary Art. The artist lives and works in Voronezh.

Ivan Novikov (b. 1990, Moscow) graduated in 2014 from the Surikov State Art Institute in Moscow, where he specialized in painting. In 2015, he participated in the Baza Institute of Contemporary Art, at the studio of Dmitry Gutov. Novikov's works exist only within the frameworks of individual exhibition projects. Each piece specifically addresses an idea or concept, with a directed, objective study into the interaction between nature and culture serving as one of the major influences on Novikov's artistic process and techniques. The artist lives and works in Moscow.

Yevgeny Granilshchikov (b. 1985, Moscow) graduated in 2009 from the Institute of Journalism and Literature, where he specialized in photojournalism, before enrolling in the Rodchenko School of Photography and New Media in 2013, where he joined the studio of Igor Mukhin. Winner of the 2013 Kandinsky prize for Emerging Artist, Granilshchikov draws on various tricks and techniques of cinematography to create complex narratives, revolving around the artist and his generation. Deep contemplation, magic and charm of the city, youth and beauty are the frequent heroes of the films and photographs of Granilshchikov, who creates unique arrangements of his work for each new exhibition project. The artist lives and works between Moscow and St Petersburg.

Aslan Gaisumov (b. 1991, Grozny) studied at the Moscow College of Design in 2010, followed by the Institute of the Problems of Contemporary Art in 2012. A nominee for the 2012 Kandinsky prize for Emerging Artist, in his practice, Gaisumov explores how culture and cultural heritage come to be modified in conflict zones. In doing so, he raises the question as to how we define natural, geographic and cultural identity, in situations where each generation is raised in its own new conflict situation, rendering everything that came before obsolete. The artist currently lives and works between Moscow and Grozny.

Alexandra Sukhareva (b. 1983, Moscow) studied in Moscow at the Stroganov State University of Arts & Industry and the Institute for Problems of Contemporary Art, before continuing her studies at the Valand Academy in Göthenburg. Since 2008, she has worked in a studio not far from the Moscow suburb of Dubna, where the artist created all of her series from 2009 until the present, including the works presented at dOCUMENTA (13). What do we call art? And is there any reason for this distinction? When is it necessary and how does it alter situations? These are the main questions providing the semantic framework of Sukhareva's practice today. The artist lives and works between Moscow and its suburb.

Kirill Makarov (b. 1988, Leningrad) graduated in 2011 from the A.A. Stieglitz State University for Arts & Industry in St Petersburg. From 2013-2015, he worked in France at the art residency, *Abbaye de La Prée*. In his most recent works, Makarov applies computer modeling and visualization to meticulous observations of the daily life of the city, producing a study in the relationship between people and images in contemporary society, and the machines that produce them. The artist lives and works in St Petersburg.

Ilya Dolgov (b. 1984, Voronezh) studied psychology and philosophy at the Voronezh State University. He was named Emerging Artist of the Year at the 2012 Innovation Prize and was nominated for the Kandinsky Prize in 2013 and 2015. The central theme of Dolgov's work is the study of nature using the methods of naturalist and symbiotic phenomenologists. The results take the form of installations, graphic series, poetry and theory. The artist lives and works in Kronstadt.

Anna Titova (b. 1984, Ulan-Ude) trained at the Glasgow School of Art, the Institute of Contemporary Art in Moscow and the Valand Academy in Göthenburg. In 2011, the artist was included in "ILLUMInations," the main project of the 54th Venice Biennale. In 2014, together with Stas Shuripa, Titova founded the Agency of Singular Investigations (ASI), an independent platform for critical engagement with the defining issues around art and creative discourse. Her work employs a variety of media – from sculpture, video and photography to installation – to trace social and cultural symptoms at points of intersection between politics and aesthetics: among them, systems of surveillance and control, ideological constructions of space, forms of life and the technology of oppression. The artist lives and works in Moscow.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

GARAGE MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART is a place where people, ideas and art meet to create history.

Founded in 2008 by Daria Zhukova and Roman Abramovich, Garage Museum is the first philanthropic institution in Russia to create a comprehensive public mandate for contemporary art and culture. Providing opportunities for public dialogue and critical discourse as well as the production of new work and ideas, Garage's extensive program of exhibitions, events, education, research, and publishing reflects current developments in Russian and international culture. Central to these activities is Garage's collection, which is the only public archive in the country related to the development of Russian contemporary art from the 1950s through to the present..

Garage Museum first opened as Garage Center for Contemporary Culture, taking up residence in Moscow's famous Bakhmetevsky Bus Garage, designed by Constructivist architect Konstantin Melnikov (which is how the institution got its name.) In 2012, Garage moved to Gorky Park, where it settled into a temporary building created by renowned architect Shigeru Ban. A year later, Garage Museum's Education Center opened up alongside the temporary building. On May 1, 2014, Garage Center for Contemporary Culture upgraded its status to Garage Museum of Contemporary Art.

On June 12, 2015, Garage Museum launched its first permanent building in Gorky Park, settling into the former *Vremena Goda* ("Four Seasons") restaurant, a landmark of Soviet Modernism, built in 1968 and recently restored by Rem Koolhaas and OMA.

THE IRIS FOUNDATION was founded by Daria Zhukova in 2008, as a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting the understanding and development of contemporary culture. The Iris Foundation supports all of Garage's activities both in Russia and abroad.

EMERGING ARTISTS GRANTS

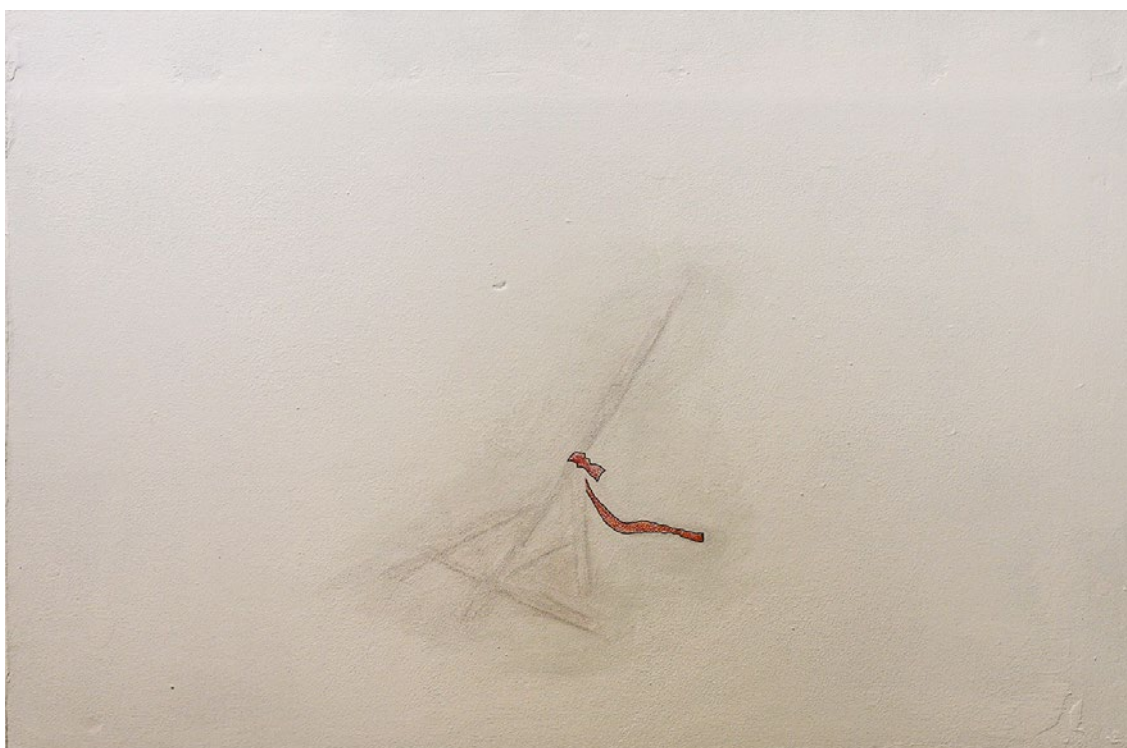
Currently the only program of its kind in the country, Garage Museum for Contemporary Art's grant program was launched in 2012 in order to create a support system for emerging Russian artists. Garage accepts applications from artists ages 18 to 35. The winners are selected by an expert jury of contemporary art specialists, and are then awarded a monthly fellowship of 30,000 rubles, for the course of one year. Offering emerging artists a period of financial independence, the program allows them to become more deeply engaged in their creative activities, to grow professionally, and to conduct research. Recipients are also invited to take part in Garage's exhibition and education programs.

NEW HOLLAND: CULTURAL URBANISATION

In 2010, Millhouse, LLC, won the tender for the restoration and renovation of New Holland Island. To help determine the concept and creative direction of the island's development, Millhouse turned to the Iris Foundation, a non-commercial initiative for the support and advancement of contemporary culture and art, launched by Daria Zhukova. This collaboration resulted in "New Holland: Cultural Urbanisation", a fresh approach to the restructuring and modernization of the territory, a monument of cultural and national historical significance. During the 9.5 months of the experimental summer programs on New Holland, the island received more than 700,000 visitors, of which 90% were residents of St Petersburg. Following the success of the seasonal programs, the project investors decided not to proceed with the original plan to clear the territory to construct a new building. Instead, they chose to organize a full-fledged city park, complete with a modern and convenient infrastructure, which each and every person could find his or her place. The island continues to host cultural programs as well as grand-scale civic initiatives. Future plans for the development of the territory include not only commercial enterprises, but also cultural and educational institutions, research laboratories, and exhibition spaces, whose programming will be overseen by emerging specialists. In August 2016, the first phase of the project launches. This includes the landscaping of park areas, featuring temporary pavilions along with a system of engineering solutions and networks necessary for the implementation of the project, as well as the public debut of the first restored buildings. Later on in 2016 and 2017, these buildings will be joined by *The Foundry*, *The Bottle* and *The Commandant's House*. For the very first time in the island's entire existence, the territory will be open to the public all year long, including the winter season.



Anastasia Kuzmina / *Search Engine Malik*, 2016 / Video still / Courtesy of the artist



Nikolai Alexeyev / *Encounters*, 2016 / Series of objects (plasterboard, acrylic, marker) / Courtesy of Gallery 21



Ilya Dolgov / *Herbarium*, 2012—present / Acrylic on paper 30 x 40 cm / Courtesy of the artist