HYBRIS
HYBRIDS AND MONSTERS
IN CONTEMPORARY ART
MULTIMEDIA EXHIBITION
VENICE
CFZ
CA’ FOSCARI ZATTERE
05.13–06.28’17

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The monster is the antipode of “one’s own” and “somebody else’s”. The subject of this project — Monsters — derives from monere, which means “to warn, to caution”, but also monumentum, “memories”, in other words, “to keep the memory alive”. The word monere, as it was noted, is connected to the concept of monster. From a theoretical point of view, the relationship between the monster and the hybrid further to a great extent the emergence of the dichotomy monere, which means “to warn, to caution”, but also monumentum, “memories”, in other words, “to keep the memory alive”. The word monere, as it was noted, is connected to the concept of monster. From a theoretical point of view, the relationship between the monster and the hybrid further to a great extent the emergence of the dichotomy between “one’s own” and “somebody else’s”: the subject that, also delineated as “one’s own”/“other’s” or “we”/“you”, is an object of memory. The art invites to hybridize with the body that has permeated all the contemporary art of the 20th and 21st centuries. FAM (Francesca Alfano Miglietti) talks about a “transhuman”, characterized by the overcoming of limitations that used to be considered fundamental in the concept of hybridity that have become the objects of absorption of the otherness. The reflection or Yuri Lotman are fundamental for the understanding of the concept of monster. It was mentioned earlier, from the perspective of its key concepts. The most significant of them is the concept of “dialogue” (the possibility of a dialogue between different semiotic systems) that is understood as the basis for dynamics of semiotic mechanisms. The importance of a dialogue with the Other in the process of production of the meaning is already revealed at the stage of transformation of different technologies. As a consequence, there is an obvious urgency to change the identity of the art, as a consequence, there is an obvious urgency to change the identity of the art. The concept of hybrid is certainly connected to the concept of monster. The image of monster is significantly more indistinct. From the theoretical point of view, the monster and the hybrid further to a great extent the emergence of the dichotomy between “one’s own” and “somebody else’s”. In fact, the conceptual framework of the monster is characterized by the overcoming of limitations that used to be considered fundamental in the concept of hybridity that have become the objects of absorption of the otherness. In the West, the ideological association of the hybrid with the monster is not so taken for granted as it might appear. Over the centuries, it was primarily popular masses that tackled the image of hybrid and its understanding of the Other, while the depiction by the masked participants of European images whose images and costumes represent hybridizing the humanity with manifestations of the natural world, animals and plants. As for representations of the enigmatic classes, they found in the hybrid and in its metaphors a certain potential on a potential antagion to the model of learning by way of experimental method. An anthropomorphic body with the image of hybrid is a dynamic model, and the monster, as a cultural being, needs a dynamic model to adapt to the present chaos. Donna Haraway defines the concept of hyperbody as a “model of interaction of multiple and mutating information codes — from the genetic code to that of the informatics.”
Back in 1964, in a book that immediately prompted vigorous debate (Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man), Marshall McLuhan concluded the chapter "Hybrid Energy: Les Liaisons Dangereuses" with a singular, if not provocative, definition of hybridity. He observed how the direct encounter between two media, and their subsequent hybridisation, is a dynamic that sparks an authentic moment of truth and revelation, from which a new form cannot but emerge. Over fifty years later, we can now frame McLuhan’s emphasis in the broader context of what we have known since the late ‘80s as the pictorial or visual turn. Many other scholars, from David Freedberg to Tom Mitchell and Gottfried Boehm, have added important contributions of their own. In the essay Four fundamental concepts of image science (2007), Mitchell in particular notes that every pictorial turn is a remarkable opportunity for artists and their audience. It “reappears numerous times in the history of culture, usually at moments when some new technology of reproduction, or some set of images associated with new social, political, or aesthetic movements has arrived on the scene. The dilation of the instruments of expression, the explosion of combinatorial possibilities and an ever-denser interweaving of mutual borrowings opens up new opportunities and new forms, resulting in new subjects and new forms of consumption.”

In this vein, the exhibition “Hybris. Hybrids and Monsters in Contemporary Art” surveys and sequences a series of works and groups of works by 19 artists from 7 countries, from different cultural contexts and historical periods. (The oldest works date back at least 40 years.) Linking all of them is a shared quest to explore one of the most challenging themes cutting across our contemporary world: the complex relationship between identity and alterity. Beginning with the Biennale organised by Iain Clair, “Identity and alterity: figures of the body 1895–1995,” later artistic explorations set out their objectives more precisely. Thus, representing the body gave way, in a post-human perspective, to manipulating it. The intercultural debate turned into the need for an encounter – indeed, a clash – with that which is not part of human civilisation: the inanimate, the inorganic, the animal, the monster, and pervasive and invasive technologies. In just a decade or so, the body became a surface bearing layers of changing information codes (from genetics to informatics), acquiring a mutating morphology that blended and blurred them.

The exhibition’s three parts – “Hybrid spaces”, “I—the other, the hybrid, the monster” and “Metamorphoses and metaphors” – at least hint at the complexity of this problem, and visitors will see that they fit together into a single discourse. The terms used suggest very clearly that the artists’ individual paths (even though these are people from different generations) and the signs they produced are a mix of different times and even far-off eras. Ultimately, the obsession with monsters/hybrids has pervaded our civilisation ever since it first appeared.

Inevitably, the artists include a strong Russian contingent. In its general thinking on the relationship between identity and alterity, the West has paid scant attention to the explorations by Russian artists. Yet one of the goals – and perhaps the merits – of this survey, despite its modest size, is precisely its appreciation of a journey with such deep, distant roots.

Silvia Burini
Professor of Russian Art History and Contemporary Art History at Ca’ Foscari University of Venice. Director of the Centre of Studies of Russian Art (CSAR)

Giuseppe Barbieri
Professor of Modern Art History at Ca’ Foscari University of Venice
**MUTATOR**

Generative video, 2015
Generated by “Mutator” software. Software development: Stephen Todd, Lance Putnam

“Mutator” shows synthetic 3D organic forms evolving as projected computer animation and in real time in VR. The viewer is navigating through a vast multidimensional space of possible forms.

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**UNTITLED**

Video triptych, 2010–2017

Video investigation of everyday things, their reflections, distortions, transformations.

“Lamps swinging in the wind, throwing red eyes in a puddle... foam cocktail structure... magic movement of car’s internal mechanism displayed in showroom... surface’s secrets. No special effects: a closer shot. It is not a fictional world. There is a diversion of the world. The motion combines organic and nonorganic worlds. Movement forms are deformed by sound. The association is between the contrast image-sound. We are taken away by the time, the speed and the rhythm” (Viktor Mazin).

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William Latham

Natalia Lyakh
TRIPTYCHS
photos, slideshow on three screens, 2007–2017
Supported by CYLAND Media Art Lab

The triptych form originated in the early Christian art, and it was a popular format for religious paintings in the Middle Ages. The middle part contained the main subject, and the wings were a compositional complement, though they too could be viewed as a separate work. In the early 20th century, a threefold polyptych inspired Kazimir Malevich. Originally, his “Black Square” was called “Tetragon”, and it was a component of the triptych, together with “Black Circle” and “Black Cross”. Alexandre Benois noted: “Undoubtedly, this is indeed the icon which Messieurs Futurists prefer to Madonnas and impudent Venuses”. A hundred years after the advent of “Black Square”, Alexander Terebenin has created a minimalist and abstract triptych, using the pictorial geometry of vanishing scenery. The squares, rectangles, crosses, “spied on” by a camera, are written into the three-part format. Traces of life of the previous generations turn into secret signs and sacral symbols.

UNTITLED LANDSCAPE #5
video, 2014

“Untitled Landscape #5” faces catastrophe, like the rest of the video series. The violent transformation wipes out any illusion of safety. Houses, gardens, basins, swimming pools: everything that was made to protect human life gives up, suffering its own opposite. Infiltrations, rocks and floods creep into the furnished rooms. Revolting creatures replace the statues in the garden. The polished marble of the sculptures is covered by shapeless rocks. Uncontrollable plants come out of the ground and crumble the bottom of the swimming pool. A tranquil telescope turns into a bullet, the glance is a punch that beheads all it sees. A barbarian power invades, disintegrates, mocks. The eyes can only look through layers of incisions, the sky has turned into a shutter of cuts that falls on its own image. If knowledge and experience want to remain reliable, they will necessarily have to take the view of the catastrophe.
The project "Studio. Waiting" is a large-format canvas with an attached device that allows the viewer to see the story anew and to refresh the image without the intrusion of one art form into another. This is an attempt to demonstrate both independence and coexistence of the traditional form — painting — and the newest means of augmented reality. The project investigates game theory (including a game with an absent character) in its contemporary, virtual-psychological aspect. The picture is separated from the device; nothing is projected onto it. It serves just as a switch-on point, a pretext to expand the boundaries imposed by the bored glance of a visitor to the exhibition. The painting and the program live and work together, much like people coexist on networks. This peculiar symbiosis allows one to bring technology to a discussion of the same questions that are posed by classical art.

The series of pictures "Geometry of Classics" is conceived by the authors as part of the investigation of patterns of plastic configuration of images in the classic art. A projection of topological space of the unilateral surface of "Moebius Strip" on famous paintings of the Renaissance demonstrates that many compositions of the old masters are structured in accordance with its crisp geometry. By creating a plastic hybrid of painting and topology, the artists suggest that the viewer return to the ancient view of the world, in which mathematics and art were capable of describing the entire Universe.
EXPLOSION OF A CAN OF CONDENSED MILK AFTER THE WATER HAS EVAPORATED

media installation, version № 3, 2016
Supported by CYLAND Media Art Lab

Conceptually referencing a computer grid and visually reflecting the infrastructure of a building without walls, Anna Frants builds an open framework room. Comprised of raw polypropylene cubes, the exposed framework houses objects, videos, and movements. The interior (unlived-in lived-in) space is empty for viewers to navigate the visuals, sounds, words, and virtual actions of the exterior matrix and formulate their own story. Birds chirp, recorded faces communicate, playful toys whirl and flow — each with brand names that they are sold as or known by as characters in Frants’ theatrically staged work and beyond. At first glance reminiscent of “The End” or “Mad Max”, this multimedia environment is less a scene from a dismal future and more an intimate setting presented for a poetic contemplation of the sense of self. The installation is flexible, varying from site to site and country to country, with local materials utilized each time.
A SUBJECT SELF-DEFINED

video, 2015–2017

Carla Gannis’s collection of large-format looped moving images takes its title from Joseph Kosuth’s 1966 neon sculpture that is eponymously titled “A Subject Self Defined”. Kosuth belonged to a group of artists involved in stripping down the art object, reducing it to ideas and information that were detached from personal meaning. Fifty-one years later, in the age of networked identity and digital dematerialization, Gannis is perplexed by subjecthood and self-definition in relationship to the “personal” when performed publicly.

OBSERVATION POST

installation, 2015
Supported by CYLAND Media Art Lab

The rapidly deployed booth is constructed out of a thick protective quilted jacket. Each booth has two pairs of sleeves to choose from. An observer could: a) try to reach the hands of another observer from a different booth; b) use the sleeves as a strait jacket. Each post is equipped with a voice servicing the observer. Periodically, the voices whisper a program of international monitoring: peace... pax... pace... мир... paix... Frieden... etc.
It’s 1915. Modernism, which reigned in art in the late 19th and early 20th century, reaches its apogee. Pioneers of abstraction are consciously solving the problem of the crisis of artistic image. The desire to reproduce the unreproducible and to reflect a higher reality was, in fact, what brought forth images of Suprematism. Abstract art, which has been trying to cleanse itself from all visual allusions and to rid itself of any illustrativity in relation to the reality, presents to the world Malevich’s “Black Square” — “the great nothing”...

The black monolith is externalization. It is the process by which the “internal OBJECT” is projected at a certain object in the outside world. It is a different person that becomes this object. Furthermore, upon superimposition, the projection brings forth something that is doubled by the mutual action of each protagonist. And what if this “something” is our internal monster or a new creation — a hybrid to which one needs to get accustomed and which needs to be tamed.

In the installation “Pastorale” copies of a porcelain shepherdess produced by a 3D printer are arranged on a screen that reproduces a video imitating a flowery meadow. The sound is a compilation of the music of Jean-Baptiste Lully and the chirping of “electronic birds”. If a traditionally understood pastorale is the peaceful bucolic scene lit by bright sunlight, the digital pastorale is a digitized world behind the looking-glass that represents what is absent in reality, the reflection’s reflection. Instead of sunshine flooding idyllic landscapes, the digital spaces glimmer with the cold silver of the Moon — the reflected light of the Sun. The pastoral music of Lully appeases the spectator who sees a multitude of absolutely identical “shepherdesses” dancing on the grass that is breaking up into pixels. The birds’ chirping creates the atmosphere of a joyful sunny day and invites us into this new digital world which dazzles us with its beauty, goodwill and absence of boarders.

Alexandra Dementieva
Ludmila Belova
The screenplay was written as a self-deprecating story that traced the origins of the “Bicapo” mystery play, with which Vinogradov has been involved since 1984. The plot calls for the cross-breeding of a man (the director of a metallurgical factory serves as a sperm donor) and an ape resulting in the creation of a biorobot with enhanced physical endurance for the manual transport of heavy things at a metallurgical factory. While transporting metal ingots, the hero-biorobot starts listening to the sounds of metal, escapes from the factory and starts creating his own music using new metal music instruments that he invents, and when he performs in mystery plays for the public, he interconnects all the primary elements: fire, water, air, earth and metal. The society rudely intrudes into the hero’s new life and brings him back to his former work at the factory. The hero breaks down under the workload and dies. He is thrown out to the scrap yard where he used to gather the material for creation of his instruments.

Simulated wings are immersed in tubs filled with black paint and they flap, bringing to mind birds soiled by oil spills at sea. The work refers to the subject of Icarus: the aspiration towards beautiful ideas followed by a fall into the depths of crap. On the other hand, the wings function as the giant brushes of an artist. The customary artisanal world of a creator can also be interpreted as an endless immersion in light and darkness.
In his work “Vigilance”, from the “Campfire Tales” series, Patchen mounts a deer head covered in code on a circuit board that incorporates 3D printing and e-waste. The piece references the human trophy-taking impulse as it combines the natural and digital worlds ultimately calling into question our own behavior, consumption and its impact on the planet. Reflecting the wariness of an endangered animal, the antlers/television antenna is a functioning theremin that fills the space with static at varying pitches when the viewer is near. The binary code, a snippet of the Stux virus, textures the beast while its meter/eye measures the environment in vain.
DEATH GRIP OF LIFE
kinetic object, 2013–2015
Engineers: Aleksey Grachev, Sergey Komarov. Supported by CYLAND Media Art Lab

The entire object is an enlarged copy of the household flytrap. The sticky sweet ribbon, in the artists’ ironic version, is a metaphor of life. People “stuck on” power, ideas and principles, sensual lust, love, time and space the way flies get stuck at the honey bait. Having come close, the viewer falls within the area of coverage of sensors. The entire construction comes into motion and starts vibrating and humming as if an insect had alit on it. The resonant and heart-rending sounds of a panicked desire of breaking loose leaves no hope for a happy end. In this grotesque form, the authors remind the viewer once again of the pernicious nature of human passions, dogmatic ideas and desires.

CROSS
oil on canvas, 1999–2000

“As an artist, I am attracted not to empiric existence, psychology, morals or societal issues, but by the sense of transcendental that is behind all that. A power is also the hatred of everything profane in oneself. I think that, through the works, one gets the feeling of belonging to supreme invariable origins. If this pans out — the artist is happy... Colors and shapes are the protagonists in my works. One could dedicate entire cycles of paintings to the joy one derives from a single color — from its capacities. The important thing, the thing that moves it all, is energy. The energy that fills life in all its shapes and manifestations” (Valentina Povarova).
Eugene Yufit, father of the Necrorealism movement, was finishing gluing together his film “Silver Heads” when Boris Kazakov ran into him in an editing room in St. Petersburg. Yufit allowed Kazakov to take away those clippings of the film positive that ended up on the editing-room floor. So the artist brought to Moscow a trunk full of film footage. He did some reviewing, selecting, adding and additional drawing, which resulted in a short spin-off film.

The work stands on the axis between the myth of basilisk, “king of serpents”, whose gaze turned everything to stone, and the play “Arden of Faversham” by an anonymous Elizabethan author, in which the protagonist Alice and her lover paid Clarke, a painter who was an expert in mixing venom into oil painting, to create a portrait that would be hung in her husband’s room and kill him at first glance. Art gives a different meaning and other points of view to a basilisk that petrifies with a gaze, and perhaps by looking and staring at art in excess we are risking poisoning it.
In 1992, the group of artists “Tut-i-Tam” (“Here-and-There”), former students and graduates of the Leningrad Academy of Arts Alexei Kostroma, Ivan Govorkov, Elena Gubanova and their friends, organized the action “Garden of Malevich”. The chief idea was to sow the seeds of new art in the very heart of an orthodox art institution during the new time of nascent democracy in Russia. In May the artists dug a black square in the round courtyard of the Academy of Arts and sowed some carrot seeds. In November they dug up the carrots. Then they walked over the Palace Bridge with 3-meter sculptures of the carrot, having crossed the Neva as a symbolic Rubicon of time. (This action was a remake of the futurist manifestation of Morgunov-Malevich on February 8, 1914, in Moscow.) The final action was eating the carrots at the exhibition-installation at the Russian Ethnographic Museum as an act of destruction of the “Black Square” itself.

To dig up the round courtyard of the orthodox Academy of Arts with the Black Square of Suprematism, to plant it with seeds and wait until the form, germinating in a plane, is born and is eaten in real life.

Ivan Govorkov, 1992

The introvert nature of “Black Square”, its inaccessibility for the uninitiated, serves as a constant irritant and a disturber of peace and, after the consumption of its fruit, turns into a quite accessible and ordinary image. In reality, there is a qualitative and quantitative change of the square that demonstrates parallels of creative and biological processes whose approximation we dare to declare here. In 1915 in Petrograd, in the first quarter of the 20th century, the great Master published with his “Black Square” the final result of his long digestion of Russian and Western Art. But does the final result exist? And isn’t the final result just a new beginning?

Alexei Kostroma, 1992

GARDEN OF MALEVICH
introspective action, 1992
reconstruction, 2017
Valentina Povarova

Povarova was born in 1933 in Leningrad, USSR. In 1946, she graduated from the Repin Institute of Painting, Sculpture and Architecture (Department of Painting). She taught the course of color science at the Mikhail Shchusev Higher School of Art and Design. The artist Valentina Povarova has traveled a remarkable creative path. Having started with the academic studies of nature, she came to the dead-end track of official art. The acquaintance with the traditions of Russian avant-garde of the early 20th century opened for the artist new possibilities in her creative work. Matters of form-making, color and plastic structure of artworks excited Povarova and made her look for her own visual metaphor of the world.

The work testifies to the enduring value of pictorial origins. Valentina Povarova wrote: “The creative vision of an artist is not the reflection of visible elements, but the “order” that emerges in the paintings down to the visible colors of spectrum – turns us to the spiritual power of Old Russian art. The artist said: “My last works are first and foremost about the color works are first and foremost about the color red that I have always loved. In fact, the main triad of colors – red, blue, yellow – holds colossal painterly possibilities. I do not treat the form and the content separately, believing this to be nonsense. I experience a purely artistic inclination to red or blue – you know, after all, both the icon-painting and the entire ancient art are built practically wholly on these forces”. The artist’s talent fuses together the traditions of Russian art in a broad timeframe. But, at the same time, an artist always belongs to his or her time being a part of the living art process. In this sense, the art of Valentina Povarova, against the background of all-European crisis of the turn of the century (“twilight of the gods” and “falling idols”) remains a genuine art phenomenon ruled by the “dynamic equilibrium” between Eternity and Time.

Nana Zhvitiashvili

Works by Povarova are in the collections of Russian Museum (St. Petersburg, Russia), Arkhangelsk Museum of Fine Arts (Russia), “Tsarskoye Selo Collection” (Pushkin, Russia) and others.

Selected exhibitions

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Oil, canvas, 60 x 50 cm

1994  "Malevich: To and Fro", St. Petersburg, Russia

Selected exhibitions

1997  Solo Exhibition as part of the international conference “Russian Science, Art, Politics”, Madrid, Spain
1998  "Malevich: To and From", St. Petersburg, Russia
1999  “In the Wake of Avant-Garde”, Lodz, Poland


1994  "Malevich: To and From", St. Petersburg, Russia
1999  “In the Wake of Avant-Garde”, Lodz, Poland

Oil, canvas, 33.5 x 59 cm

1993  “Russian May”, Ghent, Belgium
1995  "Kandinsky and Artists of His Circle", St. Petersburg, Russia
1996  "Post-Georgian: Contemporary Art of St. Petersburg", from Chudnovsky Family Collection, West Lafayette, Indiana, USA
1997  "From Non-Official Art to Perestroika", Los Angeles, USA
1999-2000  "Malevich. UNOVIS" International Open Air Exhibition
1999  "Art in a broad timeframe. But, at the same time, an artist always belongs to his or her time being a part of the living art process. In this sense, the art of Valentina Povarova, against the background of all-European crisis of the turn of the century (“twilight of the gods” and “falling idols”) remains a genuine art phenomenon ruled by the “dynamic equilibrium” between Eternity and Time.

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Oil, canvas, 60 x 50 cm

1994  "Malevich: To and From", St. Petersburg, Russia
1999  “In the Wake of Avant-Garde”, Lodz, Poland

Oil, canvas, 33.5 x 59 cm
V. Povarova
From the Cycle
ENERGY
oil, canvas, 68 x 54 cm
1998

V. Povarova
CROSS IV
oil, fiberboard, 62 x 70 cm
2000

V. Povarova
From the Series CROSSES
oil, canvas, 65 x 82 cm
2000

V. Povarova
WEIGHTLESSNESS
oil, canvas, 57 x 52 cm
2000

V. Povarova
From the Series CROSSES
oil, canvas, 63 x 68 cm
2003

V. Povarova
From the Cycle
COSMOGONY — CROSS III
oil, canvas, 65 x 60 cm
2001–2003

V. Povarova
From the Series
CROSSES
oil, canvas, 65 x 63 cm
2000

V. Povarova
From the Cycle
COSMOGONY — CROSS
oil, fiberboard 71 x 62 cm
2001–2003

V. Povarova
From the Cycle
COSMOGONY — CROSS
oil, canvas, 62 x 62 cm
2001–2003

V. Povarova
RED TRIANGLE. SPACE
oil, cardboard, 60 x 60 cm
1999–2000

V. Povarova
From the Series
CROSSES
oil, canvas, 60 x 60 cm
2003

From the collection of the Frants family
Giuseppe Barbieri (Italy)

Art historian, curator. Professor of Modern Art History at Ca Foscari University (Venice, Italy), where he was the head of the Department of Art History and Conservation of the Cultural Heritage “G. Mazzariol” from 2008 to 2010. Member of the scientific committee of the International Centre for Contemporary Art of Punta della Dogana. He has authored and curated more than 40 books and organized numerous exhibitions in Venice, Vicenza, Milan (Italy) and Madrid (Spain). His expertise in art history is testified by numerous monographs, countless essays and hundreds of articles, mostly on Renaissance treatments, the history of architecture and urbanism in the modern age, some important issues on Renaissance iconography, as well as on the enhancement of the artistic and cultural heritage. He has also worked on more contemporary figures and contexts. More recently, he coordinated several initiatives and collaborations between Ca Foscari and the main Venetian institutions in the field of contemporary art: Palazzo Grassi, Punta della Dogana, Stampalia, and Fondazione Biennale di Venezia.

Ludmila Belova (Russia)

Artist, curator. Born in 1960 on the Kamchatka Peninsula, USSR. Graduated from the Abramtsevo Art and Industry School (Moscow Region, USSR). She works with video, sound, painting, photography. Investigates the issues of memory, space and time; studies the impact of new technologies on the human being in art practices; makes the viewer a participant of the art process through interactivity. Works of Ludmila Belova have been exhibited in Europe, USA, Russia and Asia. Participant of the Moscow Biennale of Contemporary Art (Russia, 2005, 2011), exhibitions parallel to Venice Biennale (Italy, 2011, 2015), parallel program of the Manifesta 10 Biennale (St. Petersburg, Russia, 2012). Winner of the prize “10 Bestem” ZHM (Karlsruhe, Germany, 2005), nominated for Sergei Kupchik Award (Russia, 2012, 2015). Her works are in the collections of the Russian Museum (St. Petersburg, Russia), Ama Akhtamatova Museum (St. Petersburg, Russia), Erata Museum (St. Petersburg, Russia), Kolosov Art Foundation (New York, USA), in private collections in Switzerland, Germany and Russia. Lives and works in St. Petersburg, Russia. www.ludmilabelova.com

Abuse Bittente (Italy)

Artist. Born in 1973 in Venice, Italy. Graduated from the Academy of Fine Arts in Venice, Italy, with a thesis that explored the role of design in contemporary art. Participated in numerous group and solo exhibitions. His science-fiction story “I 600 Spazi Inclusi” was published in 2012 and then became a reading performance in 2015. He created the installation “A Time out of Joint” for the Cyfest Festival held in St. Petersburg (Russia) and other cities all over the world. She has curated several exhibitions of Russian art, and organized screenings of Russian films. She is currently involved in researches about Socialist Realism in art, and the Moscow underground in the Sixties. Lives and works in Venice, Italy.

Silvia Burini (Italy)

Artist. Curator of contemporary art. Born in 1966 in Bergamo, Italy. Graduated from the University of Bergamo, Italy, with a thesis in Russian Art History and earned her PhD in Comparative Slavic Culture from the University of Milan, Italy. She pursued postdoctoral specialization at the University of Genova, Italy. She further specialized in semiotics and history of art in Turin (Italy). Recent and ongoing projects are mainly in Europe and St. Petersburg (Russia). Professor of Russian Art History and Russian Cultural History at Ca Foscari University (Venice, Italy). Director of the Centre for the Studies of Russian Arts (CSAR) at the same university. Honorary Member of the Russian Academy of Arts since 2014. Member of board of the Cyfest Festival held in St. Petersburg (Russia) and other cities all over the world. The artist’s works are in the collections of the Russian Museum (St. Petersburg, Russia), Russian Art Foundation (St. Petersburg, Russia), and Kolosov Art Foundation (New York, USA) as well as in numerous private collections. Lives and works in New York, USA, and St. Petersburg, Russia.

Anna Frants (Russia-USA)

Artist, curator in the field of media art. Born in 1965 in Leningrad, USSR. She graduated from the Vera Mukhina Higher School of Art and Design (Leningrad, USSR) and Pratt Institute (New York, USA), with a thesis that explored the role of design in contemporary art. Participated in numerous exhibitions both nationally and internationally. Currently she is a professor and assistant chairperson of the Department of Digital Arts at Pratt Institute (New York, USA), Lives and works in Brooklyn, New York, USA.

Carla Canevi (USA)

Artist. Born in 1973 in North Carolina, USA. She received a BFA in painting from the University of North Carolina Greensboro, USA and a MFA in painting from Boston University (USA) in the late 1990s she began to incorporate digital technologies into her work. She narrates through a “digital looking glass” where reflections on power, sexuality, marginalization, and agency often emerge. She is fascinated by contemporary modes of digital communication, the power (and sometimes the pervertity of popular iconography, and the situation of identity in the blurring contexts of technological virtuosity and biological reality. Since 2003 Gannis’s work has appeared in 20 solo exhibitions and numerous group exhibitions both nationally and internationally. Currently she is a professor and assistant chairperson of the Department of Digital Arts at Pratt Institute (New York, USA), Lives and works in New York, USA.

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Ivan Govorkov (Russia) Artist, filmmaker. Born in 1964 in Leningrad, USSR. Lives and works in St. Petersburg, Russia.

Elena Gubanova (Russia) Artist, writer. Travels and lives in Moscow, Russia.


Boris Kazakov (Russia) Artist, computer scientist. Lives and works in St. Petersburg, Russia.

William Latham (UK) Artist. Born in 1961 in the UK. Originally trained as an artist at the Oxford University and the Royal College of Art (London, UK). Well known for his evolutionary art created from 1987 to 1995 whilst a Research Fellow at the IBM Scientific Centre in Winchester. His pioneering organic art based on the concept of "evolution by aesthetics" was shown widely in major touring shows in the UK, Germany and Japan in the 1990s. From 1993 to 2003 he worked in rave music and computer games development working with Universal, Sony SCE and Warner Bros. In 2007 Latham became Professor of Computer Art at Goldsmiths (University of London, UK) and returned to his artistic origins and instated his long term collaboration with mathematician Stephen Todd. Since 2017, he has worked extensively in VR developing “Mutation VR” Lives and works in London, UK
Natalia Lyakh (France)
Artist. Born in St. Petersburg, Russia, from her early childhood Natalia was passionate about painting, sculpture and photography. Later on, she developed a strong interest in science and got her Ph.D. in Neurolinguistics on the subject of Brain Asymmetry and Speech Processing. Several years of a scientific career were not, however, a hindrance to her artistic development as she continued to experiment with photography and got involved in video art. Since 2000, Natalia has worked in Paris, France.

Irina Nakhova (Russia-USA)
Artist. Born in 1955 in Moscow, USSR. Graduated from the Moscow Polygraphic Institute (USSR). Early member of what came to be known as the school of Moscow Conceptualism. Pionner of the genre of total installation in Soviet underground art. Nakhova concurrently works with painting and installation, the most vivid of which employs the lens of a microscope, the prism of binoculars, the telescope or kaleidoscope. She currently lives and works in Moscow, Russia, and in the USA.

Peter Patchen (USA)
Artist, art educator. Born in the USA. He grew up in Colorado where the natural environment had a profound influence on his perception of the relationships that exist between nature, humanity, culture and technology. Earned a MFA from the University of Oregon (Eugene, Oregon, USA). In 2015, he was the Kenndy Prize (Russia) in the category “Project of the Year” for “Untitled”, an installation that uses painting and video art, short ﬂm and video installations, working in Paris, Stockholm, Istanbul, Hilan, Rome, New York and London and participating in various art shows and festivals. Influenced by her former neurolinguistics research, she invites us to discover the magic dimensions and abstractions, hidden in her own personal archive. Since 1989, her work has been exhibited throughout Europe and in many private collections. Lives and works in St. Petersburg, Russia.

Valentina Povarova (Russia)
Artist. Born in 1933 in Leningrad, USSR. Graduated from the Ilya Repin State Academy Institute of Painting, Sculpture and Architecture (Leningrad, USSR). She participated in the so-called “apartment exhibitions”. Her works are in the collections of the Russian Museum (St. Petersburg, Russia) and in various public collections, such as the Russian Museum (St. Petersburg, Russia) and Museum of Modern Art (Russia), and in many private collections. Lives and works in St. Petersburg, Russia.

Alexander Shishkin-Hokusai (Russia)
Artist. Born in 1969 in Leningrad, USSR. Graduated from the Leningrad Institute of Theatre, Music and Cinematography. He has worked as a theatre artist since 1995; collaborates with such directors as Yury Butusov, Andrey Moguchy, Adolf Shapiro. As a scenographer and costume designer, he worked in theatres in Russia, Norway, Poland, Bulgaria, South Korea, China. A repeated winner of the theatre award “Golden Mask” (Russia). Since 2001, a member of the artists’ union PARAZIT. Since 2014, a participant in the projects of CYLAND Media Art Lab. Lives and works in St. Petersburg, Russia.
Alexander Terebenin (Russia)
Photographer, artist, curator. Born in 1959 in Leningrad, USSR. Graduated from the Architectural College in Leningrad. A professional photographer, Terebenin also creates art objects and installations. He is a participant of over 70 exhibitions in Russia and abroad. His works are in the collections of the Museum of the History of St. Petersburg (Russia), Kolodzei Art Foundation (New York, USA), as well as in galleries and private collections in Russia, USA, Israel, Germany and Finland. He is the curator of the art projects “Conversion” (Russia, 2012) and “Signs” (St. Petersburg, Russia, 2014). He won the Innovation Prize (Russia) for the best curatorial project of 2014 (in collaboration with Peter Belyi). Lives and works in St. Petersburg, Russia.

Lucia Veronesi (Italy)
Artist. Born in 1976 in Mantua, Italy. Graduated from the Academy of Fine Arts of Brera (Milan, Italy). Veronesi is interested in landscape and its transformation. The core of her research is uninhabitable and dysfunctional space caused by the volume of whatever was used and experienced. Hence, the inhabitable domestic space turns into a sort of wild landscape and in fact, by interacting with the natural external landscape, it is invaded and absorbed. Her videos were selected for several festivals including the Torino Film Festival (Turin, Italy), Oblique Festival (Lisbon, Portugal), Oodaaq Festival (Rennes, France), Montreal Underground Film Festival (Canada), and others. Lives and works in Venice, Italy.

German Vinogradov (Russia)
Artist, poet, musician, actor. Born in 1957 in Moscow, USSR. From 1976 to 1983, student at the Department of Architecture of Moscow Institute of Land Use Planning Engineers. From 1984, participant of numerous art groups. Founder of mystery art in contemporary Russia. Vinogradov regularly stages the mystery play “Bicapony of Heavenly Forest” using the BICAPO environment that consists of a huge number of the author’s sound sculptures. He is the first artist in contemporary Russia to introduce fire, water and other primary elements as an integral part of mystery plays held in enclosed spaces. He held over 2000 mysteries in Russia, Europe, USA and Canada. Influenced by the system of Porfiry Ivanov, Vinogradov created several unusual forms of creative work, in which cold, snow and cold-water dousing as well as dipping in icy water became a component part. Author of performances with the burning of land-art objects of Nikolay Polissky in the Nikola-Lenivets Park (Russia, 2006, 2012). Lives and works in Moscow, Russia.
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