



press kit

at la maison rouge October 21st 2007 – January 20th 2008

preview Saturday October 20th 2007 6pm to 9pm

press preview Friday October 19th 2007 9.30am to 11am

SOTS ART / COŪ. APT

Political Art in Russia from 1972 to today

Curator of the exhibition: Andreï Erofeev



press

Claudine Colin Communication

Julie Martinez – Pauline de Montgolfier

5, rue Barbette – 75003 Paris

julie@claudinecolin.com

t : +33 (0)1 42 72 60 01

f : +33 (0)1 42 72 50 23

la maison rouge

fondation antoine de galbert

10 bd de la bastille – 75012 Paris

www.lamaisonrouge.org

info@lamaisonrouge.org

t : +33 (0)1 40 01 08 81

f : +33 (0)1 40 01 08 83

contents

- p.3 **presentation of la maison rouge**
 - antoine de galbert
 - the building
 - the bookstore
 - the café
- p.4 **activities at la maison rouge**
 - the suite
 - for children
 - les amis de la maison rouge
 - the vestibule
 - publications
- p.5 **Sots Art, political art in Russia from 1972 to today**
 - press release
- p.6 **list of artists**
 - a few figures
- p.7 **about Sots Art: Making a mockery, by Andreï Erofeev**
 - biography of the curator
 - related events
 - publications
- p.10 **Sots Art chronology**
- p.15 **selected works from the exhibition**
- p.18 **exhibition sponsors**
- p.19 **practical information**

presentation

A private, non-profit foundation, la maison rouge opened in June 2004 in Paris. Its purpose is to promote contemporary creation through a programme of three solo or thematic temporary exhibitions a year, certain of which are staged by independent curators.

La maison rouge was created on the initiative of Antoine de Galbert, an art collector and active figure on the French art scene. While Antoine de Galbert's own collection is not shown, the entire project is fashioned by his personality and outlook as a collector. Beginning with *Behind Closed Doors: the private life of collections*, la maison rouge stages exhibitions on the theme of private collections and the issues and questions surrounding them.

Antoine de Galbert

Born in 1955 and a graduate in political science, Antoine de Galbert worked in corporate management before opening a contemporary art gallery in Grenoble for some ten years. Concurrently, he purchased the first works in a collection that was to take on growing importance in his life. In 2000 he chose to create a foundation as a means of both anchoring his commitment to contemporary creation and opening his collection to the public.

the building

La maison rouge is installed in a renovated factory in the Bastille district of Paris, overlooking the Arsenal marina. The 2,500 sq m site, including 1,300 sq m of exhibition space, is centred around "la maison rouge" or red house.

By naming the venue after this house, la maison rouge makes clear its vocation as a welcoming, convivial space where visitors can see exhibitions, attend lectures, enjoy a drink or explore the bookstore.

The artist Jean-Michel Alberola (born in Paris in 1953) was commissioned for the interior design of the reception areas. Receptive to the founder's personality and his relationship to objects, Jean-Michel Alberola coloured the walls in dark, warm shades and unfurled a frieze of mysterious words across the foyer and café walls (extracts from a nineteenth-century ethnographic manual describing the contents of a juju priest's basket - Lake Tanganyika in equatorial Africa, now Tanzania - and the list of works that Arthur Rimbaud asked his mother and sister to send to him while in Abyssinia).

"We are entering a private and therefore secret area. The foyer respects this idea: magic, ritual, and a vague sensation of disquiet (what are all these objects?)".
Jean-Michel Alberola.

the bookstore

la maison rouge has chosen Bookstorming, a specialist in contemporary art publications, for its bookstore at 10 bis, boulevard de la Bastille. Its selection of titles is regularly updated to reflect the current exhibitions at la maison rouge. It also stocks art DVDs and videos, publications on the latest developments in the contemporary art world, and proposes an important catalogue of out-of-print books and books by artists.

the café

The café, at the heart of the foundation and next to the "red house", is open to everyone for food and refreshments during the foundation's opening hours and on Tuesdays between 12.30pm and 3pm. Its terrace offers a privileged view of the works in the Patio.

The café serves set menus, specials and drinks, plus brunch at weekends.

activities at la maison rouge

the Suite

la maison rouge develops other activities alongside its exhibitions, and in collaboration with Gérard Wajzman has opened a hotel room, the Suite, inside its walls. It welcomes guests from all fields of thought and contemporary creation to provoke unexpected encounters with the public.

Full details at www.lamaisonrouge.org - "a propos the exhibitions"

for children

One Wednesday a month, la maison rouge invites children aged 4 to 11 to enjoy an afternoon with a storyteller, followed by a snack.

Next dates: April 18th, May 9th, June 20th and July 4th at 3pm.

Reservations: info@lamaisonrouge.org

Full details at www.lamaisonrouge.org

les amis de la maison rouge

A non-profit organisation, les amis de la maison rouge is closely involved with and supports Antoine de Galbert's project. It contributes to reflection and debates on the theme of the private collection, organises activities to coincide with the exhibitions, and promotes la maison rouge among French and international audiences.

Membership from €60.

Les amis de la maison rouge, 10 bd de la bastille – 75012 Paris, t. +33 (0)1 40 01 94 38, amis@lamaisonrouge.org

the vestibule

Always attentive and open to creations by young artists, Antoine de Galbert created this open-access space in 2006, showing new exhibitions every four to six weeks.

Full details at www.lamaisonrouge.org

publications

la maison rouge publishes a catalogue for each of the private collections it shows.

Online orders and full details at www.lamaisonrouge.org

SOTS ART

Political Art in Russia from 1972 to today

Beginning in October, la maison rouge presents **Sots Art: Political Art in Russia**. The exhibition will retrace the development of a movement which, from the early 1970s and in the wake of Socialist Realism, would stand out as the first original art movement in Russia since the 1920s avant-garde.

Sots Art will be chronologically staged in all the foundation's rooms, from the origins of the movement to its influence on contemporary works.

The term was coined in 1972 by two Moscow artists, Vitaly Komar and Alexander Melamid, as a take on Pop Art, "Sots" being a contraction of Socialism and Art.

Rather than the rejection and denunciation that motivated the first generation of Nonconformist artists, Sots Art follows a third way. It appropriates and subverts propaganda images and slogans to transform them into something that is both playful and grotesque. Through its irreverent use of symbols which, in their original context, were intended as a means of dominating the individual, Sots Art had a genuinely liberating effect on Soviet minds.

Historically, Sots Art refers to an exhibition of a dozen works of Soviet Pop Art, staged in a Moscow apartment in 1972. The term was then taken up by a group of artists which developed in the 1970s and 1980s around personalities such as Vagrich Bakhchanyan, Ilya Kabakov, Alexander Kosalopov, Leonid Sokov, Dimitri Prigov, Boris Orlov and the Nest Group. Sidelined from official exhibitions, they showed their work in their own homes which became venues for creation, exhibition and exchange for the Moscow avant-garde. This period is symbolised by the replica apartment at the entrance to the exhibition. Sots Art dominated plastic arts, architecture, design and film throughout the Perestroika years (1985-1991).

The wave of Jewish emigration in the second half of the 1970s took Sots Art beyond the USSR. Many artists moved to New York where they staged exhibitions and began to combine American and Soviet symbols. Sots Art was also taken up by artists in the crumbling Eastern Bloc, and by Chinese artists from the 1990s.

Sots Art has proved to be a prolific trend not just within the Communist system but in societies which exert other forms of pressure, via the media and religion in particular. Russian art in the 2000s is a case in point, where comparable attitudes have emerged in the work of Oleg Kulik, the Blue Noses Group and the PG Group.

A vast panorama of the movement, Sots Art: Political Art in Russia was shown at Tretyakov Gallery as part of the Second Moscow Biennale of Contemporary Art in 2007. The exhibition at la maison rouge in Paris includes additional works from American and European collections. The majority of the works shown belong to Tretyakov Gallery or to major Russian private collections (Antonichuk, Semenikhin and Smuzikov).

List of artists

Vagrish Bakhchanyan (Moscou, 1938), Aleksey Beliaev, Blue Noses Group (Viacheslav Mizin (Novossibirsk en Sibérie, 1962) et Alexandre Shaburov (Berezovsky en Sibérie, 1965)), Blue Soup Group (fondé en 1996 par Alexei Dobrov (Moscou, 1975), Daniil Lebedev (Frunze, 1974), Valery Patkonen (Moscou, 1972), rejoint en 2002 par Alexandre Lobanov (Khimki, région de Moscou, 1975)), Sergey Borisov (1975), Alexandre Brener (Alma-Ata, 1957), Grisha Bruskin (Moscou, 1945), Sergei Bugaev (Afrika) (Saint Petersburg, 1966), Erik Bulatov (Sverdlovsk, 33), Dmitriy Bulnigin, Vladimir Dubosarsky (Moscou, 1964), Andrey Filippov (Moscou, 1959), Edward Gorokhovskiy (Moscou, 1929-2004), George Guryanov, Dmitry Gutov (Moscou, 1960), Ilya Kabakov (Ukraine, 1963), Alexandra Hlestkina, Alexey Kallima (Grozny, 1970), Elena Kovylyina (Moscou, 1971), Nikolay Kozlov (Moscou, 1954), Vitaly Komar (Moscou, 1943), Maria Konstantinova (Moscou, 1955), Irina Korina (Moscou, 1977), Alexandre Kossolapov (Moscou, 1943), Valery Koshlyakov (Salsk, 1962), Nikolay Kozlov, Oleg Kulik (Ukraine, 1963), Leonid Lamm (Moscou, 1928), Rostislav Lebedev (Moscou, 1946), Alexandre Melamid (Moscou, 1945), Serguey Mironenko (Moscou, 1949), Vladislav Maminshev-Monro (Saint Petersburg, 1969), Igor Mukhin (Moscou, 1961), Groupe Gnezdo (fondé en 1975 par Victor Skersis, Mikhail Roshal, Georgy Donskoy), Vikenty Nilin (Moscou, 1971), Timur Novikov (Saint Petersburg, 1958), Boris Orlov (Moscou, 1941), Anatoly Osmolovsky (Moscou, 1969), George Ostretsov (Moscou, 1967), Pavel Peppershteyn, Groupe PG, Dmitriy Prigov (Moscou, 1940), Ivan Razumov, Mikhail Roshal (Moscou, 1956-2007), Alexandre Shnurov (1955), Leonid Sokov (Moscou, 1941), Olga Soldatova (1965), Aleksandre Sokolov, Groupe SZ (fondé à Moscou en 1980 par V. Skersis et V. Zakharov), Slava Sysoyev (Moscou, 1937-2006), Rostan Tavasiev (Moscou, 1976), Avdey Ter-Oganyan, Dmitry Tzvetkov (Kolomna, région de Moscou, 1961), Alexandre Vinogradov (Moscou, 1963), Dmitry Vruble (Moscou, 1960), Vasiliy Zagalov, Vadim Zakharov (Moscou, 1959), Konstantin Zvezdochotov (Moscou, 1958)

figures

- some 60 artists
- over 160 works

About Sots Art

The Style of Mockers, by Andreï Erofeev

While Pop Art is considered to be a typically international phenomenon, Sots Art is generally viewed as a pure product of Soviet culture.

Sots Art was indeed created and developed in the Soviet Union. It began as a humorous project by two conceptual artists, Vitaly Komar and Alexander Melamid. The show, a dozen images and slogans, was the beginning of a two-man collective that would eventually bring them renown. Designed to be shown in their apartment, the project was their reinterpretation of Soviet ideological imagery. Komar and Melamid took the anonymous language of Agit-prop and incorporated it into their own personal style. This small exhibition provided various examples and methods of how a traditional painter could "pervert" the style of Soviet propaganda. Playing with the contrived expressions of Agit-prop proved to be such fun that the Sots Art movement, led by Komar and Melamid, rapidly spread. The practice of mocking Soviet ideological creations could soon be found in other alternative art circles in Moscow during this period, and progressively Sots Art became a distinct movement in the new Soviet avant-garde art of the 1970s.

By the late 1970s and early 80s, Sots Art had begun to swell beyond the borders of the USSR as a wave of Jewish emigration brought some of the movement's leaders, including its two founders, to the West. Through their performances, publications and exhibitions, Sots Art achieved a status on the international art scene as the emblematic style of Soviet nonconformist art. Meanwhile, with the changes instituted by Gorbachev's reforms in the USSR, not only was Sots Art no longer outlawed, it became fashionable and was seen as the visual illustration of Perestroika. It gradually lost its underground nature, grew in size and developed both monumental and ornamental qualities. Originally founded by a small circle of intellectuals, the movement's initial images and mechanisms were multiplied, stylised and adopted on various cultural levels, spreading into domains such as design, architecture and the mass media, and even to the anonymous strata of popular street art.

By the end of the 1980s, Sots Art was seen as *the* prevailing artistic current of the era of Soviet transformation, and the artistic symbol of the fall of Communism. As such, Sots Art moved into Europe where, in the disintegrating Eastern bloc countries, it found its first foreign proponents: E. Truskowski in Poland and Flatz in Germany. But it was in the Far East that its impact was most striking, as it injected vital energy into the new emerging art movements of 1990s China.

The founding fathers of Sots Art, Komar and Melamid, defined their style as analogous to the American Pop Art movement. Certainly both are based on an active interaction with mass cultural contexts, characterised in the US by the temptations of consumerism and in Russia by ideological coercion. This analogy is clear, but does not take into account fundamental differences in attitude. The pop artist adores advertising imagery and lovingly elevates it from billboard status to the realms of higher culture while only slightly modifying its form and vesting it with new meaning. In Sots Art the reference image – an ideological image – is equally manipulated but in a context of obvious, extreme and constant negation. While Pop Art preserves fleeting images for eternity, Sots Art emphasises the fragility and decline of ideological constructions which aspire to eternal status. It is the difference between a conformist, opportunistic art and one based on political protest. In reality both types of art exist in Russia as well as in the US and other countries. Artists as well known as Hans Haacke in America, Antonio Muntadas in Spain and more recently Olivier Blanckart in France create works in the Sots Art spirit without being in any way linked to Soviet ideological reality. Rather than a given political context to which they are opposed, these works have in common a certain artistic attitude, an approach that is free from ideologies, dogmas and utopian projects. They do not provide alternative slogans, they do not have any social aspirations or demands, and do not promote new political parties or figures. Their version of political art can be likened to Sots Art in that these artists create paradoxical, explosive images that resist the temptation to submit to authority or to become authoritarian in and of themselves.

The philosophical basis for Sots Art is nihilistic relativism. Sots Art rejects all belief in any dogma whatsoever. It is against all forms of worship, whether spontaneously generated from within or imposed from without by an external authority, whether political, economic, religious or otherwise. Sots Art refuses to tolerate systems that humiliate the individual through inequality, by placing him in an inferior position and forcing him to

uncritical submission. Its enemy is peremptory absolutism in all its forms, and the weapons it uses are laughter, ridicule, travesty and mystification.

The cults to which Sots Art is opposed are personified by heads of state and political leaders but also by the most prominent dissidents of the opposition, eminent spiritual leaders and the most brilliant intellectuals. These personalities (the Bolshevik leaders and other figures of authority deified in bronze, such as Pushkin, Tchaikovsky, Repin and Solzhenitsyn) are shown in grotesque and comical situations. Yet it would be wrong to group Sots Art with political cartoon genre: it does not caricature political figures and in no way attempts to represent "real life." Following in the steps of Pop Art, Sots Art responds not to reality but to its images. It believes there is no reality beyond the message. This is why its only enemy is the repressive message and the media that convey the rhetoric of power.

Critics of Sots Art have often called the movement "anti-art" – not without reason, since it deliberately distances itself from all artistically perfect "texts", preferring to undermine them at every opportunity. Sots Art sees art as the most effective tool for disseminating and imposing cults.

Sots Art uses specific methods to demolish the polished veneer of rhetorical figures. The first is to bring together contradictory forms of description in a single work or image, such as in Komar and Melamid's portrait of Karl Marx in which Cubism and Socialist Realism are combined. The second consists of creating a deliberate opposition between subject and style, for instance using an unassuming, everyday technique (e.g. of folk carved wooden toys) to construct ceremonial portraits of great Soviet leaders, or by building a *Vanka-Vstanka* (pop-up doll) version of Khrushchev, or an Andropov with huge jointed ears shaped like radars (see also the comic effigies of Leonid Sokov). In this way, the movement clearly parodies the formidable models its works are based on.

Sots-art is averse from estheticizing its own discourse. On the contrary, its artistic stance is based on self-parody and self-refutation. Sots artists make it a point not to develop their own plastic system, preferring a concept of broken forms and re-appropriation: an aesthetic founded on "poorly made art" - reappearing for the first time in Russia since Dada - that rejects professional perfectionism and emphasises the disjointed and shabby nature of its projects.

This plastic slackness of Sots Art work is compensated by the artists' activism. For the first time since the Russian Futurists' street actions, artists step out from behind their works and into the social arena. Sots Art is entirely based on performance: its works are documents or products of performances. The Sots artist does not speak for himself in his work, but in the name of a particular figure whose mask he wears during the performance. This character is always some kind of rogue, cheat, impostor or swindler who employs game, simulation, deceit or evasion to reach his goals. This image has been represented by several generations of Sots artists and is still used today (see the photographs staged by Avdey Ter-Oganyan, and the Blue Noses Group). If we are to believe Jung, the rogue figure is the archetypal symbol of the young hero who rebels against tyranny and wins not by force but through cunning.

Sots Art's political revolt expressed itself not only in parodies of iconic messages, but also through a particular type of behaviour which, irrespective of its form, was considered shocking within the framework of a strictly controlled society. Sots artists adopted this "mocking" behaviour as a self-administered vaccination against the totalitarian social schema. The artists communicated their attitude to the spectators who could not help but laugh at these absurd images.

Games and performances often bordering on idiotic escapades, with the artists in the role of crazy clowns, were the curious backdrops for a serious message with works that addressed contemporary advances in science and philosophy. Sots artists were especially interested in Structuralism, which in the late 1960s and early 70s offered a new vision of stylistic and cultural development. The foundations for this interest had been laid by the study of Russian formalists and M. Bakhtin's work. Thus the Sots artists assumed the role of researchers in contemporary culture and developed the first holistic approach to artistic and visual aspects of Soviet civilisation.

Andreï Erofeev, curator of the exhibition

Andreï Erofeev was born in Paris in 1956 to a family of Soviet diplomats. At 22 he graduated in art history from Moscow State University. He specialised in the Russian avant-garde movement of 1910 and, in 1984, presented his doctoral thesis on the Mir Iskusstvo ("world of art") group of Russian symbolist artists.

Passionate about architecture, he was also a researcher at the Institute for Research on the Theory and History of Architecture in Moscow, between 1982 and 1989.

In 1983 he compiled an initial collection of Russian nonconformist art with the intention of donating it to one of the Moscow museums, at a time when they were not authorised to purchase works from this movement. However, the Pushkin Museum declined his offer to donate 300 works.

In 1989, in the middle of Perestroika, the Ministry of Culture invited Andreï Erofeev to house this collection at the newly-created state Tsaritsyno Museum. He was appointed at the head of a small "experimental" department of three people. They worked on the "prototype" for a contemporary art museum, then unheard of in the USSR. Andreï Erofeev and his team staged numerous exhibitions of Russian nonconformist art both inside and outside the USSR.

During his fifteen years at the Tsaritsyno Museum, Andreï Erofeev put together the largest collection of contemporary Russian art, with more than 2,000 works using what were then unknown art forms in Russia: installations, objects, videos, ready-mades and conceptual photography. The collection was kept in the Tsaritsyno Museum's reserves, an imposing atomic shelter, where it remained until 2006 when it was permanently transferred to another state museum, the Tretyakov Gallery, which in 2002 had opened its "new trends in contemporary art" department, eradicated in the 1930s. Andreï Erofeev took the helm of this department, bringing in the "Tsaritsyno collection," considerably extended since. He has devoted the past five years to the Tretyakov Gallery, establishing Russian contemporary art alongside other international movements through important thematic exhibitions of abstraction, pop art and conceptual art, and through solo shows in Moscow of Russian artists such as Bulatov and Kabakov, never before shown in their country.

related events

Throughout the duration of the exhibition, a series of conferences will put Russian contemporary art into perspective. Full details at www.lamaisonrouge.org.

publications

An illustrated book on Sots Art will be published by Interos (Moscow) to coincide with the exhibition. In French, Russian and English, it includes texts by Andreï Erofeev, Sergueï Yepikhin, Julia Liederman, Julia Aksionova, Oksana Sarkissian, Anna Dikovitch, Kiril Svetliackov, curators at the Tretyakov Gallery's New Trends department, and Boris Orlov, artist.

chronology

1972 Moscow

The emergence of the Vitaly Komar and Alexander Melamid (K&M) creative tandem. Their first joint works – portraits of their wives in the style of Soviet ideological posters.

K&M, jointly with Vadim Paperny, invent the term “Sots-Art” for a new contemporary art trend and style based on sending up Soviet esthetics and mass culture.

K&M put their names on posters bearing mass propaganda slogans (such as “Communism is our goal”, “We are born to turn fairy tales into reality”, “Glory to labor”)

Erik Bulatov creates his picture entitled “Horizon”.

The emergence of an artists’ and poets’ circle around the studios of Boris Orlov, Dmitry Prigov, and Rostislav Lebedev in Rogov Street.

1973 Moscow

The first installation entitled *Paradise* created by K&M in a private apartment in Moscow’s Kolomenskoye district.

Double Self-Portrait of K&M representing them as in Lenin-Stalin stereotype profile effigy on Soviet mosaics, banners, and posters.

K&M hold mock conceptual “retrospective exhibitions” of fictitious artists N.Buchumov and A.Zyablov.

Vagrish Bakhchanyan creates his manuscript books *Swarm of Flies* and *L.I.Brezhnev’s Dream*.

Leonid Lamm is arrested three weeks after tending his request for emigration from the USSR (to be released from prison camps in 1976).

1974 Moscow

Komar writes the *Sots-Art Manifesto*.

Action by K&M entitled *Painting Performance* held at Melamid’s apartment in Dm.Ulyanov St. All participants detained by KGB agents.

Vagrish Bakhchanyan emigrates.

K&M perform an anthem on the text from the USSR passport at Alexander Yulikov’s apartment.

Alexander Kosolapov holds his exhibition at the Kuznetsky Most art salon.

Alexander Kosolapov creates the picture *Soviet Myth* and sculpture-painting *Keep Learning, my Son!*

September 15 – the Bulldozer Exhibition. Many works are destroyed including the *Double Self-Portrait* by K&M.

G.Donskoy, M.Roshal, and V.Skersis form a joint team.

Dm.Prigov writes his cycle of *Historic and Heroic Songs*.

1975 Moscow

Actions by V. Skersis, M. Fyodorov-Roshal, and G. Donskoy: *Termography of Gorky* and *Paper Fading in the Sun within Ten Days*.

A Moscow artists’ show held Sept 20-30 at the Apiculture Pavilion of the National Economy Exhibition.

Donskoy, Roshal, and Skersis present an action entitled *Hatching an Egg* earning their group the appellation - Nest.

Boris Orlov begins creating Sots-Art sculptured objects – *Iconostasis* and *Sailor*.

Eric Bulatov paints his picture *Glory to CPSU*.

Alexander Kosolapov moves to New York.

Action by the Nest group entitled *24 Reminder Knots* in honor of the 24th Congress of the CPSU. Their object *The Red Pump*.

K&M’s action *Eating up the Pravda* – passing the leading Soviet ideological newspaper through a mincing machine to make rissoles.

Dm.Prigov’s poetic cycle *The Militiaman’s Apotheosis*.

1976 Moscow

Boris Orlov and Dmitry Prigov take part in the spring apartment exhibitions (preliminary for the annual show in Begovaya St.) They also exhibit at M.Odnorolov's studio. A group exhibition is held at Leonid Sokov's studio.

K&M and the Nest group join the exhibition at E.Renova's apartment.

Iron Curtain object by Nest group

Actions by the Nest group *Fertilizing the Land* and *Aid to the Country in Growing Crops*.

Leonid Sokov carves in wood the sculpture *Design of Spectacles for Each Soviet Citizen* and creates a kinetic object *Hammer and Sickle*.

K&M issue *Catalogue of Superobjects for Superpeople*.

Performance by K&M – musical version of the Soviet Passport Code.

New York

K&M stage the first exhibition of Sots-Art in the US at Ronald Feldman's gallery opening it with the *Passport* performance accompanied on the cello by Charlotte Murman of the Fluxus group.

Andy Warhol creates his *Hammer and Sickle* series after a trip to Italy where he often saw the Soviet state symbol as graffiti in public places.

Dm.Prigov's first public recital of his poetic cycle *Versegrams* at Myznikov's studio.

1977 New York

The First Slogan by Alexander Kosolapov.

Moscow

Beginning of ZHEK-series by Ilya Kabakov: ZHEK-Art, a ZHEK-artist and the paintings supposedly done by him

The Nest group stage an action with the participation of A.Yulikov: *Reunion of Continents for Restoring Gondwana's Single Material and Spiritual Field*.

K&M stage the action *Temple* at the apartment of M.Fyodorov-Roshal.

K&M leave the USSR for Israel.

The Nest group presents an action on 7th November: *For the 60th Anniversary of Soviet Power. The New Chronology*.

Erik Bulatov creates his *Krasikov Street*.

Jerusalem

K&M erect a "temple" on the holy mount of Zion – an aluminum pyramid with the five-pointed star on top – and in a symbolic "holocaust" burn the suitcase with which Komar left the country of his birth.

1978 New York

Alexander Kosolapov creates his triptych *Fathers and Son*.

K&M move to the United States.

K&M promote their project *Sale of Souls*. Their advertising clip is shown in Times Square sponsored by the Public Art Fund, New York. They form a corporation – Komar&Melamid Inc. which purchases several hundred American souls (some of them on commission) including the soul of Andy Warhol.

Moscow

The Nest group stage an action called a *Manifestation* at the intersection of Lenin and University Prospects. After this action Donskoy is incarcerated in a psychiatric clinic, Roshal is fired from his job at the Design and Decoration Service Combine.

Action by the Nest group called *Running Heat in the Direction of Jerusalem*.

Action by the Nest group held at Roshal's apartment Oct 5 (Melamid's birthday): *Half an Hour's Attempt at Materializing K&M*.

The program *100% People* by V.Zakharov and I.Lunts.

1979 New York

Unsanctioned action by Vagrigh Bakhchanyan *Walking Agitprop*: the artist walks about the MoMA rooms with the slogans "Stalin is Lenin of Today", "Why is there no vodka on the Moon?" and "Beware of the fierce dog".

K&M embark on a world tour of museums and universities with lectures and performances.

Moscow

K&M continue their *Souls* action: American souls are smuggled to the USSR and sold at an auction in M. Odnorolov's studio with the participation of the Nest group. Andy Warhol's soul fetches 30 rubles.

The Nest group disintegrates.

Leonid Sokov emigrates.

Rostislav Lebedev creates his objects *Made in USSR* and *No Exit*.

1980 New York

Alexander Kosolapov creates the image of *Lenin Coca Cola*.

V. Bakhchanyan works out Mail-Art strategies.

K&M create their *Posters* series.

Moscow

V. Skersis and V. Zakharov form the SZ group to produce a series of absurdist objects with the motto "All for the good of Man!"

M. Roshal stages a performance at his apartment entitled *The End of Pop-Art*.

R. Lebedev produces the series *Glory!*, and a deck of cards.

1981 New York

K&M begin working on the series of pictures *Nostalgia for Socialist Realism*.

1982 New York

Works by K&M are purchased by the MOMA and the Metropolitan after the success of their Sots-Art exhibition at the Feldman Gallery.

Leonid Lamm emigrates to the USA.

A. Kosolapov designs advertisements for Times Square.

A group is formed under the name Kazimir Passion (A. Druchin, A. Kosolapov, V. Tupitsin, V. Urban). They stage a performance – *Communist Congress* with speeches based on the documents of the Proletkult and the CPSU Central Committee.

Moscow

The Toadstools group issues an audio album *Golden Disk* – a cassette recording of their poetic parodies recited on the background of official radio broadcasting.

1983 New York

The Kazimir Passion group shoots a video film *Lenin in New York*.

Moscow

Vyacheslav Sysoyev is arrested (to spend two subsequent years in a prison camp).

Vladimir Sorokin applies the Sots-Art method to literature for the first time in his book of short stories *The First Subbotnik* [voluntary unpaid labor on Saturday]

Paris

The first book with drawings by V. Sysoyev is published.

1984 New York

Sots-Art is exhibited at the Semaphore gallery.

1985 New York

Leonid Sokov creates his composition *Stalin and Monroe*

1986 New York

April 12–June 12: an exhibition of Sots-Art is held at the New Museum of Contemporary Art (curator Margarita Tupitsina)

Moscow

Grisha Bruskin creates his *Fundamental Lexicon*

E.Gorokhovsky begins a series of Sots-Art pictures including a divisionist portrait of Stalin where he uses “brush strokes” of little stenciled effigies of Lenin.

1987 Moscow

Exhibition entitled *The Artist and Our Time* is held at the Kashirka gallery with the participation of G.Bruskin, E.Bulatov, E.Gorokhovsky, I.Kabakov, R.Lebedev, B.Orlov, D.Prigov.

Dm.Prigov presents his newspaper installation.

Konstantin Zvezdochotov creates his installation “Perdo”.

Kassel

K&M are the first Russian artists to take part in the Documenta exhibition

1988 Moscow

An exhibition of V.Sysoyev’s works (curator L.Bazhanov) is held at the Medical Club.

Grisha Bruskin holds a performance entitled *The Birth of a Hero* at the Kashirka exhibition premises. He begins working at an installation of the same name. He moves to New York where he cooperates with the Marlboro gallery.

Sergey Mironenko creates his installations *A Room for Military Servicemen* and *The President Election Campaign*.

Andrey Filippov creates his installation *The Last Supper*

Bern

The Exhibition *I live - I See* is held at the Kunstmuseum with the participation of G.Bruskin, E.Bulatov, I.Kabakov, R.Lebedev, B.Orlov, D.Prigov.

1989 New York

An exhibition is held at the New Museum of Contemporary Art with the participation of K&M, Sokov, Bulatov, Kosolapov, Lamm, and the group *Passion after Kazimir* (A.Druchin, A.Kosolapov, V.Urban, V.Tupitsin). Curator – M.Tupitsina.

Moscow

Vyacheslav Sysoyev emigrates to Germany.

Dm.Prigov produces his installations *The Red Corner* and *Glasnost*.

1990 Moscow

Dmitry Gutov makes his collage *It was Better in the Time of Leodid Brezhnev*.

Boris Orlov produces his installation *Pantocrator*

Berlin

Dmitry Vrubel draws *Kiss of Brezhnev and Honneker* on the Berlin wall.

1991 Leningrad

The episode *Lenin-Mushroom* is shown on May 17th in Sergey Sholokhov’s TV program *The Fifth Wheel* with the participation of Sergey Kuryokhin.

1992 Moscow

An exhibition of Sots-Art with the latest trends from the Tsaritsino Museum is staged at the Lenin Museum. Curator Andrey Yerofeyev.

New York

K&M begin their project *Monumental Propaganda*.

1993 Moscow

K&M hold their first exhibition in post-Soviet Russia – they present their project *Running Neon Ad on Stepped Pyramid* at M.Guelman’s gallery.

K&M stage a performance in Red Square entitled *What is to be done with the Lenin Mausoleum?*

1994

K&M launch an international project – “*The People’s Choice*” running from 1994 to 1997 at the Alternative Museum, USA; M.Guelman’s gallery, Moscow, Russia; the Kiev State Museum, Ukraine; the Istanbul Biennale, Turkey; the Kunsthalle, Austria; the Museum of Contemporary Art, Cologne, Germany; ARS Finland; and in other countries.

Moscow

Boris Orlov holds *Parade of Astral Bodies* at the Regina gallery.

1998 Moscow

Marat Guelman continues the project *What is to be done with the Lenin Mausoleum?*

1999

New Government project by George Ostretsov

2002

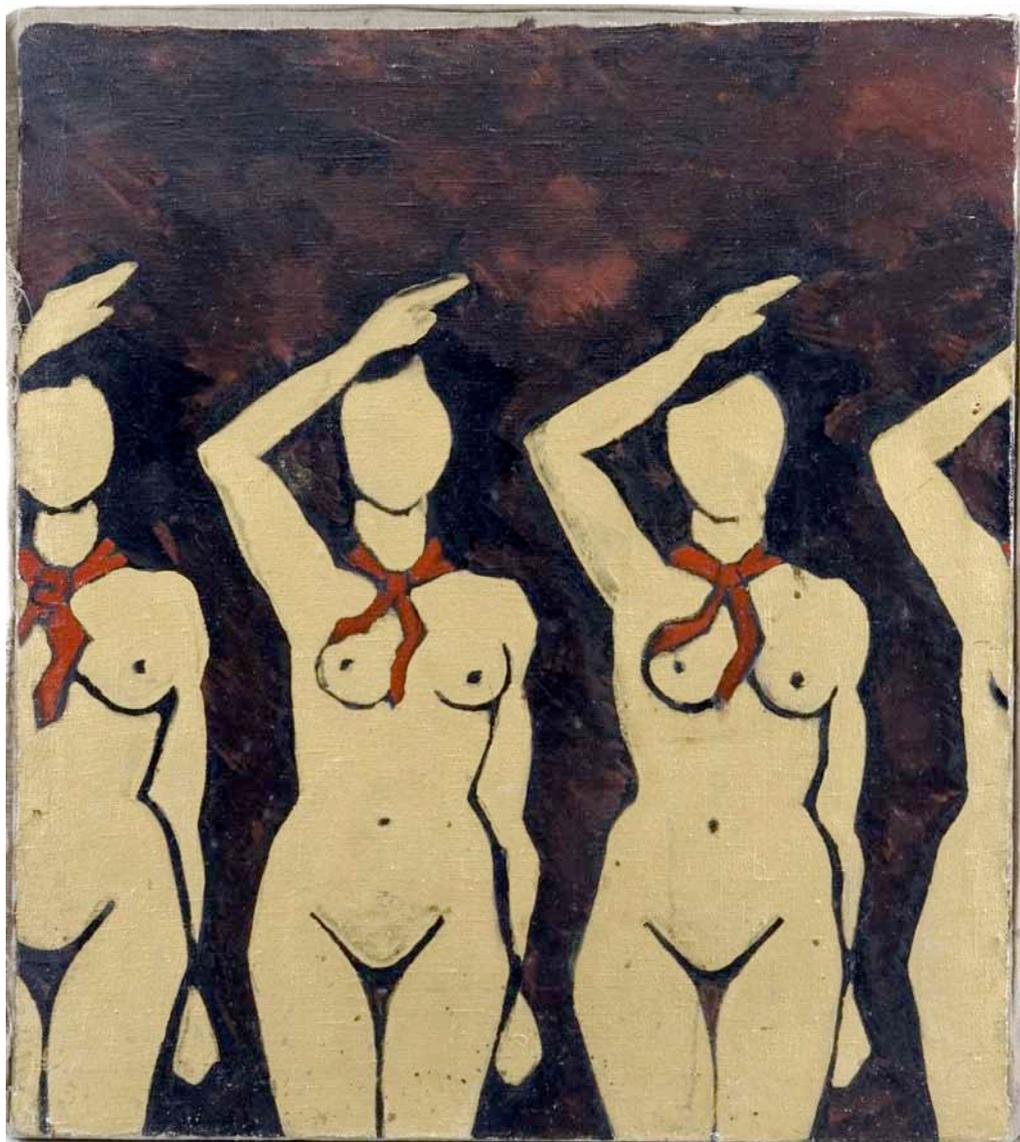
Mask Show series by Blue Noses Group

2005 Moscow

The Blue Noses group shows a video installation called *Lenin Turns in his Tomb* at the 1st Moscow biennale of contemporary art.

The Bolshoi Theatre produces the world premier of the opera *Rosenthal’s Children* by Leonid Desyatnikov, libretto by Vladimir Sorokin, stage director Eimuntas Nyakroshus.

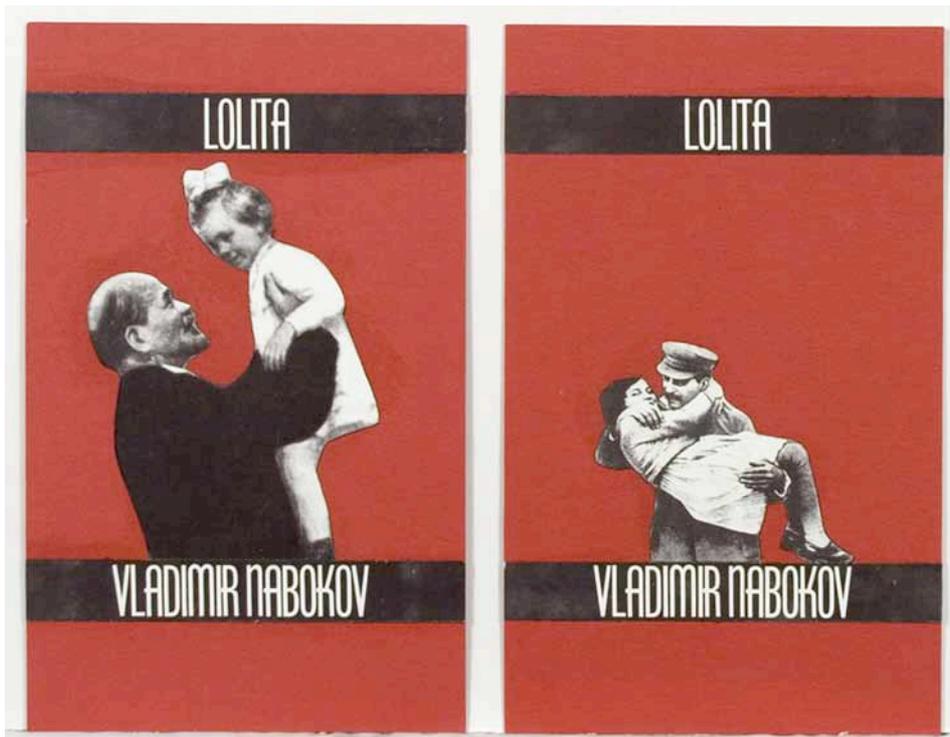
selected works from the exhibition



Victor Skersis, *Pionnières* [i.e. girl scouts], 1972. Private collection (D.R.)



Maria Konstantinova, *Etoile et croix gammée*, 1982. 127 x 30 x 127 cm ; 93 x 10 x 93 cm. (D.R.)



Vagrigh Bakhchanyan, *Projet de couverture pour le roman de Vladimir Nabokov, Lolita*, 1975 (reproduit par l'auteur en 2007). Private collection (D.R.)



Vladimir Dubosarsky, Alexandre Vinogradov, *Eltsine et Lebed*, 1991, Private collection (D.R.)



Dmitry Vruble, *Dieu, aide moi à survivre à cet amour fatal*, 1998. 191 x 201 cm. Private collection (D.R.)



Oleg Kulik, *Kulik is Your Deputy*, 1995. Courtesy Tretiakov Gallery, Moscow (D.R.)



Boris Orlov, *Totem National. A.S. Pouchkine en uniforme de Sheriff*, 1989. . Courtesy Tretiakov Gallery, Moscow (D.R.)



Alexandre Kossolapov, *Saint Sébastien. Tiré du triptyque de l'Adoration*, 1980 Courtesy Tretiakov Gallery, Moscow (D.R.)

First page :

Leonid Sokov, *Staline et Monroe*, 1991. Courtesy Tretiakov Gallery, Moscow (D.R.)

exhibition sponsors

in partnership with

- Tretyakov Gallery (Moscow)

- Fondation "Art Promotion Society" (Moscow)



with the support of

- Ekaterina Foundation (Moscow)

- Novi Foundation (Moscow)

- Robert Vallois (Paris)

- ProLab (Moscow)

about the catalogue

- Interros Editions (Moscow)

média sponsor



practical info



getting there

metro stations: Quai de la Rapée (line 5) or Bastille (lines 1, 5 or 8)

RER station: Gare de Lyon

bus n° 20, 29 or 91

accessibility

the exhibition areas are accessible to disabled visitors and people with restricted mobility.

opening days and times

Wednesday to Sunday 11am to 7pm

late-night Thursday until 9pm

closed December 25th, January 1st and May 1st

admission

full price: €6.50

concessions: €4.50 (13-18 years, students, full-time artists, and over-60s).

free: under-13s, the unemployed, companions of disabled visitors, members of ICOM and

les amis de la maison rouge.

annual pass

full price: €16

concessions: €12

free and unlimited admission to the exhibitions.

free or reduced rate admission to related events.