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**Press release**

**The second contemporary 1703 Art fair took place in St. Petersburg**

**On June 18, 2023, the second 1703 St. Petersburg Art Fair, initiated by Gazprom PJSC and supported by the Committee for Culture of St. Petersburg completed its work in the Manege Central Exhibition Hall. Thirty-six galleries from Istanbul, Moscow, St. Petersburg, Nizhny Novgorod and Kaluga presented more than 1.5 thousand works of contemporary art, that were shown to over 15 thousand visitors.**

The fair was held from June 14 to 18 and brought together one and a half times more participants at the Manege Central Exhibition Hall compared to its debut season. A broad range of artistic forms and formats were demonstrated at the gallery booths: from generative art and digital installations to sculpture and photography. Alexey Miller, Chairman of the Gazprom Management Board, and Boris Piotrovsky, Vice-Governor of St. Petersburg, were the guests of honor at the fair.

For the first time the fair registered a foreign gallery attendance Ambidexter from Istanbul, which demonstrated the works of its leading authors. Also, this year, Lumiere Gallery, Krokin Gallery, Pogodina Gallery, Pro Art's Gallery, Grabar gallery, MYTH Gallery, MAISON25, VS Gallery, Pop up Gallery, NAMEGALLERY, ARTZIP, MARCH Gallery, Arts Square Gallery, Tirage Unique, 3L STORE, PALATY, Gallery "573", PENNLAB Gallery debuted at 1703.

Triumph gallery, Marina Gisich Gallery, a-s-t-r-a gallery, KultProekt, FINEART GALLERY, E.K.ArtBuro, Béton Visual Culture Center, ART&BRUT Gallery, Generative Gallery, Masters Digital Gallery, FUTURO Gallery, ASKERI GALLERY, ARTSTORY Gallery, 11.12 GALLERY, K2 studio, Third Place NFT, Palto Gallery participated in the fair again.

During the six days of the 1703 fair that also encompassed a special preview for collectors — the galleries sold more than 150 art pieces. Prices for various pieces ranged from 1 thousand to 13.8 million rubles.

The exposition also went hand in glove with non-commercial exhibition projects "City" from the corporate Gazprombank collection and "Leningrad Landscape School" from the St. Petersburg KGallery. The KGallery showcased a special dedication project to honor the artists of the Leningrad landscape school, such as Alexander Vedernikov, Nikolai Lapshin, Vyacheslav Pakulin and others who presented the city in an unusual way. Gazprombank's corporate collection provided photos by Timofey Parshchikov and Mikhail Rozanov, as well Ivan Chuikov, who depict cityscapes and parts thereof as a material for complex visual reflections.

The fair also hosted cultural and educational series of lectures organized jointly with the Masters school. The program of the lecture series included public talks on the gallery business, new technologies in art, collectible design, young art and education in the creative industry. Leading experts in the cultural industry came to speak at the fair: Polina Bondareva (masters), Marina Gisich (Marina Gisich Gallery), Polina Askeri (ASKERI GALLERY), Ivan Nefedkin (founder and creative director of the Radugadesign design studio), Evgenia Popova (Popov Foundation), Alina Chereyskaya (SA lab), Ekaterina Sharova (Hermitage Media), Andrey Shelyutto (art director, designer, illustrator), Zera Chereshneva (director of VKontakte strategic projects), etc.

All the events of the lecture series were broadcast at the 1703 VKontakte community, the main social network of the project and the official streaming service of the fair. All in all, during the fair, there were 36 lectures, discussions and mediations, with the lecture series gaining more than 2.1 million views in total during their broadcasts.

The guests and participants of the fair highly appreciated the layout of the exposition and the interior architectonics. This year, one could marvel at the art not only inside participants' booths, but also in the entire space of the Manege: its lecture hall reminiscent of a ziggurat could easily be confused for an art object. The ante-room turned into a place of attraction, where a tired spectator could take a moment to reflect in seclusion while surrounded by books on art.

Alisa Presnetsova, Managing Director of the 1703 Fair: "The 1703 Fair is a large—scale initiative of Gazprom aimed at systematic support of Russian contemporary art. Its importance today is difficult to overestimate. Thanks to such events, we once again reaffirm St. Petersburg as a cultural capital of Russia, our project becomes an important element of urban culture, which presents St. Petersburg as a modern art center. This initiative allowed us to gather a dynamic team to create a new platform for cultural exchange together with the artistic community, without which it is impossible to move forward."

Evgenia Serousova, founder of MAISON25: "Such initiatives are extremely important for the development of the art industry. This is a unique opportunity to gather everyone in a single space for new communications and business opportunities. It also offers a great chance to get familiar with contemporary art in general, and to get to know some of its emissaries first-hand. During these days I saw a lot of committed people. It makes me happy. And I will gladly support and promote such initiatives for next year."

Natalia Grabar, Founder of Grabar Gallery: "Our team is participating in the 1703 fair for the first time, but we have already decided that we would like to come back in the coming years. St.Petersburg offers great attendance; this is a special feature of the city — our guests come to the fair as if they go to a museum. We showed the works of our young artist Yulia Virko and received many raving reviews about our booth. Art fairs are the main happening for artists all over the world, they offer great opportunities, and new names often receive well-deserved recognition. We are happy to have such a wonderful project in St. Petersburg, which, obviously, will only grow."

Anna Apresyan, curator of ARTSTORY Gallery: "This is the second time we have participated in the 1703 fair. Last year, together with the fair team, we plunged into the unknown and came out of it satisfied. When we started, we had an amazing chance to meet new collectors, to reach out to a new audience. This year the fair is more vibrant, even more dynamic than in the past. And although we show different art: realistic and primitive, light and deep, more complex, I can say that there is a demand for all its varieties in St. Petersburg. We must thank the team for the brilliant organization and hope that next year the fair 1703 will be held again and it will be even more interesting."

Natalia Maslova, founder of the 3L STORE gallery: "Last year we participated in the Cosmoscow fair in Moscow for the first time. The fair was very successful, and we realized that taking part in such an activity is important for the individual gallery growth. It helps to promote artists and their work. And while the general public is already used to art, there is only a few galleries present practical design. We must continue to talk about such artistic practices. And of course, fairs like 1703 help bring the message to a wider audience."

Irina Vladimirova, Director of the MARCH Gallery: "We are participating in the 1703 fair for the first time and are very happy with its organization. All types of wishes or concerns, they listen to us and respond to everything quickly and expediently. The quality of the exhibition build-up, both technically and aesthetically, is very high. Lighting, musical accompaniment, lecture hall — I believe that today it is top notch in Russia. My gallery participated in the Venice Biennale, and I can reference it to the 1703 fair. I really like everything here, so I believe other organizers of similar venues need to see it as a benchmark."

Katya Popova, founder of POP Up Gallery: "We are pleased with our cooperation with the 1703 fair. This is my third fair in two months. One of them was international, and I can compare. We have passed a fairly rigorous selection of the fair's expert council and are happy to be here. It's always cool for the gallery and for the artists to be in a place like this. And it's great to see different interesting collectors, from beginners to serious art lovers, people who are connected to modern art. We are always happy to see them. We really want to continue getting enrolled in such events."

Media Contacts

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**Information on Gazprom's CSR projects in St. Petersburg**

Gazprom Group is involved in a large-scale comprehensive plan aimed at making the city a great place to live by supporting and developing culture and art, public and professional sports, healthcare, science. For instance, by 2022 Gazprom Group has participated in more than 220 charity projects. By the beginning of 2022, the city saw 37 modern sports facilities, including gyms, swimming pools and ice rinks, built under the Gazprom for Children program.

More than 80 streets, squares, embankments and squares have been refurbished and over 16 thousand street lamps have been installed as part of the comprehensive improvement plan of St. Petersburg. Large-scale restoration projects are underway in the leading museums of the Northern Capital. Gazprom invested in the refurbishment of Lyon Hall interior design, restoration of the Resurrection Church, and continues to reconstruct the interiors of the Zubov wing of the Catherine Palace in Tsarskoye Selo. Since 2009, Gazprom has been a permanent partner of Peterhof Museum-preserve helping to bring back to life the Chinese Palace in Oranienbaum, where 12 of the 17 interiors have been restored to date. Gazprom Group supports large-scale exhibition and restoration projects, in particular the State Hermitage Museum, the State Russian Museum, the Faberge Museum.

Gazprom Group's outreach and social program makes St. Petersburg a great urban space for life and business, an attractive tourist, cultural and educational hub, and serves as a push towards better and more sustainable growth of regional economy. In 2021 Gazprom came first amongst other large Russian companies in SCR rating by the Institute of Strategic Communications based on a three year history of public projects in Russia.