

PRESS RELEASE

Personal Choice: Collectors' Selections from their own Collections

14 February – 6 April 2014

Curated by Yulia Aksenova, in collaboration with Anton Belov and Kate Fowle

What creates the desire to collect a work of art? *Personal Choice* will present a selection of artworks from prominent private collections of contemporary art in Russia. Over twenty leading collectors from across the country have been invited to choose one significant artwork from their collection and share why they like it so much.

The collectors will determine their own selection criteria, but for each, the common question is: "Which work to present?" As each collection has been assembled through personal passions and subjective tastes, many works have special meaning for those who look at them every day. What are the decisions behind the 'the difficult choice' made by each collector for this exhibition? And what hidden stories can be revealed for each chosen artwork?

Russia boasts a long-standing tradition of private collecting, which peaked in the early 20th century. Audiences today enjoy a legacy left behind by the patrons from this period, such as Sergei Shchukin, Ivan Morozov, and Pavel Tretyakov, whose personal collections, bequeathed to the public, have laid the foundation for some of the largest gallery and museum collections in Russia. However, following the October Revolution in 1917, private collecting declined, or at the very least, continued as a clandestine practice. Then, during the rapidly transformative 1990s, the practice of collecting art was revived and heralded as a public symbol of individuality. At the turn of the century, collecting entered a new phase with the emergence of a more globally-engaged Russia and newfound interest in international contemporary art.

The recent emergence of private museums, foundations, and art centers in major cities across Russia reflects how significant art has become to contemporary culture. Ultimately, private Russian collections created today could help to form a legacy which encourages vibrant art communities and professional art practices throughout the country in the future.

Personal Choice will therefore examine collecting on two levels: as a subjective phenomenon based on the connection between the owner and the artwork; and as a social gesture, where the personal commitment of building a private collection makes a significant contribution to public life now or in the future. Offering a window into the time-honored tradition of art collecting in Russia, the exhibition will present works selected by some of the most prominent contemporary collectors in the country.

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Collectors include:

Dmitry Aksenov, Mikhail Alshibaya, Leonid Blavatnik, Viktor Bondarenko, Andrey Cheglakov, Leonid Dobrovsky, Vladislav Doronin, Leonid Friedland, Andrey Gorodilov, Konstantin Grigorishin, Alexey Kuzmichev, Iveta and Tamaz Manashev, Igor Markin, Margarita Pushkina, Dmitry Razumov, Ekaterina and Vladimir Semenikhin, Olga Slutsker, Vladimir Smirnov, Andrei Tretyakov, Igor Tsukanov, Olga Vashchilina, Alexander Zhukov, Dasha Zhukova and Roman Abramovich

Kindly supported by Falcon Private Bank.

EDUCATION PROGRAM

Garage Education presents a series of educational events for *Personal Choice*, including conversations with the collectors featured within the exhibition, family workshops, exhibition tours, and activities for children.

Participation is free. For the full schedule of events, visit www.garageccc.com.

Notes in the Margin

Online Guide

What motivates collectors of art? What impact might their activities have on the future? How has the digital age changed art collecting? This online guide to the exhibition will attempt to understand and discuss related issues.

Available for download at www.garageccc.com.

Family Quest Guide

What defines an art collector? What guides his or her choices – personal taste and interests, or the market value of the works? How do private collections become part of museum displays? Discover the answers to these questions and many more through the exhibition's Family Quest Guide, developed by Garage for children and their parents. Designed as a sticker album, the guide will appeal to even the youngest visitors. At the end of the quest, all participants will have assembled their own collection of artworks.

Family Quest Guides are available free of charge at the Garage Information Desk.



Open Workshops

Saturdays and Sundays, 12 – 4:00 pm

For children ages 5 and above, and creative adults

Is it possible to identify a collector based upon the artwork that he or she has selected for the exhibition? How would one build a collection to represent Earthlings for a show on Mars? Participants are invited to join discussions about art collections and will have the opportunity to create special time capsules and leave their own messages for future audiences.

Free of charge. No booking required.

Exhibition Tours

Saturdays and Sundays, 3 – 3:30 pm

Visitors are invited to join the discussion about individual works in the exhibition and their collectors, and to create their own personal collection with the help of Garage tour guides.

Free of charge. Spaces are limited. Groups should gather at the Garage Information Desk at least 10 minutes prior the tour.

Individual exhibition tours can be arranged on the day and time of your choice. For bookings and enquiries, visit the Garage Information Desk or call +7 495 645 05 20.

School Tours

On weekdays, Garage offers free tours of the exhibition for groups of students and schoolchildren.

Free of charge. For bookings, visit www.garageccc.com.

ABOUT GARAGE

Founded in 2008, Garage Center for Contemporary Culture is an independent platform for new thinking in Moscow. Through an extensive program of exhibitions, events, research, education, and publishing, Garage reflects on current developments in Russian and international culture, creating opportunities for public dialogue and the production of new work and ideas.

Garage is a project of The IRIS Foundation, founded by Dasha Zhukova.



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