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CFZ
CA' FOSCARI ZATTERE
CULTURAL FLOW ZONE

Zattere
Dorsoduro 1392
Venezia

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Curated by Silvia Burini,
Giuseppe Barbieri,
Anna Frants, Elena Gubanova,
Natasha Kurchanova

Director of CFZ Veronica Gusso

Assistant Curator Matteo Bertelé

Project Manager Marta De Marchis,
VarvaraEgorova

The authors of the introductory
articles are Natasha Kurchanova,
Lizaveta Matveeva

Editor of the Catalogue
Elena Gubanova, Ekaterina Guseva

Design by Aleksander Menus

Translation from Russian
to English Irina Barskova

Translation from Italian to English
Daniela Almansi

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ON MY WAY...

The time-tested cooperation between the Centre of Studies of Russian Art (CSAR) of Ca' Foscari University of Venice and the CYLAND Media Art Lab of St. Petersburg started in 2011, the year in which our Centre was founded. On the occasion of the 54th International Art Exhibition of the Venice Biennale, the two institutions had promoted the exhibition "We Are Here", curated by Silvia Burini. It was a *project about presence*, as stated by the six artists involved (Ludmila Belova, Ivan Govorkov, Elena Gubanova, Marina Koldobskaya, Anna Frants and Alexandra Dementieva), articulated into four installations: two were designed for the Sala delle Colonne at the campus of San Sebastiano, and two for the 16th-century garden on the basis of complex spatial relations, astronomical, alien, based on sound relationships, and interactive. One year later, one of these installations, titled "Red Shift", was awarded the Sergey Kuryokhin prize 2013 for "best artwork".

For the following edition of the Biennale (2013), the exhibition "Capital of Nowhere. Envisioning a Variable Landscape" in the recently inaugurated venue of Ca' Foscari Zattere (CFZ, Cultural Flow Zone), curated by Silvia Burini and Matteo Bertelé, presented an even larger group of artists, mostly from St. Petersburg: Anna Frants, Elena Gubanova & Ivan Govorkov, Marina Koldobskaya, Vitaly Pushnitsky, Peter Belyi, Alexander Terebenin, Petr Shvetsov, Ludmila Belova, Alexandra Dementieva, and the Kurvenschreiber collective. The exhibition, featuring thirteen artworks, was dedicated to life experiences in the ever-changing landscape of a multimedia society, and to the city intended as a constantly updated screen where advertisement is contaminated with politics, imaginary futures with history, documents with fictions. And where art becomes the capital of the world's lost identity.

This year, the synergy between CSAR and CYLAND is confirmed by a new exhibition project. "On My Way" gathers and presents the works of Ludmila Belova, Peter Belyi, Alexandra Dementieva, Anna and Daniil Frants, Ivan Govorkov, Elena Gubanova, Victoria Ilyushkina, Marina Koldobskaya, Vitaly Pushnitsky, Mariateresa Sartori, Alexander Shishkin-Hokusai, Alexander Terebenin, as well as a relevant selection of works by artists of the Arefiev Circle (Alexander Arefiev, Rodion Gudzenko, Valentin Gromov, Rikhard Vasmi, and Sholom Shvartz).

As the public will be able to notice, the exhibition preserves a number of elements already present in the previous experiences, such as an exacting confrontation with space as well as with current representation and communication scenarios. However, in this case, these elements are predominantly interpreted in the key of the journey, also in chronological terms: the journey of the artist, of generations, of expressive drives.

Such a topic doubtlessly acquires a specific relevance in the experience of artists who lived and worked in the Soviet Union, as they were not allowed to travel, especially abroad, as easily as their Western colleagues. However, this widespread limitation was counterbalanced by an inexhaustible capacity to generate new worlds and spaces of individual and collective freedom. In this light, a particularly relevant section will be the one about the artists of the Arefiev Circle, who managed to incarnate and address this inner drive. Their signs, now considered as Classics in the landscape of Russian art from the second half of the 20th century, are accompanied by the time-tested and skilful exploitation of modern multimedia technologies — a life-long characteristic of CYLAND's initiatives.

Here lies one of the underlying reasons for the institution's collaboration with Ca' Foscari's CSAR: the Centre's unwavering interest in the reconstruction — also by means of original periodization and contextualisation solutions — of the main trends of 20th-century Russian art, along with its commitment to promote the latest proposals of the contemporary art scene, especially when the latter welcome the perspectives offered by Information and Communication Technologies, in which Ca' Foscari and CSAR have developed a specialised and original know-how.

Silvia Burini, Giuseppe Barbieri