



STELLA ART FOUNDATION

There is a beginning IN THE END

The Secret Tintoretto Fraternity

venice.pushkinmuseum.art

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11 MAY

11 SEPTEMBER

Curators:

Marina Loshak

Olga Shishko

Artists:

Tintoretto

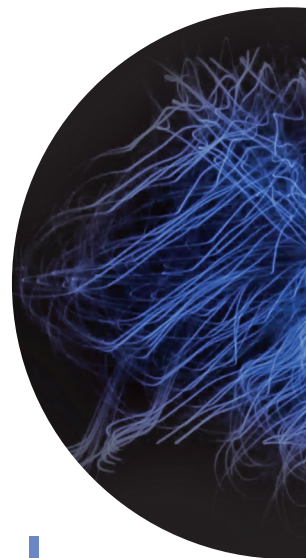
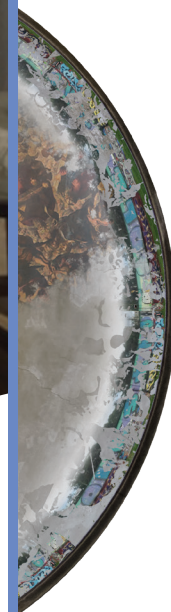
Emilio Vedova

Dmitry Krymov

Irina Nakhova

Gary Hill

!Mediengruppe Bitnik





Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts
Stella Art Foundation

announce the exhibition

There is a beginning IN THE END

The Secret Tintoretto Fraternity

Dates: May 11 – September 11, 2019

Media Preview: May 8, 2019, at 12:00 PM

Venue: Italy, Venice, San Fantin Church

Exhibition curators: Marina Loshak, Olga Shishko.

Together with the Stella Art Foundation, the Pushkin Museum will present a special project of the "Pushkin Museum XXI" initiative in Venice: "There is a Beginning in the End. The Secret Tintoretto Fraternity", a contemporary art exhibition in commemoration of the 500th anniversary of the Venetian artist Jacopo Robusti, called Tintoretto. This event will be held at the same time as the 58th Venice Biennale and organized with the support of the Mail.Ru Group, the partner of "Pushkin Museum XXI" initiative.

The San Fantin Church, where Tintoretto's paintings used to be displayed, will host works by contemporary artists Dmitry Krymov (Russia), Irina Nakhova (Russia) and Gary Hill (USA). These pieces will be in dialogue with a painting by Emilio Vedova, a modernist Italian artist and one of Tintoretto's followers, and the historical context of the venue. An intervention project by the !Mediengruppe Bitnik team from Switzerland will complement the exhibition and stress the atmosphere of participation and affiliation with a secret Venetian fraternity.

As Jean-Paul Sartre said, «Tintoretto is Venice, even if he does not paint Venice.» The key aspect of Tintoretto's paintings was space; his works embody the infinite universe in its violent eternal motion. The contemporary artists' works, created specifically for this project, reinterpret the great Venetian master's innovative approach and invite viewers to immerse themselves in Tintoretto's world. Each of them bears insight into Tintoretto's major artistic motifs, such as the spiritual unity of people and the experience of miracles, as well as evidence of his virtuosity with moving space and expressive light.



The project is arranged in four different parts where each act is a new artwork filling the entire space of the church. In addition to media objects, the exhibition will feature a painting by Emilio Vedova, an Italian abstractionist and main follower of Tintoretto in the 20th century, which is echoed by the works of contemporary artists.

Dmitry Krymov, a theatre director, turns the San Trovaso Church into a performative installation inspired by the Last Supper. As an interpretation of this biblical story, he constructs in the altar of the San Fantin Church an alternative reality based on trompe-l'oeil, an optical illusion, thereby causing the viewers to doubt the correctness of their perception. Actors Anatoly Belyy, Olga Voronina, and the students of the workshop by Dmitry Krymov (GITIS) took part in this art project.

A media installation by Irina Nakhova consists of three parts, each being a reference to the works of the great master. All of them reinterpret biblical stories from the perspective of contemporary history. For this artist, an important theme of Tintoretto's works is the vigorous movement of masses of people with their crucial emotional intensity. A swirling material born on earth searches for a way out in the transcendent outer space, which is hardly comprehensible but can be felt through Irina Nakhova's dramatic media object.

Gary Hill, a classic of American media art, decomposes Tintoretto's paintings into patterns and elements and uses those as a basis on which to create a new sounding and shimmering essence. The primary starting point for Hill is the realm of human consciousness rather than architectural space. The combination of visual images and intense electronic tones makes it possible to achieve a deep synesthetic experience.

Tondo, one of Emilio Vedova's later works presented at the exhibition, is in the shape of a circle. It reflects the concept of an endless loop of time. For Vedova, the mission of an artist was to record and re-translate the eternal themes of disturbing worldwide collisions: wars, injustice, oppression. Like Tintoretto, he handles huge spaces and forces of nature rather than single images. He employs the circular shape to go beyond the depictive environment through the connection between space and time.

The painting *The Origin of Love* (1562) by Tintoretto from the collection of the famous Venetian antiquarian Pietro Scarpa will become the conceptual center of the exhibition.

The painting was commissioned by Federico Contarini, the Procurator of San Marco, one of the founders of the Compagnia della Calza degli Accesi, to become its symbol and to decorate one of the halls of the Marciana Library, which was the important cultural center of the 16th-century Venice and the place for the meetings of fraternity members.



Tintoretto portrayed the plot of Sperone Speroni's Love Dialogues, which were popular at the time. Apollo holds in his hand a brazier with a human soul, in which the sun kindles love. The young god is accompanied by figures of Aphrodite Pandemos and Aphrodite Urania – earthly and heavenly love. The work was in oblivion until 1991, when it was discovered by the Scarpa family.

The Pushkin Museum exhibition will be the first event to welcome a wide audience to the San Fantin Church after a decade of restoration work. Its construction was finished in the 16th century, while the first local public worship buildings date back to the 10th century.

Another participant of the exhibition is the !Mediengruppe Bitnik team, which will hold a secret intervention project for the viewers to join Tintoretto's Secret Fraternity. The atmosphere of secrecy, affiliation and co-creation will connect their project with the Venetian fraternities.

Marina Loshak, Director of the Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts:

«Tintoretto introduced changes into the world of art, changes that contrasted with conventional, seemingly regular and traditional life. The theme of brotherhoods, including the poor ones that ordered Tintoretto's paintings, is important for us. This exhibition is about the role of an artist who neither deals with rich clients nor looks for means of subsistence or personal comfort. He aims to remove any distractions from a person's clear view of works which surround the liturgy, works which are the person's focal point and will change him.».

Stella Kesaeva, President of Stella Art Foundation:

«In 2019 our Foundation is returning to Venice for the seventh time. We have represented Russia in the national pavilion at the Venice Biennale on three occasions. Before that, as part of a concurrent program, we displayed projects in the Ca' Rezzonico Museum and the Tiraoro and Battioro School of Arts, and we held a special event in 2005 at the Guggenheim Foundation. This time, in cooperation with the Pushkin Museum, the Foundation is co-organizing an exhibition where current art echoes the works of Tintoretto, a great Venetian master whose 500th anniversary is celebrated worldwide this year.»

Alexander Karmaev, Vice President of Communications, Mail.ru Group:

«Modern art and technology are closely related and stimulate each other's development. Like everything else in the modern world, art is committed to the Internet. It is our pleasure to contribute to the development of this area with a professional partner like the Pushkin State Museum. For the second consecutive year, we assist them in making their amazing projects for the Venice Biennale. Russia definitely has achievements to be proud of both in IT industry and contemporary art»



BIOGRAPHIES

Curators:

MARINA LOSHAK, Director of the Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts, curator, philologist. Previously, Ms. Loshak headed the Moscow Center of Arts on Neglinnaya Street, the Gary Tatintsian Gallery and the Moscow Manege Museum and Exhibition Association. She is also a founder of the Proun Gallery. She has held the position of Director at the Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts since 2013.

OLGA SHISHKO, supervisor of the 21st Century Pushkin Museum initiative, curator, art historian, researcher, author of many publications. Ms. Shishko has organized many international events, festivals and exhibitions, exploring new media art. She founded MediaArtLab Center, which is the oldest Russian institution dedicated to media art.

Artists:

GARY HILL (born 1951, Santa Monica, USA) – artist working with a broad range of media – sculpture, sound, video, installation and performance – since the early 1970s, producing an extensive oeuvre of video, mixed-media installations, and performance work. He explores an array of issues ranging from the physicality of language, synesthesia and perceptual conundrums to ontological space and viewer interactivity. In 2013 the artist had his operatic directorial debut at the Lyon Opera House. Exhibitions of his work have been presented at museums and institutions worldwide, including solo exhibitions at the Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain, Paris; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; the Centre Pompidou, Paris; Guggenheim Museum SoHo, New York; Museum für Gegenwartskunst, Basel; Museum of Contemporary Art, Taipei; Center for Contemporary Art, Tel Aviv; Oi Futuro, Rio de Janeiro; Fundacion Centro Cultural Chacao, Caracas, Venezuela and most recently at MAAT (Museum of Art, Architecture and Technology), Portugal. Hill has been the recipient of numerous awards and honors, most notably the Leone d'Oro Prize for Sculpture at the Venice Biennale (1995), a John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation Fellowship Award (1998), the Kurt-Schwitters-Preis (2000).

DMITRY KRYMOV (born 1954, Moscow, Russia) is a theatre director, artist and stage designer. Member of the Union of Artists of Russia and the Union of Theater Workers of the Russian Federation. He graduated from the Moscow Art Theatre School in 1976. His stage plays are performed at prestigious international theater festivals in Austria, the UK and Germany. Krymov's plays were honored with the Golden Mask award six times. The Dmitry Krymov Laboratory tours around the world, including Brazil, the USA, Australia and New Zealand. Since the 1990s Krymov has been involved in art: painting, graphic art and installations. He has had solo and group exhibitions both in Russia and abroad. His works are in the collections of the State Tretyakov Gallery, the Russian Museum, the Vatican Museums, the World Bank. In 2004–2018 he



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was the artistic director in the art lab at the School of Dramatic Art theater. As a director, his focal point is the interaction of the actors with the stage spaces and the stage design. His most famous stage plays include *The Death of a Giraffe*, *Opus No. 7*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Tararabumbia*, *Honoré de Balzac*. Notes about Berdichev, etc.

IRINA NAKHOVA (born 1955, Moscow) is an artist and representative of Moscow Conceptualist circle. Her main art genres are painting and installations. She graduated from Moscow State University of Printing Arts (formerly Moscow Polygraphic Institute). Since 1989 she has had over 30 solo exhibitions in Moscow, London, Barcelona, Salzburg, New York, Chicago and other cities in Europe and the USA. She is a winner of the Kandinsky Award in the "Project of the Year" category (2013). She represented Russia at the 56th Venetian Biennale in 2015.

!MEDIENGRUPPE BITNIK (Carmen Weisskopf, born 1976, Switzerland; Domagoj Smoljo, born 1979, Croatia) is a team of media artists who work primarily with the Internet. In their works they explore the concept of virtual space, specifically the darknet. Their art works have been exhibited in many museums and galleries, such as the Shanghai Minsheng Art Museum, City Art Gallery of Ljubljana, Kunsthaus Zürich, Contemporary Art Center of Vilnius, Tehran Biennial, etc. The art group received the Swiss Art Award and an Honorary Mention at the Prix Ars Electronica. Their famous projects include *Opera Calling*. *Hacking The Opera – Arias For All!* at the Ural Industrial Biennial of Contemporary Art, *Random Darknet Shopper*, for which they created an automated online shopping bot, *Delivery for Mr. Assange*, and many others.

EMILIO VEDOVA (1919, Venice, Italy – 2006, same) is the main Tintoretto "emulator" in the 20th century. In 2013 curator Germano Celant organized an exhibition at Scuola Grande di San Rocco to illustrate the artistic dialog between Vedova and Tintoretto. After years of being absorbed in expressionism, in 1942 Emilio Vedova joined the "Corrente" movement, which formed an opposition to totalitarian art. In 1946 he founded the "New Italian Secession" movement in association with other artists. In 1948 he debuted at the Venetian Biennale. In 1960 he won a Grand Prize for Painting, in 1954 he won a fellowship that allowed him to spend 3 months in Brazil, and in 1997 he received the Golden Lion Award for Lifetime Achievement. He taught art in Salzburg, Venice, and a number of universities in the United States.



Consultants:

VIKTORIA MARKOVA, Historian of Art, Deputy Director for Research at the Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts, one of the world's leading experts on Italian Renaissance art.

ARCH. DON GIANMATTEO CAPUTO, Director of Pastoral Tourism and Cultural Heritage, Archdiocese of Venice.

GIUSEPPE BARBIERI, Historian of Art, Head of the Department of Philosophy and Cultural Heritage at Ca' Foscari University of Venice.

GABRIELLA BELLI, Historian of Art, Director of the Foundation for the Municipal Museums of Venice.

THE WORK OF TINTORETTO FROM THE COLLECTION OF PIETRO SCARPA WILL BE PRESENTED AT THE EXHIBITION IN VENICE



The Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts will present the Tintoretto painting *The Origins of Love* (1562) as part of the project "There is a Beginning in the End. The Secret Tintoretto Fraternity" in Venice with the support of Pietro Scarpa.

The work is the part of the collection of the Antichità gallery owned by Scarpa, one of the pioneers of the renaissance of an antique business in Venice. The painting was lost in the 17th century and discovered by the Scarpa family in 1991. Up to this point, the work was in the French collection, whose owners supported the version that the work was exported from Italy during the Napoleon's campaign. Since the discovering of Tintoretto's work, it has been shown in Tokyo, Japan, at the Querini Stampalia Foundation in Venice and other spaces. This show will be a rare opportunity for a Venetian audience to see it. In addition, the work will enter into a dialogue with the works of contemporary artists – Gary Hill, Irina Nakhova and !Mediengruppe Bitnik – that will actualize the Tintoretto heritage.



The Origins of Love was commissioned by Federico Contarini, one of the founders of the Compagnia della Calza degli Accesi, and became the emblem of this society. The members of the Society were responsible for organizing the most important public events in Venice and were engaged in social welfare and supported arts.

At some point the work was located in the Marciana Library. It was an important cultural center of Venice and there the Compagnia della Calza meetings were held. It was also the evidence of the knowledge inherited by Venetian humanists from antiquity. Federico Contarini probably followed in his activities in the footsteps of a relative humanist Sperone Speroni.

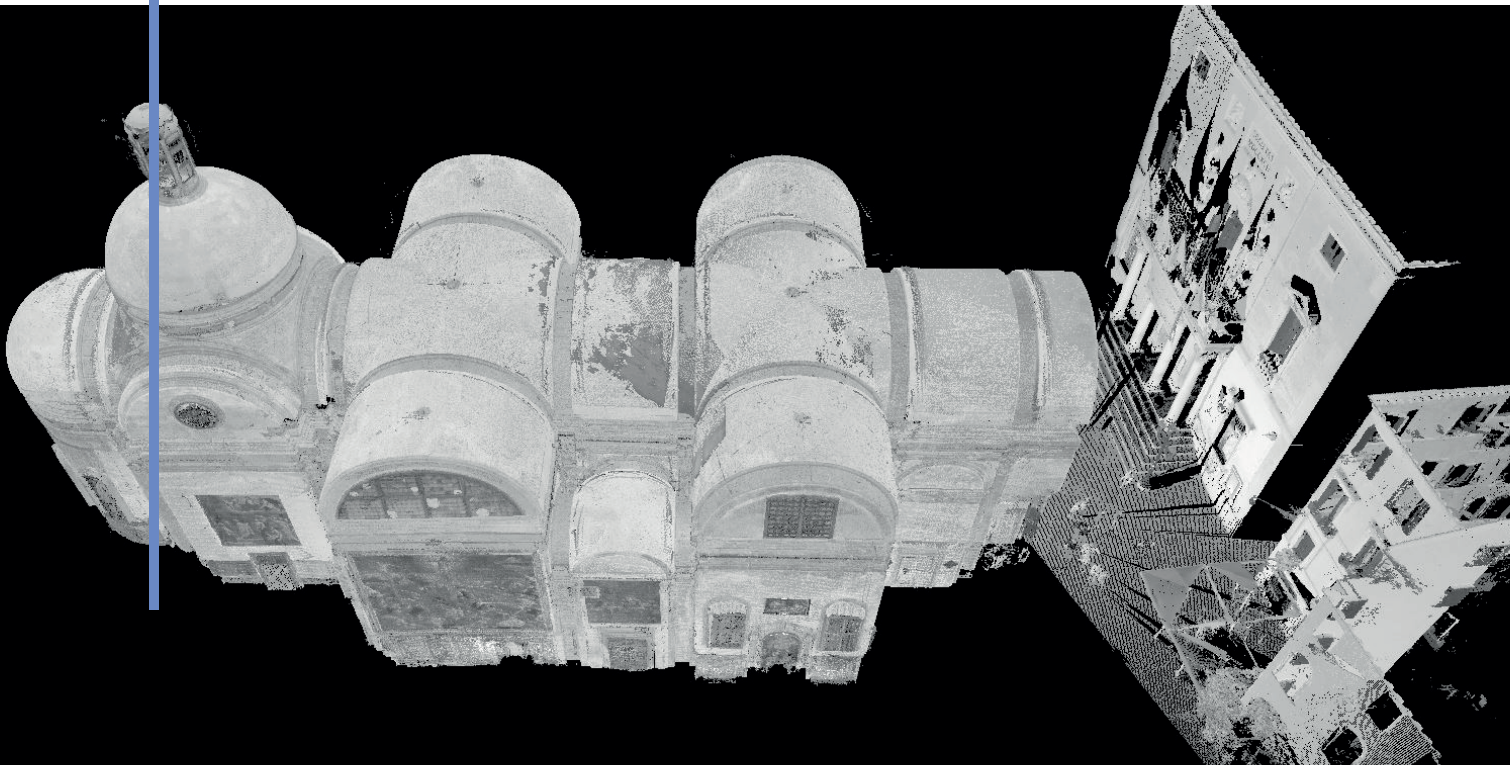
The iconography of the Tintoretto painting is based on the Dialogues of Love published by Speroni in the 1540s, which were extremely popular among Venetians at that time. Dialogues of Love refer to Plato's Dialogues and to the antique heritage. In the picture, Apollo holds in his hand a brazier with a human soul, in which the sun kindles love. The young god is accompanied by figures of Aphrodite Pandemos and Aphrodite Urania – earthly and heavenly love.

The painting The Origins of Love will become the conceptual center of the exhibition and mark the beginning of an important cultural exchange between Scarpa family and the Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts.

THE HISTORY OF SAN FANTIN CHURCH

San Fantin is a church with a very long history, erected possibly as early as the 6th century. It may have originally been a private parish church of a Venetian family by the name of Molino or Da Molina. Some historians believe that it actually belonged to the Pisani family; it is also reported that this family brought a miraculous icon of the Virgin Mary from the East and placed it in their church. Another version of the church's history claims that it was built around the year 1000 on a commission by the noble families of Barozzi, Equilia, and Aldicina, but a church by this name had already been mentioned in manuscripts in the year 966. The first documental reference to San Fantin Church is dated 1127. By the 15th century its name was changed to Santa Maria delle Grazie di San Fantino. It burned down and was reconstructed several times, with the first recorded fire occurring in the 12th century. In 1564 it was reconstructed based on a plan by Antonio Abbondi, known as Scarpagnino, and a chapel by Jacopo Tatti was added at the same time.

The church is situated on the square facing the elegant facades of the Teatro La Fenice and Ateneo Veneto Institute of Science, Literature and Art. The design of the church is attributed to many architects: Pietro Lombardo, Sebastiano



Mariani, and Jacopo Sansovino. A number of relics are stored here, including those of St. Marcellina and Holy Martyr Tryphon.

The funeral urn of Vinciguerra Dandolo, a work by Tullio Lombardo, is preserved over the door of the sacristy. Based on documents from 1908, paintings displayed in the church included "Freeing Venice from the Plague" and "Pietà" by Giovanni Battista Piazzetta, "Crucifixion" by Leonardo Corona, "The Visitation" by Jacopo Tintoretto, and others. Later, these art works were transferred to other institutions.

Currently, a number of art works are still displayed in the church's interior, such as a painting by Joseph Heintz the Younger and a marble sculpture by Giuseppe Bernardi Torretti on the high altar. The sculpture portrays San Fantin as a Roman martyr knight; this iconography resulted from an incorrect rendering of the saint's nickname – "horseman" (or "stable hand") – as "knight".

SCUOLA GRANDE DI SAN FANTIN

Erected between 1592 and 1600, the Ateneo Veneto building was designed by architects Antonio and Tommaso Contin and Alessandro Vittoria for the Scuola Grande di San Fantin, founded in the 15th century by two congregants: Santa Maria della Consolazione and San Girolamo. The mission of Scuola was to accompany convicts under a death sentence to the place of execution, hence its nicknames "Scuola della Buone Morte" ("School of the Good Death") or "Scuola dei Picái" ("School of Hanged Men"). The Scuola operated until the first decade of the 19th century, when it suffered from Napoleonic repressions and was closed down.



It has since become a residence for Ateneo Veneto, an institution created by the merging of the Venetian Medical Academy and the Venetian Academy of Literature, based on an order by Napoleon in 1810.

Inside Ateneo Veneto are paintings from the 16th century (Cinquecento era), such as Leonardo Corona's "Passion of Christ," the "Purgatory" series by Jacopo Palma the Younger, "Dinner at the Pharisee's House" by Francesco Fontebasso, and "David and Isaiah" by Bernardo Strozzi. The library of Ateneo Veneto holds paintings by Paolo Veronese and Jacopo Tintoretto. This historic building is also home to the Institute of Science, Literature and Art.

SAINT FANTINUS THE WONDERWORKER OF CALABRIA

Saint Fantinus, also known as Cavallaro (Greek: ορπινομεύς) or Taumaturgo, was a Calabrian wonderworker.

He lived in Taureana di Palmi between the years 294 and 336, approximately. He worked as a stable hand for a Roman patrician Balsamio, hence the nickname "horseman." By night he covertly used Balsamio's horses to plow the land of poor peasants. Some spiteful people reported this to his employer, and Fantinus was forced to flee in order to escape the master's rage. When Fantinus found himself at a river bank, he prayed and used a stick, just like Moses, to make the waters divide and create a passageway for himself. Balsamio witnessed this miracle, stopped the chase, apologized, and eventually converted to Christianity.

20 miracles are attributed to Saint Fantinus. He died around the age of 40 and had a ritual burial as a saint in a sepulcher inside a Roman-era hypogeum beneath a 19th-century church.

In the late 1980s, a group of young volunteers from Palmi set out to find the 19th-century church dedicated to Saint Fantinus. As a result, they rediscovered the ancient building, church, and sepulcher, which were in poor condition by that time. (The sepulcher had already been rediscovered by local researchers headed by Professor Luigi Lacquaniti in 1952, but their findings were not given much attention.) The group of volunteers immediately engaged professionals to restore the site and revive the memory of Calabria's oldest saint.

On July 24, 1994, the volunteer group assumed the name "Cultural Movement of San Fantin" and, in collaboration with the local parish and the Byzantine community of Reggio-Calabria-Bova, re-initiated an old festival celebrating Saint Fantinus that includes an equestrian parade and a Communion service in Byzantine Greek.



BACKGROUND

Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts

The Museum has some of Russia's most prominent foreign art exhibits. It opened on May 31 (June 13), 1912. The Museum was founded by Ivan Tsvetaev, a professor of art theory and history at Imperial Moscow University and the father of poet Marina Tsvetaeva. Today, it houses around 700,000 works of art from various eras: from ancient civilizations to the beginning of the 21st century. The Museum complex includes 27 buildings, and the Museum's Main Building is an architectural monument from the turn of the 20th century. The Museum collections consist of paintings by French impressionists previously owned by the Moscow merchants Sergey Shchukin and Ivan Morozov, pieces of art from Ancient Egypt from the collection of Vladimir Golenishchev, masterpieces of the old masters, and other valuable artifacts.

«Pushkin Museum XXI»

Since 2014, the Pushkin Museum has been implementing an initiative aimed at making conventional exhibition spaces more attractive to a diverse audience by incorporating modern art works into them. In 2017, we launched the "Pushkin Museum XXI" program, designed to acquaint visitors with modern art and its most outstanding representations. The mission of the program is to display art works of "new classical" artists who communicate with the world in the language of modern art.

The "Pushkin Museum XXI" program seeks to combine traditional masterpieces of the world's artistic heritage with contemporary art. The "Pushkin Museum XXI" is an innovative program that makes it possible to create a mix of all forms of art, from painting and sculpture to virtual reality and video art.

Thanks to this program, the first Russian collection of media art is being developed. This collection will include art works created from Museum collection items, site-specific projects and art works that reinterpret classical art by using new technologies. The first acquisitions include video installations by Jonas Mekas (USA) and Gary Hill (USA), video paintings by Marianne Heske (Norway), and a trilogy by the Russian art group "Provmyza" (Sergey Provorov and Galina Myznikova) – Despair (2008), Inspiration (2010), and Eternity (2011).

Stella Art Foundation

This foundation is a non-profit organization established in Moscow in 2003 by Stella Kesaeva. Its mission is to support modern art, in particular to sponsor projects exploring the legacy of the Moscow Conceptualist School. The collection of the Foundation includes over a thousand art works from the 20th and 21st centuries. Stella Art Foundation has completed about a hundred projects both in Russia and abroad, including the Venetian Biennale, promoting the art of Russian and international artists. The Foundation has successfully organized six exhibition events. In 2011, 2013 and 2015 Stella Kesaeva was a commissar of a Russian pavilion; in these three years Stella Art Foundation presented three exhibitions



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featuring art works of the Moscow Conceptualist School: "Empty Areas" by Andrey Monastyrskiy (curator Boris Groys, 2011); "Danaë" by Vadim Zakharov (curator Udo Kittelman, 2013); and "Green Pavilion" by Irina Nakhova (curator Margarita Tupitsyna, 2015).

www.safmuseum.org

[San Fantin Church](#)

This church is situated on the Teatro La Fenice square near San Marco Cathedral in Venice and bears the name of the venerable Fantinus the Wonderworker. Neither its age nor the name of its architect is known for certain. Some historians believe it dates back to the 6th century, while others argue that it was built in the 10th century. It is known that the church burned several times. In the 12th century it was rebuilt by the Pisani family, and in the early 16th century the redesign was completed based on plans by architect Scarpagnino, with the chapel by Venetian architect Jacopo Sansovino added in the middle of the 16th century. Based on the archival data, the following art works were displayed in the church until the early 20th century: Liberation of Venice from the Plague and Pietà by Giovanni Battista Piazzetta, Holy Family by Giovanni Bellini and The Visitation by Tintoretto. These art works are currently displayed in various museums.

[Mail.ru Group](#)

Partner of the "Pushkin Museum XXI" initiative and the largest holding in Russia by daily mobile audience. We support talent teams and open new avenues for them both in Russia and globally. The company owns the leading e-mail service, one of the largest portals in the Russian-language Internet, the largest Russian social networks – VKontakte, Odnoklassniki, and Moi Mir, a portfolio of the most popular online games, including Warface, Armored Warfare, Skyforge, and Perfect World, a MAPS.ME service, providing offline maps and mobile navigation based on OpenStreetMap data, and a number of IM services.

Partner of the performative program of the exhibition – [Russian Institute of Theater Arts - GITIS](#).

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