

SOCIO-POLITICAL AND ARTWORLD CONTEXT

10 February 2007

While attending the annual Munich Security Conference, the President of Russia, Vladimir Putin, gives a speech which many Western experts and journalists perceive as a return to Cold War rhetoric. In particular, President Putin says: "Independent legal norms are, as a matter of fact, coming increasingly closer to one state's legal system. One state and, of course, first and foremost the United States, has overstepped its national borders in every way. This is visible in the economic, political, cultural and educational policies it imposes on other nations."

March 2007

THE SECOND MOSCOW BIENNALE OF CONTEMPORARY ART (DIALOG/P.X) (01.03-01.04) opens in Moscow and is curated, as before, by Joseph Backstein, Daniel Birnbaum, Jara Boubnova, Nicolas Bourriaud,

Rosa Martinez, and Hans Ulrich Obrist, who are joined this time by Cunnar B. Kwaran and Fulya Erdemci. The venues include the top floor of the exclusive department store TsUM, and the Federation Tower, an uncompleted skyscraper that was originally launched by the Mirax Group of property developers. The I Believe! Exhibition (28.01-31.03) by a group of Moscow artists is curated by the former auctioneer Oleg Kulik. The exhibition is one of the first major shows at the **WINZAVOD CENTRE FOR CONTEMPORARY ART** (ESSAY / P. X), a new cluster of galleries and creative studios opened in a gentrified area. The private art foundation Contemporary City runs another emblematic exhibition *Urbanist Formalism* (01.03-01.04).

March 2007

FORBIDDEN ART 2006 (ESSAY / P. X) (07.03-31.03), an exhibition curated by Andrei Yerofeev, opens at the Sakharov Museum and Public Centre. It featured works banned from exhibition in a number of Moscow's museums and galleries in 2006. Soon afterwards, Yerofeev and the museum's director Samodurov are charged with criminal offences under laws concerning the incitement of religious hatred. The case is brought forward by the People's Assembly (Narodny Sobor), a nationalist, conservative Orthodox movement. Andrei Yerofeev is eventually sacked from his post at the Tretyakov Gallery in June of 2008.

April 2007

The Estonian Art Museum in Tallinn plans to open *The Return of Memory*, an exhibition curated by Viktor Misiano featuring works by artists from the former USSR that reflect on their Soviet and



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FIG. X: CAPTION





FIG. X: CAPTION



FIG. X: CAPTION



FIG. X: CAPTION



14 April 2007

Over 5,000 people take part in an unauthorised protest in Moscow, billed as the "Dissenters' March". Despite special purpose police units, interior troops and the city's police shutting off Pushkin Square, between 1,000 – 2,000 protesters manage to break through the cordons and carry on with the rally, marching without hindrance from Pushkin Square to Trubnaya Square.

23 April 2007

Boris Yeltsin, first President of Russia, dies.

post-Soviet experiences. **DAVID TER-OGANYAN** (IMAGE X/P.X), Ilya Budrajtskis and **ALEXANDRA CALKINA** (IMAGE X/P.X) are supposed to present "A Draft of a Revolution in Tallinn", an artistic study of a mass rebellion in the current Estonian capital viewed as a utopian possibility. However, a few days before the opening, Tallinn actually sees mass demonstrations that are without precedent in the country's recent history: Russian-speaking youths protest against the Soviet Soldier memorial being dismantled in the city center. Shortly after the turmoil begins, Russia and Estonia break off diplomatic relations, and the exhibition opening is postponed indefinitely. After May 2007, the project in question, with a number of works by Eastern European artists added by the curator, is shown at the Luigi Pecci Centre for Contemporary Art in Prato and a number of other museums under the title Progressive Nostalgia (27.05-26.08), becoming an internationally renowned representation of post-Soviet art.

27 April 2007

Cab Drivers organise a protest **WE DON'T KNOW WHAT WE WANT** (IMAGE X/P.X) in one of Moscow's parks, where an alley is cordoned off with a six-metre-long banner bearing these words. Among the participants are Oleg Vorotnikov, Petr Verzilov and Nadezhda Tolokonnikova, later to become members of the **VOINA GROUP**. (ESSAY/P.X)

1 May 2007

Voina's first artistic action takes place in Moscow. During "Mordovsky Hour", the activists went into a McDonald's shouting "Checkout's free!" while throwing live cats



FIG. X: CAPTION



FIG. X: CAPTION



over the counter in the direction of the kitchen.

June 2007

The Russian Pavilion at the 52nd Venice Biennale (10.06-21.11) is curated by Olga Svioblova, the director of the Moscow House of Photography. The project is entitled Click I Hope after an interactive installation by the artist Julia Milner, previously known as the spouse of the owner of Russia's largest internet holding company, mail.ru. Other participants included AES+F, Alexander Ponomarev, the fashion designer and showman Andrei Bartenev, and Arseny Meshcheryakov, the owner of a publishing company who made his debut as an artist. Complex media installations are dominant. The Russian elite shows some interest in the Venice Biennale for the first time. Roman Abramovich's yacht was moored at the Venice embankment.

June 2007

For the first time, the DOCUMENTA 12 (16.06-23.09) includes numerous works of Russian artists: Andrei Monastyrsky, **DMITRY CUTOV** ^(DIALOG/P.X), Anatoly Osmolovsky and Kirill Preobrazhensky. The independent publishing programme presented a newspaper run by **CHTO DELAT?** ^(DIALOG/P.X)

4 July 2007

The 199th International Olympic Committee Session, held in Guatemala, selects the Russian city of Sochi to host the 2014 Winter Olympics. Several months later, on the 8th of November, a specially founded state corporation, Olympstroy, is appointed as the main contractor for the construction



FIG. X: CAPTION



FIG. X: CAPTION



of Olympic venues and the Games' infrastructure. In the run-up to 2014, Olympstroy will receive 186 billion roubles (approximately 6.2 billion USD).

September 2007

Cagosian Gallery holds its first Russian show entitled *Insight?* (19.10-28.10) in a branch of the Alfa Bank located in Barvikha Luxury Village, an exclusive shopping mall near Moscow. It features works by Picasso, Rothko, Miró, Warhol, Kabakov, and Damien Hirst. A year later, a similar exhibition is organised in a former Red October chocolate factory. This event marked the last of the gallery's forays into the Russian market.

20 November 2007

A four-week-long strike starts at the Russian Ford plant, located near St Petersburg, resulting in serious public reaction. As a result, the trade union signs a new agreement with a 20% pay rise.

2 December 2007

Russia's parliamentary election brings victory for President Putin's party. United Russia wins 64.3% of the vote (70% of the seats), the Communist Party of the Russian Federation receives 11.57% (12.7%). UR has a constitutional majority and the largest representation ever achieved by a "ruling party" during the post-Soviet period.

2 December 2007

President Putin supports Dmitry Medvedev's candidacy for the post of the President of the Russian Federation.

December 2007

The Kandinsky Prize, founded by Shalva Breus, a businessman and the owner of *Art Chronicle* magazine, is awarded for the first time. This award (currently worth approx. 40 000 euro), intended for Russian artists, is privately funded and internationally judged. Anatoly Osmolovsky, a former political activist who now works as a sculptor and adheres to the idea of autonomous art, is named the first winner in "The Project of the Year" category.

29 February 2008

On the eve of Russia's presidential elections, the Voina group stages an action entitled **FUCK FOR THE TEDDY BEAR HEIR!** ^(ESSAY/P.X) in Moscow's Timiryazev State Museum of Biology. The event gains immense popularity.

2 March 2008

The presidential elections end with Dmitry Medvedev winning in the first round by securing 70.28% of the vote. On the 8th of May the new president confirms Putin's appointment as Prime Minister. These events mark the emergence of a political system often called "tandem" in the media, a term hinting at the limited degree of Medvedev's political independence, an impression unaffected by his attempts to show his own, more liberal stance.

February – March 2008

While fighting for the St. Petersburg European University to be reopened, students from a number of universities and activists launch the Street University, a St Petersburg-based street platform for **SELF-EDUCATION**. ^(DIALOG/P.X)

11 April 2008

The body of Anna Alchuk, a poet and artist who took part in the exhibition **BEWARE: RELIGION**, ^(ESSAY/P.X) is found in Berlin. An inquest concludes that the cause of death is suicide. Facing charges for the curation of an exhibition, Alchuk was acquitted in 2005 on the grounds of a lack of evidence, but nevertheless had to leave the country with her husband, the philosopher Mikhail Ryklin.

May 2008

The webzine OpenSpace is launched in Moscow, its arts pages becoming one of the platforms for "new left-wing" artists. The publication ceases to exist in 2012.

May 2008

The 5th Moscow World Fine Art Fair (30.05-04.06), designed to sell classical art, an-



FIG. X: CAPTION



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tique furniture and jewelry, includes contemporary art galleries for the first time, while one of Winzavod's galleries holds an exhibition of works by the socialite Ksenia Sobchak (exhibition opens on 20.05 and is made jointly with the designer Andrei Bar-tenev), who displays her shoe collection arranged by colour.

June 2008

The New Manezh exhibition centre hosts *Struggling for the Banner. Soviet Art Between Trotsky and Stalin (1926-36)* (20.06-05.07) by the independent curator Ekaterina Degot. This is the first time that Stalin's "left zig-zag" and cultural revolution are highlighted as a key period in Russian art history. Dmitry Cutov, David Ter-Oganyan and other contemporary artists take part in the project.

June 2008

The construction of the Bakhmetyev Bus Depot, designed by the avant garde architect Konstantin Melnikov, is converted into a centre for contemporary culture called Garage, which is funded by Roman Abramovich.

3 July 2008

The Voyna group stages the action **A COP IN A PRIEST'S ROBE.** (IMAGE X/P.X)

July 2008

The group Chto Delat? completes its film *Perestroika Songspiel: A Victory Over the Putsch*. This debut in the Brechtian genre of recitative opera was followed by *Partisan Songspiel: A Belgrade Story* (2009) and *A Tower: Songspiel* (2010), the latter presenting an analysis of the situation concerning the construction of the Okhta



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Centre—the offices of the Gazprom corporation.

July 2008

Moscow's Factory Project holds an exhibition Politics in the Streets, directly related to the 40th anniversary of the May 1968 events in Paris. The show's curators, Kirill Medvedev, Ilya Budrajtskis, Nikolay Oleinikov and Oksana Sarkisyan, create what becomes a unique space by Moscow standards, where young art appears alongside elements of a political conference and music festival. The participants of Politics in the Streets include David Ter-Oganyan, **ARSENY ZHILYAEV**,^(ESSAY/P.X) (IMAGE X/P.X) the Voyna group, the Chto Delat platform, Alexandra Calkina, and others.

8 August 2008

Armed hostilities start in the Georgian-Ossetian conflict, with Russia officially joining the war on the side of South Ossetia. On the 11th of August, Medvedev and President Sarkozy of France, at talks in Moscow, draft a six-point resolution on the conflict intended to settle the situation in South Ossetia and Abkhazia. On the 26th of August Russia officially recognises Abkhazia and South Ossetia's independence.

September – October 2008

The first wave of the global financial crisis hits Russia, leading to mass redundancies in the industrial and service sectors. Later, according to economic analysts, the consequences of the crisis for Russia prove harsher than for most other countries. This is largely understood as the result of large foreign debts incurred by Russian companies (which by October 2008 approached the level of the country's gold

7 September 2008

The action **IN MEMORY OF THE DECEMBRISTS**^(ESSAY/P.X) is organised by the Voyna group.

September 2008

PERMM, a new contemporary art museum conceived and headed by the art dealer Marat Cuelman, opens in Perm, a large industrial city in the Urals, with a programmatic exhibition entitled The Russian Poor

and currency reserve assets) taken in conjunction with a slump in oil prices, down to 70 USD per barrel.

(25.09-30.11). The show defines the style of Russian art as a kind of "minimalism, done poorly". This pilot project marks the start of an outreach process with Guelman working with local authorities and with the United Russia party to bring contemporary art to the country's regions.

October 2008

The news breaks that Mercury, a major Russian luxury market player, the owner of Moscow's TsUM, the boutique shopping complex Barvikha Luxury Village and other sites, is becoming the main shareholder of the auction house Phillips de Pury.

December 2008

Kandinsky Prize is awarded to Alexey Belyaev-Gintovt, an active member of the far right Eurasia Movement which styles itself as fascist. During the award ceremony, a number of artists voice their protest. Later, the panel's decision becomes a target for journalists which forces the resignation of one of the judges, a Deutsche Bank representative. As a result, the bank stops supporting the prize.

28 December 2008

An intervention by Voina, **THE BANNING OF CLUBS** ^(ESSAY/P.X) (also known as "Citizens' Safety: Charity Work to Reinforce the Doors of the Elite Club Oprichnik"), blocks the entrance of Oprichnik restaurant blocked by welding metal sheets to it.

1 January 2009

Russia completely stops supplying gas to Ukraine. The gas conflict between the countries subsequently results in a significant increase in Russian gas prices for Ukraine.



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27 April 2009

Without any apparent motive, Major Denis Evsyukov, the police chief of one of Moscow's districts, opens fire at a supermarket. Evsyukov is detained at the scene after killing two people and injuring 22, all passers-by or customers. The incident provokes a nationwide public response causing a series of discussions about the necessity for a police reform.

9 May 2009

Participants in "Leftist Art. Leftist Philosophy. Leftist Poetry", a seminar organised by the group **CHTO DELAT?** (DIALOG/P.X) and the socialist movement Vpered! (Forward!) in Nizhny Novgorod, are oppressed by a special forces unit of the Ministry of Interior (MoI). After a search, documents and reading materials are confiscated and approximately 30 participants are taken to a local MoI office, where they are interviewed and photographed.

15 May 2009

Artem Loskutov, an artist and activist from Novosibirsk, is detained by operatives of the Anti-Extremism Centre on charges of possessing 11 grams of marijuana. In his view, the real cause for his arrest is the fact that he had been one of the organisers of "Monstrations", the annual May Day neo-dadaist flash mob held in Novosibirsk since 2004. An internet campaign is launched to protect Loskutov. He is released on 10 June and handed a 20 thousand rouble (635 USD) fine.

30 May 2009

A final exhibition opens at ARTStrelka, an independent art centre which has occupied the site of the former Red October

chocolate factory since 2004. Located in the very centre of Moscow, near the Kremlin, it is replaced by the Strelka Institute for Media, Architecture and Design with a trendy bar and restaurants. Thus began the development of a gentrified area intended for the “creative class”. There are plans to build a luxury residential complex named The Golden Island.

June 2009

The Rodchenko School of Photography and Multimedia sees its first students, who enrolled in the autumn of 2007, graduate - Ekaterina Samutsevich is among them.

June 2009

The Russian Pavilion at the 53rd Venice Biennale (07.06-22.11), curated by Olga Sviblova, exhibits a group project entitled A Victory Over the Future. Several more “Russian projects” open in Venice at the same time, all of them financed by private foundations. Russian art has never before been so aggressive in its expansion abroad.

July – August 2009

Several exhibitions are held in Moscow, curated by young artists or without curators entirely. Participants in The Conquered City include Ilya Budraj-tskis, **ALEXANDRA CALKINA** (IMAGE X/P.X), **DAVID TER-OCANYAN** (IMAGE X/P.X) and others (27 July 2008 – 15 August 2009, Galeria Regina, Moscow). The artist **ARSENY ZHILYAEV** (ESSAY/P.X) (IMAGE X/P.X) presents his project *A Machine and Nata-sha* (20 July - 15 August 2009, PROEKT_FAB-RIKA, Moscow). The artists’ self-organisation is noted as symptomatic of the new era.

2 June 2009

Hundreds of people in Pikalevo (Leningrad Region) block off a federal motorway connecting the town to St. Petersburg. The protesters demand that planned redundancies be reversed and workers be paid the salaries owed to them. The town’s main business, Pikalevo Alumina Refinery, has suffered a cash flow crisis, resulting in workers not being paid for several months and the local power station being switched off because of debts. On the 4th of June Prime Minister Putin visits Pikalevo to meet the refinery’s owners and sign an agreement stipulating that resources to repay salary debts will be provided from the state budget.

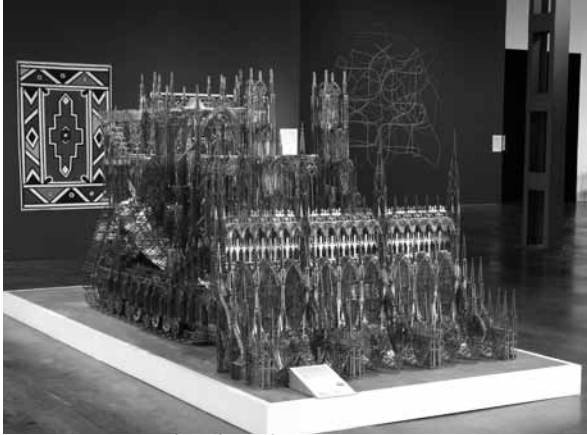


FIG. X: CAPTION



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17 August 2009

An accident hits the Sayano-Shushenskaya hydroelectric station, the largest power plant in Russia and one of the biggest hydropower facilities in the world. Beyond taking the lives of 75 people, the accident leads to a wide-scale ecological catastrophe (a 130-kilometre oil slick stretches along the Yenisey River, one of the largest in Siberia), likewise dealing a blow to the region's economy. The subsequent inquest and reports produced by a specially appointed parliamentary commission cite worn-out equipment and failure to follow operating instructions as the main factors behind the accident.

August 2009

Plans to create the first national museum of contemporary art are announced. The idea is to expand the existing building of the National Centre for Contemporary Arts (NCCA), adding 15 storeys to the building. The museum is envisaged to have an international collection (including Damien Hirst and the Chapman brothers), supported by private galleries.

September 2009

The **THIRD MOSCOW BIENNALE OF CONTEMPORARY ART** ^(DIALOG/P.X) (25.09-25.10) opens at the Garage Centre for Contemporary Culture (the other venue being TsUM). Against Exclusion is curated by Jean-Hubert Martin in reference to his 1989 project Magicians of the Earth. Although the show breaks popularity records, the political and social meaning of the post-colonial themes go unnoticed by the general public.

September 2009

For the first time, the streets of Moscow see critical guerilla posters and mock advertisements in place of real ones. An unknown group, Ovosham.Net (No to Vegetables), which did not call itself an art collective, accepts responsibility for the campaign. The authorities take some time to notice the posters, which become extremely popular among bloggers.



FIG. X: CAPTION



FIG. X: CAPTION

27 November 2009

The Neva Express train travelling from Moscow to St Petersburg derails, causing the deaths of 27 people and injuring over 100. According to official reports, the crash is the result of a terrorist act carried out by Islamic fundamentalists from the North Caucasus.

30 December 2009

Putin claims that the Russian economic crisis is past its active phase.

29 March 2010

41 people die and 88 are injured in two powerful explosions at two Moscow metro stations. As is established almost immediately afterwards, the terrorist attacks are committed within an hour of one another by female suicide bombers. Two days later, Doku Umarov, a leader of the Chechen separatists, makes a statement acknowledging his responsibility for the attacks.

8 May 2010

66 people die and over 100 are injured in a gas blast at the Rospadskaya mine in the town of Mezhdurechensk in Western Siberia. On the 14th of May a meeting to mourn the dead is held in Mezhdurechensk. Participants complain about low salaries and poor working conditions. Many openly claim to have breached safety regulations (the explosion apparently having been caused by such a breach) in order to be paid a decent salary. Hundreds of miners and their families try blocking off the railway the following night, leading to clashes with the police.



FIG. X: CAPTION



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December 2009

Kandinsky Prize ceremony takes place in the suburban shopping mall Barvikha Luxury Village. In his acceptance speech, the winner of the prize, Vadim Zakharov, accuses the new bourgeoisie of reluctance in supporting particular movements of Russian contemporary art, ex. Moscow conceptualism and its leader, Anderi Monastyrsky. In turn, a reviewer writing for a major financial paper accuses Zakharov of being ungrateful to private capitalists.

1 May 2010

The first May Congress of Creative Workers takes place in Moscow, an assembly of creative organisations and collectives working in the field of culture and humanities education.

June 2010

A special operation in Primorsky Krai, a region in the Russian Far East, disarms a group referred to as the "Primorye Cuerrillas" in the media. Active since February 2010, the six-member group carries out a number of attacks on policemen, killing two and injuring six. In a video address, later spread over the Internet, the guerrillas call on people to fight the outrageous crimes of the police: "although people are helpless and humble, there are those who are not afraid". The case of the guerrillas provokes a strong reaction nationwide. In a poll conducted by a popular radio station, up to 75% of callers support the Primorye Cuerrillas.

June – August 2010

A **CAMPAIGN TO PROTECT THE KHIMKI FOREST** ^(DIALOG/P.X), situated in the suburbs of Moscow, is underway. In early June,

14 June 2010

The Voyna group stages its protest **A DICK HELD PRISONER AT THE FSB** ^(ESSAY/P.X) in St. Petersburg.

June 2010

The Second Moscow Biennale of Young Art, entitled Halt! Who Goes There? (01.07-01.08), opens in Moscow simultaneously with a self-organised alternative event, the Youth Festival of Independent Art, Go Away! Watch Where You're Going!. The latter is run by the artist Denis Mustafin with the active support from ZHIR (Crease), a gallery of activist art that has existed since 2009.



FIG. X: CAPTION



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works begin to cut down parts of the forest to make way for a stretch of a federal motorway designed to link Moscow with St. Petersburg. Locals, supported by Moscow's political and ecological activists, attempt a number of peaceful protests to stop the area from being cleared. These protests are brutally suppressed by the local authorities and private security guards. On the 28th of July a group of about 400 antifascists and anarchists come to Khimki and attack the local administration building. The issue of the Khimki Forest gains national significance.

22 August 2010

A meeting attended by thousands takes place in the centre of Moscow, followed by President Medvedev's decision to suspend works in the Khimki Forest.

Late July – Early September 2010

Central Russia is engulfed in a wave of forest fires. Throughout the summer, 32,000 fires take the lives of 53 people in Russia, while 2,500 homes are burned and 127 localities are destroyed, completely or partially. Data collected throughout the country shows a 17.5% increase in the death rate over the months of July and August. The fires are caused/exacerbated by anomalous heat levels, a lack of precipitation, and the extremely poor performance of public services, such as state forest departments and fire brigades.

12 July 2010

The organisers of **FORBIDDEN ART 2006**, (ESSAY/P.X) Yuri Samodurov and Andrei Yerofeev are found guilty by Moscow's Court and ordered to pay fines of 200 thousand and 150 thousand roubles (approximately 4950 USD), respectively. As the sentence is announced, Orthodox fundamentalist groups sing psalms, while members of Voina scatter about three thousand cockroaches in the corridor of the court building during a protest entitled **COCKROACH COURT**. (ESSAY/P.X)

Summer 2010

Russia's Ministry of Culture vetoes the prints of Moscow artist Avdey Ter-Oganyan (born 1961). A law suit was initiated against him after his, allegedly, anticlerical performance at the *Art Manege-98* exhibition in 1998. In 1999, he left Russia and in 2002 obtained refugee status in the Czech Republic. The prints in question were to be part of *Counterpoint*, a Russian art exhibition held at the Louvre and organised by the NCCA. They are excluded because of their potential ability to incite inter-religious hatred. Ironically, the works in question had these very words written on them as the artist complemented his abstract "pictures" with captions mocking the criminal charges most frequently brought against contemporary art. The exhibition *Counterpoint: Russian Contemporary Art*, which includes Oganyan's works, will finally open on 14.10 at the Louvre in Paris.

September 2010

A new foundation, V-A-C (Victoria – the Art of Being Contemporary), owned by Leonid Mikhelson, the chairman of the gas



FIG. X: CAPTION



FIG. X: CAPTION



28 September 2010

President Medvedev issues a decree forcing the early resignation of the mayor of Moscow. Yuri Luzhkov, who has held the post of mayor since 1992, was formerly regarded as one of the most influential Russian politicians, exercising virtually limitless power over the capital.

company Novatek, launches its first export project, Modernicon (23.09.2010 – 24.04.2011), an exhibition of Russian art shown at the Sandretto Re Rebaudengo Foundation in Turin that is curated by Francesco Bonami and Irene Calderoni. The show features samples of both neo-formalism and socially engaged art.

September 2010

The First Ural Industrial Biennial (09.09-10.10), organized by NCCA, opens in Ekaterinburg. The main project of the biennale, Shockworkers of Mobile Image is curated by Cosmin Costinas, Ekaterina Degot and David Riff and poses a question about the role of global contemporary art in the shaping of neoliberal capitalism in post-industrial and post-Soviet regions, comparing this phenomenon with the role of art during Stalinist industrialisation.

16 September 2010

A PALACE COUP ^(ESSAY/P.X) is staged by Voina in St Petersburg. The group's activists turn over several police cars. On the 15th of November two of the participants, Leonid Nikolaev and Oleg Vorotnikov, are detained, only to be released on bail on the 24th of February 2011. They are never charged with any offences.

October 2010

Preliminary results of the national census are released. In the autumn of 2010 the population of Russia was 142,905,200, making it the 8th most populous country in the world. Compared to the previous census of 2002, the total population fell by 2.3 million. Urban and countryside populations made up, respectively, 74% and 26% of the whole. The average age in Russia was estimated to be 39 years. The ma-

October 2010

The Multimedia Art Museum opens in Moscow, the first large museum space in the country organised in the white cube style.

November 2010

The first large-scale retrospective of works by Andrei Monastyrsky (22.11.2010 – 27.01.2011), the leader of Moscow conceptualism, takes place in one of Moscow's most prestigious exhibition halls, it is or-



FIG. X: CAPTION



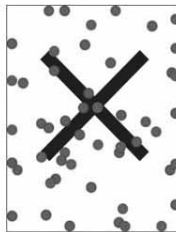
FIG. X: CAPTION



Это произведение вовлекает в занятие проституцией.



Это произведение направлено на возбуждение религиозной вражды.



Это произведение является надругательством над государственным гербом и флагом РФ.

FIG. X: CAPTION



jority of the population, 80.9%, gave their ethnicity as Russian, followed by Tartars, who amounted to 3.87%.

rganised by the V-A-C foundation and curated by Teresa Mavica.

6 December 2010

A fight in a Moscow suburb between youths of Caucasian origin and Spartak Moscow supporters leads to the death of 28-year-old Yegor Sviridov, one of the football fans. On the 11th of December, the day after Sviridov's funeral, an unprecedented spontaneous **DEMONSTRATION** (DIALOG/P.X) emerges in the centre of Moscow, at Manezhnaya Square, with participants clearly expressing anti-Caucasian and racist views. About 5,000 young football fans supporting different Moscow clubs occupy one of the city's main squares for several hours, clashing with the police and attacking **NON-SLAVIC LOOKING** (ESSAY/P.X) passers-by. The occasion becomes widely known as "Manezhnaya Square", or "Manezhka". On the 21st of December Prime Minister Putin visits Sviridov's grave and meets with representatives of football fan organisations to offer his condolences.

9 December 2010

Russia, Kazakhstan and Belarus sign a set of documents, which upon coming into effect on the 1st of January 2012, will establish the Common Economic Zone. According to the Constitutive Declaration, the main aim of the agreement is "to guarantee the participating countries the free movement of goods, services, financial and human capital across their borders".

24 January 2011

A blast rips through a crowd gathered in the arrivals area of the international terminal of Moscow's Domodedovo airport,

January – February 2011

Over two months prior to the Russian "militia" being renamed "police", Moscow faction of Voina (Nadezhda Tolokonnikova and



FIG. X: CAPTION



FIG. X: CAPTION



leaving 38 people, the terrorist among them, dead and 170 injured. The next day Putin makes a statement claiming that the attack had no trace of Chechen involvement. On the 8th of February, a speech by Doku Umarov appears online, in which he proclaims himself responsible for the explosion.

others) stage several actions titled **KISS A COP**.^(ESSAY/P.X) The group's female activists ran "training sessions on aggressive kissing aimed at "Grey Women", as they call policewomen, intending to help liberate them from militia complexes.

February 2011

The artists Denis Mustafin, Matvey Krylov and Tanya Sushenkova ran "Metrosticker", a campaign in which metro trains were plastered with leaflets advertising a special service whereby paying clients could have federal laws amended and the country's constitution changed.

10 February 2011

Innovation Prize, the largest nationwide state-backed award, established in 2005, shortlists Voina's protest A Dick Held Prisoner at the FSB for "The Best Work of Visual Art" and Artem Loskutov's Monstrations for "The Best Regional Project". At the time, the authors of both protests are involved in criminal proceedings. Despite the Ministry of Culture and the NCCA opposing their decision, the jury names both candidates as winners, announcing the results on the 7th of April. The Voina group does not attend the award ceremony. It later donates the prize money, 400 thousand roubles to the human rights organisation Agora, assisting political prisoners.

1 March 2011

The federal law on the police comes into effect, the main document related to the reform of law enforcement bodies proclaimed by President Medvedev as one of his top priorities. The long-awaited law

March 2011

The Tretyakov Gallery appoints a new director, Irina Lebedeva, who soon announces her plans to establish contacts with the Russian Orthodox Church in the sphere of art.



FIG. X: CAPTION

MUZEUM
 sztuki museum
 nowoczesnej of modern art
 w warszawie in warsaw

PRESENTS

**AUDITORIUM
 MOSCOW**

IN BELIE PALATY
 PRECHISTENKA 1 / MOSCOW
 SEPTEMBER 16—OCTOBER 16, 2011

Photo: Łęgiernia Libera, courtesy of the artist 2011

**A SKETCH
 FOR A PUBLIC
 SPACE**

Project cofinanced by the Ministry of Culture and
 National Heritage of the Republic of Poland

Ministry of Culture and National Heritage

OpenSpace

KLUTZ

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IN STOKHOLM, SWEDEN

FIG. X: CAPTION



causes general disappointment, the most radical change in it being a new name, "police", given to the former militia. Those criticising the law point out that the work of the police remains as non-transparent and the public control over it as non-existent as before.

24 March 2011
 President Dmitry Medvedev meets with culture and contemporary art practitioners at the Multimedia Art Museum, which was opened in October 2010. The meeting is organised as part of Medvedev's unofficial campaign designed to win him support amongst the "intelligentsia".

June 2011
 At the 54th Venice Biennale (04.06-27.11) the Russian Pavilion presents a joint project by Andrei Monastyrsky and the Collective Actions group, which is curated by Boris Croys.[FIG.X] The project was chosen by Stella Kesaeva, the owner of the Stella Art Foundation. In 2010 she was appointed the pavilion's commissar for 2011, 2013 and 2015 by the Ministry of Culture.

17–20 June 2011
 A citizen forum takes place in the Khimki Forest. Known as "Anti-Seliger", it brought together opposition figures, citizen and ecological activists, including art practitioners (including the artist Anton Nikolaev and curator Tatyana Volkova). The forum was organised in opposition to Seliger, the annual youth camp run by the United Russia party.

20 June 2011
 Members of the Petr Alexeev Opposition Movement open *A Monument to Bourgeoisie*, [FIG.X] a gilded plaster bust of a pig. The guerrilla monument was installed in the centre of St. Petersburg in the area in which residents had been priced out by upmarket offices and luxury restaurants.

25 June 2011
 The billionaire Mikhail Prokhorov, never involved in politics before, says he is willing to lead the small right-liberal Right Cause party in forthcoming parliamentary elections, to be held in December. The course of the election campaign might



FIG. X: CAPTION



FIG. X: CAPTION



FIG. X: CAPTION



have been significantly changed by the presence of Prokhorov and his assets, not least because this scenario could have facilitated the involvement of liberal opposition supporters, previously deprived of any chance of parliamentary representation. In mid-September, however, Prokhorov is suddenly expelled from Right Cause (with the covert assistance of the Kremlin's political technologists) and thereby loses his opportunity to run for office.

10 July 2011

The cruise boat Bulgaria sinks in the Kuibyshev Reservoir in Tatarstan. Out of 201 people on board, 122 die, including many children. An investigation into the causes of the tragedy finds that the company that owned the ship had no transport service licence, and the Bulgaria was in desperate need of repairs.

September 2011

An **IMPOSSIBLE COMMUNITY** ^(DIALOG/P.X) (06.09-06.11), an exhibition curated by Viktor Misiano, opens in Moscow in the State Museum of Modern Art of the Russian Academy of Art. Its theme is new art's utopian notion of the creative subject as a collective entity.

September 2011

The **FOURTH MOSCOW BIENNALE OF CONTEMPORARY ART** ^(DIALOG/P.X) (23.09-30.10), entitled *Rewriting Worlds* and curated by Peter Weibel, presents international art with an emphasis on interactive and computer technology. It is shown on the third floor of TsUM, as well as in the Artplay design centre (formerly the Manometer factory). The biennale's independent programme features a discussion



FIG. X: CAPTION



FIG. X: CAPTION



FIG. X: CAPTION



24 September 2011

Putin speaks at the congress of the ruling United Russia party about his willingness to run for president in March 2012 and thereby become the head of the state for the third time, dashing any hopes liberals might have nurtured for Dmitry Medvedev.

26 September 2011

Russian Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister Alexey Kudrin suddenly resigns after 11 years at his post. Kudrin is widely regarded as the main figure behind the economic policies of Putin's Russia and a proponent of budget economy.

project **AUDITORIUM MOSCOW: A SKETCH OF A PUBLIC SPACE** ^(DIALOG/P.X) (16.09-16.10). It was implemented in collaboration with the Museum of Modern Art in Warsaw, and sees people discussing a lack of space for political and public discussions in Moscow. Another key event from the same period is "Media Impact" (24.09-10.10) an international festival of activist art curated by Tatyana Volkova, which shows works by the "Moscow fraction" of Voina. The most controversial of the featured projects is a cluster of exhibitions held at the so-called **ART HOUSE SQUAT FORUM** ^(DIALOG/P.X) (24.09-22.10), an uncompleted luxury residential development: the artists and curators were supposed to infuse it with a squat-like atmosphere of "creativity". Some artists boycotted the project, others accused them of being inconsistent.

30 September 2011

The second forum of citizen activists, "The Last Autumn", opened near Moscow, following in the footsteps of the summer event "Anti-Seligier". Petr Verzilov is one of the organisers.

October 2011

Prosecution withdraws its **CASE AGAINST NIKOLAEV AND VOROTNIKOV**, ^(ESSAY/P.X) protesters involved in "A Palace Coup", on the grounds of "the absence of a criminal offence".

15 October 2011

A meeting is held between the outgoing president Dmitry Medvedev and Russia's creative intelligentsia. Several figures from the art world are also invited, including a number of **ARTISTS**. ^(DIALOG/P.X)



FIG. X: CAPTION



FIG. X: CAPTION



FIG. X: CAPTION



October 2011

PUSSY RIOT ^(ESSAY/P.X) begins activities, its female members remaining anonymous. The activists take over Moscow's public spaces - metro stations, trolley-bus roofs, trendy shops and bars - in order to perform "concerts" in the style of punk rock gigs. The lyrics of their song "Liberate the Cobbles" anticipate the forthcoming December demonstrations in Moscow: "The air of Egypt is good for your lungs/Make the Red Square into Tahrir/Spent a wild day among strong women/Look for a crowbar on your balcony, liberate the cobbles."

November 2011

Perm hosts the first national forum for the members of "Cultural Alliance", a union of seven Russian regions. The idea of the forum belongs to Marat Guelman, the head of the PERMM Museum of Contemporary Art. He launched the "Cultural Alliance" in the summer of 2010 as a project run by the United Russia party, designed to promote high-quality cultural activities as well as to contribute to the country's positive image abroad.

November 2011

The businessman and collector Viktor Bondarenko and the artist **DMITRY CUTOV** ^(DIALOG/P.X) present a project, Russia for Everyone - an exhibition in the Multimedia Art Museum (3.11-11.12) tied in with a number of discussions between ethnographers, sociologists and politicians. Although this provocative project was conceived as a move against the rise of nationalism in Russia and the regime's indirect support of it, it was met with harsh criticism, first of all within left-wing circles.



FIG. X: CAPTION



FIG. X: CAPTION



FIG. X: CAPTION



4 December 2011

Parliamentary elections are accompanied by widespread evidence of rigging which appear online towards the end of the day.

5 December 2011

The official results of the elections are announced: United Russia wins 49.3% (almost 15% down from the previous election), the Communist Party 19.2%, and AJust Russia, led by Sergey Mironov, 13.2%. On the same evening, about 10 thousand people gather in Moscow to **PROTEST** ^(DIALOG/P.X) against the rigging of the elections. The meeting ends in clashes between demonstrators and the police.

10 December 2011

STREET PROTESTS ^(DIALOG/P.X+P.X) "For Fair Elections" take place in 99 Russian and 42 overseas cities and towns. The meeting in Moscow is the most attended political protest in the capital since the early 90s, gathering no fewer than 80 thousand people. Satellite meetings, also unprecedented in terms of participants, are organised in St. Peterburg, Novosibirsk, Yaroslavl and other big cities.

24 December 2011

The second Moscow "For Fair Elections" protest brings together 100 thousand people.

14 December 2011

Pussy Riot stage a performance on the roof of Moscow's Special Detention Centre Number 1, where the authorities kept citizens arrested on civil charges after taking part in the 5 December meeting held to protest against the results of parliamentary elections. The band sings a number called **DEATH TO THE PRISON - FREEDOM TO THE PROTEST.** ^(ESSAY/P.X)

20 January 2012

Pussy Riot sing **A RIOT IN RUSSIA - PUTIN CHICKENED OUT** ^{(ESSAY/P.X) (IMAGE X/P.X)} at Lobnoye Mesto in Red Square. Eight women are detained, some of them fined.

1 February 2012

Five presidential candidates are registered and allowed to run: Vladimir Putin,



FIG. X: CAPTION



FIG. X: CAPTION



Gennady Zyuganov, Mikhail Prokhorov, Vladimir Zhirinovskiy and Sergey Mironov.

4 February 2012

Moscow, St. Petersburg and dozens of other Russian cities see more marches and meetings under the slogan **FOR FAIR ELECTIONS** ^(ESSAY/P.X+P.X). The Moscow demonstration brings together up to 120 thousand people. On the same day, an alternative meeting is held in Moscow “Against the Orange Revolution Threat” – organised, in fact, as part of Putin’s election campaign and attended by over 100 thousand people. Many observers believe that the majority of participants were recruited by authorities.

21 February 2012

Members of Pussy Riot stage a “punk prayer” in Moscow’s Christ the Saviour Cathedral. The group run up to the altar and for 20 seconds perform “Virgin Mary, Chase out Putin!”, a song referring to the links between the Moscow Patriarchy and special security forces (“Black robe, golden epaulettes”; “The KGB head, their saint boss / Leads the protesters to a custody suite”) and Putin (“Mumbler the Patriarch believes in Putin. / The bitch had better believe in God”). A few days later a criminal case is brought against participants, who are accused of hooliganism motivated by religious hatred. On the 3rd of March Nadezhda Tolokonnikova and Maria Alekhina are arrested by the police; Ekaterina Samutsevich is also detained in custody at a later date. The Pussy Riot case becomes one of the most prominent political scandals in present-day Russia, leading to wide public discussion about the role of the Russian Orthodox Church.

21 February 2012

Members of Pussy Riot stage a “punk prayer” in Moscow’s Christ the Saviour Cathedral. The group run up to the altar and for 20 seconds perform **VIRGIN MARY, CHASE OUT PUTIN!** ^{(ESSAY/P.X) (IMAGE X/P.X)}, a song referring to the links between the Moscow Patriarchy and special security forces (“Black robe, golden epaulettes”; “The KGB head, their saint boss / Leads the protesters to a custody suite”) and Putin (“Mumbler the Patriarch believes in Putin. / The bitch had better believe in God”). A few days later, two of the participants, Maria Alekhina and Nadezhda Tolokonnikova, are arrested. The arrest of their fellow activist, Ekaterina Samutsevich, later follows.

February 2012

Two Russian entrepreneurs, Sergey Skatershchikov and Dmitry Aksenov, buy 70% of a company running Viennafair, a Vienna-based contemporary art fair. The Russian



FIG. X: CAPTION



FIG. X: CAPTION



FIG. X: CAPTION



Patriarchy officials, actively urging punishment of “the blasphemers”, unwittingly provoke exposure of corruption and cynicism rife in the church’s higher echelons.

art manager Kristina Steinbrecher is appointed the fair’s curator.

23 February 2012

A meeting of Vladimir Putin’s supporters gathers about 150 thousand people. Putin himself speaks at the meeting, saying: “We won’t allow anyone to interfere in our affairs, to impose their will on us! Because we have our own will. We are the nation of winners. It’s written in our genes. It’s written in our genetic code.”

4 March 2012

The presidential elections results in Putin’s victory in the first round, as he gains 63.3% of the vote, with his closest rival, the communist leader Gennady Zyuganov, far behind with 17.1%. Observers report numerous violations.

March 2012

Many artists and curators take part in Russia’s presidential elections as independent observers, sometimes documenting the events and producing a number of video clips.

7 March 2012

St. Petersburg’s Legislative Assembly adopts a law, passed by majority vote, which lays down provisions for administrative penalty for “public actions aimed at propaganda of sodomy, lesbianism, bisexuality, and transgenderism among minors”. The bill is drafted by Vitaly Milonov, an MP representing the ruling United Russia party. Human rights organisations react strongly against the law, seeing it as symptomatic of state policy to discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation and criminalise LGBT activities.

March 2012

Two educational institutions, each opposing other, are launched. The Base Institute, established by Anatoly Osmolovsky, holds up the standard of strict artistic autonomy, while having almost no financial support. A Pedagogical Poem is an interdisciplinary project organised by the V-A-C foundation and co-authored by **ARSENY ZHILYAEV** (ESSAY/P.X) and Ilya Budrajtskis, and is alternatively based on the interaction between contemporary art and historical studies.

March – April 2012

Following two further meetings, held on the 5th and 10th of March, revealing that the “fair elections” agenda has lost its rel-

11 March 2012

Posters supporting the three arrested members of Pussy Riot, stylised as icons, are placed on three billboards in the centre of Novosibirsk. On the 14th of March the police start an investigation at the re-



FIG. X: CAPTION



FIG. X: CAPTION



FIG. X: CAPTION



evance and numbers, the protest movement rapidly subsides.

quest of the Novosibirsk diocese of the Russian Orthodox Church. In June, a local court finds Artem Loskutov guilty of insulting people's religious feelings. He is sentenced and fined for two of the posters, but acquitted for the third.

April 2012

Three of Moscow's key commercial galleries of contemporary art close or change their profile. The Guelman Gallery transforms into an exhibition hall for regional art, an extension of the "Cultural Alliance" project, Aidan is turned into a private space. Elena Selina retains ownership of XL, while becoming the curator of the Elena Baturina Foundation.

2 May 2012

The president signs a bill to bring back direct gubernatorial elections in Russia, which were suspended in 2005. A "single election day" for five regions of the country to elect their governors is set for the 14th of October.

1 May 2012

The Third May Congress of Creative Workers takes place in Moscow, St. Petersburg and Kiev, with an "anti-censorship train" sent to the capital of Ukraine in support of Kiev's endangered Centre for Visual Culture. The participants in the congress join a radical left procession during a demonstration in Moscow.

6 May 2012

On the eve of Vladimir Putin's inauguration, a **MASS PROTEST** (DIALOG/P.X+P.X) organised in Moscow is attended by up to 100 thousand people, culminating in clashes with the police. By the end of the march, about 600 of its participants (including a number of opposition leaders) are detained, about 40 seeking medical help. The Ministry of Interior claims that 29 policemen have been harmed.

9 May 2012

After a few days spent in fruitless attempts to establish a permanent protest camp in the centre of Moscow, opposition activists



FIG. X: CAPTION



FIG. X: CAPTION



succeed in **OCCUPYING** (DIALOG/P.X+P.X) one of the city's boulevards. Up to 5,000 people take part in the round-the-clock, week-long occupation.

15 May 2012

The opening of Icons (16.05-05.06), an exhibition curated by Marat Guelman in Krasnodar, is disrupted by a group of Krasnodar Cossacks joined by the public, who block off the entrance, chanting "Guelman Out of Kuban!". The police fail to disperse the discontented crowd, and the exhibition does not open until the next day. Icons features works by contemporary artists who, to quote the curator's words, "think of an icon as art masterpiece, not just a sacral object".

21 May 2012

Russia appoints as its Minister of Culture Vladimir Medinsky, a journalist, the author of books denouncing foreigners' views of Russia, and a former member of a presidential committee dealing with attempts to rewrite history against Russia's interests. A week after taking up his post, Medinsky appoints Ivan Demidov his deputy, making him responsible for contemporary art. Demidov, once a well-known TV presenter of pop music programs, was the head of the ideology department of United Russia's Young Guard in 2006



FIG. X: CAPTION



FIG. X: CAPTION



FIG. X: CAPTION



21 May 2012

Vladimir Putin confirms the new cabinet headed by Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev. Vladimir Kolokoltsev, the Moscow police chief who personally led the force during the 6th of May events, is appointed Minister of the Interior.

30 May 2012

Andrey Siluanov, the newly appointed Minister of Finance, says it is necessary to make retirement age equal for men and women, raising the age of women's retirement from 55 to 60.

27 May 2012

The first of the suspected "organisers of the 6th of May mass disorder" is detained. Over the summer months, 16 people are arrested on similar charges, while dozens are summoned to interviews as witnesses.

5 June 2012

The Russian parliament passes amendments to the existing law on meetings intended to raise the fine faced by those participating in unauthorised street activities up to 300,000 roubles (10,000 USD).

5 June 2012

A mass opposition protest in Moscow gathers about 50 thousand people.

27 June 2012

Rodchenko School of Photography and Multimedia issue an online appeal urging to free Alekhina, Samutsevich and Tolokonnikova.

7 July 2012

Amendments to the law on information are discussed in the parliament. Members

July 2012

The Third Moscow Biennale of Young Art (11.07-10.08) is curated by Kathrin Becker.



FIG. X: CAPTION



FIG. X: CAPTION



FIG. X: CAPTION



representing all parliamentary factions suggest that a register of banned websites be compiled (including those inciting national hatred and violence).

It grows increasingly international and no longer operates an open call for submissions. Elena Selina, the private owner of the XL Gallery, curates the biennale's Strategic Project.

7 July 2012

In early hours, an extremely heavy flood devastates Krasnodar Krai, a region in southern Russia. About 200 people perish when large areas of the town of Krymsk are flooded, while thousands more are harmed or lose their homes. Locals echo opposition activists in accusing the town's authorities of a failure to give timely warnings about the danger of flooding and criticising the inadequate way in which they ran their rescue operations.

10 July 2012

By majority vote, the parliament ratifies Russia's joining of the World Trade Organisation.

13 July 2012

Libel is reintroduced into Russia's penal code by parliamentary vote. The law, setting the maximum penalty at 5 million roubles (approximately 170,000 USD), is seen by many as a tool for controlling uncontrollable journalists.

17 August 2012

Three members of the **PUSSY RIOT** (ESSAY/P.X) group are given a two-year custodial sentence. The defence appeals against the decision of the court, which results in another hearing on the 10th of October, when one of the accused, Yekaterina Samutsevich, has her sentence suspended and is freed.



FIG. X: CAPTION



FIG. X: CAPTION



FIG. X: CAPTION



29 August 2012

The Russian Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs presents to the government its proposals for labour law reform, with the aim of simplifying termination of employment procedures and revising work contracts.

14 September 2012

Gennady Gudkov, one of the few MPs who took an active part in the protest movement and spoke at meetings, is stripped of his parliamentary immunity.

15 September 2012

Another **MARCH OF MILLIONS** ^(DIALOG/P.X), organised by the opposition, gathers about 40 thousand people. The procession ends with a meeting where socio-economic demands are publically voiced, perhaps for the first time.

21 September 2012

The Duma passes amendments to the Russian Penal Code to widen the definition of "treason". From now on, it will extend to "consultations" provided to foreign organisations (including non-governmental) that "subvert the security of the Russian Federation".

5 October 2012

NTV, one of Russia's leading TV channels, aired "Anatomy of Protest 2", billed as a "documentary investigation", which contained accusations against the opposition, in particular, against Sergey Udaltsov. The

September 2012

New plans for Moscow's museums and exhibition centres are announced. The venues, run by Sergey Kapkov, a manager appointed the head of Moscow's Department of Culture, are being modernised and geared towards the "creative class" and contemporary art. The new art director of Manege Central Exhibition Hall, Marina Loshak, intends to initiate large-scale art projects in the European Kunsthalle style.

September 2012

Pussy Riot's "Christ the Saviour" protest is not shortlisted for the Kandinsky Prize. Despite being nominated by the critic Irina Kulik, the rest of the judges vote against it. Some artists protest by removing their candidacies.

October 2012

The prospective National Museum of Contemporary Art and its new building become the subject of intense public debate. This is initiated by Anton Belov, the director of Garage, who called the NCCA project



FIG. X: CAPTION



FIG. X: CAPTION



FIG. X: CAPTION



film talks about Udaltsov's links to foreign intelligence services, while the activities of the Left Front, led by him, are presented as clandestine dealings of the country's foreign enemies. The main piece of evidence used in the film is the record of a conversation between Sergey Udaltsov, two opposition activists, Leonid Razvozhayev and Konstantin Lebedev, and Civi Targamadze, one of the closest advisers to Georgia's president. The conversation revolved, specifically, around a sum of money to be transferred by the Georgians in order to "destabilise" the situation in Russia. It took the Investigative Committee only two days to start a criminal investigation into these negotiations. On 17 October Konstantin Lebedev was arrested, while Sergey Udaltsov was freed after being interviewed and signing a document obliging him not to leave Moscow. On 19 October, the third party in the new case, Leonid Razvozhayev tried to apply for a refugee status at the Ukrainian UN Mission. On leaving the mission, he was forced into a car by persons unknown, illegally transferred from Ukraine to Russia and taken to Moscow as a detainee.

10 October 2012

One of the three arrested members of the **PUSSY RIOT GROUP** ^(ESSAY/P.X), Yekaterina Samutsevich, is freed in the courtroom. Her prison sentence is suspended after a motion submitted by her new defence lawyer, who has taken a new approach in conducting the case.

14 October 2012

Russia had its "single election day". Local elections took place in 77 regions of the country, including gubernatorial elections

a complete waste of state resources, not required in the presence of private venues, better suited to fulfil this role. He is backed by the oligarch Alexander Mamut.

October 2012

The exhibition Icons is cancelled in St. Petersburg. Prior to this, members of a number of nationalist organisations and the Muslim community's spokesmen signed petition, requesting the city's governor ban the exposition. The atmosphere is exacerbated when the management of Erarta, a private museum of contemporary art, scraps a stage production of Nabokov's *Lolita*, following protests from a "group of cossacks". This coincides with a growing number of statements issued by Russian Orthodox fundamentalists, demanding certain works of theatre and visual art be banned.

October 2012

The Garage Centre for Contemporary Culture opens a temporary pavilion in the Corky Park designed by the Japanese architect Shigeru Ban. During the same month, the Udarnik cinema building, a masterpiece of constructivism, becomes the home of the new Museum of Contemporary Art, a privately owned institution established by Shalva Breus and the Art Chronicle Cultural Foundation. Its programme and the name of its director are to be divulged next year.



FIG. X: CAPTION



FIG. X: CAPTION



FIG. X: CAPTION



in five of them. For the first time since 2005, when a law was passed to give the president the authority to appoint governors, regional governors were elected directly. In May 2012, on Dmitry Medvedev's initiative, a new law reinstated gubernatorial elections. The vote was in favour of the ruling United Russia party, whose representatives won in all five regions.

20–21 October 2012

The Russian opposition elects its Coordinating Council. Over 80 thousand registered voters were to elect 45 members of the Council, which was supposed to become an organisational centre to represent different political forces participating in the protest movement. The election was held electronically, its results later challenged; the critics blamed the scheming of the opposition's adversaries.

6 November 2012

After many years as Russia's Minister of Defence, Anatoly Serdyukov was made to resign. Throughout November, a number of the Ministry's high-ranking officials and the state corporation Oboronervis, linked to the MoD, had their offices searched in connection with a criminal case concerned with machinations that took place as some of the MoD's property was privatised. The investigation was perceived by the media as the escalation of internal conflicts plaguing the state elite.

1 December 2012

Russia is to chair G20 in 2013. This will culminate in a leadership summit, to be held on 5–6 October 2013 in St. Petersburg.

7 December 2012

The construction of the South Flow pipe-



FIG. X: CAPTION



FIG. X: CAPTION



FIG. X: CAPTION



line, intended to connect Russian gas fields to European consumers via the Black Sea, is officially started. This joint venture between Russia, Germany, France and Italy is estimated to cost 8.6 billion euros. The project is due for completion in 2015.

14 December 2012

The US Senate passes the Magnitsky Act to ban 60 Russian top officials, all working for structures and involved in the case of the lawyer Sergey Magnitsky, from entering the country. The UK has already called for a law to stop those on the Magnitsky list from travelling to the country. The Magnitsky Act causes a resoundingly negative reaction in the Russian parliament or instance, Vyacheslav Nikonov, one of the parliamentary majority, calls it “unprecedented since the days of the Cold War”.

17 December 2012

A draft bill is submitted to the Duma to ban American citizens from adopting Russian orphaned children. The authors of the draft bill present it as a “symmetric reply” to the Magnitsky Act. On 21 December the bill is passed by an absolute majority vote, and is signed into effect by President Putin on 28 December. The bill causes controversial responses among the Russian public, it is opposed by the Foreign Minister and the Minister of Education, while opposition politicians label it “the scoundrels’ bill”. According to 2010 data, Russian orphans constituted around 10% of children adopted from abroad in the USA. Under the previous bilateral agreements that came into effect two decades ago, over 60 thousand Russian children were taken to the US.



FIG. X: CAPTION



FIG. X: CAPTION

31 December 2012

President Putin signs a new Education Bill into effect. Some of the experts and education practitioners criticise the bill for its tendency to commercialise education, a new clause related to religious guidance, as well as harsher disciplinary measures aimed at students, which now include expulsion from a university.

2012

The number of births has exceeded that of deaths for the first time in the two post-Soviet decades: 1,409,264 compared to 1,329,018, respectively. The difference is 6%, against -2.4% in 2011.

2013

More opposition protests took place in Moscow and St. Petersburg, bringing together, respectively, 25,000 and 3,000 participants. The main item on the agenda was to protest against the bill which bans US citizens from adopting Russian children.