**16.03.2023**

**Press release**

**St. Petersburg Art Fair "1703" announces annual lecture program**

**On March 23, 2023, the first event of a series of open lectures and discussions will take place in St. Petersburg this spring on the eve of the 2nd Art Fair "1703".**

Collector and philanthropist Evgenia Popova will talk about how to turn a passion for art into your life’s occupation, whether collecting can be a profession and how to start collecting works of art. Her lecture will open the annual program of the St. Petersburg Art Fair "1703", brought by its organizers together with the Masters school team. This one and all subsequent events of the lecture program "1703" will be available free of charge to everyone who have registered in advance.

A lecture by "Dialogue of Arts" magazine curator of the Moscow Museum of Modern Art (MOOMA) and co-founder of the non-profit art Popov Foundation will take place on the Masters School premises (17 Italianskaya Street) and will be broadcast on the fair community page at VK social network. The topic of Evgenia Popova's talk is "How to start collecting without fear", but it will also touch upon investment perspectives of art and how she cooperated with a museum when relaunching the "Dialogue of Arts" magazine.

The purpose of the annual lecture program at the St. Petersburg Art Fair "1703" is to raise awareness about art and collecting, tell the story of art fairs and the role they play in the industry. The project’s focus is the phenomenon of young art, as well as its most relevant trends.

The "1703" lecture program will be held at various iconic venues of the vibrant St. Petersburg creative community. During lecture program of the fair "1703", participants will be able to listen to the leading experts in contemporary art and its markets who will talk about how to find a gem in the sea of modern artists, how the art industry lives and breathes today as well as the back-stage workings of fairs and biennales.

The 2nd Art Fair "1703" will take place in the Manege Central Exhibition Hall in St. Petersburg from June 14 to 18 and will join a list of venues featuring the events of the official cultural program at the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum. Gazprom PJSC will host the fair supported by the Committee for Culture of St. Petersburg. More than 30 galleries are coming for the second edition of 1703 Art Fair, bringing the works of both established and young artists to the show. The purpose of the project is to support artists and galleries of contemporary art, and promote art collecting in St. Petersburg. First edition of the fair was organized in June 2022 and received an enthusiastic welcome from the creative industry professionals and representatives of leading cultural institutions, and a warm support from the general public, guests and residents of the city alike, over 10,000 people attended the fair in four days.

**Official website:**

<https://1703af.ru/>

**Press service:**

[press@1703af.ru](mailto:press@1703af.ru)

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

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

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

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