**18.09.2023**

**Press release**

**The lecture hall of the 1703 Art Fair begins the new season**

**The annual lecture program will comprise of three thematic blocks — the industry experts will talk about the history of collecting and art fairs, various facets of the modern art market, and how fairs contribute to the development of culture. A meeting with Ksenia Chemezova, PhD in Art History and contemporary art curator, will open the new season on September 26 at the Bertgold Center. The audience will learn about the roots of art fairs and their key role in building the art market.**

*Date: September 26. Time: 19:00. Venue: Bertgold Center (13-15 Grazhdanskaya str.), Event Hall, Pink Staircase, 4th floor. This and the subsequent events of the annual program of the 1703 lecture hall can be attended by****[registration](https://1703af.ru/program/lectures/)****only. Subject to availability.*

The first lecture of the program: "Time to collect art: the history of world and Russian art fairs" together with the other events of the autumn cycle of the 1703 lecture hall will mark the first topical block of the annual program. It will focus on the origins of the art market, the appearance of fairs around the globe and personal stories of art collections and their collectors. By the end of the year, there will be four meetings with curators and custodians to zoom in on the phenomenon of collecting starting from "protomuseums" of ancient periods to modern collections encompassing digital era. History of collecting in modern Russia and the nitty gritty of running a private fund to support contemporary art will get a lecture of their own. At the end of this block in December, the audience of the lecture hall will visit the Anna Nova Gallery, one of the leading institutions in the field of contemporary art.

Emerging from a deep dive into art history in February-March 2024, the audience will be able to enjoy a series of lectures talking about features, patterns and problems of the modern art market. A rapidly growing industry, with the Art Basel fair and UBS Bank calculating its global turnover in their recent report at $ 67.8 billion, meaning its commercial value must be brought to the spotlight. Often, to evaluate a work of art a set of factors must come to play, ranging from the artist’s prowess to the overall context and market conditions. A series of lectures will focus on selling works of art and pricing criteria. These events will be dedicated to the professionals who determine the pathways for the modern art market: gallery owners, collectors, critics, investors and, of course, the artists themselves.

The central theme of the lecture series in April-May 2024 will be art fairs input to the formation of modern visual culture. The fairs have long since progressed beyond simple trading venues and have become an essential element of cultural life. They open a unique opportunity for visitors to immerse themselves in modern artistic trends, as well as educate on how to analyze and interpret art. To tell more about this important contribution and more, the lecture hall has invited leading gallerists who serve as a bridge between the artists and the general public. They are the ones deciding what trends are worthy to be presented and whether the fair needs to pursue a more innovative approach or, conversely, stick to the classical traditions.

Modern technologies will aid the 1703 lecture hall in maximizing its audience: all events will be broadcast on social networks, and all recorded lectures will gradually tesselate into a full-fledged educational program that will cover key aspects of the contemporary art market. All events of the annual program are free of charge and are available to everyone by prior registration.

**Alisa Presnetsova, director of the 1703 fair:** "T*he results of the second 1703 St. Petersburg Art Fair showed that this large-scale project initiated by Gazprom has become an important element of the cultural landscape of the city. We are happy to note that our fair gathered key players of the Russian art market on one venue and expanded the fandom of contemporary art. The public program of the fair, lectures, discussions, master classes and meetings that take place during its days, has received a vivid attention from our visitors for two years in a row now. In preparation to a new season, we decided to up the ante, and this fall we are launching an annual lecture program that will sustain interest in the topic until the next edition of 1703 in the summer of 2024 and will allow everyone to learn more about the world of contemporary art from leading experts*"

The lecture hall will not be limited to just the walls of the 1703 fair, within the St. Petersburg Manege building, but, on the contrary, it wants to interact with the most advanced creative venues of the city, including the Mayakovsky library, the Levashovsky Bakery Cultural Center, the media center of the New Stage of the Alexandrinsky Theater, the masters school, exhibition halls, galleries of St. Petersburg and other iconic public spaces.

**Official website:**

<https://1703af.ru/>

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**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.