**GARAGE MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART PRESENTS:**

**Assuming Distance: Speculations, Fakes, and Predictions in the Age of the Coronacene**

*March 26–August 1, 2021*

In order to put together a show conceived during the first lockdown, Garage announced its first ever exhibition open call, inviting artists and creative collectives living and working in Russia to take any kind of distance in relation to the current situation and to consider speculations in a broad philosophical sense: as a form of interaction with reality and/or as speculative reasoning about the possible. Arising as an unplanned event in the Museum’s exhibition calendar and initially driven by the humanitarian mission of helping the art community, *Assuming Distance: Speculations, Fakes, and Predictions in the Age of the Coronacene* was designed to allow artists to implement new large-scale and ambitious works. Thirty-three participants, including 11 group projects, were selected from over 1,000 applications.

Although abstract reasoning may appear to be a thankless task, art incorporates the power of imagination and in the current state of suspension this quixotic resource is in great demand. The phrase “speculations, fakes, and predictions” in the title of the exhibition represent various versions of art’s “distance” in relation to reality, a distance that each artist chooses independently in line with their personal working methods.

*Assuming Distance* introduces a wide range of forecasts, insights, and scenarios: absurd, fantastic, visionary, and frighteningly realistic. The works on display address not only the future but also possible versions of the past or present. They interpret speculation in an extremely broad way, from the figure of the profiteer to secret societies, from alternative medicine to technology startups, from trickster investigations and parafictions to imaginary museums. Whether these hypothetical worlds relate to alternative economies or conspiracy theories, new forms of employment and social interaction or systems of control and biopolitics, each of them references the economic, political, and social models discussed or derives from paradoxical and irrational creative thinking.

The exhibition architecture was designed by Novoe Architecture Bureau. It ties together the Museum galleries by way of a unified super-surface drawn on a modular grid and composed of luminous frosted glass squares. Viewers are encouraged to follow a designated route, with movement through the exhibition resembling the playthrough of a computer game. This gamified environment is inspired by sci-fi movies and arcade video games, while also referencing scanwords, application forms, questionnaires, and the distance of 1.8m recommended by the World Health Organization. It is also reminiscent of walking on special gangways, like those installed in Venice during the *acqua alta*. This movement turns the viewing experience into an adventure, while undermining routine and guaranteed positions in space and thus creating a new physical and visual experience.

The exhibition operates as a nonlinear system of intersecting themes that create fluid connections between the works and organize semantic navigation by folding into constellational configurations.

As part of the Garage Live program, visitors will have the opportunity to see Genda Fluid’s performance *Lockdown Spirituals*, the immersive performance *The University of Birds* by Theater of Mutual Operations, a video vaudeville featuring elements of group therapy and a concert by Techno-Poetry Cooperative, and a YouTube shows by the group NONSNS. The game as a model of reality, a test version or an alternative is the central motif of the public program accompanying the exhibition, which focuses on science fiction and games.

**List of participants**: Fedora Akimova (Moscow), APXIV (Moscow), Vitaly Barabanov (Moscow), Chto Delat (St. Petersburg), Tatiana Efrussi (Moscow), Anna Fobia (Moscow), Genda Fluid (Moscow), Marina Istomina (Ust-Kut, Irkutsk Oblast), Kafe-Morozhenoe media activist collective (Moscow), Khochesh Group (Moscow/St. Petersburg/Tuapse), Vladislav Kruchinsky (Moscow), Anton Kuryshev and Andrey Guryanov (Moscow), Mikhail Maksimov (Moscow), MishMash Group (Moscow), Maria Morina, Marina Karpova, and Ekaterina Sokolovskaya (St. Petersburg), NONSNS hybrid self-organized group (Moscow), Daria Pravda (St. Petersburg) ), Kirill Savchenkov (Moscow), Nikita Seleznev (St. Petersburg), Ivan Seriy (Nizhny Novgorod), Alexander Shchurenkov (Moscow), Andrey Shental (Moscow), Boris Shershenkov (St. Petersburg), ShShSh self-organized group (Moscow), Alisa Smorodina and Alyona Shapovalova (Moscow), Maxim Spivakov (Moscow), Techno-Poetry Cooperative (St. Petersburg), Theater of Mutual Operations collective (Moscow), Dasha Trofimova (Moscow), Maxim Trulov and Ksyusha Lastochka (Nizhny Novgorod), Zaur Tsugaev (Grozny ), Asya Volodina (Moscow), Mitya Zilberstein (Moscow)

*Curators: Ekaterina Lazareva, Ekaterina Savchenko, Iaroslav Volovod*

**GARAGE MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART**

Garage Museum of Contemporary Art is a place for people, art, and ideas to create history. Through an extensive program of exhibitions, events, education, research, and publishing, the institution reflects on current developments in Russian and international culture, creating opportunities for public dialogue, as well as the production of new work and ideas in Moscow. At the center of all these activities is the Museum’s collection, which is the first archive in the country related to the development of Russian contemporary art from the 1950s through the present. Founded in 2008 by Dasha Zhukova and Roman Abramovich, Garage is the first philanthropic organization in Russia to create a comprehensive public mandate for contemporary art and culture. Open seven days a week, it was initially housed in the renowned Bakhmetevsky Bus Garage in Moscow, designed by the Constructivist architect [Konstantin Melnikov](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Konstantin_Melnikov). In 2012 Garage relocated to a temporary pavilion in Gorky Park, specifically commissioned from award-winning architect Shigeru Ban. A year later, a purpose-built Education Center was opened next to the Pavilion. On June 12, 2015, Garage welcomed visitors to its first permanent home. Designed by Rem Koolhaas and his OMA studio, this groundbreaking preservation project transformed the famous Vremena Goda (Seasons of the Year) Soviet Modernist restaurant, built in 1968 in Gorky Park, into a contemporary museum.

Garage is a non-profit project of The IRIS Foundation.

Adam Abdalla

Cultural Counsel

Email: adam@culturalcounsel.com

**ABOUT GAZPROMBANK**

Gazprombank is one of the top three banks in Russia and one of the biggest financial institutions in Central and Eastern Europe.

The Bank offers an extensive range of services to corporate and private customers, serving the key sectors of the Russian economy, including the gas, oil, chemicals and petrochemicals, metals, power generation, engineering, transport, construction, communications, agri-industrial, trade and other industries.

Gazprombank’s retail business is focused on providing modern high-tech products and services, including cards, deposits, loans and mortgages, currency exchange operations, brokerage service, insurance, etc. In Russia the total number of offices exceeds 400.