

## Russia: barriers down, future upfront

23/09/2011

Russian symbolism seems to have disappeared in favour of the emerging of brand new artistic figures. The entire Russian most promising young artists generation is competing for the prestigious Kandinsky Prize...



Published on Friday, September 23rd, 2011 a number of emerging artists entered an artistic contest in order to get hold of Russia's top contemporary art prize. An actual marathon of exhibitions started off in the Russian capital city, which these days also welcomed the fourth edition of the Moscow Biennale.

A studio scattered with mouldy books, pages crackling in a simulated, gentle wind; a colourful play-dough dice pressed inside a barred enclosure; and a ball created by associating a large number of synthetic bags were in the middle of the 40 art works competing to acquire the highly celebrated Kandinsky Prize.

The title of the award has been given after the abstract painter Wassily Kandinsky (1866-1904). The prize offers awards of great economical value, up to \$55,100 towards those contemporary artists present at Moscow's Central House of Artists.

Shalva Breus, the founder of the award, which has been running every year since 2007, affirmed that this exhibition goes through the whole of Russia's contemporary art scene and expressive methods.



Where is your flag, dude? Nastya Ryabova (2011)

She also recalls an improvement in the quantity of younger applicants and avant-garde concepts in conjunction with a constant decreasing in the notion of Soviet representation within Russian art.

In fact only until three years ago, artists broadly took in hand imperial symbolism, by displaying it either from the Russian or the Soviet empire point of view. Recently though, this habit seems to have completely disappeared and the presence of abstract forms grows stronger inside the Russian art scene.

The vanishing allusion to Soviet symbolism in contemporary art focuses on the premise that award candidates get younger and younger. As a matter of fact those students studying art at the present day were born round about the time of the Soviet Union falling down, back in 1991.

The general direction in which Russian art is developing may possibly be guided by the market, since a young generation of collectors is quickly materializing in Russia. Their demand goes towards the supply of post-Communist era art pieces.

Russian contemporary art collectors usually come from Russia themselves, however the latest rising trend sees a huge deal of younger collectors climbing the art market scale. It has become a huge phenomenon, best renowned as the "Progressive Youth".

The phenomenon connected to globalisation is cancelling as well the spotlight on community history and politics. All the same, a small amount of artists grew melancholy for Soviet era and one art piece in particular "First Grade" displayed the legs of schoolchildren in conventional Soviet clothes.



The Road, by Alexander Brodsky (Kandinsky Prize 2010)

As much as topics are varying, Russian contemporary artists waited at the rear of their Western colleagues in the employ of inventive resources, Breus officially stated in a press release.

Russia is making a great effort in having a go at taking hold of the West and not only, it is a country that is also deliberately emulating European successful artists nevertheless they still have to make their own ground.

A panel of judges will take part in an election on the frontrunners just once the exhibition will be over, after October 7th. The three winning categories are: "Best Young Artist," "Media-art Project of the Year" and "Project of the Year".

### Kandinsky Prize

- Announcement of the receipt of applications – February, 1 – 11, 2011
  - Receipt of applications – February, 14 – May, 31, 2011
  - Pre-selections (2 rounds) – June, 14 – July, 20, 2011
  - Kandinsky Prize nominees' exhibition – September, 16 – October, 07, 2011
  - The Award Ceremony – December, 14, 2011
- curated by eleonora galasso

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