

Expanding space:
out of the centre

February – December 2019

For further information on this
and all V-A-C projects:

Helen Weaver
helen.weaver@v-a-c.ru
text/call +44 (0)7772 159219

Press releases / images:

Matilde Biagi
matilde.biagi@v-a-c.ru

V-A-C is excited to launch a series of new community engagement projects held in areas on the outskirts of the city of Moscow. Focusing on different communities and their specific needs, artists, theatre directors, musicians, filmmakers and architects have developed projects in close dialogue with audience groups. Host partnerships have been established with a variety of local institutions and associations including libraries, cinemas, the Lefortovo Student Campus, chess clubs, public squares and houses of culture. Throughout the year, projects will take on multiple formats, such as Live Action Role Play (LARP), film workshops, a children's club, a collectively authored musical as well as open stage and performance workshops.

As its starting point, the programme considers Moscow as a diverse and extended field of cultural production. From here V-A-C is expanding its reach outwards to opening dialogues with outlying local communities – via their cultural and educational infrastructure – and districts usually beyond the remit of contemporary art institutions.

Through these projects V-A-C will explore the possibilities of collective and inclusive contemporary cultural practices, pushing the boundaries of traditional formats of cultural production and learning. The results – and most importantly the processes enacted – will build the foundations for an open dialogue between Moscow-based communities and GES-2 to find a way to imagine together this new institution and its role for the city.

Each of the seven projects featured in 'Expanding Space: Out of the Centre' attempt to broaden the focus of existing local activities towards open and social participative practices as well as exploring their potential and meaning within the local context.

Children and teenagers will have the chance to participate in 'Weird Kruzhki' ('Kruzhki' being a term widely used in Russia to mean a regular gathering of people, of equal standing, in pursuit of a common interest or activity). 'From Oneself' is a collaboration with the Moskino cinema chain and the League of Experimental Cinema; 'Based on a True Story' and 'Continuous Currents' will feature musical performances inspired by local knowledge of the past (including interviews with former GES-2 workers) and the present (everyday experiences of citizens of Lefortovo). In contrast, 'Justice Against the Grain' and 'Moscow Solos' are experiments in form that are generated by their specific contexts: LARP and musical performances. The seventh element of 'Expanding Space: Out of the Centre' focuses on specific migrant communities and the richness they can bring into any local cultural programmes.

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V-A-C produces new culture together with artists and audiences alike. It is a platform for open discussion aimed at redefining the contemporary landscape. Working with local communities, V-A-C promotes its exhibition, publishing, performative and learning programmes beyond all disciplinary boundaries and thus constantly resets the coordinates for dialogue within a new global geography. This methodology is employed in all V-A-C initiatives, taking place in its Venetian space, through international, cross-institutional partnerships and in its future home for arts and culture in Moscow, GES-2.