

V-A-C LIVE: VASYA RUN

Friday 5 & Saturday 6 October
2018

Off-Site: Whitechapel Bell Foundry
32 Whitechapel Road, London E1
1EW

V-A-C Communications Director:

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

Press office / images:

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

For Russian media:

Alexander Belyakov
alexander.belyakov@v-a-c.ru
t. +7 (925) 276 03 06

Nonna Gazaeva
nonna.gazaeva@v-a-c.ru
t. +7 (903) 218 30 00

Philipp Mironov
philipp.mironov@v-a-c.ru
t. +7 (903) 743 44 43

V-A-C Foundation and Whitechapel Gallery are proud to present the third edition of the V-A-C Live performance series.

Russian collective VASYA RUN bring their latest performance to the UK for the very first time. Nine young men aged between 18 to 26 from London and Moscow feature in this interactive and experimental work which blurs the boundaries between theatre, music and contemporary art.

Created over an extended rehearsal period, the young men, who were street cast and required to have no background in performance, undergo an intensive programme designed to address their experiences of anxiety and introduce mindfulness practices into their daily lives. During rehearsals the performers go through a bonding process, bringing them together to work as a single unit and able to identify with and express the complex, multi-layered personality of the project's main character Vasya. A popular Russian boys' name, Vasya is an ex-teenager who needs to grow up, to enter manhood, overcome his inner struggles and insecurities and become an adult. He adopts several meditative practices to stop him from running away and to encourage him, instead, to run towards his future. The performers were also cast for their ability to directly relate to the character of Vasya and what he is going through. VASYA RUN focuses on six zones within the performance space, reflecting the six steps of self-awareness as featured in the project's 'manual', which is handed to each audience member as they enter the space.

"The aim is not to make [the performers] actors. During the actual performance they need to perform in a state of self-awareness, inner spontaneity, inner freedom and freedom of physical expression." — VASYA RUN

VASYA RUN is an anonymous platform investigating street subcultures, radical youth and teenage scenes, particularly amongst the generation born in the early nineties, following the collapse of the Soviet Union. Their research explores the gender politics of youth and what happens to subcultures when they become commodified.

This off-site project will take place at the historic Whitechapel Bell Foundry, dating back to 1570, which is located just opposite the gallery.

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NOTES TO EDITORS

V-A-C FOUNDATION

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.

Following the success of Kabaret Kultura in 2016 and Tunguska Event, History Marches on a Table by Vadim Zakharov in 2017, VASYA RUN is Whitechapel Gallery's fourth collaboration with V-A-C Foundation. A series of four displays from the V-A-C collection were shown in a dedicated Collections Gallery in 2014/15 as part of the Whitechapel Gallery's ongoing programme of opening up rarely seen collections from around the world, currently showing in two parts at V-A-C's Venetian art space Palazzo delle Zattere.

v-a-c.ru

WHITECHAPEL GALLERY

For over a century the Whitechapel Gallery has premiered world class artists from modern masters such as Pablo Picasso, Jackson Pollock, Mark Rothko and Frida Kahlo to contemporaries such as Sophie Calle, Lucian Freud, Gilbert & George and Wallinger. With beautiful galleries, exhibitions, artist commissions, collection displays, historic archives, education resources, inspiring art courses, dining room and bookshop, the Gallery is open all year round, so there is always something free to see. It is a touchstone for contemporary art internationally, plays a central role in London's cultural landscape and is pivotal to the continued growth of the world's most vibrant contemporary art.

whitechapelgallery.org

THE WHITECHAPEL BELL FOUNDRY

The Whitechapel Bell Foundry was founded around 1570 and operated on this site from 1747 to 2017. It was responsible for some of the world's most famous bells, including Big Ben and the original Liberty Bell. After years of struggling against worsening economic conditions, the previous owners of the site — the Hughes family — decided the best way to protect the legacy of Whitechapel Bells was to relocate and continue production elsewhere. The new owners of the site, Raycliff, are committed to securing a long-term future for the site, which will deliver an on-site foundry, creative affordable studios and workspace, and educational facilities that bring bell-making and its history to life. Accessible to the public, the new Whitechapel Bell Foundry will continue to be one of the East End's most important cultural landmarks.