

SPACE FORCE CONSTRUCTION

13 May — 25 August 2017

V-A-C Foundation
Palazzo delle Zattere,
Dorsoduro 1401,
30123, Venice, Italy
Vaporetto Stops:
Zattere or San Basilio

Opening Times:
Thursday – Tuesday,
11.00am–7.00pm
Friday,
11.00am–9.00pm
Closed Wednesday

Admission free

Biennale preview days:
10, 11, 12 May, 4–6 pm
International media preview
with the curators and artists:
10 May, 8.30–11 am

For further information/ images/
interviews contact:

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V-A-C Foundation presents Space Force Construction, organised with the Art Institute of Chicago, for the launch of V-A-C's new Venetian headquarters Palazzo delle Zattere.

Space Force Construction is a conversation between contemporary artists and historic works. Over 100 works from the 1920s and '30s by key Soviet artists are brought into dialogue with new site-specific commissions and recent works by contemporary artists, including Cuban performance artist Tania Bruguera noted for her strong political messages, Mikhail Tolmachev, a young artist from Moscow who explores the subject of memory through photographic archives, renowned American artist Barbara Kruger, German photographer Wolfgang Tillmans and Russian multi-media artist Kirill Savchenkov, amongst many others.

The exhibition examines the role of art and its relationship to society – a relationship which is strengthened during periods of major social and historical transformation, as seen during the years of the Revolution. Artists of that time directly participated in the construction of new institutions and in the reorganisation of public and private space, recognising art's potential to bring about social change. While the impact of the work produced by artists during that historic moment is widely recognised, the exhibition considers how their ideas have been developed over the course of the twentieth century and what form they take today.

Space Force Construction will organise the entire Palazzo delle Zattere into thematic display spaces from the early Soviet period: factory, battleground, theatre, exhibition, press, school and the domestic environment.

Historical installations and objects have been reconstructed for the exhibition, restoring their intended purpose and function and in some cases creating structures that were never realised, existing only in rare photographs or designs - from El Lissitzky's Dresden room and Gustav Klutis's multimedia kiosk to Varvara Stepanova's theatrical decorations and Aleksei Galaktionov's furniture. Rather than simply reconstructing these works, contemporary artists are playing a key role in their revival and reinterpretation. Christian Nyampeta, together with philosophers from Rwanda and students from the Industrial Design Faculty at the University of Venice, will develop a new artistic project inside Aleksandr Rodchenko's Workers' Club, aiming to start discussion and debate around contemporaneity.

Space Force Construction includes key works from major international public and private collections, including an important photographic archive showing social gatherings in early soviet times, created by Irina Bibikova during the course of her research into the art of mass propaganda. In a newly commissioned installation, Irina Korina works with the forms and figures depicted, bringing back to life the grotesque characters and figures from these street carnivals and demonstrations. In a similar way, Chinese artist Cao Fei echoes this by placing Marx, Mao and Lenin together in the online virtual world Second Life, where they live a utopic existence in the contemporary sense of the word.

Teresa Iarocci Mavica, Director of the V-A-C Foundation said: 'Cultural production is one of the fundamental aims of V-A-C and nearly all of the contemporary artists in the exhibition have produced new site-specific works. Each new piece, we believe, offers the potential for new interpretation and new reflection on the current global condition. And when these reflections come to life in the shared space of a show like Space Force Construction, they inevitably start a new conversation. In trying to find new answers to the problems posed by our contemporaneity, we create spaces where people are free and motivated to engage with an art that makes them feel part of the discussion. With this show, as always, we hope to demonstrate that the social spirit of art is still alive and that the engines of its motor for change are running at full speed.'

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Space Force Construction is curated by Matthew Witkovsky, Richard and Ellen Sandor Chair and Curator of the Department of Photography, Art Institute of Chicago and V-A-C Curator Katerina Chuchalina, with Anna Ilchenko. Peter Taub is the curator of a performance programme that is integral to the exhibition (see separate programme for timings of performances). The Art Institute of Chicago has published a richly illustrated, scholarly catalogue to coincide with the Venice exhibition, devoted to art and its display in the early Soviet period. An entirely historical version of the joint undertaking, called *Revoliutsiia! Demonstratsiia! Soviet Art Put to the Test*, will be presented from 29 October 2017 - 14 January 2018 at the Art Institute of Chicago. A major lender is the *Ne boltai! Collection*, who have enriched the exhibitions in Venice and Chicago with many key works relating to the early Soviet era.

Contemporary artists featured in Space Force Construction include: Tania Bruguera, Cao Fei, Abraham Cruzvillegas, Melvin Edwards, Yevgeniy Fiks, Kirill Gluschenko, David Goldblatt, Pablo Helguera, Olga Jitlina, Janice Kerbel, Irina Korina, Barbara Kruger, Taus Makhacheva, DJ Spooky aka Paul D. Miller, David Musgrave, Christian Nyampeta, Florian Pumhösl, Sergey Sapozhnikov, Kirill Savchenkov, Mikhail Tolmachev, Wolfgang Tillmans and Dmitry Volkostrelov.

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V-A-C Foundation is dedicated to the development and international presentation of Russian contemporary culture – across a multitude of forms and within the framework of a joint exhibition, educational, and publishing programme. V-A-C Foundation considers artistic production as central to its activity and essential for understanding contemporary cultural processes and stimulating new answers to its challenges. The opportunities V-A-C Foundation provides, to engage with and interrogate international cultural practices, aim to expand the platform for homegrown talent and encourage an independent artistic language. As a key speaker for contemporary Russia, V-A-C Foundation establishes new cross-cultural dialogues and incites an exchange of ideas through new collaborations and alternative settings for bringing different artistic practices together within a single vision for arts and culture.

V-A-C launches its new permanent exhibition and education space in Venice, home to La Biennale di Venezia, one of the art world's most important events. It is here that V-A-C has been producing solo and group exhibitions of contemporary Russian and international artists for the past eight years.

V-A-C Foundation supports as donor the 57th International Art Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia.

PALAZZO DELLE ZATTERE, V-A-C Foundation's new Venetian headquarters, will be open to the public from spring 2017. The palazzo is situated on Zattere, overlooking the Canale della Giudecca. Originally dating back to c.1850, the building's interior was renovated at different times from the 1950s to the 1990s. The entire space covers 2000 square metres over four levels, half of which will be dedicated exhibition space. It will include a welcome and reception area, restaurant and bookshop, rooms for talks and events, offices, an external garden and studio apartments for visiting artists and curators.

A detailed outline of the new Venice space is available upon request.

THE ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO, founded in 1879, is a world-renowned art museum housing one of the largest permanent collections in the United States. An encyclopedic museum, the Art Institute collects, preserves, and interprets works in every medium from all cultures and historical periods. With a collection of approximately 300,000 art works and artifacts, the museum has particularly strong holdings in Impressionist and Post-Impressionist painting, contemporary art, early 20th century European painting and sculpture, Japanese prints, and photography. The museum's 2009 addition, the Modern Wing, features the latest in green museum technology and 264,000 square feet dedicated to modern and contemporary art, photography, architecture and design, and new learning and interpretation facilities. In addition to displaying its permanent collection, the Art Institute mounts more than 30 special exhibitions per year and features lectures, gallery tours, and special performances on a daily basis.

Special thanks for the support of Abraham Cruzvillegas's project

