

«ODNUSHKA»

A social sculpture in Novo-Molokovo

by Elena Kolesnikova (artist) and Elena Ishchenko (curator)

Venue: Novo-Molokovo, Address: crossing of Volodarskoe highway and Vasilia Molokovo Street

Dates: 1st May – 30 October 2019

Opening of «Odnushka»: 1st of May 2019

Exhibition of objects in the public space: October 19, 2019 at 19.00

The finissage and presentation of the results: October 19, 2019 at 19.00

The **Odnushka** project represents a social sculpture, dedicated to the most popular type of housing in Russia—the one-room flat. The project is going to be realized as a public art project in Novo-Molokovo, one of the most ambitious new districts on the outskirts of Moscow. Elena Kolesnikova and Elena Ishchenko transform an ex-sales office into a typical, but free-standing, one-room flat, transforming the intimate place that a flat represents into a public space where meetings and discussions among inhabitants of the newly built *Novo-Molokovo* housing complex can take place. As a meeting place with a cultural program, 'Odnushka' at the same time explores the experiences of people in modern conditions of new apartments and new housing districts, where everything starts over—renovation, friends, family, daily routines, space for relaxing, and daily habits.

«Project «Odnushka» is important to me because it is a good opportunity to create space «outside home», where people can break away from their familiar roles and express themselves, perhaps in unexpected ways. This is also an opportunity to discuss many important topics — the comfort and quality of life; the creation and development of public spaces; strengthening good neighborhood relations; creating and sharing experience in developing grassroots initiatives. I hope that this project will create a positive experience and serve as an example for the organization of public spaces for people in other districts», — says **Elena Kolesnikova**, artist.

«It was no coincidence that we chose an ex-sales office for the project. This building was probably visited by all residents of Novo-Molokovo. Now they will visit this space again, but with a different purpose, as the flats are all sold and houses are populated. Commercial relations will be replaced by friendliness, warmth, and good-neighbourliness. In my opinion, it is necessary to have some external source of motivation in order to draw people out of their covers, their «warm odnushkas», and collect them all together to reveal the possibilities for good neighborhood relations. In Novo-Molokovo, the culture center became this source of motivation, and «Odnushka» continues its work, but in another context – modern artistic practice», — says **Elena Ishchenko**, curator of the project.

«Developing territories through culture, especially when it includes people in a community's development, is one of the main strategies of the Aksenov Family Foundation», according to the

director of AFF, **Viktoriya Kondrashova**. «That is why we decided to support the initiative of the Austrian Cultural Forum and got involved in the production of «Odnushka».

The art residency in 'Odnushka' (studio apartment) was conceived by curator Elena Ishchenko and artist Elena Kolesnikova as way of introducing local residents to contemporary art as they interacted with the artists. This became the main criterion in choosing artists for the residencies so participatory and research projects got priority. Out of nearly 30 applications received, four projects were selected - "Skinny" by Varvara Gevorgizova, Walkshops by Alisa Oleva, 'Jaws in Milk' by Alexander Gorelikov, and 'Sound Laboratory' by Masha Molokova, Lisa Sazonova, Dmitry Stepanov and Katya Turbina. A further two artists took part in the residencies, with the support of the Austrian Cultural Forum - Albert Algayer with the social sculpture 'St. Tropez' and Vasilena Gankowska, whose residency is scheduled for early October.

Elena Ishchenko:

"Almost all the residents of Novo-Molokovo with whom I managed to talk, knew about 'Odnushka' and were glad to see this kind of initiative in the residential complex. When they learned it was a temporary project finishing at the end of October, many expressed regret and wanted to see 'Odnushka' continue. At the same time, some didn't go to 'Odnushka' at all, while others attended just a couple of events. At first this depressed me: - we tried, the artists tried - but in the end few people came. We intended 'Odnushka' as a neutral place where you can come to relax and escape from everyday life and we got the impression local residents didn't need it. But after talking to them, we found this wasn't true. They thought of 'Odnushka' like a museum: you don't go to the Tretyakov Gallery every weekend but the very fact it exists changes the city's identity and its conceptual paradigm."

As a second project in the same district Aksenov Family Foundation in cooperation with the Austrian Cultural Forum Moscow is following the ambitious plan to realize a large scale public art project for Novo-Molokovo.

Contemporary Art in public space is still very rare in Russia, but that should not be a barrier. The main idea is not just to drop an art work but to integrate the inhabitants of the district from the very beginning into the process of selection.

Three Russian (Ivan Gorshkov, Nikita Seleznev, ZIP group) and three Austrian (Gabriele Edlbauer & Julia Goodman, Marlene Hausegger, Jascha Jakob Schieche) art projects are going to be presented as architectural models, each one occupying a vitrine or entire shop facility on the territory of Novo-Molokovo. Enlightened in the evenings and visible from the street citizens will have a chance to get acquainted, a voting system will be taken in place allowing to get a feedback by the local community who at the end should feel a the commissioners of the chosen art project.

«Odnushka» in Novo-Mokovo is part of the year long social project of the Austrian cultural forum «Na RAJONE. Cultural and artistic dynamics between city center, districts and periphery».

«The NA RAJONE project is planned to be an artistic exchange, a visualization of the culturally most relevant and dynamic places of big cities today—the districts, the outskirts. It is there where new aesthetics are created, where most people live and where social and "normal" life is forming and defining what culture actually is. Novo-Molokovo is one of the most ambitious and promising elements of this project. Working at this place is a great opportunity to not simply drop off some art

works, but to really get involved and create an artistic place. Over months Odnushka will work in Novo-Molokovo to create a friendly but truly artistic place, interacting with its environment while preparing a major international presentation to be held in late autumn», says **Simon Mraz**, director of the Austrian Cultural Forum.

Press contact:

Elena Kurbatskaya: lkurbatskaya@gmail.com

Simon Mraz: simonmraz77@gmail.com; +7 925 860 1275