



Antarctic Biennale



The first art expedition in history to the shores of Antarctica has been completed

The participants in the Antarctic Biennale international project have returned from the first art expedition to Antarctica

About 100 people from around the world – artists, architects, researchers, poets, writers, musicians and philosophers – set off on board a scientific research vessel, the Academic Sergei Vavilov, from the port of Ushuaia to the Antarctic Circle. The expedition of the First International Antarctic Biennale, held under the patronage of UNESCO, started on the shores of the Tierra del Fuego on March 16, 2017, and concluded with a ceremonial reception in honor of the participants in the biennale in Buenos Aires on March 29. The Antarctic Biennale's Commissioner, the artist Alexander Ponomarev, said: *"We have all been witnesses to and participants in a unique phenomenon – a project that goes beyond the confines of a normal artistic event, a biennale that is beyond time, beyond space, beyond politics. Now we merely have to understand and recognize the fact that we are part of a new cultural phenomenon which, without any exaggeration, is worthy of going down in the history of world art."*

On the mainland, the travelers were met by the Minister of Culture of Argentina, Pablo Avelluto, who stressed the importance of the brave researchers' mission and the significance of international collaboration on scientific, cultural and artist issues. *"It's impossible to overestimate the cultural significance of this project. It's astonishing how, united by a common idea, and solidified by a powerful spirit of collaboration, experts from different spheres are discovering new horizons of knowledge and stepping beyond the limits of innovation, creativity and the avant garde, skillfully bringing together and combining various forms of art."*

The results of this historically exceptional biennale have yet to be assessed, but the project's author and founder, the artist Alexander Ponomarev is certain that the organizers have managed to carry out and even go beyond the previously planned program: *"If we're talking about numbers, then we carried out 150 percent of the program. We worked with the Antarctic, the Ocean, whales and penguins, fish and birds. On board the vessel we had an international team of astonishing people, each of them has an indomitable spirit of adventure and romance. Despite the continual pitching of the ship, in the lecture hall, every day, there was packed attendance for the lively debates, and global issues and the problems of the modern world were discussed,"* added Ponomarev.

During the artistic voyage, the participants traveled around 2,000 nautical miles (4,000 km), making over 12 landings on the shore of the Antarctic peninsula and on islands surrounding Earth's most southerly continent. In total, on the continent's territory, over 20 artistic projects were carried out, including performances, installations, exhibitions and sound-art experiments, as well as over 15 research sessions and philosophical discussions.

Also within the framework of a special program of the Biennale, with the participation of the company ProLab, five photographic exhibitions were held on the continent. On board the vessel, the most southerly Fine Art photographic laboratory operated, allowing to create photographic works in a real-time mode. Each shot contained geographical information, indicating the longitude and latitude at which it was created.

For the duration of the voyage, the flagship of the Russian scientific fleet was transformed into a space for pure art and unlimited creative freedom.

Ponomarev noted that the expedition's success would have been impossible without the participation of the project's bold comrades and partners. One of these brave heroes was a seasoned traveler who is on the Biennale's Board of Trustees, the visionary, founder and general director of Kaspersky Lab, Eugene Kaspersky. The international company acted as General Partner for the Antarctic Biennale.

Eugene Kaspersky related how he had been gripped by the magnificent insanity of this project: *"I'm attracted by unusual, insane projects, the results of which are impossible to guess at or predict. At its foundation lies a process, a voyage – projects like this alter your mind, they allow you to understand how this world can be changed for the better. It was a wonderful voyage with amazing people, with a very special atmosphere. Everything that happened reminded me of a Federico Fellini film, "And the Ship Sails On". Only in our case it was a film with a happy ending. I'm impatiently awaiting the beginning of the next Antarctic Biennale."*

During the mobile exhibition that was set up in Buenos Aires, one of the Antarctic Biennale projects was presented – a robotized art object, the "Glaciator", created by the Argentine artist Joaquin Fargas with the support of Kaspersky Lab. The artistic concept for "Glaciator" is in keeping with Kaspersky Lab's basic mission – to save the world. So Kaspersky Lab is sending a machine on a mission to keep the earth safe – this time not in cyberspace, but in Antarctica. The technologies of Kaspersky Lab provide reliable protection of the security of the robot's computer systems. Glaciator compresses the snow as it steps on it. Glaciator is a "Firn-Maker", firn is an intermediate state between snow and glacier ice. This process contributes to accelerate the formation of a glacier protecting it from the impact of global warming.

The main conditions for the creation of the objects of the Antarctic Biennale on the White Continent were not only artistic value but also strict observation of the ecological requirements of an human activity in Antarctica.

The objects created in the region of the South Polar Circle, as well as photo and video documentation of the voyage – will be shown for the first time in the Antarctica Pavilion during the 57th Venice Biennale of Art 2017 in May. The group exhibition will include works done by the voyage's participants and projects of the finalists of the Antarctic Biennale Open Call for young artists, the results of which were announced during the Art Basel Miami Beach 2016 contemporary art fair. A series of documentary

films, television arts programs, and illustrated books and photographic albums will be made on the basis of the results of the voyage. The artistic works created amidst the ice of the Antarctic will be exhibited at leading exhibition venues and museums.

Words of thanks were expressed to partners and friends who provided unfailing support for the project. Alexander Ponomarev expressed particular gratitude to the **Phillips** auction house and its owners Leonid Friedland and Leonid Strunin; the **AVC Charity Foundation** and its founder Andrei Cheglakov, and Alexandra Smirnova; the company **Croc** and a personal thank you to Boris Bobrovnikov and Veronica Gimenez; the American partners Erik Arneberg and John Royall; Spanish friends Ana Rierola Forcada and Mark Agnolin; the participant in the Biennale's special program, who presented a series of sketches and drawings for an exhibition, "The Antarctic Diaries" the artist Katya Kovalyova from Russia; to all the crew and members of the Biennale's Board of Trustees and especially to Director of the Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts Marina Loshak; owner of The Art Newspaper Inna Bazhenova; editor-in-chief of The Art Newspaper Anna Somers Cocks; Advisor to the General Director of the State Hermitage Museum Nicolas Iljine.

"According to Vajrayana Buddhism, a space is created with a single movement, which simultaneously turns it into a curvature. This movement is curved and concentric, like a spiral. I think that with this historic event we have managed to curve space a little," said Ponomarev, concluding his speech.

About the Antarctic Biennale

The Russian artist, seaman and philosopher Alexander Ponomarev is the author of the concept for the Antarctic Biennale and the project's founder and Commissioner. The idea of holding the most unusual biennale in history came to the artist over 10 years ago, during his first expeditions to Antarctica. Thanks to the comprehensive support of friends, associates and partners in the project, the original concept has taken on concrete form. On March 17, 2017, about 100 people from all over the world – artists, architects, researchers, poets, writers and philosophers – set off on board the Akademik Sergey Vavilov scientific research vessel, for a creative voyage to the shores of the Earth's most southerly continent.

Principles of the Biennale

Supranationality: A cultural conceptualization of a space that doesn't belong to any single country. A model for the future world community.

Interdisciplinarity: A visionary collective effort to find new approaches to solve the problems the humanity is facing using the achievements of numerous academic disciplines.

Intercultural Exploration: Re-imagining the function of culture in the 21st Century.

Mobilis in Mobile!: The concept of "mobility in the mobile" – transportable installations that are quickly erected and dismantled respect Antarctica's fragility leaving no traces of the artistic activity on the continent.

About the Kaspersky Lab

Kaspersky Lab is a global cybersecurity company founded in 1997. Kaspersky Lab's deep threat intelligence and security expertise is constantly transforming into security solutions and services to protect businesses, critical infrastructure, governments and consumers around the globe. The company's comprehensive security portfolio includes leading endpoint protection and a number of specialized security solutions and services to fight sophisticated and evolving digital threats. Over 400 million users are protected by Kaspersky Lab technologies and we help 270,000 corporate clients protect what matters most to them.

Learn more at www.kaspersky.com

INFORMATION:

Artists-participants in the 1st Antarctic Biennale:

Abdullah Al Saadi (UAE). Expedition Diaries 'Antarctic Alphabets'

Alexander Ponomarev (Russia). 'Alchemy of Antarctic Albedo (Or Washing Pale Moons)'. Underwater installations

Alexis Anastasiou (Brazil). 'It's Cold out There'. Large scale projection

Andrey Kuzkin (Russia). 'The Phenomenon of Nature or 99 Landscapes with a Tree'. Series of performances

Eulalia Valldosera (Spain). 'Penelope's voice: communicating with animals'. Audio intervention on the ship that travels to Antarctica

Gustav Dusing (Germany). 'The solid state of matter'. Tent made of frozen cotton

Joaquin Fargas (Argentina). 'Glaciator'. Robotic & Solar, mixed techniques, multiple materials

Julian Charriere (France/Switzerland). Performance 'Silence'

Juliana Cerqueira Leite (Brazil). 'Vestibule'. Video Installation

Julius von Bismarck (Germany). 'Space Fish (Raumfisch)'. Performance. Modified Aquarium

Lou Sheppard (Canada). Sound installation 'Requiem for the Antarctic'

Paul Rosero Contreras (Ecuador). 'Arriba!' site-specific intervention, film, photographs

Shama Rahman (Bangladesh/UK). Performance with sitar on ice 'Truth be told'

Sho Hasegawa (Japan). 'Winter Landscape (Antarctica Version)'

Tomas Saraceno (Argentina/Germany). 'Aerocene' Performance

Yasuaki Igarashi (Japan). Performance 'Bundling Time'

Yto Barrada (Morocco). 'Abstract Geology'

Zhang Enli (China). 'Egg'. Resin; FRP, Size: 40cm x 50cm, Weight: 5kg

Antarctic Biennale Open Call artists-finalists whose artworks will be presented as part of a group exhibition in May during the 57th Venice Biennale of Art 2017:

Andreas Lutz (Germany), Ariel Spadari (Brazil), Banrei (United States), Bridget Steed (United Kingdom), Jasmin Blasco (France), Louise Oates (United Kingdom), Matilde Solbiati (Italy), Meadhbh O'Connor (Ireland), Stefan Laxness (Iceland), Stephanie Roland (Belgium), Sybren Renema (Netherlands), Tom Blake (Australia), Valentine Siboni (France), Winston Chmielinski (United States).

Antarctica

According to the Antarctic Treaty (1959) and other international agreements, the continent can only be used for artistic activities and scientific research in the interest of humanity. Antarctica is the last continent not to belong to any single state, and it is one of a select few places where international agreements really are observed.

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