

УДК: 7.036

ББК: 85.10

A43

DOI: 10.18688/aa177-10-75

Olga Baturina, Svetlana Gracheva

“Art-Dala: Dialogues through Space and Time” Exhibition as Part of EXPO–2017 World Fair in Astana: The Problem of National Art Preservation in the Context of Globalization

EXPO—2017 in Astana is the first world-wide exhibition in CIS and the whole Central Asia region. The theme of the current exhibition is energy of the future. A unique exhibition complex was built in order to house the event. The design of the project was created by “Adrian Smith + Gordon Gill Architecture” Chicago bureau, which specializes in energy-efficient architecture. Indeed, the pavilion expositions of all participating states were devoted to the problem of the usage of new technologies in the field of the production and conservation of energy. The center of the complex — the spherical eighty feet in diameter “Nur Alem” pavilion made of glass — is the realization of the idea of modern high-tech architecture [3]. Like many things in Astana, the architecture of the complex seems futuristic and totally unreadable.

Traditionally, EXPO has a very rich cultural program. This time, there were more than 6000 cultural events held during the three month period. The accent of artistic exhibitions within EXPO was made on the problem of artificial intelligence in its use in everyday life. So, the “Aritsts & Robots” exhibition was held at the Astana Contemporary Art Center (ACAC).

The “Art-Dala: dialogues through space and time” exhibition, which became part of the EXPO Astana 2017 cultural program, me was devoted to the more traditional forms of art. The exhibition was held under the partisanship of the Ministry of Culture and Sport of Kazakhstan. Due to the high status of this cultural event, the exhibition was placed in the National Museum of Kazakhstan, founded in 2014.

The name “Art-Dala” is not accidental: ‘Dala’ means ‘steppe’ in the Kazakh language. But it has to be understood not in natural, but in philosophical sense. ‘Dala’ is the universe, the oecumene, the sphere. The main idea behind the exhibition was to show the polyphony of voices in contemporary Kazakh art and its syntony with foreign discourses. The image of time presents itself here not only on the story level, but also in the totality of existential comprehension.

The image of the exhibition appears as an artistic dialogue. It is the dialogue of generations and spaces. One hundred pictures by thirty-three artists, whose works made a significant contribution to modern art, were chosen for the exhibition. All of the artists, who came from Kazakhstan, Russia, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Azerbaijan, Georgia, USA, and Italy, have different connections with the East, Asia. Those connections can be hidden or obvious, genetic.

The range of styles, artistic schools as well as the geography of the participants is wide and diverse. At the beginning of the exhibition there are two main paintings: *Composition № 12* by Askar Esdauletov (Almaty) and *The Death of Watermelon* by Konstantin Grachev (Ill. 167). Those are the most saturated and colorful paintings of the exhibition. They marked the wide-ness of the stylistic range and the vector of the rest of the exhibition.

A. Esdauletov is one of the brightest contemporary artists; arguably, the leader of the 'In-dependence' generation. This period in art is filled with the active search for new forms and meanings. The processes of both national and personal self-identification characterize the face of contemporary Kazakh art today. The creative work of A. Esdauletov combines in itself tradi-tional and even archetypal with modern, actual. Doing both sculpture and painting, he makes a lot of experiments in his art. Each painting made by the artist is a modern myth born from the depths of the national cultural code.

A. Esdauletov is nomadic by descent, so he sees freedom as the most important value. Open, limitless space is a life necessity for him. There are two works by the artist presented at the "Art-Dala" exhibition: *Dust* (2016) (Ill. 171) and *Composition № 12* (2017) (Ill. 169). The first work has a steady, almost squared format, which is typical of the artist, planar figures and space, symbolic understanding, allegorical and meditative images. Space and time in his paintings are global. A man as the element of an eternal universal ornament, he is inseparable from Sky-Ten-gri and Earth-Umay. The traditional beliefs about the unity and eternity of the world are shown through the calmness of characters, which dwell in mysterious, wonderful space.

Composition № 12 is another manifestation of A. Esdauletov's metalanguage. This monu-mental work is made of separate abstract paintings with boosted colors and active rhythm of forms, lines, and texture. Each part is independent and has its own separate life. It is a pixeled way of understanding the reality, but the world has been creatively transformed. Therefore, it gives birth to thousands of associations: from different times of year to complicated, personal feelings. The artist releases his works from the chains of concreteness and transfers them to the tier of ever-changing live impressions. As Mirab Mamardashvilli once said, "all finite is imper-fect". A. Esdauletov knows it; he feels and confirms it because "it is possible to think concrete only using abstractions" [2].

Still life paintings by Konstantin Grachev are big in size and scale. They were made in the stylistics of the "Jack of diamonds" artistic group. The artist plays with the space in his paintings by overturning it on us and involving into the whirlpool of feelings. There is irony, almost sar-casm, behind the name of his painting, *The Death of Watermelon*; the sarcasm of a modern man who turns the traditional values upside down. On the other hand, it possesses incredible power, and its texture, multi-layers, color mixture contribute to the sheer beauty of the painting.

Undoubtedly, Ekaterina Gracheva has her own monumental artistic thinking. Her St. Pe-tersburg academic background is felt in all of her works. She is fond of Italian painting, archi-tecture, nature, and cinema. Her Venetian landscapes presented at the exhibition (*Night-I* (Ill. 170), *Night-II* [2009] and *Velvet Season* [2009]) are filled with philosophical sentiments: feelings of loneliness, perplexity. But at the same time, her paintings contain harmony, integrity, beauty, and admiration for the secrets of life. Ekaterina is fascinated with existential questions and, obviously, her works possess the metaphysical dimension.

Hamid Savkuev, a painter who works in all kinds of technique, is among the most acclaimed artists of Saint Petersburg. He was born in Kazakhstan, but spent his childhood and youth in Kabardino-Balkaria. In his works he turns to the traditions, epos, and history of the Northern Caucasus. He “always feels his own roots, knows who he is and where he is from”. He prefers to work with “everything that relates to his homeland and people” [1]. The subjects that he deals with are always interpreted through the prism of traditional culture.

The exhibition presents the works from the series of illuminations to the novels by V. B. Livanov, *Agnia, the daughter of Agnia* (Ill. 168), made on huge sheets of paper of a monumental scale (200 × 100 cm). Even the size of those works corresponds with the epic mood of the literal text called the *Legend about the Scythians*. The images of Red-haired Agnia, the proud and powerful green-eyed Scythian tsarina, her daughter Agnia, born from black Nubian slave, warlock gaffer May, and other mythic characters are embodied in the graphic art of H. Savkuev. Both the painter and the author of the novel seek not only the authenticity of ethnographical details, but the expression of real emotions and human values. The painter reaches that with the help of expressive drawing based on the deep understanding of the forms and the laws of nature.

Klim Lee, an ethnical Korean, is from Uzbekistan. Being an inheritor of Russian artistic traditions and an expert in European art, he received an academic education. In his blood he absorbed the traditions of different cultures. However, he identifies himself strictly with Russian culture, seeing himself as the member of the Saint Petersburg painting school.

Saint Petersburg became the point of cultural intersection between the East and the West. In 2013, Klim Lee started to work on the series of graphic portraits, *Faces of Tibet*, which is still unfinished.

Silent faces of Tibetan native people — monks, peasants, women, — are painted on huge sheets with energetic brushes, shaded stains, highly voluminous and contrast. Those hieroglyphic token-faces look like the fast signatures of the artist. He uses the method he developed during the work on the Tibetan series in his other paintings, such as *The Woodcutter* and *The Old Man*. The latter is a part of the series of illuminations for Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea*.

The art of Kazakh artist Gani Bayanov is in tune with music and poetry. He sees his mission as an artist in sublime global sense; therefore, his art aspires to the underlying truth of the universe which is hidden in ordinary things and routine moments of life. Bayanov's contemplation and wisdom allow him to live in his own dimension and not to waste his time on small things. The exhibition presents his *Haloxylon Cutter* (2014) and the *Escape to Urgench* (Ill. 173), where the painter leaves the concreteness and predetermination of the plot for the world of metaphors and parables. The cosmos of his paintings is universal; it is not limited by the concreteness of the material world. The heroes of paintings are typified; they do not belong to any particular epoch. The painter raises his viewer above the fuss of everyday life and helps them to come close to the understanding of the basics of the existence. The figures on his paintings are ghostly, mysterious, and, at the same time, distinct. The artist would never allow any negligence in the whole or in details. The characters of his paintings have enlightened, sad faces; they look as if they were immersed in the realm of their own feelings. The smooth motion of the figures on his paintings is round and plastic. In their silhouettes, the shadows of steppe legends, and fairy-tales filled with the spicy aroma of the East can be felt. Even in his small aquarelles, the artist seeks the perfection of details, from a tiny star in the night sky to the complicated ornament of

a horse harness. Bayanov's paintings are polysemantic; they contain different levels of meaning, from Biblical to Sufi.

Some works of art presented at the exhibition interpret the theme of "Art-Dala" as the inner space of art itself, the personal cosmos of the artists. Obviously, 'Dala' is a native ground for the masters from Russia. Nikita P. Fomin, a famous Saint Petersburg muralist, frequently refers to the images of Pskov, where as a child he used to spend summer time. His epic landscapes, *Spring Evening* (2012) and *In October* (2013), are closely connected with those sacred grounds.

The artist reaches the realistic credibility of his images transforming the space of his paintings and exaggerating the shape of images by using dissonant colors. Fomin's landscapes cause the feeling of incredible admiration for the might, power, and sheer beauty of Russian land. There is hope for eternal revival in his paintings. It is felt through the might of the enormous heavy sky covered with heavy clouds and the silver surface of water.

A 'pure' landscape has become the main topic in the art of yet another master from Saint Petersburg, Aleksandr V. Chuvin. His 'Dala' are the images of the Volga region, which he is constantly working on. Perhaps, that is why he likes the "planetary scale" that land possesses from *Genius loci*. His landscapes are filled with the lyricism of chosen motives, the laconism of artistic means, schematic composition, powerful linear rhythms, decorative clarity, and the emotional tension of colors. Chuvin does not strive for excessive narrative or the diversity of topics in his paintings. He usually prefers the images of native lands, river banks, lakes, eternal blue sky, pastures, and villages located on downslopes.

Andrey Noda calls his artistic method the *colored realism*. It allows the artist to use the game of shapes and colors, which causes complicated semantic modulations. The reality of feelings is expressed through the tangibility of color in big dynamic compositions. Through the simplified, conditional, almost monumental shapes of faces, houses, and clouds, the texture of time is felt.

The abstract compositions by Marat Bekeev — pulsating, luminous, multi-layered, and multi-colored, give us the feeling of freedom and joy, elation and flying. His color palette is free from dark, gloomy tones. His meditative paintings are of Sufi profundity. Marat has two favorite themes: 'a letter' and 'a game'. Through them he realizes the infinite treasure of meanings which lay on the other side of visible world.

The poetic literal outline of the pictorial stories told by Vyacheslav Lui-Ko (Ill. 172) and Shamil Guliev is always connected with a word and a text. Sometimes the connection is straightforward, other times it indirectly refers us to classical or fictional plots, nonexistent worlds. For example, Guliev's *The Way of Abai* is a painting where through the darkness of space we see the round side of our planet with a thin strip, a crossroad sign and the monumental figure of Abai, the last hope for light. Another painting by this author is called the *Mounting that Comes to Muhammad*. It is an anti-parable work of art where the animated mounting, strong and mighty, goes fast making wide giant steps. The *Treasure Keeper* and the *Golden Man*, where the sacred becomes profane and Philistine, can be referred to the same group of paintings. The *Golden Man* is the main historical and ideological symbol of Kazakhstan. Originally, he is a king-warrior from Issyk Kurgan, but in the art of Guliev, he is literary a man made of gold, a round funny modern character who likes comfort, money, and power.

The musical, poetic, and elegiac traits of Vladimir Grigoryan's creative work are seen on every level, from a compositional structure to a color and tonal order. The artist uses complicated

coloristic solutions. The figures on his paintings are ghost-like and transparent, as the whole space of his canvases.

Painting as expression and improvisation, where live impressions from nature are combined with high professional skills and the ability to show the state of nature as an inner feeling, is what we find in the creative work of Aleksey Utkin, Evgeniy Fridlin, and Tatyana Barinova.

The graphic works by Nurlan Bazhirov, Asemkul Beybit, and Zhanat Koshen are filled with the scent of ancient history. Each of them has his own vision of native land. The graphic sheets by Nurlan Bazhirov feature the dramatic battle view of epic heroes immersed in the battle. Historic memory manifests itself differently in the graphic works by Asemkul Beybit. He lets it flow through the prism of his personal emotions. His images are always warm and homelike, but, at the same time, graphically precise and expressive.

Nurjan Sautbekov remodels the reality into expressive signs and formula, synthesizes the natural with the decorative by focusing his view on the eternal and the permanent. He expresses it in the format of 'plain' still-life and, sometimes, in plot compositions.

Pavel Kovalev (Saint Petersburg) works mainly in the field of architectural design. He finds beauty in the pure forms of architectural constructions. His works, as well as *Prouns* by Lisitsky, are not only of applied importance; they also mesmerize the viewer with the architectural and designer fantasy of the author, leading us away to the sphere of pure abstraction. Expanding his creative scope, Kovalev presents the series of etchings that decorate the walls of the famous Literary Café in Saint Petersburg.

Oleg Mikhailov is another young and successful graphic artist from Saint Petersburg. Made on the highest professional level, his lithographs undoubtedly belong to academic school. The *Dream of Fisherman's Wife* is a work of art based on archetypical images: a woman sitting in a boat, her red dress, schools of red fish, a crescent reflected in the water, wooden houses on a bank. All of this combines into a single ensemble and creates the unique filling of the unity of the world.

The youngest participant of the exhibition, Maryam Eralieva, has just graduated from the Kazakh National Academy of Art. Her diptych, the *Red Book of Kazakhstan*, depicts a snow leopard. It is a national symbol, a very important archetypical image of traditional culture. On the other hand, it is a tragically disappearing species. That is why one half of the diptych is monochrome. The composition is built on the opposition between the decorative and the realistic.

The exhibition also presents the paintings by the well-known artists from other countries: Rose Adelashvili from the USA, Carmine Barbaro from Italy, Andriy Kopchak from Ukraine, Rusudan Khizanishvili from Georgia, Sardor Allabergenov and Anvar Bahteev from Uzbekistan, Ovezmuhammet Mametnurov from Turkmenia, Dzhyldyzbek Moldakhmatov from Kyrgyzstan, and Elena Hagverdiyeva from Azerbaijan.

In conclusion, the "Art-Dala: Dialogues through Space and Time" exhibition has gathered the creative works of the artist of different generations, with different views. However, the highest professional level, which allows them to make the most precise impressions of the world, is what unites them. The cosmos of national culture accepted into our global epoch is limitless and full of energy. It keeps and develops the cultural codes, where everyday images are transformed and filled with new meanings. This is the art where the trending aspects of our time

reveal themselves, where the inner and the outer, the traditional and the new, the covert and the overt interlace.

References

1. Kuteinikova N. S. Khamid Savkuev. Life and Composition Lessons. *Khamid Savkuev: Album*. Saint Petersburg, Artindex Publ., 2009, pp. 5–15 (in Russian).
2. Mamardashvili M.; Eidelman N. On Good and Evil. *Iskusstvo kino (Cinema Art)*, 2000, no. 3. Available at: <http://kinoart.ru/archive/2000/03/n3-article30> (accessed 17 July 2017).
3. Shovskaia T. *Biznes v stepi: 7 mega-proektov Astany (Business in the Steppe: 7 Mega-Projects in Astana)*. Available at: <https://archi.ru/russia/70474/biznes-v-stepi-astana-kak-novoe-delovoe-prostranstvo> (accessed 9 August 2017).

Title. “Art-Dala: Dialogues through Space and Time” Exhibition as Part of EXPO—2017 World Fair in Astana: The Problem of National Art Preservation in the Context of Globalization.

Authors. Baturina, Olga Vladimirovna — Ph. D., professor. Kazakh National Academy of Arts named after T. Zhurgenov, ul. Panfilova, 127, 050000 Almaty, Kazakhstan. olga.baturina@mail.ru

Gracheva, Svetlana Mikhailovna — full doctor, dean of the Faculty of the theory and history of arts, professor. I. Repin St. Petersburg State Academy Institute of Painting, Sculpture and Architecture of the Russian Academy of Arts, Universitetskaya nab., 17, 199034 St. Petersburg, Russian Federation. grachewasvetlana@yandex.ru

Abstract. The article is dedicated to the “Art-Dala: Dialogues through Space and Time” exhibition held in the National Museum of Astana as part of EXPO—2017 World Fair. The exhibition united 100 paintings by the artists from ten different countries, whose oeuvre became the sign of our times. The variety of themes, styles, trends, as well as the geography of participants, is wide and diverse.

The most interesting contemporary Kazakh artists presented at the exhibition include names such as Gani Bayanov, Askar Esdauletov, Marat Bekeev, Shamil Guliev, Andrey Noda, Alexander Sorokin, Vladimir Grigoryan, Vyacheslav Lui-Ko, Aleksei Utkin, Evgeny Fridlin, Nurlan Bazhirov, Asemkul Beybit, Dauren Beknazarov, Tartyana Barinova, Zhanat Koshen, Nurjan Sautbekov, and Maryam Eralieva, the youngest participant of the exhibition. Nikita Fomin, Hamid Savkuev, Alexander Chuvin, Klim Lee, Ekaterina and Konstantin Grachev, Oleg Mikhailov, and Pavel Kovalev are the artists who represent Saint-Petersburg at the exhibition. The other artists whose works were displayed at the exhibition are Rose Alelashvili (USA), Carmine Barbaro (Italy), Andriy Kopchak (Ukraine), Rusunad Khizanishvili (Georgia), Sador Allabergenov and Anvar Behteev (Uzbekistan), Ovezmuhammet Mametnurov (Turkmenistan), Dzhyldyzbek Moldakhmatov (Kyrgyzstan), and Elena Hagverdiyeva (Azerbaijan).

The main idea behind the exhibition is to expose the polyphony of voices on the contemporary art scene and to show the consent of discourses. The cosmos of national culture is limitless and full of energy. It preserves and develops cultural codes and the archetypes of national self-consciousness. The name ‘Art-Dala’ is not accidental: ‘Dala’ means ‘steppe’ in the Kazakh language. But it has to be understood not in natural, but in philosophical sense. ‘Dala’ is the universe, the oecumene, the sphere. As the vastness of Kazakh steppe is never homogenous and alike, the realm of contemporary art is extremely diverse.

Keywords: EXPO—2017; Astana; National Museum of Kazakhstan; Art-Dala exhibition; contemporary painting.

Название статьи. Выставка «Арт-Дала: диалоги в пространстве и времени» в рамках Всемирной выставки ЭКСПО—2017 в Астане. Проблемы сохранения национального искусства в условиях глобализации.

Сведения об авторах. Батурина Ольга Владимировна — кандидат искусствоведения, профессор. Казахская национальная академия искусств им. Т. Жургенова. ул. Панфилова, д. 127, Алматы, Республика Казахстан, 050000. olga.baturina@mail.ru

Грачева Светлана Михайловна — доктор искусствоведения, декан факультета теории и истории искусства, профессор. Санкт-Петербургский государственный академический институт живописи, скульптуры и архитектуры имени И. Е. Репина при Российской академии художеств, Университетская наб., д. 17, Санкт-Петербург, Российская Федерация, 199034. grachewasvetlana@yandex.ru

Аннотация. Статья посвящена международной художественной выставке «Арт Дала: диалог сквозь пространство и время», прошедшей в Национальном музее г. Астана в рамках ЭКСПО—2017, первой всемирной выставки в странах СНГ и во всем Центрально-Азиатском регионе, ключевой темой которой стала «энергия будущего», ее новые источники и вопросы сохранения. Художественная выставка объединила 100 картин тридцати трех художников из 10 стран, чье творчество стало знаком времени. В статье анализируются диапазон тем, сюжетов, стилей и направлений выставки, которые так же, как и география авторов, широки и разнообразны. Название выставки не случайно. Ее главная идея — проявить полифонию голосов современной живописи, показать созвучие дискурсов. Космос национальной культуры — безграничный, живой, полный энергии созидания, в котором сохраняются и продолжают культурные коды и архетипы национального самосознания.

Ключевые слова: ЭКСПО—2017; Астана; Национальный музей Казахстана; выставка Арт-Дала; современная живопись.



Ill. 167. Konstantin Grachev. The Death of a Watermelon. 2009. Oil on canvas, 110 × 260 cm. Property of the author



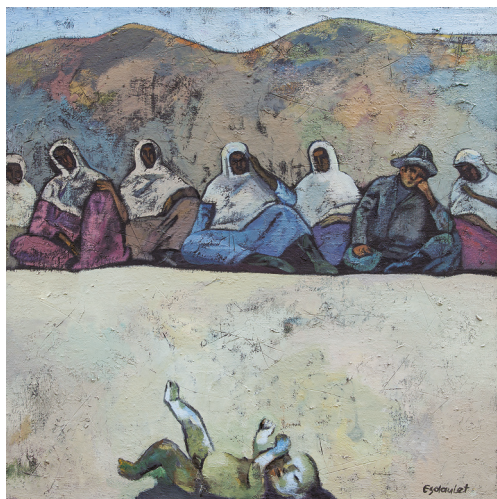
Ill. 168. Khamid Savkuev. Illustration for the V. Livanov's story "Agnia, the daughter of Agnia". Sauce, sanguine on paper, 100 × 180 cm. Property of the author



Ill. 169. Askar Esdauletov. Abstract composition № 12. 2017. Oil on canvas, 40 × 49 cm (One of the 12 parts). Property of the author



Ill. 170. Ekaterina Gracheva. Night-1. 2009. Oil on canvas. 100 × 120 cm. Property of the author



Ill. 171. Askar Esdauletov. Dust. 2016. Oil on canvas. Property of the author



Ill. 172. Vyacheslav Lui-Ko. The Last Pier. 2014. Oil on canvas, 100 × 150 cm. Property of the author



Ill. 173. Ghani Bayanov. Flight to Urgench. 2011. Water-colour on paper, 40 × 45 cm. Property of the author