

French Modern Art Visits 2 Galleries

By [The Moscow Times](#)

August 19, 2010



“Archive,” an installation by French sculptor, painter and photographer Christian Boltanski, is on show at the Winzavod Center for Contemporary Art.

Russia and France have been in a tango of art all year as 2010, a year of cultural exchanges between the two countries, has seen the nations share their often very different visions of art.

Two exhibits that have just opened as part of the exchange focus on contemporary art. “Painting After Painting,” now on at the National Center for Contemporary Arts, is an exhibition of a vast collection of modern works from Brittany, put together by Russian curators.

Meanwhile, another collection of contemporary art, “The World Experience,” also from Brittany and including the biggest bra you’ve ever seen, is currently on show at the Winzavod Center for Contemporary Art.

The works at the NCCA all come from the last third of the 20th century, and all relate to classical painting in different ways. The artists have all engaged themselves in a very

traditional theme: reflection upon art itself.

The most sophisticated reinvention of classical art is a video composed by Turkish-born artist Sarkis Zabunyan, in which he, by means of watercolors in a bowl of water, attempts to recreate landscapes by 19th-century German Romantic artist Caspar David Friedrich, capturing the ephemeral beauty of moonlight over a lake.

Fixed in the center of the NCCA's hall is a bright yellow cone. Hanging above is a pendulum. The pendulum, dangling dangerously, can start swinging unexpectedly at any time and so violently that an absentminded spectator can easily be knocked in the head. It is perhaps not German installation artist Rebecca Horn's most notable piece of work, but, nevertheless, one worth seeing and dodging.

A second set of striking pieces in yellow is Claude Ryuto's painted planes, inspired by Theodore Gericault's renowned "The Raft of the Medusa." Nobody knows what happened to the people on the raft, but their panic is captured in this modern artwork.

"Painting After Painting" works, except for the NCCA's fondness for condensing exhibitions into "visual aids" to help people conceptualize contemporary art. It is as if they are trying to provide proof of contemporary art's right to exist to those who still cannot come to terms with its nature.

The second part of the French-Russian exhibition, which comes from the Regional Fund for Contemporary Art in Brittany, is displayed in two different rooms at Winzavod.

Most notable is Christian Boltanski's classical "Archive," where a series of children's photos are accented by lights above a set of rusty iron boxes, evoking feelings of stress, anxiety and importance.

Then there is Vito Acconci's gigantic "Adjustable Wall Bra," each cup of which is so big it could be used as a hammock.

"Painting After Painting" runs till Aug. 29 at the National Center for Contemporary Arts, 13 Zoologicheskaya Ulitsa. Metro Krasnopresnenskaya. Tel. 254-8492, www.ncca.ru.

"The World Experience" runs till Wednesday at the Winzavod Center for Contemporary Art, 14th Syromyatnichesky Pereulok, Bldg. 6. Metro Kurskaya. Tel. 917-4646, www.winzavod.ru.

Original url: <https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2010/08/19/french-modern-art-visits-2-galleries-a779>