

New Gallery Looks to Encourage 'Fresh Blood'

By [Jemma Buckley](#)

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One of the portraits from the series.

Last week saw the opening of MSK Eastside, a loft-space gallery in the heart of Moscow's central east side district that hopes to provide a platform for young, emerging artists who might otherwise be overlooked by some of the city's larger galleries.

The exhibition space is based in Project Fabrika, an old Soviet factory near Baumanskaya metro station, in an area that was once famous for being Moscow's red light district.

Inspired by the vibe in other east side areas like London's Shoredich, New York's Alphabet City and Berlin's Kreuzberg, the project's gallerists and curators hope to breathe new life into Moscow's eastern district.

"The DNA of the project is to give extremely talented artists a platform to show their work, to help expose and develop them. We are not interested in just having a one-off relationship

with the artists we work with — we want to help develop their career," explained Zak Kaghado, co-curator of the gallery's first exhibition.

Zak Kaghado shares his curating duties with his younger brother Ja'bagh Kaghado. The brothers originally hail from New York but have lived and worked in Moscow for the best part of a decade. They are joined by gallerists and identical twin sisters Marina and Mariana Gogova and Frenchman Wildrik Batjes.

"All five of us are closely involved in the art scene here in Moscow. It's a very closed world and we think there isn't enough fresh blood," explained Zak Kaghado. "We asked ourselves — why is it always the same artists, the same names and faces dictating what people should and shouldn't get to see? We want to find talented unknown artists and turn them into stars."

The first young artist that MSK Eastside hopes to catapult to stardom is Daria K., a 22-year-old artist from the small town of Skopin in Ryazan. Her exhibition "From the Deep" is comprised of several series of portraits, inspired by such diverse interests as Garcia Lorca's poetry and traditional Russian icons.

When she was 15 years old, Daria was hit by a speeding train and spent many months recovering in hospital from multiple injuries. It was her stay in hospital, and the interaction she had with old and dying people, that put everything in perspective and showed her that pain, suffering, loneliness, old age, patience and a boundless desire to live can all coexist.

"No gallery would usually give her a chance because she is doing something very personal. She isn't trying to do something that sells, she is just representing how she feels. It's taking a risk to represent her because she is totally unknown and doing something quite different," said Zak Kaghado.

Although MSK Eastside's aim is to promote young talent, the gallery will also exhibit work from more established international artists such as Selwyn Senatori, a Dutch painter and graffiti artist, and French painter Virginie Caillet.

"Most galleries, because they are commercially driven, focus on big names in order to make money. We are taking a different approach by focusing on the unknown artists and occasionally showing more well-known artists with the intention of raising the profile of our new artists. We have essentially reversed the model," Zak Kaghado said.

Daria K's "From the Deep" runs at MSK Eastside Gallery till July 19th. Project Fabrika, 18 Perevedenovsky Pereulok, Entrance 2, Building 3, 3rd Floor. Metro Baumanskaya.
Tel.+7-499-763-3590. www.mskeastside.com

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