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Museum of Everything Ready for Art in Gorky Park

By Alex Labrom

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The museum's previous incarnation saw its red bus take up residency in London at the Tate Modern. Garage will be the venue for the Moscow show.

The last time The Moscow Times spoke to James Brett, founder of the unique Museum of Everything project, he was in Yekaterinburg, the first stop on an epic journey through Russia.

Since then he has visited Kazan, Nizhny Novgorod and St. Petersburg, looking for unknown, self-taught artists and offering them the chance to have their work displayed in the Museum of Everything.

His eye-catching big red truck branded with the word "everything" has just arrived in Moscow and pulled in at its final destination, the Garage Center for Contemporary Culture in Gorky Park.

Moscow is another city where he hopes to find more hidden gems to add to the already diverse collection that he has acquired.

"Each city has had a different flavor," said Brett. "In Yekaterinburg, the art came mostly from the street, in Kazan the Tartar element was much more obvious, in Nizhny Novgorod we had a lot more older artists and in Petersburg it was underground, urban and political."

The museum will collect art at Garage's new home in Gorky Park until Sept. 9. After that, Brett will announce the dates for his Exhibition No. 5, where the best of this unknown art will be displayed alongside other recognized self-taught Russian artists who have already achieved some fame, such as Alexander Lobanov.

One example that he gives of artists he has unearthed on his journey is a caricature painter from Yekaterinburg who mixes images of the cosmos and the chromosomes of his subject.

Another, from Kazan, uses pop singer Sofia Rotaru as his muse, and even his paintings of his wife bare a close resemblance to the veteran chanteuse.

"The number one criteria is that the work they bring is truthful, that it isn't a copy, that it's personal and about them," Brett said.

One expectation that he did have before embarking on this journey was that, given Moscow's current political climate, the works he found would be more politically-charged.

"I am extremely interested to see if anyone in Moscow comes with protest art as, particularly now, there is a mood to be heard," he said. "I had hoped that so far it would be more political. But if it's going to be political anywhere it would be here in Moscow."

The Russian tour follows Brett's similar projects in Britain, where he held exhibitions at the Tate Modern and Selfridges department store.

The Museum of Everything will be showing at the Garage Center for Contemporary Culture in Gorky Park. Aug. 30 to Sept. 2, Sept. 6 to Sept. 9. Metro Oktyabrskaya. www.musevery.com. www.garageccc.com Tel. +7 (495) 645-0520.

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