Impressions of the Year

Last year was an important one for Russian society and our community of street artists. This is a list of the ten most interesting projects, artists and events of 2012.

People's Creativity

We were really impressed to see people's creativity in situations where typical things are not allowed, and legal ways of problem solving don’t work. During last year’s protests, we noticed hundreds of the coolest, smartest and funniest posters, stickers and pictures, as well as direct actions by ordinary people who do not see themselves as artists or activists.

The Pussy Riot Buzz

Punk-feminist band Pussy Riot became infamous for political opposition to Russia's patriarchal 'dictatorial regime.' Their performance turned into a symbolic act protesting corruption and the merging of church and state.

We strongly support tolerance, free speech and the idea of creatively occupying public spaces. But we feel it is really problematic to look at the situation in Russia as black and white, particularly with something as sensational as this performance. What is happening in Russia is not simple to begin with. But again, the media turned them into heroes and sensationalized what they did, rather than thoughtfully discussing what they as a group of women performers really advocate—queer and LGBT rights.

Occupy Abai!

Occupy the square in front of Abai Kunanbaev's statue at Christie Pradie boulevard was a great example of self-organization. People realized that they couldn’t and did not need to rely on leaders to express themselves or represent their opinion. And so, they began to take part in an international system of horizontal consensus and decision-making.

Occupy Abai represents the expansion of anti-automocratic protest methods: assemblies, discussions, educational program and the experience of being together for a long time in a shared public space. This gave a new push to young leftist activists who decided to share these ideas in their cities, districts, and varied fields of interests.

Even more interesting, however, was that this manifestation of social and political expression began to highlight a movement of people’s right to the city through their acts of daily living.

New Art by Kirill Kto

Kirill Kto is unsurprisingly the most active and vocal street artist in Moscow. Last year, Kirill made banners for Occupy Abai’s protests and posters for our exhibitions. He also wrote hundreds of statements and thoughts on the walls and streets of Moscow. His non-stop interventions make him one of the most influential street artists in the country, and turned him into a well-known anti-car and anti-capitalist activist.

Homer's Adbusting

After being criticized for excessive cooperation with galleries at the expense of his street art career, our favorite Ukrainian colleague—Sasha Kurnaz, aka Homer—responded with a series of amazing ad-takeovers. He also created a wonderful layer for our side project The Wall in Moscow, which inspired a series of Partizaning interventions in the city.

Partizaning will continue to develop throughout 2013. We are excited to share our creative and critical insights with our online community.

About Us

Partizaning is a term used to describe a social movement inspired by Russia’s revolutionary, DIY traditions. We are an international, interdisciplinary group of artists, researchers, urbanists and art-brokers. Our website promotes participatory urban replanning, and we use street art as a tool for civic action in cities worldwide.

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A site about street art, cities and human interactions.