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RESEARCH SEMINAR

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**Late/Post-Soviet Art
Two Decades after the Fall of the USSR**

Margarita Tupitsyn
Independent curator and art critic
Not Quite Twenty Years After

Victor Tupitsyn
Critic and cultural theorist
Margins of Error

ALL WELCOME!

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Abstracts

Margarita Tupitsyn

Not Quite Twenty Years After

What does it mean to be a native agent in a foreign environment? To organize exhibitions and write about a culture whose context is not transparent, and whose art objects have not yet been critically or institutionally processed, either at home or abroad? These are the kinds of questions that during the cold war wore heavy on the minds of those who, was involved in disseminating Soviet culture in the West. This year marks two decades since the fall of the Soviet Union, and yet these questions continue to resonate. This talk tackles those aspects of post-Soviet art that have contributed to this paradoxical condition and discusses artists who have resisted Russian-style culture industry.

About the speaker

An independent curator, critic, and art historian, **Margarita Tupitsyn** is the author of numerous essays and books on twentieth-century Russian and Soviet art, including *Margins of Soviet Art: Socialist Realism to the Present* (1989) and *Malevich and Film* (2002). She has organized many shows on the Russian avant-garde including *Rodchenko and Popova: Defining Constructivism* (2009) at Tate Modern and *Against Kandinsky* (2006) at Museum Villa Stuck. In 1986 she curated *Sots Art* (1986) at the New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York and in 1998 co-curated *Global Conceptualism: Points of Origin, 1950s-1980s* at Queens Museum of Art. Tupitsyn's art criticism has appeared in *Art in America*, *ArtForum*, *Art Journal*, and other journals.

Victor Tupitsyn

Margins of Error

In the 1920s, the term "factography" was coined by the Russian revolutionary artists and theorists (like Tretiakov, Chuzhak, Brik, and Vertov). This was a utopian dream, pursued by very talented and idealistic people, who failed to understand that there should have been two kinds of "factography", positive and negative, affirmative and nonaffirmative: factography of a de jure legitimate actions (promulgated by the State) and factography of "illegal legitimacies," that challenge the status quo. A paradigm shift discussed in "Margins of Error" is Moscow conceptualism. In the 1970s and 1980s, unable to compete with the mass media and societal spectacles, these artists created their own "low-tech" factographic discourse, aimed at registering their performances and other manifestations of "cultural insurgency" that took place in parks and forests beyond the city. This brings to mind Carl Schmitt's theory of the partisan, especially when one can extend this political category to aesthetic practices.

About the speaker

Victor Tupitsyn is a critic and cultural theorist. In 1989 he co-edited the Russian issue of *Flash Art*, and in 2003 guest-edited *Post-Soviet Russia*, an anthology of contemporary Russian theory and philosophy of art (Routledge/Third Text). Tupitsyn's books include: *Verbal Photography*, 2004, and *Moscow*, New York, 2006 (both co-authored with Margarita Tupitsyn). In 2006, he published *Glaznoe yabloko razdora* (conversations with Ilya Kabakov); and, in 2009, *The Museological Unconscious*, that was printed by the MIT Press. His new book, *The Milieu*, is coming out in Moscow this year. Tupitsyn is on the advisory board of *Third Text*, London, and an editorial board member of *Kabinet*, St. Petersburg.