

**EXPERIENCE OF PARTICIPATION  
OF THE REPUBLIC OF BELARUS IN THE VENETIAN BIENNAL**

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Today it is impossible to live and create in an isolated cultural space, not knowing and not taking part in the global processes of the development of art. The Venice Biennale is the most authoritative forum of world contemporary art; it is not just an exhibition of contemporary art: it is one of those events that are part of a collective culture that often discusses and changes the way we understand and create art that can capture change and social change.

The purpose of the article is to analyze the experience of the participation of the Republic of Belarus in the Venice Biennale.

**Material and methods.** For writing the article were used historical-descriptive and historical-system methods. The main base was the sources and materials of the periodical press and the official Internet resources of the Venice Biennale.

**Findings and their discussion.** The Venice Biennale was created on the basis of a resolution of the municipal administration of April 19, 1893. In accordance with it, in 1894, it was ordered to organize a “National Biennale Exhibition” to celebrate the silver wedding of King Umberto and Margherita di Savoy. The actual inauguration of the event took place two years later, on April 30, 1895. The then mayor of Venice, Riccardo Selvatiko, who decidedly wanted to transform the evening meetings of artists in Florian’s coffee houses into a prestigious international exhibition, played an indisputable role.

During its existence, the Biennale has turned into a celebration of modern art, incomparable in scale and spectacle. The Venice Biennale is currently the most authoritative forum of world contemporary art. The main goal of this large-scale exhibition is to present the most modern phenomena in the contemporary art of different countries. In many ways, the dynamics of the development of art of our time is determined by the two-year rhythm of the Venetian exhibitions. The special theme proposed for each of the Biennale is intended to reflect the problematics of the current situation in contemporary art.

The most recognized contemporary artists exhibited their works at the Venice Biennale, including: Gustav Klimt (1899), Renoir, Courbet (1910), Henri Matisse, Cezanne, Van Gogh (1920), Modigliani (1922), Chagall (1928), De Chirico (1930), Dali, Kandisky, Mir (1948), Pollock (1950), Jeff Koons (1990), Damien Hirst (1993) and Italian Maurizio Cattelan. At the Venetian art exhibitions such Russian painters showed their works as: Mikhail Vrubel, Isaac Brodsky, Mstislav Dobuzhinsky, Boris Kustodiev. A retrospective of Modigliani at the Biennale took place in the 1930s. The great Picasso had to wait until 1948 to see his works exhibited at the Venice Biennale.

Belarus at the Venice Biennale was presented four times: in 2005, 2011, 2015. and in 2017. [3]

From June 12 to November 6, 2005, the 51st International Art Exhibition was held, at which two international exhibitions were held, created in Giardini (curated by Maria de Corral) and in Arsenal (curated by Rosa Martinez).

Belarus was first represented at this prestigious forum. In Venice, the works of N. Zavoznoy, I. Tishin, V. Celen, S. Voichenko, V. Pysin and R. Ivashkevich - a Belarusian artist, representative of conceptual art were presented. Their works were noticed, and this inspired and intensified preparations for subsequent exhibitions.

2011 - the 54th Biennale, compared with the previous exhibition, marked a significant increase in participants. 83 artists, 62 of which are presented for the first time, 32 artists and more than 440,000 visitors. Belarus presented the curatorial concept of Mikhail Borozny - the project "KODEX" by A. Klinov, V. Petrov, O. Kostyuchenko and D. Skvortsov.

The theme of the Biennale was proposed by the Swiss art historian BicheKuriger - "ILLUMInationi", she divided it into two words: illumi - lighting and nation - nation. At the forefront of the question about the nation and time of art. The Belarusian project was called "KODEX" - this is a part of the book that does not have a cover, only the basis, it is a modern interpretation of the text design. Five different artists were selected, each of whom offered his own vision of the topic.

2015 - the 56th International Art Exhibition, held from May 9 to November 22 and set a new record of attendance and participation of the press (more than 501,000 visitors and about 8,000 accredited journalists).

The program of the exhibition featured works of 136 artists, of which 89 took part for the first time.

The organizers of the national competition of curatorial concepts of the Belarusian pavilion for the first time held an open competition. Belarus presented the project by Alexei Shinkarenko and Olga Rybchinskaya "Archives of the witness of the war". The exposition was based on photographic documents on the theme of the First World War from the funds of republican and regional museums and private collections. The project was quite successful and at the state level they realized that contemporary art contributes to the formation of the country's image and the manifestation of national identity. She conquered the jury with a depth of philosophical meaning, an unusual form and an attempt to comprehend and establish a connection with events that concern society.

From May 13 to November 26, 2017, the 57th Venice Biennale of Contemporary Art was held by Kristin Masel and received the name VIVA ARTE VIVA. [2]

The exhibition was attended by 120 artists, including 103 - for the first time at the main exhibition, attended by 86 countries. The whole exhibition is

animated by a series of parallel projects and speeches. Speaking by curator Kristin Masel, she said, "Contemporary art, faced with conflicts and upheavals in the world, remains the most valuable testimony of humanity. While the very idea of humanism is under threat. Art is the last fortress to be guarded; a garden that needs to be carefully cultivated, without paying attention to fashion and anyone's interests, art is an alternative to individualism and indifference.

The Belarusian art project "Table" was successfully presented at the 57th Venice Biennale by the artist Roman Zaslouov in collaboration with Viktor Lobkovich and Sergey Talybov "Table" is a 32-minute video from more than two dozen mini-scenes that continuously replace each other the background of the main and unchanged object is the flat surface of the table. Thus, the table becomes not just a "stage" on which dramatic, comic and philosophical scenes unfold, but also the main witness and even the actor in each of them. The viewer is invited not only to observe what is happening from the outside, but literally to be at the same table with the heroes of video art.

The project was honored good by the jury. Professional judges noted that the authors managed to create a bright and expressive image using minimal means. In the first week of the Biennale, more than a thousand spectators saw the Belarusian exposition. The Italian magazine Kyoss, one of the oldest in the art world, dedicated a series of articles to Roman Zaslouov. [1]

**Conclusion.** Belarus is attracting more and more attention in the global art community. The participation of Belarus in the Venice Biennale is an occasion by which Belarus will be talked about at the international level. Today, it is modern art that reflects the philosophical search for identity that will lead Belarus and Belarusians to their very special path of development. Further participation in this event makes it possible to demonstrate what actual Belarusian art is - this is not a myth, but a large-scale phenomenon that deserves recognition not only in its "homeland", but also beyond its borders. Biennale provides an opportunity to show their culture and identity. Venice Biennale has become a great experience and opportunity for the world recognition of Belarusian contemporary art.

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