



Calvert 22 Foundation,
State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg,
the Hermitage Foundation UK
and the Dmitri Prigov Foundation present:

Dmitri Prigov. Theatre of Revolutionary Action

*Part of The Future Remains: Revisiting Revolution season marking
the centenary of the Russian Revolution*

13 October – 17 December 2017, Calvert 22 Space
Press Preview: Thursday 12 October, 10am – 12pm

Calvert 22 Foundation is pleased to announce the first posthumous solo presentation of Dmitri Prigov's work in the UK. Prigov (1940 – 2007) was one of the leading figures of Moscow Conceptualism and is known for his varied and prolific work as a poet, performer and artist using installation, video, typewritten books and other media.

The exhibition *Dmitri Prigov. Theatre of Revolutionary Action* at Calvert 22 Space will reflect on the different ways theatricality and performance influenced Prigov's oeuvre, focusing primarily on his work after the fall of the Soviet Union. Part of the *The Future Remains: Revisiting Revolution* season at Calvert 22 Foundation marking the centenary of 1917, the exhibition will look back on the Soviet experiment and the ways Prigov harnessed ideological, philosophical and mystical languages to address themes of chaos, change and death.

Organised in collaboration with the State Hermitage Museum, the Hermitage Foundation UK and the Dmitri Prigov Foundation, the exhibition centres around an installation based on a drawing from the museum's collection, *Series with Brooms* (2000s). The exhibition will use

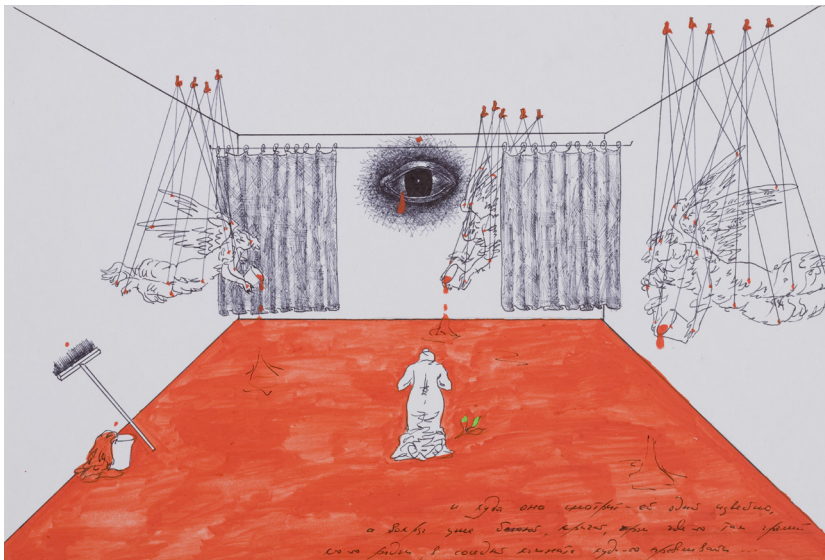
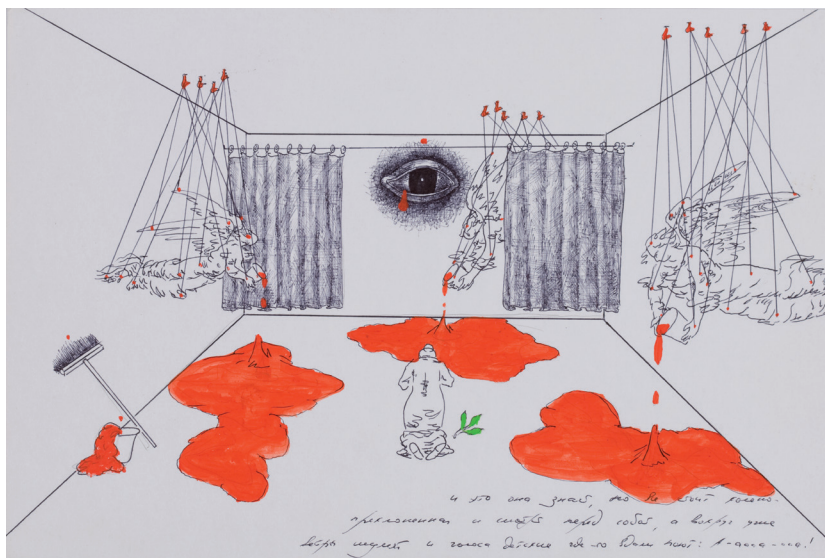
performativity as a way of understanding Prigov's works and the ironic mystical world they evoke. The installation, realised in collaboration with Prigov's son Andrei Prigov, will be in dialogue with other works including a number of the artist's early typewritten concrete poems (recently acquired by Tate), video performances and rarely seen objects and drawings from the Prigov Foundation's collection.

Prigov created a large number of 'phantom installations' that were never realised. As well as the *Series with Brooms* installation, which will be realised for the first time, a number of installation sketches will be displayed. *Cleaning Woman and Angels* is part of a triptych featuring Prigov's recurring motif, the 'Cleaning Woman', which also features in his large-format drawing on newspaper, *She and the Eye* (1992), also on display. The work depicts three floating angels and a kneeling cleaning woman, overseen by a large solitary eye, interpreted by many as evoking the totalising gaze of political rule or an all-seeing God. *Series with Brooms* also features a solitary eye, along with an ominous bulging ceiling and long, upturned brooms, once again evoking the *Cleaning Woman* motif.

Providing an insight into Prigov's Soviet period and early engagement with conceptualism, his so-called *stikhogramms* date from 1975 – 1985. These typewritten visual poems play with well-known slogans, songs and titles, such as *A Spectre is Haunting Europe* and *Heroic Times We Lived In*, and deconstruct the relationship between text, object and speech.

Prigov's interest in found images and his playful intervention in historical scenes permeates the *Flowers* and *Palaces* series (both 1992) and is present in modified photographic works such as *1907* (2002). Furthermore, video works such as *The Evangelist* (2007) are typical of Prigov's later move into multimedia performance and it is these that most overtly blur the boundaries between artist, poet and performer.

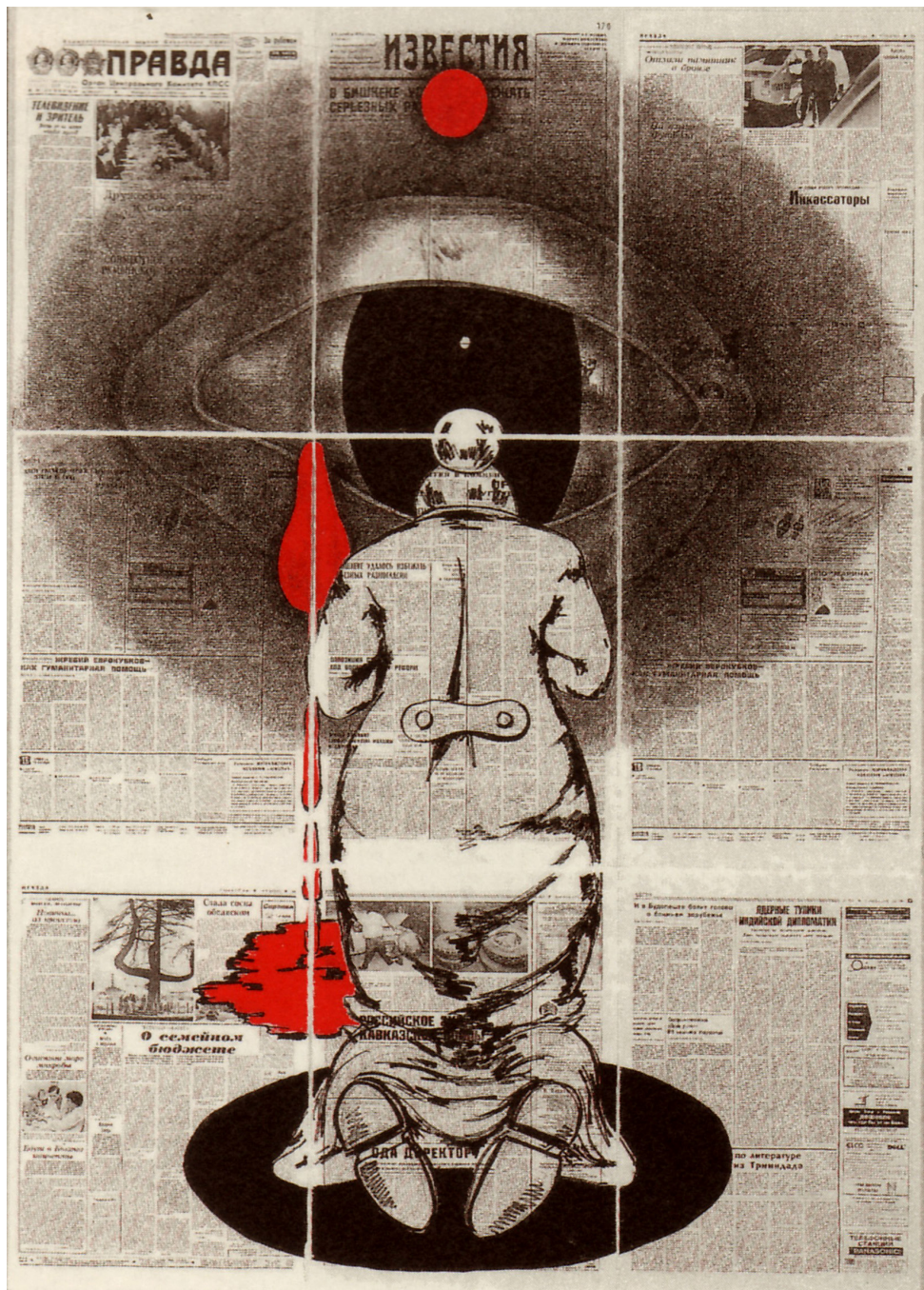
The show will be complemented by a programme of events exploring Prigov's artistic contribution within an international context, including a one-day conference in collaboration with *The Courtauld Institute of Art*, spoken word performances and a series of workshops looking at the broader context of revolutionary theatre and performance in Russia and Eastern Europe.



Dmitri Prigov, Sketches of the installations *Series with Brooms and Cleaning Woman and Angels*, 2000s. © Prigov Estate

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Dmitri Prigov, *She and the Eye*, 1992. © KE Gallery

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Notes to Editors

Dmitri Prigov. Theatre of Revolutionary Action is curated by Dr. Elizaveta Butakova-Kilgarrieff and is part of *The Future Remains: Revisiting Revolution*, Calvert 22 Foundation's year-long season of events, exhibitions and discussions marking the centenary of the Russian Revolution.

The full events programme to accompany the exhibition will be announced later this summer.

About Dmitri Prigov

Dmitri Prigov was born in 1940 and was part of the circle of artists working in the Soviet Union in the 1970s and 1980s that became known as Moscow Conceptualists (including Ilya Kabakov and Erik Bulatov, amongst others). During his lifetime, Prigov was known equally as an artist and as a poet, bringing together these roles in his artistic persona of Dmitri Alexandrovich Prigov or "DAP". This persona allowed him to adopt an "unstable" position within his poetry and art, ironizing Soviet culture in its period of decline through stagnation and Perestroika. In 1986, he was arrested by the KGB for handing out his "addresses to citizens" on the street. Until the end of his life Prigov was deeply engaged with contemporary culture, and died in 2007 on the day before a planned performance with the group Voina. The performance would have seen Prigov carried up 22 flights of stairs in the Moscow State University in a cupboard, reciting his poems along the way.

Recent retrospectives of Prigov's work include *Dmitri Prigov: Dmitri Prigov*, a solo retrospective organized by the State Hermitage Museum during the 45th Biennale at Ca Foscari University, Venice (2011); *Dmitri Prigov: From Renaissance to Conceptualism and Beyond* at the State Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow (2014); *Dmitri Prigov in Dialogue with the Avant-Garde* at the State Russian Museum, St Petersburg (2015) and *Havel-Prigov and Czech Experimental Poetry* at the Star Summer Palace, Prague (2016).

His work featured in the recent exhibitions *Adventures of the Black Square* at Whitechapel Gallery, London (2015) and *Kollektisia!* at the Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris (2017). An English-language critical biography of his work is forthcoming by Mark Lipovetsky, University of Colorado.



Dmitri Prigov. © Prigov Estate

About Calvert 22 Foundation

Calvert 22 Foundation celebrates the culture and creativity of the New East – Eastern Europe, the Balkans, Russia and Central Asia – enriching perceptions of the region and furthering international understanding.

Calvert 22 Foundation is a not-for profit organisation committed to dialogue and discovery, to the development of international creative networks, and to the role of learning and education as the basis for knowledge sharing and institutional exchange.

The Foundation's activities include:

Calvert 22 Space – the London headquarters of the foundation that hosts seasonal programmes, events, talks and screenings for a first-hand experience of the contemporary culture and creativity of the New East

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The Calvert Journal – an online magazine of New East contemporary culture, including art, film, architecture, design and avant-garde culture

The Calvert Forum – a think tank for the New East, focused on research and policy for the creative industries of the region. The Forum also operates as a digital and physical platform for discussion and learning.

About the State Hermitage Museum, The Hermitage Foundation UK and the *Hermitage 20/21 Project*

The State Hermitage Museum in St Petersburg is one of the largest museums in the world. The collection of the State Hermitage includes over 3 million works of art and world culture artefacts. It contains paintings, graphic works, sculptures, works of applied art, archaeological artefacts and numismatic objects. The Hermitage is considered to have been founded in 1764, when Empress Catherine the Great acquired an impressive collection of works from the Berlin merchant Johann Ernst Gotzkowsky.

The Hermitage Foundation UK was established in 2003 to support the Hermitage Museum in all or any ways consistent with its charitable status. The Foundation has championed *the Hermitage 20/21 Project* from its inception in 2007. In addition to this work the Foundation supports exhibitions in the UK and St Petersburg, study visits to the UK for Hermitage research staff and the translation of Hermitage collection catalogues into English. It also runs a Friends organisation that is closely linked to the Friends of the Hermitage in St Petersburg and that organises exciting special events in the UK.

Since its launch in 2007 the *Hermitage 20/21 Project* has organised over 40 exhibitions and several research and educational projects aimed at illuminating major contemporary art trends have been carried out. The project's exhibitions fall into five main categories: solo exhibitions of renowned classics of contemporary art, group exhibitions of young artists from different countries, architecture exhibitions, photography exhibitions, and the project "Sculpture in the Great Courtyard of the Winter Palace".

The project's goal is to collect, exhibit and study art produced since 1917, 20th century art and 21st century art – hence 20/21. It also aims to build the museum's contemporary art collection. Among the works in the Hermitage collection are sculptures by Louise Bourgeois and Antony Gormley, the archive of drawings by Dmitri Prigov, and installations and graphic works by Ilya and Emilia Kabakov.

Educational programmes play an important role in the Hermitage's work in the field of contemporary art, and are focused on revealing the inner workings of the present-day art world. They include meetings with artists and curators, roundtables and workshops, as well as art competitions.

About the Dmitri Prigov Foundation

The Dmitri Prigov Foundation was established to promote Dmitri Prigov's legacy in art and literature. It is also dedicated to supporting groundbreaking innovative practices and research in both these areas.

In the ten years since Prigov's passing, the DPF has held several major international conferences on various aspects of contemporary art, curatorship and art criticism, helped to launch half a dozen large-scale retrospective exhibitions and sponsored numerous smaller shows of Prigov's art across Europe. The Foundation funds the translation of his work for international publishers which has resulted in his books coming out not only in his own country, but also in Italy, Germany, the United States, the Czech Republic, Poland and elsewhere. The Foundation still owns a large selection of Prigov's art and is proud of having been helpful in enlarging the contemporary art collections of the State Hermitage, Centre Pompidou and Tate Modern museums.

In partnership with:



Dmitri Prigov. Theatre of Revolutionary Action

Calvert 22 Foundation

13 October – 17 December 2017

Press Preview: Thursday 12 October, 10am – 12pm

Private View: Thursday 12 October, 6pm – 9pm

Free admission

Calvert 22 Space

Wed – Sun, 12pm – 6pm

22 Calvert Avenue

London E2 7JP

UK

For more information about the exhibition and the related programme of events, please visit: calvert22.org

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