

ART: RUSSIAN

// LONDON

Alongside this, new contemporary art centres are appearing all over Russia, which offers hope to emerging artists. They all think differently, speak an international visual language and are free to do what they want. The situation is far from perfect; there is not enough international recognition for these artists and still only limited local support. I hope that will change soon though...

VV: Are most of the top Russian artists based outside of their homeland nowadays?

NM: I don't think that an artist's location is of much importance. Artists are travelling with their exhibitions and working abroad like never before, but that's the same the world over, not just in Russia. What matters are the influences and experiences that shape their work.

VV: Why did you decide to launch Calvert22 in London instead of Paris or New York? And why the trendy neighbourhood of Shoreditch instead of a more upmarket area like Chelsea or Mayfair for example?

NM: While people are certainly starting to notice Russian art, there are very few spaces in London where Russian and Eastern European art is given centre stage. We chose Shoreditch because it's the heart of London's art scene and the area has the most incredible disused spaces - Calvert22 is in a huge former warehouse that offers a large, luminous and flexible exhibition space. I was also drawn to Shoreditch's history as a cultural melting pot with its history as a first home to immigrants, including many Russians over the years. Above all, London has a very supportive arts community which has enabled Calvert22 to develop and grow tremendously.

