

GES-2-----V

Yamal Chronotope Exhibition Opens at GES-2 House of Culture, Exploring Life on the Siberian Peninsula and Its Artistic Scene

A new project in the *GES-2: Cities* programme examines how the natural conditions of the region and the history of its development by people from different cultures are reflected in souvenirs—a special category of objects that connect memories of spatial properties with the processes they have become part of.

About the title

The term “chronotope” is used in the humanities to denote the connection between a geographical space and the social and cultural processes occurring within it. The most prominent feature of the Yamal chronotope is its discontinuity. Pockets of human life are scattered across an enormous territory, with uninhabited expanses between them.

This seemingly harsh region is distinguished by its unique culture, which interweaves Northern indigenous traditions and imagery with those of the modern gas and oil extraction industry. The exhibition offers an artistic research perspective on the widely recognised symbols of Yamal, exploring how the peninsula’s sociocultural reality is reflected in souvenirs.

Souvenirs as the exhibition’s central theme

The key objects that authors and curators examine are souvenirs in the broadest sense: traditional craft items, memorable finds, and even experiences or documents. The exhibition is structured around a dialogue between authors and experts born or living in the Yamalo–Nenets Autonomous District and artists from other parts of Russia and former Soviet states. All of them contemplate the dimensions of the Yamal chronotope through exploring both actual and conceptual souvenirs from the region. The twenty project participants have divided nine themes amongst themselves, creating collective or individual works.

For example, Alexey Rumin installation—a reflection on traditional Yamal ornaments—resulted from a dialogue with archaeologist and art historian Veronika Mogritskaya and educator Olga Khorotetto. In his work, Rumin highlights the dual role of patterns: they simultaneously appear as decorative motifs and as symbols of primordial power.

Not only objects but also elements of intangible heritage can serve as mementos. The art collective Agency of Singular Investigations (Anna Titova and Stanislav Shuripa) offers their interpretation of the origins of legends about the mythical Sikhirtya people from Nenets tales, epic songs, and parables. The artists’ narrative takes the form of an installation based on research by a fictional Soviet geological engineer, Platon Andreyev, who supposedly worked in the Far North during the 1970s–1980s.

Yamal Chronotope
31 Jul–7 Dec 2025
Gallery C7
12+

Press materials

Artists

Agency of Singular Investigations
(Anna Titova, Stanislav Shuripa)
Yuri Beloselsky
Zhanar Bereketova
Mikhail Dobrovolsky
Anton Gudkov
Galina Guryanova
Fedor Hiroshige
Gennady Khartaganov
Efim Khorolya
Olga Khorotetto
Zoya Khudi
Ivan Istomin
Ekaterina Iushkevich
Alexey Mikulin
Veronika Mogritskaya
Albert Okotetto
Valentina Palamarchuk
Yan Posadsky
Alexey Rumin
Ivan Savitsky
Kamil Sazhensky
Evgeny Salinder
Sonya Zaindeevshaya
Hanna Zubkova

Curators

Yaroslav Aleshin
Sergey Babkin
Alexandra Kiseleva

Architecture

NORMA
(Daria Gerasimova, Grigoriy Tsebreiko)

GES-2 House of Culture
15 Bolotnaya Embankment
Moscow
ges-2.org

Entry to the House of Culture is free of charge, by prior registration

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Curators on the exhibition

Alexandra Kiseleva, exhibition curator:

"I define my impressions of being in Yamal as spatial. The local cities don't entice with striking architecture or welcome visitors with a balmy climate, yet they generate fantasies about an enormous open space that ends at the shore of the Arctic Ocean—the literal edge of the world. There, I constantly felt like a tiny dot inside another dot—a city on a map. Similarly, our exhibition explores how space and time are experienced in Yamal."

Yaroslav Aleshin, exhibition curator:

"Finding myself in Yamal, traversing vast distances between settlements, I observed the contrasts of northern life: nomads following reindeer herds while new cities are raised on stilts nearby. Throughout this time, I invariably wondered: what connects these places and these people, and how? The answer came almost from the periphery of vision. It's the stylised patterns in the margins of urban advertising materials, small trinkets—figurines, keyrings, magnets—sold on every corner, and monumental yet equally straightforward urban decorations, like murals, steles, and sculptures, as uncomplicated as their pocket-sized counterparts. All of this seems to become one large souvenir which one must, of course, accept."

Sergey Babkin, exhibition curator:

"Establishing a dialogue between strangers with often vastly different cultural experiences is a task that defies success. The works presented in the exhibition are products of chemical reactions, the result of collaboration between historians, archaeologists, and artists not only from Yamal but from across Russia. When we formed creative pairs, the nature of the final works could only be intuited very approximately. But there is one pattern we've derived from our experiments: collaborative creativity can unite people across any distance."

A public programme titled *Dimensions of the Far North* will also launch at the House of Culture on 31 July, complementing the exhibition's themes. The programme will include popular science talks, meetings with artists, and workshops on traditional crafts of the Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous District.

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