

Vasili Tsereteli

Executive Director of the Moscow
Museum of Modern Art

Moscow Museum of Modern Art is a regular participant of the Moscow International Biennale of Contemporary Art. Within the framework of this large-scale event, the museum presents projects that invariably attract a huge number of visitors. This year, the museum venues host several fascinating exhibitions, among which an important place belongs to the solo show of Michail Grobman, special guest of the 3rd Moscow Biennale.

Michail Grobman is one of the key figures in the Moscow underground art of the 60s, a major representative of Conceptualism, founder of the legendary "Leviathan" group. As time went by, the artist outstripped Conceptualism, but his oeuvre has always been a pointed critical statement. This is a protest art, as it denies all conventions of religion, nationality, sex or political views. Grobman was brave in his opinions in the 'clandestine' 60s, and so he continues to be today, in the age of total freedom of expression.

From the very start of his creative career, Grobman was attracted to graphic art and collage in all their types and modifications. The artist experimented constantly, which led to the birth of unique genres, from mail art to 'visual poems'. His works balance on the verge between plane and three-dimensional installation: they include objects from the past, such as book covers, yellowish photographs, old postcards and newspaper clippings that overcome the borders of the image and open the way to the new symbolic space.

The most important element of Grobman's method is the interaction of the visual with the text; as the artist puts it, the 'letter' lies at the base of his art. In this sense, Grobman is like-minded to such masters of Russian art as Ilya Kabakov and Dmitry A. Prigov. Recently their huge retrospectives took place in Moscow, while Grobman hasn't exhibited his works in the capital for a long time. I am really happy that this event takes place on the premises of the Moscow Museum of Modern Art.