



Press Contacts

REVOLUTION EVERY DAY

Exhibition extended through January 28, 2018; features a new commission from artist Cauleen Smith and an 800-page publication inspired by Soviet daily tear-off calendars



The University of Chicago's Smart Museum of Art presents *Revolution Every Day* (September 14, 2017–January 28, 2018), an exhibition of Soviet posters and contemporary art presented on the centennial of the 1917 Russian Revolution. The exhibition, organized by a team of guest curators from the University of Chicago and Northwestern University, features 77 works and immerses visitors in the distinct textures and speeds of everyday life that arose—and have lingered stubbornly—in the wake of revolutionary upheaval.

“*Revolution Every Day* aspires to find a different way into the art of the Russian Revolution. Most of us think we already know how to respond to Russian revolutionary posters. We are sure they are propaganda, deploying a set of recognizable tropes that are easily decoded. We think we know how to respond to the Russian Revolution itself, as a long and failed experiment. *Revolution Every Day* tinkers with this certainty, setting up visual and aural conversations that might inspire the visitor to experience this Soviet visual work, and maybe even the idea of the Russian Revolution itself, anew, without the usual ready-made responses,” write co-curators Robert Bird (Professor, Slavic Languages and Literatures, and Cinema and Media Studies, The University of Chicago), Christina Kiaer (Associate Professor of Modern Art, Northwestern University), and Zachary Cahill (Curator for the Richard and Mary L. Gray Center for Arts and Inquiry, The University of Chicago). The exhibition was organized in collaboration with Diane Miliotes (Interim Curator of Modern Art and Design, Smart Museum of Art).

The exhibition juxtaposes works of Soviet graphic art—primarily posters from the 1920s and 1930s, many by female artists such as Valentina Kulagina—with works on video and film, including excerpts from Dziga Vertov's documentary films from the 1930s, post-Soviet videos by artists like Olga Chernysheva, as well as a new commission by Cauleen Smith. Focused on the experiences of women under (and after) communism, these works involve viewers in visual and aural conversations concerning the temporality of the everyday, revealing how socialist labor involves feats of endurance and patience as much as heroic action.

“*Revolution Every Day* exemplifies the power of bringing multiple voices, perspectives, and realms of expertise together in one multifaceted, paradigm-shifting exhibition,” said Alison Gass, Dana Feitler Director of the Smart Museum. “Rather than feature only well-known Russian avant-garde artists from the first part of the twentieth century, it aims to challenge our assumptions about Russian and Soviet art by mingling vanguard and traditional aesthetic approaches, known and unknown artists, as well as mediums—from mass produced posters to films and videos.”

The exhibition is one of a series of exhibitions and artist projects on view concurrently at the Smart Museum that foreground the revolutionary potential of everyday art and experiences. It has been extended to run through January 28, 2018.

ARTISTS

Lene Berg, Mariia Bri-Bein, Olga Chernysheva, Aleksandr Deineka, Elizaveta Ignatovich, Gustav Klucis, Vitaly Komar, Viktor Koretsky, Valentina Kulagina, Anri Sala, Cauleen Smith, Varvara Stepanova, Dziga Vertov, and many others.

PUBLICATION



Revolution Every Day

\$30 / 800 pages, 222 illustrations / ISBN: 978-88-6749-294-7

Published by the Smart Museum of Art in collaboration with Mousse Publishing

Edited by Robert Bird, Christina Kiaer, and Zachary Cahill

Executive editor, Diane Miliotes

The exhibition is accompanied by a unique, small format publication inspired by the tradition of Soviet tear-off calendars. The book has 365 calendar pages with daily entries featuring a range of images and texts drawn from primary and archival source materials that explore the historical and experiential dimensions of revolution. It presents multiple short essays and other original contributions from the curators, artists, and scholars, accompanied by full color illustrations of all of the works in the exhibition.

ON CAMPUS

In conjunction with the exhibition, the Smart Museum and Film Studies Center present the series *Revolution Every Day: Dziga Vertov in the 1930s*, three screenings of rarely seen “poetic documentary” films by the Soviet filmmaker. At the University of Chicago Library, the Special Collections Research Center presents a parallel exhibition *Red Press: Radical Print Culture from St. Petersburg to Chicago* (September 25, 2017–December 15, 2017). The Neubauer Collegium for Culture and Society’s research project *Revolutionology: Media and Networks of Intellectual Revolution* questions the link between political and intellectual change through workshops and public programs. And the University Symphony Orchestra presents Dmitri Shostakovich’s Symphony No. 12, *The Year 1917*, as part of a performance of poignant musical reflections on historical turning points of the last 100 years (December 2, 2017).

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ABOUT THE SMART MUSEUM OF ART

As the fine arts museum of the University of Chicago, the Smart Museum of Art is home to thought-provoking exhibitions and an exquisite collection of more than 15,000 objects, including modern masterpieces, millennia-old Chinese ritual objects, rich examples of Renaissance painting, and provocative works of contemporary art. Through collaborations with scholars, the Smart has established itself as a driving force for creative thinking through the arts at the University and a pioneering model of what a 21st century academic art museum can be. The Museum also offers distinctive programs that inspire visitors of all ages to experience the dynamic role of the visual arts in our world. The Smart first opened in 1974.

Mission

The Smart Museum of Art at the University of Chicago opens the world through art and ideas.

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Hours

Tuesday–Sunday, 10 am–5 pm
Thursday evenings until 8 pm

Galleries are closed Mondays and holidays.

Admission is always free. All are welcome.