

Press Release – 22 July 2010

ALEXANDER PONOMAREV: SEA STORIES

Curated by Nadim Samman

6 October – 14 November 2010

(Private View – 5 October 2010)

Calvert22 is pleased to present *Sea Stories*, the first UK solo exhibition by Russian artist **Alexander Ponomarev** (b. 1957). *Sea Stories* will unveil a series of new and recent works by the artist. All but one piece in the show has never been exhibited before in the UK.

Drawing upon his background in nautical engineering and an early career as a submariner, Ponomarev uses journeys on the sea as a starting point to explore the relationship between illusion and 'reality', the utility of art, and the shifting tides of personal and cultural history. The works in this exhibition issue from journeys undertaken by the artist – to the North Pole, to the bottom of the ocean and while tracking the 60th latitude of the Atlantic onboard a scientific research ship. His work presents unbelievable stories from his voyages and takes the form of epic aquatic installations and performative engagement with remote seas and arctic terrain.

Sea Stories will mark the UK debut of the major installation *Base* (2003) which was originally created during a residency at the studio of sculptor Alexander Calder. In this work the artist uses the recurring metaphor of the submarine that carries across his practice. For Ponomarev, the submarine is employed as a symbol that links art to war while also signalling the issue of surface and hidden depths, and the fraught relationship between appearance and disappearance.

Sea Stories will feature a number of drawings, films and photographs documenting actions in far flung corners of the ocean. The film works to be shown in the exhibition will include *Heliotropism* (2009), created onboard a lifeboat in the middle of the Atlantic and *Maya: A Lost Island* (2000), recording a collaboration with the 5th fleet of the Russian Navy.

The exhibition will also unveil a new series of self-portraits by the artist. *Deep Water Graphics* (2010) was created in the arctic and subsequently distorted by subjection to water-pressure at a depth of up to 4km below sea-level.

Alexander Ponomarev, whose father was a hero of the battle of Stalingrad, graduated from the USSR Nautical Engineering College in 1979. His career as a seaman left an indelible mark on his artistic practice. When not crossing oceans he lives in France. In 2007, he was named an Officier des Arts et des Lettres by France's Minister of Culture.

Recent solo exhibitions include:

'Subtizioso', collateral event at the 53rd International Art Exhibition Venice Biennale/ Biennale di Venezia (2009); 'Faire Surface', MNMN (Monaco National Musee Nouveau); Culture Project, New York; Punto di vista Nina Lumer, Milan (all 2008); 'Verticale parallele' Chapelle Saint-Louis de la Salpetriere; National Center of Contemporary Art, Festival d'Automne, Paris; 52nd International Art Exhibition Venice Biennale / Biennale di Venezia; 'Secret Fairway' special project of the 2nd Moscow

Biennale of Contemporary Art; 'In the Garden of Wolf Packs', installation in the Tuilleries Fountain, Louvre, Paris (all 2007); Multimedia Complex of Actual Arts, in conjunction with the 1st Moscow Biennale (2005); 'Alexander Ponomarev,' TNT Center, Bordeaux, France (2004).

Recent group exhibitions include:

Krasnoyarsk Biennale of Contemporary Art; 'New Angilarium', Museum of Modern Art, Moscow; 'I Believe', Winzavod Center for Contemporary Art, in conjunction with the 2nd Moscow Biennale of Contemporary Art (all 2007); 'ARS 06. Sense of the Real', Kiasma Nykytaiteen Musee, Helsinki (2006); 'Under the Bridges-2', Casino Luxembourg, Luxembourg; 'Alexander Ponomarev, Video,' firstRun, art media festival, Ivri, France (all 2005).

Exhibition viewing and talk by curator Nadim Samman

As part of part of the Inside Out Festival

Date: Tuesday 26 October 2010

Time: Viewing 6:30pm; Talk 7:00pm



Notes to Editors:

About Calvert22

Calvert22 is a registered charity. Founded by Russian economist Nonna Materkova, and under the artistic direction of David Thorp, Calvert22 opened in London in May 2009 and is the UK's first not-for-profit foundation specialising in contemporary art from Russia and Eastern Europe. Calvert22 presents four curated exhibitions each year, and is currently developing an education and talks programme, with the aim of promoting Russia and Eastern Europe's rich contemporary art culture.

Visitor Information

Address: 22 Calvert Avenue, London E2 7JP

Opening Hours: Wednesday – Saturday: 10am – 6pm; Sunday: 11am – 5pm

Admission: Free

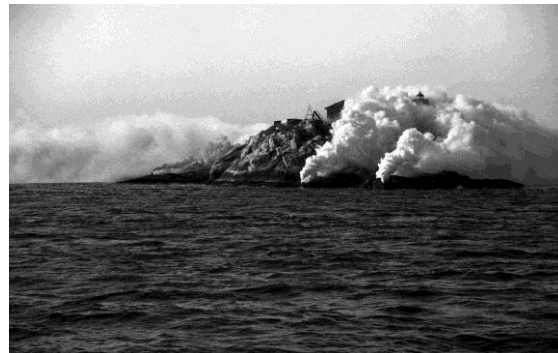
Contact: +44 (0) 20 7613 2141 | info@calvert22.org

Nearest Tube: Old St / Liverpool St

Website: www.calvert22.org



Alexander Ponomarev
Base (2003)
Atelier Calder, France
Photo by Cristian Mosar
Image courtesy of Alexander Ponomarev



Alexander Ponomarev
Maya: A Lost Island (2005)
Action in collaboration with the 5th fleet of the Russian Navy,
Barents Sea
Film
Image courtesy of Alexander Ponomarev