

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



Gallery SHCHUKIN Opens New York City Location With First US Solo Exhibition of Works by Aladdin Garunov

May 1- June 30, 2014

Press preview: Monday, April 28, 5:30-7:30 pm



Untitled, 2010. Rubber, carpet, industrial fabric

New York, NY—Gallery SHCHUKIN is pleased to announce the opening of its New York branch on 524 West 19th Street, with the exhibition of works by Dagestan-born artist and sculptor Aladdin Garunov. Curated by Matthew Drutt, **Aladdin Garunov: Selected Works, 1998-2013**, is the artist's first solo show in the United States, on view May 1 – June 30, 2014. The gallery also has an exhibition space in Paris and a representative office in Moscow.

One of the first galleries to bring Russian contemporary art to Western audiences, Gallery SHCHUKIN has introduced many artists who have become prominent figures on the international stage. This inaugural exhibition, reflecting the gallery's history and commitment to discovering and cultivating international talent, surveys Garunov's work of the past fifteen years and encompasses 29 paintings and objects.

As Mr. Drutt writes in the publication that will accompany the exhibition: "Aladdin Garunov's art occupies a position seemingly rife with contradictions. Utterly contemporary in idiom and execution, it is also replete with references to belief systems and materials indigenous to his native Dagestan, a Russian federal republic on the border of the Caspian Sea better known in the world for its militant Islamism

than for its rich cultural traditions. But it is precisely these tensions--old vs. new, the patriarchal East vs. the progressive West, Asian vs. European spiritual views--that form the complex matrix of Garunov's art.

Since the mid-1980s, when he relocated to Moscow to study art, graduating from what was then the Stroganov Higher Art Industry College, Garunov has largely marched to his own drummer, eschewing the prevailing Postmodernist styles of Perestroika artists, who celebrated and critiqued both the fall of Communism and Russia's romantic attachment to its deeply embedded visual icons. Instead, Garunov followed his interest in Modernism and its language of abstract painting, which sought to be the secular equivalent of spirituality formerly found in figurative, religious art. To that, he brought the non-objective traditions of art in the Muslim world, which richly combines pattern and language but completely avoids figuration. Finally, Garunov has created a further layer of intricacy by occupying the language of painting but displacing paint as a material, instead using everything from discarded Asian carpets to industrial materials such as rubber, which refers in part to the oil economies of the countries neighboring Dagestan.

The result is a body of work that looks both familiar and exotic, Minimalist in conception but robust in execution, with surprising combinations of fur, Arabic calligraphy, and found objects that remind us of the Combine painting strategies of Rauschenberg.

The works selected for this exhibition span the entire period of Garunov's mature output as an artist. They represent one aspect of his work—he also works with installations, video, and paintings-- and show how his exploration of the painting/object has evolved from his first tentative forays to his more commanding works of the past few years. At a time when tensions between the Muslim and non-Muslim worlds are at an all time state of tension and crisis, Garunov's art of poetic coherence and reconciliation is a fitting tribute to how differences can comfortably, if not harmonically, coexist."

The exhibition will be accompanied by a fully illustrated catalog published by Gallery SHCHUKIN.



Untitled, 2009. Rubber, tarpaulin, rubber adhesive, fabric, fur



My Prayer. From the series "Zikr," 2012. Rubber, carpet, nitro paint

About Aladdin Garunov:

Born in Dagestan in 1956, Aladdin Garunov is an artist and sculptor living in Moscow, Russia. Garunov started exhibiting in Russia and Europe in the beginning of 1990s with solo and group shows and received critical acclaim for his work inspired by Islamic themes and traditions. Twice the finalist of the prestigious Kandinsky Prize, Garunov's work is often shown in solo and group exhibitions and is included in private and public collections, including National Centre for Contemporary Arts, Moscow, Russia; State Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow, Russia; State Russian Museum, St. Petersburg, Russia; Moscow Museum of Modern Art; and many others.

About Gallery SHCHUKIN

Gallery SHCHUKIN is an international arts organization with a representative office in Moscow and gallery exhibition spaces in Paris and New York. Founded in 1987, the gallery specializes in modern and contemporary art and is dedicated to discovering and cultivating cutting edge contemporary artists. One of the first organizations to bring contemporary Russian art to international audiences, Gallery SHCHUKIN has exhibited established and emerging artists, including David Datuna, Sasha Semenov, Andrey Shchelokov, Aladdin Garunov, Vladimir Migachev, Natalia Zaloznaya, Igor Tishin, and many others. The gallery frequently collaborates with prominent art institutions in Russia, Asia, Europe, and Scandinavia including a group show of contemporary work at the Tampere Art Museum in Finland; "Russian Collection Presents..." at the United Nations in Geneva; "Russian Mind," a group show of

Perestroika era artists in Graz, Austria; “Matrix XX Century,” a collection of digital work commissioned for the Japanese International Telephone and Telegraph Corporation in Tokyo; as well as projects with The State Tretyakov Gallery and The State Museum of the East in Moscow. In October 2013, Gallery SHCHUKIN expanded to Europe, opening an exhibition space on Avenue Matignon in Paris, France, with a solo exhibition of installations by David Datuna, “Power And Beauty.” The newest location of Gallery SHCHUKIN, a two-level, 3,500-square-foot space at 524 W 19th Street in New York, opened in spring 2014. Through exhibitions, publications, collaborations, and its non-profit component, “National Foundation for Art Collection,” Gallery SHCHUKIN continues to support and promote established gallery artists and introduce emerging talent.

The founder of Gallery SHCHUKIN, collector Nikolay Shchukin, is a former psychotherapist specializing in psychoanalysis. Presently, Mr. Shchukin works on the universal concept of psychology and sociology of art.

About Matthew Drutt

Matthew Drutt (M.A. Yale University) is an independent, New York-based curator specializing in modern and contemporary art. He was previously the Executive Director of the Blouin Cultural Advisory Group. Prior to this appointment, he was Executive Director of Lisson Gallery in London, Milan, and New York, where he oversaw its international sales of such stellar artists as Daniel Buren, Tony Cragg, Dan Graham, Anish Kapoor, Jason Martin, and Lawrence Weiner. From 2006 to 2010, he was Executive Director of Artpace San Antonio, an international artist residency program. He served as Chief Curator of The Menil Collection, Houston from 2001 – 2006, where he organized exhibitions of Olafur Eliasson, Robert Gober, Arshille Gorky, Donald Judd, Ellsworth Kelly, and Kazimir Malevich. From 1993 to 2001, He was a curator at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, where he organized numerous shows, including The Art of the Motorcycle, and advised on the construction and programming of the international Guggenheim network. During that time, he also served as a visiting professor at Columbia University, and was a teaching fellow at Yale University prior to that. In 2006, the French Government knighted him as a Chevalier in the Order of Arts and Letters in recognition of his accomplishments in the international art world.

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