



**NO. THE EXHIBITION
CURATED BY MEDUZA
APRIL 26 — JULY 6, 2025
KUNSTRAUM KREUZBERG/BETHANIEN
MARIANNENPL. 2, 10997 BERLIN**

In 2014, a team of independent journalists left Russia to escape pressure and censorship. In exile, they created [Meduza](#), now one of the most important independent Russian-language media outlets. The decade that followed has been marked by frustration and turmoil: war in Europe, the pandemic, the climate crisis, the rise of authoritarianism, the erosion of democracy, and deepening polarisation.

The exhibition “No”, curated by *Meduza*, is a multidisciplinary project that weaves together contemporary art and documentary testimonies. It immerses the audience into the experiences of ordinary people who have learned to live and work in extreme circumstances.

The title “No”, «Нет» in Russian, is a statement of resistance. It is a word that has become dangerous to say in today’s Russia — a word that can lead to imprisonment or murder. This exhibition unites the voices of those who continue to say no — to dictatorship, censorship, fear and war. It is an homage to independent journalists, political activists and all those who have the courage to disagree.

This exhibition tells about an era at the turning point — but, more importantly, about a person who encountered great historical events. Such a collision always leads to tragic consequences. In this project, we see people who talk about their experiences — about the experience of life under a dictatorship and in exile, about their experience of war. This is a conversation that

brings more questions and no simple answers. But it is no coincidence that the exhibition is called “No”: it is also our no to fear and silence, censorship and self-censorship. — Curatorial team.

Documentary

The exhibition’s storytelling is structured around two narratives: the works of 13 international artists and a documentary project created specifically for the exhibition. This non-fiction section, directed by playwright **Mikhail Durnenkov**, features close-up video portraits of *Meduza* journalists and contributors — people who have witnessed this historical time. Featured contributors include reporters Taisia Bekbulatova, Elena Kostyuchenko, Svetlana Reiter and Lilia Yapparova, writer Zhenia Berezhna, film critic Anton Dolin, photographer Alexander Gronsky, *Meduza*’s cofounders Ivan Kolpakov and Galina Timchenko, and others.

Notions

Drawing on an analysis of *Meduza*’s headlines from the last 10 years, the exhibition explores the defining themes of the past decade: **Dictatorship, Resilience, Censorship, War, Exile, Fear, Polarization, Loneliness**, and **Hope**. Each one is refracted in artworks and journalistic testimonies.

The final room, *Hope*, leaves the visitor with no easy answers. Instead, it asks a simple yet profound question: Why do those who report, create, resist — keep doing what they do? Their answers are complex, but one thing is clear: artists and journalists alike are sounding the alarm. Like canaries once taken into coal mines to warn of toxic gas, their voices are reminders of our shared humanity — and our shared responsibility to protect it.

Artists

Anonymous Artist (Russia) presents *Time of War*, a project that began in 2022 and now includes 150 iterations of the phrase “I want the war to end” in multiple languages. Serving both as an act of self-healing and a manifesto for peace, the project invites visitors to participate and contribute their voices.

Aleksey Dubinsky (Russia) presents a series of paintings depicting the long queues at Borisovskoye cemetery during Alexey Navalny’s funeral — an event remembered as “the burial of hope.” The works reflect on both loss and the resilience seen in collective mourning.

Alexander Gronsky (Russia) explores the theme of loneliness through a meditative slideshow of images captured across Russia in recent years. Calling himself “the last one in the shop,” Gronsky reflects on solitude in a society saturated with propaganda.

Semyon Khanin (Latvia) tackles polarisation through a new installation that literally makes black appear white and vice versa — an unsettling and powerful metaphor for how deeply manipulation distorts reality in divided societies.

Gülsün Karamustafa (Turkey) exhibits *Where Continents Meet*, using child-sized military uniforms found in an Istanbul shop to symbolize the devastating sacrifices wars demand, particularly from mothers and children.

Stine Marie Jacobsen (Denmark) and **Teobaldo Lagos Preller (Chile)** present *Quantum No*, a participatory installation inviting visitors to write political statements for the long-term democratic project *Law Shifters*. Initiated in 2015, the project has traveled from Greenland and Ukraine to Lebanon, engaging citizens in imagining new legal frameworks.

Cristina Lucas (Spain) contributes *Unending Lightning*, a haunting embroidered map of aerial bombings worldwide, recently expanded to include the atrocities caused by Russian bombs during the war in Ukraine — offering a powerful visual archive of destruction from the sky.

Pavel Otdelnov (Russia) unveils *Primer*, a series inspired by a Soviet alphabet book from his childhood. Each large canvas transforms familiar letters into haunting scenes — R for “radiation,” G for “grave” — illustrating how early learning can be filled with fear and foreboding.

Sergei Prokofiev (Russia) shows works from his project *HELL*, including fragile 3D-pen reconstructions of the Donetsk International Airport and Mariupol Drama Theater — both destroyed in war — alongside graphic works made with ashes from burned plastic, evoking the permanence of loss.

Fernando Sánchez Castillo (Spain) presents a monument that could never be erected in today’s Russia: a figurine of Alexey Navalny, murdered in prison in 2024. Visitors can take one of these small statues home in exchange for a note on resilience, turning memory into action.

SUPERFLEX (Denmark) showcases *All Data To The People*, a mural boldly overwritten in Russian («Данные народу»), referencing state censorship and the manipulation of digital information — and highlighting how even radical slogans can be co-opted or erased.

Pilvi Takala (Finland) contributes a new video based on her participation in Finland’s secretive, invite-only “National Defense Course.” Her work explores how military institutions shape public perception and promote militarization under the guise of preparedness and unity.

Alisa Yoffe (France/Russia) documents her own experience as an émigrée in a series of black-and-white digital sketches depicting long lines at French migration offices. Later transferred to canvas and walls, her expressive, analog-style brushwork brings humanity into a sterile bureaucratic space, softening and humanizing the digital medium.

Partners

[Helsingin Sanomat Foundation](#), [Fritt Ord Foundation](#), [Stichting Editors Choice](#), [JX Fund](#), [Committee to Protect Journalists](#), [Network of Exiled Media Outlets](#)

Exhibition Info

No. The exhibition

Curated by Meduza

Kunstraum Kreuzberg/Bethanien

April 26 — July 6, 2025

Opening: April 25, 2025, 5 PM

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instagram.com/thenoexhibition

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Some participants in the documentary section, as well as several artists and team members, remain anonymous for security reasons.

ABOUT MEDUZA

Founded in 2014 in Riga, Latvia, by a team of journalists from Russia, Meduza has grown into the largest independent Russian-language media outlet, reaching around 15 million readers. Outlawed and blocked in Russia, Meduza continues to report from the ground despite the risks, using anti-blocking tools to circumvent censorship and reach audiences inside the country. After being labeled a “foreign agent” by the Russian government, its business model was effectively destroyed, forcing the newsroom to rely on crowdfunding to sustain its work. In addition to its Russian-language reporting, Meduza has an [English-language edition](#). It also publishes and [sells books](#).