

Water, water everywhere

St. Petersburg hosts its first international exhibition of contemporary public art at the Peter and Paul Fortress.

coming up

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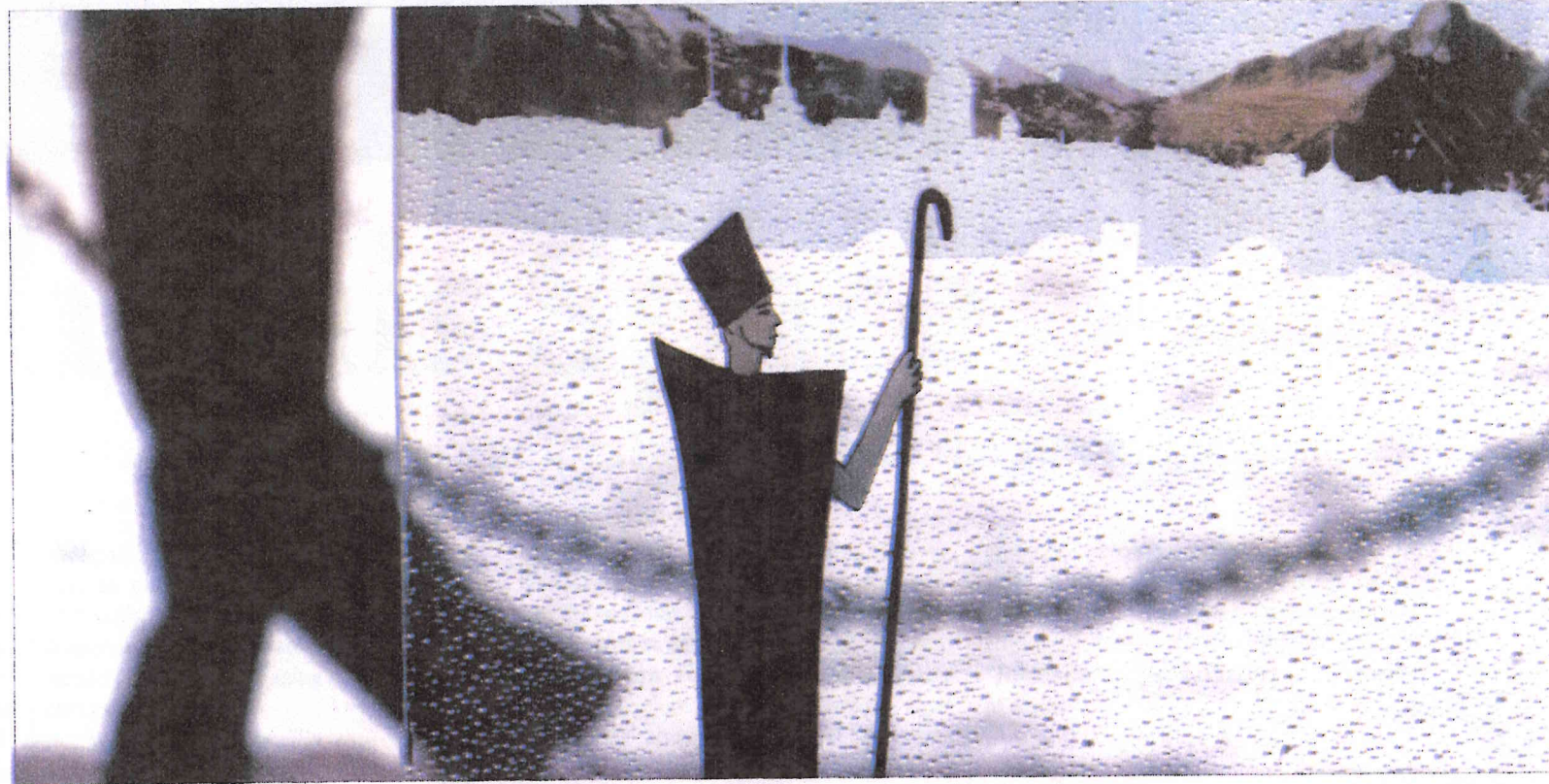
What is claimed as St. Petersburg's first international exhibition of contemporary public art, "H2O: Nordic and Russian Art in Public Spaces," opened Monday at the Peter and Paul Fortress with works by leading artists from Finland, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, and St. Petersburg.

The exhibition, which is dedicated to the theme of water, runs through Sept. 14.

"The project promises to be one of the largest and wide-reaching public events this autumn," organisers CEC ArtsLink said in a press release. "Interactive objects, sculptures, video and sound installations, all elucidating the theme of water in different ways, will be shown at the exhibition. The exhibition marks the first major international exhibition of contemporary art on the grounds of the Peter and Paul Fortress."

The organisers also explained the selection of "water" as the theme for the ambitious event.

"Water has always been not only a natural component of St. Petersburg, but also one of the most important parts of the city's visual image. Water plays an important role in St. Petersburg's identity and serves as a geographic and unifying element, connecting the Northwest of Russia with neighboring northern countries. For this reason, St. Petersburg is ideally appropriate for an open intercultural visual



A man walks past an exhibit at the "H2O: Nordic and Russian Art in Public Spaces" open air exhibition — devoted to the theme of water — at the Peter and Paul fortress on Wednesday

discussion of the theme of water and the definition of public space using the language of contemporary art."

The works on display utilise architectural and sculptural elements such as glass and mirrors to elaborate on the watery theme. Seven well-known artists with significant experience in the field of public art from five northern

countries will exhibit new «site specific» works at the Peter and Paul Fortress.

They include Denmark's Kaspar Bonnén with his floating slogan "I will always love you," and Finnish duo Tommi Gronlund and Petteri Nisunen with a series of sunken pools. Two St. Petersburg artists, Yury Shtapakov and

Pavel Shugurov 33+1, have also created new works for the exhibition.

A parallel project will feature the work of young St. Petersburg artists, who have created public art works as part of a workshop conducted by New York public art specialist Kendal Henry. The works are on show exhibited in the garden of the Anna Akhma-

tova Museum at Fontanny Dom. This exhibition, called "Fountain" is also dedicated to the theme of water.

"H2O: Nordic and Russian Art in Public Spaces" at the Peter and Paul Fortress and "Fountain" in the garden of the Anna Akhmatova Museum until Sept. 14. www.h2oexhibition.ru