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RUSSIA IRAN

FIELD TRIP: ST. PETERSBURG

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May in St. Petersburg, Russia's second largest city, is a sight to behold. Sunshine illuminates the city, luring people into its many gardens and parks, while highlighting the eclectic mix of baroque and neoclassical architecture that has made the city—since it was founded by Peter the Great in 1703—the country's "window to Europe." The port city of roughly five million people sits along the Baltic Sea, among a network of canals, with the Neva River running through it. During these months in the summer season, usually between the end of May through July, the evenings of St. Petersburg remain bright as dusk, a period that is also known as the "White Nights."

On the occasion of Iranian artist Reza Derakhshani's solo exhibition at the Marble Palace of the Russian Museum, ArtAsiaPacific was invited by Sophia Contemporary, the artist's gallery in London, to explore St. Petersburg, Russia's cultural hub. From the various venues that make up the Russian Museum to the world-renowned Hermitage (with its three-million-piece collection), the breadth of these institution's holdings, of not only ancient to contemporary Russian art, but also iconic pieces from American and European art history, made for an incredible journey through the ages.

Below are some highlights from the city's art museums.



The Mikhailovsky Palace, the main building of the Russian Museum. Formerly the imperial residence of Grand Duke Michael Pavlovich, it took six years to build and was completed in 1825. All photos by Sylvia Tsai for ArtAsiaPacific.

A full review of Reza Derakhshani's solo exhibition at the Marble Palace of the Russian Museum will appear in ArtAsiaPacific Issue no. 100 (September/October). The exhibition is on view until July 25, 2016.

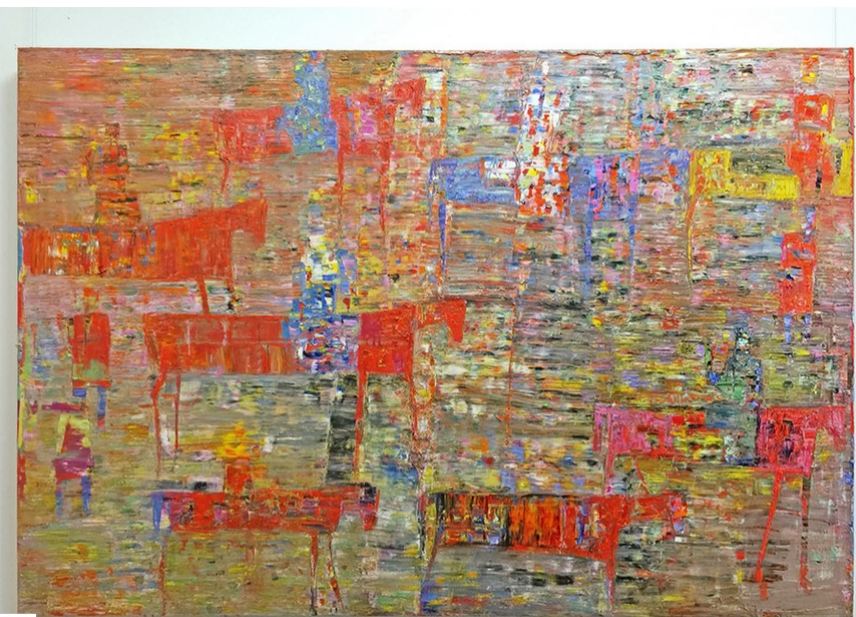
Sylvia Tsai is associate editor at ArtAsiaPacific.



Opening of the solo show of Iranian artist REZA DERAQSHANI at the Marble Palace.



REZA DERAQSHANI, *Secret Love*, 2016, enamel and glaze on canvas.



REZA DERAQSHANI, untitled work from 2015 that carries on his exploration of the huntsman figure from the Persian epic *Shahnameh*, one of the artist's frequent motifs that is used to represent the morally good and uncorrupt.