

"Art Belongs to the People" by Komar & Melamid
(School of the Arts)

The performance is designed to lift the veil covering the secret depths of the Russian soul and to demonstrate the remarkable results that can be achieved when pedagogical instruction is in the hands of informed and experienced teachers.

A group of simple Russian people (4 in all) who know nothing of the most recent achievements of Western European thought in the field of the visual arts, and who have never been involved in art on either side of the Iron Curtain, will paint a large canvas on the most recent and dramatic events in the United States, under the direction of Komar and Melamid. (The events to be depicted will be chosen for their chronological proximity to the date of the performance. Today, for example, the invasion of Grenada by American soldiers would serve as an appropriate theme. We hope that history will provide us with something similar at the appointed time.) The leaders and inspiration of this action, Komar and Melamid, will be seated with their backs to the audience, facing the canvas, which is to be attached to the wall; from this position they will issue instructions in Russian through a microphone or bullhorn. Slides of famous works of art worthy of emulation and study will be projected on the canvas. ~~There will be a short~~ lecture on history, ideology and esthetics. The participants and viewers will be served Russian Vodka until such time as ideological and esthetic principles have merged into a creative union. Musical accompaniment will also be provided to inspire the participants. Komar and Melamid will give oral explanations and demonstrations of the composition and coloristic resolution of the painting, and will interpret the fundamental principles of spiritual self-expression in contemporary conditions. During the actual painting of the work Komar and Melamid will correct the participants mistakes and praise and reward manifestations

Komar and Melamid

of artistic talent. Employing the whip and carrot strategy, Komar and Melamid will facilitate the speediest and most esthetically felicitous completion of the painting possible.

The action will be accompanied by simultaneous translation into English.

Necessary materials and equipment:

Canvas and stretchers (Size will be determined by the size of the available performance space); gesso; cans of oil paint of a variety of colors; brushes. (Canvas to be pre-stretched).

Amplifier with two microphones; plus microphone and headphones for the simultaneous translation.

Photographic and video equipment to document the events of the performance.

Vodka.

Participants: Komar and Melamid; four Russians; simultaneous translator; waiter to distribute vodka.