

## **Tbilisi Architectural Biennial 2018 opens today**

Tbilisi October 26, 2018

October 26, 2018 through November 3, 2018 the Gldani neighborhood of Tbilisi will host the first Tbilisi Architectural Biennial since the country regained its independence in 1991. TAB 2018 will focus on the subject “Buildings are not enough”, seeking to study the informal social and urban spaces of the lived neighborhoods.

Tbilisi Architectural Biennial aims to rethink the post-Soviet transformative period and to study how these changes have been reflected on the urban environment, its consumers and how the society has participated in these processes.

Tbilisi Architectural Biennial will host leading international architects, scientists, artists and media representatives who will discuss and try to emphasize the diversity of the informal architecture and urban spaces and review both, the theoretical and the practical approaches.

“Our Main goal is to raise awareness towards the architectural and urban issues in Tbilisi and other cities and to strengthen the existing critical discourse around the topic. Together with the invited Georgian and foreign guests, we want the Tbilisi residents, the direct participants of the processes described above, to take active part in all the activities planned in the scopes of TAB 2018” – Tinatin Gurgenedze, one of the co-founders of TAB.

The project supporters are Creative Europe Culture, European Cultural Centre, Tbilisi City Hall, Enterprise Georgia, TBC Bank, and the Adjara Group.

Tbilisi Architecture Biennial will be held till November 3, 2018 and all events will have free attendance.

The detailed information can be view at [www.biennial.ge](http://www.biennial.ge)

The biennial will consist of indoor and outdoor activities including exhibitions, symposiums, public lectures, workshops, guided tours, film screenings, artistic performances, urban and architectural installations. Public artworks will be created: landmarks that will become part of the open space of the Gldani neighborhood.

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## „BUILDINGS ARE NOT ENOUGH“

Tbilisi Architecture Biennial 2018 will focus on the subject “Buildings are not enough”, which covers the issue of the chaotic development of urban spaces in the period after the fall of the Soviet Union. Residential buildings lined up in former Soviet micro-districts of Tbilisi have been built upon an idealistic vision of a happy collective life. But the buildings were not enough to ensure the well-being of residents, and in a similar vein the micro-districts and the social housing were not enough for the creation of collectivism. As soon as the buildings and their residents got rid of the obligation to create socialist sentiments, the buildings began to transform according to the logic of the individual requests for amenities and beautification. Under the topic “Buildings Are Not Enough,” TAB 2018 aims to thoroughly review the underlying processes of this transformative era and to study how these changes are reflected on urban spaces, their consumers and how the society participates in these transformations.

“Buildings Are Not Enough” illustrates the outbreak of chaotic construction in Tbilisi that followed the dissolution of the Soviet Union. Today, the processes of the previous 25 years shape the cityscape of Tbilisi, as well as many other post-socialist cities. On the one hand, this phenomenon can be discussed globally: it is the response of ordinary city dweller to an absolute architecture, a solution to their constrained situation. On the other hand, “Buildings Are Not Enough” is a demonstration of the existing socio-economic disorder.

## **About the Tbilisi Architectural Biennial**

Tbilisi Architecture Biennial was established in 2017 by Tinatin Gurgенidze, Natia Kalandarishvili, Otar Nemsadze and Gigi Shukakidze. TAB aims to bring together professionals from diverse disciplines united under one topic on a biannual basis.

Policy makers, the local public and other stakeholders will present during the event, initiating and broadening the critical discourse on architectural and urban issues in Tbilisi and beyond.

The TAB platform will join forces to generate exhibitions, new architectural installations, spatial experiments, symposiums and other activities related to the theme of the event. The topic, location as well as a curator will change for each event.

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## **TAB team**

### **TINATIN GURGENIDZE**

Tinatin lives and works in Berlin. She studied architecture and urban design in Tbilisi and Barcelona. Currently, she is working on her PhD thesis concerning the (post-) Soviet mass housing settlement of Gldani, a suburb of Tbilisi. Tinatin's work concentrates on a sociological approach towards architecture and urban space. In her work she tries to understand what happened to Gldani in the transition period after Georgia regained its independence in 1991. In addition to authoring several publications and lectures, Tinatin is the co-founder and artistic director of the Tbilisi Architecture Biennial.

### **GIGI SHUKAKIDZE**

Gigi is the co-founder of the Tbilisi Architecture Biennial.

Gigi completed his studies at the Georgian Technical University, Faculty of Architecture and Urban Planning. He lives and works in Tbilisi, where in 2013 he opened his own architectural practice Wunderwerk, with a broad range of projects and an experimental-analytic direction. Since 2016 he is an invited independent expert for the Mies Award Prize.

## **OTAR NEMSADZE**

Otar is a co-founder of the Tbilisi Architecture Biennial. Oto holds an M.Arch degree from the Georgian Technical University and an M.Sc. in Urban Management and Development from the Institute of Housing and Urban Development Studies, Erasmus University, Rotterdam. He is currently undertaking his PhD in Tbilisi State University, focusing on zoning regulations and land based conflicts.

## **NATIA KALANDARISHVILI**

Natia is one of the co-founders of the Tbilisi Architecture Biennial. She is also a co-founder and director of the Georgian gift and souvenir production company mazerART, and the co-founder and art editor of the interior design magazine “Interieri”. Natia has a background in public service, having led the international relations departments at several public institutions. She studied International Relations and Law. In 2014, Natia was awarded the title of the Marshall Center Scholar at George C. Marshall Center – European Center for Security Studies.

## **HISTORY FACT**

In November 1988 Tbilisi hosted a New Architectural Biennial. Featuring work from the USA, France, Switzerland and the rest of the Soviet Union, and a jury made up of notable international architects including Massimiliano Fuksas, the week long event was the first and only architectural biennial to be held in the Soviet Union, reflecting Tbilisi’s role as an island of relative artistic freedom within the authoritarian state, and it’s receptiveness to new ideas within a closed society. The collapse of the Soviet Union and accompanying political instability meant that the event did not continue. The 2018 Tbilisi Architecture Biennial will be the first to take place since Georgia regained its independence in 1991.

## **Gldani Location**

Residential buildings lined up in the former Soviet micro-districts of Tbilisi have been built upon an idealistic vision of a happy collective life. The former Soviet blocks of Gldani are a living example of the transformation or adaptation of the utopian vision of Soviet ideology to the logic of modern human living standards.

The construction of the Gldani Micro-districts started on the territory of the village with the same name, in the 70s of the past century, after the Tbilisi's General Plan for the Urban Development was approved. The architectural planning of the Gldani district was assigned to the young architect Teimuraz Botchorishvili. The Gldani project consisted of eight micro-districts with industrial, typical thick panel buildings and was determined for 147 000 dwellers. There was a time when Gldani was called a "sleeping district", while currently it is active and lively urban space that accommodates more than 170 000 residents.

**The symposium will be held in the scopes of the Tbilisi Architectural**

**Biennale**

**Tbilisi, October 27, 2018**

On October 27 and 28, in the scopes of the Tbilisi Architectural Biennial the Gldani Professional Training Centre (Gldani, the 5th Micro District, Omar Khizanishvili Street) will host the symposium. The goal of the symposium is to hold discussions about the architectural and urban issues in Tbilisi and beyond and to involve architects, decision-makers, professionals, researchers, local communities and interested parties in this discussion.

“The two day symposium is one of the key events of the Tbilisi Architectural Biennale and it aims to rethink the TAB’s theme “Buildings Are Not Enough” – Otar Nemsadze, the co-founder of the Tbilisi Architectural Biennale. The symposium will consist of two parts: discussions and the guest speaker lectures. This year, more than 30 participants from more than 15 countries will be involved in the discussion (Georgia, USA, Norway, Brazil, Poland, Germany, Armenia, Austria, Turkey, Hong-Kong, Netherland, Bulgaria, Slovenia, etc.).

The discussions will be organized around the following topics:

- The pedagogy of the peripheries
- The city and the architectural institutions
- The example of Gldani
- Society and counter-society
- New spaces/new economies
- Post-Soviet transformations The guest speakers will be the leading international architects:
  - Reinier de Graaf
  - Nina Rappaport
  - Jorge Jauregui
  - Alexander Brodsky

Attendance to the symposium is free and open for all visitors. Please, fill out the form (not mandatory) beforehand, on the following link: <https://goo.gl/67iXnF>

The project is supported by the Creative Europe Centre, the Centre for the European Culture, the Tbilisi City Hall, Enterprise Georgia, TBC Bank, and the Adjara group. You can see the full schedule of the Tbilisi Architectural Biennale on the website:

**[www.biennial.ge](http://www.biennial.ge)**

### **Reinier de Graaf visits the Tbilisi Architectural Biennale Tbilisi, October 28, 2018**

Reinier de Graaf, a prominent architect will visit Tbilisi in the scopes of the Tbilisi Architectural Biennale. He will be discussing his book “Four Walls and a Roof: The Complex Nature of a Simple Profession” on October 28, at 13:00, as a guest speaker on the symposium held in the Gldani Entertainment, Educational and Training Centre.

Reinier de Graaf’s book, *Four Walls and a Roof: The Complex Nature of a Simple Profession* was published by Harvard University Press and is considered to be one of the most prominent works of the past few years. De Graaf has his own views on the complexities of architecture’s relationship to developers, politicians, bureaucrats, and consultants. Drawing on his own tragicomic experiences in the field, in his book he discusses the key factors defining this complex nature of a simple profession, from suburban New York to the rubble of northern Iraq. He describes oligarchism determined to translate ambitions into concrete and steel, developers for whom architecture is mere investment, and the layers of politicians, bureaucrats, consultants, and mysterious hangers-on who lie between any architectural idea and the chance of its execution. After the discussion the author will meet with the audience members and will give out autographs. The event is open for all visitors.

The additional information about the Tbilisi Architectural Biennale is available on the website:

**[www.biennial.ge](http://www.biennial.ge)**

## **More than 15 different environmental installations and outdoor TAB**

**exhibitions will be held from October 26 through November 26 in the**

### **Scopes of the Tbilisi Architectural Biennial 2018**

#### **Tbilisi October 26, 2018**

Outdoor installations will be found throughout the location of the Biennial, along the main infrastructural axis of the Gldani neighborhood. The context and background for this outdoor exhibition will be Georgia's contemporary socio-cultural situation: the installations will be, literally foregrounded against a backdrop of contemporary Georgia. Installations will take shape within the yard of the brick-building, in two identical courtyards located along the Gldani axis, on pedestrian bridges connecting courtyards, in a Soviet-era playground and on the front patio of the bridge building.

The exhibition will feature the work of more than fifteen architects, artists and artistic groups from around the world. Each Installation is an independent exhibition, developing its own idea around the biennial theme "Buildings Are Not Enough". Projects are focused on research, visual and conceptual references on informal architecture, and the special context of Gldani. Part of works to be exhibited have been chosen from entrants to the Tbilisi Architecture Biennial Open Call, selected by the jury; David Avalishvili, Irina Dikhaminjia, Irina Popiashvili; the Obscura curator team, Mariam Loria, Mariam Tsikaridze; and co-founder of the Biennial Gigi Shukakidze. The Outdoor Exhibition also includes installations and pavilions built by invited artists. These works are also created exclusively for the biennial, and focus on the main theme, discussing the topic from different angles.

The Outdoor Exhibition is curated by the co-founder of the biennial Gigi Shukakidze, Obscura's curator-team, Mariam Loria, Mariam Tsikaridze and curators from Propaganda.Network: Anna Gabelaia;

<http://biennial.ge/bridge-building-outdoor-exhibition/>

Additional information regarding TAB can be viewed on the website: [www.biennial.ge](http://www.biennial.ge)

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**The curated exhibitions and research expositions will be held in Gldani, in the former KGB building in the scopes of TAB 2018**

**Tbilisi**

**October 28, 2018**

The former KGB building (Auto Amateur Association) , which is located in the middle of the Gldani neighbourhood, will host the indoor exhibition of the Tbilisi Architecture Biennial. Divided in two parts, the prominent brick building will display a curated exhibition “Buildings Are Not Enough”.

<http://biennial.ge/brick-building-indoor-exhibition/>

One part of the exhibition (curated by TAB co-founder Tinatin Gurgenidze and Dutch-Georgian artist and curator Sophia Tabatadze) under the heading “Impermanence” involves a wide range of Georgian and international artists including Onur Ceritoglu, Lado Darakhvelidze, Tako Robakidze, Daniel Spehr, Onno Dirker, Salome Jashi, Kote Jincharadze, David Kukhalashvili, Ceren Oykut, Taiyo Onorato & Nico Krebs, Salome Sikharulidze, Mikheil Svanidze and Giorgi Tabatadze.

The exhibition outlines the unstable character of social conditions in the Georgian state, where war and political unrest have created a consciousness of unpredictability among citizens. Spatial installations, performances, artistic research, drawings, film and photography discuss these phenomena. Some of the participants will present work dealing with the specific local contexts of Tbilisi and the Gldani neighborhood. Self-built garages, water fountain memorials, internally displaced people, the destruction of a WWII monument and urban grape cultivation are all visible expressions of these unstable and changing conditions.

The research exhibition will bring together institutions and groups of researchers to discuss examples of urban transformations in different parts of the world. Presenting on-going research projects at ETH Zurich, TU Vienna, TU Braunschweig Institute of Sustainable Urbanism, Ilia State University and

many more, the research exhibition offers insights into a variety of informal urban realities. The exhibition features contributions from the MENA region, including “The Durable Ephemeral” a research-based exhibition on the architecture of refugees and camps in Jordan,

curated by Ayham Dalal, Kamel Dorai, Pauline Piraud-Fornet and Rand El Hajj Hassan with the support of the Institut français du Proche-Orient (Ifpo). While Charlotte Malterre-Barthes outlines the spatial persistence of agrarian property lines and irrigation canals as a shaping structure in informal settlements in Cairo.

The Turkish metropolis of Istanbul will be discussed by Onur Ceritoglu, Gözde Sarlak and Nazli Tümerdem. Onur Ceritoglu’s research focuses on the role of scrap dealers. The scrap dealers, known as “Çıkmacılar” recycle and resell material harvested from destroyed buildings, and thus become an integral part of Istanbul’s informal urbanization processes. Gözde Sarlak’s work deals with alternative food networks and conceptualizes urban gardens as spaces of “commoning”. Founder of Istanbul walkabouts Nazli Tümerdem uses critical walks as a method to discuss ecologically disastrous planning projects in northern Istanbul. A master student project of Braunschweig University was dedicated to Tbilisi’s Saburtalo district and intended to find design updates for the socialist neighbourhoods’ urban issues. The design proposals of the students are presented during the exhibition. Another modernist neighbourhood featured in the exhibition is Fisksätra, a large-scale project in Nacka municipality, Stockholm. Swedish architecture office SECRETARY’s “This Space Between Us” is an installation inspired by the neighbourhood and will provide a comparative case for Gldani. The University of Wuppertal will present their project “Potential Spaces”, which is an urban laboratory initiated in Wuppertals Arrenberg neighborhood.

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## **Block 76**

**Oct 27 at 5 PM – Oct 28 at 8 PM**

In the backdrop of the urban dystopia of today's Tbilisi, the uniformity of Soviet micro-districts and '90s brutalism is generating a new cultural form, creating a framework for urban development. Gldani micro-districts could be the case for representation of urban development from socialist Utopian collectivist culture to late post-soviet capitalism with its block of buildings, inner and outer spaces and live streets.

Block 76 is participatory and community art project that takes place in the residential paneled block of building #76 in Gldani micro-district. The project is aimed at opening up private living spaces for visitors, bringing together artists and residents, establishing culture of neighbor festival and bringing and sanctifying art into private dwelling space.

In the project the artists do not serve to create an Utopian reality, but a shared social environment.

Building 76 asks the question, who is the artist? The host who allows an artist to bring artwork into his/her own particular spatial domestic creation? Or the artist who transforms a private space into a shared social space? Here the work-status of the artist and the host is equal, just as is the relationship between the Gldani Architecture Biennial and the Gldani micro-district itself, the Soviet sleeping quarter, and all of the city's historical urban spaces.

Block 76 takes place within the scope of Tbilisi Architecture Biennial. The exhibition shows artworks of 24 local and international artists done in collaboration with the residents of the building.

### **Artists in Block 76 apartment projects:**

- Andro Eradze/Georgia/Wave (gesture)/Video HD/Installation

- Bàra Gallo/Czech Republic/Scanning of 76/sound, drawing
- Dodoshka Chkheidze/Georgia/ Reflections/Installation
- Esther Kemp/Switzerland/Circulation/Water tube, water, found objects
- Jan Chudozilov/Switzerland/Block 76 Music piece project
- Johanna Padge/Germany/Greetings from.../Postcards
- Mariam Natroshvili+Detu jincharadze/Georgia/Burn as soon as you read/text
- Nino Sakandelidze/Georgia/Austria/My static performance is better than your planned motion/Sculpture
- Nutsa Esebua/Georgia/Doors/Photo
- Thea Gvetadze/Georgia/Germany/Tsisia (Private name meaning Violet of sky) in Gldani/ painting, objects

**Artists in Block 76 indoor projects:**

- Alisja Plisjka/Poland/Yes, yes neighborhood/Installation
- Tamuna Chabashvili/Georgia/Netherlands/Memory Foam/Installation

**Artists in Block 76 outdoor projects:**

- Misho Sulakauri/Georgia/Street Art
- MistoDiya collective ( Dmytro Isaiev, Anna Dobrova, Dmytro Prutkin, Maria Semenenko)/Ukraine/not enough building/installation-game
- Natuka Vatsadze+Temo Kartlelishvili/Georgia/Palma-my dream tree/Action- performance
- Ninutsa Shatberashvili/Georgia/Pur-marili (Bread and salt) 3/Performance
- Sara Cowles/USA/ Restitution's Garden/ Public art installation
- Vazha Marr/Gio Kuchuhidze/Georgia/Sound Installation Curators: Gigi Shukakidze/Lali

Pertenava

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## **Alternative Tour: Gldani**

**Tbilisi**

**October 26, 2018**

### **Gldani - a City Inside a City**

<http://biennial.ge/alternative-tour/>

Tbilisi is very diverse city. Mostly, Georgians and people who visits it get together in old town for different activities. But there are just few amount of people who is interested in Soviet apartment blocks around the city. This tour actually will take you there and you will discover almost a separate city of its own within Tbilisi. You will be able to explore different types of markets, the life in the suburb, how it continues through Soviet apartment blocks and through the public spaces that are changing in the face of capitalism. As we walk, you will find out what makes this part of Tbilisi special; and if the name of the tour applies to reality.

Guide: Ana Ramazashvili

Duration: 2.5 – 3 hours

Price: 15 GEL per person