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Makeover in Moscow

Sightings of the Russian billionaire Roman Abramovich and his companion, Daria Zhukova, caused great commotion among the dealers and collectors at Art Basel this week. Besides the relentless speculation about what the couple have bought, there was much discussion of a non-profit contemporary art center that Ms. Zhukova is opening in Moscow this fall. Molly Dent-Brocklehurst, a former dealer at the Gagosian Gallery in London, is working with Ms. Zhukova on the project.

In a telephone interview Ms. Zhukova said that while there were plenty of commercial art

spaces in Moscow, she felt there was a shortage of nonprofit ones.

Her new center will be housed in a former bus garage designed in 1926 by the Constructivist architect Konstantin Melnikov. The London architect Jamie Fobert is renovating the building, which will include exhibition and education spaces, a theater, cafe and bookstore. It will open for a single "pre-launch" on Thursday, exhibiting work by Melnikov and his fellow Constructivist Vladimir Shukhov, a light installation by Rafael Lozano-Hemmer and a performance by Amy Winehouse.

Whether the center will ultimately have its own collection is unclear. "With time I would like the space to have a collection, but it's not a priority," Ms. Zhukova said. At any rate, she said, it will be a showplace for world-class modern and contemporary art.