



UKRAINIAN CONTEMPORARY ART IN AUSTRALIA

THE EMIGRANTS AND THEIR BROKEN WAYS

BILLICH ART GALLERY

KOZYTSKYI CHARITY FOUNDATION

УДК 75(477)(083.824)=111

KOZYTSKYI CHARITY FOUNDATION

This catalogue is dedicated to an art exhibition of contemporary Ukrainian art «The Emigrants and Their Broken Ways», which will be hosted by Billich Art Gallery (106-108 George St, The Rocks NSW 2000, Sydney, Australia) on February 19, 2024. Our exposition presents 35 artworks, including paintings, graphics and sculptures contributed by artists from different regions of Ukraine. These artists, resiliently continuing their work despite the ongoing war, represent the stubborn spirit of their nation. The majority of artworks were created during the russian-Ukrainian war, which is currently raging in the country. The exhibitions are part of the artistic project «We and the World», which was established within the framework of the Kozytskyi Charity Foundation.

Curator:

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Website of the Kozytskyi Charity Foundation - bfk.org.ua

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ISBN 978-617-629-762-8



THE EMIGRANTS AND THEIR BROKEN WAYS

LVIV EDITION «APRIORI» 2024



The Emigrants and Their Broken Ways

Throughout their centennial history, Ukrainians have been assigned various labels and titles regarding the concept of "emigrant": IDP, refugee, exile, displaced person, stranger. Over the last three wars, Ukrainians have been compelled to flee their homeland in search of safety, freedom, opportunities, and new horizons.

The Russian invasion of Ukraine on February 24, 2022, ushered in a "new wave" of forced emigration. This unjust war in the twenty-first century has resulted in vast fields of violet where our soldiers have fallen, and has created long lines of refugees seeking safety in the world beyond.

The exhibition titled "The Emigrants and Their Broken Ways" delves into the journey, reasons, motives, and significance of emigrant life. It explores the coexistence of two homelands within one heart, symbolized by Ariadne's thread, the tangled end of which lies in the "family nest" in Ukraine.

Featuring paintings and ceramics of diverse styles and subjects, the exhibition ranges from literal and simplified landscapes to figurative depictions of refugee children, carefree beach vacations, laundry drying in the sun, and passionate embraces of lovers. Through these artworks, the exhibition captures the multifaceted life of emigrants, from the process of change to the pursuit of betterment.

The central theme of our exhibition revolves around the artwork "Escape from the war" by Ukrainian artist Pavlo Ponomarenko, also known as Pablo Po, from Mariupol. In this piece, the artist portrays an exaggerated figure of an emigrant hastily crossing an imaginary barrier, evoking a sense of urgency. Set against the backdrop of a brightly moonlit night, the scene is intensified by the presence of two full moons in the sky, symbolizing the dual homelands on opposite hemispheres of the planet.

The exhibition is part of the larger art project titled "We and the World," organized by the Kozytskyi Charity Foundation. Since its establishment in March 2022, the Foundation has curated 34 exhibitions showcasing contemporary Ukrainian art across 13 countries. This marks the inaugural exhibition being held in Australia.

Khrystyna Berehovska
Ph.D. in Arts
Artistic Director of Kozytskyi Charity Foundation



The art of "duality"

In ancient mythology, among the revered gods of the Roman pantheon stands Janus, one of the oldest, revered as the patron of beginnings and endings, entrances and exits, light and darkness. This inherent "dualism" of Janus' character finds a parallel in Ukrainian emigrants, who, much like the deity, are depicted as having two faces, gazing simultaneously into the past and the future. Physically dispersed across the globe, as they strive to navigate their present lives and adapt to modern realities, mentally they remain tethered to news of their homeland and their past.

Taras Haida's artwork "Unity," selected for the cover, also delves into the theme of "duality" in existence. Upon the canvas, the artist portrays a figure embodying the coexistence of two temporal realms, as if capturing life "before" and life "after." The chair upon which "our emigrant" sits metaphorically extends its roots deep into the native soil, while a red "Ariadne's thread" serves as a symbolic link between these two parallel worlds.

As the deity representing both beginnings and endings, life and death, the two-faced Janus is also associated with war and victory. In this context, we earnestly hope that every emigrant will discover their own swiftest route back home.

Karina Davydova
Co-curator of the art project "We and the World"
Postgraduate student at the Lviv National Academy of Arts

ANDRII MENTUKH

95 y.o. / GDANSK

Andrii Mentukh, a Polish artist of Ukrainian descent, who has immersed himself in Gdańsk's cultural environment throughout his life. He survived the 1947 Ukrainian resettlement-expulsion operation "Vistula" and is intimately familiar with the term "emigrant." His paintings symbolize the Ukrainian people forced to leave their homes due to tragic historical events like two world wars and the current Russian invasion.



“

I grew up in the countryside and have a very good memory, a virtual memory, so to speak. I remember it all: what worked, what went down, where the grass was greener, the warmth of the breeze, the force of the wind – I can still feel it all.

Human is at the heart of everything, the focal point of the universe. Everywhere you look, it's all about people, people, people.

quote from the artist

«IMAGE LV», 1997
tempera on canvas,
50x61 cm

BOHDAN PIKULYTSKYI

76 y.o. / LVIV

Bohdan Pikulytskyi, a renowned engraver in Ukraine and a professor at Lviv National Academy of Arts, holds the title of Honored Artist in both Ukraine and Poland. His influence extends to numerous followers and students. A recurring motif in his work is women amidst flocks of birds. In his piece "Postkarte," the bird symbolizes migratory creatures, reflecting the plight of tens of thousands of contemporary Ukrainians living between two homelands.



“

The dove has no gall, it does not attack with its beak, and it does no harm with its claws.

quote from the artist

«POSTKARTE», 2024
embossing, ecolint, watercolor,
21x30 cm

CHRISTINA KUDRYK

84 y.o. / TORONTO

Christina (Chris) Kudryk – well-known Ukrainian-Canadian artist, who since childhood has lived in Canada – land of immigrants. Growing up in multicultural Canada, as an artist, she could not but reflect on the theme “the immigrants broken paths”. Christina Kudryk approaches each of her works in a philosophical, deeply thoughtful manner. Every subject, theme, she studies in depth, researches historical facts, then creates her works. Christina Kudryk has developed a unique personal style, a recognizable artistic language.



“

As a child I came to Canada – an immigrant. The image in this work is taken, modified and silk-screened from a section of an archival photo. It depicts the hope and expectations for a better life of all immigrants who come to Canada – the land of equality and multiculturalism. The superimposed definitions a confirmation of this.

quote from the artist

«IMMIGRANT», 2021
mixed media on canvas,
25x25 cm

INNA KHARCHUK

29 y.o. / RIVNE

Inna Kharchuk, a young artist hailing from Volyn, rose to prominence with the onset of the full-scale invasion, showcasing the unwavering spirit of a true Ukrainian artist through her life stance and thematic palette in her paintings. Through her art, Kharchuk vividly captures the poignant moments experienced by Ukrainian mothers and families over the past two years. The theme of family and motherhood holds a special place in the artist's heart, as she herself is raising a four-year-old girl named Tina, who contributes in part to her mother's artistic endeavors. Inspired by old ethnic photographs, Kharchuk's piece "Brother" portrays the profound bond and nurturing relationship between an older sister and a younger brother.



«BROTHER», 2023
acrylic, oil, pastel on canvas,
150x130 cm



«AFFILIATION», 2022
oil, cardboard on canvas,
42x34 cm

“

The molecule of war. This metallic molecule with the sound of a siren is something existing within you, growing in size and squeezing out all emotions from within. Everything becomes heightened, excessive, almost unbearable.

The course of action becomes unpredictable. You are at the mercy of internal chaos because when peace comes, it is followed by fear.

I yearn for Ukraine, both in the past and present, wondering when we will experience true peace, or at least our children?

To remain or to leave, to safeguard or to seek salvation?

quote from the artist

TARAS HAIDA

31 y.o. / KYIV

Taras Haida is a Kyiv-based artist originally from Lviv. He explores a range of artistic mediums, from painting to digital art. Delving into his own subconscious, he translates compelling situations and ideas into expressive artistic representations. Among his recurring motifs is the depiction of Ukrainian women, often characterized by a sense of anonymity, adorned with Ukrainian symbols, and with crossed or intertwined arms symbolizing defiance, defense, and protection.



«MADONNA», 2022
digital art, printing on canvas,
52x39 cm

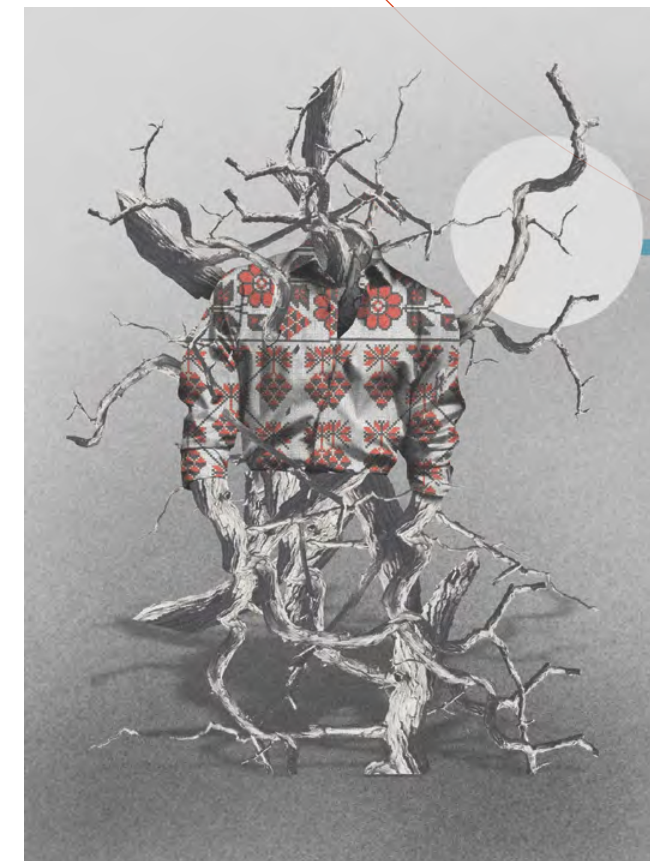


«GENOCIDE», 2022
digital art, printing on canvas,
52x39 cm

In Taras Haida's work, roots serve as potent symbols of resilience, a deep connection to the Motherland, and an intertwining with past generations. Similar to the "invisible" roots of trees concealed beneath the earth's surface, the roots depicted in Haida's paintings represent Ukrainian traditions that quietly "weave" and "construct" our collective identity.



«NATION», 2022
digital art, printing on canvas,
52x39 cm



«UKRAINIAN ROOTS», 2022
digital art, printing on canvas,
52x39 cm

OLHA PYLNYK

44 y.o. / UZHGOROD

Olha Pylnyk, a seasoned ceramist based in Lviv, frequently employs the language of sculpture to convey historical symbols of contemporary Ukraine. Her renowned "knots of invincibility," colloquially referred to as "anti-tank hedgehogs," symbolize the resilience of every Ukrainian who has steadfastly remained in their homeland.



«KNOT OF FATE I», 2024
ceramics,
15x25x21 cm

OLHA KRAVCHENKO

39 y.o. / LVIV

Olha Kravchenko is a Lviv-based icon painter who is widely known in European art circles. She is known for her unique creative method, as the artist uses sacred iconography and iconology to demonstrate everyday subjects. Kravchenko often delves into universal human concerns, such as ecology. In 1986, Ukraine endured an ecological disaster that left a profound mark on its history. The global environmental crisis affects every continent uniquely, including Australia. Her piece "Strange Spring" is a reflection on the challenging spring of the COVID-19 pandemic that gripped the world. This unprecedented health crisis has impacted the respiratory system of our green planet.

“

The broken road of the recent years. Back then it seemed like what could be worse than a terrible disease taking the lives of thousands of people? We were hoping for some relief as spring rolled around. But here we are, in the thick of a whole new nightmare of war. So we are waiting for the spring again.

quote from the artist



«STRANGE SPRING», 2020
silver, tempera on canvas,
62x51 cm

PAVLO PONOMARENKO

45 y.o. / MARIUPOL

Pavlo Ponomarenko, a 45-year-old artist hailing from Mariupol, considers himself not as an "internally displaced person" but rather as an emigrant residing in Lviv. His life has been marked by profound loss: his property, family, means of sustenance, and artistic legacy were all ravaged by the rashists. Starting anew in Lviv, he rebuilt his life from scratch, while his family sought refuge in neighboring Poland. Despite the hardships, Ponomarenko persists in his creative pursuits, amassing hundreds of new works and participating in numerous group and solo exhibitions. He sustains himself through his art, viewing it not just as a means of livelihood but as a source of resilience and vitality.

“

The title of the exhibition very aptly reflects the condition of an emigrant – indeed, broken roads. The people of Mariupol I know are now scattered all over the world. Everyone feels bad, everyone suffers from mental illness in one way or another, but everyone is holding on because they realize that their previous life is over forever. No one knows where fate will take them next... The state of temporality. The state of not being aware. The question "what am I doing here" and the feeling that we are not living our own lives... But that's what the road is, it always has an end. The beginning was not good for all of us, but hope for a happy ending, as you know, never dies. Strength to all of us!

quote from the artist



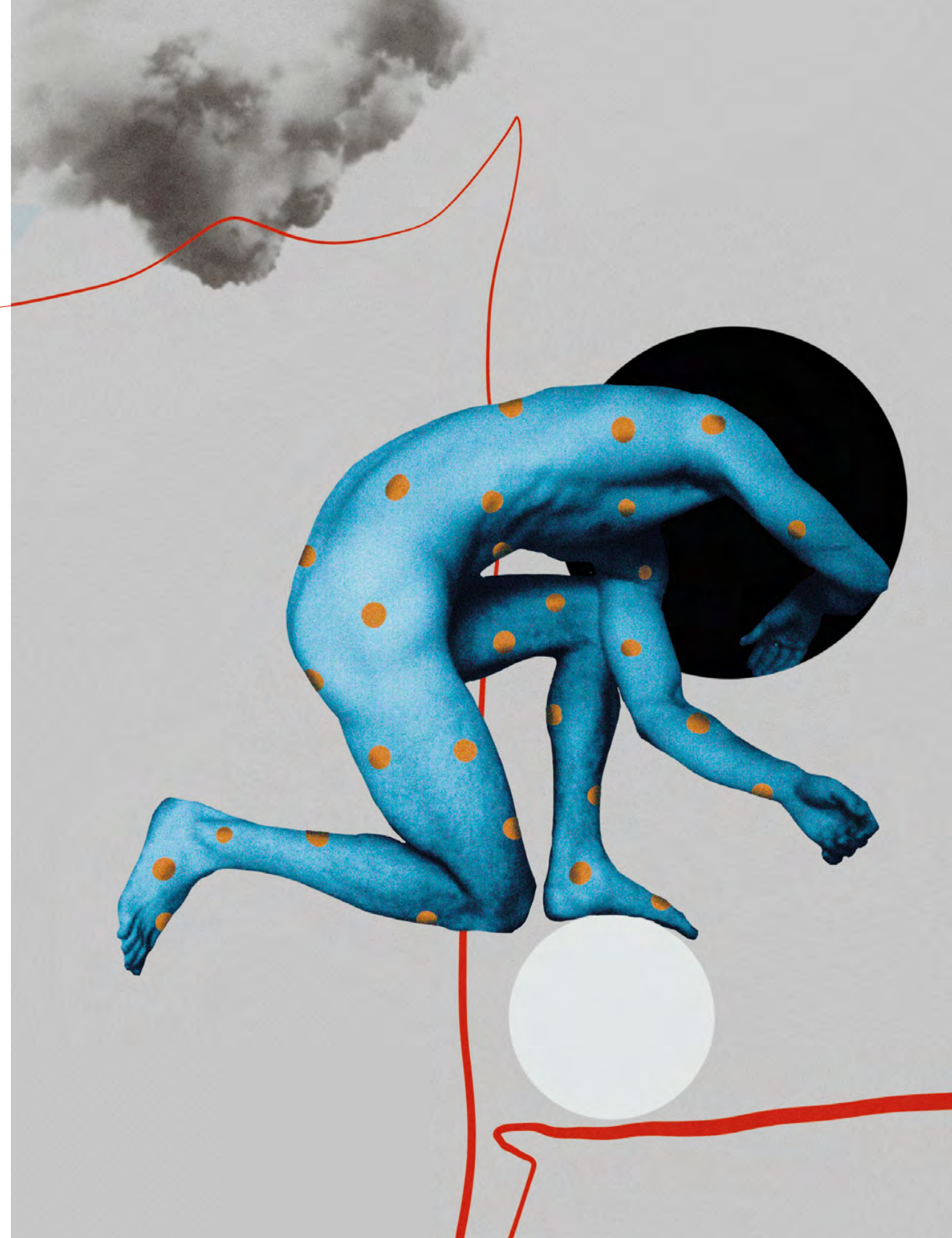
«ESCAPE FROM THE WAR», 2022
oil on canvas,
80x70 cm

TARAS HAIDA

31 y.o. / KYIV

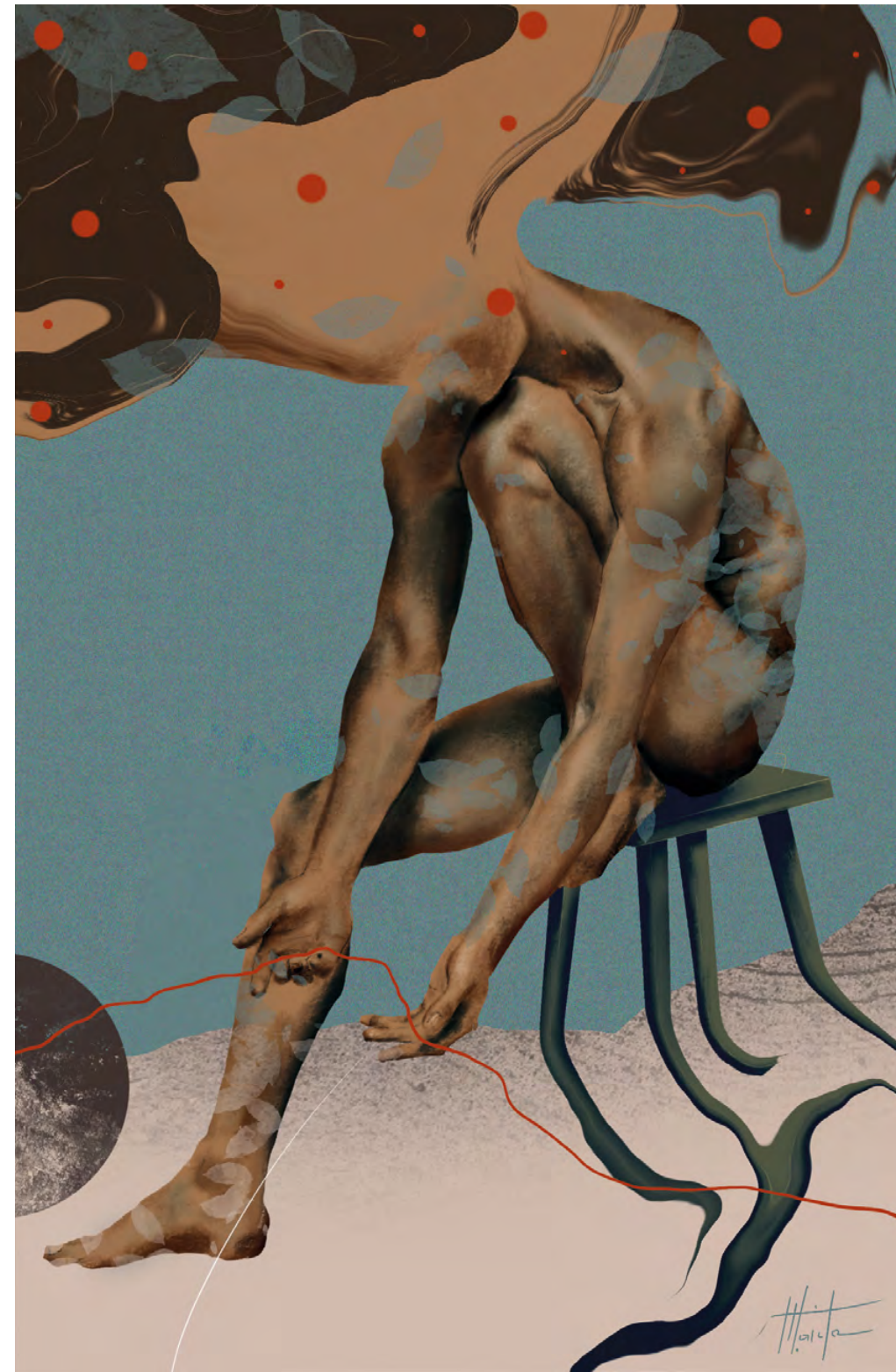
Taras Haida is a Kyiv-based artist originally from Lviv. He explores a range of artistic mediums, from painting to digital art. Delving into his own subconscious, he translates compelling situations and ideas into expressive artistic representations. Among his recurring motifs is the depiction of Ukrainian women, often characterized by a sense of anonymity, adorned with Ukrainian symbols, and with crossed or intertwined arms symbolizing defiance, defense, and protection.

«I CAN MANEUVER», 2021
digital art, printing on canvas,
57x38 cm





«UNITY», 2019
digital art, printing on canvas,
52x39 cm



“

I do not know what emigration is and I would never want to know. I struggle to empathize with those who chose to leave their homeland during such tumultuous times, except for those compelled to flee due to the destruction wrought by occupiers or the on-going hostilities in their regions. My sentiments are conflicted, and I refrain from idealizing this difficult decision. It is a broken road, yet not irreparably severed, and I hold onto hope for the eventual return of all who departed their country.

quote from the artist

DIANA RUBAN

25 y.o. / KREMENCHUK

Diana Ruban, a young artist from Kremenchuk in the Poltava region, finds herself in a similar situation to Inna Kharchuk as she navigates raising a young son. Despite facing the onset of full-scale invasion, Diana and her family endured severe rocket attacks without succumbing to fear or abandoning their home. She has been painting always and everywhere - in a boarded-up house, a basement, a garage, or out in the open. For Diana, the theme of embracing relationships holds particular poignancy. In the backdrop of ongoing turmoil, each young Ukrainian woman grapples with her own personal emotional journey, with endings as diverse as their experiences.

“

Forced displacement feels like a child being left without a mother.

This is a traumatic realization that you cannot influence, but you need to find a corner where you feel safe.

quote from the artist



«ATTACHMENT», 2023
acrylic on canvas,
110x84 cm

ANNA VERESHCHAKA

22 y.o. / CHERNIHIV

Anna Vereshchaka, a 22-year-old artist from Chernihiv, honed her skills at the National Academy of Fine Arts and Architecture in Kyiv. Her artistic style revolves around a modest palette, predominantly achromatic colors with a notable touch of red. She has a penchant for animalistic themes, frequently exploring the profound bond of loyal friendship between pets and their owners, particularly addressing how it can be strained or severed in the face of forced emigration.

“

Forced emigration exacts a toll on both the individual and the country. It represents the involuntary departure of a citizen from their homeland, seeking temporary or permanent refuge elsewhere. Since the outbreak of war, my decision was to stay in Ukraine, and my refuge in the first months of the war was western Ukraine. Even while staying within the country, I have experienced a sense of suspension, akin to someone who has uprooted their life and stands at a crossroads. When circumstances compel such a profound change against one's will, it becomes challenging to truly feel at home in a new environment; everything appears forced. On the one hand, it offers a sense of safety and shelter, yet on the other, there persists a constant awareness of the external forces that have led to this displacement, a realization that one is not there by their own will. Some people assimilate, find something to cling to and stay, while others live in a state of limbo.

quote from the artist



«STRAY DOGS», 2022
acrylic on canvas,
65x55 cm

OLHA PYLNYK

44 y.o. / UZHGOROD

Olha Pylnyk's intricately intertwined and tightly knotted designs carry profound symbolic significance. The knot serves as a powerful emblem of unity, interwoven destinies, and unbreakable family bonds. Across various cultures, including Scandinavian and Indian traditions, knots are revered as potent amulets or talismans, believed to ward off malevolent forces and deflect negative energies.



«KNOT OF FATE II», 2024
ceramics,
18x21x14 cm

NATALIIA PAVLIUK

47 y.o. / LVIV

Nataliia Pavliuk is known in Ukraine for her art school for children. Drawing upon her teaching experience at Lviv Polytechnic National University, Nataliia chose to channel her pedagogical skills into nurturing the creative talents of young individuals. Her art studios gained particular prominence during the full-scale invasion, providing an outlet for thousands of children to express their emotions through canvas and paint. As an artist herself, Nataliia aligns with the principles of the "territory of a clean field" movement. The color parables evident in her paintings often draw inspiration from the works of renowned artists such as Mark Rothko and Anatolii Kryvolap.

“

I am connected to Australia by a family story... during the Second World War, my mother's uncle was forced to flee from the Moscow occupiers. Australia became his second homeland. All these years in exile, he felt incredibly homesick for Ukraine. But circumstances made it impossible for him to come home...

It was only when Ukraine gained its independence that his daughter was able to fly to Ukraine and visit her parents' house, which was an indescribable joy for my uncle

My paintings are about a home where people are always waiting, where hope stretches across endless horizons. They reflect the opportunity to find your place of grounding and peace.

quote from the artist

«WHERE THEY ARE
WAITING FOR US», 2022
oil on canvas,
70x70 cm



«A LULLABY OVER
THE DNIPRO», 2022
oil on canvas,
70x70 cm



MYKOLA SHYMCHUK

75 y.o. / LVIV

Mykola Shymchuk, a professor at Lviv National Academy of Arts, draws inspiration from the renowned artist Bernard Buffet. As a People's Artist, Shymchuk's oeuvre revolves around historical and philosophical themes, often drawing from literary sources. He has a strong affinity for plein air painting, with many of his works crafted at residences on the island of Sviti-az. However, the central focus of his paintings is the portrayal of individuals and their inner worlds.



«CONVERSATION IN EMIGRATION», 2013
oil on canvas,
60x80 cm



«SUMMER. A DREAM ABOUT THE CRIMEA», 1993
oil on canvas,
51x65 cm

NOTUKO

26 y.o. / RIVNE

Natalia Brichuk, known under the pseudonym NOTUKO, began her artistic journey at Rivne State University of Humanities. Despite the influence of her teachers not proving beneficial, she chose to forge her own creative path. Brichuk is among those artists adept at analyzing the works of recognized masters and weaving narratives that resonate with her personal vision. Drawing inspiration from everyday life, she excels in capturing ordinary scenes. Brichuk's forte lies in creating large-format paintings that magnify and hyperbolize each image.

«SEASIDE», 2023
acrylic on canvas,
130x140 cm



VOVA KENO

37 y.o. / MORSHYN

Vova Keno, a dedicated young artist hailing from Morshyn, specializes in the intricate art of still life. While predominantly focusing on this genre, he occasionally incorporates portraits of his contemporaries into his paintings. Keno draws upon the portrait iconography of British artists, employing techniques that enable him to skillfully capture the essence of a psychological portrait, and emphasize the most distinctive features of his subjects.



«SUMMER TIME», 2022
acrylic on canvas,
120x95 cm

ANTON LOGOV

40 y.o. / KYIV

Anton Logov, a young Kyivan known for his trademark black hat, is hailed as an artist-chronicler, capturing the daily triumphs and tragedies of Ukrainians during these tumultuous years. His illustrations have garnered recognition in books by renowned American historian and writer Timothy Snyder. Throughout the war, Logov has showcased his art in numerous solo and group exhibitions worldwide. Notably, his Ukrainian patriotic project "Star" in New York stirred controversy in Moscow's political and journalistic circles, yet received widespread acclaim from the American media. Logov is a versatile artist, skilled in painting, engraving, and watercolor. However, he prioritizes the theme and imagery over the medium and technique.



«UKRAINE», 2022
oil, acrylic on canvas,
50x70 cm

LILIA STUDNYTSKA

36 y.o. / LVIV

Lilia Studnytska is a renowned landscape painter based in Lviv. Fascinated by Ukraine's geopolitical position and its diverse geographical beauty since her student days, she meticulously captures the landscapes spanning from the Svan to the Don, and from the Crimean to the Carpathian mountains. Studnytska portrays various types of nature, both pristine and rugged. However, the hallmark of her paintings lies in the sense of tranquility and comfort despite any external influences.

“

People have always been looking for a better life for themselves and their families, but wherever they go, their homeland will always be in their memories. Everyone who emigrated will never forget the crunch of snow underfoot in winter, the sound of birds in spring, a happy summer somewhere in the countryside, and the golden autumn, where you can smell another year coming to an end.

quote from the artist



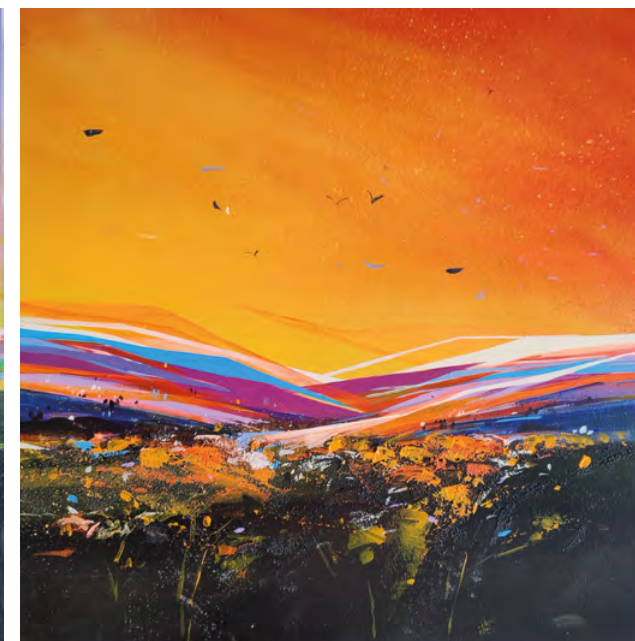
«WINTER SEASON», from the series «SEASONS», 2023
acrylic on canvas,
50x50 cm



«SPRING SEASON», from the series «SEASONS», 2023
acrylic on canvas,
50x50 cm



«SUMMER SEASON», from the series «SEASONS», 2023
acrylic on canvas,
50x50 cm



«AUTUMN SEASON», from the series «SEASONS», 2023
acrylic on canvas,
50x50 cm

HEIZA DERKE

33 y.o. / UZHGOROD

Heiza Derke, a 33-year-old artist from Uzhhorod, represents the Transcarpathian school of painting. Influenced by the unique luminaries of this school, who were shaped under the cultural sphere of Budapest, Derke chose a different path from artists like Erdelyi, Manailo, and Kotska. Instead, he drew inspiration from professors of Lviv school, particularly Liubomyr Medvid, whose works significantly impacted his artistic style. Derke's own project, a retrospective exhibition titled "o-CREATION," held at the Potocki Palace, struck a chord within the Lviv community.

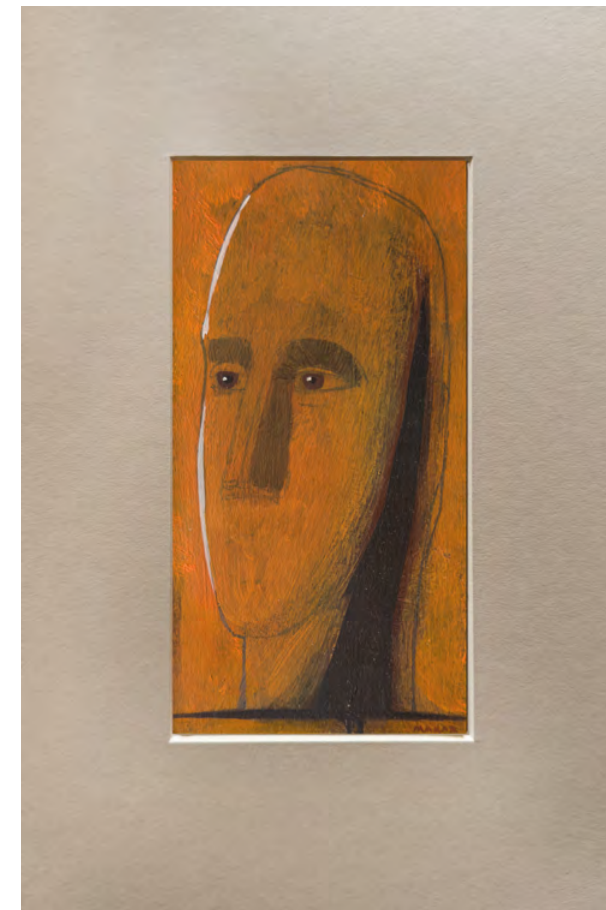


«NOON», 2020
acrylic on canvas,
50x70 cm

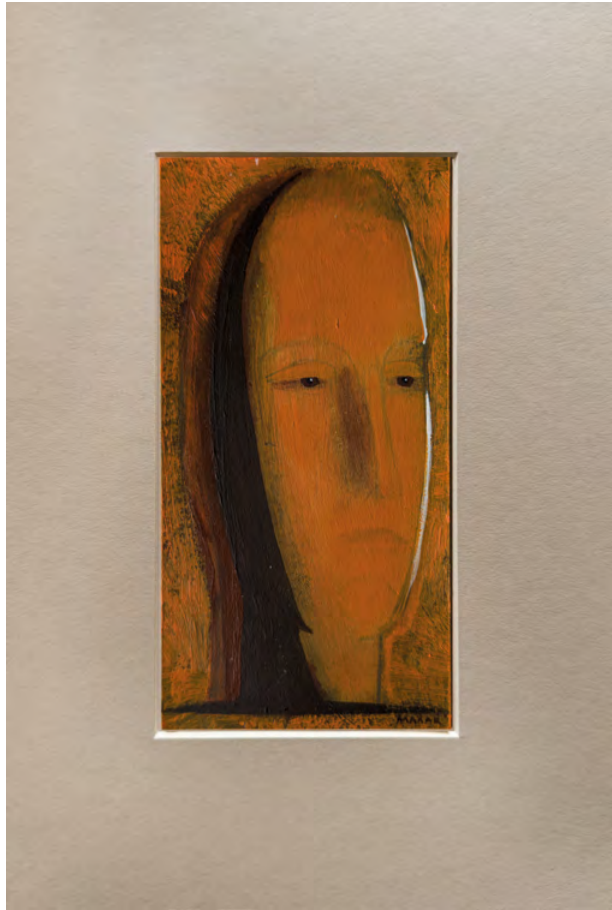
MAKAR MOSKALIUK

33 y.o. / LVIV

Makar Moskaliuk comes from a dynastic family of artists, being the son of the world-famous Viktor Moskaliuk. However, Moskaliuk has diverged entirely from his father's artistic path, forging his own distinctive style. His work delves into the profound complexities of existence, often placing humans at the center – or individuals grappling with their own existence. Moskaliuk draws inspiration from philosophical texts, skillfully translating their themes into compositions rich in symbolism and nuanced color palettes.



UNTITLED, from the series «WARM SERIES», 2018
acrylic on paper,
18x9 cm each



UNTITLED, from the series «WARM SERIES», 2018
acrylic on paper,
18x9 cm each

OLHA PYLNYK

44 y.o. / UZHGOROD

“

...On February 22, 2022, a large, full-scale russian invasion of our lands suddenly burst into the lives of Ukrainians. Everything has changed... Now there is "before" and "after". Broken fates, broken paths. No plans... Living one day at a time... Looking to the future with fear, uncertainty and sometimes despair... What awaits our children? Will they be comfortable in Ukraine? ...or will they suffer the fate of emigrants ?

quote from the artist



«KNOT OF FATE III», 2024
ceramics,
16x23x15 cm

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Образотворче видання

THE EMIGRANTS AND THEIR BROKEN WAYS

Англійська мова

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Підписано до друку 5.02.2024
Формат 84x100/16. Папір офсетний
Наклад: 100 прим.

