

# VOLOSHYN GALLERY

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## Victor Sydorenko ACQUIRING SUBJECTIVITY

28.02.2018 - 07.04.2018

Opening: February 28, 7 PM, Voloshyn Gallery, Kyiv, 13 Tereshchenkivska Str.



**Voloshyn Gallery** is proud to present **Acquiring Subjectivity**, a new project by **Victor Sydorenko**.

Victor Sydorenko requires no introduction. He is a renowned Ukrainian painter, curator, professor, author of art objects and photo compositions, as well as scholarly and popular texts. Victor Sydorenko is one of the most prominent figures in contemporary Ukrainian art. His interests include the key concepts of our times: memory, post-totalitarian legacy, progressively more complicated identity constructs in the contemporary world, and humankind's prospects in the new globalized life. His research often turns to the past too, but the artist approaches our cultural legacy outside the ideological framework, with an entire arsenal of new media.

The protagonist of the Acquiring Subjectivity project is the mysterious "new man", a recurring character in Victor Sydorenko's works. The Man in His Underpants undergoes metamorphoses along with the artist, transcending certain boundaries and changing compared to his earlier self.

As the title indicates, the project explores transitions that make new subjectivities emerge and take root, a topic that is very important to our society: "The issue of choice is ever relevant for our society. We still linger in the transitory state between the Soviet past and the capitalist present, equally incapable of escaping the past, which has become the subconscious of the present, and of outwitting the future. You cannot appropriate the past, it's yours as much as anybody else's. Therefore, self-identification, 'the test of authenticity', endless measuring of yourself remains relevant. The main theme I've been working on for many years now, exploring and developing its symbolic meanings, first emerged in the 1996 project Amnesia, which marked the first appearance of my protagonist, 'the man in the underpants': a half-dressed man in undergarments that men from all social classes wore here for the better part of the century. Going through a complicated process of national self-identification that, to a large degree, remains ongoing to this day, Ukraine rejected its Soviet past and tried to strike it from collective memory. And yet, the unreflected, unanalyzed experience returns to public consciousness as indelible myths and social complexes," Victor Sydorenko explains. "We live in the era of transparency that lays illusions bare and encourages us to rethink our cultural and ideological heritage. The illusion of freedom is another beautiful illusion that got debunked. Freedom has become another abstraction that would never come to pass. My protagonist's goal is to search for unconditional freedom. Science, as we know, has not yet offered a concrete definition of 'humankind', so art has got to step in."

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### **Voloshyn Gallery**

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Beside large paintings on canvases painted over black imprimatura, the exhibition will also include the graphic series *The Protagonist's Vocabulary*.

**Victor Sydorenko** was born in 1953 in the city of Taldykorgan (Kazakhstan). He graduated with distinction from the Kharkiv Institute of Arts and Design (now the Kharkiv State Academy of Design and Arts) in 1979. He has lived and worked in Kyiv since 1985, serving as a full member and vice president of the National Academy of Arts of Ukraine. Awarded the distinction of the People's Artist of Ukraine in 1998. In 2001, Sydorenko founded and headed the Modern Art Research Institute of the Academy of Arts of Ukraine with the goal of comprehensive research in all areas of contemporary art. Sydorenko has been teaching painting since 2002, and received a PhD in art history in 2005.

In 2003, he represented Ukraine at the 50th Venice Biennale with the solo project *Millstones of Time*. In 2007, he co-curated the Ukrainian pavilion at the 52nd Venice Biennale (with Oleksandr Soloviov). Victor Sydorenko took part in many Ukrainian and international group shows, with venues including *Mystetskyi Arsenal* and the American House (Kyiv, Ukraine), The Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art (Toulouse, France), Galleria Forni (Bologna, Italy), Église Saint-Merri (Paris, France), Saatchi Gallery (London, the UK), Black Square Gallery (Chicago, the USA), and the United Nations Headquarters (New York, the USA). Sydorenko's solo shows were exhibited at the National Art Museum of Ukraine (Kyiv), the Yermilov Center (Kharkiv, Ukraine), B. Voznytskyi Lviv National Art Gallery and the Lviv Palace of Arts (Lviv, Ukraine), A. Kasteyev State Museum of Arts (Almaty, Kazakhstan), the Museum of Contemporary Art Kiasma (Helsinki, Finland), Woodrow Wilson Center (Washington, DC, USA), Black Square Gallery (Miami, the USA), and other museums and galleries in France, the UK, and other countries. Victor Sydorenko's works often appear at international auctions, and are featured in many private and public collections, including the National Art Museum of Ukraine (Kyiv), the Museum of Contemporary Art Kiasma (Helsinki, Finland), and Yale School of Art (the USA).

**Voloshyn Gallery** is a gallery of contemporary art, which was founded by **Max** and **Julia Voloshyn** in 2006. Starting from its foundation it was called *Mystetska Zbirka Art Gallery* and has been specializing in Ukrainian classical art and Socialist Realism, which is an integral part of the history of the Ukrainian arts. Subsequently, the gallery has changed its name, expanded its exhibition space and proceeded to the presentation of contemporary and conceptual art.

The modernly-equipped exhibition gallery space is located in the cultural and historical center of Kyiv at *Tereschenkivska Street* in an old house build in 1913, which was owned by N.A. Tereshchenko. Subsequently, the collector and philanthropist Bohdan Khanenko has purchased the building for his wife Varvara and rebuilt it into an apartment house, where the second floor is intended for expanding the Khanenko's museum exhibition of their collection paintings.

**The Voloshyn Gallery** is engaged in the development of the artistic community in Ukraine and promotes its integration into the global cultural processes. The gallery represents Ukrainian artists abroad and participates in international art fairs and art projects. It represents works of different generations of artists, working on exclusive terms with such artists as *Mikhailo Deyak*, *Mariia Sulymenko* and *Volodymyr Kohut*. The gallery is a platform for experiments, researches, social projects, for both well-known artists and those who are just announcing themselves. Voloshyn Gallery also specializes in private sales on the secondary market of the art of the XX century and contemporary art and also provides consulting services in the field of collection management service.

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## Voloshyn Gallery

Kyiv, 13 Tereshchenkivska Str., entrance through the arch, the 2nd yard.

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