

Voloshyn Gallery at ARCOmadrid 2024
Booth 7A18
Danylo Halkin



Danylo Halkin, From the series Optical prostheses, 2023, installation, stained glass windows. Courtesy of the artist and Albertinum, Dresden.

Voloshyn Gallery is pleased to present a solo exhibition of Danylo Halkin at ARCOmadrid 2024.

Ukrainian artist Danylo Halkin, born in the city of Dnipro, explores the concept of public space and reflects on the influence of political systems on people's lives. After Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukrainian territory, he initiated a project focused on the study of Soviet decorative art, with particular emphasis on the stained glass windows of hospitals, military offices, and fire stations, thus creating a cohesive artistic expression in the context of wartime.

The title Optical Prostheses refers to the distortion of history through the prism of Kremlin propaganda and Russian imperialism. The narratives conveyed by the stained glass windows have always been propaganda tools; in the past they promised a bright and happy tomorrow, but the war has upended our perception of them, reversing the effect. Now they depict war crimes, sometimes literally visualizing headlines from Ukraine.

Like many other objects of decorative and applied art, stained glass windows are disappearing fast: they can be removed - under the 2015 decommunization law - destroyed, or looted by developers. They are also at risk of being destroyed in Russian bombing raids. Objects that should have cultural heritage status can still be purchased on free classified portals and online auctions. The series of stained glass windows presented in the exhibition, framed in a light box system, was purchased this way and, according to the seller, once adorned a restaurant in the Sosnowy Bór sanatorium in the village of Vlasovka in the Poltava region. By transferring the stained glass to the exhibition space, Halkin points to

the need to preserve the cultural heritage of the second half of the 20th century and protect it by giving it museum status. Moreover, in the exhibition space, these objects no longer function as elements of industrial design, but as independent objects that evoke the carefree life before the war.

The paintings in the Optical Prostheses series depict smoke-darkened stained glass windows of real buildings in the Dnipropetrovsk region, either damaged by Russian rocket attacks or shattered in the process of removing communist symbolism in Ukraine. The absence of colors other than black and white makes the works resemble monochrome illustrations from Soviet art history books. Yet they also speak of war news and cultural heritage. The artist paints images of stained glass onto the canvases, giving them a new meaning and a status as a work of art that they never had before. In a way, the resulting pieces capture the spirit of today while allowing the viewer to glimpse the atmosphere of the original environment of the stained glass windows.

This brings to mind apt and appropriate words from Walter Benjamin's essay *On the Concept of History*: "To articulate the past historically is not to recognize it 'as it really was.' It means appropriating a memory as it flashes up in a moment of danger." By turning to the artistic legacy of the past, Halkin interweaves threads of history with the gruesome reality of the ongoing war in Ukraine. Emphasizing the importance of challenging official narratives, he allows Soviet totalitarian art to reveal its essence in a different light.

*Booth 7A18
ARCOmadrid 2024
March 6th - 10th, 2024
IFEMA Madrid,*

For all press inquiries, please contact us: info@voloshyngallery.art

About Danylo Halkin

Danylo Halkin (born in Dnipro in 1985) is a contemporary Ukrainian artist/curator. He had studied at Dnipropetrovsk Theatre and Arts College and at Academy of Civil Engineering and Architecture. In his works, he explores the concept of public space through installations, happenings, site-specific art, etc. He cooperates with state-owned cultural institutions, drawing public attention to pieces of Soviet heritage in Eastern Europe to promote their further preservation in museums and re-interpretation.

Halkin's works have been shown in solo and group exhibitions, including *Kaleidoscope of (Hi)stories. Ukrainian Art 1912–2023* (The Albertinum, Dresden), *Out Loud* (Galeria Labirynt, Lublin), *When Faith Moves Mountains* (PinchukArtCentre, Kyiv), *Transition Dialogue Talks* (LWL-Museum für Kunst und Kultur, Münster), *Europa Endlos* (Kunsthal Charlottenborg, Copenhagen), National Art Museum of Ukraine (Kyiv) and others.

He is a two-time nominee for PinchukArtCentre Prize (in 2011 and 2015) and the winner of the Special Prize of the award (in 2013). Halkin was shortlisted for Malevich Award (in 2014) and M17 Sculpture Prize (in 2020). He also won the Special Prize of the Art Future Prize award in 2020.

About Voloshyngallery

Established in October 2016 by Max and Julia Voloshyngallery specializes in contemporary art. It exhibits a broad range of works in a variety of media, hosting solo and group exhibitions and taking part in leading contemporary art fairs.

Over the last two years, the gallery has participated in The Armory Show, Liste Basel, ARCOmadrid, Art Brussels, Art Cologne, Enter Art Fair, viennacontemporary, Dallas Art Fair, NADA Miami, Untitled Art, Art Athina, EXPO Chicago, and more. Voloshyngallery is a member of the New Art Dealers Alliance (NADA). In 2023, Voloshyngallery opened its new space in Miami, FL, US.