

Lesia Khomenko

Through Waves and Portals

February 24–March 30, 2024
802 NW 22nd Street, Miami, FL USA



Lesia Khomenko, *The Wave II*, 2024. Courtesy the artist and Voloshyn Gallery

Voloshyn Gallery is honored to present *Through Waves and Portals*, Ukrainian artist *Lesia Khomenko's* first solo show in Miami.

Lesia Khomenko is a prominent figure in the Ukrainian and Eastern European art scene and is considered one of the leading artists of her generation. She was one of the exhibiting artists at the collateral event of the 59th International Art Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia and has also exhibited internationally at the European Parliament (BE), Museum Folkwang (DE), Ukrainian Museum in New York (US), Albertinum in Dresden (DE).

In her new body of work, Lesia Khomenko scrutinizes the images of the Russo-Ukrainian War. Her elaborate visual language focuses on the representations and digital traces of warfare as they appear through new technological ways of documentation and the sharing of photographic and video footage on social media. Comprised of the three series—*Montage*, *Waves*, and *Portals*—the exhibition demonstrates Khomenko's aptitude for bridging painting and technologically mediated images. Khomenko's installation in the gallery space is a forensic research into the impact of war on human perception.

The *Portals* series epitomizes the complex idea of jumping through space and time by means of the Internet in order to discover the war in Ukraine from places as remote as the U.S. Lesia Khomenko lives between New York where she relocated recently, Vienna where her parents have evacuated to, and Ukraine where her husband is serving in the army. The artist's physical displacement and the need to work in different countries over the last year is comparable to "jumping through virtual portals." At times, carrying unfinished paintings from one place to another, Khomenko considers how the information obtained with the lightning speed online can be equally productive and problematic.

While the consumption of news and media seemingly grants proximity to these historical moments, the empathy and kinship arise only from thoughtful modes of engagement with the deeds of war. As often seen in Khomenko's paintings through her subject matter and the unusual three-point, bird's eye view perspective, it is the directed attention that allows one to associate themselves with a survivor, a combatant, an FPV drone, a bullet.

Further in this exhibition, Khomenko contrasts the cognitive compression of distance with the phenomenon of time delay and inertia. *Waves* is the installation where Khomenko utilizes painting conservation techniques to reinforce the canvas and mold it into rippled screens positioned directly on the floor. The metaphor of waves in this series points both to the physical phenomena, such as explosive blasts, and the ocean waves, which used to terrify the artist during her long-term residency in Dania Beach, FL in Oasis Pointe in 2022–2023. Waves represent the time delayed impact of the catastrophe that moves across the ocean. In this sense, they are opposite to the “flash portals” which deliver weaponized digital facts and drastically reduce the distance to war zones.

Khomenko's experiments with video reports of war culminate in the abstracted imagery of *Montage*—a horizontal sequence-ordered painting series based on sourced footage from the Ukrainian frontlines. In *Montage*, the artist combines different viewers' perspectives into one story. By way of laying out the frames, Khomenko compresses 10-second video of explosions in Kharkiv into a singular picture that testifies to “the entire moment of disaster.” In her paintings, she consciously avoids “the banality of fire” as a commonly depicted attribute of war atrocities. Instead, Khomenko focuses on the roles of witnesses, the process of interpretation, and the function of new technologies in producing the evidences and documents of history. Informed by Khomenko's earlier investigations of the socialist realist post-WWII battle paintings, *the Montage series* captures our contemporary experience with the full awareness of the augmented visual apparatus of cyber war. Maneuvering through waves of emotions and portals of information, Khomenko reinstates the importance of cerebral distance that is crucial for being able to articulate and really see.

About Lesia Khomenko

Lesia Khomenko was born in 1980 in Kyiv, Ukraine. Graduated National academy of fine art and architecture in 2004. 2005-2006 – residency at Center for Contemporary Art at Kyiv-Mohyla academy, Kyiv; 2008 – residency at LIA (Leipzig International Art program) Leipzig. Co-founder and member of R.E.P. group (since 2004) and curatorial group Hudrada (since 2008). She was in the short list of PinchukArtPrize (2009, 2011 and 2013), Future Generations Art Prize with group R.E.P. (2012) founded by Victor Pinchuk and Kazimir Malevich Artist Award (2012 and 2016). Lives and works in New York, NY, US.

Her works are in public collections including M HKA (BEL), Ludwig Museum (HU), Art Collection Telecom (DE), and Albertinum (DE). Lesia's works have been shown in several solo and group exhibitions, among others at Ukrainian Museum in New York, New York (US); Albertinum, Dresden (DE); Collateral Event of the 59th International Art Exhibition the Venice Biennial, Venice (IT); The European Parliament (BE); Museum Folkwang (DE); Fridman Gallery, NYC (US). Khomenko's works have been covered and reviewed by The New York Times, The Washington Post, The New Yorker, The Art Newspaper, and Frieze, among others.

Lesia participated in residency programs of Oasis Pointe Residences, Miami, USA (2022 - 2023): Martha MOCA Artist Residency, NJ, USA (2022); Emergency Residency Ujazdowski Castle, Warsaw, PL (2022); Working Room, Ivano-Frankivsk, UA (Curated and participated, 2022); Salzburg International Summer Academy of Fine Arts, Salzburg, AT (2020); LIA (Leipzig International Art), Leipzig, DE (2008); Visual Culture Research Center, Kyiv, UA (2005–2007).

About Voloshyn Gallery

Established in October 2016 by Max and Julia Voloshyn, Voloshyn Gallery 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. Voloshyn Gallery is a member of the New Art Dealers Alliance (NADA). In 2023, Voloshyn Gallery opened its new space in Miami, FL, US.

Opening Reception: Saturday, February 24, 2024, 6 – 9 pm
Gallery hours: Tuesday – Saturday, 11am – 5pm and by appointment
802 NW 22nd Street, Miami, FL, USA

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