

ARTISTS KNOW BETTER

OCT 8 - NOV 21, 2022

150 MANUFACTURING STREET, SUITE 214, DALLAS, TX 75207

Voloshyn Gallery, together with **Dallas Art Fair Projects**, presents *Artists Know Better*, an exhibition of contemporary Ukrainian artists reflecting on the radical situation of russia's full-scale war against Ukraine. Working on the edge of different techniques and media, while combining research with intuition, artists often foresee events to come. Many of the works showcased in the exhibition were created after 2014 but before the russia's full-scale invasion in 2022, taking on new meaning in today's environment. Other works were created amidst the invasion that has shaken the world. In this exhibition, we recognize the significance of an artistic statement in time of war and how artworks garner new weight in the context of history.

In the first part of the exhibition, *Lesia Khomenko, Nikita Kadan, Daniil Galkin, Yevgen Samborsky, Vlada Ralko, Daniil Revkovskiy and Andriy Rachynskiy* contemplate and directly respond to the war in works created during the Russian invasion of Ukraine. For instance, a videowork *Sky. Invasion by Daniil Revkovskiy and Andriy Rachinskiy* is intended to show the fragility of the sky and the fear of looking at it, inherent to people with traumatic experiences. The compilation of founded footage presents the sky with the daily cycle: morning, afternoon, evening, night, morning. This is sky over Ukraine in various states, before and during the russian-ukrainian war. The end of the video is the sun close up, similar to an explosion of a hydrogen bomb. The sound of the video is the Russian military frequency 4625. One can hear the voice of a man who in Russian calls numbers and names without any meaning. There is one version that frequency 4625 is part of the Perimeter nuclear complex. A complex for automatic control of a massive retaliatory nuclear strike, created in the USSR at the height of the Cold War and used by Russia.

For this exhibition, *Nikita Kadan* also presents his new work *Composition with three legs (after Henryk Streng/Marek Włodarski)*. The motif of black plowed field relates to the hundreds of photos of dead bodies partly covered by soil, explosion craters made by missiles and bombs, collective graves quickly dig at outskirts of cities and villages — the images which circulate in social media and mass-media of war period. At the same time, it is a motif of "rich Ukrainian soil", crucial both for colonial and nationalist narratives about Ukrainian "global mission".

Lesia Khomenko's paintings from her new series are based on photographs of soldiers with their faces and backgrounds blurred to prevent recognition. In these works, she meditates on the war's self-representation through soldiers' selfies and on photography that turns into weapon. She also appeals to the historical context of figurative painting in the modern cyber war setting.

Daniil Galkin's paintings from his series *Optical Prostheses* are dedicated to stained-glass windows of Soviet-build hospitals, military commissariats and fire stations. The black-and-white grisailles depict smoked stained-glass windows of buildings located in the Dnipropetrovsk region, shown against the backdrop of smoky sky. All of the windows are either damaged by missile strikes or splintered and shattered while being dismantled in the course of decommunization. The author attaches fragments of the glass to his canvases, thus giving them a new meaning, together with the status of a work of art.

Yevgen Samborsky's new series of watercolors *Everything Mixed Up* is about collective images of destruction. The series is intended to show how the bombed and damaged private interior become available testimony for everyone. How the photo galleries of our smartphones mix private photos with pictures of destroyed architecture from the internet, memes about war, corpses of Russian soldiers, screenshots of texts about help. *Vlada Ralko's* work from the new series "*Lviv Diary*" is a response to the daily horrors of warfare documented on paper. The artist has started to work on this series since the beginning of the full-scale war.

The second part of the exhibition presents earlier works by *Oleksiy Sai, Nikolay Karabinovych, Maria Sulymenko, Mykola Ridnyi, and Artem Volokitin*. These pieces assume new meanings in today's environment. This process is symptomatically represented by works from the *Afterimage* series by *Artem Volokitin*, evacuated from the heavily shelled city of Kharkiv in July 2022. Physiologically speaking, an afterimage is a side effect of our eyes' adaptation to bright light. They are most commonly produced by looking at sunlit objects or bright lights. Today, Artem Volokitin's rescued works shown in Dallas are much more than just images of blinding flashes. They are afterimages bearing a distinctive disposition: they represent the psycho-emotional state of people looking at glaring outbursts while being evacuated from Kharkiv.

Similar is the story of the *Shelter* series by *Mykola Ridnyi*, which was evacuated from Kharkiv in the spring of this year. Created in 2012 and 2013, the sculptures depict different bomb shelters, both as relics and as a phenomenon that found new meaning: first, in 2014, and now, in 2022, as many bomb shelters returned to their initial purpose after the invasion.

The work of *Oleksiy Sai* from the series *Bombed*, which was started by the author back in 2015 as a reaction to the current events in the country, is presented. The Bombed series unites bird's-eye views of Eastern Ukrainian landscapes pockmarked by bomb craters left by the war. Sai obliterates the surfaces of his earlier works almost completely with disk grinders, drills and abrasive materials, transforming them into tactile maps of ruination. Gradually losing the original legible images, the works become almost abstract while remaining filled with wholly concrete meanings.

Nikolay Karabinovych's video work *As far as possible* delves into the artist's multicultural genealogy (of Greek and Jewish ascent) and his family ties to Odesa, a city coveted by many imperial powers.

The work follows a tourist group traveling by bus along the Kuialnyk Estuary outside Odesa, next to the caves where Jewish refugees, including the artist's great-grandmother, found shelter at the beginning of World War II. Could the victims of various historical catastrophes imagine that their children would meet? Where could this meeting occur? What would be the soundscape of their meeting place? These and other questions foreshadow an interpretative reception of Karabinovych's work. Maria Sulymenko's watercolors depict slow motion reels, or figures frozen in a vacuum, plunging the viewer into the atmosphere of translucent grey air. Sulymenko arranges every possible detail with a delicate touch and sharp vision, notwithstanding a sense of spontaneous improvisation. The characters in her drawings are timeless and placed in a generic, often naive environment that alludes to our subconscious rather than to our reality — an atmosphere of absurdity with existential connotations.

Max Voloshyn, the co-founder of the Voloshyn Gallery, tells, "It is very important for us to keep working, especially during this full-scale war against Ukraine. We value art and culture because they define our national identity, our national idea. We consider them the power that can solidify the nation. We have to unite around it and do our best to make sure that Ukraine is paid attention to across the whole world."

We greatly appreciate the assistance and support provided by our partner, **Dallas Art Fair Projects**.

Dates: October 8 to November 21, 2022

Held by the Voloshyn Gallery, Kyiv, Ukraine

Founded in October 2016 by Max and Julia Voloshyn, **Voloshyn Gallery** specializes in contemporary art. It showcases a broad range of media in contemporary art, hosting solo and group exhibitions and participating in leading contemporary art fairs. In 2015, the Voloshyns made it to the Forbes' 30 Under 30 list. Voloshyn Gallery is a member of The New Art Dealers Alliance (NADA). Voloshyn Gallery fosters the integration of Ukrainian art into global cultural processes. It presents an exciting and diverse exhibition programme, as well as working in partnership with institutions, independent curators in realising both on and off-site projects. Voloshyn Gallery participates in leading contemporary art fairs. Over the course of the last two years, the gallery has participated in The Armory Show, Liste Art Fair, Enter Art Fair, Vienna Contemporary, Dallas Art Fair, Pulse Art Fair, Art Cologne, Nada Miami, Untitled Art, Expo Chicago etc.

Launched by the Dallas Art Fair in 2019, **Dallas Art Fair Projects** is an arts and special projects space located in the Dallas Design District, formerly known as 214 Projects. This additional venue allows international galleries and Dallas Art Fair exhibitors to present more ambitious art installations and special projects in Dallas on a year-round basis.