

# VOLOSHYN GALLERY

## THE MEMORY ON HER FACE: PART II

### A pop-up exhibition in Miami

04/1/2022 – 04/25/2022

Miami Design District, 88 NE 39 St., Miami, FL 33137

Hours: Mon-Sat: 11am-8pm, Sun: 12pm-6pm.

**Voloshyn Gallery is proud to present *The Memory on Her Face: Part II***, a group exhibition of Ukrainian artists featuring works by Nikita Kadan, Lesia Khomenko, Nikolay Karabinovych, Maria Sulymenko, Vlada Ralko, Yevgen Samborsky and Oleksiy Sai.

The first iteration of this exhibition, *The Memory on Her Face*, was presented in Miami between February 5 and March 28, 2022. After the Russian Federation invaded Ukraine on February 24, the exhibition project gained new relevance. Curated by Omar Lopez-Chahoud, an independent curator and the artistic director of Untitled Art Fair, *The Memory on Her Face: Parts I and II* document the events that unfolded in Ukraine over the last 8 years, tracing the physical destruction and collective anguish caused by unfathomable events that demand global attention.

The exhibition highlights the artists' take on historical events and processes, interactions between the past and the present, and ideas of the future, addressing issues of national identity, destruction, and renaissance. Through an embrace a visual language that poetically expresses their personal experiences, *The Memory on Her Face: Part II* reflects on how past and recent historical events have shaped Ukrainian identity.

Nikita Kadan's works from the *Tiger's Leap* series refer to Walter Benjamin's homonymous notion of a spring back into the past in search of an impetus to reinstate political struggles in the present. Kadan's *Tiger's Leap* is a reconstruction of quotidian instruments refashioned into handmade spears used by workers of the Horlivka Machine-Building Factory during the 1905 armed uprising against the Belgian factory owner. This historical focus sheds light on the European role during the first modernization of Donbas, an revisits a history of abuse, workers' struggles, and revolution in the Russian Empire. In his *National Landscape series*, Kadan depicts landscapes as witnesses of carnage, murder, and human violence, offering viewers an opportunity to reflect on large-scale violence, and rediscover their identities within the darkness of history.

Lesia Khomenko's series of paintings titled *Vernadsky's Dacha* engages with historical memory while focusing on the local context. The series depicts the cottage that belonged to the scientist Vladimir Vernadsky on Butova Hill, outside the village of Shyshaky, where the scholar developed his theory of the noosphere. Khomenko's paintings use archival photographs of the Vernadsky's cottage from the Shyshaky Local History Museum. When she visited the cottage site with the intention of photographing it, Khomenko found it overgrown with trees. "Standing in front of the thickets and not recognizing the place, I felt lost; this feeling became the foundation of my works," the artist explains in her description of this series. The cottage becomes an imagined site: the building is hidden in the thickets. In the foreground are the poplars, allegedly planted by the scholar himself, and the dancing body of the artist enlarged to match the size of the trees.

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Vlada Ralko presents her *Signs* series, which address issues of identity and relevant social and political contexts by delving into the existential pain and suffering of the collective body. The *Signs* series remains one of her most critical projects, resisting unambiguous interpretations. When Ralko began working on them back in 2008, she seemed to anticipate asking, "What does this mean?" Instead of explaining, she offers decontextualization as an element of vulnerability and challenge. Ralko attempts to put her audience through a U-turn, creating a vicious circle: each unanswered question produces more doubt. These works depict a break, something that is exteriorized, damaging the body from the inside.

Oleksiy Sai's new works portray tin soldiers in business suits. The series explores the emergence of office plankton as a class, with faceless characters that become more human and individualized as they age and depart from the ideals of consumerist society. Sai creates a markedly neutral and objective representation of the lives of office workers, without being a critique or parody of the corporate lifestyle.

Maria Sulymenko's watercolors from *the Glass World of People and Things...* project 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.

In *Taste the feeling* from the series *Simple Things* Yevgen Samborsky comprehends the landscape through the practice of open-air, where through interventions in the surrounding space, various hidden contexts are revealed or new ones are built. Coca-Cola, as a symbol of advanced America, the American world, the 'American dream'. The brand, which is represented around the world, even in the poorest countries, constantly reminds us of this 'taste of the American dream.' A formalistic gesture by the author, who placed the brand's logo on an old rusty industrial tank, simply reminded the artist of a can of Coca-Cola. The white inscription on the tank is associatively reminiscent of the image of refined happiness that the company has nurtured in the minds of consumers for years, and ruined the bank - destroyed buildings and mutilated happiness. A tank with a logo is a conditional image of the reputation of corporations that support and finance the war. Conditional image of the future of these corporations, whose reputation on the world market is destroyed and unfit for existence (as well as thousands of Ukrainian homes).

Nikolay Karabinovych's video work about the imagined future, titled *Even Further*, was developed in Odesa, Kyiv, Ghent, Amsterdam, Sainte-Croix, Berlin, Zurich, Stuttgart, Istanbul, Tbilisi, Thessaloniki, Groningen, Antwerp, Bratislava, Chernivtsi and Sadhora. The work 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. The film starts with the bus entering a static frame. Tourists leave the bus and follow the guide to the waterline. The group pauses at a distance from the water and listens to the guide tell her story. Once the story's over, the tourists board the bus again and leave the frame.

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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.

The pop-up exhibition will be open from April 1 through April 25, 2022.

Partners: Fountainhead Residency Miami, Miami Design District

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**Max and Julia Voloshyn** founded **Voloshyn Gallery** in October 2016, specializing in contemporary art in a broad range of media. In 2015, the Voloshyns made it to the Forbes' 30 Under 30 list.

Voloshyn Gallery has a vibrant exhibition program, often collaborating with other institutions and independent curators, prioritizing the representation of its artists at leading international contemporary art fairs.

Over the last two years, the gallery participated in the Armory Show, Vienna Contemporary, Dallas Art Fair, Pulse Art Fair, Nada Miami, Untitled ART, Expo Chicago, and others. Zhanna Kadyrova's solo show, presented by Voloshyn Gallery, won the Pulse Prize in 2018; the Perez Art Museum Miami curators also noted the project.

**Voloshyn Gallery has been a member of the New Art Dealers Alliance (NADA) since 2020.**