

## IDENTIFICATION OF UKRAINIAN ART DURING ACTIVE TRANSFORMATIONS OF WORLD ART SPACE

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**Abstract.** International status projects have enriched the experience of Ukrainian galleries and centers of contemporary art. The visual practices of Ukrainian artists, thanks to successful participation in the world Biennale and art fairs, have entered foreign contexts. Leading art institutions create exhibition projects for the international presentation of artists and art associations, allowing the world to demonstrate contemporary Ukrainian art, the high potential of Ukrainian artists, and promote the recognition of the contemporary Ukrainian culture. Traditionally, the international exhibition activities of Ukrainian galleries take place in two ways: in one case, the art institution independently presents the project in a certain exhibition space on a commercial basis or a welcoming gallery abroad; otherwise, the art institution participates in the programs of well-known art fairs and festivals (which merely are working only with galleries and not with independent artists), presenting the worthiest works of artists with whom it collaborates. Transformations of the cultural and artistic process marked the formation of new vectors of development in the 1990s and 2000s. They are related to economic, technical, and socio-cultural transformations in various fields. In particular, it forms the coordinates of contemporary Ukrainian art's artistic image, merging into one powerful wave of art development, which has its trends, genesis, and features. This renewal was significantly influenced by the entry of Ukrainian art into the world's cultural arena, that is, its revival in the world cultural field.

**Keywords:** Art fair, Art festival, Art project, Cultural and artistic process, Cultural practices.

### 1 Introduction

In recent years in, the world of art has been formed into a new global art space, which has a certain logic and operates in its coordinate systems. Art theorist M. Sheps states that "the expanded globalization of art has taken place over the past two decades" [13, p. 16–20], but this still takes place today. He writes that since 1980, art entered an era of "global presence," manifested in increased mobility of artists, exhibitions of non-Western artists in the West, and the development of world art institutions in non-Western countries. M. Sheps concludes that art has become integrated into the symmetrical world cultural network. In addition, since 1989, the "global dialogue of art" has accelerated, which is possible only with the help of a new visual language, i.e., with the help of new media and new forms of art practice, such as video art, computer graphics or installations [13, p. 16–20]. One of the leading art critics, Kate Kravagna, believes the bright changes began in the late 1980s, and they are associated with the widespread involvement of artists from both hemispheres in the global space of art. The researcher notes the rapid transition from the insignificance of non-European artists to the overweight of their works at international exhibitions, where the works of all artists are exhibited side by side, under the sign of global art [9, p. 98–104]. With the growing prestige of world art fairs, a new territory is gradually formed, where all participants of the art process meet, and market research, trends, search, and acquisition take place simultaneously and in one place [11, p. 110] – we define this territory as the "world art market."

As a tradition, the Western world dictates the rules of world art, but the unusually exotic nature of everything that has currently come from the North and East is of interest to art connoisseurs and professionals. In addition, the increased public awareness of "non-Western" art is associated with the prevailing

neoprimivist impulses in world culture, which, in contrast to Western rationality, elevate imaginary, irrational, "otherness." As a result, the inclusion of non-Western artists in the structure of the global art space is often limited to old structures and inequalities. It is until now still a "cultural game," a cultural policy, but this process is inevitable institutions will have to coexist with it.

### 2 Materials and Methods

The article aims to study the role of art fairs and festivals in contemporary Ukrainian culture, particularly their impact on the transformation of contemporary Ukrainian art. The primary methodological approach in determining the state of research on the selected topic was the methods of analysis, verification, and systematization. The analytical method is designed to determine internal trends and prospects for development, as in sociology, it is used to analyze economic and other social changes and phenomena.

#### 2.1 Theoretical Foundations of the Research

Contemporary Ukrainian art, in general, is characterized by: the development of artistic institutions and the social vector of artistic pursuits. Victor Sydorenko characterizes this tendency as a dynamic component of the art of the XX-XXI centuries, when "the conversation about universalization moves from the zone of aesthetic studies or biopolitics to the space of life," and "collision with art" enhances "not just an aesthetic experience," but an "ontological adventure, "Where an art project is able to demonstrate its effectiveness as a social sculpture, as a tool in public space, as a means of transformation and communication" [14, p. 112].

Aver'janova N. considers one of the peculiarities of contemporary Ukrainian art to be its entry into the world art space, as foreign exhibitions prove the fact that it has its own features of Ukrainian postmodernism and quickly overcomes the world artistic development and are actively involved in the world art space [3, p. 57]. According to Oksana Chepelik, contemporary Ukrainian art is in tune with Western European art: "The theme of political, social and cultural identity came to the fore as the main concept of actual art practice. Modern aesthetic search can be combined with political, racial, or territorial identity. This topic acquires considerable significance against the background of Ukraine's consistent intentions to fit into the European format, given that the characteristic feature of European theoretical thought is close attention to the art associated with topical reflection" [7, p. 119–120].

Curator Oksana Barshynova, about the emergence of Ukrainian art in the world, pointed out that "in the mid-2000s, a new generation came to contemporary Ukrainian art, actualizing the experience of avant-garde and conceptualism, which are gaining new significance in today's context. However, debate with the avant-garde, analysis of the cultural and historical past, rethinking the principles of creativity through the prism of freedom of expression, and, most importantly – analysis of reality remain the most important and most difficult for art [4].

### 3 Results and Discussion

#### 3.1 The Leading World Art Fairs as New Platforms for the Functioning of the Art Market

An essential aspect of the rapid dynamics of cultural development was its involvement in the economy of first industrial and then post-industrial society in the twentieth century, which led to the reorganization of cultural meanings, transforming them according to the logic of "marketability" [5, p. 116] and commercialism. According to S. Kropotov, Doctor of Philosophy, "modern art with its eternal variability and complexity of artistic language reflects the inevitable escalation

of differences in the capital of post-industrial civilization, presenting different ways of thinking as an indicator of the complexity of society." [10, p. 14]. Consequently, modern art, more than in previous times, becomes dependent on the leading consumer – the public; it is transformed and changed following the demands of society.

Nowadays, there are more than two hundred art fairs for contemporary art in the world. A feature of the world's oldest fair, "Art Cologne," is the absence of conceptual themes and cultural programs of contemporary art. In 2018 the "ST-H Gallery" presented Ukraine in a parallel program representing the art of photography and urban art "Kölner Liste" the gallery showed the works of Sergei Hai and Vladimir Boguslavsky. Moreover, in 2018 during the "Kölner Liste" "V Gallery" presented works by Tanya Vasylenko, Dmytro Grek, Yegor, and Mikita Zigura. The project of the Ukrainian gallery demonstrated to the world community abstract painting, formal and stylistic sculptures, and conceptual art objects.

To take part in the Art Basel art fair is difficult for Ukrainian galleries; however, it has several parallel satellite fairs – youth Art Statement, fashion Scope, conceptual Volta, and others. Ukrainian artists and art institutions are systematic participants in these events. For example, in 2010, Ukraine was represented at the Scope by Tatiana Mironova's gallery, which featured works by current artists – Victor Sydorenko with the project "Levitation," Zhanna Kadyrova with sculptures of tiles from the series "Planets" and "Oranges," Roman Zhuk with the picturesque series "The Indigo," Arsen Savadov with works from the series "Commedia dell Arte." Excellent quality and relevance to the world community ideas of Ukrainian artists promoted the emergence of Ukrainian art on the world stage. International experts praised the golden fund of works by Ukrainian artists of different generations presented in the gallery booth.

In 2014, "Dymchuk Gallery" presented Ukraine at the "Volta Fair." The gallery featured works by classics of contemporary Ukrainian art: Igor Gusev, Vasyl Tsagolov, and Arsen Savadov. Igor Gusev showed paintings from the series "Platforms of Eternity" and "Knights of the Revolution" (2014); Vasyl Tsagolov – projects "Ghost of the Revolution" and "Ukrainian X-Files" (2014), and Arsen Savadov – spectacular photos from the series "Donbass-Chocolate" (1997). As "Volta" positions itself as a mobile fair open to experimentation and new art with an emphasis on the high quality of the works presented, the works, which in some ways reflected the current events of the Ukrainian Revolution of Dignity, were received by the world cultural community with special interest and positive feedback.

In 2018, at the "Volta Fair," "Mironova Gallery" presented Artem Volokitin's conceptual painting, Roman Mikhailov's online game and graphic drawings, photos of the behind, the scenes of Leica Awards winner Serhiy Melnychenko's Chinese nightlife, and collages in the style of pop art by Alina Pivnenko and Bohdan Tomaszewski – bright representatives of the young generation of artists. The gallery brings together artists who work in contrasting styles and techniques but are equally sharp and thoughtful about reality and create non-standard philosophical works.

In 2017–2018, "Voloshyn Gallery" represented Ukraine at "Pulse Miami Beach," a fair whose main priority is to support young art galleries and artists. The Ukrainian Gallery presented a solo project by Zhanna Kadyrova "Market" (awarded the "Perez Art Museum Miami"). In addition, for the second time at the international fair Voloshyn Gallery presented a group project of artists Alexei Say, Mikhail Deyak, and Igor Gusev. Oleksiy Sai presented part of his project "Excel-Art," in which he used Excel as a visual language resource, visualizing the monotonous life of office workers, Mikhail Deyak presented minimalist landscapes from the series "Space," Igor Gusev showed works from the series "Mister Nobody" – miniatures sculptures created on a 3D printer.

The periodic practice of participation of Ukrainian artists in world art fairs is the presentation of their works on the stands of foreign art galleries. Thus, in 2019 in one of the sections of Art

Basel, a platform for presenting large-scale projects, large installations, video art, monumental sculptures, and performances called "Unlimited," the Italian gallery "Continua" indicated the famous works of a Ukrainian artist Zhanna Kadyrova, made of tiles.

The participation of Ukrainian galleries in the Pulse and Volta fairs is a significant and responsible event for Ukraine, as it is believed that the appearance at the art fair in Basel and the exhibitions of related satellite fairs approve the success of the gallery owner and artist on the world art stage and is one of the leading factors influencing the further acquisition and commercial success of his works.

In the mid-2000s, the model of the fair as an art event was consolidated. According to art critic A. Arutyunova, this model is based on a modern strategy of "global expansion" [2, p. 51]. If earlier, the main task of the fair of contemporary art was to support local authors, bring them into the international context, attract new galleries, collectors, and professionals to its territory, since the 2000s, the emphasis has shifted to finding new markets and audiences, which is expressed in active politics – "colonization" of new territories. In the early 2000s, the largest and most prestigious fairs opened "branches" in different parts of the world.

In addition to the above, there are many equally popular professional art community art fairs in the lower price range. Broadly, they can be divided into two categories:

- So-called "satellite fairs" that operate at one time and in parallel with large-scale world fairs;
- "Middle-level" fairs that take place on other dates in other cities and form their audience, according to a certain concept of choice of art that they offer to their audience.

Founded in 2009, Art Vilnius has enhanced one of the most prestigious fairs in Eastern Europe. The organizers focus on the quality of the presented art and the content of the exhibition and invite world museums, galleries, and centers of contemporary art to participate. Art Vilnius has been in contact with Ukrainian artists for many years: "Art 14", "Ra," "Karas Gallery," "Shcherbenko Art Center," and "Ya Gallery" took part in the exhibition. Art Svit space, etc. [1]. In 2015, Anton Logov's installation "Reference Point" greeted the guests of the fair at the entrance to the exhibition center, and the inner work of the entire exhibition was the work of Nikita Shaleny "Siberia," which eventually won the nomination "Best Installation." After the fair, he acquired this work in his collection "Museum of Contemporary Art in Krakow." And the work of Roman Mikhailov from the series "Burns of the Real" was purchased in the collection of the organizing committee of the fair.

In 2020, "Mironova Gallery" presented Ukrainian art at two prestigious fairs: "Photo La" and "Cadaf." It should be noted that the gallery is one of the few art institutions that systematically represent Ukraine in the world cultural field. "Photo La" has an excellent reputation for experienced photographers and has established itself as a source for the discovery of innovative art photography. In 2020, the forum took place online, which opened up even more opportunities for public world photo presentations. "Mironova Gallery" has selected a star cast of artists of various styles and creative methods, but undoubtedly iconic figures in contemporary photography – the most titled Ukrainian photographer Borys Mykhailov, American Roger Ballen, who rightfully holds the title of the star of modern photography and promising young Ukrainian photographer Serhiy Melnychenko. "Mironova Gallery" became the first and only Ukrainian gallery to present its photo project at a prestigious forum. The authors presented at the gallery stand each testified to the current and global demands of human development in their unique style.

The world's first art fair, which combines contemporary and digital art, "Cadaf," worked online during a pandemic in 2020, providing participants with a virtual platform to attract artists and sell digital art during quarantine restrictions. At the art fair, "Mironova Gallery" presented the works of artists, different in

artistic handwriting and unique in their genre. Stepan Ryabchenko, a prominent architect of digital universes in the art world, presented work from the series "Virtual Mythology" – architecturally designed utopian worlds in which the artist recognized absolute freedom; Maria Kulikovska presented a video performance, "Lustration," dedicated to a woman in the modern world, personal experience of the traumatic consequences of war; and Victoria Pidust exhibited her art using generative design at the intersection of photography and digital technology. The selected "Mironova Gallery" authors highlight important issues of the world agenda in their work, and the presented works accede to global demands so much that they further stimulate interest in Ukrainian contemporary art in the world community.

The emergence of new art fairs in separate parts of the world increases the global interest in cultural development and transformations of visual art in particular. Such a push is not so much due to the mixed format and the opportunity to witness new and different artistic manifestations on gallery stands in one exhibition space as due to the comprehensive intellectual, educational and cultural program component that "overgrown" these events [11, p. 110]. Unfortunately, however, a minority of Ukrainian gallery owners, who have a development strategy in the local and international context, start selling the works of their artists only after several years of stable annual presence at the fair.

### 3.2 Contemporary Ukrainian Art Fairs and Festivals: Features of the Ukrainian Art Market

The renewal of the cultural and artistic process in Ukraine at the beginning of the XXI century and dynamic changes in the social system became the basis for the emergence of independent city festivals and art fairs on both regional and national scales. Ukrainian art fairs and forums – are:

- The format of events to implement exhibition programs with educational and Ukrainian events;
- Logically appearing in the context of the modern cultural process;
- Setting a vector for developing communication and promoting art at both local and Ukrainian levels.

One of the most historic Ukrainian festivals, which includes new media experiments in its program, is "Non-Stop Media" (NSM), held in Kharkiv since 2003 in the format of the Biennale. The leading organizer of the festival is the Municipal Gallery. Initially, "NSM" was organized as an opportunity for young artists and art critics, curators, and culturologists to prove themselves in the first professional search, but over time, in response to requests from the cultural sector, it was supplemented by professional discussion and educational platforms to date, the structure of the festival. Moreover, over the years, the geographical boundaries of the festival have expanded: launched as a local event, it has gradually become national, and today is already international [16]. The "NSM" created like modern world festivals is today a platform for creative experiments and interaction of recent artists with the cultural community.

Along with traditional visual practices, the art of animation is confidently developing today. The largest and only centralized show of unusual animation in Ukraine for several years in a row is part of the International Festival of Animation and Media Arts "Linoleum," which since 2013 has united an international circle of the most notable industry promoting professional cultural exchange. The festival aims to demonstrate the practically unlimited potential of animation, which makes it a universal tool of any cultural communication. The first "Linoleum" in Ukraine took place at the "Lavra Gallery" in Kyiv in 2013, bringing together the fascinating authors and studios not only from Ukraine but also from around the world. The organizers of the festival offered participants and visitors a variety of visual works, exciting VJ networks, and an interesting show program for all tastes - from traditional documentaries and cartoons to science fiction and experimental video art.

Develop the current vector of the festival movement in the media sphere "Carbon Media Art Festival" created by the art platform "Carbon" and the Ukrainian Association of Vijay's "VJ UA." This art event combines all kinds of new media art in a specific format that straddles the line between art and technology, showing the audience mapping, music, light, and audiovisual performances, parametric and interactive art installations, kinetic and interactive media exhibitions, projects, virtual and augmented reality installations, 360-projections and an academic program from media art professionals. Deliberately not defining thematic or conceptual direction, participants and curators show the art process of search and experiment: "If the goal of modern art – media art – is to reflect the realities of today by technology, the festival organizers certainly succeeded. Nothing is clear in the pavilion; in modern life, you move from object to object in search of meaning but discover nothing" [6].

However, "Carbon" is today one of the few Ukrainian media art festivals which combines new means of generating an image in Ukrainian culture in new media projects. The art of innovative technologies is increasingly conquering the global art market, its visual tools are becoming increasingly clear in modern society, and creative dialogue with new gadgets and interactive construction of modern exhibitions change the perception of visual art by the public, updating the perception of new media art.

Along with media festivals in Ukraine, annual art fairs of the classical format are being developed. In the early 2000s, the annual international art fair "Art-Kyiv Contemporary" (AKC) was launched, which for more than ten years was one of the most large-scale projects of this scale in the Ukrainian cultural arena. "AKC," created in the European tradition of global fairs of contemporary art, performed a wide range of professionals, curators, critics, theorists, collectors, and art connoisseurs a broad perspective on current trends in Ukrainian and the world art. For more than ten years, "AKC" under Natalia Zabolotna has been improving the quality of the Ukrainian art process, being an open contextual field for active international cooperation.

Simultaneously with these events, the idea of combining professional theoretical review and demonstration of contemporary art, as well as various presentations, lectures, fashion shows, and exhibitions in the format of an international festival open to both the art community and the public [12]. Therefore, the logical continuation of the fair format initiated within the framework of "AKC" was the annual "Kyiv Art Fair," a separate large-scale event that is part of the "Kyiv Art Week" (KAW) festival, with a program that includes audiovisual shows and presentations of significant projects. The art fair aims to promote the work, concepts, and ideas of current Ukrainian and world artists and cultural institutions to a wide audience. One of the key trends of "KAW" is the focus of participants and organizers of the festival on the active search for new meanings and new places of modern art objects in space, both internal and external [8], taking into account the global cultural context. The fair houses exhibitions of both Ukrainian and foreign galleries. Many foreign gallery owners, who have been participating in the "Kyiv Art Fair" for several years in a row, have successfully collaborated with Ukrainian artists, representing Ukrainian art abroad, becoming partners and cultural ambassadors of Ukraine (according to fair curator Yevhen Bereznytsky) [8].

Several gallery exhibitions, art events, and academic events at the fair are traditionally dedicated to architecture, urban planning, and public art, as one of the goals of "KAW" is to develop and study the artistic infrastructure of the Eastern European cultural region. Thus, the festival "KAW" is the initiator of diverse interactions in the cultural field and a platform for demonstrating various trends in contemporary world art [8].

### 3.3 Other Volumes of the Ukrainian Art Market

Regrettably, many festivals and fairs in Ukraine experience a brief history due to the precarious status of culture at the level of national policy. Demonstrative in this sense, the only pre-festival exhibition, "Freira" of the planned Odessa festival "Freierfest

2016" was presented at the "Lavra Art Gallery" in 2016. Curators of the project were Roman Gromov and Dmitry Ehrlich, artistic director – Anatoly Hankevich, and coordinated curator Julia Nuzhina. The project proposed to the Kyiv public represents an attempt to move away from "criminal" romance and look at the concept of "guy" in a slightly different dimension - cultural and aesthetic. The curators presented the guy's image as an independent artist who actively broadcasts himself and his art to the public. The festival was attended by both renowned Ukrainian artists and talented young artists. Bringing together artists from various backgrounds and generations in one exhibition space, the exhibition has become a platform for cultural and intellectual discourse between artists and, spectators, professionals in the field of cultural art management.

The modern Ukrainian art market, considering its constant addition of innovative techniques and technologies, is developing in all forms and manifestations of creative directions. Thanks to the introduction of new modern technologies, the first decade of the XXI century was marked by the growth of a broad range of private jewelry companies, primarily geographically occupying the country's entire territory. In a relatively short time, the Ukrainian jewelry market was filled with a large amount of jewelry of various assortments and a wide range of typological structures. Among the participants in the cultural and creative process of this industry in the forefront are jewelry companies, distinguished by the exclusive performance of jewelry using innovative, creative design techniques, where the processes of interaction of artistic and technological components form compositional concepts with deep philosophy. It should be noted that the active competition in the circle of recognized jewelry brands fully stimulated the appearance in the Ukrainian and world jewelry art market of new works of senior artistic level, distinguished by perfection.

The modern artistic space of Ukraine was constructed by a complex layering of artistic searches of masters who not only started from reflections on social issues but also filled the national artistic field with other mental metaphors. Thus, the Odessa artistic environment in the second half of the twentieth century was enriched by bright, expressive images of the Armenian Valery Geghamyan. According to the master's paintings and memories of friends and students, there was no throwing, torment, or ambivalence inherent in the artistic environment. Inspired by the mountains of Armenia, he carries this monolithic through his work, imparting a taste of sculpture, statics in painting, and especially, graphics.

Connoisseurs of his art are attracted by the author's deep philosophy, which he shared in his paintings and in his manuscripts. Naturally, the cost of such a master's work is growing every year. His name is becoming known among domestic collectors and foreign connoisseurs [17, p. 129–134].

V. Geghamyan's paintings are presently becoming high-value lots of domestic auction houses – "Corners," "Golden Section," and others. Thus, Lb.ua reported in 2011 that Valery Geghamyan's painting "African Woman" was sold for UAH 240,000. At that time, it was a record amount for the auction of "Ukrainian Alternative XX." Such sales success in the auction house "Ducat" was explained by the excellent quality of the canvas - this is modern but time-tested art. According to art market analysts, such investment indicates a steady increase in post-war and contemporary art demand. Interestingly, the works of these periods are associated with successful bidding at the world's leading auctions, Sotheby's and Christie's. [15].

Mythopoetic language, which embodies the system of sacred meanings of a certain ethnic group, is gaining considerable relevance in the field of contemporary Ukrainian art. The myth grows out of society's cultural and linguistic existence, in which the central image symbol is the world tree. Over the millennial history of this symbol, it has acquired several meanings: fertility, the connection between the worlds, the cycle of time, destruction and reproduction, and spiritual fulfillment. Nevertheless, the East Slavic tradition still preserves the sacredness and grace of the tree. The "eternal tree" symbolism is widely used in

decorative and applied arts and design, where the semiotic series must be recognizable and associative. Well-known Ukrainian artists, like Maria Pryimachenko, also used motifs related to the world tree. Thus, in the work "Lezhen lay down under an apple tree," the artist identifies the whole world with a sprawling apple tree with red ripe fruits. However, more often, the artist embodied the image of a tree through huge flowers-bushes, which filled the compositional space, which corresponds to the reproduction of reality in amateur and naive art.

In the work of our contemporary, young artist, Oksana Fursa, there are the same signs of artistic narrative, involving the richness of folklore images and ancient Ukrainian symbols. In her paintings, elements of native nature are intertwined with fairy-tale characters, united by decorative lace, which sounds like an echo of Ukrainian embroidery. The reinterpretation of the tree symbol is one of the themes of her work on silk, canvas, and cardboard. The names of two of her personal exhibitions are eloquent: "Flowers of Ukraine" and "Apple and Honey Tale." By the way, the apple tree is most often celebrated in the Ukrainian tradition as a fairy-tale tree and a dream tree. The paintings of the young master suddenly gained recognition in the Ukrainian art space and later abroad. In addition to the relevance of the content, the popularity of paintings is added by a unique author's technique: Oksana Fursa uses a porcelain mixture and egg yolks. As follows, the artist's design experience prompted the solution of the volume on the plane and emitted a significant glow to the paint. This day, the artist's trees adorn several galleries, private collections, and modern apartment interiors.

#### 4 Conclusion

According to their specifics, art festivals and art fairs, as part of cultural practices, directly or indirectly reflect the most important social life processes and the main reference points of public consciousness: rapid globalization, transformational processes in international economic and political relations, features of interaction – problems of environmental protection and other aspects of human existence in the modern world. Comprehension of the surrounding realities in various manifestations and spheres by means of the artistic language of art is currently a common global goal of all world festivals and fairs of contemporary art.

The result of globalization processes manifested in large-scale art projects has been the rapid expansion of art geography and an increase in the number of artists and art institutions participating in such events. In this regard, world festivals and fairs of contemporary art should be considered as a model of a mega-exhibition, in which, by means of various independent authorial manifestations, there is an expositional metaphor for problems and demands of the global world.

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**Primary Paper Section: A**

**Secondary Paper Section: AL**