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CULTURAL AND ARTISTIC DIALOGUES IN GALICIA IN THE SECOND HALF OF THE 20TH CENTURY

INTRODUCTION

There are significant tasks related to the revival, and to the thorough and comprehensive study of priceless centuries-long heritage of Ukrainian culture and art, that we can observe from a certain temporal distance, against the background of the present problems in the formation of Ukrainian state policy. In the current climate, good relations with neighbours and the real prospect of Ukraine's entry into the civilised space of modern Europe largely depends on the fulfilment of these tasks. Cultural and artistic traditions, in particular those of the second half of the 20th century in Galicia (Halychyna), need clarification in order to understand the achievements, and lack of them, in relation to the realities of the development of Europe at the time.

Hannah Arendt, who discusses the dynamics of the complex historical processes of the second half of the 20th century, leaves the historical and cultural development of Ukraine of that time out.¹ To a certain extent, Viktor Sydorenko,² highlighting a number

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1 Philosopher and historian Hannah Arendt was a founder of the theory of totalitarianism, e.g., she explored totalitarian societies in her book *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (published in 1951). She also defended human rights and paid special attention to the concept of freedom.

2 Viktor Sydorenko, *Visual art from avant-garde movements to the latest trends (Development of visual art of Ukraine in the 20th–21st centuries)* (Kyiv: VH studio, 2008), 188.

of problems in the history of culture, could not give significant attention to Galicia due to the large amount of material with which he deals. Art reviews by Dmytro Krvavych, Volodymyr Ovsiychuk, and Svitlana Cherepanova, revealing the artistic processes that took place in European and Ukrainian art in the 20th century in general, contain only selective factual and descriptive material without deep analysis of the relationships between social and political phenomena and historical and cultural processes of that time in Ukraine.³ Publications relating to certain stages of Ukrainian fine art of the second half of the 20th century, namely works by Volodymyr Badiak⁴ and Oles Noha⁵ do not comprehensively cover cultural and artistic relations. Taking into account the requirements of the time, a number of analytical publications by Roman Yatsiv⁶ and Olena Ripko⁷ appeared with the achievement of independence, covering the events only in the context of general 20th century Ukrainian art as an example of forced isolation from artistic events. There is no thorough study of the events of the 1990s. Thus, the entirety of the cultural and artistic life of Galicia are not covered, and either is there a comprehensive analysis of the contextuality of the cultural dialogues of 20th century Ukrainian art.

Adaptation of global artistic trends during the 20th century, as well as the newest trends in the artistic space of Ukraine is currently a very important issue. We must recognise that it is practically impossible to address this issue without a thorough review and a rethinking of a number of events and phenomena of the past, that is to say without the creation of a strong historical background. The process of reconstruction of lost or intentionally destroyed cultural heritage requires study of the factors affecting the nature of culture, and therefore the drawing of scientific conclusions regarding the loss and resumption of dialogue with

3 Dmytro Krvavych, Volodymyr Ovsiychuk, Svitlana Cherepanova, *Ukrainian art* (Lviv: Svit, 2005), 268.

4 Volodymyr Badiak, *Totalitarianism and the creative process* (Lviv: LNAM, 1995), 100.

5 Oles Noha, *Art societies, associations, groups, unions of Lviv (1860–1998)* (Lviv: Ukrainian technologies, 1998), 128.

6 Roman Yatsiv, 'Artistic Lviv before and after 1956: immunity contra canon', *Narodoznavchi zoshyty*, 4 (1998), 434–445.

7 Olena Ripko, *In search of the executed past: Retrospective of artistic culture of Lviv of the 20th century* (Lviv: Kamenyar, 1995), 286.

the world's artistic trends using the example of the second half of the 20th century in Galicia.

In a relatively small part of western Ukrainian lands (Galicia) in the second half of the 20th century, complex and contradictory processes took place that which became largely decisive for the preservation of the Ukrainian national idea and the future formation of a sovereign state. In a short period of time in Galicia there were severe consequences of turbulent social and political cataclysms, as well as unexpected historical paradoxes.

With the advent of Soviet totalitarianism, which replaced the long-term authoritarianism of the Polish government, and, later, the Nazi occupation, radical and, at the same time characteristic, changes took place in Galicia. They vividly demonstrated the sophisticated methods of destruction, planned separation and subsequent long-term isolation from the world of Ukrainian culture and art. Along with negative phenomena, it was at that time that forms of overt or hidden resistance, methods of effective preservation of the principles of free creativity, were outlined in the artistic environment.

The importance and role of Galicia in the Ukrainian history of the Soviet period was deliberately downplayed. Gradually, Galicia became the main centre of national and cultural revival, an important fact that concentrated the efforts of prominent representatives not only of the local intelligentsia, but also of eastern Ukraine, as well as abroad. Throughout the 20th century, the historical fate of western Ukrainian was obviously different from other areas of our country, and the events that took place here, in particular in the fields of culture and art, were of unique importance. The purpose of the study is to use the example of Galicia, as the main centre of the cultural and artistic life of western Ukraine, to show three things: the stability of the local artistic environment; the nature of changes at all stages of ideological aggression; the ability of Ukrainian culture to regenerate in a difficult period of nation-building.

STATEMENT OF BASIC MATERIALS

After the end of World War II and the return of Soviet power to Lviv, as to other cities in Galicia, the process of sovietisation began, which manifested itself primarily in the elimination of any features

of the previous colonisation.⁸ Construction of new monuments was started and city streets and squares were renamed. The importance of this process from the point of view of Ukrainian national interests is difficult to overestimate, however, despite the apparent external positivity of the processes, in reality any ideas of Ukrainian modification of communist society were denied. The Soviet principles of denationalisation (i.e., Russification), a component of the general Communist Party policy were hidden under Ukrainisation. In addition, widespread ideologising of socialist labour and international brotherhood, as well as so-called socialist patriotism, were introduced in order to assist in total control. Differences in worldview positions and different approaches to artistic problems, as well as creative solutions to the problems faced by the artistic circle of Lviv during this period were unacceptable to Soviet functionaries. As a result, throughout the 1940s all levels of government imposed Soviet guidelines through the use of various, often coercive, 'teaching' methods, which later became a common practice in Soviet art. Throughout 1946–1947 there were many party and government decrees of an ideological nature against leading cultural figures such as writers, artists, composers, critics, historians, art historians. Violence repression was employed, affecting all representatives of and participants in cultural life. With the advent of Soviet power, the local artistic environment suffered significant losses. Many of its best representatives were subjected to repression. In particular, Ivan Ivanets, Zenoviy Ketsalo, Yaroslava Muzyka, and Vira Svientsitska were sent to Siberia.⁹ This took place against a background of the mass deportation of 26,300 of the western Ukrainian population, replaced by newly arrived self-righteous 'builders of communism'.¹⁰

8 The nature of the Polish regime was not democratic. Its main features were authoritarianism through occupation methods. In addition, Polish veterans of the First World War were resettled in Galicia and a lot of land was transferred to them within a few years.

9 Ivan Ivanets was a Ukrainian artist, editor, publisher, photographer. He created book illustrations, military paintings, landscapes. He was arrested, taken to Siberia, and died there. Ukrainian artist Zenoviy Ketsalo studied at the Kraków Academy of Arts (Poland). He was sentenced to 8 years in labour camps and 3 years of deprivation of civil rights for anti-Soviet propaganda. After returning, he lived in Lviv. There are more than 1,000 paintings in his creative output. He painted portraits, still lifes, created graphic works on anti-war themes in various techniques. Yaroslava Muzyka was a Ukrainian artist and public figure. She was arrested and taken to Siberia, where she contracted tuberculosis. After 6 years of arrest, she was amnestied and returned to Lviv. Vira Svientsitska was a Ukrainian art critic and victim of the Stalinist terror. After returning from deportation to Lviv, she worked at the State Museum of Ukrainian Art.

10 Tamara Marusyk, *The Western Ukrainian Humanitarian Intelligentsia: Realities of Life and Activity (1940–1950s)* (Chernivtsi: Ruta, 2002), 69.

Ideologically harmful works were purged from the archive of the Shevchenko Scientific Society,¹¹ and museum funds were cut from the National Museum in Lviv and other museums in Galicia.¹² In September 1946 the Lviv branch of the Institutes of History, Literature and Economics at the Academy of Sciences of the Ukrainian SSR was liquidated, while at the same time the Institute of Applied and Decorative Arts, and the Union of Soviet Artists of Ukraine were established. In order to 'examine the situation', a special brigade of the Central Committee of the CP(b)U (Central Committee of the Bolshevik Communist Party of Ukraine) arrived in Lviv with historical consultant Andrij Lykholat.¹³ She prepared memorandums 'On faculty and academic staff of social science departments and the quality of teaching at Lviv universities' and 'On the state of ideological work in the party organization of Lviv region'. In July 1947, in Oleksandr Fadeev's¹⁴ report on the tasks of Soviet literature at the 11th plenum of the Union of Soviet Writers of the USSR, attention was drawn to 'the need for a party approach to highlighting the historical past of nations'.¹⁵

After the death of Josef Stalin, the chief communist ideologist and implementer of the Soviet totalitarian system, the situation began gradually to change with the process of the seeming democratisation of Soviet society gaining momentum. The first stage covered 1953–1956, the period of 'quiet' and rather timid criticism of the Stalin personality cult; the second stage, between 1956 and 1961, was distinguished by Nikita Khrushchev's report at the 20th Congress of the CPSU and by general de-Stalinisation; the third stage, 1961–1964, began at the 22nd Congress of the CPSU, with criticism of the cult of personality ringing stronger, in addition to criticism not just of Stalin himself, but also of his active supporters.

11 A Ukrainian academic organisation, founded in 1873 in Lviv, was initially a literary society. Over time, it became a multidisciplinary academy of sciences, with priority given to Ukrainian studies. In the 1920s and 1930s, the Society was persecuted by the Polish government, and in 1939 it was liquidated by the Soviet authorities. In 1947 the Society was restarted in Western Europe and the United States of America, where it became known as the Shevchenko Scientific Society.

12 Orest Holubets, *Between Freedom and Totalitarianism: The Artistic Environment of Lviv in the Second Half of the Twentieth Century* (Lviv: Akademichnyi ekspres, 2001), 42.

13 Ukrainian Soviet historian, researcher of the 20th century history of Ukraine and the history of the USSR.

14 Oleksandr Fadeev was a Russian Soviet writer and a communist activist. He was also the head of the Union of Writers of the USSR.

15 Marusyk, *The Western Ukrainian Humanitarian Intelligentsia: Realities of Life and Activity (1940–1950s)*, 81.

Echoes of these changes were also felt at the local level. Thus, in 1953, the plenum of the Central Committee of the Ukrainian Communist Party heard a report by Viacheslav Sekretariuk, the first secretary of Lviv Regional Committee of the Ukrainian Communist Party, who made the following information public: only one of 37 directors and deputy directors of higher education institutions was local; only 2 of 43 deans were local, 42 of 275 heads of departments were local, and 182 of 535 school principals were local. Moreover, in addition to the 'reliable' newcomer staff, such well-known artists as Ivan Severa, Anton Manastyrskyi, Roman Selskyi, all of whom had acquired art education in the European model, at one time worked at Lviv Institute of Applied and Decorative Arts.¹⁶ However, they were not admitted to senior positions in education institutions. The Union of Soviet Artists of Ukraine in Lviv remained a nomenclature tool of governmental propaganda.

Despite adjustments to political doctrine, Khrushchev was not going to deviate from the previously tested method of ruling with the help of terror and coercion. Although he did not directly resort to Stalin's extreme approach during the thaw period, terror was used as a policy of intimidation and suppression of political opponents, although now it was more subtle, with an insidious individual approach.

At the 22nd Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union a new main line of development was adopted, as well as the Program for the Construction of a Communist Society. The program envisaged active and permanent rapprochement of Soviet nations, strengthening their social homogeneity. In fact, this program meant gradual Russification of local education and science. For example, large-scale exhibition projects on eloquent subjects were organised, for example a regional art exhibition dedicated to the 300th anniversary of the reunification of Ukraine and Russia (1954), the exhibition of works by artists from the west of the Ukrainian SSR (1955), and a regional art exhibition dedicated to the 700th anniversary of Lviv (1957).

In order to understand Khrushchov's policy on culture and art, it is enough to refer to the following wording: '...as chairman of the Council of Ministers, I declare: the Soviet people do not need such

¹⁶ Borys Lobanovskyi, *Ukrainian Painting in the Clutches of Perestroika: From the Sources of Socialist Realism to the 1980s* (Kyiv: LK 'Maker', 1998), 95.

art. Yes, I eliminated the cult of Stalin, but in the realm of culture I completely agree with Stalin's policy, so you hope in vain – his apparatus exists'.¹⁷ Khrushchev made this statement after a December 1962 visit to an art exhibition dedicated to the 30th anniversary of the Moscow branch of the Union of Artists.

At the official level, intolerance towards any deviation in the fields of artistic creativity was getting stronger. In particular, a certain number of party meetings in 1962 began a large-scale campaign to expose Ukrainian abstractionists and formalists. According to the understanding of party officials, formal searches in art were an appeal to national modernism and were therefore connected with nationalism. Setting artistic priorities as one of the conditions of the totalitarian Soviet regime is not at all surprising because new dictators have always been attracted by forms close to the academic and classical worlds. Such artistic forms were easily modifiable to the required level of ideological activity and always served as an accessible and convincing argument to present to the broad masses of the population. The creators of Socialist Realism as a 'new' and 'advanced' method denied practically everything that happened in 20th century art and tried to rewrite history in contrary fashion to the realistic tendencies of the end of the last century. From their point of view, the formal investigations of the avant-garde era, primarily abstractionism, were an extremely dangerous and harmful phenomenon. At the same time, art exhibitions migrated to the centre of the socialist empire, for example the Lviv regional art exhibition dedicated to the decade of Ukrainian literature and art in Moscow (1960), which gave Lviv artists the opportunity to officially exist at the all-Union level, and drove nonconformists into a blind corner. In the Soviet system, art had to fulfil an educational function clearly defined by the state. The vast majority of artists obeyed these conditions and began serving the system and its leaders. That is why leaders often underwent paradoxical processes of image idealisation in the works of Soviet artists. At the same time, the masses appear in this art full of optimism. Thus, real life within the country of the Soviets in this sort of work is completely deprived of the possibility of comparison with surrounding realities. Historical, revolutionary and military themes and the idea of patriotic sacrifice

¹⁷ Nina Moleva, *When the Thaw Fell Out* (Moscow: MPI, 1991), 23.



FIG. 1. LEOPOLD LEVYTSKY, *THOUGHT ABOUT REUNIFICATION* (OIL ON CANVAS, 1950s). FROM: OREST HOLUBETS, *BETWEEN FREEDOM AND TOTALITARIANISM. THE ARTISTIC ENVIRONMENT OF LVIV IN THE SECOND HALF OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY* (LVIV: AKADEMICHNYI EKSPRES, 2001), 56.

were paramount in artists' creative works. They cultivated the image of the hero as a kind of martyr. The unconditional sacrifice of the individual for the sake of Soviet ideology had to play a primary role in these works.

Under such circumstances, artists were often forced to seek compromises, moderate, reasonable ways out of the situation, often by producing so-called 'handouts' works that testified to their acceptance and support of the official line. The monumental pictorial canvas *Thought about Reunification* (Fig. 1) by graphic artist Leopold Levytsky (Fig. 2) is a good example in this regard. This sort of work was periodically collected at pompous exhibitions, timed to certain dates or events, for example party congresses or significant anniversaries. Those deemed unreliable were very noticeable in such an environment, and found themselves under special supervision. In particular, in Lviv, Roman and Margit Selskyi, Oleksa Shatkivskyi, Okhrim Kravchenko, Veniamin Sipper, and Yaroslava Muzyka received this treatment. Commitment to communist ideology and proletarian beliefs initially helped, in particular, Leopold Levytsky's self-realisation in the environment for which he fought in the first



FIG. 2. LEOPOLD LEVYTSKY IN 1950s. FROM: MARYAN BESAHA, *LEOPOLD LEVYTSKY: ALBUM* (KYIV: RODOVID PRESS, 2006), 277.

third of the 20th century. In 1947, he was elected a deputy of Lviv City Council, and on February 18, 1948, he became the Chairman of the Union of Soviet Artists of Ukraine in Lviv, where he would later be a permanent member of the board. Taking into account his active political and public position, one may get the impression that Leopold Levytsky, living under the conditions of Soviet society, chose a political career. However, he never left his creative work. So, initially he created graphic sheets that reflected painful topics of the past during the time of Polish rule. At the same time, the artist created an ideologically relevant graphic series prepared for the All-Union art exhibition of 1947 and the exhibition dedicated to the Red Army (1948), which were necessary for the nomenclature, as well as the *Soldier's Adventures* (1948), and *From My Memories* (1946–1947), series. Incentivised in the system of social values by such awards as the Badge of Honour (November 24, 1960), the cult Order of Lenin (October 27, 1967), and Honoured Artist of the Ukrainian SSR, an honourable public recognition approved by the Minister of Culture



FIG. 3. LEOPOLD LEVYTSKY, MASKS (LINO CUT, 1960s). FROM: BESAHA, *LEOPOLD LEVYTSKY: ALBUM*, 169.

and the Union of Artists of the Ukrainian SSR (December 18, 1970), as well as official public commissions, Levytsky penetrated the secrets of political science, which, however, was far from the realities of life. At the same time, Levytsky was repeatedly tormented by endless stressful situations, calls to the Lviv Regional Committee of the Communist Party, coercion to create 'true' thematic and content works for creative and reporting exhibitions with pronounced propagandistic and agitation functions. Levytsky was repeatedly criticised by ideological educators Vasyl Liubchuk, Gennadij Leonov, Andrij Popov. He was also checked by being asked to perform sample assignments. At one of the regular meetings of the Union, Levytsky spoke about his creative path as a former formalist, expressing the opinion that he had achieved certain positives in his latest work (Fig. 3), but he immediately encountered clarification on some issues

related to the art of comrade Melnychuk.¹⁸ Despite the difficult realities and the burden of political responsibility, Levytsky gave the opportunity to many younger generation artists to develop freely, supporting Ivan Ostafiychuk, Ivan Kryslach, Henrietta Levytska. For the new generation, the illustration of a folk tale, lyrical motifs, the theme of the city, and the majesty of nature became an artistic vent. Aesthetic pleasure, the aesthetics of the object and morality become signs of the folk-decorative trend. The majesty of nature is reflected in the compositional solutions of the Carpathian theme, which included industrial and lyrical landscapes, plot and domestic scenes.¹⁹

An important role in the artistic processes of the 1960s and 1970s in Galicia was played by 1965 class graduates of the Lviv Institute of Applied and Decorative Arts: Liubomyr Medvid, Andrij Bokotei, Oleh Minko, Zenovij Flinta, Ivan Marchuk. They, as well as Roman Petruk, Bohdan Halytsky and Bohdan Soika, formed the basis of the underground Evening School of Karl Zvirynsky (Fig. 4), which operated in Lviv between 1959 and 1968. Zvirynsky was engaged in painting and graphics and experimented a lot with appliqué and various other artistic forms. He also painted icons and painted churches and fiercely hated socialist realism. The underground school of Karl Zvirynsky functioned in Lviv. Hiding from the KGB in a tiny apartment, he taught his students European freedom of thought.²⁰

Despite strong pressure, the Prolisok Creative Youth Club (1962) also managed to operate, with members Sofia Karaffa-Korbut, Ivan Kryslach, Emmanuil Mysko, Liubomyr Medvid and Stefania Shabaturova.²¹

After Khrushchev, Leonid Brezhnev became First Secretary, and later the General Secretary, of the Central Committee of the CPSU. His activity initially focused mainly on foreign relations, negating

18 From Minutes No. 78 from the meeting of the Union of Soviet Artists of Ukraine in Lviv, August 02, 1946.

19 Yatsiv, *Artistic Lviv Before and After 1956: Immunity Contra Canon*, 443.

20 Karlo Zvirynsky, 'All My Painting is Prayer': *Memoirs, Interviews, Reflections, Articles* (Lviv: Manuskrypt, 2017), 315.

21 Creative youth clubs were opened all over Ukraine. The club in Lviv was headed by literary critic and graduate of Lviv University Mykhailo Kosiv. The club carried out anti-Soviet activities. Very quickly, this and other clubs came under the supervision of the KGB. Persecution, moral pressure, searches and eventually arrests resulted.



FIG. 4. KARL ZVIRYNSKYI IN 1960s. FROM: HOLUBETS, *BETWEEN FREEDOM AND TOTALITARIANISM. THE ARTISTIC ENVIRONMENT OF LVIV IN THE SECOND HALF OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY*, 70.

domestic policy and effectively delegating initiatives to the capitals of the Union Republics.

In 1972, Volodymyr Shcherbytsky became the Secretary of the Ukrainian Communist Party. It was under him that another round of arrests and purges began in the circles of the intelligentsia. Even party figures did not escape. At that time, the party chose a new active art policy and began the presentation of Soviet art abroad within the republics in order to demonstrate the apparent freedom of Soviet people's views. All-Union symposia, including graphic and ceramic, were held in Riga (Latvia), Vilnius (Lithuania), Dzintari (Latvia), Vallauris (France). For this purpose, the creative contribution of artists from Galicia, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, that is, those regions that had not undergone noticeable changes under the duress of ideological pressure, was widely used. But a characteristic sign of



FIG. 5. IVAN OSTAFIYCHUK, *PEASANT* (LINOCUT, 1969). FROM: OREST HOLUBETS, *ART OF THE 20TH CENTURY: THE UKRAINIAN WAY* (LVIV: KOLIR PRO, 2012), 62.

the times was that the art travelled without its authors. At the same time, individual invitations to Moscow became more frequent and all-Union art editions published works by young artists, in particular Ivan Ostafiychuk (Fig. 5) in *Soviet Graphics*. The exhibition in Riga (1972) was to be a landmark where, alongside Levytskyi, Volodymyr Patyk and Marion Ilku were present, and Ivan Ostafiichuk presented the Hutsul legends series. Fascinated by the artist's Carpathian theme, art critic Daria Darevich said, when commenting on this series a little later, 'Although this series is based on the legend of Oleksa Dovbush, it does not illustrate his life and exploits, but rather depicts human life, over which the hero rises, suffers and dies. The reinterpretation of the legend of Dovbush here is very peculiar, original and perhaps to some extent prompted by the events of 1972, when as a result of new persecutions of Ukrainian culture, and arrests, heroic figures

appeared in defence of rights, freedom and national positions.²² A system of individual exhibitions of the creative contribution of Soviet artists was organised in the republics. Thus, paintings by Hakob Hakobyan (1976), and later Cornelio Baba and Roerich, were demonstrated in Lviv. These were high-profile projects that had an impact on the artistic environment of Lviv, with, in general, such dialogues leading to the synthesis of officially permitted themes and forms in the creative work of Lviv artists.

Starting from 1982, Mikhail Gorbachev, the last Soviet General Secretary of the Central Committee of the CPSU, in pursuing changes and liberalisation by implementing economic reforms and declaring the policy of glasnost, directed policy towards Perestroika. The main task was to preserve the Communist Party and stop the economic decline. This led to the overthrow of the communist regimes in Eastern Europe in 1989 and the emergence of national identity movements within the USSR itself. In the context of Perestroika, the leadership of the Ukrainian SSR began to build a dialogue with the youth, in particular through informal associations that were outside Komsomol and party control, but the resistance movement gained momentum. Opening the public space of Soviet cities in search of a compromise could not stop the socio-political processes aimed at creating alternative organisations to the Komsomol. Therefore, in 1987, a unique protest exhibition against the occupation of the city's exhibition halls by the Union of Soviet Artists of Ukraine took place in Lviv, called the Invitation for Dialogue exhibition.²³ The exhibition opened in the Lviv Church of Mary the Snow (at that time an affiliate of the Museum of Ukrainian Art). The church was filled with an agglomeration of paintings and drawings, among which it was difficult to single anything out. Hundreds of authors (most of whom are unknown) took part in this exhibition and action which, although it did not have much artistic significance (the spirit of protest pushed quality to the background), was significant in the sense that it became the first protest exhibition against total control by 'higher authorities'.²⁴

22 Daria Darevych, 'Ivan Ostafychuk's exhibition in Toronto', *Novyi Shlyakh*, 16 (1988), 6.

23 Innovations in the art of Lviv began with the advent of Perestroika. Ukrainian SSR party functionaries were instructed to hold a dialogue with young people, including the creative youth. Therefore, Lviv contemporary art began with dialogue and discussion at the Invitation for Dialogue exhibition in 1987.

24 Holubets, *Between Freedom and Totalitarianism: The Artistic Environment of Lviv in the Second Half of the Twentieth Century*, 115.

Next year, the first city-wide holiday took place, the City Day, where Lviv hippies took part in first unauthorised demonstration, For Peace and Disarmament, which was quite controversial against the background of the Soviet Union's military intervention in Afghanistan. It is indicative that in 1988, as a sign of unprecedented openness, a Sotheby's auction was held in Moscow where the works of Mykola Filatov and Igor Kopystiansky, exhibited as young Soviet art, were sold. The second exhibition, Youth of the Country, was also held in Moscow with works by Ukrainian artists Oleksandr Hnylytsky, Oleh Holosiy, Oleksandr Roitburd, and Arsen Savadov. In the spring of 1988, the organisers of the Invitation for Dialogue exhibition created the first alternative gallery in Lviv, the Centre of Europe, located in the lobby of the Dnister Hotel. Of course, the alternativeness of the gallery was conditional as approval for its creation, as well as to hold the exhibition of 1987, came from above, from the Komsomol organisations. However, the anti-Soviet movement was unstoppable. In July 1988, a mass meeting was held in Lviv where more than fifty thousand participants gathered, and the creation of the Ukrainian Helsinki Union was announced on the basis of the Ukrainian Helsinki Group human rights movement of 1976.²⁵ The Lion Society²⁶ was active, and the Plast²⁷ and Lviv Students' Brotherhood²⁸ organisations were emerging.

25 The Ukrainian Helsinki Union is a Ukrainian political and human rights organisation founded on July 7, 1988 in Lviv by members of the Ukrainian Helsinki Group. In 1975, the governments of 35 countries in Europe and North America, including the government of the USSR, signed the Helsinki Agreements, which were designed to establish new relations in Europe, to ensure the implementation of high principles of democracy and human rights. Realising that this was practically impossible under the conditions of Soviet Ukraine, in November 1976 a group of human rights activists united to become the Ukrainian Group for Promoting the Use of the Helsinki Agreements in Ukraine, or the Ukrainian Helsinki Group. Despite the complete legality of the union's activities and its support by Western democracies, the group's actions took place under constant pressure from the authorities, in particular the KGB.

26 The Lion Society was one of the first independent organisations in the Ukrainian SSR, created in Lviv on October 16, 1987 by a group of nationally conscious youth. The Society's activities were an attempt to abolish the Soviet tradition in culture. The Lion Society aimed to participate actively in the processes of national revival.

27 Plast is a national scouting organisation in Ukraine. The purpose of Plast is to promote comprehensive patriotic education and self-education of Ukrainian youth on the basis of Christian morality. As a non-political and non-confessional organisation, Plast educates conscious, responsible and fully-fledged citizens of the local, national and world communities, and leaders of Ukrainian society. Plast was created in 1911.

28 The official founding date of the Lviv Students' Brotherhood is May 25, 1989. It was one of the main Ukrainian youth opposition organisations during the Perestroika period. Initially, it took the form of an underground network organised by student Markiy Ivanov. In 1988, the first branches of the Student Brotherhood appeared in Ukrainian education institutions.

In 1988, the Shlyakh Arts Association²⁹ was created on a patriotic wave in Lviv, uniting seventeen young artists who focused on artistic values, not themes, in their creative practices. These extraordinary artists (about thirty years old) became the first organised force that resisted the wave of pseudo-Ukrainisation, having in the foreground of their work not plot or theme, but artistic values. The artists, including Yurko Kokh, Volodymyr Kaufman, Mykola Krytsky, and Yaroslav Shymin, deliberately opposed the proposed dialogue. Over years of vigorous activity, the society organised three exhibitions in Lviv (1989, 1990, 1992); two exhibitions in Kyiv (before Unity Day, 1991, at the Shevchenko State Museum), Kharkiv, Lublin, Krakow, Ivano-Frankivsk and Lutsk.

In 1989, 1992 and 1995 the International Blown Glass Symposium was held on the initiative of Andriy Bokotei in Lviv, at the Lviv Institute of Applied and Decorative Arts, creating new prospects for intercultural dialogue and bringing art education to a new level by demonstrating both tradition and innovation.

At the end of the 1980s, the movement revived in other cities of Galicia, in particular, artists from Ternopil led by Mykhailo Nykolaychuk started 'Khorugva' group. The members of the group in the creative sphere showed disagreement with the stereotypical principles of the Soviet government. The group was formed on the eve of the declaration of Independence of Ukraine, marking the revival of national art even then. It included Igor Zelinko, S. Kovalchuk, Mychailo Lysak, Petro Moroz, Yaroslav Novak, Dmytro Stetsko, Borys Rudyi, Andrii Zyubrovsky. Members of the group united in efforts to reproduce the 'intelligent art' designed according to the Western trends of the early 20th century with clear national features aimed at the intellect of the connoisseur. Thus, postmodernist art continued to develop, strengthening the national style. It is gratifying that in 1989 in Lviv, twenty-six artists and art historians created a new creative and public organisation, the Club of Ukrainian Artists, referring to the national and cultural tradition as a continuation of historical development of the practices of Ukrainian artists from the first third of the 20th century. The artists organised their first exhibition at Lviv

29 Shlyakh is a youth art association, the first extra-system (informal) art group in Lviv. Officially registered on October 5, 1989 under the auspices of the Lviv branch of the Ukrainian Culture Fund, it operated actively until 1992, after which it *de facto* ceased to exist. The Lviv art critic and public figure Yurko Boyko was the inspiration, initiator and organiser of the association.



FIG. 6. INTERNATIONAL BIENNALE 'IMPREZA'. PHOTO OF THE OPENING IN 1989. FROM: ART, FREEDOM, INDEPENDENCE. WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT 'IMPREZA', [HTTPS://POSTIMPREZA.ORG/EN/TEXTS/MYSTETSTVO-SVOBODA-NEZALEZHNIŠT-SHCHO-TREBA-ZNATY-PRO-IMPREZU](https://postimpreza.org/en/texts/mystetstvo-svoboda-nezalezhnist-shcho-treba-znaty-pro-imprezu) [ACCESSED 07/01/2023].

Art Gallery while later exhibitions were held in Kyiv and Chernivtsi. Through contacts with artists who had migrated abroad, exhibitions were held in Poland, the Czech Republic, Lithuania, Belgium, and the Netherlands. An important achievement was the launch of the independent art magazine *Art Studios*.

Another significant step towards returning Ukrainian art to its rightful place among the national schools of the world was made in Ivano-Frankivsk, where the large-scale Impreza International Biennale of painting, graphics, sculpture and assemblage was organised in 1989 (Figs. 6 and 7). Works by 200 participants from 17 countries and eight republics of the USSR were exhibited.³⁰ The first biennial (and eventually the second and third) went down in history due to the legitimisation of abstraction in contemporary Ukrainian art. The political, financial, and technical conditions of those times did not allow painting from abroad to be fully presented, and neither were sculpture or installation allowed. Therefore, the most diverse pieces at Impreza were graphics blocks.

30 *The Impreza International Biennale* (Ivano-Frankivsk: Lileya-NV, 2012), 184.



FIG. 7. INTERNATIONAL BIENNALE 'IMPREZA'. CATALOGUE (1989). FROM: ART, FREEDOM, INDEPENDENCE. WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT 'IMPREZA', [HTTPS://POSTIMPREZA.ORG/EN/TEXTS/MYSTETSTVO-SVOBODA-NEZALEZHNIŠT-SHCHO-TREBA-ZNATY-PRO-IMPREZU](https://postimpieza.org/en/texts/mystetstvo-svoboda-nezalezhnist-shcho-treba-znaty-pro-imprezu) [ACCESSED 07/01/2023].

In 1990, a young generation of Lviv activists and artists organised the Vyvykh alternative culture festival³¹, which was repeated in 1992 (Fig. 8). It was at this time that art events that would develop the cultural and artistic life of Lviv in the 1990s and have an impact on the present took place. Artists had already started experimenting with performance, land art and kinetic art, interacting with public space in the city. On top of this the Plus 90 international project took place, which united artists from Ukraine, Israel, Poland, the USA, Germany, Armenia and Russia. Lviv gallery owner Heorhiy Kosovan, who at the same time founded the Three Dots gallery, organised a contemporary art exhibition in the Lenin Museum for artists who did not get to the Plus 90 festival. The Interdruk '90 and Interdruk '92 international projects gathered participants in Lviv

31 The Vyvykh festival was organised by the City of Lviv Students' Brotherhood, a union of students from the opposition movement during Perestroika. The head of the organisation at that time was Markiyan Ivashyshyn. The name of the festival was dictated by the period itself: people's perception of reality was changing, everyday life was being distorted and a real dislocation was occurring.

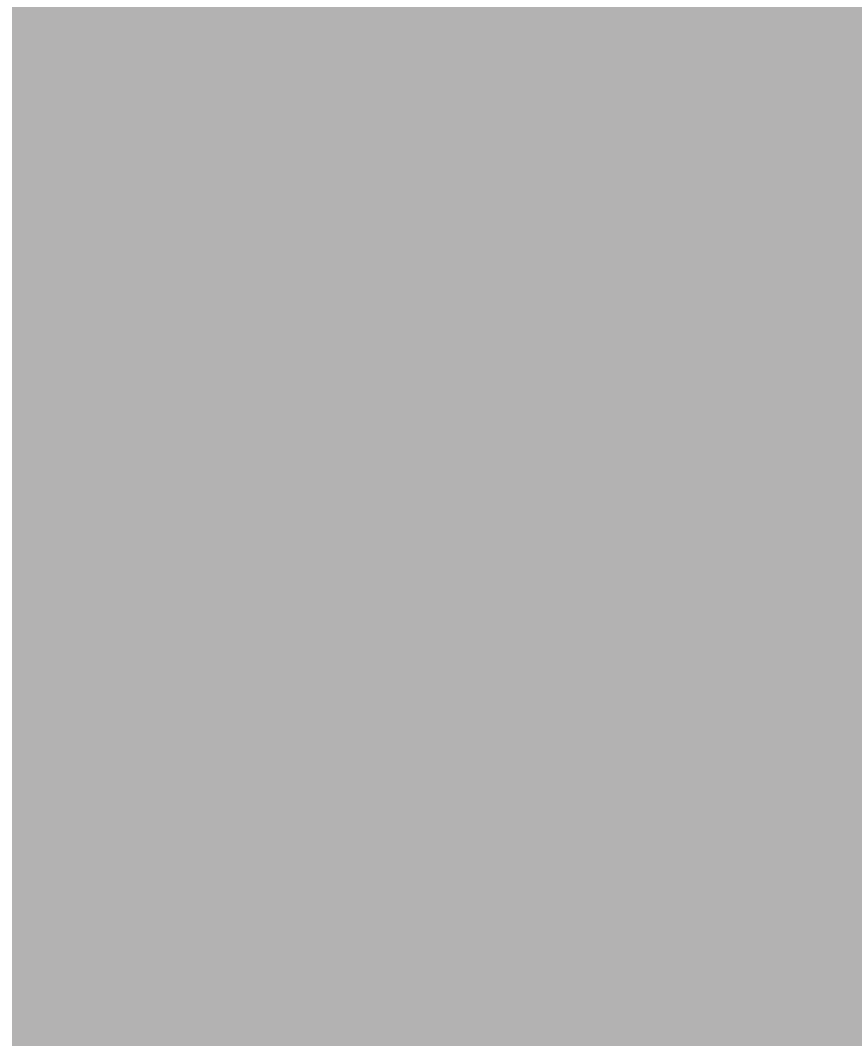


FIG. 8. YURIJ KOKH, THE POSTER OF THE FESTIVAL 'VYVYKH' (1990). FROM: SERHIJ SEREDNYAK, HISTORY OF THE LVIV FESTIVAL 'VYVYKH', [HTTPS://AMNESIA.IN.UA/VYVYKH](https://amnesia.in.ua/vyvykh) [ACCESSED 07/01/2023].

with the participation of more than 300 artists (from more than 50 countries) and discovered a new world of graphics for connoisseurs. In the 1990s, exhibitions of Ukrainian artists abroad gained pace, leading to the Ukrainian Painting in the 1960s–1980s: The Three Generations of Ukrainian Painting exhibition in the Danish cities of Odense and Copenhagen.

In August 1991, conservative circles of the Communist Party staged a failed coup d'état, which led to the banning of the Communist Party. In the same year, Gorbachev resigned, which resulted in the collapse of the Soviet Union and the creation of 12 independent states. This was the period of Reanimation in art. The rapid fall of ideological veils gave rise to a deep and comprehensive rethinking of the phenomenon of Ukrainian culture, a review of artistic values, and a study of the problems of preserving national traditions. Later, the problem of revising the basic principles of education of creative youth emerged extremely clearly. Informal cultural organisations, art associations and collectives were revived.

A number of landmark exhibitions were held in Lviv, in particular, the Translation exhibition at the National Museum of Lviv (1992), which became a reflection of the processes that took place in the artistic life of Galicia in the second half of the 20th century. The creative contribution of Roman Turyn, Yaroslava Muzyka, Petro Obal, Omelyan Lishchynsky, Roman Selsky, Margit Selska, Oleksa Shatkivsky, Okhrim Kravchenko and Mykola Fedyuk was demonstrated. Artists whose creative practices were based on the traditions of Ukrainian art in combination with the current artistic practices of Europe, built dialogues with the younger generation of artists and managed to transmit their knowledge and skills. Before this, the Boychuk and Boychukists: Boychukism exhibition, which was unique in its importance, was also held at the Lviv Art Gallery.³² Soon afterwards, in 1993, the National Museum in Lviv hosted an exhibition called Modernist Searches of Lviv: The Artistic Environment of the 60s, dedicated to the 90th anniversary of the birth of Roman and Margit Selsky. According to the results of the exhibition, after a long break, the National Museum in Lviv updated the exhibition of modern art, which consisted of works that were exhibited at Translation supplemented by works by artists from the Ukrainian diaspora, although the exhibition was dismantled and no longer displayed. High-profile foreign exhibitions held in Lviv included those of Milich of Machva (Yugoslavia), Jacques Hnizdovsky (USA), Myron Levytsky, Halyna Novakiwska (Canada), and Jerzy Nowosielski (Poland).

32 *Boychuk and Boychukists, Boychukism*. Exhibition catalogue (Lviv: Department of the Region Press Management, 1991), 88.

In 1991, the Lviv Renaissance 91 Biennale of Fine Arts exhibition was organised in Lviv.³³ Its organiser was Orest Sheyka, Director of Gherdan Company; co-founders and sponsors were JSC Concern-Electron and the Ukrainian-American Renaissance Foundation. Co-organisers were the Lviv branch of the Ukrainian Cultural Foundation, the Union of Artists of Ukraine, The Ukrainian Artists Club, the Regional Executive Committee Department of Culture, the National Museum in Lviv, and the Lviv Art Gallery. Painting, graphics and sculpture created by more than 250 authors over the past two years were presented in the exhibition halls of the Lviv Art Gallery. The exhibition brought together artists from 25 cities in Ukraine, Russia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Belarus and Lithuania, as well as emigrant artists from France, Great Britain, Switzerland, Germany, Canada and the USA. One of the authors of the introductory article in the exhibition catalogue, art critic Oleg Sydor noted: 'The picture of the current artistic life in Ukraine is rich, complex, and ambiguous. This was confirmed by the exhibitions of recent years, which are radically different from the exhibitions of several years ago. Then, everything was regulated by the ideological dogmas of socialist realism, far from aesthetic criteria, and it seemed that it would continue this way, if not forever then at least for a very long time. But in the narrow walls of the workshops of young artists, in their thoughts and passionate arguments, a different artistic reality was formed.'³⁴

In April 1991, Roman Viktyuk, Ihor Podolchak and Ihor Dyurych from Lviv established the Masoch Foundation Creative Association, which not only popularised the personality of the famous resident of Galicia, Sacher Masoch, but highlighted marginality in culture and art. If Roman Viktyuk worked as a theatre director, then Igor Dyurych and Igor Podolchak organised forums and exhibitions. In their projects, such as, for example, Art in Space (1993), the 'masochists' raised questions about the way a work of art exists in a non-artistic space and the subsequent redefinition of this new context. In addition, the project revealed the whimsicality of the post-Soviet situation, when it was possible to do the impossible, i.e., force the Flight Control

33 *Lviv '91 – Revival, Biennale of Ukrainian Fine Arts*. Exhibition catalogue (Lviv: Gherdan, 1991), 220.

34 Oleh Sydor, 'Introduction', *Ibid.*, 14.

Centre to 'exhibit' Podolchak's etchings at the orbital station. From the early 1990s, the Masoch Foundation began to take its activities outside Lviv, and almost all of its founders left the city.³⁵

Ultimately, the openness of borders and a trivial lack of money, obliging the search for income, caused the migration of artists to Europe, the USA and Canada, and to Moscow as a powerful centre of a rich new life. There were also exceptions such as Ivan Ostafiychuk, who returned home, having experienced life abroad, and opened new incomprehensible worlds in their work to their fellow countrymen. After all, the creative biography of Ivan Ostafiychuk is a path that vividly illustrates the full palette of the events of the 1970s and 1990s, from persecution to recognition at the All-Union and European levels (he was the only artist whose works were purchased by the Hermitage), migration, return to the impoverished country of the 1990s, recognition in the new millennium at the state level in independent Ukraine, and the founding of his own gallery.

The first half of the 1990s was a period of the active development of gallery activity in Ukraine with the emergence of dozens of private galleries, such as Triptych, Oikumena, Inkoart, Taras, Svit L, Vernissage, Smalta, Arts, Makosh, Plastart, Skhid-Art. In 1993, the Dzyga Art Association's gallery opened in Lviv, and still functions today as a place of alternative art. Later, in 1995, the Gerdan Gallery was founded headed by Yurko Boyko, which created its own style and line of activity, reviving the culture of royal Galicia, popularising the work of local artists Volodymyr Kostyrko, Yurko Kokh, and Volodymyr Bohuslavsky. The emotional concepts of Andrii Sahaidakovsky were first demonstrated in Dzyga. In the same year, Lviv abstractionist Vasyl Bazhai presented installations and paintings in Warsaw named *The Meadows of Europe*. In 1993, video art *Crosses*, by Anna Kuts and Viktor Dovhalyuk, was presented for the first time in Lviv. In 1994, the first Kyiv Art Fair was held, with thirty galleries participating. That year, the Lviv Institute of Applied and Decorative Arts was inducted into the Lviv Academy of Arts, outlining more vividly the structure of artistic dialogues and becoming a prominent centre not only of education, but also of socio-cultural life in the region. The opening of the Palace of Arts in 1996 significantly increased the city's exhibition opportunities, for

35 Orest Holubets, *Art of the 20th Century: The Ukrainian Way* (Lviv: Kolir PRO, 2012), 200.

example in 1997 the annual exhibition of *The High Castle* autumn salon was initiated.³⁶ In the same year, the *Sources of Freedom: Berlin-Wroclaw-Lviv* exhibition was organised under the patronage of the Academy on the initiative of Orest Holubets. In 1998, the *Art at the Turn of the Millennium* action was held on the initiative of the Lviv Academy of Arts' International Relations Centre, a project unique in its significance that gave new meaning and perspectives to the artistic culture of Galicia in the second half of the 20th century.

CONCLUSIONS

The cultural and artistic processes of Galicia in the 1950s and 1960s were subject to an expressive politicisation. In turn, politics sought artistic decorations and glorification. Fine art occupied the main place in this process and was entrusted with the most important ideological tasks. Promoting and widely implementing their ideological priorities, the party leadership achieved great skill in creating a kind of ritual organised on the basis of the permanent recording of significant events in the history of the Soviet state. For this purpose, ideologues widely and effectively used all possible means: poetry, cinema and theatre, painting, sculpture and graphics. The ideological elite of the 1960s and 1970s created a complex system of incentives in the field of culture and arts, belonging to which seemed to contribute to steady progress, and guaranteed some sort of official, but in fact fictitious, professional growth. There was a widespread desire and admiration of high fees, rewards and the relevant state awards. Any dissidence such as a pursuit of freedom in creativity and ideas among the artistic elite immediately manifested itself against the background of the prevailing opportunism and led to threatened isolation and repression. The period of the 1970s and 1980s, distinguished by the 'decentralisation' of power, was characterised by seeming openness, both within the Union and to the outside world, and attempts to reorganise stereotypes, although using the tactics of total control proven over the years. Creativity could continue to exist only within the framework of generally accepted Soviet people's worldview. Despite the efforts at movement, the crisis of the 1980s and 1990s

36 *An exhibition of works by Lviv artists dedicated to the opening of the Palace of Arts in Lviv*. Catalogue (Lviv: Braty Syrotynski and K, 1997), 182.

played a decisive role in the subsequent periods of irreversible decay. The processes of transgression were unstoppable, they appeared both in the high echelons and at ground level, absorbing the economy, education, and culture, causing manmade, humanitarian disasters. By rethinking the role of art and society, artists headed for transformation. The large territory turned into new objects that had to find themselves, just as everyone who had a portion of individuality left was looking for themselves. The events of the 1990s brought a new dimension of life, a new culture. Views enriched by reanimated traditions shaped the nation, the state, and therefore individuality. Freedom of choice appeared not only in art, although it turned out to be quite a test. New artistic forms of expression, such as installation, performance, video art, were looking for a place, trying to become part of cultural and artistic processes. The seemingly natural abstractionism and minimalism did not agree to the full extent with the paths travelled.

We summarise the analysis of the events that took place in the artistic environment of Galicia in the second half of the 20th century with a number of conclusions.

Summing up dialogues in the cultural and artistic space of Galicia in the second half of the 20th century, it is worth noting that they always took place, although in several forms, for example under the strong pressure of totalitarianism a dialogue between generations was resumed in order to preserve the creators. The next form took place only with the collapse of the communist regime, initiating the process of primary restoration of the sources of creativity and artistic value. A form addressed to the national tradition as a continuation of the historical development of Ukrainian and European artists' practices from the first third of the 20th century subsequently emerged. As a result, a form of alternative and experiment followed which built new principles for the purpose of the revival of the local centre of modern art as a platform from which to seek new dialogues.

Despite the numerous, pre-planned stages of ideological aggression and destruction, forced destructuring, significant demographic changes and unprecedented physical and moral losses, the artistic environment of Galicia showed not only exceptional stability, but also a phenomenal ability to rapidly reactivate and revive itself. It crystallised effective forms of outwardly hidden inner spiritual

opposition to the forcibly imposed artistic priorities of the era of totalitarianism.

In the 1970s and 1980s, extremely important phenomena took place in Galician culture: in contrast to the planted ideas of collectivism, there was a convincing affirmation of the priority of creative individuality and the first attempts to unite artists in small groups based on creative interests. The beginning of the collapse of the totalitarian system and its ideological superstructure at the end of the 1980s was accompanied by strong processes of national revival, the main epicentre of which was, at least initially, Lviv. The sign of this was the reactivation of the artistic environment of the city and the revival of artistic organisations.

In the 1990s it was still too early to talk about the situation stabilising, both in Ukrainian art in general, and in the Galician cultural environment in particular. However, a number of the main problems can be outlined. Among them, the most fundamental was the need to restore a holistic image of Ukrainian culture and art, an objective analysis of the variety of concepts and phenomena included in their circle, the return of many forgotten and forcibly removed artists and their creative work. Only from such positions can one realistically, in an inextricable temporal connection, evaluate the past and present and talk about the future. Against the background of what has been said, the need to overcome the ideological stereotypes of the past in approaches to modern art, to revise outdated terminology, and to create a modern history and theory of Ukrainian art, clearly emerges.

MARYAN BESAHA, YULIYA BABUNYCH, OREST HOLUBETS: CULTURAL AND ARTISTIC DIALOGUES IN GALICIA IN THE SECOND HALF OF THE 20TH CENTURY

KEYWORDS: POLITICS; ART; CREATIVE PERSONALITY; ARTIST ASSOCIATION; EXHIBITION; ARTISTIC ENVIRONMENT; DIALOGUE; GALICIA

SUMMARY

The research aims to define the dialogical nature of cultural and artistic processes in the historical environment of late 20th century Galicia, and to determine a list of significant events, artist associations, and personalities. The Research methodology is based on the principles of combining the system approach with historical principles, comparison, and synthesis. Historical and cultural, and formal-analytical, approaches with elements of comparative and descriptive analysis are used.

The mutual impact of policy and authorities on the artistic environment and education processes is analysed for the first time. The movement of individual artistic practices and artist unions as the main factors shaping the artistic environment in Galicia in the second half of the 20th century is highlighted.

We conclude that pressure from the communist totalitarian authorities on the artistic community in Galicia, deportations, bullying, and isolation failed to destroy the structure of artistic dialogue. With changes in leadership and control vectors, cultural and artistic life searched for a unique form of expression, and Lviv (being a centre of culture and education) played an important role in shaping many new names that would later influence the environment. After the collapse of the Soviet Union and the appearance of independent Ukraine, the processes to rehabilitate artistic values, based on national form and the dialogical form of the first third of the 20th century, took place. Artist unions and new galleries that appeared to cater to the needs of cultural and artistic life in Galicia became instrumental in developing new artistic ideas both in Ukraine and beyond. Consideration of views and the importance of the creativity of individual artists and artist associations in cultural and artistic processes in late 20th century Galicia created the preconditions by which to determine the importance and patterns of social and political influences on the development of Ukrainian art in the 20th and 21st centuries.

CV

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