



Alena Kuznetsova

Portfolio
Texts

Kyiv, Ukraine

CV

ALENA KUZNETSOVA

is a professional multidisciplinary artist born in 1986 and works in Kyiv, Ukraine. Participant of Ukrainian and international projects, author of 14 solo shows and exhibiting since 2009.

Alena's creative work includes painting (main media), graphics, land art, video installation, and ceramic sculpture. In her artistic practice, the artist explores the concepts of nature, transformations, femininity, fragility, life, and death. She endeavors to find a balance between humans and nature and the role of female artists, felt in the context of events taking place in Ukraine. In her artistic practice, Alena deals with such issues, as self-identification in society, and the role of women in art.

Education:

2003-2008 – KNUBA, Master's degree degree, specialty Fine Arts, Kyiv.

Other Educational programs:

2022 – Art in Times of Crisis (Dr Emma Mahony), NCAD, Dublin.

2015 – School of Visual Communications, Kyiv.

2014-2015 – School of contemporary art, MARI, Kyiv.

2008 – Kyiv National University of Construction and Architecture (Magister).

Selected solo shows:

2023 – Flowers or Explosions, Forsa gallery, Kyiv (UA)

2022 – Relations with the image, Imagine point gallery, Kyiv (UA)

2021 – Gamma, Ornament Art Space, Kyiv (UA)

2019

- Trajectory, Mironova foundation, Kyiv (UA)
- Mechanical Ballet. Act 3, French Institute, Kyiv (UA)

2018

- FLUX, Triptych: Global Arts Workshop, Kyiv (UA)
- Mechanical Ballet, White World, Kyiv (UA)

2017

- What color do you see?, MASLO the gallery,
- Khmelnytskyi (UA)
- GRAVITY, NEBO art gallery, Kyiv (UA)
- KILL BILL, America house, Kyiv (UA)

Selected group shows:

2024

- Melancholy, Draft Gallery, Kyiv (UA)
- Sci-Fi Art, Portal 11 Gallery, Kyiv (UA)

2023

- Concentration of the will, M17 Contemporary art center, Kyiv (UA)
- Ukrainian 12, Portraits International gallery, Brussels (BE)
- Awakening, Museum of Kyiv (UA)

2022

- From Ukraine with love, Gallerie Lorien, Copenhagen (DK)
- And Get Up!, Gallery Lavra, Kyiv (UA)
- Wartime. Reflections..., Dzyga, Lviv (UA)
- The Art of Resistance, Sala d'Exposicions Municipal, Valencia (SP)

2021

- Bohemian art corner. CQ edition, Kyiv (UA)
- New human nature, NVAIR, Zbarazh castle (UA)

2020

- Objects art prize, Chocolate House, Kyiv (UA)
- Habitat. Manifesto 2020, Lavra gallery, Kyiv (UA)

2019

- Collective art show, Van Gogh Art Gallery, Madrid (ES)
- Summer salon, Triptych: Global Arts Workshop, Kyiv (UA)
- Verbalization, Lavra gallery, Kyiv (UA)
- Objects art prize, nominees' exhibition, Chocolate House, Kyiv (UA)

2018

- Simulacra anatomy, MARI, Kyiv (UA)
- Modern art international exhibition, Seoul (KR)
- Values on the way, Lite-haus galerie + Projektraum, Berlin (GE)
- Exposure, AkT, Kyiv (UA)

2017 – Marry me!, Zenko Foundation, Museum of Kyiv history (UA)

Art Residencies, Competitions, Art Fairs:

- 2024-2025** – Serendipity, Art laboratory, Port of Culture, Kyiv (UA)
- 2024-2025** – Martin Roth residency, online, Leipzig (GE)
- 2024** – MC6, Slavske (UA)
- 2022** – Artists at Risk residency, AICA, Dublin (IE)
- 2022** – Cultural Traffic residency, Vyzhnitsa (UA)
- 2020** – Final of Art Competition "Objects art prize", Chocolate House, Kyiv (UA)
- 2019** – Art Bodensee fair, Dornbirn (AT)
- 2019** – Final of Art Competition "Objects art prize", Chocolate House, Kyiv (UA)
- 2018** – Nazariy Voitovich Art Residency, Travneve village, Ternopil region (UA)
- 2018** – Modern art international exhibition (Art Fair), Seoul (KR)

Printed Publications:

- 2024** – Argument №9, p.66-79 (FR-CH)
- 2024** – Sci-Fi Art, Catalogue of the group exhibition, Portal11 gallery, p.20–21 (UA)
- 2022** – Argument, Hors-serie Ukraine, p.16-25 (FR-CH)
- 2020** – Collection of works of modern art, White World gallery, p.200-201 (UA)
- 2019** – AirBaltic, p.19 (EE)
- 2018** – Personal catalogue (UA)
- 2018** – International Modern Art Exhibition, Gallery Harang, p.10 (KR)
- 2018** – Values on the Way, NVAIR (UA-DE)
- 2018** – Exposure, KUCA 2018, Korea and Ukraine Contemporary Art Exhibition, p.62 (UA)
- 2017** – Marry me!, Zenko gallery, p.26-27 (UA)

PROJECTS



Ukraine is me

Painting, graphics, 2022

Ukraine is me is 2022 series of self-portraits in blue and yellow, made at Artists at Risk residency in Dublin in a temporary 3 months shelter.

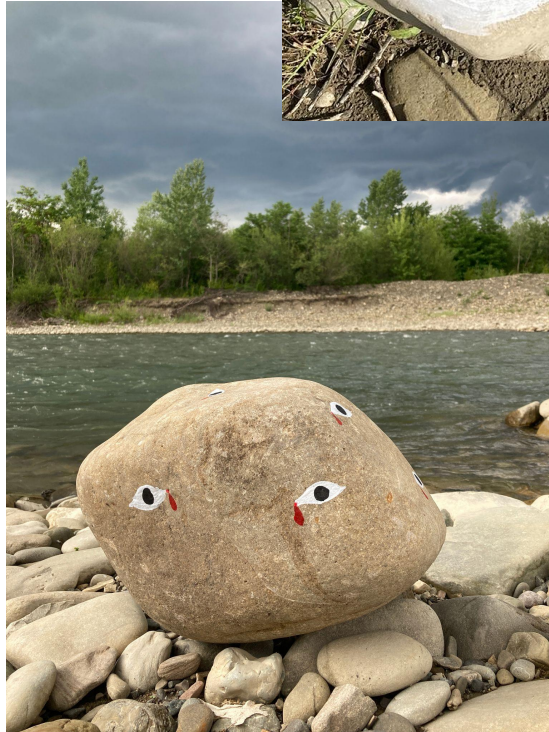
It is a statement of self identity, a Ukrainian. It is an attempt to feel alive again after the beginning of the full-scale invasion of russia to the territory of Ukraine through a return to a simple academic approach in state flag colors. This is an attempt to get back some strength to myself after being absolutely exhausted volunteering non-stop for a half of year to help Ukraine and everyone except myself (this project is a process of realizing of this mistake).

To scatter stones

Land art, 2022

The huge field of stones on a river Cheremosh banks, Pokuttya, Ukraine. It reminded me how I painted on the stones in Crimea (which is now occupied by Russia), on the seashore in 2011 and 2012. This a first art project since the full-scale invasion. Short quotes and drawings, I was thinking about, painted just on the stones. It reflects my feelings about the war in a relatively safe place, and the fundamental changes of my art because of the war.

...Red, black and white.



Flowers or Explosions

Painting, graphics, objects, 2022-2023

The painting series, complemented by graphics and objects (fresh flowers, animal bones in glass flasks), appeals to schizophrenic dichotomy of blooming life and death, which is now too close when we have learned to live, work and even find inspiration in the permanent stress and egregore of the war, the relevant information field and while friends or relatives are at the front.

What is a flower, if not a manifestation of life, so fragile and short-lived? Explosion is like a flower-like symbol from the center to the periphery. There are even cannons called Peonies, and visually the fire of their shot looks like a peony. Isn't that symbolic? In my work on it, I use napkins in the form of flowers, made by my grandmother, and multi-layered mixed media, including appliqué. Almost all works have the eyes of an observer of events, and each of the works has the name of the top context that was happening at the time of its creation/end. I use the landscape format in the majority of paintings and the brown colors/texture that reminds the ground, to raise question about the ecology: soil pollution and fauna suffering.

Animal's bones, glass, flowers, 2023





*Terra Ukraina, 65*130 cm, oil, acrylic, stencil with spray paint on canvas, 2022*



*Forest of Kyiv region is full of rising flowers; First March tulips
70*50 cm each, oil, spray paint, acrylic, embroidery, firing, applique on canvas, 2022,*

Cave diary

photo, graphics

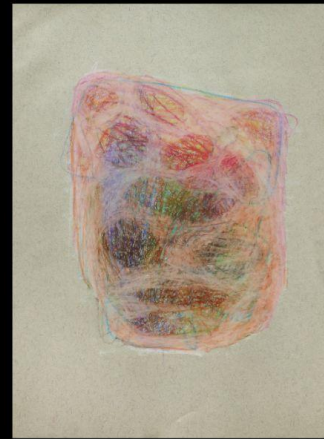
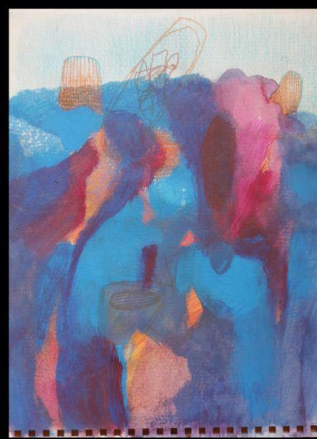
I've started the series of graphics "Cave Diary" back in 2013, living in a cave, or rather, under a large stone in the Carpathians for 2 weeks. It continued year after year in similar wild, deserted places.

Nature heals, it is an example of total integrity. A forest is a fractal with an error of imperfection. There, everything is in unity, symbiosis. If something dies, mushrooms transform death into life.



In 2020, I think I felt its continuation, once again living in my favorite cave. Life in such a place is total austerity and therapy. Without the Internet, without people, words, other people's thoughts and even sounds. "The silence is so precise."

I formed this project back in 2020, during the first year of covid. After the beginning of a full-scale, and the death of many, including close people, this topic was revealed to me even more deeply; I invite the brave to join me on this journey.



Cave diary. Paper A4 (+ -), pencils, watercolor, acrylic, 2 types of pastels, ballpoint pen, felt-tip pens, 2013-2022

Fractals photo





Fantastic Mushrooms

Ceramic objects, 2020-2021

I have been interested in the subject of fungi since childhood. This is the most mysterious, oldest of all living things, and probably the least studied kingdom, endowed with its intelligence. They – mycelium, and fungi – are everywhere and much closer in terms of genome to humans than to plants! It is a web that connects different organisms and transmits information, it is a prototype of the Internet. These are saprophytes, they are at the end of the food chain, and the closest to the phenomenon of death than all other creatures. They break down matter, turning it into nutritious soil for further life, and therefore they are at the beginning of the chain at the same time! They teach us not to be afraid of death because it is an integral part of the program.

Clay, glaze, h~28 cm each

To the river, to the forest

video, sculpture installation



video 40'04", 2023



ceramic sculpture Fantastic Mushrooms

The caustic phenomenon on the water's surface is an ideal environment for contemplation. It resembles a web, the Internet, or mycelium, rhizome. It is also a metaphor for the impermanence of the world and changes, as well as of our worldview, life habits, and beliefs. The video also refers to the Kakhovka tragedy of 2023, which occurred due to the Russian occupiers undermining the dam of the reservoir.

Relations with the image

Painting, video, 2020-2021

Our relationships are also our stories, shared with others.

This is not exactly a "series", but a cycle of 11 works of various formats, I think prophetic. I started it at the end of 2019 because I felt pain as if I had died, and a personal crisis that I could not explain logically. The worst thing for me is the crisis of meaning.

This cycle is an attempt to look into the eyes of my truth - the images, from which I have largely weaned myself, studying color and abstract art for the past 10 years.

I consider this series a return to real life, containing complex relationships, such as Eros and Thanatos, unspeakable, subconscious.

Visualizing your demons is like bringing them to the surface to let them disappear. To think of the beauty and fear, of your role: artist, woman, about the rules that limit your mind in this world.

*Relationship with image 1, 130*100 cm, canvas, oil, rhinestones,
applique, 2019-2021*



33, 65*90 cm, canvas,
oil, beads, applique,
2019-2021



Exposing, 45*50 cm, canvas, oil,
beads. 2019-2021



Retrograde Mercury, 30*20 cm, canvas,
oil, beads, applique, 2019-2021

Buffet, 60*50 cm,
canvas, oil, beads,
2019-2021



Heterotopia

Video, 2020-2021

<https://youtu.be/hbCsXDLYBJY>

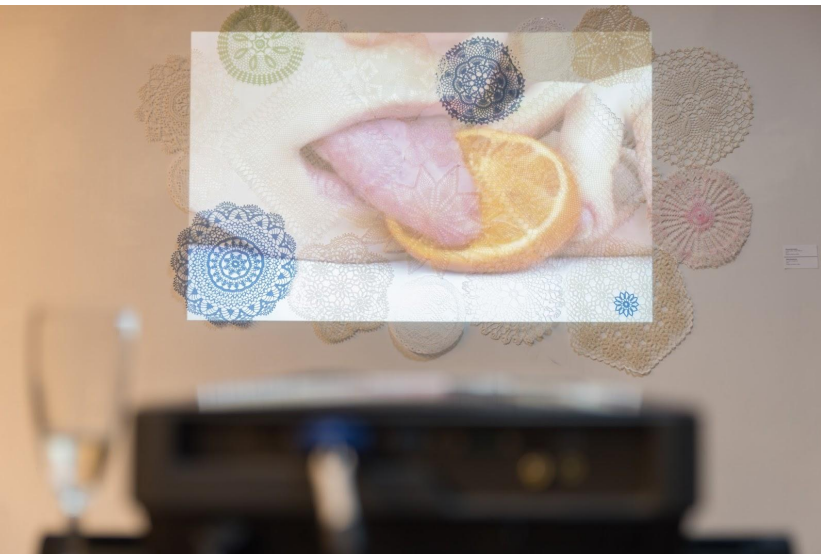
This video is the exploration of fruitless attempts to understand my controversial identity, desires and ideas, to find my perfect place (which is actually illusive). It is a part of Relations with the Image cycle.

Michel Foucault introduced the concept of "heterotopia" (fr. Hétérotopie) to be able to reflect the semantic diversity, i.e. to present all the meanings embedded in the understanding of space. Thus, heterotopia can be both a real place and something close to utopia, parallel to a real space (for example, a prison), the fullness and content of which allows you to bring a real place closer to the virtual one.



Hello, mum, hello, granny

Knitted napkins, video, 2016



In this work, I ask questions about the details of cognitive vocabulary, the degree of honesty-puritanism, borders in the communication between the generations, and the language barrier as part of the same ethnic language of each generation rates personal world. Therefore, I always had a strong association with my older relatives in these knitted napkins at my grandma Zhenya's house. I even have used these napkins in my later project Flowers or Explosions (after Zenya's death in 2021). This is something concrete and stable, that always remains unchanged. It's like an unknown or forgotten language for me, that I can use to become a little closer to all of them, creating a new communication process, and inventing new game rules.

Press

1. [Marie Claire \(2023\)](#)
2. [Подобици \(2023\)](#)
3. [The Village \(2023\)](#)
4. [IMMART \(2022\)](#)
5. [Revenue Argument \(2022\)](#)
6. [The-Village \(2022\)](#)
7. [Esthète Газета \(2022\)](#)
8. [Antikvar \(2022\)](#)
9. [In Kyiv \(2022\)](#)
10. [ArtDependence \(2019\)](#)
11. [AirBaltic \(2019\), p. 19](#)
12. [Art Ukraine \(2018\)](#)
13. [Ukraine art news \(2018\)](#)
14. [The culture trip \(2017\)](#)
15. [Art Ukraine \(2017\)](#)
16. [Chernozem \(2017\)](#)



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