



WhiteBox
9 Ave. B, NYC
www.whiteboxnyc.org
Wednesday - Saturday 11am-6pm, Sunday 1pm-6pm

Curator: **Irina Danilova**

PRESS RELEASE

WhiteBox in collaboration with 2B&2C and Project 59, Inc. presents a New York première exhibition: **PEREMOGA /victory/ukr.**, opening December 7, 2022 from 6PM to 8PM. On the cusp of a new year, this show focuses on the main forces behind the Ukrainian victory. Courage, Love for the Land, Friendship, Collaboration, Support, Strength, Freedom and Democracy are evoked through the artists' works, which call over and over for the reassurance of values at the foundation of humanity. This show examines life-affirming themes and honors the Ukrainian/American collaboration, a mutual effort in the fight against Russia's aggressive invasion of Ukraine.

Ukrainian women artists showcased in this exhibition, **Olia Fedorova** (Kharkiv), **Daria Koltsova** (Kharkiv), **Maria Kulikovska** (Kerch, Crimea), **Natalia Lisova** (Vinnytsia), and **Maria Proshkowska** (Kyiv), belong to the generation which was raised in independent Ukraine after the collapse of the Soviet Union. The Russian occupation of Crimea and military invasion of the Donbass happened when they just started to enter adulthood. These tragic events and the following Russian violence shaped their artistic perspectives. All five women artists are well known in Ukraine and are now becoming renowned throughout Europe.

Art and War are mutually exclusive concepts: creation and destruction. War deteriorates life, stifles creativity, eliminates lightheartedness, and suppresses playfulness in art. This show explores the variations of wartime art and the shifts in perception during the war.

Ecological performances of Natalia Lisova turned into stirring declarations of love for the land. The artworks of Maria Proshkowska call for defense. Olia Fedorova addresses aggressors in a direct manner and investigates the possibilities of restoration. Maria Kulikovska, a Ukrainian refugee from occupied Crimea, examines the scope of the tolerable. In addition to leading an international art project in support of people in Ukrainian cities and villages who live in danger, Daria Koltsova performs a *Lullaby* to hundreds of children killed in this war.

The etymological meaning of the word *victory* varies depending on language and culture. *Pobeda* in Russian literally means *after a tragedy*. The Latin word *victory* means *to conquer*. Chinese *shengli* means *to succeed*. The Ukrainian term for *victory*, PEREMOGA, is a combination of the words *over* and *ability: beyond the possible*. The conflict in Ukraine is an example of unimaginable resistance: the outnumbered Ukrainian army heroically confronts a massive Russian aggression. The stoic defiance has not waned for many months.

The war is a predominantly a masculine conflict, from male majority of militaries to phallic shapes of cannons and rockets. The Russian attack on Ukraine has been led by the twisted ambition of a psychologically damaged male ruler. The combat literally and symbolically pertains to men while women inevitably belong to the anti-war movement. This exhibition presents a fearless response of five young Ukrainian women artists to the atrocities of wartime. Their artworks partake in the global effort to thwart the Russian invasion and put an end to this war.