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**Bronx River Art Center is pleased to present:**

***PEREMOHA/victory/ukr.***

**Exhibition Dates: March 22 - April 23, 2023**

**Opening Reception:  
Wednesday, March 22, 6:00-9:00 PM**

**Curated by Irina Danilova**

On the occasion of the one-year anniversary of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the Bronx River Art Center is proud to present five brave Ukrainian Women artists responding to their experience of the war in our next exhibition: **PEREMOHA/victory/ukr.**

The show's opening reception will be on Wednesday, March 22, 2023. From 6PM - 9PM, culminating with a live performance by artist Daria Koltsova, who is flying in from her exile in Great Britain.

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Over the past year, the democratic nations of the globe have come together to support Ukraine for their ultimate success against the imperialistic aggression of Russian. Ukraine's victory, and the preservation of a democratic world order of liberty and justice for all, is the main motivations for this show. The artworks conjure courage, love for the land, friendship, collaboration, support, strength, and freedom from oppression. This show is, in effect, an affirmation of the values that form the cornerstone of humanity, and it pays tribute to the cooperation of Ukrainians and Americans in the struggle against Putin's autocratic thirst for domination of its neighboring countries. The show warns all of us in the West of his intention to re-establish a Russian empire ruled by himself in the guise of Russia's brutal Tsars of the 17<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. We Americans would be wise to heed the threat to world democracy that this war can manifest if left unchecked.

The 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 a generation that was raised in independent Ukraine after the collapse of the Soviet Union. The Russian occupation of Crimea and its military invasion of the Donbass occurred when they were just entered adulthood. These tragic events, and the associative Russian barbarianism, shaped these artists perspectives on the human condition and the need to take a stand for Ukraine's autonomy. These five women artists have become known in Ukraine for their courageous outspokenness and are now becoming renowned throughout Europe for their strength in the face of oppression and atrocities.



*Photo: Olia Fedorova, Anger Exercises, paper and ink, wall installation, 2022*

Art and War are mutually exclusive concepts: creation and destruction. War deteriorates life, stifles creativity, eliminates lightheartedness, and suppresses artistic expression. This show presents various explorations of wartime art and the shifts in perception during the war.

The ecological performances of Natalia Lisova become stirring declarations of love for the land. Since February 24, 2022, she has remained in Ukraine, traveling around country to conduct art workshops for refugee teens and children to express their war driven heightened emotions.

The artworks of Maria Proshkowska call for resistance. In the video documentation of her performance that was made in the vicinity of Kiev just a few days before the Russian invasion, she is patiently preparing her personal weapon of defense, self-made from kitchen supplies.

Olia Fedorova addresses the aggressors in a direct verbal appeal by exploring the possibilities of restoration in her performance series "Making Yoga in the Burned Woods".

Maria Kulikovska, a Ukrainian refugee from occupied Crimea in 2014, examines the boundaries of the tolerable. Her personal life was directly intertwined with the war when pro-Russian forces in occupied Donbass used her sculptures for target practice.

Daria Koltsova, who has lead an international art project in support of people living in danger in Ukrainian cities and villages, will perform a farewell Lullaby to the hundreds of children killed in this war on the night of the opening.



*Photo: Daria Koltsova, Lullaby, vocal performance, 2022*

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, PEREMOHA, is a combination of the

words *over* and *ability*: beyond the possible. The conflict in Ukraine is an example of unimaginable resistance of an outnumbered Ukrainian army heroically confronting a massive Russian aggression. Their stoic defiance has not waned for more than a year.

Curator **Irina Danilova** says of her intent in creating this exhibition: “War is predominantly a masculine militaristic conflict, ironically manifested through the phallic shapes of cannons and rockets. The Russian attack on Ukraine has been led by the twisted ambitions of a psychologically deranged male ruler. Combat is literally and symbolically in the domain of men, while women largely belong to the anti-war movement. Aptly, this show is being presented during Woman’s History Month. The 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.”

Along with the presentation of war related works of Ukrainian emerging women artists, one of the main goals of this show is to bring Ukraine closer to Americans and to show our mutual effort in bringing about the PEREMOHA. A photo documentation by **Alexei Zagdansky**, an immigrant from Kyiv, of the antiwar movement in New York City in support of the ongoing resistance of the Ukrainian people will also be presented as part of the show.

**PEREMOHA/victory/ukr.** premiered in December 2022 at the WhiteBox alternative art space in the Lower East Side. There it was a site specific installation organized by Ukrainian-American artist and curator, Irina Danilova, who was born and raised in Kharkiv. This iteration of the exhibition will be substantially expanded to include new artworks and the photo documentations and live performances mentioned above. The Bronx River Art Center will hold aloft the PEREMOHA in anticipation of Ukrainica’s ultimate victory.

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