

BLACK SOIL

Each of us is now a witness of the war in Ukraine. We see how the memory of everyday tragic events is shaped differently for different people. But besides the numerous testimonies of people, nature will also remember everything. It also witnesses human suffering and for many years after the war it will keep the terrible remnants of this war inside. Destruction, fires, explosions, bombings, trenches - all this impacts the soil, which every day absorbs more and more corpses of the innocent and the fighting people. Unexploded mines and bombs will remind of themselves in the future, even after the end of the war. Abandoned military equipment rips the landscape like rotten teeth. Blood cools down, turns into stone and forms another layer of miserable human history. Today it is crucial to join our efforts in fighting the climate crisis, but political leaders are rattling nuclear weapons, and trying to satisfy their imperial ambitions, continuing to destroy our planet, together with our lives. The violence must be stopped now! Violence against people, animals, every Ukrainian tree, grass and even a small bug. The soil groans and turns black from blood and destruction. Will it forgive?

SIMPLE TEARS

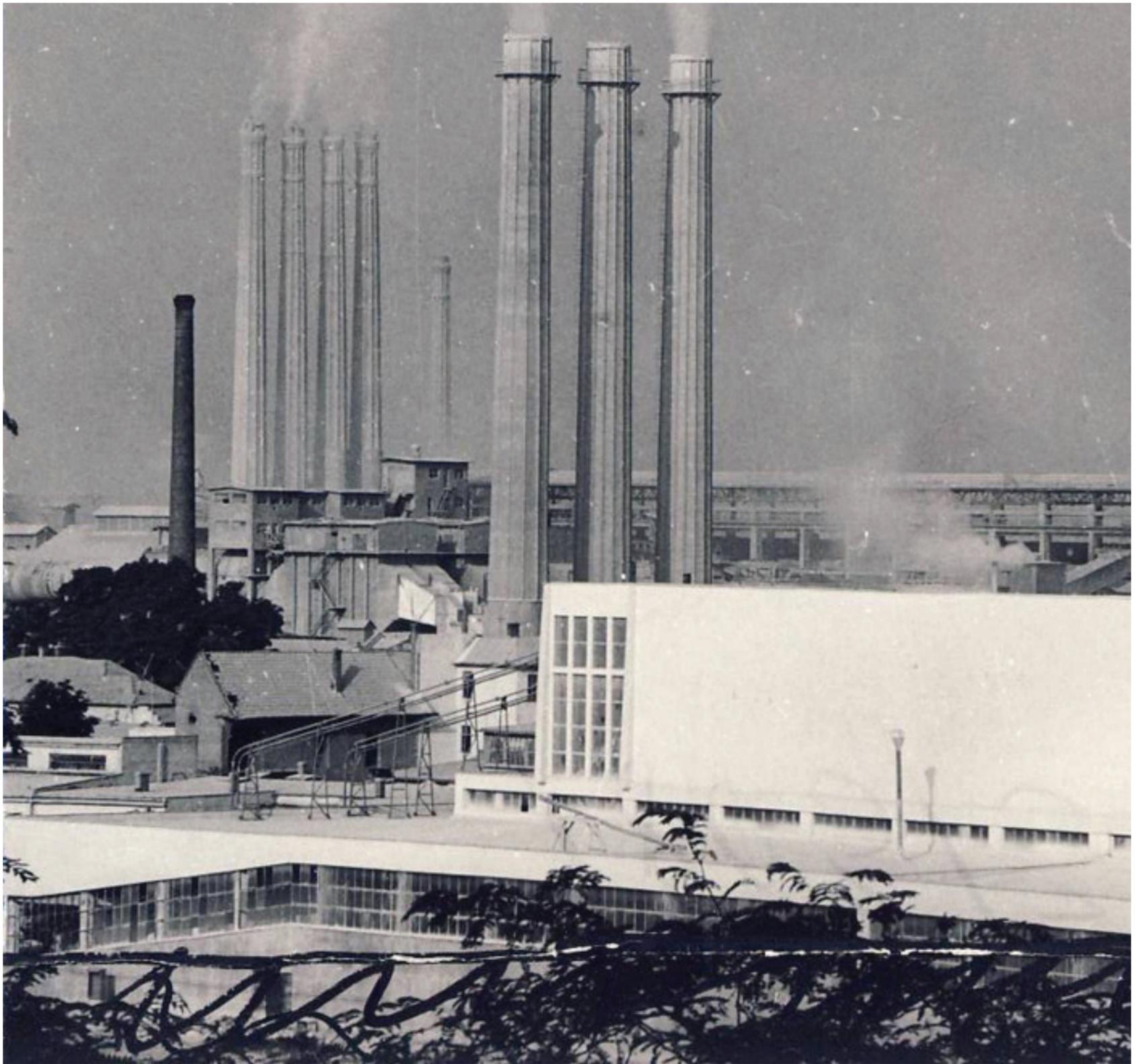
In the “Hundred Years’ War” project, together with curator Marth von Loeben, I tell stories about the war of the past, and its further ghostly presence in everyday life. This is a project about post-memory, and it incorporates the family memories and the history of the city where I grew up. I appeal to the topic of war and its legacy because being raised in post-Soviet environment and annexed Crimea, I was convinced that war is only about victory, heroism and pride. The accent was always put on “their” inhumanity, but the inhuman behavior of “us” was deliberately forgotten. Such rhetoric was repulsive, because life consists not only of victories, so I wished to get under the skin of this patriotic and propagandistic image and find the human core there: feelings and simple tears. Due to allegorical language of the project it was possible, considering the censorship, to restore gaps in the narrative, since traumatic experience from the past was hushed up or denied by official historical agenda, and simply by people because of fear or shame. It turned out to be very destructive to keep the silence.

Using images and stories, we’ve built a psychological space for discussing trauma in the present, so that we would never repeat the experience of our ancestors. I never thought that it would be necessary to fix the reality, that I would have to work not with archives and memories, but with a horrible present. What can art do in such conditions? It does not seem to directly save lives or protect, feed or heal. In peacetime, it is difficult to find a sense in art practice, and now it is even harder. But I see the point in fixing feelings, in the chronicle of events through the heart. All for humanizing the pain, protecting our memory, so that later nobody could manipulate it for the sake of the new myth.

QUIET ROOTS

I was born and raised in Crimea, which has always been a disputed territory and someone's colony. In the course of numerous wars, migrations and annexations, the peninsula has become a crossroads of different cultures and languages, which have been layered and intertwined. I am also such a crossroad. My identity is an interweaving of both Ukrainian and Russian cultures, two languages. I believed that such entanglements enrich Crimea and its people, make us all more tolerant to each other. But I was wrong. Eight years ago Crimea was annexed by Russia without a gunshot. All Crimeans found themselves in the "phantom" zone, and the hatred towards the "others" only grew stronger. People who did not agree, either fled or found the strength to live with this state of things. Sometimes thinking about leaving your home is more unbearable than accepting the new reality. But some people were happy. Finally I left for neutral territory, but I could not escape from conflicts within myself. The ghost of war has always been there, in subconscious, memories, monuments.

The annexation of Crimea has already started a real, not ghostly war in Ukraine, which over the past month has become the new, even more destructive and large-scale round. In my mind I travel through happy memories from trips to Kyiv, Lviv, Odessa, and with my eyes I travel through the images of demolished Kharkov, Mariupol, Irpin, Mykolayiv and Volnovakha. I believe that the people's death and destroyed, abandoned homes can not be justified by any political and territorial ambitions. I regret that I was confident about the impossibility of a slaughter in the modern world.





For many of my works I was inspired by the stories of my hometown, Turda.

Turda (Latin *Potaissa*, German *Thorenburg*, Hungarian *Torda*) is a municipality in Cluj County, Transylvania, Romania. This city was heavily industrialized during the communist period and after 1989 most of the factories remained in ruins due to privatization and the city became a ruin full of toxic waste. The cityscape is one dominated by greys and dusty nature, like the works I present in this exhibition.

Unfortunately because of the war in Ukraine, the cities of the country will remain in ruins and nature will be covered by the dust of bombed buildings.

The selection of the works exhibited brings into question the degradation of urban space caused by man.

PUTIN KHUYLO

Poorly translated by the lack of a better one, as “Putin is a dickhead” is a slogan originating from Football Fans from the football clubs Metalist Kharkiv and Shaktar Donetsk.

They chanted this since 2014 as a strongly felt emotion for Ukrainian sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Nowadays it has become a more general felt message against everything that is wrong with Putin’s kleptocracy.

So it’s more than the English translation can express.

THIS IS OUR WAR AS WELL

The war in Ukraine is a war of principles.

European Values against the totalitarian dictatorship of one man who stands for everything that we don't want to experience.

This is not the fight of Ukraine,

this is a fight for humanity - I dare to say - world wide.

We all need to stand up and make sure that this is not the world we want to live in.

Like the brave Ukrainians are showing us at this very moment.

It's all or nothing in this conflict.

We should take a note out of their books.

We can - and will - make that difference together.

It's time for a new paradigm.

It's so painful to realise that the sick ambition of one person can destroy so many lives and bring the whole world 70 years back in time.

It's scary to see how truth, the judicial system, the media and every person in Russia is poisoned by vicious propaganda.

It's terrible to watch people get manipulated by the twisted narratives.

All only because of one person's greed and hunger for power.

This filth has already destroyed families in both Ukraine and Russia.

Even for me it is a small personal tragedy because it has split my family.

I'm from Donetsk and I want to be able to visit my childhood town in Ukraine.

Not the complete destruction left by the invasive army after they loose this fight.

Your fear is their weapon.

we are blackmailed into submission.

Fear and control walk side by side.

Fear of loosing gas supplies limits our actions.

Stand up for what is right!

NATALIA

GREZINA

LIVIU

BULEA

YELYZAVETA

GAYDUKOVA

VLADIMIR

RADUJKOV
