

PRESS RELEASE

October 14, 2014

New York

MAIDAN. UKRAINE. ROAD TO FREEDOM

Art created by artists who participated in Ukraine's uprising against a corrupt regime

October 20 – 27, 2014

The Ukrainian Institute of America

The exhibition 'Maidan. Ukraine. Road to Freedom' is the artistic expression of Ukrainian artists who participated in Ukraine's uprising against a corrupt regime.

The Ukrainian 'Maidan' of 2013-2014 started on November 21, 2013 as a peaceful demonstration and turned into civil unrest on the central square of Kyiv called "Maidan Nezalezhnosti" (Independence Square). This peaceful demonstration was initiated by journalists, students, artists, musicians, bloggers and pro-democratic politicians after the government unexpectedly dropped the negotiations with the European Union on an association agreement and instead decided to join Russia's customs union.

Artists were at the center of the demonstrations from very beginning creating protest posters, organizing mass performances and showing their works directly in the square. "Maidan. Ukraine. Road to Freedom" is a multi-disciplinary arts exhibition featuring paintings, photography, original artifacts, strike posters as well as art performance, music and film documentary created by the artists who were active participants of the Maidan events.

Matviy Vaisberg created a series of expressive abstract paintings entitled 'The Wall' that carries on the spirit of the events. The artist spent every day at demonstrations and painted at night in his studio being emotionally overwhelmed with the ongoing events. Photographs by Igor Gaidai, Oleksandr Glyadyelov, Maksym Dondyuk and Anton Trofymov comprise a series entitled "Maidan's Saga" that is a highly dramatic, psychological, historic and social expression of the peaceful protests that turned into violence. Nothing can compare to the feeling of touching objects used by protesters to defend themselves against brutality of security forces that were part of the corrupt regime. These original artifacts will be presented at the exhibition; wooden and metal shields, cobblestones, burned down pieces of clothes, sticks, helmets, empty Molotov cocktail bottles, firewood logs and a pit fire barrel. Strike posters were an idea of the Facebook community called "Strike-Plakat" consisting of eight professional designers and painters who created them and posted them online making it available for everyone to download and use. One poster from this series by Pavel Klubnikin entitled "I am a drop in the Ocean" was reproduced by the thousands and became the visual symbol of the peaceful protest. Oleh Denysenko created a

commemorative coin dedicated to the Heavenly Hundred. It will be available for sale during the exhibition. Cinema of a civil protest "#BABYLON'13" provides a focused lens where the viewer can hear and see what took place inside the Maidan. Finally, the folk-rock band Mandry will perform 'Music of Maidan.' The lead musician of the band Foma spent countless days and nights at Maidan's stage and on barricades: his music is directly inspired by the sound of the Ukrainian Revolution.

This exhibition was initially presented on June 5, 2014 at the Checkpoint Charlie Museum in Berlin and later traveled to London where it was on exhibit at the Ukrainian Cultural Center on July 10-13, 2014. The exhibition will open at the Ukrainian Institute of America in New York on October 20, 2014 and will continue through October 27, 2014.

A press conference with the artists Matviy Vaisberg, Olexander Glyadyelov, Anton Trofymov and the curator Serhiy Fomenko will take place on October 23, 2014 at 4:00 p.m.

An opening reception featuring music and art performance will take place on October 23, 2014 from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

A panel discussion with Oleksandr Glyadyelov, Matviy Vaisberg and Serhiy Fomenko to take place on October 24, 2014 from 6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

For more information contact Olena Sidlovykh by email at mail@ukrainianinstitute.org or by phone at 212-288-8660.

Curator

Serhiy Fomenko 'Foma.'

Facilitated by

Alexander Demko, Artfira Gallery

Tamara Shevchenko

Participating artists

Matviy Vaisberg, Maxim Dondyuk, Anton Trofymov, Igor Gaidai, Olexander Glyadyelov, Oleksiy Sai, Mykola Honcharov, Oleh Denysenko.

Cinema of a civil protest #BABYLON'13. Music by folk-rock band 'Mandry.'

This exhibition is supported by

DAR Foundation, Kyiv online at www.darfoundation.org.ua

Meest America, USA online at www.meest.us