

Ola Rondiak: *Identity, Interrupted*

May 4 – June 10, 2018

Reception for the Artist: Friday, May 4, 6:00 to 8:00 PM

The Ukrainian Institute of America 2 East 79th Street New York, NY 10075

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NEW YORK — **Art at the Institute** is pleased to announce *Identity, Interrupted*, an exhibition of mixed media works by Ukrainian-American artist **Ola Rondiak** in which she uses traditional cut-and-paste collage and painting techniques to touch on influences ranging from personal history, womanhood, ethnic and national identity, politics, to street art. The exhibition will open on Friday, May 4, 2018 with a reception for the artist at **The Ukrainian Institute of America** from 6:00 to 8:00 PM, and will remain on view through Sunday, June 10.

Curated by **Walter Hoydysh, PhD**, director of Art at the Institute, this marks Ms. Rondiak's first showing with The Ukrainian Institute of America.

Ms. Rondiak's work is situated between collage, painting and assemblage. She reinterprets the relationship between image and text by combining printed newspaper clippings and sewing patterns with painted female likenesses — scrutinizing historical, personal and social ideals, norms and roles, questioning models of representation and perception. This reflects a ritualistic way of absorbing and processing the rendering of an inner reality, where her tribal senses come out in images instead of written words or vocal sounds. Within this, her actual creative process varies considerably, sometimes producing several works simultaneously. By displaying a group of artworks of typological likenesses, she offers a comparative truth, a certain kind of access to her intimate subject matter.

Two central and repetitive motifs bear witness to Ms. Rondiak's narratives: the "motanka," the faceless handmade rag doll/talisman signifying the woman-goddess, and the "vinok," the traditional Ukrainian flower crown representing the purity of womanhood. Combined with iconographic depictions of her anonymous female protagonist against dense backdrops of disturbance, the emerged outcomes metamorphose into a metaphor for Ukraine herself, and an ever optimistic attitude toward the singular constancy and dignity of not only of the Ukrainian woman, but of women everywhere.

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“... Rondiak captures her own vision to broaden our grasp of human experience and resiliency to finding the freedom to live in a society that remembers its past,” writes Kathrine Page, Gretchen Hupfel Curator of Contemporary Art at The Delaware Contemporary. “In this respect, by commemorating the past, Rondiak’s creativity cuts the cloth of a new absolute beauty with a redemptive quality that clearly understands the important healing role of art and the psyche for future generations.”

Selected past solo exhibitions of Ola Rondiak’s works include installations at RA Gallery (Kyiv, Ukraine), America House (Kyiv), Mystetskyi Arsenal (Kyiv), The Delaware Contemporary (Wilmington, DE), and Zorya Fine Arts (Greenwich, CT), among others. Raised within the Ukrainian-American community in northeast Ohio, Ms. Rondiak moved to Kyiv, Ukraine in 1995, where she currently lives and works.

A fully-illustrated catalogue will accompany *Identity, Interrupted* with texts by Marta Kolomayets, director of the Institute of International Education in Ukraine, and Kathrine Page, Gretchen Hupfel Curator of Contemporary Art at The Delaware Contemporary.

Exhibition hours: Tuesday through Sunday, 12:00 to 6:00 PM, or by appointment.

For further information: Please contact Olena Sidlovych, executive director, at (212) 288-8660 or mail@ukrainianinstitute.org.

Image: Ola Rondiak, *Identity*, 2018, mixed media on canvas, 75 x 63 inches.

About Art at the Institute

Celebrating its sixty-fourth year of activity, **Art at the Institute** is the visual arts programming division of **The Ukrainian Institute of America**. Since its establishment in 1955, Art at the Institute organizes projects and exhibitions with the aim of providing post-war and contemporary Ukrainian artists a platform for their creative output, presenting it to the broader public on New York’s Museum Mile. These heritage projects have included numerous exhibitions of traditional and contemporary art, and topical stagings that have become well-received landmark events.

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