

# *Skarbnytsya Third Edition:*

## *Text Compendium*

<b>Kseniya Bilyk</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Babyn Buchok</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Basny Rugs</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Ayla Dmyterko</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Aleksander Kryzhanovskyi</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Mary Lydon</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Eva Repyah</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Sergiy Romashov</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Timur Rostovyï</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Salt Salome</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Maksym Son</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Tamara Turliu</b>	<b>18</b>

Born out of Glasgow artists' response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine, Skarbnytsya is an exhibition and sale celebrating Ukrainian artists. The Ukrainian word for 'treasure box,' Skarbnytsya is a curious arrangement of objects, familiar and uncanny, intricate and extraordinary.

As a team of Glasgow-based creators with personal ties to Ukraine, we are driven by a shared commitment to amplifying the voices of those affected by war. Our collective effort is dedicated to forging meaningful connections between communities. Skarbnytsya is a tapestry of resilience and creativity: through it, we affirm the importance of solidarity in times of crisis.

Our inaugural sale showcased the works of 12 Ukrainian artists and 14 independent brands from all over the country. Each piece told a story of resilience and creativity amidst adversity. The tactility of the hybrid show/sale bridged a tangible, accessible link between makers in both Ukraine and Glasgow. Expanding our reach in the second sale, we welcomed Scottish and international counterparts alongside even more Ukrainian artists. Through spatial curation, we traced a thematic passage from Ukraine to Glasgow, mirroring the interconnectedness of artistic expression across borders.

*Skarbnytsya: Third Edition* carries with it the weight and curiosity of transition and journey. The Celtic symbol of the labyrinth is the crest of arms for this exhibition: the space will be labyrinthine, playful and inquisitive, coaxing the viewer to explore the environment. The body of the show is its craft and folk initiatives. Each kind of making is a journey within itself; intricacy and character slowly and scrupulously marked into each weaving, tapestry, pottery, painting and textile.

Artists from Ukraine and Glasgow will be connected through their different, parallel mythologies. Invisible webs will be made visible.

*Kseniya Bilyk*

Ksenia Bilyk creates large-scale handmade canvases using tapestry and wool. She vivisects genetic invasions, urban environments, and medical experiments within the modern cities of Ukraine. Bilyk takes the familiar and triggers the visual unconscious, reversing and deconstructing visual propaganda and the homogeneity of mass memory. Using soft, muted edges and textures, she pulls sharp and confronting concepts into a gentler medium that catches the viewer off-guard.

The diptych “Stone Cossack Cross” is dedicated to the religious monuments erected upon the grave of a fallen soldier.

Inspired by Valeriy Malyna’s anthology, Bilyk’s work for *Skarbnytsya* explores the resonance of stone crosses across Ukraine. In a concrete transcendence of time and history, these objects immortalise the thousands of those fallen who gave their life for the freedom of Ukraine. Bilyk’s tapestries, as a secondary ode to the object-memorials, compound this immortalisation across mediums and fields.

Bilyk works within the renaissance of interest in restoring the lost fragments of Ukraine’s historical and cultural heritage. She identifies the cross as a certain burden, path, and mission of the Ukrainian soul through suffering to affirmation, in the name of the homeland for which millions were crucified.

*Babyn Buchok*

Ivan Mudrak and Irutsa Slepnyuk make up the Babyn Buchok. Their work aims to unearth, protect and preserve lost and hidden treasures found across the Bukovnya region in the Chernivtsi Oblast. Their finds are happenstance, approximated only by cursory research of villages on Google Maps. They now lead expeditions regularly to the region, for friends and for others who are interested in preservation, in efforts to recover and celebrate its identity.

For Skarbnytsya, Babyn Buchok is donating bespoke recreations of authentic glass frames found during these explorations.<sup>1</sup> Each frame is a unique research and reproduction of the ancient tradition of glass painting. The style of painted frames in Bukovnya is distinctive, characterised by deep reds, greens and golden yellows flowing and swelling over each other in saturated floral tessellations. They embody a certain naïvite and lightness, often one of many in a constellation of charms adorning homes in the region. The tender and sinuous composition of *Skarbnytsya* is epitomised in the careful craftsmanship and conservation of these works of glass.

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<sup>1</sup>The originals are unique and retained for the sake of preservation.

### *Basny Rugs*

Basny is a Ukrainian brand of rugs that weaves together local Carpathian weaving traditions with a modern visual language. Crafted by hand with centuries-old techniques passed down through generations, using natural dyes and pure, novel imagery contributed by the in-house team and collaborating artists, Basny establishes a site where art, tradition and application no longer stand apart. Contemporary forms of aesthetics and authentic regional craft converge in the interior space.

In Ukrainian dialects, “basny” refers to a fantasy or a tale with mystical and abstract qualities. It carries a sense of imaginative storytelling, often with elements of folklore or myth woven into it—here, the name echoes the project’s idiosyncrasy in its binding of utility and ritual with offbeat modern artistic expression. The Random Walker series, a collaboration with Path Mode design studio, epitomises Basny’s disruptive approach. With designs developed using random image generators, the series’ name captures the unpredictability of the forms, microcosmic of the abstraction of natural elements: forest, moss, mushrooms, rock erosions, tree bark.

Each rug in the series features a duochromatic colour scheme, intentionally both contrasting and harmonious. The three designs demonstrate an array of spontaneous natural imagery: *Teifi* showcases a chaotic and structured visual rhythm, inspired by the mountain river curves and rock veins lacerating the monolithic cliff. *Ystra* is dedicated to the uninhibited beauty of the Ukrainian Gorgany mountain range, reinventing itself under the influence of chemical and physical symbiosis in the restless movement of nature. *Reon* mimics a night scene, where snow blankets the landscape beneath the moonlight. A strict pattern captures the romanticism of a serene winter view in the light of a late sky.

*Ayla Dmyterko*

Glasgow-based artist and researcher Ayla Dmyterko deconstructs visual symbols and oral histories within the Canadian-Ukrainian diasporic community, marrying auto-ethnographic writing with studio-led investigations. Taking Walter Benjamin's 'angel of history' and Svetlana Boym's ideas on the future of nostalgia, Dmyterko muses on the tempestuous present and forms visions of an enduring future, while situating the past as a chameleonic force, in an ethical approach to the edges of history.

Her practice interrupts the otherwise exponentially urgent rhythm of the information age, constructing meditations of colour, fantasy and form that draw on immutable symbols and folkloric surrealism. Drawing on pareidolia—the perceived recognition of significant patterns in spontaneous forms—Dmyterko intends to trigger nostalgia through this symbol-making twofold: restoratively and reflectively. Synchronously, her work streams out of an intentional gambit to relieve solostalgia, a neologism referring to the feeling of existential distress caused by environmental change in an inhabited place.

Dmyterko positions her work per her unique diasporic experience, as it exists within the larger mythos of cultural memory. Born in Canada, two generations removed from her family's migration from Ukraine to Canada through the Glasgow Ports, her work responds to a felt disconnect between the contemporary climate in Ukraine and her lived experience, and intends to incubate a transnational, intergenerational history within her complex reliquary of folkloric signification wrested from the natural and supernatural worlds.

*'Places, like memories, alter fluidly through time in relation to the manner in which they are exchanged, moderated, and exposed through different contexts.'*<sup>2</sup>

*'Most urgent to my practice is not only the preservation of cultural memory or upholding a long lineage of peasant revolt, but rather examining how diasporic tendencies are stabilised and destabilised amidst globalisation.'*<sup>3</sup>

*'History is the subject of a structure whose site is not homogenous, empty time, but time filled by the presence of the now.'*<sup>4</sup>

*'The nostalgic desires to obliterate history and turn it into private or collective mythology, to revisit time as space, refusing to surrender to the irreversibility of time that plagues the human condition.'*<sup>5</sup>

*'His eyes are staring, his mouth is open, his wings are spread. This is how one pictures the angel of history. His face is turned toward the past. Where we perceive a chain of events, he sees one single catastrophe which keeps piling wreckage and hurls it in front of his feet. The angel would like to stay, awaken the dead, and make whole what has been smashed. But a storm is blowing in from Paradise; it has got caught in his wings with such a violence that the angel can no longer close them. The storm irresistibly propels him into the future to which his back is turned, while the pile of debris before him grows skyward. This storm is what we call progress.'*<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Dmyterko, Ayla.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Benjamin, Walter. [Benjamin says 'Jetztzeit' and indicates by the quotation marks that he does not simply mean an equivalent to Gegenwart, that is, present. He clearly is thinking of the mystical nunc stans.]

<sup>5</sup> Boym, Svetlana. "The Future of Nostalgia."

<sup>6</sup> Benjamin, Walter. "Theses on the Philosophy of History."

*Aleksander Kryzhanovskyi*

Oleksandr Kryzhanovskyi (b. 1997) is a multidisciplinary artist based in Kyiv. Mostly working with painting, graphics and sculpture, his practice characterises the threshold between the subconscious and the conscious with a grounded solemnity, posing gentle figures amongst modest overlays of contraptions and environmental structures, composed of untethered coils and bars. There's an airy existentialism, but the state bearing it is earthy and calm, organic and intimate. Memory is suffused with history and disseminated into the present, the rifts of the external and internal worlds suspended in a tension which is more introspective and quiet than imposing and chaotic. A warmth in shape and colour tempers the weight of the viscid imaginings inside; an unassuming geode carefully cracked to show the depth of its internal formations. Kryzhanovskyi's work is reflective, studying the conflict between the subconscious world and the chain of causation. The imagined states deliberately echo the oscillation between chaos and order portrayed by the Babylonian creation mythology, where the goddess Tiamet, the beginning of the universe as a formless, primordial chaos, is reconstructed into order by the god Marduk, who forms the heavens and the earth from her body.

As with all of the artists exhibited in *Skarbnytsya*, Kryzhanovskyi is affiliated with the new wave of post-war art in light of the full-scale Russian invasion in 2022, and fixed within a wider and protracted movement reclaiming and asserting Ukrainian identity and cultural sovereignty against imperialistic narratives.

*'There is a tragic clash between Truth and the world. Pure undistorted truth burns up the world.'*<sup>7</sup>

*'Individualism has chained man in itself and in the forms by which man has separated himself from other people and from the world. These shackles fall, these forms are overthrown. A person comes out to community. A universalist, collectivist era is coming. A person ceases to believe that he can protect himself by separating himself from others through rationalist thinking, humanistic morality, formal law, liberalism, democracy and parliament. All these forms reveal only deep discord in humanity, disunity, lack of one spirit, all of them are forms of legalized separation, treaties to leave each other alone, alone, unwillingness to choose the truth.'*<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Nikolai Berdyaev

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

*Mary Lydon*

Mary Lydon is a multidisciplinary artist from Ukraine, living in Glasgow. The founder of *Skarbnytsya*, her current work addresses the erosion of Ukrainian culture by Russia. Her projects traverse themes of life, death and rebirth, reflecting the circumstances of her homeland and addressing the trauma of forced displacement. Continually working with the immense visual power of symbols and traditional motifs, Lydon incorporates flags, coats of arms and other emblematic material into her constructions, from neo-tribal manhole covers to modernised coats of arms. The destruction of the war on Ukrainian culture is mirrored in both technique and intent—eroding family photos with bleach to illustrate the impact of radiation on daily life, to a perpetual commitment to utilising public and abandoned spaces in Ukrainian cities for her work to advocate for the safeguarding of Ukrainian visual heritage.

Her practice hinges itself on experimentation: refusing to repeat herself, she has metamorphosed across mediums, retaining the same interest in symbol and ornament whether painting, stitching or engraving. Her work is patient and considered, often large spectacles that are elaborate down to the smallest mark. For the observer, this invites a sublime experience, a reckoning with the self brought about by infinite divisibility at such scale. Every solitary stroke accumulates into an emphatic, grand and imposing corpus of iconography.

Her origins in mural-making and graffiti stem from an inveterate impulse to transform and reclaim abandoned sites and objects through large-scale paintings, and the consequential documenting and spotlighting of on-site artefacts. This impulse has led Lydon into her practice today—to this exhibition: *Skarbnytsya*; the showcasing and preservation of curios and ephemera made around and in light of this crucial moment in Ukrainian identity.



*Volodymyr Pavlov*

Volodymyr Pavlov is an artist from Yalta based in Kyiv. Making graphic works and printing across mediums, producing limited edition zines and screen prints, his works reflect an anthropological curiosity about human interaction with the environment. The fine detail of his drawings springs from the careful attention to layering and texture crucial to his background in graffiti—though these works have a sombre and patient quality; time spent. The complex interplay of light and dark, precisely constructed, explores the ceaseless undulation of tension to harmony in the sensitive dovetailing of human-made and natural elements in hybrid environments.

*Sergiy Romashov*

Sergiy Romashov is an artist from Ukraine, temporarily relocated to Berlin. His work shrouds a long history of medieval printmaking aesthetics in a contemporarily resonant and explicit commentary on the human condition in turbulent times. Alloying familiar imagery—reminiscent of illuminated manuscripts or woodcut illustrations—with dense and intricate gothic leitmotifs, Romashov’s works amalgamate history, ornament and socio-political undercurrents (and overcurrents) into a distinctive and highly symbolic artistic language. The nature of these works is palpably informed by his Ukrainian heritage against the backdrop of the continuing war, issuing a sense of dutiful timelessness intersecting with the overwhelming shadow of the present day. The stark, high-contrast visual language and intricate textural marks extend through the breadth of his practice into his works on paper and on skin.

For *Skarbnytsya*, the work Romashov has proffered demonstrates his skilled handling of traditional printmaking techniques from dry point and etching to woodcut and linocut. From visceral tangles of organic forms saturating structured frames; warrior figures stood amidst symbols of conflict and carnage, and decorative borders enclosing enigmatic central vignettes, these works are visually arresting: unsettling, serpentine and monochromatic.

*Timur Rostovyï*

Timur Rostovyï's work constructs a primitive surrealist reality, breaking down the gap between the conscious and the subconscious. His approach is two-pronged: first chance, and then gesture. Enveloping the observer in an earthy textural and moody fever of symbols and associations, bold strokes form skewed perspectives and uneven shapes to

approach themes of religious narratives, madness, anticipation and urban spaces in relation to nature. There is a degree of eerie mirage at play, but the darkness present is expansive and suggestive rather than hostile – a leitmotif within the art presented in *Skarbnytsya*.

*“Our world is chaos and uncertainty. Art, as a sign of the viability of society, should establish at least a certain vector of movement.”*<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Rostovyï

*Salt Salome*

*"I am at my best when I am sinuous and slippery."*<sup>10</sup>

*"Hold Infinity in the palm of your hand  
And Eternity in an hour"*<sup>11</sup>

*"But when we sit together, close, we melt into each other with phrases. We are edged with mist. We make an unsubstantial territory."*<sup>12</sup>

*"What shadow is ever separated from its maker?  
Do you see?  
The shadow and its maker are one and the same."*<sup>13</sup>

Salt Salome is comprised of two filmmakers, Salome and Svitlo. Out of their synthesis comes a devout intention to lay bare memory and grief, entwining folkloric and primordial imagery with sublime and highly conceptual worldbuilding, transmuting towards a liquid future. If photographs are particles, singular and frozen, then film, for Salt Salome, is a wave: the 'ripple when captured in moving time'.<sup>14</sup> Their filmography is alive, released amongst chaos and healing through hazy and hallucinatory repose. The film presented for *Skarbnytsya* is a surface with no boundaries, twisting, repeating over and over at the finest of scales the infinitude of nature. The thing about light is that it never stops moving, and here there is a carnival of light, determinedly both sincere and arcane.

Taking influence from Bergson's theory of mind-time and memory-images, and Beckett's ever-questioning, inchoate stuttering in *The Unnameable*, the narrative is obscured, intentionally, its evasiveness necessary in constructing this strange and speculative mimodrame. There is a coolness present, more cool than warm, but not unsafe, a certain serenity untroubled by the emotional disquiet. The cycle back into birdsong at the close lends an arborescence, a concentric circle forming over itself; an obscure geometry.

Salt Salome's filmography rests on a theory of quantum mechanics, a proposition Salome and Svitlo dub the "Many-Worlds Interpretation" [MWI]: presupposing the existence of parallel universes, the observer 'splits into several (presumably, infinitely many) versions.' A textural cacophony, the film's sonic foreground and background collapse into a confronting kaleidoscope of motifs; howling wind chimes, cows like sirens, frogs creaking—at points deep, at points shrill, but the videography patient, if precarious, human, ringing.

*"But I had visions, I felt everything, as if we were twins of love who had been separated we are in Ukraine, the whole family is defending the country, fighting*

*And we are the keepers of the hearth, we grow vegetables and berries and dreams of helping people get out of the darkness into the light*

*we live in a small village, I think we are the strangest in this village*

...

*We want to change the world*

*We are very naïve, but we are like delicate flowers with strong roots deep in the ground"*

– Salome

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<sup>10</sup> Clarice Lispector

<sup>11</sup> William Blake, *Auguries of Innocence*

<sup>12</sup> Virginia Woolf, *The Waves*

<sup>13</sup> Sufi, *The Conference of the Birds*

<sup>14</sup> Claire St Clair, [Aurascience](#)

*Maksym Son*

Maksym Son was born in Lutsk in 1999 and now lives and works in Ukraine. With beginnings in graffiti, he consciously began to focus his artistic career in 2018 and graduated from Lutsk National Technical University in 2021. He has since shifted his practice into mixing medium experiments with graphics, collage, audio, video and photography. His works exhibit the interconnectedness of nature and memory, making tender depictions of landscapes and superimposing sketched symbols and illustrations onto their veneer, disparate and lyrical. These overlaid drawings—from husky silhouettes of sibylline figures and considered, lighthearted digital hieroglyphs, to childlike finger paintings and rough nature illustrations—though made with more singular markings than the amorphous scenes they are appended to, do not feel harsh or discordant. Rather, these tchotchkes are pressed into the landscapes like flowers found in the domain of their making, laminating memory and esoterica into their very skin.

*Tamara Turlion*

Tamara Turlion was born in 1995 in the village of Pavlivka, in the Cherkasy region. Exploring primitivism in her painting, alongside working with sculptural monumental techniques of fresco and mosaic, her approach allows her to distil thorny emotions and narratives into accessible and commanding visual statements. Originally working across graphics, painting, video, mosaic, and sculpture, since the full-scale invasion of Ukraine by russia in 2022, Turlion has been developing novel approaches to the technique of *vytynanky*.<sup>15</sup>

For *Skarbnytsya*, Turlion has made a series of vegetable cuttings, entitled *Гарбузові родичі* or *Pumpkin Relatives*. This takes from the familiar folk song sung by children during the harvest season in Ukraine—as with many childrens’ songs, it carries veins of hope, future generations and the continuity of life. These *vytynanky* lay bare their strength and come to life when exposed to light. In-fitting with *Skarbnytsya*’s anchor of folklore and the preservation of cultural heritage, Turlion’s paper cuttings provide solace and continuity, a poignant and pared back contrast to the complexity of experience enkindled by the war.

*‘You can work with your hands, tearing off pieces, gently and carefully, or with anger.’<sup>16</sup>*

*‘The pumpkin walks around the vegetable garden, asking its family, ‘Are you safe and sound? The pumpkin’s wife, a yellow melon, says, ‘We are all safe and sound!’<sup>17</sup>*

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<sup>15</sup> The traditional artform of papercutting, native to Ukraine from the fifteenth century.

<sup>16</sup> Turlion

<sup>17</sup> *Ой чи живі, чи здорові / Всі родичі гарбузові?*



*Fata Morgana*

Fata Morgana's namesake calls to mirages within nature—an optical phenomenon stemming from rays of light bending through air layers. Her works manifest these false, stretched and inverted reflections of distant objects. Characters plastered with knowing smiles, and lurid pools of colour set against illusive grids, her paintings are each a self-contained environment part of a mischievous and eccentric wider world. A jesterlike and darting pandemonium, naive, uncanny and confronting.

Skarbnytsya has fabricated silk scarves with prints of Fatamorgana's works, a preferred medium for the artist.

*NADRA.CONCEPT*

NADRA.CONCEPT is a coalescence of contemporary artists with masters of traditional crafts. Created together with Ukrainian tattoo artist Sasha Lu, and ceramicists Oleksandr and Polina Maslii, each candle is coiled from porcelain clay, glazed and fired in searing alchemical embrace; every piece imbued with the precise conditions of its making.

From the untamed Carpathian winds materialises the free-spirited Povitrylya, the Ukrainian mythological daughter of the mountains. As bright as her own myth, emerging from the apogee of boundless joy, her energy when illuminated diffuses tranquillity and fullness felt amongst the peaks.

*Skarbnytsya*, a propounder of the gravity of fairy tales and childhood faith, showcases the “Air” candle from NADRA's first drop—a sculptural vessel giving form to this lightness; the Air descending to us on its wings from the Ukrainian peaks at the moment of oppression: a cracking of the light.