

## Works on display

In the two video works *Dedicated to the Youth of the World II & III* (2019, 2023), **Roman Khimei and Yarema Malashchuk** document the internationally famous Cxema raves, which have taken place in various post-industrial locations and urban spaces in Ukraine and beyond since 2014. In the 2019 version, Kyiv youth reclaim their post-revolutionary city in an intimate and yet massive nocturnal ritual – an embodiment of absolute freedom. In 2023, a reenactment of the film was created against a new backdrop: in the face of the permanent threat posed by the war, the artists decided to film the party again with a special focus on members of the community. After an ongoing pandemic and the full-scale invasion by the Russian occupation forces, they replaced the former rave participants with other protagonists. While in *Dedicated to the Youth of the World II* the meticulously focused camera follows the revellers into the next day, whose dawn many do not seem to accept. The remake, by contrast, intends to capture the devastating reality that has since emerged and that no one would have imagined four years earlier.

The **Óstov Collective** was founded in 2022 in response to the Russian war of aggression in Ukraine. Their participatory practice centres on the investigation of sound in the context of war. Military conflicts have an enormous influence on the public soundscape. In addition to the bangs of weapons, they include various noises, voices and music, each of which form different acoustic backdrops depending on the temporal and spatial context. They shape the war experiences of the respective societies, with certain sounds becoming inscribed in the collective memories. The sound installation *Why do we always sing sad songs? II* (2024) is based on an open call, which invited Ukrainians to make the sound of war audible and has taken place annually since the beginning of the full-scale invasion. The composition produced for the exhibition at Kunsthau Hamburg is the fourth work created from the archive of these submissions. Through its specific arrangement of sirens, nature sounds, conversations, prayers and sounds of explosions or combat, it focuses on rhythmic aspects and attempts to formulate a subjective perception of the ongoing war against Ukraine at the present time.

The video compilation *Dances at the Dead. Archive* (2023, ongoing) is dedicated to Yura Stetsyk, an artist and friend of **Anna Potyomkina**, who was killed in the war in 2022. Only a short time after his death the Ukrainian Christmas festival Koliada began, where the associated traditional dances were performed with great intensity in spite of the mourning for numerous victims of war. Already in pre-Christian times, the Hutsuls, an ethnic group native to the Carpathian Mountains, would transform even the saddest events such as funerals into humorous theatrical spectacles. "Dances with the dead" were a common element in Hutsul funeral customs up to the beginning of the 20th century. They involved a cycle of plays which took place in the house of the deceased. To symbolize the transition from life to death, ceremonies were used that would break with the norms of secular life, such as travesty. Rituals based on cosmological myths were intended to make the event more tangible. Anna Potyomkina's archive is a collection of short video clips of various dances performed by Ukrainian friends and acquaintances – solo and collective, melancholy and hysterical, abroad and in Ukraine. In the scope of this personal observational study, the artist records the changes in movements and bodies arising from situations of crisis.

In his video installation *The Battle over Mazepa* (2023), **Mykola Ridnyi** uses rap as a musical vehicle to illuminate divergent interpretations and contradictory narratives of history. At the centre of the work is the political and military leader of the Zaporozhian Cossacks Ivan Mazepa (1639–1709), who fought in the Great Northern War (1700–1721) to achieve the foundation of an independent state in Ukraine. Many different portrayals relating to his role exist and have been passed down in theatre plays and opera productions, for instance. Ridnyi summarizes the history of Mazepa's reception in a supplementary brochure. *The Battle over Mazepa* presents a clash between two works of world literature: while the British poet Lord Byron, in his dramatic poem *Mazeppa* (1817–1818), portrayed the hetman as a romantic hero seized by love the Russian national poet Alexander Pushkin portrayed him as a traitor in *Poltava* (1828–1829), thus propagating the colonial stance of the Russian empire. By inviting four rappers from different national and cultural backgrounds to restage the poets' texts in the form of a rap battle, Mykola Ridnyi interprets Ivan Mazepa from a contemporary

perspective. In supplementary interviews, the performers reflect on the original material and their own subject positions.

The inspiration for **Iza Tarasewicz's** sculptural installations crafted from oxidized steel derives from the rituals and resilience of rural communities. Revolving around the dynamics of protest, *Revelation of Powers* (2022) in its composition of individual elements is reminiscent of both barricades and stroboscopic movements. The group of sculptures forge a link between the cyclical regularity of agricultural work and the rapid triple time of the mazurka dance, deriving from the Polish landscape of Mazovia. Through these references, the installation juxtaposes dance choreographies with the use of weapons during acts of attack or defence. *Looped Processions II* (2022) addresses the decline in importance of traditional agricultural methods due to modernisation, war and environmental disasters. In the context of the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine, both groups of works are to be understood as a tribute to collective resistance and solidarity. Against the backdrop of the fight against drought and the lack of access to natural harvests in many regions, they also address current issues of global food distribution and Russian invaders' blockade of grain supplies from Ukraine.

The series *Maskirovka* (2016–2017) by **Tobias Zielony** comprises photographs and a video work. It sheds a light on the queer underground and techno scene in Kyiv in the post-Maidan era. The title refers to the Russian war tactic of deception and disinformation known by the same name. Situations in clubs as well as practices of masking, disguise and identity concealment are thus juxtaposed with tactics of deception on the battlefield. The photographs portray the many facets of a youth culture that conveys the political and societal changes occurring after the revolution in a heterogeneous manner. They depict a new generation: a young LGBTQI community that challenges nationalism, neoliberalism and social and sexual conventions and gives rise to a world of emotional resistance. Through images taken from television to then be edited one by one, the video features scenes from a club, footage of the Maidan movement along with media reports on Kyiv and the front line. Its mode of switching rapidly between the portraits and scenes results in fleeting impressions – like fragments of overlapping memories succeeded by new images. In his work, the artist emphasizes the complexity and ambivalence of reality in present-day Ukraine. Images, masquerades and the exertion of influence are a part of the war as much as they are a part of peaceful resistance.