

SCATTERED TRENDS RDM COM MUNIS TIES

PROGRAM FOR ARTISTIC TANDEM WORKS ON HOME AND FORCED BORDERS, MIGRATION

Insha Osvita and Asortymentna kimnata with the support of the Robert Bosch Foundation and Goethe-Institut, September 2024-January 2025

«scattered communities» program aims to support collaboration among Ukrainian artists who have found themselves on different sides of the border due to the war — both in Ukraine and various European countries. The program offers funding for collaborative projects, mobility grants and opportunities for experience exchange.

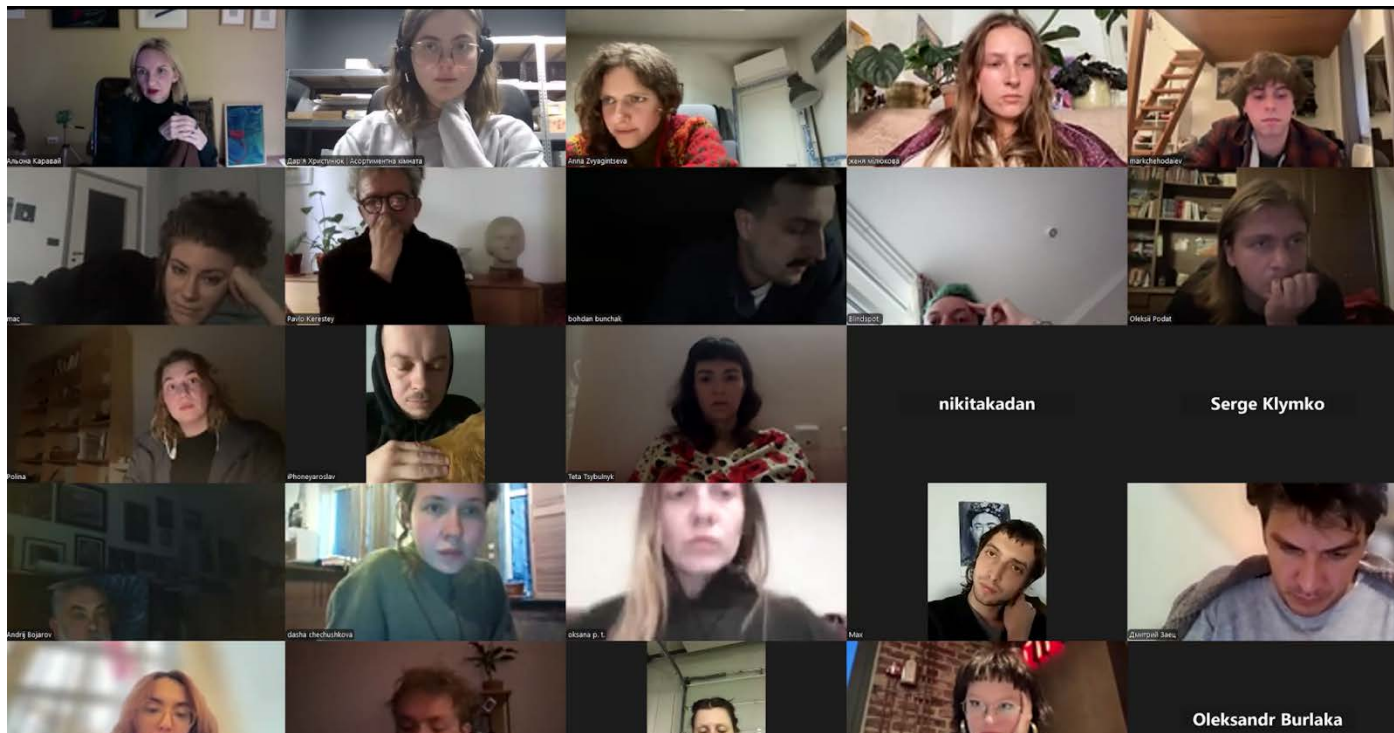
Many artists are experiencing different realities — life on the front lines, forced displacement or safety — which creates tension within communities. Over 20% of cultural sector professionals have left the country, and the number of Ukrainian refugees in Europe continues to grow. The program seeks to restore horizontal connections in communities through art and reduce the tension caused by differing war experiences.

PROGRAM LAUNCH, PARTICIPANT SELECTION AND ONLINE MEETINGS

In September 2024, an open call was announced for artists wishing to participate in the program. Participants submitted applications with descriptions of their ideas and motivations for collaboration. As a result, we received 311 applications, from which 26 artists were selected, including those living in Ukraine, Germany, Austria, France, Italy, Portugal, the United States and the United Kingdom. This stage allowed us to form a group with diverse experiences — from those in forced exile to artists who remained in Ukraine, as well as those with experience on the front lines.



In total, the program hosted about a dozen online meetings. Among them, two were focused on finding a partner for collaboration, and one was a discussion meeting dedicated to the topic of connections and ruptures within the artistic community. There were also thematic online meetings, where topics such as (re) cancelling, the hierarchy of trauma, the psychological dimension of tensions, linguistic scholasticism, love for the (non)close, and accessible solidarity practices were discussed. The meetings have also become an important platform for exchanging experiences between artists from different life situations and jointly searching for new forms and ways of artistic interaction.



PUBLIC ARTISTIC ONLINE DISCUSSIONS AND PRACTICE PRESENTATIONS

One of the key elements of the program was public online artistic discussions. During each session, one artist from Ukraine and another from Europe presented their artistic practice and shared their experiences of living during the war and forced displacement. This allowed participants to better understand each other and establish a deeper creative dialogue.

A TALK WITH THE ARTISTS: ANDRIY BOYAROV AND MYKOLA RIDNYI ABOUT THEIR WORKS AFTER 2022 (AND BEFORE)

An online public talk with Andriy Boyarov, a media artist and independent curator who currently lives and works between Ukraine, Poland, and Estonia, and Mykola Ridnyi, a Kharkiv-based artist who currently lives and works in Berlin, including teaching at the Berlin University of the Arts. They spoke about individual projects in their practice with a focus on periods of migration.

The text version of the talk was published by Artslooker — one of opinion setters in the art scene in Ukraine.

POLE-PHONY. CONCERT-CONVERSATION WITH MYKOLA LEBED AND OLEKSIY PODAT

This was a conversation-live concert between Kyiv and Vienna. Mykola Lebed, a composer and musician from Rivne, who currently lives in Vienna, played and talked with Oleksiy Podat, a Kyiv-based composer and producer from Sloviansk, about field recordings using natural and anthropogenic sounds in his practice.

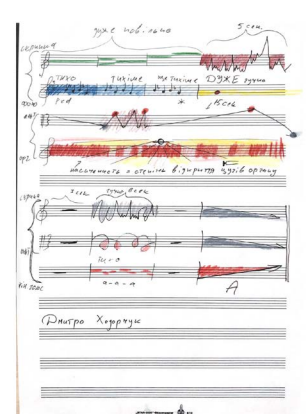
The text version of the part of this conversation is to be published soon by one of the Ukrainians media covering music.

CROSS-BORDER ART PROJECTS IN TANDEMS AND TRIO

The program provided funding for seven joint art projects created in tandem format. This funding contributed not only to the realization of ideas, but also to strengthening cooperation between artists from different countries and contexts. During this stage, the projects that most closely corresponded to the themes of borders, home and displacement were awarded.

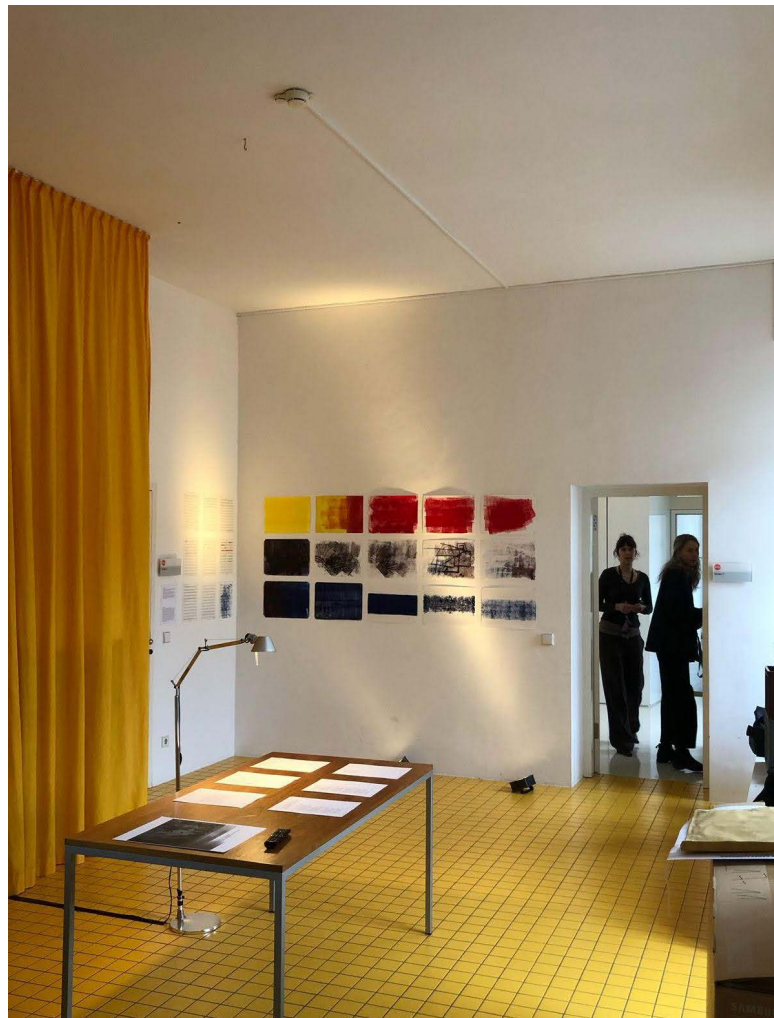
CURRENT FOLK (MYKOLA LEBED, YURIY HOLIK) IS A PARTICIPATORY PROJECT THAT EXPLORES CONTEMPORARY MIGRANT FOLKLORE BY DOCUMENTING EXPERIENCES AND PRACTICES OF IMPROVISATION.

The exploration focuses on individuals who have moved both by choice and by the force of war. Emigration and integration are never simple processes, and by examining the examples of previous waves, it becomes evident that diasporic art and communities often become disconnected and unfamiliar to their communities of origin.



This disconnection has inspired Mykola Lebed and Jura Golik to explore the cultural narratives of Ukrainian emigrants, blending auditory and visual storytelling techniques with intuitive and unconscious creation to capture the evolving state of folklore, now buried under the layers of globalization and pop culture. This is achieved through research sessions which consist of interviews with participants about their origins and background, workshops on intuitive visualization and intuitive music composition (similar to automatic writing) to collect the examples of narratives and symbols.

Mykola and Yura are still in the research stage, but they presented their first results on February 19th in Graz at the Center for Contemporary Art <rotor> and on the 25th in Vienna at MQ AiR Open Studio.



PENELOPE'S DREAMS (TETA TSYBULNYK, POLINA CHONI) IS AN ARTISTIC RESEARCH OF DREAMS THROUGH THE EXCHANGE OF IMAGES OF THE UNCONSCIOUS BETWEEN TWO ARTISTS LIVING ON DIFFERENT CONTINENTS

Polina Choni, an artist from Kyiv, and Theta Tsybulnyk, also from Kyiv, who now lives in the United States, exchanged dreams for several months. The dreams featured a lot of water and the sea, and the artists embodied the image of the sea in their weaving, based on the Greek myth of Penelope, who was weaving while waiting for Odysseus. According to the myth, Penelope wove during the day and at night she unwound everything she had done during the day. Hence the expression “Penelope’s work” — endless work that does not move forward, just like waiting for something.

In this tandem, Polina is doing textile work and Teta writes a literary text.



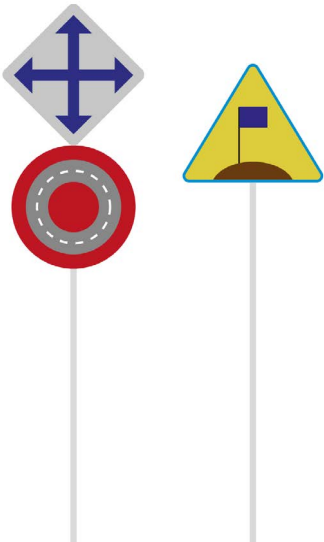
UKRAINIAN SOCIETY IN A STATE OF FORTIFICATION (DMYTRO ZAYETS, MARIA VASYLENKO) IS AN ART BOOK AND A COLLECTION OF ESSAYS ABOUT THE STATE OF FORTIFICATION IN UKRAINIAN SOCIETY IN 2023-2024

In this project, Dmytro Zayets, an artist and military officer from Kharkiv, created a series of essays, and Maria Vasylenko, an artist from Kyiv, illustrated them. This is a collection of sociological research data of Ukrainian culture from 2023 to 2024. There is a place for black humor, satire, mysticism; there is a fairy tale and even a lullaby. The texts of the collection are accompanied, and sometimes guided, by Maria Vasylenko's artistic signs. With their help, we can look at such different objects of the collection's research through visual metaphors and think about what such intertwining can give us in the analytical sense.

The book is published by the "lost library" publishing house at the end of February 2025.

СТРУКТУРА

ПОДЯКА	7	ВІЙНА	
ВСТУП. ВІЙНА ЗНИКАЄ, ПОКИ НА НЕЇ НЕ ДИВИШСЯ	8		
I. ОБ'ЄКТ — ВІЙНА	12	II. ВІЙНА — ТІЛО	36
12 Київ-алкоголік		36 Мінерали, що бігають й копають	
17 Гуссерль на Дніпрі		38 Я липкий і потний	
20 Вірремонт		41 Про реальність ТЦК	
23 Назад до Паноптикону		43 Домінуй, але солов'їною	
27 Плоска архітектура		46 Доля сліз	
30 Фукусіма+		48 Одищезя	
32 На захист вогню			
ОБ'ЄКТ		ТІЛО	
IV. ОБ'ЄКТ — МИСТЕЦТВО	60	III. МИСТЕЦТВО — ТІЛО	50
60 Збудований гнів		50 Соціологія Che.Bar	
64 Під тиском заздрості: рецензія на нечитання книги Бориса Філоненка		52 Допоміжний збір: інтимність у допомозі ЗСУ	
67 М'яка гниль, заспокійлива гниль, розквітлий сад		55 Пам'яті Вероніки Кожушко	
71 Політична теорія театру		56 На коліні Анни	
74 «Нічна темрява, що погойдує занавіску»			
76 Кого ви готові вбити, щоб врятувати Держпром?		ВІСЬ V. МИСТЕЦТВО — ВІЙНА	78
		78 Мистецтво як війна	
		ВІСЬ X. ОБ'ЄКТ — ТІЛО	81
		81 Про дотик	
		МИСТЕЦТВО	



MOUNDS, GRAVES, AND US (KSENIA POHREBENNIK, ANNA IVCHENKO, YEVHENIA MILIUKOVA) IS ABOUT SPACES OF MEMORY AND THE PRACTICE OF (NOT) RETURNING TO THE PLACES OF CHILDHOOD MEMORIES

Each of the artists has experienced migration in different ways: Ksenia Pohrebennik moved from Kherson to Spain when she was 9 years old, and after the war started, she returned to Ukraine, settling in Ivano-Frankivsk. Zhenia Miliukova is from Crimea and lived in Russia until 2022, when she moved to Lisbon. Anya Ivchenko, from Kyiv, returned to Ukraine after studying in Poland and is now continuing her studies in Berlin.

In December 2024 the artists met in person for the first time and went on a research trip to the Dnipro region. They visited the village where Ksenia spent her childhood, and within a radius of 4 km from the village there are two dozen mounds dating back to the second millennium BCo. The image of the mound is also present in Zhenia's early memories — she is from Sevastopol, but access to her places of memory is closed due to the occupation. Each of the girls expressed their views on childhood memories, personal places of memory, and returning to the symbolic “zero points” of their formation in a three-channel video essay.

Asortymentna kimnata plans to show this work in April.



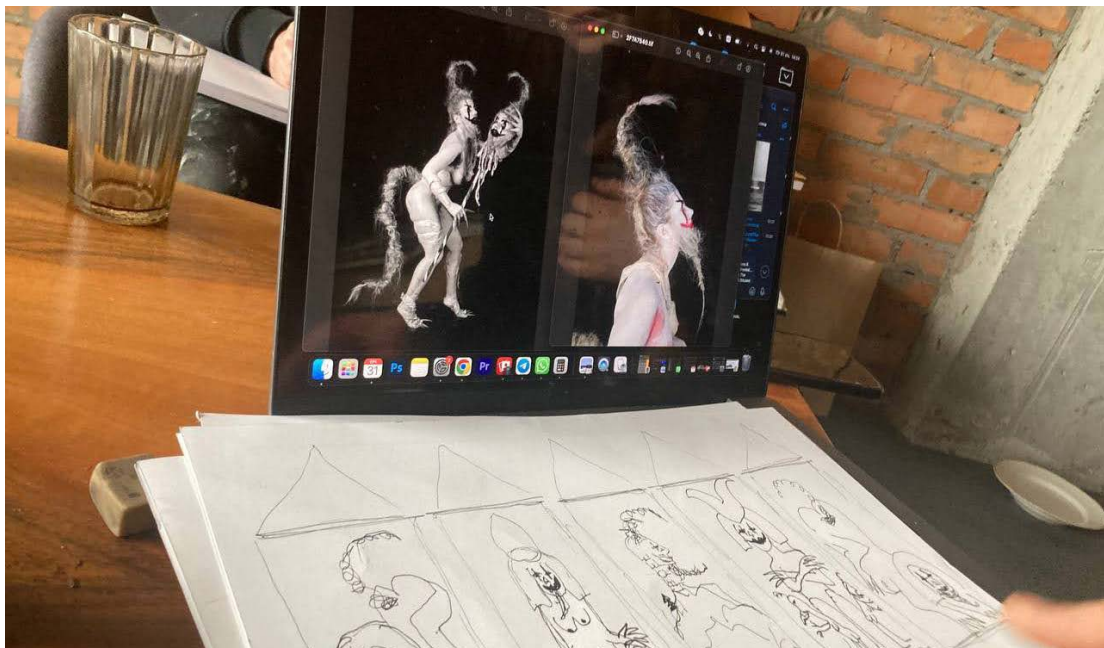
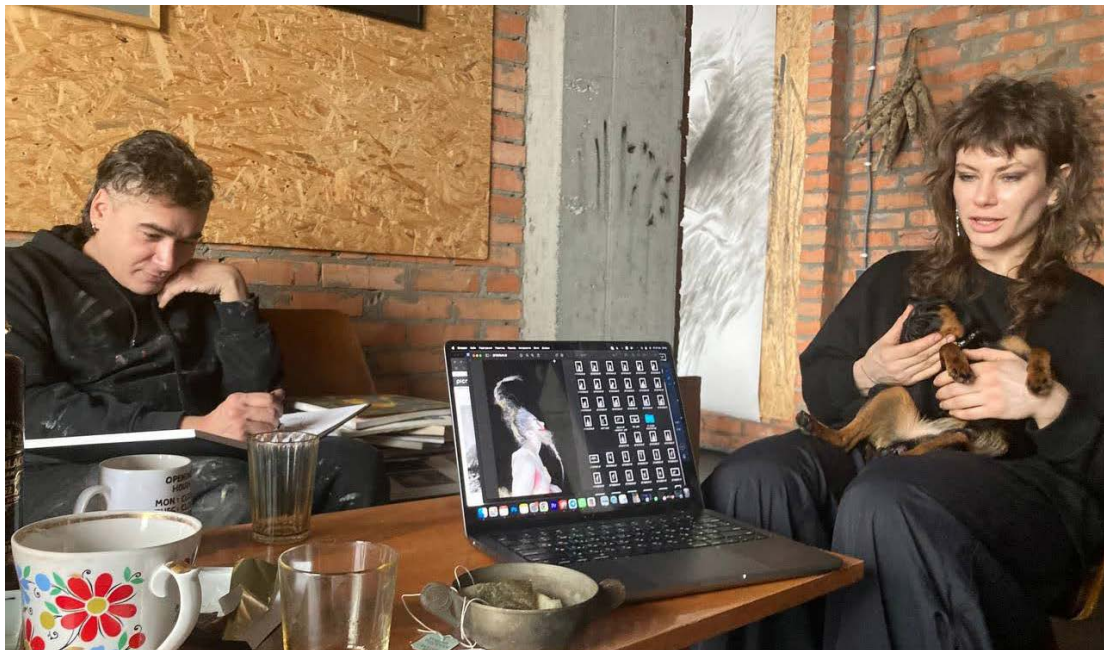
SELF-PORTRAIT (ANNA ZVYAGINTSEVA, MARK CHEGODAEV) IS A STUDY OF SECURITY SPACES THROUGH THE IMAGES OF EVERYDAY OBJECTS, THE PROCESSES OF THEIR DESTRUCTION AND RESTORATION

The project is based on a conversation between Ania Zvyagintseva, an artist from Kyiv, and Mark Chegodaev, a Kyiv-based artist currently living in Vienna. In their conversations, they shared the course of their daily routine and noticed small details that they used as an image of each other's modifications.

The Naked Room gallery is interested to exhibit this project



**MIRROR REFLECTS WITH A DELAY (NIKITA KADAN,
ALINA KLEITMAN) IS A DIALOGUE BETWEEN TWO
ARTWORKS THAT, THROUGH THE STUDY
OF MUSEUM EXHIBITIONS, COMPREHEND PATTERNS OF
IMPERIALIST BEHAVIOR THAT ARE COMPULSIVELY
REPRODUCED DESPITE THE LOSS
OF CONNECTION WITH REALITY**



SITUATIONAL FLOWERBEDS (DASHA CHECHUSHKOVA, ANYA NIKITIUK, KSENIA SHCHERBAKOVA) IS A SERIES OF EVENTS PLANTING FLOWER BEDS IN DIFFERENT CITIES/COUNTRIES, WHICH ARE INTENDED AS ACTS OF COMMEMORATION AND COEXISTENCE IN THE EXPERIENCE OF LOSS

The project was created in honor of the artist Artur Snitkus, but in general, it is an attempt at commemoration through gardening. In this way, the artists want to let the memory of Artur grow in different soil and invite others to join the action in memory of those who died during the war.

In March 2025, the artists will publish a guide-zine, as well as a video tutorial on how to use seed bombs and distribute the project. On January 18, Ksenia Shcherbakova also presented a project in Reading during her mobility within the program. A talk with Dasha Chechushkova and this project as well as about gardening practices as a commemoration tool was published on the platform “Past. Future. Art”.



M O B I L I T Y S U P P O R T FOR ARTISTS

In addition to funding for the creation of projects, the program also provided mobility support for artists. Four tandems received funding for mobility. During the trips, the artists explored the context in which their project partners live. This was an important step in ensuring real physical interaction.

In particular, Max Zatsarinnyi (originally from the small town of Zvenyhorodka in the Cherkasy region, now living in Berlin) visited Yura Golik in Graz, where he gave a public presentation of his practice. Ksenia Shcherbakova also visited Pavel Kerestey (another participant of the program) in Reading. Together they organized a two-day charity event with a screening of video works from “BIKOHE4KO” (which includes video works by 15 Ukrainian artists and was created between Ukraine, Germany and Austria), a workshop on planting a “Flowerbed that remembers something”, a charity garage sale, fundraising breaks and music.



QUOTES FROM PARTICIPANTS AND CURATOR

Participants (anonymous quotes from the evaluation form):

- “I think it was a very sensual match. I wanted to work with someone with different strengths from mine. With someone who can translate the sensual into words, who will decipher and complement. I think this happened. I am very grateful to you, the organizers, for the opportunity to speak and be in the circle of my own, to be noticed. It was valuable for me to feel the common pain and it seems to have added a lot of empathy. I don't know if our paths will cross in the future, but I would sincerely like that.”
- “For me, the most important thing that happened in the program was an attempt to talk. some things, questions, uncertainties, disputes change their qualities if they are voiced. if you do not maintain connections, they disintegrate by themselves due to distance and time, so an attempt to create conditions for dialogue is very valuable.”
- “There is no common trauma, language, or solidarity. To some extent, a scattered and traumatized (in different ways) social landscape has emerged. And this landscape is not divided only into “here” and “there”.
- “In general, I think that something very cool and important happened, but so far I can only describe it as “mutual exchange”.
- “There was a dialog, but no related action.”
- “There was no acceptance of all participants of the group and their views on certain issues.”
- “There is an impression that something did not happen, yes”
- “As if no one killed anyone (yay).”

One of the curators of the program, Yaroslav Futymsky:

“scattered communities” is a space full of different possibilities, some of which have happened, some of which are still unfolding and stretching, some of which have already been forgotten or postponed. a wide geography full of differences and emotionality, recognition but also rejection, repetition and forgetting, untimely or reactionary. I repeat after Alyona Karavay: this is a window of opportunity that still exists in difficult times, in a wide geography, between poisoned landscapes and mutilated landscapes, next to the (in)possibilities of language and the weaknesses of art. i thank the participants for their attentiveness and mutual support, for their emotionality and (in)comfort, for what was outlined and for their words (out of sight), for what was done and what will remain “in process.”

CONCLUSIONS

“Scattered Communities” program has become an important step in restoring ties between Ukrainian artists who found themselves on different sides of the border due to the war. It demonstrated how art can be a powerful tool for sharing experiences, supporting creative dialogue, and resolving cultural tensions caused by war and forced displacement. The program participants created a number of projects that open new horizons for the Ukrainian cultural community.