



Ukrainian Pavilion at the 59th International Art Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia

A Kharkiv-based artist, Pavlo Makov, was chosen to represent Ukraine at the Biennale Arte 2022.

A renowned artist, famous for his innovations in etching and printmaking, will premiere with his kinetic sculptural object – the *Fountain of Exhaustion. Acqua Alta*.

The pavilion, commissioned by the Ministry of Culture and Information Policy of Ukraine, will be curated by co-founders of [The Naked Room](#) gallery Lizaveta German, Maria Lanko and chief editor of [IST Publishing](#) Borys Filonenko.

The story of Fountain of Exhaustion dates back to the '90s in Kharkiv, Ukraine. Back then the artist worked with the theme of the Place: he printed etchings with a panorama of the city and produced artbooks and made photo documentation. Kharkiv at the time has been experiencing significant transformations in the urban landscape and social relations. Abandoned fountains, infrastructural accidents and water supply disruptions served as a background and sometimes additional confirmation of Makov's practices.

Once, an accident at the local treatment facility caused a four-week shutdown of the water supply and subsequent flooding. The city was full of water, yet there was no drinking water available. The general «lack of vitality» in Kharkiv in the '90s brought Makov to the metaphor of the fountain that is exhausting itself, rather than spurting water with power.

The place where the Lopan' and Kharkiv rivers confluence gradually led the artist to the concept of the funnel that splits into two and exhausts the water flow. Put together in a multiple-level construction, the funnels constitute *The Fountain of Exhaustion* – a paradoxical symbol of life in the place in Makov's works. Its water from the top funnel splits till only a few drops reach the bottom – just like two rivers that merge but still exhaust themselves.

Makov's local experience of being in his own place and his careful observation of its changes are inherent in his practices. They make the fountain relevant to the current global agenda by representing depletion of earth's resources, post-pandemic burnout, social media fatigue, and exhaustion by wars.

Fountain of Exhaustion has never been executed as a working fountain despite the artist's attempts to put it up in Kharkiv. Symbolically, for the first time, it will be presented in the city that is too familiar with high waters and exhaustion from human occupation – Venice.

"Changing water levels and peoples' attempts to master the uneven flow of the 'liquid world' are common metaphors to describe modernity, that has a very real embodiment in Venice. The alternation of flooding and drought that led to a lively discussion about the future of the city are important components of the project context in the Ukrainian pavilion" commented the curators of the Ukrainian pavilion Lizaveta German, Maria Lanko and Borys Filonenko.

The curators decided to stay away from flashy installations and digital solutions. Instead, they will give the audience a break and a chance to look inside and reflect on the current moment.

This approach led to their proposal of the pavilion to win the national competition organized by the Ministry of Culture and Information Policy.

"Art, embodying the symbolic value of the modern era, helps people to realize pressing problems. Sometimes this is the best way to bring sensitive issues to the fore. The art project by the artist Pavlo Makov reflects very symbolically the problem that affects every citizen of our planet. I am convinced that the project will worthily represent Ukraine at the exhibition and will resonate with everyone's heart," comments the Minister of Culture and Information Policy of Ukraine, Olexandr Tkachenko.

Venue

Arsenale

Campo de la Tana, 2169/f, 30122 Venezia VE, Italy

Dates

- April 23 to November 27, 2022

More information about Ukrainian Pavilion here:

- [Site](#)
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Press contact

[Katya Pavlevych](#)

Head of Communications

+1 415 640 3152

katya@thenakedroom.com