

Glory to Ukraine! The 24th edition of Designblok pays tribute to Ukrainian design and supports artists affected by the war

The twenty-fourth edition of Designblok with the theme FOREST will take place from 5 to 9 October 2022 in two exhibition spaces: the Gabriel Loci in Holečkova Street and the Museum of Decorative Arts in Prague. The special exhibition Glory to Ukraine! will honour the work of Ukrainian designers and brands that keep creating despite the ongoing war and offer them a platform for international presentation.

Seven progressive Ukrainian designers and studios will present their work at this year's Designblok, the largest Central European fashion and design festival, under the slogan **Glory to Ukraine!** [Sláva Ukrajině!] In the selection curated by the IHOR studio, co-founded by Czech designer with Ukrainian roots Ihor Sabadosh, Gabriel Loci will host the brands **Gunia Project, Gushka Wool, OLK manufactory / Oksana Levchenya, RE:QUIET, Seri/graph studio, and Sergey Zhernov**. Their common denominator is their original approach to the creative process, values strongly anchored in traditions, crafts and environmentally responsible production, and their relentless courage to continue working despite the difficult circumstances. The artists will present their work in a joint installation on the second floor of the Gabriel Loci Openstudio, in rooms 201A and 201D.

*"We created the project Glory to Ukraine! after carefully considering how best to help Ukrainian designers affected by the war unleashed by Russia over half a year ago. In cooperation with IHOR, we invited seven design studios and brands to Designblok and provided them with a dedicated space for their presentation. This allows them to attract the attention of the media, global gallerists, curators and manufacturers coming to the festival and move their careers forward. We are pleased that the cooperation with our partners enables us to support Ukrainian designers also financially: **we donate 600 euros to each of the exhibitors to cover the costs associated with the transport and the installation.** We believe that helping specific designers, whom we hope to get to Prague in person in cooperation with the Embassy of Ukraine in Prague, is the most efficient way for us to contribute to the protection and preservation of contemporary Ukrainian design,"* says **Jana Zielinski, Director of Designblok**, about the motivation behind the project Glory to Ukraine!.

"Russia's aggression against Ukraine has paralysed us and at the same time evoked in us the desire to help. We began to get actively acquainted with Ukrainian culture and artists. We were shocked by the losses of life but also by the Russian attacks on culture, art and history - an attempt to destroy everything that co-creates the Ukrainian nation. Through our existing communication channels, we shared information about current events and spread awareness about the work of Ukrainian artists. Our work reached several journalists, thanks to whom we could communicate the fate of Ukrainian artists to a wider audience in Czech and Slovak media. They also caught the interest of Jana Zielinski and Jiří Macek, the organisers of Designblok, who teamed up with us to come up with efficient ways to help. This is how the exhibition project Glory to Ukraine! was born. We believe that the opportunity to participate in

*this year's Designblok can help Ukrainian designers to overcome the difficult situation, establish important industry contacts and show that Ukrainian design is of world-class quality," say **Sara Matysová and Ihor Sabadosh**, founders of IHOR studio.*

This year's Designblok will offer an exclusive look at the work of one of the main protagonists of contemporary Ukrainian design, **Victoria Yakusha**, who works under the brand **FAINA**. Yakusha's designs will be exhibited for the first time in the Czech Republic in an independent installation in the Church of the Annunciation at Gabriel Loci throughout the duration of the festival. Here, you will be able to admire her designs of ceramic vases Hlyna, concrete lamps Soniah, sofa Plyn from her collection for the FAINA brand, as well as the latest design of the Sluhach lights, which she designed for the Czech manufacturer of lights and glass accessories, **Lasvit**.

Eva Slunečková, the head of the Czech edition of Elle Decoration magazine, who has been following Victoria Yakusha's work for a long time, accepted the curatorial supervision of the FAINA exhibition. *"The participation of the Ukrainian studio FAINA at this year's Designblok is a matter of the heart for me. Not only it is a symbolic support of Ukraine, but it is also a unique opportunity to get acquainted with the work of the leading designer and founder of FAINA, Victoria Yakusha, in the captivating environment of the Church of the Annunciation in the Gabriel Loci complex. FAINA furniture and accessories demonstrate the unprecedented - they combine traditional craftsmanship and contemporary design into an attractive whole. **The cultural heritage of Ukraine is transformed by FAINA into an up-to-date product - and better even - produced from the patented, environmentally friendly Ztista material.** The fact that the Sluhach luminaire, designed for the Czech company Lasvit, will also be on display in its Czech premiere is just the icing on the cake."*

The Ukrainian exhibition at the 24th Designblok is held under the auspices of the **Embassy of Ukraine** in the Czech Republic. *"Over time, the slogan 'Glory to Ukraine!' has become the national brand of Ukraine. It symbolises Ukrainian courage, freedom, creativity and unbridled energy, which is obvious at first sight, whether we are talking about Ukraine's armed struggle against Russian occupiers or culture. We always reach for the slogan 'Glory to Ukraine!' whenever we are threatened, and that is why I see great symbolic value in the fact that the Ukrainian exhibition at this year's Designblok will be called this. Ukrainian applied art is threatened by Russian aggression, but the artists do not lose their energy and freedom, with which they can captivate the world. **This is the first comprehensive Ukrainian exhibition at the largest Central European design festival, which I hope will become the beginning of a new tradition of presenting Ukrainian designers in the Czech Republic,**" says **Vitaly Usatyj**, Chargé d'affaires of the Embassy of Ukraine in Prague.*

Accommodation for the representatives of Ukrainian brands and the designers for the duration of Designblok in **Diplomat Prague and Andel's Prague hotels** was kindly offered by the **Vienna House Group**.

This year's Designblok will also welcome a representative of the Ukrainian press who will come to Prague. **Venya Brykalin, Fashion Director of Vogue UA magazine**, accepted our invitation to join the jury of the international Diploma Selection competition. Since the beginning of the Russian aggression, Ukrainian Vogue has served as a strong opinion platform reflecting current events.

The visual design of the exhibition follows the motif depicted on a collection of charity T-shirts, the sale of which was launched by the organizing team of Designblok and the Czech Grand Design Awards immediately after the invasion of Ukraine by Russian troops. After the charity sale, a total of CZK 180,000 was sent to the account of People in Need, and **the sale of T-shirts will continue during the festival in the Designblok Shop at Gabriel Loci. All proceeds will again go to People in Need SOS Ukraine fundraiser.**

The 24th edition of Designblok takes place from 5 to 9 October 2022. You will find more detailed information about exhibitions and accompanying programme at designblok.cz, where we are also pre-selling discounted festival passes

PHOTOGRAPHS AND INFO ABOUT THE EXHIBITORS: https://bit.ly/db22_SlavaUkrajine

If you are interested in an interview with the participants or additional information, do not hesitate to contact us.

PRESS ACCREDITATIONS:

Registration of press accreditations for the 24th edition of Designblok takes place via an online [form](#). You can request your accreditation by 4 October 2022.

PRESS CENTRE:: https://bit.ly/designblok2022_press

VISUAL DESIGNS AND VIDEOS: https://bit.ly/designblok2022_vizual

PR CONTACTS:

Patrik Florián | patrik.florian@profilmedia.cz, +420 725 280 613

Helena Novotná | helena.novotna@profilmedia.cz, +420 604 261 809