

Katya Kononenko

I am a Ukrainian contemporary artist. I was born in 1989, Kyiv region. I lived for three years in Lithuania (2022-2025). Now I live and work in Kyiv again.

Education

2025 - Mentoring program, Asortymentna kimnata, Ukraine
2024 - Mentoring program, Artscape, Lithuania
2023 - Mentoring program, Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen, Germany
2018-2019 - Abstract and figurative art, "Karas" Gallery, Kyiv, Ukraine
2013 - Painting, European School of Design, Kyiv, Ukraine
2012 - Master`s Degree, Faculty of Psychology, Kyiv National University named Taras Shevchenko, Ukraine

Personal exhibitions

2023, "I am a refugee", Druskininkai museum, Druskininkai, Lithuania
2022, "Passion to Live or Fear to Die", Sugihara House, Kaunas, Lithuania
2021, "Mosaics", library "Svitlo", Kyiv, Ukraine
2021, "Art. Life. Play", bookstore "Siayvo", Kyiv, Ukraine

Group exhibitions

2024, Art as refuge, 8 akys ir ausys, Vilnius, Lithuania
2024, Refugee Week, Mo Museum, Vilnius, Lithuania
2023, Ukraine. The residency of Freedom, Rīgas dome, Riga, Latvia
2023, Rozgostitsa, Motanka festival, Kühlhaus, Berlin, Germany
2023, Conversation, cultural central "Menu Kalve", Druskininkai, Lithuania
2023, Paroda, Druskininkai museum, Druskininkai, Lithuania
2022, Time condensate, Sala de exposiciones junta municipal de ciudad, Valencia, Spain
2022, A Thing from inner space, Institute of Modern and Research Art, Kyiv, Ukraine
2021, Change, Mykolaiv ART Week, Mykolaiv, Ukraine
2021, Your names, Ukraine, The Korsaks museum of Ukrainian modern art, Lutsk, Ukraine
2021, Art-parallels 2021, Centre of Ukrainian Culture and Art, Kyiv, Ukraine
2021, Life as Art. Art as Life, Institute of Modern and Research Art, Kyiv, Ukraine
2021, CONNECT, Mykolaiv ART Week, Online, Mykolaiv, Ukraine

Art Residencies

2022, Druskininkai, TechSpa, Lithuania

Publications

2024, [ART AS REFUGE exhibition – what is home?](#), Artscape.It , Lithuania
2024, [Sapiegu rūmuose menininkai pristatė „El Dorado“ instaliaciją migracijos tema](#), Artscape.It , Lithuania
2024, [Refugee week is celebrated for the first time in Lithuania](#), Artscape.It , Lithuania
2024, [The first "Artscape" Mentorship meetup took place](#), Artscape.It , Lithuania
2023, [Support in Times of Great Uncertainty: Artist Katya Kononenko and the ifa Mentoring Programme Ukraine.](#) Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen, Germany
2023, [Kultūros diena, LRT.lt](#)

2022, [240 tūkšt. eurų paskirta Ukrainos menininkų kūrybinei veiklai Lietuvoje](#), LRT.lt
2022, [UKRAINIETĖ MENU RAMINĄ SIELĄ LIETUVOJE](#), Kauno Diena LT
2022, Video about my solo show "[Passion to Live or Fear to Die](#)", Sugihara House, Kaunas, Lithuania
2022, [Sugiharos namuose sužydo ne tik sakuros: pristatyta ukrainietės paroda „Aistra gyventi ar baimė numirti?“](#), People Magazine
2021, [Колір року: як вдало інтегрувати Вері Пері у свій гардероб | ТСН 19:30](#)
2021, [Головна виставка фестивалю Mykolaiv Art Week: CHANGE відкрилася у Миколаєві](#), Суспільне Новини
2020, [USiM: Interviews with creative people: Katya Kononenko](#)

Catalogs

2021, Your names, Ukraine, The Korsaks Museum of Ukrainian Modern Art, Lutsk, Ukraine
2021, Art-parallels 2021, Centre of Ukrainian Culture and Art, Kyiv, Ukraine

Awards

2022, Grant, Artist at Risk Connection, PEN America, USA
2022, Grant, Lithuanian Ministry of Culture, Lithuania
2021, Open call "Portraits", ArtJobs, online, London, Great Britain
2020, "Artist's Day" open call, "White World" Gallery, Kyiv, Ukraine
2020, Easter open call, "White World" Gallery, Kyiv, Ukraine

Artist Statement

I create abstract art. My media are oil, acrylic, mixed media on canvas, and feather, ink on paper, and installations.

I've studied color and art therapy. I truly believe contemporary art is an art therapy for creators and for visitors as well. The creation process is an experiment with the idea, selected media, and an artist. The result of the artwork is an art object and transformed reality outside and inside of me.

Existential crises and challenges during wartime are the main themes for me last few years. I can transfer only my individual thoughts and feelings on how I solve or don't solve issues.

My artworks are situated in private collections of Ukraine, Lithuania, Iceland, France, Poland, Germany, the USA, and Canada.

My contacts

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Site: <https://katyakononenkoart.com.ua>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/KatyaKononenkoArt/>

Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/katya_kononenko_art/

Installation “Home”, 2024



Canvases, sounds,
“Art as refuge”, 8 akys ir ausys Gallery, Vilnius, Lithuania

What makes a home, home? What are their characteristics? Why does ‘home’ in Lithuania feel like a temporary stop for me? Why do I still hear the call of my true home in Kyiv?

I consider that home is the main reason why Ukrainians never tire of fighting on the front lines, and those who have had to leave their country constantly experience a mixture of pain, sadness, hope, and strength. Home unites us all: both those who have it and those who are searching for it.

The self-portraits reveal that when you don’t have a true home, you search for it within yourself, for only then can you soothe the longing. The inner voice, which resembles the daily sounds of Kyiv, constantly reminds you of this longing. I still hear those sounds inside me. I still hear that Ukraine is calling me.

The installation was made in collaboration with Andrii Gumeniuk. He created sounds.

Installation “Rehabilitation”, 2024



Textile, photos, plaster
Refugee week, Mo Museum, Vilnius, Lithuania

Clothes keep our memories, history, events, emotions, and thoughts.

After Russia's full-scale invasion to Ukraine, I relocated to Lithuania. I wore a pink sports suit during my few days trip to the last safe point.

This pink costume is associated with hard relocation, war, and sorrow.

I didn't have many clothes to change it every time, so I decided to reanimate the suit from harmful memories. I wore it walking to the forest, went on vacations, traveled across Lithuania, did food and art supplies shopping, etc.

Making rehabilitation to my pink suit, I rehabilitated myself.

Untitled Series, 2022-2023

Untitled Series shows pure emotions, such as pain, and frustration, exploring physical contact between me and my canvas. It's a color therapy during wartimes.

The Untitled Series consists of 10 paintings of different sizes, oil, acrylic on canvases.



Untitled Purple, Oil on canvas, 132*163 cm, 2022



A city light with a poster of my solo exhibition "I am a refugee" near Druskininkai Museum, Druskininkai, Lithuania, 2023



Untitled Green with Orange, Oil on canvas, 134*162 cm, 2022



A photo from my solo exhibition "I am a refugee", Druskininkai, Lithuania, 2023.

A musician is playing the piano.



Untitled Raw Sienna, Oil on canvas, 106*79 cm, 2022

[Video of creating process "Untitled Raw Sienna"](#)

[More paintings from Untitled Series](#)

Dichotomies Series, 2022

The Dichotomies Series is about 2 realities: war and non-war. Here, in Europe, space is safe and full of life. But Ukraine is on fire. The war is continuing each moment. I can't be out of this news. My inner space is full of emotional chaos, and ambivalent feelings.

Dichotomies Series consists of 11 paintings of different sizes: abstractions and abstract self-portraits, oil, acrylic on canvases.



Dichotomy-5, Oil on canvas, 100*80 cm, 2022

[Video of making process "Dichotomy-5"](#)



Dichotomy-2, Oil, acrylic on canvas, 120*160 cm, 2022



A mock-up with selected paintings from Dichotomies Series

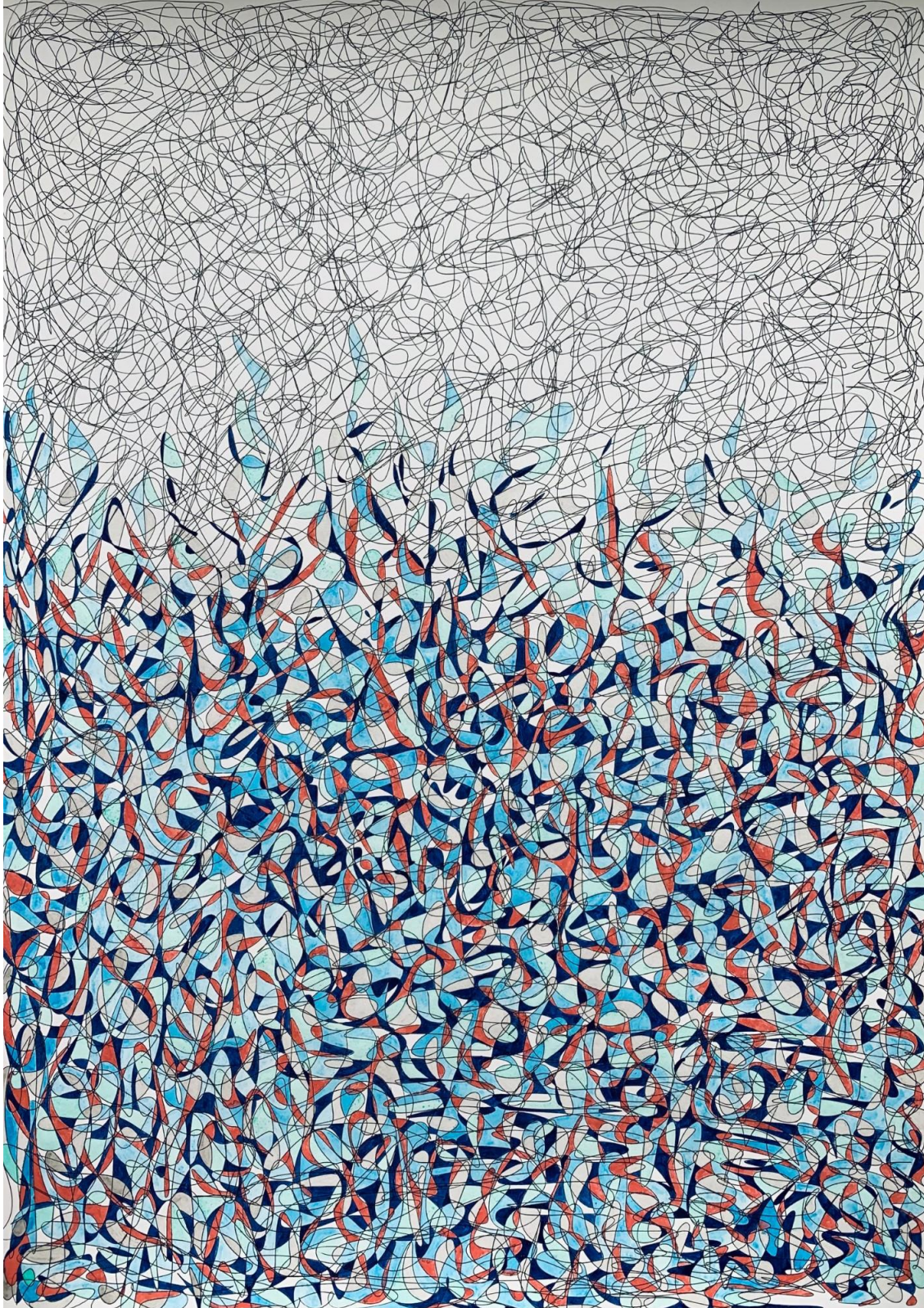


A mock-up is with self-portraits "Refugees" from Dichotomies Series

[More paintings from Dichotomies Series](#)

Mosaics Series, 2021-2022

The Mosaics Series consists of the drawings that I made inspired by Winnicott's art therapy technique "Doodles". There are 40 drawings and 2 paintings. Drawings are made with ink, feather on paper, paintings - oil, acrylic on canvases.



Blue and Red Mosaic, ink, gel pen, feather on paper, 45x32 cm, 2022



The Forest. Druskininkai, ink, gel pen, feather on paper, 32x45 cm, 2022



"A Sunflower" and "G" drawings are hanging on my solo exhibition
 "Passion to Live or Fear to Die", Sugihara House, 2022, Kaunas, Lithuania

Hommages Series, 2021-work in progress

I painted these artworks to express my respect for artists, which I am inspired by. Hommages Series consists of 8 paintings of different sizes and media.



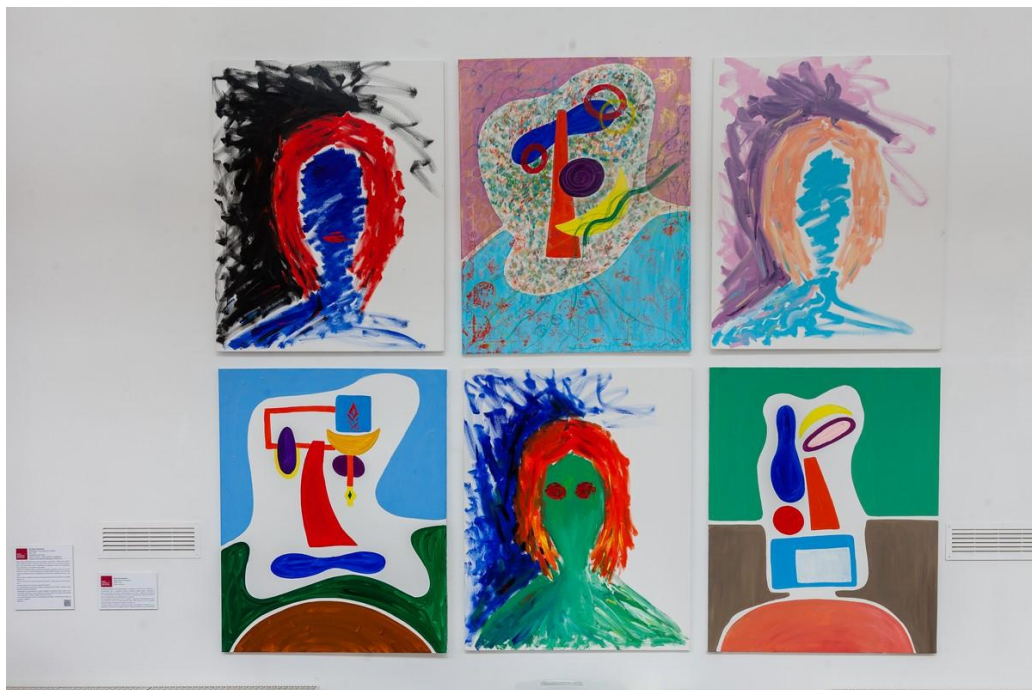
Homage on Kandinsky, acrylic on canvas, 100x70 cm, 2021

[More paintings from Hommages Series](#)

Self-portraits Series, 2020-2022

In the Self-portraits Series, I explore the existential question “Who am I” in a different period of time. Psychological theories help me with this.

Self-portraits Series consists of 10 paintings 100x80 cm, mainly oil on canvas. 4 of Self-portraits also connect to Dichotomies Series.



Photos from a group exhibition

“A Thing from inner space, Institute of Modern and Research Art”, 2022, Kyiv, Ukraine

Art Plays Project, 2020-2021

Art Play is a collaboration of art with drama play. It's a story about relationships, finding yourself, and exploring the inner and outer world through abstract art. There are two main heroes: The Petal - the female symbol, and The Molecule - the male symbol. There are 4 Art Plays with visual and text.

Full Art Play story consists of 17 artworks of different kind of sizes and media.



A photo from a group exhibition
Change, Mykolaiv ART Week, 2021, Mykolaiv, Ukraine,



Performance with professional actors
They are playing my Art Play during the opening day of the solo exhibition
“Art. Life. Play”,
bookstore “Siayvo”,
2021, Kyiv, Ukraine

[Art Play 1 “Finding”](#)
[Art Play 2 “Freedom”](#)
[Art Play 3 “Back to yourself”](#)
[Art Play 4 “The Exploring”](#)