

## OUTSTANDING REPRESENTATIVES OF MODERN MOVEMENTS IN UKRAINIAN ART

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### Abstract

*The purpose* of the article is to explore the activities of the most famous Ukrainian artists who embodied in their works the ideas and moods of the Art Nouveau era of the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. *Research methodology.* The author of the article applies structural, comparative, and analytical methods. *Results.* The study summarises art studies and scientific literature, which gave an understanding of the processes that directly influenced the development and creation of new artistic works in modern art, in particular, the issue of national cultural identity. The main modernist movements in Ukrainian art of the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries are analysed. The features of the work of prominent representatives of the modern era (M. Zhuk, V. Maksymovych, O. Arkhypenko, O. Murashko, O. Ekster, K. Malevich, V. Krotkov, and others) are characterised. Special attention is paid to the use of compositional schemes, symbolic techniques, and colouristic construction of paintings used by modernist artists. The study demonstrates that each artist considered it necessary to contribute something from his unique way of creation to the general culture and art of that time, therefore, in the Art Nouveau style, the atmosphere of presentation and colour changed, which directly affected the image of the paintings themselves. The features of the representation of female images in the works of artists of graphic, decorative and applied art are considered. The article reveals the contribution of Ukrainian artists to the cultural heritage of Europe. *Scientific novelty.* The contribution of Ukrainian artists to the development of the modernist art, who worked in various historical conditions without betraying the national foundations of artistic creative work, is traced.

*Keywords:* art; modern era; style; décor; female image

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## INTRODUCTION

Today's realities more than ever require an in-depth study of various movements of Ukrainian art. The article is dedicated to the Ukrainian artists who worked in the modern era and left a unique legacy, which is a significant contribution to the entire European cultural community. The idea of further research on this topic is the issue of the ban and disappearance of Ukrainian works of art, in particular those related to the modern era. At the current stage of the development of Ukrainian art studies, the issue of the national idea as an important factor in the development of artistic culture is becoming particularly relevant, which is reflected in the works of domestic and foreign scholars. The analysis of Ukrainian sources (arti-

cles, monographs, dissertations, etc.) proves that there are many topics that were ignored by the researchers since a significant emphasis was placed on the works of foreign scholars. Thus, modern art studies researchers face an urgent task: to conduct as many qualitative studies as possible on the issues of Ukrainian cultural achievements from the point of view of the historical prism of perception of being.

## RECENT RESEARCH AND PUBLICATIONS ANALYSIS

Among the published articles and scientific research, attention should be focused on the works of V. Afanasiev (2006), Yu. Bohutskyi and V. Sheiko (2013), V. Holovko (2003), A. Hotsaliuk (2018),

Z. Zlatanov (2019), H. Skrypnyk and T. Kara-Vasyliieva (2007), A. Tsyna (2020), in which the origins of Art Nouveau and avant-garde in Ukrainian art are revealed; Ukrainian applied graphics of the late 19<sup>th</sup> — first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, as well as works on the history of fine art, are studied; the art of ornament, which made a great contribution to the treasury of world art of the modern era, is described. The authors note that Art Nouveau is reflected in many areas of creative activity, and primarily in architecture, painting and applied arts.

**The purpose of the article is** to study the activities of the most famous Ukrainian artists who embodied in their works the ideas and moods of the modern era of the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

*Research methodology.* The author of the article applies structural, cultural, comparative, and analytical methods in the study of the achievements of Ukrainian artists of the modern era.

## RESULTS

Art Nouveau is characterised by the interpenetration of easel and arts and crafts forms of art. Ornament acted as a means of forming the compositional structure of Art Nouveau and as a decoration of works of art. It was the ornament that set a peculiar rhythm of flexible lines and organised the plane, which passed into the development of graphics. Therefore, the art of books, lithography, and xylography reached a high level during this period. The idea of Art Nouveau was the desire to become a single synthetic style, combining all the elements from the human environment into one direction. As a result, there was a growing interest in decorative and applied arts: interior design, ceramics, graphics. Everything had an imprint of the Art Nouveau style: from decorative elements to reproductions of popular artists (Bohutskyi & Sheiko, 2013).

The figurative language of Art Nouveau is organically combined with national features in the works of the Ukrainian graphic artist, master of ceramics, one of the founders of the Ukrainian Academy of Arts Mykhailo Zhuk (1883–1964) — a student of the famous Polish master of secession. He also worked as a poet, novelist, playwright, but went down in history as a famous painter. Thanks to his talent, he became a legend of the national art culture, as he was the only one who created the largest number of portraits of his contemporaries: T. Shevchenko, I. Franko, M. Kotsiubynsky, H. Skorovoda, L. Ukrainka, N. Uzhvii, M. Khvylovy, M. Lysenko and others. Catalogues of his exhibitions are presented in various museums of Ukraine. The ideas of Art Nouveau can be clearly traced in his book works of 1917, for example, in the illustration of O. Oles's book *On the Green Moun-*

*tains*, where the artist depicts the mallow as a synergy of decorativeness and faithfulness to nature. It is the mallow flower that becomes a symbol of spontaneity, a "life impulse" that harmoniously echoes the modern moods of reproducing complex lines. M. Zhuk (1912) describes this creative method in the lines to his beloved woman: "You create from the lines those secret miracles that are hidden in the soul at the very bottom..." (p. 27).

The decorative ornamentation of his art comes from the origins of the plant world, which was generally inherent in the style (*Carnation, Lily*). It is in its diversity that Art Nouveau drew the plasticity of its flowing lines. In numerous panels of the master, along with such fantastic images, where the lily beloved by secessionists and the wings of an amazing bird are combined, stylised wildflowers interact: marigolds, dahlias (*Ornament, Black and White*). M. Zhuk's portrait works, despite their decorativeness, are marked by psychological development of images (Skrypnyk & Kara-Vasyliieva, 2007).

The defining features of Art Nouveau were also embodied in the works of Vsevolod Maksymovych (1894–1914). The artist's monumental panels, portraits, mythological scenes (*Kiss, Feast*) reflected both his fate as a typical representative of the era of decadence, and the features of his art with the symbolism of images emphasised by the decorativeness of plane forms, where the rhythmic role of contour lines prevails (*Decorative Panel*). The world on his canvases is always conditional, theatrical, and masquerade. In the two-dimensional space of the artist's paintings, the graphic principle is primary (*Argonauts, Carnival*), therefore he was considered one of the leaders in the world of secession (Skrypnyk & Kara-Vasyliieva, 2007).

Cubism in sculpture was represented by Oleksandr Arkhypenko (1887–1964). The artist's works changed the world's ideas about sculpture of the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (*Standing Woman, Woman with a Fan*), since he was the first to compose a single form of various non-equivalent forms, introducing glass, wood, metal into the composition. His works are determined by the laconism, dynamism of the composition of the form. He introduced polychromy, concavity and openings into sculpture as expressive elements of sculpture, synthetic three-dimensional movable structures (Tsurmenko, 2016).

The term Cubo-Futurism originated from the names of two artistic trends: French Cubism and Italian Futurism, which, at first glance, was difficult to synthesise. The most prominent representatives who embodied the principles of cubism (movement, speed, energy) are Kazimir Malevich, Vasily Krotkov, Aristarkh Lentulov, Vadym Meller. The representatives of

avant-garde painting, freeing themselves from direct imitation of nature, received a certain freedom to interpret the world in their own way. It is worth noting that it was in Ukraine that the trend towards abstractionism became widespread, which led to pragmatism and social involvement in painting of that time. In Ukrainian Art, the extreme positions of the avant-garde emerged — Suprematism and Cubo-Futurism, which later formed as conceptually new trends of abstractionism that denied the value of reproducing an inanimate object (Holubets, 2008).

In the Ukrainian artistic sphere, the restructuring of the image of a woman took place from the point of view of sensuality in the works of Oleksandr Murashko (1875–1919). The art of France and Germany left an imprint on the master's work, giving it features of impressionism and symbolism. However, the stay in France and Germany affected the master's work not only in the impressionistic interpretation of nature, the symbolist load of colour, but also in the artist's reinterpretation of the images he used in his work, in particular, the image of a woman. These changes are best traced in the portrait genre. The female images created by O. Murashko before traveling abroad are marked by deep psychologism, an attempt to reveal the personality in a manner characteristic of realistic art. Instead, for female portraits painted in Europe and after returning, the semantic emphasis shifts to the sensuous plane. Although it is present as a subtle nuance and appears along with psychologism, as well as in a generally realistic interpretation of nature, it is still impossible not to notice the emphasised femininity and sensuality of his images. The artist mainly achieves the feeling through the use of the model's angle, a bare shoulder or hand, a constant and very special enhancement of colour intonation. Examples of such images were *Woman in Black* (1917), *Woman with Flowers* (1918), *Girl in a Red Hat* (1903); *On the Streets of Paris* (1903). A good example is O. Murashko's painting *The Annunciation* (1909), where the theme of religion plays a secondary role, emphasising the pictorial problematic. The image of a simple peasant woman Mary is raised by the author to the level of a saint. But, in the general trends in modernity, the latest psychoanalytical concepts of individualism were discovered, which brought bodily human nature and essence to the fore. All this was reflected in religious plots. Mary's image in *The Annunciation* by A. Murashko, in addition to the fact that she is depicted as a simple Ukrainian peasant, is shown from the side of her human essence: this is evidenced by a realistic interpretation of the image as concrete, and not collective and ideal. Moreover, the emphasis of this image is shifted to the corporeal, fleeting: Mary appears very feminine, this impression is enhanced

by her loose braids, a simple white shirt that slipped over the shoulder, the grace of her posture; the fluidity, instantness of the moment emphasises the impressionistic interpretation of the terrace lighting. In Ukraine, religious painting had deep traditions, and this interpretation of the plot was innovative for the Ukrainian worldview, which was closely intertwined with the Christian worldview. It would be appropriate to draw certain analogies with the Pre-Raphaelite D. Rossetti's painting *The Annunciation* (1850). This masterpiece for the first time touches on a religious theme, where not only the spiritual values of a person are represented, but also femininity (Afanasiev, 2006).

O. Murashko's work was created later than the general modern concepts, it emerged in the field of Ukrainian culture later than the European style, emphasising the existing analogies that determine the common worldview bases, and confirm that Ukraine was part of the pan-European cultural process. In the modern style, the topic of female nature is important, namely: the issue of virginity, motherhood, and old age. It is noteworthy that the image of inevitability finds itself in a female representation. In our opinion, such a tendency is connected with a special interpretation of the image of a woman as a phenomenon, because she possesses the secret of birth, and also, a kinship with death can be traced. This approach defines a woman as a mysterious being. Its leading feature is the contradiction that finds itself in the synthesis of Life and Death.

In Ukrainian Art, the theme of three centuries was developed by F. Krychevsky (*Three Ages*, 1913). Certain analogies with *Three Ages* can be drawn in F. Krychevsky's triptych *Life*. Although the composition conveys three periods of family life ("Love", "Family", "Return"), the woman occupies a central place here. In all three compositions, her figure is key and the change in life periods is reflected, first of all, on her. To a certain extent, we can speak of the attitude to the theme of different manifestations of the female essence in each period of life regarding Krychevsky's series *Kateryna* (1937–1940). Although Shevchenko's idea is clearly read, the artist reveals the image not of Kateryna-Ukraine, but of Kateryna—a woman, which is seductive, pure at the beginning, and broken, dramatic but surprisingly feminine at the end of the drama (Hotsaliuk, 2018).

The student of O. Murashko, the artist Oleksandr Bohomazov (1880–1930) was called the "Ukrainian Picasso" — a poet by worldview and an analyst by mindset. He looked for himself in different styles: from Realism to Cubo-Futurism, but most of all he liked to depict Kyiv. *Hay Market*. Kyiv is one of his outstanding works, which demonstrates dynamics in static.

A prominent representative of Cubo-Futurism was also Kyiv resident Oleksandra Ekster (1882–1949), who adhered to the ideas of style in everything except colour, because Cubo-futurists put it in last place. The artist gave the colour scheme a decisive role (*City, Venice, Wine, Florence*), which later determined her unique signature in the work. The artist together with O. Bohomazov and O. Arkhypenko studied under M. Pymonenko. It was Ekster who combined the ideas of Cubism with abstract motifs and bright colours borrowed from Ukrainian folk art. It was she who inspired Picasso to use bright colours in Cubism. After communicating with her, the founder of Cubism dramatically expands his palette and boldly expands the entire range of colours, not avoiding contrasts. Thus, the reformist ideas and innovative features of the style of the Ukrainian artist entered the history of world art studies. In 2008, the National Art Museum hosted the first retrospective exhibition of O. Ekster with an exposition of more than 50 works (Bohutskyi & Sheiko, 2013).

## CONCLUSIONS

Having studied the scientific literature, it can be argued that the concepts: "modern", "decorative and applied art", "style", "image" are interpreted differently in various sources. But it is the disclosure of these concepts that creates a general picture of the modern era, its significance in the further development of culture and art. In recent decades, the art at the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup>–20<sup>th</sup> centuries and the underestimated contradictory Art Nouveau style are of great interest, which is due to the consonance of this period with modern processes of changing worldviews. In Ukrainian and European cultures, interest in Art Nouveau is associated with the need for rehabilitation and reassessment of its role in the general panorama of art.

Summing up, it should be noted that the modern era discovered many new Ukrainian artists, brought a conceptually different vision of images in art, laying the groundwork for further in-depth research.

In the course of the research, we managed to achieve the set objectives:

- the main modernist movements in Ukrainian art of the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries are analysed;
- the features of the work of prominent representatives of the modern era (M. Zhuk, V. Maksymovych, O. Arkhypenko, O. Murashko, O. Ekster, K. Malevich, V. Krotkov and others) are characterised;
- the features of the representation of female images in the works of artists of graphic, decorative and applied art are considered;
- the contribution of Ukrainian artists to the cultural heritage of Europe is revealed.

*The scientific novelty* of the article consists in the fact that for the first time the contribution of Ukrainian artists to the development of the modernist art, who worked in various historical conditions without betraying the national foundations of artistic creative work, is traced.

The next stage of the study of Ukrainian Art Nouveau will be a more detailed study of the architectural works of the period under consideration.

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## ВИДАТНІ ПРЕДСТАВНИКИ МОДЕРНИХ НАПРЯМІВ В УКРАЇНСЬКОМУ МИСТЕЦТВІ

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### Анотація

*Мета статті* — дослідити творчість найбільш відомих українських митців, які втілювали у своїх роботах ідеї і настрої епохи модерну кінця XIX — початку XX століття. *Методи дослідження*. У статті застосовано структурний, компаративний методи, метод мистецтвознавчого аналізу. *Результати*. У дослідженні узагальнено мистецтвознавчу та наукову літератури, що дало розуміння процесів, які безпосередньо впливали на розвиток і створення нових художніх творів у мистецтві модерну, зокрема питання національної культурної ідентичності. Проаналізовано основні модерні напрями в українському мистецтві кінця XIX — початку XX ст. Охарактеризовано особливості творчості видатних представників епохи модерну (М. Жука, В. Максимовича, О. Архипенка, О. Мурашка, О. Екстер, К. Малевича, В. Кроткова та інших). Особливу увагу зосереджено на застосуванні композиційних схем, символічних прийомів і колористичних побудов картин, використаних художниками-модерністами. Виявлено, що кожен митець вважав за необхідне внести щось зі свого унікального способу творіння в загальну культуру та мистецтво того часу, тому в стилі модерн змінилися атмосфера подачі та колорит, які вплинули безпосередньо на саме зображення картин. Розглянуто специфіку зображення жіночих образів у працях митців графічного та декоративно-ужиткового мистецтва. Виявлено внесок українських митців у культурну спадщину Європи. *Наукова новизна*. Простежено внесок у розвиток мистецтва епохи модерну українських митців, які працювали в різних історичних умовах, не зраджуючи національних засад художньої творчості.

*Ключові слова*: мистецтво; епоха модерну; стиль; декор; жіночий образ

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