

Portfolio Maria Vasylenko Artist

Caution! Exhibition



The forest is a space of the untouched and the unknown. A place that endures the ruptures of civilization. Yet in recent years, much has changed. Even where the flow of life seems stronger than anything, the turbulent human world leaves its traces. Perhaps the forest is a place where one can simply be present, regardless of whether it is a person, a bottle, or other beings. One can, for a moment, forget about the outside world, at least until a warning sign brings you back to reality.



Installation view "Caution! Exhibition", Kyiv, 2026

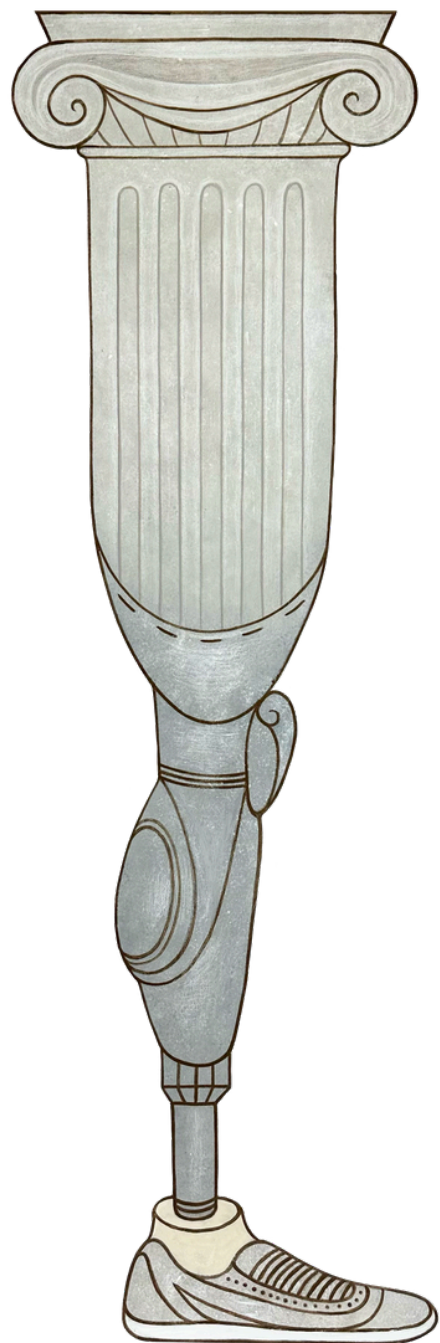


"I have lived in the suburbs of Kyiv for a long time and have always loved wandering deep into the forest or along the river. On one side is the city, on the other a power plant, and here—roe deer, hares, mermaids, people without a fixed home, twisted trees. In this company, strange images would often come to me, becoming both explanations and questions.

Now my personal Eden-like gardens attempt to hold new spring leaves, war, animals, bulldozers, clean air, domestic and military waste, silence, the political, the escapist, and local beings. Here one might encounter a sacred power socket, a passport once lost here, a veil between the known and the unknown, a wound within which a happy life exists, a lost wing, a battery that has become an ecosystem, a bed on which two swords are sleeping, an abyss from which water bursts forth, a figure suspended in thought, and more."



Pillars
Maly Theatre



The two columns presented in the exhibition are a series of reflections and sensations about the state of the part of civilization we are used to calling European or Western. Here, the column appears as a symbol of order, stability, and ideal form.

Yet these foundations no longer feel unquestionable. The column seems to have retained its shape, but lost something essential. It still stands, but is no longer perceived as a guaranteed support — rather as something strange, altered.

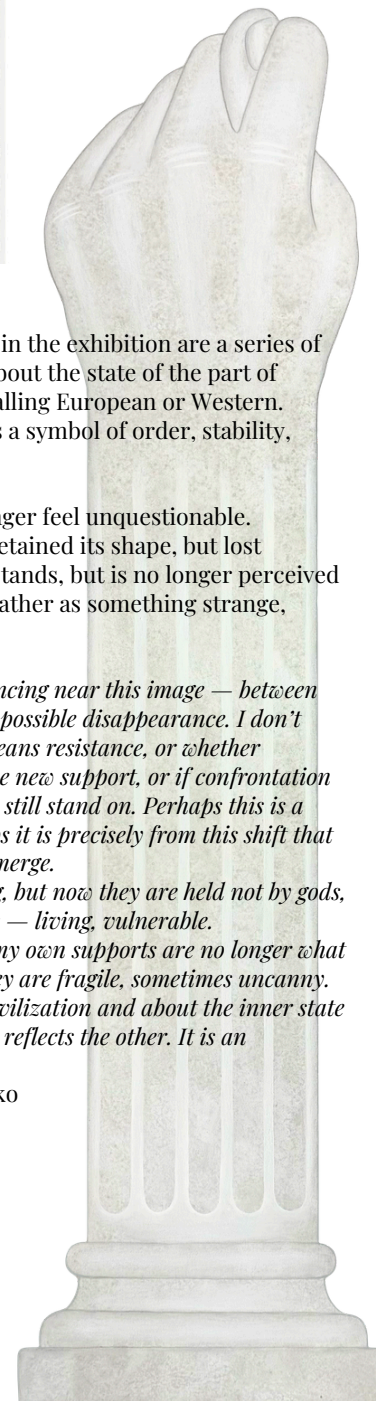
"I constantly find myself balancing near this image — between its transformation or even its possible disappearance. I don't know whether support now means resistance, or whether resistance itself has become the new support, or if confrontation is the very thing anything can still stand on. Perhaps this is a fixation of collapse, or perhaps it is precisely from this shift that something new will begin to emerge.

The columns are still standing, but now they are held not by gods, but by people and their bodies — living, vulnerable.

This is how it feels now. And my own supports are no longer what they used to be. Sometimes they are fragile, sometimes uncanny.

These works are both about civilization and about the inner state of a person, because often one reflects the other. It is an interconnected story,"

— comments Maria Vasilenko



Suspended



Installation view "Suspended", Budapest 2026. *Absurd Signs*, aluminum objects, 50 × 50 cm and 60 × 60 cm.

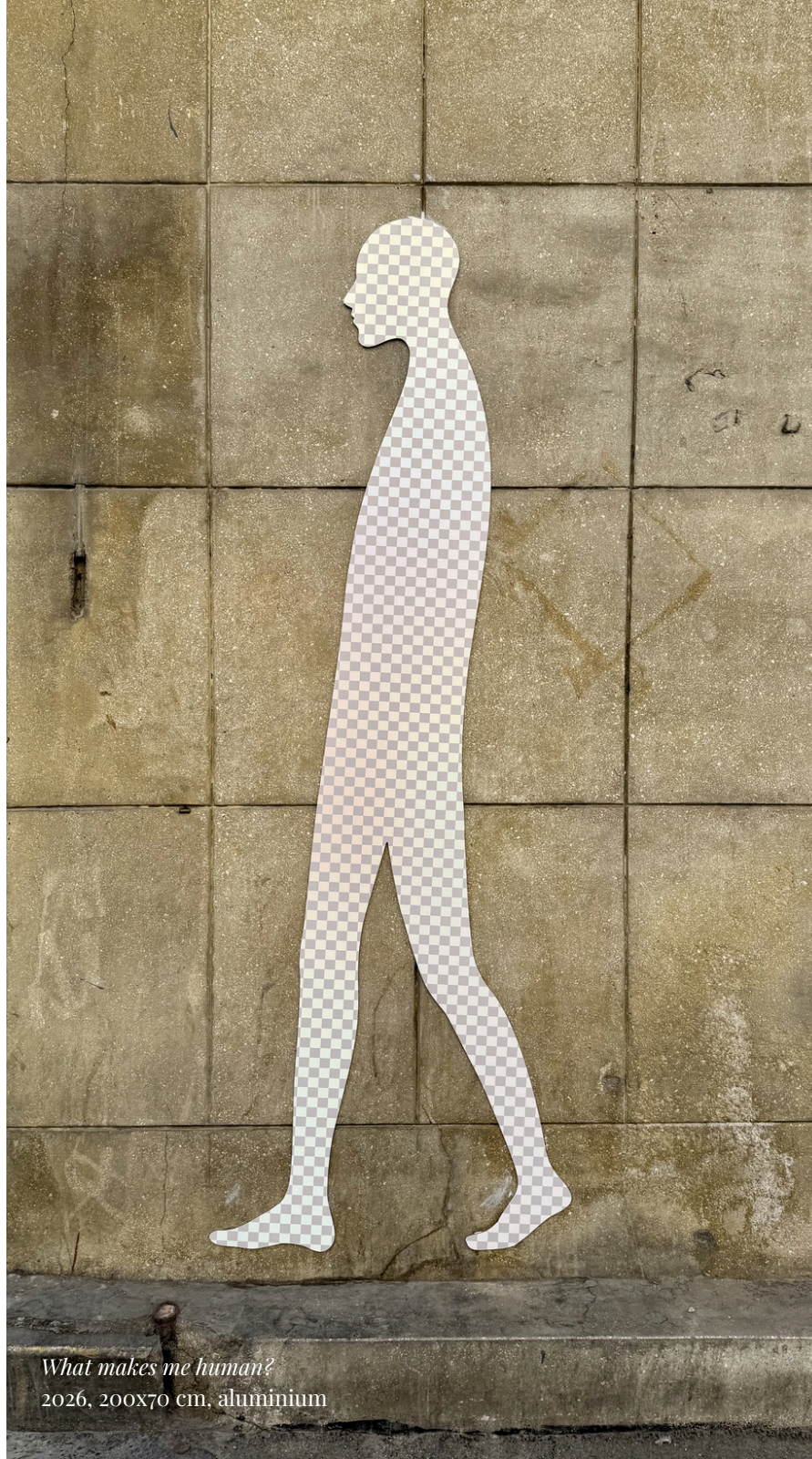
During the IN SITU Lab in Budapest, a series of site-specific interventions was created as a dialogue with the city and its context. The works temporarily manifest themselves within the urban space, interacting with its surfaces, routes, and existing systems of signs.

The first intervention is a transparent human figure from the series "What Makes Me Human?" (page 4) It is partially present in physical space while simultaneously remaining part of the technological reality of a digital image. The grey PNG background, which usually indicates emptiness or transparency, becomes visible and multifaceted here.

The other objects, shaped as road signs, resemble absurd urban signs that seem to have accidentally found their place. They do not provide unambiguous instructions but instead open up several possible interpretations. The image of bridges speaks about connections, their destruction and reconstruction, as well as the repetition of routes and historical and civilizational scenarios.



The Button
2026, 20X20 cm,
aluminium



What makes me human?
2026, 200X70 cm, aluminium

The socio-political dimension of the series remains quiet and unresolved. It is not formulated as a direct statement but emerges through the tension between presence and absence, connection and rupture, prohibition and the possibility of continuation.

Here, the city becomes not a background but an interlocutor, while the artistic object becomes a temporary manifestation within its space.



[Installation view "Suspended", Budapest 2026](#)
[Video documentation](#)

A Place That Doesn't Exist

THE NAKED ROOM gallery, Kyiv



Installation view "A Place That Doesn't Exist", Kyiv, 2025

Curator - Lizaveta German, Maria Lanko



We are presenting a solo show by Maria Vasylenko entitled ***A Place That Doesn't Exist***. The artist invites us to take a walk in the world she has invented, where conventional time and space do not exist, and to seek what lies behind the curtain of phenomena. Vasylenko experiences upheavals in her own way: she mythologises them and turns them into symbols. Her world is a projection of consciousness that takes on form and begins a dialogue with its surroundings.

Maria studied academic easel painting and sacred art but later chose to abandon the classical set of techniques. Eventually, her current visual language formed at the crossroads of working with colour and the formal aspects of icon painting. Maria uses egg tempera—a timeless, transparent, almost intangible medium. Her compositional solutions are based on the reverse perspective inherent in iconography, which, following the genre's conventions, places the notional 'point of origin' not in the distance, but in the position of a viewer. Maria also deliberately rejects the standard rectangular shape of a painting as a window onto the world. She creates her works on recycled wood panels to give them form. This, she says, brings the sacred and fantastical elements in her works closer to a viewer. For *A Place That Doesn't Exist* at The Naked Room, Vasylenko creates a common space of existence for them: she tears some of the works off the walls, making her mythical world tangible and inviting viewers to cohabit it temporarily.

[More photos](#)

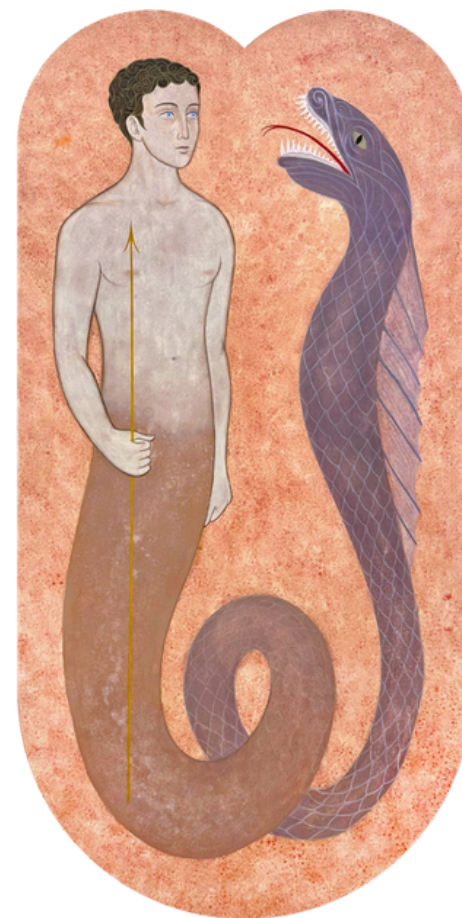
[Press](#)

The Serpent Was Here

The Kuznya is a space within a centuries-old building that was saved from demolition by a community of artists. Maria Vasylenko chose this site as a threshold where the possibility of the future emerges amid the near-ruins of the past, memory, and the living present. For her, it is not only a place of preservation but also of transformation—a fragile yet potent intersection where time folds in on itself and something new begins to take shape.



They say that once, near the hills and waters of Kyiv, there lived a great Serpent. Legends tell of battles with this creature that exists between light and darkness. Artist Maria Vasylenko feels this chthonic image especially strongly today. It embodies both good and evil. Why are these two opposites so closely intertwined that, when observed for a long time, their boundaries begin to blur? Where does one end and the other begin? Is it possible to escape this duality, or is it the foundation of everything? Maria Vasylenko's exhibition invites us into a space of external and internal struggle, an attempt at balance that is always under threat. Her works pose questions and contain every possible answer—as well as their absence. Maria works at the intersection of painting and object-making, striving to create a space of alternative reality.



Enemies 2023, 100x200 cm, tempera on figured board