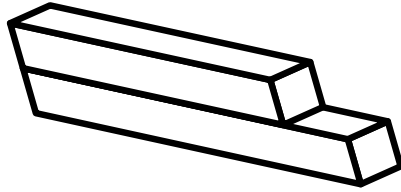


**ústí nad labem
house of arts**



**The Spectacle
of Unorganized
Masses**

**13/12 2018—
2/2 2019**

**Artist:
Nikita Kadan**

**Curators:
Monika Szewczyk,
Michal Koleček**

**on Wednesday
December 12, 2018
at 7 pm**

**in Ústí nad Labem
House of Arts
Faculty of Art
and Design at Jan
Evangelista Purkyně
University**

**Open:
Tue—Sat
10 am—6 pm
Admission free**

**Ústí nad Labem House of Arts
Klíšská 1101/129a
Ústí nad Labem
Czech Republic
(next to the university dormitory K1, K2)
Trolleybus 52, 58, 59, bus 9, 17, 27
Stop 'Klíše - lázně'**

**www.duul.cz
[#dumumeniul](https://www.instagram.com/dumumeniul)**

Nikita Kadan engages in contemplative art, tying closely in with the social circumstances and history of Ukrainian and Soviet culture. His objects – even if referencing extreme experiences – are devoid of emotional embellishment. Kadan exercises his activities on images, objects, archives, yet primarily on local 20th and 21st century discourses in a global perspective. In a quest for inspiration, he travels the world, explores literature, the Internet, cultural institutions storage and archives, and co-operates with groups of people representing a broad spectrum of political preference.

He shows his works in reference to museum exhibitions. They appear in showcases, on stylish pedestals, in clean interiors. I read such visual as an ironic gesture alluding to the already deconstructed classical mission of a museum as a venue intended to present ideal models and an abstract of reality. Yet such technique allows expression to be revealed, inviting the viewer into asking, *'What breed of practices and actions did these objects involve? What are the curious rituals documented in photographs? And what is with the molten fragment of matter brought in from Stanytsia Luhanska, a settlement located approximately 60 km from the Russian border in Eastern Ukraine on the River Donets, traversed with the frontline between Ukrainian troops and Russia-assisted separatists, and affected by unceasing combat since 2014?'* The object shows traces of exposure to high temperature, kinetic energy, weather, and some form of impact. The work has been 'produced' by warfare, with immense dynamics, and unintentionally. Before that? Almost certainly a gray Soviet edifice. Who was the shooter? Perhaps he did not want to hit a civilian building or kill any human being.

The artist is consistent in revealing the inside lining of history, disassembling over-simplified versions of the past. Kadan's works oppose perpetuated narratives. Modern identity may be based on diversity, and does not require to be developed by castrating a disquieting past. We have reached the threshold of massive civilisational change, past oppositions are no longer worth taking at face value either, the world is tilting. For the past five years, Eastern Ukraine has been witnessing combat with terrorists supported by Russia, the conflict designed for longevity and ultimate destabilisation of Ukraine. Nikita Kadan gazes upon the struggle, applying his own visual and historical filters; while offering no political guidelines, he counteracts any over-simplification in assessing the present and the past alike.

Nikita Kadan explores circumstances of a collapse of a certain civilisational project. He has selected essential matters for his oeuvre – matters recognised as traces

of intense experience. The Soviet Union is dissolving unhurriedly and not as painlessly as it might have seemed some time ago. The Union's impact or gravity cannot be eradicated with the monuments subject to de-communisation laws. Not that the condition of liberal democracies is any better, given its selection of monuments.

Anna Lazar

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art, culture, creativity, research,
education, social responsibility

