

## ARTISTS OF THE UKRAINIAN AVANT-GARDE

### Rules of the games

#### **The game «Memorize it»**

The game is designed for players aged 4-5. The goal of the game is to remember and open as many **paired** cards as you can. An even number of cards (all cards are paired) are placed face down on the table in any number of rows and columns forming a rectangle. Players take turns opening any two cards. The player keeps matching pairs, while unmatched cards are put back on the table face down. Whether the opened pair matched or not, the next player is to open the next two. The player with the most pairs of identical cards is declared the winner.

#### **The game «Pairs»**

The game is designed for players aged 4 and up. The goal of the game is to collect as many pairs of identical cards as you can. Each player is dealt 6 cards face down. Sitting in a circle, players take turns asking their neighbors whether they have a card matching theirs, describing it in words (e.g., «a woman in yellow and blue» or «a man with a moustache»). If the match is found, the player sets the matching cards aside. Players shouldn't mention the card's number, the title of the painting or the name of the artist. If a player didn't provide enough details and got the wrong card, he gets to keep it. After each play, players take one card from the deck each. The player with the most pairs of identical cards is declared the winner.

#### **The game «Artists in series»**

The game is designed for players aged 7 and up. The goal of the game is to collect as many matching cards by an artist as possible. Players may use the booklet with the biographies of the artists and the lists of their paintings. Each player is dealt 6 cards. Sitting in a circle, players take turns asking their neighbors whether they have a card matching theirs, describing it **in words** (e.g., «a woman in yellow and blue» or «a man with a moustache»). If the match is found, the player sets the matching cards aside. Players shouldn't mention the card's number, the title of the painting or the name of the artist. The player with the most series of matching cards by different artists is declared the winner. **NB:** some artists are represented by just one pair; in this case, the pair counts as a complete collection.

### **The game «Understand Me»**

(use 32 cards without their pairs)

The game is designed for players aged 7 and up. The goal of the game is to collect as many cards as you can. 4, 6 or 8 players are dealt 4 cards each. The dealer chooses a card from his hand and describes it through associations it elicits (e.g., «A walk on a sunny morning» for David Burliuk's «Spring is Coming», card # 5), and places it on the table face down. All players place the card most similar to the description from their hand on top of the one dealt by the dealer, all face down. The dealer shuffles the cards and lays them out face up. All players, except for the dealer, take turns guessing which card was the dealer's. The players who guessed right divide the laid-out cards among them evenly. If no one guesses right, the dealer puts all his cards, except for a random one of his choosing, back into the pack. After each play, all participants take a card from the pack each. The dealer changes at each play.

## **ARTISTS OF THE UKRAINIAN AVANT-GARDE**

### **The cards depict fragments of works of the artists who belonged to the Ukrainian avant-garde**

The end of the 19th century and the first decades of the 20th century became a turning point in the history of art, both in Europe and globally. The old forms and norms, artistic as well as social, were collapsing. In the 1910s-20s, the artists from all corners of the territory that then belonged to the Russian Empire actively participated in the creation of the new art. The artists who were born or lived in Ukraine, or actively adopted Ukrainian motifs in their works, were acutely aware of the changing times, as well as of the new trends in European art. They joined the worldwide search for new ideas and forms, launched by such prominent figures as Vincent van Gogh and Paul Gauguin, and continued by Henri Matisse, Pablo Picasso and others; however, their own daring searches also included peculiarly Ukrainian elements evoking the folk tradition. Ukrainian avant-garde artists worked and produced something startlingly new on the cusp of the 20th century, perched precariously between chaos and order, between the urban and the primeval nature, between volume and plane, between the tangibly human and the world of signs. They are well worth a closer look, and deserve a prominent place in the global art history.

## Biographies of artists (parents should read these first)

### **Alexander Archipenko (1887-1964)**

Born in Kyiv, he was schooled at the Kyiv Art School and in Paris. Archipenko lived and worked as a sculptor and an artist in Ukraine and in the USA, and he is considered to be one of the first artists to employ Cubism in sculpture. He was an honorary member of the Ukrainian Artist's Association in U.S.A., and a full member of the American Academy of Arts and Letters. Archipenko's works are known for their sense of movement, laconic compositions and forms; having introduced a polychromatic approach to sculpture, he also used concavities and holes as expressive elements, and resorted to three-dimensional synthetic moving constructions. Archipenko was the first artist to start exploring expressive possibilities of «negative» (in-between) spaces. Having changed the established notions of sculpture, Archipenko opened his own schools in Paris, Berlin, and New York. In the 1920s-1930s, he participated in art exhibitions in Ukraine, worked on monuments to Taras Shevchenko, Ivan Franko, and Prince Vladimir for a park in Chicago. During his life, Archipenko had 130 solo exhibitions.

### **Alexander Bogomazov (1880-1930)**

A native of the village of Yampil, Kharkov province (now Sumy region), Bogomazov intended to apply to the Petersburg Academy of Art, but in 1907 he joined the Kiev Art School instead. He studied under Alexander Murashko and Ivan Seleznev, and visited private workshops in Moscow. His works can be divided into several periods, the most prominent being Cubo-Futurism, which Bogomazov admired in 1913-1917, and Spectralism, to which the artist turned in 1920. Researchers consider him to be one of the founders of Cubo-Futurism in Ukraine. Bogomazov wasn't «just» a practicing painter: he was also actively exploring the theoretical foundations of this art. His most famous theoretical work was the treatise «Paintings and Elements» on the theory of «qualitative rhythms». Almost immediately after his death, the name and creative achievements of Alexander Bogomazov were struck from the history of the Soviet art. Only during the «thaw» of the mid-1960s did his works get rediscovered by Ukrainian art historians.

### **Mykhailo Boichuk (1882-1937)**

A native of the village of Romanivka, Ternopil region, Boichuk was an artist and an educator, as well as the founder of the original national school of monumental painting that developed in Ukraine in the first three decades of the twentieth century. He studied at an art studio in Lviv, at a private drawing school in Vienna (1898–1899), at Krakow Academy (1899-1905), and in Munich. Boichuk's goal was to create a synthetic national art form based on the sources that, in his opinion, were the sources of Ukrainian culture: Byzantine art and folk art in its different manifestations. Mykhailo Boichuk based his style, intended to unite broad strata of population, on Ukrainian history and the international art movements of the time. Amongst his most significant works, produced in collaboration with his students (the so-called «Boichukists»), were the murals on modern themes for the Red Army «Lutsk barracks» in Kyiv (1919), for the Agricultural Sanatorium in the Khadzhabei estuary in Odessa (1927-1928), and for the Chervonozavodsk theater in Kharkiv (1933 -1935). None of the monumental ensembles have survived.

### **Tymko Boichuk (1896-1922)**

Tymko, born in the village of Romanivka, Ternopil region, was a brother and a student of Mykhailo Boichuk. In 1917-1922, he studied at the Ukrainian State Academy of Fine Arts in the studio of monumental painting lead by Mykhailo Boichuk. He worked in easel painting, producing mainly domestic scenes, portraits and posters, as well as book graphics. The compositions, image structure and the tonal scale of his works betray a deep knowledge of the Proto-renaissance and Byzantine art, as well as iconography and ancient Ukrainian folk art. He coauthored the murals at the «Lutsk barracks» in Kyiv (1919), and at the Kyiv Opera House. In collaboration with Ivan Padalka, he illustrated the children's book «Periwinkle» (1919). Almost all his works were destroyed during the purges of the «Boichukists»; those that survived are now in the collections of the National Art Museum of Ukraine (Kyiv).

### **David Burliuk (1882-1967)**

Born near the village of Ryabushko, Lebedinsky district, Sumy region, Burliuk studied at the Kazan Art School and Odessa Art School, at art studios in Munich and Paris, and at the Moscow School of Painting, Sculpture and Architecture. After periods of infatuation with Impressionism, Art Nouveau,

neo-primitivism and other art trends of the time, David Burliuk became the ideologist of futurism both in painting and in literature. He inspired and initiated many (often controversial) events that were to popularize the new ideas.

### **Alexandra Ekster (1882-1949)**

Born in Bialystok, Grodno province (present Poland), she studied in the Kyiv Gymnasium of St. Olga, graduating in 1899. She subsequently studied at the Kyiv Drawing School of M. Murashko, and at the Kyiv Art School. Postimpressionism became her primary style. After a trip to Paris, she gradually shifted towards Cubism and became known for her avant-garde sketches of theatrical costumes and decorations. She was a member of the association «Jack of Diamonds» (an artists' union that refused classical painting, preferring Fauvism and Cubism) and of the «Union of Youth». Her exhibitions were held in Paris, Moscow, Kyiv, Odessa, and St. Petersburg. Ekster sought a radical renewal of the system of artistic expression. She enriched the local art scene with the latest trends of Western art, filtered through her experience, but never lost her individuality in them. Alexandra Ekster's individual style that also included elements of the Ukrainian visual tradition became the basis for the creation of the Kyiv School of Art. Her aim was to guarantee artists a proper role in the twentieth century society.

### **Mark Epshtein (1899-1949)**

Epshtein was born in Bobruisk (Belarus). In 1918, he graduated from the Department of Sculpture of the Kyiv Art School. In 1918, Mark Epstein, along with many other artists, frequented Alexandra Ekster's studio. A friend of Pablo Picasso and Georges Braque, Ekster became a link between talented Kyiv artists and the Cubo-Futurism and avant-garde art. In his works, Mark sought to develop an original Jewish style based on the images from the Jewish folk art and the avant-garde movements of that time. Soon he, among others, initiated the establishment of the art section of the Kultur-League, and of the Museum of Jewish Art. Epshtein attracted harsh criticism and brutal attacks in the early 1930s, when he was accused of «nationalism» and «formalism». In his later years, Mark Epshtein would occasionally receive commissions as an artist-designer.

### **Vasyl Yermylov (1894-1968)**

A native in Kharkiv, Yermylov studied at the Kharkiv School for Applied Art, and at the Moscow

School of Painting, Sculpture and Architecture. In 1927-1932, he was a member of the Association of the Revolutionary Art of Ukraine, and from 1939 on of the Kharkiv branch of the Union of Artists of Ukraine. At the time, he created many projects: prefabricated kiosks and agitation book vans, rostrum advertising, etc. He worked in industrial graphics, developing and producing sketches of designs for packages, matchboxes, factory brands, etc., as well as designing book covers. He achieved exquisite results by combining two or three local colors, selecting two or three textures, using polishing, grinding, powdering, contrasting oval and angular planes, and perfecting proportions. Yermlyov drew inspiration from folk art, as demonstrated by his choice to combine the cultural legacy of the ages with the available materials.

### **Mykola Kasperovych (1885-1938)**

Kasperovych was born in a hamlet of Lapyn Rih, Kozelets district, Chernihiv region. He studied in Moscow, Krakow, and Paris, where he met Mykhailo Boichuk. After returning to Lviv in 1911, he was hired by the National Museum to restore their icons. Later, in Kyiv, he began his career as an artist-restorer. He worked on restoration projects at the Art and History Museum (1928), at the Kyiv Museum of Russian Art, and at the Kyiv Museum of Western and Eastern Art (1935-1937). Kasperovych also restored the iconostasis of the St. Cyril Church in Kyiv (1935).

### **Borys Kosarev (1897-1994)**

A native of Kharkiv, he studied at the Kharkiv School for Applied Art (1911-1915), and at the Kharkiv Art University (1915-1918). Having started his career as assistant scene designer in 1915, he progressed towards a full designer of stage sets by 1916. Before the October Revolution, he also painted churches. Starting in 1918, he worked at theaters of Odessa and Kharkiv. He also produced book designs for poetry collections by Mayakovski, Pasternak, Khlebnikov. Since 1927, he took part in national and international exhibitions. He worked with Vasyl Yermlyov, Anatol Petrytsky, Alexander Khvostenko-Khvostov. His best works were created in collaboration with a student of the famous director Les Kurbas, a director V. Vasyliok. Kosarev is one of the most distinctive representatives of the Ukrainian avant-garde.

### **Fedir Krychevsky (1879-1947)**

Krychevsky was born in Lebedyn, now Sumy region. He graduated from the Moscow School of Painting, Sculpture and Architecture in 1901, and from the Academy of Arts in St. Petersburg in 1910, after which he took a year-long trip over Eastern Europe, which culminated in him attending Gustav Klimt's Vienna workshop. Klimt was a significant influence on both Krychevsky's philosophy and on his technique. Starting in 1913, Krychevsky worked in Kyiv: he taught at the Art School (1913-1917), at the Ukrainian Academy of Arts (1918-1922, becoming its first rector), and at the Kyiv Art Institute (1924-1932, 1934-1941). Krychevsky's monumental triptych «Life» is the most striking example of Ukrainian modernism, combining elements of Art Nouveau with Ukrainian religious painting tradition (flat images, color blocking, empty background).

### **Kazimir Malevich (1878-1935)**

A native of Kyiv, he studied drawing under Mykola Pymonenko at the Kyiv Art school (1895-1897). Having moved to Moscow in 1904, he developed his skills at the School of Art, Sculpture and Architecture (1904-1905), and at the studio of F. Rerberg (1905-1910). He taught at the Kyiv Art Institute. In the paintings of what became known as the first period, Malevich tried to combine Cubism, Futurism and Expressionism. In 1915, he founded a new trend in modernist art, now known as Suprematism. Malevich believed that art has long departed from the tenet of reflecting nature uncritically and of copying its conventional forms.

### **Ivan Padalka (1894-1937)**

Padalka was born in the village of Zhornokliovy, Cherkasy region. He studied at the Art and Industrial School in Myrhorod, at the Kyiv Art School, and at the Ukrainian State Academy of Fine Arts in the studio of monumental painting run by Mykhailo Boichuk. The artist was commissioned by Ukrainian State Publishing House to illustrate collected «Fairytale» and a children's collection «Periwinkle» (with Tymko Boichuk). He then joined the team of artists who painted the mural at the Lutsk military barracks in Kyiv. He illustrated many children's books. Nature and peasantry are the main motifs of Padalka's works. His style didn't fit the definition of «Socialist Realism» (the one government-sanctioned style that glorified Soviet power and socialism). Padalka taught at the Myrhorod art and ceramic college, and was a professor of the Kyiv Art Institute.

### **Victor Palmov (1888-1929)**

Born in Samara (Russia). In 1914, he graduated from the Moscow School of Painting, Sculpture and Architecture. In 1925, Palmov, along with David Burluk, Vasyl Yermylov and Alexander Bogomazov, joined the Association of Revolutionary Art of Ukraine (ARMU). In 1927 he, along with Mark Epshtein and Anatol Petrytsky, founded the Ukrainian Union of Artists. He also founded the Association of Contemporary Artists of Ukraine, oriented towards the European cultural shifts of the time. In 1925-1929, he taught at the Kyiv Art Institute. Rejecting «visual naturalism», he suggested that artists should instead look for new ways of representing colors, and that they should seek «a realism of colors that will incite the joyful strivings in workers». His best paintings represent a distinct blend of Primitivism and Futurism. Palmov experimented with surfaces of paper and canvas, creating complicated textures by introducing bright layers of glass and foil.

### **Anatol Petrytsky (1895-1964)**

A native of Kyiv, Petrytsky studied at the Kyiv Art School. In 1916, he made his debut as a theater designer. In 1917-1919, he was the chief artist at the Les Kurbas Young Theatre. His constructivist costume and stage designs, striking in their imagery and the unerring understanding of the era, were commissioned by the theaters of Kyiv, Kharkiv, and Moscow. Petrytsky, far ahead of his times, generated new artistic concepts, and pioneered new ways of artistic development. A conscientious scholar of both global and Ukrainian art history, Petrytsky portrayed the drama of human life, creating bright artistic ensembles where color arrangements evoked the Ukrainian folk tradition, the ethnographic element.

### **Oleksandr Sayenko (1899-1985)**

Sayenko was born in Borzna, Chernihiv region. Having lived through the scarlet fever epidemic that broke out in Ukraine in the early twentieth century, Oleksandr lost speech and hearing. He studied at the Kyiv art school and graduated from the Kyiv Art Institute. Continuing in the footsteps of Mykhailo Boichuk, Sayenko worked in monumental and monumental-decorative art, but explored the medium of straw inlaying instead. The artist saw his paintings, his compositions in flashes of straw that had absorbed the sunshine and the juices of the earth. Sayenko could only communicate with the outside world through vision. His works are dynamic, endowed with an exquisitely expressive rhythm. The artist successfully combined decorative art with elements of the folk culture and the innovative trends of avant-garde art.

**Vasyl Sedliar (1899-1937)**

Sedliar was born in the village of Zhorzhivka, Poltava region. He studied at the Kyiv Art school and at Mykhailo Boichuk's workshop of monumental painting at the Ukrainian State Academy of Arts. He started participating in academic, national and international exhibitions in 1921. In 1924, he took part in decorating the Kyiv Art Institute. He worked in easel painting, book graphics, and decorative ceramics, becoming the first artist after the Revolution to illustrate «Kobzar» by Taras Shevchenko. He also illustrated books by Vladimir Mayakovski, Heo Shkurupii, Ivan Franko, Andrii Holovko, and others.

**Petro Stovbunenko (1903-1967)**

A native of the village Znamenka, now Dnipropetrovsk region, Stovbunenko studied at the Kyiv Institute of Plastic Arts (1923-1927). He worked in genre painting, landscapes, and still life. Many of his works depict life in the North and the East of the Soviet Union.

**Alexander Tyshler (1898-1980)**

Tyshler was born in Melitopol. He studied at the Kyiv Art School under Hryhorii Diadchenko, Fotii Seleznev and Ivan Krasyskyi (1912-1917), and at Alexandra Ekster's studio (1917-1918). In 1918, he became one of the founders of the art section of the Kultur-League in Kyiv. In the 1920s, he participated in international exhibitions in Dresden, Venice, and Harbin. Since the late 1920s, he worked as a stage designer in Jewish, Russian, and Roma theaters in Ukraine. Tyshler designed stage sets for many performances of Shakespeare's plays (for example, he designed the sets for Les Kurbas's production of «The King Lear» in the State Jewish Theater in Moscow in 1935). Since the late 1930s, he worked primarily on theater productions, and hardly ever exhibited his works. Starting in the mid-1940s, Tyshler had been painting still lifes and portraits. In the 1950s, he turned to wood sculpture.

### List of works by numbers:

1. **Alexander Archipenko.** *Woman in a chair.* 1918. Plaster, paint, wood.
2. **Alexander Bogomazov.** *Portrait of the artist's daughter.* 1928. Plywood, oil.
3. **Alexander Bogomazov.** *Portrait of a woman.* 1914. Oil on canvas.
4. **Mykhailo Boichuk.** *Saint John.* 1910. Mosaic.
5. **Tymko Boichuk.** *By the apple-tree.* 1919-1920. Cardboard, tempera.
6. **David Burliuk.** *The arrival of spring and summer.* 1914. Oil on canvas.
7. **David Burliuk.** *Spring in a village.* 1917. Oil on canvas.
8. **Alexandra Ekster.** *Spanish dance.* 1912. Paper, gouache, ink.
9. **Alexandra Ekster.** *Three female figures.* 1910. Oil on canvas.
10. **Mark Epshtein.** *Two trumpeters.* The early 1920s. Graphics.
11. **Mark Epshtein.** *A woman with a yoke.* The early 1920s. Graphics.
12. **Vasyl Yermilov.** *Guitar.* 1924. Relief, wood, oil.
13. **Mykola Kasperovich.** *Ducks.* 1920s. Cardboard, tempera.
14. **Mykola Kasperovich.** *Head of a girl.* 1920. Plywood, tempera.
15. **Borys Kosarev.** *Goblets.* 1919. Pencil on paper.
16. **Borys Kosarev.** *A sketch for the play «Hubeane.»* 1923. Coloured paper collage.
17. **Fedir Krychevsky.** *Triptych «Life» - Love.* 1927. Tempera on canvas.
18. **Kazimir Malevich.** *Self-portrait.* 1936. Oil on canvas.
19. **Kazimir Malevich.** *In the hayfield.* 1929. Oil on canvas.
20. **Abram Manevych.** *Winter. Sovska street in Kyiv.* 1914-1915. Oil on canvas.
21. **Vadim Meller.** *Assyrian dances.* 1919. Cardboard, gouache.
22. **Vadim Meller.** *Masks.* 1919. Cardboard, watercolor.
23. **Ivan Padalka.** *Rural photographer (fragment).* 1927. Tempera on canvas.
24. **Victor Palmov.** *The Forge. (Smith).* 1923. Plywood, oil.

25. **Victor Palmov.** *Village.* 1928. *Oil on canvas.*
26. **Anatol Petrytsky.** *Portrait of M. Kozytskyi.* 1931. *Paper, watercolor, gouache.*
27. **Oleksandr Sayenko.** *Ukrainian woman.* 1925 *Plywood, tempera, straw.*
28. **Oleksandr Sayenko.** *V.G. Krychevsky.* 1922. *Cardboard, gesso, tempera.*
29. **Vasyl Sedliar.** *At school. Literacy classes (fragment).* 1929. *Paper, tempera.*
30. **Vasyl Sedliar.** *Girl.* 1928. *Plywood, tempera.*
31. **Petro Stovbunenko.** *Village priest. The early 1930s.* *Oil on canvas.*
32. **Alexander Tyshler.** *Woman and an airplane.* 1926.

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