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Бойко В. І. Скульптура Вадима Сідюра «Пам'ятник загиблим дітям» (1968) – унікальний експонат колекції Дніпровського художнього музею. *Вісник Національної академії керівних кадрів культури і мистецтв* : наук. журнал. 2024. № 3. С. 131–135.

THE SCULPTURE BY VADYM SIDUR "MONUMENT TO THE FALLEN CHILDREN" (1968) – A UNIQUE EXHIBIT IN THE COLLECTION OF THE DNIPRO ART MUSEUM

The aim of the article is to present and analyze Vadym Sidur's sculptural work "Monument to the Fallen Children" (1968), as well as to re-contextualize this unique piece in the Dnipro Art Museum's collection from the perspective of 20th-century Ukrainian fine arts. **The research methodology** is based on a comprehensive approach, utilizing a variety of general scientific and specialized methods, including analytical, historical-chronological, systematization, and generalization. This allowed for a thorough examination of the topic and led to relevant conclusions. **Scientific novelty** lies in the fact that, for the first time, a comprehensive approach was applied to the analysis and synthesis of issues concerning the representation of Vadym Sidur's sculptural work "Monument to the Fallen Children" (1968) in the Dnipro Art Museum's collection. The study also contributes to the reintroduction of the artist's legacy into the domestic art history discourse. **Conclusions.** To mark its 110th anniversary, the Dnipro Art Museum received a unique addition to its collection: Vadym Sidur's "Monument to the Fallen Children" (1968). This work is part of a series of succinct artistic images created by the artist in the 1960s, in which V. Sidur explores and reflects on his own wartime trauma. It is precisely these works, with their tragic tone, that brought V. Sidur international recognition. The presented metaphorical artistic image resonates as a direct reflection of our current reality. The inclusion of this original work by the world-renowned sculptor in the museum's collection marks a significant milestone in the history of its modern art department. This event sparks the process of reintegrating both the artist's figure and his work into local and national art history discourse, which is especially timely given the need to reassess and reconsider the contributions of Ukrainian culture and correct the distortions in the history of domestic fine arts.

Keywords: Dnipro Art Museum, collection, Vadym Sidur, sculpture, Soviet art, 20th-century Ukrainian fine arts.

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Скульптура Вадима Сідюра «Пам'ятник загиблим дітям» (1968) – унікальний експонат колекції Дніпровського художнього музею

Мета статті полягає в репрезентації та аналізі скульптурного твору Вадима Сідюра «Пам'ятник загиблим дітям» (1968), реактуалізації цього унікального предмету зберігання колекції Дніпровського художнього музею з точки зору надбань саме українського образотворчого мистецтва ХХ століття. **Методологія дослідження** заснована на використанні комплексного підходу в застосуванні таких загальнонаукових та спеціальних методів пізнання, як аналітичний, історико-хронологічний, систематизації та узагальнення, що дало можливість ґрунтовно розглянути заявлену проблематику та отримати відповідні висновки. **Наукова новизна** полягає в тому, що вперше було застосовано комплексний підхід до аналізу та узагальнення низки питань щодо репрезентації скульптурного твору Вадима Сідюра «Пам'ятник загиблим дітям» (1968) з колекції Дніпровського художнього музею та повернення постаті митця до вітчизняного мистецтвознавчого дискурсу. **Висновки.** Дніпровський художній музей до свого 110-річчя отримав унікальне поповнення колекції – скульптурний твір Вадима Сідюра «Пам'ятник загиблим дітям» (1968 р.). Робота належить до низки лаконічних художніх образів митця 1960-х років в яких автор здійснює спробу осягнути та відрефлексувати власну воєнну травму. Саме твори такої трагічної тональності, принесли митцю світове визнання. Презентований метафоричний художній образ, резонує як пряма мистецька проекція нашого сьогодення. Поява оригінального твору всесвітньо відомого

скульптора в музейній колекції – знаковий епізод в історії формування відділу сучасного образотворчого мистецтва. Ця подія інспірує процес повернення як самої особи видатного митця так і його творчості до локального та всеукраїнського мистецтвознавчого дискурсу, що є вельми актуальним, з огляду на необхідність реактуалізації та переосмислення надбань української культури та спростування викривлень історії вітчизняного образотворчого мистецтва.

Ключові слова: Дніпровський художній музей, колекція, Вадим Сідур, скульптура, радянське мистецтво, українське образотворче мистецтво XX століття.

Relevance of the research topic. Throughout 2024, the Dnipro Art Museum received a number of artworks as gifts, which became the foundation for an exhibition of contemporary art. The exhibition of paintings, graphics, sculptures, and decorative applied arts, titled "Gifts from Contemporary Artists for the Museum's 110th Anniversary", was presented on April 25, 2024. This exhibition still serves as a temporary replacement for the main museum collection, which was dismantled and secured by the museum staff in the early days of the full-scale Russian armed aggression against Ukraine.

Among the numerous gifts presented by the museum as part of the exhibition, a special place is occupied by the sculptural work of Vadym Sidur (1924–1986) titled "Monument to the Fallen Children" (1968). The research is particularly relevant, considering that this piece became the first sculpture by the world-renowned artist in the collection of the city's art museum, where he was born and spent his childhood and youth.

Additionally, the proposed scholarly exploration is relevant in terms of the reactivation and rethinking of the achievements of 20th-century Ukrainian fine art. A significant number of artists with direct ties to Ukraine and its culture, as a result of aggressive colonial policies, are perceived in Europe and the USA as representatives of Russian (Soviet) artistic culture, which is a clear distortion of the history of domestic fine art.

Analysis of Research and Publications. The study of the historiography of this subject revealed that the formation of the Dnipro Art Museum's collection as a scholarly issue has been the focus of a small group of specialists, usually those connected to the museum's operations. Among this group, it is worth highlighting both the scientific and popular science works by researchers who have studied personal museum collections and individual items within the museum's holdings, such as V. Kulychikhin [6], S. Nesmachnyi [7], O. Kapshukova [5], O. Svitlychna [8], and L. Tverska [9]. Vadym Sidur's sculptural work "Monument to the Fallen Children" has not yet been the subject of scholarly attention or research as part of the Dnipro Art Museum's collection.

This article aims to present and analyze Vadym Sidur's sculptural work "Monument to the Fallen Children" (1968). It seeks to reactuate this unique object in the Dnipro Art Museum's collection in the context of the achievements of Ukrainian fine arts in the 20th century.

Main contents presentation. In April 2024, the Dnipro Art Museum celebrated its 110th anniversary. Over the course of more than a century, the museum and its collection have endured many dramatic events: several relocations, the occupation of the city during World War II, significant building damage, and a fire in 1974.

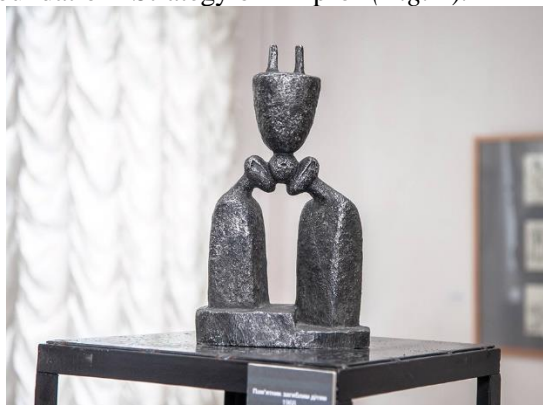
The museum marked its 110th anniversary under challenging circumstances. Full-scale Russia's armed aggression against Ukraine forced museum staff not only to dismantle and secure the artworks in the collection but also to reconsider the museum's future direction. After all, some of the fine art objects in the collection cannot currently have a place in the main exhibition from the point of view of restoring historical justice. Other require a careful approach to rethinking the concept of exhibition in the context of the latest museum narratives. Furthermore, the era of state procurement is unfortunately behind us, and today the task of building the collection and creating new exhibitions entirely depends on the active work of museum staff, as well as the support of volunteers and friends of the museum.

Therefore, in March 2024, the museum made a public appeal to professional painters, graphic artists, sculptors, collectors, and patrons, asking them to donate one or more works of art to the museum for its 110th anniversary. The goal was to make a significant contribution to building an artistic legacy for future generations of Ukrainians and to represent Ukrainian culture on the world stage in the years ahead.

As a result, the museum was able to gather a number of artworks in 2024, forming the foundation of its current collection of Ukrainian fine art from the second half of the 20th century and the first quarter of the 21st century. Some of the donated artworks were presented on April 25, 2024, as part of the exhibition "Gifts from Contemporary Artists for the Museum's 110th Anniversary." The exhibition successfully showcased the full range of modern Ukrainian art,

with its diversity and uniqueness [1]. Around 100 works of paintings, graphics, sculptures, and decorative applied arts were displayed in three halls on the second floor of the museum, where the main exhibition was previously located until February 24, 2022.

Among the many donations, special attention was given to Vadym Sidur's sculpture "Monument to the Fallen Children" (1968), which was donated to the museum by Professor of Slavic Studies Karl Aimermaher (Berlin, Germany), with the support of the Charitable Foundation "Strategy of Dnipro" (Fig. 1).



**Fig. 1. Vadym Sidur (1924–1986).
«Monument to the Fallen Children». 1968.
Aluminum, cast.
Dnipro Art Museum Collection**

"Monument to the Fallen Children" became the first work by the internationally renowned sculptor in the museum's collection in his hometown [3]. It should be noted that the name of Vadym Sidur is increasingly being mentioned in Dnipro's cultural discourse, which is no coincidence. The future sculptor, graphic artist, writer, and poet was born in this city, spent his childhood and youth there, and received his first creative impulses. During World War II, in the liberation of the Dnipropetrovsk region, he suffered severe injuries and, at the age of 18, became a war invalid.

Since the 1970s, Vadym Sidur's work has confidently integrated into the European cultural sphere, aligning the artist with the leading figures of 20th-century modernist sculpture. Within the Soviet Empire, however, the artist remained in a state of cultural isolation, which is not surprising given how much his creative style and metaphorical language conflicted with socialist realism, taking on an increasingly underground direction.

It is important to emphasize that the presentation of V. Sidur's original sculptural work, "Monument to the Fallen Children," was a major event in Dnipro in 2024, but not the only one that

related to the figure of the famous master of the 20th century, of those that took place in the city of Dnipro during 2024. Specifically, a series of city events honoring the memory of this renowned sculptor took place on June 28, 2024, in accordance with the Ukrainian Parliament's Resolution №3536-IX dated December 21, 2023, "On the Commemoration of Significant Dates and Anniversaries in 2024-2025."

The first event was the presentation of an exhibition of V. Sidur's graphic works and sculptures at the Dnipro Art Museum (on display from June 28 to September 1, 2024). The exhibition included not only the donated "Monument to the Fallen Children," but also another sculpture, "Treblinka" (1966), as well as 15 lithographs from his series "Mutations" (1969) [3]. The second event was the unveiling of the sculptural composition "Monument to the Fallen from Bombs" a large replica of V. Sidur's monumental work, recreated by the Honored Artist of Ukraine, sculptor Harnik Khachatryan (the original sculpture was installed in 1993 in the city of Würzburg, the administrative center of the Lower Franconia region, Germany) (Fig. 2). The third event was the premiere of the theatrical sketch "Planet Sidur" by the Theatre "DGU" and the Creative Workshop "A", as well as the screening of the documentary "Sidur. Eternal Return". Additionally, since 2021, a cultural and artistic space dedicated to V. Sidur has operated in Dnipro, known as the "Vadym Sidur Museum of Dnipro" [4] (Fig. 3). Located in the educational institution where V. Sidur studied, it has been part of the "Museum of the History of Dnipro" since 2024.



**Fig. 2. Replica of Vadym Sidur's sculpture
"Monument to the Fallen from Bombs", recreated by
Honored Artist of Ukraine, sculptor Harnik
Khachatryan. 2024**



Fig. 3. Entrance to the cultural and artistic venue "Vadym Sidur Museum of Dnipro". 2021

In the 1960s, Vadym Sidur created a series of artworks in which he sought to comprehend and process his own war trauma, representing it through artistic metaphors and symbols in concise visual forms. One of these works, "Monument to the Fallen Children" (aluminum, cast; 1968), became a key piece that brought V. Sidur international recognition.

It is noteworthy that many of Vadym Sidur's easel sculptures from this period were later transformed into monumental works and installed in several cities in Germany. "Monument to the Fallen Children" remains one of the few works that did not find monumental expression, despite the strong message embedded of the author's conceptual intention.

"Monument to the Fallen Children" is a poignant reflection on loss, an ongoing artistic interaction between the artist and eternity. The directness of its visual language is striking, compressing emotional tension into metaphorical forms, resonating as an artistic projection of our present-day reality.

Like many other easel artworks of the period, V. Sidur's conception reflects the scale of monumental sculpture, where not only volume but also voids play an important role. His artistic language is exceptionally minimalist, with generalization being one of author's primary techniques.

The sculpture composition is set on a two-step pedestal and consists of three figures whose heads meet. In portraying these figures, V. Sidur arrives at the archetype – an abstracted representation of the human form. In creating the figures of two adults, the artist leaves only the torsos, omitting all other elements. The texture of the surface, which imitates stone, is crucial to the work, creating a sense of roughness. In this sculpture, V. Sidur simultaneously appeals to both modern metaphorical artistic language and archaic stylistic elements.

"Monument to the Fallen Children" was an excellent fit within the exhibition of gifts from contemporary Ukrainian artists. Its inclusion in this exhibition highlights how close the modern artistic aspirations of Vadym Sidur in the late 1960s were to the artistic explorations of contemporary Ukrainian artists.

It is no exaggeration to say that the acquisition of Vadym Sidur's original work by the Dnipro Art Museum is a significant moment in the museum's history. The timing of this event is especially poignant, occurring during the period of martial law in Ukraine (imposed on February 24, 2022, due to full-scale Russia's armed aggression by Decree of the President of Ukraine № 64/202), when the museum's normal operations were severely disrupted. The donation can be seen as a strong gesture of support for the museum during a difficult historical moment and one of the first steps toward re-establishing interest in the life and work of this internationally recognized artist within both the local and national art historical discourse.

The scientific novelty of this work lies in the application of a comprehensive approach to analyze and generalize a series of issues concerning the representation of Vadym Sidur's sculptural work "Monument to the Fallen Children" (1968) from the Dnipro Art Museum's collection, and the reintroduction of the artist into the national art history discourse.

Conclusions. In celebration of 110th anniversary, the Dnipro Art Museum received a unique addition to its collection – Vadym Sidur's sculptural piece "Monument to the Fallen Children" (1968). This work belongs to a series of concise artistic representations from the 1960s, in which the artist seeks to understand and reflect upon his own wartime trauma. Works of this tragic tone brought V. Sidur international recognition. The presented metaphorical artistic image resonates as a direct artistic projection of our contemporary reality.

The inclusion of the original work by the world-renowned sculptor in the museum's collection is a landmark moment in the history of the formation of its contemporary art department. In our view, this event initiates the process of reintroducing both the artist's persona and his work into local and all-Ukrainian art history discourse. This is especially pertinent considering the need to re-actualize and reassess the contributions of Ukrainian culture and to refute distortions in the history of domestic fine arts.

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Література

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