

# Portfolio

Alyona Tokovenko

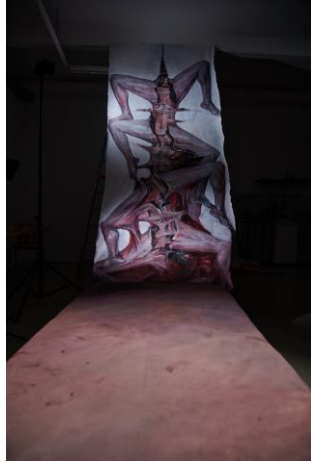
Title: "Collective Body"

Medium: Installation

Year: 2022

In these series I reflect on the topic of privacy and ownership loss in the modern world, the way it shapes our lives and the way in which boundaries that we set can be used against us. Where exactly are the boundaries of personal space? Whether it is your home or a mattress on the street why was the government given every right to dispose your body and life to resolve political or military conflicts. Does your body belong to you personally or are you just part of a collective organism without the right to make decisions. While there is a rise of "Right to Repair" movement in western world which stands against the way corporations treat customers redefining modern ownership into rather a lease selling us services indefinitely and taking away the freedom of owning a product, our bodies are long time treated the same way by governments.





Title: "I am an Insect"

Medium: Installation

Year: 2022

In my works, I explore the body, consciousness, trauma and the way we process it in our life. The form it takes in my works is the opportunity to recognize distress experience and separate it. If thinking about our consciousness as a map, my works are knots, crossroads there, marking the moments of processed shape or outcome.

In my series "I am an insect" I continue to work on the topic of victim. Inspired by a very trivial episode from my life I undertake an attempt of understanding history as a trauma — personal and collective, where society and individuals are the victims.

Once I settled in the apartment, I found cohabitant – a cockroach. Small, but so undesirable creature usually awaits one fate – the brutal murder of a slipper. However, a person who saw the acts of the same ungrounded attack on himself, cannot do the same with another living creature. In these faceless images of the interlacing of body parts, muscles, arteries, veins, and tentacles I built a creature that is nor a human, nor an insect. In this series I'm thinking about the distribution of power, metamorphosis and changes of places with insect asking myself if it's necessary to take a certain position and perceive yourself as a victim, or an aggressor.



Title: "No Time To Heal"

Medium: Installation

Year: 2022

I started this series before the recent war outrage in Ukraine. At that time, I was obsessed with images of the body on a mattress and representations of the zoomed skin and wounds. Today with photos of war one can have a close look at the blooded body, partless body, and wounded body and it poses a question: how do we feel about it? What do we think? In which way do we understand it as a living experience, or do we look at it as an image? In my series, I use colors, textures, and even my hair, as a part of my DNA, quite explicitly to confront people with these questions. There how it becomes in some way a social body.

Simultaneously the issues of the collective and private bodies are extremely important for me. How do we understand and define the collective body and personal one? When you enter the war, the body loses its privacy, it becomes something in between. It gets another dimension, it is spread on the streets, and flesh is seen in the photographs. One is confronted with such images, that before were only appearing in movies. I can only perceive these wounds, traumatized bodies, flesh, and skin as a part of the information, which is impossible to grasp or process emotionally being where I am and looking at it.

In Ukraine now, on the other hand, everything spins around emotions. When you start to process what is happening emotionally, it is a private body that hurts.

My series is about this suspended feeling, the body that is being hung in between. I perceive it as having an avatar. My avatar now performs duties, and makes the necessary moves, while I am having a distance and observing it.



Title: "I am Human"

Medium: Canvas, oil, chair

Year: 2020

This work is an analysis of how the human consciousness detects, processes and affirms images. This process is influenced by the history of a particular consciousness, its trauma, deformation, as well as the characteristics of its body shell.

Thanks to the internet and social media, we often encounter how algorithms misinterpret information and visual data. For instance, an algorithm sees a nude where there isn't one, thus endowing an object with subjectivity based on visual characteristics only.

I was interested in whether human consciousness works in the same way. To explore this, I created a corporeal mini-space with the medium of oil painting and placed an object that states "I am Human" inside of it. The shape of the chair itself is a direct reference to the original purpose of the object and its man-made nature (created by man and for man). The painting is done in such a way that it mimics an ultra-zoom, like the one in a camera or a smartphone; thus, an audience is invited to explore the object's traumas, deformations, and bodily characteristics as if it is a living creature, otherwise, it could be understood as a painting or a sculpture.

This work aims to combine the objectivity of painting and the chair with the subjectivity of the human. A chair made of flesh corresponds to the machine method, but at the same time emphasizes the humanity of painting, its origin, content, and purpose.





Title: "Common Key"

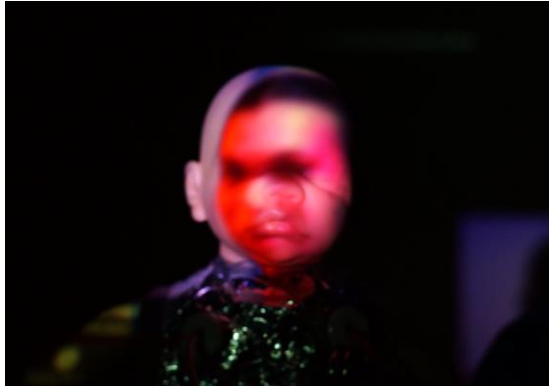
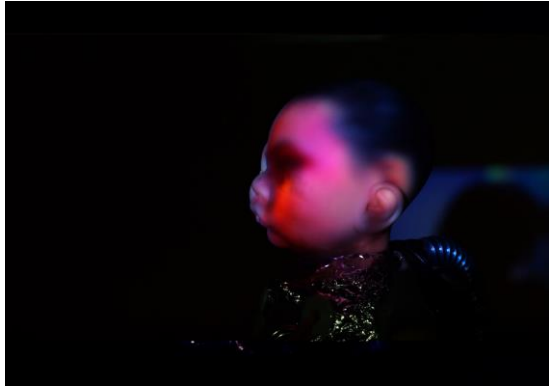
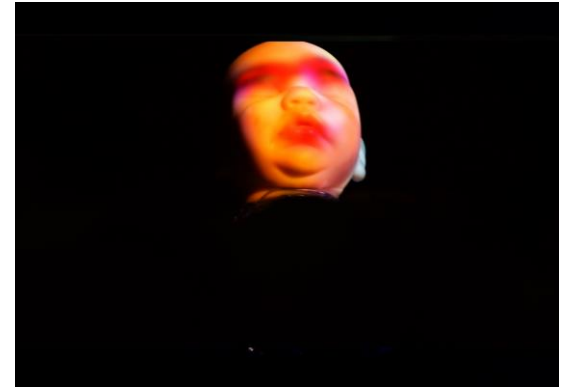
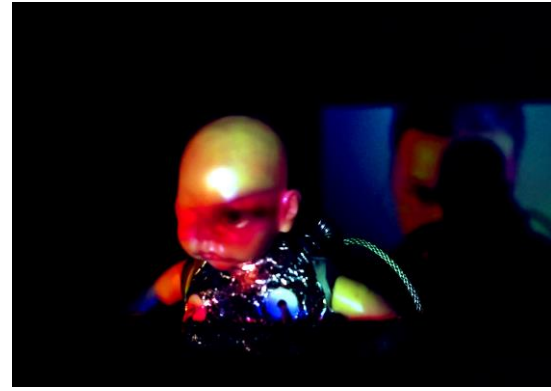
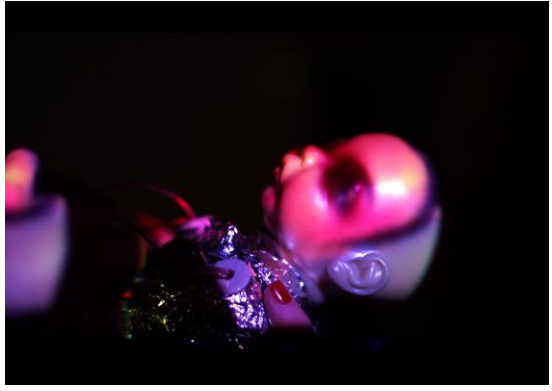
Medium: Video/Photo documentation

Year: 2020

<https://youtu.be/5BN2dFzS-zE>

The video reflects on the programming of consciousness. I am interested in how computing correlates with the process of how human consciousness works. This project is a fantasy and stylization of the possibility of human consciousness programming. In the video, I try to envisage and consider how we created the computer in our image and, similarly, try to project our personality onto our children and close ones.

In the video, I am connected to the doll's body and the computer through the wire. The sound in the video is the sound of the milling machine, and the human heartbeat slowed down. My face is projected on the doll's face with an aim to project my personality onto the baby's one.



Title: "The Eucharis or the Holy Communion"

Medium: Performance

Year: 2019

In this thematic performance the artist conducts the ritual of communion reflecting on the concept of bread and body in the contemporary culture opposed to traditional and religious perceptions of this subject.

For this performance I'm wearing a skin-color leather overalls with 'Хлеб' ('bread') written on my back, a skin-color canvas, where I write 'Тело' ('body') in the process of the performance and the box signed with 'Тело' ('body') where there was the bread for the communion.



Title: "Phantom pain"

Medium: Installation

Year: 2019

This project reflects on the national decommunization process. It explores the topic of communist heritage as religious phenomenon and the methods of fighting this with experience.

The project consists of four installations: 'Sacrificial Altar', 'Icon Corner', 'Stigmata', 'Red Chapter', a series of paintings and opening performance 'ГОТОВ'

'Sacrificial Altar' consists of a dummy which is crucified on the cross that has soviet symbols on it. A crown of thorns was placed on the cushion made from the soviet flag.

'ГОТОВ' (opening performance)

"Red Chapter" is a canvas decorated with a gold frame, which is a traditional element for portraits of important Soviet party figures, is a textured painting of red paint and hair. Symbolizes a fragment of the "sacrificial flesh of a citizen."

"Icon Corner" is an installation with a table and a book of Lenin's biography with a hole cut out inside to hide a stack of Soviet erotic playing cards.

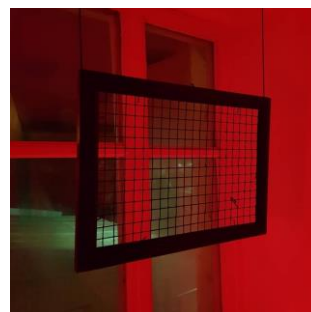
"Stigmata" includes five objects, four of them are frames with stretched fabric resembling skin with stigmata on them. The fifth object in the center is a canvas in the form of Khorugv (a religious banner used in the Eastern Orthodox and Eastern Catholic Churches). On this canvas, there are tattoos from the Soviet prison subcultures.



'Sacrificial Altar'



'Red Chapter'



'Icon Corner', 'Recast'



'Stigmata'

Title: "Готов / Ready"

Medium: Performance

Year: 2019

A performer is wearing a shirt with three collars. The word "Gotov!" (Ready!) on the shirt is made of numerous Soviet badges. The performer takes off the badges one by one during the performance and attaches them to the audience's clothes, thus destroying the word "Gotov", which is a key part of soviet slogan. An All-Union Pioneer Organization's slogan "Bud` gotov - Vsegda Gotov!" ( Be ready - Always Ready).

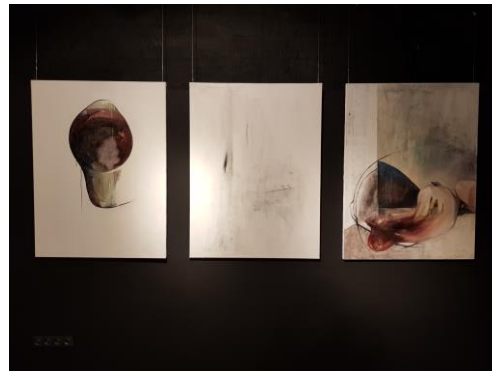
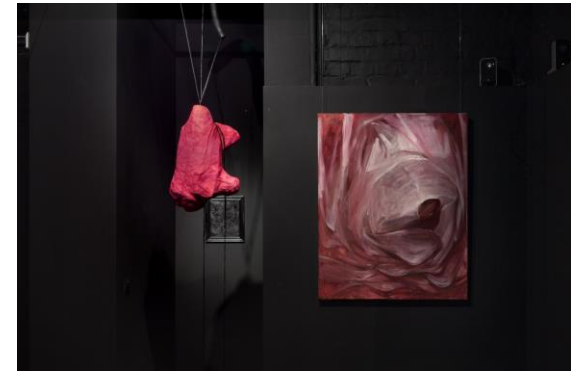


Title: "Transcript"

Medium: Installation

Year: 2018

The project consists of a number of paintings and objects. This is a process of analyzing memory, its modifications and how it mutates and transforms in the human mind. The human body is used as a visual symbol. The project uses the concept of tactile memory for which some paintings are transformed into objects that make sculptures assembled into an installation.





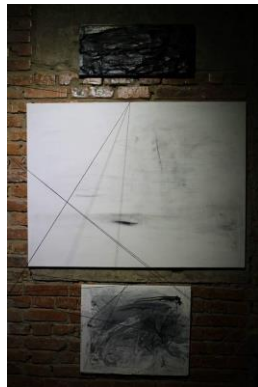
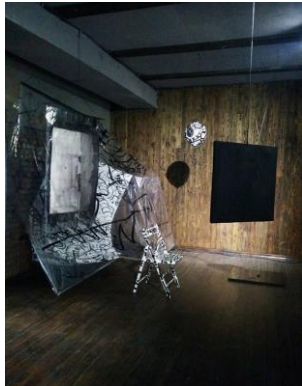


Title: "There is Nothing"

Medium: Installation

Year: 2017

The project reflects the phenomenon of human attention. The installation consists of objects that could be grabbed by attention from the total mass. These objects are camouflaged and they create a common space where there is no hierarchy. Among them there are household items like a chair or a T-shirt, as well as abstract shapes and textures.





Title: "Mechanical catharsis"

Medium: Painting / Installation

Year: 2016

The project describes the process of a system failure and computer restart, drawing an analogy with the processes occurring at the time of a human's epileptic seizure. The project consists of 10 paintings that correspond to 10 stages of the epileptic seizure and an installation that symbolizes the birth of a traumatized but renewed consciousness.

1. Code
2. Cycle
3. Error
4. Absence
5. Process
6. Pause
7. System Analysis 1
8. System Analysis 2
9. Update
10. Catharsis

Danger Marks ( installation)

