

## **In the splendour of fallen suns**

Daria Koltsova

27.09. – 13.11.2024

‘The seasons contemplate the light’s confusion  
In the arid zones of our thoughts.’  
– Etel Adnan, *Time*, 2019

*In the splendour of fallen suns* is Daria Koltsova’s first solo exhibition with Suprainfinit showcasing newly commissioned works that blend metal, stained and blown-glass sculptures to create an immersive environment. By addressing the relationship between memory, built environments and imagined spaces, the exhibition continues the artist’s practice of highlighting the fragility of landscapes and objects in their coexistence with the human one.

*Witnesses*, a group of sculptures depicting sunflowers and wheat grains monumentally inhabit the gallery space in a synecdoche of a lost land, creating a dried, burnt landscape of plants that have witnessed the tragedy of war. The incompleteness of the landscape creates a powerful poetics of memory, able to capture the grieving of the Earth through these subtle fragmentations. As the black glass is deprived of its habitual function to let light shine through, this opaque statue, in a display of trauma, reflects darkness back to its viewers. By shattering the light, the sunflowers turn into mourning sentinels. Outraged about the Ukrainian burnt sunflower and wheat fields in the current Russian invasion, the artist’s desire to commemorate nature turned into spiky and eerie sunflowers, like shadows of multigenerational traumas, histories of subjugation that brutally reverberate into the present.

Daria bears a personal connection to the wheat grain which has informed her ardent wish to visually and symbolically represent this cereal. Her grandad worked as a genetic agricultural engineer who ended up dedicating his research and work on wheat. Reflecting on her grandad’s process of walking through a complex land that was both foreign and a home, the artist conjures the processes of deterritorialization and reterritorialization through her new sculptural assemblages, as the viewer is invited to equally inhabit her glass fields, to aggregate with the memory of estranged living organisms.

The eponymous stained-glass sculpture *In the splendour of fallen suns* seduces the viewer to step inside and travel to an architecturally Constructivist past, familiar to the artist’s childhood home city of Kharkiv. Struck by the image of an old Soviet propaganda stained glass depicting a pristine landscape, centering a large sun and a Soviet soldier, Daria removed the image of the soldier but kept the sun, symbolically liberating the land from ideologising forces. Consciously deploying a

gesture of erasure, the image transforms into a metaphor of boundless nature whereby the environment regains its autonomy, even if temporarily. The rhythm of shapes and colours of the round portal infuses a sort of cosmic movement that conjugates the black holes around it.

Carefully shaped and made in colourful see through glass, the silent sculpture of birds hung from the ceiling represent the voices of artists and poets that have been taken away. As the bird sings to mark its territory, the artist created an assemblage of birds to subconsciously mark her territory, to carry a piece of land in the gallery space. Her voice becomes silenced and disappears inside the empty bodies of the bird sculptures.

Daria's exhibition is a lyrical contemplation on hope for a better ecological future in a post-war Ukrainian society, conserving memories of lost landscapes through sculptures as collective symbols. Her works shift the viewer's perspective between politics and nature, re-animating landscapes and thoughts, emotions and interpretations. As such, her art gazes back upon itself and uses memories of its past to become a way to analyse, discover, commemorate, and rebuild.

*In the splendour of fallen suns* exhibition is part of the project *Becoming after Ruin*. *The Becoming After Ruin* project is implemented by *Suprainfinit Gallery* with support of *IZOLYATSIA* foundation, *Trans Europe Halles* and *Malý Berlín* and co-financed by the *ZMINA:Rebuilding* program, created with the support of the *European Union* under a dedicated call for proposals to support *Ukrainian displaced people* and the *Ukrainian Cultural and Creative Sectors*.

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