



### **Reflections: Botanica / Positron**

Residency for young artists and activists “Reflections: Botanica / Positron” for the 1st time brought art-practices into two residential post Soviet remote neighborhoods - Botanica in Chișinău and Positron in Ivano-Frankivsk. The project was implemented by the organizations [UFRA](#) NGO (Ivano-Frankivsk, Ukraine) and Young Artists Association [Oberliht](#) (Chișinău, Moldova).

14 participants took part in 2 research and 2 practical visits to Chișinău and Ivano-Frankivsk in April - June, 2017. Artists from Chișinău realized their projects in Ivano-Frankivsk, and activists and artists from the West of Ukraine worked in Moldova’s capital. It was the 1<sup>st</sup> experience of working on the art projects in public space for many of them.

6 artistic projects were realized in Ivano-Frankivsk and 6 in Chișinău. These projects needed active involvement of local residents of Botanica and Positron and dealt with the themes of memory, common space of the residential areas, cultural infrastructure, social life, and civic engagement.

We invite you to look closer on the projects of “Reflections: Botanica / Positron” program in this catalog.



**Botanica.** As one of Chişinău's five sectors, Botanica is a particular example of Soviet era large scale urban development scheme with subdividing microrayons that were designed to function as self-sustainable units with public educational, cultural and leisure infrastructure. In these type of areas, you can stumble upon places like neighborhood libraries, schools and kindergartens, resilient green areas, or a "center for young naturalists".

The post-Soviet society changes have led to a generalized amnesia. The original aims of these urban life common facilities was forgotten, as people have become concentrated mostly on their own condition. The retreat of the state's authority led to a neglect for the maintenance and renewal of important urban life sustaining amenities. Residents have come up with their own understanding of the residential areas.

**Positron** district is one of the remote neighborhoods in Ivano-Frankivsk, constructed in the 1970s. The new neighborhood has been designed for the workers of a "Positron" plant, located nearby. The plant itself has been closed in the mid-90s, the residential area remained on its own. Positron looks at odds with the city of Ivano-Frankivsk known to tourists, distinctive with the City Hall's silhouette, narrow streets and Secession buildings. However, Positron's image is typical for all residential neighborhoods built in 70s: five- and nine-storied blocks with glazed balconies and modern colourful patches of warmth-keeping covering, wide streets with greenery and spacious yards with the remnants of outdoor theatres and vegetables' pavilions, makeshift street furniture and landscape design.

## Ciprian Antoci



How does our memory work? What do we remember from the past years of our personal life, and what – from the worldwide events that had already become history? Ciprian Antoci located his installation next to the church of St. Olha and Volodymyr in Ivano-Frankivsk. A few dozens of white chairs, and a year written with a black paint on each one, are located on a green lawn. A space for a meditation and retreat was created in such a way. So the church has become an ideal spot for this art work that requires from participants to be concentrated, and from the outside world – to be quiet.



## Daria Ivanov and Irina Șolopa



Audiovisual work by two young artists from Chișinău unites the stories of the residents of Botanica (Chișinău) and Positron (Ivano-Frankivsk). Daria made a series of photos in these two post Soviet neighborhoods. Irina recorded a few dozens interviews with their residents who she met during her walks around Botanica and Positron. As a result girls created an audiovisual essay about the meaning of our everyday life space, how we define its value and what do we remember about it through the years. Artists used the space of a summer theater in the middle of the residential area of Positron neighborhood, thus the audience has gathered long before the projection's started.



## Dana Maxim and Anastasia Capșitcaya



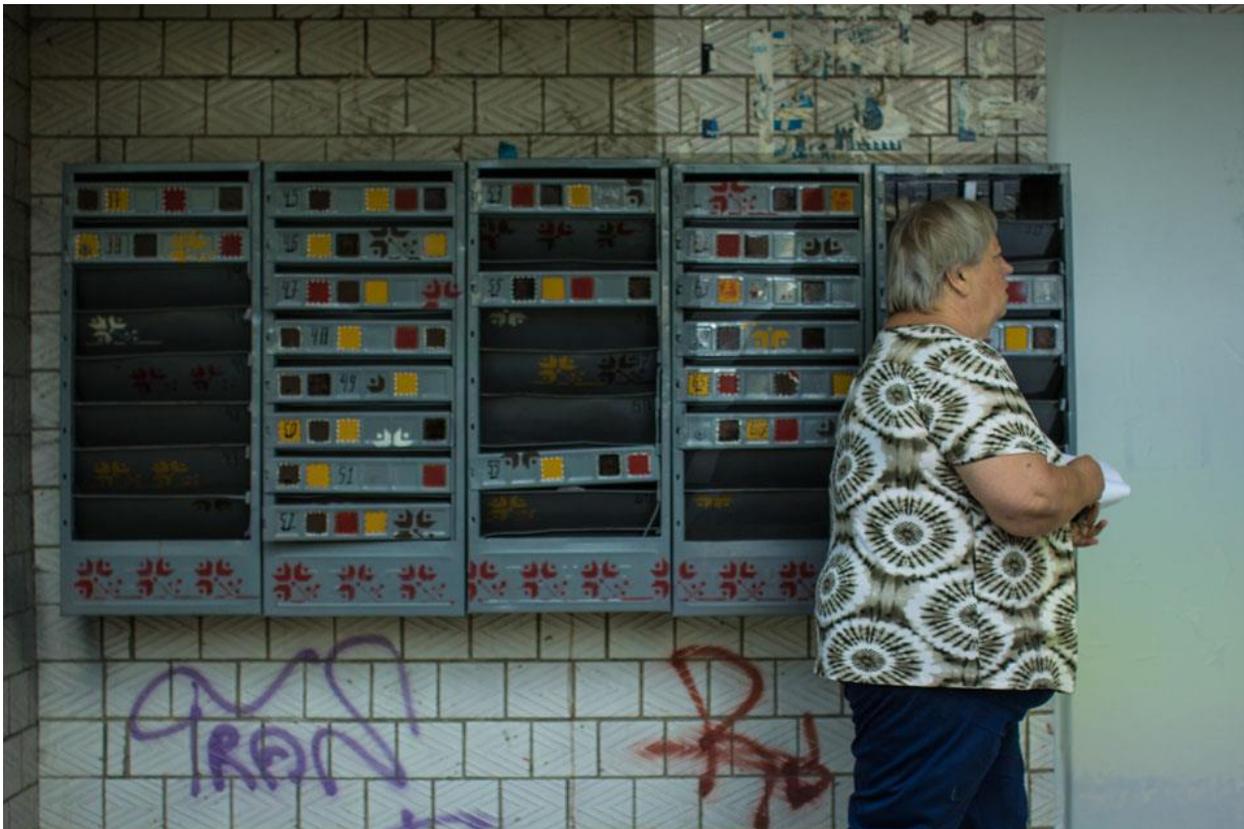
Artists gathered family photos of people who they met at Positron neighborhood to create three “photofits” – collective portraits of the residents of Positron. They made graffiti with these posters using stencil technique on a wall of a cabin substation in the neighborhood, a neglected unfriendly building. Today people of Positron can see these pop-art blue & pink portraits and recognize some face features – nose, eyes or hair – of their neighbors.



## Anna Casim



Anna Casim noticed neglected post boxes at one of the block at Positron. This was an inspiration for her project where she refers to the topic of human needs, sincerity and gratitude. Anna removed rust from the metal surface of the post boxes, covered them with a new layer of paint and decorated with the elements of traditional Ukrainian and Gagauzian ornaments. She also suggested residents to write letters to each other. Although not all the letters were received by their addressees (not all the letters had addresses written and some were addressed to people in other parts of the city), the residents were inspired by Anna's work. Who knows, perhaps soon other post boxes in this and neighboring buildings will look even better than those painted by Anna.



## Cătălina Bucos



Cătălina's work is not easy to capture with a photo camera. And video camera as well does not express the feeling that was born among the viewers of the projection. The topic of this work – home and spirituality, the role of religion in our everyday life and the frontier of the sacred and secular. With the help of coordinators and participants of the project Cătălina projected on the entrance door of a 9-story block a video she shot the day before. We see people who enter the local church on this video, and in projection the doors of the church from the video overlay the entrance to the block. Could our home be our temple? – rhetorically asks Cătălina with her work.



## Cristina Buga



Cristina knows how to make a stained-glass window – from purchasing of materials, working with glass elements to polishing the finished work. Her stained-glass made in Tiffany technique today everyone can observe in the window of an ordinary grocery shop “Lakomka” at Positron neighborhood. Cristina used glass elements from bottles, 3-litres jars and even glasses – her work refers to a topic of the Soviet past. At the same time one can just observe the play of sun beams on the colored glass and enjoy the beauty without thinking about the past. This is what the owner of the shop Svitlana Stefanyshyn can do now along with shop’s customers. For a few days the entrance space of this shop has become a space for Crisitna’s workshop where children and adults could learn how to make Tiffany stained-glass and create small glass souvenir as a keepsake.



## Maria Zubko



Young artist from the town of Nadvirna (Ivano-Frankivsk region) Maria Zubko has been tirelessly working from morning till night to paint a mural. In this painting – motives of childhood and maturity, seasons of the year. Its mild colors are inspired by the city of Chişinău and the district of Botanica in June: sun light, blue sky, dry grass and the light gray walls of the houses. While working on her project, Maria has succeeded in engaging local residents. Not only children who are always happy to have fun with paints and brush but also adults have been participating in creative process. With some of them Maria has built real friendship. Now this bright and mild at the same time, work will not only decorate the garage wall but also remind people that their everyday life's space could be a little brighter and friendly.



## Nadiya Kohutyak



Nadiya Kohutyak is a psychologist who teaches at Ivano-Frankivsk Vasyl Stepanyk University and has a private practice as well. She works with children and teenagers. One of the fields of her research interests is work with autistic children. In the framework of her project Nadiya has created a bilingual “autism guide” in Ukrainian and Romanian “Accept Unordinary”. In the textbook one can find a well-written story about an “odd” schoolboy who saves his school and the whole country from the computer virus. In this story the symptoms of autism and the way how to behave with such children are presented in comprehensible and exciting way. The illustrations for the textbook done by a young artist from Ivano-Frankivsk Slavko Khomenko.



## Yaroslav Khomenko



Animation is Slavko's passion. That's why in Chişinău he chose to work with this medium. During the week Slavko conducted everyday workshops with children from Botanica and taught them how to create real animation film. They created animation characters from color paper and bright plasticine. Children were excited by this activity and at the presentation of the work one could hear their cheerful voices when they recognized their work projected on a large screen in their yard.



## Andriy Tuzhykov



Physical scientist and poet Andriy Tuzhykov from Chernivtsi created a series of urban postcards. On the postcards there are three different views of Chişinău and on the back side – three quotes from «Chuck» Palahniuk, Milorad Pavić and from Japanese anime film “Ghost in the Shell 2. Innocence”. The first post cards were signed by local children – they wrote acknowledgements to the project’s organizers from the Oberliht Young Artists Association.



## Vitaliy Hryniv



Social animator from the town of Nadvirna (Ivano-Frankivsk region) Vitaliy Hryniv designed a model of birdhouse for books that can serve as a shelf for bookcrossing. Books are protected in this “bookhouse” from the rain and foul weather by the walls from plywood. Vitaliy made one such “bookhouse” and installed it on wooden construction – an artwork by Stefan Rusu. Vitaliy hopes this object will inspire residents to read, exchange books and communicate more. The first guests in the bookhouse were urban postcards by Andriy Tuzhykov and the autism guide by Nadiya Kohutyak.



## Volodymyr Radevych



Volodymyr Radevych, student from Ivano-Frankivsk, cyclist and transport policies researcher has proposed to make a bike service point. It has to be installed in front of Botanica district office. At the final night Volodymyr also made a short presentation for the residents of the yard at Tailor street. He explained in lay terms what does “sustainable mobility” mean, why bicycle in the city is not only fashion, but also a sustainable and efficient solution, dismantled some stereotypes about bicycles along the way.



Text: Svitlana Oslavska

Photos: Anna Ilchenko

This project is part of [TANDEM Ukraine](#) program. TANDEM – Cultural Managers Exchange Ukraine is an initiative of the [European Cultural Foundation](#) (Amsterdam) and [MitOst](#) (Berlin). The program is implemented by MitOst and “[Insha Osvita](#)” (Kyiv), supported by the Federal Foreign Office (Berlin) in the framework of “Dialogue for Change”.

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