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### THE ORIGINALITY OF THE AESTHETIC IN THE PHILOSOPHICAL AND ANTHROPOLOGICAL SEARCH OF GEORG LUKÁCS

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*The object of our analysis is the works by Hungarian philosopher 20th century G. Lukács. The article investigates the interpretation of the phenomenon of special in Hungarian thinker aesthetic concept. This is the subject of this article. The use of the term "special" in modern aesthetic theory, from Lukács's point of view, determines the peculiarity of aesthetic knowledge.*

*As a hypothesis, we assume its heuristic and methodological value for the development of modern aesthetics. We emphasize that it allows us to understand the difference between the aesthetic experience from the individual sensory experience, as a single, and abstract-theoretical, as a general one.*

*As a result, it has been found that the humanitarian outlook of the Hungarian thinker's creative heritage is humanistic. Exactly on this basis his aesthetic concept was developed and the doctrine of the special and sensual experience of man in particular. Therefore, ideas developed by the Hungarian philosopher and esthetician need more attention, and his appeal to the value of the idea of humanism in the evaluation of current art or artistic practices makes it possible to expand the criteria in the analysis of the latest art works and aesthetic phenomena. It is stated that modern aesthetics is based on all the previous development of aesthetic thought, but it is not a simple continuation of traditions. Aesthetic anthropology is one of the promising areas of its development. However, it is more overshadowed issue of art, artistic creation. It is revealed that aesthetic works by G. Lukács expand the field of non-classical understanding of art meaning in society, they allow studying the specifics of aesthetic, artistic experience and artistic practices of the present in the anthropological sense.*

*We point out the need for a more in-depth appeal to the works of this scientist in the analysis of modern society and his desire for formative innovation, in particular, there is a need for further study of his early works. We consider this as a prospect for further research into the philosophical and aesthetic heritage by G. Lukács. In addition, it seems necessary to investigate the impact by Lukács's ideas on the ideological searches of thinkers of Central and Eastern Europe when it comes to aesthetic and anthropological issues. We consider it important to do on the basis of consideration of the works by the Kyiv School of Philosophy and Aesthetics. Its representatives study the role of the aesthetic component in everyday life, and features of aesthetic experience in contemporary artistic practice, and aesthetic or artistic means of harmonization of the urban environment, etc.*

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## СВОЄРІДНІСТЬ ЕСТЕТИЧНОГО У ФІЛОСОФСЬКО-АНТРОПОЛОГІЧНИХ ПОШУКАХ ДЬЙОРДЯ ЛУКАЧА

Д. М. Скальська

Об'єктом нашого дослідження виступили праці угорського філософа ХХ століття Д. Лукача. У статті досліджується трактування феномена особливого в естетичній концепції угорського мислителя. Це предмет розгляду цієї статті. Ужиток поняття "особливе" в сучасній естетичній теорії, з точки зору Лукача, визначає своєрідність естетичного пізнання. У якості гіпотези ми припускаємо його евристичну та методологічну цінність для розвитку сучасної естетики, адже воно дає змогу зрозуміти й відмінність естетичного досвіду від власне чуттєвого, як одиничного, та абстрактно-теоретичного, як загального.

Як результат, нами з'ясовано, що світоглядно-засадничим принципом творчої спадщини угорського мислителя виступає гуманізм. Саме на його основі й розроблялася його естетична концепція загалом і вчення про особливе й чуттєвий досвід людини зокрема. Зазначено, що сучасна естетика спирається на весь попередній розвиток естетичної думки, проте не становить собою простого продовження традицій. Одним із перспективних напрямів розвитку її проблематики постає естетична антропологія. Тому естетичні напрацювання Д. Лукача розширюють поле неklasичного розуміння значення мистецтва в соціумі, дають змогу досліджувати специфіку естетичного, художнього досвіду та мистецьких практик сучасності в антропологічному сенсі.

Нами вказано на необхідність більш поглибленого звернення до праць цього ученого при аналізі сучасного суспільства та його прагнень до формотворчих інновацій, зокрема існує потреба подальшого вивчення його ранніх творів. Це вважаємо перспективною подальших досліджень у філософській та естетичній спадщині Д. Лукача. Крім того, видається необхідним дослідити вплив ідей Лукача на ідейні пошуки мислителів Центральної та Східної Європи, коли йдеться про естетико-антропологічну проблематику. Вважаємо важливим це зробити на основі розгляду праць Київської філософсько-естетичної школи, адже її представники вивчають роль естетичного компоненту в повсякденному житті людини, особливості естетичного досвіду у сучасній мистецькій практиці, естетичні й художні засоби гармонізації міського середовища та ін.

**Ключові слова:** Дьйордь Лукач, особливе, чуттєвий досвід, естетичний досвід, художнє пізнання, художні практики, естетична антропологія, повсякденність, інтуїція

**Introduction of the issue.** Passionate discussions are being held around the works and points of view of the Hungarian philosopher, specialist of aesthetic fields and literary critic G. Lukacs (György Lukacs), as well as around the fate of Western neo-Marxism and non-classical aesthetics in contexts of contemporary challenges and civilizational shifts. Making speeches with an uncompromising critique of the values, standards, and lifestyles of developed countries in Europe and North

America, this thinker has made his way in science, philosophy, whose development has reflected the dramatic history of social life in general, and the intellectual and artistic practices of modern times in particular.

From the point of view of actualization of the resolving of the current practical problems, it is a unique example of an organic combination of classical and modern discourse in philosophical and aesthetic thought. In his philosophical and aesthetic heritage the development of the concept of the special, applied by

him for the evaluation of aesthetic knowledge, artistic creativity and artistic practices of the present deserves the attention in the first place. This concept has not been sufficiently used in modern aesthetic theory yet, which makes it really important to analyze the work of G. Lukacs. In addition, the thinker's theoretical heritage seems to have a heuristic potential for considering and evaluating the role of aesthetic rather than sensory experience in the present society when phenomena or objects which are offered by everyday life, artistic practices and popular and elitist art raise the following question: does a harmony really have the value for the average person in our time.

**Current state of the issue.** The figure of Lukacs is often considered as a symbol of the "tragic intelligentsia" of the XX century: "After the authority of Marxism - together with the social system created on the basis of Marxist ideology - having declined sharply, Lukacs name and his works were for some time in the shade. It seemed that after having worked for six or seven decades in the field of philosophy and aesthetics, he has never left constructive ideas to mankind - unless we consider such as the theory of "great realism" which generations of literary critics did not know how to do, and therefore conscientiously forgot. However interest to Lukacs has been reviving in recent years" [9: 5]. The study of both foreign and domestic authors on the issues of philosophy of culture, philosophical anthropology, art and aesthetic issues can be considered as similar. In particular, we need mention such explorers of Lukacs' biography as U. Titz, M. Kheveshi, P. Anderson, T. Sabo, and B. Kifalyfeiv. Special attention to be paid to the discourses of scholars on the legacy of the odious G. Lukacs in the 2009 issues of *Literary Questions* in Moscow. Intellectual studies of the Kiev School of Philosophy and Aesthetics, with the origins by A. Kanarsky, such

scholars as E. Pavlova, V. Panchenko, O. Polishchuk and others are devoted to the newest post-totalitarian practices in the fields of artistic cognition, aesthetic anthropology in Eastern Europe. Thus, similar to Lukacs's research on the phenomenon of myth, mimesis, and animation, we can find convincing scientific explorations by O. Polishchuk about the potential of artistic myth, its visualization and the means of introduction into the mass consciousness [10: 62-69].

**The outline of unresolved issues brought up in the article.** The *object* of our research is the philosophical legacy of Lukacs, and our key *task* is to explore the role of the concept of the special in the philosophical and aesthetic heritage of this Hungarian thinker. Also our research task is to explore its contribution to the development of aesthetics and anthropology. It is important to consider the author's efforts to form the interest of aesthetic anthropology as a promising scientific direction among anthropological studies of 20th century through understanding the specifics of art and its manifestations of mankind.

**The purpose** of the article, we want to pay attention to some problems and make description of unresolved issues because the creative heritage by Lukacs is represented quite ambiguously and in some way incompletely in modern philosophical studios. Most scholars consider the ideological baggage by the late Lukacs, developed at such works as: *The peculiarity of the aesthetic* and *Ontology of social being* (which are sufficiently popularized in the intellectual circles of Eastern and Central Europe through Russian translation) as the thing of paramount importance. But no less relevant thing for the development of modern aesthetic theory is the early writings by the young Lukacs, in particular his work *History and Class Consciousness* (1923), particularly because of the depth and the

certain paradox of the thought. Other works by G. Lukacs of the early period, given their insufficient consideration by contemporary specialist of aesthetic field, philosophers, and art theorists are also quite intriguing and promising for the study of the creative legacy of the Hungarian philosopher.

**Results and discussions.** Having begun his career as a literary critic and essayist, G. Lukacs sought a theoretical foundation first in Kant's aesthetics and later in Hegel's. Therefore, his first works focused more on historical and philosophical problems, while aesthetic issues were addressed only by their individual episodes. It should be noted that his research interests increasingly focused on the problems of analysis of contemporary social life in ethical, historical sections. The active public position of the thinker led him to an in-depth study and assimilation of the theoretical baggage by Marxism. In addition, in the 30's - early 40's of the last century, Lukacs even lived in the Soviet Union, took an active part in discussions on artistic creativity, created works about the classics of realism of the XX century.

It is necessary to lay emphasis on he always opposed formalism in art, artistic practices, upholding true, humane spirituality. In particular, the thinker devoted a great deal of his works to the question of form-making, in the field of aesthetics we can see that in the following works: *Soul and Form* (1910), *Heidelberg Aesthetics* (1912), *Theory of the Novel* (1914-1916), *Art and Objective Truth* (1934), *Goethe and His Age* (1946), *Great Russian Realists* (1951), *Essays on the History of Aesthetics* (1953), *Special as the Central Category of Aesthetics* (1957). In the last years of his life Lukacs made an attempt to substantiate the essence of the aesthetic approach to reality, to outline the categorical structure of philosophical and anthropological aesthetics. His fundamental work such as *Aesthetics. The peculiarity of the*

*aesthetic* (1963) is the first volume of his three-volume work *Aesthetics*, in which he turns to aesthetical and anthropological meditation. The philosophical justification of the aesthetic approach to reality, the development of categories of aesthetics and distinguishing it from other industries - is the main purpose of the first part of *Aesthetics*. However, the following is also indicative. As a complete integrity, this work also forms part of an unfinished multi-volume study on the *Ontology of Public Being*.

As we can see the interest in art aesthetic moments in human life appears not only in aesthetical and anthropological terms in the work of the Hungarian thinker.

It should be emphasized that the theory of reflection is central to its aesthetic concept. Drawing on the materialist understanding of the latter as universal, Lukacs considers the forms of human cognition associated with it, which, in the course of long historical development, become conscious reflection, namely: scientific, philosophical and aesthetic or illusory religious. The source of real interest and conscious reflection on the part of man is everyday life. Therefore, analyzing the problem of reflection in everyday life, the researcher turns to the consideration of everyday thinking, and then the principles of its differentiation when referring to phenomena in art and science. In our view, such ideas of Lukacs are noteworthy because artistic, scientific or religious thinking is evidenced not only by various spheres of human interest. They also capture various experiences and different social activity of people.

According to the thinker, two processes run roughly in parallel: it is the release of art from religious or mythological representations and magical actions. To Lukacs mind, the artistic reflection is substantially different from the reflection in everyday life; the genesis of art ran through a complex dialectical path, full of contradictions, freeing itself from

religious and mythological components in early human societies. Such thoughtful and varied observations of Lukacs, ultimately, led him to the problems of aesthetic anthropology. After all, as you know: "One of the productive directions in the development of philosophical anthropology was its ability to be a kind of key to understanding the diverse aspects and levels of aesthetic culture. Understanding of the artistic potentials of man, one's aesthetic feelings, needs are closely related to the anthropological principle, which combines unconditionally biological preconditions of sensuality and its socio-historical characteristics" [7: 31]. Therefore, the thinker is interested in the place of aesthetic feelings in human sensory experience in general.

Lukacs also studies in detail the specifics of aesthetic display on the example of a form of mimesis, an artistic imitation. It is both an adequate reflection of reality and the activity of creative imagination, and depending on the creative task of the artist, the idealization of reality. According to G. Lukacs, the category of "mimesis" emphasizes the dialectical unity of objective and subjective in artistic creativity. The dialectic of aesthetic reflection comes from the interplay of objectivity and subjectivity, creating a seeming cohesive unity, involving both man and the environment. At this point Lukacs also breaks certain ethical problems by addressing the value principles of human existence. He pays special attention to catharsis as a general aesthetic category. In all its manifestations, being the essence of aesthetic experience, catharsis, according to the scientist, is the sphere of moral regulatory decisions and at the same time a kind of criterion for the artistic perfection of a work of art. That is why Lukacs leads us to believe that the aesthetic reflection is always the expression of some vital truth, the power

of which lies in the self-consciousness of humanity.

Entering into a controversy with philosophical idealism which, according to the author, becomes an obstacle to adequate understanding of aesthetic content, Lukacs draws attention to the following. When Hegel associates art with contemplation, religion with the imagination, and philosophy with the notion, and states that these forms of consciousness define art, religion, philosophy, he thereby constructs a rigid and "eternal" hierarchy. Therefore, to his mind, the aesthetic form of cognition in the idealistic interconnections of the world is inevitably "timely", "eternal".

In accordance with G. Lukacs, all types of reflection (in everyday life, in science and in art) always reflect the same objective reality. However, it should be noted that the philosophical definition of the specificity of aesthetic cognition Lukacs passes through the concept of the special, in which he finds the uniqueness of the conceptual definition of the specificity of artistic cognition. To identify this peculiar mechanism, he considers an environment called the "signal system 1". Drawing on Ivan Pavlov's materialistic doctrine of acquired experience and unconscious actions, the author proves the impossibility of typologizing artistic creativity and aesthetic perception or intuition by conditional reflexes alone. According to the researcher, there is a specific "distance" between the subject and the object of artistic display, created by its own aesthetic reality. The design of signal system 1 should be a kind of synthesis of the first and second Pavlov signaling systems. Grasping immediate sensory impressions and manifesting as an instant orientation through imagination, this construction differs in dynamism and is fixed by the reaction of intelligence. Art (a work of art) acts as a means of objectification of this system of signals, although it itself comes from everyday life and is independent from it (art).

However, the specific aesthetic can only be known at the level of separate individuals in their relation to the human race, that is, they recognize the specifically human form of "aesthetic contemplation" and the ability to see everything in terms of "interests of the race". By associating the signal system with the "Language of Art", G. Lukacs states: "The poetic language finds its place in a range of human needs not because of its 'beauty' but because it enables it to express something that is not expressed by other means in its peculiar uniqueness" [4:168].

Interestingly, in developing the categorical apparatus of theoretical aesthetics, Lukacs draws on the workings of the classics of philosophy, beginning with Aristotle and ending with Hegel, but does not find a clear definition of the essence and role of the special as aesthetic category. (But in its semantics lies the elusive peculiarity of the aesthetic, unique originality, the secret of creativity).

To his mind, the special removes the extremes of the single and the general, the individual and the social. (We should mention that there is an experience, a sensual experience, an aesthetic or artistic experience separately, that has been noticed by the Hungarian thinker. In addition, he claims, although in a non-obvious form, that there is the need for a more meticulous consideration of the latter in the life of contemporaries, as a special). The artistic "special" is like "an organizing midpoint" where the typical thing acts in the shell of the individual-specific. This is the eternal process of elimination with a more emphasized moment of preservation: "The specificity of the aesthetic sphere is, – Lukacs writes, – that the special not only manifests itself between the general and the single – as mediating them – but also forms the organizing environment, the middle..." [4: 169]. The work of art as a result of aesthetic shaping, by means of reflection, removes the border points

here. That can be the unity of the inner and outer, the states of the soul of the individual and one's destiny in the world, man and all mankind.

Because the concept of the special, according to Lukacs, reproduces the artistic life of society, the historical aesthetic, artistic experience of mankind, as well as the world of art in general, it thus determines the humanistic orientation and character of the aesthetic. Due to the concept of the special, one can try to define the aesthetic as a certain substance of the creative process. On the one hand, its dynamism and mobility are revealed by the dialectical relation of mutual transition with the general, on the other – this dialectical relationship in no way destroys the independence of the general as a philosophical category.

There is both a relative generalization (not just a path from the single to the general and vice versa), but also a necessary mediation between the single and the general (and its own mediation, which is not a link that simply links the single and the general, but performs its function as one of the main features of the special).

The study of all the richness of the interconnections of the intersections of the single, the special and the general always reveals the dialectic of the aesthetic process, in the Hungarian thinker's opinion. It is connected with the needs and possibilities of thinking at every stage of socio-historical development and in this context testifies to the approximation of György Lukacs's aesthetic reflections to the search for anthropological meaning in modern social activity of a human in general and aesthetic activity, artistic practices in particular: "In the transition from classical to modern in European culture, there have been changes marked by an "Anthropological Turn" as a new worldview and methodological paradigm that has unfolded within the postclassic" [8: 9]. In our point of view, the need noticed by the Hungarian researcher to

include the problems of nature and role in the human life, especially in the context of contemporary aesthetics studies, has been given impetus in the very idea of the specificity of artistic knowledge.

After all, aesthetics is the science of the sensual which is equal to the method of social assertion of one in all the richness of one's needs, anthropological perspective as designed by his "father" A.-G. Baumgarten.

Let's recall that the process of development of the specificity of human sensuality and the related phenomenon of aesthetic are analyzed through the prism of the value of indifference to human existence by Ukrainian philosophy and specialist in aesthetic field A. Kanarskyi [3]. The dialectics of the aesthetic, as a theory of sensual cognition, necessitates the construction of the theory of the development of the aesthetic phenomenon, and thus addresses the problems of the successful development by G. Lukacs. In people's lives, everything that is valuable, not indifferent to the person, is asserted in the most sensual way. Actually in the struggle for logic, which denies all old and obsolete, the methodology for the study of life processes should find its content for the dialectic: "... this logic should make the context of the aesthetic dialectics as a theory of sensual cognition" [3: 36]. The search for a positive update on the contemporary culture of artistic creativity and artistic practice leads to attempts to unravel the mystery of art by appealing to the aesthetic theory of knowledge. After all, human sensuality more fully and often reveals itself in artistic creativity, and aesthetics at the same time also serves as a general theory of artistic creativity.

That is similar to Lukacs's productive idea of a particular aesthetic sphere. That is peculiar phenomenon of human perception which E. Ilyenkov calls productive imagination, fantasy or intuition develops on the basis of the

"signal system 1<sup>1</sup>". He claims that it is "the universal human capacity to provide human activity to the perception of the outside world. Without mastering it, a person can neither live nor act, nor think humanly; neither in science, nor in the field of moral and personal relations with other people" [2: 275]. That is, the development of aesthetic theory through the concept of the special leads to the search for such a logic of presentation, which would be at the same time a profound philosophical generalization at the level of the method of materialistic dialectics. It would seem that the peculiarity of this aspect of the analysis will be the basis for solving any aesthetic problem, as designed by György Lukacs. However, over time, another model alternative to the theory of reflection, the so-called Gestalt theory, has gained increasing attention in the scientific space: "If we consider thinking as a certain quintessence of the process of perception, the result and generalization of the act of perception, and not as a relatively independent phenomenon, then, in this case, the act of perception itself which includes sequential interactive actions and many details, has essentially the form of simple, holistic and indivisible result, that is, what we consider to be a complete thought - gestalt" [1: 42].

Another little-known work by Lukacs attracts scholars: "Art as an awareness of human development" [6: 250-266]. It seems to be the quintessence of creative search during the most difficult, "test" years in the biography of a scientist (a period that cannot be considered without taking into account the intense ideological struggle in the totalitarian period of social life in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, specifically the historical view of its motives). However, Lukács defended his principles in opposition to the opponents of realism in general and most convincingly in art worthy. His concept was characterized by a fundamental, subtle understanding of the

nature of the aesthetic experience and human spirituality, a logical and systematic approach. The work reveals the particular intuition of the Lukacs-philosopher, on the one hand, and the Lukacs-artist, on the other. He was able to feel deeply that the subjectivity of art had grown out of the self-consciousness of mankind (this connection indicates the continuity of artistic reflection with social life). According to the author, in the works of art, the historicism of objective reality through subjective artistic image with necessity leads to worldview problems, and, consequently, to recognition of the significant social "fate" of art which is the act of human creation.

Having accepted from Hegel the category of "special" ("Besonderheit"), G. Lukacs finds in it a concentrated expression of the basic creative social, aesthetic and artistic coordinates that determine the humanistic orientation, and, consequently, the affinity of art, by its social ascendant role, with the phenomenon of self-awareness of humanity. In addition, Lukacs concludes that the mission embodied in art is the struggle for the formation of the self-sufficiency of human consciousness, and therefore the struggle for freedom as a phenomenon of human existence. Such beliefs of the thinker are relevant in our time, because art is a kind of demiurge of cultural phenomena of reality: "There are art products outside of art with a lack of humanistic challenge, and a carrier of artistic and expressive experience faces with them most often" [11:14]. It is interesting that G. Lukacs, having borrowed a great deal of instruction from the views of Aristotle, Hegel, and Goethe, still chooses his own original path. He understands that if the concept of aesthetic reflection is quite simple in its essence, then its relationship with other important principles is quite complicated. Therefore, the author conducts a serious study, which argues that the dialectical-materialistic aesthetics (its ascending

basis on mimesis) is not the only source of the problem of assessing the role of aesthetic and artistic moments in human sensory comprehension and attitude to the world, social life. (This theory, no matter how it was not called, mimicry, imitation or sometimes representation has been followed by most thinkers, since Aristotle's time). The philosopher is convinced that the term "reflection" should be used as a constant reminder to us of the objectivity of art without association with coding, photography or any other kind of naturalistic technique. Lukacs considers anthropocentrism to be a particularly important feature of aesthetic reflection. Because art is always human-related (anthropomorphic), and such phenomena as time and space can't be isolated or interpreted metaphysically (as Kant and Bergson did, for example).

According to the traditions after Aristotle, mimesis has been understood as the reflection of the inner features of the citizen of the ancient polis, and showed his actions as an ethos. But Lukacs, in fact, also considered mimetic all the so-called microforming fields of art, starting with literature and ending with architecture. Emphasizing the essence of artistic creativity as an integral part of the active-vocational (evocative) activity of the subject, the scientist chooses the principle of realism as the basis of any reflection in art. According to Lukacs, the basis of realism, that is, his perspective must relate to the "modest proportions" that arise from the characters and actions of the heroes of a particular work, not optimization or far-fetched ideas of the author. Here, indeed, Lukacs regards realism as "an opportunity rather than a reality" [5: 132].

As a result of the significant influence by Lukacs's heritage in general, the Hungarian School of Aesthetics has developed: D. Zolthai, J. Szigeti and others. It is significant that philosophers and art critics in Hungary explored the issue of creativity in the light of the



problems of humanism under the impression of the works by G. Lukacs, and in particular *Art as an awareness of human development*.

**Conclusions and research perspectives.** 1) In his personal and public life, G. Lukacs actively defended the cultural heritage of mankind, the progressive spiritual and creative potential of social activity of man and mankind, opposed all forms of barbarism and alienation that can destroy humanity. Therefore, his fundamental ideological orientation as a thinker was humanism. Therefore, his aesthetic considerations are of value in analyzing the formative pursuits of contemporary artistic practices, in assessing the value of the aesthetic beginning of life in contemporary societal challenges. That is exactly the thing which makes the analysis of his creative heritage interesting.

2) By analyzing the human-creative functions of art, Lukacs, without even realizing it by the end, created his "authentic" look (not distorted by "naturalistic" and "positivist" influences), ideologically approaching the eminent existential thinkers of the present.

3) The methodological foundations of aesthetic theory that have been stated by Lukacs, and such productive ideas that have been synthesized give reason to consider him as a thinker of the post-classical era with its sharpened global anthropological conclusions. First of all, it concerns the development of the concept of the special as a heuristically productive for the evaluation of the aesthetic life of the present society, its art and artistic practice.

4) It is necessary to investigate the impact by Lukacs's aesthetic heritage on the theoretical and ideological searches of thinkers of Central and Eastern Europe when it comes to aesthetic and anthropological issues as a prospect for our further exploration. In our opinion, this can be done on the basis of consideration of the works of the Kyiv

Philosophical and Aesthetic School, because its representatives study the role of the aesthetic component in everyday life, aesthetic and artistic means of harmonization of the urban environment, especially aesthetic experience, intuition in contemporary art practice, etc. In addition, it should be emphasized that its representatives now work at different universities in Ukraine.

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