



Berlin, April 20, 2022

PRESS RELEASE

Kulturforum, Neue Nationalgalerie

Potsdamer Straße 50, 10785 Berlin

Tues.-Wed. 10–6; Thurs. 10–8; Fri.–Sun. 10–6

Ukrainian artist Maria Kulikovska shows her performance „254“ on the terrace of Neue Nationalgalerie from April 27 – May 4, 2022

The war and its impact are the central focus of the work by Ukrainian artist Maria Kulikovska (b. 1988). She is presenting her one-hour performance “254” on the stairs of the Neue Nationalgalerie terrace from Wednesday, 27 April to Wednesday, 4 May 2022, daily at noon, 3 pm and 5 pm. The performance, first shown in Saint Petersburg in 2014, has regained topical relevance against the backdrop of the current war in Ukraine.

The performance for the Neue Nationalgalerie is a restaging of an unauthorised action that took place on 1 July 2014 during the opening of the Manifesta 10 contemporary art biennial at the Hermitage in Saint Petersburg, Russia. Fully covered by the Ukrainian flag, Kulikovska lay as if wounded on the museum steps. The performance ended with the artist's brief imprisonment. Its title “254” refers to the number that Kulikovska received while fleeing to Kyiv after the annexation of Crimea in 2014. Under this number, she was registered as a refugee in her own country.

Maria Kulikovska (b. 1988 in Kerch, Crimea, Ukraine) is a multimedia artist, architect, actionist performer, researcher and lecturer. She currently lives in Linz, Austria, where she has been since she had to leave Kyiv following Russia's invasion of the city in March 2022. In 2015 Kulikovska founded Flowers of Democracy (FoD), an international group of women artists and a public feminist platform, and in 2017 she founded the School of Political Performance. In 2019, with Uleg Vinnichenko, she initiated the international, non-binary art space GARAGE33 in Kyiv – a protected gallery space for contemporary artists.

Performance “254” at the Neue Nationalgalerie is curated by Klaus Biesenbach, director of Neue Nationalgalerie and Lisa Botti, curatorial assistance and is a cooperation between the Neue Nationalgalerie and the Gallery Weekend Berlin to raise donations for Be an Angel e. V. – an organisation committed to establishing sustainable integration for refugees.

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