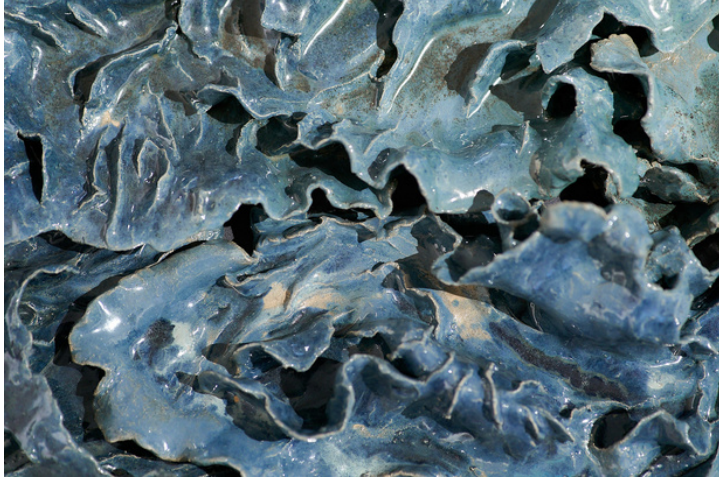


UNDER THE SURFACE

Impact Report

*EMBracing the Ocean artist-in-residence project
April 2022 - April 2023*



"Kyiv is the heart of Ukraine. Strategic decisions are now being made in the capital, and the Kyiv Museum is a space where important social projects and complex topics have taken place, are being implemented, and will be a place, which are brought "to the surface" thanks to caring artists. Many Crimeans were forced to evacuate to the Ukrainian capital, and today they are co-creators of the city's history. The seas not only divide us, but also unite us. Right now, we feel that due to Russian aggression, the world has lost one of the important economic and cultural links of interaction, so we dream of the return of all our territories and seas as soon as possible"

- Diana Popova, Director of Under the Surface exhibition at the Kyiv History Museum.

Co-design process:

As part of the 'Under the surface' project Lera developed of new ceramic art pieces accompanied by text and video in collaboration with various scientists from the Black Sea area and NGOs. The pieces personify the Black Sea and its underwater inhabitants, raising questions on the scale of impacts on the Black Sea of Russian military aggression, and how to rebuild ecosystem health, reduce pollution and enable sustainable development in post-war conditions. During the project Lera has discovered that the war has had a significant impact of the scientific community, and the exhibitions themselves were disrupted by the Russian invasion. Lera also collaborated with EMBracing the Ocean artist Michael Begg to create a musical sound portrait of the unseen and hidden impact of war on the fragile marine ecosystems of the Black Sea and Sea of Azov.

Project outputs:

- A solo exhibition "Renaissance" at the Museum of Outstanding Cultural Figures of Ukraine in Kyiv from August 26 to October 10 2022. The ceramic art pieces were accompanied by written information and videos developed with collaborating scientists including from [EMBLAS](#) and with the support of [EcoAction](#) and [Uninvest](#).
- "Under the Surface" group exhibition at the Kyiv History Museum from March 29 - April 16 2023 with other artists whose work explores the past, present and future of Ukraine and its relationship with the Black Sea and Sea of Azov. Michael Begg's Black Sea compositions were also included in this exhibition.
- The art pieces were included in the "[One Day After](#)" exhibition at Image Point Gallery in Kyiv from December 2022 - February 2023. This exhibition focused on thoughts and expectations for the common future of Ukraine.
- A short [video](#) about Lera's project was developed and released by the DOORS project.
- An EMB [Blog article](#) featuring an interview with Lera was written by EMB Young Ambassador Anjali Kopakumar.
- The [EMB science webinar](#) on 20th April 2023 featured Lera discussing her project.
- Endorsement as an action under the EU Mission Restore our Ocean and Water charter, and poster presentation at the first Mission Ocean Forum in Brussels on 17 February 2023.

Key impact:

- The "Renaissance" exhibition was visited by almost 350 guests who described the experience as 'sensual', 'nostalgic' and 'thought-provoking'.
- The "Under the Surface" exhibition was visited by approximately 620 guests including the Ambassadors of Japan and Slovenia to Ukraine and CEOs of various NGOs.
- The "One Day After" exhibition was attended by approximately 400 residents of Kyiv and temporarily displaced residents from other regions.
- During the exhibitions Lera engaged in dialogue with guests about future of Black Sea and Sea of Azov, discussing how society's behavior should change in order to preserve the seas and steps Ukrainians can take to solve the problem of Black Sea pollution.

Project longevity:

- "Under the surface" is planned to be presented in other cities in Ukraine in 2023.
- Lera is looking for partners to present this project in cities beyond Ukraine and also further scientific collaborators to continue her work.

IMPACT IN NUMBERS



2021
2030 United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development

European
MARINE BOARD
Advancing Seas & Ocean Science

3 **EVENTS**
Showing the artwork

1,370 **EXHIBITION VISITORS**
Estimated at the three events

506 **PAGE VISITS**
To project webpage on EMB website

88 **YOUTUBE VIEWS**
Of DOORS video within 6 months

55 **INSTAGRAM POSTS**
From the EMB and other instagram accounts

38 **NEWS ARTICLES**
By EMB and others highlighting the project and exhibitions

10 **TWEETS**
From the EMB twitter account and other accounts

Under the Surface is one of the 6 most interesting exhibitions in Kyiv
-Vogue Ukraine, April 2023

