

## Press Release

### The German travelling exhibition **MODERNISM IN UKRAINE** will be shown in Kharkiv, Ukraine Scheduled opening: 1 May 2025

Today, 18 April, is the *International Day of Monuments and Sites*, which in 2025 has the motto 'Heritage under Threat from Disasters and Conflicts'. Reason enough to turn our attention to the war in Ukraine.

The exhibition series *Modernism in Ukraine – Modern Roots and Heritage of Kharkiv and Lviv*, which was created in six parts, will be shown in Ukraine from 1 May, funded by the German Foreign Ministry and other partners. It will be shown within the iconic *Derzhprom* complex in Kharkiv, a gigantic constructivist building from the late 1920s, which experts considered a potential UNESCO World Heritage Site, but which was also hit by Russian bombs in October 2024.

The Berlin exhibition series, shown in its entirety in cooperation with the local *Yermilov Centre*, consists of 283 panels that show, explain and contextualise outstanding modernist buildings in Ukraine.

Parts 2 to 5 of the exhibition were developed in Berlin and shown for the first time in 2022 as part of the *Triennial of Modernism* festival. It emerged from the cooperation between academics from Ukraine and Poland and the curators of the Berlin festival programme, from which the offshoot of a *European Triennial of Modernism (ETOM)* was also founded in 2022 with partners from 14 countries, which cooperates with the global expert networks of *DOCOMOMO International* and *ICOMOS*.

A sixth section was added in 2024. Around half of the panels were last shown as part of the opening of Chemnitz as *European Capital of Culture 2025*.

This fits in with the aim of the exhibition to draw public attention to the special significance of Modernism in Ukraine within the common European history of values and ideas. As in many places in Europe, Kharkiv and Lviv (which once belonged to Poland and was strongly characterised by its Jewish inhabitants), saw the emergence of a society characterised by the peaceful coexistence of different cultural identities for a long time as a result of industrialisation.

In view of the diversity of Ukraine's architectural heritage, the exhibition draws a link to German cities such as Berlin, Magdeburg, Frankfurt, Dessau and Chemnitz as well as many other centres of the *New Objectivity* in Architecture in Europe in the 1920s - such as Prague and Brno, Warsaw and Gdynia, Amsterdam and Rotterdam.

In the face of destruction and anti-modernist endeavours, these European set of values and their architectural witnesses need to be saved, communicated. It will be necessary to explore ways of suitable restoration on an European level.

### Brief profile of the individual parts of the exhibition and participating partners: <https://triennale-der-moderne.de/2022/modernism-in-ukraine-travelling-exhibition/>

**Part 1/6:** *Lviv Modernism*, the first part of the exhibition series by Ukrainian journalist Myroslava Liakhovych, shows the history of modern residential buildings in Lviv. The spectrum ranges from villas and individual buildings to ensembles and housing estates, with a focus on the 1930s.

**Part 2/6:** The second part *City, Architecture, Modernism* focuses on public buildings that were built in Lviv between World Wars I and II. The buildings shown in photographs by Pawel Masur are a selection from an exhibition held at the International Cultural Centre in Krakow in 2017

**Part 3/6:** The third part, developed by a collective, is about the contribution of Jewish architects to the cultural melting pot of Lviv, where over 3,000 buildings were erected. Special attention is paid to *Ferdynand Kassler - the inventor of Galician modernism*.

**Part 4/6:** The exhibition chapter developed by Svitlana Smolenska focusses on the urban ensemble on Sovoba (Freedom) Square in the metropolis of Kharkiv. The square is dominated by the *Derzhprom* complex, probably the most important and iconic modernist building in Ukraine, which was hit by a Russian bomb at the end of 2024.

**Part 5/6:** The chapter *Ukrainian Socialist Postmodernism*, developed in cooperation with the Urban Forms Centre in Kharkiv, deals with the late postmodern socialist period in Ukraine and its significance for the development of Ukrainian architecture. The exhibition with photos by Pavel Dorogoy shows buildings in cities around Kharkiv and documents the war damage in 2022.

**Part 6/6:** This is about the 1930 multilingual competition for the 'Theatre of Mass Musical Action' and some of the designs submitted. The competition shows how strongly the Ukraine was in the focus of international modernism. Architects from the USA, Japan, Russia, Ukraine and, of course, various Central European countries took part in the competition.

#### Realisation

Curation: Robert K. Huber (BHROX bauhaus reuse / zukunftsgeraeusche GbR), Ben Buschfeld, Peter Winter  
Produktion: Peter Winter (BHROX bauhaus reuse / zukunftsgeraeusche GbR)

Layout / Kommunikation / Social Media: Ben Buschfeld (buschfeld.com – graphic and interface design)

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#### Sponsorship of the travelling exhibition

Federal Foreign Ministry of Germany, Kul'tura e.V., Ukrainian Institute in Germany, in co-operation with:

Städtepartnerschaftsverein Steglitz-Zehlendorf e. V., BHROX bauhaus reuse / zukunftsgeraeusche GbR, buschfeld.com

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## Presse-Bilder (Auswahl)



Derzhprom Building at Svoboda Square, Kharkiv / Ukraine

Fotos 2/3/4/7: Michael Setzpfandt



Svoboda Square, Kharkiv 2022, Foto: Stanislav Ostrovs



Ausstellung, Teil 2/6, im BHROX bauhaus reuse, Berlin



Derzhprom Building, Charkiw, Foto: Ben Buschfeld 2017



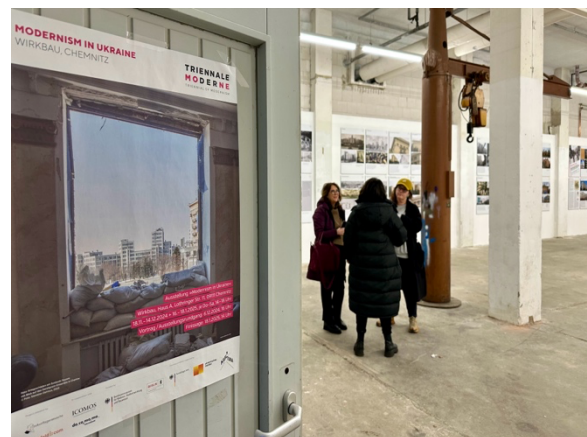
Ausstellung, Teil 3/6, in der TU Berlin



Expert\*innen-Gespräch zu Ausstellungs-Teil 6



Ausstellung, Teil 4/6, im BHROX bauhaus reuse, Berlin



Ausstellung in Chemnitz 2024