

# UKRAINIAN SCULPTOR ANASTASIIA KOSAREVSKA

## ESCULTORA UCRANIANA ANASTASIA KOSAREVSKA

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**Abstract:** The present academic paper is dedicated to the creative work of the modern Ukrainian sculptor Anastasiia Kosarevska. This year marks the 105th anniversary of the birth and 30th anniversary of the death of the Ukrainian sculptor Anastasiia Savivna Kosarevska (Kovryha) (April 24, 1918-May 26, 1993), who was born and died in Poltava Oblast (Figure 1). The purpose of the research is to analyze the personal path of the master and the factors influencing the formation of her style. It is noted that there is not enough information about the personalities of the artists in the domestic art literature. Moreover, most publications about artists are informative rather than scientific in nature. Therefore, it is worth focusing only on the personality of the sculptors. The factors considered in the cycle of science, which can be defined as the perspective of scientific research, are represented. Attempts were also made to classify her work in order to determine the traditions that influenced the emergence of her creative features. The synthesis of tradition and innovation in the artist's artistic language was analyzed, and using specific tools by the artist in the past was demonstrated with

particular examples. By the way, the ability to creatively rework the traditions of predecessors was demonstrated on the basis of which one can create unique and recognizable artistic language. The author's main methods of using material were described indicating the dominant materials (limestone, marble, bronze, sandstone) in her work. The modern rare scientific basis of artistic work methods is revealed, emphasizing the role of academic schools and the influence of the artist's personality. The main characters and subjects of her sculptures are known as the most characteristic examples of various groups of the master's work. The principle of contrast used by the sculptor in his realization is emphasized. Scientific novelty refers to defining theoretical and practical aspects of modern artistic culture formation and, to a certain extent, changes in the cultural consciousness of Ukrainian society in accordance with modern international intellectual requirements. Ukrainian art has quickly absorbed new artistic forms and currents. Art moves, and so does its temporal and spatial nature. Many factors contribute to these processes, in particular: upheavals in social-political, economic and educational policies, as well as new discoveries in the natural sciences and the emergence of new forms of art. Thus, after the end of cultural isolation from the rest of the world, the development and popularization of Ukrainian sculpture took place, which at the same time influenced all kinds of artistic styles and directions. Ukrainian artists, particularly young individuals and those using sculptural means to create monumental sculptures, influence the development of artistic culture, sociocultural awareness, and the cultural environment.

**Keywords:** Art. Life path. Creativity. History. Followers.

**Resumo:** O presente trabalho acadêmico é dedicado ao trabalho criativo da escultora ucraniana moderna Anastasiia Kosarevska. Este ano marca o 105º aniversário do nascimento e o 30º aniversário da morte da escultora ucraniana Anastasiia Savivna Kosarevska (Kovryha) (24 de abril de 1918 a 26 de maio de 1993), que nasceu e morreu em Poltava Oblast (Figura 1). O objetivo da pesquisa é analisar a trajetória pessoal da mestra e os fatores que influenciam na formação de seu estilo. Nota-se que não há informações suficientes sobre as personalidades dos artistas na literatura de arte nacional. Além disso, a maioria das publicações sobre artistas são de natureza informativa e não científica. Portanto, vale a pena focar apenas na personalidade dos escultores. Estão representados os fatores considerados no ciclo da ciência, que podem ser definidos como a perspectiva da pesquisa científica. Também foram feitas tentativas de classificar seu trabalho para determinar as tradições que influenciaram o surgimento de suas características criativas. A síntese de tradição e inovação na linguagem artística do artista foi analisada e o uso de ferramentas específicas do artista no passado foi demonstrado com exemplos particulares. A propósito, a capacidade de retrabalhar criativamente as tradições dos predecessores foi demonstrada com base na qual se pode criar uma linguagem artística única e reconhecível. Os principais métodos de uso da autora foram descritos indicando os materiais dominantes (calcário, mármore, bronze, arenito) em sua obra. A rara base científica moderna dos métodos de trabalho artístico é revelada, enfatizando o papel das escolas acadêmicas e a influência da personalidade do artista. Os personagens principais e temas de suas esculturas são conhecidos como os exemplos mais característicos de vários grupos de trabalho do mestre. É enfatizado o princípio do contraste utilizado pelo escultor em sua realização. A novidade científica refere-se à definição de aspectos teóricos e práticos da formação da cultura artística moderna e, até certo ponto, das mudanças na consciência cultural da sociedade ucraniana de acordo com os requisitos intelectuais internacionais modernos. A arte ucraniana absorveu rapidamente novas formas e correntes artísticas. A arte se move, assim como sua natureza temporal e espacial. Muitos fatores contribuem para esses processos, em particular: convulsões nas políticas sócio-políticas, econômicas e educacionais, bem como novas descobertas nas ciências naturais e o surgimento de novas formas de arte. Assim, após o fim do isolamento cultural do resto do mundo, ocorreu o desenvolvimento e a popularização da escultura ucraniana, que ao mesmo tempo influenciou todos os tipos de estilos e direções artísticas. Artistas ucranianos, particularmente jovens e aqueles que usam meios escultóricos para criar esculturas monumentais, influenciam o desenvolvimento da cultura artística, a consciência sociocultural e o ambiente cultural.

**Palavras-chave:** Arte. Percurso de vida. Criatividade. História. Seguidores.

## 1. Introduction

The sculpture is a form of art in which works have three-dimensional shapes and are made of solid or plastic materials (Turdikulovich, 2022). Hulls J. M. (2019) notes in his work that the sculpture, in contrast to architecture, is a visual art rather than a functional art. At the same time, it is indicated that this art is not easy to master; it has a complex character and deep historical roots. The ease of perceiving the sculpture is only superficial. The sculpture is symbolic, traditional, and artistic, making it difficult to accept and comprehend. This thesis seeks to understand the importance of preserving this artistic object as a transfer of artistic and historical value.

Numerous publications and scientific studies by domestic art critics have been devoted to the development of Ukrainian sculpture in recent decades. These include Skliarenko H.'s publications (2021), which examine the author's perspective on sculpture as well as a variety of other artistic techniques. Protas M. (2022) considers in his monographs the formation of modern sculpture, as well as its qualitative perception. Lysenko L. and Shpanko O. (2021) examine the work of artists and point to the diversity and correspondence to the epoch. Zaspá I. Yu. (2022), in her work, considers the meaningful aspect of modern culture and studies the role of female images. The scientific article of Hotsaliuk A. (2019) investigates the features of the evolution of Ukrainian sculpture (the end of the XX – the beginning of the XXI century). The development of modern Ukrainian sculpture is determined by the diversity of genres and the active dialogue of neo-traditional forms of expression with the latest social-cultural phenomena and processes. It has been determined that the process of igniting the creativity of sculptors from various regions of Ukraine and the organization of their art centers has been still going on at the end of the XX and the beginning of the XXI centuries. These authors have investigated the essence and content, the stages of sculpture formation.

The scientific works of the authors Sayfullaev N. (2019), Sharifjanovna Q. M. (2022) consider the issues of modern sculpture in general artistic directions.

The purpose of the present academic paper is to analyze the life path and creativity of the Ukrainian sculptor Anastasiia Kosarevska, and display a complex archive of materials and works.

Based on the goal outlined, the following tasks were solved:

- analysis of the essence and stages of the formation and development of the sculpture;
- consideration of the life path of the sculptor Anastasiia Kosarevska;
- analysis of the creative works of the sculptor Anastasiia Kosarevska;
- analysis of the cultural heritage formation.

The object of the research is the work of the Ukrainian sculptor Anastasiia Kosarevska.

The subjects of the research are the cultural and historical tendencies arising in the process of formation and development of the artist Anastasiia Kosarevska.

## **2. Materials and Methods**

The academic paper uses a general epistemological approach of analysis, synthesis and abstraction. It allows tracing the formation and development of Ukrainian sculpture as an original form of creative reflection of reality and as a specific artistic approach. The research is based on art historical methods, a complex combination of methods of art historical analysis, categorical abstraction, and factual description, comparative-historical and structural typology. The phenomenological approach is used to reveal the nature of the phenomenon of Ukrainian sculpture and its transitional stages.

## **3. Results**

For a long time, the sculpture was one of the most conservative forms of art in Ukraine. The experience of the innovators of the beginning of the XX century (Klymenko, 2021), Shkandrij, 2019) and the modernist sculpture of the 1920s were further erased by the Soviet ideology from the national culture, leaving stereotypes in the public consciousness. Despite the emergence of new artists seeking to compensate for the lost future, the sculpture was not enforced even in the first decades of independence due to the continued economic crises and the difficult de-ideologization process of art. Only in the early 2000s, when new sculptures actively entered the context of modern art, did significant changes in the business start to occur. However, there is an interpretation of the figurative world itself and its themes and ways of expression in the sculpture. The scope, and, therefore, the stereotypes of sculptural monuments and sculptural objects in general in public space,

developed during the Soviet period, and art continue to influence public perception, imagination and taste nowadays. However, the conditions for training young artists have changed. Although it is still very difficult to be an artist in our country, it has been undergoing a huge renewal process. New forms and new creative thinking are actively entering the domestic art. In this regard, the goal of the present academic paper is not only to represent the work of a new generation of artists, using the example of the sculptor Anastasiia Kosarevska, but also to popularize, analyze and comprehend the latest artistic ideas of their work, the spread of modern visual vision.

In addition, the sculpture nowadays is one of the forms of art in which the process of innovation is most evident. Its imaginary world attracts with a variety of new themes, motifs, materials and means. Moreover, the new generation of Ukrainian sculptors actively draws inspiration from other media developments and expressions in their work: photography, painting, video art, object art and various conceptual practices. Each artist has participated in one way or another and will participate in various actions of contemporary art, and their experience should be reflected in their works. It can be stated that it is not the first time since the appearance of domestic sculpture at the beginning of the XX century that it is filled with artistic themes, which expand its possibilities and give it a new vision. Since, as L. Steinberg wrote at that time, one of the primordial artistic impulses in the history of art remains that “artists want to understand their work”, “to redefine their limits”, the research covers all senses: “One moment in history, we, artists, are interested in how far art can go, how much non-art can be tolerated and still be art, while “other times they explore the opposite possibilities of sexuality to find what they can refuse without giving their reason” (Casini, 2023). Considering the general range of creative directions of young Ukrainian sculptors, it can be claimed that due to the appeal to various non-figurative forms, using new materials and studying artistic qualities, they experienced a “reevaluation of traditional boundaries”, “sculptural essence”. At the same time, artists, in general, remain within the limits of aesthetic norms, receiving new figurative content and, especially nowadays, new functions and opportunities for integrating sculpture into public space. Henceforth, the study of this thesis is represented on the example of the life path and work of the Ukrainian sculptor Anastasiia Kosarevska.

Anastasiia studied at the Dnipropetrovsk Railway Technical School and the Kyiv State Art Institute (1945-1951, in the workshops of L.D. Muravin and M.H. Lysenko). In 1951, she was nominated for the State Prize for her thesis (a sculptural composition “Stalin

in the Turukhan Region”), and in 1952 she was accepted into the Union of Soviet Artists of Ukraine.

During 1952-1973, Anastasia combined teaching activities (at the Republican Art School and the Kyiv State Art Institute) with active creativity. She created many different monumental and decorative works during this time, characterized by the characteristic features of the “Lysenko school”: romantic sublimity, emotional manner of sculpting, and orientation to the humanistic traditions of sculptural classics. Working in the portrait genre, Anastasiia created images of statesmen, science and culture (bas-relief “V.I. Lenin”, forged copper; “Kobzar E. Adamtsevych”; “M.O. Tyshchenko”).

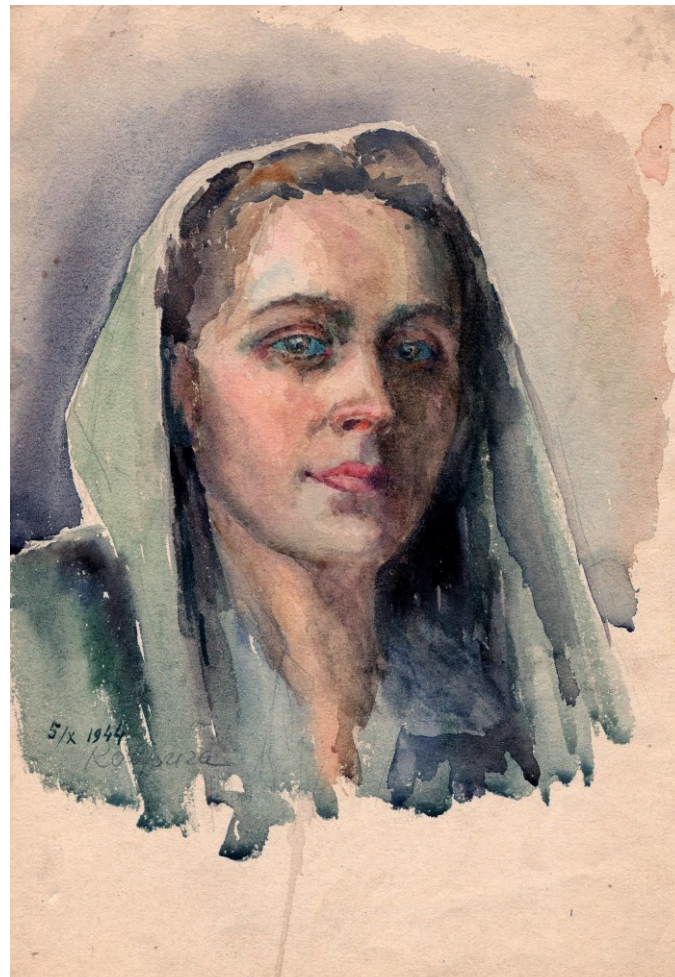


Figure 1. Self-portrait. 1944. Watercolor.

*Archive of Kosarenska R.O.*

In the 1960s – the 1980s, she had been performing monumental and decorative works in the genre of “Soviet propaganda” (“N.K. Krupska with children”, wood; “V.I.

Lenin among the peasants”, bronze; “Peasant Woman”; multi-figure composition “Experience”, “Pioneer”, etc.). This public pathos of the themes, combined with the originality of the vision, enriched with life experiences and interesting solutions, gave the works a unique expressiveness and “humanity”. At the same time, she created a number of works dedicated to Ukraine. In particular, one of her works “T.H. Shevchenko with his sister” (bronze) is relevant nowadays: the sister is the image of Ukraine (mother, Ukrainian woman), who suffers for her children (people) and needs the protection of Heroes (Taras Shevchenko), who will not allow Ukraine or its people to be broken... (Figure 2).



Figure 2. T.H. Shevchenko with his sister. Bronze.

*Photo from the archive of Kosarevska R.O.*

In addition, at this time, Anastasia created a number of monumental works dedicated to the theme of those who had died during the Second World War (“Mother”; “Eternal Memory to the Fallen”, collective farm “Bilshovyk”, Volyn region; “Memory to

fallen fellow villagers”, the village of Karlivka, Kirovohrad region; “Warrior” – all made of reinforced concrete). These artworks convey the deep tragedy and invincible vitality of the Ukrainian people. She made an individual order for the city of nuclear workers Prypiat – a composition for the “Spring” fountain. Afterward, she was successfully engaged in the art of medallions.

Anastasia devoted the last years of her life to ceramics, which clearly showed her flair for experimentation and Ukrainian humor (series: “Milkmaids”, “Cossacks”, “Oriental motifs”, “Birds”, “Cats”, “Pegasus”, “Granddaughter”, “Flowers” etc.).

The body of work of each artist has its own fate: one is quickly forgotten, the other is kept in the field of vision for a while; and only a few manage to remain in the memory of their students as a Teacher who formed the ability to comprehend the world. Since the very perception and understanding of beauty is the basis of aesthetic culture, without which feelings remain deaf to everything high and noble, Anastasiia’s primary responsibility as a sculptor-teacher was the humanistic education of her students (the formation of the aesthetics of feelings and emotional culture) (Figure 3).





Figure 3. Anastasiia Kosarevska with her students of graduating class, 1967: the first row – Viktor Riabchuk; the second row – Volodymyr Medenskyi, Anastasiia Kosarevska, Liudmila Butenko, Yevhen Karpov; the third row - Viktor Frenchko, Yevheniia Sliepova.

*Photo from the archive of V.I. Riabchuk.*

#### 4. Discussion

Each historical epoch created its own ideals of beauty, its own standards and concepts of beauty and ugliness, its own levels of aesthetic value. It is challenging to compare medieval values with Renaissance goals, and baroque ideals with classical ideals because they are, for the most part, diametrically opposed. And only the modern art space has the opportunity to synthesize all the evoked components in the art of the beginning of the XXI century. It is possible to find the right of the artist not to burden himself with canonical frameworks but to synthesize elements of different styles and canons in his own way, or to refuse attachment to one or another canon and precisely emphasize its absence.

A banal inability to learn often hides behind the lack of a philosophically grounded commitment to some canon, a conceptual mask that hides incompetence. This is more easily demonstrated in non-figurative art. Considering that the strength of the academic tradition weakens day by day, fewer and fewer masters are taking the path of greatest resistance, devoting themselves to academic art in a realistic way that requires thorough study, training, knowledge, saying nothing about broad knowledge (Canagarajah, & Dovchin, 2019). There are various ways to influence consumers, because anger is rarely revealed on their lists. Realist artists will soon become shrines. Ukrainian sculptor Anastasiia Kosarevska belongs to those masters who do not quite correspond to the modern idea of an artist and may contradict the generally accepted ideas about beauty. Her work deserves attention as one of the rare examples because she can combine a deep knowledge of art history, mythology and a high level of professionalism while working realistically, shocking the viewer no less than any abstract artist. The artist does all this flawlessly, and the artist's work is multifaceted in the most unconventional sense of the genre. Her creative path can be traced and analyzed from her student days, when it became obvious that she was excellent at expressing herself about her vision of sculpture, ideal creation and the concept of beauty. A number of books were devoted to Anastasiia Kosarevska: for about a quarter of a century, several catalogs and introductory articles to her work were published; numerous television programs were broadcast; several articles were published, both dedicated to personal exhibitions or individual works, and to the artist's work in general. However, despite the completeness and significance of these resources, it should be noted that almost all of them are mainly of a popular science nature. Thus, it can be argued that the name of Anastasiia Kosarevska has not entered the historical scientific life of domestic art yet. To achieve the goal outlined and the tasks defined, chronological, complex, comparative and historical methods are used, which make it possible to fully and effectively cover various aspects of the phenomenon.

## 5. Conclusion

The research results show that Ukrainian sculpture is a driving force in the formation of the general culture of the personality forasmuch as there is a tendency to integrate Ukraine into the world of art nowadays.

The art of Anastasiia Kosarevska is known as the pride of modern Ukrainian sculpture, although this can hardly be considered a typical expression because such blocks of talent are still rare in modern art. Lovely and graceful works are within her power; she can leave the whole piece of marble alone, allowing the stone to breathe freely, often combining these techniques. The image is intuitively perceived as a spiritual self-portrait of the artist, focusing on her character and strength. The artist seems to have photographed from stone and proved to the audience that she is capable of being different; her incised style shows the carvings of sculpture that has evolved over the centuries.

The pupils of Kosarevska A.S. were such famous Ukrainian artists as Honchar Anatolii Mykhailovych, Hovdia Mykola Volodymyrovych, Karpov Yevhenii Oleksandrovych, Kryvenko Mykola Yevhenovych, Riabchuk Viktor Ivanovych, Frenchko Viktor Vasyliovych, Chepelyk Volodymyr Andriiovych, etc.

As a result of the present research, innovative plastic searches of the Ukrainian sculptor Anastasiia Kosarevska were demonstrated making it possible to implement the author's concept outside of Ukraine. The existence and properties of polychromy and kinetics, concepts of composition and montage, and plastic aspects are confirmed, which in turn testifies to the integration of this part of Ukrainian culture into the process of world art of the XX century. The inventive work of Anastasiia Kosarevska turned out to be an important source of inspiration for the next generation of Ukrainian sculptors.

The scientific innovation of the academic paper consists in revealing the transformational aspect of the figure in Ukrainian sculpture of the XX century, emphasizing the conceptual issues of color and movement. The systematization of the selected materials made it possible to create new views on the inseparable unity of Ukrainian plastic and world artistic currents.

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