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MODERN UKRAINIAN PHOTO BOOK AS AN OBJECT OF CONCEPTUAL ART OF POSTMODERNISM

Purpose. *The purpose of the study is to identify the features of modern Ukrainian photo books, which have become a striking example of following the trends of postmodern art.*

Methodology. *The study is based on the integrated use of historical, comparative methods, systems analysis, synthesis, generalization.*

Results. *The modern Ukrainian photo book is considered as a work of conceptual art of postmodernism. Certain artistic and compositional features and design techniques of Ukrainian photobooks are identified; originality of form; author's presentation of textual, content and visual components of the indoor unit: inclusion of ready-made images (ready-made) and photo manipulation, use of collages, photos of utilitarian objects, etc.*

Scientific novelty. *On the example of art history analysis of a number of well-known Ukrainian photobooks, the characteristic features of the photobook as an object of modern conceptual art is determined, the features of figurative, stylistic, artistic and compositional design solutions are systematized.*

Practical significance. *The artistic and compositional features and design techniques used by photographers in the implementation of creative ideas have been identified, the theoretical basis of modern conceptual art have been expanded that can be useful in future creative projects of photobooks that will have both artistic and commercial value.*

Keywords: *conceptual art; Ukrainian photobook; art of postmodernism; ready-made; photographs of utilitarian objects.*

Introduction. In the era of postmodernism, first against the background of disappointment in the subject of science, and later against the background of the development of digital technologies and mass media culture, there was a certain rethinking of the subject of art. The philosophical aesthetics of postmodernism is aimed at mixing heterogeneous elements, traditional values, the use and processing of classical heritage. If previously the reality was imitated and copied (mimesis – imitation of the natural), then in the works of postmodernism the use of objects, that are already a certain "copy" of reality have began. This formed a kind of work of art or object, which by moving them to another, new or unusual context, acquire new meaning or significance. Conceptualism flourished in the 1960s, where experiments with the art object itself and its concept, playing with the viewer through patterns of meanings and signs, and a typical perceptions of habitual things that acquired new aesthetic qualities in the context of a work of art, became clear [1; 2; 11; 14; 17]

Such works of art, in our opinion, should include a number of well-known Ukrainian photobooks, which can be considered as examples of conceptual art of the postmodern era.

Setting objectives. The renowned American photographer and researcher of the history of photography, Martin Parr considers the photobook as a unique work of art, covering the events of the last 172 years of world history, and aims to communicate with the viewer through a series of photographs or, according to the author, perform "physical and visual communication with people" [21]. Authors of photobooks express themselves through the symbolic content, composition and order of the photographs in order to create a visual narrative (narrative) or documentary work. Over the past 20, 30 years, photobooks have not only become very popular around the world, but also changed their appearance. They differ in shape, design, genre of the presented photos, etc. The interest in the photo book is evidenced by the

large number of international festivals, that take place annually in Europe, America, Japan and other countries. These are photo festivals in Vienna (Vienna Photo Book Festival), Belfast (Belfast Photo Festival), International Biennial of Photography and Visual Arts (BIP) in Liege (Belgium), International Photography Festival in Brazil (Encontros da Imagem), festival (Format) in Derby, the annual photography festival in Łódź and many more. Time, The Guardian, and the New York Times regularly cover topics related to modern photo books.

The photo book, which is presented today at international exhibitions and festivals, is one of the forms of art presentation, which is able to simultaneously broadcast author's concept through the maximum number of informational channels through the perception: tactile, sight, smell, and sometimes taste. That is why, in the practice of photography, as in other modern creative practices, the term "art object" is often applied to a photo book, which means an object of art or synthesis of arts, a valuable, non-utilitarian thing created from different materials and objects that conveys the creative idea of the artist through visual interaction with the viewer and is designed for the emotional reaction of man.

In a recent decades, the Ukrainian photobook has become a regular participant in international competitions and festivals, where the works of Ukrainian photographers Borys Mykhailov, Yevhen Pavlov, young Ukrainian authors Serhiy Lebedynsky, Vladyslav Krasnoshchok, Vadym Trikoz and others, have repeatedly received positive reviews and awards in creative competitions. Therefore, the purpose of the study is to determine the features of the Ukrainian photobook as an object of modern conceptual art and make a systematization of its figurative and stylistic techniques and artistic and compositional design solutions.

Analysis of previous researches. Much attention is paid to the disclosure of the nature of conceptual art, its theory and practice in the works of various authors, both Ukrainian and foreign. The 7th issue of the collection of

scientific works "Contemporary Art" of 2010 edition (Institute of Contemporary Art Problems of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine) is completely devoted to the analysis of the peculiarities of contemporary Ukrainian visual art. Among the recent publications of Ukrainian scientists, we can highlight the work of L.V. Smyrna [15], O.M. Petrova [12], O.S. Afonina [1], N. Molok [9], where the views on the essence of the art of postmodernism, its trends and its reflection in different areas of art are generalized.

Applying a semiotic methodological approach to the analysis of contemporary visual art, Olga Petrova uses the concept of "Code of Linguistic Art". According to it, the art as a system develops on the principle of dynamic contrast between Language and Code [12, p. 39]. Language is a structure with historical memory, it preserves and supports tradition. Code – a newly created artistic structure that breaks out of tradition, striving for innovation. It is these two components that form the "Code of Linguistic Art". Modern culture and culture in general is based on the traditions of heritage, but each time the tradition is interpreted with new qualities [12, p. 48]. O.M. Petrov considers the essence and specifics of Ukrainian visual art is a kind of unity of Language and Code, which is the case of contemporary art in general.

L.V. Smyrna makes an analysis of Ukrainian art of the second half of the twentieth in her work. The author considers underground works of art, including in the field of photography, which arose in opposition to «socialist realism» and affirmed the national character of Ukrainian art [15].

Analysis of the main publications devoted to the peculiarities of the development and formation of the photo book in the world are the previous works of the author [7; 14], which analyzed the most important foreign publications and research on this issue, including M. Parr [21], A. Dudi [20], P. Di Bello [19], A. Ruye [13].

In the work [14] on the basis of the analysis of scientific sources, features of design

of the modern foreign and Ukrainian photobook, the authors generalized approaches to its art-compositional decisions and design, made classification of types of the photobook on a way of representation of content as concrete editions. in the series. At the same time, the limited volume of publications did not allow to cover all aspects of the formation of a modern Ukrainian photobook.

Results of the research. Marcel Duchamp was the first artist, who proposed a kind of manifesto of contemporary art, which involved the use of a typical objects and forms. In his works "Bottle Dryer" (1914), "Advance for a broken arm" (1915), "Fountain" (1917) and others (Fig. 1, Fig. 2), which he called ready-made «without additions» (ie, a pictorial frame that would be able to give a certain art to objects), Marcel Duchamp argues that the artist is not required to create certain new forms or improve existing ones, which he transforms or processes – he can take ready-made objects and give them artistic significance only by moving them to another context, which leads to a change in their symbolic value. Thus, the importance of Marcel Duchamp's early ready-made lies in the fact that he rearranged the traditional ways in which artists defined the form and content of art. According to Duchamp's ready-made concept, the artist is free to place any object in any artistic (or non-artistic) context, without processing the material, but using ready-made objects in their pure form. Duchamp's work is considered not only a transitional link from modernism to postmodernism, but also the first work of the art of conceptualism, which developed within the framework of postmodernism [9]. Note that such techniques as the appropriation of works by other authors for use in their collages, as well as assembly, photomontage, bricolage began to be used by representatives of the avant-garde Dadaism, whose American representatives included Marcel Duchamp, Francis Picabou and Man Ray.

The forerunners of the concept of the postmodern photobooks were the works of

the Dusseldorf School of Photography. A series of photographs of the similar industrial objects (factories, buildings) are typical projects of the school representatives – Berndt and Healy Becher. By moving such series (catalogs) into the exhibition space, the visual load of the photographs is rethought, their simple frontal frame becomes three-dimensional and multifaceted, and they acquire artistic value as objects of art. In addition, photographs of Berndt and Healy Becher are based on the idea of time. Photographs capture the objects of the industrial past, blurring the line between present, past and future. The destruction of time becomes the system on which the paradox of personnel is built [22].

Among modern Ukrainian photo books we can single out a few that most vividly illustrate the basic artistic techniques of postmodernism (editing, appropriation, assembly, use of images-symbols and metaphors, anti-aesthetics, ready-made, etc.).

Notably that the theme of the modern Ukrainian photo book is often aimed to understand the Soviet past or modern social problems and is presented by the author through the original design of the book and photos, which recorded events, utilitarian objects or objects in unusual contexts and without decoration, often grotesquely provocative. Such a photo book makes a deep ambiguous impression, evoking certain associations, as a reaction to the original visual series presented by the photographer. Consider a number of well-known Ukrainian photo books, which in our opinion can be attributed to the objects of conceptual art.

In 1985, Borys Mykhailov, a prominent Ukrainian photographer of the Kharkiv School of Photography, presented his new work to his colleagues from the Vremya group, a self-published artbook made of yellowed papers (Fig. 3). According to the legend, Mikhailov found someone's unfinished dissertation and used it as a material basis for his own project. On the back of the each sheet he pasted "cards" (his photos of Soviet everyday life made as if from home archives) and bordered

it with "notes in the margins" (handwritten comments that do not clarify anything, but rather complicate the understanding of the connection between text and image). Thus, in this work, a random object, which essentially has no aesthetic and scientific value, due to its use by the artist, acquires significance and certain meanings. In this format, the author conducts a dialogue with the recipient and gives him the freedom to make sense.

The "Unfinished dissertation" with its ostentatious anonymity, blurring meanings, mediocrity of the visual and non-bindingness of the written, resembles a real manifesto of late Soviet apathy. The title of the English-language edition of the book is a quote from Ilya Kabakov, which aptly covers the essence of the repressive experience of existence in those years with the inability to reflect this experience: "According to the plan of life. a person should write a dissertation at least once in his life" [4].

Roman Pyatkovka's "You Are Waiting" artbook (Fig. 4) of the 1989 edition. won the award of the French festival Rencontres d'Arles. (Rencontres d'Arles is an annual summer photography festival founded in 1970 in Arles by photographer Lucien Clerg, writer Michel Tournier and historian Jean-Maurice Rouvet. The publication also was in the list of the best photo books of the festival in Kassel, Germany (Kassel Photobook Award 2018). As the author said in his exclusive comment, the artbook "You are waiting" is an ironic photo story on the topic: "There is no sex in the USSR". The artbook was created on the basis of a set of cards for expectant mothers, which the author found in the dump near the clinic, and which described the process of expecting a child and the postpartum period [21].

In 2017, the photobook "Completed Dissertation" by Shilo's group was published (Serhiy Lebedynsky, Vladyslav Krasnoshchok and Vadym Trikoz). By superimposing their photographs on top of Boris Mikhailov's photographs, actively introducing their works, using any occasion to develop the feature of intertextuality, the authors, in fact, undermine

the information space of Boris Mikhailov's Unfinished Dissertation (Fig. 5). The "Completed Dissertation" of a young group of photographers, formed under the influence of the Kharkiv School of Photography, is a striking example of the "art game" and a kind of response to the "Unfinished Dissertation" of Boris Mikhailov. The book appeals to anonymity – another Kharkiv trend (a series of projects "Lurika" by Boris Mikhailov, "The Third Author" by Eugene Pavlov and Vladimir Shaposhnikov, "Rapid Response Group" by Boris Mikhailov, Sergei Solonsky and Sergei Bratkov). In their works, young artists continue the aesthetics of their predecessors and their techniques (irony, metaform, sarcasm, the use of anti-aesthetic photographs, quotations), bringing it to the absolute [11]. Thus, the characteristics of postmodernism reach their apogee in their work. The text and additions of the authors do not explain, but rather confuse the viewer in the interpretation of the dissertation.

It is important to note that the postmodern deconstruction of reality is one of the peculiarity of the works of the Kharkiv School of Photography. By deconstructing documentary photographs (editing techniques, collage, painting photos in bright colors), the famous artists of this school (Eugene Pavlov, Vladimir Shaposhnikov and others), not only destroyed the essence of photography, but also created the new meanings with the help of specific painting techniques [10]. The approaches of their photo projects do not meet the criteria of aesthetic in the classical sense. Ernst van Alfen's work emphasizes that contemporary art is characterized by so-called "failed images", which are translated literally as "failed images". While selecting the photos, Eugene Pavlov, for example, preferred rather failed images. In his study of photographic practices, Ernst von Alfen singles out several artistic strategies that can make sense of unconscious and make visible the media space of the photography, which usually remains opaque.



Fig. 1. "The Fountain", Marcel Duchamp, 1917. Tate Gallery, London [9]



Fig. 2. "50 cubic centimeters of Parisian air" Marcel Duchamp, 1919. Art Museum, Philadelphia [9]

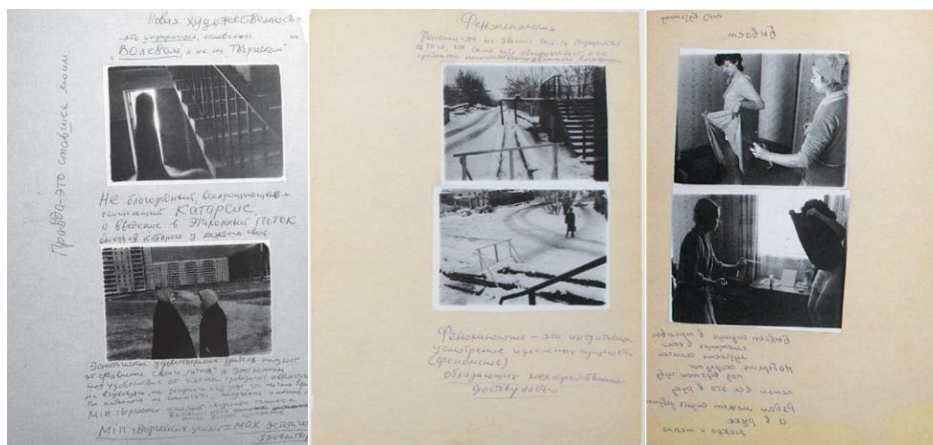


Fig. 3. Fragment of the photobook "Unfinished thesis", Boris Mikhailov, 1985 [3]



Fig. 4. Fragment of the photobook "You are waiting", Roman Pyatkov, 1989 [16]

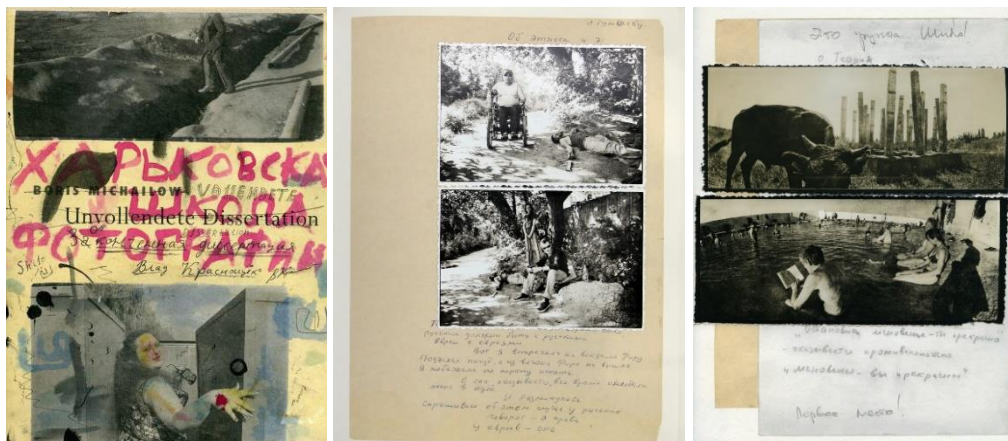


Fig. 5. Fragment of the photobook "Finished thesis", Shilo group, 2017 [11]

These strategies include defocused photographs, underexposed and overexposed images, staged photography and archival photography [18].

In 2018, the Museum of the Kharkiv School of Photography was opened in Kharkiv, with the MOKSOP publishing house next to it. His first work was the photo book «Kochetov», which included photographs of father and son Victor and Sergei Kochetov, taken in Kharkov during the 1970–2000 (Fig. 6). The photo book is distinguished by a recognizable style; an ironic vision of the world around. According to T. Pavlova, "Kochetov's work is an amazing – in its completeness, sincerity and coverage – It is an encyclopedia of Soviet myth, a complete absurdity of Soviet reality with a touch of brutality. The author creates, or rather reconstructs the main popular "ready-to-use" Ukrainian archetypes, as it were an illustrations cut from popular national magazines, with their low-quality print and a parade of beautiful faces, which he decorates with additional coloring [6]. The tradition of "lurics", which gained a popularity in Kharkiv photography, has been brought to their aesthetic limits in their photographs. The well-constructed visual series fully represents the achievements of these photographers, who were little known before the release of the photobook.

In the modern photo book "Dembel's album", which was presented at the photo festival Circulation (s), took place from March 17 to May 5, 2018 in Paris, Kharkiv photographer Sergei Kamenny through a popular self-published format of a specific form of photoalbum of the military subculture. It is called "Dembel album" and includes the photographs, documents, handwritten text, and other materials about the life assignment of the military staff, ironic about modern society (Fig. 7). Such an album was invented in Soviet times at a time when the soldier was close to demobilization ("dembel"). The author presents the "Dembel" as an album of his son, Taras Kamenny, who is currently serving in the

Ukrainian army. Although physically the space of Taras's movement is limited by a kilometer of the military unit, he travels countries, epochs, pages of art history, co-authoring with the classics in the album [5]. The lack of an aesthetically beautiful image from the classical point of view, manipulation with the recipient's emotions (the use of scandalous symbols suggestive of homosexual relations; unaesthetic images of food and military life that resonate with the Soviet past) cause disgust and disgust. Using the techniques of allegories, metaphors, signs-symbols and technologies of photomontage and photo collage, the author reveals the problems of the current state of the Ukrainian conscript service, society as a whole

A more veiled work is the photo book "Schwarzenegger is my idol", the second printed edition of the Museum of the Kharkiv School of Photography (MOKSOP) in 2020, which includes a series of photographs taken in 2012 by Mykolayiv photographer Serhiy Melnychenko (Fig. 8). The designer of the photo book is Kalin Kruse, the founder of Dienacht Publishing (Germany). The photobook has many layers of meanings and symbolism. "Schwarzenegger is my idol" is a story about the generation of 80–90 grew up on Hollywood blockbusters. It tells the story of a young boys in love with sports, who turned teenage hobbies into a landmark in the midst of suffocation in the post-Soviet province.

The simple gyms, built in the Soviet times, appeal to the Soviet past. The title of the book appeals to the American dream and its ideals, unattainable for young people in Soviet society. At the second level of symbolism, it can be found the references not only the classic American magazines, that shows a beautiful body and athletic form, but also to Renaissance art with images of the ideal athletic bodies of young men. At the highest level, the photographer raises the issue of corporeality – the naked body as an object of art.

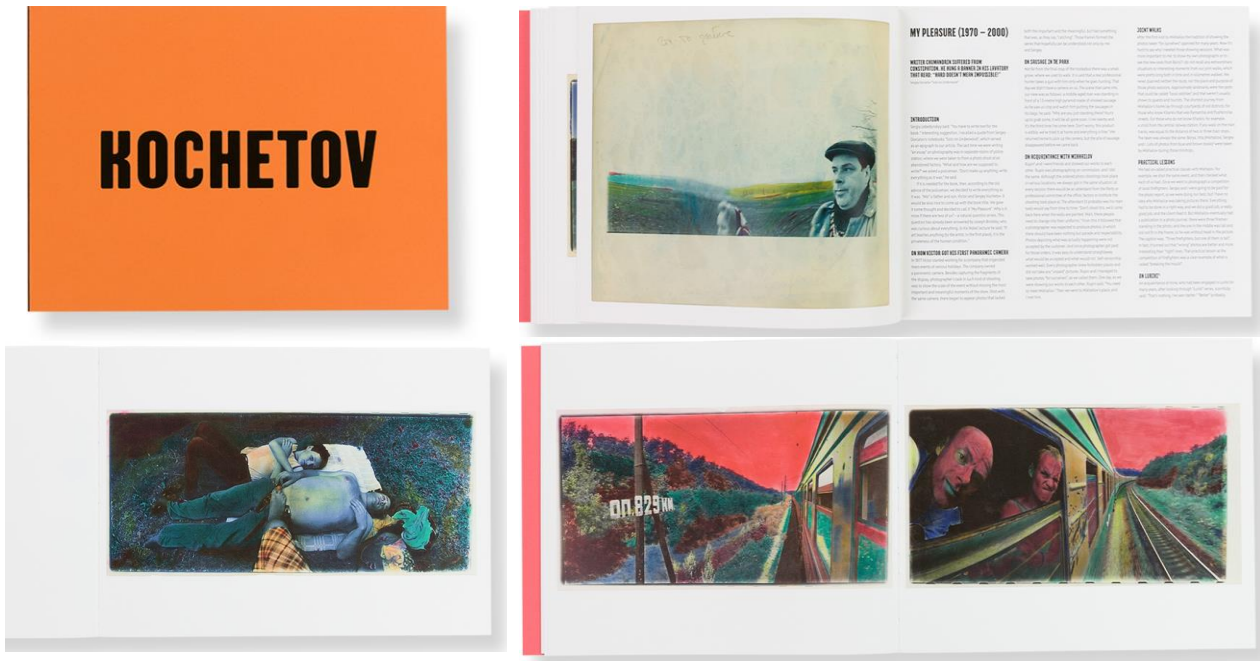


Fig. 6. Fragment of the photobook "Kochetov", Victor and Sergiy Kochetov, 2017 [6]



Fig. 7. Fragment of the photobook "Dembelsky Album", Sergiy Kamennoy, 2018 [5]



Fig. 8. Fragment of the photobook "Schwarzenegger – my idol", Sergiy Melnichenko, 2020 [4]

The author does not answer the questions, but leaves the viewer alone with the photobook and gives him the right to decide – to mock or admire the naked bodies of young men with their desire to achieve physical

Conclusions. It is determined that the modern author's photobook corresponds to the main aspects of the postmodernism period as a direction of photographic art. A photobook is a form of presentation of the art project in which the artist transmits his ideas in an original pictorial solution, which may include: not typical form of presentation (diary, administrative document, notebook with notes and sketches, etc.); specific author's textual content and visual components of the internal and external blocks of the book (the use of photographs of utilitarian or "ugly" objects, "finished" images, collage and photomontage techniques, etc.). The plots of selected photographs vary widely from documenting people, events, living conditions, to staged photographs. By using unaesthetic

perfection. Thus, in the postmodern form – through irony, sarcasm, metaphors, intertextuality and symbolism, the author asks questions about the essence of art.

photographs, quoting them and bringing it to the absolute, photographers introduce the irony, metaphor, and sarcasm to their projects. Studies have shown that postmodernism in the art of the Ukrainian photobook is characterized by such features as intertextuality; allusion; reminiscence. The Ukrainian photobook is a unique phenomenon. It was formed within the genre of visual art and is a valuable subject not only for Ukrainian collectors in the exhibition spaces of Ukraine, but a phenomenon, that has a high artistic value at the international level. The subject of the Ukrainian photobook is very often related to a critical assessment of Ukraine's Soviet past, disabilities and the illusory of well-being of the average citizen.

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СУЧАСНА УКРАЇНЬСЬКА ФОТОКНИГА ЯК ОБ'ЄКТ КОНЦЕПТУАЛЬНОГО МИСТЕЦТВА ПОСТМОДЕРНІЗМУ

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Мета дослідження виявити особливості сучасних українських фотокниг, що стали яскравим прикладом наслідування тенденцій мистецтва постмодернізму.

Методологія. В основу дослідження покладено комплексне використання історичного, компаративного методів, системний аналіз, синтез, узагальнення.

Результати. Сучасну українську фотокнигу розглянуто як твір концептуального мистецтва постмодернізму. Визначені

СОВРЕМЕННАЯ УКРАИНСКАЯ ФОТОКНИГА КАК ОБЪЕКТ КОНЦЕПТУАЛЬНОГО ИСКУССТВА ПОСТМОДЕРНИЗМА

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Цель исследования: выявить особенности современных украинских фотокниг, которые стали ярким примером наследования тенденций искусства постмодернизма.

Методология. В основу исследования положено комплексное использование исторического, сравнительного методов, системный анализ, синтез, обобщение.

Результаты. Современную украинскую фотокнигу рассмотрено как произведение концептуального искусства постмодернизма. Опре-

художньо-композиційні особливості і прийоми дизайну, притаманні ряду відомих українських фотокниг: оригінальність форми; авторське подання текстової, змістовної та візуальної складових внутрішнього блоку: включення готових зображень (реді-мейд) і їх обробка, використання колажів, фотографій утилітарних об'єктів тощо.

Наукова новизна. За допомогою мистецтвознавчого аналізу ряду відомих українських фотокниг визначено особливості фотокниги як об'єкту сучасного концептуального мистецтва, систематизовано риси образно-стилістичних технік і художньо-композиційних дизайнерських рішень. Розглянуті закономірності, що притаманні українським фотокнигам як візуальним нарративам, а також аспекти, що формують сучасну українську фотокнигу.

Практична цінність. Виявлені в роботі художньо-композиційні особливості і прийоми дизайну, що використовують фотохудожники у реалізації творчих ідей, розширюють теоретичну базу сучасного концептуального мистецтва і можуть стати корисними у рішеннях майбутніх творчих проєктів фотокниг, що матимуть як художню, так і комерційну цінність.

Ключові слова: концептуальне мистецтво; українська фотокнига; мистецтво постмодернізму; реді-мейд; фотографії утилітарних об'єктів.

делены художественно-композиционные особенности и приемы дизайна, присущие ряду известных украинских фотокниг: оригинальность формы; авторское представление текстовой, содержательной и визуальной составляющих внутреннего блока: включение готовых изображений (реди-мейд) и их обработка, использование коллажей, фотографий утилитарных объектов и т.д.

Научная новизна. С помощью искусствоведческого анализа ряда известных украинских фотокниг определены особенности фотокниги как объекта современного концептуального искусства, систематизированы черты образно-стилистических техник и художественно-композиционных дизайнерских решений. Рассмотрены закономерности, присущие украинским фотокнигам как визуальным нарративам, а также аспекты, формирующие современную украинскую фотокнигу.

Практическая ценность. Выявленные в работе художественно-композиционные особенности и приемы дизайна, которые используют фотохудожники в реализации творческих идей, расширяют теоретическую базу современного концептуального искусства и могут стать полезными в решениях будущих творческих проєктов фотокниг, которые будут иметь как художественную, так и коммерческую ценность.

Ключевые слова: концептуальное искусство; украинская фотокнига; искусство постмодернизма; реди-мейд; фотографии утилитарных объектов.

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