

# **IGOR ZABEL** **AWARD FOR** **CULTURE AND** **THEORY 2022**

## **Igor Zabel Award for Culture and Theory 2022** **Grant recipient**

**Oksana Briukhovetska, artist, curator, and art writer, Kyiv; currently living in Michigan, USA**

### **Jury's statement**

The jury has awarded **Oksana Briukhovetska** the 2022 Igor Zabel Award Grant for her outstanding contribution to the artistic and activist life in Ukraine and beyond. Informed by a variety of research, curatorial, artistic, and activist methods, her work brings polyphonic voices together, triggers processes of democratization under the most demanding circumstances, and raises feminist awareness.

Oksana Briukhovetska is an artist, curator, art writer, graphic designer, and activist. She graduated from the National Academy of Visual Arts and Architecture in Kyiv in 2003. She explores social themes through the study of personal experience focusing on topics of memory, and social and gender trauma. In her work, she also addresses the issue of Ukrainian labor migration, the impacts of the ongoing military conflict, and the realities of motherhood.

For nearly a decade (2011–19), she worked as a curator at the Visual Culture Research Center in Kyiv where, together with other female colleagues, she focused on feminist attitudes in Ukrainian art. In her curatorial projects, she confronts the position of women in post-Soviet societies, emphasizing the need to stand up for the rights of women and minorities. Her strong activist attitude informs her curatorial practice – the exhibitions she has (co)curated have a strong, engaged character. *Ukrainian Body* (2012) tackled topics of corporeality, poverty, and the experiences of marginalized groups in Ukraine, and *Lockout* (2014) and *I am Ukrainka* (2018) focused on labor in post-Soviet space and Ukrainian labor migration. Briukhovetska curated and edited catalogues for two powerful feminist exhibitions: *Motherhood* and *What in me is Feminine?* (2015), and for *TEXTUS: Embroidery, Textile, Feminism and Women's Texts* (2017).

Briukhovetska's research practice often includes interviews and conversations while also utilizing a range of different media: drawing, painting, textile, writing, public installation, and interventions into urban spaces. The book *The Right to Truth: Conversations on Art and Feminism* (2019), which she co-edited with Lesia Kulchynska, is a compilation of conversations between female artists and cultural workers about contemporary art and feminism that goes far beyond the feminist discourse centered in Western Europe. It



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questions the reality of feminist art in the post-Soviet space, particularly in Ukraine and Belarus, while forming alliances with international feminist practices.

In recent years, Briukhovetska has lived in the US where she has been researching and writing a new book that aims to present a more critical discussion of race and the anti-racist struggle to a Ukrainian audience.

As most of **Briukhovetska's** projects have emerged from collaboration and she is currently far from the Ukrainian scene, the jury hopes that the grant will give her the opportunity to initiate projects with Ukrainian feminists (artists, curators, and activists) while continuing to cultivate international collaborations. It is especially important to support the fragile feminist discourse that is both endangered and at the same time crucial in the context of the war in Ukraine.

## **2022 jury members**

**Marta Dziewańska**, philosopher and curator, Kunstmuseum Bern

**Ahmet Öğüt**, artist, Berlin/Amsterdam

**Tomáš Pospiszl**, art historian and curator, Prague