



# ANDREJ BABENKO



[www.babenkobelgium.com](http://www.babenkobelgium.com)



[andrejbabenko@gmail.com](mailto:andrejbabenko@gmail.com)



[instagram.com/babenkobelgium](https://www.instagram.com/babenkobelgium)

# About Andrej Babenko

- Born and raised in Boyarka and Kyiv, Ukraine
- 25+ years in Belgium
- Listed in the Artist Database, the Belgian list of professional artists and art heritage
- Listed in Yaroslav Mudryi National Library of Ukraine (p. 13 and pp. 17 – 18)
- Contributed to numerous charity projects since the start of the full-scale invasion of Ukraine, collecting more than 100 000 EUR



[www.babenkobelgium.com](http://www.babenkobelgium.com)



[andrejbabenko@gmail.com](mailto:andrejbabenko@gmail.com)



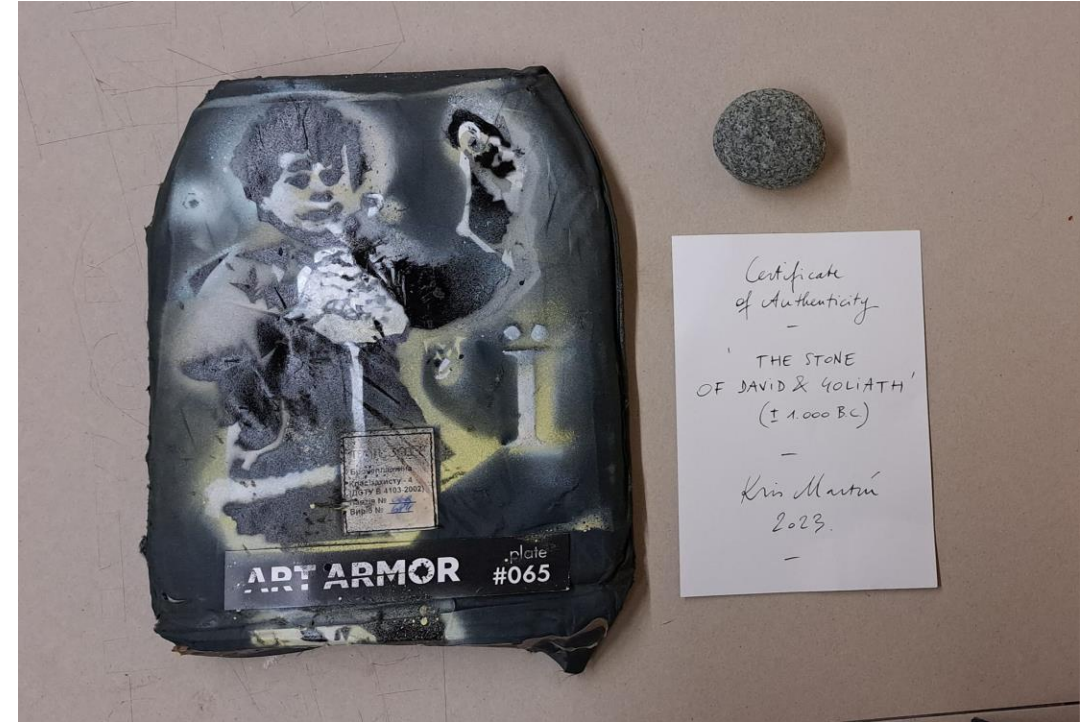
[instagram.com/babenkobelgium](https://www.instagram.com/babenkobelgium)



# Art Armor

- Project started in 2022 by Ukraine for Heroes, charitable foundation founded by Oleksander Kovalchuk
- Artists transformed **armor plates** used by the military into unique art objects
- The art armor plates are auctioned and proceeds are spent on providing assistance and meeting the humanitarian needs of the Armed Forces of Ukraine
- Babenko and fellow artist Kris Martin were invited to participate in this project for Belgium. The work was exhibited at **S.M.A.K. Ghent** and the **War Museum in Kyiv**
- [Zelensky signed the ArtArmor plate - Art Armor](#)





ArtArmor, by Babenko and Martin, on display at **S.M.A.K. Ghent**  
David and Goliath, spray paint on armor plate, stone with certificate of authenticity, 2023





Babenko at **S.M.A.K. Ghent** talking about the project and his work with **museum director Philippe Van Cauteren**, fellow artist and project collaborator Kris Martin and the **Embassy of Ukraine in Belgium**





The story of **David and Goliath** is one of the best-known and beloved stories of the Old Testament. The brave David goes into battle with the almost three-meter-tall fighter Goliath. David wins the battle by a well-aimed stone from his sling.

With the allegory, Babenko and Martin refer to **the war in Ukraine** and the giant that the country is fighting against. The armor plate comes from a bulletproof vest worn by a Ukrainian fighter.



The certificate of authenticity gives the impression that the original stone of David, more than three thousand years old, is on display. For a moment, the viewer is misled, concluding eventually that there is nothing new. There is just history repeating itself.

Babenko, Ukrainian by descent, has committed himself to the Art Armor project in the hope of keeping the war in Ukraine in the spotlight. The artworks from the project will be auctioned. The **proceeds will be used to support Ukraine**.

Practical Info [Buy your ticket here](#) en ▼

# S.M.A.K.



Home ↩ News

↩ Andrej Babenko & Kris Martin in the entrance hall of S.M.A.K.

## Andrej Babenko & Kris Martin in the entrance hall of S.M.A.K.



## S.M.A.K. stelt kunstwerk voor Oekraïne tentoon

Het S.M.A.K. zal de volgende twee weken een werk tentoonstellen van de Oekraïense kunstenaar Andrej Babenko en Kris Martin. Het werk kadert in het Art Armor-project, een artistiek liefdadigheidsproject dat opgezet werd in Oekraïne en ondersteund wordt door president Volodymyr Zelensky.

Kunstenaars maken hun werk op originele borstplaten van soldaten als statement tegen de oorlog. Na Gent verhuist het werk naar Londen, waar het geveild wordt. De opbrengt gaat naar steun voor Oekraïne.

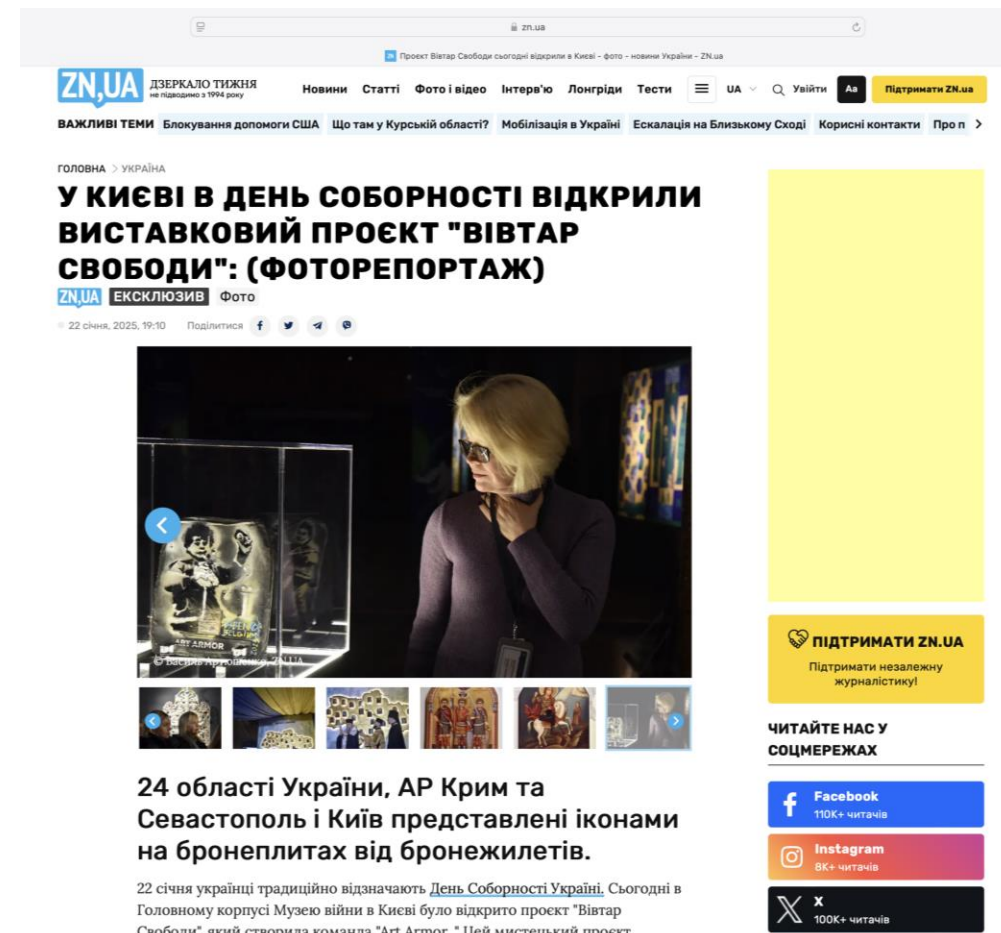
Het werk van Babenko en Martin is een combinatie van een met graffiti bespoten borstplaat en een steen, waarbij een echtheidscertificaat ligt als zou dat het 3.000 jaar oude wapen van David zijn. De kunstenaars verwijzen hiermee naar het verhaal van David en Goliath, of het kleine Oekraïne dat het moet opnemen tegen de reus Rusland.

“Heel even wordt de toeschouwer hiermee misleid, om uiteindelijk vast te stellen dat er niets nieuws onder de zon is. Er is alleen de geschiedenis die zich herhaalt”, zo klinkt het. (DM)





The Altar of Freedom, exhibition of ArtArmor creations at the National Museum of the History of Ukraine in the Second World War







## NATO HQ – 1000 days of war

- NATO HQ organised a symbolic ceremony to mark 1000 days since the beginning of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine
- NATO Secretary General **Mark Rutte** and the Head of Ukraine's Mission to NATO, **Natalia Galibarenko**, addressed the Permanent Representatives of the Allies, as well as representatives of the International Staff and NATO Military Staff
- An **exhibition of Babenko works** dedicated to Ukraine was also opened at NATO HQ to mark the date. His paintings convey through art both the tragedies of war and the hope for victory and reflect the unique spirit of the Ukrainian people.







NATO HQ – 1000 days of war  
Babenko with Secretary General **Mark Rutte** and the  
Head of Ukraine's Mission to NATO, **Natalia**  
**Galibarenko**



# NATO Archives Reading Room

## Salle de lecture des Archives de l'OTAN





# NATO in Ukraine #artwar



Андрій Бабенко  
Andrej Babenko

Брюссель, Бельгія  
Brussels, Belgium



NATO in Ukraine

June 14 · 🌐

#artwar

<https://fb.watch/sV32-5j63-/>

June 14



Russia's war against Ukraine touched every sphere of Ukrainian life: political, economic, informational, etc. The cultural sphere was no exception. Some artists joined the defense of the country at the front, others took up volunteering, and some felt the need to respond to Russian aggression with artistic language.

In the #artwar series, we will talk about Ukrainian UA art during the war and those artists who, with their practices, create a space for reflection on this difficult experience.

Today we are getting acquainted with the work of Andrej Babenko, a Belgian artist of Ukrainian origin. His work is known for its tangible plasticity and expression. The artist's style covers a wide range: from pop art, comics, neo-expressionism and graffiti on canvas to classical paintings and drawings.

Thanks to his migration background, Babenko manages to bring together extremes with great grace: the folkloric of his Ukrainian background and the conceptual of Belgium.

He wonders why history keeps repeating itself, how people survive in the hectic economic reality of our society and how peace and privacy managed to have become luxury goods. At the same time, he uses light as a magical metaphor for the future, for a better world without wars, epidemics and global warming.

Watch the video to immerse yourself in the world of the artist's images

More of the author's works – at the link: [www.babenkobelgium.com](http://www.babenkobelgium.com)

## Meeting with Mr. Tochytskyi, Ukrainian Minister of Culture and Strategic Communications, at KIK- IRPA

- At the invitation of **Glenn Micallef**, European Commissioner for Intergenerational Fairness, Youth, Culture and Sport, Babenko visited the KIK-IRPA, the Royal Institute for Cultural Heritage in Brussels, Belgium.
- The Commissioner and Babenko met **Mykola Tochytskyi**, Ukrainian minister for Culture and Strategic Communications, who shared information about the actions that Ukraine takes to preserve its art and cultural heritage during the war.
- KIK-IRPA has restored the Ghent Altarpiece of the **Van Eycks** and at the time of the visit, was restoring a **Rubens** painting.











# The World Is Burning

Mol, Belgium - 2022



Babenko created these works in a turbulent period. In 2013, his father died by suicide. Not long after, in 2014, the **Maidan Revolution** took place in Ukraine. Already then, the artist had a foreboding that this could lead to a major war. While this did not happen immediately, the fear and foreboding found their way in his paintings. Besides death and destruction, there was also **life**: Babenko's daughter and son were born in 2014 and 2015, respectively.

Two joyful and intense events which at the same time exposed him to the feelings of crushing responsibility and vulnerability of a parent. Interestingly, the **perception** by viewers has changed over time, in particular of Ukrainian acquaintances and friends of the artist: while the paintings were sometimes considered gloomy, explicit and somewhat frightening when they were just created, today, many Ukrainians see them as the perfect representation of the world they live in as well as of their inner world.

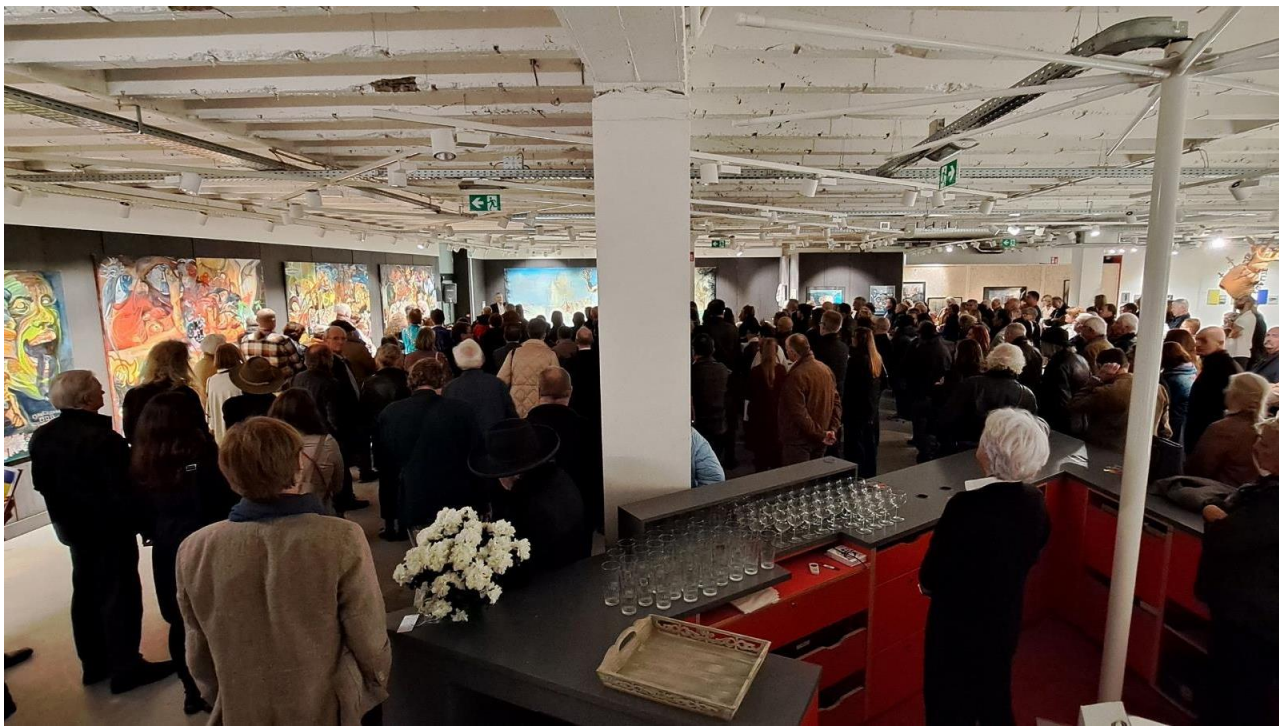




Despite the reference to war, this work was made well before the outbreak of the war in Ukraine. The painting represents Babenko's personal and professional tribulations during the corona pandemic. On top of the canvas is a cloth with **traditional Ukrainian embroidering** and the words 'Make borscht not war'; references to John Lennon and Banksy are evident. The work also refers to the collaboration of the artist with Mauro Pawlowski and Dirk De Wachter, mostly in the form of live performances, with Babenko painting live, De Wachter reciting poems and Pawlowski providing the music. The trio performed in **S.M.A.K. Ghent**, in **Extra City Antwerp** and at **Pukkelpop** inter alia.

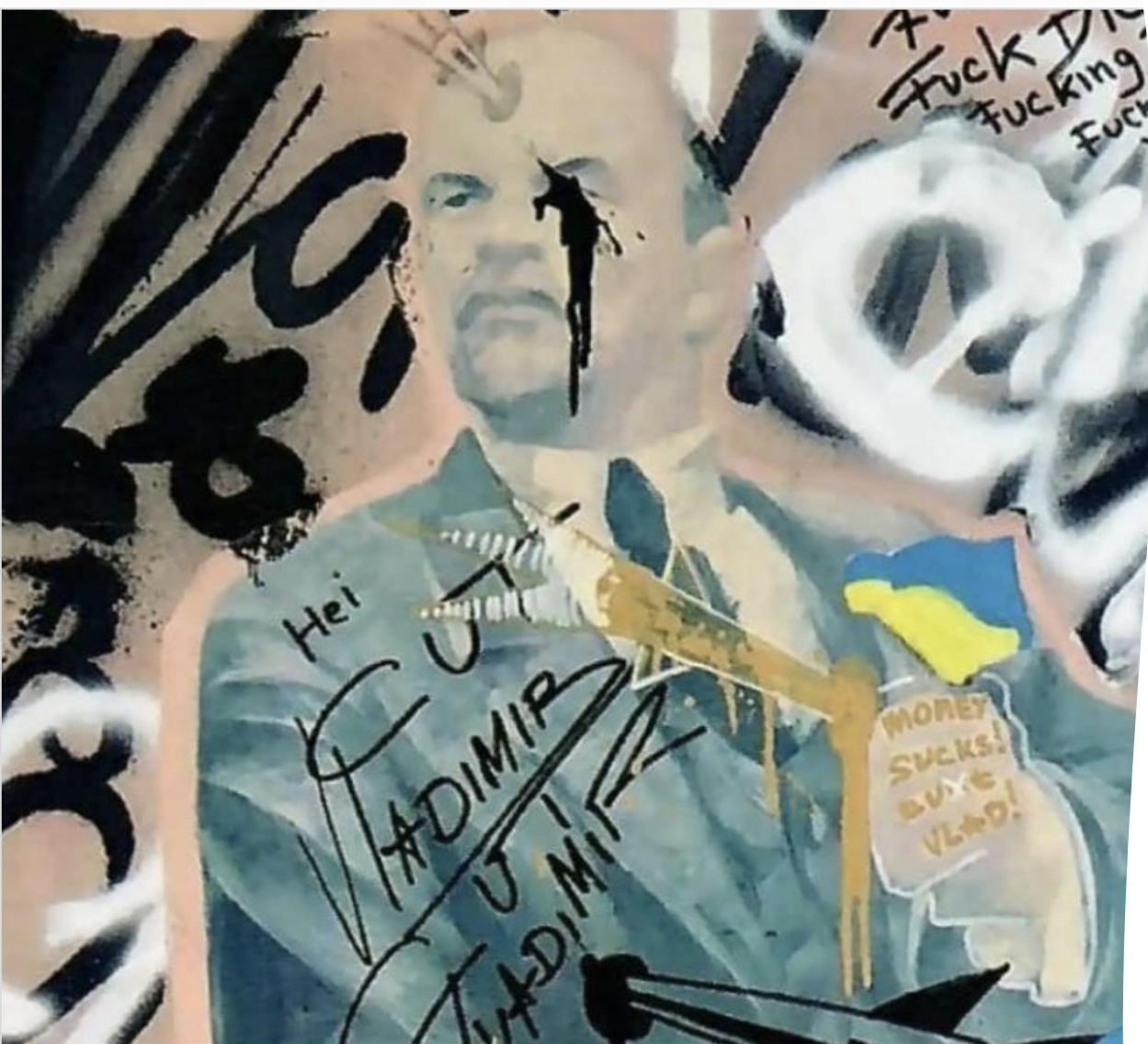






The World Is Burning was a very successful exhibition with a large turnout. Mr. **Oleksiy Gorbunov** gave a music performance and Ms **Kateryna Bilotil** of the embassy of Ukraine in Belgium gave the closing speech.





## Postcards for Ukraine

- Sperling gallery Munich launched 'Postcards for Ukraine' after the start of Russia's invasion of Ukraine
- Postcards designed by international artists in aid of people affected by the war are released on a regular basis
- The postcards can be purchased for a donation of 350 EUR or more to a charity supporting those affected by the war
- Babenko was invited to take part in the project

**Галерея у Мюнхені продає листі  
в обмін на допомогу Україні**





Babenko edited this existing canvas portraying Vladimir Lenin. The canvas was originally bought in the 1980s in Moscow by H. Willemse, guest curator at **Museum of Contemporary Art Antwerp (M HKA)** and personal friend of Babenko. Willemse donated the work to Babenko for editing or processing in his art. The work shows an expressive reflection of the war aggression and associated emotions. It carries a **message from one Vladimir (Lenin) to the other (Putin)**: “Vladimir, I am the star, and you are a cunt”!

The picture of these works was used for the project Postcards for Ukraine





BENEFIZAUKTION

## Neue Postkarten für die Ukraine

VON BRITA SACHS - AKTUALISIERT AM 11.03.2024 - 10:15



Künstler aus aller Welt gestalten „Postkarten für die Ukraine“. Zu erwerben sind sie bei der Galerie Sperling in München – gegen eine Spende für Hilfsprojekte in dem überfallenen Land.

MERKEN ☆ 6 | 1 Min.

**A**ls Russland vor zwei Jahren seinen Angriffskrieg auf die **Ukraine** begann, zeigte sich schnell, wie dringend die Notleidenden in dem überfallenen Land Unterstützung brauchen. Damals startete der Münchner Galerist Johannes

ANZEIGE

Gesponserte Finanz-Inhalte

Wilt u uw risico verminderen? Ontdek onze

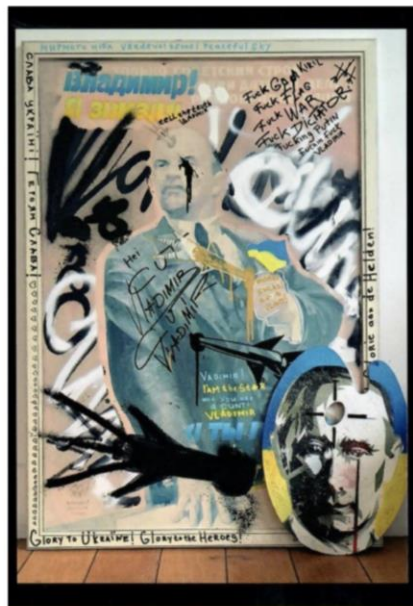
**FAZ+** Alle exklusiven Artikel auf FAZ.NET lesen

Jetzt für nur 0,99 € testen >

BENEFIZAUKTION

## Neue Postkarten für die Ukraine

VON BRITA SACHS - AKTUALISIERT AM 11.03.2024 - 10:15



1/2



Eine der „Postcards for Ukraine“ der Galerie Sperling, gestaltet von Andrej Babenko, 2022

Bild: GALERIE SPERLING

23:28

**amnews.ua**

78%



amnews.ua  
Munich, Bayern

6 W



## Галерея у Мюнхені продає листівки в обмін на допомогу Україні



Liked by s1962266 and others

amnews.ua Майже два роки тому мюнхенський галерист Йоганнес Шперлінг та його сестра Франциска Ле Мер започаткували благодійний проєкт: вони попросили художників з усього світу створити "Листівку для України". Свій внесок митці почали надсилати майже одразу – у вигляді намальованих, надрукованих або маркованих листівок. За цей час продали близько 150 маленьких творів мистецтва й зібрали понад €50 тис.

Проект активно існує і зараз. Листівки можна придбати за пожертву у розмірі €350 або, за бажанням, за вищою ціною. Листівки можна переглянути в Instagram на сторінці @postcardsforukraine.

Фото – Postcards for Ukraine

#galleriesperling #postcardsforukraine #Мюнхен



Über 250.000 Abonnenten nutzen bereits FAZ+

Jetzt für nur 0,99 € testen >



# Commissioner Micallef in Babenko's studio

- **Glenn Micallef, European Commissioner** for Intergenerational Fairness, Youth, Culture and Sport, visited the studio of the Ukrainian-born Belgian artist Andrej Babenko in Overijse, Belgium, on the occasion of International Workers' Day
- The visit was an opportunity to discuss how the Commission supports working conditions in the cultural sector and the **freedom of artistic expression**, a cornerstone of European values.
- EC AV PORTAL – Visit of Glenn Micallef, European Commissioner, to the studio of Andrej Babenko, Ukrainian-born Belgian artist











*“What is special about his work is the striking synergy of styles and cultures. He mixes spray cans and oil paint, combines punk with jazz, and creates wild compositions with classical patterns. He is East and West, past and present, and slightly ahead of time. One reads Jheronimus Bosch or Brueghel in his work, but above all a lot of Babenko. It should come as no surprise that he was always “the best draftsman in class” at school. Unraveling origin, identity and artistic influence by different political-cultural backgrounds can only lead to new insights, both for the artist and the viewer. Art is the most important school of learning; by looking closely one learns to understand ”.*