



Natalia PROCOP

Doctor în studiul artelor și culturologie, artist plastic, membru al Secției de Științe Sociale, Economice, Umanistice și Arte a Academiei de Științe a Moldovei, cercetător științific coordonator, Departamentul Științe Umaniste, Universitatea de Stat „Dimitrie Cantemir”. Domenii de preocupare: arta decorativă, pictura, design vestimentar. Cărți publicate: *Batik-ul din Moldova*, Chișinău: Balacron, 2017; coautor, *Terminologie vestimentară. Dicționarul ilustrat român-englez*, Chișinău: Gunivas, 2019.

### MOLDOVAN PLASTIC ARTISTS IN THE FIELD OF TEXTILE ART SCHOOLED IN LVOV NATIONAL ACADEMY OF ARTS

The present article is a study that elucidates the evolution of textile art (batik, tapestry) and analyzes the works of plastic artists schooled at the Lvov National Academy of Arts. The methodological basis of the research is the historical-theoretical method, which allows the synthesis of the evolutionary process of textile art. The historical-comparative method elucidates the level of development of the researched genre in comparison with the various cultural centers in which the future plastic artists studied. The formal-stylistic, interpretative, axiological methods etc. are used in the case of the analysis of the works of art.

The 1980s are characterized by the flux of artists, who studied in the higher education institutions of the USSR: V. Avrușevici (Moscow), A. Drobaha (Lvov, 1979), O. Drobaha (Lvov, 1979), N. Ciornaia (Lvov, 1981), V. Damir (St. Petersburg, 1988), V. Ivanciuc (Lvov, 1984), I. Șuh (Lvov, 1985), V. Grama (Moscow, 1986), L. Șevchenko (Tallinn, 1987), I. Baba (Tallinn, 1987) etc. Having been familiarized with the specifics of the

school upon returned home, the plastic artists created their own style. They entered the creative competition in the field of batik and tapestry in Moldova in the early 1980s with new visions, practicing either abstract art (A. Drobaha) or the just started figurative art (I. Șuh, V. Ivanciuc).

In the 1980s-90s of the XX century, in the MSSR persists the opinion that decorative art is a minor art, of everyday use, or, at most, to embellish the environment. Therefore, it is not able to capitalize on topical themes and social-philosophical ideas. However, the textile art is going through a new stage in its evolution. For example, in the field of professional tapestry, authors call for “formal structures or reduced figurations and subtle allegories of universal significance” [1, p. 53]. A similar aspect is evidenced by the batik, the works being performed in a predominantly abstract vision.

Despite the social situation at the end of the 1980s, the process of renovation of the artistic life and a new environment of creative freedom for Moldovan painters is underway.



Alexandr Drobaha, *Alcor*, 1993,  
batik, 900×1150 mm.

One of the authors who contributed most to the development of textile art is Alexandr Drobaha. The President of the Union of Designers of the Republic of Moldova, Grigore Bosenco, stated at the opening of Alexandru Drobaha's exhibition that the artist, being the student of Professor Vladimir Avruțevici, surpassed his teacher [2, p. 6]. We mention on this occasion that V. Avruțevici graduated from the Textile Institute in Moscow and later was Al. Drobaha's colleague for many years.

During his artistic evolution, Alexandr Drobaha, graduate of Fine Arts and Theater College in Odessa (Ukraine) and of the Institute of Applied and Decorative Arts in Lvov, created his own style, the combination of the free, cold batik technique and various author techniques. He greatly impresses through the application technology, through his philosophical vision, which he realizes with a special mastery achieved by the rich creative experience. Another strength of the author is the fineness of the chromatic choice, which gives space to compositions.

During his artistic activity, the author organizes numerous personal and group exhibi-



Alexandr Drobaha, *Monomakh's Cap*, 2008,  
batik, 550×450 mm.

tions in Moldova, Ukraine, Poland, Romania, Russia, Austria, and Italy [3]. He is a permanent participant in exhibitions organized by the Union of Plastic Artists (UPA), each time impressing through his high mastery in the graphic design of textiles. Unlike his other



Olga Drobaha, ArtPodium 2010, batik.



Natalia Ciornaia, *The legend of the old Orhei*, 1997, batik, 1500×1500 mm.

colleagues (Natalia Ciornaia, Irina Șuh, Vasile Ivanciuc), who practice other genres of plastic arts (clothing design, tapestry, painting, woodworking, graphics), A. Drobaha is faithful to the batik technique. Experimenting on the technique, the author obtains unique effects, which make his works highly appreciated in the exhibitions. His works are like fine-grained jewelry, reaching maximum ex-



Natalia Ciornaia, Costume of collection from the *Treasure of Montezuma*, batik, 2002.

pressiveness while remaining very airy (the main feature in creating a batik).

Natalia Ciornaia, another graduate of the Institute of Applied and Decorative Arts in Lvov, Ukraine, the Fashion Design Chair (in the period 1976–1981), imposed herself into artistic life in 1985, starting at the group exhibitions organized by the Union of Plastic Artists. Her first works “Legend of Old Orhei. Autumn Park” (1984) and “Old Orhei Legend” (1987–1988) were executed in the technique of cold batik and were inspired by the landscapes of her native town. Both works reflect pages from the history of the region, where either a realistic landscape (“Legend of Old Orhei, Autumn Park”) or battle scenes (“Legend of the Old Orhei”) are represented [4]. Subsequently, the “Old Orhei Legend” was purchased by the plastic fund of the UPA.

During the same period at the Republican Exhibition “Youth of Moldova”, the author exhibits a costume made in the cold batik technique called “Motifs from Raciula”. Her father’s home village, the Raciula village served as inspirational source. Phytomorphic motifs predominate the composition, being the focus of the work.

In the years 1994–95, the author’s creation is characterized by large-scale tapestries “The R – I Fall” (1994), “Interior of the Village” (1995), whose specificity is abstractionism. The artist returns to the art of tapestry in 2012 in the work “I am another tree”. The figurative motif is made in the technique of tapestry and crochet.

Although Natalia Ciornaia practiced the execution of decorative panels in the tapestry and batik technique, she also made numer-



Irina Şuh, *Pink fish*, 1996,  
batik, 950×850 mm.



Irina Şuh, *The village cemetery*, 2007,  
batik, 920×820 mm.

ous conceptual collections: “Miss – Portrait”, “Montezuma Treasures” (2002), “The Sea” (2001), “German Shepherd”, “Spanish Wind”.

The artist is a member of the Union of Plastic Artists of the Republic of Moldova since 2009 and of the Union of Designers of the Republic of Moldova since 2001. She was awarded the Fashion Festival Laureate Diploma. She is the founder of the “Conceptual Fashion Theater” and of the “Arts, Culture, and Education Association”. She is an active participant in exhibitions, national and international symposiums from the Republic of Moldova, Romania, Ukraine, Russia, Germany, Poland, France, Israel, USA, and Canada.

One of the representatives who largely practices the batik technique in the Republic of Moldova is Irina Şuh, graduate of the Institute of Applied and Decorative Arts in Lvov, the Fashion Design section. In the first years, she worked in the field of fashion design, occupying leading positions at union and international exhibitions-competitions (in Greece, Bulgaria, Mongolia – in 1986 and Estonia – in 1987) and at fashion festivals (Estonia – 1988, Russia, India, Belgium, Germany, Austria –

1989, Ukraine – 1994) [5]. In 1984, Irina Şuh presented the first work executed in cotton in the technique batik entitled “Three”. She is one of the well-known authors of the batik technique not only in the Republic of Moldova, but also abroad. She periodically participates in exhibitions abroad, being a member of the Association of Designers from Moscow (Russian Federation) since 1988. Since the same year, she has been a member of the Union of Designers of the Republic of Moldova and since 1999 is a UPM member of the republic.

In his recommendation of Irina Şuh as a UAP member, Vlad Bolboceanu (member of the UPA of the Republic of Moldova since 1993, being at that time the head of the Applied Decorative Art Chair of the State University of Arts) pointed out that the works of the author “impact on sensitivity and memory; contemplating them, you have the feeling that they belong to a long-lasting historical process, have roots in the deepest structures of our spiritual tradition. The compositions of Irina Şuh attest not only imaginative vocation, which implies a mixture of real and fan-



Irina Şuh, *Still life with pears*, 2012,  
batik, 560×720 mm.

tastic, but also a leaning towards storytelling, towards myth” [6].

In the thematic diversity of her works, we encounter landscapes, gender compositions, portraits etc. The author’s works are executed in the complicated chromatic gamut with well-chosen tones. The entire creation in batik, from 1984 until today, has evolved both in the use of textile support (from cotton to silk) as well as in the compositional structure and the subject approached.

The first works are characterized by the use of flat decorative spots and expressive and naive styles of the human figure. The batiks of the year 1996 are of special graphic and pictorial finesse, and those of the 2000s are distinguished by vivid colors, decorative spots and harsh stylizations, while the evidently pronounced pictorialism has disappeared. The craftsmanship and skillfully chosen gamut places the author among the most important plastic artists in the industry.

Another representative of Lvov Institute of Applied and Decorative Arts is Vasile Ivanciuc. Being active in the artistic life of the Republic of Moldova, he participates with his



Vasile Ivanciuc, *Rural landscape*, 2009,  
batik, 820×980 mm.

batiks in numerous exhibitions and creative camps. His canvases impress by a rich, novel color gamut. The unique combination of idea, color and plasticity express the individuality of this artist’s batiks.

The studies at the college of Cosau (Ivano-Frankovsk region, Ukraine), the Artistic Processing of Wood Section, leave a print in the author’s textile, especially with regard to the forms of the created motifs, the pale color palette, which reminds the color of the wood. According to the art critic Tudor Braga, “each work is individualized, surpassing the particularities of the cultural ethos of the school in which he was trained. Vasile Ivanciuc experiments extensively in order to obtain the expressiveness of the ideas, taking special care of the accuracy of balancing the color valences in relation to the fabric of the materials used in the configuration of the plastic discourse” [7]. In the conceptual textile, there is a syn-

thesis of the idea and the laconic expressiveness of the form.

Since the middle of 1980s, the whole art of the batik has also evolved into a new style through the works of Veaceslav Damir. The originality and the craftsmanship of the approach certainly places the author among the pleiad of plastic artists Alexandr Drobaha, Irina Șuh, Vasile Ivanciuc, who devoutly approached the textile arts in the Republic of Moldova for more than two decades [8].

The contribution of the above-mentioned artists affects not only the direct development of visual arts in Moldova but also the training of a plethora of young artists (Alla Uvarova, Tatiana Trofimov, Veronica Tara-

senco, Florentin Leancă etc.) who approach the genre with creative enthusiasm.

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#### **Moldovan plastic artists in the field of textile art schooled in Lvov National Academy of Arts**

**Abstract.** In the textile art from the period of MSSR have been activating a number of artists, schooled in big cultural centers one of which is the Lvov National Academy of Arts (Al. and O. Drobaha, N. Ciornaia, V. Ivanciuc, I. Șuh), which have substantially contributed to the direct development of the visual arts in Moldova. They entered in the creative competition in Moldovan batik and tapestry genres in early 80's, with new visions, practicing the abstract art or just figurative one. Activating as senior lecturers at specialized institutions from Chisinau, they had conditioned the emergence of a new generation of artists as: A. Uvarova, E. Cemortan-Voloșin, T. Trofimov, V. Tarasenco, I. Leahu etc.

**Keywords:** textile art, batik, tapestry, technique, abstractionism.

#### **Plasticieni din domeniul artei textile din Moldova formați în cadrul Academiei Naționale de Arte din Lvov**

**Rezumat.** În arta textilă din perioada RSSM au activat o serie de artiști, școliți în marile centre culturale, unul din ele fiind Academia Națională de Arte din Lvov (Al. și O. Drobaha, N. Ciornaia, V. Ivanciuc, I. Șuh), care au contribuit substanțial la dezvoltarea directă a artelor vizuale din Moldova. Ei au participat la competiția creativă în genurile batik și tapiserie moldovenești la începutul anilor '80, cu viziuni noi, practicând arta abstractă sau abia figurativul. Activând în calitate de lectori superiori la instituții specializate din Chișinău, ei au condiționat apariția unei noi generații de artiști ca A. Uvarova, E. Cemortan-Voloșin, T. Trofimov, V. Tarasenco, I. Leahu ș. a.

**Cuvinte-cheie:** artă textilă, batik, tapiserie, tehnică, abstracționism.