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THE IMPORTANCE OF MELLER'S MODEL WORKSHOP EXPERIENCE FOR MODERN DESIGN EDUCATION

ЗНАЧЕННЯ ДОСВІДУ МАКЕТНОЇ МАЙСТЕРНІ МЕЛЛЕРА ДЛЯ СУЧАСНОЇ ДИЗАЙН-ОСВІТИ

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Abstract

Research aim. To analyze the activities of the model workshop of the Berezil Artistic Association under the leadership of V. Meller, to establish the influence on modern graphic design.

Research methods. Historical-comparative, study of art analysis. **Scientific novelty.** For the first time, attention is focused on the activities of the model workshop in the field of design of printed products with the provision of relevant visual evidence. The analysis revealed features that relate the design activities of the workshop with the modern advertising paradigm. An attempt is made to determine the educational achievements of the formation and their agreement with other art schools of the time.

Conclusions. Undeservedly little-studied activity of the model workshop in the field of printed products is one of the highest achievements of Ukrainian graphic design of the twentieth century and corresponds with similar experiments in other countries. The commonality of program principles, the identity of the applied artistic techniques and technical means with the cor-

Анотація

Мета дослідження – проаналізувати діяльність макетної майстерні Мистецького об'єднання «Березиль» під керівництвом В. Меллера, встановити її вплив на сучасний графічний дизайн. **Методи дослідження.** Історично-порівняльний та мистецтвознавчий методи аналізу. **Наукова новизна.** Вперше зроблено акцент на діяльності макетної майстерні у сфері оформлення друкованої продукції із наведенням відповідних візуальних доказів. У процесі аналізу виявлено риси, що споріднюють дизайнерську діяльність майстерні із сучасною рекламною парадигмою. Зроблено спробу визначити освітнянські здобутки формації та їхню суголосність з іншими мистецькими школами того часу. **Висновки.** Маловивчена діяльність макетної майстерні у царині друкованої продукції належить до одного з найвищих досягнень українського графічного дизайну початку ХХ ст. і гідно кореспондується із подібними експериментами в інших країнах. Відстежується спільність програмних засад, ідентич-

rection towards the specifics of the theatrical process on the part of the model workshop and the branches of Bauhaus, De Stijl, Vkhutemas artistic practice are traced.

ність вжитих художніх прийомів і технічних засобів макетної майстерні та осередків художньої практики Баугаузу, De Stijl, ВХУТЕ-МАСу. Водночас, специфіку макетної майстерні Меллера визначає її спрямованість у бік театрального процесу.

Keywords: **Ключові слова:**

Berezil, model workshop, Vadym Meller, design of printed products, Ukrainian constructivism, magazine, theatrical poster.

Мистецьке об'єднання «Березіль», макетна майстерня, Вадим Меллер, український конструктивізм, дизайн друкованої продукції, журнал, театральна афіша.

Introduction

The 1920s and 1930s brought Ukrainian art to the world level. Fortunately, formal and substantive innovation in art coincided with the state policy of «indigenization», which was reflected in the Ukrainization of content. Romantic and sincere expectations of social post-revolutionary progress in the future coincided with a high concentration of world-class artists in a certain area, who were aware of their «superiority» and enthusiastically worked on the idea of communist construction. However, they realized the fallacy of this path much later.

Things that were performed as purely functional (posters, programs, magazine design) have outgrown the utilitarian nature and over the centuries have acquired the status of priceless treasures of national design. His achievements can be considered on a par with the achievements of such formations as Bauhaus, De Stijl, and Vkhutemas.

The scenography of those times became no less important than directing or acting, the artist in the theater became a co-creator of the action. Different styles of the European avant-garde were used in the stage design: expressionism, constructivism, cubofuturism, and suprematism. This happened at a time when Ukrainian innovators were mostly constructivist in the advertising and printing spheres. In the design of printed publications, functionality comes to the fore, the unnecessary secession decor, characteristic of the theatrical poster of private enterprises of the early twentieth century, disappears. Changing the function of the creator in the theatrical process required the education of their artistic staff.

Research aim. Identify the activities of the model workshop of the Art Association «Berezil», which relate to graphic design; to establish connections, both formal and programmatic, in the field of education between Ukrainian constructivism and Bauhaus; to trace the significance of the pedagogical experience of the model workshop for modern design education.

**The
methodology
and analysis
of sources** **2**

The research is based on the application of historical, comparative, and art methods of analysis. The empirical source base of the research is the photographic material taken by the author of the article at thematic exhibitions, library, and museum funds.

The work of both Vadym Meller himself and the model workshop he heads is increasingly coming to the attention of the general public and scientists. These are gift monographs, albums (Horbachov, 1996; Mudrak & Rudenko, 2015), and numerous articles in specialized magazines. However, the group's design activities in the publishing field have not been studied in details yet: attention has been paid, for the most part, to the purely theatrical specifics of creating stage layouts or costume sketches (Dmytrenko, 2014; Yermakova, 2017; Chechyk, 2016; 2017). However, in the typography of the model workshop, we are dealing with the embryos of Ukrainian-language graphic constructivism – a direction that significantly influenced the domestic graphic design of the twentieth century. and remains relevant today. Besides, the pedagogical methodology that has matured within the workshop deserves attention, because the value of its achievements is important for modern design education.

**Results
of the
research** **3**

In 1923, a year after Les Kurbas founded the Berezil Theater, a «model workshop» was organized under the direction of Vadym Meller, which specialized in the design of performances. Unfortunately, we do not have an exact picture even of the signed theatrical sketches: «As a result of opposite information, we cannot claim that the design was invented by M. Simashkevych, invented by V. Shklyajev or designed by V. Meller. All of them worked on the play together, which was reported in the newspapers, and the press called the more experienced V. Meller an artist-designer» (Veselovska, 2010, p. 175). It is even more difficult to establish the authorship of unsigned typographic works, so it is worth trying to at least outline the design genres that the workshop was engaged in.

As there is no author's signature on the products of «model workshop», it is necessary to establish authorship on indirect grounds.

From the article «Berezil Model Workshop» published in the magazine «Theater Barricades», we learn that Meller is recognized as a senior master in the model workshop, and it includes 3rd year students of the Meller Institute of Art class, as well as other students: «During its existence, the workshop performed in corpore the tasks of the director's laboratory «Berezil» models for the scenography «Kings» by Shevchenko, directed by laboratory assistant P. Dolyana. The works were reviewed and discussed by the entire director's laboratory led by Les Kurbas and were mostly considered worthy of use on stage. Models for the «Captivity of Babylon» directed by G. Ignatovych will be completed this week» ("Maketna maisternia", 1924, p. 19). The author of the quoted article also gives us an idea of the specifics of the workshop: «In addition to work on the tasks of the Director's Laboratory, the workshop conducts internships on

stage. The model workshop members was commissioned to sketch actors in different roles to create an album of productions of Berezil's workshops ("Maketna maisternia", 1924, p. 19).

Indirectly, we can assume that Meller's wife, Nina Genke-Meller, was also involved in the case, as it is known that she is the author of the cover of the magazine «Theater Barricades».

If we trace the activities of the community in all types of graphic design, we will see that the model workshop was engaged in creating what in the modern language of advertising is called logos, billboard design, editing of multi-page publications, three-dimensional objects, corporate clothing or fashion illustration, souvenir products, branding, etc. Next, we will consider in detail each type of activity.

Creation of logos. The Berezil logo, which can be considered the main domestic theatrical symbol of the 1920s, was developed personally by Vadym Meller (fig. 1.1). In addition to the modern geometric approach in the decision of the sign in the model provided for a change of year, which performed then innovative function of fixing the period of the show. This design is of paramount value for researchers of the theatrical process in general and design in particular, because the assembly posters did not put the years and the date of printing can be set only on indirect grounds. The typographic reproduction of the sign differs slightly from the original sketch with a greater emphasis on the composition of the letters M (artistic) and O (association) (figs. 1.3, 1.4), as opposed to the dominance of B (Berezil) in the handmade version (fig. 1.1). Of course, the practical application of such a construction required close author's supervision, as sometimes the pragmatic scheme included numbers with serifs from fonts of a historical nature (fig. 3.1). In addition, the scope of use of the logo was quite wide: from souvenirs (fig. 1.2) to outdoor advertising (fig. 5). The use of the sign was stopped after May 1926 due to the reorganization of the Berezil into the Central Theater of the Republic with a permanent location in Kharkiv. To understand how avant-garde Meller's logo was, it is worth looking at theatrical stamps of the time, which were made by artists of not the last row: Mykhailo Zhuk, Solomon Mandel, Ohrim Sudomora (figs. 2.1–2.4.).

To Meller's constructivist work can be added his monogram on theatrical sketches, which uses the Latin letters W and M. In its construction it is much closer to the modern logo than to the established author's signature (figs. 3.1, 3.2). In our opinion, such a monogram could be created only by a person aware of European cultural life – not to mention the sign of the «Vienna Workshops» ("Wiener Werkstätte", 2020), founded in 1903 by Koloman Moser and Josef Hoffmann (fig. 3.3). And if you dive into the monograms of Viennese Art Nouveau artists, you can find something in common in the Berezil logo with a personal brand, such as Ernst Stöhr, which in no way indicates plagiarism, but, on the contrary, proves the artist's acquaintance with the best European.



Fig. 1.1. Vadym Meller. Sketch of the logo of AA «Berezil». 1923. Paper, gouache. Collection of the Museum of Theater, Music and Cinematography of Ukraine. Photo by the author.

Рис. 1.1. Вадим Меллер. Ескіз логотипу МО «Березиль». 1923 р. Папір, гуаш. Збірка Музею театрального, музичного та кіномистецтва України. Фото автора.

Fig. 1.2. Use of the logo on souvenirs. Berezil sign. 1926. Collection of the Museum of Theater, Music and Cinematography of Ukraine. Photo by the author.

Рис. 1.2. Використання логотипу на сувенірній продукції. Значок «Березолю». 1926 р. Збірка Музею театрального, музичного та кіномистецтва України. Фото автора.

Fig. 1.3, 1.4. Typographic reproduction of the logo. 1924, 1926. Collection of the Museum of Theater, Music and Cinematography of Ukraine. Photo by the author with the year-posters.

Рис. 1.3, 1.4. Типографічне відтворення логотипу. 1924, 1926 р. Фото автора з афіш відповідних років (збірка МТМКУ).



Fig. 2.1. Mykhailo Zhuk. The sign of the Maria Zankovetska Theater. Paper, woodcut. 1923. Collection of the Museum of Theater, Music and Cinematography of Ukraine. Photo by the author.

Рис. 2.1. Михайло Жук. Знак театру імені Марії Заньковецької. Папір, ксилографія. 1923 р. (МТМКУ). Фото автора.

Fig. 2.2. SM (Solomon Mandel?). Sign of the State Theater for Children. Kyiv. Photo by the author from the poster «Ho» in 1929. Collection of the Museum of Theater, Music and Cinematography of Ukraine.

Рис. 2.2. С. М. (Соломон Мандель?). Знак Державного театру для дітей. Київ. Фото автора з афіші «Хо» 1929 р. (МТМКУ).

Fig. 2.3. Unknown author. Donbass State Drama Theater (from Stalino region) «Donderzh drama». Season 1929 - 1930. Photo by the author from the poster «Give a party ticket». Collection of the Museum of Theater, Music and Cinematography of Ukraine.

Рис. 2.3. Невідомий автор. Державний драматичний театр Донбасу (зі Сталінщини) «Дондерждрама». Сезон 1929 – 1930 рр. Фото автора з афіші «Віддай партквиток». (МТМКУ).

Fig. 2.4. Ohrim Sudomora (?). Sign of the 1st Taras Shevchenko Drama Theater in the Ukrainian Soviet Republic. Photo by the author from the poster «Kolnarviz». 1924. Collection of the Museum of Theater, Music and Cinematography of Ukraine.

Рис. 2.4. Охрім Судомора (?). Знак 1-го драматичного театру імені Т. Шевченка Української радянської республіки. Фото автора з афіші «Колнарвиз». 1924 р. (МТМКУ).

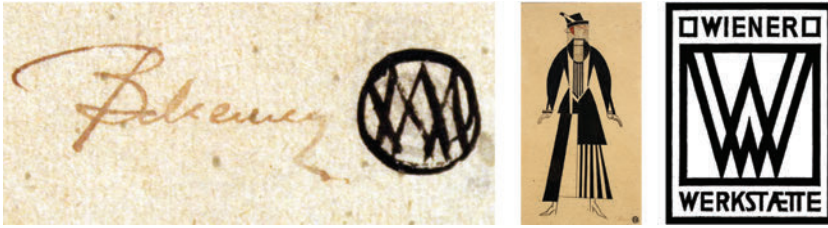


Fig. 3.1, 3.2. Vadym Meller's personal monogram on the sketch of the billionaire's daughter's costume for the play «Gas». 1923. Paper, gouache, pencil, ink. Collection of the Museum of Theater, Music and Cinematography of Ukraine.

Рис. 3.1, 3.2. Особиста монограма Вадима Меллера на ескізі костюму дочки мільярдера до вистави «Газ». 1923. Папір, гуаш, олівець, туш. Збірка МТМКУ.

Fig. 3.3. Sign «Vienna workshop» (Wiener Werkstätte). 1903.

Рис. 3.3. Знак «Віденських майстерень» (Wiener Werkstätte). 1903.

The design of the posters was an integral part of the whole action, the significance of which is difficult to overestimate today, as most of the performances have not preserved audio or video, so the posters and photos remain almost the only visual markers of events. Compounds on the technology of letterpress, constructivist on the principles of organization of sheet space, posters of «Berezil» were never signed by their authors. But the already mentioned description from the article in the magazine «Theater Barricades» gives us reason to consider them the result of the collective work of «workshop members» ("Maketna maisternia", 1924, p. 19). It is a significant fact that the posters not only performed the functions of outdoor advertising on billboards, but were also used in the design of performances just on stage during the action (figs. 4.1–4.2). This is a rather responsible element of the artistic design of the play and we have every reason to consider the authors of the posters of the participants of the workshop, as they are unlikely to resort to



Рис. 4.1. A scene from the play «Jimmy Giggins». 1926.

Рис. 4.1. Сцена з вистави «Джиммі Гіггінс». 1926.



Рис. 4.2. A scene from the play «Jimmy Giggins». 1923.

Рис. 4.2. Сцена з вистави «Джиммі Гіггінс». 1923.

the design of posters in someone else's performance. Exceptions may be individual posters performed by other authors. For example, in fig. 4.1. you can see a fragment of A. Finogenov's movie poster «Spartacus» (VUFKU, 1926) and parts of other unidentified posters.

Prints were printed mostly using one or two inks. Features of the workshop were: the use of large fonts (sometimes vertical or at an angle), diagonal dynamic composition, printing in different formats, articulation of space with rulers, playing with different pins and fonts, bold compositional treatment of free space. The last feature significantly distinguishes the innovative design of Berezil's advertising media from the eclectic overload of pre-revolutionary posters of Ukrainian private theaters. However, they are related by a penchant for the «poster-sensation» invented by Phineas Taylor Barnum, a mid-19th-century American circus producer whose goal was to «stop» the audience and drag it into the performance (Mark-schiess-van Trix & Nowak, 1986).

Conditionally, the posters can be divided into two large groups – the chronology of the «Kyiv» and «Kharkiv» period (before and after May 1926). There is no striking difference between them, however, the first (Kyiv) period demonstrates a tendency to diagonal dynamic solutions, no fear of free space, inconsistency with the basic color scheme «black and red» (fig. 5). Instead, it is possible to state a larger number of horizontal formats in the Kharkiv period, noticeable compositional tightness, the appearance of two additional colors – green and purple (fig. 6). As for the authorship of the posters, it is known that at the time of moving to Kharkiv with V. Meller there were only M. Simashkevych and V. Shklyajev, and E. Tovbin and D. Vlasjuk joined later.



Fig. 5. Posters of the Berezil Artistic Association of the Kyiv period. Until May 1926. Collection of MTMKU.

Рис. 5. Афіші МО «Березиль» київського періоду. До травня 1926 р. Збірка МТМКУ.



Fig. 6. Posters of the Kharkiv period. After May 1926. Collection of MTMKU.

Рис. 6. Афіші харківського періоду. Після травня 1926 р. Збірка МТМКУ.

Design of multi-page printing products. The workshop typed (in the terminology of the time – «mounted») the magazine «Theater Barricades», the cover of which is too similar to the logo of «Berezil» and gives grounds to talk about the practice of conscious corporate style and branding for the customer's design products, in this case, AA «Berezil». The wrapper was created by V. Meller's wife Nina Henke-Meller, who is the author of another cult setting of Ukrainian constructivism – the book «October Collection of Panfuturists» in 1923, published by the Kyiv publishing house Golfstrom, whose main artist is considered to be Henke-Meller (Library of Ukraine) (fig. 7.1).

Let's focus on the advertisements placed in the magazine: in the very fact of the presence of advertising, there is nothing fundamentally new because commercial blocks on the pages of periodicals have always been a desirable content since pre-revolutionary times. As for the technical and compositional presentation, similar typography can be found in many magazines of the time. And the very fact of the existence of a commercial component in the activities of a progressive art center is reminiscent, for example, of the execution of advertising orders by the Bauhaus printing house in Dessau. New was the proposal to advertise during the show (they really sounded from the stage). That is, we are talking about a certain technology when advertising texts are skillfully intertwined in action as an «integral part of the play» (fig. 7.3). There is evidence that interns have joined other advertising media: programs (fig. 7.2), booklets, etc., which are not inferior to the printing house of Bauhaus.

Workshops with three-dimensional models of theatrical performances. A certain body of scientific literature is devoted to their technical implementation, so we will not touch on it extensively in the format of this article. However, it should be noted that the findings in this area reached the world level. Conceptualism with font names of

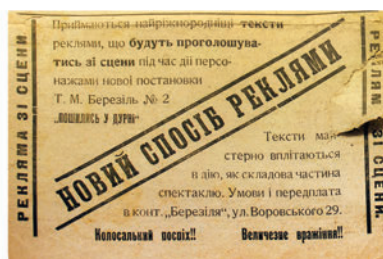


Fig. 7.1. Nina Genke-Meller. Cover of the magazine «Theater Barricades». 1923. Collection of MTMKU.

Рис. 7.1. Ніна Генке-Меллер. Обкладинка часопису «Барикади театру». 1923 р. Збірка МТМКУ.

Fig. 7.2. The program «Hello on Wave 477». Season 1928-1929. Collection of MTMKU.

Рис. 7.2. Програма «Алло на хвилі 477».Сезон 1928–1929 рр. Збірка МТМКУ.

Fig. 7.3. «A new way of advertising». Advertisement in the magazine «Theater Barricades». 1924. № 4/5. P. 12. Collection of MTMKU.

Рис. 7.3. «Новий спосіб реклами». Рекламне оголошення у часописі «Барикади театру». 1924. № 4/5. С. 12. Збірка МТМКУ.

mise-en-scène in the design of the play «Macbeth» («Abyss», «Castle Gate», «Field under the Birnam Grove», «Second Room», etc.), the role of «light» electrical design, specific movement of actors, use of cinema in performances («Jimmy Higgins») - all these findings were designed in conjunction with the director's workshops and realized in the depths of model workshop. From the modern point of view of content branding, it is interesting to use the same font in the design of the «Macbeth» stage, which we see on the theater logo, on the cover of the «Theater Barricades», some posters, etc. (figs. 8.1, 8.2).



Fig. 8.1. A scene from «Macbeth» with the use of font decorations. 1924. Collection of MTMKU.

Рис. 8.1. Сцена з «Макбета» із використанням шрифтових декорацій. 1924. Збірка МТМКУ.

Fig. 8.2. Modern reconstruction of «Macbeth» scenery. Exhibition «New Worlds. Kurbas». Mystetskyi Arsenal. 17.10-02.12.2018. Photo by the author.

Рис. 8.2. Сучасна реконструкція декорацій «Макбета». Виставка «Нові світи. Курбас». Мистецький Арсенал. 17.10–02.12.2018 р. Фото автора.



Fig. 9.1. V. Shklyajev, M. Simashkevych. Sketch of a scribe's suit. «Made a Fool» by M. Kropyvnytsky. AA «Berezil». 1924. Paper, application. 58x35 cm. Collection of MTMKU. Photo by the author.

Рис. 9.1. В. Шкляєв, М. Симашкевич. Ескіз костюма писаря. «Пошилися у дурні» за М. Кропивницьким. МО «Березиль». 1924. Папір, аплікація. 58x35 см. Збірка МТМКУ. Фото автора.

Fig. 9.2. M. Simashkevych. Sketch of the billionaire's daughter's costume in the play «Gas». AA «Berezil». 1923. Collection of MTMKU. Photo by the author.

Рис. 9.2. М. Симашкевич. Замальовка костюма дочки мільярдера у виставі «Газ». МО «Березиль». 1923. Збірка МТМКУ. Фото автора.

Fig. 9.3. V. Meller. Sketch of a soldier's suit. 1923. Collection of MTMKU.

Рис. 9.3. В. Меллер. Ескіз костюма вояки. 1923. Збірка МТМКУ.

Рис. 9.4. М. Симашкевич. Замальовка костюма. 1923. Збірка МТМКУ.

Fig. 9.4. M. Simashkevych. Sketch of a costume. 1923. Collection of MTMKU.

The design of the theatrical costume was based on the study of the specifics of actors' movements, sketches from nature with subsequent graphic geometric stylization, which brings these works closer to graphic design (figs. 9.1–9.4). In the technical execution of sketches, an application (Valentin Shklyajev) was often used (fig. 9.1), which is related to the use of patterns in the posters of Soviet avant-garde films. From the point of view of the modern advertising market it is possible to consider similar exercises as the forerunner of a fashion illustration or as development of the corporate clothes practiced in modern design bureaus.

Educational factor. Undoubtedly, the workshop was decisively influenced by Vadym Meller, an artist with a European education, who during his 4-year study in Munich (1908–1912) communicated with future members of the Bauhaus Paul Klee and Vasyl Kandinsky. It included Meller's students from the Kyiv Art Institute: Valentyn Shklyajev, Yevhen Tovbin, Maya Simashkevych, Dmytro Vlasjuk, Moisey Ashkinazi, Mirra Panadiadi, A. Protsenko, as their surnames are most often mentioned in literary sources (Yermakova, 2017, pp. 190-191). Names are also found on printed posters: I. Kryha, Z. Eremiyiva (figs. 10.1–10.2). It is not known for sure who designed the printed publications. It can be assumed that the students edited posters according to Meller's previous conditional compositional



Fig. 10.1. Poster of the 4th workshop (fragment). 1923. Collection of MTMKU.
Photo by the author.

Рис. 10.1. Афіша 4-ї майстерні (фрагмент). 1923 р. Збірка МТМКУ. Фото автора.

Fig. 10.2. Poster of the 4th workshop. 1923. Collection of MTMKU.
Photo by the author.

Рис. 10.2. Афіша 4-ї майстерні. 1923 р. Збірка МТМКУ. Фото автора.

sketch because it is unlikely that such a busy teacher had time to select small iron letters in the assembly font compositions.

Based on the analysis of visual materials, it can be assumed that a student of an art school in the 1920s becomes a full participant in the creative and production process. The names of the workshop members appear on the posters, first as «laboratory technicians», «interns» or assistants (fig. 10.1), and then as independent artists. The bottega model is followed when the teacher and students work side by side, which is an important experience for a modern pedagogical system, which sometimes sins against purely theoretical teaching, when the teacher «reads» the material, communicates remotely, but cannot demonstrate skills that require students (fig. 11.1). By no means underestimating the value of the theory, we note that Meller (fig. 11.2), no doubt, could visualize theoretical lectures at the highest practical level, having behind him Munich education, regular visits to Europe during 1905–1917 and joint exhibitions with the best masters of the European avant-garde in world art capitals (Paris, New York).

We can attest to the similarity of the practical experience of Ukrainian creative youth in Meller's studio with the Bauhaus educational system, where a lot of time was spent on industrial exercises in metalworking, textiles, ceramics, and printing experiments. As for the latter, model workshop students also participated in the formation of the assembly form, and in the process of letterpress. Such a practice was characteristic of Laszlo Moholy-Nagy in the Bauhaus. In fairness, we note the lack of photography in the practice of model workshop, which distinguishes it from both periods of the Bauhaus. However, in «Berezil» V. Vasyloko was conditionally considered to be a full-time photographer.



Fig. 11.1. Group photo. Vadym Meller with artists and stage workers of the Berezil Art Association.

Рис. 11.1. Групове фото. Вадим Меллер з художниками і працівниками сцени Мистецького об'єднання «Березіль».

Fig. 11.2. Vadym Meller.

Рис. 11.2. Вадим Меллер.

Fig. 11.3. Maya Simashkevych.

Рис. 11.3. Майя Симашкевич.

Fig. 11.4. Valentyn Shklyajev.

Рис. 11.4. Валентин Шкляєв.

How avant-garde was Meller's educational method? An example of the revolution in art education is Ivan Vrona's work at the Kyiv Art Institute, but he became rector in 1924, so Meller began his practical work a year earlier at the same institution, which was twice reorganized (in 1923 – from the Ukrainian Academy of Arts in the

Institute of Plastic Arts; in 1924 – as a result of the merger of the latter with the Ukrainian Institute of Architecture). And the famous Fortech was founded by Vrona even later – in 1929 (Kovalchuk, 2003; 2010). Another powerful player and customer on the design front – VUFKU – did not create such a formation – as Meller – but also turned to the services of students of the Art Institute in creating film posters. Therefore, we can assume that the direct counterpart of Meller's practices is abroad: the acquisition of knowledge directly through practical activities (printing posters, building construction, tailoring) corresponded to the activities of printing, woodworking, metalworking, ceramic and textile workshops Bauhaus.

The youth of the Berezil Theater (the cast was mostly under the age of 30) also caused the least surprise among the bourgeois audience of Kharkiv, Kyiv, and Odessa with their creative fanaticism and conscious refusal to give birth to children, just as Bauhaus students shocked Weimar and Dessau Cup burghers by bathing naked, smoking cigarettes, short hairstyles for girls, and long hair for boys.

Thus, in Meller's studio a special system of art education was formed, the powerful «three whales» of which were:

- 1) a charismatic leader who, however, does not put pressure on students;
- 2) practical scope related to the implementation of innovative ideas, strengthened by a team of technical staff;
- 3) gifted young people, ready to give up their own comfort for the sake of creative perspective.

Such a model has proved its ability and prospects, because in a few years of practice, the workshop members have already carried out works that have become, if not a gold fund, then notable events in Ukrainian art and design.

The subsequent fate of the workshop members turned out differently. The brightest representatives in scenography were the Shklyajev-Simashkevych couple. Their names appear on both costume sketches and posters as self-designers. Maya (Militsa) Symashkevych (fig. 11.3) designed the following performances: M. Kropyvnytskyi «Made a Fool»; «For two hares» by M. Starytskyi; «Commune in the steppes» by M. Kulish, «Sava Chalyi» by I. Karpenko-Karyi. After graduation, she remained to work in the theater. Simashkevych is the only female surname that can be found on the posters of that period in the sections «artist» or «designer». The educational foundation, laid in collaboration with Meller, allows her to be realized both in theater and cinema. From 1929 to 1935, the artist designed about 20 feature films and 10 documentaries at the Odessa Film Studio, as well as performances at the Odessa Opera House and the Theater of the Revolution. After returning to Kyiv, she made films «Natalka Poltavka», «Rich Bride», «Riders», «Kuban», «May Night» and others. After the Second World War, she joined

more than 20 performances at the Ivano-Frankivsk Regional Drama Theater (Bondarenko, 2018).

Valentyn Shklyajev (fig. 11.4), a husband of M. Simashkevych, collaborated with children's and Jewish theaters, designed productions of plays «Ho», «Black Ghetto», «Schleck», as stated on the posters, the development of which he joined. (figs. 12.1–12.3). It is noticeable that these sheets bear certain signs of constructivism, which was practiced in the «model workshop». Later, Shklyajev worked for some time in Leningrad, where, according to inaccurate data, he died during the blockade in 1942.



Fig. 12. 1. Poster for the play «Ho». Artist V. Shklyajev. 1929. Collection of MTMKU.

Рис. 12. 1. Афіша вистави «Хо». Художник В. Шкляєв. 1929 р. Збірка МТМКУ.

Fig. 12.2. Poster for the play «Black ghetto». Art design V. Shklyajev and D. Crein. 1928-29. Collection of MTMKU.

Рис. 12.2. Афіша вистави «Чорне гетто». Художнє оформлення В. Шкляєва і Д. Крейна. Сезон 1928-29 рр. Збірка МТМКУ.



Fig. 12.3. Poster for the play «Schleck». Design V. Shklyajev. End of 1920s. Collection of MTMKU.

Рис. 12.3. Афіша вистави «Шлек». Оформлення В. Шкляєва. Кінець 1920-х рр. Збірка МТМКУ.

The activity of Moses Ashkinazi was noticeable, who as a part of the workshop created sketches of costumes of Jimmy (actor J. Girnyak) and the daughter of a billionaire (actress V. Chistyakova) in the performance of Berezhil Theater «Jimmy Higgins» by E. Sinclair. Participation in the design of the Ukrainian pavilion at the World Press Exhibition in Cologne in 1928 (Ashkinazi) can be included in the artist's design work. The fate of the other participants in the workshop requires further research.

Scientific novelty and practical significance of the research

4 The scientific novelty is an attempt to consider the origins of the creative method and European influences on the activities of the model workshop. An attempt was made to evaluate the activities of the workshop participants in terms of modern advertising and design practice, especially in the field of printed products. This view allows us to state the stable relationship of the domestic culture of graphic design with the then European trends and, at the same time, distinguishes national specifics in the visual work of pioneering designers.

Prospects for further research on the topic involve movement in several directions. The first, practical, is the reconstruction of lost posters, which have been preserved exclusively in photographs from the exposition of the V. Vasylo Museum or in other stage photographs. This can be implemented as a project with the involvement of students of «graphic design» and the application of modern knowledge and skills acquired in classes in computer science.

The second direction is studying the further fate of the workshop participants, their influence on Ukrainian design. It is important to study the analogs of the creation of similar design bureaus, including «Atelier Levenstein» in Russia, which worked in the 1920s. It is also necessary to carefully study the connection of the participants of the workshop with the Kyiv Art Institute, to track their achievements in the context of other disciplines.

Conclusions **5**

Thus, the Berezil model workshop under the leadership of Vadym Meller is a unique experiment of the design system, the activity of which is marked, on the one hand, by the contribution to the development of various branches of design, on the other, is an example of a comprehensive approach to education in design. In the field of graphic design, it performed all the usual work for the modern advertising market. Besides, it can be considered the legislator of fashion of that time layout of theatrical posters, because its achievements influenced the formation of artistic and constructive design in remote parts of Ukraine. In the field of theatrical art, the workshop has developed an innovative approach to scenography and created iconic examples of stage design. The educational system proposed by V. Meller proved its ability and prolonged effectiveness, as it was based on pedagogical principles similar to those used in the leading design schools of contemporary Europe – Bauhaus, De Stijl, Vkhutemas, etc.

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