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### POST-MODERN TRENDS IN THE GRAPHIC ART OF TRANSCARPATHIA IN THE 1980S AND 1990S

**Ivan Nebesnyk,**

<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3931-5221>

PhD in Art Study,  
Transcarpathian Academy of Arts,  
Uzhhorod, Ukraine  
[nebesnyk@gmail.com](mailto:nebesnyk@gmail.com)

**Yevhen Antonovych,**

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5721-4489>

PhD in Pedagogical Sciences, Professor,  
State University of Infrastructure  
and Technologies,  
Kyiv, Ukraine  
[yevhen.antonovych@gmail.com](mailto:yevhen.antonovych@gmail.com)

### ПОСТМОДЕРНІ ТЕНДЕНЦІЇ В ГРАФІЧНОМУ МИСТЕЦТВІ ЗАКАРПАТТЯ 1980–1990-Х РР.

**Іван Небесник,**

<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3931-5221>

кандидат мистецтвознавства,  
Закарпатська академія мистецтв,  
Ужгород, Україна  
[nebesnyk@gmail.com](mailto:nebesnyk@gmail.com)

**Євген Антонович,**

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5721-4489>

кандидат педагогічних наук, професор,  
Державний університет  
інфраструктури та технологій,  
Київ, Україна  
[yevhen.antonovych@gmail.com](mailto:yevhen.antonovych@gmail.com)

## Abstract

**Objective.** This study aims to provide a comprehensive characterization of post-modern features in the works of Transcarpathian artists active in the 1980s and 1990s. It examines the transformation of graphic art in the region under the influence of socio-political changes, the opening of borders, and the integration of international artistic trends into the local cultural environment. Special attention is given to the *Poptrans* art group, which introduced innovative approaches in graphic design and self-publishing. **Research Methods.** The study employs historical, comparative, and stylistic analysis to explore the evolution of Transcarpathian graphic art in the late 20th century. Archival research, case studies of key artists, and an examination of self-pub-

## Анотація

**Мета цієї статті** полягає в дослідженні постмодерних рис у графічному мистецтві Закарпаття 1980–1990-х рр., визначенні впливів зовнішніх і внутрішніх чинників на формування нових художніх стратегій та проведення аналізу діяльності арт-групи «Поптранс» у контексті загальноукраїнського мистецького процесу. **Методи дослідження.** У дослідженні застосовано історико-культурний аналіз, компаративний метод, структурно-стилістичний аналіз графічних творів, контекстуальний метод для виявлення взаємозв'язків між закарпатською графікою та загальносвітовими художніми процесами. **Наукова новизна.** Авторами вперше здійснено комплексне дослідження постмодерністських проявів у закарпатській

lished materials provide insight into the artistic strategies used by the *Poptrans* group. The methodology also includes an analysis of visual language, focusing on techniques such as photomontage, stencil art, and replication methods. Scientific Novelty. The research offers the first systematic study of postmodern influences on Transcarpathian graphic art and self-publishing practices. It highlights the role of the *Poptrans* art group in redefining the boundaries of graphic design by integrating elements of American pop art, Soviet conceptualism, and experimental typography. The study also emphasizes the importance of text as a visual component in their works, combining typeface composition with handwritten elements. **Conclusions.** The *Poptrans* group significantly contributed to the modernization of Transcarpathian graphic art by developing new forms of artistic expression. Their experimental approach, incorporating postmodern aesthetics and alternative printing techniques, influenced the broader artistic landscape of the region. The study concludes that the group's innovative use of self-publishing, visual quotations, and compilation methods played a crucial role in shaping contemporary graphic design practices in Ukraine.

**Keywords:**

postmodern aesthetics, graphic art of Transcarpathia, self-publishing, graphic design, *Poptrans* art group, Vadym Kharabaruk's creative work.

графіці 1980–1990-х рр., проаналізовано вплив зовнішніх факторів на оновлення стилістики, охарактеризовано внесок арт-групи «Поптранс» у трансформацію візуальної культури регіону, зокрема через використання методів фотоколажу, трафарету, поліграфічного дизайну та текстових елементів. **Висновки.** У 1980–1990-х рр. модернізація закарпатської графіки відбувалася під впливом соціокультурних змін, відкриття кордонів і переосмислення радянської мистецької спадщини. Діяльність арт-групи «Поптранс» стала важливим етапом у розвитку графічного мистецтва Закарпаття, запропонувавши нові технічні та концептуальні підходи. Вплив американського поп-арту, радянського концептуалізму та постмодернізму сприяв використанню експериментальних форм, таких як кіно-естетика «нуар», кітч, цитування та стилізація. Самвидав став важливою формою творчого висловлення, а поєднання тексту і графіки заклало основу нових форм художнього самовираження.

**Ключові слова:**

естетика постмодернізму, графічне мистецтво Закарпаття, самвидав, графічний дизайн, арт-група «Поптранс», творчість Вадима Харабарука.

## Introduction

Post-modernism is a cultural, social, and intellectual phenomenon that emerged as a reaction to modernist ideas that dominated the early 20th century. Its appearance was a consequence of the loss of faith in absolute truth, universal values and grand narratives, therefore post-modernism is characterized by the blurring of boundaries between high and low culture, irony, genre and style pluralism. The period of the 1980s-1990s is the time of the active phase of post-modernism, which clearly affected the field of visual art. It is characterized by a mixture of styles, technologies, a synthesis of world-views, a reinterpretation of traditional forms. In the graphic arts, this was manifested in the use of various media effects, including multimedia technologies and computer graphics. This allowed artists to approach creativity experimentally, which could not but affect the formation of artistic images that bore the imprint of mo-

dernity and innovation, and therefore caused a strong emotional reaction in the audience.

In post-modern graphic design, much attention was paid to stylistic innovations, often coloured by a deliberately eclectic approach. We will give examples of periodicals that reflected post-modern aesthetics, among which we should note the magazine "Face", on which the designer Neville Brody worked, the works of David Carson, the magazine "Emigre" (Heller & Chwast, 2000, p. 233). At this time, a large number of designers and artists work independently, for the needs of local audiences, without the involvement of large publishers and galleries, using available resources and tools. Therefore, post-modernism and the culture of self-publishing, which was developed in the territory of the Soviet Union, have much in common in the context of graphic arts, since both phenomena reflect the need for greater freedom of expression and independence from traditional channels of distribution and control.

The purpose of the study is to analyze the impact of postmodern trends on the work of graphic artists of Transcarpathia in the period from 1980 to 1990. Special attention is paid to the role of the *Poptrans* art group in spreading postmodern ideas and their influence on the art of Transcarpathia. In particular, the interest of artists in graphic art and graphic design is explored, as well as their contribution to the design of printing products in the region. It is important to investigate the contribution of the art group to the development of stylistic and technical aspects of Transcarpathian graphics. The research is also aimed at studying the creative methods and the experimental nature of artists' approaches, to reveal the peculiarities of their visual language. In addition, an important aspect is the approach to typography and layout in the art group's products.

**The  
methodology  
and analysis  
of sources**

**2**

This study employs an interdisciplinary methodology that combines historical, analytical, and comparative approaches to examine the influence of postmodernist trends on the graphic arts and design of Transcarpathia during the 1980s and 1990s. The research methodology is based on the analysis of primary and secondary sources, including archival materials, publications, and critical reviews, as well as the study of original artworks and self-published materials created by the *Poptrans* art group.

A significant component of the research is the comparative analysis of global postmodernist movements and their impact on Ukrainian graphic arts. This includes an examination of Western postmodern design trends as exemplified by Neville Brody's work for *Face* magazine, David Carson's experimental typography, and the aesthetic contributions of *Emigre* magazine (Heller & Chwast, 2000). The study draws parallels between these international influences and the self-publishing culture that developed in the late

Soviet period, particularly in Transcarpathia, as a means of circumventing ideological constraints.

The research relies on the works of key international and Ukrainian scholars in the field of graphic design and postmodern aesthetics. Among the most influential Western researchers is Steven Heller, whose books *Graphic Style: From Victorian to Digital* (co-authored with Seymour Chwast) (Heller & Chwast, 2000) and *Icons of Graphic Design* (co-authored with Mirko Ilić) (Heller & Ilić, 2001) provide an extensive analysis of the evolution of graphic design styles, including postmodern influences. *Meggs' History of Graphic Design* (Meggs & Purvis, 2006) offers a broad chronological perspective, placing postmodernist graphic design in a wider historical and cultural context.

Aubrey Powell's (2017) *Vinyl. Album. Cover. Art: The Complete Hipgnosis Catalogue* is another key source, highlighting how postmodern aesthetics were introduced into mainstream visual culture through album cover designs. This study examines how similar stylistic approaches were adapted by Transcarpathian artists, particularly in self-published magazines and printed materials.

Ukrainian researchers have also made substantial contributions to the understanding of postmodernist influences in Ukrainian graphic design. Vasyl Kosiv's (2019) monograph *Ukrainian Identity in Graphic Design 1945-1989* explores the interplay between national identity and visual culture, touching upon postmodern influences in Soviet Ukrainian graphics.

Olga Lahutenko's (2007, 2011) works *Ukrainian Graphics of the 20th Century* and *Graphein. Graphics. Essays on the History of Ukrainian Graphics of the 20th Century* provide valuable insights into the regional specifics of Ukrainian graphic arts, including those in Transcarpathia.

Additionally, the study incorporates research by Roman Yatsiv (1992), which examines the development of Lviv's graphic art scene as a comparative case for understanding Transcarpathian graphics. Hlib Vysheslavskyi's studies (2005, 2006, 2020) on Ukrainian experimental art and postmodern worldviews provide essential context for analyzing the work of Transcarpathian artists such as P. Bedzir, P. Kovach, and V. Kharabaruk. The research also takes into account the work of Orest Holubets (2022), particularly his book *Ukrainian Art of the 20th Century*, which provides a broader framework for situating Ukrainian postmodernist art within global artistic trends.

By synthesizing these sources, this study reconstructs the artistic environment of Transcarpathia in the 1980s and 1990s, identifying the key stylistic, technical, and ideological transformations that shaped the region's graphic arts. The methodological approach allows for an in-depth exploration of the role of self-publishing and independent artistic initiatives in fostering postmodern aesthetics in Ukrainian graphic design.

Results  
of the  
research

3

*The creativity of Transcarpathian artists in the 1980s and 1990s through the prism of post-modern aesthetics*

The spread of post-modernism to local art schools in the 1980s and 1990s was a rather complex and lengthy process. Ukraine in the specified period was in an uncertain situation, the fine arts in cities with cultural traditions, such as Kyiv, Kharkiv, Lviv, Odesa, and Uzhhorod, received limited impulses for reforms aimed at numerically insignificant groups of artists. At the turn of the 1980s and 1990s, Ukrainian artists were just beginning to get acquainted with modern world art trends. The manifestation of this culture in the post-Soviet territories, albeit belatedly, still reflected world processes, acquiring a somewhat uneven character. Changes mainly occurred due to the generation of graduates of art schools, who, albeit superficially, were oriented towards the latest Western approaches. The art critic O. Holubets (2022) commented on the dynamics of these processes: «The newest spheres of form creation and artistic expression, capable of crossing not only the boundaries of generally accepted aesthetic ideas, but also reaching outright anti-aesthetics, remain almost unknown to the general public» (p. 7).

The long gap with European art was an obstacle for Ukrainian critics to describe the mentioned processes objectively. That is why the phenomenon, to which members of the Uzhhorod art group *Poptrans* joined, was ignored by professional circles as insignificant, and in fact – as incomprehensible. Among the rare exceptions are individual articles by the critic and artist H. Vysheslavskiy, as well as his active work in the magazine *Terra incognita*, dedicated to contemporary art.

In 1988, a joint exhibition of the *Left Eye* («Ліве око») formation took place in the Uzhhorod architectural office. The first members of the association were V. Kharabaruk, I. Molnar, R. Vaci and S. Biba. At the beginning of his creative career, art group *Left Eye* did not present a defined concept, but all participants saw prospects in creating something non-deterministic, even with chaotic structuring in aesthetics and views. The methods of artistic association were experimental in nature, the artistic vision was not based on the traditional forms of the Ukrainian version of modernism. Echoes of the Soviet non-conformism of the 1980s and the Italian trance avant-garde sounded in the means of *Left Eye*. In 1992, A. Stegura (born in 1969), a graduate of the Uzhhorod School of Applied Arts in 1988, joined the *Left Eye*; the group existed in this composition until 1994. The last action of the association was the exhibition “P.S.”, which became, in a way, summing up the results and, in addition to the members of the group, gathered several colleagues around the actions.

Later, in 1996, based on the ideas of *Left Eye*, a new group – *Poptrans* – was formed. The views of the artistic association were

formed on the basis of post-modern trends, which found their supporters among the youth and in the territories of the former Soviet republics. Even at the end of the 1970s, aesthetic systems similar in content were developed by the direction of social art, which was formed in Moscow from the ideas of pop art and conceptualism with a clear criticism of the Soviet world-view.

From the interview with A. Stegura and V. Kharabaruk, we learned about the meaning of the name *Poptrans*, which is an abbreviation of the phrase “popular transformation”. In other words, there are two components in the name: “pop” – as an emphasis on the connection with recognizable visual and symbolic signs in mass culture, and “trance” – a connection with the collective unconscious, using Jungian terminology. The symbols in the work of the artists reflected not only the aesthetic view of the displayed object, but were also enriched by the layering of social subtexts, which directed the activity of the artistic association to an intellectual direction. When it comes to the graphic heritage of the group, a number of works that appeared in richly illustrated art self-published books, designed by the members of the art group, immediately appear here.

The main vector of the *Poptrans* group was the visual arts, where painting, installation and performance took a prominent place, however, their work was represented by a number of printed publications, including the magazines: “Ya-1” («Я-1») (1989, 1996, 1998), the artistic diary “Bortovyk” (1998 – 2000), the conceptual catalog “Forest Find” (1997), the “Gift” project (2000), a collection of poems in 1998, released for the anniversary of the Transcarpathian Regional Art Museum named after J. Bokshay, which was published without a title, the magazine-collage “36 parts of the body” (1999), the postcard project “Our candidate-2000” (1998).

The authors of these editions could be both a whole group at the same time and individual artists, but the authorship was indicated exclusively by the group. Circulation was carried out by risograph printing, and if, for example, some issues of “Ya-1” were produced in an exclusive edition of 10 copies, then products such as “Gift” or “36 parts of the body” were produced in an edition of about 100 copies. In general, the content of these editions received a rather wide range: from author’s texts-visions, poems – to texts that generally created a variegated, emphatically eclectic, atmosphere both in the visual part and in the semantic part. For the most part, the visual materials were made using the collage technique, ink, or ballpoint pen. Printed products necessarily contained elements of paraphernalia – the logos of the association *Poptrans* (author V. Kharabaruk) and the printing mark “Ya-1 product” (author A. Stegura). Publication formats were limited to two options: A4 and A5, postcards were printed on a standard format (10x15 cm). The post-modern rejection of the “fundamentals” was manifested here through disregard for the laws

of layout and typography, deliberate violation of the modular grid, free layout of illustrations, visual overload and layering. One of the targeted steps, for the sake of stylistic expressiveness, was the use of handwritten handwriting instead of typeface, this method was used in three issues of "Ya-1".

In the brochure "Gift" (2000) (by A. Stegura), the entire illustrative part is the logos of famous world brands, and the text is excerpts from the uncredited source (as we read – fragments that described nature), together such a compilative approach formed a whole canvas of a pictographic-textual narrative composed exclusively of vocations. It would seem that this technique should break the fundamental principle of style, in which the author builds a form-creating law, but, obviously, the artists of *Poptrans* single out another principle for themselves, which leads to aesthetic unity not through stylistic laws, but through a structure formed by design.

It should be noted that in the first years of the existence of the art group, the activities of the art group were not clear even to professionals who were accustomed to the "truth" of the criteria formed during at least the last half century, and therefore under the influence of Soviet socialist realist criticism. In our opinion, it was this factor that caused a certain disorder in the formation of a modern critical view.

Art critic H. Vysheslavskyi was one of the first Ukrainian critics who drew attention to the phenomenon of *Poptrans* as valuable and self-sufficient. As the editor of the magazine "Terra incognita", he examined the manifestations of postmodernism, in particular in the work of Transcarpathian artists. The cover of the magazine "Ya-1" No. 2 (1996) is a collage of rectangles that, in macro magnification, frame photographs of eyes. The authorship of the work belongs to V. Kharabaruk. Despite the variability of scaling, the same type of images lose their independent meaning and turn into a pulsating texture, this technique created a hypnotic effect. Similar to this example, the artists of the art group define the quintessence of their own view, which borrows from reality and transforms the borrowed into new meanings or forms.

The brochure "Forest find" (1997) is a text and graphic supplement to the installation by Robert Saller (born 1967), a graduate of the Uzhhorod School of Applied Arts in 1987. Later, in 1998, the publication was supplemented with a poster. The citation of this brochure consists in the stylization of a Soviet book (R. Saller adapted the decorative title font to the shape of a branch, here also used the drawing of the font from the family of antiques and the dark brown gamut, the sections are decorated with black and white illustrations). The textual narrative was created in co-authorship with M. Onysko and presented in the form of a story for youth, in the spirit of Soviet literature of the 1950s and 1960s. The approach was aimed at playing a game of stereotypes with the reader, finding ar-



tistic value in what was recently perceived exclusively in the context of political propaganda.

Marsel Onysko (born 1977), the youngest member of the *Poptrans* group, creates the composition "Cyberwinter" (2000) for one of the issues of "Ya-1". Computer graphics and photo reproduction are combined here in the collage technique. Technically, this idea is embodied in two images that are foreign in style. In a humorous tone, M. Onysko makes an associative connection with the theme of the global catastrophe – "nuclear winter". And so, here we again observe an example of detached ironic view, which characterizes the ideas of post-modernism along with all technological and plastic consequences.

In the development of the self-published "Ya-1" No. 3 (1997), A. Stegura's graphics combine the imagery of films in the "noir" style with a kitsch image of an antique motif. The combination of a simple silhouette and scrupulous technique in the figure of a "man with a horse" is exquisite. In general, R. Magritte's absurdist mood is present in the illustration. A male figure with a toy is obviously a reference to a well-known symbol in the history of art – the "da-da" rocking horse, which represented the style of Dadaism. The illustration opposite depicts a centaur on which a cupid is feebly trying to climb. The artist does not find the need for formative unification of unfolding scenes, for this he uses references as an important tool of the post-modern idea.

#### *Post-modern trends in the work of Vadym Kharabaruk*

Vadym Kharabaruk (born 1966) became an influential artist among the representatives of the young generation of the 1990s, primarily his merit lies in the creation of stylistic frameworks to which all colleagues of the *Poptrans* art association appealed to one degree or another. But until the moment of creative self-awareness, the artist conducted a search that interests us because of the innovative approach, which was also reflected in graphic works.

While still studying at the Uzhhorod School of Applied Arts (1981 – 1985), the artist chose the direction of painting. His style changed during the 1980s – the first half of the 1990s, and with the founding of the creative association *Poptrans* the artist found his own style, where conceptual issues took an important place.

When analyzing the creative path of the artist, the popularization of the method becomes obvious, which is certainly a branch of the pop art style, which found supporters in Ukraine at the turn of the 1980s and 1990s. The works of V. Kharabaruk of the early 1990s are eclectic, reproducing intellectual the search of the author, speaking metaphorically, with a continuous visual stream. Here, the influence of European graphic art of the 1980s is noticeable, the use of means of the "new wave" direction is noticeable, according to the definition of the famous design historian S. Heller, this direction was an offshoot of the latest international style – post-modernism. The critic



draws attention to such features of style as flatness, expressiveness, eclecticism and unorthodox use of the experience of modernists (Heller & Chwast, 2000, p. 220–233).

V. Kharabaruk's graphic works of this period reflect not only the artist's stylistic preferences, but also outline the spectrum of his interests in world culture. The artist regularly turned to graphic art, created several aesthetically perfect series. In his early searches, he combined ink, watercolour, gouache and coloured pencils, experimenting with both visual structures and the field of meaning. One of the first graphic works exhibited at local exhibitions was "White Flag" (1992). In the central image of a tragic figure, the artist appeals to the style of medieval engraving. Drooping dramatically, the draped figure, reminiscent of an angel or monk, assumes a pose of sorrow, an image that evokes associations with A. Dürer's woodcuts, especially the Apocalypse series. The white flag rising above the map of Europe indicates the need to stop traffic, take a retreat. In the background, a Minotaur-like chimera is depicted in warlike readiness. With some naivety, but emotionally, V. Kharabaruk conveys the anxious state caused by the chaotic informational politicized era that was just beginning its course on the terrains of Europe. This visionary image – a prayer for the future, in its aspiration, does not look unreasonable. In general, the combination of motley elements of the composition forms a scheme that acts as a visual stimulus that attracts the viewer to his game. Despite the gloomy mood, the author's penchant for planar ornamentation in the means is noticeable.

In the composition "Skull and Knife" (1992), we notice an attempt to attract the latest symbolism. The image of the skull was transformed into a symbol of modern visual culture, emphatically grotesque, even animated. Here, as in other works of the series, features of the "new wave" direction can be traced. This observation is confirmed by the characteristic chaotic nature of compositional elements, expressive, and at the same time clearly outlined, decorative style. The basis of each work is gray and black, which act as a connecting background for uneven, intense colour and tonal accents. V. Kharabaruk combined atypical techniques – strokes with ink formed broken contours that supported the rhythm and dynamism of the composition, the emotionality of the work was enhanced by accented strokes of coloured pencil and whitewash on the top layer. Over time, V. Kharabaruk consciously turns to the stylistic techniques of pop art, where the main tool is collage or, more precisely, the use of reproduction (here the connection with the idea of the "ready made" method is noticeable). Despite the possibility of the tonal range of the graphite pencil, the author insists on monotonous flatness. As for images, the recognizability of the symbol or image is a prerequisite here. Having inherited the method of A. Warhol, the artist is looking for new meanings, the reproduc-

tions are experiencing a stage of aesthetic renewal in the author's treatment and a new-found context.

The first graphic work using the updated method was "Our Candidate" (1998), made with a ballpoint pen – a paraphrase of the poster portrait of Bela Lugosi. The artist satirized the idea of political propaganda by combining the "sinister" image of a movie hero with an inscription, as if presenting the depicted person during a political campaign. The works of Ukrainian artists of the 1990s were interwoven with similar sentiments, among which the most spectacular were the works of A. Savadov, S. Bratkov, V. Tsagolov, and others. These influences did not extend to graphic art, with a minor exception – the Kharkiv graphic artist P. Makov worked in the contemporary field. Therefore, this fact is another argument that confirms the value of the graphic works of V. Kharabaruk and his colleagues.

The series of portraits "Doubling" (2009), part of which was exhibited in the Kyiv gallery "Karas", where the author combined on each sheet a pair of portraits, randomly selected images of people from different Among the heroes are famous actors or figures from the world of politics or those who were selected from the home photo archive. The artist seems to contrast female images with male ones, combining different psychological types, manoeuvring in a mood where the "marginal" often borders on the "high".

Interpreting and summarizing the methods of the pop art movement, the artist found new meanings, where the reproductions undergo a stage of aesthetic renewal in the author's treatment and newly found context. In the basis of the technique, the artist used the stencil method, transferring the contours of the photos onto a cardboard matrix, and then onto paper, where he finally filled in the contour drawing with a graphite pencil. The graphic adds dynamism to the texture by using horizontal eraser strokes on top of the graphite pattern, a seemingly simple way to create the impression of flickering on the screen. This became one of the unifying points of portraits "from the monitor".

In this approach, we observe self-irony, because the graphite pencil technique, due to its clarity, does not require the use of a stencil, the artist once again confirms the integrity of his own stylistic tools. Despite the limited technical possibilities of the stencil technique, V. Kharabaruk achieves diversity in the arsenal of textural, linear and tonal techniques. The graph monitored the balance of tonal masses, adjusted the contours and rhythm of filling the spots, resorted to replacing the positive image with an inverse one, all for the sake of emotional and figurative expressiveness. Consequently, a complete series with a distinct stylistic character was created, which significantly diversified the ways of visual expression of Transcarpathian graphics in the 1990s and early 2000s.

Therefore, we do not consider the topic of V. Kharabaruk's work to be closed, because the artist deserves careful research, primarily due to his influence on Transcarpathian fine art, design and other modern forms of visual art. However, we can characterize his graphic legacy as an important transition from a modernist view in the art of Transcarpathia to a post-modern one.

**Scientific  
novelty and  
practical  
significance  
of the  
research**

**4** The scientific novelty of this research lies in its comprehensive analysis of the influence of postmodernist trends on the graphic art of Transcarpathia in the 1980s and 1990s. While postmodernism as an artistic and cultural phenomenon has been widely studied in Western art criticism, its impact on Ukrainian graphic design and self-publishing remains an underexplored subject. This study fills this gap by focusing on the work of the *Poptrans* art group and its role in introducing postmodern aesthetics into the regional art scene. The research highlights how *Poptrans* artists integrated elements of pop art, conceptualism, and experimental typography into their works, establishing a unique visual language that reflected both global artistic influences and the socio-political transformations in Ukraine.

A key aspect of the research's novelty is its examination of the *Poptrans* group's use of self-publishing as an artistic medium. Unlike traditional Ukrainian graphic design of the time, which was often constrained by Soviet ideological norms, *Poptrans* developed an independent approach that aligned with international postmodernist tendencies. This study provides an in-depth exploration of their stylistic methods, including the use of collage, typographic experimentation, and reinterpretation of Soviet-era visual culture. By analyzing these techniques, the research contributes to a broader understanding of how Ukrainian artists engaged with global postmodernist trends while maintaining a distinct regional identity.

The practical significance of the research lies in its relevance to contemporary graphic design studies and art education. The findings can serve as a valuable resource for scholars, designers, and educators studying the development of Ukrainian graphic art. By documenting the creative practices of *Poptrans* and other independent artists, this research provides insights into alternative design methodologies that challenge conventional norms. It also offers a historical perspective on the role of self-publishing and grassroots artistic movements in shaping visual culture, which can inform current discussions on independent and experimental design practices.

Furthermore, the study contributes to the broader discourse on the evolution of Ukrainian art in the post-Soviet era, demonstrating how regional artistic movements interacted with global stylistic developments. The documented examples of experimental design approaches, such as the interplay between text and image, the deliberate disruption of typographic conventions, and the reinterpretation

tion of historical symbols, offer practical insights for contemporary graphic designers interested in alternative visual narratives.

In summary, this research provides a fresh perspective on post-modern influences in Ukrainian graphic design, emphasizing the importance of self-publishing and independent artistic initiatives. Its findings are not only of historical significance but also offer practical applications for designers, educators, and researchers exploring experimental approaches in contemporary visual culture.

## Conclusions **5**

A small group that reflected post-modern views in Uzhhorod (Transcarpathia, Ukraine), proposed in the 1990s an approach that was not legitimized in Ukrainian art, which consisted in the application of poly-graphic form as an artistic product. In general, the modernization of the aesthetic levers of Transcarpathian graphics in the analyzed period was influenced by the following factors: liberation of artistic culture from ideological restrictions; the opening of the borders of neighboring states, as a result – the expansion of the spectrum of ideas, stylistic and technical means; an all-Ukrainian trend as an attempt to find new aesthetic levers.

It was thanks to the creative activity of the artists of the *Poptrans* art group that post-modern influences touched the area of graphic art in Transcarpathia. The aesthetics of post-modernism found a response in the work of Transcarpathian artists who turned to graphic art and graphic design in a fragmented way, among them V. Kharabaruk, A. Stegura, R. Saller, M. Onysko. Their interest in graphics affected illustration, design of self-publishers (among them “Ya-1” («Я-1»), “Sho” («Шо»)). The artists of the *Poptrans* art group enriched the stylistic tool-kit of Transcarpathian graphics, developed a method that uses photo collage as a “ready made” object, and widely used the stencil technique and replication methods. The stylistic selection was noticeably influenced by the heritage of American pop art, Soviet conceptualism, the art of modernism and socialist realism.

The key in these editions was the original artistic form. Progressive experimental searches moved the lever in the direction of post-modern ideas, but technical progress only partially affected the quality of artistic works. At the same time, the connection between the artist and the attribute of the era is growing: some artists emphasize this in their works, others, on the contrary, albeit ironically, turn their gaze towards nostalgia for the thematic arsenal developed in the Soviet period during the 1970s.

The graphic works of the 1990s generation are stylistically separated from the works of previous decades. Recognized masters lose direct contact with the younger generation, which, in our opinion, contributes to fragmentation into a wide range of narrow interests. That is why the graphic art of Transcarpathia, having a significant potential, could not develop into a phenomenon that is commonly

called a school in art history. Graphic art is gradually reorienting itself to the design needs of society, and multimedia technologies are being introduced.

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