

Socialist Realism Goes West

A private auction of Socialist Realism art took place at ARTEast Gallery on Saturday 13 May. 70 pieces of Socialist Realism art were presented, dating from the late 1940s - 70s. The event gathered many of the Kyiv expat community's most devoted art fans, all of whom were treated to a delicious buffet and wild berry vodka 'slurpies' and entertained by 'Foreign Folk'. By the time auctioneer John Vellinga invited the first bids, everybody had enough to eat and drink and the third painting, 'Cows on the river' by Volodymyr Masyk, was sold. Even relatively expensive pieces such as Komsomol Wedding went immediately. Unfortunately none of the sculptures were sold, even a marble 'piece of history' as John Vellinga put it, 'Girl' by Halina Petryashevich. Serhiy Hryhyoryev's sketch of a girl, which was widely advertised and was the auction's symbol sold quickly too. Everybody who purchased anything was awarded a Soviet medal. Medals were not the only

Soviet touch: Constance Uzwyshyn was wearing a Soviet outfit too, and the impromptu benches were made out of railway sleepers covered in red fabric. Two couples present who are soon to leave Kyiv, Ron and Gina Griffiths and Chris and Carmel Delaney, were given some outstanding Soviet military head wear as a souvenir. They immediately put them on, making everyone laugh. And so it went: Socialist realism moved West, accompanied by lots of jokes. You can take part in Ukraine's first ever on-line auction till May 28 at www.arteast.org

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