

## UKR|RUS

**Artist:** Molly Gochman

**Date:** 2024

**Medium:** Reclaimed wood, concrete, glass, plaster, ground marble

**Dimensions:** 150' long x 14" to 28" in height variation (approx.)

*UKR|RUS*, a sculptural work by Molly Gochman, invites us to question the devastating human cost and destruction caused by aggressive imperialism, and to celebrate the resilience of Ukrainians, their rich cultural history, and the future that so many are fighting to defend. Taking the shape of the Ukraine-Russian border as it is defined by Ukraine and recognized by international law, the work draws parallels between physical and metaphorical boundaries, explores the complex dynamics that exist around borders, and provides a space to center and reflect upon the ongoing struggle of Ukraine and its people.

Sharp angles define the sculpture's linear form, with sections varying in length (from 4 to 10 feet) and height (14 to 28 inches). Constructed using an assemblage of reclaimed wood, rubble, and various types of ground surface materials including marble, *UKR|RUS* recognizes the scars of conflict while simultaneously suggesting the possibility of rebuilding and healing. In the wake of major geopolitical events and the ongoing invasion of Ukraine, Gochman's sculptures serve as a stark reminder of the human cost of conflict and the suffering of those caught in the crosshairs of imperialism.

*UKR|RUS* underscores that borders are more than mere cartographic lines; they are tangible divisions that shape communities and lives. In the face of Russian aggression, the Ukrainian border is a manifestation of and container for the unique Ukrainian identity, culture, and history, and a reflection of its sovereignty. By positioning parts of the bench in historically Ukrainian communities across New York City, *UKR|RUS* will be paired with programming with cultural institutions and organizations that support and exemplify Ukrainian culture.

Amidst the noise that often drowns out the reality of Ukraine's struggle, *UKR|RUS* invites pause, reflection, and a deeper engagement with the celebration of Ukrainian identity and culture. Most importantly, it serves as a poignant reminder of the shattered lives and communities left in the wake of territorial aggression, urging viewers to stand in solidarity with those impacted.