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**BIBLIOTHECA HERTZIANA**  
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FOR ART HISTORY



# Elena Subach

# HIDDEN

RESEARCH EXHIBITION  
**APRIL 19 – JUNE 9, 2023**

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Image: Elena Subach, from the series Hidden, 2022. Courtesy of the artist.

This is a research exhibition of the photographic works of Ukrainian artist Elena Subach. The featured series was created in the spring of 2022 when museum workers and volunteers nationwide united to protect cultural heritage in the wake of the escalation of Russian military aggression.

The series was created in Lviv, one of Ukraine's major artistic centres. These photographs exude unease and uncanniness even if no sensitive scenes were captured. The surrealist appearance of the wrapped and transported items serves to disentangle the items from the image they convey and presents them as physically fragile objects. The inverted images reveal a bitter irony: as the war draws more attention to Ukrainian art, which has been garnering worldwide media coverage, the artworks themselves must be physically concealed and protected.

**ELENA SUBACH** (1980) is a Ukrainian visual artist from Chervonohrad, Ukraine, but currently lives and works in Lviv. Elena studied economics and received her master's degree (2002) from the Department of Economics at Lesia Ukrainka Eastern European National University before turning to photography in 2012. Since then, she has been collaborating on art projects with another photographer, Viacheslav Poliakov. Elena developed her own unique understanding of Ukrainian visual culture in an autodidactic manner. Between 2019 and 2022, she worked in curatorial practice at the Borys Voznytsky Lviv National Art Gallery. Currently, she is teaching courses in art history and curatorial practice at the School of Visual Communications SKVOT in Kyiv. Elena is member of the "Ukrainian Photographic Alternative" Association. Her photographs have been published in numerous magazines and newspapers, including British Journal of Photography, Weltkunst, Vogue Poland, the Guardian, Süddeutsche Zeitung, and many others. She has received numerous awards such as the New East Photo Prize from Calvert Foundation (2016), Future Talents (2019) nominee and the Gaude Polonia Scholarship (2019). Her work has been featured at international exhibitions, most recently at the Nordic House in Reykjavik, Photo Elysee Museum of Photography in Lausanne, Kunstforum Wien in Vienna, Eretz Israel Museum in Tel Aviv, Willy Brandt House in Berlin, the World Bank in Washington, DC, and the Tycho Brahe Museum in Ven, Sweden.

Subach's techniques have focused on fragility since she is particularly sensitive to the textures of the surrounding world. Her style can be recognized by the way she zooms in to lend monumentality to seemingly insignificant details. The distinction between what is real and what has been digitally altered is virtually erased in this vibrant patchwork of colourful surfaces and patterns, which range from grannies' head scarves to feeble plants connected with strips of old textiles. This blending of the real and the imaginary reveals the essence of actual relationships.

## ENTRANCE WALL

1. Exhibits of Potocki Palace prepared for the evacuation. Archival pigment print, fine art baryta paper, 2022.
2. Holy Mary's statue on Mariyska Square, Lviv. Archival pigment print, fine art baryta paper, 2022.

## SALA TERRENA, FROM THE LEFT

3. Covered wooden sculptures from altar of the Saints Peter and Paul Church, Lviv. Archival pigment print, fine art baryta paper, 2022.
4. Potocki Palace exhibits being prepared for the evacuation. Archival pigment print, fine art baryta paper, 2022.
5. Covered sculptural decoration of the pipe organ from the Saints Peter and Paul Church, Lviv. Archival pigment print, fine art baryta paper, 2022.
6. Wallpaper print featuring a covered statue of Diana from the Four Fountains on Rynok Square.
7. Potocki Palace exhibits being prepared for the evacuation. Archival pigment print, fine art baryta paper, 2022.
8. Potocki Palace exhibits being prepared for the evacuation. Archival pigment print, fine art baryta paper, 2022.
9. Wallpaper print featuring a covered statue of Amphitrite from the Four Fountains on Market Square.
10. Protecting sculptures of St Yura's Cathedral, Lviv. Archival pigment print, fine art baryta paper, 2022.
11. Covered sculptural decoration of the pipe organ from the Saints Peter and Paul Church, Lviv. Archival pigment print, fine art baryta paper, 2022.
12. Protecting sculptures of St Yura's Cathedral, Lviv. Archival pigment print, fine art baryta paper, 2022.

13. Covered wooden sculptures from the altar of Saints Peter and Paul Church, Lviv. Archival pigment print, fine art baryta paper, 2022.
14. Johann Georg Pinzel's Angel, a wooden sculpture originally made for the altar of the Church of All Saints in the village of Hodowica. Archival pigment print, fine art baryta paper, 2022.
15. Covered wooden sculptures from the altar of Saints Peter and Paul Church, Lviv. Archival pigment print, fine art baryta paper, 2022.
16. Wallpaper print depicting sculptures being protected from possible damage near St Yura's Cathedral, Lviv.
17. Evacuating Johann Georg Pinzel's wooden sculpture of St Anna, originally made for the Missionary Fathers' Church of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary in Horodenka. Archival pigment print, fine art baryta paper, 2022.
18. Evacuating Johann Georg Pinzel's wooden sculpture of Angel, originally made for the Missionary Fathers' Church of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary in Horodenka. Archival pigment print, fine art baryta paper, 2022.
19. Wallpaper print featuring the protected window in the house of the keeper of the Armenian Cathedral of the Assumption of Mary (the Armenian church) in Lviv.
20. Evacuating Johann Georg Pinzel's wooden sculpture of Abraham, originally made for the altar of the Church of All Saints in the village of Hodowica. Archival pigment print, fine art baryta paper, 2022.
21. Evacuating Johann Georg Pinzel's wooden sculpture of Angel, originally made for the altar of the Church of All Saints in the village of Hodowica. Archival pigment print, fine art baryta paper, 2022.
22. Evacuating Johann Georg Pinzel's wooden Crucifix, originally made for the altar of the Church of All Saints in the village of Hodowica. Archival pigment print, fine art baryta paper, 2022.