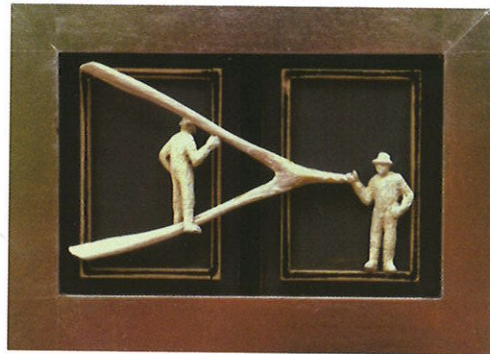


У серії творів "Вистави в маленьких скриньках" Боднар-Балагутрак опрацьовує численні смислові значення мови. Англійська гра слів перетворюється в конкретні візуальні форми. Розставляючи фігурки людей (ліплені з гіпсу) на різне тло – включаючи вишивку, родинні світлинки, паперові гроші – мисткиня створює маленькі сцени для цих фігур, де вони гіють у своєму оточенні, яке впливає на них. У цих конструкціях авторка творить примхливу, іронічну, інколи кумедну ситуацію. У творі "Пробив" зображується чоловіча постать, яка ногою "пробиває" українські купони. Цей твір представляє оптимістично "пробив" України на шлях державності, а також іронічно, коли з'явилися в обігу купони як гроші й країна потерпала від гіперінфляції. Тут чоловіча постать протестує проти економічної розрухи, яка випала на долю підсоветської України, коли розхитуванням грошової системи розхитувалась і вся економіка краю.



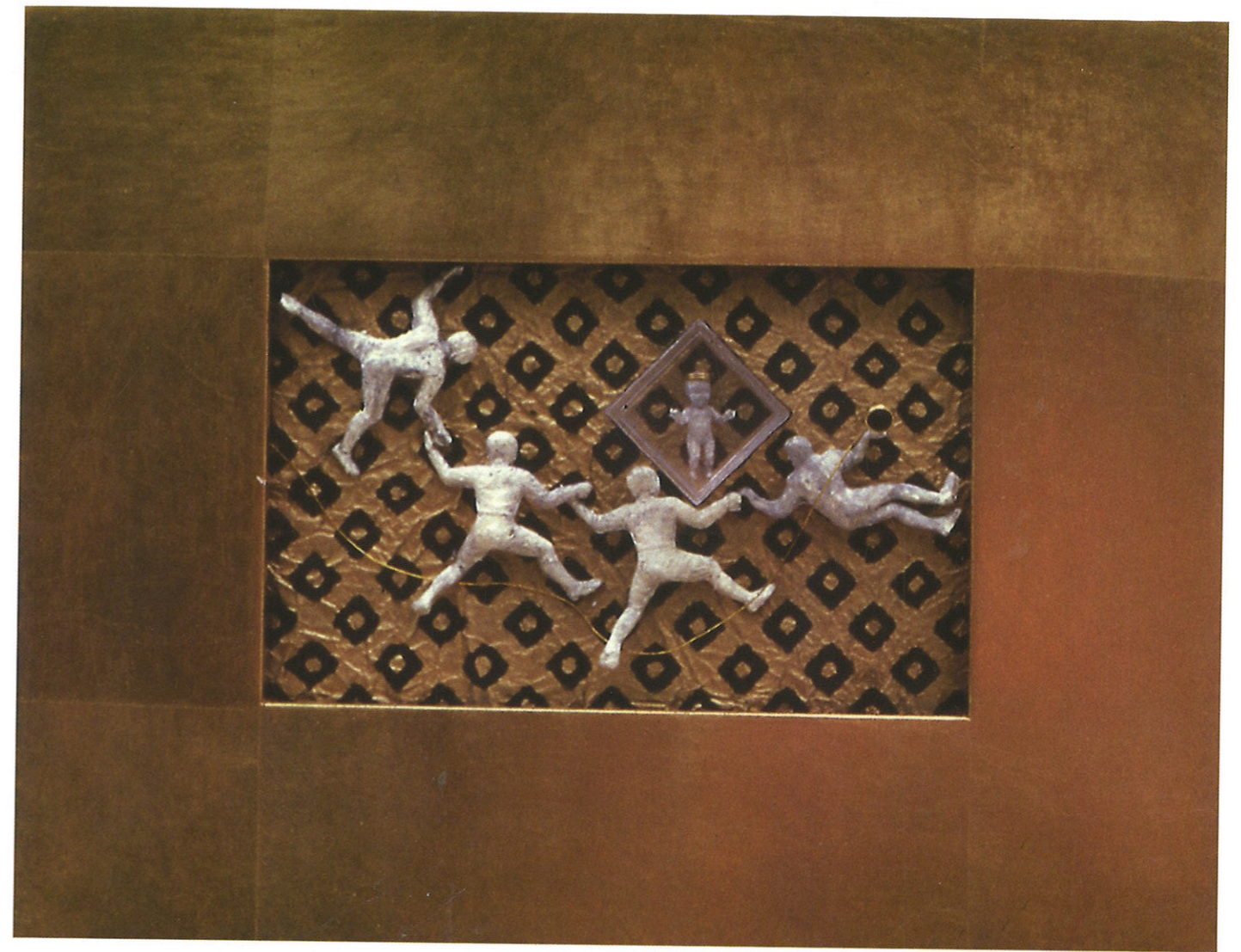
Lydia Bodnar-Balahutrak's "Boxed" series explores the numerous meanings conjured by a given English-language figure of speech or play on words. By placing miniature plaster-white modeled human figures on various grounds, ranging from embroidery to family pictures to paper money, she creates tiny stages for these figures, where they act on their surroundings and the surroundings on them. With this approach, the artist strikes a whimsical, ironic, sometimes comedic note. She says this is a contrast to some of her more somber work. Yet whimsy and irony are very much a part of this artist's overall, intelligent style.

"Art-si-do" is a play on "do-si-do" or "back to back," the lyric from the country square dance. To have fun and succeed at square-dancing, one needs to have a large group of people. Bodnar-Balahutrak seems to be suggesting the same is true of art, as a group of eight figures, some evidently from an earlier generation than the others, works together with one golden palette. The piece evokes joy, hinting at the importance of relationships and at the way some people help to lift others up.

"De-face", which features an older male figure in overalls and a wide hat, and a picture of an elderly male priest, is among the series' more provocative pieces. It shows the figure in overalls holding, or rolling up, or ripping the picture as if it were a billboard image. Perhaps the figure and the picture are the same person, with "De-face" offering a comment on how removed a public face might be from the person behind that face. The artist notes the priest is in fact her paternal grandfather. Whatever meaning she intended to inject into "De-face", it's probable that the man she knew, and the one his parishioners knew, were quite different people. Alternately, the figure may be unrelated to the priest and may be defacing the picture, suggesting the highly contemporary – and also perennial – theme of conflict between clergy and lay people.

"Break-through", featuring a male figure shoving a foot through a Ukrainian banknote, is possibly the most political piece, as the artist uses it to comment on the first currency issued by an independent Ukraine. "Break-through" can be read as an optimistic image, the personification of Ukraine breaking through to the world of independently issued money and the end of Soviet domination. It can also be read as ironic criticism. When the coupon was issued, the country had been suffering from hyperinflation, and therefore the break through the floor of the coupon can be seen to refer to prices breaking away from the currency's value. The figure may also be protesting the terrible economic legacy Ukraine inherited from its Soviet overlords – kicking the currency and the economy itself.

As with much of Bodnar-Balahutrak's work, one cannot view "Boxed" without being stimulated and provoked. The Series leaves the viewer feeling as though she has had an interesting conversation – not a bad reaction to art that was created around a theme of plays on words.



## Вистави в скриньках. Меланія Жила Вікерс / About the Boxed Series.

Melana Zyla Vickers



**Вистави в маленьких скриньках. Серія.**  
Дерево, позолота, папір, гуаш, мішана техніка.  
2001-2002. Big 15x15 до 25x20.

**Miniature tableaux from the "Boxed" Series.**  
Gold leaf, paper, mixed media.  
2001-2002. From 15x15 cm to 25x20 cm.

