

Presentation prepared as a part of  
Open University Opatów/Michigan  
2022

# Introduction to naïve art

Aleksandra Dudek  
PhD Candidate  
Doctoral School of Humanities





## What is naïve art?

Naive art, also known as outsider art, is a style of art that is typically characterized by a lack of formal training or artistic technique. It is often associated with the work of self-taught artists or those who come from non-Western cultural backgrounds.





## Why is it important?

Naïve art presents a unique and often underrepresented perspective on art and culture. Pieces give a glimpse into the personal experiences and perspectives of their authors.

Naïve art challenges traditional notions of what constitutes "good" or "professional" art. By rejecting formal training and artistic techniques, naive artists can create works that are unconventional and original. This can be refreshing and inspiring for viewers who may be used to more traditional styles of art.

Naive art is important for its historical and cultural significance. Many naive artists have used their work to document their personal histories, traditions, and cultural practices, making it an important source of information and insight into different ways of life.

## Differences between terms



Naïve art	Primitivism	Folk art
<p>Naive Art is usually defined as the work of people who have no formal education, i.e. knowledge in such areas as anatomy, art history, perspective, technical fields, etc.</p> <p>It is very often characterized by great attention to detail.</p> <p>Ex. Meier Kirschenblatt, Nikifor Krynicki</p>	<p><b>Primitivism</b> is a mode of aesthetic idealization that either emulates or aspires to recreate a "primitive" experience by <b>trained artists</b>.</p>	<p>Folk art covers all forms of visual art made in the context of folk culture. Definitions vary, but generally the objects have practical utility of some kind, rather than being exclusively decorative. The makers of folk art are typically trained within a popular tradition, rather than in the fine art tradition of the culture.</p> <p>In addition to creativity, which is called visual arts, folk art includes music, dances, legends, fairy tales, folk poetry and the entire artistic side of folk customs and rituals.</p>



## Best known naïve artists

There have been many important naive painters throughout history. For the purposes of this lecture, we will get to know just a few of them:

01. Henri Rousseau

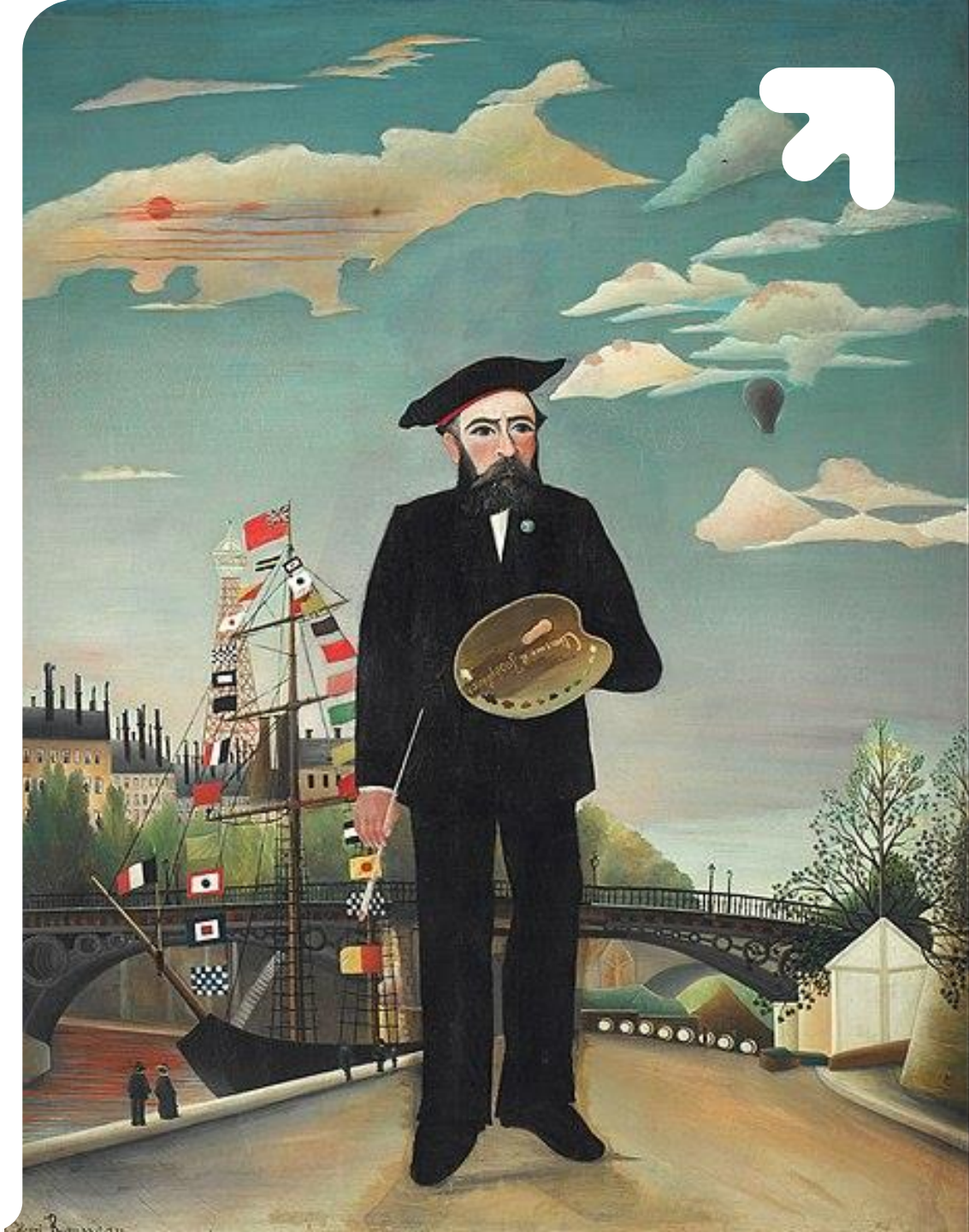
02. Hlebine School

03. Nikifor



## 01. Henri Rousseau (1844-1910)

Henri Rousseau was a French painter who is often considered one of the **pioneers** of the naive art movement. His occupation as a toll and tax collector gave him a nickname ***Le Douanier***. He was self-taught and did not receive any formal artistic training. He started painting in his early forties and soon retired from his job to become a full-time painter.



## 01. Henri Rousseau (1844-1910)

His work is characterized by a unique and dreamlike style, and he is known for his colourful, detailed paintings of jungle scenes and other exotic landscapes, even though he never left France or saw a jungle. His art is considered to be inspired by children's book illustrations.





## 02. Hlebine School

The Hlebine School, also known as the Hlebine Group or the Croatian Primitives, was a group of Croatian naive artists who worked in the village of Hlebine in Croatia in the 1920s and 1930s. The group was founded by the Croatian artist Ivan Generalić, and it was known for its colorful, expressive, and highly individualistic style of naive art.

The artists of the Hlebine School often depicted everyday life in their paintings, including scenes of farming, village life, and rural landscapes.





## 02. Hlebine School

The biggest collection of the pieces of Hlebine School is kept in Koprivnica Town Museum - Gallery of Naive Art, Hlebine.

The Collection of Naive art has approximately 1000 museum objects - paintings, sculptures, drawings or graphics.

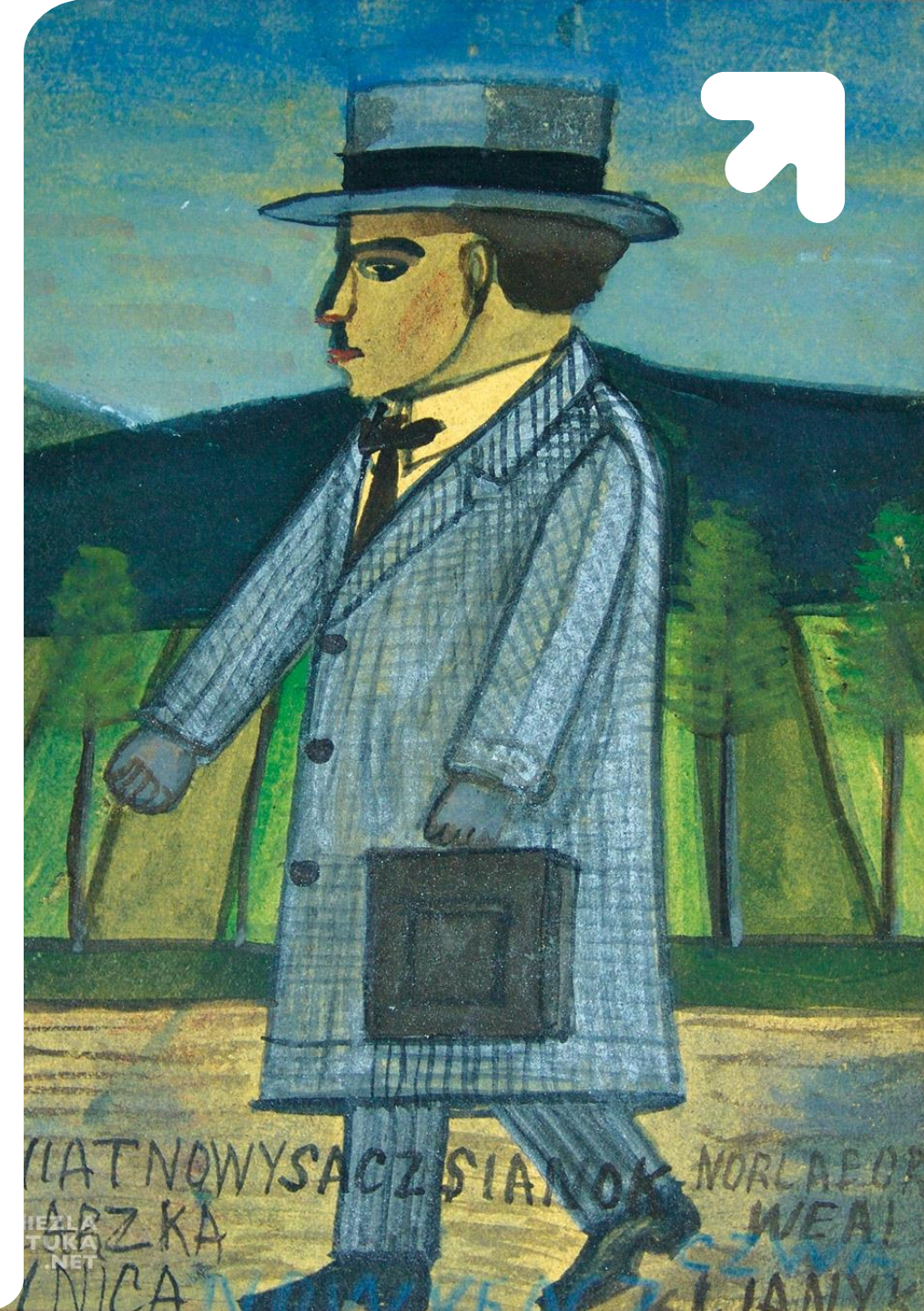
To see more from Koprivnica Town Museum - Gallery of Naive Art, Hlebine on Google Arts & Culture - [CLICK HERE](#)





### 03. Nikifor (1895-1968)

Nikifor also known as Nikifor Krynicki was born as Epifaniusz Drowniak was a Lemko naïve painter. Over his whole life he painted around 40 000 pictures on small sheets of paper, pages of notebooks, cigarette cartons, and even on scraps of paper glued together. The main topic of his art is a landscape of his hometown Krynica.





### 03. Nikifor Krynicki

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## Gallery



Henri Rousseau, *The Hungry Lion Attacking An Antelope*  
1898-1905  
Fondation Beyeler



Henri Rousseau, *The Sleeping Gypsy*  
1897  
The Museum of Modern Art, NY



Henri Rousseau, *Myself: Portrait-Landscape*  
1890  
National Gallery Prague



## Gallery



Ivan Generalić, *Dancing in the Vineyards*  
1968  
Koprivnica Town Museum



Mirko Virius, *Potter in the Village*  
1939  
Koprivnica Town Museum



Stjepan Vecenaj, *Adam & Eve's First Encounter*  
1968  
Koprivnica Town Museum

## Gallery



Nikifor, *Krakowska Wolnica*  
Ca. 1935  
Ethnographic Museum Cracov



Nikifor, *Mountain landscape*  
Ca. 1930  
Ethnographic Museum Cracov



Nikifor, *Autoportrait*  
Ca. 1930  
Regional Museum Nowy Sącz



# Recomendations:

- Film *My Nikifor*, dir. Krzysztof Krauze, 2004, Poland  
[IMDB WEBSITE](#)
- Google Arts & Culture  
<https://artsandculture.google.com/story/HAXB8yxnsRUtJA>

