

Redaktor naczelny / Editor in Chief

Łukasz Guzek

Sekretarz Redakcji / Managing Editor

Anka Leśniak

Redakcja / Editorial Board

Józef Robakowski, Aurelia Mandziuk-Zajączkowska,
Jana Orlová, Marina Gržinić.
Uczelniana Rada Naukowa – Janina Rudnicka,
Grzegorz Kłaman, Krzysztof Gliszczynski,
Roman Nieczyporowski.

Rada Naukowa / Board of Scholars

Ryszard W. Kluszczyński, Kristine Stiles, Anna Markowska,
Slavka Sverakova, Leszek Brogowski, Bogusław Jasiński,
Anna Szyjkowska-Piotrowska, Tomasz Załuski,
Tassilo von Blittersdorff, Tomasz Majewski, Cornelia Lauf,
Iwona Szmelter, Hanna B. Hölling, Anne Swartz,
Henar Riviere, Jin-Sup Yoon, Magda Radomska,
Paweł Leszkowicz.

Galeria im. Andrzeja Pierzgałskiego. Dokumenty

Artystów / Andrzej Pierzgałski Gallery. Artists' Documents
/ Galerie dédiée à Andrzej Pierzgałski. Documents d'Artistes
Koncepcja i prezentacja / Idea and Form of Presentation /
Conception et présentation
Leszek Brogowski
e.mail: leszek.brogowski@univ-rennes2.fr

Współpraca / Cooperation

Université Rennes 2
Cabinet du livre d'artiste
Sans niveau ni mètre. Journal du Cabinet du livre d'artiste
[https://www.sites.univ-rennes2.fr/arts-pratiques-poetiques/
incertain-sens/](https://www.sites.univ-rennes2.fr/arts-pratiques-poetiques/incertain-sens/)
Unité de Recherche Pratiques et Théories de l'Art
Contemporain (PTAC)

**Korekta w języku angielskim / English proofreading**

Paul Barford, Rainer Pagel, Dominik Czechowski

Tłumaczenia angielskie / English translations

Katarzyna Podpora, David Vichnar

Tłumaczenia francuskie / French translations

Tomasz Stróżyński

Okładka / Cover:

- przód / **front:** Norbert Trzeciak, z cyklu / **series** *Manekiny*
- tył / **back:** Julia Kul, *Academic Woman's Brain*

Projektowanie, skład / Design, typesetting

Norbert Trzeciak

<http://www.norberttrzeciak.art>**Wydawca / Publisher**

Akademia Sztuk Pięknych w Gdańsku / Academy of Fine Arts in Gdansk



AKADEMIA
SZTUK
PIĘKNYCH
W GDAŃSKU

Siedziba / Office

Targ Węglowy 6
80-836 Gdańsk / Poland
Tel.: +48 530 490 904
e-mail: journal@doc.art.pl
<http://www.journal.doc.art.pl>

Dystrybucja / Distributione-mail: distribution@asp.gda.pl**Współpraca / Cooperation**

Stowarzyszenie Sztuka i Dokumentacja (SSID)
Art & Documentation Association
ul. Wschodnia 29/3
90-272 Łódź / Poland

Druk / Print

PHU "Olejnik" - Piotr Olejnik
ul. Eugeniusza Szwanowskiego 2/3
01-318 Warszawa

nakład 300 egz. / circulation 300 copies

ISSN 2080-413X

e-ISSN 2545-0050

doi:10.32020/ARTandDOC

Wydanie pisma Sztuka i Dokumentacja w wersji papierowej
jest wersją pierwotną (referencyjną).

Dofinansowano w ramach programu
„Rozwój czasopism naukowych”



Ministerstwo
Edukacji i Nauki

Zapraszamy do współpracy wszystkich zainteresowanych. Propozycje tematów i tekstów prosimy nadsyłać na adres siedziby redakcji. Prosimy zapoznać się z założeniami redakcyjnymi i edytorskimi znajdującymi się na stronie internetowej pisma. Wszystkie materiały publikujemy na licencji Creative Commons. Artykuły są recenzowane. Lista recenzentów i zasady recenzowania znajdują się na stronie internetowej pisma.
<http://www.journal.doc.art.pl>

All interested in collaboration are welcome. Suggestions of topics and texts should be sent to the e-mail address of the editor. We also kindly ask to read the notes on style that can be found on our journal's website. All content is published under the Creative Commons licenses. Articles are peer-reviewed. The list of peers and the peer-review process are available on our website.
<http://www.journal.doc.art.pl>

Table of Contents



5-127

SEKCJA 1 / SECTION 1

WOMEN AT THE ACADEMIES OF FINE ARTS

Edited by Anka LEŚNIAK

doi:10.32020/ArtandDoc/29/2023/3

6-9

Anka LEŚNIAK, Introduction

doi:10.32020/ArtandDoc/29/2023/4

11-16

Darina ALSTER, Touch is a Form of Memory.
Looking Back at the Celebration of 100 Years
from the First Female Absolvent of the Academy
of Fine Arts, Prague

doi:10.32020/ArtandDoc/29/2023/5

17-56

Zofia REZNIK, Herstorical Figures. Women in
the 1946-1980 Archival Documents of the State
Higher School of Plastic Arts in Wrocław

doi:10.32020/ArtandDoc/29/2023/6

57-62

Roman NIECZYPOROWSKI, The Joy of Creation. Teresa Sierant-Mikicicz's Role in Building the Gdansk Academy of Fine Arts Brand

doi:10.32020/ArtandDoc/29/2023/7

63-72

Ulrike HIRHAGER, Damaging the Silence and Order at the Institute. Women and the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna

doi:10.32020/ArtandDoc/29/2023/8

73-83

Marina GRŽINIĆ, The Influence of Women on the Content and System of Art Education

doi:10.32020/ArtandDoc/29/2023/9

84-95

Anka LEŚNIAK, The exhibition *Women at the Academies of Fine Arts*

doi:10.32020/ArtandDoc/29/2023/10

96-129

Women at the Academies of Fine Arts project – documentation

doi:10.32020/ArtandDoc/29/2023/11

132-209

SEKCJA 2 / SECTION 2

THEORIA CUM PRAXI OF PERFORMANCE
ART 2022

FNAF 8

FNAF 8 Export Gdańsk

Nudity as a Political Gesture. Performance Art
Festival & Conference

Edited by Łukasz Guzek

doi:10.32020/ArtandDoc/29/2023/12

133

Lenka KLODOVÁ, Introduction by FNAF 8
Curator

doi:10.32020/ArtandDoc/29/2023/13

134

Łukasz GUZEK, Introduction by
FNAF 8 Export Gdańsk Curator.
Nudity as Political Ground-Breaking

doi:10.32020/ArtandDoc/29/2023/14

137-146

Darina ALSTER, The Naked Body as a Symbol

doi:10.32020/ArtandDoc/29/2023/15

147-159

Vladimír HAVLÍK, Framing the Performance
and Its Documentation

doi:10.32020/ArtandDoc/29/2023/16

161-174

Joanna M. CZAJKOWSKA, Nudity in
Pomeranian Dance and Performance

doi:10.32020/ArtandDoc/29/2023/17

175-187

Ewa MAJEWSKA, Nudity as a Feminist Gesture:
in Defense of a Supposedly Lost Cause

doi:10.32020/ArtandDoc/29/2023/18

189-200

Katarzyna PASTUSZAK, Naked Care:
Explorations of Naked Performance and Queer
Political Gestures

doi:10.32020/ArtandDoc/29/2023/19

201-209

FNAF 8 Export Gdańsk Festival - illustrations

doi:10.32020/ArtandDoc/29/2023/20

VARIA

213-232

Jana ORLOVÁ, Differences between Visual
Performance and Theatre. The Question of
Genre Identity

doi:10.32020/ArtandDoc/29/2023/21

DOKUMENTACJA / DOCUMENTATION

236-273

DEATHSCAPES AFTERLIVES

Edited by Marina Gržinić

doi:10.32020/ArtandDoc/29/2023/22

275-287

Łukasz GUZEK, Art Against Modern Death.
A Retrospective of Marina Gržinić
and Aina Šmid

doi:10.32020/ArtandDoc/29/2023/23

SEKCJA 1 / SECTION 1

WOMEN AT THE ACADEMIES OF FINE ARTS

Edited by Anka LEŚNIAK

INTRODUCTION

The academic conference and the exhibition *Women at the Academies of Fine Arts* was dedicated to the history of women in art academies and the role they play in them today. The impulse for the conference was the 100th anniversary of the admission of the first women students to the academic community at academies of fine arts, including Kraków (1917/18), Vienna (1920/21), Berlin (1919/1920). These events encourage in-depth reflection on the spectrum of issues related to this topic, in the field of art history and criticism, sociology and the biographies of women professors, women masters, graduates and first women students, who opened the door to a professional artistic career for the next generations. The aim of the conference was to exchange information and present various research perspectives on the

activities of women at academies of fine arts, from the first female students to the present day.

Art education takes place at universities that do not necessarily have the word “academy” in their name. However, this term has been used here, not only because of its historical importance, but also for the purpose of its critical analysis. Women predominate among students, while men dominate the staff of the academy of fine arts (e.g. in Poland). However, some changes have been observed in recent decades. In 2008, Ludmiła Ostrogórska was chosen as the first woman in Poland for the position of the rector of the Academy of Fine Arts and headed the Gdańsk Academy of Fine Arts until 2016. Shortly thereafter, this function was taken up by Jolanta Rudzka-Habisiak in Łódź (terms of office 2012-2020). From 2020, Mirosława

Jarmołowicz has been the rector of the Academy of Art in Szczecin.

After more than a century since women, acting against prejudices and stereotypes, won full access to artistic education at academies of fine arts in Europe, it is worth considering what their presence has brought to these institutions and what has changed in them over the decades. The topic of the presence of women in the academies of fine arts was the first in a series of issues and problems raised during the meetings of the Feminist Seminar.

This conversation was continued during the conference *Women at the Academies of Fine Arts* in a series of presentations of artists and theoreticians from Poland and abroad.

Issues:

- first students, first lecturers;
- outstanding professors and women masters and their influence on subsequent generations of women artists;
- women in the structures of academies and in relation to their authorities;
- the influence of women on the content and system of arts education;
- oral history - not only of students and professors, but also other outstanding women that have been remembered by us.

The conference is accompanied by the exhibition *Women at the Academies of Fine Arts*, March 11-31, 2022, Aula Gallery, Academy of Fine Arts in Gdańsk; curated by Anka Leśniak

Matronage: International Association of Art Critics AICA / Polish Section

Concept and coordination : Anka Leśniak, ania włodarska [a.w.]

Project financed by the Doskonała Nauka Programme of the Ministry of Education and Science



Ludmiła Ostrogórska, the first female rector of the Academy of Fine Arts in Poland, Academy of Fine Arts in Gdańsk.
photo by Bartosz Żukowski

Darina ALSTER

Academy of Fine Arts in Prague

TOUCH IS A FORM OF MEMORY. LOOKING BACK AT THE CELEBRATION OF 100 YEARS FROM THE FIRST FEMALE ABSOLVENT OF THE ACADEMY OF FINE ARTS, PRAGUE

Touch is a form of memory, a method of remembering and a way of bringing bodies into the present.¹

We feel the need of remembrance, when we need to connect different layers of time, because we feel that we cannot grasp the whole situation, or we suspect that some essential information is missing. The memory trace is often broken or omitted, especially when it comes to various disadvantaged and marginalised groups, such as women in art history.

His story is his story but what about her story?

In 1998, the Guerrilla Girls published a book called *The Guerrilla Girls' Bedside Companion to the History of Western Art*.² The book is a critique of traditional art history and an unconventional survey of female artists who have worked from the time of classical Greece to the present. These women artists have traditionally been overlooked by male critics, their works attributed to their fathers, brothers, husbands, or lovers. Here, the GGs offer a more revisionist and inclusive art history where female artists are not excluded on

the basis of gender or ethnicity. Like the Guerrilla Girls, we revise history and find shards of herstory, life stories, and legacies of women artists.

To celebrate the 100th anniversary of the first female AVU graduate, in the fall of 2022, we have put together a cultural event with Katerina Olivova, a colleague and friend with whom I run the New Media 2 studio at the AVU in Prague, to enjoy the aforementioned jubilee and to make the legacy of the first women officially educated in Art at Prague's academy more visible. The celebrations included an exhibition called Herstory, which was located in the library of the school building, and a series of side events.

The celebrations opened with the happening *Embracing the Institution*. We invited all AVU staff and students to take part in the happening. We needed physically to realise together that the institution is our space, which we all can shape. We wanted to feel the touch of every person who is a member of AVU, whether staff, students or pedagogues.

The Art Nouveau building of the AVU was embraced by a living chain of all members of the academic community. The aim of the happening was collectively to realise and experience the fact that the academy as an institution is made

up of its membership and therefore we all have the opportunity to participate in the creation of a dynamic structure called academia. The building could not be embraced completely, but most of it was covered by the human chain.

Physical action deepens and intensifies the experience of theoretical concepts and allows them to be experienced in a new way that carries the potential to provoke change. In the case of an institution, the process of care should be bidirectional. Each and every one of us feels how we become an integral part of the care process that constitutes a living institution and participates in the transformation of its environment through the improvement of internal relationships. The happening took place on 15.11.2022

All that you touch you Change.
All that you Change Changes you
The only lasting truth
is Change.
Goddess is change ³

The year 2022 brings another significant moment in the Academy's development. The election of AVU's first ever female rector, Mária Topolčanská, who took office in February 2022. We wanted to celebrate the new rector by embracing the building and supporting her feminist vision.

Hugs and touches are forms of connecting the different layers of time that we carry within us as members of the academic community. There is also a linking of history and the present, an awakening of forgotten memory and the assumption of a certain article of responsibility in these highly transformative times.

Who were the first graduates of the Academy of Fine Arts and what is the significance of their legacy for our times?

In fact, in 1922, four women graduated from the Academy of Fine Arts in Prague. Each was originally from somewhere else and worked in a different medium. In 1922, Karla Bulovec, Helena Bochořáková, Charlotte Schrotter and Mary Duras graduated from the Academy of Fine Arts. The last-named, though neglected in Bohemia,

achieved worldwide recognition. The sculptures of Mary Duras are represented, among others, in the collections of the National Gallery in Prague.⁴ However, each of the artists is a bearer of a quality artistic legacy. When we search for information about these women, we discover their interesting fates and the messages they carried through their turbulent lives.

Vjera Borozan's interpretation focused mainly on two lesser-known authors, Karla Bulovca and Helena Bochořáková. Women were allowed to study in the newly founded Czech Republic from 1918. However, when they wanted to apply for studies, a man had to transport their work to the building.

Helena Bochořáková-Dittrichová (1894-1980), although an overlooked artist in Bohemia, became the world's first recognized author of comic strips, or graphic novels.⁵ She accompanied her graphic cycles with social themes with texts. She dealt with the themes of labour, workers, motherhood and also the theme of Indian life. She felt deeply for the workers and for the colonised. Her series entitled *Uprising* was significant. She published several books during her lifetime, including the graphic series *From My Childhood and Between Two Oceans*.

Bochořáková-Dittrichová's larger body of work references starker topics, from oppression to capitalism. "Her subsequent work further expanded [graphic novels'] scope, focusing on history, religion, and impressions of other cultures," Rebecca Gross writes. "As a result, Bochořáková-Dittrichová quietly strengthened the case for topics such as domestic life to be seen as legitimate art subjects rather than as easily dismissed female fodder." (Gross Rebecca, "Bringing artist to light," NEA Arts blog. Accessed April 1, 2023, link not accessible anymore)

"It's great that there's proof that there were women who were working in this very early art form. I'm hoping people will recognise her place, and the place of women at the beginning of things." said Heather Slania, the director of NMWA's library and research center about Helena Bochořáková's works. (see Katherine Brooks, "Meet The World's First Woman Graphic Novelist, Helena Bochořáková-Dittrichová," accessed December 21, 2023,

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/05/26/helena-bochoakova-dittrichova_n_5354241.html

Karla Bulovec-Mrak's (1895-1957) work was marked by a lack of funding and therefore materials. She created her sculptures in clay, which disintegrates over time. After her studies, Karla Bulovec returned to her native Ljubljana, Slovenia. She married the first declared gay man, Ivan Mrak. She was therefore a pioneer on the issue of open marital relationships and LGBT+ identities. She was fascinated by indigenous cultures. The only surviving realisation is the Yakumtek Indian statue. It was part of a dreamed-about project for a Pantheon of Indians that was never realised. We only know of the project from drawing studies.⁶

The lecture about the first graduates of the Prague Academy was given by Vjera Borozan. Vjera was the director of the Artyčok project and the director of the National Museum in Montenegro, and currently lives in Prague and teaches at the Academy of Fine Arts.

This was followed by a lecture on Teresa Feodorowna Ries (1866-1956), an unofficial student of the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna. The lecture was given by the Polish theoretician, curator and artist Anka Lesniak from the Academy of Fine Arts in Gdansk. Lesniak is one of the authors of the exhibition *Un Paradiso Amaro / Bitter Paradise* and a member of the TFR Archive.⁷ The exhibition was held in 2021, the centenary of the official admission of the first women artists to the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna. This exhibition, and the subsequent exhibition *The Lost Element/Reconstruction of the Witch* in the VBKOE (2022), were dedicated to the enigmatic work *Die Hexe* (The Witch, 1895) by the sculptor Teresa Feodorowna Ries, who, although she could not officially study at the Academy, paved the way for future generations of women art students with her enthusiasm.⁸

The figure of *Hexe*, the witch, is a kind of feminist image of a woman who defied patriarchy and lived her authentic life in spite of the status quo. In this sense, every woman artist is a witch. As Kristen J. Solle writes in her book *Witches, Sluts, Feminists*: "a witch is the opposite of a victim."⁹

We saw the exhibition at the Vienna Academy with the New Media 2 studio. The enigmatic sculpture of the witch completely captivated us as well as her contemporary artistic interpretations. Like the works of the first graduates of the Academy of Fine Arts, *Hexe* by Teresa Feodorowna Ries was closely linked to the artist's life and experienced its own troubled destiny. Such a curatorial approach became an inspiration for us of how to grasp the past and connect it with the present through the frame of contemporary art.

The presentations and the debate ended with the performance *Angel of Assassination* by Saydie Vell & Yazz. Dancing with burning fans and wax lovingly poured over each other's bodies, they made a conscious integration of the submissive and dominant components of the soul. BDSM culture can be understood as the objectification of power games, which, when they are conscious and consensual, help transform power games and other usually toxic behaviors into a form of dance. Presentations, debate and performance happened as a part of celebrations which we called Wisdom Day on 22.11.2022.

The main element of the celebration was the exhibition *Herstory*, set in the specific atmosphere of the AVU library. The library of the Academy of Fine Arts in Prague is one of the oldest Czech libraries in the field of art history. Its origins date back to the founding of the Academy in 1799. The author of the original unique interior of the library from the early twentieth century is the famous Czech architect Jan Kotěra. The library is housed in the main building of the Academy, which was built in the Art Nouveau style, sometimes called Art Nouveau Baroque. The main building was designed by architect Václav Roštlapil. The project dates from 1897 to 1903.¹⁰

The exhibition was opened on 15.11. 2022 by the performances *Herstorie* by Kateřina Olivová and *All the female Graduates of the Academy of Fine Arts* by me (Darina Alster).

The performance *Herstorie*: Kača Olivová was lying naked on a pile of feminist books. Her beautiful body was looking very monumental in the darkness of the Art Nouveau library. Kateřina

pulled out various selected books from underneath her and read random passages from her favourite feminist authors. Some of these books were later quoted by Anka Lesniak in her presentation, for example *Satanic Feminism: Lucifer as the Liberator of Woman in Nineteenth-Century Culture*.¹¹

Outside the library, in the corridor directly adjacent to the study department, I was standing on a ladder in a tight red velvet evening dress. On a large sheet of paper about 3 by 10 meters long, I wrote the years from 1922 to 2022. Under each year I wrote the names of the female graduates of the study. Some years were more prolific for female graduates, at other times one or two names appear, and in some years women did not graduate. In the post-war period there is a great rush of names of women graduates. The writing process exceeded the building's working hours, so I was later assisted by the students of the New Media 2 studio in the following weeks.

In this way, we both (Darina and Kateřina) remind us that they are continuing in the roots of our foremothers, women feminists, artists, witches, thinkers and pioneers. Women who have found the courage and self-respect to challenge the unequal social norms set in our Euro-American world by predominantly white cisheteronormative men. These courageous women had the imagination to realise that the norm can be transformed and often contributed to the equality of their followers. These courageous women had troubled lives and were often subjected to hatred and rejection by mainstream society. Like them, it gives us the strength and hope to see the world in the larger scale of herstory and in the broader context of world development for all social classes. Similarly, their legacy gives us the power to actively participate in the transformation of the institution in which we work and to imagine and shape a mutually caring society through our own creation and legacy.

With the aforementioned *Herstory* exhibition, we aimed to present the life and work of four artists - the first female graduates of the Academy of Fine Arts through to the artistic interpretation of the students of the Academy of Fine Arts. For the occasion, we organised a site-specific. We are

fascinated by the quiet and peaceful space of the library, where history and shared knowledge breathe. We worked freely with the legacy of the artists mentioned above, letting it inspire us... The exhibitors were selected on the basis of an open call. The selection criteria for us were the relevance and extension of the subject matter for today's current turbulent times, and also the feminist theme of the position of women in the art world.

Both Kass Vladyka and Karol Filo thematised the relationship with women from their own lineage. Kass's *Golden Girls* is a video of a drag party he threw in his drag form Beatrice to please and share wisdom and humor with his mother and grandmother. In his audiotapes, Karol dialogues about life with his mother, sister, grandmother and great-grandmother.

Hana Chmelíková and the collective created guides for seven exercises in appropriateness. The exercises were designed for mothers who always and everywhere feel out of place. They placed the *Exercise Book* object on a library table, and later it became part of the library's archives.

The diary, which Marie-Luise Pulkrábková used to make the lives of four women artists visible through fictional diary entries, became a bridge to the personal confessions of the academy's contemporary student body and to the revelation of several examples of the pedagogical transgressions of power.

Natalia Różycka's video *A tak Cię zawołałam* (And that's how I called you) captured a fragment of the old Polish series about Janosik, where Janosik, as a symbol of masculinity, seduces his love Maryna through a red carpet rolled out in a meadow. Różycka borrowed this moment for her own erotic play between two girls, contextualizing the fragment as queer and thus appropriating it into the present.

Michaela Prablesková together with Natalia Różycka created a *Celebratory cake*, which was a tribute to the four first graduates and at the same time a certain commentary on the position of women in today's art world and a wish for a better future not only for women.

Sonya The Moon painted on a large strip of plastic a certain allegory of the motivation to

create, Daemon, which drives people on despite all the difficulties of life inspiring them to make art.

Dominik Málek exhibited a painting called *Warmth of Home*, which speaks of gay desire, partnership and the need for a safe space in a non-normative relationship.

Marina Drozd Smutná exhibited a painting painted on a tea towel titled *Kitchen Towel*, the painting themed the invisible feminine care that surrounds our lives and keeps society running.

Nik Timkova exhibited a textile object giga glow for cleaning made of thermal fabric. The object is called *Existential Housekeeping*.

Lenka Štěpánková thematised the low visibility of recent art college graduates with her painting *Hostess Inga*, a portrait of a recent UMPRUM (Academy of Arts, Design and Architecture in Prague) graduate.

Zlata Ziborová placed a series of ceramic breasts directly between books to emphasise the interrelationships between different kinds of bodies and the physicality of each and every one of us.

Together with Kateřina Olivová we exhibited a photograph we made together with Anna Daučíková in 2019 in the space of the library. The photographic work was a means to pass on the imaginary scepter of the function of the head of the studio in an artistic form, and also to divide the monolith of authority power from one personality into two. The joint leadership of the studio, which took 2 years to establish officially, opened the way for leading collectives, frontal distribution of power, art making as a collective phenomenon and the non-hierarchical idea of the studio as a living organism or feminist art laboratory.

The celebrations ended on 29 November 2022, the Day of Joy, with a joint performance by me (Darina Alster) and Kateřina Olivová named *Art Cleaning ladies*. Cleaning ladies have played a specific role in conceptual art. From time to time, they clean up a work of art thinking that it is a mess, thus indelibly inscribing themselves and the work in history. The two pedagogues walked naked through the lower part of the building and swept the thresholds of all the official areas of the building, including the rector's office, the studies

and economics department, the questor's office and several sculpture studios. The two naked female teachers were covered in mirrors like two disco balls, Darina's body was painted dark blue like the body of the goddess Nuit. Both artists thus simultaneously evoked the mythical allegories of Day and Night. Everything happened in total darkness, the scene was illuminated only by one travelling disco light, which changed colours to the rhythm of Sonya The Moon's live music set.

The situation was thus reminiscent of a magical cleansing ritual, with mirrors reflecting tiny lights across the audience to remind us of the fragile places in each and every one of our souls. Awareness of these fragile places should not be an excuse to hurt each other, to entrench ourselves in collective trauma, but rather a moment of healing, knowing that our life stories and pains are symptoms of a society's crumbling trauma,¹² and that these wounds and the whole society can be healed and transformed through mutual respect and compassion. Imagining a new world through rethinking and reevaluating the attitudes of the past through living contemporary art.

Through the celebration, we wanted to encourage a more inclusive treatment of historical facts, to make the legacy of specific alumnae more vivid for our times, and to encourage an overall reflection on the position of women artists in the art world.

All power to healing and imagination!

Notes

- ¹ Quotation from my unpublished dissertation about Liquid identity at the edge of civilisation.
- ² Guerrilla Girls, *Beside companion to the history of western art* (London: Penguin Books, 1998).
- ³ Octavia Butler, *Parable of the Sower* (New York: Four Walls Eight Windows, 1993).
- ⁴ A monography of Mary Duras's work was published under the title *Mary Duras* in 2014. Annotation here: Ivo Habán, *Mary Duras* (Prague: Arbor Vitae, 2014).
- ⁵ Katherine Brooks, *Meet The World's First Woman Graphic Novelist*, accessed March 21, 2023, https://www.huffpost.com/entry/helena-bochoakova-dittrichova_n_5354241.
- ⁶ Lev Menaše, Nina Pirnat Spahić (ur.), Reno Svan, Taras Kermauner, Jedert Vodopivec, *Karla Bulovec 1895–1957* (Ljubljana: Cankarjev dom, 2003).
- ⁷ *Un Paradiso Amaro / Bitter Paradise*, Exhibit Studio, Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna, 9.10 - 16.11.2021, curator: Valerie Habsburg.
- ⁸ *Lost Element. Re-construction of the Witch*, VBKOE, Vienna, 14.01-13.02.2022, curator: Anka Lesniak.
- ⁹ Kristen J.Solle, *Witches, Sluts, Feminists* (New York: ThreeL Media, 2017).
- ¹⁰ Anna Hrabáková, Zuzana Křišková, Pavlína Morganová, Dagmar Svatošová, *220 míst AVU* (Praha: Akademie výtvarných umění v Praze, 2019).
- ¹¹ Per Faxneld, *Satanic Feminism: Lucifer as the Liberator of Woman in Nineteenth-Century Culture* (Oxford: Oxford university Press, 2017).
- ¹² Therapist Resmaa Menakem talks about the society of trauma in the book „My Grandmother's Hands“. Specifically quoting : "Trauma in humans, decontextualized over time, looks like culture." Resmaa Menakem, *My Grandmother's hands* (New York: Central Recovery Press, 2017).

Bibliography

- Butler, Octavia. *Parable of the Sower*. New York: Four Walls Eight Windows, 1993.
- Faxneld, Per. *Satanic Feminism: Lucifer as the Liberator of Woman in Nineteenth-Century Culture*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017.
- Guerrilla Girls. *Beside companion to the history of western art*. London: Penguin Books, 1998.
- Habán, Ivo. *Mary Duras*. Prague: Arbor Vitae, 2014.
- Hrabáková, Anna , Křišková, Zuzana, Morganová, Pavlína, Svatošová, Dagmar. *220 míst AVU*. Praha: Akademie výtvarných umění v Praze, 2019.
- Menakem, Resmaa. *My Grandmother's hands*. New York: Central Recovery Press, 2017.
- Solle, Kristen J. *Witches, Sluts, Feminists*. New York: ThreeL Media, 2017.

Zofia REZNIK

The Eugeniusz Geppert Academy of Art and Design in Wrocław

HERSTORICAL FIGURES. WOMEN IN THE 1946-1980 ARCHIVAL DOCUMENTS OF THE STATE HIGHER SCHOOL OF PLASTIC ARTS IN WROCŁAW

Introduction

The year 1946 was the 'year zero' for the Wrocław art academy – on October 1st, the first academic year was inaugurated at the Higher School of Plastic Arts in Wrocław (since 1949 State Higher School of Plastic Arts, SHSPA, now The Eugeniusz Geppert Academy of Art and Design in Wrocław, EGAAD).¹ The group of students included 20 women and 36 men. However, there was not a single woman among the teaching staff at that time. The only female employee of the HSPA was one secretary.²

In the Polish lands, it was not until the early twentieth century that the access to artistic training in the visual arts became possible for women. Although there were female students at the Warsaw School of Fine Arts (Szkola Sztuk Pięknych w Warszawie) as early as 1904, it was still a private institution at the time. Access to a public college was first to be won for herself by Zofia Baltarowicz-Dzielińska in Kraków in 1917, and from the following year – when Poland regained independence – the possibility for women to obtain higher artistic education became formally a reality at both the Academies of Fine Arts, in Kraków³ and Warsaw.⁴ Women started

studying with great enthusiasm and accounted for around a third of all students, although this pathway was still class-based. It was only after the Second World War – as part of the country's communisation process – that the opportunity to access art studies became more realistic and egalitarian.⁵ Although gender equality was already enshrined in the 1919 Constitution, the right to education or work was only secured by the socialist state after 1945.⁶ Since that time, women accounted for around half of all students nationwide.⁷ As Zdzisława Czyżowska noted in her paper for the UN World Conference on the Decade of Women in 1986, the removal of barriers to education in Poland after the Second World War was used to a greater extent by girls than by boys, and this was a growing trend.⁸ Historian Małgorzata Fidelis reminds us, however, that all these changes were not the product of an impersonal state apparatus, but instead the outcome of the efforts of particular activists from the 'women's departments' of the public administration, whose work she details.⁹

SHSPA was special in this respect, as it was constituted from the ground up in 1946, which was its 'year zero'. Although the school was founded literally and metaphorically on the ruins of the Breslau Academy of Arts and Crafts (*Akademie*

für Kunst und Kunstgewerbe zu Breslau) and, in a city with a new territorial affiliation, did not act as its institutional continuation. Neither did it refer to the pre-war schools of Lviv, although a large proportion of the post-1945 inhabitants of Wrocław came from the so-called Eastern Borderlands, nor was it a branch of the Art Academy in Kraków, although its initiators and many of the first professors came from there.¹⁰ The college created its artistic and institutional identity from scratch. Since women had already made up about half of the students since 1945, one could therefore assume that in such a context, internal relations at the SHSPA had a chance to be re-established in an open and more equal distribution. However, as we know thanks to the *Little Chance to Advance?* (*Małe szanse na awans*) report published in 2015, the number of women students did not translate into the so-called pedagogical body. As the co-authors of the report state: "If the gender ratio among professors truly mirrored the gender ratio of students (with an appropriate time lag), women would have made up half of the professors back in the 1970s. Meanwhile, today, 45 years later, they make up only one-fifth".¹¹ The report showed that equality changes in Polish art academies are occurring as the slowest of all higher education institutions – at the level of theological schools [*sic!*] – therefore, the researchers call this situation not a glass ceiling, but an 'armoured ceiling'.

In this article, I would like to present my preliminary findings concerning the number of women at the State Higher School of Plastic Arts in Wrocław in the light of selected archival material from the years 1946-1980. Initially, I collected quantitative data as contextual research for my oral history based doctoral project at the University of Wrocław and within the scope of a research project entitled 'The Thicket' at the Wersja Foundation. I then developed the database with a grant from the National Science Centre and, based on my activist experience as part of the Caryatid Collective,¹² I transferred it to a dedicated Wikipedia subpage – a dedicated 'Wikiproject'.¹³ These are now partly available in open access as the Wikiproject

Thicket.¹⁴ Through this research I wish to look at how this kind of data can be useful for the feminist rewriting of Polish art history or even in evoking the so-called herstory of art in Poland.

History, herstories and statistics – mixing methodologies

As I began working on the Wrocław art herstories of the 1970s, which is the main part of my PhD project pursued in the field of oral history, I needed to compile a list of potential women interlocutors and obtain contacts with them. Preparing this list of artists inspired me to look at the presence of women in the Wrocław art community a little more broadly, from its post-war beginnings in 1945. While working on the individual narratives, I was simultaneously collecting personal information, which began to form a comprehensive database. I began to ask not only qualitative but also quantitative questions: how many women were there actually? What was their percentage of the total number of students, lecturers, exhibitors? Was the situation of women in the 1970s different from that of earlier decades, and if so, how?

An important moment for me was meeting Anna Kutera and receiving her story about the 1977 work *Is the Word 'Woman' a Noun or an Adjective*,¹⁵ in which the artist used data from a Central Statistical Office publication to ask provocative questions: if the figures prove the equality of women and men among art graduates, why do so few of these women fulfil themselves creatively and where does the problem of discrimination actually come from? Are not the women themselves responsible for their alienation?¹⁶

Following the artist's lead, I came across Roman Wieruszewski's 1975 publication *Equality of Women and Men in People's Poland*, a comprehensive study of the situation of women in the People's Republic of Poland compiled and published in conjunction with the United Nations'

proclamation of the International Women's Year. The author argued that, despite constitutional gender equality and women gaining full legal rights, it was still necessary to work towards exercising them in practice. To this end, he listed as essential: the need to abolish damaging stereotypes of weakness, lack of ambition or rationality which hold women back in the employment market, the stimulation of their professional development and more substantial participation in the adoption of leadership roles, and the unburdening of household duties, in which he assessed men's participation as still negligible.¹⁷ As Wieruszewski emphasised in his conclusion, care should be taken above all for the practical and psychological support of women, enhancing the process of their 'internal emancipation', resulting in their willingness to take up the opportunities for acting offered them by the socialist state, of course.¹⁸

I began to ask myself, therefore, obviously engaging with the Linda Nochlin's pivotal question¹⁹, what was it that caused – despite such a large number of women students of fine arts after the Second World War – that so few of them were recognised by art history? Why did such a small number pursue a successful career and are mentioned in the textbooks as important figures in contemporary art?

Even though I did not have a relevant social science background, I decided to add quantitative research to the qualitative methods I was using to collect and analyse micronarratives. Anna Kutera provided me with inspiration for this not only with her work, but also by showing me Anka Leśniak's 2010 video *Fading Traces*, in which she appeared telling her own story as one of the doyennes of 1970s art in Poland.²⁰ Thanks to this clue, I also discovered the 2011 project *Registered*, in which Lesniak created, among other pieces, very articulate, almost abstract 'statistical' paintings presenting the proportion of women and men in the exhibitions shown in contemporary art galleries existing since the 1970s, as well as an animation presenting data on the representation of women in art colleges in the twenty-first

century.²¹ I also remembered the iconic works of the American group Guerrilla Girls, which often used figures in its banners and posters. Their aim was to emphatically, visually communicate the glaring gender disparity in galleries and museum collections: "less than 5% of the artists in the Modern Art Sections are women, but 85% of the nudes are female", as we learn from their most recognisable work *Do Women Have To Be Naked To Get Into the Met. Museum?*²²

The possibility of using data visualisation techniques as a means of communicating knowledge, for example in digital humanities, and at the same time as a strategy of feminist activism, seems to me a particularly appealing prospect. I am therefore attempting to use these tactics in a very basic form – simple tables, ratios, arithmetical facts, indicators and figures – by inviting the hitherto rather alien statistical tools into the field of art history. A revised, herstorical and more equitable re-reading of the past of art in Wrocław gains a new dimension with the support of the language of mathematical signs and relationships, which brilliantly illustrates the existing social inequalities. The combination of qualitative, especially biographical, and quantitative methods seems to me to be particularly important when it comes to the critical reflection on women's art. This combination provides a basis for seeing processes, grasping changes and trends or visualising the historical setting also through personal testimonies. Even if it requires stating the obvious to begin with: that while women made up half of all art students in the previous century, among female staff at art academies they were mainly cleaners and secretaries; and that this is also reflected in the under-representation of women in museum collections or in the positions as art professors in the 21st century.

I was largely inspired to develop this article on the numerical presence of women in Wrocław's SHSPA by the *Little Chance to Advance?* report, mentioned above and widely discussed in the art community. However, I was encouraged to pursue it by the work of an 'academic sister', Magdalena

PP		- 2 -	70 2
Proj. Arch.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> prof. W. Wincze (K) (P) doc. J. Kewalczyk (P) doc. T. Forewicz (P) adj. Zb. Kawecki (P) st. as. N. Wieschalla st. as. R. Heszewski st. as. P. Karpiński asyst. K. Welewski asyst. E. Gańcza asyst. G. Jaresz asyst. P. Lamers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> wykl. dr S. Lipiński wykl. dr S. Będkowski wykl. int. S. Chrenowski wykl. int. W. Melicki 	0/11
Proj. Form. Przem.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> doc. K. Meissner (K) (P) st. wyk. J. Chierewski st. wyk. M. Jędrzejewski (P) od 1. 10. 74 st. wyk. W. Zajączkowski (P) 1. 10. 74 st. as. W. Semniszyn od 1. 10. 74 asyst. K. Bukasiński od 1. 10. 74 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> prof. dr T. Kolendowicz wykl. int. S. Zemła wykl. R. Gachewski asyst. M. Schultz 	0/6
Asyst. Ogólne	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> doc. J. Hałas (K) (P) doc. Z. Artymewska (P) 10. 24 - 30. 04. 75 st. wyk. I. Skomerowska (P) (Andoch) (P) wykl. R. Kenieczka (P) st. as. R. Reguliński st. as. A. Dymitrewicz od 1. 10. 74 asyst. M. Weiczuk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> prof. dr A. Smolalski wykl. Z. Meinhardt lektor agr. H. Ziólkowska agr. A. Zając agr. A. Maziarz dr A. Dworski wykl. dr J. Wrabec wykl. agr. J. Ekwiański wykl. dr E. Niemczyk wykl. dr E. Malachewicz wykl. agr. A. Chrzanowska 	3/7
Stud. MS-P.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> doc. K. B. Wiczerzek (P) 10. 24 - 30. 04. 75 wykl. J. Kozłowski st. as. S. Mróz 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ELIZBIETA AGNIESZKA ALINA 	0/4
Stud. M-F	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> st. wyk. R. Marchacz (P) 1. 10. 74 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> naucz. A. Sekełowska lekarz B. Żarnowska 	5/14
Wielki 17			2/2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Delator - Furonier 29 + Biurotechnika (etat adm.?) August. Piątkowska ♥ 			24
<p>KIEROWNICZE</p> <p>64 / 15</p>			21/6
			Jul 25/7

In the light of historical data, it would therefore be appropriate to say that there is a pedagogical model firmly rooted in the academy's past, and its figure in the 20th and 21st centuries is no longer master-disciple, but rather 'master and apprentices.'

Mach, previously unknown to me, who, at the conference “Women's Utopias in Action. 100 Years of Women's Voting Rights” in Kraków in 2018, presented a paper entitled *Women at the Jan Matejko Academy of Fine Arts in Kraków*, a compilation and analysis of quantitative data on female students and staff at the academy she is associated with.²³ I am convinced that collecting such research from other institutions in Poland, although tedious and time-consuming, will allow for more nuanced comparative studies in the future.

Research materials, objectives and questions

For the purposes of this article, I have set the upper time limit at 1980, that is the end of Tadeusz Forowicz's rectorship (1967-1980). The source materials I have analysed are: matriculation books, entry book and book of studies (student cards) covering the years 1946-1973, the diploma book (1952-1997) and academic year organisation plans from 1954 to 1980. Some documents were not available, such as the consecutive book of studies and staffing plans for some years, especially for the period 1946-1954. The research could be supplemented, deepened, and more detailed by referring to other documents, especially the personal files of individual female students and members of staff. However, as their total number is very high, analysing it was beyond the scope of this study. All the source materials mentioned are kept in the Archive of EGAAD. I have also used the information available in the monographs of the artistic milieu and academy in Wrocław, especially the book containing the memoirs of its first pedagogues, in order partially to fill in the missing information and to include herstorical testimonies.

When I refer to ‘women in SHSPA’ I mean those persons who have been identified as belonging to the female gender and socialised as

women. Staying with the binary gender division, I distinguish them based on their female name existing in the archival documents. When writing I seek to place them at the centre of both my interest and narrative. With the intention of looking at the equality transformations and the factors conditioning them, I ask the documents a very basic question: how many women were there actually in the Wrocław Academy of Fine Arts? I focus primarily on women students, including graduates, as well as research and teaching staff, also collecting scattered information about those working in the school's administrative division.

The aim of the authors of the *Little Chance to Advance?* report was to provide an answer to the question “why are women dropping out on such a scale in the Polish art education system?” and to identify the cultural, environmental, and psychological factors blocking their advancement and thus the generational and gender transformation in the art schools. This phenomenon, as the researchers point out, is the strongest in art colleges of all art schools and universities in general. They mainly point to the negative role of the master-apprentice model functioning in these colleges, which makes the professor's influence on the student's career path development very strong, sometimes extending throughout the student's entire lifetime.²⁴

In the course of researching and collecting the existing data, more questions emerged than I was able to answer, including: on what did the progression of those who persevered depend? Were there any differences in the speed of promotion between men and women? What were the reasons for dropping out for those who did not stay at the academy for long? How was the participation of women in the various fields of university life distributed according to their social background and chosen discipline? Could the choice of a particular discipline have been related to gender at the aspirational level or rather in terms of recognising one's own possibilities and those offered by the university or the labour market? To what extent might psychological factors –

resources, stress, support, encouragement received or lack thereof – that are unmeasurable from today's perspective, have determined their career development? Whether and how did men's and women's salaries differ, who had more access to additional paid assignments? What was the extent of unpaid work – organisational and emotional – provided to the school? I will try to answer some of these questions with the use of available micronarratives of the academy's first female pedagogues, published in 1996 in a collection of memoirs about SHSPA's by its founders, teachers, and students.²⁵

Linguistic and visual representation of gender

Nouns and adjectives in Polish have three types: masculine, feminine and neuter. In the documents analysed, all titles, position and function names were exclusively – with the exception of the positions of secretary and cleaner (*sic!*) – in masculine forms. This is in line with the nomenclature of the time, which favoured masculine forms, and the linguistic *usus*, both of which are still largely in place today and are reflected in the highly androcentric language of legal regulations (according to a grammatical rule, the collective masculine grammatical form covers also non-male persons, e.g. *studenci* that means both 'male students' and just 'students').²⁶ As English is more gender inclusive due to the lack of grammatical types, I will attempt to portray the language specifics where relevant to the information cited.

In order to counteract the anonymity of women in science, I have also decided to cite their personal details extensively. Due to the fact that, according to the practice in Poland, when women married, they usually changed their surname to their husband's or appended it to their own, I will at the first appearance in this text provide as broad a form of personal data under which the person was

known or may appear in documents and literature as possible. For the purposes of this publication, I also use pink to accentuate the names of the artists referred to and the related absolute figures in order to highlight the content relating to women, and purple to indicate the percentages of women and feminisation rates, both in the text and in the tables.

!?! – Informal co-foundress and women co-creators (1946–1953)

Based on the documents examined, it is unfortunately impossible to provide figures on the participation of women in the establishment of the SHSPA in its first eight years of existence. Therefore, from other sources, I would like to present a few of them by their names as persons important for the so-called pioneer period of the Wrocław academy.

In the literature discussing the beginnings of the Wrocław academy after World War II, reference is made primarily to its male founders – undoubtedly men were the main formal actors in the process of establishing and shaping the institution. In the monographs on the post-war artistic milieu in Wrocław, among the over a dozen names of the successively appointed teachers, several women are also mentioned: painters Hanna Krzetuska-Geppert and Maria Dawska (both appointed as assistants in 1948, usually mentioned among the 'pioneers' [masculinatives!], and even called by Andrzej Jarosz to be among 'the founding fathers' of the school [*sic!*]²⁷), glass designer Halina Jastrzębowska-Sigmund (although only appointed as a substitute, opening the academic year 1948/1949 with her inaugural lecture²⁸) and ceramicists Julia Kotarbińska and her assistant Halina Olech (both working at the SHSPA since 1950). Wanda Gołkowska and Łucja Skomorowska-Wilimowska themselves testify to their presence at the academy since 1950 as assistants (Gołkowska recalls that she was still a student at the time). Maria Starzewska mentions that she was employed

a year later as an art history lecturer.²⁹ No female teachers of sculpture, printmaking or drawing are recorded during this period, although certainly not all the women working at the college at the time are being listed.³⁰

Krzetuska in particular played an important role in shaping the foundations of the academy, as scholars confirm.³¹ However, what is significant is that Geppert, in describing the preparations and his fellow co-founders of the time, omits his own wife.³² She herself mentions that she was delighted with the prospect of moving to Wrocław, even though her husband initially located his ambitions more in Warsaw. "There were four of us at the time (I'm not counting myself), so all of us – Leon Dołżycki, Adam Hannytkiewicz, Eugeniusz Geppert, Emil Krcha – no longer counted on any work in Kraków," the artist writes in her memoirs, using an interesting rhetorical formula: simultaneously including herself ('us') and excluding (the enumeration).³³

Sylvia Świsłocka-Karwot also mentions other women involved in plastic arts and participating in the pioneering (1945-1949) exhibitions in Wrocław, these were: Zofia Krokowska-Zastawnik, Maria Jurczenko-Kamińska, Felicja Potyńska, Wanda Żygulska-Pogonowska, Krystyna Pękalska, Julia Ponikowska, Maria Zabłocka, Halina Łepkowska-Giecewicz, Irena Borzęcka-Kozłowska and Iza Hochman.³⁴ In the later socialist realist period (1949-1955), specified by the researcher, further names appear, to some extent of already graduated women: Barbara Gutekunst, Janina Rybicka, Jadwiga Szyszko, Marta Augustynowicz and Róża Kijankowska, Celina Brandstätter, Jadwiga Skomorowska and Łucja Skomorowska, Małgorzata Grabowska-Stradecka, Krzesława Maliszewska-Mazurkiewicz, Maria Janowska-Karpińska and Jadwiga Lebidowicz-Kociankowska³⁵ and Jadwiga Desage³⁶, and several women associated with Lower Silesia. These artists arrived in Wrocław in waves of resettlement from the Eastern Borderlands and migration from other parts of the country, and undoubtedly co-founded the artistic environment re-born in this city after the war. There is no evidence,

however, that they were appointed as lecturers to the emerging academy. Perhaps they were not interested in pedagogical work, or their qualifications were not, in the opinion of the decision-makers, sufficient for the roles of university teachers.

In this first period, it is clearly visible how factors related to a woman's social capital, such as connections, family background or the prestige of the education she received, played a major role in her employment at the academy.³⁷ Kotarbińska and Jastrzębowska, before the war, had been associated with the Warsaw Academy of Fine Arts and the renowned 'Ład' cooperative, and their relocation to Wrocław was linked to the task of strengthening the design division of the Academy in Wrocław, in accordance with the authorities' objectives. Krzetuska and Dawska, on the other hand, were established artists and had personal relationships with the school's key founders, and for both of them this was an ambivalent situation, bringing benefits as well as difficulties. After Geppert was indirectly forced to resign from the rector's chair in 1950, Krzetuska lost her employment entirely. And in 1970, in a somewhat corresponding situation happening in the context of the 1968 political crisis, Dawska had to give up her post and leave Wrocław with her husband (the academy's rector from 1952 to 1965). Krzetuska shares her experience, very consciously pointing out the mechanisms of power and symbolic violence against women: "At the same time, I was not given a further contract as a senior assistant. This was to prove, it seems, that only as long as I had a rector as a husband, I could lead a studio [...] Wherever I tried to get in, I faced an impenetrable wall. The campaign against me also had the excuse that it was simultaneously hitting my husband."³⁸

One should also note that the Wrocław academy was formed not only by female teachers, but also by non-teaching staff and students, about whom I write further on in the article. Of the first female students, Świsłocka-Karwot distinguishes (after Geppert): Celina Brandstätter, Izabela Kulczyńska, Ewa Erdt, Krzesława Maliszewska, Wanda Gołkowska and Małgorzata Grabowska.³⁹

Furthermore, the researcher points out that Irena Podbereska-Ptatakis was among those recognised after the first six months of the school's operation, and goes on to mention the names of the 1950 scholarship recipients: Janina Kasperska and Ł. Skomorowska. Among the female graduates noted at the beginning of the 1950s were, besides Gólkowska, Janina Mękarska and Jadwiga Lebiechowicz.⁴⁰ However, these are only a few names from among the first female students, because until 1950 a total of around 150 women entered the walls of SHSPA. Altogether, between 1946 and 1972, the group of female students numbered 634, and it is from this largest representation of women at the Wrocław academy that I will begin my further analysis.

1:1 – Significant others. Female students
49% – truly fully accepted into the academic community?

Data on students, i.e. those admitted into the academy with student record book numbers issued, is drawn from the slightly inconsistent archival documents covering the period 1946-1972: Matriculation Book 1946-1956 (record numbers 1-551), Entry Book for 1952/53, 1953/54 and 1955/56, Book of Studies – Student Cards 1956-1967 (record numbers 552-965) and Matriculation Book 1967-1973 (record numbers 966-1274). Records for the years 1973-1982 were unavailable, the next archived book covers the years 1982-1996. Some of the staffing plans included overall figures for the number of students and enrolments, but these figures were estimates based on the results of the entrance examinations and therefore do not match the figures of actual entrants.

In the light of the above documents, women accounted for almost half of all those who started their studies at the State Higher School of Visual Arts in Wrocław between 1946 and 1972 – there were 634 women to 638 men, making women 49.8% of all students in a given period. The average feminisation rate, however, measured by the average percentage of women in each academic year, was 48.8%. Therefore, it can be stated that there were almost equal numbers of men and women in the group of all new entrants in the

examined period. This could be followed by more detailed questions: did such an equal proportion characterise all faculties and studios? How did this ratio change in the later years of study?

WOMEN AMONG STUDENTS ENTERING THE SHSPA IN WROCŁAW IN 1946-1972				
Starting year of studies	ADMITTED STUDENTS			AVERAGE feminisation rate (AFR)
	TOTAL	of which women	percentage (%) of women (FR)	
1946	36	20	55,6%	54,5%
1947	74	45	60,8%	
1948	58	27	46,6%	
1949	42	24	57,1%	
1950	67	35	52,2%	
1951	45	24	53,3%	38,4%
1952	37	15	40,5%	
1953	39	13	33,3%	
1954	35	8	22,9%	
1955	38	16	42,1%	
1956	37	13	35,1%	46,4%
1957	46	31	67,4%	
1958	35	17	48,6%	
1959	42	19	45,2%	
1960	42	15	35,7%	
1961	47	23	48,9%	46,6%
1962	56	27	48,2%	
1963	50	25	50,0%	
1964	47	19	40,4%	
1965	42	19	45,2%	
1966	48	26	54,2%	53,6%
1967	47	25	53,2%	
1968	47	24	51,1%	
1969	59	34	57,6%	
1970	50	26	52,0%	
1971	52	35	67,3%	60,5%
1972	54	29	53,7%	
TOTAL:	1272	634	49,8%	-
AVERAGE:	47,1	23,5	48,8%	-

Table 1. Women among students entering the State Higher School of Plastic Arts in Wrocław between 1946 and 1972.

As Table 1 shows, both the total number of admissions and the percentage of female students

slightly fluctuated. In the first five years following the opening of the SHSPA, the enrolment of women was slightly higher than that of men – in the record-breaking academic year of 1947/48, as many as 45 women were admitted, which accounted for almost 61% of all the students. It can therefore be said that women took the opportunity of an education that was new to them in greater numbers, with the average feminisation rate for this period being 54.5%. Undoubtedly, this high feminisation rate is related to the general increased activation of women immediately after the war, referred to by Fidelis after Irena Krzywicka as the 'new matriarchy'.⁴¹ However, the rate fell already in the following five years (1951-1955), by as much as sixteen percentage points to only 38.4%. This period was also characterised by a high volatility of the gender ratio, with fluctuations of up to around thirty percentage points. Similar dynamics characterised the next period (thirty-two percentage points), with a noticeable increase in the average. In the following five-year period, the average stabilised at a similar level as before, repeating the result of around 46.5% with half the fluctuation in the feminisation rate for the individual years.

In the second half of the 1960s, the average gradually increased, approaching the initial level with the lowest fluctuation of only 6.6 percentage points. In the 1971/72 academic year, the feminisation rate rose steeply again to 67.3% – the second highest in the period under review, and almost identical for 1957/58. In contrast, the lowest enrolment of women was in 1954/55, with only 8 female students, representing 23% of the total number.

Thus, after the initial 'little domination' of studies at the SHSPA by women, a kind of backlash and instability of the gender ratio can be observed from the early 1950s until the end of the decade. From the 1960s onwards, women seem to have gradually returned to the position occupied earlier, of fully-fledged students and their presence consistently grew in strength, slightly exceeding the number of male students. Presumably, this trend continued or increased slightly in the 1970s,

but these figures do not, of course, reveal whether equality on a quantitative level translated into equal treatment in the education process itself.

The records analysed also provide other information to varying degrees, such as marital status, social background, grades and examination results, honours, major or faculty chosen, degree obtained and diploma examination grade. Above all, it would be valuable to analyse to what extent the various fields of specialisation were feminised. Given the faculties functioning at the academy at the time and a general review of selected documents, one of the most plausible hypotheses concerns the higher presence of women in ceramics versus glass design and in painting versus sculpture. However, its verification requires a more detailed analysis of the archival materials.

50% – determination of female graduates

Graduation means succeeding at the educational level. It may have been affected by a variety of factors – social capital possessed, family role models, social background, available resources (including material), encouragement or discouragement received, degree of determination and others. Data on the number of graduates is drawn from the Diploma Book covering diplomas issued between 1952 and 1997 (numbers 1-1929). For the purposes of this overview, I limit the time span to 1986 to reflect the group studying between 1945 and 1980 and to keep the breakdown to five-year periods.

Although the fluctuation in the average percentage of female graduates is much higher than that of students and the range of difference between years is as high as 47 percentage points, this is most likely due to the individualisation of learning and migration between groups due to breaks, dean's leaves or resumption of the course of study. The distribution of numbers across years may also have been influenced by the changes in the study cycle and curricula (e.g. some of those

starting their studies in 1950 defended in 1955 and some in 1956). On average, during the indicated period, women made up approximately 49.7% of all graduates, which is one percentage point more than in the group of students. It can therefore be concluded that the number of female graduates was equal to the number of male graduates in the period studied (women represented 50.3% of the sum of all graduates from 1952 to 1986).

Women among graduates of the SHSPA in Wrocław in 1952-1986				
Year of graduation	GRADUATES			
	TOTAL	of which women	percentage (%) of women (FR)	AVERAGE feminisation rate (AFR)
1952	37	23	62,2%	52,4%
1953	36	18	50,0%	
1954	28	14	50,0%	
1955	12	6	50,0%	
1956	30	15	50,0%	
1957	28	17	60,7%	39,7%
1958	20	10	50,0%	
1959	24	11	45,8%	
1960	24	5	20,8%	
1961	19	4	21,1%	
1962	33	14	42,4%	50,6%
1963	28	19	67,9%	
1964	19	9	47,4%	
1965	31	12	38,7%	
1966	23	13	56,5%	
1967	37	15	40,5%	47,4%
1968	41	23	56,1%	
1969	42	23	54,8%	
1970	32	14	43,8%	
1971	31	13	41,9%	
1972	32	20	62,5%	59,0%
1973	69	37	53,6%	
1974	50	31	62,0%	
1975	49	25	51,0%	
1976	35	23	65,7%	
1977	59	33	55,9%	52,4%
1978	52	29	55,8%	
1979	55	25	45,5%	
1980	68	38	55,9%	
1981	43	21	48,8%	
1982	38	20	52,6%	46,4%
1983	38	18	47,4%	
1984	48	26	54,2%	
1985	62	23	37,1%	
1986	71	29	40,8%	
TOTAL:	1344	676	50,3%	-
AVERAGE:	38,4	19,3	49,7%	-

Table 2. Women among graduates (master's degree) of the State Higher School of Plastic Arts in Wrocław between 1952 and 1986.

On the other hand, if we try to calculate the success rate and compare the data on those entering SHSPA with the data on the graduates, we find that, although women do slightly better than men in the overall numbers (a difference of about two percentage points), the average success rate for both genders for the respective years is quite comparable at around 68.5%. However, it must be acknowledged that the success of women is of a somewhat different nature – taking into account additional unfavourable factors such as the high masculinisation of the staff, greater exposure to sexual violence, performing of reproductive work by some women while studying, which involved not only unfavourable interruptions to their studies, but sometimes also the decision to abandon this educational path after maternity leave, it must be concluded that women did much better than the numbers alone indicate.

When comparing the average success rates for women and men for the respective five-year periods, on the other hand, it is noticeable that, although female students initially fared slightly worse than their male counterparts, by the turn of the 1950s and 1960s, the average success rate for their group had increased by almost fifteen percentage points (while for men by only five) and since then they have consistently outperformed men over the period studied. All this may indicate their strong determination and the increasingly more favourable study conditions for them.

The disparity between the success of men and women by year ranges from a mere 0.3 percentage points difference for those entering university in 1966 to 35 percentage points for those entering in 1955. This was the second most disadvantageous year for women, only 37.5% of them became graduates. The worst results, however, came from the highly feminised initial enrolment of women – despite making up 55.6% of first-year students, only 35% of them obtained their diploma. The highest success rates of 94.3% and 91.7% characterised the groups of women entering school in 1971 (with the second highest feminisation rate of 67.3%) and 1951 (feminisation rate of 53.3%) respectively. These results may

indicate a correlation between the number of women in general and their success—the more women there are, the better they do on average.

It would also be interesting to analyse the grades received during the course of study and at graduation and the impact of additional stimulation in the form of various scholarships, prizes and awards, as well as the ‘penalties’ given (failed exams, reprimands or other disciplinary penalties, or the sheer lack of positive stimuli compared to the group).

However, women’s determination and success at university level seems not to translate into later professional success understood as artistic and academic prosperity. Perhaps some of them saw their happiness elsewhere, e.g. in economic security or family life, and so just getting a degree was for them a sufficient achievement? Or was the art world so impenetrable to them? One contemporary study found that female students are twice more likely than male students to find their field of study particularly stressful and twice more likely to suffer from depression and anxiety disorders, while at the same time they achieve better results and prove to be more hard-working. This demonstrates the low self-esteem of women and the much greater effort they put in.⁴²

Less equal further paths

Interestingly, Geppert mentions as many as 6 women among his first students [maskulinatives!]: Brandstätter, Erdt, Gołkowska, Grabowska, Kulczyńska, Maliszewska, and 4 men, which is surprisingly in line with the gender ratio of the time (women made up about 56% of the group beginning their studies in 1946). However, while half of the aforementioned students immediately became employees of the university (50%), only two of the women became teachers (33%) – and that was a rung below, at the secondary art school.⁴³ What becomes revealed in this recollection is not only the disparity in numbers, but also in the direction of aspirations and career opportunities.

SUCCESS RATE AMONG STUDENTS OF THE SHSPA IN WROCLAW IN 1946-1972											
Starting year of studies	NEW ENTRANTS			GRADUATES			SUCCESS RATE				
	TOTAL	of which men	of which women	TOTAL	of which men	of which women	OVER-ALL	for men (M)	AVER-AGE for M	for women (W)	AVER-AGE for W
1946	36	16	20	13	6	7	36,1%	37,5%	53,4%	35,0%	50,2%
1947	74	29	45	37	13	24	50,0%	44,8%		53,3%	
1948	58	31	27	27	15	12	46,6%	48,4%		44,4%	
1949	42	18	24	31	15	16	73,8%	83,3%		66,7%	
1950	67	32	35	35	17	18	52,2%	53,1%		51,4%	
1951	45	21	24	37	15	22	82,2%	71,4%	66,2%	91,7%	64,3%
1952	37	22	15	23	12	11	62,2%	54,5%		73,3%	
1953	39	26	13	26	17	9	66,7%	65,4%		69,2%	
1954	35	27	8	22	18	4	62,9%	66,7%		50,0%	
1955	38	22	16	22	16	6	57,9%	72,7%		37,5%	
1956	37	24	13	31	20	11	83,8%	83,3%	68,5%	84,6%	63,6%
1957	46	15	31	29	9	20	63,0%	60,0%		64,5%	
1958	35	18	17	24	14	10	68,6%	77,8%		58,8%	
1959	42	23	19	28	16	12	66,7%	69,6%		63,2%	
1960	42	27	15	21	14	7	50,0%	51,9%	46,7%	73,7%	78,2%
1961	47	24	23	37	19	18	78,7%	79,2%	78,3%		
1962	56	29	27	43	20	23	76,8%	69,0%	85,2%		
1963	50	25	25	37	17	20	74,0%	68,0%	80,0%		
1964	47	28	19	35	22	13	74,5%	78,6%	68,4%		
1965	42	23	19	32	17	15	76,2%	73,9%	78,9%	71,8%	78,9%
1966	48	22	26	35	16	19	72,9%	72,7%	73,1%		
1967	47	22	25	37	17	20	78,7%	77,3%	80,0%		
1968	47	23	24	37	17	20	78,7%	73,9%	83,3%		
1969	59	25	34	40	15	25	67,8%	60,0%	73,5%	89,2%	92,0%
1970	50	24	26	40	18	22	80,0%	75,0%	84,6%		
1971	52	17	35	47	14	33	90,4%	82,4%	94,3%		
1972	54	25	29	50	24	26	92,6%	96,0%	89,7%	-	-
TOTAL:	1272	638	634	876	433	443	68,9%	67,9%	-	69,9%	-
AVERAGE:	47,1	23,6	23,5	32,4	16,0	16,4	69,0%	68,4%	-	68,9%	-

Table 3. Success rate among students of the State Higher School of Plastic Arts in Wrocław between 1946 and 1972 (not including transfers between colleges).

In one of the already mentioned papers for the UN conference, researchers of women's labour activity state that among the factors influencing advancement, the most significant is the one of personality.⁴⁴ But was it really women who were alienating themselves, unable to have a better job and salary, or was it also determined by the context? Based on the archival data, it is impossible to say whether overcoming obstacles at the university level was so exhausting that it was for this reason that, after graduation, women were content with less prestigious but more secure jobs, ready to go into production plants scattered all over the country. Nor is it possible to determine what their attitude to further artistic pursuits was, or the reasons why some of them chose to devote themselves to a perhaps slightly less stressful family life, considering their own art as a side occupation.

Geppert's recollection, however, provides an unexpected clue – he apparently overlooked the presence of his own female assistant, Gołkowska, at the academy. Perhaps, then, in the realm of academic careers, women were not well regarded – recognised and wanted – as potential college employees? In what follows, then, I look at the quantitative presence of women in the group of SHSPA teachers.

1:5 – (Un)womanly pedagogical body and ladies' corners

Perhaps Geppert forgot about Gołkowska because she resembled him in nothing. As the authors of the *Little Chance to Advance?* report claim, in the case of the selection of assistants or successors in art schools characterised by a very high degree of intimacy, the presence of the 'little-self' (or 'mini-me') syndrome is identified, which means the selection of a student with similar characteristics to one's own who will be an extension of oneself.⁴⁵ Women were, however, invited to become assistant professors and, to some extent, continued as academics, but in the period under review none

of them reached the position of full professor. The position of associate professor was enjoyed by only two: Kotarbińska (1957-1965) and, for a mere two years, Dawska (1968-1970), who had to step down with her husband.

I base my analysis of the personnel of the SHSPA on the annual staffing plans. It has been possible to present reliable figures for female teachers since around the mid-1950s – the first staffing plan preserved in the Archive of the EGAAD dates from 1954.⁴⁶ Plans for the years 1961-63, the academic year 1967/68 and 1972/73 remain unavailable and are therefore not included here. The figures quoted from these documents are based on plans that were prepared at the beginning of the academic year and therefore do not take into account mid-year turnover within the so-called teaching body: departures, admissions or promotions.

Within the population of female teachers I would like to distinguish between two groups: full-time employees (open-ended contracts) and employees working on so-called 'contracted hours' (temporary contracts covering teaching hours only). In addition, I would like to look at the presence of women at different rungs of the university position hierarchy. Finally, based on the collected figures, I would like to present those places in the academy that were significantly or insufficiently feminised.

Full-time (16%) and contractual (20%) female teachers

The data collected for the years 1954-1980 show that the percentage of female staff in both groups altogether did not exceed 23%. Women accounted for an average of 17.6% of the university's total teaching staff and a slight rising trend can be seen over the 26 years examined. On average, there were nearly five male teachers to one female teacher (1:4.7), although it must be remembered that the data collected is incomplete and the results differ slightly from the actual situation.

WOMEN AMONG THE RESEARCH AND TEACHING STAFF OF THE SHSPA IN WROCLAW IN 1954-1980												
Academic year	ALL ACADEMICS				of which FULL TIME				of which on CONTRACTED HOURS			
	TOTAL	of which women	% of women	AFR	TOTAL	of which women	% of women	AFR	TOTAL	of which women	% of women	AFR
1954/55	-	-	-	-	51	9	17,6%		n.a.	n.a.	-	
1955/56	52	9	17,3%	15,5%	34	6	17,6%	16,2%	18	3	16,7%	15,0%
1956/57	55	7	12,7%		35	5	14,3%		20	2	10,0%	
1957/58	57	10	17,5%		36	6	16,7%		21	4	19,0%	
1958/59	-	-	-		34	6	17,6%		n.a.	n.a.	-	
1959/60	69	10	14,5%		41	6	14,6%		28	4	14,3%	
1960/61*	52	7	13,5%	14,6%	37	5	13,5%	15,3%	15	2	13,3%	13,5%
1961/62	n.a.	n.a.	-		n.a.	n.a.	-		n.a.	n.a.	-	
1962/63	n.a.	n.a.	-		n.a.	n.a.	-		n.a.	n.a.	-	
1963/64	88	14	15,9%		47	8	17,0%		41	6	14,6%	
1964/65*	62	9	14,5%		46	7	15,2%		16	2	12,5%	
1965/66	91	14	15,4%	18,3%	46	5	10,9%	13,3%	45	9	20,0%	24,0%
1966/67	87	16	18,4%		44	6	13,6%		43	10	23,3%	
1967/68	n.a.	n.a.	-		n.a.	n.a.	-		n.a.	n.a.	-	
1968/69	101	21	20,8%		56	8	14,3%		45	13	28,9%	
1969/70	101	19	18,8%		55	8	14,5%		46	11	23,9%	
1970/71	107	17	15,9%	15,6%	55	8	14,5%	15,2%	52	9	17,3%	16,2%
1971/72	105	17	16,2%		54	9	16,7%		51	8	15,7%	
1972/73	n.a.	n.a.	-		n.a.	n.a.	-		n.a.	n.a.	-	
1973/74	122	17	13,9%		86	12	14,0%		36	5	13,9%	
1974/75	129	21	16,3%		84	13	15,5%		45	8	17,8%	
1975/76	133	27	20,3%	20,8%	87	15	17,2%	19,0%	46	12	26,1%	24,5%
1976/77	127	24	18,9%		83	17	20,5%		44	7	15,9%	
1977/78	133	30	22,6%		90	18	20,0%		43	12	27,9%	
1978/79	141	28	19,9%		87	16	18,4%		54	12	22,2%	
1979/80	143	32	22,4%		100	19	19,0%		43	13	30,2%	
AVERAGE:			17,6%	AVERAGE:			16,1%	AVERAGE:			19,9%	-

Table 4. Women among the academics (research and teaching staff) of the State Higher School of Plastic Arts in Wrocław between 1954 and 1980. Data for the academic year 1958/59 is incomplete and for the years 1961/62, 1962/63, 1967/68 and 1972/73 not available. Data on persons employed on contracted hours in the years marked with an asterisk (*) is underreported.

As Table 4 presents, the feminisation rate in the group of those working on contracted hours was slightly higher than for those in full-time positions, with an average of 19.9% for contracted hours and

16.1% for FTEs (only these positions counted in the official statistics of academic teachers compiled by the Central Statistical Office).

Interestingly, however, by 1965 the proportion was different: between 1954 and 1965, the proportion of female full-time employees was on average 1.2 percentage points higher than the other studied group.

Apparently, in 1965, with Stanisław Pękalski taking over as rector (1965-1967), there was a clear and significant (sustained) change in the employment policy. Already in his first year in office, the teaching body was enlarged by almost half, from 62 persons to 91. This did not, however, involve an increase in the number of full-time female staff, who initially even declined slightly (from 7 to 5, while there were 46 men in both years). A significant increase in the number of employees can only be observed in the group of people on contracted hours – the number of women increased from 2 to 9, which meant a jump of 7.5 percentage points in feminisation rate for this group. And while there was a significant increase in gender equality in this group, it was still at a very low level of 20%, and there were far more men employed – their group increased by as many as 22 contractors. However, the following years saw an increase in the number of women in contracted hours up to a level of almost 30% in the academic year 1968/69. Overall, in the second half of the 1960s, there were on average 10.7 percentage points more of them than women in permanent positions. This shows that the increase in the employment of women in research and teaching positions overall was not necessarily associated with the stabilisation of their status and the improvement of their working conditions.

While in the five-year period of 1970-1975 the percentage of women employed on a contract basis fell by almost 8 percentage points, in the following five-year period 1975-1980 it increased by the same number of 8 percentage points (24,0%–16,2%–24,5%). In the same period, a small but steady increase in the group of full-time female employees can be observed, first by about 2 percentage points and later by nearly 4 (13,3%–15,2%–19,0%). Such distinct numerical fluctuations testify to the much higher turnover and instability of employment on commissioned

hours, where personnel changes were made on an ad hoc basis. This form of employment was mostly occupied by people who were either at the lowest, assistant level of the research and teaching career path or, for various reasons, outside of it: lecturers, language teachers, PE teachers or those teaching the so-called theoretical and humanistic subjects.

Over the 26 years studied, the expansion of the permanent personnel increased the number of full-time employees by 39 men (an increase from 42 to 81, i.e. about 193%) and by 10 women (from 9 to 19, i.e. about 211%). Thus, it can be said that the gender gap in employment decreased, but it was a rather slight change. At the beginning and at the end of the period under study, there were still more than four full-time teachers to one female teacher (1:4.7 in 1954 and 1:4.3 in 1980, respectively). However, the average ratio for the entire period was higher at 1:5.2 and even reached an overwhelming ratio of eight men to one woman in the aforementioned year 1965 (a feminisation rate of just under 11%).

Thus, in the light of the data collected, it must be noted that from the mid-1950s the inequality in the key group of full-time employees was in fact increasing and did not fall to its initial level until the mid-1970s. The disproportion did not begin to decline noticeably until the end of the period under study, but by the end of the decade it was only slightly lower than in 1954 (1.4 percentage points of difference). Thus, this insignificant change within the academy did not at all reflect the equality-related social and awareness shift, which, at the level of full-time female employment at SHSPA, only began to become visible in the second half of the 1970s. However, even then it remained far (by exactly 11 percentage points) from the 30% threshold.

Leaking pipe, or ladder with broken rungs
(and springboards)

As I have already mentioned, the percentage of the presence of women among full-time teaching staff at the SHSPA in Wrocław between 1954 and 1980 was around 16%. This group included persons in hierarchically ranked positions in several sub-groups, the systematisation and nomenclature

of which changed at the time under state regulations. In order to look at the distribution of the feminisation rate according to classification at the different ranks, for the purposes of this summary and based on the nomenclature present in the documents analysed, I have adopted the systematisation closest to the Higher Education Act of 1958.⁴⁷ It distinguishes the following teaching positions [in masculinatives only!], to whom I have tried to allocate English-language equivalents:

ACADEMIC POSITIONS ACCORDING TO THE HIGHER EDUCATION ACT OF 1958		Comments
IN POLISH	IN ENGLISH	
I. Pracownicy nauki:	I. Academics (Research-and-teaching staff):	
1. samodzielni:	1. independent researchers:	
a) profesor zwyczajny	a) full professor	A
b) profesor nadzwyczajny	b) associate professor	B
c) docent etatowy	c) full-time docent	C
2. pomocniczy:	2. auxiliary researchers:	
a) adiunkt	a) assistant professor / adjunct (professor)	a
b) starszy asystent	b) senior assistant	b
c) asystent	c) (research-and-teaching) assistant	c
II. Inni pracownicy:	II. Other employees:	
1. dydaktyczni:	1. teaching staff:	
a) starszy wykładowca	a) senior lecturer	I
b) wykładowca	b) lecturer	II
c) bibliotekarze dyplomowani:	c) certified / qualified librarians:	4
i. starszy kustosz biblioteczny	i. senior library custodian	
ii. kustosz dyplomowany	ii. qualified custodian	
iii. adiunkt biblioteczny	iii. adjunct librarian	
iv. asystent biblioteczny	iv. library assistant	
d) lektor (nauczyciel języków obcych)	d) lector / reader (foreign language teacher)	5
e) nauczyciel wychowania fizycznego	e) physical education teacher	3
f) nauczyciele przedmiotów, zawodów i umiejętności praktycznych	f) subject, vocational and practical skills teachers	1, 2
2. [pracownicy techniczno-badawczy, naukowo-techniczni, robotnicy].	2. [technical and research staff, scientific and technical staff, workers].	non-teachers
III. [Pracownicy administracyjno-biurowi, gospodarczy i obsługi oraz robotnicy remontowi i transportowi].	III. [Administrative, clerical, housekeeping and service workers, repair and transport workers].	non-teachers

Table 4. Academic (research and teaching) positions according to the Act of 5 November 1958 on Higher Education Institutions, in Polish with suggested equivalents in English.

According to the legislation, the group of the academic teachers included persons occupying full-time positions in the research and teaching track – independent researchers and the so-called auxiliary research forces – as well as persons in the teaching track. In addition, people involved in teaching supporting subjects, foreign languages, practical and vocational skills, physical education,

qualified people working in the library or dealing with scientific documentation were included.

As regulations regarding the structure and nomenclature of academic personnel (as well as the respective salaries) have changed over the years, the classification of individuals within the academic hierarchy has sometimes fluctuated.⁴⁸ In the following summary, I have attempted to

WOMEN IN PARTICULAR ACADEMIC POSITIONS IN SHSPA IN 1954-1980												
Academic year	1954/55	1955/56	1956/57	1957/58	1958/59	1959/60	1960/61	1961/62	1962/63	1963/64	1964/65	1965/66
TOTAL FULL-TIME POSTS	50	34	35	36	34	41	37	n.a.	n.a.	47	46	46
of which women	9	6	5	6	6	6	5	n.a.	n.a.	8	7	5
% of women (FR)	18%	18%	14%	17%	18%	15%	14%	-	-	17%	15%	11%
		16%					15%					13%
A full professors												
TOTAL	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	n.a.	n.a.	1	-	-
of which women	-	-	-	-	-	0	0	n.a.	n.a.	0	-	-
% of women (FR)	-	-	-	-	-	0%	0%	-	-	0%	-	-
		0,0%					0%					-
B associate professors (incl. professors in 1954 and contract professors)												
TOTAL	9	1	3	5	4	4	4	n.a.	n.a.	3	3	2
of which women	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	n.a.	n.a.	1	1	0
% of women (FR)	11%	0%	0%	20%	25%	25%	25%	-	-	33%	33%	0%
		14%					31%					10%
C full-time docents (incl. contract docents)												
TOTAL	0	0	1	4	4	5	5	n.a.	n.a.	6	6	6
of which women	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	n.a.	n.a.	1	1	1
% of women (FR)	-	-	0%	25%	25%	20%	20%	-	-	17%	17%	17%
		17,5%					18%					16%
a adjunct professors												
TOTAL	5	5	5	6	6	6	7	n.a.	n.a.	9	12	11
of which women	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	n.a.	n.a.	1	2	1
% of women (FR)	20%	20%	20%	17%	17%	17%	14%	-	-	11%	17%	9%
		18%					14%					15%
b senior assistants												
TOTAL	1	3	3	6	5	9	6	n.a.	n.a.	6	5	5
of which women	0	1	1	2	2	3	2	n.a.	n.a.	2	1	1
% of women (FR)	0%	33%	33%	33%	40%	33%	33%	-	-	33%	20%	20%
		35%					29%					31%
c assistants (incl. trainees)												
TOTAL	10	5	6	2	4	1	1	n.a.	n.a.	2	1	-
of which women	2	1	1	1	1	0	0	n.a.	n.a.	0	0	-
% of women (FR)	20%	20%	17%	50%	25%	0%	0%	-	-	0%	0%	-
		22%					0%					0,0%
I senior lecturers (incl. deputy professors)												
TOTAL	3	11	8	2	2	1	1	n.a.	n.a.	3	3	2
of which women	1	2	2	0	0	0	0	n.a.	n.a.	1	0	0
% of women (FR)	33%	18%	25%	0%	0%	0%	0%	-	-	33%	0%	0%
		9%					11%					4%
II lecturers												
TOTAL	9	-	-	-	-	-	-	n.a.	n.a.	-	-	1
of which women	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	n.a.	n.a.	-	-	0
% of women (FR)	11%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0%
		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	15%
1 auxiliary subjects teachers												
TOTAL	-	-	-	-	-	5	3	n.a.	n.a.	6	6	5
of which women	-	-	-	-	-	0	0	n.a.	n.a.	1	1	1
% of women (FR)	-	-	-	-	-	0%	0%	-	-	17%	17%	20%
		0,0%					11%					9%
2 vocational teachers												
TOTAL	6	7	7	9	7	7	7	n.a.	n.a.	8	8	8
of which women	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	n.a.	n.a.	0	0	0
% of women (FR)	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	-	-	0%	0%	0%
		0%					0%					0%
3 physical education teachers												
TOTAL	0	1	1	1	-	1	1	n.a.	n.a.	1	1	1
of which women	0	0	0	0	-	0	0	n.a.	n.a.	0	0	0
% of women (FR)	-	0%	0%	0%	-	0%	0%	-	-	0%	0%	0%
		0%					0%					0%
4 librarians												
TOTAL	1	1	1	1	-	1	1	n.a.	n.a.	1	1	1
of which women	1	1	0	0	-	0	0	n.a.	n.a.	1	1	1
% of women (FR)	100%	100%	0%	0%	-	0%	0%	-	-	100%	100%	100%
		25%					67%					67%
5 others (instructors, readers, other)												
TOTAL	6	0	0	-	2	-	-	n.a.	n.a.	1	-	4
of which women	2	0	0	-	0	-	-	n.a.	n.a.	0	-	0
% of women (FR)	33%	-	-	-	0%	-	-	-	-	0%	-	0%
		0,0%					0,0%					0%

WOMEN IN PARTICULAR ACADEMIC POSITIONS IN SHSPA IN 1954-1980

1966/67	1967/68	1968/69	1969/70	1970/71	1971/72	1972/73	1973/74	1974/75	1975/76	1976/77	1977/78	1978/79	1979/80	
44	n.a.	56	55	55	54	n.a.	86	84	87	83	90	87	100	58,5
6	n.a.	8	8	8	9	n.a.	12	13	15	17	18	16	19	9,6
14%	-	14%	15%	15%	17%	-	14%	16%	17%	21%	20%	18%	19%	
				15%					19%					
-	n.a.	-	-	-	-	n.a.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,0
-	n.a.	-	-	-	-	n.a.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0,0
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
				-					-					
2	n.a.	5	5	1	1	n.a.	1	1	1	-	-	-	1	2,9
0	n.a.	1	1	0	0	n.a.	0	0	0	-	-	-	0	0,5
0%	-	20%	20%	0%	0%	-	0%	0%	0%	-	-	-	0%	
				0%					0%					
8	n.a.	7	10	13	15	n.a.	15	15	18	19	21	21	21	10,0
2	n.a.	1	1	1	2	n.a.	2	2	4	4	4	3	3	1,6
25%	-	14%	10%	8%	13%	-	13%	13%	22%	21%	19%	14%	14%	
				12%					18%					
6	n.a.	8	5	7	7	n.a.	10	10	14	15	14	19	17	9,3
1	n.a.	1	1	2	2	n.a.	2	2	2	3	3	3	2	1,6
17%	-	13%	20%	29%	29%	-	20%	20%	14%	20%	21%	16%	12%	
				24%					17%					
4	n.a.	5	5	6	7	n.a.	12	16	15	12	20	15	16	8,3
1	n.a.	2	2	1	1	n.a.	2	2	4	3	5	3	3	2,0
25%	-	40%	40%	17%	14%	-	17%	13%	27%	25%	25%	20%	19%	
				15%					23%					
1	n.a.	4	3	2	-	n.a.	23	14	15	14	12	8	13	7,1
0	n.a.	0	0	0	-	n.a.	3	2	2	3	2	2	3	1,2
0%	-	0%	0%	0%	-	-	13%	14%	13%	21%	17%	25%	23%	
				9%					20%					
7	n.a.	4	6	4	4	n.a.	9	14	14	13	14	14	16	7,0
0	n.a.	0	1	1	1	n.a.	2	3	2	2	3	3	4	1,3
0%	-	0%	17%	25%	25%	-	22%	21%	14%	15%	21%	21%	25%	
				23%					20%					
4	n.a.	9	8	10	9	n.a.	8	4	1	-	-	1	7	5,9
1	n.a.	2	1	1	1	n.a.	1	1	0	-	-	1	3	1,1
25%	-	22%	13%	10%	11%	-	13%	25%	0%	-	-	100%	43%	
				15%					48%					
7	n.a.	5	5	3	3	n.a.	2	3	4	4	3	4	1	4,1
1	n.a.	0	0	0	0	n.a.	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0,3
14%	-	0%	0%	0%	0%	-	0%	0%	25%	0%	0%	0%	0%	
				0%					5%					
5	n.a.	5	5	5	6	n.a.	6	5	5	4	4	4	6	6,1
0	n.a.	0	0	0	0	n.a.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0,0
0%	-	0%	0%	0%	0%	-	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	
				0%					0%					
0	n.a.	1	1	0	0	n.a.	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	0,7
0	n.a.	0	0	0	0	n.a.	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	0,2
-	-	0%	0%	-	-	-	-	-	-	100%	100%	100%	100%	
				-					1					
-	n.a.	2	2	2	2	n.a.	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1,3
-	n.a.	1	1	2	2	n.a.	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	0,9
-	-	50%	50%	100%	100%	-	-	100%	-	-	-	-	-	
				100%					-					
-	n.a.	1	-	2	-	n.a.	-	2	-	1	1	-	1	1,8
-	n.a.	0	-	0	-	n.a.	-	0	-	1	0	-	0	0,3
-	-	0%	-	0%	-	-	-	0%	-	100%	0%	-	0%	
				0%					33,3%					

Table 5. Employment of women in particular full-time research, teaching and other academic positions in the State Higher School of Plastic Arts in Wrocław between 1954 and 1980.⁴⁹

present as accurately as possible the numerical ratios of women and men at various rungs of the academic ladder, which I have standardised. I have included contract professors in the associate professors' group, contract docents in the docents' group and deputy professors in the senior lecturers' group. The 'other' group includes positions that have occasionally appeared as permanent positions over the years: instructors, lecturers or assistant trainees. Also, all job titles appeared exclusively in masculine forms in the staffing plans analysed.

In the different position groups, the average percentage of women ranged from 0-64.3%. In the group of independent research and teaching positions (A-C), it was 0% for the position of full professors (A), 11.2% for associate professors (including contract professors and those at the rank of professor in 1954 – B) and 16.4% for the full-time docents (including contract docents – C). At the level of auxiliary research and teaching staff (a-c), women represented on average: 17.8% of the assistant professors or adjuncts (a), 25.5% of the senior assistants (b) and 12.9% of the assistants (including trainees – c). In the group of didactic positions (I-II), there were on average 14.4% female senior lecturers (I) and 22.7% female lecturers (II), as well as 5.4% female teachers of supporting subjects (1), 28.6% female teachers of physical education (3), 64.3% female librarians (4) and 13.3% women in other full-time teaching positions (instructors, readers, others – 5). There were no female vocational teachers (2) for the entire period studied. However, it must be borne in mind that assistants and lecturers were employed largely on contracted hours, so that they are not included in this summary and the absolute values may appear unrepresentative.

The decline in the feminisation rate at successive rungs of the academic hierarchy, known as 'the leaking pipe' syndrome,⁵⁰ is clearly visible here. This systematic decrease in the number of women in higher positions is linked to problems that are currently being intensively researched, such as the so-called glass ceiling, structural violence or the lack of role models in the workplace, society or one's own family. In describing the

origins of this phenomenon, researchers point to the following socially related and interacting factors: differences between women and men in terms of aspirations, self-esteem, family plans, extent and strength of social networks, experience of discrimination, availability of role models.⁵¹ The position of a person socialised into a woman's role operating in a masculinised social and professional environment is therefore particularly fragile and vulnerable to compromise.

Another important factor affecting women is the non-linear multiplication of social capital known as the St Matthew effect – the progressive increase in success generated by even small incentives. In the case of women, however, it is more referred to as the Matilda effect, that is the overlooking and discrediting of women's achievements. Unfortunately, even a slight clipping of wings can project a lack of motivation, self-confidence and, as a result, unsatisfactory results. Thus, even the slightest favouritism in a team (in the case of employees) or a studio (in a group of students) in the form of greater familiarity or attention can have very serious consequences. Similarly, the slightest manifestation of sexual harassment, i.e. gender-based violence used by those with greater power or symbolic status, can have an impact. Within the masculinised structures of the higher education institutions, it was and is most often experienced by women.⁵²

Research indicates that one of the important reasons causing 'falling down the academic ladder', also known as 'broken rung syndrome', is marriage and starting a family – the strain of these roles is experienced by women much more than by men in a similar situation.⁵³ Another issue is the masculinisation of male decision-making bodies, thereby making them less favourable to the advancement of women.⁵⁴ Sometimes these decisions were arbitrary, based on personal or political considerations more than on merit.

As Krzetuska reminisces: "It was also characteristic of me to be removed from my position, as I, admittedly, did not have a diploma from the Academy of Fine Arts, but only 20 years of solo work, however those who were contracted

did not have any artistic apprenticeship."⁵⁵ She also points to the belittling of her work: "I recall such a situation: after the first review of my studio (I was then an assistant under Prof. Emil Krcha), when everyone ruled that I had a very high-profile studio, the very next day I heard the remark that, after all, I had very talented students, while in the other studio the students were much weaker!"⁵⁶ – this was meant as a harmful suggestion that the excellent level was not of her own making.

Coming back to the indicators in this group of female employees, it is worth noting that the 100% feminisation rate occurred in the period in question only in the group of library staff (Irena Pijaczewska, Barbara Prytyka, Zofia Tyślewicz) and PE teachers (Zuzanna Sokołowska), and in one year in the group of female lecturers (Irena Ładomirska). On the other hand, the rate of 0% – the total absence of women – was found in almost all position groups, most frequently in the group of professors, assistants, senior lecturers, supporting subjects and PE teachers and 'others'.

The following women were employed in their respective positions (in alphabetical order):

- associate professor, including contract professor, and professor in 1954 (2): Dawska, Kotarbińska,
- docent, including contractual (5): Zofia Artymowska, Krystyna Cybińska, Dawska, Olech, Skomorowska-Wilimowska,
- adjunct professor (5): Cybińska, Regina Konieczka-Popowska, Irena Lipska-Zworska, Olech, Wiesława Pawelska,
- senior assistant (11): Mirosława Bernat, Cybińska, Gołkowska, Krystyna Januszkiewicz, Marta Lachur, Lipska-Zworska, Ładomirska, Ewa Mehl, Pawelska, Alfreda Poznańska, Skomorowska-Wilimowska,
- assistant (11): Mirosława Bernat, Elżbieta Chodźaj, Cybińska, Gołkowska, Teresa Jarzembowska, Monika Kamińska, Lidia Kupeczyńska-Jankowiak, Lachur, Pawelska, Grażyna Płocica, Eulalia Złotnicka,
- senior lecturer or deputy professor (7):

- Dawska, Gołkowska, Kotarbińska, Lipska-Zworska, Halina Pawlikowska, Skomorowska-Wilimowska, Janina Żemojtel,
- lecturer (6): Konieczka-Popowska, Ładomirska, L. Orzechowska⁵⁷, Pawlikowska, Skomorowska-Wilimowska, Fania Sokołowska,
- supporting subjects teacher (1): Pawlikowska,
- reader (1): Ludmiła Nodzyńska,
- PE teacher (1): Z. Sokołowska,
- librarian (2): Pijaczewska, Prytyka, Tyślewicz,
- others (2): Elżbieta Biskup, Bogumiła Cyrek.

On contracted hours the following women worked (54): Krystyna Adamczak, Lucyna Adamus, Bożena Bartecka, Maria Berny, Barbara Brodzińska, Joanna Chalfen, Anna Chrzanowska, Ewa Chrzanowska, Ewa Cieszyńska, Ewa Dawidejt, Zofia Wąsowa-Gunaris, Jadwiga Hawrylak, Halina Idkowiak-Sambor, Jarzembowska, Ewa Jęczalik, Kamińska, Halina Kłosowicz, Konieczka-Popowska, Irena Koźnica, Kotarbińska, Alicja Krępa, Marta Krzemińska, Lucyna Krzemińska, Krzetuska-Gepert, Kupeczyńska-Jankowiak, Jadwiga Leśkiewicz-Zgieb, Lipska-Zworska, Halina (Alina?) Maziarz, Ewa Mehl, Nodzyńska, Bożena Noji (?), Teresa Orszulok, Pawelska, Pawlikowska, Pijaczewska, Krystyna Pilch, Grażyna Płocica, A. Poznańska, Jadwiga Poznańska, Adrianna Sarnowicz, Jadwiga Sławińska, Z. Sokołowska, F. Sokołowska, Daniela (Danuta?) Stankiewicz, Starzewska, Anna Węgrzyn, Zofia Woźniak, Emilia Wrońska, Barbara Wysłouch, Agnieszka Zając, Barbara Zenkteler, Anna Ziomecka, Elżbieta Ziółkowska and Barbara Żarnowska.⁵⁸

Promotion within the research and teaching track involved meeting statutorily defined criteria related, among other things, to the length of service and the completion of a qualification procedure, but the legislature also allowed promotion on the basis of a commission-assessed body of work. Thus, the will of the academic decision-makers and their appreciation of the individual's work may have been entirely sufficient and provided a springboard for the rapid occupation of a more prestigious and better-paid position. On the other hand, failure to achieve promotion within

the statutory timeframe could have meant an irreversible downgrading – a reassignment to a teaching-only position. Such a shift took place in the case of, for example, Gołkowska, who, after a hiatus of more than a decade, returned to the position of senior assistant and was subsequently classified as a senior lecturer, or Lipska-Zworska, who moved to the position of senior lecturer from the position of assistant professor.⁵⁹ Skomorowska-Wilimowska recalls with regret the negative impact on the academy from central decisions, including the withholding of staff promotion until the late 1960s after "the removal of some professors in the early 1950s" – she certainly has Geppert in mind here, as well as the politicisation of procedures affecting professional advancement in higher education.⁶⁰

Among those consistently pursuing an academic path or staying on it in the period under review, the following women should be mentioned: Cybińska, Dawska (she was not promoted above associate professor), Gołkowska, Konieczka, Lipska-Zworska, Olech, Pawelska, Pawlikowska, Skomorowska-Wilimowska and Pijaczewska. It would certainly be interesting to track what the average length of time in each position was for women and men, the directions of change – meaning how their academic careers progressed or collapsed – and whether there was any significant difference between these groups in this respect. It would be particularly interesting to track such promotion rates in the transition from contract hours to full-time positions – did women wait longer for tenure? Another interesting question would also be the quantification of work on contract hours or part-time positions. For the sake of a full picture, it would also be useful to take into account departures, especially from lower positions, and any breaks in employment as well as returns.

Ladies' corners or enclaves of sisterhood?

Among the full-time research and teaching staff at the SHSPA in the period 1954-1980, a regular high, usually 100%, female staffing level occurred only in the library, a place with a decidedly auxiliary function at the academy.⁶¹ In other areas where the female staffing was quite numerous and strong, it unfortunately did not maintain continuity. This was the case in the so-called theoretical subjects, namely social sciences, humanities and art history in particular, as well as in language classes, where female teachers were mostly employed on a contract basis and worked for a rather short period of time. The high turnover of female employees observed in the documents was certainly not conducive to the possibility of establishing lasting and changing interpersonal bonds within the university structure.

In the structure of the PWSSP in the period under study, one can notice the presence of a few particular places where the presence of women was numerous and sustained. If these places were, from the point of view of maintaining the status quo, convenient for placing women there – such as the subservient study of humanistic subjects or the library – then they should be termed so-called 'women's corners',⁶² in other words academic ghettos for women. Within them, they may have had a presence in the community, but they did not influence the relationships within it and therefore did not threaten the structure of the institution. In contrast, the more established places, where woman-to-woman relationships were important and nurtured, with older artists supporting younger ones in their professional development, I would call 'the enclaves of sisterhood' within such a structure. Based on the employment records analysed, I observed two such places: the Department of Ceramics and the Faculty of General Plastic Arts Education.

Highly feminised personnel can be observed particularly in the Department of Ceramics, e.g. in the academic year 1968/69 the first ceramics studio

was run by Olech and Leśkiewicz, the second by Kotarbińska and Lipska-Zworska, and the third by Cybińska alone. In contrast, the Department of Glass employed virtually no women at all, manifesting a patriarchal and binary division between the supposedly high and demanding crafts of men and the simpler, much less technologically advanced crafts of women. Lipska-Zworska recalls the tenderness and positive reinforcement that Kotarbińska's students could count on:

Successful student projects, which the Professor called achievements, were regarded as artistic events of the School and it happened that the Professor showed the painted jug of a student, Hanka Aleksandrowicz, now Papierniakowa, to the rector Stanisław Dawski, the dean Stanisław Pękalski and other professors, pointing out the beauty of the glaze and the freshness of the colour scheme, enthusiastically enjoying the achievements of her students.⁶³

Olech, meanwhile, wrote of her that she was 'cordial and maternal, but also tough and relentless'.⁶⁴ This recollection of the kindness and active promotion of the student contrasts with Skomorowska's account of the rather challenging atmosphere in the sculptor and Auschwitz survivor Dunikowski's studio: "Men would kiss his hand and women would ask about his mood before speaking to him. They feared his alleged malice."⁶⁵ In place of male professor's severity and harshness, referred to by Skomorowska across her text and requiring great resilience from her, comes the female professor's encouraging care.

The second place, the Faculty of General Plastic Arts Education in the Department of Interior Design, was something between a women's corner and a sisterly enclave. Its head was the painter Józef Hałas, but the female staff in this department was numerous and maintained continuity over the years – on average, women made up half of the staff. In the 1975/76 academic year they headed three of the four studios there, with the Department employing as many as two of

the three female docents working at the academy. Those working there included: Artymowska, Jarzembowska, Kamińska, Konieczka, Kupczyńska-Jankowiak, Skomorowska-Wilimowska and Żemojtel. From the perspective of the school's structure, the faculty served as a complementary function to the education of design students, and was therefore characterised by far less prestige and, therefore, less competition for positions – perhaps for this reason, women were more often placed there than men, who aspired to and were more often situated in the Department of Painting, Graphics and Sculpture? However, even if the faculty was a place of 'exile,' it was, judging by the career paths of the women employed there, a good and friendly place to work and develop.

Women's friendships are extremely important for building resilience against the negative conditions of functioning in a male-dominated environment. While the female 'pioneers' in Wrocław came from very different contexts and thus of necessity acted rather individually, it was the next generation of female employees – the former first female students – who could recognise the power of sisterhood. Recalling a moment just after graduation, Skomorowska gives an example of such a woman's communal experience:

One beautiful summer day I squatted on the edge of the pavement next to Halina Olech and Maryla Janowska [Janowska-Karpińska]. This sitting directly on the street, Traugutta Street, surrounded by ruins [...] stayed in my memory. It became [...] an act of manifestation of great joy and a feeling of freedom, of liberty. Our three young girls sitting in the street at that time had a feeling of six years of danger and confinement leaving us. The stuffiness of cellars and shelters. We felt like birds released from a cage. We wanted to see as much as possible.⁶⁶

She continues by writing about her later relationship with Olech as co-workers:

Already during my studies and later during my many years at the academy, I had the habit of 'sitting down' to Halina. At meetings, interdepartmental assemblies or college sessions, we always looked out for each other. I remember Halina's cry: 'Ućka! Here!' Very often, despite working in different departments and in different specialities, I visited Halina."⁶⁷

Skomorowska, a sculptor, operated within the highly masculinised structures of her discipline and may have sought contact with a female colleague from a much more feminised ceramic environment out of a need for kindness, for community. As she writes of her colleague nostalgically, "when greeting each of us she would rush off with the words of a song: »O my falcon, you my happiness«. We were all falcons to her".⁶⁸ It seems that the presence of a close colleague brought her comfort and support in her own efforts – internal alliance may have helped her to survive, among others under Dunikowski's, and to develop within the structures of the institution. In retrospect, in the 1990s, Skomorowska considers the most important event in her career to be her independence from political pressure and the organisation of her own studio, while Lipska-Zworska lists among her own successes the advancement of the teaching staff at the Department of Glass and Ceramics, whom she was willing to support even at the expense of her own artistic practice.⁶⁹ Apparently, in a masculinised environment women are strong with the power of their sisterhood relationships and it might have helped them in moving up the ladder.

1:4 – Leadership (not quite) without female heads

Interestingly, the overall rate of feminisation of leadership positions in the SHSPA between 1954 and 1980 was a little higher than the corresponding rate for the pedagogical body as a whole – there were not five, but four male managers to one female manager. This is curious, as it is the presence of

women in authority that should have a positive effect on the employment of women in general. One would have to ask why, then, with around 19% of female leaders, there were only 16% of women in full-time positions? This may indicate that they are replicating the male model of management and are unwilling to support younger women being motivated by competition and protecting their own position in unfavourable circumstances. Or it may also indicate a lack of clout in the aforementioned male-dominated decision-making bodies. "Women tended to reach the top of academic careers at the expense of their personal lives, imitating the working style of older men", as pointed out by the authors of the report referenced several times already.⁷⁰

The composition of the senior staff for the period 1946-1980 is probably reconstructable on the basis of archival data, including the personal files of employees, but remains not fully visible from the perspective of the documents selected for the analysis. In the staffing plans preserved in the archive, the details of the persons performing particular functions were not always present or were incomplete. For this reason, the data for the academic years 1958/59, 1973/74 and years 1975-1980 is approximate and may slightly differ from the actual situation, requiring verification with other sources.

The hierarchy of authority positions included the following roles: rector, pro-rector, dean, vice-dean (pro-dean, being the head of department), head of study, head of faculty, head of studio, head of plant, head of workshop, head of laboratory and head of library. It was very common for roles to be combined in superior bodies and the management of individual units, and it also happened that one person headed several studios at the same time. In the case of combined roles (e.g. head of faculty and a studio or two studios), each role appearing in the documents was counted as a distinct occurrence.

WOMEN IN THE LEADERSHIP OF THE SHSPA IN WROCLAW IN 1954-1980				
Academic year	LEADERSHIP POSITIONS			
	TOTAL	of which held by women	feminisation rate (FR)	AVERAGE feminisation rate (AFR)
1954/55	9	1	11,1%	-
1955/56	5	1	20,0%	23,4%
1956/57	n.a.	n.a.	-	
1957/58	n.a.	n.a.	-	
1958/59 *	13	3	23,1%	
1959/60	11	3	27,3%	23,6%
1960/61	11	3	27,3%	
1961/62	n.a.	n.a.	-	
1962/63	n.a.	n.a.	-	
1963/64	14	3	21,4%	15,1%
1964/65	9	2	22,2%	
1965/66	13	2	15,4%	
1966/67	38	7	18,4%	
1967/68	n.a.	n.a.	-	17,9%
1968/69	60	9	15,0%	
1969/70	51	6	11,8%	
1970/71	53	10	18,9%	
1971/72	65	11	16,9%	18,0%
1972/73	n.a.	n.a.	-	
1973/74 *	62	8	12,9%	
1974/75	65	15	23,1%	
1975/76 *	62	10	16,1%	18,0%
1976/77 *	63	10	15,9%	
1977/78 *	64	12	18,8%	
1978/79 *	63	12	19,0%	
1979/80 *	65	13	20,0%	
AVERAGE:			18,7%	-

Table 6. Women in the leadership of the State Higher School of Plastic Arts in Wrocław between 1954 and 1980. Data for the academic years 1956/57, 1957/58, 1961/62, 1962/63, 1967/68 and 1972/73 not available. Data for the years marked with an asterisk (*) is uncertain or estimated. In the case of combined roles, each role was counted as a distinct occurrence.

Based on the data presented in Table 6, it can be seen that the percentage of women in leadership positions over the 26 years studied is unlikely to exceed 30% of the total number of people in management, with an average value

of 18.7%. From 1955 to 1965, the rate was quite high, at around 23.5% in both five-year periods. Again, from 1965 onwards, the feminisation rate dropped significantly – in the next five-year period it was about 8.5 percentage points lower. In the 1970s, the percentage of women increased slightly, averaging around 18%, with a gentle upward trend in the second half of the decade, by the end of the decade reaching a level of around 20% again.

It is symptomatic that despite the clear threefold expansion of the academy's structure around 1966 – with the overall number of managers increasing from 13 to 38 – the increase in the representation of women in leadership is negligible: out of twenty-five new managerial positions, women took up only two, occupying a total of seven positions of authority. It would also have been valuable to examine what was the distribution of the women's presence in leadership by the hierarchy of functions and specialisations – in an overall view of the staffing plans, it is apparent that women were placed more often in lower managerial positions.

The first female heads were Dawska, Kotarbińska, Olech, Cybińska, Skomorowska-Wilimowska, and also temporarily Konieczka, as well as Pijaczewska, who took care of the library, and Pawlikowska, who was initially the curator of the museum, and in 1970 simultaneously the head of a faculty, a studio and a plant. Lipska-Zworska and Artymowska also joined this group. 1974 was the peak year in terms of the absolute number of women in the management (15 out of 65): Skomorowska-Wilimowska was vice-dean, and Olech continued as the head of the Ceramics and Glass Study, the heads of the faculties were Olech and Pawlikowska, and of the studios: Golkowska, Poznańska, Pawlikowska, Cybińska, Olech, Konieczka, Artymowska and Skomorowska (a total of 8 women to 30 men). In addition, Pawlikowska headed a workshop, Olech a plant and Pijaczewska the library. In 1977 Źemojtel joined the ranks of female managers as the head of a workshop, and in 1979 F. Sokołowska was the first head of language courses.

As the already widely quoted *Little Chance to Advance?* report points out, "the low proportion of women on the staff of art colleges may be largely related to the hermetic nature of the art community and the sphere of relationships and the unequal distribution of career-enhancing stimuli".⁷¹ So if one were to look for proto-feminist women frontrunners – female leaders supporting the presence of other women – these, in the light of quantitative data and memories cited, were undoubtedly Kotarbińska and Olech. In the internal school's hierarchy, however, the woman who reached the highest position was Skomorowska, who was the first woman to hold the post of pro-rector since 1978. In the history of the academy, the rector's chair has never been occupied by a woman yet.

Table 7. Women in the non-teaching positions, namely administrative, service and technical division of the State Higher School of Plastic Arts in Wrocław in the selected academic years between 1954 and 1971.

WOMEN IN THE ADMINISTRATIVE, SERVICE AND TECHNICAL DIVISION OF THE SHSPA IN WROCLAW IN 1954-1971									
Academic year		NON-TEACHING STAFF							AFR per academic year
		administrative	service	Student House	Experimental Plants	models	OVERALL	of which women	
1954/55	TOTAL	10	-	-	-	-	10	3	30,0%
	of which women	3	-	-	-	-			
	% of women (FR)	30,0%	-	-	-	-			
1955/56	TOTAL	12	13	-	-	7	32	n.a.	-
	of which women	n.a.	n.a.	-	-	n.a.			
	% of women (FR)	n.a.	n.a.	-	-	n.a.			
1963/64	TOTAL	16	19	-	-	-	35	23	65,7%
	of which women	9	14	-	-	-			
	% of women (FR)	56,3%	73,7%	-	-	-			
1970/71	TOTAL	15	30	10	14	-	69	44	62,3%
	of which women	11	21	9	2	-			
	% of women (FR)	73,3%	70,0%	90,0%	14,3%	-			
OVERALL	TOTAL	53	62	10	14	7	146	70	47,3%
	of which women	23	35	9	2	n.a.	-	-	-
	AFR per sub-group	53,2%	71,8%	90,0%	14,3%	-	-	-	-
	AFR for ALL sub-groups	57,3%					AFR for ALL academic years		52,7%

1:0.8 – Women's division. Female administrative and technical staff

The last – though no less numerous – group of people working at the university are those working in the non-teaching, usually full-time positions: clerical, technical, housekeeping and others. In the documents examined, data on this group appears only for the years 1954/55, 1955/56, 1963/64 and 1970/71, and, although not always complete, gives a certain sense of the degree and process of feminisation of this diverse staff group.

The following subgroups or areas are distinguished in the documents: administration, services, Student House, Experimental Plant, models (most probably working on commissioned hours, however). In terms of job titles, the documents used almost no feminatives, so women worked as the male equivalents of legal secretary (later clerk), secretary, accountant, economist, planner, guard, doorman, craftsman, stoker, cloakroom attendant, duplicator or janitor. The only officially occurring position in the records named as a female variant was that of a cleaner (*sprzątaczką*), in the course of the years, moreover, a position entirely filled by women.

The average feminisation rate for all subgroups is 57.3%, meaning that there was less than one man to every one woman (a ratio of 1:0.8), and it is the highest of all the groups studied in this article. The greatest feminisation rate of as much as 90% was recorded in the group working in the Student House, but the data available only covers one academic year. It is significant that the only male employee in this team was its manager, as in the case of the aforementioned Faculty of General Plastic Arts Education, this model of management by a man over a team of all-women resembles, therefore, a figure of icing on the cake. Of course, the documents in question do not demonstrate the opposite situation, that of a woman managing an entirely or predominantly male team, in any of the academy segments analysed.

The most complete data concerns the administrative unit, where, with an average of 53.2%, a significantly progressive feminisation can be observed while at the same time this subgroup grew slightly. In the service unit, separated from the administration in the 1960s, a very high and constant percentage of women of 70% to 73.5% can be observed. However, it should be emphasised that the positions classified in this group are among the least prestigious in the school: cleaner, janitor (*pedel*), guard, cloakroom attendant, stoker or craftsman. The fewest numbers of women, only two in twelve men, or 14.3%, were employed in the Experimental Plants, involved in wood and metalworking. However, these were not qualified craftsmen, but occupied non-managerial office positions. Unfortunately, there is no detailed data available on persons employed as models.

If, on the other hand, the entire division in question is viewed through the lens of each academic year, the feminisation rate doubled in the 1960s – up by almost 36 percentage points from 30.0% to 65.7%, with a slight decline of around three percentage points in the following decade.

The most numerous and fully feminised (100% occupancy) types of service positions were cleaner, caretaker (*pedel*), doorman and craftsmen with 75% occupancy. Among the office positions, the posts of clerk/senior clerk, accountant/senior

accountant and senior economist were always staffed by women (100% occupancy). There was also a 100% female proportion in the less numerous positions of cloakroom attendant, duplicator or guard.

In contrast, women were not employed (0%) as janitors (*woźny*), drivers, transport workers, maintenance workers or specialised craftsmen: blacksmiths, carpenters or locksmiths. To a certain extent, women were employed as stokers (about 29%). Remarkably, there were no women (0%) in the most important managerial positions for the university at that time: the administrative director and the bursar. Nor were they employed in other managerial positions (0%) of the administrative and economic department, of the Student House, of the storage team or of the Experimental Plants. Women in management positions were almost exclusively in the secretarial positions.

As they were not anonymous and also contributed significantly to the academy, and as that group is the most overlooked in historical analyses, I would like to present them by their names as well. The following women worked in their respective positions:

in 1954/55 as a clerk (3): Julia Brenenstuchl, Zofia Misiówna, Irena Robak,

in 1963/64 as the head of the independent section of the course and organisation of studies – secretary of the college (1): Stanisława Menzłowa; senior economist (2): Dorota Mikulska, Robak; senior accountant (2): Waclawa Armatys, Wiktoria Gołębiowska, senior clerk (2): Daniela Iwanek, Helena Niewójt; clerk (2): Brenenstuchl, Misiówna; craftsman (3:1): Janina Horodecka, Janina Piskorska, Helena Zubko; stoker (1:3): Anna Dzimira; cleaner (5): Bronisława Dieszko (?), Celina Półtorak, Krystyna Rak, Zofia Rucko, Maria Zawada; senior janitor (*pedel*) (3): Maria Barciszewska, Henryka Sapała, Alfonsa Sokalska; guard (2): Kazimiera Adamska, Zofia Stefańczuk; in 1970/71 as the head of the independent personnel section (1): Robak; head of the accounting section (1): Wanda Pawlak; head of the secretariat (1): Czesława Pączek; head of the course of study (1): Chima Aleksandra Łagowska; secretariat of the

deans (1): Armatys; senior economist (3): Urszula Bielska, Janina Felińska, Dziewanna Zatorska; senior accountant (1): Maria Kramarzewska; accountant (1): Mirosława Szymańska; senior planner (2): Niewójt, Anita Wierzbicka; clerk (1): Józefa Horegląd; stoker (1:3): Józefa Kwiecińska; duplicator (1): Lidia Jastrząb; craftsman (3:1): Barciszewska, Sokalska, Zubko; cleaner (13): Jadwiga Chodyra, Janina Duda, Urszula Grońska, Anna Kościelna, Edeltrauda Nowak, Aniela Niełacka, Maria Ołdziejewska, Półtorak, Rak, Teodozja Strzelec, Irena Szadkowska, Anna Szulc, Zawada; senior janitor (*pedel*) (5): Anna Dzimira, Bronisława Piorunowicz, Barbara Sawczuk, Irena Surmacz, Krystyna Widera; senior doorman (4): Helena Judek, Maria Kubara, Zofia Metyk, Zofia Wołowiec; senior guard (1): Stefańczuk; cloakroom attendant (2): Maria Dudzińska, Izabela Ignaczak.

In all the years given, there was one woman working consistently, Robak, changing positions to higher and higher positions – from clerk to senior economist to the head of the independent personnel section. The other women either appeared only once or remained in a resembling position.

Assuming that the data collected is representative of each decade – the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s – it must be noted that in the administrative subgroup the process of feminisation occurred very swiftly, reaching 30,0%–56,3%–73,3% successively. Interestingly, this progress took place with a relatively modest staff growth of around 50%. So the school's bureaucracy feminised most dynamically and most efficiently.

So, where are they ?%

Comparing the different groups of women in SHSPA in the selected years between 1954 and 1971, it can be seen that the presence of all women combined – students from all years (estimated),⁷² academics and non-teaching staff – gradually increased. What is particularly important, however, is that as early as 1954 the percentage of all women combined in all divisions of the university exceeded

the thirty-percentage threshold of critical mass, at an estimated 38.7%. The average feminisation rate (AFR) of the whole academy (all persons combined) for the selected years 1954/55, 1963/64 and 1970/71 is 41.4%. Whereas, looking at the feminisation of the various subgroups, namely total and new students, graduates, teachers, including full-time and contracted hours, school leaders and non-teaching staff, the average for the corresponding years was around 33%.

Women in various divisions of the SHSPA in Wrocław in between 1954 and 1980									
group	subgroup	Academic year:	1954/55 (a)	1955/56(b)	1963/64(c)	1970/71(d)	1979/80(e)	AVERAGE FR (b-d)	OVERALL AFR (b-d)
STUDENTS*	NEW STUDENTS	TOTAL	35	38	50	50	n.a.	48,0%	46,9%
		women	8	16	25	26	n.a.		
		FR	22,9%	42,1%	50,0%	52,0%	-		
	ALL STUDENTS*	TOTAL	223	194	237	251	n.a.	46,3%	
		women	95	76	109	135	n.a.		
		FR	42,6%	39,2%	46,0%	53,8%	-		
	GRADUATES	TOTAL	12	30	19	31	68	46,4%	
		women	6	15	9	13	38		
		FR	50,0%	50,0%	47,4%	41,9%	55,9%		
ACADEMICS	ALL ACADEMICS	TOTAL	51	52	88	107	143	16,4%	17,3%
		women	9	9	14	17	32		
		FR	17,6%	17,3%	15,9%	15,9%	22,4%		
	FULL-TIME TEACHERS	TOTAL	51	34	47	55	100	16,4%	
		women	9	6	8	8	19		
		FR	17,6%	17,6%	17,0%	14,5%	19,0%		
	CONTRACT HOURS TEACHERS	TOTAL	-	18	41	52	43	16,2%	
		women	-	3	6	9	13		
		FR	-	16,7%	14,6%	17,3%	30,2%		
	LEADERSHIP	TOTAL	9	5	14	53	65	20,1%	
		women	1	1	3	10	13		
		FR	11,1%	20,0%	21,4%	18,9%	20,0%		
AFR for the above subgroups per year			27,0%	29,0%	30,3%	29,5%	-	30,0%	
AFR for STUDENTS* and ACADEMICS in selected years (b-d)								30,0%	32,1%
NON-TEACHING STAFF		TOTAL	10	32	35	69	n.a.	AFR for selected years	
		women	3	n.a.	23	44	n.a.	(a/b, c, d)	
		FR	30,0%	-	65,7%	63,8%	-	53,2%	
AFR for all subgroups per year			28,2%**		37,6%	37,3%	-	34,4%	
AFR for STUDENTS*, ACADEMICS and NON-TEACHERS in selected years (a/b, c, d)								32,9%	32,1%
ALL PERSONS (all students*, academics and non-teachers)		TOTAL	284	278	360	427	-	AFR for ALL PERSONS for selected years	
		women	107	-	146	196	-	(a, c, d)	
		FR	37,7%	-	40,6%	45,9%	-	41,4%	

Table 8. Women in various divisions – students (including new enrollments and graduates), academics (including full time positions, contract hours teachers and leadership) and administrative, service and technical units – of the State Higher School of Plastic Arts in Wrocław in selected years between 1954 and 1980. Data for the groups marked with an asterisk is estimated. The average feminisation rate (AFR) for all subgroups for the years 1954/55 and 1955/56 (***) is combined to cover up for the missing or unrepresentative data.

A different picture emerges, however, when comparing the feminisation rate for these groups in the 1970/71 academic year: for full-time female employees, it was a mere 14.5%, for all female academics only about 16%, in the subgroup of female managers nearly 19%, definitely higher for female graduates and female students, constituting about 52% and 54% of their group respectively, and the highest feminisation rate was in the group of non-teaching staff – as high as 64%. In this context, it is interesting to note the slight decline in the number of female graduates between 1954 and 1970, from 50% to about 42% of their group. Despite their initial enthusiasm to study, did they begin to lack motivation as they saw more women cleaners (13) or janitors (5) around them than women professors (3)⁷³?

Fortunately, the situation improved for women at the end of the 1970s: in 1979/80, the number and proportion of women among the research and teaching staff increased considerably, including a doubling in the number of female full-time staff (up from 8 to 19, or 19%) and simultaneously the number of female graduate students grew threefold (from 13 to 38, women representing around 56% of the group). Thus, the more numerous presence of women on a cadre – especially those employed in permanent positions and therefore with security and the prospect of professional development, which undoubtedly contributes to enhancing the quality of teaching – seems to have a very positive impact on the education of female students and their academic success.

* * *

The figures for the academy's staff are well complemented by two extracts from the memoirs of the school's first teachers. Stanisław Dawski, recalling the pioneering period of teaching among his colleagues, wrote:

All of us as pedagogues were rookies. No one had taught before. [...] The beginning of the School was the beginning of all our problems, even the organisational and administrative ones. There was a moment

when Geppert came to ask us what to do about the secretariat. I replied that we needed to engage a secretary [feminative – ZR] who had some experience, who had worked somewhere. And there was one secretary [fem. – ZR], one administrative manager who had never been a manager before, one caretaker.⁷⁴

This person was required because of their skills and experience in the profession, but apparently this position was the only one in which a woman was implicitly sought and, as I have already mentioned, only this post was labelled with a feminative.

An interesting aspect of women's participation in organisational and administrative work also emerges from Krzetuska's memoir, she writes:

Coming back to the preparations, however, these were the hardest times. The cleaning alone was exhausting, and if we add that just then the secretary recommended by friends ran away, taking with her the typewriter that had been bought with difficulty, it was already a disaster. So when enrolment was announced, first for the plein-air and then for the School, I was already performing all the supplementary functions, naturally for free. It was very satisfying to know that I was doing something useful after all.⁷⁵

By revealing, without embarrassment, her supportive role to her fellow professors, Krzetuska also exposes an overlooked dimension of the invisible work that women usually do, even if they are employed alongside their colleagues as academic teachers.

It is only when the opportunity arises that some women, transparent in their roles, claim recognition for their contributions and achievements, doing so out of necessity – a sense of justice or a need for recognition, rather than the possibility of some benefit. Elsewhere, Krzetuska points out herself: "Maybe I'm bragging too much – but the fact that the school edifice on Plac

Polski has been rebuilt is no small feat on my part. Everyone around me said it wasn't worth it, that it couldn't be done, and so on. And I persisted [...]."⁷⁶ And another artist, Lipska-Zworska, recalls that she was the first organiser of the academy's museum, founded in the academic year 1959/60,⁷⁷ of which it is officially more appreciated which rector was appointed.⁷⁸

More humble individuals can only receive adequate recognition from attentive colleagues who will testify on their behalf. Such was the case with Olech, on whose shoulders all the organisational effort involved in setting up the school's most unique department was to rest, the work invisible from the level of official documents: "In my opinion, the history of the Department of Ceramics and Glass at the SHSPA in Wrocław – is the story of Halina Olech's hardworking life," testifies Skomorowska, admiring her colleague's strength and proactivity.⁷⁹ But her statements also shed light on the dedication and taking on additional responsibility that women in academia – and the professional environment more broadly – are still predisposed to:

Seeing at times her great workload at the expense of her own creation, I argued and quarreled with her. For she relieved everyone: from professors, administrative staff, janitors to cleaners. To everyone, regardless of their position, she was Halinka. How much of her own salary, sparing herself, she put into equipping the studio, will remain her secret.⁸⁰

Bearing additional costs, especially emotional and organisational ones, and so-called invisible work may have delayed women not only from moving up the ladder, but also in creative development or the realisation of personal goals. With this realisation in mind, it is less surprising to read a confession from Cybińska, a doyenne of the academy in Wrocław and an artist known for her creative determination, discipline and hard work, who, with the benefit of hindsight, recalls that the most important and formative event in her career

was... a break from the college work between 1964 and 1974.⁸¹

Taking a simultaneous look at the figures found and the biographical and especially autobiographical narratives within oral history projects can be a beneficial formula for art history to break down the dominant narratives produced by the authority of scholars, museum professionals and decision-makers of the art field, operating with categories of assessment derived from a male-centric spectrum of values. Reclaiming the stories of women who did not receive adequate recognition and acknowledgement of the work they carried out, not only artistically but also organisationally or emotionally, is particularly important here. Championing female artists, so numerous in the second half of the twentieth century, in a feminist, equalitarian and inclusive perspective that critically takes into account the context of their functioning and their support networks is, of course, not only a socio-politically informed research task, but also an activism within the field of knowledge.

* * *

Dreaming up a fantasy of sisterhood, one would like to say that perhaps the academy would be somewhat different in terms of equality today if all the women who study and work there supported each other and acted together – in solidarity, without class prejudice or the lining up with strategies of becoming equal in the world appropriate for more privileged men. However, they were undoubtedly hindered by the power on the male side, not so much the symbolic power, but the very real one, influencing working and studying conditions and relations within the institution. With the predominance of men as decision-makers and at the highest hierarchical levels, both in terms of academic titles, degrees and functions and in key non-teaching positions, it is very difficult to feminise the academy as a whole.

Thus, instead of equality at all levels of academic life, we are currently faced with a situation in which female professors still constitute a negligible proportion while female

students are greatly dominant. Based on the data published by the authors of the report *Little Chance to Advance?* and the data collected in the Archive of EGAAD in Wrocław, it can be seen that there has been a significant increase in the representation of women – from one female teacher for about three students to one female teacher for about two students.⁸²

WOMEN IN ART COLLEGES IN HISTORICAL AND CONTEMPORARY DATA		
Percentage of women (FR)	SHSPA in Wrocław 1946-80	Fine arts colleges in Poland in 2013
Teaching staff	18%*	35%
Students	49%**	77%

Table 9. Women among students and teaching staff of the SHSPA in Wrocław between 1946 and 1980 in relation to the averages for fine arts colleges in Poland in 2013. The feminisation rate for female teachers (marked *) relates to the years 1955-1980 and for female students (marked **) to the new admissions between 1946 and 1972.

However, while the Wrocław academy currently ranks close to the national average in terms of the total number of female staff, in terms of the proportion of female professors it is the second lowest, ahead only of the Faculty of Fine Arts at the Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń (also established in 1946).⁸³ In the light of historical data, it would therefore be appropriate to say that there is a pedagogical model firmly rooted in the academy's past, and its figure in the 20th and 21st centuries is no longer master-disciple, but rather 'master and apprentices.' I therefore believe that in an art college with such a unique formula for sharing skills and knowledge, where there is one teacher for about five students (the average for all types of universities in Poland is 1:16), it is, among other factors, the devotion to this teaching model that makes the armoured ceiling in Wrocław particularly fortified.

But since women have already reached the thirty percent critical mass threshold in almost every group, there is – assuming no procedural, political or violence-related obstacles – a good chance that this ceiling will crumble quite rapidly

in the years to come. However, has the critical shortage of female professors already decreased enough? It would also be interesting to see what the real influence of women on politics and equality in the academy has been, for example by examining their involvement in Faculty Boards or Senate meetings - did they speak out on issues of importance to the academy and were their voices heard?

At the time of the political transformation of the 1990s, fifty years after the establishment of the school, Skomorowska was very conscious of the democratic changes taking place and the necessary adjustments to be made at the school. As she pointed out:

Above all, pedagogues need to realise that studio management should not be treated as an untouchable occupation, because it is not one's own individual creation. It is simply to work together more. For the time of "master and apprentice" and, above all, single-person responsibility for artistic education is over – in favour of team responsibility.⁸⁴

The artist wrote this from the position of an already experienced professor, a former pro-rector and leader at various levels of the academic hierarchy. However, the underbelly of her own activity, as other quoted passages testify, was the nurturing sisterhood, warmth and kind words she received from another woman close to her.

What remains is, on the one hand, supporting in solidarity the efforts of women applying for the highest titles and positions – that is, counting on professors and rectors – and, on the other hand, constantly looking after the wellbeing of the least privileged women: students, low-level academics and service workers or those on temporary and part-time contracts, while constantly expanding the attention paid to people from minority and disadvantaged groups. And in doing so, it is worth seeking, protecting, reading, listening and passing on to each other the stories of those women on whose shoulders we stand, those

with whom we can offer our hands and those who come after us, because the numbers show that they are already on their way, and there is some part in their narratives that is also our own.

Acknowledgements

The article was developed within the framework of the research project no. 2017/27/N/HS2/02476 entitled *The Art of Women Artists in Wrocław of the 1970s in the Light of Their Micronarratives*, funded by the National Science Centre. It serves as contextual research for my PhD project dedicated to the oral herstories of Wrocław 1970s art, carried out at the Institute of Art History of the University of Wrocław under the supervision of Professor Anna Markowska. For their contribution to this article, I would like to thank: Ms Sylwia Klechniewska, Head of the Archive of EGAAD in Wrocław, for providing me with the access to the collection and for her assistance in my queries, Dr Wiktoria Kozioł for her substantive guidance in the field of statistics, and Anna Kozicka for her support.

Notes

¹ Państwowa Wyższa Szkoła Sztuk Plastycznych we Wrocławiu (PWSSP) is also known in English as ‘State Higher School of Visual Arts’, ‘State Higher School of Fine Arts’ or ‘State College of Fine Arts’. I will be using the exact translation referring to plastic arts, as intended by the school’s creators.

² Unfortunately her name was not provided. Eugeniusz Geppert, “Pierwsze lata...,” in *Szkice z pamięci: Państwowa Wyższa Szkoła Sztuk Plastycznych we Wrocławiu we wspomnieniach jej założycieli, studentów i pedagogów: Lata 1946-1996: Cz. 1*, ed. Andrzej Saj and Urszula Benka (Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Akademii Sztuk Pięknych, 1996), 28.

³ Iwona Demko, *Zofia Baltarowicz-Dzielińska: Pierwsza studentka Akademii Sztuk Pięknych w Krakowie* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Akademii Sztuk Pięknych im. Jana Matejki, 2018), 81-105. Iwona Demko, “Zofia Baltarowicz-Dzielińska – pierwsza studentka na krakowskiej Akademii Sztuk Pięknych / Zofia Baltarowicz-Dzielińska – the First Female Student at the Academy of Fine Arts in Krakow,” *Sztuka i Dokumentacja* 19, (2018): 27–32, accessed September 4, 2022, doi:10.32020/ARTandDOC/19/2018/6. Monika Stelmach and Iwona Demko, “Zwycięstwo Zofii: Rozmowa z Iwoną Demko,” *Dwutygodnik.com*, 263, August 2019, accessed September 4, 2022, <https://www.dwutygodnik.com/artukul/8427-zwyciestwo-zofii.html>.

⁴ Dobromiła Dobro, Agnieszka Kalita, Hanna Kraś, Adam Mazur, Agata Ostrowska, Agata Plater–Zyberk and Katarzyna Trzeciak, “Opowiedzieć pomijane historie: Rozmowa z kuratorkami wystawy *Kocham w życiu trzy rzeczy: samochód, alkohol i marynarzy*,” *BLOK*, August 23, 2021, accessed September 4, 2022, <https://blokmagazine.com/pl-opowiedziec-pomijane-historie-rozmowa-z-kuratorkami-wystawy-kocham-w-zyciu-trzy-rzeczy-samochod-alkohol-i-marynarzy/>. “Kocham w życiu trzy rzeczy: samochód, alkohol i marynarzy. Nieopowiedziane historie studentek ASP w Warszawie 1918-1939 / Three Things I Love in Life – The Car, Liquor and Sailors: Untold Stories of Women Students of the Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw 1918-1939,” *Lokal30.pl*, accessed February 6, 2023, <http://lokal30.pl/wystawy/kocham-w-zyciu-trzy-rzeczy-samochod-alkohol-i-marynarzy-nieopowiedziane-historie-studentek-asp-w-warszawie-1918-1939/>.

⁵ “Statistical Yearbook 1955” of the Central Statistical Office (GUS/CSO) presented an increase of 20 percentage points in the proportion of students coming from peasant and working-class families in the group of students at vocational and art schools in the 1953/55 academic year compared to 1935/36. Detailed information on higher education institutions was published from 1959 onwards. “Rocznik Statystyczny 1955. Główny Urząd Statystyczny Polskiej Rzeczypospolitej Ludowej,” *Rocznik Statystyczny* 15 (Warszawa: GUS, 1956), “Szkolnictwo/Schooling” insert.

⁶ Zofia Morecka, Danuta Graniewska, Adam Kurzynowski and Barbara Tryfan, “Aktywność zawodowa Kobiet,” in *Kobieta w Polsce: Referaty na Światową Konferencję Dekady Kobiet ONZ* (Warszawa: Instytut Pracy i Spraw Socjalnych, 1986), 36-37, 52-53.

⁷ Anna Gromada and Jutta Kawalerowicz, “Pancerny sufit: dlaczego jest tak mało kobiet w kadrze uczelni plastycznych w Polsce?” In *Kariery akademickie kobiet i mężczyzn: różne czy podobne?* ed. Renata Siemieńska-Żochowska (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Scholar, 2019), 119. Anna Gromada, Dorka Budacz, Jutta Kawalerowicz and Anna Walewska, *Marne szanse na awanse? Raport z badania na temat obecności kobiet na uczelniach artystycznych w Polsce*, ([Warszawa]: Katarzyna Kozyra Foundation, 2015), 7, accessed September 4, 2022, <https://www.nck.pl/upload/attachments/317998/Marne%20szanse%20na%20awanse%20RAPORT.pdf>.

⁸ Zdzisława Czyżowska, “Kobieta w Polsce w latach 1975-1985: Przegląd statystyczny / Woman in Poland 1975-1985: Statistical Review,” in *Kobieta w Polsce*, 11-35.

⁹ Małgorzata Fidelis, *Kobiety, komunizm i industrializacja w powojennej Polsce / Women, Communism, and Industrialization in Postwar Poland*, trans. Maria Jaszczurowska (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo W.A.B. – Grupa Wydawnicza Foksal, 2015), 37-75.

¹⁰ Michał Jędrzejewski, “Słowo wstępne / Preface,” in *Państwowa Wyższa Szkoła Sztuk Plastycznych we Wrocławiu, [1946-1990]: CBWA ‘Zachęta’, Warszawa luty 1990: Wystawa prac studentów i pedagogów / State Higher School of Plastic Arts in Wrocław, [1946-1990]: CBAE ‘Zachęta’, Warsaw February 1990: Exhibition of Works by Students and Teachers*, ed. Wojciech Śmigieński and Irena Zaucha (Warszawa: Centralne Biuro Wystaw Artystycznych ‘Zachęta’, 1990), 9. Hanna Krzetuska, “Jak to było na początku / How it Was at the Beginning,” in *Szkice z pamięci*, 39-40.

¹¹ Gromada, Budacz, Kawalerowicz and Walewska, *Marne szanse na awanse?*, 7. All the translations from Polish by Zofia Reznik.

¹² Caryatid Collective (Kolektyw Kariatyda) – informal group of information activists dedicated to enriching Polish Wikipedia with content on encyclopedic women in the arts. “Wikiprojekt:GLAM/Kolektyw Kariatyda,” [pl.Wikipedia.org](https://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikiprojekt:GLAM/Kolektyw_Kariatyda), last modified October 31, 2022, https://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikiprojekt:GLAM/Kolektyw_Kariatyda.

¹³ The Wikiprojekt is a group of Wikipedians working together to improve Wikipedia in a subject area of their choice. “Wikipedia:WikiProject,” [en.Wikipedia.org](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:WikiProject), last modified August 14, 2022, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:WikiProject>.

¹⁴ “Wikiprojekt:GLAM/Gaszcz,” [pl.Wikipedia.org](https://pl.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikiprojekt:GLAM/Gaszcz), last modified May 1, 2021, <https://pl.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikiprojekt:GLAM/Gaszcz>.

¹⁵ Anna Kutera, *Czy wyraz „kobieta” to rzeczownik, czy przymiotnik? / Is the Word ‘Woman’ a Noun or an Adjective?* 1977, fragment of a report, collage, drawing and typesetting on paper, in the artist’s collection.

¹⁶ Anna Markowska, “Trzeba przetrzeć tę szybę; Powikłane dzieje wrocławskiej Galerii Sztuki Najnowszej (1975-1980) w Akademickim Centrum Kultury Pałacyk / This Glass Must Be Wiped Clean: The Complicated History of the Recent Art Gallery (1975-1980) at the Pałacyk Academic Culture Centre,” in *Awangarda nie bila braw: Cz. 1: Galeria Sztuki Najnowszej /*

The Avant-Garde Did Not Applaud: Pt. 1: The Recent Art Gallery, ed. Anna Markowska (Wrocław: Muzeum Współczesne Wrocław, 2014), 290. Zofia Reznik, "Piąta Beatles i Matka Sukcesu. Artystki kolektywu GSN w świetle historii mówionej / The Fifth Beatle and the Mother of Success. Female Artists of the RAG Collective in the Light of Oral History," in *Awangarda nie była braw*, 334-335.

¹⁷ Roman Wieruszewski, *Równość kobiet i mężczyzn w Polsce Ludowej* (Poznań: Wydaw. Poznańskie, 1975).

¹⁸ Wieruszewski, *Równość kobiet i mężczyzn*, 226.

¹⁹ Linda Nochlin, "Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists?," in *Women, Art, and Power, and Other Essays* (New York: Harper & Row, 1988), 145-178.

²⁰ The artists invited to the project were: Izabella Gustowska, Anna Kutera, Natalia LL, Teresa Murak, Ewa Partum, Krystyna Piotrowska oraz Teresa Tyszkiewicz. "Fading Traces: Polskie artystki w sztuce lat 70.," *Ankalesniak.pl*, accessed September 4, 2022, http://www.ankalesniak.pl/fading2010_pl.htm.

²¹ "Zarejestrowane," *Ankalesniak.pl*, accessed September 4, 2022, http://www.ankalesniak.pl/registered2011_pl.htm. "Zarejestrowane," *Łódź-art.eu*, accessed September 4, 2022, <http://www.lodz-art.eu/zarejestrowane/index.html>.

²² Guerrilla Girls, *Do Women Have To Be Naked To Get Into the Met. Museum?*, 1989.

²³ Magdalena Mach, *Kobiety na Akademii Sztuk Pięknych im. Jana Matejki w Krakowie* (paper, "Kobiece utopie w działaniu. 100 lat praw wyborczych kobiet" conference in Kraków, 2018), courtesy of the author.

²⁴ Gromada, Budacz, Kawalerowicz and Walewska, *Marne szanse na awanse?*, 10, 22.

²⁵ Andrzej Saj, and Urszula Benka, eds., *Szkice z pamięci*. The publication contains, among other things, invaluable heristorical material – the narratives of several women involved with the academy in its early years, most of them now deceased, and their answers to questions asked in a questionnaire designed in conjunction with the publication. The following were invited to contribute to the project: artists K. Cybińska, W. Gólkowska, M. Janowska-Karpińska, R. Konieczka-Popowska, I. Lipska-Zworska, H. Olech, Ł. Skomorowska-Wilimowska, art historians B. Baworowska, I. Huml, I. Pijaczewska, M. Starzewska and a literate U. Benka. An excerpt from H. Krzetuska's autobiography was also included.

²⁶ The discussion on the use of feminatives, especially in official documents, had its turning point in public debate in Poland in 2019. At that time, the Council for the Polish Language issued a statement advocating an increased visibility of women in the Polish language and the symmetrical use of feminine forms alongside masculine ones where possible. In the same year, the Senate of the Adam Mickiewicz University passed a new statute with an unprecedented clause on allowing female forms of the names of positions and functions. In 2020 a similar clause appeared in the statute of the Academy of Art in Szczecin, and in 2021 the Senate of the Academy of Fine Arts in Krakow took a corresponding decision. The Szczecin Academy was honoured with the only feminist art award in Poland, i.e. the Maria Anto and Elsa von Freytag-Loringhoven Art Award, in the "special recognition for supporting the presence and visibility of women in education and culture" category as a pioneering institution in the field of art. Also, the feminine language forms functioning in higher education institutions and in the art world became the subject of Iwona Demko's activist project *Feminatives at the Academy*. "Stanowisko Rady Języka Polskiego przy Prezydium PAN w sprawie żeńskich form nazw zawodów i tytułów (25 XI 2019 r.)," *Rjp.pan.pl*, accessed September 4, 2022, https://rjp.pan.pl/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1861:stanowisko-rjp-w-sprawie-zenskich-form-nazw-zawodow-i-tytulow. Paulina Januszewska, "Mów mi »rektorke«: O feminatywach na uczelniach," *Krytykapolityczna.pl*, July 10, 2020, accessed February 6, 2023, <https://krytykapolityczna.pl/kraj/akademia-sztuki-szczecin-feminatywy-nowy-statut-januszewska/>. Kov, "Akademia Sztuki z nagrodą za »rektorke«, »dziekanę« i »kanclerzową«: Uznanie za wsparcie kobiet," *Szczecin.wyborcza.pl*, December 29, 2020, accessed February 6, 2023, <https://szczecin.wyborcza.pl/szczecin/7,34939,26646565,akademia-sztuki-z-nagroda-za-rektorke-dziekane-i-kanclerzowa.html>. Aleksandra Suława, "Droga Pani Dziekano... Po co nam feminatywy na uczelniach?," *Styl.interia.pl*, June 4, 2021, accessed February 6, 2023, <https://styl.interia.pl/spoleczenstwo/news-szanowna-pani-dziekano-po-co-nam-feminatywy-na-uczelniach,nId,5276339>. Iwona Demko and Łukasz Trzcinański, *Feminatywy w Akademii: Słowniczek* (Kraków: Dom Utopii – Międzynarodowe Centrum Empatii; Teatr Łąźnia Nowa, 2022).

²⁷ Andrzej Jarosz, "Barwne kadry, spiętrzone materie, kontemplacyjne płaszczyzny: Z dziejów współczesnego malarstwa wrocławskiego," in *Wrocław sztuki: Sztuka i środowisko artystyczne we Wrocławiu 1946-2006*, ed. Andrzej Saj (Wysoka: Agencja Reklamowa i Drukarnia Kontra s.c., 2007), 25, 33, 36.

²⁸ Sylwia Świsłocka-Karwot, *Sztuka we Wrocławiu w latach 1945-1970: Artyści, dzieła, krytycy* (Wrocław: Via Nova, 2016), 30, 33.

²⁹ Andrzej Saj, and Urszula Benka, eds., *Szkice z pamięci*, 45, 157, 160.

³⁰ The dates of commencement given by different authors are sometimes a little inconsistent and need to be verified. Świsłocka-Karwot, *Sztuka we Wrocławiu w latach 1945-1970*, 27, 63, 66. Andrzej Saj, ed., *Wrocław sztuki*, 10, 24-37, 83-90, 126-145, 153-183, 205-207, 250. Paweł Banaś, "PWSSP – szkic do portretu / SHSPA – Sketch for a Portrait," in *Szkice z pamięci*, 9-11. Michał Jędrzejewski, "Słowo wstępne / Preface," 9-10.

³¹ Świsłocka-Karwot, *Sztuka we Wrocławiu w latach 1945-1970*, 290. Jarosz, "Barwne kadry, spiętrzone materie, kontemplacyjne płaszczyzny," 33. Banaś, "PWSSP – szkic do portretu / SHSPA – Sketch for a Portrait," 9-10.

³² Geppert, "Pierwsze lata...," 25-26.

³³ Krzetuska, "Jak to było na początku," 39-40.

- ³⁴ Świsłocka-Karwot, *Sztuka we Wrocławiu w latach 1945-1970*, 17-57. Sylwia Świsłocka-Karwot, "Obraz rozciągnięty w czasie: Środowisko wrocławskie i sztuka w latach 1946-2006," in *Wrocław sztuki*, 289-293.
- ³⁵ Świsłocka-Karwot, *Sztuka we Wrocławiu w latach 1945-1970*, 59-107. Jarosz, "Barwne kadry, spiętrzone materie, kontemplacyjne płaszczyzny," 42-43.
- ³⁶ Unquestionably significant in the history of women's art was the 1952 Exhibition of Paintings, Drawings and Prints by Women Plastic Artists. It was the first exhibition of its kind to bring together works by eleven of the above-mentioned active women artists. The commissioner of this exhibition was Dawska, and among the eight jurors there was only one woman – Jastrzębowska. Desage was mentioned in the Świsłocka-Karwot dissertation for the first time as a participant in the 1953 edition. Świsłocka-Karwot, *Sztuka we Wrocławiu w latach 1945-1970*, 86-87.
- ³⁷ Gromada, Budacz, Kawalerowicz and Walewska, *Marne szanse na awanse?*, 14-15.
- ³⁸ Krzetuska, "Jak to było na początku," 42.
- ³⁹ Świsłocka-Karwot, *Sztuka we Wrocławiu w latach 1945-1970*, 23. Świsłocka-Karwot, "Obraz rozciągnięty w czasie," 290.
- ⁴⁰ Świsłocka-Karwot, *Sztuka we Wrocławiu w latach 1945-1970*, 25, 61, 62, 67.
- ⁴¹ Fidelis, *Kobiety, komunizm i industrializacja w powojennej Polsce*, 37-41, 50-56.
- ⁴² Gromada, Budacz, Kawalerowicz and Walewska, *Marne szanse na awanse?*, 21.
- ⁴³ Geppert, "Pierwsze lata..." , 27.
- ⁴⁴ Morecka, Graniewska, Kurzynowski and Tryfan, "Aktywność zawodowa Kobiet", 52-53.
- ⁴⁵ Gromada, Budacz, Kawalerowicz and Walewska, *Marne szanse na awanse?*, 16.
- ⁴⁶ An analysis of the numerical presence of women in the university in its first seven years of operation requires a separate reconstruction study based on information scattered over various documents.
- ⁴⁷ Ustawa z dnia 5 listopada 1958 r. o szkołach wyższych (1958), accessed February 6, 2023, <https://isap.sejm.gov.pl/isap.nsf/download.xsp/WDU19580680336/O/D19580336.pdf>.
- ⁴⁸ The classification of some employees was sometimes variable, e.g. in the case of a PE teacher in some years it was in the supporting personnel group and in other years in the lecturing group. The available documents also did not always include library staff. There was also a migration in the classification of people between full-time employees or on contract hours, especially in the group of assistants and lecturers, instructors or those teaching socio-political and humanistic subjects.
- ⁴⁹ In the academic year 1954/55, 9 people were employed as 'professors' (in the following year eight became deputy professors and one became an associate professor) and three as 'deputy professors' (in the following year still as deputy professors).
- ⁵⁰ I derive this term from the paper by Mach. Mach, *Kobiety na Akademii Sztuk Pięknych im. Jana Matejki w Krakowie*. Gromada, Budacz, Kawalerowicz and Walewska, *Marne szanse na awanse?*, 15.
- ⁵¹ Gromada, Budacz, Kawalerowicz and Walewska, *Marne szanse na awanse?*, 11-21.
- ⁵² Gromada, Budacz, Kawalerowicz and Walewska, *Marne szanse na awanse?*, 16. The issue is currently being discussed in public colleges, sparked in 2018 by the Ombudsman's report *Experiences of harassment among female students. Analysis and recommendations (Doświadczenie molestowania wśród studentek i studentów. Analiza i zalecenia)*, revealing just how widespread a problem of sexual violence is in higher educational institutions. "Doświadczenie molestowania wśród studentek i studentów: Analiza i zalecenia RPO," Bip.brpo.gov.pl, February 11, 2019, accessed February 6, 2023, <https://bip.brpo.gov.pl/content/molestowanie-wsrod-studentek-i-studentow-analiza-i-zalecenia-rpo>.
- ⁵³ Gromada, Budacz, Kawalerowicz and Walewska, *Marne szanse na awanse?*, 18.
- ⁵⁴ Gromada, Budacz, Kawalerowicz and Walewska, *Marne szanse na awanse?*, 51.
- ⁵⁵ Krzetuska, "Jak to było na początku", 42.
- ⁵⁶ Krzetuska, "Jak to było na początku", 42.
- ⁵⁷ Full name missing.
- ⁵⁸ Unfortunately, it is difficult to analyse the allocation to particular posts within commissioned hours, as this information is usually not explicitly recorded in staffing plans.
- ⁵⁹ The maximum time for holding a given position was regulated by law and, on the one hand, it forced the employees to improve their professional qualifications, namely to obtain degrees or to build up a body of work, while, on the other hand, it obliged the institutions of higher education to promote employees to further positions. In the event of a shortage of vacant positions, a shortage of staff or a particular preference or dislike for a particular person, these decisions could be taken in a non-obvious manner, that is, accelerated or deferred or even blocked advancement.
- ⁶⁰ "Uczelnia i jej pedagodzy – wspomnienia, oceny, refleksje (Ujęcie ankietowe)," in *Szkice z pamięci*, 164.
- ⁶¹ I exclude here the group of PE teachers, because for almost the entire period in question the teacher and the head of the Physical Education Study was a man, Roman Marchacz, classified in the second half of the 1970s as a lecturer or senior lecturer. It was only then that Z. Sokołowska, who had previously worked with him on contract hours, was given a full-time teaching position.

- ⁶² This more elegant phrase is usually uttered in the context of group exhibitions, in which the works of women artists are separated from those of other artists and gathered in one place, usually demonstrating the curator's helplessness in convincing and substantive inclusion of women in the proposed exhibition.
- ⁶³ Irena Lipska-Zworska, "Pani Profesor Julia Kotarbińska," in *Szkice z pamięci*, 86.
- ⁶⁴ Halina Olech, "Pierwsze lata ceramiki – pierwsi pedagodzy (o Rudolfie Krzywcu i Julii Kotarbińskiej)," in *Szkice z pamięci*, 92.
- ⁶⁵ Łucja Skomorowska-Wilimowska, "Moje wspomnienie o Xawerym Dunikowskim (wybrane fragmenty)," in *Szkice z pamięci*, 63-65.
- ⁶⁶ Łucja Skomorowska-Wilimowska, "Wspomnienie o Halinie Olech," in *Szkice z pamięci*, 125.
- ⁶⁷ Skomorowska-Wilimowska, "Wspomnienie o Halinie Olech," 125-126. 'Učka' was a diminutive of the name Łucja, indicating great intimacy.
- ⁶⁸ Skomorowska-Wilimowska, "Wspomnienie o Halinie Olech," 126.
- ⁶⁹ "Uczelnia i jej pedagodzy – wspomnienia, oceny, refleksje (Ujęcie ankietowe)," 166-167.
- ⁷⁰ Gromada, Budacz, Kawalerowicz and Walewska, *Marne szanse na awanse?*, 20.
- ⁷¹ Gromada, Budacz, Kawalerowicz and Walewska, *Marne szanse na awanse?*, 53.
- ⁷² The data for the group of students of all years is estimated based on the summarised admissions for five consecutive years, e.g. the estimated total number of students at the academy in 1954 is the sum of those admitted between 1950 and 1954. The resulting data is overstated as it does not take into account the so-called sifting and transfers between colleges.
- ⁷³ In 1970/71 there were no female full professors, only one full-time docent and two adjuncts (assistant professors).
- ⁷⁴ Stanisław Dawski, "Tamte czasy (wspomnienia wg stenogramu wywiadu z 1979 r.)," in *Szkice z pamięci*, 29.
- ⁷⁵ Krzetuska, "Jak to było na początku," 40.
- ⁷⁶ Krzetuska, "Jak to było na początku," 43.
- ⁷⁷ "Uczelnia i jej pedagodzy – wspomnienia, oceny, refleksje (Ujęcie ankietowe)," 163. Data from staffing sheets.
- ⁷⁸ "Ośrodek Dokumentacji Sztuki," Asp.wroc.pl, accessed February 6, 2023, <https://www.asp.wroc.pl/pl/uczelnia/osrodki-i-jednostki/osrodek-dokumentacji-sztuki>.
- ⁷⁹ Skomorowska-Wilimowska, "Wspomnienie o Halinie Olech," 126.
- ⁸⁰ Skomorowska-Wilimowska, "Wspomnienie o Halinie Olech," 126.
- ⁸¹ "Uczelnia i jej pedagodzy – wspomnienia, oceny, refleksje (Ujęcie ankietowe)," 164.
- ⁸² Gromada, Budacz, Kawalerowicz and Walewska, *Marne szanse na awanse?*, 6-8.
- ⁸³ Gromada, Budacz, Kawalerowicz and Walewska, *Marne szanse na awanse?*, 8.
- ⁸⁴ "Uczelnia i jej pedagodzy – wspomnienia, oceny, refleksje (Ujęcie ankietowe)," 173.

Bibliography

Archive of the Eugeniusz Geppert Academy of Art and Design in Wrocław

Księga dyplomów 1952-1997 / Diploma Book 1952-1997.

Księga immatrykulacyjna 1946-1956 / Matriculation Book 1946-1956.

Księga immatrykulacyjna 1967-1973 / Matriculation Book 1967-1973.

Księga studiów – karty studentów 1956-1967 / Book of Studies – Student Cards 1956-1967.

Plany organizacji roku akademickiego za lata 1954-1961, 1963-1967, 1968-1972 i 1973-1980 / Academic Year Organisation Plans for 1954-1961, 1963-1967, 1968-1972 and 1973-1980.

"Doświadczenie molestowania wśród studentek i studentów: Analiza i zalecenia RPO / Experiences of harassment among female students: Ombudsman's analysis and recommendations." Bip.brpo.gov.pl, February 11, 2019. Accessed February 6, 2023, <https://bip.brpo.gov.pl/pl/content/molestowanie-wsrod-studentek-i-studentow-analiza-i-zalecenia-rpo>.

"Fading Traces: Polskie artystki w sztuce lat 70. / Fading Traces: Polish Female Artists in the Art of the 1970s." Ankalesniak.pl. Accessed September 4, 2022, http://www.ankalesniak.pl/fading2010_pl.htm.

"Kocham w życiu trzy rzeczy: samochód, alkohol i marynarzy. Nieopowiedziane historie studentek ASP w Warszawie 1918-1939 / Three Things I Love in Life – The Car, Liquor and Sailors: Untold Stories of Women Students of the Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw 1918-1939." Lokal30.pl. Accessed February 1, 2023. <http://lokal30.pl/wystawy/kocham-w-zyciu-trzy-rzeczy-samochod-alkohol-i-marynarzy-nieopowiedziane-historie-studentek-asp-w-warszawie-1918-1939/>.

“Rocznik Statystyczny 1955. Główny Urząd Statystyczny Polskiej Rzeczypospolitej Ludowej / Statistical Yearbook 1955. Central Statistical Office of the People's Republic of Poland.” *Rocznik Statystyczny / Statistical Yearbook*. Warszawa: GUS, 1956.

“Stanowisko Rady Języka Polskiego przy Prezydium PAN w sprawie żeńskich form nazw zawodów i tytułów (25 XI 2019 r.) / Position of the Council of the Polish Language at the Presidium of the Polish Academy of Sciences on the Feminine Forms of the Names of Professions and Titles (25 XI 2019).” [Rjp.pan.pl](https://rjp.pan.pl/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1861:stanowisko-rjp-w-sprawie-zenskich-form-nazw-zawodow-i-tytulow). Accessed September 4, 2022, https://rjp.pan.pl/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1861:stanowisko-rjp-w-sprawie-zenskich-form-nazw-zawodow-i-tytulow.

“Uczelnia i jej pedagodzy – wspomnienia, oceny, refleksje (Ujęcie ankietowe) / The College and Its Pedagogues – Memories, Evaluations, Reflections (Survey Approach).” In *Szkice z pamięci : Państwowa Wyższa Szkoła Sztuk Plastycznych we Wrocławiu we wspomnieniach jej założycieli, studentów i pedagogów: Lata 1946-1996: Cz. 1 / Sketches from memory: the State Higher School of Plastic Arts in Wrocław in the Memories of its Founders, Students and Pedagogues: 1946-1996: Part 1*. Edited by Andrzej Saj and Urszula Benka. 157–192. Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Akademii Sztuk Pięknych, 1996.

Ustawa z dnia 5 listopada 1958 r. o szkołach wyższych / Act of November 5, 1958 on Higher Education Institutions (1958). Accessed February 6, 2023, <https://isap.sejm.gov.pl/isap.nsf/download.xsp/WDU19580680336/O/D19580336.pdf>.

“Zarejestrowane / Registered.” [Ankalesniak.pl](http://www.ankalesniak.pl/registered2011_pl.htm). Accessed September 4, 2022, http://www.ankalesniak.pl/registered2011_pl.htm.

“Zarejestrowane / Registered.” [Lodz-art.eu](http://www.lodz-art.eu/zarejestrowane/index.html). Accessed September 4, 2022, <http://www.lodz-art.eu/zarejestrowane/index.html>.

Banaś, Paweł. “PWSSP – szkic do portretu / SHSPA – Sketch for a Portrait.” In *Szkice z pamięci : Państwowa Wyższa Szkoła Sztuk Plastycznych we Wrocławiu we wspomnieniach jej założycieli, studentów i pedagogów: Lata 1946-1996: Cz. 1 / Sketches from memory: the State Higher School of Plastic Arts in Wrocław in the Memories of its Founders, Students and Pedagogues: 1946-1996: Part 1*, edited by Andrzej Saj and Urszula Benka. 9–15. Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Akademii Sztuk Pięknych, 1996.

Czyżowska, Zdzisława. “Kobieta w Polsce w latach 1975-1985: Przegląd statystyczny / Woman in Poland 1975-1985: Statistical Review.” In *Kobieta w Polsce: Referaty na Światową Konferencję Dekady Kobiet ONZ / Woman in Poland: Papers for the UN World Conference on the Decade of Women*, 11–35. Warszawa: Instytut Pracy i Spraw Socjalnych, 1986.

Dawski, Stanisław. “Tamte czasy (wspomnienia wg stenogramu wywiadu z 1979 r.) / Those times (recollections based on the transcript of the 1979 interview).” In *Szkice z pamięci : Państwowa Wyższa Szkoła Sztuk Plastycznych we Wrocławiu we wspomnieniach jej założycieli, studentów i pedagogów: Lata 1946-1996: Cz. 1 / Sketches from memory: the State Higher School of Plastic Arts in Wrocław in the Memories of its Founders, Students and Pedagogues: 1946-1996: Part 1*. Edited by Andrzej Saj and Urszula Benka. 29–34. Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Akademii Sztuk Pięknych, 1996.

Demko, Iwona. *Zofia Baltarowicz-Dzielińska : Pierwsza Studentka Akademii Sztuk Pięknych w Krakowie / Zofia Baltarowicz-Dzielińska: The First Female Student of the Academy of Fine Arts in Cracow*. Kraków: Wydawnictwo Akademii Sztuk Pięknych im. Jana Matejki, 2018.

Demko, Iwona. “Zofia Baltarowicz-Dzielińska – pierwsza studentka na krakowskiej Akademii Sztuk Pięknych / Zofia Baltarowicz-Dzielińska – the First Female Student at the Academy of Fine Arts in Krakow.” *Sztuka i Dokumentacja* 19, no. 19 (2018): 27–32. Accessed September 4, 2022. [Doi:10.32020/ARTandDOC/19/2018/6](https://doi.org/10.32020/ARTandDOC/19/2018/6).

Demko, Iwona, and Łukasz Trzciniński. *Feminatywy w Akademii: Słowniczek / Feminatives in the Academy: Glossary. Słowniczek*. Kraków: Dom Utopii – Międzynarodowe Centrum Empatii; Teatr Łąźnia Nowa, 2022.

Dobro, Dobromiła, Agnieszka Kalita, Hanna Kraś, Adam Mazur, Agata Ostrowska, Agata Plater-Zyberk, and Katarzyna Trzeciak. “Opowiedzieć Pomijane Historie. Rozmowa z Kuratorkami Wystawy *Kocham w Życiu Trzy Rzeczy: Samochód, Alkohol i Marynarzy* / Telling Overlooked Stories: A Conversation with the Curators of the Exhibition *Three Things I Love in Life – The Car, Liquor and Sailors*.” *BLOK*, August 23, 2021. Accessed September 4, 2022. <https://blokmagazine.com/pl-opowiedziec-pomijane-historie-rozmowa-z-kuratorkami-wystawy-kocham-w-zyciu-trzy-rzeczy-samochod-alkohol-i-marynarzy/>.

Fidelis, Małgorzata. *Kobiety, komunizm i industrializacja w powojennej Polsce / Women, Communism, and Industrialization in Postwar Poland*. Translated by Maria Jaszczurowska. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo W.A.B. – Grupa Wydawnicza Foksal, 2015.

Geppert, Eugeniusz. “Pierwsze lata... / The first years...” In *Szkice z pamięci : Państwowa Wyższa Szkoła Sztuk Plastycznych we Wrocławiu we wspomnieniach jej założycieli, studentów i pedagogów: Lata 1946-1996: Cz. 1 / Sketches from memory: the State Higher School of Plastic Arts in Wrocław in the Memories of its Founders, Students and Pedagogues: 1946-1996: Part 1*. Edited by Andrzej Saj and Urszula Benka. 25–28. Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Akademii Sztuk Pięknych, 1996.

Gromada, Anna, Dorka Budacz, Juta Kawalerowicz, and Anna Walewska. “*Marne szanse na awanse? Raport z badania na temat obecności kobiet na uczelniach artystycznych w Polsce / Little Chance to Advance? An Inquiry into the Presence of Women at Art Academies in Poland*.” [Warszawa], 2015. Accessed September 4, 2022. <http://katarzynakozyrafoundation.pl/projekty/badanie-dotyczace-obecnosci-kobiet-w-srodowisku-panstwowych-wyzszych-uczelni-artystycznych-w-polsce>.

Gromada, Anna, and Juta Kawalerowicz. “Pancerny sufit : dlaczego jest tak mało kobiet w kadrze uczelni plastycznych w Polsce? / The Armoured Ceiling: Why Are There So Few Women in the Staff of Arts Colleges in Poland?” In *Kariery akademickie kobiet i mężczyzn : różne czy podobne? / Women's and Men's Academic Careers: Different or Similar?* Edited by Renata Siemieńska-Żochowska. 118–142. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe “Scholar,” 2019.

Januszewska, Paulina. “Mów mi »rektorko«: O feminatywach na uczelniach / Call me »rectress«: On Feminatives in Universities.” *Krytykapolityczna.Pl*, July 10, 2020. Accessed February 6, 2023, <https://krytykapolityczna.pl/kraj/akademia-sztuki-szczecin-feminatywy-nowy-statut-januszewska/>.

Jarosz, Andrzej. "Barwne kadry, spiętrzone materie, kontemplacyjne płaszczyzny: Z dziejów współczesnego malarstwa wrocławskiego / Colourful Frames, Accumulated Matter, Contemplative Planes: On the History of Contemporary Painting of Wrocław." In *Wrocław sztuki: Sztuka i środowisko artystyczne we Wrocławiu 1946-2006 / Wrocław of the Arts: Art and the Artistic Milieu in Wrocław 1946-2006*. Edited by Andrzej Saj. 24–81. Wysoka: Agencja Reklamowa i Drukarnia Kontra s.c., 2007.

Jędrzejewski, Michał. "Słowo wstępne / Preface." In *Państwowa Wyższa Szkoła Sztuk Plastycznych we Wrocławiu, [1946-1990]: CBWA "Zachęta", Warszawa luty 1990: Wystawa prac studentów i pedagogów / State Higher School of Plastic Arts in Wrocław, [1946-1990]: CBAE 'Zachęta', Warsaw February 1990: Exhibition of Works by Students and Teachers*. Edited by Wojciech Śmigieński and Irena Zaucha. 5–22. Warszawa: Centralne Biuro Wystaw Artystycznych "Zachęta," 1990.

Kov, "Akademia Sztuki z nagrodą za »rektorke«, »dziekane« i »kanclerzową«: Uznanie za wsparcie kobiet / Academy of Art with Award for »Rectoress«, »Deaness« and »Chanceloress«: Recognition for Support of Women." *Szczecin.wyborcza.pl*, December 29, 2020. Accessed February 6, 2023, <https://szczecin.wyborcza.pl/szczecin/7,34939,26646565,akademia-sztuki-z-nagroda-za-rektorke-dziekane-i-kanclerzowa.html>.

Krzetuska, Hanna. "Jak to było na początku / How it Was at the Beginning." In *Szkice z pamięci: Państwowa Wyższa Szkoła Sztuk Plastycznych we Wrocławiu we wspomnieniach jej założycieli, studentów i pedagogów: Lata 1946-1996: Cz. 1 / Sketches from memory: the State Higher School of Plastic Arts in Wrocław in the Memories of its Founders, Students and Pedagogues: 1946-1996: Part 1*. Edited by Andrzej Saj and Urszula Benka. 39–44. Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Akademii Sztuk Pięknych, 1996.

Lipska-Zworska, Irena. "Pani Profesor Julia Kotarbińska / Ms Professor Julia Kotarbińska." In *Szkice z pamięci: Państwowa Wyższa Szkoła Sztuk Plastycznych we Wrocławiu we wspomnieniach jej założycieli, studentów i pedagogów: Lata 1946-1996: Cz. 1 / Sketches from memory: the State Higher School of Plastic Arts in Wrocław in the Memories of its Founders, Students and Pedagogues: 1946-1996: Part 1*. Edited by Andrzej Saj and Urszula Benka. 85–86. Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Akademii Sztuk Pięknych, 1996.

Mach, Magdalena. *Kobiety na Akademii Sztuk Pięknych im. Jana Matejki w Krakowie / Women at the Jan Matejko Academy of Fine Arts in Kraków*. Paper, "Kobiece utopie w działaniu: 100 lat praw wyborczych kobiet / Women's Utopias in Action: 100 Years of Women's Voting Rights" conference in Kraków, 2018. Courtesy of the author.

Markowska, Anna. "Trzeba przetrzeć tę szybę: Powikłane dzieje wrocławskiej Galerii Sztuki Najnowszej (1975-1980) w Akademickim Centrum Kultury Pałacyk / This Glass Must Be Wiped Clean: The Complicated History of the Recent Art Gallery (1975-1980) at the Pałacyk Academic Culture Centre." In *Awangarda nie bila braw: Cz. 1: Galeria Sztuki Najnowszej / The Avant-Garde Did Not Applaud: Pt. 1: The Recent Art Gallery*. Edited by Anna Markowska. 22–144, 258–324. Wrocław: Muzeum Współczesne Wrocław, 2014.

Morecka, Zofia, Danuta Graniewska, Adam Kurzynowski, and Barbara Tryfan. "Aktywność zawodowa Kobiet / Women's Professional Activity." In *Kobieta w Polsce: Referaty na Światową Konferencję Dekady Kobiet ONZ / Woman in Poland: Papers for the UN World Conference on the Decade of Women*. 36–59. Warszawa: Instytut Pracy i Spraw Socjalnych, 1986.

Nochlin, Linda. "Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists?" In *Women, Art, and Power, and Other Essays*. 145–178. New York: Harper & Row, 1988.

Olech, Halina. "Pierwsze lata ceramiki – pierwsi pedagodzy (o Rudolffie Krzywcu i Julii Kotarbińskiej) / The First Years of Ceramics – the First Pedagogues (on Rudolf Krzywiec and Julia Kotarbińska)." In *Szkice z pamięci: Państwowa Wyższa Szkoła Sztuk Plastycznych we Wrocławiu we wspomnieniach jej założycieli, studentów i pedagogów: Lata 1946-1996: Cz. 1 / Sketches from memory: the State Higher School of Plastic Arts in Wrocław in the Memories of its Founders, Students and Pedagogues: 1946-1996: Part 1*. Edited by Andrzej Saj and Urszula Benka. 89–92. Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Akademii Sztuk Pięknych, 1996.

Reznik, Zofia. "Piąta Beatles i Matka Sukcesu. Artystki kolektywu GSN w świetle historii mówionej / The Fifth Beatle and the Mother of Success. Female Artists of the RAG Collective in the Light of Oral History." In *Awangarda nie bila braw: Cz. 1: Galeria Sztuki Najnowszej / The Avant-Garde Did Not Applaud: Pt. 1: The Recent Art Gallery*. Edited by Anna Markowska. 158–167, 331–335. Wrocław: Muzeum Współczesne Wrocław, 2014.

Saj, Andrzej, ed. *Wrocław sztuki: Sztuka i środowisko artystyczne we Wrocławiu 1946-2006 / Wrocław of the Arts: Art and the Artistic Milieu in Wrocław 1946-2006*. Wysoka: Agencja Reklamowa i Drukarnia Kontra s.c., 2007.

Saj, Andrzej, and Urszula Benka, eds. *Szkice z pamięci: Państwowa Wyższa Szkoła Sztuk Plastycznych we Wrocławiu we wspomnieniach jej założycieli, studentów i pedagogów: Lata 1946-1996: Cz. 1 / Sketches from memory: the State Higher School of Plastic Arts in Wrocław in the Memories of its Founders, Students and Pedagogues: 1946-1996: Part 1*. Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Akademii Sztuk Pięknych, 1996.

Skomorowska-Wilimowska, Łucja. "Moje wspomnienie o Xawerym Dunikowskim (wybrane fragmenty) / My memoirs about Xawery Dunikowski (selected excerpts)." In *Szkice z pamięci: Państwowa Wyższa Szkoła Sztuk Plastycznych we Wrocławiu we wspomnieniach jej założycieli, studentów i pedagogów: Lata 1946-1996: Cz. 1 / Sketches from memory: the State Higher School of Plastic Arts in Wrocław in the Memories of its Founders, Students and Pedagogues: 1946-1996: Part 1*. Edited by Andrzej Saj and Urszula Benka. 63–68. Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Akademii Sztuk Pięknych, 1996.

Skomorowska-Wilimowska, Łucja. "Wspomnienie o Halinie Olech / Memory of Halina Olech." In *Szkice z pamięci: Państwowa Wyższa Szkoła Sztuk Plastycznych we Wrocławiu we wspomnieniach jej założycieli, studentów i pedagogów: Lata 1946-1996: Cz. 1 / Sketches from memory: the State Higher School of Plastic Arts in Wrocław in the Memories of*

its Founders, Students and Pedagogues: 1946-1996: Part 1. Edited by Andrzej Saj and Urszula Benka. 125–126. Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Akademii Sztuk Pięknych, 1996.

Stelmach, Monika, and Demko Iwona. "Zwycięstwo Zofii. Rozmowa z Iwoną Demko / Zofia's Victory: Interview with Iwona Demko." *Dwutygodnik.com*, 263, August 2019. Accessed September 4, 2022. <https://www.dwutygodnik.com/artykul/8427-zwyciestwo-zofii.html>.

Suława, Aleksandra. "Droga Pani Dziekano... Po co nam feminatywy na uczelniach? / Dear Madam Deaneess: Why Do We Need Feminatives in Universities?" *Styl.interia.pl*, June 4, 2021. Accessed February 6, 2023, <https://styl.interia.pl/spoleczenstwo/news-szanowna-pani-dziekano-po-co-nam-feminatywy-na-uczelniach,nId,5276339>.

Świsłocka-Karwot, Sylwia. "Obraz rozciągnięty w czasie: Środowisko wrocławskie i sztuka w latach 1946-2006 / Image Stretched in Time: Artistic Environment and Art in Wrocław from 1946 to 2006." In *Wrocław sztuki: Sztuka i środowisko artystyczne we Wrocławiu 1946-2006 / Wrocław of the Arts: Art and the Artistic Milieu in Wrocław 1946-2006*. Edited by Andrzej Saj. 289–315. Wysoka: Agencja Reklamowa i Drukarnia Kontra s.c., 2007.

Świsłocka-Karwot, Sylwia. *Sztuka we Wrocławiu w latach 1945-1970: Artyści, dzieła, krytycy / Art in Wrocław 1945-1970: Artists, Artworks, Critics* Wrocław. Via Nova, 2016.

Wieruszewski, Roman. *Równość kobiet i mężczyzn w Polsce Ludowej / Equality of Women and Men in People's Poland*. Poznań: Wydaw. Poznańskie, 1975.

Roman NIECZYPOROWSKI

Academy of Fine Arts in Gdańsk

THE JOY OF CREATION. TERESA SIERANT-MIKICICZ'S ROLE IN BUILDING THE GDANSK ACADEMY OF FINE ARTS BRAND

In my view, there is no true history of this school without Franciszek Otto and Teresa Sierant. The former was the holocaust of our intelligence - Teresa somehow compensated for that, whole decades of beauty and art she told us about.

From a laudation delivered by Prof. Mieczysław Olszewski on the occasion of a commemorative celebration honouring the sixtieth anniversary of the Academy of Fine Arts in Gdansk.

One can safely say that the history of the Academy of Fine Arts in Gdansk begins with the arrival of seven painters who set themselves the goal of creating an art school in Tri-City. Thanks to them, in the late summer of 1945, the State Institute of Visual Arts¹ was established in Sopot; a few weeks later it was transformed into the State Higher School of Fine Arts in Gdansk with its seat in Sopot.² It often happens, however, that stories concerning the beginnings of the Gdansk Academy of Fine Arts feature its "founding fathers," forgetting somehow that three out of seven people who built the School were women - a case quite rare in the patriarchal world of that time. They were: Krystyna Studnicka, Józefa Wnukowa and Hanna Żuławska.³ Three strong personalities, three great artists. Thus, it can be stated that the feminist theme was significantly present already in the founding act of the Gdansk Academy.

A few years later, this group of women building the identity of the Gdansk Academy was joined by Teresa Sierant. Nevertheless, while

Krystyna Studnicka, Józefa Wnukowa and Hanna Żuławska remain relatively popular, due to their artistic activity, Teresa Sierant is only mentioned in conversations and memoirs of those who have known or met her. Therefore, the aim of this text is to bring to light the figure of Teresa Sierant - associated with the Gdansk Academy almost from the very beginning, and for a long time the only professional art historian employed there. For decades, almost every graduating student at the School had to pass exams and, often, write a theoretical paper. In addition, most of the academic community frequently met Teresa at the academy library which she managed for almost fifty years. Throughout the years, it was her knowledge, attitude and joy of life, that drew paths of personal development for countless students. Thus, one can conclude that along with the end of her employment at the Academy - she retired in 2001, in her seventies - a certain era ended, the era of finest quality joy of life. In a way, everything that led to Teresa Sierant's appearance

at the Gdansk State Higher School of Visual Arts (PWSSP) stemmed from old friendships and wounded ambitions. To explain this properly, one has to go back to the period between 1940s and 1950s. In 1949 Prof. Marian Wnuk, then the Gdansk School Rector, left Tri-City to take over the sculpture studio, and later the position of Rector at the Warsaw Academy of Fine Arts. Then Prof. Jan Wodyński⁴ was appointed Rector in Sopot, only to be replaced in this position by Prof. Stanisław Teisseyre who arrived from Poznań in 1951. At the Krakow Congress of the Association of Polish Artists and Designers in 1945, when the future development of artistic education in Poland was under discussion, the need for a third Academy of Fine Arts, apart from those in Krakow and Warsaw, was noted. This new institution, according to the participants' suggestions, was to be established in Poznań.⁵ At the time when, partly for ambitious reasons, Teisseyre moved to Tri-City, the matter of the third academy was still open. Thus, Prof. Teisseyre made efforts to ensure that the planned increase in rank was assigned to the Gdansk institution. The main difference between the Academy of Fine Arts and the State Higher School of Visual Arts study programs was marked in their approach to the theory and history of art; hence the new Rector's endeavours focused on adapting the theoretical program to the higher academic requirements. Rector Teisseyre's goals were set on teaching art history.

Initially, students at the State Higher School of Visual Arts in Gdansk learned about the history of art as part of classes in art or design studios. In 1947, the course was taken over by Janina Ebenberger-Orzechowska who focused mainly on Italian art.⁶ But the new authorities were perhaps not in her favor because, probably even before 1950, her education was questioned; as evidenced by written testimonials of her former students at the Jan Kazimierz University in Lviv, which confirm information concerning lectures on Italian art conducted by Ebenberger-Orzechowska at her alma mater in Lviv in the years 1935-1939.⁷ No wonder that in these circumstances Rector Teisseyre began looking for an art historian whose person would

not raise any objections. This person turned out to be Teresa Sierant who had been recommended by Jan Chranicki,⁸ then the director of the Pomeranian Museum in Gdansk;⁹ in 1956 she was employed at the State Higher School of Visual Arts.

Teresa Sierant was born on December 5, 1931 in Majków Duży,¹⁰ but soon the family moved to Starogard Gdański, where Teresa's father, Teofil Sierant, got a job at an amplification (relay) station belonging to the state-owned company Polska Poczta, Telegraf i Telefon. There, she began her primary school education, which was interrupted after a year by the outbreak of World War II. The family then moved to Piotrków Trybunalski, where, changing their place of residence several times, they survived the German occupation. In 1945, the Sierants moved to Gdansk and settled in Wrzeszcz. Then Teresa began her education at the Stefan Żeromski V Liceum in Gdansk-Oliwa. Having graduated, she studied history of art at the Faculty of Philosophy of the Nicolaus Copernicus University in Torun, in years 1949-1952. She was studying there with, among others, Marian Arszczyński. At that time, history of art was delivered in a two-stage study programme, and the Torun University did not have the right to conduct the second cycle of studies granting the Master's degree in art history.¹¹ In the light of that, Teresa Sierant's talent and scientific potential becomes evident as she was the only person from her year selected to continue studying;¹² thanks to that, in the years 1952-1954, she completed her MA studies in art history at the Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań. There Teresa Sierant found herself in good company - studying with some of the greatest Polish figures in this field, such as Teresa Jakimowicz, Zofia Ostrowska-Kęłbowska, Janusz Kęłowski and Piotr Skubiszewski - in her year, and Alicja Kępińska a year below.

For the first few months of her studies, she participated in a Master's seminar conducted by Fr. Prof. Szczesny Dettloff; however, after he was forced to retire in March 1953,¹³ she found herself under the scientific supervision of Prof. Gwidon Chmarzyński and Prof. Zdzisław Kępiński, with whom she defended her Master's thesis which

concerned tenement houses in Gdansk. On June 26, 1954 she was granted the Master's degree in art history and received her Diploma of Completion of the second stage study programme from the Faculty of Philosophy and History at the University of Poznan.

The realities of the time meant that after graduation, in 1954, Teresa Sierant received a work order directing her to Kwidzyn, but thanks to director Jan Chranicki, she was employed at the Pomeranian Museum in Gdansk,¹⁴ at its Scientific and Educational Department. Thus, she naturally entered the community of Gdansk museologists and art historians. No wonder that a year later, on November 24, 1955, she was among the founding members of the Association of Art Historians, Gdansk subsidiary. Jan Chranicki, then director of the Pomeranian Museum, became its president, and Teresa Sierant became the vice-president of the self-education section.¹⁵

Before the war, just after graduating from the art history studies at the Jagiellonian University, Jan Chranicki worked at the Museum in Lviv. In these days, he met Juliusz Studnicki and Stanisław Teisseyre. Thanks to these acquaintances he, in later years, sometimes gave lectures on history of art at the Gdansk School. In addition, "he worked for several Festivals of Fine Arts in Sopot as part of Organizing Committee, he was a member of [...] the Diploma Committee of the State Higher School of Visual Arts [in Gdansk]."¹⁶ Therefore, when Teisseyre was looking for an art history lecturer, he sought the advice of director Chranicki who suggested Teresa Sierant. It so happened that Teisseyre knew also Prof. Kępiński from Poznan, who recommended her as well. And so, in October 1956, while still employed at the museum, Teresa Sierant began giving lectures at the Gdansk State Higher School of Fine Arts. Initially, Rector Teisseyre entrusted her with the students of the I and II year only, allowing her to assist at his lectures for the IV year painting students. As she recalls, the classes led by Teisseyre taught her to look at painting, and talk about the essence of art of a given time; it was then when she began to focus on making her lectures not resemble

those from her studies. In turn, the classes Rector had conducted assisted by Teresa Sierant inspired his trust; thus, in the next academic year she was delivering lectures to students of all years.¹⁷

Working with students became her passion. Thanks to the support of the School Authorities, she took her students on yearly monument-researching tours around Poland, participated in painting and sculpting plein-air. Students adored her, feared her, but most of all respected her. Among proof of the admiration there is, for example, a medal cast for her by a group of students as a thank you, inscribed: AMICAE STUDIORUM - TERESIE SIERANT - SEMPER FIDELI. She values this medal more than the Presidential Bronze Cross of Merit she received in 1996.¹⁸ No wonder that she was always present in stories told by Prof. Andrzej Dyakowski, mentioned many times by Prof. Mieczysław Olszewski, she has remained important for many former students. Krystyna Niznikiewicz (Suwara), appreciates her not only for the knowledge Teresa Sierant passed on to them, but also for teaching them to look at art. Teresa Miszkin, a former student and later professor at the Gdansk Academy of Fine Arts, recalled that, apart from respecting Teresa Sierant's knowledge, women studying at the Gdansk Academy admired her for her courage and joy of life, for her fearless belief in herself, and accepting no imposed limits. To them, she was the example of an intelligent, well-educated yet liberated and beautiful woman. In addition to the all that, Teresa Sierant conducted field inventory research of the monuments of Gdansk Pomerania¹⁹, she wrote scientific and popularizing texts (including the one devoted to Memling's triptych which is presented at the Gdansk National Museum²⁰), she prepared a guide to the exhibition of Flemish and Dutch paintings of the 17th century for the Pomeranian Museum in Gdansk,²¹ she wrote about Gdansk monuments,²² she conducted series of lectures at the BWA Gallery in Sopot. Using her personal contacts, she invited, among others, Prof. Stefan Morawski, Prof. Andrzej Ryszkiewicz and Prof. Jacek Woźniakowski to give lectures at the Gdansk School; and, at the same time, like the proverbial "Strongwoman" from

Stefan Żeromski's novel, she travelled with her lectures on art to schools and community centres in rural areas. Everything indicated that, like the rest of her friends from Poznań, she would become recognized as one of the famous art history professors. She did even make an attempt to write a doctoral dissertation devoted to the Gdańsk Higher School of Visual Arts artistic environment. For that reason, as she recalls, she participated during the early 1960s in the doctoral seminar led by Prof. Roman Wapiński. However, it must have taken place a little later - in the second half of this decade, since Wapiński obtained his habilitation in 1964.²³ Nevertheless, she quickly gave up on this idea - she chose life.

It must be admitted that despite the "communist times," the late 1950s as well as 1960s were an intense and lively period, especially at the School. It still seems to be one of the most colourful and crazy times in the history of Gdańsk academic life - the time of student theatres, with the famous Bim-Bom at the forefront, the numerous faces of Zbyszek Cybulski, Bogumił Kobiela, Jacek Fedorowicz...,²⁴ colourful plain-airs in Dębki, Kadyny, Chmielno; the time of crazy balls at the Gdańsk PWSSP. Teresa Sierant actively participated in everything. Thus, she quickly became an excellent partner for both intellectual conversations and ... dancing. Serenity and joy of life. To many people she was also a "scandalist." Since, in the decisive moment of her life she did not hesitate to bet on love, and in 1972 she married her then student, Romuald Mikicicz. As she herself claims, in spite of everyone, it turned out that it was the best possible decision²⁵.

The position she built for herself over the years at the Gdańsk School meant that almost all Rectors, starting with Prof. Stanisław Teisseyre, valued her opinion. As she declares, the School has always been close to her heart. It seems evident, for instance, when examining her efforts towards building the independent trade union movement in 1980,²⁶ and her later involvement in the first, fully democratic Rector elections held at the Gdańsk PWSSP in spring 1981.

Aware of the passing time, changing artistic

fashions and preferences, at some point she began to "escape" to the privacy of the Academy library which she had created practically from scratch, and then managed for decades. At the same time, as long as she worked at the School, she strove to support new tutors who succeeded her in didactic functions.

It seems that the best summary of Teresa Sierant's role presents itself in the farewell words issued to her - who after having tutored many generations of artists was retiring in autumn 2002 - by the former Rector of the Academy of Fine Arts in Gdańsk, Prof. Tomasz Bogusławski:

On behalf of the Gdańsk Academy of Fine Arts Senate and my own, I would like to express my sincere thanks to you for the many years of continuous effort in educating the students of our Academy in humanities, as well as for your commitment and excellence at managing the academic library.

To many generations of students at the Academy you were the guide to the history of art and the curator of all the small, but greatly valuable museums contained between the covers of books. We were lucky to have benefited from your knowledge, experience and invariably kind help, navigating our reaching for beautiful, colourful albums, obligatory and optional reading positions, footnotes, bibliographies and iconographies. Among the bookshelves with hundreds, later thousands of titles, one could always feel your presence so tender towards art, students and books.

For this special kind of presence, which I will allow myself to call PERSONALITY, I thank you with all my heart's warmth and cordiality.

Notes

¹ According to Józefa Wnukowa, the first inauguration of the academic year took place on October 15, 1945, see: Józefa Wnukowa, "U źródeł szkoły talentów i charakterów," *Gdański Rocznik Kulturalny* 10 (1987): 174.

² The ordinance No. L. dz. 1972/V/11022 issued by the Minister of Culture and Art on December 6, 1945, signed by the then Deputy Minister, Leon Kruczkowski, see: Józefa Wnukowa, ed., *Państwowa Wyższa Szkoła Sztuk Plastycznych w Gdańsku. 1945–1965* (Gdańsk: PWSSP w Gdańsku, 1965), 9. It should be noted that the School managed to keep this name for the first few post-war years, and it was not until the 1950 act that it was changed to the State Higher School of Visual Arts (PWSSP).

³ in fact Anna Klementyna Żuławska née Jasińska, see: Archives of the Academy of Fine Arts in Gdansk, Collection: Personal Files of Employees: "Hanna Żuławska," ref. Ż9: *Certificate of birth and baptism*, issued by the Roman Catholic parish of St. Barbara in Warsaw (act no: 462 from 1909).

⁴ After World War II Jan Wodyński was first involved in organizing the School of Visual Arts in Katowice, then he was a painting professor at the University of Torun, Faculty of Fine Arts; since 1947 (until 1953), he was briefly staying in Tri-City where in 1949-1950 he assumed the position of Rector. He came to the Sopot School thanks to an old, pre-war friendship with Jacek Żuławski. Wodyński was a former student of Wojciech Wajs at the Academy of Fine Arts in Krakow; there he met Jacek Żuławski who was studying under Felicjan Kowarski. When Prof. Kowarski moved to Warsaw, Żuławski followed him to finish his studies at the School of Fine Arts there (it became an Academy in 1932). No wonder the professor saw Jacek as his successor. Wodyński, already living in Warsaw at that time, maintained close contacts with Kowarski's studio. Therefore, after Żuławski had left for Józef Pankiewicz's studio in Paris, it was Wodyński who became Kowarski's assistant.

⁵ See: [Kazimierz Tomorowicz], "Ramowy program szkolnictwa artystycznego plastyki w Polsce. Projekt Związku Polskich Artystów Plastyków," *Przegląd Artystyczny. Biuletyn informacyjny Związku Zawodowego Polskich Artystów Plastyków* no. 1 (September 1945): 4, quoted from: <https://kpbc.umk.pl/Content/215903/Publikacja-WiMBP-070727.pdf>, accessed June 03, 2021.

⁶ Born on June 21, 1894 in Lviv, *ibidem*, she began studying art history before the First World War, which she later continued in Italy, see: Archives of the Academy of Fine Arts in Gdansk, Collection: Personal Files of Employees: "Janina Ebenberger-Orzechowska," ref. E1.

⁷ Archives of the Academy of Fine Arts in Gdansk, Collection: Employees' Personal Files: "Janina Ebenberger-Orzechowska," ref. E1: Declaration by Zofia Łepkowska, and Statement by Maria Sobolewska.

⁸ Jan Chranicki knew Stanisław Teisseyre from Lviv before the war. Teisseyre was born in Lviv, Chranicki chose to live there, see: Helena Hohensee-Ciszewska, "Jan Chranicki. 1906-1976," *Biuletyn Historii Sztuki*, R. XXXIX, no. 1, (1977): 110. (110-111); Anna Gosieniecka, "Jan Chranicki 3.II.1906-11.V.1976," *Gdańskie Studia Muzealne*, vol. 1 (1976): 224. (223-224).

⁹ Currently, since 1972, the National Museum in Gdansk.

¹⁰ Piotrków County, Lodz Voivodeship. Biographical data of Teresa Sierant, see: Archives of the Academy of Fine Arts in Gdansk, Collection: Personal Files of Employees: "Teresa Sierant-Mikicicz," ref. S 158: Personal Survey.

¹¹ At that time, only three universities in Poland had such a right: in Warsaw, Poznan and Krakow (Jagiellonian).

¹² Marian Arszczyński was admitted to the MA studies in art history in Poznan only a few years later (he studied in years 1955-1958).

¹³ After Dettloff's statement commenting on Stalin's death. As a result, "on March 20, 1953, members of the University of Poznan Senate stated that »the educational influence of Fr. Prof. Dettloff on academic youth is definitely harmful,« and they decided that »further activity of the above-mentioned professor at any Polish University is impossible«, and then issued a request to the »citizen Minister« imploring him to immediately cease the professional relationship with Fr. Prof. Dettloff." Their wish was granted on the same day, quoted from: <https://poznan.ipn.gov.pl/pl7/aktualnosci/179674,Wyklad-Sprawa-księżyca-profesora-Szczesny-Dettloffa-Poznan-7-marca-2023.html>, accessed June 17, 2023; see: Piotr Grzelczak, "Sprawa ks. Szczęsnego Dettloffa. UAM 1953," *Artium Quaestiones* vol. XXII (2011): 79-99.

¹⁴ She was employed there from November 1, 1954 to March 31, 1963.

¹⁵ Jacek Kriegseisen, *Stowarzyszenie Historyków Sztuki Oddział Gdański 1955-2015. W 60. rocznicę powstania* (Gdańsk: Stowarzyszenie Historyków Sztuki, Oddział Gdański, 2014).

¹⁶ Helena Hohensee-Ciszewska, "Jan Chranicki. 1906-1976," *Biuletyn Historii Sztuki*, R. XXXIX, no. 1 (1977): 110 (110-111); Anna Gosieniecka, "Jan Chranicki 3.II.1906-11.V.1976," *Gdańskie Studia Muzealne* vol. 1 (1976): 224 (223-224).

¹⁷ An interview with Teresa Sierant, conducted on March 26, 2022.

¹⁸ See: The decision issued by the Polish President on January 18, 1996, concerning awarding decorations, Polish Monitor, 1996, No. 16, item 212.7; cf.: Archives of the Academy of Fine Arts in Gdansk, Collection: Personal Files of Employees: "Teresa Sierant," ref. S. 158.

¹⁹ See: Krystyna Mellin, Teresa Sierant, "Kartuzi i powiat kartuski. Stan z września 1958," in *Zabytki Województwa Gdańskiego*. Table no. 6 (Gdańsk: Muzeum Pomorskie w Gdańsku/Konserwator Wojewódzki Gdański/Okręgowa Komisja Opieki nad Zabytkami), 3-11. MNG Library, DZ-15051, reference number L III 832.

²⁰ Teresa Sierant, "Sąd Ostateczny" *Hansa Memlinga* (Gdańsk: Muzeum Pomorskie, 1959). MNG Library, reference number L II 4354.

²¹ Teresa Sierant, *Przewodnik po wystawie malarstwa flamandzkiego i holenderskiego XVII wieku* (Gdańsk: Muzeum Pomorskie w Gdańsku, 1960). Biblioteka MNG, sygn. L II 4069 [Teresa Sierant, *Guide to the exhibition of Flemish and Dutch paintings of the 17th century*]. MNG Library, reference number L II 4069.

²² Teresa Sierant, *Renesansowe kamieniczki*, from the series: Zabytki Gdańska (Gdańsk: Stowarzyszenie Historyków Sztuki, b.r.w.). MNG Library, reference number L II 5146.

²³ Prof. Roman Wapiński received his habilitation degree in humanities in 1964, see entry: Roman Wapiński, https://www.gedanopedia.pl/gdansk/?title=WAPI%C5%83SKI_ROMAN.

²⁴ Who, *nota bene*, was also a student of Teresa Sierant.

²⁵ Archives of the Academy of Fine Arts in Gdansk, Collection: Files of Employees: "Teresa Sierant," ref. S. 158: Extract from the marriage certificate - copy.

²⁶ In 1980, she was elected vice-president of the Scholl's NSZZ Solidarność Committee.

Bibliography

Archival sources

Archives of the Academy of Fine Arts in Gdansk, Collection: Personal Files of Employees: "Janina Ebenberger-Orzechowska," ref. E1.

Archives of the Academy of Fine Arts in Gdansk, Collection: Personal Files of Employees: "Teresa Sierant-Mikicicz," ref. S.158.

Archives of the Academy of Fine Arts in Gdansk, Collection: Personal Files of Employees: "Hanna Żuławska," ref. Ż9.

Printed sources

Gosieniecka, Anna. "Jan Chranicki 3.II.1906-11.V.1976." *Gdańskie Studia Muzealne*, vol. 1 (1976): 223-224.

Grzelczak, Piotr. "Sprawa ks. Szczęsnego Dettloffa. UAM 1953." *Artium Quaestiones* vol. XXII (2011): 79-99.

Hohensee-Ciszewska, Helena. „Jan Chranicki. 1906-1976.” *Biuletyn Historii Sztuki* R. XXXIX, no. 1 (1977): 110-111.

Kriegseisen, Jacek. „Stowarzyszenie Historyków Sztuki Oddział Gdański 1955-2015. W 60. rocznicę powstania.” Gdańsk: Stowarzyszenie Historyków Sztuki, Oddział Gdański, 2014.

Mellin, Krystyna, Teresa Sierant. „Kartuzy i powiat kartuski. Stan z września 1958.” In *Zabytki Województwa Gdańskiego*. Table no. 6, 3-11. Gdańsk: Muzeum Pomorskie w Gdańsku/Konserwator Wojewódzki Gdański/Okręgowa Komisja Opieki nad Zabytkami.

Polish Monitor. no. 16 (1996): item 212.7.

Sierant, Teresa. *Przewodnik po wystawie malarstwa flamandzkiego i holenderskiego XVII wieku*. Gdańsk: Muzeum Pomorskie w Gdańsku, 1960.

Sierant, Teresa. *Renesansowe Kamieniczki*. From the series: Zabytki Gdańska. Gdańsk: Stowarzyszenie Historyków Sztuki, [b.r.w.].

Sierant, Teresa. *"Sąd Ostateczny" Hansa Memlinga*. Gdańsk: Muzeum Pomorskie, 1959.

[Tomorowicz Kazimierz], "Ramowy program szkolnictwa artystycznego plastyki w Polsce. Projekt Związku Polskich Artystów Plastyków." *Przegląd Artystyczny. Biuletyn informacyjny Związku Zawodowego Polskich Artystów Plastyków* No. 1 (September 1945): 3-6. Quoted from: <https://kpbc.umk.pl/Content/215903/Publikacja-WIMBP-070727.pdf>. Accessed June 03, 2021.

Wnukowa, Józefa, ed. *Państwowa Wyższa Szkoła Sztuk Plastycznych w Gdańsku. 1945-1965*. Gdańsk: PWSSP w Gdańsku, 1965.

Wnukowa, Józefa. "U źródeł szkoły talentów i charakterów." *Gdański Rocznik Kulturalny* 10 (1987): 174-188.

Ulrike HIRHAGER

Academy of Fine Arts Vienna

‘DAMAGING THE SILENCE AND ORDER.’ WOMEN AND THE ACADEMY OF FINE ARTS VIENNA

2020/21 ... An Anniversary Year

The academic year 2020/21 was an anniversary year at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna: 100 years before, in the 1920/21 winter semester, women were first admitted to study there.

This article is the follow-up to a project the University Archives of the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna initiated at the suggestion of the Academy’s PR department: the regular presentation of an ‘Archivist’s Choice’. In monthly intervals, a video series covering certain topics from ‘100 Years of Women’s Studies’ was put online together with an essay.¹

Women’s Studies in the Arts in Vienna before 1920

Before 1920, women could take private (and rather expensive) lessons, attend private schools or the *Kunstschule für Frauen und Mädchen* (Art School for Women and Girls), as well as the then *Kunstgewerbeschule* (today’s *Universität für angewandte Kunst*, University of Applied Arts) or the *Graphische Lehr- und Versuchsanstalt* (Higher Federal Institution for Graphic Education and Research).²

The admission of women to the Academy in 1920/21 was preceded by discussions that went on for several decades.³ In 1872, the Ministry of Education submitted this subject for appraisal to the faculty board. The board members refused the idea on the following grounds: the Academy building did not provide enough space; women were less educated than men and were only suited to produce ‘lower art,’ like flower and portrait painting; finally, one could not expect young ladies to be put together in one room with young men, as they would not be able to pursue their studies without ‘damaging the silence and order at the institute’.⁴

In 1904, the whole matter was taken up again by the Ministry with a similar outcome – the faculty board feared dilettantism as a consequence of women being admitted because of their ‘lack of creative spirit’.⁵

This assessment was valid until after World War I. In 1919, the State Office for Internal Affairs and Education ordered the Academy to take steps to introduce women’s studies, which they finally did in 1920/21.

The women who enrolled in the 1920s were in fact not the first. The Academy of Fine Arts Vienna was founded in 1692, and the Archives’ holdings go back to 1706. The Archives’ records

At his *Kupferstecherakademie*, a few women joined the ranks of the members. Their *Aufnahmstücke* are held by either the *Gemäldegalerie* (Paintings Gallery) or the *Kupferstichkabinett* (Graphic Collection) of the Academy. (ill. 4)

In 1768, two women were appointed as members: first, the painter Anna Dorothea Therbusch (1721–1782),²⁴ who had been taught by her father, the painter Georg Lisiewski (1674–1750; employed at the Royal Court in Berlin). (ill. 5) The second was *Frau von Cont [Conte]*, *Mitglied der Akademien in Rom Florenz, Parma, und Bolonien [Bologna]* (member of the Academies in Rome, Florence, Parma, and Bologna).²⁵

In 1771, three women were appointed as members of the *Kupferstecherakademie*:²⁶ (ill. 6) the pastelist Gabriele Beyer (1729–1802), née von Bertrand, art teacher of Maria Theresia's daughters and wife of court sculptor Wilhelm Beyer,²⁷ (ill. 7) the Parisian engraver Anne Philiberte Coulet (1736–after 1787)²⁸ and the Dutch portrait painter Gertrude de Pélichy (1743–1825).²⁹ (ill. 8)

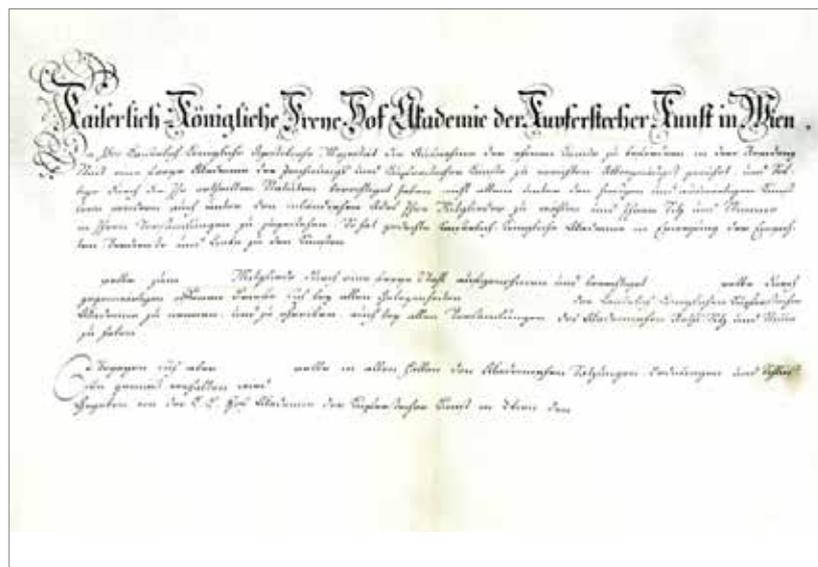
Women also participated in the Academy's exhibitions, e.g. Gabriele Beyer, who is explicitly named as a member, in 1774, 1777 and 1786.³⁰

The *Kupferstecherakademie* and the *Kaiserl. Königl. Hof-Academie der Mahler-Bildhauer- und Baukunst* were merged in 1772. For the almost 100 years to come, until 1870, hundreds of members were accepted; none of them was a woman. After 1870, only the option of becoming an honorary member remained.

Noble 'Dilettantes' as Honorary Members of the Academy

The Academy not only accepted 'regular' members, i.e. active artists, but also honorary members. In the statutes of 1751 these so-called *Ehrenmitglieder* are mentioned for the first time.³¹

It was again Jacob Matthias Schmuizer's *Kupferstecherakademie* that acted in a progressive way: Its statutes from 1767 explicitly state that women, no matter what their social position was



4



5

(*Frauen-Personen von hohem und niedrigem Stande*), could become honorary members.³² The only condition was excellence in their artwork.

In the first draft of the statutes of the *K. k. Akademie der vereinigten bildenden Künste* from 1773³³ it is stipulated that art lovers of both sexes who handed in their *Aufnahmstück* could become honorary members. In the binding statute of 1800, women are not specifically mentioned any more: The ranks of the honorary members could be joined by art lovers and supporters of the fine arts and of artists, as well as male scientists whose field of work showed a close connection to art.³⁴

From 1767 to 1836, approximately twenty noblewomen were accepted as honorary or regular members of the Academy resp. the *Kupferstecherakademie*. These women were 'dilettantes' who practiced their art for pure joy, as in the original meaning of the Italian *diletto* (not like the women mentioned above, who made their living with their art).³⁵ They either belonged to the Imperial House or were closely associated with it. Their patronage had a certain protective function for the Academy and for the arts taught there.³⁶

The first members of the *Kupferstecherakademie*, accepted in 1767, were women: the Archduchesses Maria Anna (Marianne) and Maria Carolina (Charlotte), two of Maria Theresia's daughters. The latter appears in our sources as a regular (of the *Kupferstecherakademie*), but also as an honorary member (of the *Kaiserl. Königl. Hof-Academie der Mahler- Bildhauer- und Baukunst*, accepted in 1768).³⁷ The archduchesses' *Aufnahmstücke*, both drawings of an excellent quality, are preserved in the Academy's *Kupferstichkabinett*. Their teacher was Gabriele Bertrand. (ill. 9)

Two other noblewomen became members of either institution in the 1760s: in 1768 Ernestine von Losymthal, wife of the Academy's *Protector* Adam Philipp Losy von Losymthal and daughter of Maria Theresia's intimate friend Maria Carolina Gräfin Fuchs von Bimbach,³⁸ and in 1769 Princess Marie Anne von Lamberg, née Countess Trautson.³⁹

The women who were appointed as honorary members from 1789 on all belonged to

the Imperial House. In this context, I can only point out some exemplary names; a complete list is given in my essay 'Adelige "Dilettantinnen" als (Ehren-)Mitglieder der Akademie' and can be viewed in the newly developed database on the Academy's website.⁴⁰ In 1789, Archduchess Elisabeth Wilhelmine, the first wife of Emperor Franz II (I), became an honorary member.⁴¹ In 1812 and 1818, the Emperor's third and fourth wives followed: Maria Ludovica⁴² and Carolina Augusta,⁴³ as well as his daughter, Archduchess Marie-Louise (the wife of Napoleon I), in 1818.⁴⁴ The Academy's Archives hold her thank-you letter.⁴⁵

The artworks of these 'noble dilettantes' show a very high quality, for example the *Aufnahmstück* of Maria Antonia, Princess of Naples and Sicily (appointed in 1802).⁴⁶ (ill. 10)

In 1836, the last female honorary members of the Imperial House were appointed: Empress Maria Anna Karolina and the Archduchesses Maria Dorothea, Maria Elisabetta, Maria Theresia, and Sophie.⁴⁷

There was then a long period without women. More than 150 years later, the architect Margarete Schütte-Lihotzky (in 1994), the sculptor Louise Bourgeois (in 2000) and, in 2010, the painter Maria Lassnig and the writer Friederike Mayröcker were appointed honorary members of the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna. Recently, in the spring of 2023, the sculptor Teresa Feodorowna Ries posthumously received an honorary membership.



9



10

Notes

- ¹ Permalink, <https://www.akbild.ac.at/de/resolveuid/40b76ef6ad2d478a94876468423ef0c7>.
- ² Sabine Plakolm-Forsthuber, *Künstlerinnen in Österreich 1897–1938. Malerei. Plastik. Architektur*. Wien 1994, pp. 45ff.
- ³ For the following see Eva Schober, 1872 – Das erste Dokument ..., Permalink <https://www.akbild.ac.at/de/resolveuid/64fdf4af867c41f81190a44aeaac8702>.
- ⁴ Universitätsarchiv der Akademie der bildenden Künste Wien (UAAbKW), *Verwaltungsakten (VA) 1872–104*.
- ⁵ UAAbKW, VA 1904–65.
- ⁶ UAAbKW, *Matrikelbuch* (students' records book) vol. 2 ½, *Protokoll / Jener Schüler, welche in der kk. / Kupferstecher-Akademie-Zeichner / aufgenommen worden sind / vom Jahre 1766 bis 1784 / dann vom Jahre / 1805 bis 1845*, fol. 4.
- ⁷ 1733–1811. Also Schmutzer; Schmuzer is the spelling he preferred, see Monika Knofler, *Das visuelle Gedächtnis der Akademie der bildenden Künste Wien*, manuscript.
- ⁸ UAAbKW, *Matrikelbuch* vol. 17, *PROTOCOL. der die k.k. Accademie der bildenden Künste frequentierenden Schüler 1813–1823*.
- ⁹ ÖBL Online-Edition, https://www.biographien.ac.at/oeb1/oeb1_K/Kaltner_Josef_1757_1824.xml.
- ¹⁰ UAAbKW, *Matrikelbuch* 17/15, *Matrikelbuch* vol. 19, *Protocoll / der frequentierenden Schüler der Mahlerkunst von 1813 bis 1823 / von A bis Z*, fol. 10.
- ¹¹ UAAbKW, *Matrikelbuch* vol. 12, *Protocoll / Schülerliste vom Jahre 1810–1812*, fol. 39, *Matrikelbuch* 17/23, *Matrikelbuch* 19/15.
- ¹² UAAbKW, *Matrikelbuch* 17/7, *Matrikelbuch* 19/6.
- ¹³ UAAbKW, *Kartei Kunstausstellungen* (card index art exhibitions).
- ¹⁴ *Allgemeines Intelligenzblatt zur Wiener Zeitung*, No. 114, 18th May 1824, p. 843, <https://anno.onb.ac.at/cgi-content/anno?aid=wrt&datum=18240518&query=%22Fricart%22&ref=anno-search&seite=5>; *Intelligenzblatt zur Preßburger Zeitung*, No. 82, October 25th, 1825, p. 1113, <http://anno.onb.ac.at/cgi-content/anno?aid=pre&datum=18251018&seite=9&zoom=33>; AKL online s.v. „Fricart, Marianne,“ https://db.degruyter.com/view/AKL/_40286559?rskey=poExcl&result=1&dbq_o=fricart&dbf_o=akl-fulltext&dbt_o=fulltext&o_o=AND.
- ¹⁵ See for this and the following Walter Cerny, *Die Mitglieder der Wiener Akademie*, Wien 1978, and Angelika Plank, *Akademischer und schulischer Elementarzeichnenunterricht im 18. Jahrhundert*, Frankfurt/Main etc. 1999 (= Beiträge zur Neueren Geschichte Österreichs Bd. 10) (Diss. Wien 1997), pp. 94ff.
- ¹⁶ UAAbKW, *Statuten* (Statutes) 1726, MSZ II/3, fol. 160/168–174 ex VA 1735, fol. 169v.
- ¹⁷ UAAbKW, *Satzungen der Kupferstecherakademie* (Statutes of the Engraving Academy), 1767.
- ¹⁸ *Ibidem*, para. *decimo* (10): *Mahler von allerley Arten, wen [sic] sie nur die erforderliche Stärke in der Kunst besitzen [...]*.
- ¹⁹ UAAbKW, *Statuten* 1800 and 1812, MSZ II/3.
- ²⁰ UAAbKW, *Statuten* 1800, MSZ II/3, para. XXVI.
- ²¹ Due to the introduction of a new statute in 1872, see Cerny, *Kunstmitglieder*, 9.
- ²² *Ibidem*, 10ff.
- ²³ Plank, *Elementarzeichnenunterricht*, 81ff.; Monika Knofler refers in her not yet published manuscript *Das visuelle Gedächtnis der Akademie der bildenden Künste Wien* to Schmutzer's *promemoria* (memorandum) as well (UAAbKW, VA 2a/Mappe 2, fol. 19–22, fol. 21). In this document, Schmutzer offers drawing lessons taking place after the Academy, where anyone, no matter what age, if man or woman or child, is allowed to take part; the drawing of heads, hands and dress is taught, as well as inventing, arranging the models and expressing taste. Almost identical is UAAbKW, VA 2a/Mappe 2, fol. 1–3, fol. 1v; in this document Schmutzer also proposes to use male and female convicts (*Zuchthäusler*) and people from the *Armeleutekotter* (work house) as models for reasons of cost (fol. 3v).
- ²⁴ UAAbKW, *Wahlbuch* (Book of Elections), p. 120. Walter Wagner, *Geschichte der Akademie der bildenden Künste Wien*, Wien 1967, p. 423, gives 1776 as the year of her acceptance, but we do not have any proof for this. In fact, in 1776, Anna Dorothea Therbusch offered the Emperor a painting as a gift, referring to herself as a member of the Painters' Academy (UAAbKW, VA 1776 fol. 101/102). For Therbusch's biography see Helmut Börsch-Supan, „Lisiewska, Anna Dorothea,“ in *Neue Deutsche Biographie* 14 (1985), 684–685, <https://www.deutsche-biographie.de/pnd122269071.html#ndbcontent>. Thanks to MMag. René Schober (Kupferstichkabinett der Akademie der bildenden Künste Wien) and Mag. Claudia Koch (Gemäldegalerie der Akademie der bildenden Künste Wien) for the permission to use the reproductions of the drawings and paintings in this article.
- ²⁵ UAAbKW, VA 2a/Mappe 2, fol. 76/77 ex 1769; *Wahlbuch*, p. 119; cf. Cerny, *Kunstmitglieder*, p. 38; thanks to the Archive of the Accademia Nazionale di Belle Arti di Parma, *Frau von Conte* could be identified as Marguerite Lecomte (1717–1800), https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marguerite_Lecomte.
- ²⁶ UAAbKW, VA 2a/Mappe 2, fol. 152/153 ex 1771; UAAbKW, VA 1818 fol. 69–81, fol. 73v (Beyer and Coulet are mentioned here). The *Wahlbuch* (p. 120) lists *Mademoiselle Coulet, Fräulein Bertrand* is added in a later script; *Baron Ballischi* can only mean Baroness Pélichy. See for the following Monika Knofler, „Das fortschrittliche 18. Jahrhundert – Maria Theresias Vorbildfunktion für Künstlerinnen,“ in *Carte blanche für Anna Reisenbichler. I work too much, work too little*, ed. by

Wolfgang Cortjaens and Julia M. Nauhaus. Kupferstichkabinett der Akademie der bildenden Künste Wien (Wien 2019), 17–34; Anton Weinkopf's *Beschreibung der k.k. Akademie der bildenden Künste in Wien. 1783 und 1790*, Wien 1875, p. 11 (Beyer, Coulet; for Pélichy vide fn. 29).

²⁷ Dankmar Trier, „Bertrand, Gabrielle,“ AKL online, https://www.degruyter.com/database/AKL/entry/_10122062/html.

²⁸ Renate Treydel, „Coulet, Anne-Philiberte,“ AKL online https://www.degruyter.com/database/AKL/entry/_10173309/html.

²⁹ AKL online, https://www.degruyter.com/database/AKL/entry/_00119770/html, s.v. „Pélichy, Gertrude Cornélie Marie de“; Weinkopf, *Beschreibung*, 8, 70, wrongly lists Pélichy as an honorary member. Plank, *Elementarzeichnenunterricht*, 97, points to this mistake. Cerny, *Kunstmitglieder*, 40, lists her as *Baron Ballischi* (vide fn. 26).

³⁰ Catalogue des ouvrages de peinture, sculpture, et gravure exécutés par des membres de l'Académie Imp. et Royal. des Beaux-Arts; exposés dans le salon destiné à cet effet, Wien 1777: *Madame Beyer*: fol. 2 (1x), 3 (7x), 4 (5x); UAAbKW, *Kartei Kunstausstellungen*. See Plank, *Elementarzeichnenunterricht*, 272. *Verzeichnis der von der k.k. Akademie bildender Künste aufgestellten Kunstwerke*. Wien 1786: *Madam Gabriele Beyerinn, geb. [née] von Bertrand, Mitglieder der Akademie* [member of the Academy]. *Porträt der Mademoiselle von Greiner* [portrait of Mlle von Greiner].

³¹ UAAbKW, *Statut* 1751, MSZ II/3, fol. 91–99 ex VA 1751, fol. 92r.

³² UAAbKW, *Satzungen Kupferstecher-Akademie*, para. 21.

³³ UAAbKW, *Entwurf zu den Satzungen der k.k. Akademie der vereinigten bildenden Künste* (Concept of the Statutes of the Imperial and Royal Academy of United Fine Arts) 1773, MSZ II/3, para. 5.

³⁴ UAAbKW, *Statuten* 1800, MSZ II/3, para. XXVIII.

³⁵ See for this and the following Sabine Plakolm-Forsthuber, *Künstlerinnen in Österreich*, 24ff.

³⁶ See Angelika Plank, *Elementarzeichnenunterricht*, 84ff.

³⁷ See UAAbKW, *Matrikelband* 2 1/2, fol. 82; VA 2/Mappe 2, fol. 76 ex 1769; VA 1792 fol. 249; *Wahlbuch*, 88; VA 1818 fol. 73; see Knofler, *Das visuelle Gedächtnis*; Weinkopf, *Beschreibung*, 7; *Carte blanche für Anna Reisenbichler*, 50, exhib. cat., (W. Cortjeans).

³⁸ UAAbKW, VA 1792 fol. 249; VA 1818 fol. 73. Knofler, *Das visuelle Gedächtnis*; Knofler, *Das fortschrittliche 18. Jahrhundert*, 29; Plank, *Elementarzeichnenunterricht*, 95. Monika Knofler assumes that she was a member of the *Kupferstecherakademie*.

³⁹ Member of the *Kupferstecherakademie*: UAAbKW, VA 2/Mappe 2, fol. 70; Weinkopf, *Beschreibung*, 8, with a description of her *Aufnahmstück* on pp. 16–17; as member of the *Kaiserl. Königl. Hof-Academie der Mahler- Bildhauer- und Baukunst*: UAAbKW, VA 1818 fol. 73; see also Plank, *Elementarzeichnenunterricht*, 95.

⁴⁰ Permalink <https://www.akbild.ac.at/de/resolveuid/ofe5eaaof89d1eb7f432bad355d3e791>; <https://ehrenmitglieder.akbild.ac.at/db>.

⁴¹ Wagner, *Geschichte*, 432, gives 1785 as year of acceptance; the reason for this may be that the draft for the diploma (dated 13th January, 1789) is part of a document with drafts for different diplomas from 1785 to 1789 (UAAbKW, VA 1785 fol. 26–29, fol. 29v). The decree of appointment (UAAbKW, VA 1789 fol. 12) served as a model for the decree of Archduchess Maria Anna Ferdinanda (UAAbKW, VA 1793 fol. 138).

⁴² UAAbKW, *Wahlbuch*, 92.

⁴³ UAAbKW, *Sitzungsprotokoll* (minutes of the meetings of the Academic Council, SProt) 1818 fol. 23; *Wahlbuch*, p. 93.

⁴⁴ UAAbKW, VA 1818 fol. 443, SProt 1818 fol. 86.

⁴⁵ UAAbKW, VA 1820 fol. 553.

⁴⁶ UAAbKW, SProt 1802 fol. 30/31; *Wahlbuch*, 90.

⁴⁷ UAAbKW, *Wahlbuch*, 94–95.

Bibliography

- Universitätsarchiv der Akademie der bildenden Künste Wien (UAAbKW)
- AKL: Allgemeines Künstlerlexikon – Internationale Künstlerdatenbank – Online
- ÖBL: Österreichisches Biographisches Lexikon Online-Edition
- Cerny, Walter. *Die Mitglieder der Wiener Akademie*. Wien 1978.
- Doser, Barbara. *Das Frauenkunststudium in Österreich. 1870–1935*, Diss. Innsbruck 1988.
- Knofler, Monika. „Das fortschrittliche 18. Jahrhundert – Maria Theresias Vorbildfunktion für Künstlerinnen.“ In *Carte blanche für Anna Reisenbichler. I work too much, work too little*, 17–34. Hg. v. Wolfgang Cortjaens und Julia M. Nauhaus. Kupferstichkabinett der Akademie der bildenden Künste Wien, Wien 2019.
- Knofler, Monika. *Das visuelle Gedächtnis der Akademie der bildenden Künste*. Wien, manuscript.
- Krapf, Almut. *Zur Geschichte des Frauenstudiums an der Akademie der bildenden Künste Wien*, <https://www.akbild.ac.at/resolveuid/e457fb2bf2631e5fd063994e34d9c282>.
- Plank, Angelika. *Akademischer und schulischer Elementarzeichnenunterricht im 18. Jahrhundert*. Frankfurt/Main etc. 1999 (= Beiträge zur Neueren Geschichte Österreichs Bd. 10). Diss. Wien 1997.
- Plakolm-Forsthuber, Sabine. *Künstlerinnen in Österreich 1897–1938. Malerei – Plastik – Architektur*. Wien 1994.
- Poch-Kalous, Margarethe. „Das Frauenstudium an der Akademie der bildenden Künste in Wien.“ In *100 Jahre Hochschulstatut, 280 Jahre Akademie der bildenden Künste in Wien*, 204. Wien 1972.
- Wagner, Walter. *Geschichte der Akademie der bildenden Künste Wien*. Wien 1967.
- Weinkopf, Anton. *Beschreibung der k.k. Akademie der bildenden Künste in Wien. 1783 und 1790*. Wien 1875.

Illustrations

- Ill. 1: Entry of Katharina Heim in the students' records, UAAbKW, *Matrikelbuch* vol. 2 ½, *Protokoll / Jener Schüler, welche in der kk. / Kupferstecher-Akademie-Zeichner / aufgenommen worden sind / vom Jahre 1766 bis 1784 / dann vom Jahre / 1805 bis 1845*, fol. 4
- Ill. 2: UAAbKW, *Matrikelbuch* Bd. 17, *PROTOCOL. der die k.k. Accademie der bildenden Künste frequentierenden Schüler 1813–1823*
- Ill. 3: UAAbKW, *Satzungen der Kupferstecherakademie* (Statutes of the Engraving Academy), 1767, frontispice
- Ill. 4: UAAbKW, Diploma of the *Kupferstecherakademie*
- Ill. 5: Anna Dorothea Therbusch, Portrait of the Painter Philipp Hackert, 1768, oil on wood, Gemäldegalerie der Akademie der bildenden Künste Wien, inv. GG-113
- Ill. 6: UAAbKW, VA 1771 fol. 152v, detail
- Ill. 7: Gabriele Beyer-Bertrand, Girl with Flowers, around 1771, pastels on paper laid on canvas, Gemäldegalerie der Akademie der bildenden Künste Wien, inv. GG-185
- Ill. 8: Gertrude de Pélichy, Head of a Woman, 1770, chalk drawing, Kupferstichkabinett der Akademie der bildenden Künste Wien, inv. HZ 3843
- Ill. 9: Maria Anna, Archduchess of Austria, Head of a Woman, 1767, red chalk on paper, Kupferstichkabinett, inv. HZ 17.120
- Ill. 10: Maria Antonia, Princess of Naples and Sicily, Head of an Angel, c. 1802, chalk drawing, Kupferstichkabinett, inv. HZ 8410

Marina GRŽINIĆ

Academy of Fine Arts Vienna

THE INFLUENCE OF WOMEN ON THE CONTENT AND SYSTEM OF ART EDUCATION

In the following, I would like to highlight some fragmentary practices of art and teaching in order to open a possibility to tell a different story of the positions within the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna. Fred Moten states in "Ecology of Eloquent Things," "We live within the history of a double violation, the denigration of things and the coincident devaluation of people that is carried out by what is supposed to be their reduction to things."¹

My idea, therefore, is to strive for a gesture that builds some pillars of thinking to unlearn the repetitive history of white educational institutions arbitrarily employing any other position that might be called a Person of Colour in continental Europe today. This is again a racialised term to protect "white innocence."²

In "The Unquiet Dead: Race and Violence in the 'Post-Racial' United States," J.E. Jed Murr:

focuses in particular on popular cultural repertoires of narrative, visual, and sonic enunciation to read how histories of racialized and gendered violence circulate, (dis)appear, and congeal in and as "common sense" in a period in which the uneven dispensation of value and violence afforded different bodies is purported to no longer

break down along the same old racial lines. [...] Deeply and contested and contradictory [...] in their articulations to other modalities of difference and oppression is alleged to have undergone significant transformation such that, among other things, processes of racialization are understood as decisively delinked from racial violence.³

We are experiencing something similar in the European space, in the institutions of the former West. In the former East, there is an intensified process of ongoing racialisation, subjugation, and discrimination, first against LGBTQI+ communities, and then an overt and poisoning, but EU-supported dispossession of refugees, especially those who are not "white." This text navigates through some important events and positions that have changed the state of affairs and of which we should be made aware. These events and positions are all connected to the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna. They bring the future and it is up to us to see how we can unlearn our present to imagine a better world differently.

Part 1.

Introduction: Where I stand

In 2003 I was appointed professor at the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna, where I teach the Conceptual Art Studio. I direct the Conceptual Art Studio, which I have conceived as “post-conceptual” (Post-Conceptual Art Practices, or PCAP). This is how many of the contemporary conceptual artworks are seriously defined today because we were too tied to a historical movement with conceptual art. Activism, politics, and theory are paramount to the way we engage with visual practices and the politics of representation in PCAP. Theory is not about old academic theories that stifle art practice, but about contemporary theoretical and critical thinking that helps students develop processes for conceptualising the visual arts and the politics of the world, which has many different levels. Every provider of content and context, from pencil to computer, is supported.

PCAP asks us to rethink what the image is, how the relationship between art, culture, society, and politics is established, and the ways in which students can function as responsible political subjects. The idea of bridging the gap between media and conceptuality means that we look deeply at technology, from film, photography, video, internet, and multimedia to computer technologies, to develop a politically and socially engaged art that can intervene in a larger context. Art is not a tool that can simply be used for a particular, innocent process of producing and disseminating images and knowledge. Education is not a transparent machine for the production and dissemination of skills. PCAP is therefore developing a platform for the discussion and conceptualisation of various artistic, cultural and political issues.

The Academy of Fine Arts Vienna is a polystructured institution that combines art with art education and philosophy of art with the training of future art teachers. Accepting the professorship is a political decision. I think it is a challenge to dismantle the power of hierarchy because it exists. It is one of the fundamental functions of the institution. Danila Mayer, an anthropologist, explained in the

midst of the 2020-2022 Corona pandemic, which is a very neoliberal virus: free movement of goods and money, but total restriction of free movement of people ... the transfer of tax money to corporations and businesses ... the isolation of people at home. The whole world has come to a standstill and the reason is the Covid-19 pandemic.

Suddenly, humanity, touching, hugs, conversation, kindness, celebration and all the "good things" associated with being together seem to have met an early death and insecurity, aggression, depression, fear, hostility, oppression, racism - all forms of discrimination are the order of the day. The community organisation Afro Rainbow Austria has described the consequences of the pandemic. They say that for their vulnerable community, Covid-19 brought job loss, depression, homelessness, and delays in asylum procedures, to name a few. Thus, interventions at the level of production, distribution, and institutionalisation of knowledge are capital's latest attempt to transform even universities and academies into managerial institutions that produce only “skilled” students.

Afro Rainbow Austria [ARA], *Wearable Vocabulary, Smashing Wor(l)ds Summercamp*, June 26, 2021. Summercamp was organized via the project *Smashing Wor(l)ds: Cultural Practices for re/Imagining & un/Learning Vocabularies (2020–2022)*, funded by the Creative Europe programme of the European Union. It was a gathering of the Austrian partner organisations with Afro Rainbow Austria [ARA], Queer Base, Silent University Austria and the PCAP Students at the Academy of Fine Arts.

The final point of this intervention, which capital has already exercised at every other level of contemporary society, from public space to government agencies, civil rights, and the arts, is depoliticisation. Everything from business to education is now being transformed into a non-political form and agency. What is feared is the entry of the state neoliberal apparatuses into the public education system, which means that students will be controlled and monitored to expediently get a job and pay taxes.



Opening by Marissa Lôbo, Marina Gržinić, *Smashing Wor(l)ds Summercamp*, June 26, 2021. Photo by Rui Bai.



Smashing Wor(l)ds Summercamp, Kleine Stadtfarm am Schillerwasser 26.06.2021 Photo J. Pristovsek

What is going on can be aptly described by Kirsten Forkert's thoughts on the contradictions of post-studio practices in relation to the academy in the current political climate. For Forkert, the changes that are taking place have much to do with the commodity value of art and the role of the artist in comparison to another figure, the employee. They are both symptom and reaction to certain political and economic changes.⁴

We seek to open a radical platform for the discussion and conceptualisation of issues as formulated by Forkert in her reflections on post-studio practice:

Post-studio practices challenge the assumptions that art is about technical virtuosity or mute creative expression, and that what happens in the studio or classroom is separate from the rest of our lives. Certain aspects of post-studio practice also question the definition of the artist as a romantic, heroic individual (also

imagined as white and male) – one who does not consider the political or economic context of his work. On the other hand, how much do post-studio practices, as they are taught within the academy, really challenge conventional definitions of authorship or signature style?⁵

In such a context, no tool (if we think of technology) and no paradigm (if we think of theory, the visual, etc.) can be considered a tool or category that can be applied to a particular, innocent, collaborative process of knowledge production and dissemination. In this way, not only can the institutions of knowledge escape connection to power, capital, and economic "rationalisation," but also the methods and technologies used in the process of knowledge production and dissemination are not simply seen as pre-political categories that can be connected exclusively to ideas and discourses of improvement, facilitation, and valorisation.

Part 2.**Wo/men, LGBTQI+ initiatives,
community, publishing projects by
and with PCAP (2005–2022)**

Over the past decades, as specific projects of the art studio I direct, Post-Conceptual Art Practices, or PCAP, including 2022, we have published five books.

The books were part of the activation with and by the students of Post-Conceptual Art Practices, or PCAP, of different decades and generations.

The first book, *Medialization/Labour/Spatialization/(Re)Politicization*, published in 2005, addressed and critically countered antisemitism.⁶

The second, *Are You Talking to Me? Discussions on Knowledge Production, Gender Politics and Feminist Strategies*, published in 2008, dealt with feminism, and the post-feminist condition.⁷

The third, *INTERSECTIONS. At the Crossroads of the Production of Knowledge, Precarity, Subjugation, and the Reconstruction of History, Display and De-linking*, published in 2009, dealt with the analysis of education and activism.⁸

The fourth, published in 2013, which we call *The Vocabulary of Decoloniality*, for short, is entitled *Utopia of Alliances, Conditions of Impossibilities and the Vocabulary of Decoloniality*.⁹

In 2022 we published a picture book, *I'm 10 and my hobby is flying*.¹⁰ The book is a project by Cathérine Lehnerer to “unlearn” by the class 4b (Lupo class) of GTVS 3 (primary school and speech therapy school in Vienna). The book was produced as part of the Art Studio for Post-conceptual Art Practices program, Prof. Gržinić, IBK, Academy of Fine Arts Vienna. Financially supported by the Publication Fund of the Rector of the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna, 2022.

THE VOCABULARY OF DECOLONIALITY

The Vocabulary of Decoloniality, as the Editorial Group explains in an introduction, focuses on the social and political antagonism of our artistic and epistemological formation in the present: past colonialism and present forms of coloniality, with an emphasis on anti-racism and the new political figure—the migrant! The Editorial Group emphasized that the volume not only provides a cultural framework for analysing racism, colonialism, and strengthened antisemitism, but also looks at their political, social, and economic implications. This includes thinking not only about historical colonialism, but also about the ways in which capitalism shapes the world we inhabit here and now.¹¹ The concept of decoloniality offers a radical way to rethink learning processes from positions that are not exclusively Western-oriented but are informed by other political-social contexts and perspectives. The concept of decoloniality offers a rebellious position in the history of colonialism and in all its contemporary forms of colonial subjugation, exploitation, and discrimination.¹²

The Editorial Group stressed the importance of analysing the continuities of colonialism, Nazism, and fascism in today's neoliberal global capitalist democracies. Using these continuities, it is possible to define contemporary racism, Islamophobia, anti-Romaism, and antisemitism without forming competing histories of oppression and persecution.¹³ As they write, “Many questions could not be answered here and now, yet it was clear that we wanted to reflect upon memory politics as well as upon how to make alliances between present forms of anti-racist, anti-colonial, political, theoretical, critical and artistic works.”¹⁴



1



2



3



4



5

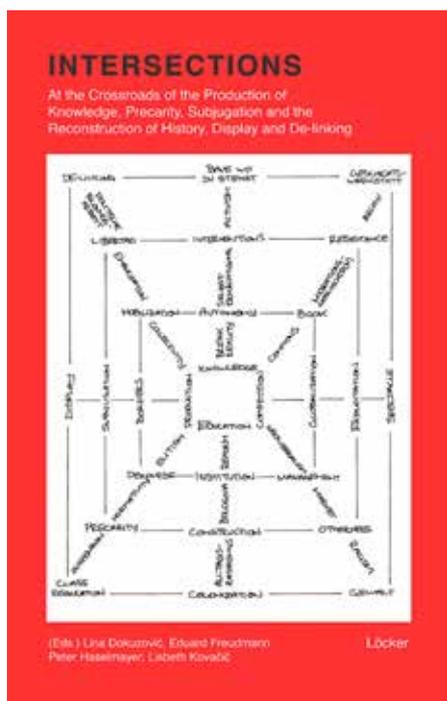
1. *Will You Marry Me? Marriages of Convenience in Times of Crises. The Nazi Era and Nowadays*, lecture by Henrie Dennis (speaking) and Prof. Dr. Irene Messinger, FH Campus Wien, social work. Organized by the PCAP Studio and Prof. Marina Gržinić at the Institute of Fine Arts, June 27, 2022. Photo by J. Pristovšek

2. Jennifer Ndidi Iroh, *(M)EIN BILD VON MIR – Selbstwahrnehmung in der Fotografie*[A photograph (my) from me – Self-Perception in Photography], first “Memory-Labs” session as part of the project *Citizens’ Memories and Imaginaries: Democratic Citizenship* (FWF, TCS 119), Academy of Fine Arts Vienna, May 19, 2022. Photo by J. Pristovšek

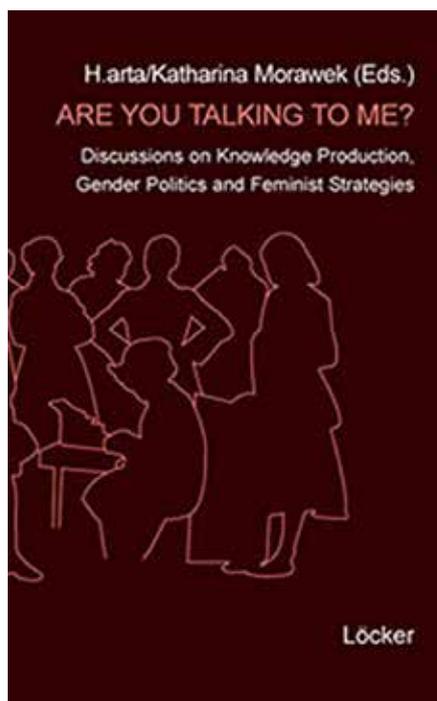
3. Asma Aiad, *The Ninth of November 2020*, installation view, *Muslim* Contemporary*, Prospekthof, Academy of Fine Arts Vienna, November 2021. Photo by J. Pristovšek

4. *WTF Is a Non-Binary University? Readings & Contributions*: Felix Deiters, Oke Fijal and Finn Mühl, Rundgang 2022 with PCAP class at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna, January 20–23, 2022. Photo by J. Pristovšek

5. Book cover *Utopia of Alliances, Conditions of Impossibilities and the Vocabulary of Decoloniality* (2013)



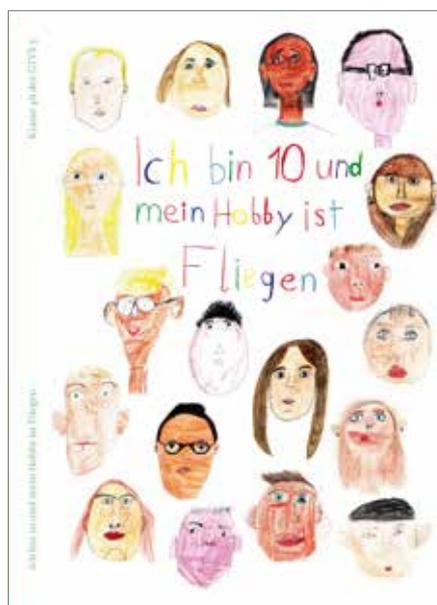
1



2



3



4

1. Book cover *Intersections: INTERSECTIONS. At the Crossroads of the Production of Knowledge, Precarity, Subjugation, and the Reconstruction of History, Display and De-linking* (2009)
2. Book cover *Are You Talking to Me? Discussions on Knowledge Production, Gender Politics and Feminist Strategies* (2008)
3. Book cover *Medialisierung/Arbeit/Spatialisierung/(Re)Politisierung: Ein Projekt der StudentInnen der Klasse für Post-Konzeptionelle Kunst und der Klasse für Performative Kunst & Bildhauerei – Medialization/Labour/Spatialization/(Re)Politicization: Project by Students of the Post-Conceptual Art Practices Class and Performative Arts – Sculpture Class* (2005). Photo by M. Gržinić
4. Book cover *I'm 10 and my hobby is flying* (2022)

Part 3.**A New Generation of Artists at the****Academy of Fine Arts Vienna:****Marissa Lôbo, Asma Aiad, Jennifer****Ndidi Iroh**

A new generation of artists developing anti-racist, lesbian, and anti-binary gender structures is a powerful undertaking for a new aesthetic of tomorrow. The presentation will aim to reverse a possible narrative about what a decolonial Muslim/lesbian/queer position can do to the ossified academies of fine arts in Europe.

Most influential is the process of establishing the discourse of anti-racism, anti-black racism, and anti-Muslim racism, which undermines the persistent biological gender divide that holds that the boundary between men and women runs only along the heterosexual patriarchal system. Racism is a poisoning, institutional, structural social system of categorisation, of subjugating people based on the colour of their skin.

Marissa Lôbo is a Black feminist activist, member of *maiz* – Autonomous Center of and for Migrant Women in Linz, she studied at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna, Post-Conceptual Art Practices. She lives between precarity and utopia and is involved in various initiatives against racism and sexism. As an Afro-Brazilian migrant living in Europe, she reflects on the continuities of colonialism and its everyday impact on black subjects in terms of sexism, homo/trans phobias, and racism. Her work is a constant in the struggles against the perpetual processes of racialisation, segregation and discrimination in the European Union. Lôbo is engaged in the process against the ongoing racialisation of refugees in the EU. They are exposed to the toxic characteristic of their skin colour. Some refugees who are white (in the context of the war in Ukraine and on the borders with Poland and Hungary) are considered the real refugees, others are called “not our” refugees.

In 2016, PCAP, in collaboration with Marissa Lôbo, we organised Yuderkys Espinosa Miñoso’s lecture entitled “A Genealogy of the Practices of the Present: A Critique of the Colonial Feminist Reason, Coming from the Historical Experience in Latin America.” Espinosa Miñoso is a thinker, activist, writer, and lecturer involved in radical movements against racism, (hetero)patriarchy, and colonialism. She was born into an *Afromestizo* family and grew up in the popular neighbourhoods of Santo Domingo in the Dominican Republic. Early on, she took up María Lugones’ proposal to develop a decolonial feminism and eventually became one of its most important spokespersons in Latin America.

Espinosa Miñoso’s lecture was about answering the key question:

if we propose a genealogical method to be applied to the field of feminism, it means: how did we become the feminists we are? What are the possible conditions that have enabled feminism to believe what it believes, to say what it says, to do what it does, in a region geopolitically determined by its status as a “Third World” and carrying with it colonial trauma as a condition for being what we are today?

From these questions comes the opportunity to reflect on some key themes of feminism in Latin America and its history of dependency. Not about a Latin American feminism, but about a feminism in Latin America. We see that there is no universal feminism as envisioned by the legacy of Eurocentric modernity. If we find no surprises in the statement that feminism encounters modernity, we must nevertheless ask ourselves how one can be willing to follow it in regions of the world where modernity turns out to be only what it is: racist, Eurocentric, capitalist, imperialist, and colonial.

Perhaps women, gender, and despised sexualities have succumbed to the notion, based on theory and feminist thought, that

the past was always worse for us. Perhaps we could say that feminism claims that our struggle cannot be anything but modern when it proclaims modernity as a historical time that allows us to free ourselves from it. This argument illuminates the divergent interests between feminism and anti-racist, anti-colonial, and decolonial struggles in the region. It allows us to uncover the hidden pattern of feminist struggles and their engagement with coloniality.¹⁵

Asma Aiad is a Viennese conceptual artist, activist, and youth worker. She holds a bachelor's degree in political science and completed her master's in Gender Studies at the University of Vienna on the topic of Islamic feminism. She is a co-founder of Salam Oida, an initiative to promote Muslim culture and arts in Austria, and a spokesperson for the anti-racism referendum Black Voices. Her activism and artistic work deal with anti-racism, feminism, and the deconstruction of stereotypes. Aiad curated *Muslim* Contemporary* (Atelierhaus Prospekthof, Academy of Fine Arts Vienna, November 8–12, 2021), a multidisciplinary, participatory, and dialogical project that aims to reflect on the place of Muslim communities in Austrian society through education, art, dialogue, activism, and culture.^{16j}

In the 1930s, the Nazis galloped toward the Reichstag. Today we have fascist populism, the rise of antisemitism, and we know that Austria never underwent a harsh denazification. We are alarmed by the rise of anti-Muslim racism, which is mixed with racism against Black people and Asian communities and calls everyone to action.

Jennifer Ndidi Iroh graduated from the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna in 2022 with a Master's degree. Her artistic focus is on analog film and photography and other visualizations of Black queer*ness and feminism, highlighting themes of home, safety, and utopia. Her master's thesis in Critical Studies at the Academy, titled "Re/configurations of Photographic Practices,"

deals with the topics of decolonisation and re/configurations of hegemonic photographic approaches. Beginning with the colonial gaze and its effects, it displays how photography was used as a weapon and tool to carry out colonial practices, which still exists in the present. Furthermore, the focus lies on exploring different ways of perceiving and experiencing images, as well as questioning and re/imagining the archive of visual material to expand the possibilities of making marginalized positions visible. Questions such as, how can images be read beyond their margins?, and what does it take to transfigure the gaze? are explored here. Finally, processes of self-defined photographic works are presented with the example of the two photographers, Zanele Muholi and Mikael Owunna, as well as photographic methodologies displaying the relationship between the photographer, the camera lens and the person being photographed.¹⁷

A very important reference for Iroh is the work of Tina Campt. In her book *Listening to Images*, Campt says: "Redirecting Ariella Azoulay's evocative proposal to 'watch' rather than look at photographs [...], the choice to 'listen to' rather than simply 'look at' images is a conscious decision to challenge the equation of vision with knowledge by engaging photography through a sensory register that is critical to Black Atlantic cultural formations: sound."¹⁸

In *The Civil Contract of Photography*, Ariella Azoulay posited:

Anyone who addresses others through photographs or takes the position of a photograph's addressee, even if she is a stateless person who has lost her "right to have rights," as in Arendt's formulation, is nevertheless a citizen—a member in the citizenry of photography. The civil space of photography is open to her, as well. That

space is configured by what I call the civil contract of photography.”¹⁹

In a recent interview, Azoulay argued:

In *The Civil Contract of Photography* I speculated on the existence of a civil contract (in distinction from the tradition of the social contract), that I then labored to find its manifestations at different places and times, as proof that speculation is never simply speculation, but actually an attempt to provide the language with which the participation of others can neither be denied, nor the power we exercise against them when the existing language that makes them irrelevant, invisible, or uncounted is being used. Therefore, the idea started to be: let us acknowledge the ways in which people were always engaged with photography, not only the photographers; and let us account for the ways in which they were engaged in photography.²⁰

What we are witnessing these days and in recent years is the takeover of public space by the right-wing mob, fake news and looting by the political elite, hostility, fear, a breakdown in the distribution of what is reasonable, and our inability to think of a future. With these positions and events, a constant process of reflection is set in motion.

Notes

- ¹ Fred Moten, “Ecology of Eloquent Things” (lecture, Indianapolis Museum of Art, Indianapolis, April 8, 2011). Quoted in J.E. Jed Murr, “The Unquiet Dead: Race and Violence in the ‘Post-Racial’ United States” (PhD diss., University of Washington, 2014), 3.
- ² Gloria Wekker, *White Innocence: Paradoxes of Colonialism and Race* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2016).
- ³ J.E. Jed Murr, “The Unquiet Dead,” n.p.
- ⁴ Kirsten Forkert, “Can Post-Studio Art School Function as a Place of Resistance in an Immaterial Economy?,” in *Mind the Map: History Is Not Given*, eds. Marina Gržinić, Günther Heeg and Veronika Darian (Frankfurt am Main: Revolver, 2006), 224.
- ⁵ Forkert, “Can Post-Studio Art School Function as a Place of Resistance in an Immaterial Economy?,” 226.
- ⁶ Marina Gržinić and Monica Bonvicini, eds., *Medialisierung/Arbeit/Spatialisierung/(Re)Politisierung: Ein Projekt der StudentInnen der Klasse für Post-Konzeptionelle Kunst und der Klasse für Performative Kunst & Bildhauerei = Medialization/Labour/Spatialization/(Re)Politicization: Project by Students of the Post-Conceptual Art Practices Class and Performative Arts – Sculpture Class* (Norderstedt: Books on Demand, 2005).
- ⁷ H.arta [Maria Crista, Anca Gyemant and Rodica Tache] and Katharina Morawek, *Are You Talking To Me? Discussions on Knowledge Production, Gender Politics and Feminist Strategies* (Vienna: Löcker, 2008).
- ⁸ Lina Dokuzović, Eduard Freudmann, Peter Haselmayer and Lisbeth Kovačič, eds., *Intersections: At the Crossroads of the Production of Knowledge, Precarity, Subjugation, and the Reconstruction of History, Display and De-linking* (Vienna: Löcker, 2009).
- ⁹ Editorial Group for Writing Insurgent Genealogies [Carolina Agredo, Sheri Avraham, Annalisa Cannito, Miltiadis Gerothanasis, Marina Gržinić, Marissa Lôbo and Ivana Marjanović], ed., *Utopia of Alliances, Conditions of Impossibilities and the Vocabulary of Decoloniality* (Vienna: Löcker, 2013).
- ¹⁰ The book is a project by Cathérine Lehnerer who is currently a PhD candidate in philosophy at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna.
- ¹¹ Editorial Group for Writing Insurgent Genealogies, *Utopia of Alliances*, 11.
- ¹² Editorial Group for Writing Insurgent Genealogies, *Utopia of Alliances*, 11.
- ¹³ Editorial Group for Writing Insurgent Genealogies, *Utopia of Alliances*, 11–12.
- ¹⁴ Editorial Group for Writing Insurgent Genealogies, *Utopia of Alliances*, 12.
- ¹⁵ Yuderkys Espinosa Miñoso, “Hacer genealogía de las prácticas del presente: Una crítica a la colonialidad de la Razón feminista desde la experiencia histórica en América Latina” [A Genealogy of the Practices of the Present: A Critique of the Colonial Feminist Reason, Coming from the Historical Experience in Latin America] (guest lecture, PCAP (Post-Conceptual Art Practices) Study Program, Academy of Fine Arts Vienna, June 21, 2016). The abstract is available at <https://m1.antville.org/stories/2239994/>. It has been slightly linguistically revised here.
- ¹⁶ See Muslim* Contemporary website at <https://muslimcontemporary.at/>.
- ¹⁷ Jennifer Ndidi Iroh, “Re/konfigurationen fotografischer Praxen” [Re/configurations of Photographic Practices] (master’s thesis, Academy of Fine Arts Vienna, 2021), 100.
- ¹⁸ Tina M. Camp, *Listening to Images* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2017), 6.
- ¹⁹ Ariella Azoulay, *The Civil Contract of Photography*, trans. Relá Mazali and Ruvik Danieli (New York: Zone Books, 2008), 81.
- ²⁰ Ariella Aïsha Azoulay, “Ariella Aïsha Azoulay – Unlearning,” interview by Filipa Lowndes Vicente, *Análise Social* 55, no. 235 (2020): 425, <https://doi.org/10.31447/as00032573.2020235.08>.

Bibliography

- Azoulay, Ariella. *The Civil Contract of Photography*. Translated by Relá Mazali and Ruvik Danieli. New York: Zone Books, 2008.
- Azoulay, Ariella Aïsha. “Ariella Aïsha Azoulay – Unlearning.” Interview by Filipa Lowndes Vicente. *Análise Social* 55, no. 235 (2020): 425. <https://doi.org/10.31447/as00032573.2020235.08>.
- Camp, Tina M. *Listening to Images*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2017.
- Dokuzović, Lina, Eduard Freudmann, Peter Haselmayer and Lisbeth Kovačič, eds. *Intersections: At the Crossroads of the Production of Knowledge, Precarity, Subjugation, and the Reconstruction of History, Display and De-linking*. Post-Conceptual Art Practices Studio, Academy of Fine Arts Vienna, published by Löcker, Vienna, 2009.
- Editorial Group for Writing Insurgent Genealogies [Carolina Agredo, Sheri Avraham, Annalisa Cannito, Miltiadis Gerothanasis, Marina Gržinić, Marissa Lôbo and Ivana Marjanović], ed. *Utopia of Alliances, Conditions of Impossibilities and the Vocabulary of Decoloniality*. Post-Conceptual Art Practices Studio, Academy of Fine Arts Vienna, published by Löcker, Vienna, 2013.
- Espinosa Miñoso, Yuderkys. “Hacer genealogía de las prácticas del presente: Una crítica a la colonialidad de la Razón feminista desde la experiencia histórica en América Latina” [A Genealogy of the Practices of the Present: A Critique of the Colonial Feminist Reason, Coming from the Historical Experience in Latin America]. Guest lecture, PCAP (Post-Conceptual Art Practices) Study Program, Academy of Fine Arts Vienna, June 21, 2016.

Forkert, Kirsten. "Can Post-Studio Art School Function as a Place of Resistance in an Immaterial Economy?" In *Mind the Map: History Is Not Given*, edited by Marina Gržinić, Günther Heeg and Veronika Darian, 224–228. Frankfurt am Main: Revolver, 2006.

Gržinić, Marina, and Monica Bonvicini, eds. *Medialisierung/Arbeit/Spatialisierung/(Re)Politisierung: Ein Projekt der StudentInnen der Klasse für Post-Konzeptionelle Kunst und der Klasse für Performative Kunst & Bildhauerei = Medialization/Labour/Spatialization/(Re)Politicization: Project by Students of the Post-Conceptual Art Practices Class and Performative Arts – Sculpture Class*. Norderstedt: Books on Demand, 2005.

H.arta [Maria Crista, Anca Gyemant and Ródica Tache] and Katharina Morawek. *Are You Talking to Me? Discussions on Knowledge Production, Gender Politics and Feminist Strategies*. Post-Conceptual Art Practices Studio, Academy of Fine Arts Vienna, published by Löcker, Vienna, 2008.

Iroh, Jennifer Ndid. "Re/konfigurationen fotografischer Praxen" [Re/configurations of Photographic Practices]. Master's thesis, Academy of Fine Arts Vienna, 2021.

Lehnerer, Cathérine and altri, eds. *I'm 10 and my hobby is flying*. Post-Conceptual Art Practices Studio, Academy of Fine Arts Vienna. Printed by Studio Luminus (Novo mesto, Slovenia), 2022.

Moten, Fred. "Ecology of Eloquent Things." Lecture, Indianapolis Museum of Art, Indianapolis, April 8, 2011.

Murr, J.E. Jed. "The Unquiet Dead: Race and Violence in the 'Post-Racial' United States." PhD diss., University of Washington, 2014.

Wekker, Gloria. *White Innocence: Paradoxes of Colonialism and Race*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2016.

Anka LEŚNIAK

Academy of Fine Arts in Gdańsk

THE EXHIBITION *WOMEN AT THE ACADEMIES OF FINE ARTS*

Concept outline and key artistic imperatives

The impetus behind organising the exhibition and academic conference *Women at the Academies of Fine Arts* was the centenary of the first female students' admission to the art academies in Vienna, Kraków and Prague, among other cities. The subject of women and their academic position has been a recurring research enquiry in my artistic projects. As a former art student, I observed that many of my female colleagues outnumbered male students yet most professors were men. Having worked as a freelance artist for a few years, I was appointed to the Sculpture and Intermedia Department at the Academy of Fine Arts in Gdańsk. As an academic I became interested in building connections between female art professors and exploring our professional experiences and work methodologies.

The project's direct idea stems from my artistic research into the life and work of sculptor Teresa Feodorowna Ries (1866-1956). Ries was an artist of Jewish origins who spent her youth in Moscow. In her autobiography *The Language of Stone (Die Sprache des Steines)* she reveals that she did attend the Moscow Art Academy but was later expelled for challenging a professor's authority in front of other students.¹ She probably attended the Moscow School of Painting, Sculpture and Architecture (MUZHIZV) which was administratively the branch of the Academy of Arts in St. Petersburg.² Later, Ries moved to Vienna where she lived for over 30 years and created her most outstanding works. Regrettably, she had to abandon her 'Ary-

anized' studio in her 70s, leave all her artworks behind, and flee to Switzerland to escape Nazi persecution.

In her book Ries states that she was an exceptional student in Moscow. She most probably moved to Vienna in 1894 as evident from her registration card kept in the Vienna City and State Archives (Wiener Stadt- und Landesarchiv). Unfortunately, due to Vienna's Academy of Fine Arts policy, she could not enrol there. Instead, she took private sculpture lessons from one of the professors, Edmund Hellmer.³ Ten years later, Teresa F. Ries wrote a letter to the Academy's rector Clemens Holzmeister proposing herself for a professor position. Despite her recognition in the Austro-Hungarian art scene, her proposal was ignored.⁴ It wasn't until after the World War II in 1947 that the first female professor, Gelda Matejka Felden, was appointed to the Academy in Vienna.⁵

The exhibition provided an opportunity to critically interrogate the distinctions between fine arts academies established in various historical periods and geopolitical frameworks. It also raised the question of whether the contexts surrounding the formation of these academies influenced their later politics toward gender equality and fair access to professional positions. Academies in Vienna and Kraków were founded in the time of a monarchy and women could officially study at neither. The first female students entered the Kraków's Academy in 1918, which was the year when Poland reunited after 123 years of partition by the Austro-Hungarian, Russian and Prussian Empires. However, the right to study and vote were not 'gifts' for women from the newly established Polish state. Rather, it resulted from the

ongoing struggle of Polish suffragists and activists of the time. One such go-ahead woman was sculptor Zofia Baltarowicz-Dzielińska, a true forerunner of change who received the right to study at the Academy in Kraków a year earlier in 1917⁶.

Most Polish Academies of Fine Arts were established during the 1940s which marked the beginning of the communist state. At that time, they were officially known as 'State Higher Schools of Visual Arts' (PWSSP) and were only granted the 'Academy' status in the 1990s with the emergence of finance capitalism in the region. The Academy status had been previously only held by the Kraków and Warsaw schools due to their pre-war history. The initiative to create an art academy in Gdańsk was taken by artists – and both men and women played a significant role in this effort. The founders were Janusz Strzałecki, Krystyna and Juliusz Studnicki, Hanna and Jacek Żuławski, and Józefa and Marian Wnuk. They all met after the war at the Baltic coast.⁷ From the outset, female students were able to enrol to the Academy. Initially, the school was located in a historical house (Berger's Willa) in Sopot due to the heavily damaged post-war Gdańsk.

In 2019 I travelled to Vienna to do my research on Teresa Feodorowna Ries who is significant in the context of the first emancipated women bravely pursuing their careers despite the patriarchal constraints. As the 100th anniversary of the first female students' admission to the Viennese Academy of Fine Arts approached, it seemed worth reflecting on the challenges women faced in pursuing art education, particularly in the traditional relationship between master and (his) students. Interestingly, women who worked as painters and graphic artists were more accepted than those interested in sculpture. That medium was seen as a field reserved for men and women sculptors faced even more discouragement than other female artists.

The *Women at the Academies of Fine Arts* exhibition explored the idea of sculpture not only as a material intervention in space but also as 'social sculpture' – a tool for institutional change. As a faculty member of the Sculpture and Intermedia department at the Academy in Gdańsk where the exhibition took place, I am aware that such a viewpoint is subjective and selective. It is important to note that the project

was based on personal experiences and the outcome emerging from them is autonomous and individual. As such, it cannot be treated as a scholarly take on such a wide-ranging issue. Rather, the exhibition became a manifesto for more presence of women in the art academies' structures while offering a platform for exchanging ideas and identifying areas for further research and collaboration.

Furthermore, both the exhibition and the conference aimed to examine the impact of the increasing number of female professors and students on the very structures of the academy. This included topics like the forms of artistic expression, teaching content, and relations within the academic community. The project also encouraged participants to reflect on the history of women's presence within the academic structures. It was vital for me to consider *colleges* (universities) with an academy of fine arts status which in the European tradition emphasises their connection to the prototype of the modern academy, namely the Academia di San Luca established in 1635.⁸ For that reason, in this text I am taking into account a variety of academies not because they are 'better' than colleges, but because through adopting the very name 'academy' they inherit a form of prestige and tradition. As Whitney Chadwick notices commenting on German neoclassical painter Johann Zoffany's work *The Academicians of the Royal Academy* (1771-72), "artists are male and white, and art a learned discourse (...) women art objects of representation rather than producers in a history commonly traced through 'Old Masters' and 'masterpieces'".⁹

**First women students, professors
and rectors, and artistic research
in archives**

The focal point of the exhibition were artworks related to the theme of women and sculpture (including sculpture and installation). The exhibition featured several women appointed to the Intermedia and Sculpture Faculty of the Academy in Gdańsk including Ludmiła Ostrogórska. She was the first female rector of the Academy of Fine Arts in Poland holding that position between 2008-16. Interestingly, it took 63

years for a woman to become a rector at this school despite it being co-founded by female artists. This highlights the patriarchal mechanisms of discrimination that have existed regardless of the origins of the individual academies. In Poland, the rector is selected through an election system by fellow professors.

The history of women's presence in academies was presented primarily through artworks and archival materials from the collection of the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna. The exhibition used that particular art school to foreground histories spanning over several centuries. Simone Bader's video *100 Years** (2022) featured quotes and archival photos from the Viennese Academy's archives highlighting the evolution of female position there. As it were, the Academy was supported by aristocratic female donors which links it to the phenomenon of female benefactors financing institutions otherwise inaccessible to women. That was reflected by Virginia Woolf in her essay *A Room of One's Own* which was based on the author's own lectures to female literature students. Even in the early 20th century well-off women supported 'prestigious universities' that did not admit women.

Frau auf der Akademie* (Woman* at the Academy) (2015-18) by Marion Porten continued the history of women's struggle to study at the Academy in Vienna. In her video, the artist uses quotations from the archives focussing on discussions between the (male) professors about whether women should be allowed to study at the Academy. Despite being asked for their opinions by the Ministry of Education, subsequent committees and faculty councils rejected admitting women claiming they lacked talent and the ability to focus on creative work. Eventually, the State Office for Internal Affairs and Education ordered the Academy to allow females thus ending the professors' objections. Porten's video includes excerpts of protocols from the faculty council meetings together with images of the busts of anonymous women from the Viennese Academy's *glyptothek* (a collection of sculptures). The glyptothek is located in the basement which emphasises the work's message – video shots from there are intertwined with scenes in which we see female hands processing some kind of pulp. This may be associated with either preparing plaster for casting, or kneading dough.

Two photographs by Valerie Habsburg were presented alongside the video. One of them showed the façade of the building designed for the sculpture faculty with the inscription "The Master School for Sculptors" (*Meisterschule für Bildhauer*). The other was a photograph of the aforementioned letter sent by Teresa F. Ries to the academy's rector in 1931 (2019). Habsburg juxtaposed the two photographs to highlight the letter being sent when the building for sculptors already existed. She photographed the letter as an archival exhibit.

These two photographs were accompanied by reprints of archival photos from the private archive of Teresa Feodorowna Ries. Valerie Habsburg acquired this archive from an anonymous seller at an auction house. The photos show Ries working on the cast of a sculpture in the interiors of the Academy proving that although women were not registered as official students, they were present in the Academy. They took private lessons and provided additional income for the professors. Edmund Hellmer allowed Ries to use his studio at the school. He appreciated her talent so much that he proposed that she should make sculptures commissioned from him and then showed them under his name. However, he remained against the general admission of female students.¹⁰

De-construction, re-construction, and tools for reshaping the space

As a reference to Teresa Feodorowna Ries' story, I filmed *The March for the Witch* (2019-21) in the yard of the sculptors' building previously captured by Valerie Habsburg in her photo diptych. During a stone workshop, I made video footage of female students' hands (they made up the majority of attendees). The video shows the gestures of chiselling and grinding. Today no one is questioning women's abilities to be professional sculptors in the very institution they had no right to study at a hundred years ago. My focus on the hands of female students drew inspiration from Ries' sculpture *The Witch*. It portrays a vigorous woman preparing herself for a Witches' Sabbath. She holds cutting shears in her hand as she trims her toenails. The sculpture has been damaged

a few times and the hand holding the shears is lost. I explore the significance of this lost element in my project *Lost Element. Re-construction of the Witch* (2019-23) and the video *The March for the Witch* is a part of this project. In a metaphorical sense Ries' *Witch* represents liberated femininity but the missing tool symbolises a loss of agency. My video offers a symbolic reconstruction of this lost element embodied and multiplied in the hands of contemporary sculptors. The rhythm of the chisels is echoed in the video's soundtrack: a percussion composition by Justyna Stopnicka June relating to march as a musical genre.

Another context for *The March for the Witch* was a large-size photograph by Agnieszka Babińska depicting a destroyed monument to a man. His head was chopped off and the whole statute removed from its plinth. The picture was taken in Ukraine in 2018. The artist poses the question "Is that Lenin?" in the work's title. It is likely that the monument was one of many dedicated to Lenin across the former Soviet Union. While some of these statutes remain standing, others were removed often with passion and anger as shown in the photograph. In a broader sense, the damaged figure represents the imperial politics of the Russian Empire which have persisted over centuries and continue to this day (it should be mentioned that our exhibition coincided with the Russian aggression on Ukraine in February 2022). Babińska's photograph also raises questions about the visual language of propaganda and how it shapes public spaces through its proliferation. Sculpture memorials play a significant role in appropriating public space with tangible symbols of the regime. As such, the art education system must be compatible with the state ideology to produce artists who can meet its expectations.

Among the works described above was also *House-Shelter* (2020-21), an installation by Sylwia Jakubowska-Szycik, currently the vice-rector of the Academy in Gdańsk. It featured models of wooden houses of varying sizes connected by corridors. For the exhibition, the artist left some parts of the installation unassembled. As a result, it was unclear whether the work was still under construction or had in fact been damaged.

The ambiguity of tools such as chisels and

hammers that can either manufacture or destroy something was reflected in *Persuasion* (2019) by Adrianna Majdzińska. An accumulation of knives was juxtaposed with moulds of soil. The knives were collected from the artist's friends or bought at a flea market and given a new meaning as ready-mades. Their contradictory physical properties such as the hardness of steel and sharpness of blades as opposed to the softness of organic soil could be read as a comment on the Anthropocene era where what is natural, undefined and formless must be shaped, disciplined, and controlled. Another interesting aspect of that work is that while knives are typically utilised in the kitchen (often associated with house chores assigned to women), they are also used in sculpting in clay.

Aurelia Mandziuk's *The Hare. Re-enactment* (2011/12) sheds light on the challenges faced by women artists in making a living from their art. The work is based on the story of Katarzyna Kobro (1898-1951), a Polish female sculptor of German-Russian origins who belongs to the history of avant-garde art.¹¹ Kobro was married to Władysław Strzemiński (1893-1952), a prominent painter and art theoretician. Their artistic relationship, productive and flourishing in the beginning, soon became rife with conflict and violence on Strzemiński's part, leading to their separation. Although Kobro's contributions to avant-garde art are equally significant as those of her husband's, she was never appointed to the Academy of Fine Arts in Łódź which Strzemiński co-founded. Despite authoring outstanding and pioneering sculptures (spatial compositions) and theoretical texts, Kobro was forced to sew fabric toys for children to make ends meet.¹²

One of the toys she made for her daughter Nika was a hare which directly inspired Mandziuk's work. She is a graduate of the Textile Faculty of the Academy in Łódź and is currently serving as the dean of the Design Faculty at the Art Academy in Szczecin. Her works sit in the intersection of art and design. She focuses on an aspect that is not usually considered worth dealing with in Katarzyna Kobro's practice. While some of Kobro's works were damaged or lost and later reconstructed, the hare toy given to Nika has been preserved by Monika Krygier, a daughter of Kobro and Strzemiński's friend. As the hare had lost its legs over time, Mandziuk decided to reconstruct

the toy in its original shape using methods usually applied in art conservation. That way, Mandziuk shifts perspective and challenges patriarchal clichés in narratives on Kobra by inserting a simple child toy into the discourse.

Institutional critic. Re-forming the Academy

A few years after graduating from the Academy in Łódź, I created a project *Registered* (2011), which included an animation *Academies 2011* that displayed the gender statistics of students and professors in Polish art academies. I collated information from seven art academies' websites and interviewed several professors. The results of this para-sociological research surprised me; all art academies had a majority of female students ranging from 70% to 80%, while around 70% of art professors were men. The differences were slight as the number of female professors never exceeded 35% at any of the academies. These facts were based on hard data. However, many other indirect ways of discrimination were not obvious, and the mechanisms to prevent them were either non-existent or ineffective. These statistics were confirmed a few years later in a report on the study of the presence of women at higher art schools in Poland published by the Katarzyna Kozyra Foundation.¹³

This issue is raised in *Base of Academic Woman's Brain* (2022), a drawing by Julia Kul. It depicts the human brain that looks as if it's taken from a medical textbook. As we read, the drawing was prepared by AKIN_Autoethnographic Kul Institute of Neuroscience (a fictional scientific body invented by the artist). Kul illustrates and describes over 20 different areas of "an academic woman's brain," each responsible for various functions such as "selective attention (ignoring the way other people ignore you)," "normalising men's language (in case of linguistic exclusion)," "primal instinct to devalue one's own qualification," "fight, flight, freeze or act-like-a-man."

In *Praise of Precariat* (2022) Ania Włodarska [a.w.] touched upon the question of precarity glaringly prevalent in the so-called culture industries. Like other schools of higher education, the Academies of Fine

Arts benefit from the precarious work of their academic teachers who are employed on mandate contracts, meaning the institutions cover only for teaching hours. Such a tutor is not paid during holidays and doesn't have the right to any other social benefits. However, working at art schools is not limited to teaching hours – for instance, the tutors are obliged to prepare graduate exhibitions and half-year term reviews with students. Włodarska listed a vast number of projects and teaching hours which she realised on mandate contracts between 2015–22. She showed such projects in a golden frame echoing the way prisoners count their time through crossed-out lines arranged in groups, thus capturing the remaining days in confinement.

Escape from the Oz (2020/22) presented in the exhibition as an object and photographic documentation refers to an installation of the same title carried out on the façade of the University of Arts in Poznań by Anna Tyczyńska. The artist lowered a rope from the window as if she wanted to leave the institution building. However, the rope was not affixed which thwarted the desired evacuation. This site-specific installation may be understood as a reference to the mechanisms of oppression in state institutions such as fine arts academies. They are often grounded in the passion and commitment of numerous employees who devote their energy to students in the teaching process and implement projects and organisational work to ensure the smooth running of such institutions. However, after some time this leads to a burn-out, routine, and conflicts that may last for years and which affect the overall atmosphere in the institution.

Janina Rudnicka, a professor of drawing at the Faculty of Sculpture and Intermedia of the Academy of Fine Arts in Gdańsk, created an animation entitled *My Name WAS no 1* (2018). It features the artist's name written in a hand-drawn style using a simple brush from a graphic design software. The name is scribbled repeatedly resulting it being obscured by the lines. This artistic gesture recalls the issue of women's systemic underappreciation in academic structures and their tendency to self-sabotage. Women often feel responsible for the institution's well-being and as a result take on many responsibilities which leaves little time for their creative endeavours.

Janina Rudnicka and Ludmiła Ostrogórska prepared the first ever publication on the Sculpture Faculty of the Academy of Fine Arts in Gdańsk in 2003. It presented the history of the faculty and the people associated with it since its establishment just after World War II.¹⁴ Notably, it was the female faculty members who took the initiative to preserve such knowledge of the faculty's origins for future generations. Ostrogórska's work *Atropos Scrolls* (2022) has a special meaning in this context. A spindle-shaped object showcases scraps placed behind a glass surface, much like fragments of memories. Rudnicka was once an assistant professor in the Drawing studio led by Ostrogórska. They were not only colleagues but also became friends. Rudnicka remembers that in 1999 Ostrogórska broke barriers by becoming the first female dean in the history of Polish art academies. This achievement surprised the academic community as sculpture faculties were traditionally considered particularly masculinised. A decade later, Ludmiła Ostrogórska became the first female rector.¹⁵

Language as a Manifesto of Presence

Feminist artist and sculpture professor Iwona Demko has thoroughly investigated the role of women in the Academy of Fine Art in Kraków both in the past and present. The Academy was established in 1818 and recently celebrated its bicentenary. Coincidentally, 2018 also marked the 100th anniversary of the admission of its first female students. Despite the significance of this event, it was not included (even mentioned) in the planned celebrations. Consequently, Iwona Demko organised the Women's Year at the Academy in Kraków which included lectures, panel discussions, film screenings, exhibitions, publications, and interventions in the school's space throughout 2018. Copies of antique statues, predominantly male, were adorned with pink sashes inscribed with "200 years of Academy and 100 years of Women's Academy."¹⁶ Demko also created a series of counterfactual photomontages *Real Impossibility* (2018) which imagined what it would have been like if women artists who were historically not allowed to study and teach, had instead been the professors and rectors.

These photomontages were based on photographs from the National Digital Archive and aimed to challenge the male-dominated history of the Academy.¹⁷

Demko also presented her series *Feminatives* (2021) at the *Women at the Academies of Fine Arts* exhibition. *Feminatives* are the distinctively feminine forms of nouns derived from grammatically masculine forms, particularly those referring to humans.¹⁸ In English, nouns are generally not marked for gender and there are relatively few feminatives such as waitress or actress. However, in Polish all nouns are marked for their grammatical gender which can be male, female, or neutral. Using feminatives for occupations such as nurses, cleaners, and schoolteachers is popular, but such a linguistic logic is rarely applied to higher education institutions or the realm of politics. There, male forms dominate even when a professor or a prime minister is a woman. This shows the lack of consistency in applying feminatives that is conditioned by patriarchal gender roles. Strangely, the use of feminatives in more 'prestigious' professions such as medical doctors, lawyers or academic teachers has been rejected by many women as they feel that the feminine version of their professions somehow diminishes their status. However, the younger generation of female academics calls for introducing feminatives into everyday use and official documents.

In her series Demko presents exclusively female-gendered names for all academic positions, from a student to a professor through to a rector. The artist challenges gender stereotypes related to women's clothing and the appropriate 'dress code' for sculptors. As a woman, Demko enjoys putting on pink clothes, short skirts and high heels which she also wears at the Academy where she has been appointed to the Sculpture Faculty despite many of her colleagues believing that her very appearance undermines the quality of her work. Once she has realised it, she decided to keep her unique style as a feminist statement and subversive gesture against the adopted habits. She presented her outfit on a mannequin as part of the *Feminatives* series.

Anna Królikiewicz from the Painting Faculty of the Academy in Gdańsk works with senses other than sight. In her art book *Interlanguage* (2019) included in the exhibition one can see images of her

works based on taste and carnal sensuality.¹⁹ Królikiewicz breaks the hegemony of sight and hearing considered for centuries to be the senses superior to smell, taste and touch defined as more corporeal and thus assigned to the sphere of femininity and matter.²⁰ Music and visual arts were created to please the superior senses and the sphere of spirituality.

Women's transgenerational legacy and collaboration. Projects with students

In her newly commissioned work Magdalena Grzybowska created a minimalist composition *The Unbearable Lightness of Paper. Submission* (2022) using blocks of white paper for notes that pay homage to her female master, Alfreda Poznańska (1939-2001). Poznańska was Grzybowska's professor at the Academy in Wrocław renowned for representing the impermanence of things through durable materials such as paper sculpted in marble. Grzybowska and her students continue this tradition of combining permanent and ephemeral elements in their intermedia and post-conceptual artworks.

Love Stories-Radio Pogoda (2021) by Izabella Gustowska and her students (Martyna Miller, Maja Okamgnienie, Joanna Pietrowicz, Maria Subczyńska, Katarzyna Wojtczak, Weronika Wronecka) is another example worth mentioning here. The film comprises seven distinct stories that showcase diverse artistic sensibilities but together form a coherent whole. The work blends documentary footage and personal memories with surreal and dreamy elements and humour.

Izabella Gustowska is an important figure in the history of women's activities at art academies in Poland. She is a distinguished intermedia artist who often explores feminist themes in her practice. Her work focuses mainly on video and installation art, and she has been teaching at the University of Arts in Poznań (earlier Academy of Fine Arts) for more than four decades. Gustowska is one of few women in the history of Polish art academies who has had the chance to run an accredited studio practice programme. She is also a passionate activist for the

promotion of women's art. Between 1979 and 1994 she ran the ON gallery at the Academy in Poznań presenting the most interesting art tendencies of the time. Gustowska co-curated the gallery with Krystyna Piotrowska who emigrated from Poland in the early 1980s. Together, they organised an exhibition *Women's Art* in 1980 which showed the most significant Polish artists of that time shedding light on femininity and women's position in the society.²¹

When watching *Love Stories* we recognise Gustowska's influence on her students in their awareness of the medium of video, their ability to work with the language of moving image, the aesthetic sensitivity, and the construction of non-obvious visual narratives. As a professor, Gustowska avoided the formatting of her students to her visual language which has been a frequent problem at art academies (though fortunately this seems to be changing lately).

When discussing female professors associated with the University of Arts in Poznań it is important to mention Magdalena Abakanowicz, a significant figure in the institution's history. A world-renowned sculptor, Abakanowicz taught from 1965 to 1992 and she led the Tapestry Studio.²² According to Krystyna Piotrowska, one of her students, Abakanowicz encouraged them to think beyond the boundaries of artistic disciplines. Through the tasks she assigned to her students Abakanowicz proved that textiles could be transformed into sculptural forms, installations, or performances.²³

Sowing (2021), a performative project in the exhibition initiated by a younger generation academic Martyna Jastrzębska also belonged to the series of initiatives involving students. It was done in collaboration with the NOMUS Museum of Contemporary Art in Gdańsk. The students collected different plant seeds and spread them onto a hemp fabric (jute). The crucial element of their public space action was a walk from the Sculpture and Intermedia Faculty's building of the Academy to the NOMUS Museum. The texture of the jute allowed some seeds to fall down on the way. This action reflects the mechanisms of the education and the art world systems. Are they compatible? Do graduates have an open access to exhibiting in museums? Isn't an artistic career understood in terms of 'an artistic success' defined by the market? Who will survive

and achieve such success? How many seeds will fall somewhere onto the unknown ground, and what new may emerge from the pre-defined structures of the art world? The piece of fabric with seeds that hadn't fallen out on the way to the Museum was buried in front of its building. Perhaps one day they will sprout there.

Artist Agata Zbylut leads the Studio of Photography and Post-Artistic Activities at the Art Academy in Szczecin. As part of the exhibition, she presented a documentation of a project she made with her female graduates. *The Queen of Bees* was presented at Kronika Gallery in Bytom in 2019. In a rather perverse way, the idea of that exhibition referred to the model of showcasing the master and their students. However, Zbylut didn't show 'the best of young artists from her studio but instead focused on the difficulties they faced after the graduation. Some works also revealed direct and indirect gender discrimination in the labour market. A few of the graduates gave up their practices while others experienced some artistic success living out of a suitcase and leading the lives of freelance artists without steady income and health insurance.

Zbylut and her students questioned the traditional master-student hierarchy in their work. Through a collaborative model of *The Queen of Bees*, the vertical structure inherent in institutional education was softened by students being genuine partners and co-creators of the work, and by the professor supporting them in finding their path rather than simply instructing them to do so. This opens up the possibility for collaborative projects where students and professors are equal co-participants. The only question that arises is how the increasing number of women in academic positions can in fact influence the methods of artistic education.

In her cartoon animation *The Exam Session* (2019) Joanna Bajus portrayed her professor Anna Tyczyńska with tenderness and wit, focusing on the latter's appearance, characteristic gestures and 'aura'. Tyczyńska runs the 2nd Interdisciplinary Drawing Studio at the University of Arts in Poznań and showed *Primal Scream* (2015) which documents a student workshop inspired by the therapeutic method invented by American psychotherapist Arthur Janov. Letting out a scream was a difficult task in a world in which we are conditioned to suppress our expression. Each

student screamed one after another and their efforts were recorded as a collective video performance.

Private is Political.

Gestures and symbols

Scream was also heard in Dominika Kowynia's painting *The Furious Girl* (2017) (depicting a yelling girl). Kowynia is a painter who teaches at the Academy of Fine Arts in Katowice. An otherwise empty red wall on which the painting was hung enhanced its expression. The work refers to an event from the artist's childhood when her mother bought her an ornate dress (almost like a wedding dress) for her First Communion ceremony which little Dominika did not care about. However, upon noticing that she stood out from the other girls and commented on it with satisfaction, she was scolded by her mother. Through her work the artist highlights the contradictory expectations that girls face when growing up which demand perfection in many areas while also requiring false modesty. Girls are taught to compete while being expected to deny it.

Eliza Proszczuk from the Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw explores the notion of female solidarity. Her textile *Sisterhood* (2020) features graphic symbols and pictograms of a woman. They resemble the Palaeolithic 'Venus' figurines or extraterrestrial beings, expressing a sense of power and joy and recalling Niki Saint-Phalle's works. Proszczuk is also the author of *Traces of Sisterhood*, a project that took place at the Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw two months after the exhibition's opening. It brought together women from various fields for discussions, presentations, and workshops, ultimately resulting in a publication.²⁴ It is worth noting that Proszczuk also ran a series of workshops with female prisoners where they created outfits that served as a temporary alternative to their prison uniform. During these workshops, the artist recorded conversations with the imprisoned women.

Jolanta Rudzka-Habisiak, the second woman to serve as rector (2012-20) in the history of Polish Academies of Fine Arts is an artist working mainly in textile. She is affiliated with the Textile Institute of the Academy of Fine Arts in Łódź (previously, the Faculty of Textiles and Clothing). Interestingly, this

faculty had the highest proportion of female tutors among all departments in the academy with 50% of its lecturers being women. However, this exception only confirms the age-old rule that women in the academies were mainly accepted in fields that were culturally assigned to them. Rudzka-Habisiak presented a large-format object titled *Moon Lake* (2018) in the exhibition. The starting point were the shapes based on letters from the alphabet designed by Władysław Strzemiński. This way Rudzka-Habisiak refers to the work of the founder and patron of the Academy where she studied and currently works. In my view, she effectively hacks the master's work by spontaneously and intuitively arranging the shapes of the Latin alphabet letters he designed into a circular structure covered with gold paper. The work is a pleasure to look at, cozy and tactile, far from the disciplined visual compositions of Strzemiński who created the ideological foundations of the Academy in Łódź.

Rudzka-Habisiak also showed a series of small paintings in which she depicted ideograms from the everyday life and the *iconosphere* (a term introduced by Mieczysław Porębski to designate the universe of images of all kinds surrounding human) of the so-called feminine—lip prints, lipsticks, and clothing accessories. After a closer look, we see a lightning bolt among these pictures – a powerful emblem of women's fight against a legislative proposal for a total ban on abortion in Poland – or an umbrella, both an everyday object and a symbol in the Black Protests against restraining women's right to self-determination.

Care and Protest

Magdalena Wawrzyniak's graduation artwork *Design of a Conceptual Melee Weapon in the Context of the Contemporary Social Resistance Movement* carried out at the Faculty of Design of the Academy of Art in Szczecin similarly explores public dissent. This performative critical-design object can function as a simple stool. Yet after disassembling its components it turns out to be a piece of armour, a shield and a police baton. The form of the stool, the most basic home equipment, can be

used during protests. This works as a metaphor for society which, however it appears to be passive and subjugated to power, does have the necessary tools for resistance and change which it unmistakably becomes aware of when human rights have been violated and the social contract has been broken.

Marina Gržinić is an artist and philosopher who runs the Studio of Post-conceptual Art Practices at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna, an essential part of their socially engaged projects. In the exhibition, she presented *Seizure – Rewriting Counter Histories* (2015), a video film made in collaboration with Aina Šmid. It shows four strong female characters (Adela Jušić, Anja Salomonowitz, Heiny Srour and Nevline Nnaji) working in the field of film and video who take the risk of revealing social mechanisms and power relations. The piece is a hybrid that breaks the conventions of traditional documentary filmmaking. It combines video documentation and interviews to create a visual essay that serves as a rebellious manifesto that challenges the conventions of the genre. The question the artists pose is whether it is possible to subvert, contest, destabilise and rethink some old and new relations in film and political activism.²⁵

Artist Bogna Burska is a careful observer of social mechanisms which she explores through performative works situated between video and theatre.²⁶ She runs classes on sensual perception at the Academy of Fine Arts in Gdańsk, where students create works based on senses other than sight and deal with the issues of disability. In the exhibition, Burska presented her video *I didn't tell anyone anything* (2017/19) based on the story told by Maciej Chodziński, her PhD student and graduate of the Academy of Fine Arts in Gdańsk. During his studies, Chodziński was a member of the artistic group Krecha (2006-09) which published an art zine criticising the art world and mass media calling it “media terrorism”. When releasing the zine's topical issue on media terrorism, the artists enclosed an envelope which had the seal of the Krecha group and the inscription “anthrax” on it (a dangerous disease caused by the bacteria *Bacillus anthracis*) and mailed numerous copies of the publication to the cultural institutions in Gdańsk.

Even though the group was well known for its provocative actions in the city's artistic community and the probability that the envelope contained the anthrax bacteria was zero, one of the institutions' directors called the police. Chodziński was taken out of his house in handcuffs and the investigation into the case lasted over a year.

Cuban artist Vivian Crespo Zurita presented her video *The Power of Ancestors* (2019), an excerpt from group performance *Willkommen auf dem Bababara* initiated by Mariama Diallo in 2019 in front of *Africa*, a large-format painting by Maître Leherb (Helmut Leherb) itself deriving from a series of several metre-long faiences (fine tin-glazed pottery) depicting six continents (1980-1992). These large pieces of faience were laid on the Vienna University of Economics and Business walls, the space also used by the Academy in Vienna during a renovation works of its main building. Considering discourses such as post-colonialism and feminism, *Africa* clearly is part of colonial and racist thinking.²⁷ Crespo Zurita's performance explores patriarchy, migration and indigenous ancestry. The artist emphasises the bond she feels with the sea through her singing. Her performance resembles a ritual with the artist as a shaman who evokes her black ancestors brought to Cuba by the sea. Her country of origin and Europe are also divided by an ocean. Crespo Zurita is critical of the European policy against migrants. As she writes in the commentary on her performance, "I carry the sea and the power of my ancestors within me. I use this power to fight racism, fascism, and patriarchy".

Final remarks

The myriad of the threads and artistic responses that the exhibition presented are worth further exploration in future projects. Naturally, women in art academies are not just tutors and students. As highlighted in the book *Remembering Academy* edited by Iwona Demko included in the show, there are indeed female employees in administration, cleaning, and security doing work that is often invisible or underestimated.²⁸ The problem of women in fine arts academies is part of a broader equality discourse related to racial, ethnic or gender identity, and disability. These issues resonate

differently depending on the degree of national and ethnic diversity of the academic community. Polish academies still function in a more homogeneous society than for example the Academy in Vienna. Procedures and communication methods intended to counteract discrimination are still being implemented in Poland.

Certainly, in recent years there has been a greater political, feminist and ecological awareness among students of the Polish academies. Queer and non-binary people are more and more visible, and their creative practices make us acutely aware of the oppressiveness of binary divisions and gender roles to which we are all formatted as a society. Using a sculptural metaphor, it was the women's very entry into the fossilised structure of the academy that constituted the first chip-away breaking down of the monolithic block of exclusion. Women's intellectual, creative and physical presence within the male-dominated structures has helped create a far more inclusive space for diverse attitudes and artistic forms of expression ever since. It has in the process also transformed the definition – and the meaning – of artist.

Notes

- ¹ Julie M. Johnson, *The Memory Factory: The Forgotten Women Artist in Vienna 1900* (West Lafayette: Purdue University Press, 2012), 205.
- ² Andrey Shabanov, *Art and Commerce in Late Imperial Russia* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2019), 39-40.
- ³ "100 years of Admitting Women to Study at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna," <https://www.akbild.ac.at/en/news/2021/100-years-of-admitting-women-to-study-at-the-academy-of-fine-arts-vienna-> (10.10.2023)
- ⁴ Valerie Habsburg, "Teresa Feodorowna Ries and her Private Archive," *Sztuka i Dokumentacja* no. 21 (2019): 134.
- ⁵ Ulrike Hirhager, "Gerda Matejka-Felden: Umstritten progressive," Biografieblog, *Der Standard*, <https://www.derstandard.at/story/2000136742429/gerda-matejka-felden-umstritten-progressiv> (01.10.2023)
- ⁶ Iwona Demko, *Zofia Baltarowicz-Dzielińska – pierwsza studentka na krakowskiej Akademii Sztuk Pięknych* [Zofia Baltarowicz-Dzielińska – the First Female Student at the Academy of Fine Arts in Kraków], *Sztuka i Dokumentacja* 2018, no. 19, 27-32.
- ⁷ Roman Nieczyporowski, *Szkoła z Widokiem na Morze. U źródeł Akademii Sztuk Pięknych w Gdańsku* [A School with a View of the Sea. The Genesis of the Fine Arts Academy in Gdańsk], *Sztuka i Dokumentacja* 2021, no. 19, 5-19.
- ⁸ Academy of Art, *Britannica*, <https://www.britannica.com/art/academy-of-art> (19.10.2023)
- ⁹ Whitney Chadwick, *Women, Art and Society* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2007), 8.
- ¹⁰ Valerie Habsburg, Jakob Krameritsch, Anka Leśniak, "The Professor's Council voted against the admission of female students," *Spezialschule*, (Vienna: Schebebrügge.Editor 2019), 115.
- ¹¹ Janina Ładnowska, "Katarzyna Kobro: A Sculptor of Space," *Artibus et Historiae* 22(43) (2001), 161-185, doi:10.2307/1483659
- ¹² Phillip Barcio, "Katarzyna Kobro and Władysław Strzemiński – Stars of the Polish Avant-garde," IDEELART, <https://www.ideelart.com/magazine/katarzyna-kobro-wladyslaw-strzeminski> (10.11.2023)
- ¹³ *Marne szanse na awanse. Raport z badania obecności kobiet na uczelniach artystycznych w Polsce* [Little Chance to Advance? An Inquiry into the Presence of Women at Art Academies in Poland] (Warsaw: Katarzyna Kozyra Foundation 2016), 5. <https://www.nck.pl/upload/attachments/317998/Marne%20szanse%20na%20awanse%20RAPORT.pdf> (18.10.2023)
- ¹⁴ *Wydział Rzeźby Akademii Sztuk Pięknych w Gdańsku* [Sculpture Department of the Academy of Fine Arts in Gdańsk, ed. Ludmiła Ostrogórska, Janina Rudnicka (Gdańsk: Akademia Sztuk Pięknych w Gdańsku, 2002-2003). <https://www.zbrojowniasztuki.pl/pliki/aae680536a21b07814713683c097c274/wydzial-rzezby-akademii-sztuk-pieknych-w-gdansk.pdf> (10.10.2023)
- ¹⁵ Janina Rudnicka, "When do we meet...?", *Ludmiła Ostrogórska, Przemiany* [Transformations], ed. Ludmiła Ostrogórska (Gdańsk: Akademia Sztuk Pięknych w Gdańsku, 2020), 104.
- ¹⁶ Iwona Demko, „Jak to się stało, że się udało?” *Rok kobiet w ASP* [Year of Women from the AFA. The Centenary of women's presence at the Kraków Academy of Fine Arts, ed. Iwona Demko, Agnieszka Marecka (Kraków: Akademia Sztuk Pięknych w Krakowie, 2021, 13-23.
- ¹⁷ "Iwona Demko," *Secondary Archive*, <https://secondaryarchive.org/artists/iwona-demko/> (11.10.2022)
- ¹⁸ Jadwiga Linde-Usiekiewicz, "The Case for Feminatives in Polish," *The Magazine of PAS* 4/76/2022, 82, https://journals.pan.pl/Content/126352/PDF/82-82_Linde_Usiekiewicz_ang.pdf (12.10.2022)
- ¹⁹ Anna Królikiewicz, „Interlanguage,” *Międzyjęzyk* [Intrlanguage], ed. Jacek Foromański (Gdańsk: Akademia Sztuk Pięknych w Gdańsku 2019), 71-110. <https://www.zbrojowniasztuki.pl/pliki/e72645c98eeb20082be438590a1736a5/anna-krolikiewicz-miedzyjezyk.pdf> (13.10.2023).
- ²⁰ Carolyn Korsmeyer, "Taste and Other Senses: Reconsidering the Foundations of Aesthetics," *The Nordic Journal of Aesthetics*, No. 54 (2017), 20–34, 20.
- ²¹ Agata Jakubowska, "Meetings: Exhibitions of Women's Art Curated by Izabella Gustowska," *Ikonotheka* 26/2016, 291-311.
- ²² Marta Smolińska, "Abakanowicz in Poznań: an enduring presence," *Poznan.pl*, <https://www.poznan.pl/mim/wortals/en/en/news,9560/abakanowicz-in-poznan-an-enduring-presence,170114.html> (14.10.2023)
- ²³ Anka Leśniak, *Fading Traces. Polish Women Artists in Art of Seventies*, video-installation based on conversations with artists, 2010.
- ²⁴ *Traces of Sisterhood*, ed. Eliza Proszczuk, Ewa Chomicka (Warsaw: Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw, 2022) <https://tractsnetwork.online/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/TRACES-OF-SISTERHOOD.pdf> (16.10.2023)
- ²⁵ "Seizure – Rewriting Counter Histories (2015)," Grzinić-Smid.si, <http://grzinić-smid.si/?p=1303> (17.10.2023)
- ²⁶ "Bogna Burska," *Culture.pl*, <https://culture.pl/en/artist/bogna-burska> (16.10.2022)
- ²⁷ "Kulturen-Clash: Das „nackte“ Afrika an der alten WU," *Die Presse*, <https://www.diepresse.com/5359064/kulturen-clash-das-nackte-afrika-an-der-alten-wu> (17.10.2022),
- ²⁸ *Wspominając Akademię. Wysłuchane, zapisane, okazane. Kobiety* [Remembering the academy. Heard, written down, presented. Women] Vol. 12., ed. Jacek Dembosz, Iwona Demko (Kraków: Akademia Sztuk Pięknych w Krakowie, 2021).

Bibliography

- “100 years of Admitting Women to Study at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna.” A...kademie der bildenden Künste Wien, News, 2021. <https://www.akbild.ac.at/en/news/2021/100-years-of-admitting-women-to-study-at-the-academy-of-fine-arts-vienna-> „Academy of Art.” *Britannica*. <https://www.britannica.com/art/academy-of-art>.
- Anna Królikiewicz. *Międzyjęzyk* [Intrlanguage]. Edited by Jacek Foromański. Gdańsk: Akademia Sztuk Pięknych w Gdańsku, 2019. <https://www.zbrojowniasztuki.pl/pliki/e72645c98eeb20082be438590a1736a5/anna-krolikiewicz-miedzyjezyk.pdf>.
- Barcio, Phillip. “Katarzyna Kobro and Władysław Strzemiński – Stars of the Polish Avant-garde.” *IDEELART*. <https://www.ideelart.com/magazine/katarzyna-kobro-wladyslaw-strzeminski>.
- “Bogna Burska.” *Culture.pl*. <https://culture.pl/en/artist/bogna-burska>.
- Chadwick, Whitney. *Women, Art and Society*. London: Thames and Hudson, 2007.
- Demko, Iwona. “Zofia Baltarowicz-Dzielińska - pierwsza studentka na krakowskiej Akademii Sztuk Pięknych” [Zofia Baltarowicz-Dzielińska - the First Female Student at the Academy of Fine Arts in Krakow]. *Sztuka i Dokumentacja*, no. 19 (2018): 27-32.
- Demko, Iwona. “Jak to się stało, że się udało?” *Rok kobiet z ASP* [Year of Women from the AFA. The Centenary of women's presence at the Krakow Academy of Fine Arts]. Edited by Iwona Demko, Agnieszka Marecka. Kraków: Akademia Sztuk Pięknych w Krakowie, 2021.
- Habsburg, Valerie. “The Sculptor Teresa Feodorowna Ries and her Private Archive.” *Sztuka i Dokumentacja*, no. 21 (2019): 133-141.
- Habsburg, Valerie, Jakob Krameritsch and Anka Leśniak. “The Professor's Council voted against the admission of female students.” *Spezialschule*. Vienna: Schebebrügge. Editor, 2019.
- Hirhager, Ulrike. “Gerda Matejka-Felden: Umstritten progressive.” *Der Standard*. Biografieblog. <https://www.derstandard.at/story/2000136742429/gerda-matejka-felden-umstritten-progressiv>.
- “Iwona Demko.” *Secondary Archive*. <https://secondaryarchive.org/artists/iwona-demko/>.
- Jakubowska, Agata. “Meetings: Exhibitions of Women's Art Curated by Izabella Gustowska.” *Ikonotheka* 26 (2016): 291-311.
- Korsmeyer, Carolyn. “Taste and Other Senses: Reconsidering the Foundations of Aesthetics.” *The Nordic Journal of Aesthetics*, no. 54 (2017): 20-34.
- “Kulturen-Clash: Das »nackte« Afrika an der alten WU.” *Die Presse*. <https://www.diepresse.com/5359064/kulturen-clash-das-nackte-afrika-an-der-alten-wu>.
- Leśniak, Anka. *Fading Traces. Polish Women Artists in Art of Seventies*. Video-installation based on conversation with artists, 2010.
- Linde-Usiekiewicz, Jadwiga. “The Case for Feminatives in Polish.” *The Magazine of PAS* 4/76 (2022): 82. https://journals.pan.pl/Content/126352/PDF/82-82_Linde_Usiekiewicz_ang.pdf.
- Ładnowska, Janina. “Katarzyna Kobro: A Sculptor of Space.” *Artibus et Historiae* 22(43) (2001): 161-185.
- Marne szanse na awanse. Raport z badania obecności kobiet na uczelniach artystycznych w Polsce* [Little Chance to Advance? An Inquiry into the Presence of Women at Art Academies in Poland]. Warszawa: Katarzyna Kozyra Foundation 2016). <https://www.nck.pl/upload/attachments/317998/Marne%20szanse%20na%20awanse%20RAPORT.pdf>.
- Nieczyporowski, Roman. “U źródeł Akademii Sztuk Pięknych w Gdańsku” [A School with a View of the Sea. The Genesis of the Fine Arts Academy in Gdansk]. *Sztuka i Dokumentacja*, no. 19 (2021): 5-19.
- Ries, Teresa Feodorowna. *Die Sprache des Steines*. Wien: Krystal Verlag, 1928.
- Rudnicka, Janina. “When do we meet...?” *Ludmila Ostrogórska. Przemiany* [Transformations]. Edited by Ludmila Ostrogórska. Gdańsk: Akademia Sztuk Pięknych w Gdańsku, 2020.
- “Seizure – Rewriting counter-histories (2015).” Grzinić-Smid.si. <http://grzinić-smid.si/?p=1303>.
- Shabanov, Andrey. *Art and Commerce in Late Imperial Russia*. London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2019.
- Smolińska, Marta. “Abakanowicz in Poznań: an enduring presence.” *Poznan.pl*. <https://www.poznan.pl/mim/wortals/en/en/news,9560/abakanowicz-in-poznan-an-enduring-presence,170114.html>
- Traces of Sisterhood*. Edited by Eliza Proszczuk, Ewa Chomicka. Warsaw: Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw, 2022. <https://tractsnetwork.online/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/TRACES-OF-SISTERHOOD.pdf>.
- Wspominając Akademię. Wysłuchane, zapisane, okazane. Kobiety* [Remembering the academy. Heard, written down, presented. Women]. Vol. 12. Edited by Jacek Dembosz, Iwona Demko. Kraków: Akademia Sztuk Pięknych w Krakowie, 2021.
- Wydział Rzeźby Akademii Sztuk Pięknych w Gdańsku* [Sculpture Department of the Academy of Fine Arts in Gdansk]. Edited by Ludmila Ostrogórska, Janina Rudnicka. Gdańsk: Akademia Sztuk Pięknych w Gdańsku, 2002-2003. <https://www.zbrojowniasztuki.pl/pliki/aae680536a21b07814713683c097c274/wydzial-rzezyby-akademii-sztuk-pieknych-w-gdansk.pdf>.

*WOMEN
AT THE
ACADEMIES
OF FINE
ARTS*

project – documentation[©]

Photo by Kacper Krajewski



Julia Kul, *Base of Academic Woman Brain*



Agata Zbylut, *Queen of bees. Documentation of the project*



Ania Wlodarska, *In Praise of the Precariat*



Jolanta Rudzka Habisiak, *Moon Lake*, object; Dominika Kowynia, *Furious Girl*, painting



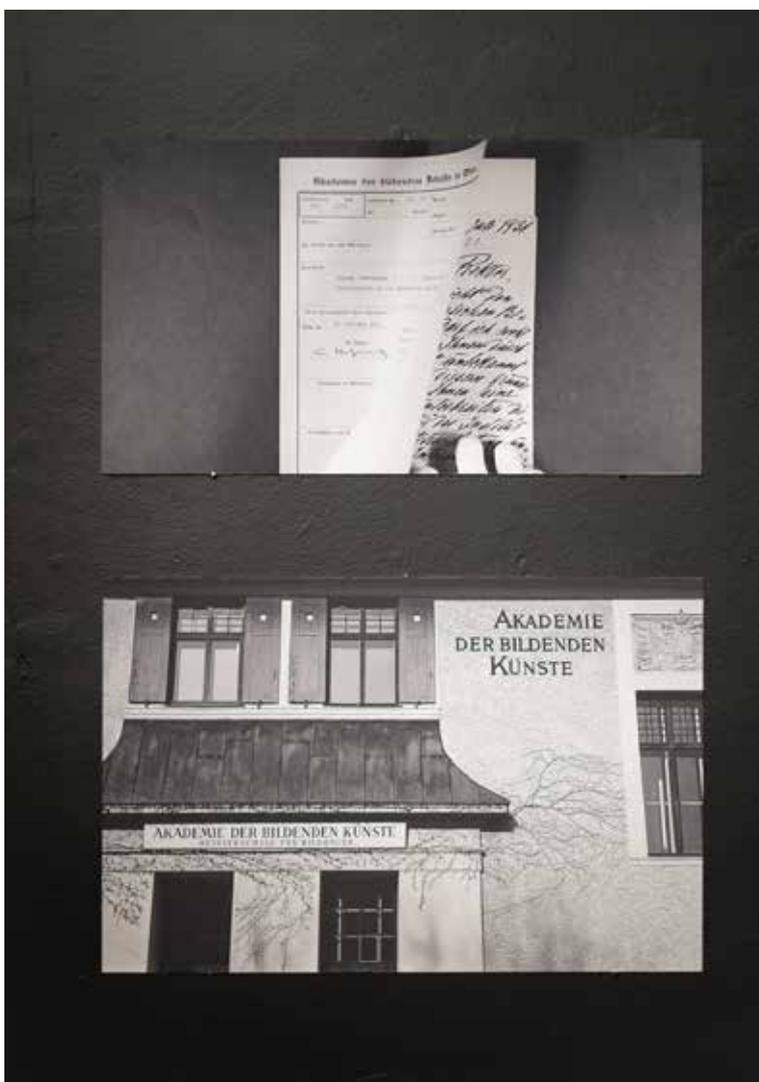
Simone Bader, *101 Years**, video; Iwona Demko, *Feminatives*, objects



from the left: Anka Leśniak, *March for the Witch*; Agnieszka Babińska, *Is that Lenin?*
Vivian Crespo Zurita, *The power of the ancestors*



from the left: Magdalena Wawrzyniak, object and photo; Bogna Burska, video; Ludmila Ostrogórska, object



Valerie Habsburg, Letter of application for professorship from Teresa F. Ries, Akademie der Bildenden Künste, Meisterschule für Bildhauer



Exhibition view



Exhibition view



Exhibition view



Exhibition view



Remembering the Academy, edited by Iwona Demko



Photographs from the TFR Archive, courtesy Valerie Habsburg



Vivian Crespo Zurita, *The Power of Ancestors*, video



Sylvia Jakubowska-Szycik, *Home Shelter*, objects; Agnieszka Babinska, photographs; Vivian Crespo Zurita, video

*WOMEN
AT THE
ACADEMIES
OF FINE
ARTS*

artists' documentations[©]

SIMONE BADER

The 1st Document*

Dopiero w roku akademickim 1920/21 przyjęto kobiety jako pełnoprawne studentki Akademii Sztuk Pięknych w Wiedniu.

Liczne dokumenty znajdujące się w archiwum uczelni dowodzą, że Akademia, a konkretnie rada profesorska, była zdecydowanie przeciwna przyjęciu kobiet na studia.



Pierwszym dokumentem, w którym pojawia się informacja na ten temat, jest ekspertyza akademii z 1872 r., wydana przez Rektorat na wniosek austriackiego Ministerstwa Oświaty. Wyniki raportu jak można się było spodziewać, potwierdziły obawy profesorów i świadczyły przeciwko przyjmowaniu kobiet.

Negatywna postawa profesorów nie pozostawia wątpliwości: stwierdza się, że kobiety prezentują niższy poziom wykształcenia, a przede wszystkim, niewłaściwe jest moralnie, „aby kobiety i mężczyźni studiowali razem”.

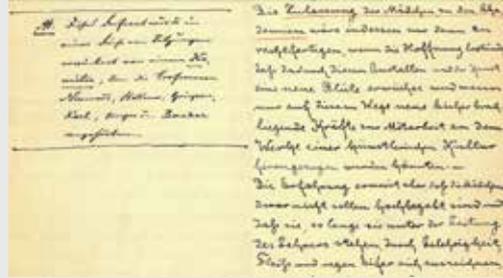
Co więcej, kobiety są w stanie uprawiać tylko „niższe” formy sztuki, takie jak malarstwo pejzażowe, florystyczne i portretowe.

Profesorowie zarekomendowali utworzenie odrębnej szkoły artystycznej dla kobiet – w 1897 r. rzeczywiście powstała w Wiedniu szkoła artystyczna dla kobiet i dziewcząt.

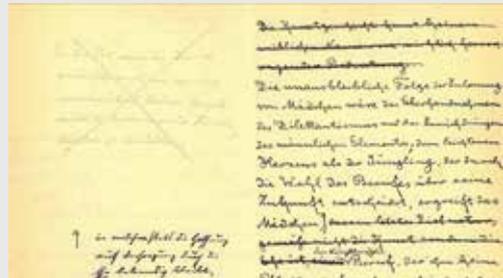
Kolejna ekspertyza z 1904 r., wydana na prośbę austriackiego Ministerstwa Oświaty o zajęcie stanowiska w tej sprawie, porównała Akademię Sztuk Pięknych w Krakowie, Pradze i Wiedniu.



Podczas gdy akademia w Krakowie skłonna była rozważyć uczestnictwo kobiet w zajęciach, akademia w Wiedniu, podobnie jak w Pradze, była temu przeciwna.



Zapisy wykreślone z dokumentów, są szczególnie znaczące. W tym przypadku, w oświadczeniu z 1904 r. skreślono zdanie: „Historia sztuki nie zna żadnego imienia żeńskiego o naprawdę wybitnym znaczeniu”.(!)



Pojawiały się kolejne zapytania w tej sprawie. Jednak stosunek profesorów do przyjmowania kobiet nie zmienił się w następnych dziesięcioleciach.

W końcu, w 1920 r. wydano zarządzenie Ministerstwa Oświaty: „Kobiety mają być przyjmowane, a Akademia musi zapewnić warunki do tego”. Było to dwa lata po wprowadzeniu w Austrii w powszechnych praw wyborczych dla kobiet, które zdobyły 1918 r.

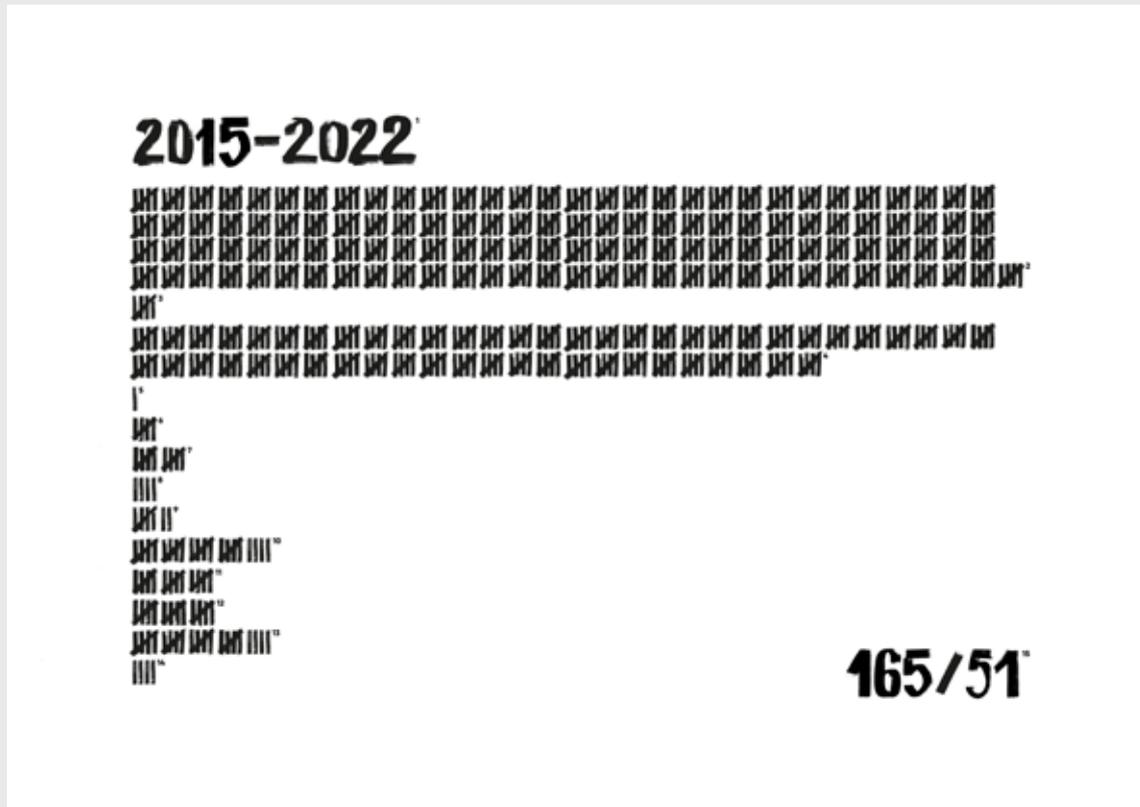
Excerpts from the text
 1872 – The first document...
 by Eva Schober
 Head of the University Archives
 of the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna

Translated from English to Polish
 by Anka Leśniak
 Font: Courier

Video
 Simone Bader
 2022

101
 years*

ANIA WŁODARSKA



Precariat

The word ‘precariat’ (precarity) was formed by combining two English words: ‘precarious’ and ‘proletariat.’ What does this word mean? Precarious proletariat? What can I say about such a characteristic group that is unaware of its greatness? Why unaware? Because there is no time to self-organize in constant adaptation to change in the fixation on unstable daily life. The qualities of the precariat (not supported by research but by observation and experience), stress and tension, professional burn-out, striving for appreciation, unsure and uncertain status in the place of work, striving for appreciation, overeagerness, proving that you can do everything and in the best possible way too, overworking, inadequacy, discouragement. The gold frame is a praise, a recognition of the precarians. The gold frame is also for me.

MAGDA GRZYBOWSKA



It lasted, paper, granite, 2017

The exhibition and the conference *Women at Academies of Fine Arts* became an excuse to trace the processes I have witnessed since the beginning of my stay at the Wrocław Academy of Fine Arts.

In the years 1995-2000, I studied sculpture in the studio of professor Alfreda Poznańska (1937-2001), and it is with her that this story begins. Alfreda Poznańska was an artist whose medium was traditional sculptural materials. However, what she instilled in me as a woman was a reflection on ephemeral phenomena, the fleeting 'between' the permanent and the impermanent. Poznańska created her works at a time when sculpture at academies was a male domain - hard stone, hard physical work. This largely shaped Poznańska's attitude, but at the same time, she formulated her own concept of art by reaching for the very idea of durability and impermanence. The sign of this was paper - presented in monolithic sculptural forms, but essentially pointing to the ephemeral and spiritual nature of the work's sources.

My work is focused on capturing fleeting phenomena. I have noticed similar traits in other women in academia, including students and Ph.D. candidates with whom I have had the pleasure of working. I will give them the opportunity to showcase their work, which often features paper as a material and not just an idea. Through their examples and short notes, there will be a feminine perspective on the 'durable-impermanent' dichotomy that is common to all human creativity and seems to define its existence.

The Polish word 'trwało' (meaning 'it lasted') contains an interesting paradox - it refers to something infinite in the past tense. The work is inspired by tombstones and monuments, where inscriptions, names, and epitaphs are usually carved into stone. However, in this case, I used an inherently ephemeral technique of pasting paper notices, which is temporary and doomed to the effects of time, to create the inscription. As a base, I used a granite element of a once-demolished chapel, parts of which can be found in the palace park in Morawa.

ALEKSANDRA PULIŃSKA

(from Magda Grzybowska)

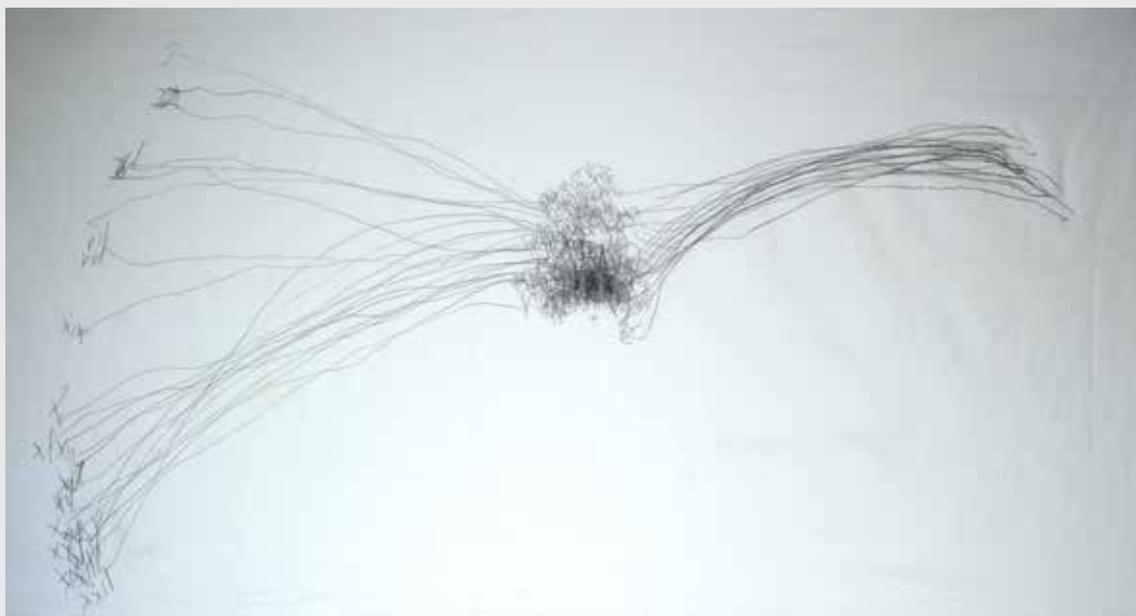


Your brother's blood is calling from the ground to me, handmade paper (waste paper), linocut, biota: beetroot seeds, 2021

The plants that grow through my graphic works slowly decompose cellulose with water day by day, writing their ornaments of destruction on the cards. Eventually, they complete their own life and wither. Dealing with these phenomena, however, certainly shows hope that even ephemeral processes can be a source of lasting changes in us.

AGATA HORWAT

(from Magda Grzybowska)



Black box, performance for camera, 2021

The performance piece was an attempt to recall from the deepest recesses of memory the days of December 2020, when, standing in front of the window of the Capitol Theater, I was in contact (or sometimes without it) with a person sitting in a chair - an idle actor protesting against the closure of the theater. After each session, I wrote down the thoughts that emerged in my head during meditation, as well as more cold thoughts summarizing the entire hour-and-a-half experience. The notes were read aloud and recorded by me. They became a frame and a reason for running a line through my head, symbolizing time, and writing words behind it that appeared in my consciousness while listening to those experiences.

ANGELIKA TAMKUN

(from Magda Grzybowska)



To Paper, steel, 2019

In the face of a 1000-year-old oak, our life is just one leaf falling from its crown.
In human eyes, the life of a fruit fly is like the blink of an eye. And yet, although so fleeting, life - both human and insect - is in their eyes a monument, more durable than bronze.

JASMIN SCHAITL

(from Magda Grzybowska)



present/presence (air), video, 2018

present/presence is an ongoing project visualizing the natural, transformative, and ephemeral properties of matter after the artist's intervention. The title refers to Henri Lefebvre's hypothesis (in *Rhythmanalysis*, 1992) about the common confusion between presence (which cannot be represented, but can only be experienced at the moment itself) and present (sometimes appearing to be, but actually representing being through medium).

In the video work *present/presence (air)*, I exhale on the window, writing 'NOW' on the fogged glass, repeating this action several times.

ALFREDA POZNAŃSKA

(from Magda Grzybowska)



Alfreda Poznańska, altar of St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross (Edyta Stein) in the chapel of the church of St. Michael the Archangel in Wrocław (ul. Kard. St. Wyszyńskiego), marble, completed in 1991

MARTYNA JASTRZĘBSKA



Sowing

Referring to the Totart's achievements in times of social anger and lack of trust towards the authorities seems to be an obvious gesture, especially in Gdańsk. However, this is not a simple dialogue. Heritage formation is undoubtedly important but also difficult - especially for young people encountering Totart's art for the first time. Repeating or directly quoting Totart's actions and interventions is impossible from today's perspective; it would create an artificial situation and be doomed to failure in the drastically different context of the reality surrounding us. However, we can undoubtedly point to many separate threads in the formation's achievements, which remain current and gain a new dimension through this specific update when analyzed by people in the 20+ age group.

Work is taking place in a process - we work collectively, also tackling group activity, which is slowly gaining popularity in fine arts. It should be noted that this group met in the same year of study, and they were not a collective established by defining their common priorities. Analyzing the heritage of Totart, we point to the threads closest to our perspective; we look for those sensitive points where the message of action remains above changing times. The project's starting point was the idea of a banner. From the first October classes, students started trying to reread this idea, taking into account the performative factor of the planned action. An object was created in a horizontal arrangement on which kilograms of seeds were poured. The key to plant selection is the space for individual choice - so there were the seeds of plants that are incredibly visually attractive and those that feed us. There are also those that exceptionally support the ecosystem, such as highly honey-producing compositions dedicated to bees. The material used is jute (hemp textile), a biodegradable fabric. This ecological aspect - which is sometimes referred to as an area signaled by Totart - has a unique role in our work. After over six weeks of working together, the group takes the object to a new museum institution on the map of Gdańsk, NOMUS. The march route begins at the Mała Zbrojownia, the seat of the Faculty of Sculpture and Intermedia of the Academy of Fine Arts. Some events on the way are difficult to predict - one of the participants is injured along the way, so we call an ambulance. Fortunately, the injury turns out to be relatively minor. Everyone, including the injured person herself, decides not to abandon the action and move on. During the walk, the textile acts as a sieve - this is made possible by the way of weaving the chosen fabric. Only some of the seeds will be carried to the final destination and buried. Perhaps something will grow out of them. However, some will be sifted out along the way, and some will sown somewhere or serve as food for birds.

In this simple gesture, students notice the conventional nature of their situation - studies are not a guarantee, and the very definition of success in the modern world is subject to dynamic changes. The group carries the object with white gloves. The students treat this characterization as emphasizing the institutional background of their activity. In just half a year, they will officially defend their master's diplomas. They represent the Academy of Fine Art and their march ends in the NOMUS National Museum's Department for Contemporary Art. But it is also a signal towards pompous artistic gestures supporting the cult of the master artist, which have long been devalued. We bury the object together without using tools, white gloves get soaked in mud, and at the end, we shake hands (still wearing gloves) with the recipients of the action.

What is the point of analysis, search, preparation, and construction if, in the end, nothing remains? Against the universal expectation of lasting effects, we point to the validity of the value of the performative dimension of work, the ephemeral, poetic gesture derived from the process - as what is still valuable, perhaps the most valuable.

Authors of the action:

Agata Augustynowicz/ Marta Długolecka/ Zofia Grunt/ Zuzanna Malinowska/ Anna Przytocka/ Grzegorz Sosiński/ Anita Święciak/ Ewa Tomaszewska/ Mikołaj Walentynowicz/ Karina Zawadzka

The project was carried out under the supervision of Martyna Jastrzębska, Ph.D. as part of the Shaping the Environment classes

2021/22

Graphic design – Patrycja Orzechowska, Photographic documentation – Anna Rezulak

Video documentation – Piotr Tomaszewicz

Full operation documentation: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qjfgDZR2atw&t=671s>

MARTYNA MILLER

The *Sexinsitu* project seeks a new visibility of sexuality. By focusing on experience rather than fantasy, it restores its social dimension. By recording individual solo recreations of the sexual memories of those participating in the project, a unique archive of sexual experience is created. It takes the form of a macro-organism. Facing the matter of their own bodies and the virtuality of their memories, the beings form an organic machine, whose individual parts cooperate for the common good.

It is a story of intimacy, cosmic possibilities of organisms, circulation, movement and - on the top of it - motion picture and its responsibility for our imagination.

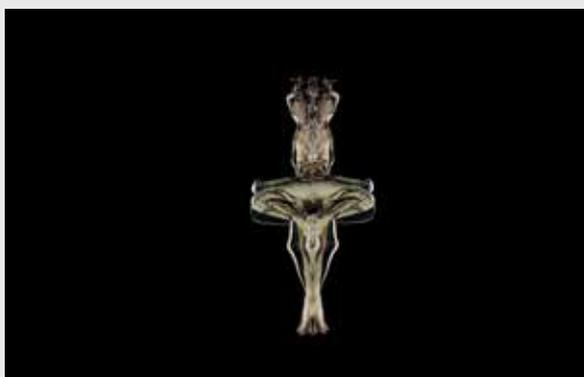


<https://vimeo.com/727534622/dbd58f197e>

The project is developing and macroorganism is growing together with the new participants. It has a modular form, in which each person is unique, transforming within itself realm, that develops with time:

<https://vimeo.com/762152028/3fb7532f1f>

A body situated alone in space, without a partner, recalling the shared moments - it provokes questions about responsibility and pleasure, as well as about the role and function of the body, mind and memory in the process of experiencing pleasure, loving and/or forming relationships. *sexinsitu* problematises human sexuality in the philosophical dimension by treating sex as a personal but not private matter. Its aim is to restore the social dimension of sexuality, in which the term “social” describes all transformative planetary matter.





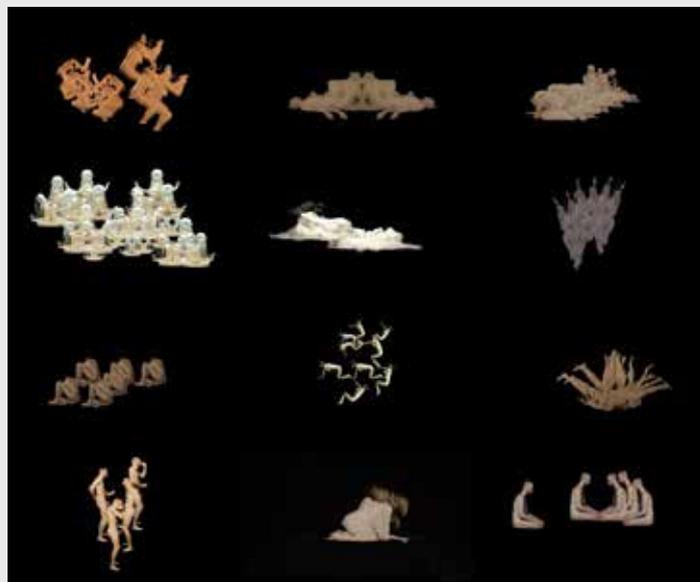
The *Sexinsitu* project takes the form of an archive, specific as it collects data and materials that it produces itself, according to an elaborated method. The basic units are video recordings. They are based on the method of work with the body, in which the participants, through body movements, recall their own sexual memories. They do this alone – without partners. The choreographies created in this way become a prosthesis of this memory, an attempt to materialize intimate and ephemeral sexual events in the image.

This is therefore not an archive in the classical sense of the word, but rather a visual archive project that produces its own technology as a basis for creating a visuality of sexuality based on experience. Its task is to change not only the perspective of looking at sexuality, but to enable insight into this space for ourselves, to tame and express it.



The virtual dimension of memory combines the tradition of performance with the subject matter of new media. The increasing participation of media in the production of our contemporary identities adds another element to this relationship – empathy through embodiment. The dual logic of remediation states that the primary goal of our culture is to become as technologically mediated as possible while removing all traces of our functioning through media. The importance of technology in the construction of our self is realized and fulfilled without our awareness of these processes. This

recognition seems to be crucial in thinking about the body, its experiences and affects, including sexuality. As our primary medium, it has become the encyclopedic product of this double logic – the difference between the medialized image of the body and its experience in non-virtual life is as obvious to us as it is inescapable.



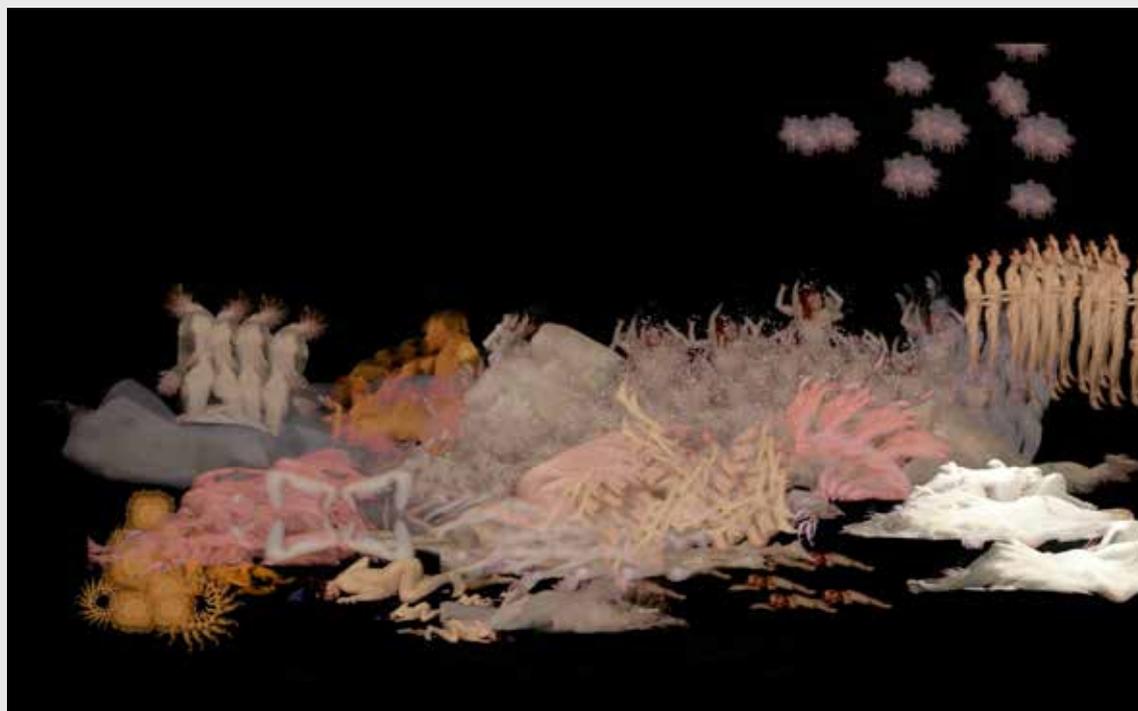
In the image, we see only a piece of what opens up psychologically, socially, and interpersonally. We produce an image, this single, unique reproduction of a sexual memory which, in contrast to the simplicity with which we are used to associating the „sexual”, is illegible, unacceptable as a fetish. Too abstract on the one hand and too raw on the other. Naked and veiled, explicit and understated. Censored virtually and „innocent” in the situation of direct contact. It is a separate form of recording, something between a note, a sketch and a finished, monumental work. Reconstruction creates and opens up an entire universe, yet its documentation merely records this fact, marking the difference between image and life.

In this dimension, the single act of reconstruction is also a manifesto. A reflection on corporeality, a corporeal trace, noting that I notice the body and sexuality as an element that connects me to the social world. I am on the side of action, search, weakness, experiment, the unknown, the You-oriented world.



By presenting a fragment of my own sexual self, I fight for the possibility of a subjective presentation of sexuality, and thus for the empowerment and emancipation of all of us as sexual, sentient beings.

Martyna Miller, fragment of the DA dissertation, „Sexinsitu. Presentation of sex in everyday life”



Martyna Miller's art is an area of cultivation of creative relations with the world, the meaning of friendship, community, the presence of female narrative, but also an area of struggle for one's own identity, sexuality, widely understood freedom and independence. The artist is aware of the constantly developing new technologies that change the area of art, but she is also deeply convinced that „the strength, durability, beauty and significance of images come from their function and role in the life of the community”.

The theoretical work, and partially the video fragments realizations, have given me a great pleasure to experience wonderful, deeply emotional, intimate, nevertheless universal art, excellently guided by erudite theoretical work, and as free and independent as the author of this project.

prof. Izabella Gustowska

QUEEN OF BEES

Exhibition of women students and graduates of the Photography and Post-Art Activities Studio, Faculty of Media Art, Academy of Art in Szczecin.

LOCATION: Centre of Contemporary Art KRONIKA, Bytom, Poland

DATES March 30 - May 2, 2019

ARTISTS: Olga Dziubak, Małgorzata Goliszewska, Hanna Kaszewska, Karolina Melnicka, Patrycja Migiel, Jolanta Nowaczyk, Tatiana Pancewicz, Irmina Rusicka, Emilia Turek, Dorota Wójcik, Agata Zbylut

CURATORS: Agata Zbylut, cooperation Agata Cukierska

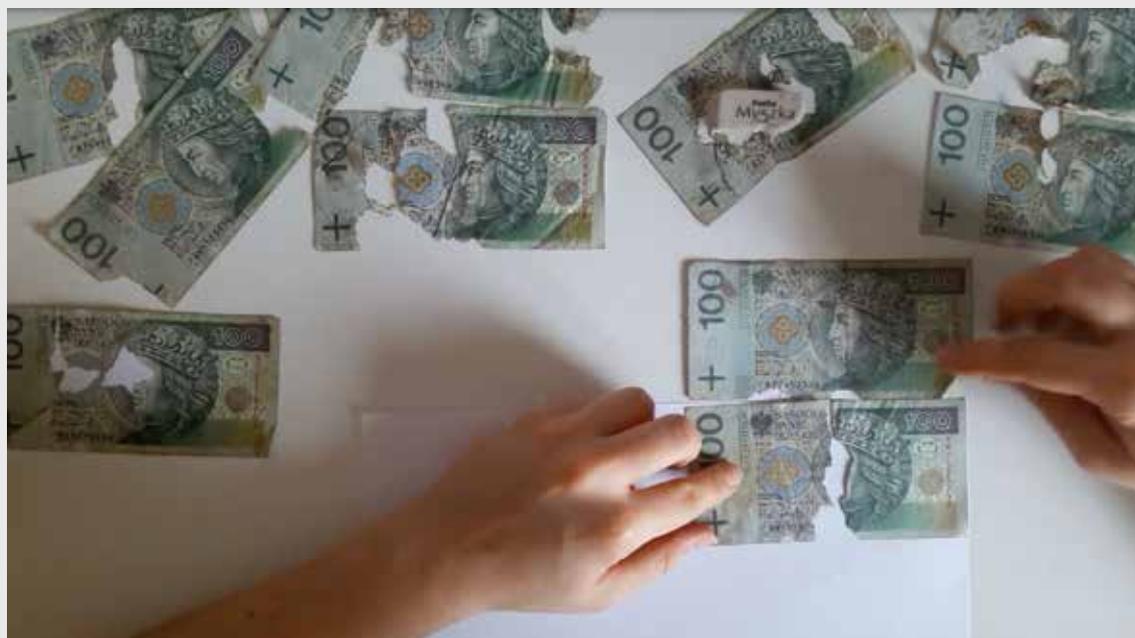
VISUAL IDENTIFICATION: Marcin Wysocki



The *QUEEN OF THE BEES* exhibition was intended to extend the dialogue conducted by the Photography and Post-Artistic Activities Studio. Many of these conversations, especially in the last stages of education, concern what will happen after graduation, about strategies that could be effective in the so-called art world. I remember the fear that accompanied me perfectly when I graduated from the Academy. This moment is especially difficult for young women. Even though over 70% of art academies' "graduates" are women. Rankings, sales of works, representation by commercial galleries, and participation in group exhibitions reverse these proportions, and even parity would be unfair.

The exhibition confronted the young women artists with the market, the professional situation, and the social roles they entered after completing

their studies. It included winners of prestigious competitions, foreign scholarships, and women who devoted all their attention to family matters, putting artistic activity into the background. I expected these conversations to be difficult, but the scale of these difficulties was surprising even for me. Especially concerning the artists who are "making a career." They "burn out" very quickly. They are exhausted from constantly maintaining their visibility in the art world. They travel from one exhibition to another, live from project to project, and are still on the road. We know well that participation in exhibitions can be very poorly paid for different reasons - sometimes because of the organizer's small budget and sometimes because the artist is the weakest link who agrees to work without remuneration.

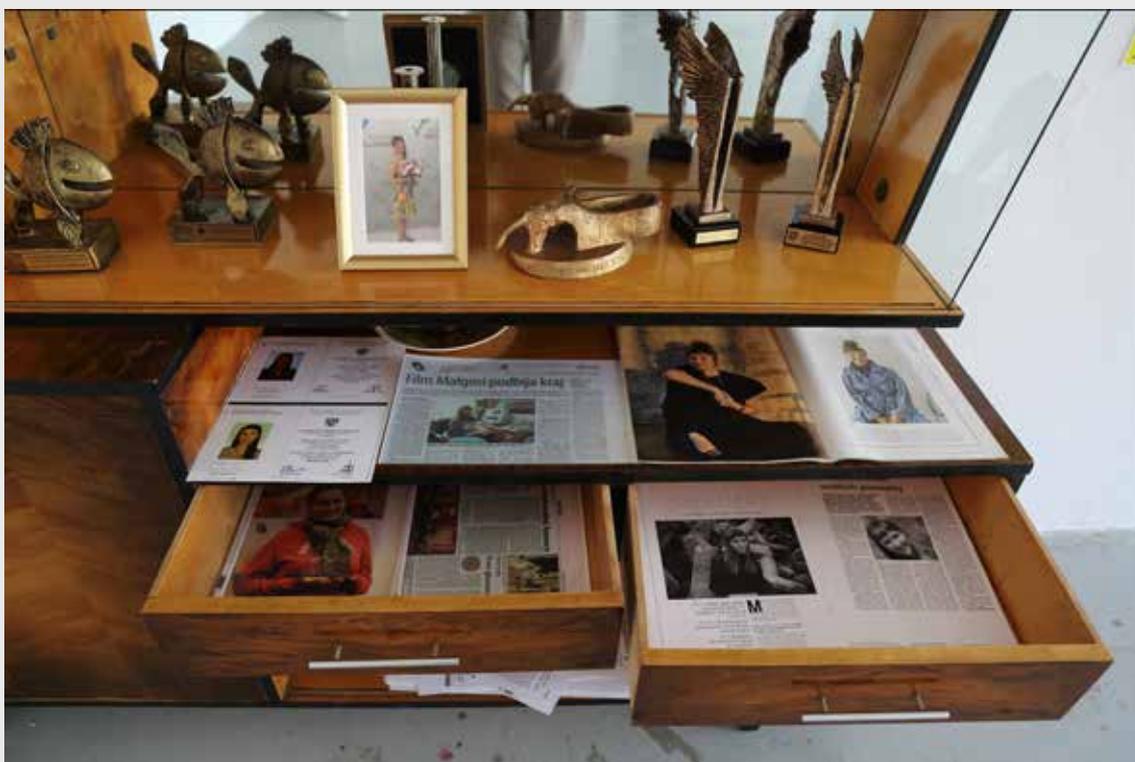


Olga Dziubak

1500 PLN, 2017

video 3'50", one hundred zloty banknote prepared for exchange in the bank for a new one, by gluing a white piece of paper in the place eaten by mice

The work is a record of repair to money hidden by the artist's grandfather in the attic and found after his death. The banknotes bitten by mice were found when Olga had finished her art studies and was looking for a job. According to the National Bank of Poland guidelines, damaged money can be replaced with a new banknote if less than 75% of its surface is damaged. In the video, banknotes are delivered for exchange following the advice of a bank employee. The artist fills the gaps with white paper, strengthening the visual void.



Małgorzata Goliszewska

***Mom's Room*, 2019, diplomas, statuettes, and other insignia of awards and distinctions that the artist has received since starting her studies at the Academy of Art, which are carefully collected by her mother, who is also the author of the arrangement of this work**

For as long as I can remember, I dreamed of becoming an artist. The art world seemed to me something unique, an unreal fairy-tale land. Throughout primary school, I drew and dreamed of an art school. It was like the gate to paradise. I didn't go to the exam because my mother did everything to discourage me from doing so. She was terrified of what might happen if I fell into the wrong (artistic) environment and that there would be no future for me. I gave up these dreams and went to a psychology high school. It was then 2003. Today, my mother is very proud of me. He collects all the materials about me and decorates his room with them.

The work at the exhibition is an attempt to move fragments of my mother's apartment and recreate her dreams and fantasies, displaying treasures and trophies related to me. It is a kind of altar and tribute that the most loyal fan pays to her favorite star. Most of the artifacts were donated with great anxiety, but for a good cause, to let people see them, maybe someone will appreciate it and notice it. It would be a pity if such a rich exhibition had only one viewer.



Hanna Kaszewska

Escitalopram Dreams Radio, 2018/2019

Internet radio at: Escitalopram-dreams.eu

Muzyka Mikołaj Tkacz

Sen 23: VIOLATION, 2018/2019

Performance art piece during the opening

Escitalopram is an organic chemical compound and, for the time being, the most selective serotonin inhibitor. The medications, including Escitalopram, are considered highly effective for depressive episodes in bipolar disorder. (...) The only side effect is vivid dreams. Although sometimes annoying, such dreams do not seem to be a high price for the possibility of functioning. However, they remain an integral part of my life that is essentially uncontrollable.

The dreams being a side effect of medical treatment, I turned into podcasts. By narrating them as if they were someone else's dreams, I can distance myself from the story being told while also capturing it.



Karolina Melnicka

***I'm Silent*, 2019**

print on a Japanese unfolding book (empty inside), 23x150 cm

During Karolina's artistic residency in Tokyo and Kyoto in 2018, the artist came across a self-service love hotel with a several hundred-page catalog in which women exposed their bodies and covered their faces with their hands. This motif was to be used by Karolina to create an animation, with the artist using her hands. Accustomed to a relative artistic activity, she did not expect that the topic would be censored by the institution that invited her and would not be implemented.

I'm Silent is an attempt to disenchant this situation. What was not published in Japan was shown in the Kronika gallery. No one will hear this voice in Tokyo or Kyoto, and also the fact that the rejection of the project causes the cancellation of the artist's fee. By trying to speak in the name of those who couldn't speak for themselves, Karolina has been effectively silenced and deprived of the financial resources she expected to receive during her residency.



Patrycja Migiel

***Portfolio*, 24'42, 2018/2019**

print on a Japanese unfolding book (empty inside), 23x150 cm

Patrycja Migiel established contacts with five people involved in curating and art criticism. She offered to perform tasks they did not have time or inclination to do, such as painting the floor or cleaning the office. She included these tasks in her existing artistic achievements as performative actions. While performing the tasks, the artist tried her best and completed them conscientiously, hoping for future reciprocation from the 'employers.' After each task, a video was created, which the artist posted on her website: www.patryciamigiel.pl.

The last video, made almost a year later, summarizes the artist's situation after graduation. The question arises - what was the use of the favors performed as part of her diploma? Did she manage to monetize the contacts she established then?



Jolanta Nowaczyk and Olga Dziubak

***In Rejection We Trust, 2018-2019* an installation consisting of a video advertising Open Call: Rejected Proposals and origami made of no longer useable competition entry forms sent by artists from around the world**

For young artists, applying for grants or exhibitions becomes part of everyday life - a placebo pill, an illusion of participation in the world of art. The "grant fever" does not bring many benefits and even leads to depression caused by competing between artists with very different symbolic capital.

In 2018, the fictional foundation 'In Rejection We Trust' launched an open call for artists to submit projects that competition juries had rejected. This project transformed the negative experience of rejection into a creative and critical energy source. Olga Dziubak and Jolanta Nowaczyk, graduates of the Faculty of Painting and New Media at the Academy of Art in Szczecin, invented the foundation. They used institutional criticism strategies in their work and recognized the potential of such collective activities.



Tatiana Pancewicz
Rainbow, 2016
3D printed object, LED light, prism

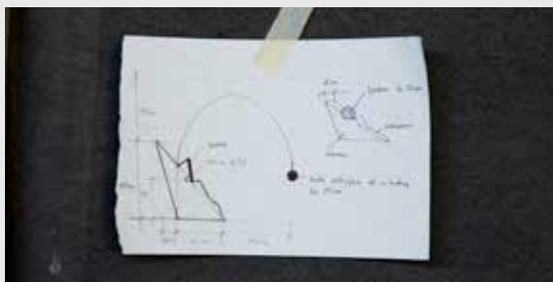
The rainbow was created as one of the elements of the artist's diploma. It is the result of the artist's cooperation with physicists and opticians. The object itself was 3D printed. The LED light used to obtain a physical rainbow is split on a prism and then diffracted on a semicircular mirror surface. A similar visual effect could be achieved more easily by projecting an image of a rainbow instead of physically breaking and bending light - but then the rainbow would not be a rainbow, but only an image of it. At the same time, this object becomes an emanation of the teaching processes conducted in the Studio in the context of concepts such as truth or the artist's position in society.



Irmina Rusicka
***What a Fucking Crisis*, 2018**
Lightbox 100 x 70 cm

For several decades, researchers have been talking about the think manager - think male phenomenon - the common belief that the one who manages must be a man. Even if a manager is a woman, she should behave 'like a man.' Ultimately, the abovementioned phenomenon transforms into a more radical thinking power – think male. To become effective, female politicians and activists put themselves in other people's shoes and speak in a 'male' voice to be heard by male ears.

In *What a Fucking Crisis*, the central tension is created between the aggressive title and the passivity of the artist in a male disguise. Living in an era of masculinity crisis, the power-male strategy turns out to be ineffective. The attribute of the white man's flexed muscles becomes a clear burden. In a broader perspective, the crisis of masculinity itself is, above all, a crisis of a world based on "masculine" values: domination, exploitation, expansion, and objectification.



Dorota Wójcik
***Host Team*, 2018**
Three sculptural objects, free-standing

The sculptures were created as part of my master's degree. The starting point was conversations about the influence of third parties on the final shape of an art object, especially where their participation is necessary, e.g., for technological reasons. The flow of financial resources was also an important issue. To be able to study, the artist worked as a hostess, which resulted in frequent absences and little time that she could devote to completing her diploma. One of the last jobs she undertook during her studies was at a nightclub in Zurich. This job involved drinking expensive champagne with men who paid for it. She used the money she earned to pay subcontractors - other men who made the sculptures. The artist also assumed that she would listen to the subcontractors' advice and accept the technical solutions they proposed based on the drawing presented to them. The form of the object to produce was so complex that the subcontractors would not doubt that the artist could not complete it on her own. Additionally, the object was designed with a flaw that made it unstable. Although each subcontractor received the same drawing as a model for the sculpture, each proposed different ways of making it and selected other materials. In this way, three various sculptures were created, the shape of which only serves as a pretext for examining how the subcontractors' knowledge, authority, and personal experience can influence the final shape of the artwork. The sculptures were named after subcontractors, about which the quests were informed during the exhibition's opening by a hostess employed and trained by the artist.



Agata Zbylut

***Damp Patch*, 2019**

A fresco painted by Olga Dziubak on one of the walls of the gallery, a video in which Karolina Babińska tells the story of the painter.

The project was inspired by a story I heard from Karolina Babińska when she was my student, which I have not forgotten for years. It is the story of a painter who, during the most challenging period of her life, painted a fresco on the walls of her studio in the form of stains or fungus. The painting was so realistic and convincing that the artist successfully reported it to the insurance company several times, which paid her compensation. At the time, these were the only paintings she made money from. Today, the painter works as an academic at one of the state art universities. I invited her to participate in the work in Kronika, and although she initially agreed, she withdrew a week later. Instead, I asked Olga Dziubak - another young artist with financial problems - to help me with the project. Olga faked water damage on one of the gallery's walls and received remuneration for her work, which was equal to the estimated compensation for such damage.

SEKCJA 2 / **SECTION 2**

THEORIA CUM PRAXI OF PERFORMANCE ART 2022

FNAF 8
EXPORT GDAŃSK

***NUDITY AS A POLITICAL
GESTURE***

Performance
Art Festival & Conference

Edited by Łukasz Guzek

Lenka KLODOVÁ

INTRODUCTION by FNAF 8 Curator

The eighth year of the Festival of Naked Forms takes place in the situation of the attack on the independent state of Ukraine by Russian troops. In the light of this conflict threatening the stability of the whole world, we want to highlight the arsenal that nudity hides in itself.

Copious evidence from folkloric tradition, especially in Slavic areas, but also historically dating back to antiquity to the times of Pliny the Elder, attest to the belief that a strong apotropaic power emanates from the naked body. An exposed bare bottom or nudity can ward off a natural disaster or bad weather, and like Medusa's head can petrify an enemy with its appearance. The fluid group Femen, which was founded in Ukraine and which enriched the Czech public space in a unique way when it surprised President Zeman during the 2018 elections, expresses this with the slogan: "hot breasts, cool heads and clean hands" (see: <https://femen.org/about-us/>).

Our performances certainly do not replace the weapons that would help with the defence of the attacked country, but they can clearly be a means. They can be a means of expressing our utter nakedness in the face of incomprehensible injustice, or a vehicle for calling ancient magical means to action. "The body seems to be

simultaneously anchored in the divine and natural order of things. This religiosity inherently includes significant expressions of physicality, in which we can observe that the intensity of physical exhibition corresponds to the importance and value of the goal to be achieved." (Alexandra Navrátilová, „Nahota v obřadní tradici české kultury,“ in: Iva Doležalová, Eleónora Hamar, Luboš Bělka eds., *Náboženství a tělo*, Brno – Praha 2006, 60). The value of the goal in this case is very high, the intensity and quality of the performances of the 8th year of FNAF will certainly correspond to this.

Łukasz GUZEK

INTRODUCTION by FNAF 8 Export Gdańsk
Curator

NUDITY AS POLITICAL GROUND-BREAKING

Can you imagine a naked dictator? Nudity deprives of power. And it is a soft power itself. In 2000, Artur Żmijewski made a short (7') film showing the *Polish Army representation company*, which drills naked, marches with rifles on its shoulder in a four-line formation, makes turns, as if on a parade. Central Europe emerged from a militarist ideology that demystified the totalitarian system. The army was here a source of oppression and, maintaining political regimes. It was necessary to look at it critically. In this film, nudity proves its subversive power.

Since then, in the socio-political space of Poland, there has been a struggle for freedom for minorities who are denied a place in society by the ruling nationalist-Catholic political authorities. Putin's Russia's aggression against Ukraine created an additional context and gave reason to criticize the authorities reliance on violence. Art does not use violence. Instead, it creates a field for criticism, provides resources and space for dialogue. Nudity is a means of art, that, thanks to its radicalism, serves well to make things clear. Nudity vs. violence. In every form.

The collection of texts presented here comes from the conference accompanying the Festival of Naked Forms, which was established in Prague, Czech Republic, by Lenka Klodová in 2018. Since 2021, the

festival has its editions at the Academy of Fine Arts in Gdańsk, as the FNAF Export. The model of the festival, combining presentations of performance art works and theoretical reflection, results from the assumptions of artistic and research methodologies. According to them, practice supports theory and vice versa, theory is the basis for practice. What cannot be shown in art forms can be articulated in a discursive text, what cannot be written can be expressed through art. Art and theory complement each other. In the name of creating a single space of freedom for artistic creation and academic research.

In the set of articles presented below, there are topics related to performance art workshop practice and research on history of this artistic discipline (Vladimir HAVLIK, "Framing the Performance and Its Documentation;" Joanna M. CZAJKOWSKA, "Nudity in Pomeranian Dance and Performance"), and those that analyze its use in the practice of socio-political discourse, described on the case studies (Ewa MAJEWSKA, "Nudity as a Feminist Gesture. In Defence of a Supposedly Lost Case;" Katarzyna PASTUSZAK, "Naked Care: Explorations of Naked Performance and Queer Political gestures"). The article by Darina ALSTER, "The Naked Body as a Symbol," opens this set as a perfect combination of art and research, in the individual art practice.

Theoria cum Praxi of Performance Art 2022

FNAF 8 Nudity as a Political Gesture

participants
 DARINA ALSTER, JOANNA CZAJKOWSKA, DARIUSZ FODCZUK,
 VLADIMIR HAULIK, LENKA KLDOVÁ, EWA MAJEWSKA,
 TAMARA MUZYK, KACA OLIVOVÁ, KATARZYNA PASTUSZAK &
 NATALIA CHYLIŃSKA, TOMAŠ ROLLER, MACIEJ SMIETAŃSKI,
 SADIE VELL, MARTIN ZET documentation: Marek Zygmunt

October 4-6, 2022

from 12:00 p.m. Patio Gallery
 Academy of Fine Arts in Gdańsk
 Targ Węglowy 6, 80-836 Gdańsk

PERFORMANCE
 ART
 FESTIVAL &
 CONFERENCE

curator FNAF: Lenka Klodová
 curator FNAF-Expo: Gdańsk: Łukasz Guzek



Darina ALSTER

Academy of Fine Arts in Prague

THE NAKED BODY AS A SYMBOL

Thrust in your inner beast!

Wildness of unapologetic nakedness beyond frames labels moralities...

In 2019, French anthropologist Nastassja Martin published a book with the title *Croire aux fauves (Thrust in the beast)*.¹ In her anthropological studies she wrote about her liminal experience when she was attacked by wild bear in Alaska. And she survived... After he took away part of her jaw and she struck him in the groin with an axe. She was attacked, she was fighting and she survived, but her integrity was corrupted. Physically the woman acquired the psyche of an animal. The anthropological posthumanism of Martin has a symbolic value for us, who are dealing with our inner beasts rebelling against the stereotypes of our daily lives. Martin wrote about the liminal experience thus (quoting freely from her words):

When two beasts met, their territory collapses. Their fight is similar to lovemaking, their bodies are melting together... they are dreaming similar dreams.

Why are we returning to the animism at the edge of the Anthropocene?

Because we would love to accept our wild part, psychologically called Daimon. In the process of transformation of society we have to face our wilderness and gently transform our deep hurting emotions into a wisdom. We will not change the system by the same tools that it itself uses. This is well expressed by the classic words of Audre Lorde: „The master’s tools will never dismantle the master’s house.”² Our system has not counted with our emotions and dreams, because most of our power is sub-conscious... But the inner beasts speaks... And she holds the tools which we need in her claws.

Anima as an archetype. Dark naked woman. Half human half animal is surviving in contemporary society stereotypes as the opposite of good girl. The good girl should be perfect and it is not easy to survive the requirements of the perfection and at the same time stay authentic. We should make ourselves kin with the Anima, our inner wild beast. We should enter the door of unconscious and embrace the liminal space inside. Nudity in performance is the way how to express the inner beast. Because we need her! Sure, she is wild, but under the level of our fears, she is wise. Treasures are hidden deep in the mud. The dreams which we have are ours and hers at the same time. The naked body in performance is a form of display of all those dreams. Nudity in performance is a transformative technique as well as being an emancipatory practice.

The feminist artist Barbara Kruger asserts: „My body is a battleground!“ It is the battleground of society and its stereotypes with hidden power games and inequalities.

The naked body in performance is always political.

It is impossible to be impersonal with nudity.

The naked body in the performance is always telling some story.

I am sharing my stories through my art in shared presence, in liminal time, in timelessness which generates the performance situation.³

Now I will take you to the tour around my personal tales.

Aramaic prayer is the original prayer of Christ in its original non-binary form, when translated directly from the Aramaic. I needed to understand this prayer deeper than my brain can do so I asked my close friends to cover my body with this prayer in original Aramaic form as well as in English, Czech and Ukrainian translation. They were using feathers dipped in red ink. It was embodiment of prayers going through my skin. When the work was completed, I was dancing naked covered just in prayers and with a Non-binary Madonna Flag.

The Non-Binary Madonna came to me in a vision and told me: I am relationship. I am a symbol of rediscovered relationships between people, nature and culture! We restore to Madonna her wild animistic potential. The Mother of Mercy does not hold a machine gun or a victory flag but the seed of wild herbs, her body is woven from Amazonian lianas. She is not trying to protect the old structures of power but life itself.

The Madonna is not only a feminist goddess, but above all a relational one. Today, the Mother of Mercy is rebuilding relationships between people and communities and helping to create a society that is not based on abusive power structures.

The Mother of Mercy will never cease to protect every child on Earth!

Nudity as a form of emancipation is shown in the project *Desire is all that exists!* This sentence I heard from the sea in Venice, when was visiting the Biennale in 2019. That time I just realized that *Desire* is over-personal, it is the power of lust flowing

everywhere spreading energy, the driving force of life. And I just express how to break out of the normative demands which contemporary society puts on woman goodgirlness, goodmotherness, goodwifeness. Those demands are unrealistic, and often contradictory. And what stays after all the layers are gone, was my pure naked body swinging on a swing, laughing wildly like a goddess or child.

My version of the sculpture of *Penseur* by Rodin is showing that we should unlearn, unschool, all the frames of rationality to explore what presence means. My performative remake is called *Depense*. I was sitting on a family car in the position of the *Penseur* and was covered by black mud.

We all should dream because, especially in performance art, our fantasy is a regular tool more realistic than the consensual „rational“ reality that we are trying to transform.

We all desire of society its transformation, but we need to reach our inner power, which is not counted in our daily carousel of civilization. We should become kin with our dirty wild anima made from mud, because as I wrote before, she owns the wisdom.

We all have to stare into a Medusas face.

Because She is fucking beautiful! She is showing us the mirror and she is laughing! Her libido will produce far more political and social change than many others like to think.⁴

Performances have transformative power, which can materialize dreams and they come true. You never know what will happen in the next moment.

Performance as poetry speaks the same language of the unknown. It speaks directly from, and to, the unshaped aspects of our soul, which are reflecting the collective shared trauma from the history of society.

In togetherness, as a living web of care we can heal together our collective human and nonhuman hurt body. Through togetherness we can visit inner lands and be consciously part of the process of transformation. The whole process is silent and slow. We are all one body.

The cell of the heart loves the cell of the lungs.



Death as a friend (in collaboration with Jane Scalabroni, Maria Schormová, photos by Karolína Raimund). FNAF 8, Prague, 2022



Hot wives go to heaven! (in collaboration with Petr Váně, photos by Jolana Havelková). FNAF 8, Prague, 2021



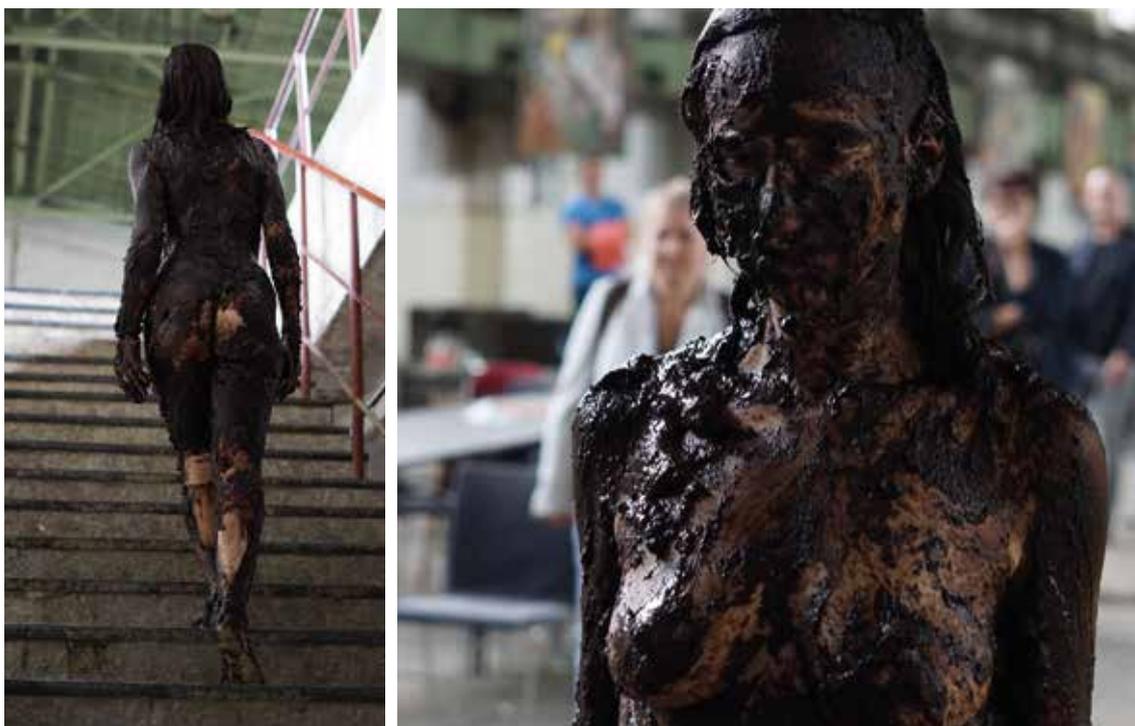
Aramaic Prayer (in collaboration with David Josef Merta, Matěj Pšenička, Polina Revunenکو, Sonya The Moon, Daria Kolodina, photos by Jevhenij Lar, Karolina Raimund). FNAF 6, Prague, 2020



Desire is what exist! (photos by Robert Carrithers). FNAF 5, Prague, 2019



Soil Woman (in collaboration with Tereza Trnková, video Demian Kovalov aka Xerox), 2020



Depense, (in collaboration with Lukáš Mejzr, photos by István Kovacs). FNAF 3, Prague, 2017



Vision Babalon, FNAF 1, Prague, 2015



Fairytale, 2012. Photo by Tereza Z Davle



Multihanded woman, 2009. Photo by Václav Beitler



Piel (in collaboration with Petr Skala, photo by Martin Kámen), 2005

Notes

¹ Nastassja Martin, *Věřit v šelmy*, translated by Jana Bednářová (Prague: Neklid, 2022).

² Audre Lorde, *Sister Outsider: eseje a projevy*, translated by Markéta Musilová (Prague: Tranzit.cz, 2021).

³ Darina Alster, *Kolektivní tělo* (Brno: Vysoké učení technické v Brně, Fakulta výtvarných umění, 2021).

⁴ Helene Cixous, The Laugh of the Medusa, " *Signs* 1.4 (Summer, 1976): 875-893. Translated by Keith Cohen and Paula Cohen. University of Chicago Press.

Bibliography

Alster, Darina. *Kolektivní tělo*. Brno: Vysoké učení technické v Brně, Fakulta výtvarných umění, 2021.

Cixous, Helene. The Laugh of the Medusa. " *Signs* 1.4 (Summer, 1976): 875-893.

Lorde, Audre. *Sister Outsider: eseje a projevy*. Translated by Markéta Musilová. Prague: Tranzit.cz, 2021.

Martin, Nastassja. *Věřit v šelmy*. Translated by Jana Bednářová. Prague: Neklid, 2022.

Vladimír HAVLÍK

Palacký University Olomouc, Department of Art Education

FRAMING THE PERFORMANCE AND ITS DOCUMENTATION

This paper is based on an attempt to generalize, or rather to put my experience of performance and its documentation into a broader context. For this reason, I will illustrate it with my own work and inevitably commit a subjectivisation that is rather unacceptable for academic research. May I be forgiven for this in this friendly circle.

When we talk about performance, we naturally touch on the psychophysical experience of the relationship to place and time. The performer appropriates the selected space, fills it with his energy, movement and gestures. In the words of Maurice Merleau-Ponty the performer "roots in the space."¹ I remember the contradictory experience of the *Attempt to Sleep* event (Fig. 1). In the middle of the meadow I made a bed (a pillow and blanket of grass sod) in which I intended to sleep. While the body was trapped under the weight of the earth, the mind expanded in all directions. I was both inside the action and its outside observer. Jan Patočka says: "In order to see relationships, we must first create a kind of scene on which they can appear, a scene of the relationships of things to our own

experience."² By installing my body in a defined space, in other words by 'framing' the experienced situation, I created a temporary place worthy of attention. A work that addresses the viewer, better said, a work that seduces the viewer.

It is not important whether the viewers are physically present. They exist in the performer's mind at that moment and his or her performance relates to them. The medium of transmission between the performer and the absent (secondary) spectator is documentation. In this case, a photographic record. The images frame the action, images created primarily by the performer, but of course also by the photographer. The close-up shot of the face draws into the psychological state of the performer while the distance shot (Fig. 2) frames the spatial relations of the performance. The performer is concerned with making the photographs civil and convincing the viewer of the truth of the executed action. I always instructed the photographer in this way and hoped that he would respect my wishes. Occasionally, however, the photographs' photo-ness came out in full force.

Three years before *The Attempt to Sleep*, I made *The Sleep* (Fig. 3) action and its documentation is unbearably aesthetic. But I am also to blame for this, because I stayed on too symbolic a level. So the content and formal framework of the performance itself remains fundamental. However, its documentation also has its regularities. The composition, the angle of view, the focus, the distance, the sequence, the number of frames all play an important role. But the most important one is the final choice of the performer. He/she is the one who releases the representation of his/her performance into the world. The second author's act comes after the execution of performance. But what we see in the photograph is only a snapshot, a fragment of the action. Everything else we have to imagine. The photograph is an impulse to our idea of the course of the performance itself. Even though sometimes the author helps us by selecting more photographs that indicate the temporal course of the performance in individual sequences, there are pauses, gaps, empty spaces between the photographs that we have to fill with our imagination. The linear time of the performance thus turns into a non-linear composition of ideas about its course. Sequentiality both dynamizes and relativizes time. Photography gives us clues to investigate how it was in the past.

We are all familiar with birthday photos of children with cake. Two candles, three candles, four candles, the scene identical, clear traces of the passage of time and its irreversibility (Fig. 4). But where is the mystery of the photography itself, that well-known atmosphere of the manipulation of the child by the parents to keep still and, above all, to smile, just to 'perform' properly for the camera. Unfortunately, we cannot see what was going on outside the frame at that moment. Although at one of my early events, my sister accidentally managed to catch what was going on behind the frame (Fig. 5). I am performing and my mother is watching from the window (Fig. 6), amused, but afterwards she has no choice but to exercise her parental authority and advise me not to fool

around and go and study instead. While it took a few seconds between shots for the Samurai event, it's always a whole year for the *Birthday Pieces* cycle (Fig. 7). So time passes differently, but the location (and therefore the framing) is always the same. A different kind of sequence is represented by a pair of 'before' and 'after' photographs. I was interested in making natural processes visible and experiencing them literally on my own skin. During the *Print in the Rain* event (Fig. 8), I lay down on the sun-warmed pavement before the summer rain and waited until the surroundings of my body were wet. The photo is taken from a bird's eye view, so unfortunately it looks like I'm climbing somewhere rather than lying on the ground. The angle of view caused inaccurate reading of the documentation and set unclear interpretative frameworks. This error can also occur in post-production processing of photos. The graphic designer considered the flying LP record as a smudge and retouched it. I didn't notice it during proofreading and so I have a photo of *Playing J. S. Bach for the Wind* (Fig. 9) without the LP in my monograph. Sometimes it is difficult to choose the number of photographs to represent a performance. For the *Controlled Fall* (Fig. 10) event, I always exhibited only two sequences of the fall from the snow-covered rock. However, I subconsciously feel that the third one, capturing the expression on my face just after the fall, is also important.

In sequential photography of natural processes we also determine the images, but chance comes into play to a greater extent. The sound of a match striking, the pain, the smell of burning hair, all of these are absent from the photographs, but we can imagine it through the photographs (Fig. 11). The loss of control over the shot was even more evident when the participant of the happening *The Orchard* took pictures with his eyes covered (Fig. 12). What to do with the documentation of the *Great Frottage*, which was accidentally shot twice on the same film and the double exposure created an unreal space (Fig. 13)? Is it valid as a testimony of the action that took place?

Sometimes the action has a natural frame, as in the case of *White Christmas*, where it was the gallery window. The image worked reversibly, with the audience watching the performers and the performers watching the audience, who thus also became performers (Fig. 14).

I would also like to mention a situation where something important is happening off-screen. I was detained and investigated by the police during the *Exchange* event (Fig. 15). That didn't show up in the original documentation at all. Subsequently, I wrote up this and other stories accompanying my performances and published them in a book called *Yesterday* (Fig. 16). I found that without the text it was impossible to convey additional layers of meaning. So I began to combine text with photography, although I had avoided text in my earlier work. How else to convey, for example, the anarchistic act of a Chinese participant in my performance in Beijing who, instead of throwing a paintbrush dipped in paint at me like the others, painted his chest, ran and jumped on my back (Fig. 17).

In the last 20 years I have returned to the original documentation and reinterpreted it in collaboration with artists of the younger generation (Barbora Klímová and later Petra Feriancová). For example, I printed and exhibited all the frames of scanned negatives (Fig. 18). Or I had a new edition of the documentation enlarged and framed and exhibited it in a kind of information cloud (Fig. 19). I realized that with all the manipulation of contexts and reframing of documentation, it was still impossible to avoid a linear return to the past (Fig. 20). In this sense only the internet and its Google 'shaker' is a perfectly non-linear master of temporal cocktails (Fig. 21).

In this context, I would like to mention Henri Bergson's notion of 'duration' and his theory of the changing (non-linear) relationship between the past and the present, where memory materializes into an image, opening up a new idea, reviving a past action and transforming its content into the present.³ The complexity of the existential and at the same time conceptual act can also be

evidenced in Bergson's words: "The presence of perception places us at once in matter, and the presence of memory places us at once in spirit."⁴ This applies both to the actions themselves and to their documentation. What interests me about documentation is its impermanence and openness to the viewer. Petr Rezek comments on this: "The meaning of documentary is not the dead document, but precisely the happening of meaning, which is newly constituted by the transformations of understanding."⁵ Similarly, Boris Groys argues that it is only through documentation that our lives become meaningful.⁶ This is primarily related to art, which is temporal, unrepeatable, and can approach a secondary audience through documentation. Groys finds this mechanism in the creation of art installations based on documents, which thus acquire their place and context. Documentation is thus significantly transformed by the concept of new disclosure. The dynamics of the relationship between rational and intuitive approaches is important. In this context, Vilem Flusser's observation is accurate: "Conception is becoming more and more imaginative and imagination more and more conceptual."⁷

The existential, risk-taking, self-sacrificing commitment of performers in the seventies and eighties has been largely revised by conceptual distance. Analytical strategies relying on a post-conceptual approach prevail, where the performative act itself may be only one part of (post)production structure. As Adrian Heathfield, a prominent theorist of the performative arts, says: "Phenomenological aspects can no longer be seen in isolation from their linguistic and discursive constructions. Understanding performance is accomplished through the temporal paradox between specific experience in live performance and its equally specific revision in other instances of knowledge. Experience cannot be separated from thought."⁸

The relationship between action and documentation is becoming central in contemporary artistic practice and needs to be analyzed with the utmost criticality. While live

action attempts to dematerialize the artistic act through ephemeral, time-limited live action, performance documentation objectifies it and transforms it into a fixed artefact. There is a similar danger in the repetition (reenactment) of performances, which are generally shielded by institutional authority and easily commodified through maximized documentation. The institutionalization of performative activities significantly shortens the process between the live action and the report (documentation) of its progress. The ontological gap filled with a certain degree of indeterminacy and mystery disappears along with the elusive dimension of temporality (the passing of 'unmeasured' time). Performance retreats from process and becomes more of a 'sculptural or object artefact,' a methodically processed spatio-temporal structure made visible by photographic, filmic or verbal recording. In order to escape this trap of immobilization and transformation of performance into a product, it is necessary to unframe it again, to open it up, to accept ambiguity and mystery, to respect accidental twists and unexpected reactions. In my opinion, sharing situational precariousness and uncertainty is still one of the most important sources of freshness, renewal, recharging the energy field of the mind-body-space-time network structure.

Finally, let us return to the documentation and comparison of its photographic and video form. Photography is a poetic medium, offering a symbolic image that paradoxically refers more to the present interpretation than to the original performance (Figs 22, 23). Video is seemingly more factual, at least that's how we perceived it in the past. Nevertheless, it captures and frames reality selectively, incompletely and therefore semi-realistically. Both media (photography more, video less) create space for our imagination. So, in conclusion, I dare say that performance and its documentation are more poetry than reality.

- 1 *The Attempt to Sleep*, 1982
- 2 *The Attempt to Sleep*, 1982
- 3 *The Sleep*, 1978
- 4 *The Birthday photos*, 1961, 1962
- 5 *The Samurai*, 1978
- 6 *Mother watching a Samurai*





1



2



3



4



5

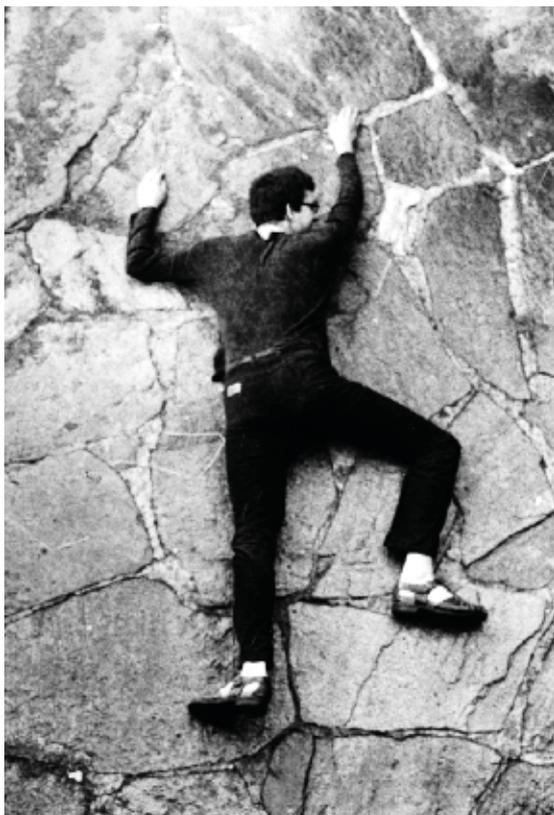


6



7

7 *The Birthday Pieces*, 2013–2022



8



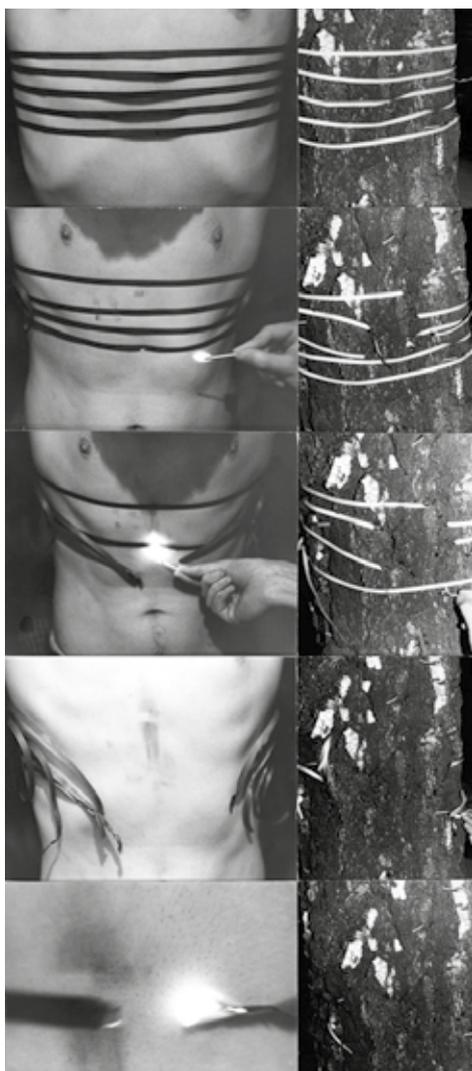
9

8 *The Print in the Rain*, 1980

9 *Playing J. S. Bach for the Wind*, 1980
Accidentally retouched LP record in
the monograph



10



12

11

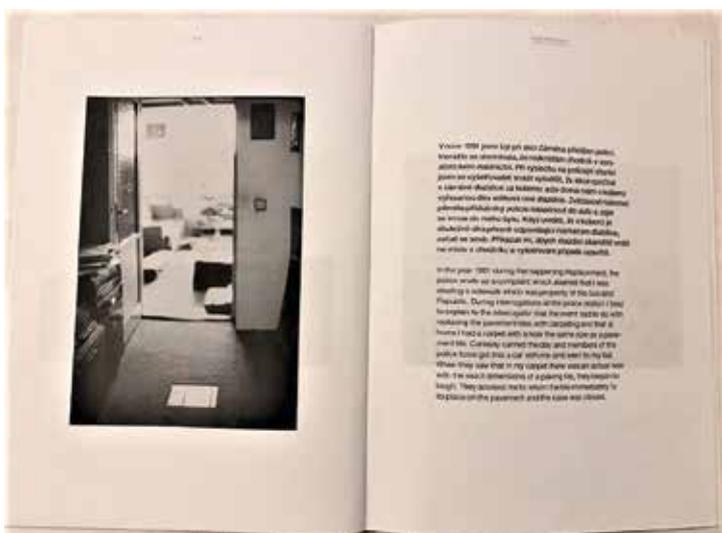
- 10 *The Controlled Fall*, 1980
- 11 *The Confrontation (Pain of the Tree and Pain of the Man)*, 1981
- 12 *The Orchard (Welcoming Spring)*, 1980
- 13 *The Great Frottage*, 1984
- 14 *The White Christmas*, 1990
- 15 *Exchange story in the book „Yesterday“*, 2009
- 16 *The Exchange*, 1980



13



14



15



16



17



18



19

17 *The Calligraphic Brush Throw at a Living Target*, Peking, 2013

18 *Documentary Relicts*, amt-project, Bratislava, 2016

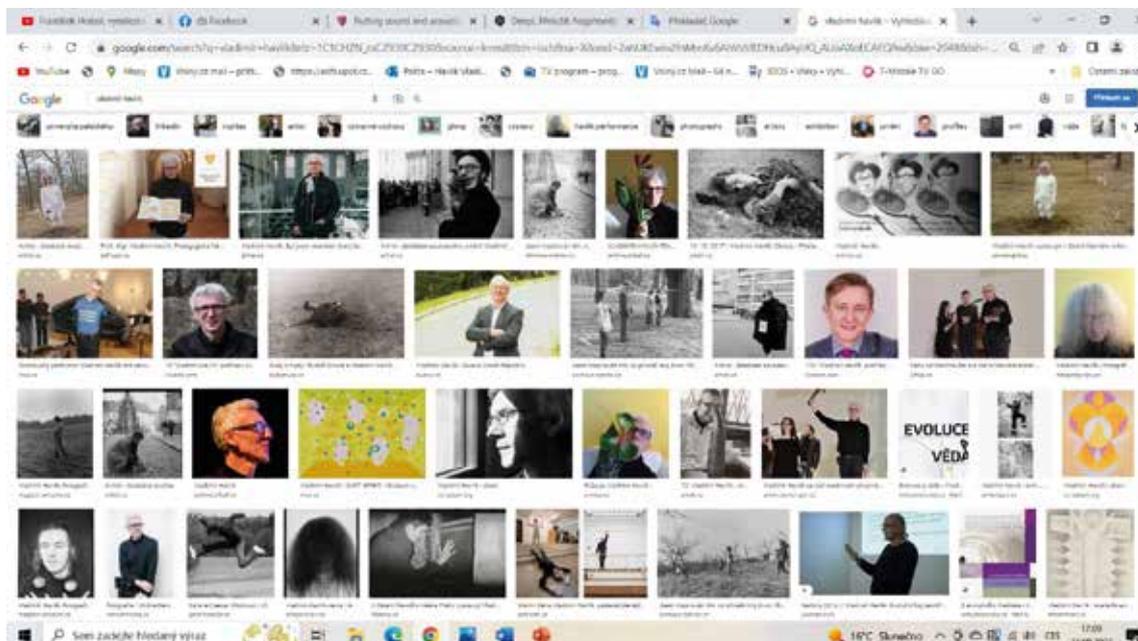
19 *Reframed Records*, Fondazione Zimmei, 2020

20 *Performer's Biography, 1959–2019* (Gallery Caesar, 2019)

21 *Google search for name Vladimír Havlík*



20



21



22



23

22 *The Geysir*, 2018, Festival of Naked Forms

23 *The rEVOLUTION*, 2022, Festival of Naked Forms

Notes

- ¹ Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Fenomenologie vnímání* (Praha: OIKOYMENH, 2013).
- ² Jan Patočka, *Umění a čas I, II. Soubor statí, přednášek a poznámek k problémům umění* (Praha: OIKOYMENH, 2004).
- ³ Henri Bergson, *Hmota a paměť: esej o vztahu těla k duchu* (Praha: OIKOYMENH, 2003).
- ⁴ *Ibidem*.
- ⁵ Petr Rezek, *Tělo, věc a skutečnost v současném umění* (Praha: Jazzová sekce, 1982).
- ⁶ Boris Groys, "Umění ve věku biopolitiky: Od uměleckého díla k dokumentaci umění," translated by Vladimír Malý, *Sešit pro umění, teorii a příbuzné zóny*, Prague: VVP AVU, 4-5 (2008): 114-128.
- ⁷ Vilém Flusser, *Postdělžiny* (Mělník: Přestupní stanice, 2018).
- ⁸ Adrian Heathfield, *Live: Art and Performance* (New York: Routledge, 2004).

Bibliography

- Bergson, Henri. *Hmota a paměť: esej o vztahu těla k duchu*. Praha: OIKOYMENH, 2003.
- Flusser, Vilém. *Postdělžiny*. Mělník: Přestupní stanice, 2018.
- Groys, Boris. "Umění ve věku biopolitiky: Od uměleckého díla k dokumentaci umění." Translated by Vladimír Malý. *Sešit pro umění, teorii a příbuzné zóny*. Prague: VVP AVU. 4-5 (2008): 114-128.
- Heathfield, Adrian. *Live: Art and Performance*. New York: Routledge, 2004.
- Merleau-Ponty, Maurice. *Fenomenologie vnímání*. Praha: OIKOYMENH, 2013.
- Patočka, Jan. *Umění a čas I, II. Soubor statí, přednášek a poznámek k problémům umění*. Praha: OIKOYMENH, 2004.
- Rezek, Petr. *Tělo, věc a skutečnost v současném umění*. Praha: Jazzová sekce, 1982.

Joanna M. CZAJKOWSKA

Sopot Dance Theatre

NUDITY IN POMERANIAN DANCE AND PERFORMANCE

The body is an essential tool in a dancer's work, so since the nineteenth century, artistic dance began to use so-called leotards, cladding the body thoroughly, or more precisely, the legs, so as not to offend the audience with nudity, but at the same time to be able to expose them. However, as Irena Turska points out, in the twentieth century the meaning of the leotard (often already covering the whole body of the dancer) changed - it became a stage costume, "which not only clothes, but also shapes the figure of the dancer, the leotard not only emphasizes the modelling of the body, but synthesizes it, simplifies it to a spot of colour."¹

The twentieth century also saw the appearance of nudity as such on world and Polish stages, but it is still not a common phenomenon. It definitely appears more often in dance theatres or performance-type activities than in ballet theatres, because, as Turska explains, "when the body moves, there are spontaneous disorderly, uncontrollable movements of some of its exposed parts, and they are unintentional surpluses of movement

structures. Thus, they can attract the attention of the viewer, interfering with the course of dance reception."² Disruptive movement elements are not the only reason. Arguably, the approach to nudity is directly influenced by the aesthetic canon or that of meaning. Whether for the choreographer the body is supposed to be a 'colorful stain' or a real person. Therefore, one can risk the thesis that the presence or absence of nudity in the actions of dance artists is influenced by the form and place of the art they practice.

Clothed nudity - the body as synthesis

The art of dance appeared in Pomerania after World War II with the arrival in Gdansk of choreographer and dance pedagogue **Janina Jarzynówna-Sobczak**, who founded a private dance school, led to the establishment of the Choreographic Lyceum in Narvik, which in time was transformed into the Ballet School in Gdansk.

From the beginning of her stay, she also worked as a choreographer, cooperating with the Wybrzeże Theatre and the Baltic Opera, where she was the creator, choreographer and manager of the ballet company between 1953 and 1976.³ This company in the late fifties and early sixties, thanks to the work and vision of Jarzynówna-Sobczak, became one of the most interesting Polish ballet companies.⁴

Talking about her creative method, the artist herself claimed that she used “abbreviation, synthesis, which moved the characters to the plane of general meanings.”⁵ The choreographer worked closely with the dancers in creating the performances: she introduced them to the theme of the show, to specific roles, to dramatic tensions, together with the dancers she used improvisation to find the final choreographic shape, and this process involved the dancers repeating a given sequence many times, in different variations of it, to find the final, satisfying form. She herself called the movement language she shaped a “deformed classic.”

Among the works that placed Janina Jarzynówna-Sobczak among the avant-garde artists of the time were, among others, *The Miraculous Mandarin*, *Four Essays* and *Titania and the Donkey*. In all of these works, the dancers appear in leotards that support the entire body, possibly with graphic elements that define the figures. *Four Essays* and *Titania and the Donkey* were also filmed, with the performers dancing in open spaces in almost transparent costumes.

This penchant for costumes that emphasize the silhouette, actually revealing the body of the dancers in the case of this outstanding artist, is the result of her search for a mental shortcut, but also her antipathy to classical ballet costume: “I think I’m the only one who didn’t like those, degenerating the silhouette, stiff costumes, from under which stick out the pretty little pooches of the dancers. But I’m afraid to admit it out loud!”⁶ she said in an interview.

Nudity shaped - the ideal body

Wojciech Misiuro, creator of the Expression Theatre (1987-2000), became Jarzynówna - Sobczak's direct disciple and successor in avant-garde activities. With his education and experience in dance and pantomime, as well as choreographic collaborations in dramatic theatres, Misiuro knew that he wanted to create a theatre that had not yet existed in Poland, a theatre in which the main tool would be movement corresponding to the “rhythm of the street,”⁷ derived from everyday and sports movement.

The Expression Theatre was a stage of plastic naked male and female bodies - in dynamic movement on stage. Traditional dramatic actors were replaced by 'athletes' (...). They were selected on the basis of attractiveness and physical prowess, and then put through training by a 'master' to achieve expressive choreography (...). The performances were accompanied by opera or rock music, with no dialogue or individual role. Using the language of the super-body, at the intersection of dance, mime and sports, the Expression Theatre addressed in its performances mythical and cultural themes relating to fundamental questions of human existence. In this way, the perfect surface was combined with psychological and artistic depth, as evidenced by the titles of the performances: *The Dead Can Dance*, *Dantonians*, *Idols of Perversion* (...).⁸

As Majewska noted, the actors' bodies, shaped by training in sports, pantomime and dance, were close to the on the one hand, to Greek ideals, on the other, they resembled ideal models from Bruce Weber and Calvin Klein advertising campaigns. Despite playing with the convention of erotic freedom, the performers' bodies remained enclosed in a specific form.⁹ Nudity in Misiuro's performances appeared as an erotic symbol (*ZUN*, *Idols of Perversion*) or power and authority (*City of Men*), sometimes as a symbol of exposure accompa-

nying death (*PASSION, De Egipto*). Always, however, the actors-dancers of the Expression Theatre presented themselves in this nudity in an extremely catty, epic manner, like idealized sculptures.

The truth of nudity - the truth of man

At the beginning of the nineties, the creators of the Gdansk Dance Theatre (1994-2001) appeared in Gdansk – the American **Melissa Monteros** and the Pole **Wojciech Mochniej**, bringing the methodology of teaching modern dance based on Jose Limon's technique, related to work with body weight and breath. On their initiative, a private dance school, an international workshop and a festival for young choreographers Dance Explosions were established, and they also served as advisors in the creation of an extremely important international festival for the dance community taking place in the Tri-City, the Baltic University of Dance.¹⁰ Although nudity appeared incidentally in their performances, the activity of this duo, had great significance for the environment in terms of the new language of movement, in which technical skills were combined with the preservation of the dancers' individuality.¹¹ The art and environment created by Monteros and Mochniej, coexisted with the already existing Expression Theatre, the General Ballet School and the Baltic Opera, and the period of the last decade of the twentieth century was full of new initiatives and debuts. Actors of Wojciech Misiuro's theatre took on their own activities: Krzysztof Leon Dziemaszkiewicz, Jacek Krawczyk, Bożena Eltermann, while the following made their debuts: Joanna Czajkowska, Anna Haracz, Daria Jędra, Magda Jędra, Aurora Lubos, Iwona Gilarska, Robert Przybył. Individuality has become a hallmark of Pomeranian dance - both in terms of the artistic path taken and the approach to stage nudity. However, the various approaches of Pomeranian artists have one common denominator - nudity has been humanized.

A harbinger of a change concerning nudity in dance was already the first performance directed by **Krzysztof Leon Dziemaszkiewicz** (then Read My Lips Theatre, now LEON Theatre), which accompanied the exhibition of sculptures *Iron People* by Zbigniew Frąckiewicz at the State Art Gallery in Sopot (1995). The four men, in a dynamic, powerful dance, at one point shed their petticoats, and the audience could watch their bodies in direct confrontation with all possible "movement surpluses." Although all the performers (Krzysztof Leon Dziemaszkiewicz, Jacek Krawczyk, Piotr Pająk, Jarosław Filip) came from the Expression Theatre and presented excellent form, it was not the beauty of the body that mattered here, but precisely this directness and natural wildness of movement. Later, nudity became a permanent element of Dziemaszkiewicz's work: "Leon's group's productions are distinguished by certain fixed stage elements - a combination of psychodrama, carnival, humor, nudity and music. A frequent element of the performances is gender bending, i.e. performance based on changing roles between a woman and a man, balancing on the border between the sexes combined with strong expressive acting of the actors."¹² The artist himself puts it this way: "Nudity is a very natural thing for me and I treat it as a means of affirmation, joy, as a manifestation of spontaneity and independence. I use it (...) in my performance actions partly as a provocation, (...) to spontaneously and unrestrictedly embrace the reality I present."¹³ He stresses that after using a scene with nudity, he usually changes the narrative thread absolutely. This, according to the artist, causes him to be accepted unconditionally.

Starting from my archaic spontaneous actions in clubs, in the Sphinx Club, in the Spatif Club or still in my student days, nudity has always been for me a means to draw attention to myself and direct the perception of the viewer, the audience, mainly as a means of spontaneity and provocation to reject any canons of judgment. Starting with my first performances: the Read My Lips, where nudity is definitely used in

a very ostentatious way, through *Live-act* or the *National Drag Queen*; all these performances had an undertone of a very personal message (...). They were not subject to any template, that is, neither a political pretext, nor a moral pretext, nor a rebellion against someone or something.¹⁴

The language of movement used by Dziemaszkiewicz has evolved over all the years of his work - from physical theatre, where choreography combined processed natural movement and sequences composed of strong, exertional dance, to the currently used movement reduction, performative a turn toward inner experience, where the body undergoing artistic treatment is more a body in action than in dance.¹⁵ At the opposite pole to the artist described above, are the creators of the Dada von Bzdülów Theatre - **Leszek Bzdyl** and **Katarzyna Chmielewska**. They started working together at the very beginning of the nineties, and although they came from different techniques (Bzdyl was a mime artist, he appeared in the Tri-City at the invitation of the Expression Theatre, in which, however, he did not stay long, Chmielewska graduated from the Ballet School in Gdansk). Thanks to their cooperation with the Gdansk Dance Theatre and the inner need for development, they began to shape their own theatrical and choreographic language. Bzdyl's previous theatre experience, as well as a period of study at Katarzyna Chmielewska's P.A.R.T.S school, were of great importance.¹⁶ Working with natural body weight, contact improvisation, and the release technique, in which the body moves with the most economical effort possible, and the joints remain relaxed, full of 'air' yet with anatomically correct body structure, brought new results. "The group has managed to develop a unique style, drawing from the Polish (and world) theatrical and literary tradition (Witold Gombrowicz is the unofficial patron of the group), as well as the avant-garde Dadaist movement, from which the group's name derives. In its work, the group uses movement, dance, text, and its particular distinctive feature has become the play

with theatrical and dance conventions, as well as such artistic means and procedures as pastiche and grotesque, bringing original, intertextual performances, rich in interdisciplinary references and allusions."¹⁷ Dancers appeared naked in such performances as *UFF...!*, *Barricade of Love*, *Non-Existent Duets*, *Red Grass*, *Factor T*. Leszek Bzdyl said that he treats nudity as "an expression of freedom, and at the same time a stage sign inscribed in the narrative. It seems to me that I don't use my body for any kind of manifestation. Nudity in the stage space is either inscribed in the necessity of the dramatic statement, or it is a sign. It is significant for the transformation of the character, it is a transition from state to state, or it is a counterpoint for stage actions."¹⁸ In the Dada von Bzdülów Theatre, the undressing of the artists is thus an effect of the work on the performance, a kind of transgression of the character, although, as Bzdyl notes, the effect of transgression can also be achieved in another way - through close contact and direct exposure of the viewer to the corporeality (not necessarily completely naked) of the dancers.¹⁹ Here we see how important and significant in the viewer-dancer/performer relationship are the place and distance of the action. Given Chmielewska and Bzdyl's language of movement, nudity also appears in a more »accidental« guise, when during the dance the costume reveals bare breasts or intimate area, which often happened, for example, in the *Magnolia* performance - it is then treated as a natural consequence of the free body in motion.

An artist associated for years with the theatre of Chmielewska and Bzdyl, who at the same time developed her own creative path, is **Anna Steller**. In her independent work, she has moved from dance theatre to performance, and the language of movement she has used has evolved from dance in release technique to movement reduction and physical action. "As a performer, she mainly focuses on the transparency and sincerity of her message and on radical artistic solutions. The interdisciplinarity of dance and performance is an area she has been exploring for years, trying to understand and convey important content and concepts to the audience."²⁰ The artist has

collaborated many times with Magdalena Jędra as the **Good Girl Killer** collective, and Krzysztof Leon Dziemaszkiewicz. She says the following about the use of nudity in her works (including *Displacement*, *Danger Zone* with Read My Lips Theatre, *You're doing it all wrong*): “Nudity arises out of necessity, it has no other connotations, it is only an element needed to visualize the artist's specific ideas.”²¹ She also adds: “In my work, it is usually related to something that lies deep inside me, and it is only through the use of nudity in which I am simply just a person that I can convey content that is important to me.”²²

Artists who also use nudity as an expression of essential content that cannot be shown through the clothed body are **Joanna Czajkowska** and **Jacek Krawczyk**, creators of the Sopot Dance Theatre founded in 1998. The artists, who have been working closely together for a quarter of a century, have developed a specific model of it - they take turns creating group performances, with the director of a given title taking the final say on scenic solutions. Duets are created rarely, the performance is then always a product of the ideas of both. Krawczyk, who was formerly an athlete and then a long-time actor-dancer at the Expression Theatre, who has a diverse experience of corporeality, talked about this in an interview: “In the Expression Theatre earlier, according to the director's point of view and vision, corporeality was exposed, its sporting and energetic qualities emphasized. I try to look for a certain melancholy in my works, suspension between the world of good and evil, poetics”.²³ Thus, nudity or partial nudity in the performances directed by the artist appears in various scenic and thematic circumstances - as the exposure of a character, his transgression, sometimes emphasizes eroticism (*2FACES*, the *Discreet Charm of Picasso*, *manRay*, *The Barbarian*), the exposure of nudity, however, is always a stage sign shown in a certain aura of understatement, poetics. Joanna Czajkowska, who previously (in the nineties) worked with Read My Lips Theatre and Gdansk Dance Theatre, as far as the language of movement is concerned, is comfortable with Limon and release techniques,

and her preferred theatrical forms are dance theatre, physical actions, and performance. She herself diagnosed her approach to movement language as follows: “Dance or dance technique was not the clue, rather we (Sopot Dance Theatre) used there structured everyday movement, sports movement, physical movement, which was later seen in our performances, such as our first performance with Jacek Krawczyk *Niunia seriously thinking about life*, *Square. Version 6*, *Empty Body* or *Lechistan Pany Arka*, where the scenes were based on gestures and physical movement, but there were also dance sequences. This happens when I recognize that the eruption of movement in a given structure will properly convey the theme or content.”²⁴ About her approach to nudity Czajkowska says this: “For me, the body is a container and transmitter of thoughts, emotions, the whole inner cosmos. I use nudity only when it is really important and relevant and when it gives the viewer something that the performer's clothed body would not be able to give. Regardless of whether I'm talking about intimacy, love, weakness, pain, truth, the naked body expresses it all.”²⁵ And so nudity in her performances appears in exceptional circumstances in which the artist reveals herself as a human being (*Magnification - Zoom Out*, *Introspection*, *Object of Inestimable Value*, *OCTOPUS*, *Talk to me* in collaboration with Krzysztof Leon Dziemaszkiewicz), or as a cultural sign (*Object of Inestimable Value*, *Ono/Lennon were right, but wrong*).

The connection between the language of movement, theatre form and nudity can also be seen conclusively in the case of Amareya Theatre & Guests, which moves at the intersection of Japanese butoh and physical theatre. The undisputed leader of the group is **Katarzyna Julia Pastuszak**, and the theatre's long-time members are Agnieszka Kaminska, Aleksandra Sliwinska, Natalia Chylinska. “Nudity in butoh is also an aspect of costume and another form of shedding the social body. (...) When the body appears nude in butoh, it is usually partially covered, often smeared with mud and whitened. Nudity is stylized in butoh, and the costumes are metamorphic. They change along

with the dance....”²⁶ Nudity used in this way is very characteristic of the first period of Amareya Theatre's activity (e.g. *Xenos*, *Anatomical Theatre - Mystery of Life and Death*, *Dream of Icarus*) however, with the development of the company, also the way of exposing the naked body has changed, and performers sometimes play completely naked (e.g. *Nomadic woman*, *2 Improvised Duet*, *Kantor_Tropy*, among others). “Amareya's first Eastern inspirations led to the formation of the phenomenon known as Polish butō - an original aesthetic, combining Japanese influences with the Polish tradition of theatrical avant-garde. It can be said that a dramatic theatre actor translates the experience of the body into signs, while a butō actor/dancer makes this experience itself visible - the conflict takes place in the space of corporeality itself. In the case of the European, and especially the Polish, butō tradition, it is an attempt to use the body as such for artistic activities, with the dancer here becoming both the performing subject and the matter, working on his own body and allowing the viewer to witness these activities”.²⁷ So the artists have moved from stylized nudity, to the truth of the naked body, which, through the themes they take up, often shows the human being in suffering or borderline situations.

To sum up: nudity, as a stage phenomenon in Pomeranian²⁸ dance, has transformed from the symbolic presentation of nudity in the clothed body, through the posed body with model ideal shapes, to nudity as a theatrical sign and personal confession. Important elements are the artistic form and the language of movement preferred by the artists, and consequently the place of presentation. And here, as surprising as it may seem, the proximity between the performers and the viewer of their art matters, though not explicitly. What is important is simply the authenticity and intimacy of the message.

Janina Jarzynówna - Sobczak The Baltic Opera

ballet theater -
going beyond classical thinking about the dancer's body



"Tytania Lotoska"
kadr z filmu

Joanna M. Czajkowska, Jacek Krawczyk Sopocki Teatr Tańca

dance theatre



"manBy the Barbarian"



"Magnification - Zoom Out"



"Tytania i Lasiol"
Opera Bałtycka
Aleja Boniatnicko, Janusz Wojciechowski



"Crimy Kweje"
Opera Bałtycka
Aleja Boniatnicko, Zygmunta Jarmari

Wojciech Misiuro / Teatr EKSPRESJI

movement theatre

language of movement: sport, everyday movement, pantomime
body architecture / dynamic stillness



ZUN
Teatr Ekspresji
Andrzej Chorab, Bożena Eltermann, Krzysztof Leon Dziemaszkiewicz

Krzysztof Leon Dziemaszkiewicz Teatr Patrz Mi na Usta i Teatr LEON

physical theatre, performance



Katarzyna Chmielewska, Leszek Bzdyl Teatr Dada von Bzdülöw

dance theatre



"Non-existent dance"



"Non-existent duets"



"Magnolia"



"Barricade of Love"

Anna Steller

dance theatre, performance



"Displacement"

Katarzyna Pastuszek
Teatr Amareya and Guests
butoh based physical theatre



"Kantor Tropy Collage"

Notes

- ¹ Irena Turska, *Spotkanie ze Sztuką Tańca* [Meeting the Art of Dance] (Kraków: Polskie Wydawnictwo Muzyczne, 2000), 38.
- ² Ibidem.
- ³ *Encyclopedia of Gdansk*, Gdansk Community Foundation, accessed December 1, 2022, <http://www.gedanopedia.pl>.
- ⁴ Irena Turska, *Almanach polskiego baletu 1945-1974* [Almanac of Polish Ballet 1945-1974] (Kraków: Polskie Wydawnictwo Muzyczne, 1983), 36.
- ⁵ Janina Jarzynówna-Sobczak, and Kanold Barbara. *Rozmowy o tańcu* [Talk on Dance] (Gdańsk: Polnord, OSKAR Publishing House, 2003), 21.
- ⁶ Ibidem, 67.
- ⁷ Zofia Tomczyk–Watrak, *Teatr Ekspresji Wojciecha Misiuro* [Wojciech Misiuro's Theatre of Expression] (Gdańsk: BROWAT Publishing House, 2003), 12.
- ⁸ Jadwiga Majewska, entry "Teatr Ekspresji Wojciecha Misiuro," accessed December 1, 2022, <https://culture.pl/pl/tworca/teatr-ekspresji-wojciecha-misiuro>.
- ⁹ Ibidem.
- ¹⁰ Katarzyna Pastuszak, entry „Gdański Teatr Tańca,” accessed December 1, 2022, <http://sloowniktanca.uni.lodz.pl/gdanski-teatr-tanca>.
- ¹¹ Joanna Czajkowska, "On Different Ways of Education in Contemporary Dance in the Tri-City" (MA thesis University of Gdansk, Department of Theory of Education, 1999), 147. Under the supervision of Dr. Maria Szczepska-Pustkowska.
- ¹² Paweł Leszkowicz, *Art Pride. Gay art from Poland / Polska sztuka gejowska* (Warszawa: Abiekt.pl, 2010).
- ¹³ Interview with Krzysztof Leon Dziemaszkiewicz, online, October 27, 2022 (author's material).
- ¹⁴ Ibidem.
- ¹⁵ Self-analysis of the artist's work.
- ¹⁶ P.A.R.T.S - School of Contemporary Dance founded by renowned choreographer Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker, <https://www.parts.be/>.
- ¹⁷ Julia Hoczyk, entry "Teatr Dada von Bzdulow," accessed December 1, 2022, <http://sloowniktanca.uni.lodz.pl/teatr-dada-von-bzdul%D3%A7w/>.
- ¹⁸ Leszek Bzdyl, Mikołaj Mikołajczyk, and Maria Stokłosa, "Naked truth in dance theater," interviewed by Majewska Jadwiga, *Theater* no. 9/09 (2012), accessed December 1, 2022, <https://e-teatr.pl/naga-prawda-w-teatrze-tanca-a143439>.
- ¹⁹ Ibidem.
- ²⁰ Biography of the artist, accessed December 1, 2022, <https://cialoumysl.pl/artysta/anna-steller/?f=21-c-u-2022>.
- ²¹ Interview with Anna Steller, October 5, 2022 (author's material).
- ²² Ibidem.
- ²³ Interview with Jack Krawczyk, September 29, 2022 (author's audio material).
- ²⁴ Joanna Czajkowska, interviewed by Katarzyna Wysocka, *Gazeta Swietojańska*, accessed December 1, 2022, <https://gazetaswietojanska.org/polecane/teraz-jeszcze-bardziej-zmierzam-do-konkluzji-w-ruchu/>.
- ²⁵ Statement from the lecture at the FNAF 8 conference, Academy of Fine Arts, October 10, 2022.
- ²⁶ Sondra Fraleigh, *Butoh: Metamorphic Dance and Global Alchemy* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2010), 56.
- ²⁷ Jadwiga Majewska, entry "Teatr Amareya," accessed December 1, 2022, <https://culture.pl/pl/tworca/teatr-amareya>.
- ²⁸ Pomeranian dance is diverse and constantly evolving, with some artists changing their life paths over time, changing their profession or place of residence, but there are also younger generations, in some of whose performances there are scenes of nudity (e.g. *Solo for four helmets and lost time* by the Hertz Haus group, choreographed and directed by outside artist Anna Piotrowska). However, in my text, I present those artists in whom nudity is not a one-off or accidental affair, and who reach for it consciously as a means of artistic and personal expression.

Bibliography

- Bzdyl, Leszek, Mikołaj Mikołajczyk, and Maria Stokłosa. "Naked truth in dance theatre." Interviewed by Majewska Jadwiga. *Theatre* no. 9/09 (2012). Accessed December 1, 2022. <https://e-teatr.pl/naga-prawda-w-teatrze-tanca-a143439>.
- Czajkowska, Joanna. "On Different Ways of Education in Contemporary Dance in the Tri-City." MA thesis, University of Gdansk, Department of Theory of Education, 1999.
- Czajkowska, Joanna. Interviewed by Katarzyna Wysocka. *Gazeta Swietojańska*. Accessed December 1, 2022. <https://gazetaswietojanska.org/polecane/teraz-jeszcze-bardziej-zmierzam-do-konkluzji-w-ruchu/>.
- Jarzynówna-Sobczak, Janina, and Kanold Barbara. *Rozmowy o tańcu* [Talks on Dance]. Gdańsk: Polnord, OSKAR Publishing House, 2003.
- Fraleigh, Sondra. *Butoh: Metamorphic Dance and Global Alchemy*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2010.
- Leszkowicz, Paweł. *Art Pride. Gay art from Poland / Polska sztuka gejowska*. Warszawa: Abiekt.pl, 2010.
- Tomczyk–Watrak, Zofia. *Teatr Ekspresji Wojciecha Misiuro* [Wojciech Misiuro's Theatre of Expression]. Gdańsk: BROWAT Publishing House, 2003.
- Turska, Irena. *Spotkanie ze Sztuką Tańca* [Meeting the Art of Dance]. Kraków: Polskie Wydawnictwo Muzyczne, 2000.
- Turska, Irena. *Almanach polskiego baletu 1945-1974* [Almanac of Polish Ballet 1945-1974]. Kraków: Polskie Wydawnictwo Muzyczne, 1983.

Ewa MAJEWSKA

University of Social Sciences and Humanities in Warsaw (SWPS)

NUDITY AS A FEMINIST GESTURE: IN DEFENSE OF A SUPPOSEDLY LOST CAUSE

Griselda Pollock rightly argues in her book *Vision and Difference* that simply 'adding women' to art history will not necessarily make it more feminist. She claims: "Women's studies are not just about women – but about the social systems and ideological schemata which sustain the domination of men over women within the other mutually inflecting regimes of power in the world, namely those of class and those of race."¹ This structuralist positioning of the gender question within a wider spectrum of class inequalities and racialization, which we should enlarge today to embrace also the LGBTIQ+ struggles, allows for an intersectional approach to the question of art history, hopefully without stabilizing the category of womanhood, but rather presenting it as a historically adequate description of some art historical struggles for equality, today deconstructed in the process of queering, de-binarisation and embracing transgender identity. I need to add this general statement, as I intend to use the words 'women' and 'men,' in a non-essentializing, non-normative

way, as they depict historical struggles for equality central for any discussions of nudity, artistic representation and equality within those histories and struggles.

It is much more popular to associate nudity with innocence, transparency and immediacy, than with strategy, opacity and distance. Art history and theory however complicates this popular belief by adding the dimension of performativity to the supposedly stable human body's image. Images can therefore do things, like words in John Austin's *How to do things with words?* Such suggestion however is far more difficult to explain than performativity of certain words. However, while the judge's 'guilty!' or the priest's 'I now pronounce you husband and wife' clearly do something to the materialized, historical reality, images might be more complicated that way. The image of God in a Catholic church might make people do things, just as well as the white and red stripes on the border territory signalize the end of the territory of

the Republic of Poland, therefore making anyone going beyond these stripes a border crosser, and possibly a criminal, if they carry no documents with them. Road signs also have the magic power of allowing the police or city guard to demand a sum of money, or even our driving licence, after we behave in certain ways behind the wheel. But is the image of a nude woman also that powerful? Or is it only sexual agency, which has this power? But then – what is sexual agency? Or sexual organs in action? Was professor Marian Filar right, when he argued that it is the intention to show sexual agency that makes an image pornographic?² Was Robin Morgan right saying that "pornography is theory, and rape is practice" (of violence against women in patriarchal society)?³

Feminist artistic interventions have been central to proving that the perception of nudity has been to a large extent profiled to please the male gaze. One of the central distinctions, organizing our perception of the artistic nude, opposes nudity to pornography, and in some countries found its legal formula too, where the latter is forbidden by law. This distinction has been discussed in Poland as well, and while we currently do not have a law prohibiting pornography as such, we have various legal norms foreclosing the possibility of abuse of someone's image, good name, privacy, integrity etc.⁴ Performativity in the context of nudity could lead directly to its condemnation as pornography, according to those who argue that what makes them special is 'the ability to cause action,' in this case: sexual arousal. But – isn't any nude body possibly a sort of excitement? How would a distinction be made between a body, which explicitly seeks such result of its appearance from that which is not meant to cause such effect? For some – it is the context that changes everything, and in many cases this is right – we might experience nudity very differently depending on whether it appears on a wall of a church, in an art gallery, museum, porn magazine or a shabby VHS tape from the early nineties. Due to the historicity of artistic representations as well as the cultural and generational changes in taste, we might now see as pornographic the representations of bodies, which

– in the intention of the authors at least – were not meant to incite sexual response.

Feminist perspectives on the female nude, as well as on pornography, have been as diverse, as feminists can be. Robin Morgan's claim "pornography is theory, rape is the practice" united those authors and activists, who proclaimed the necessity of a legal ban on pornography. Angela Dworkin and Catherine MacKinnon participated in campaigns aimed at introducing such a ban in the state of Minneapolis (1983) and Indianapolis (1984), both attempts were finally unsuccessful, as the legislation was voted against. In 1976, the young feminist photographer, Jacqueline Livingston, working as an assistant professor at Cornell University, probably paid the biggest price for the anti-porn campaigns, as she was accused of spreading child pornography, enforcing the sexualization of a child as well as violating her duties as parent. Each of these accusations led to a court trial, which she eventually won in the early eighties, however as in the meantime no gallery would exhibit her work, she was fired from the university, which led to her change of profession and moving to Hawaii. In 2009, two Polish curators, Mariola Balińska and Małgorzata Zwolicka, invited Livingston to make a solo show of photography in the National Museum in Gdańsk (in Pałac Opatów). Some journalists discovered the scandalous past of the artist, and published articles inciting protests, regardless of the fact that the exhibition was not one on pornography, and the pictures presented in it were a tender collection of everyday family images. I met Jacqueline on this occasion, and we maintained very friendly contacts until she died in 2013. She offered me a beautiful photograph for my first book's cover.

Many feminists disagree with the anti-porn perspective, rightly claiming that there is no scientific proof of Morgan's statement, and therefore it cannot be legitimately argued that pornography leads to violence. The plethora of these perspectives was collected by the much missed feminist theorist and organizer, Ann Snitow, who made the amazing effort to collect opinions from all sides.⁵ Lisa Duggan and Nan Hunter on the

other hand have been documenting the 'sex wars' since the early nineties in their groundbreaking anthology, composed of theoretical essays, but also a calendar of events concerning sexual politics as well as that of its visual representation.⁶ They have also been one of the central voices for the feminism opposing censorship, in visual arts and more widely – in all cultural production. Duggan sees censorship as part of the neoliberal pact – where the state and capital withdraws from its obligations of care and safety, a conservative narrative offering a dummy of actual protection is installed, giving an appearance of genuine concern of the state about the population.⁷ The same can be said about the anti-child porn EU regulations, which seem to replace the care for the protection of children from sexualization and abuse by the means providing safety to the gaze of the adults. The fact that a mature person will not see a fictitious image of child porn will not save children from sexual violence, logically the opposite can be expected, as with the preoccupation with what the adult may see, the state forces get distracted from following the actual criminals abusing children.⁸ My own experience of being accused of defending child pornography by the editors of an art magazine in 2009, when I was merely defending Adorno's claim that while we focus on what adults can see, children are still suffering domestic violence, proves that such reasoning can be true. I was told by some of the magazine's editors, that even though I actually train teachers and educators in the prevention of sexual harassment of minors and children in schools, I have no clue about what children need, because I do not have any. Luckily Grzegorz Borkowski, another editor of said magazine, found a way for my article about Jacqueline Livingston to be published anyway and did not submit to the accusations.

Some authors, such as Linda Williams, argue that pornography might actually succeed in preventing violence, as the play with images can allow a phantasmatic realization of forbidden passions, thus saving their potential victims.⁹ Such claims are further complicated by such legal norms as the EU directive from 2006, which demands punishment for child pornography created without

using any actual models (in this case: children and minors), and thus making completely fictional images almost as dangerous as those, which were produced with actual presence of real children and their sexualization by adults.¹⁰ This directive leads to creating appropriate legal norms in European countries, which are quite similar one to another, and to legal practice, which can differ between EU countries. In my book on politics of art from 2013 I discuss two cases of artists put on trial because of their work being accused of promoting child pornography.¹¹ The feminist artist from Finland, Ulla Karttonen, presented an artwork aimed at criticizing the omnipresence of child pornography on the internet. She used printed images of young women published online, trying to pick those, who did seem to be minor. However, as we well know, such distinction is particularly volatile, and so therefore the artist was tried and sentenced by courts in Finland, and sentenced for promoting child pornography, although the court decided not to act upon the verdict in recognition of the feminist good intentions of the artist. She decided to make an appeal to the European Tribunal of Human Rights in Strasburg, where, after a long discussion, which still can be found online, the verdict of the courts in Finland was supported.

The Polish artist Krzysztof Kuszej on the other hand wanted to critically address the very painful topic of sexual molestation of children by Catholic priests, of which he was one of the victims as a child. In his artwork from 2007, he used found footage press images of sexually harassed children, which he inserted in large scale paintings, thus also in his case we cannot speak of any use of children to produce sexualized images. After an exhibition of his work in Łódź in 2008, he was arrested, and his artworks, as well as computer and other equipment, were taken as evidence of possible guilt. He spent seven months in jail, which is a very long period of time. The judge of the local court invited several experts and eventually cleared the accused artist of all charges. In the verdict's explanation, the judge claimed, that it was an act of enormous courage and responsibility for the future generation to produce such artworks and therefore also to re-



1. FEMEN activist, 2010.
Wikipedia
2. Alexis Hunter,
Model's Revenge, 1978.
Compliments of the artist
3. Ewa Partum homage
a solidarnosc 1982
compliments of the artist
4. Ewa Partum,
Samoidentyfikacja, 1980

open the artist's own trauma. Kuszej worked in the context of critical art, which the judge claimed to have learned for the purpose of better preparing to the trial. The artist was declared innocent and apologized for the long arrest. No appeal was made, therefore the verdict seems to be final.

As we can see, Polish and Finnish courts interpret the agency of artists as well as their use of found footage very differently. One thing remains true: the Baudrillardian argument about the things being replaced by simulacra, or better – Debordian claim about social relations being replaced by images in the society of the spectacle, is becoming true also by means of the (almost complete) equation of the production of child pornography with and without the presence (and therefore also abuse) of actual children. We need to discuss this troublesome equation without fear of being accused of promoting violence, and yet with the growing culture of cancelling and readiness of the social media to provide immediate acceptance or rejection for any controversy, we might be willing just to resign from such discussions. My own example of facing severe accusations mentioned above shows why most lawmakers, lawyers, artists and journalists, not to mention scholars, prefer silence. Yet, cases such as that of Kuszej, and the unbiased, bold defense provided by the judge in his case, show that the neoliberal productivity mode, smoothing all controversies for the better acquisition of profits, does not always win.

The controversies concerning pornography have shaped our perception of the nude body. While a naked child's picture in the seventies would just be seen as a nice memory shot from someone's childhood, today any posting of nude babies on social media cause outcries about protection of children from abuse. The protection of children and their privacy is a legitimate concern, but what matters here, in a discussion concerning nudity and its visual representations, is above all the immediate change of standards, which has taken place just in the last two decades. The protection discourse has intensified to such extent, that it is surprising that naked images abound on the one hand, and on the other – even more cases

of child abuse are reported to the police and media. How can this be explained? As you might already guess, my response is that the protection of the gaze of the adult is by no means an effective substitute of legal, social and cultural protection measures helping the actual, living children of flesh and bones to be safe from violence and sexual abuse. The fake protection measures are today replacing the actual ones. This claim cannot be substituted by even the most elaborate criticisms of the abuse, stereotypes and inequality of genders, racialization and exclusions performed in pornography as it is produced today, at least in its mainstream versions.

Entire groups, companies, collectives and art projects have been devoted to creating pornography free of abuse, exploitation, stereotypes and non-consensual violence. Festivals such as the *Post-Porn Fest* in Warsaw, *Porn Fest* in Berlin, their sister projects in Vienna, Brussels and other cities are collective entities dedicated to building a sexually active, diverse community without exploitation, abuse and discrimination. They gather porn producers offering alternative visual representations, as well as business and art production models, in which the abuse rightly criticized by the anti-porn feminists, Marxists and others are not accepted. It is in such circumstances, that what is now called 'sex-positive feminism' abounds, just as expressions of LGBTQI+ erotica and representations. Agnieszka Szreder, the co-curator of the Warsaw *Post-Porn Fest* speaks of postpornography as if it was a "whole new language, expressing the world and experience of it in new categories." It is important to notice that – as many active and former sex workers claim – such contexts really bring alternatives not just to bodies and their representations, but also of work conditions and atmosphere in porn production. Some of these sex workers are feminists, as Annie Sprinkle, as well as the authors of the amazing anthology of texts, *Whores and other Feminists*.¹²

With such feminist and LGBTQI+ sexual productions, as well as authors such as Brian McNair, we enter a whole new era of what he called 'porn chic' – a new sex-positive fashion for pornography, mostly understood either as class-

emancipatory transgression to what was taken to be 'low aesthetics,' or as a newly established feminist sex-positive canon.¹³ The porn-chic is therefore a strong claim to aesthetic as well as political emancipation, by means of pornographic imagery, usually produced (or: claimed to be produced) in an ethical, abuse-free way. Such new fashion works against the marginalization of what Lynda Nead labelled 'obscene,' excluded from the stage, and therefore becomes a way of granting visibility to the persons, bodies, sexual practices and orientations, which were not particularly visible before. Emancipated, self-conscious, and also sexually explicit femininity, various versions of gay sexuality and desire, lesbian S/M and other marginalized visual representations of sexual life, are entering the stage with and by means of porn-chic, making of them the most attractive images adding surplus value to any product. This popularity of the marginalized is obviously contaminated by the risk of immediate commodification, and yet for many it also becomes a way to disturb, subvert and reverse or even transform the canon of visual representations, thus making it possible for the fat singers, gay porn stars, trans lap dancers or lesbian dommes to become pop icons, movie or social media stars etc.

Such abundance of atypical naked bodies in the public visual sphere most certainly has emancipatory and empowering effects. It is common to see children becoming fascinated with queer pop culture icons, non-binary movie characters or trans singers. Such fashions create what Jack Halberstam called the safe-spaces of 'Gaga feminism,' in which the countercultural does not necessarily mean 'opposed to the market economy,' but it most definitely means "resisting neoliberalism AND the heteromatrix."¹⁴ This emancipatory and empowering impact that the changes of visual representations of bodies have on the population, cannot be perceived as proof that everything is fine in the sector of visual representation. Social media provide drastic examples of opposite tendencies, particularly when it comes to their influence on teenagers, especially girls. While we observe the growing popularity of

atypical bodies represented publicly, websites and social media profiles advising unhealthy, or even deadly eating and behavioral patterns abound. In a recent scandal, a whistle blower, Frances Haugen revealed, that Facebook (now: Meta) knew about several Instagram profiles promoting diets and lifestyle leading to severe eating disorders, such as anorexia, and did not close these accounts until the scandal was revealed.¹⁵ It should however be noted that teenagers are just a part, albeit extremely important, of social media users. It is therefore interesting to see, how with the growing preoccupation of what the adult eye should or should not see, the border between pornography and sensuality is blurred, at least this is one of Brian McNair's conclusions.

A very interesting example of a project allowing to situate the otherwise hardly ever present border between the pornographic and the nude or – as it might also be called – between the sexual and the sensual – is a recent series of photographs of the Warsaw based artist, Mariola Przyjemska (*Victoria's Secret*, 2019-20). In her psychogeographic walks around the city, she often visited Christian churches, and photographed the body of Christ, represented in paintings and sculptures. These images, meticulously framed and only rarely showing the face of Jesus, could very easily be confused with any Catholic saint's representations (of St Sebastian for example), but also with a contemporary or historical dead body in a morgue, possibly a victim of sexual crime; a woman's or intersexual body (as the gender of legs or arms is not clearly defined). With such a plethora of connections and interpretative possibilities, the body of Christ became a common denominator not just for all identities and genders, but also – for all those interested in rethinking the meaning of the body and sacrum. By offering this, Przyjemska made a great post-secular use of what stands as the most central and most important mystery of the Christian religion – the embodiment of God in human flesh. This religious secret becomes in her work once again an interesting and engaging problem, as her pictures inspired by it, open discussions of gender, embodiment, but also topics



5. Judy Chicago, *Red Flag*, 1971

6. Mariola Przyjemaska, *Victoria's Secret*, 2019–2020. Compliments of the artist

7. Mariola Przyjemaska, *Victoria's Secret*, 2019–2020. Compliments of the artist

such as sanctity and violence happening to various bodies, including those most holy. In today's discussions and conflicts surrounding gender and sexuality, and the trans- and non-binary persons and bodies in particular, the *Victoria's Secret* photographic series performs a fascinating role of respectfully opening a debate, which otherwise could easily become painful. For the Christian religion on the other hand, Przyjemska opens a new trajectory of becoming something, which it rarely is today – a peaceful common denominator for a contemporary debate, usually occupied with dogmatism or exclusions. Instead of this, Przyjemska's work becomes an opportunity for a Paulinian 'coming community' - for which – like Giorgio Agamben rightly claims – it does not matter whether one is a Christian or a Jew, a man or a woman, a Greek or a Roman...¹⁶

It always strikes me, how easily and how fast the naked woman becomes a naked body in male-dominated, patriarchal society. This happens in the musings on seduction, offered by Jean Baudrillard, it takes place in Agamben's *Nudity*, it is very central in George Bataille's *Erotics*, however in this last case, it is a part of a very meticulous, and I would argue also a very pertinent, adequate discussion of, the sexual act, in which the (male) subject emerges, while the (female) subject disappears, after being stripped – like in the case of Carl Schmitt's *enemy*, also in Bataille's analysis – of all its human characteristics. While in Bataille's work the dehumanization correctly depicts the patriarchal sexual act based on the violently unequal gender social contract, in Agamben it is a Freudian slip, revealing the extent to which the otherwise perfectly emancipated and egalitarian thinker is still thinking along the cruel, patriarchal lines.¹⁷ Agamben's depiction of Vanessa Beecraft's 2005 performance in Berlin focuses on the vulnerability of the fully dressed spectators walking between 100 almost naked women (wearing only transparent pantyhose). From my own, feminist perspective, it can be understood, that a man who grew up in Italy, surrounded by the canonic representations of the art historical, mainly female nudes represented solely to please

the audience, must be terrified seeing one hundred living women naked, but in a pose of full physical capacity, staring at him with a gaze suggesting possible action, not necessarily aimed at his pleasure, must be terrified. However the transition of his narrative, the move between 'women' and 'naked bodies' is to me even scarier, as it reveals the lively tendency mimicked by Bataille in his depiction of the sexual act and the disappearance of the woman in it in *Eroticisme*.

In the process of shaping gendered representations of human bodies in art history, adding 'more women' might actually end up with further perpetuation of gender inequality. This argument is today often being used against pornography, sex work and its various media representations of bodies and genders, as well, as against including trans-, queer-, non-binary, lesbian, gay and other non-normative nudity into the public visibility, as I would like to call the generalized areas of artistic representations, but also – media visibility, internet images and other elements of today's visual culture, in which they also function as elements of the public sphere. The public sphere should not be merely treated as 'what is outside of home,' neither should it be reduced to 'what is outside the buildings,' it should rather be seen as what Jurgen Habermas calls a debate of the common issues, accessible to all, or – as Kluge, Negt, Fraser, Warner and other authors describe as a debate of common issues, hegemonized by the male, white, privileged, straight minority.¹⁸ As we can already see, what I try to emphasize, following Rosalyn Deutsche and her wonderful analysis of public art from the nineties, is the discursive, conflicted, and active nature of the visual cultures, often presented a *de facto* impossible *universum* of some petrified images, which neither interact nor cause trouble (Deutsche, 1992). Just as in Deutsche's analysis, public art is one which questions the existing divisions between the private and the public, also the body representations subsume the role of activating or petrifying processes of representation, stabilization, consent making or conflict among different practices and visions of body politics. Therefore, they are also

susceptible to colonial processes of epistemic violence, which always complicate not just the discursive, but also the visual dimension of the representations of the subaltern, as Gayatri Spivak argues in *Can the Subaltern speak?*¹⁹ As she writes, “For the (gender-unspecified) »true« subaltern group, whose identity is its difference, there’s no unrepresentable subaltern subject that can know and speak itself; the intellectual’s solution is not to abstain from representation. (...) The woman of whom I will speak in this section was not a »true« subaltern, but a metropolitan middle class girl. (...) She was made to unspeak herself posthumously, by other women. In an earlier version of this chapter, I had summarized this historical indifference and its results as: the subaltern cannot speak.”²⁰

Spivak does not, and in fact never did, condemn the efforts of representation and/or its analysis. On the contrary, she argues – following Althusser in that matter – that a meticulous ideological work is always already present in such acts of constructing representation, as well as discussing it. Thus, as Karl Marx wrote in *The Capital* the commodity is just like the Shakespearean character, Quickly (*The Merry Wives of Windsor*), we can never be certain, which part of her exactly we grab.²¹ Spivak emphasizes, that “a postrepresentationist vocabulary hides an essentialist agenda,”²² thus proving, that ‘difference,’ just as the *homo sacer*, the proletarian or the refugee, is not ungendered, and undergoes a painful procedure of ideological differentiation. By installing *catachresis*, synecdoche or scripting ‘of the reproductive body’ Spivak also opens the possibility of escaping the binary narrative of men/women, however – as this binary itself contains elements of violence, its dismantlement cannot avoid certain amount of repeating.

An interesting connection between the body and representation, was made by Rene Magritte. In the painting *Representation*, from 1937, he offers a realistic image of the woman’s body, from just below the breast down to the middle of the thighs. As we might remember, Magritte only painted his wife, so what we see seems to be the belly, vagina and tights of *Georgette Berger*, in a

golden, simple frame, which in shape follows the body’s contour. As we know, the other painting of Magritte, The Treachery of Images from 1929 became the object of the painter’s discussion with Michel Foucault, who in his book Ceci n’est pas une pipe (This is not a pipe) beautifully deconstructed Magritte’s intention. Magritte’s reasoning is one far more similar to the critical deconstruction of ideology performed by Spivak and the other members of the Subaltern Studies Group – he does not say that representation does not exist, which is Foucault’s conclusion; he says something opposite – that within the operation of representation, several processes are present, including the word/image/object triad, which cannot be solved merely by the correspondence theory of truth, in which the accuracy between the words and the things is unproblematically taken as prima facie criterium of the quality of a statement. This unproblematic realism is undermined in any theory of suspicion, be it that of Marx or Freud, or any their followers. It also is central in feminist analysis, therefore also art history, however due to its preoccupation with gender, sometimes class, ethnicity and sexuality are less present or openly marginalized, and thus the white straight middle class women become THE subject of feminism.

The decolonial perspective, as useful and necessary as it is to preserve the somewhat denied autonomy of the oppressed subject, will not save us from the violent political epistemology of the hegemonic European Subject. It will allow us, however, to express, preserve and value the epistemology of the oppressed, as one shaped in the dialectic process of sublation of the plethora of oppressions. The decolonial perspective focuses on the subaltern by means of intended neglect of the oppressor. In my view, however, by claiming that the hegemonic subject does not exist, we might allow its strength to reemerge.

The art strategies organizing political uses of (female) nudity are obviously tacit hostages of the above mentioned conflicts at the core of representation debates. In the art historical field perhaps the most interesting theory allowing the location of these tensions,

was offered by Lynda Nead, who used the ancient term 'obscenity' to discuss the process of exclusion and resistance of certain bodily representations in the field of Western art history. The notion of obscene, meaning 'ex-cluded' or 'out-of scene,' as the word's etymology suggests, opens a common denominator for all those bodies, subjectivities and genders, which do not fit in the representation regimes of the West. Nead argues that this means for the contour of the woman's body in the painting, sculpture and later also other media to always be 'closed' (the exclusion of body liquids and vagina), and positioned in ways convenient for the male heteronormative viewer. Before feminism the women's bodies could not be presented as active or professional, with some minor exceptions for professions traditionally reserved for women. The similar exclusion is experienced by any non-normative bodies, and the exceptions in the art history only prove the general norm.

We can divide the acts of resistance to these norms of representation into those expressing vulnerability, as in Yoko Ono's performance *Cut Piece* from 1964, where the viewers are cutting pieces of the artist's clothes, while she patiently sits and allows her almost complete undressing. Another strategy focuses on the expression of disagreement, resistance and/or scandalization of the unequal norms of representation, as in Judy Chicago's *Red Flag* or the performative actions of the Ukrainian and international group Femen.

Femen's strategic nudity has been discussed by feminists, who are divided between those who think that these Ukrainian and international artists are following the patriarchal script of aesthetic canon, exposing mainly young, female bodies in their happenings, and those authors, who – like Lourdes Veneracion-Rallonza – see their actions as a successful feminist takeover of nudity, effectively employed to challenge structures of domination.²³ She explains that nudity has been strategically employed in protests as an act of resistance for many decades, and in various parts of the

world: "in the Philippines, 'undress' was a form of protest first used by Cordillera women against the Spanish colonizers in the sixteenth century. During a protest action against the building of the Chico Dam in the seventies, the Cordillera women bared themselves as a symbolic act with the intent of shaming the dam engineers into leaving the dam project behind."²⁴ Similar protests have been held in Cameroon, India and Nigeria. In Ukraine, Femen was first created to contest the sex tourism (albeit not sex work as such). The young women perform with bare breast also in other countries, like Belarus, where they protested against Lukashenko's dictatorship, in Poland (during the Euro 2012 Football Cup, held simultaneously in Poland and in Ukraine), France (after rapes of women by policemen in Tunisia in 2012) and Germany, where Femen's activists presented themselves around the surprised Chancellor, Olaf Scholz, to demand his support of Ukraine in the time of Russia's invasion in 2022. The group's members claim to be the new Amazon's, employing their bodies for the women's cause, sextremism for the women's rights. They fill in the 'Barbie woman' standard, depicted by Oksana Kis as one dominating Ukraine's politics since at least the former Prime Minister, Yulia Tymoshenko.²⁵ The Guardian journalist, Chitra Nagarajan, criticized Femen for cultural imposition of European values onto women of the Islamic countries. Their bare breasts offend some of the members of the Muslim communities, thus making it impossible to discuss the problem of violence against women and thus also building solidarity networks with women in these communities, not solely supporting them from the outside. While this argument is relevant, its author mistakes part of the group's activities for the whole thing and criticizes all Femen's actions based on a specific case, thus committing a *pars pro toto* mistake. The legitimacy and even effectivity of Femen's actions in Ukraine, Belarus and Poland, as well as those performed in other countries, but without any connection to religion, seem to be effectively supportive for the oppressed groups. The criticism of the group should therefore be more nuanced to better construct its arguments in the debates.

The female nude can be a threat to patriarchal norms and exclusions, but it can also become a problematic tool of incels and other agents of the misogynist *old regime*, targeting women in their supposedly emancipated lives, especially in the domain of sexuality. As many authors have argued, the internet has become a zone of stalking, harassment and abuse, regardless of the cyberfeminist optimism surrounding it in the nineties. Women's naked images and deep fakes, used predominantly against famous women, but also employed by the men harassing more ordinary colleagues, former lovers or complete strangers, become a difficult weapon, sometimes causing more damage to women's psychic lives than earlier forms of gender-based aggression. In the times of social media and online dating platforms, as well as expansive backups of any private information, sometimes regardless of the individual decision of the device's owners, leaks of personal information, including passwords, but also photographs and videos stored on machines and online repositories, such as iCloud, become women's worse nightmare. Kaley Cuoco, Scarlett Johansson, Alexandra Daddario, Miley Cyrus and so many other actresses have their nude images still floating in the internet. Many other women are threatened that such a leak might occur, if they do not surrender to threats. As I argued in *Feminist Antifascism*, these tendencies and problematic behaviors should not be seen as undermining the generally emancipatory developments in the field of women's nudity, sexuality and gender politics. They are symptoms of the inability of some men to adjust to recent changes in gender role social division, similar to those analyzed by Anthony Giddens in *The Transformations of Intimacy* from 1992. Just as in 1990, it was still difficult for some men to understand that their female partners have had other husbands or boyfriends before them, now it is absolutely impossible for some men to accept rejection.²⁶

Without a deeper reconstruction of the evolution of the feminist perspectives on nudity and pornography, it is hard to establish a feminist sex-positive view on nudity today. As this article

shows, there are multiple controversies concerning the uses and abuses of women's bodies in the visual public sphere, however it is clear that most of them if produced by feminist artists, activists and protestors, serve to dismantle the patriarchal power structures rather than to strengthen them. The subversive uses of nudity in activism have their laboratories in the form of emancipated pornography, as well as in feminist and queer art today. With some exceptions, they can be politically potent in deconstructing, subverting or overcoming the male dominance in visual culture, and furthermore – politics and society.

Notes

- ¹ Griselda Pollock, *Vision and Difference* (London: Routledge, 2010), 1.
- ² Jacek Sobczak, "Sztuka a pornografia," *Santander Art and Culture Law Review* 1(4) (2018): 21-44.
- ³ Robin Morgan, *Going Too Far: The Personal Chronicle of a Feminist* (New York: Random House, 1977).
- ⁴ See: Sobczak, "Sztuka a pornografia"; Ewa Majewska, *Sztuka jako pozór. Cenzura i inne formy upolitycznienia kultury* (Kraków: Korporacja Ha! Art, 2013).
- ⁵ Ann Snitow, Christine Stansell, and Sharon Thompson, eds., *Powers of Desire: The Politics of Sexuality* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1983).
- ⁶ Lisa Duggan, and Nan Hunter, *Sex Wars* (New York: Routledge, 2006).
- ⁷ Lisa Duggan, *The Twilight of Equality? Neoliberalism, Cultural Politics and the Attack on Democracy* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2003).
- ⁸ Theodor W. Adorno, *Critical Models. Interventions and Catchwords* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005).
- ⁹ See: Linda Williams, *Hard Core. Power, Pleasure and the „Frenzy of the Visible”* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999); Linda Williams, *Screening Sex* (London: Duke University Press, 2008).
- ¹⁰ Ewa Majewska, "Censored bodies, censored selves. Towards a feminist critique of neoliberal anti-porn legislations," *Transverse* 10 (2010): 51-57.
- ¹¹ Majewska, *Sztuka jako pozór. Cenzura i inne formy upolitycznienia kultury*.
- ¹² Jill Nagle, *Whores and other Feminists* (New York: Routledge, 1997).
- ¹³ Brian McNair, *Striptease Culture. Sex, Media and the democratization of Desire* (London: Routledge, 2002).
- ¹⁴ Jack Halberstam, *Gaga Feminism: Sex, Gender, and the End of Normal* (Boston, Ma: Beacon Press, 2012).
- ¹⁵ „Facebook knew Instagram was pushing girls to dangerous content: internal document," *CBS* 11 Dec 2022, accessed December 16, 2022, <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/facebook-instagram-dangerous-content-60-minutes-2022-12-11/>.
- ¹⁶ Giorgio Agamben, *The Coming Community* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007).
- ¹⁷ Georges Bataille, *L'Erotisme* (Paris: Editions du Minuit, 1957).
- ¹⁸ See: Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society* (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1991); Nancy Fraser, "Rethinking the Public Sphere: A Contribution to the Critique of Actually Existing Democracy," *Social Text*, no. 25/26/ (1990): 56-80; Michael Warner, *Publics and Counterpublics* (New York: Zone Books, 2002).
- ¹⁹ Gayatri Ch. Spivak, *A Critique of the Postcolonial Reason* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1999).
- ²⁰ *Ibidem*, 272-273.
- ²¹ Karl Marx, *The Capital, Volume 1: A Critique of Political Economy* (London: Penguin Classics, 1992).
- ²² Spivak, *A Critique of the Postcolonial Reason*, 271.
- ²³ Lourdes Veneracion-Rallonza, "Women's naked body protests and the performance of resistance: *Femen* and *Meira Paibi* protests against rape," *Philippine Political Science Journal* 35:2 (2014): 251-268.
- ²⁴ *Ibidem*, 256.
- ²⁵ Oksana Kis, "Beauty Will Save the World: Feminine Strategies in Ukrainian Politics and the Case of Yulia Tymoshenko," *Spaces of Identity* 7 (2) (2007): 31-75.
- ²⁶ See: Anthony Giddens, *The Transformation of Intimacy: Sexuality, Love and Eroticism in Modern Societies* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992); Angela Nagle, *Kill All Normies: Online Culture Wars from 4chan and Tumblr to Trump and the Alt-Right* (New York: Zero Books, 2017); Jen Schradie, *The Revolution That Wasn't: How Digital Activism Favors Conservatives* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2019).

Bibliography

- Adorno, Theodor W. *Critical Models. Interventions and Catchwords*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2005.
- Agamben, Giorgio. *The Coming Community*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007.
- Agamben, Giorgio. *Nudities*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2011.
- Austin, John L. *How to do things with words*. Oxford: At Clarendon Press, 1962.
- Bataille, Georges. *L'Erotisme*. Paris: Editions du Minuit, 1957.
- „Facebook knew Instagram was pushing girls to dangerous content: internal document,” *CBS* 11 Dec 2022. Accessed December 16, 2022. <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/facebook-instagram-dangerous-content-60-minutes-2022-12-11/>.
- Deutsche, Rosalyn. “Art and Public Space: Questions of Democracy.” *Social Text* 33 (1992): 34-53.
- Duggan, Lisa. *The Twilight of Equality? Neoliberalism, Cultural Politics and the Attack on Democracy*. Boston: Beacon Press, 2003.
- Duggan, Lisa, and Nan Hunter. *Sex Wars*. New York: Routledge, 2006.
- Fraser, Nancy. “Rethinking the Public Sphere: A Contribution to the Critique of Actually Existing Democracy.” *Social Text*, no. 25/26/ (1990): 56-80.
- Giddens, Anthony. *The Transformation of Intimacy: Sexuality, Love and Eroticism in Modern Societies*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992.
- Habermas, Jürgen. *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*. Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1991.
- Halberstam, Jack. *Gaga Feminism: Sex, Gender, and the End of Normal*. Boston, Ma: Beacon Press, 2012.
- Kis, Oksana. “Beauty Will Save the World: Feminine Strategies in Ukrainian Politics and the Case of Yulia Tymoshenko.” *Spaces of Identity* 7 (2) (2007): 31-75.
- Majewska, Ewa. “Censored bodies, censored selves. Towards a feminist critique of neoliberal anti-porn legislations.” *Transverse* 10 (2010): 51-57.
- Majewska, Ewa. *Sztuka jako pozór. Cenzura i inne formy upolitycznienia kultury*. Kraków: Korporacja Ha! Art, 2013.
- Majewska, Ewa. “Censorship as the Formative Mechanism of Neoliberal Culture?: The Productive Function of Prohibition.” *Polish Theatre Journal*, 1-2 (3-4) (2017). <https://www.polishtheatrejournal.com/index.php/ptj/article/view/92/637>.
- Marx, Karl. *The Capital, Volume 1: A Critique of Political Economy*. London: Penguin Classics, 1992.
- McNair, Brian. *Striptease Culture. Sex, Media and the democratization of Desire* London: Routledge, 2002.
- Nagle, Angela. *Kill All Normies: Online Culture Wars from 4chan and Tumblr to Trump and the Alt-Right*. New York: Zero Books, 2017.
- Nagle, Jill. *Whores and other Feminists* New York: Routledge, 1997.
- Morgan, Robin. *Going Too Far: The Personal Chronicle of a Feminist*. New York: Random House, 1977.
- Pollock, Griselda. *Vision and Difference* London: Routledge, 2010.
- Schradie, Jen. *The Revolution That Wasn't: How Digital Activism Favors Conservatives*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2019.
- Snitow, Ann, Christine Stansell, and Sharon Thompson, eds., *Powers of Desire: The Politics of Sexuality*. New York: Monthly Review Press, 1983.
- Sobczak, Jacek. “Sztuka a pornografia.” *Santander Art and Culture Law Review* 1(4) (2018): 21-44.
- Spivak, Gayatri Ch. *A Critique of the Postcolonial Reason*. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1999.
- Veneracion-Rallonza, Lourdes. “Women's naked body protests and the performance of resistance: *Femen* and *Meira Paibi* protests against rape.” *Philippine Political Science Journal* 35:2 (2014): 251-268.
- Warner, Michael. *Publics and Counterpublics*. New York: Zone Books, 2002.
- Williams, Linda. *Hard Core. Power, Pleasure and the „Frenzy of the Visible”*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999.
- Williams, Linda. *Screening Sex*. London: Duke University Press, 2008.

Katarzyna PASTUSZAK

Department of Performing Arts, Institute of English and American Studies,
University of Gdańsk

NAKED CARE: EXPLORATIONS OF NAKED PERFORMANCE AND QUEER POLITICAL GESTURES

In lieu of an introduction

I am a forty-two-year-old woman. I am white, Polish, European, educated, homosexual, the daughter of Elizabeth and granddaughter of Wanda. I stand naked. I stand next to Natalia Chylińska— my partner in life-art. It is the ending of our performance at the Festival of Naked Forms 8 in Gdańsk, October 5, 2022. Our bodies—gendered, female, non-heteronormative, queer—are covered with patchouli oil and soil. I am naked-with, naked in relation, attempting to activate the common space of shared relationality.¹ I am holding a container made of transparent glass. It is filled with dark soil and human hair – my pubic hair and Natalia’s head hair which we cut for each other during the performance. A humid earthy and sweet smell embraces us. I contain and carry, I am carried and contained by the performative action of the nudity-in-flux that continues its hidden life with/in the ecosystem of interrelations and entanglements. The object that I am holding is

not a flag of protest, and the nakedness that I am exposing is not a fist in the air accompanied by a fierce protest song. It is the vulnerability of the private and intimate body that demands attention and invites new modes of co-existence based on care and recognition of differences that lie at the heart of the uncontainable multiplicity of human and non-human worlds.

From black flag to soft political gestures

In 2018 I wrote an article titled *#MyBlackVenusProtest*. The article summarised a series of naked performances and actions that were part of the Black Venus Protest project.² In the opening of the article, I chose a moment from one of the BVP performances as a frame for situating myself at the intersection of the private and the public, the political and the corporeal, the subjective, the collective, the symbolic. I wrote:

I am a woman. A Polish woman. My mother bore me in Gdańsk, in the hospital on Kliniczna street, on the 16th of August 1980, at 6:50 a.m. Two kilometres away, in the Vladimir Lenin Shipyard in Gdańsk, a strike was going on. Thirty-seven years later I stand naked, facing what is left of the Shipyard, facing the greyness and the lazy movement of the sun that pierces the clouds. I am holding a black flag.³

Being naked and holding a black flag in the BVP performances was a clear political gesture of resistance against the oppression targeted at women in Poland and elsewhere. These performances “supported the Black Protests and women’s strikes by transferring them in the sphere of visual arts, and thus bringing the Polish movement of feminist counter-audience into the global women’s solidarity movement.”⁴

Four years later, in 2022, when developing the score for the FNAF8 performance, together with Natalia Chylińska, we questioned the very possibility of making a political gesture and began searching beyond the “conventional forms and gestures of political activism: a fist in the air, a demonstrator holding a placard, people assembling for a march or a sit-in.”⁵ Understanding that “the power of the political field that operates according to the principles of domination, power, and progress, results in the dominance of representations of resistance and protest based on the use of force.”⁶ Hence, we asked ourselves – How can we talk about violence and resist oppressive structures without reproducing violence and without multiplying violent imagery? How can we confront what we called ‘the inner politician’ in us, who tries to convince us that tenderness and care (of queer subjects) cannot be a political gesture? We also asked – How can we can “be political by means of performance in the context of representative democracy as the ruling political system in Europe”⁷ and in the current socio-political context, i.e., the ongoing Russian

invasion in Ukraine (violations of human rights, including cases of sexual and gender-based violence and the use of mass rape as a weapon of war⁸); the anti-government protests in Iran where Iranian women were shaving off their hair in a gesture of protest, grief and anger;⁹ the continuous attempts in Poland of the leading party PiS (Law and Justice) to further limit women’s rights and tighten abortion laws, which are among the strictest in the EU.

Assuming that performance itself is “a repository of critical and resistant knowledge,”¹⁰ we decided to explore the caring “minor gesture”¹¹ – a gesture that can shape Rancière’s “common sensorium”¹² and whose political potential may lie in the fact that it activates a field of relations and marks “a space of cohabitation where differences are cultivated and produced.”¹³ Focusing on this minor gesture and using the shape-shifting potential of relational movement, we attempted to create “a space of democracy that is empty, inviting the public to engage in inventing the people who populate it and create the social imaginary.”¹⁴

Performance score and relational movements and gestures

Meanwhile, I would like to briefly outline the score of the performance and point out several traces that can accompany us in the explorations into politicality of performance.

Performance outline (K is for Katarzyna, N is for Natalia) [Fig. 7–15]:

- K and N enter the space. K – carrying a transparent glass container with soil, N – carrying a transparent glass container with patchouli oil and scissors.
- Place glass containers on the floor, stand face to face (soft eye-contact), undress.
- Stand naked face to face (soft eye-contact).
- K puts the soil from the glass container on the floor.
- N kneels in front of the heap of soil and gives scissors to K who kneels next to her.
- K cuts N's head hair and places hair wisps on the soil heap.
- When N's hair is very short, K puts the scissors on the floor and takes the oil container and covers N's head with patchouli oil.
- K ends the oiling, stands up with her pelvis facing N.
- N takes the scissors and cuts K's pubic hair, placing hair wisps on the soil heap.
- When K's pubic hair is very short, N puts the scissors on the floor and covers with patchouli oil K's pubis, groins, thighs, underbelly, hips.
- K and N move towards the heap of soil and hair; K and N place their bodies on the heap in a position, in which the bodies are closely intertwined like a knot, forming an image of an entanglement.
- K and N smear the oil and the soil with their hair onto their bodies, moving slowly and gently, keeping the eye contact. Finally, they stop the movements. A moment of silence.
- K and N stand up and leave the PATIO.

The performance score was based on relational movements, gestures of care and offering one's vulnerability to other(s) – the other performer, the witnesses, who were with us in the PATIO space of the Academy of Fine Arts in Gdańsk. We handled the objects (scissors, glass containers, soil) and each other with care, delicacy, and attention. We carried out physical practices of the everyday such as cutting the hair, oiling the body, holding each other in a firm embrace with an intention of creating a common safe space. We realised that placing oneself naked in the hands of another person who has a sharp tool is a gesture of trust but also a step into uncertainty. As highlighted by Natalia Chylińska, “exposing and experiencing a body that is naked, vulnerable, caring, and longing for care and protection, is about placing oneself in a state of uncertainty – uncertainty about the power of the gesture, uncertainty about its agency and political potential.”¹⁵ It is a state, in which the internalised structures of patriarchy shake, and it is by entering the state of uncertainty that we create space for new caring gestures of protest that do not reproduce political gestures based on the demonstration of force, violence, self-violence, destruction, self-destruction.”¹⁶

Let us not forget also that hair holds a special place in Polish and Slavic traditional culture and folk rituals, where it was associated with the magical and ritual sphere and “(...) commonly regarded as a carrier of life forces, vitality and energy.”¹⁷ Hair also functioned as a denominator of the social status and played a key role in the rites of passage, reflecting the relationships between the individual and a larger group/community.¹⁸ “Destroying, combing, or cutting hair, including shaving it, were among the gestures with a strong ritual and religious character. They signified a ritual death”¹⁹ of an individual and his/her passage into the realm of the new social status. It is in the light of these connotations that we intended the performance score to be a form of ‘fake ritual,’ whereby the nudity and the act of cutting each other's pubic and head hair, followed by placing/planting them

in the soil, serve as elements of our personal rite of passage towards visibility – whereby we become caring queer subjects, exposing naked care and creating “queer time and space”²⁰ for non-binary and non-normative relationality to sprout outside the paradigm of birth, marriage, reproduction and death. In a gesture of trust, we entrust the cut hair to one another, we entrust a part of ourselves. Additionally, to transform this potentially aggressive act into a caring gesture we encased the act of cutting in a series of tender gestures and small movements that enabled us to project the intention of care and empathy, and to activate performative feedback between us and the witnesses, a circulation of attention and attentiveness, a sense of cohabiting a safe space, in which we are breathing together. In this space, the physical and emotional closeness and vulnerability of intimate naked bodies emerged as a gesture of protest against the public sphere and its system of order and oppression. Following the act of cutting the pubic and head hair we covered these areas with patchouli oil that has protective and nourishing properties and is used for healing wounds. The oil was used “to create an actual, yet transparent and sticky, protective layer in the areas that were exposed, with the intention of healing the wounds that are not physical.”²¹ As if the act of oiling one another was able to heal our invisible and silenced queer subjectivity, by bringing it to a full pronouncement in the public/institutional space of the Art Academy. A sensual and sensuous encounter, in which proximity and the physical and emotional aspects of touch, shape intimacy and open a space for a collective socio-political body of doers and witnesses to emerge and move and indulge in the intimate sensory experience. The gaze of the witnesses is following the slow movement of the hands as they spread the oil on one another, making the naked bodies glitter, as if the affects and sensations were coming to the surface – a sticky, sweaty, oily, substance of attraction and desire. The gaze traces the hands, joins them in their tender passages along the lines of muscles, the folds, curves, surfaces, points where

the fingertips sense the fascia sliding under the skin. The doers and witnesses join in a “dance of attention,”²² through which the normative and non-normative identities can come together in a gesture of care, resistance and pleasure.

As I return to the simple structure and the organic flow of our performance, I see two bodies in motion and am immediately reminded of Erin Manning’s passage on relational movements and their often-ungraspable politicality. The movements of these two bodies create the space, they are agents of body-worlding.²³ These two bodies “stand close, facing one another, reaching-toward an embrace that will signal an acceleration of the movement that has always already begun. The movement within becomes a movement without, not internal-external, but folding and bridging in an intensity of preacceleration. (...) Our embrace quickens the molecules that compose us. An adaptation occurs—we begin to recompose. Volumes, always more than one, emerge from surfaces, recombining with lines, folding, bridging, knotting. This coming-together proposes a combination of form-forces where preacceleration potentially finds passage. (...) To move together, the connection must be alive. As they move, they reconnect. Call it a relational shape-shifting.”²⁴ The relational movements of “the two of us moving together—provides a glimpse into the ways in which movement creates the potential for unthinking dichotomies that populate our worlds: abstract-concrete, organic-prosthetic, alive-dead, mind-body, actual-virtual, man-woman. It’s not that movement directly undermines these dialectical concepts. It’s that movement allows us to approach them from another perspective: a shifting one. When we are no longer still, the world lives differently.”²⁵

Our naked vulnerable bodies in motion shape-shift the binary oppositions and invite new combinations of experience-in-motion and experience-in-relation, and “the micropolitical potential of its in-betweenness.”²⁶ In this coming-together and moving-together of two bodies, “(...) a politics is made palpable whereby what is produced is the potential for divergent series of movements. This is a virtual politics, a politics

of the not-yet. In-forming analogously to the interval, these politics of touch are substantial but ungraspable. These are not politics we can choreograph but politics in the making. These are politics not of the body, but of the many becoming one, increased by one. The body-in-deformation is a multiplying sensing body in movement: many potential bodies exist in a singular body. These are politics of that many-bodied state of transition that is the collective.”²⁷

Seeds of minor political gestures

Between May and September 2021, I undertook several performative actions that later fed into the FNAF8 performance. On the one hand, these actions were part of the artistic research project *Anatomies of the Process* that I carried out with Natalia Chylińska.²⁸ On the other hand, they were part of my personal process of healing the wounds of sexual abuse and reworking elements of this experience via performative practice, as well as exploring the theme of gender identity. These actions were a mode of “re-membering”²⁹ and healing by the means of revisiting personal hurt and exploring my “material geo-neuro-biography.”³⁰

The first of these actions took place on May 31, 2021 and was witnessed and documented by Natalia Chylińska [Fig. 1–4]. The action comprised cutting my pubic hair and securing the hair in a hand-folded paper envelope. I carried out the action in my apartment in Gdańsk using scissors and a thick grey A4 paper. I began sitting naked on a chair. I placed the paper between my legs, so the pubic hair that I was cutting would fall on the paper. I was cutting the hair in a slow and caring manner. “Careful and caring in the act of taking care of”³¹ myself. Touching the genitals and making the vulva more visible by cutting the hair that covered it. I was trying to push my fingers deep into my own flesh, touching the pubic bone, softly pulling at the skin that covers my pubis and my groins, digging into the layers of skin, muscle tissue, fascia, nervous tissue, folding and

unfolding the labia. My fingertips wanted to see thorough the cartilaginous pubic symphysis, investigate the uterus, tubes, ovaries, and vagina. My primary concern was to reconnect with and care for a site in my body that has been violated and the borders of which were trespassed at numerous occasions. While continuing the act of cutting the hair, I kept reconnecting also with the concrete geographic location where the sexual assault took place, namely the Jaśkowa Dolina Park in Gdańsk-Wrzeszcz. The act of cutting my pubic hair with an intention of reconnecting with the location and the experience of being raped, became - using an anatomical metaphor - a connective tissue bridging the present and the past, and opening them into the future via a minor gesture³² of caring for my intimate story and securing a material element of myself - pubic hair - in a hand-folded envelope, for future empathic engagements. It was “an embodied practice of re-membering - which is not about going back to what was, but rather about the material reconfiguring of spacetime mattering in ways that attempt to do justice to account for the devastation wrought as well as to produce openings, new possible histories by which time-beings might find ways to endure.”³³ In this sense, the minor gesture of caring for my intimate story and securing a material element of myself is “the activator, the carrier, (...) the *agencement* that draws the event into itself. It moves the nonconscious toward the conscious, makes felt the unsayable in the said, brings into resonance field effects otherwise backgrounded in experience. It is the forward-force capable of carrying the affective tonality of nonconscious resonance and moving it toward the articulation, edging into consciousness, of new modes of existence.”³⁴

Hence, the action carried out on the May 31, 2021 that encompassed a gesture of self-caring, as well as unfolding and folding of the self and matter, was also an act of detaching myself from my own hurt and opening my “isolated, autonomic, anthropocentric and agential »I«”³⁵ to a complex process of mourning understood as a “political embodied labour,”³⁶ that creates new

entanglements with the world. In this sense, “the conjunction between the minor gesture and life-living is a political ecology that operates on the level of the in-act, asking at every juncture what else life could be.”³⁷

The second action that grew out of the above-described process was a continuation of the embodied and political mourning process, in which I attempted to untangle my relationship with the actual location of the sexual assault (Jaškowa Dolina Park in Gdańsk-Wrzeszcz) and find new openings and new entanglements with life that could be born of minor gestures.

On June 30, 2021 I revisited the Jaškowa Dolina Park in Gdańsk-Wrzeszcz to reconnect with the landscape that I associate with violence and loss, and symbolically heal it. [Fig. 5–6]

My visit at the site was part of the long-duration performative walk carried out as part of the *Anatomies of the Process* project created by me and Natalia Chylińska. The performative walk encompassed a journey through Gdańsk during which me and Natalia revisited places that are of special importance to us and interacted with them. We also collected stones from each of the places/sites we interacted with, a material fragment of the place, and we labelled each with a word or phrase that for us resonated with this place or with our experience of this place.

Together with Natalia Chylińska, we pushed a table into the woods of Jaškowa Dolina Park and arrived at the small clearing – the exact site of the sexual assault. This is where I decided to plant the pubic hair I cut on May 31. I found a stone on the edge of the clearing. I lifted it in a caring manner, dug a hole with my bare hands and placed the pubic hair from the paper envelope in the ground, buried it, and then covered it with the stone. A minor gesture of planting a material part of myself in a place where another part of me has been lost, muted, fragmented, and violated by means of a brutal gesture of assault. This gesture was accompanied by the wish for the hair to grow, to be like seeds that can germinate or become a fertilizer for the growth of other lives. New entanglements.

The continuum

The gestures that emerged in the performative actions described above were transformed by me and Natalia Chylińska and became part of the score of our FNAF8 performance, calling forth the ecology of which they were part and creating new relational fields. The performance was a condensation of a long-term process into several gestures and movements that bring forth an actual change. The act of entrusting the other(s) with one’s nudity, vulnerability, and uncertainty is a practice of relationality that broadens the field of political gestures and opens new potentialities for collective acts of nurturing minor narratives and fostering non-dominant modalities of protest. The practice of naked care is about personalising the political questions, bringing them into the microscale of an individual person and their ecology, asking oneself – What do I need in my personal process of protesting? What alliances can help me foster care and “response-ability”?³⁸ What new entanglements can my caring and careful gestures activate and what new human and non-human configurations do they create?



1



2



3



4

1, 2, 3, 4. Katarzyna Pastuszek
intimate ritual, 31.05.2021, Gdańsk
Phot. Natalia Chylińska



5, 6. Katarzyna Pastuszek and Natalia Chylińska – long-duration performance *Anatomies of the Process*, 30.06.2021, Jaśkowa Dolina Gdańsk, Phot. Vero Szafran



Katarzyna Pastuszak and Natalia Chylińska – unfitted performance, Festival of Naked Art Forms 8, Academy of Fine Arts Gdańsk – PATIO, 5.10.2022

Notes

¹ Judith Butler, "Precarious Life, Vulnerability, and the Ethics of Cohabitation," *Journal of Speculative Philosophy*, vol. 26, no. 2 (2012): 134-151.

² Black Venus Protest – a project initiated in 2016 by the Polish artists Magdalena Mellin and Monika Wińczyk in co-operation with the Colombian artistic collective Caldode Cultivo (Unai Reglero, Gabriela Córdoba Vivas, Guillermo Camacho). The project was produced by Łąźnia Centre for Contemporary Art of Gdańsk (Poland), within the framework of the European project *Artecitya.eu Envisioning the City of Tomorrow*. In 2017 and 2018 BVP was realised in Gdańsk and Gdynia and encompassed a series of performative interventions/protests in the public space carried out by BVP group I (2017) – Magdalena Mellin, Monika Wińczyk, Katarzyna Pastuszek, Magda Doborzyńska, Agnieszka Sprawka and BVP group II (2018) Katarzyna Lewandowska, Monika Wińczyk, Joanna Krysiak, Vanessa Szymikowska, Katarzyna Lewandowska, Magdalena Mellin. See katarzyna lewandowska, "Why Do We Need Women's Freedom? Feminist Artistic Activism Against Power. Anarcho-Porn-Resistance (Anarchopornopór)," *Sztuka i Dokumentacja* (Art and Documentation) no. 25 (2021): 279-292.

³ Katarzyna Pastuszek, "My #BlackVenusProtest," *Artecitya. Artist Residencies as a Process of Mutual Learning* (Gdańsk: ŁAZNIA Center for Contemporary Art, 2018), 46.

⁴ *Ibidem*, 55.

⁵ Claire Bishop, "Rise to The Occasion. Claire Bishop on the art of political timing," *Artforum*, vol. 57, 9(2019), accessed January 12, 2023, <https://www.artforum.com/print/201905/claire-bishop-on-the-art-of-political-timing-79512>.

⁶ Natalia Chylińska, Conversation with the author, 12 January 2023.

⁷ Ana Vujanović, Livia Andrea Piazza, "Introduction: People Are Missing..." *A Live Gathering: Performance and Politics in Contemporary Europe* (Berlin: b-books, 2019), 13.

⁸ The allegations of a "systemic, coordinated campaign of sexual violence by Russian forces" were voiced in late March/early April 2022, after the initial period of the Russian invasion of Ukraine. See. Bethan McKernan, "Rape as a weapon: huge scale of sexual violence inflicted in Ukraine emerges," *The Guardian*, accessed January 15, 2023, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/apr/03/all-wars-are-like-this-used-as-a-weapon-of-war-in-ukraine>.

⁹ The outburst of protests in Iran were caused by the death of Mahsa Amini. Amini was arrested by Iran's morality police for allegedly violating the country's strict Islamic dress code and died in the custody. Amini's death was internationally condemned and triggered numerous acts of solidarity across the globe, including female politicians and celebrities who symbolically cut off their hair in a gesture of solidarity with Iranian women. See. Celine Alkhalidi, Nadeen Ebrahim, *Grief, protest and power: Why Iranian women are cutting their hair*, accessed: January 4, 2023, <https://edition.cnn.com/2022/09/28/middleeast/iran-hair-cutting-mime-intl/index.html>.

¹⁰ Ana Vujanović, Livia Andrea Piazza, "Introduction: People Are Missing..." *A Live Gathering: Performance and Politics in Contemporary Europe* (Berlin: b-books, 2019), 15.

¹¹ "Minor gesture" – a term devised by Erin Manning and analysed by her in the book *The Minor Gesture*. Manning develops the concept of the minor gesture by analysing it from a variety of theoretical perspectives including art criticism, critical theory, and literary analysis and insights into the practice and experience of the minor gesture that open new possibilities of understanding politics, art, agency, and resistance. Manning situates the minor gesture in opposition to major/grand gestures, rooted in discourses and narratives of the majority and by linking it to Deleuze and Guattari's schizoanalysis, explores its potential to shift power relations and introduce social change by altering perception and allowing the emergence of new ways of living and expression. See. Erin Manning, *The Minor Gesture* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2016).

¹² Ana Vujanović, "Notes on the Politicality of Contemporary Dance," *Dance, Politics & Co-Immunity. Current Perspectives on Politics and Communities in the Arts*, Vol. 1, eds. Stefan Hölscher and Gerald Siegmund, Berlin: Diaphnes (2013): 181-191.

¹³ *Ibidem*.

¹⁴ *Ibidem*.

¹⁵ Natalia Chylińska, Conversation with the author, 12 January 2023.

¹⁶ Natalia Chylińska, Conversation with the author, 12 January 2023.

¹⁷ Anna Figiel, "Symbolika włosów w polskiej kulturze ludowej," *Zeszyty Wiejskie*, no. 23 (2017): 126. See also: Anna Targońska, "Symbolika włosów i manipulowanie włosami w kulturze ludowej," *Lud* no. 82 (1998): 157-176.

¹⁸ Anna Figiel, "Symbolika włosów w polskiej kulturze ludowej," *Zeszyty Wiejskie*, no. 23 (2017).

¹⁹ *Ibidem*, 128-129.

²⁰ Judith Jack Halberstam, *In a Queer Time and Space. Transgender Bodies, Subcultural Lives* (New York and London: NY University Press, 2005).

²¹ Natalia Chylińska, Conversation with the author, 12 January 2023.

²² Tsing,

²³ Erin Manning, *Relationscapes: Movement, Art, Philosophy* (Cambridge and London: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2019).

- ²⁴ Erin Manning, *Relationships: Movement, Art, Philosophy* (Cambridge and London: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2019), 13.
- ²⁵ *Ibidem*, 14-15.
- ²⁶ *Ibidem*, 28.
- ²⁷ *Ibidem*, 27.
- ²⁸ *Anatomies of the Process* – an artistic project created by Katarzyna Pastuszek and Natalia Chylińska in 2021, financed from the funds of the City of Gdańsk within the “Artistic Scholarship” programme.
- ²⁹ Karen Barad, “Troubling time/s and ecologies of nothingness: re-turning, re-membering, and facing the incalculable,” *New Formations* 92(2017): 56-86, accessed January 12, 2023, <https://doi.org/10.3898/NEWF:92.05.2017>.
- ³⁰ *Ibidem*, 83.
- ³¹ Erin Manning, *The Minor Gesture* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2016), 73.
- ³² *Ibidem*.
- ³³ Karen Barad, “Troubling time/s and ecologies of nothingness: re-turning, re-membering, and facing the incalculable,” *New Formations* 92(2017): 63, accessed January 12, 2023, <https://doi.org/10.3898/NEWF:92.05.2017>.
- ³⁴ *Ibidem*, 7.
- ³⁵ Monika Rogowska-Stangret, *Być ze świata* (Gdańsk: słowo/obraz terytoria, 2021), 77.
- ³⁶ Karen Barad, “Troubling time/s and ecologies of nothingness: re-turning, re-membering, and facing the incalculable,” *New Formations* 92(2017): 70, accessed January 12, 2023, <https://doi.org/10.3898/NEWF:92.05.2017>.
- ³⁷ Erin Manning, *The Minor Gesture* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2016), 8.
- ³⁸ “Response-ability” – a concept that lies at the core of a post-anthropocentric feminist ethics, broadly discussed by such theorists as Donna Haraway, Vinciane Despret, Katharina Hoppe, Karen Barad, Hanna Meissner, Natasha Myers, Monika Rogowska-Stangret, among others. See Bibliography to this article.

Bibliography

- Alkhalidi, Celine, and Nadeen Ebrahim. *Grief, protest and power: Why Iranian women are cutting their hair*. Accessed January 4, 2023. <https://edition.cnn.com/2022/09/28/middleeast/iran-hair-cutting-mime-intl/index.html>.
- Barad, Karen. “Troubling time/s and ecologies of nothingness: re-turning, re-membering, and facing the incalculable.” *New Formations* 92(2017): 56-86. Accessed January 12, 2023. <https://doi.org/10.3898/NEWF:92.05.2017>.
- Barad, Karen. *Meeting the Universe Halfway. Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2014.
- Bishop, Claire. “Rise to The Occasion. Claire Bishop on the art of political timing.” *Artforum*, vol. 57, no. 9(2019). Accessed January 12, 2023. <https://www.artforum.com/print/201905/claire-bishop-on-the-art-of-political-timing-79512>.
- Butler, Judith. “Precarious Life, Vulnerability, and the Ethics of Cohabitation.” *Journal of Speculative Philosophy*, vol. 26, no. 2(2012): 134-151.
- Despret, Vinciane. *What would animals say if we asked the right questions?* Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2016.
- Figiel, Anna. “Symbolika włosów w polskiej kulturze ludowej.” *Zeszyty Wiejskie*, no. 23 (2017): 125-137.
- Halberstam, Judith Jack. *In a Queer Time and Space. Transgender Bodies, Subcultural Lives*. New York and London: NY University Press, 2005.
- Haraway, Donna. *Staying with the trouble: Making kin in the Chthulucene*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2016.
- Hoppe, Katharina. “Responding as composing: Toward a postanthropocentric, feminist ethics in the Anthropocene.” *Distinktion: Journal of Social Theory* (published online 20.05.2019): 125-142. Accessed January 10, 2023. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1600910X.2019.1618360>.

Lewandowska, Katarzyna. "Why Do We Need Women's Freedom? Feminist Artistic Activism Against Power. Anarcho-Porn-Resistance (Anarchopornopór)." *Sztuka i Dokumentacja* (Art and Documentation) no. 25 (2021): 279-292.

Manning, Erin. *The Minor Gesture*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2016.

Manning, Erin. *Relationscapes: Movement, Art, Philosophy*. Cambridge and London: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2019.

Meissner, Hanna. "Politics as encounter and response-ability. Learning to converse with enigmatic others." *Artnodes* no. 14 (2014). Accessed January 10, 2023. <https://raco.cat/index.php/Artnodes/article/view/n14-meissner>.

McKernan, Bethan. "Rape as a weapon: huge scale of sexual violence inflicted in Ukraine emerges." *The Guardian*. Accessed January 15, 2023. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/apr/03/all-wars-are-like-this-used-as-a-weapon-of-war-in-ukraine>.

Pastuszek, Katarzyna. "My #BlackVenusProtest." *Artecija. Artist Residencies as a Process of Mutual Learning*, 46-55. Gdańsk: LAZNIA Center for Contemporary Art, 2018.

Rogowska-Stangret, Monika. *Być ze świata*. Gdańsk: słowo/obraz terytoria, 2021.

Targońska, Anna. "Symbolika włosów i manipulowanie włosami w kulturze ludowej." *Lud*, no. 82 (1998): 157-176.

Vujanović, Ana. "Notes on the Politicality of Contemporary Dance." *Dance, Politics & Co-Immunity. Current Perspectives on Politics and Communities in the Arts*, Vol. 1, eds. Stefan Hölscher, and Gerald Siegmund, 181-191. Berlin: Diaphnes, 2013.

Vujanović, Ana, and Livia Andrea Piazza. "Introduction: People Are Missing...." *A Live Gathering: Performance and Politics in Contemporary Europe*, 8-22. Berlin: b-books, 2019.

FNAF 8

**EXPORT
GDANSK
FESTIVAL**

illustrations[©]

Photo Marek Zygmunt



Tomáš Ruller & Darina Alster



Martin Zet



Dariusz Fodczuk



Dariusz Fodczuk



Joanna Czajkowska



Joanna Czajkowska



Sadie Vell



Sadie Vell



Emilia Rodziewicz



Emilia Rodziewicz



Darina Alster

Ptaki wylatują z mojego serca
 Staram się to schować pod kurtką
 Ale one po prostu tam są
 A kiedy nikt nie patrzy
 Latają tam i spowrotem
 Chyba zrobiły we mnie gniazdo
 I wywiodą młode...
 W ruinach starego świata
 Wyrasta nowy świat

Ze srdce mi vylétávají ptáci
 Snažím se to skrýt pod bundou,
 Ale jsou prostě tam
 A když se nikdo nedívá
 Létají dovnitř a ven.
 Asi si ve mně udělali hnízdo
 A vyvedou mladé...
 V troskách starého světa
 Vzniká nový svět

Darina Alster



Katarzyna Pastuszak / Natalia Chylińska



Katarzyna Pastuszak / Natalia Chylińska



Lenka Klodová



Lenka Klodová

Lenka Klodová

WVA

RRIAA

Jana ORLOVÁ

Silesian University in Opava

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN VISUAL PERFORMANCE AND THEATRE. THE QUESTION OF GENRE IDENTITY

The question of the difference between theatre and performance art in the context of visual art is only rarely directly stated, but it is all the more controversial. In the world of visual art and theatre, there are different opinions not only about the differences between the two genres, but also about what performance is. I am well aware of what a complex and insufficiently explored space I am entering here, but still I believe that my effort is a contribution to a discussion that needs to be opened. The present study focuses primarily on comparing the position of the performer and the actor while also taking into account the different histories and institutional backgrounds of the two art forms. It also constitutes an attempt at pointing out a certain vacuum that exists in the field of defining performance art.

It is of course impossible fully to describe such a fundamental and extensive topic within the space available in a single study. Therefore, I will try to capture the most important points of departure through a thematic ordering that I consider essential, deliberately leaving aside e.g. the connections with literature (slam poetry, etc.) or group delegated performance (i.e. performance performed by someone other than its author,

delegated to someone else): in my opinion, such a genre finds itself at the almost perfect interface between performance art and theatre. Nor is it possible at this point exhaustively to take into account all theoretical perspectives on both performance and theatre and to confront them.¹ my view is therefore selective, but its selectivity is purposeful. In this study I draw on visual art theory and primarily deal with performance in its context, from which my interpretive code is also derived: that is to say, I do not interpret performance through theatrical perspectives, but through the code of visual art. As a result, for example, I do not emphasise the position of the spectator, which is crucial for theatre but not for performance (as I will outline below). I depart from the assumption that performance (in the sense of performance art) is part of the visual arts, and my aim is not to establish clearly defined boundaries for the art form, but to propose a distinguishing principle that can be applied as a scale.

I have come to my conclusions through the study of primary and secondary literature, and interviews with artists from both disciplines, as well as theatre theorists and critics who were willing to give me their time.² In addition, my conclusions

are influenced by my position as an active artist, which has also given me the opportunity for direct comparison with the international scene. I consider this 'double position' an advantage; as much as it is possible to write about performance art from a purely theoretical point of view, it is an artistic field that is based on live action. For the purposes of this study, I have also sought out direct experience from the side of the theatre: I attended rehearsals of a production with performance elements, briefly tried out the role of an actress in an experimental theatre project, and took part in dialogic acting classes for beginners and advanced students.

Over the past few years, theoretical-critical reflections on the field have, with a few exceptions, been written by the performers themselves or 'ideologically' tuned according to whether the writer is in favour of a given kind of expression or not; however, they touch very little on what performance could or should be and what its disciplinary specifics might be. On the other hand, there is a significant amount of teatrological reflection dealing with performativity and sometimes also with (visual or artistic) performance itself, and two main tendencies can be identified therein. The first tendency of these teatrological considerations is to include artworks that do not belong in performance art, which is a consequence of the vague external definition (there is a certain functional – albeit unspoken – prior understanding shared within the art scene), the second is to subordinate the reflection on performance to purely theatrical principles (i.e. to interpret performance as theatre). Performance art has thus rather unhappily put itself on the defensive against everything theatrical. To open up the topic of performance theory, to ask what is typical of visual performance or performance art and how it differs from theatre, is therefore, in my opinion, necessary in many aspects.

Performance art is historically tied to a conceptual art base, while simultaneously expanding towards other art forms, with which it freely intermingled. In the sixties, performance art was seen as an intermediate genre, with

intersections among different artistic disciplines and their common denominator to be found in live action in the here and now. The term performance art thus served as an umbrella term for various live art performances. However, given that nowadays this kind of artistic expression is no longer marginal (on the contrary), with the associated significant diversification, this concept is no longer sustainable, and therefore, in accordance with Claire Bishop, the term visual performance is used, which despite some reservations seems the most accurate. In her definition, visual performance is made up of visual artists who are not trained actors, musicians, dancers, etc.³ In the text, I continue to use the term performance art to refer to performance art up to about the nineties, that is, to denote the period before its significant expansion. When I write about performance art without attribution, I always mean performance art in a visual context, that is, visual performance.

As difficult as it is to define theatre as an art form, there is a fairly clear general (audience-oriented) understanding of what 'traditional,' 'typical,' or simply conventional theatre looks like. Despite the oversimplification, conventional theatre can be identified with drama.⁴ (Beyond that, of course, there are a number of theatrical genres and practices that break out of this stereotypical notion. These are equally taken into account in this study: everything I will argue about theatre below can be applied to puppet theatre, ballet or opera, as well as to 'alternative' theatre that lies closest to visual performance.) In the case of visual performance, however, there is no such simplistic (all-)general awareness. Even art historians have so far settled for such claims as the 'indefinable nature'⁵ of performance art, which is supposedly where its strength lies⁶ performance art mentor RoseLee Goldberg argues that, "by its very nature performance defies precise or easy definition beyond the simple declaration that it is live art by artists. Any strict definition would immediately negate the possibility of performance itself."⁷

In my opinion, this may have been true during times when performance was a marginal

genre and very few artists were involved in it. Since the beginning of the new millennium or so, we have witnessed the increasing expansion and mass popularisation of visual performance, with the associated institutionalisation and commercialisation. Marina Abramović is referred to by Lady Gaga, for example, and Donatien Grau speaks of the phenomenon of 'pop performance' in this context.⁸ The position of visual performance is therefore changing dramatically compared to the past, but so far there have only been publications documenting the history of performance art and very few theoretical texts, which has resulted in a plenty of confusion about what performance and visual performance actually is. This also implies difficulties in its evaluation. As long as it is far from clear what features are typical of an art form or genre, there are very limited options available for writing about and evaluating performance.

This study deals with visual performance and theatre as genres that, although significantly different, share some essential features. The aim of the study is to find a broadly applicable differentiating feature and to use it to describe visual performance so that it can be easily distinguished from other art forms and, on the basis of this feature, performance is easier to write about, whether in the context of art theory, history or art criticism.

In the Czech environment (and the same is true, my research suggests, for more or less all environments where English is not the native language), the term performance is used quite widely and often vaguely or inaccurately. The word *performance* in the English language means any act, action, endeavour or performance, in both artistic and non-artistic contexts.⁹ Even in the Czech environment, we speak of the performance of a car or a manager in the sense of their effectiveness (although so far only in the field of advertising and management); in the broad sense of the word, a performance is also, for example, a lecture at a university or a demonstration. In addition to this, it is important to take into account that the word performance has a different meaning

in speech act theory and philosophy,¹⁰ and yet another meaning in the context of art (whether visual art, music or theatre). This study focuses exclusively on the artistic environment. There, the term performance refers to various kinds of artistic activity that have live performance in common, whether it might be an author's live reading (which, for the purposes of this essay, can be called a 'literary performance'), a concert (by the same token, a 'musical performance'), theatre ('theatrical performance'), and performance in the context of the visual arts, i.e. visual performance. Music and theatre are always performative (action-based), while literature and visual arts are not, although they can become performative (action-based) under certain circumstances. The process of creating a poem or a painting, for example, the recitation of a text or an installation that invites direct interaction can be described as performative, but a text on paper or a finished painting is not a performance in itself (without the contribution of the human element). Visual performance has a specific position within the visual arts, and in the case of literature it is slam poetry.

In the Czech theatre circle, performance is mostly referred to as non-traditional theatre, 'alternative' or authorial theatre.¹¹ The word performance is a signal to the viewer to expect 'something different' than what can be – imperfectly – called a traditional theatre form or traditional theatre. However, to speak of alternative theatre (however many detractors this name might have) as performative is terminologically unfortunate, because, as shown above, all theatre is performative (theatre as a kind of performance cannot be 'non-performative'). What all kinds of performances (artistic and non-artistic) have in common is that they are live actions in space and time and are (therefore) performative.

How does theatre relate to other performative art forms? The direction of the theatre scholars' reflections on the nature of theatricality is derived from the affiliation of theatre to the performing arts. As an example, here is the formulation of theatricality by Peter

Pavlovsky in his book *Basic Concepts of Theatre*: “To theatricalise an event means to interpret it scenically, to create a situation using a stage and actors. The symptom of theatricalisation is the visual element of the scene and the creation of situations of speech.”¹² Although a classical music concert, for example, also has a stage, we would be hard-pressed to describe the players as actors or look for the spoken word. What about an author’s live reading? There is a scene, also a speech, but there is no actor, the author reads the text ‘in their own way,’ unprofessionally. If the author of the text is also an actor, their reading will have theatrical qualities or features (it will be theatrical). An actor differs from a mere agent (a person acting or doing) in their ability, their skill to act. Theatre can exist even if the stage is reduced or completely abolished, even if the creation of situations of speech is absent. But not without the actor (even if hidden behind the scenes). It seems, then, that key could be the actor and acting. Acting is essentially the creation (by actor and spectator, differentiated and accepted) of a fiction or illusion, in which the actor is playing ‘someone’ or ‘something.’ This creation of an illusion seems to be a possible leitmotif through which other differences could be seen, but which would not be sufficient in themselves to distinguish it from other art forms.

The following text will focus on the specific differences between visual performance and theatre, from the ideological to the practical and institutional, in order to verify the extent to which the creation of illusion applies. The intention is to highlight the differences between the two art forms and through them to articulate a hypothesis characterising visual performance. The latter would enable visual performance to be evaluated and would be useful for theorists, critics or art historians as well as for organisers of cultural events and artists themselves.

Performing Arts (rehearsal and repetition) and Visual Performance (de-skilling)

Although it is not obvious at first glance, not all types of artistic performances belong to the performing arts. The performing arts, characterised by their emphasis on professionalism and repetitiveness,¹³ include theatre, dance, opera and concerts, but not readings and visual performances. This is because these artistic expressions lack the professional craftsmanship that is typical of the performing arts (that is, professional training in singing, dancing, acting, etc.). Visual performance artists have even historically built on the accentuated (and deliberate) de-skilling (lack of skill) in the performing arts¹⁴ this de-skilling is also linked to the democratisation of the arts.

Albeit a historical distinction, it still has some validity today, but it cannot be followed unquestioningly. It would mean that someone who is able to dance at a professional level, for example, cannot create visual performance; with the shift of visual performance from the margins to large institutions, this assumption has been challenged. However, it is still the case that visual performance should not present such a level of skill; in the case of delegated dance performance,¹⁵ for example, de-skilling is artificially required of dancers.¹⁶ On the other hand, this does not mean that visual performance is bad theatre or dance performance – each genre has different goals and starting points.

Instead of the procedures typical of the performing arts, visual performance is based on different principles of creation (more on which in a moment), so it cannot be evaluated according to the same key as the performing arts. Historically, performance art is linked to the desire of the avant-garde movement of the sixties to eliminate art as product:¹⁷ performance art is ephemeral, immaterial. While in the West it was a reaction to the commodification of art through the growing art market, in the East performance art was an

immaterial reaction to the limited freedom and possibilities of artistic expression. Performance art was defined at the time oppositionally as an immaterial, ephemeral and essentially unrepeatable act, whether critical of the system and contemporary morality, exempt from meditation, and playful. Performance art was meant to be close to everyday life, an unrepeatable one-off act distinct from repetitive theatrical, musical or dance performances.

Unlike in the performing arts (that is, theatre, among others), the visual performer does not rehearse their action in advance according to a given script. Specific approaches vary, but generally speaking, the visual performer has only a rough plan or intention for the event and experiences similar uncertainty as, for example, in everyday life before an important meeting. Many things can be decided on the spot by details that cannot be accounted for in advance (I aim to cut a rope: how long will it take me with my knife? Will it even work?). During the performance, there is a lot of room for 'fragmentary authenticity,' that is, the kind of fleeting authenticity arising in moments of surprise when something unexpected happens. In the case of performance, it is usually an ideologically pre-prepared action, not a staged or rehearsed plot that is meant to be repeated. The degree of readiness is variable for each performance. Individual details may be prepared, for example whether the performer is carried away by the branch he aims to sit on during the action, or the overall message is prepared and the individual details remain up to chance. Readiness ranges from almost no preparation to precise preparation. From the above, I conclude that the more prepared an artistic event is in the details and overall feel, the more it approaches performing arts. Applied to visual performance and theatre: the more prepared a performance is in its details and overall appearance, the closer it is to theatre.

The basic difference is the different type of education of actors and visual performers: the type of training fundamentally influences the artist's means of expression and their further direction. Actors learn to work with the voice (stage speech,

singing), the body (movement skills, dancing), and the text (interpretation of the text, creation of their own script and characters), that is to say, they shape their acting expression and study the history and theory of theatre. Visual performers are trained in drawing, video art, sound art, and the history and theory of visual arts. In the case of performers, formal training is not crucial; de-skilling is still a desirable discipline. A certain de-skilling is also typical for the poetics of amateur theatre or friendship bands (amateur, hobby level). However, with performance it is also a specific feature at the professional level. The situation is very different even after graduation: an actor tries (or is able) to get a job in the theatre. A visual performer cannot get any such comparable 'engagement.' Modes of creating and living are also different. Ideally, an actor spends most of his time rehearsing theatre pieces and acting in their reprises. A visual performer can potentially be employed as a teacher, and they think through their performances over time and realises them occasionally, usually on a one-off basis, again outside the rhythm of rehearsals, retakes, or the theatrical season of their fellow actors (whether functioning at the professional or amateur level). It is clear from the above outline that visual performers and actors come from different practical and institutional contexts that fundamentally shape her creative expression.

Theatre, Acting and Illusionism

As already outlined in the previous section, based on the author's research, actors and acting are considered a basic premise of theatre. Of course, theatre has many other levels, but without the actor (whether acting on stage or hidden in the background) it could not be realised. Therefore, the following will focus on the differences between the actor and the visual performer, who is as indispensable to the realisation of performance (at least in a basic sense) as the actor is to the theatre. So who is this actor and how do they differ from the performer? Discussing the various levels of acting, Michael Kirby argues that the essence of

acting is in pretending, simulation, impersonation,¹⁸ and that acting is present in even the smallest and simplest action that involves pretending.¹⁹ What does this imply? By way of explanation, use will be made of the example of physical pain in theatre and performance, whereby specifically conceived body work – pain, liminal situations, etc. – is referred to as body art. However, there is no equation between visual performance and body art, body art is only one possible position of visual performance and vice versa. Extreme physical engagement is not a prerequisite for visual performance, but in the following paragraph it will serve as a suitable vehicle for my thoughts.

When a visual performer stabs themselves in the hand, it is a real fact and experience; when an actor stabs themselves, there is a shared expectation that it is ‘make-believe.’ There are two completely different constellations. Watching a strong physical real experience up close is mentally challenging; we get close to the real person, the real situation. The pain is real, and though planned, the visual performer only suspects how he will react to it, each time risking an uncertain outcome. For the onlooker, there is both the temptation and the fear to approach the performer voyeuristically, forgotten memories are made present, the time of performance can seem painfully endless; for the spectator it can also be a humanly liminal experience. Watching an actor, by contrast, is ‘safe’ because the actor moves within the convention of the ‘make-believe.’ The theatregoer “(...) sees the suffering of others and feels the pleasure of knowing that it is someone else who is suffering, and also that it is not true.”²⁰ The theatre spectator assumes that the pain seen in the theatre is an illusion and treats it accordingly. (The visual performer may be mentally prepared for the act in advance and most likely has set certain internal boundaries, but this does not guarantee that the action will actually unfold as expected, i.e. there is (due to the absence of rehearsal and repetition) indeed some real risk.)

The environments and objects that surround the actors in the theatre are also often illusory. The

stage is a place where one can be transported to another space and time, to another continent, to another century. The audience understands and accepts as a convention that what is on stage is fiction. Jan Císař, in his text on puppet theatre, describes the workings of theatrical fiction succinctly: “The greaser cannot sell, he must only pretend to sell. For him, the marketplace cannot be a space that is absolutely real; it must be a space in which he can perform – that is, a space for fiction, for transformed reality.”²¹ In the same way, the objects that are used in the theatre can represent something quite different from what they really are. A table can become a cave, ordinary clothes can become a magical dress, etc.

Different conventions apply to visual performance: the space in which the performer moves is always the same place we see in front of us. There is one reality here and now, both spatial, temporal and action-oriented. Also, objects are in most cases used non-illusionally. (If they are used illusively, then this is a sign of theatricality.) In the case of performance, it is questionable whether to use the term ‘prop,’ which is closely associated with the theatrical environment. I lean more towards the neutral term ‘thing’ or ‘object,’ since prop implies illusiveness and theatricality.

However, the common feature of both genres is the use of specific clothing and accessories. In theatre, the term costume is used and, as with the word prop, I think that when talking about visual performance, a neutral term is more appropriate. However, the terms prop and costume are justified when dealing with a theatrical use of objects, whether in or out of the theatre. That is, the performer may use the garment in a theatrical or non-theatrical way. The non-theatrical use of clothing consists in the performer’s wearing of certain, even distinctive, clothes and remaining themselves (the distinctive clothes may be part of their personal style and worn on a regular, everyday basis), whereas in the theatrical use they ‘become someone else’ through their clothes and accessories.

Visual performance is usually only performed once. While theoretically repeatable,

this is not the primary intention of its creators.²² There is usually a specific reason for reperformance, whether it is to re-enact an event by a well-known artist or to repeat one's own performance after many years. In contrast, a theatrical production is created to be repeated and its success is quantifiable by the number of repetitions. Even if a theatrical performance is performed only once, it is the result of many rehearsals and other preparations, unlike a performance. On the other hand, if the same performance is performed repeatedly, in my opinion it becomes (albeit unintentionally) theatrical.

Related to rehearsal and repetition is the question of improvisation. Catherine Wood argues that "there is a quality of unpredictability in the unfolding and outcome [in performance], and this distinguishes it from theatre, which is assumed to be the results of scripted repetition via rehearsal."²³ However, her claim cannot be applied to theatrical improvisation. So is improvisation the same as visual performance? Yes and no. In fact, a distinction must be made between improvisation in the general and in the theatrical sense. If the question is asked whether visual performance is improvisation, the answer is yes, but it is not theatrical improvisation. With improvisation²⁴ it is true that the more often one gets into improvised situations, the better one is able to handle them, in everyday life as well as in art. Thus, although it is without preparation, it is an act shaped by previous experience of improvisation; the more such experience one has, the better one is at improvising. In a theatrical context, actors learn to improvise and hone their ability as much as possible within the context of the theatrical routine. Such improvisation on stage is, after all, a discipline in its own right. Improvisation in the context of visual performance is more akin to everyday life, in the sense that the performer's action fulfils a certain idea or concept and does not rely on illusion or use the techniques inherent in theatre and theatrical improvisation. Theatrical improvisation:

(...) can be briefly and broadly characterised as a mode of acting characterised by a

varying degree of effort to limit the *a priori*, predetermined project, programme, and idea of the role: to reduce the scope of the predetermined text of the dramatic person, but equally to limit the *a priori* idea of the actor's character and their actions. (...) Acting based on improvisation always counts on the possibility of change, of the evolution of the conception and realisation of the role, it is open to chance, to immediate situational inspiration – from communication with partners, with the audience and with the atmosphere of the performance.²⁵

Although the project, dramatic text, role and script are limited, they do not disappear. It's still about portraying a character, creating fictional stories and plots. Certainly theatrical improvisation can, at some points, become intertwined with visual performance provided theatrical consensus is greatly suppressed. During a visual performance, the actor does not represent a role, and so there is no need to limit the scope of the fixed text of the dramatic person or the character of the actor; the performer does not act or create illusory situations. In contrast, the visual performer acts and improvises in a way similar to everyday life.

Michael Kirby has identified five types of acting, ranging from 'non-acting' to 'complex acting.' Non-acting in his typology means that it is not about portraying roles. In the second level, called "symbolic acting," the audience recognises a character in the stage action even if the actor/performer acts as if they were not a character.²⁶ If we apply these categories to a visual performance, then in most cases it falls into non-acting, symbolic acting is the case, for example, with Jiří Surůvka, who takes on the identity of the 'Anti-Batman' during his performances, or with Darina Alster, who personifies one of the female archetypes or deities. For Kirby, the key to differentiating between the different types of acting is the degree of pretence that appears in the action.

In relation to performance art, Kirby mentions uncoded representation or symbolisation.²⁷ This uncoded representation takes the form of self-stylisation, which has become the norm in recent years thanks to social media. However, it was used by visual performers long before the mass spread of the internet. Users of social media (including fictional ones) can construct the reception of their own person (through photos, videos, and textual outputs) as they see fit. The same principle has been and is used by visual performers, but in an artistic context. For visual performers, it is not about pretending or creating illusory identities, but rather about consciously accentuating certain elements or possibilities (aspects) of the self, whether this relates to appearance and physicality, social identity or political self.

The term 'self-stylisation' is sometimes used in the theatrical context to refer to self-staging.²⁸ Self-staging implies the idea of a stage and 'performing for someone,' which is related to the fact that theatre is one of the performing arts, unlike visual performance. For theatre, the person of the spectator is very important, as well as the idea of something happening on stage especially for them.

In her work on acting, Marie Adamová has expressed the relationship between the performer's self-esteem and the actor's performance as follows:

With self-training, the potential viewer is never sure whether it is 'make-believe' or 'for real' (for example in art performances) ... What distinguishes the activity of the performer and self-stager from the actor and his creation is, in the case of the actor, not only the necessity of collaboration with other components of the dramatic work (especially the constitutive collaboration with the spectator component), but also the intention (conscious and unconscious feedback communication with the spectator).²⁹

Performance, Agency, and Individualism

As a means of expression, the visual performers can be seen to have a mode of doing that has much in common with the everyday. It is aptly described by Erika Fischer-Lichte:

When Marina Abramović crushed the glass in her hand and started bleeding, it meant that the glass was crushed and then bled. Her actions shaped the reality of the broken glass and the bleeding hand. In this respect, there was no difference between art and reality in the performance. All that was done and shown meant exactly what was done and shown, and thus created a corresponding reality.³⁰

It is true that doing means exactly what has been done, but not only that. The performer's action is at the same time symbolic and becomes, whether intentionally or unintentionally, also a sign, a metaphor, or, in the words of Július Gajdoš, an image.³¹

Doing is not feigned or illusory, a jar is a jar, bleeding is bleeding. The fact that doing is at the same time not utilitarian, that is to say, it has no practical meaning, removes it from the everyday and moves it into the realm of art. An ordinary breakfast or other action is therefore at first sight no different from an artistic one. One could say that performance is in a sense the metaphorical equivalent of Duchamp's ready-mades. In this case, an act is art if it is marked as art and accepted as art by the art world. It can even be argued that visual performance is more about not/doing than doing, because doing is the end and not the means. Performance is focused on process, whether external or internal.

Doing is both symbol (or ritualistic, as will be shown later) and sign-based, although exactly what it symbolises we often do not know. The specific meanings are assigned by the viewer/

observer based on their preunderstanding and current internal setting. It can be said, then, that visual performance is an art form that requires the inwardly active collaboration of the observer in order to create meanings.³² The performer's specific position, compared to acting, is also due to the fact that the performer freely jumps from the position of the subject to the position of the object, from the signified becoming the signifier and back again. In doing so, they also become a sign of something other than themselves, although they do not create an acting character (or a fictional figure of himself) by their actions.

What they create is the identity of the *hic et nunc* doer, and onto this identity are projected meanings largely dependent on the imaginative capacity of the viewer. Anything the visual performer does, anything they wear, any object they work with, etc., can be considered as a sign or symbol. This places great demands on the recipient; the codes that the visual performance uses (however conventionalised over time) require revision at every single action.

A tendency towards self-objectification can be identified in visual performance. The performer perceives and treats themselves and their body as a means or an art object, their personality and body are public and personal at the same time. They are a mediator and a carrier of meanings. It can be argued that they sometimes work with their body in a way similar to a painter with paint or a sculptor with matter; they explore it, manipulate it, paint it, cover/uncover it, freeze it, cut it, isolate it and treat it as if it were an object. Such behaviour involves distance and proximity, subjectivity and objecthood at the same time. The above, however, in my opinion, does not result in the death of the subject, as Féral claims,³³ but object and subject coexist.

When confronting doing with theatrical terminology, then doing is not dramatic. Departing from the simple definition of dramatic action as the action of a person acting on another person such that "each action is caused by a previous one and is usually done so in order to cause a subsequent action,"³⁴ it follows that causality

underlies dramatic action. Doing, on the other hand, is non-causal, sometimes directly beyond causation. Thus, however, a storyline develops, and a situation arises: it is static rather than dramatic, approximating a painting.

The performer reveals and isolates an aspect of their personality through action and assumes the identity of the performer in the here and now. It is similar to a spectator adopting the identity of a fan during a football match. However, the performer's action is not utilitarian, unlike that of a football fan. Theatre can be said to mimic human agency,³⁵ whereas visual performance is a form of human agency set in an artistic context.

Spectator, Documentation, and Individualism

Without the spectator, the theatre would not be itself, they are paramount to its existence. The theatre thinks about the spectator, works with how the performance will affect the spectator, has the intention to move the spectator in a specific way, to evoke certain emotions, etc. Theatre needs an observer, it needs to be played for someone. Vít Neznal defines the relationship between theatre and the spectator as follows: "Other media (film, fine arts, music, literature, etc.) may lack their purpose without a spectator, but they are not conditioned by them in the sense of not being able to come into existence without them."³⁶

The presence of the spectator is not decisive for the visual performance, although the visual performer is aware of their existence, they do not need the spectator's presence during the action. Martin Zet has even created a body of work called *Performances for Myself*,³⁷ i.e. performances that have taken place without spectators and now exist only in the form of photographic documentation. František Kowolowski was resolute on the issue: "The (visual) performer does not need a spectator."³⁸ The theatre is directly dependent on the spectator's presence at the time of the

performance,³⁹ which is also evidenced by the large number of theatrical texts dealing with the issue of the spectator and their perception. It can be said that, unlike visual performance, theatre seeks a predetermined emotional effect on the spectator; purposefully evoked and regulated emotions are part of the directorial and dramaturgical intention.

If the space allows it, the viewer follows a similar zoning during the visual performance as a visitor in the gallery. It is possible to walk freely around the performer, to stop and stay longer or to take a cursory look and move on, to look closely, from afar, to leave, to return.⁴⁰ There is a link to conceptual art, the emphasis is on the visual. One of the forms of performance is, for example, self-installation, i.e. placing one's own body and mind in a space, in (un)usual conditions and environment, as if it were an art object.

At the same time, the spectators (who are more like onlookers) can complete the visual performance by their behaviour and their reactions. In many ways it is not quite clear what is part of the performance and what is not, often it is not fixed when and how the action ends, what the 'rules' are, when the audience can participate and when not.⁴¹ A visual performance does not usually have a clearly distinguished beginning (it can be loosely intertwined with everyday life) or end, nor does it have a fixed length. The culminating moment of an action can occur at any time, and there may be several or no climaxes. The viewer is therefore forced to search for meaning and internal relationships constantly. Visual performances are often not meant to be watched continuously, the viewer is expected to see only a part. Each visual performance is of course specific, what is important is that through this disturbance, life breaks into art and vice versa, whether through chance, personal relationships, or simply through an unexpected, unplanned progression; all of this generates a fragmented authenticity. Documentation and the subsequent artistic work with it therefore plays a key role. The different work with the documentation is a historically and functionally conditioned difference. The visual performance continues to work with

photo and video documentation artistically, the documentation actually re-creates⁴² (or co-creates) the performance, the author has the possibility to present what he wants to be perceived and preserved, through the use of editing and other post-production means. At a basic level, the documentation is proof that the performance has actually taken place. Documentation is therefore not a secondary outcome of the artistic act, but constitutes the visual performance itself and determines its further reception.⁴³ It is exhibited in galleries in the same way as other art objects, whether tangible or intangible. This is, in my opinion, one of the very essential and tangible differences. Photographs taken during a theatre event can also be exhibited, usually as a (promo) presentation of the theatre or as part of the photographer's portfolio. But not as an autonomous work of art by the actor.⁴⁴ Documentation of visual performances, however, works in this way. It is not a mere by-product of the event; on the contrary, it forms an integral part of the visual performer's artistic work.

The question arises as to the relationship between the author of the documentation and the visual performer.⁴⁵ In my opinion, the visual performer is the author of the idea or concept and from the available documentation they choose such photographs (and such video footage) that best describe their concept. (The author of the photography or video is not the author of the visual performance, they only document it – unless the documentation is made by the author of the performance.)⁴⁶ The style of documentation can be influenced by the artist's choice of photographer: it is a matter of personal preference whether they prefer 'documentary,' slightly blurred photos or more stylisation. An important feature of visual performance, also mirrored in the question of documentation, is individualism. The visual performer represents several functions that in the theatre would be distributed among a group of collaborators (costume designer, playwright, dramaturg, director, set designer, actor), between whom there is an intense exchange of ideas and a broad relationality. Theatre is a collective,

collaborative work and the final form is always a compromise or consensus. In the case of visual performance, the most common (and also historically embedded) form is the single performer, which is practical because of the fragmented preparedness of the event. There are, of course, also author duos, whether permanent or temporary, and free performance collectives. Group performances are of two kinds: The first are visual performances in which a large number of artists perform simultaneously, but who operate in a similar mode to individual performers. They are still individual independent artists, who in this case work alongside each other, respond to each other, etc., without the dramaturgy one would find in theatre. Of course, the approaches of individual performance groups, as well as individual artists, are various, and there may be a pre-determined script, with such a performance approaching theatre. The second type is delegated group performance,⁴⁷ in which 'ordinary' people or artists fulfil the intention of another artist. In this form of performance, the specific approach is very important; the 'artist-author of the performance' can act either as a coordinator who only minimally directs what happens, or as a director who gives precise instructions on what the performers should do. Through the lens of this study, the currently popular delegated group performance is a borderline genre between visual performance and theatre.

Fragmentary Authenticity, the Everyday, and the Illusion of Authenticity

The leitmotif of illusion and illusiveness is directly related to the theme of authenticity, in the sense of genuineness (one can also say non-pretence). In texts about visual performance and theatre from the perspective of visual art, theatre is often described as artificial and fake in contrast to real or true, authentic visual performance.⁴⁸ In my opinion, this received notion is inaccurate, because there is also authenticity within theatre,

namely the authenticity of acting, i.e. authenticity within a given fictional world. (As with theatrical improvisation, which is also a theatrical fictional world.) Just as with improvisation, then, it is possible to speak of two kinds of authenticity: the first relates to the 'everyday self' and the second to the 'fictional self.'

'Everyday' authenticity is a socially constructed ideal state,⁴⁹ which is not easy to achieve (for the sake of this essay, we will assume that it can be) and even harder to maintain. Authentically, one reacts to unexpected events such as surprise, sudden joy, shock, etc.⁵⁰ These states usually last only for a limited time, which is why I think of authenticity as fragmented, fragmentary, partial. And it is precisely such states of fragmentary authenticity that happen during a visual performance that caters to them by being prepared only to a certain extent in the details and in the whole, and moreover by not using acting. In this sense, then, authenticity, or more precisely authentic emotional response or authentic action, is something extra, something that may or may not appear. Authentic is what was not prepared for, what was not counted on and what more or less threw the performer off guard (for example, when the visual performance *The Artist is Present* (MoMA, 2010) was unexpectedly attended by Abramović's former artistic and life partner Ulay and the meeting years later was very emotional for both of them).⁵¹

Acting, on the other hand, creates the illusion of 'everyday' authenticity, and the more perfect the illusion, the better their acting skills, or rather the whole performance, is evaluated. Moments of fragmented 'everyday' authenticity can occur in the theatre, but they are much less frequent due to actor training, rehearsal, and repetition. In the case of theatrical improvisation, unexpected situations are a fictional format (the actor learns to create and respond to such situations according to a certain key), so it is also authenticity within a fictional world.

It can be said, then, that within acting it is possible (and desirable) to achieve authenticity

within a given fictional world, and that this authenticity is also an illusion of 'everyday authenticity.' The visual performer confronts us with a real (actual) action in which fragments of this 'everyday authenticity' appear. The visual performance is anchored in an action that is non-illusory and that usually has a symbolic, committed, ritual or spiritual overlap within the performance, in which the visual performer occupies the position of subject and object at the same time.

Performance and Ritualism

Finally, the aspect of visual performance in which the rational and conscious side of the personality is suppressed will be discussed, namely ritual. Even though the study might be concluded at this point, it would be incomplete should this question be omitted. The element of ritual is present in every performance, whether non-artistic or artistic. The ritual horizon is therefore present in both theatre and visual performance. The following reflection will focus purely on visual performance, as this aspect tends to be accentuated (both positively and negatively) in theory and practice.

First, let me explain how ritual is conceived of here. The origin of ritual is connected to the field of magic and religion, but metaphorically⁵² one can also describe as (profane) ritual the morning brushing of teeth.⁵³ In general, it is an act or set of acts whose psychic-sacral power increases with the number of repetitions. At the same time, it is an act which has in it a prefiguration of the same or similar acts of an earlier one, whether such acts were performed by the same or by a different person or group of persons at a different place and time. Richard Schechner argues that all performances are essentially a repetition of previous performances (the theory of restored behaviour).⁵⁴ Whatever it is, it is very likely that a similar action has already taken place at some point in the past, so all performances are considered to have a ritual aspect, whether this aspect is reflected or not. The aesthetic dimension of ritual is

secondary to its meaning, but it plays an important role in terms of effectiveness and fixation. Ritual is a way of communicating and shaping the external world; the performer experiences continuity and coherence with the environment while at the same time participating in the creation of this coherence through ritual. In an extended sense, in this way they participate in the shaping of their life, the world in which they live. Such ritualistic creation of the world, and thus self-creation, is the link between the world of magic and the world of art.

Ritual is a symbolic act, objects have the function of a sign, they are used metaphorically and analogically. As Pavlovsky notes,⁵⁵ the time of ritual is relative, it can slow down and speed up again in the course of a single action in relation to what is happening. Thomas Hylland Eriksen called a similar phenomenon of distorted time 'slow time.'⁵⁶ This is, according to him, 'calm, linear, cumulative, organic'⁵⁷ and is a space not only for relaxation but also for self-reflection and possible self-transcendence and transgression.⁵⁸ Visual performance can be thought of as a non-utilitarian, non-efficiency-oriented action that evokes in the audience a sense of this slowed-down, 'stretched' time. In the first phase, boredom, nervousness, or the need to pull out the mobile phone, will set in. For the viewer and the artist, there is a real opportunity to step outside the everyday self, which is what the inefficiency of action and the subjective slowing down of time serves to achieve.

According to anthropologists Caroline Humprey and James Lidlow, ritualism consists in a conscious change in the direction of action "from the utilitarian to the meaningless."⁵⁹ In visual performance, as in ritual, the achievement of a particular outcome recedes into the background; what matters is pure doing, pure activity. Hanna Hesemans, in her study *Why We Should Not Try to Understand Performance Art*, applies this understanding of ritual from Fritz Staal⁶⁰ to visual performance, the meaning of which, she argues, coincides with the meaning or non-sense of ritual, whose function is to transform the profane into the sacred. Visual performance in her conception

is not about meaning, but about the emotional effect it produces in us.⁶¹ Unlike theatre, however, this effect is not 'calculated' and is hardly, if ever, repeatable.

As diverse as the manifestations of visual performance are, they can be perceived with a bit of exaggeration as an eclectic form of ritual, whether it is an accented ritualism or one more hidden in the civility of the performance. In this aspect, visual performance resembles theatre and dance. It depends on the intention of the artist and also on the internal setting of the spectator whether they can discern the ritual dimension in the performance.

Conclusion

This study has pointed out the differences between visual performance and theatre, with the starting point consisting in the comparison between actor and visual performer. The author has found that defining the two genres is as difficult as finding the differences between them. Several theatre scholars have attempted to do so just marginally, but with only minimal knowledge of visual performance; the author is assuming the principle that would allow visual performance and theatre to be easily distinguished in practice.

Incorporating historical and institutional differences, the author concludes that the key difference that can be easily applied *in situ* is illusiveness. According to Michael Kirby's theory, pretence is a fundamental prerequisite for acting – and acting or playing is considered as a fundamental feature of theatre, something that distinguishes it from other artistic performances. Illusion is therefore typical of theatre, and different levels of illusion can be identified, each of which also functions as a scale. In my opinion, there is a direct proportionality here: that the more illusion, the more the performance approaches theatre.

An illusion can be: 1) an illusion of identity, that is, the artist pretends to be someone or something other (a person, an object, a natural

element, etc.) than what he or she really is, 2) an illusion of emotion (pretending to have feelings, emotions, emotional experience), 3) an illusion of an object, e.g. a piece of wood becomes a table or a princess, and 4) an illusion of the environment, where an outstretched blanket in an interior becomes a beach, etc. In the case of clothing and objects, it is important to distinguish whether the artist wears a costume and pretends to be someone else, or whether they retain their own identity despite the eccentric clothing (which may also be their everyday 'civilian clothes').

Illusiveness is fundamentally linked to rehearsal and repetition. Again, the more the action is prepared (whether in detail or in the overall feel), the more it approaches theatre. Every rehearsal, which is intended to fix the artistic form towards repetitiveness, refers to the performing arts, and therefore to theatre.

In addition to rehearsal and repetition, the performing arts are characterised by professionalism, whereas visual performance by de-skilling. The performing arts are built on the training of the artists in the field; for visual performance, the untrainedness of the artists in the performing arts is historically important and typical. Actors undergo specific training that gives them the ability to act, both vocally and in movement. Visual performers may have art or any other training, but it is not necessary for the realisation of a visual performance. For visual performance, any acting skills are even a hindrance, because the goal is not to act, but to *do*.

It can be said that visual performance is a form of human action in an artistic context, while theatre in general imitates human action (or animal, elemental, etc.). Like human action, performance is characterised by a so-called fragmentary authenticity, which occurs when a person acts without a prior script, outside of routine, and is confronted with unexpected circumstances or events. Fragmentary authenticity comes from a degree of non/preparedness of the action, again in direct proportion. Theatrical improvisation, unlike improvisation in everyday

life, is a theatrical form. In everyday life, fragmentary authenticity occurs to a much greater extent than in theatre, where it is eliminated through rehearsal and repetition. On the one hand, theatrical improvisation involves routine, rehearsal and repetition, so 'unexpected' events are more or less expected (they are part of the fictional world), but on the other hand, the truly unexpected can also occur – and much more so than in a perfectly rehearsed production.

Another difference between the two genres is the role and position of the viewer. Theatre could not exist without the spectator: the target audience is part of the directorial and dramaturgical plan and is thoroughly thought out in advance. In the case of visual performance, the spectator is not essentially necessary, as the visual performer works artistically with the documentation, which is an integral part of the visual performance and even co-creates it in a certain way. As an autonomous work of art, the visual performance can then be presented in a gallery environment through photo or video documentation selected by the artist.

The fact that visual performance is a non-illusory act with limited preparation makes it much more complicated to perform with multiple people. A performer usually works as an individual artist, whereas theatre is most often a collective consensus. The group-delegated performance, recently very popular, is a liminal unit between visual performance and theatre, where the degree to which the author/performer intervenes in the course of the action in a directorial way depends, among other things, on the degree to which the action is rehearsed. Visual performance is not meant to be watched continuously; the spectator is free to come and go. The complex work is communicated through documentation.

In the author's opinion, all performances, whether non-artistic or artistic, have a ritualistic aspect. Ritual, as well as visual performance, can be characterised as a non-utilitarian, even non-intentional action that has an inner meaning in the transformation of the performers and the spectators. Related to this is the phenomenon of

slow, distorted time, which allows for an immersion into the self and a stepping-out of the everyday. As diverse as the manifestations of visual performance might be, it is possible to perceive them, with slight exaggeration, as an eclectic form of ritual, whether the ritualism is accentuated or hidden in the civility of the performance.

It is quite difficult to distinguish visual performance from theatre because the differences described (in approach, preparation, training, etc.) are often not visible at first sight. As important as it is for a theoretical grasp of the issue to keep in mind all the aspects addressed in this study, in my opinion, it is sufficient to stick to illusiveness for a quick distinction. Indeed, the degree of illusiveness can be identified at a glance, just as one can distinguish acting (associated with trained vocal or bodily expression) from doing that approaches the mode of everyday life. Context also plays a role in the spectator's reception: while the theatre spectator assumes that what they see in the theatre is an illusion (for example, that the blood on stage is not real), the visual performance spectator expects that what they see is real.

In the light of what has been said, I propose to characterise and assess visual performance as an action in an artistic context, as a non-utilitarian and non-illusory action. At the same time, the institutional and historical context, especially the context of conceptual art, must be taken into account. Thus, it is possible to say that visual performance is a non-illusory and non-utilitarian (human) action realised in the context of conceptual art.

It is clear that both art forms come from different contexts, ideological, practical, historical, and institutional, and both have their own irreplaceable place in the art world. Theatre allows audiences to be transported into 'other worlds,' to be carried away by familiar and unfamiliar stories, by the refined vocal and physical expression of actors, and often by exquisite sets, lights or costumes. Theatre is a great colossus with a huge history and nuances of expression, from opera, ballet, puppetry, drama to less traditional

‘alternative’ theatre, which in some ways can be intertwined with visual performance. (Immersive theatre, for example, uses elements of visual performance and installation). Performance, which has long been a fringe genre, offers a more conceptual experience, it is more unpredictable and difficult to read. Whether it is contemplative, civil, extravagant or ritualistic, it applies to a greater extent the fragmented authenticity that is typical of everyday life.

What has been written about the differences between the two art forms in this study is not universally valid. I conceive of visual performance and theatre as open fields, not fixed definitions. It is possible to speak of visual performance elements in theatre and theatrical elements in visual performance: that is illusionism is proposed by way of application as a scale. Naturally, there are projects that oscillate somewhere on the edge (for example, the aforementioned group delegated performance), genre boundaries are always blurred, and this is what allows for further artistic development. On the other hand, the development is also supported by the effort to name the phenomena, to grasp them. It is the author’s belief that the present study will open a much needed discussion and, most importantly, stimulate further research.

within theatre studies and whose authors focus on questions of visual performance only generally. The author critically analyses the comparisons available and complements these by her own theoretical and empirical research. The author concludes that there are major differences between visual performance and theatre, brought together under the concept of illusiveness, whose application is proposed in the form of a graded scale. This concept is thoroughly explained and presented in specific contexts and expressions. The author also formulates a general characteristic of visual performance as a genre. The study opens up a new field of potential research and broadens the possibilities of writing about visual performance and evaluating the genre on the basis of what is unique to it.

Visual Performance and Theatre

The study “Visual Performance and Theatre,” explores the visible signs that set the two artistic genres apart. The work’s motivation is to enrich our theoretical conception of visual performance and contribute to an interdisciplinary understanding and cooperation of theorists and practitioners alike. The author starts by pointing out that there is no reliable referential definition of either genre available – one that could work as a guideline for comparison – and pinpoints the general difficulties in the use of the word ‘performance.’ Then she summarises the partial conclusions brought by prominent studies; works whose domain lies

Notes

¹ Those interested in the full bibliography on which I have based my conclusions and which there is no space to publish here shall be referred to my dissertation: Jana Orlová, *Visual performance and theatre* (PhD diss, Prague: Academy of Fine Arts, 2021).

² In about five years, there were about thirty of them. I owe the overarching methodological support from the side of art theory and history mainly to the supervisor of my dissertation (this study is a summary of my discoveries therein) Pavlína Morganová and also to Tomáš Pospiszyl.

³ Claire Bishop, "Black Box, White Cube, Gray Zone: Dance Exhibitions and Audience Attention," *TDR: The Drama Review* 62, no. 2 (2018): 24.

⁴ In the Czech context, 'going to the theatre' means going to watch drama, which is perceived as the most typical form of theatre. See e.g., Vít Neznal in his discussion of alternative theatre "Going from somewhere to somewhere," <https://www.divadelnioviny.cz/jit-odnekud-nekam#comment-195779> (cited 30 July 2019). "Drama can be briefly characterised as theatre of a predominantly dramatic type, whose acting component is created solely by the psychosomatic tonality of the person and in which the acoustic components of the actor's performance are clearly dominated by the spoken word." Jaroslav Etlík, "Drama," *Divadelní revue* 1 (2001): 61. The word drama is also used in a figurative sense: "[In] this sense, drama refers to a theatre company or building in which drama performances are predominantly (or predominantly dominate) performed." *Ibidem*, 62.

⁵ Amy Dempsey, *Art styles, schools and movements* (Prague: Slovart, 2002), 222.

⁶ *Ibidem*.

⁷ RoseLee Goldberg, *Performance Art: From Futurism to the Present* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2001), 8-9.

⁸ Donatien Grau, "Lady Gaga," accessed March 1, 2021, <https://flash---art.com/article/lady-gaga/#>.

⁹ Richard Schechner, one of the founders of performance studies (which originated in the 1970s in New York), defines performance as an open structure based on an event, action or activity. See Richard Schechner, *Performance Studies* (London: Routledge, 2002), 41. In performance studies, performance becomes a metaphor for the action structure of the world: the field of performance studies interprets phenomena across different disciplines through their action, performative dimension. (This is also the concept of the anthology *Terrains of Performance*, in which one can find, among others, a text on the performativity of politics or a text entitled *Performativity as a Tool for the Study of the Middle Ages*. See Alice Koubová, Eliška Kubartová, eds., *Terrains of performance* (Prague: AMU Publishing House, 2021).

¹⁰ For the Czech context, see Alice Koubová, *Thinking from the second place: on the question of performative philosophy* (Prague: Academy of Fine Arts, 2020). On performative and performativity in analytical philosophy, see also Aleksandra Jovičević, Ana Vujanović, *Introduction to performative studies* (Bratislava: Theatre Institute, 2012), 75-88.

¹¹ On the issue of the concept of performance (art) and the use of the word performance in the Czech theatre environment, see Orlová, *Performance and Theatre*, 18-24. Czech theatre studies, as far as performance art is concerned, is based on German theatre studies, especially on the texts of Erika Fischer-Lichte, who follows the ideas of Max Herrmann. Fischer-Lichte refers to his concept of theatre studies focusing not on the literary text but on performance itself, which according to Herrmann is the basis of theatre. Erika Fischer-Lichte, Minou Arjomand, and Ramona Mosse, *The Routledge Introduction to Theatre and Performance Studies* (London & New York: Routledge, 2014), 12. Another source for the concept of performance art in Czech theatre studies is the work of Jana Pilátová, focusing on Jerzy Grotowski's figure and ritualism in theatre. Pilátová uses the concept of performance in a somewhat simplistic and incomplete way, for example, she presents the term 'performatives,' used by Tomasz Kubikowski, as a field constitutive. Jana Pilátová, *Grotowski's nest: on the threshold of theatre anthropology* (Prague: Institute of Art – Theatre Institute, 2009), 504. Orlová, *Performance and theatre*, 17-18.

¹² Petr Pavlovský, *Basic theatre concepts: Theatrical dictionary* (Prague: Libri, National Theatre, 2004), 431.

¹³ See for example Baz Kershaw, Helen Nicholson, *Research Methods in Theatre and Performance* (Edinburgh University Press, 2011), 12.

¹⁴ Claire Bishop briefly mentions deskilling as a difference between visual performance and performing arts. See Bishop, "Black Box," 24, or Claire Bishop, "Performance Art vs. Dance: Professionalism, De-Skilling, and Linguistic Virtuosity," in Cosmin Costinas, and Ana Janevski, eds., *Is the Living Body the Last Thing Left Alive? The New Performance Turn, Its Histories and Its Institution* (Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2015), 40.

¹⁵ Claire Bishop, *Delegated Performance: Outsourcing Authenticity*, CUNY Academic Works 2012, accessed Mar. 31, 2021, https://monoskop.org/images/f/f3/Bishop_Claire_2012_Delegated_Performance_Outsourcing_Authenticity.pdf.

¹⁶ Bishop, "Performance Art vs. Dance," 41.

¹⁷ See, for example, Lucy Lippard, *Six Years: the Dematerialisation of the Art Object From 1966 to 1972* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973).

¹⁸ Michael Kirby, "On Acting and Non-acting," in Gregory Battcock, Robert Nickas, eds., *The Art of performance. A Critical Anthology* (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1984), 56. Accessed January 18, 2020, https://monoskop.org/File:Battcock_Nickas_eds_The_Art_of_Performance_A_Critical_Anthology_1984.pdf.

¹⁹ *Ibidem*, 59.

- ²⁰ Anne Ubersfeld, "The Pleasure of the Spectator," in *Performance: Critical Concepts in Literary and Cultural Studies* Vol. 2., edited by Philip Auslander (London: Routledge, 2003), 245.
- ²¹ Jan Císař, *Theory of puppet acting* (Prague: SPN, 1985), 14.
- ²² The genre of group delegated performance, which is on the borderline between visual performance and theatre/dance, is often intended to be performed repeatedly. For example, the performance of Alexandra Pirici or Anne Imhof.
- ²³ See <http://intermsofperformance.site/keywords/live/catherine-wood> (accessed January 17, 2020).
- ²⁴ I define improvisation as "a manifestation, a performance, especially artistic, created without preparation, on the spur of the moment, a creation prepared hastily without proper means." See Jiří Kraus et al., *New academic dictionary of foreign words* (Prague: Academia, 2005), 341.
- ²⁵ Jan Roubal, Josef Kovalčuk, and Jan Motal, eds., *Theatre as an unthrown ladder: texts on original, alternative and studio theatre* (Brno: Janáček Academy of Performing Arts, 2015), 73.
- ²⁶ Battcock, Nicas, *The Art of performance*, 57-61.
- ²⁷ Ibidem.
- ²⁸ For example, Miroslav Vojtěchovský, Jaroslav Vostrý, *Image and story: scenicity in visual and dramatic art* (Prague: KANT for AMU, 2008), 5-18.
- ²⁹ Marie Adamová, *Terra histrionis: Exploring the art of acting* (MA thesis, Prague: AMU, 2016), 20. The so-called feedback loop means a two-way communication between actor and spectator.
- ³⁰ Erika Fischer-Lichte, *Aesthetics of performativity* (Mníšek pod Brdy: Na konáři, 2011), 245.
- ³¹ Július Gajdoš, *From staging to installation, from acting to performance* (Prague: KANT, 2010), 89.
- ³² The viewer completes the work in his or her mind, which is typical of conceptual art and has its equivalent in literary theory in the school of reception aesthetics that emerged in the sixties in West Germany, in parallel with the emergence of the performance art genre. According to the founder of reception aesthetics, Wolfgang Iser, the concept of the reader is in many ways identical to the position of the recipient of performance art. It is up to the reader to 'complete' the work, to 'determine' the meaning, while the meaning is always subjective, dependent on the reader's imagination and previous recipient experiences. The work does not have only one 'correct' and rigidly fixed meaning. Wolfgang Iser, *The Theory of Literature. Current Perspective* (Prague: AV ČR, 2004).
- ³³ Josette Féral, "Performance and Theatricality: the Subject Demystified," in *Performance: Critical Concepts in Literary and Cultural Studies* Vol. 2, edited by Philip Auslander (London: Routledge 2003), 209.
- ³⁴ Jan Císař. *A man in a situation* (Prague: ISV, 2000) 30.
- ³⁵ Hans Thies Lehmann, *Postdramatic theatre* (Bratislava: the Theatre Institute, 2007), 40.
- ³⁶ Vít Neznal, *What is theatre? The "media" tradition of Czech theatre theory in the context of the art-reality dichotomy* (PhD diss., Prague: DAMU, 2017) 50.
- ³⁷ Martin Zet, *Performance for myself* (Brno: ESKORT Gallery, 2006).
- ³⁸ František Kowolowski, "Elementarist performance art in contemporary social conditions," in *Action and reaction: performative aspects in contemporary art and art education*, edited by Vladimír Havlík (Olomouc: Palacký University, 2015) 163.
- ³⁹ See: "(...) a theatrical act cannot come into being without an audience," and "a performance (art) does not need an audience to take place." Neznal, *What is theatre?*, 49, 69.
- ⁴⁰ Immersive theatre takes a similar approach, exemplifying the use of elements of performance and art installation within theatre.
- ⁴¹ It is different in Carol Martin's Theatre of the Real. Here, the emphasis is on the spectator, who is confronted with an ethical dilemma from the position of a witness, but the theatrical framing and illusionism is maintained. See Suzanne Little, "The Witness Turn in the Performance of Violence, Trauma, and the Real," in Emer O'Toole, Andrea Pelegri Kristić, and Stuart Young, eds., *Ethical Exchanges in Translation, Adaptation and Dramaturgy* (Leiden – Boston: Brill – Rodopi, 2017), 43-62. Accessed January 17, 2020, https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004346376_004.
- ⁴² "The act of documenting an event as a performance is what constitutes it as such." Philip Auslander, *The Performativity of Performance Documentation* 5. Accessed June 10, 2022, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/237818132_The_Performativity_of_Performance_Documentation.
- ⁴³ Jana Písařiková deals in detail with the topic of performance documentation. *Archives and documentation of performance art: searching for a path between history and myth* (PhD diss., Brno: FaVUVUT 2016).
- ⁴⁴ In the case of video documentation, comparisons can be made with the theatre's internal documentary recordings, television recordings of theatre performances and, last but not least, with streaming. In the case of recordings and streams, which are intended for the public, it is a specific film genre that rewrites the language of theatre into that of film. It is governed by its own specific laws and challenges (for example, not every production is technically or artistically suitable for such a treatment, care is taken not to shift the meaning, not to make the theatrical characterisation appear out of place on the screen, etc. See Pavla

Bergmannová, "Theatre Online! Possible Ways of Theatre to the Audience in the Age of Covid," in Monika Horsáková, Irena Kocí, eds., *Transformations of dramaturgy 5* (Opava: Silesian University in Opava, 2021), 24-31.

⁴⁵ On this topic, see for example Jan Krůčka, Jan Prošek, and Hanna Buddeus, eds, *Documentation of art* (Ústí nad Labem: Faculty of Art and Design, Jan Evangelista Purkyně University, 2013); Jan Mlčoch, "What is an original in 20th century Czech photography? The answer: there is a lot of it, but..." in František Zachoval, ed., *Original? The art of imitating art* (Hradec Králové: Gallery of Modern Art, 2021), 215-221; Amelia Jones, "Presence in Absentia: Experiencing Performance as Documentation," *Art Journal* vol. 56, no. 4 (1997) accessed May 12, 2020 or Hanna Buddeus, *Representation without reproduction? Photography and performance in Czech art of the 1970s* (Prague: UMPRUM, 2017).

⁴⁶ See Jana Orlová, "How (not) to exhibit performance art," accessed March 23, 2022, <https://artalk.cz/2022/03/23/jak-nevystavovat-performance-art/>.

⁴⁷ A solo performance may also be delegated. In this case, the action is performed by someone other than the author of the concept, and the author of the concept has asked the person to perform the action. Delegated can also be a reperformance (Marina Abramović, for example, likes to delegate her older performances).

⁴⁸ The myth-making discourse of authenticity across the history of performance (art) is explored in detail by Jessica Chalmers in a case study of the transformations of Marina Abramović's approaches. See Jessica Chalmers, "Marina Abramović and the Reperformance of Authenticity," accessed June 10, 2022, https://www.academia.edu/4313053/On_Marina_Abramovic_and_the_Reperformance_of_Authenticity.

⁴⁹ Irene Eynat-Confino, "Performance Space and Designed Authenticity: From a Non Sequitur to a Real Make-Believe?" Accessed June 10, 2022, https://www.academia.edu/24427386/Performance_Space_and_Designed_Authenticity_From_a_Non_Sequitur_to_a_Real_Make_Believe.

⁵⁰ That even the everyday is not entirely authentic is decoded by books such as Erving Goffman's ever-referenced *We All Play Theatre*. In them, the central question is how much acting is present in the everyday, how much we pretend (pretend to be better or simply different than we really are) in everyday life, or how much we wear social masks, implying the theme of socially constructed reality. The trouble is that it is not easy (if it is possible at all) to identify what is inherently our own and what we have taken over from society in the form of upbringing, social correctives, etc. This further problematises the question of the possibility of authenticity. It is also for this reason that I apply the term fragmentary authenticity in connection with reactions to unexpected events. Erving Goffman, *We all play theatre* (Prague: Studio Ypsilon Publishing House, 1999). Original edition: Erving Goffman, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (New York: Anchor, 1959).

⁵¹ The footage from the documentary cameras is available for example here: <https://youtu.be/OSoTg0ljCp4>, accessed June 18, 2022.

⁵² See George Lakoff, Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By* (Brno: Host, 2002).

⁵³ Thomas Hylland Eriksen gives the example of a modern ritual as a sport or a rock concert. In: Thomas Hylland Eriksen, *Social and cultural anthropology: kinship, nationality, ritual* (Prague: Portál, 2008), 273.

⁵⁴ "Performances – of art, ritual, or everyday life – are 'renewed behaviors,' 'twice-behaved behaviors,' activities that people train and rehearse... But everyday life also involves years of training and practice, adjusting and performing one's life roles in relation to social and personal circumstances." Richard Schechner, *Performance Studies: An Introduction*, 29.

⁵⁵ Pavlovský, *Basic concepts of theatre*, 242.

⁵⁶ In his book *The Tyranny of the Moment*, Thomas Hylland Eriksen analyses the accelerating pace of time, noting that although we are faster and potentially more efficient at work thanks to the internet and mobile phones, we have less and less time. In: Thomas Hylland Eriksen, *The tyranny of the moment: Fast and slow time in the information age* (Brno: Doplněk, 2005).

⁵⁷ *Ibidem*, 157.

⁵⁸ On the concept of transgression see Georges Bataille. *Erotism* (Prague: Herrmann a synové, 2001).

⁵⁹ Caroline Humprey, James Laidlaw, *The Archetypal Actions of Ritual. A Theory of Ritual Illustrated by the Jain Rite of Worship* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), 260.

⁶⁰ Fritz Staal, "The meaninglessness of ritual," *Numen* vol. 26, no. 1 (1979): 2-22.

⁶¹ Hanna Hesemans, "Why we should not try to understand performance art" University College Maastricht, 2017, accessed November 13, 2019, https://www.academia.edu/33662364/Why_we_should_not_try_to_understand_performance_art_-_About_the_ritualistic_aspects_of_performance_art_meaninglessness_and_rules.

Bibliography

- Adamová, Marie. *Terra histrionis: Exploring the art of acting*. MA thesis, Prague: AMU, 2016.
- Auslander, Philip, ed. *Performance: Critical Concepts in Literary and Cultural Studies* Vol. 2. London: Routledge, 2003.
- Auslander, Philip, "The Performativity of Performance Documentation." Accessed June 10, 2022. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/237818132>.
- Battcock, Gregory and Robert Nickas, eds. *The Art of performance. A Critical Anthology*. New York: E.P. Dutton, 1984.
- Bishop, Claire, "Black Box, White Cube, Gray Zone: Dance Exhibitions and Audience Attention." *TDR: The Drama Review* 62, no. 2 (2018): 22-42.
- Bishop, Claire. *Delegated Performance: Outsourcing Authenticity*. CUNY Academic Works 2012. Accessed March 31, 2021. https://monoskop.org/images/f/f3/Bishop_Claire_2012_Delegated_Performance_Outsourcing_Authenticity.pdf.
- Buddeus, Hana. *Representation without reproduction? Photography and performance in Czech art of the 1970s*. Prague: UMPRUM, 2017.
- Costinas, Cosmin and Ana Janevski, eds. *Is the Living Body the Last Thing Left Alive? The New Performance Turn, Its Histories and Its Institution*. Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2015.
- Chalmers, Jessica. "Marina Abramović and the Reperformance of Authenticity." Accessed June 10, 2022. https://www.academia.edu/4313053/On_Marina_Abramovic_and_the_Reperformance_of_Authenticity.
- Dempsey, Amy. *Art styles, schools and movements*. Prague: Slovar, 2002.
- Eynat-Confino, Irene. "Performance Space and Designed Authenticity: From a Non Sequitur to a Real Make-Believe?" Accessed June 10, 2022. https://www.academia.edu/24427386/Performance_Space_and_Designed_Authenticity_From_a_Non_Sequitur_to_a_Real_Make_Believe.
- Fischer-Lichte, Erika. *Aesthetics of performativity*. Mníšek pod Brdy: Na konári, 2011.
- Fischer-Lichte, Erika, Minou Arjomand, and Ramona Mosse. *The Routledge Introduction to Theatre and Performance Studies*. London & New York: Routledge, 2014.
- Gajdoš, Július. *From staging to installation, from acting to performance*. Prague: KANT, 2010.
- Goffman, Erving. *We all play theatre*. Prague: Studio Ypsilon Publishing House, 1999.
- Goldberg, RoseLee. *Performance Art: From Futurism to the Present*. London: Thames and Hudson, 2001.
- Grau, Donatien. "Lady Gaga." Accessed March 1, 2021. <https://flash---art.com/article/lady-gaga/#>.
- Humphrey, Caroline and James Laidlaw. *The Archetypal Actions of Ritual. A Theory of Ritual Illustrated by the Jain Rite of Worship*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994.
- Havlík, Vladimír, ed. *Action and reaction: performative aspects in contemporary art and art education*. Olomouc: Palacký University, 2015.
- Hesemans, Hanna. "Why we should not try to understand performance art." University College Maastricht, 2017. Accessed November 13, 2019. https://www.academia.edu/33662364/Why_we_should_not_try_to_understand_performance_art_-_About_the_ritualistic_aspects_of_performance_art_meaninglessness_and_rules.
- Horsáková, Monika and Irena Kocí, eds. *Transformations of dramaturgy* 5. Opava: Silesian University in Opava, 2021.
- Hylland Eriksen, Thomas. *Social and cultural anthropology: kinship, nationality, ritual*. Prague: Portál, 2008.
- Hylland Eriksen, Thomas. *The tyranny of the moment: Fast and slow time in the information age*. Brno: Doplněk, 2005.
- Jones, Amelia. "'Presence' in Absentia: Experiencing Performance as Documentation." *Art Journal* vol. 56/4 (1997): 11-18.
- Jovičević, Aleksandra and Ana Vujanović. *Introduction to performative studies*. Bratislava: Theatre Institute, 2012.
- Kershaw, Baz and Helen Nicholson. *Research Methods in Theatre and Performance*. Edinburgh University Press, 2011.
- Koubová, Alice and Eliška Kubartová, eds. *Terrains of performance*. Prague: AMU Publishing House, 2021.
- Krtička, Jan, Jan Prošek, and Hanna Buddeus, eds. *Documentation of art*. Ústí nad Labem: Faculty of Art and Design, Jan Evangelista Purkyně University, 2013.
- Lakoff, George and Mark Johnson. *Metaphors We Live By*. Brno: Host, 2002.
- Lehmann, Hans Thies. *Postdramatic theatre*. Bratislava: Theatre Institute, 2007.
- Neznal, Vít. *What is theatre? The "media" tradition of Czech theatre theory in the context of the art-reality dichotomy*. PhD diss., Prague: DAMU, 2017.
- Orlová, Jana. "How (not) to exhibit performance art." Accessed March 23, 2022. <https://artalk.cz/2022/03/23/jak-nevystavovat-performance-art/>.
- Orlová, Jana. *Visual performance and theatre*. PhD diss, Prague: Academy of Fine Arts, 2021.

O'Toole, Emer, Andrea Pelegri Kristić, and Stuart Young, eds. *Ethical Exchanges in Translation, Adaptation and Dramaturgy*. Leiden – Boston: Brill – Rodopi, 2017.

Písaříková, Jana. *Archives and documentation of performance art: searching for a path between history and myth*. PhD diss., Brno: FaVU VUT 2016.

Pavlovský, Petr. *Basic theatre concepts: Theatrical dictionary*. Prague: Libri, National Theatre, 2004.

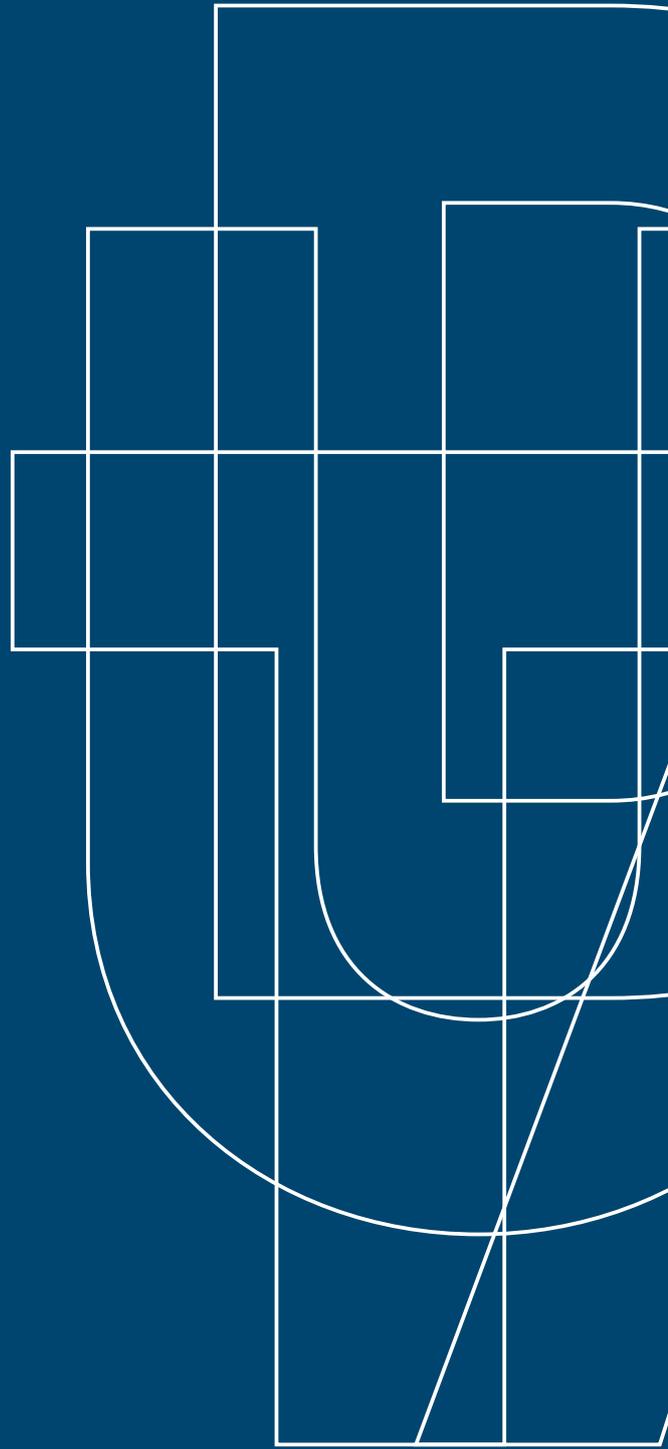
Roubal, Jan, Josef Kovalčuk, and Jan Motal, eds. *Theatre as an unthrown ladder: texts on original, alternative and studio theatre*. Brno: Janáček Academy of Performing Arts, 2015.

Schechner, Richard. *Performance Studies*. London: Routledge, 2002.

Staal, Fritz. "The meaninglessness of ritual." *Numen* vol. 26, no. 1 (1979): 2-22.

Vojtěchovský, Miroslav, Jaroslav Vostrý. *Image and story: scenicity in visual and dramatic art*. Prague: KANT for AMU, 2008.

Zet, Martin. *Performance for myself*. Brno: ESKORT Gallery, 2006.





DOCUMENTATION

DEATHSCAPES AFTERLIVES

(part 1)

Edited by Marina Gržinić

Preamble

The volume *Mapping Deathscapes: Digital Geographies of Racial and Border Violence* (ed Suvendrini Perera and Joseph Pugliese, eds., Routledge, 2022) saw its international launch via zoom in May 2022. It is reviewed in this journal by Saša Kesić.

Mapping Deathscapes grew out of the research project *Deathscapes: Mapping Race and State Violence in Settler Societies*, funded by the Australia Research Council (ARC) under its Discovery Projects Scheme (DP 160100303) from 2016 to 2020.

Following on from discussions at the launch, contributors to the volume initiated a number of projects under the broad heading **Deathscapes Afterlives**.

The first of these **Deathscapes Afterlives** projects takes the form of a two-part publication in two successive issues of *Art and Documentation* to be published in 2023. These two related publications were initiated and led by Marina Gržinić, in collaboration with the journal editors.

Included in this current issue of *Art and Documentation* **DEATHSCAPES AFTERLIVES (part 1)** consists of a brief introduction by Deathscapes' lead investigators Suvendrini Perera and Joseph Pugliese, followed by two speeches delivered at the launch of *Mapping Deathscapes*, by Nicole Watson and Yannick Giovanni Marshall. It ends with an extended dialogue by Jan Turner and Albertina Viegas, "Continuous Being-The Artworks of Mr Ward."

Part 2 will be published by *Art and Documentation* later in 2023. It consists of an introduction and further analysis of Deathscapes by Marina Gržinić, followed by a dialogue on occupied Kashmir between Goldie Osuri and Iffat Fatima. Also in the issue are a visual essay on Chile by Antonio Traverso; reflections on the photography and absence by Marziya Mohammedali, and Marina Gržinić's reflections on Europe, the European Union and the war in Ukraine. The issue ends with a sequence of poems by Yirga Gelaw Woldeyes.

Introduction

Suvendrini Perera and Joseph Pugliese

Mounting Indigenous deaths in custody and serial asylum seeker deaths at the border and in detention prisons are all systemically generated by transnational iterations of the racial state and its diverse non-state actors—including transport, surveillance and security companies. It was this unfolding necropolitical crisis that prompted the development of the Deathscapes project. In an attempt to identify the patterns of racial violence deployed by the state and its operatives, the project developed the analytic of the deathscape as what succinctly captures all of the relations of power that lethally impact on the lives of targeted racialised groups.

This special issue of *Art and Documentation*, published in two parts, emerges from the generous invitation from Marina Gržinić for Deathscapes to speak to its afterlives, that is, to the new embodiments and contestatory vectors that continue to be animated in the wake of the formal cessation of the project in 2020.

Across the two special issues, a range of work powerfully transposes the analytic of the deathscape to new international locations and subjects: they include colonial Nairobi, occupied Kashmir, political violence and memory in Chile and

the complex systems of relations between Ethiopia, its Black diaspora and the white Australian settler state. In keeping with the way in which Deathscapes mobilised a heterogeneity of genres, media and languages, the contributions to these two special issues encompass a celebratory mix of images, interviews, testimony, poems and reflections.

What emerges from the contributions of these two special issues are powerful voices that expose various modalities of racialised state violence, indict its operatives and, crucially, that also work to transmute it through creative acts that bear witness to the fact that the dead, in the loving hands of the friends and allies that survive their passing, continue to be animated in inspiring afterlives—as is so eloquently evidenced by Jan Turner and Albertina Viegas’ “Continuous Being—The Artworks of Mr Ward.” The painful death in state custody of Mr Ward was the very first case study explored by the Deathscapes project and we are honoured and moved to be able to include this expanded exploration of his “continuous life,” written by two of his old friends and allies with the approval of his family, as part of the Afterlives project.

In one of the poems that concludes Part 2 of this “Afterlives” special issue, “Under the Oldest

Tree,” Yirga Gelaw Woldeyes invokes his Ethiopian grandmother who reminds him to ask his elders to plant him under the oldest tree—where “you will grow roots and seeds.” In the shadow of the now-elderly tree of Deathscapes, these two special issues bear witness to unexpected seeds that have struck deep roots and are generating new and impassioned forms of future-oriented justice.

Works Cited

Bui, Michelle, Dean Chan, Suvendrini Perera, Joseph Pugliese and Charandev Singh. 2017. *The Road: Passage Through the Deathscape. Deathscapes: Mapping Race and Violence in Settler States*, 2017. <https://webarchive.nla.gov.au/awa/20201103065140/http://pandora.nla.gov.au/pan/173410/20201103-1648/www.deathscapes.org/case-studies/the-road-passage-through-the-deathscape/index.html>.

Professor Suvendrini Perera, John Curtin Distinguished Emeritus
Professor Curtin University, Perth, Australia.

Professor Joseph Pugliese, Department of Media, Music, Communication and Cultural Studies, Macquarie University, Sydney, Australia.

Nicole Watson

ON MAPPING DEATHSCAPES: *DIGITAL GEOGRAPHIES OF RACIST AND TRANSNATIONAL VIOLENCE* (A BOOK LAUNCH SPEECH)

**BOOK LAUNCH SPEECH
BY NICOLE WATSON ON
MAPPING DEATHSCAPES:
DIGITAL GEOGRAPHIES
OF RACIST AND
TRANSNATIONAL VIOLENCE.
EDITED BY SUVENDRINI
PERERA AND JOSEPH
PUGLIESE. ABINGDON, OX:
ROUTLEDGE, 2022.**

Good evening, I would like to acknowledge the Aboriginal people, the owners of the land upon which I live and work, the Cammeraygal people. It is a privilege for me to participate in the launch of *Mapping Deathscapes: Digital Geographies of Racial and Border Violence*. I want to congratulate the editors, Suvendrini Peraera and Joseph Pugliese, and the authors whose rich chapters offer new and empowering lenses through which we can see the world. I was excited when I received my copy of this book. From the first page of the introductory chapter, which acknowledges the contributions of Wiradjuri activist Uncle Ray Jackson, I knew this book would provide intellectual succour and speak to my heart because it celebrates the intellectual traditions of grassroots activists. The decision by Uncle Ray and other activists to give Aboriginal passports to our brothers and sisters who have been dehumanised by the refugee policies of successive Australian governments demonstrates the brilliance and creativity of these traditions. Today, these traditions are more important than ever, reminding us all of the real power we have to speak back to the violence revealed in the chapters of this book.

Mapping Deathscapes: Digital Geographies of Racial and Border Violence illuminates what Patricia Hill Collins describes as "lethal intersections," that is, multiple and intersecting forms of oppression manifested in violent practices imposed on Indigenous peoples, immigrant communities, and others affected by marginalisation. Such analysis enabled me to see how past protection policy, under which my ancestors were removed from Country and herded onto remote reserves, are perpetuated in today's immigrant detention programmes.

One of the revelations in this book that deeply disturbed me was how substandard care administered to those in detention has become the norm, so that illness and even death are seen as inevitable and devoid of human agency. In the chapter "Deadly Prescriptions: Immigration detention, misedication and the necropolitics of uncare," Jonathan Xavier Inda poignantly demonstrates how avoidable deaths caused by woefully inadequate medical practices, are accepted in immigration detention facilities without consequence. The story of Juan Carlos, a 26-year-old man who died in a detention facility due to medical neglect and incompetence, is truly horrifying.

After reading this important book, one might feel overwhelmed by the seemingly unstoppable power of systems that condemn those on the margins of society as expendable. But in the pages of *Mapping Deathscapes: Digital Geographies of Racial and Border Violence*, you'll find tools we can use to interrupt them. One such tool is honouring those whose lives have been treated as worthless by naming them and telling their stories. In this regard, I would like to acknowledge the authors whose work makes Indigenous women visible. Bronwyn Carlson exposes how the endemic violence suffered by Indigenous women consistently fails to generate outrage in Australian social media. At the same time, Aboriginal women are using social media as a medium to speak back against our invisibility. Hannah McGlade and Stella Tarrant demonstrate the power of storytelling in their chapter "Say Her Name," using the stories of Jody Gore, Tamica

Mullaley and baby Charlie, and Ms. Dhu, McGlade and Tarrant elucidate the multiple forms of violence that Aboriginal women face in the legal system. One of the gifts of this book is the recognition of the power of art to make visible what has previously been erased. This is highlighted by Tess Allas and Ruben Allas in their chapter "Artistic Responses to historical and ongoing genocidal violence against Aboriginal women." Tess Allas and Ruben Allas show how First Nations artists speak out about massacres that are all too often omitted from settler histories by bringing this violence back into focus in the colonial present.

I want to thank each author for the wisdom and stories they so generously shared with us. I usually never read an anthology from the first page to the last. I usually pick the chapters that capture my interest the most. But *Mapping Deathscapes: Digital Geographies of Racial and Border Violence* was a rare exception. Reading this book was an extraordinary journey that revealed the connections between Indigenous peoples, members of immigrant communities, and others who experience relentless oppression. The book also celebrates the knowledge within communities that have experienced marginalisation, and the resilience of those who live at the grassroots level, personified by Uncle Ray Jackson, who never lost sight of his power. Thank you.

Nicole Watson is a Murri woman from south-east Queensland, who belongs to the Munanjali and Birri Gubba Peoples. She is currently employed as an Associate Professor in the Faculty of Law, University of Technology Sydney. Nicole has published a large body of work on legal issues that are of particular concern to Indigenous communities.

Yannick Giovanni Marshall

A DEATHSCAPE IN COLONIAL NAIROBI

When Billie Holiday took the stage in 1937, picked up the microphone and performed her lament "Strange Fruit," she set a dark and ghostly crooning as the signature tune for America's festival of lynching, replacing imitation ragtime. Its images of "blood on the leaves" and the black bodies "hanging from the poplar trees" in Southern breeze like "strange fruit," were likely inspired after its writer, Abel Meeropol, who saw a photograph of the August 7, 1930 lynching of Thomas Shipp and Abram Smith in Marion, Indiana.

As striking and upsetting as the images of lynched Black people's bodies dangling like fruit may have been to a more protected audience in 1937, it was not the first time the metaphor had been used.

Twenty years earlier, the editor of the *Times of East Africa*, angered by what he saw to be a plague of native "impertinence" as well as by the colonial administration's arrest and jailing of a group of white settlers who had taken the initiative to put a dramatic end to it by illegally flogging three Africans on the steps of the Nairobi courthouse, had used similar symbolism for a different end. "Let the Government take warning. We have suffered too long, at first in silence, following this in quiet protest. Entreaties and warning, temperate speech and determined assertion have alike failed in their object. Our blood is roused now and will not be quick to cool. Again we say let the authorities be warned; they are living on the brink of a volcano

which may break out at any moment and the fruit of that eruption, when it comes, may be black fruit and may hang from the branches of trees." The editorial was partly incitement to turn the settlers against the "insolent" native population, and partly a promise to litter the colony with the corpses of Black people if the colonial state did not get its act together and become a reliable instrument of racial control and violence against African natives.

The settler state is a deathscape. The languishing and waiting while decomposing in detention centers and jails, the celebrated snuffing out of the lives of racialized people by the forces of state order, the execution centers of death row camps, and the disposal of bodily waste after the execution of the law against a captured body - all these nightly atrocities of the settler state are clear to those who have no political interest in seeing them remain hidden. But we must also ponder whether the state is merely an abstraction that can absolve settler "society," or whether the elephant question must be set aside, whether the fabric or mechanism in the settler population imagination is not as full of rot and carrion as the offices and backyards of the settler state. Whether the state is a repository for the excesses of settler culture that leaves room for a more humane settler culture after colonial settlement and functions in the same way that the concepts of bad apples or police brutality leave room for the possibility of a good police force. What if

the state to be condemned is set up like a piñata, an imagined beast onto which we can blame and condemn all the normal violence of settler culture, while our hopes for a better society or a post-settler colonial society remain untouched.

The settler state of the East Africa Protectorate was nominally responsible for torture, flogging, and eventually mass internment and execution of political prisoners. But this was the very state that the most prominent members of the settler society condemned as liberal for coddling the natives, for allowing the N-words to become so brazen as to rudely address a white woman on the street. This settler state is the state that the settlers said they would overthrow if the state did not immediately change its policies toward the natives, including calling for executions of natives accused of rape and an end to restrictions placed on settlers for the flogging and murdering their native employees. The settlers of the East Africa Protectorate threatened to overthrow the state and cover East Africa with black fruit hanging from the branches of trees. They wrote that they would soon do things the way their compatriots across the pond did in another province of the white, racist settler empire, the United States of the early 1900s. The settler state was not racist enough for them. When calls were made to abolish the police after the recorded suffocation of George Floyd, conservatives made videos warning that blacks had better hope the police continued to exist, because if they had their way, no taxpayer time or money would be wasted on lawsuits against blacks. In 2021, dissatisfied with the colony's mass incarceration, reservations, immigrant detention, and public murders, a settler mob, equipped with nooses, confederate battle flags, and ethnic slurs, sought to overthrow this unsatisfactorily racist settler state.

For the settler-colonists, whether centuries before or yesterday, the settler-state is never settler enough. The settler state, which we prove to be genocidal, is only the bare minimum, never deathly enough, an instrument for the settler population. In fact, there are currently movements in all settler states and in all colonial metropolises (especially those where the colonized have washed back to the

shores of the "homeland" in significant numbers) to replace the false settler state that coddles the migrant/native with a state that better suits the instincts of the settlers.

This is why the concept of "deathscapes" is so compelling. Accounting for every inch of settler space. Not just the genocidal state hovering over society, but every inch of land claimed by colonial geography, it can hold every inch of settler imagination as the problem. An accounting of settler sovereignty that is not exhausted in the colonial administrative carceral state, but in the much broader geography of the always present lynch mob. Thus, not simply a listing of murders on the frontier, but the rot in the liberal imagination evident in the worship of peddlers of flesh as founding fathers. Where colonial institutions are not rejected as offal but celebrated as achievements of human progress and democracy, so that an officer wrestling with and executing an immigrant on the ground is the victim and the hero, so that repurposed cotton plantations are seen as rehabilitation centers, so that elections are progressive forms of collective governance rather than afterlives of treaty scams.

Deathscapes makes possible an accounting not only with the goings-on of the corpse machines, but also with the always present promise of the edge of the volcano, a landscape of black fruit hanging from the branches of trees. One that raises a question skillfully avoided in the radical European anti-state traditions, namely whether the abolition of the state is not the end of history, but the gate that opens to a bloody sight.

Yannick Giovanni Marshall writes in *Black Studies*. He is a faculty member at the School of Critical Studies, California Institute of the Arts, US. Marshall's current interests include police power, colonial sexualities, colonial whiteness, anti-Blackness, urbanity in East Africa and the US, and anti-colonialism. Marshall has published two collections of poetry, several articles, and given several interviews on race, power and policing. Links to writings can be found at yannickgiovannimarshall.net

Saša KESIĆ

Postdoctoral researcher at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna, Austria

MAPPING DEATHSCAPES: DIGITAL GEOGRAPHIES OF RACIAL AND BORDER VIOLENCE, SUVENDRINI PERERA AND JOSEPH PUGLIESE (EDITORS), 288 PP., ROUTLEDGE, US, 2022

The volume *Mapping Deathscapes: Digital Geographies of Racial and Border Violence* grew out of the research project *Deathscapes: Mapping Race and State Violence in Settler Societies*, funded by the Australia Research Council (ARC) under its Discovery Projects Scheme (DP 160100303) from 2016 to 2020. According to editors Suvendrini Perera and Joseph Pugliese, the book was developed by an international team of authors who studied race, violence, and resistance in North America, Australia, and Europe. The *Deathscapes* website is one of the outcomes of the *Deathscapes* project that was funded by the ARC. The edited volume and the website are complementary outcomes of the same project.

Deathscapes project aims “to make visible the shared strategies, policies, practices

and rationales of state violence deployed in the management of separate racialized categories of the population” (4). *Deathscapes* features individual case studies of testimonies and accounts of deaths in custody as a kind of “anti-archive” - “it refuses the classificatory categories that organise the official archives of the state, categories that reproduce their own forms of epistemic and symbolic violence” (11). Because violence occurs in different places and throughout history, this site aims to critically and analytically examine how deaths are perceived through various forms of witnessing and activism that often go unnoticed.

In the introduction to *Mapping Deathscapes*, the editors *Suvendrini Perera and Joseph Pugliese with contributions by Michelle Bui, Pilar Kasat, Ayman Qwaider and Raed Yacoub*, explain that

the Deathscapes project was inspired by the work of the late Uncle Ray Jackson, a Wiradjuri activist who held Australia accountable for the deaths of people who died in custody. Ray Jackson, who died in 2015, was a Wiradjuri activist and elder. He was president of the Indigenous Social Justice Association (ISJA) and a prominent campaigner for the rights of Indigenous Australians. Jackson was part of the Stolen Generations, as the Australian government deprived his birth mother of custody of her four children (including Jackson) because of her Aboriginal race, rather than granting her a war widow's pension (his father was killed in World War II, fighting Japanese forces on the Kokoda Track). It was not until he was in his teens that he learned he had been adopted. His name was changed and he was sent to a Catholic institution for a year before being adopted by a white family.

He was affectionately known as Uncle Ray and was one of Australia's most prominent and knowledgeable campaigners on the issue of Aboriginal deaths in custody. Between 1991 and 1997, Jackson was coordinator of the Aboriginal Deaths in Custody Watch Committee, which was funded by the government agency ATSIC. However, when the government under Prime Minister John Howard cut off funding to the committee, Jackson formed the Indigenous Social Justice Association (ISJA) to continue the work. Uncle Ray campaigned against deaths in custody and established a series of Aboriginal passport ceremonies in 2010 that represented "an act of reciprocal recognition in defiance of the colonizing settler state, a compact between the very bodies on whose violent exclusion that state's sovereignty was founded" (1). Moreover, Indigenous deaths in custody are linked to refugee deaths at sea or in detention centers. This is now a way for necrocapitalist states to demonstrate their supreme authority to govern their people and territories.

In the **first part** of the book, "Deathscapes intersectionalities," the concepts and features of the Deathscapes site are expanded. In the first text, this is done through several case studies of state violence against different groups; in the second, with "the fundamental debt" of the Australian state to its

Indigenous people; and in the third, with gendered and sexual violence against women in immigration detention in Australia and the United States.

Patricia Hill Collins, in "Violence and intersecting power relations," examines violence as a mechanism that operates within a system of power to oppress minority groups such as women, people of color, Indigenous people, youth, the poor, immigrants, religious minorities, and queer populations. Collins first points out that victims of violence are blamed for the violence - "dominant discourse depicts subordinate groups as either initiating violence or as being so threatening that they require disciplinary violence to keep them in their place" (28). Therefore, it is important that those who fight against violence and for social justice are perceived as intellectual leaders within marginalized communities, as well as among individuals, and that they come from below. For example, they can point out forms of violence that are so routinized that they have become invisible, help discriminated groups resist the institutions that organize and perpetrate institutionalized violence through ideology, propaganda, and/or hate speech, analyze the organizations and dynamics of intersecting power relations, and so on.

In "The colonial debtscape," Maria Giannacopoulos takes as her starting point the concept of "nomophilia" - the blind love of the law that enables the failure of decolonial justice in colonial Australia, i.e., the systematic discrimination against Indigenous, refugee, and economically disenfranchised populations. Nomophilia gives rise to nomopoly, which is "a monopoly in the creation of nomos/law, but in a colonial context, it has the added feature of structurally foreclosing the operations of the first laws of Aboriginal peoples by subjecting all to its monolithic rule" (46). Therefore, Deathscapes is of inestimable importance because it is not focused exclusively on individual local issues but looks at state crimes globally, appealing for urgent intellectual and political solidarity. Deathscapes works "to reveal in more detail the relevance of the Australian Constitution, as nomopoly, to the carcerality and related harm." It generates (51),

because of the disavowed sovereign Australian debt to Aboriginal people, what Giannacopoulos refers to as “debtscape.”

Suvendrini Perera and Joseph Pugliese analyze, in “‘You have to pay with your body’: sexual violence, border violence and the settler state,” sexual violence in immigration detention in immigration detention centers in two colonial nation-states, Australia and the United States, and emphasize that these forms of violence occur at the border, “both at the legislative level and at the level of expansive discretionary powers which enable multiple forms of non-accountable force and violence to be directed against non-white and racialized bodies that are cast as threats to national security” (64). In the case of immigrant women, sexual violence remains invisible because they are deemed guilty before they commit the crime, so the ability to seek any kind of justice is virtually nonexistent without a legitimate legal basis. As an example, the authors cite the case of “the Australian coastal detention camp in Nauru, where inmates say they were asked to strip and pose naked for guards in order to access the most basic everyday goods (such as soap) and practices (a hot shower for their children)” (68), while in the U.S. there are documented cases of women being taken out of their cells at night to have sex, fondle in front of others, etc. These types of violence, of course, also apply to LGBTQI+ refugees who fled their countries of origin because of homophobia and then experienced in detention centers the very things they were trying to flee. And indeed, the most disturbing cases are women who became pregnant in the camps as a result of rape. On the other hand, the security guards, border guards, and bureaucrats who perpetrate this kind of violence are guaranteed impunity through structural and institutional normativity.

The **second part** of the book, “Making Indigenous women visible in the deathscape,” examines Australian colonial violence against Indigenous women. While the first text addresses two murderous silences—the silence about the continuity of border violence of the present and the past, and the media's neglect of stories

related to violence against Indigenous women and girls—the second text illustrates critical work aimed at reviving the stories of women whose lives have been taken. The section ends with a poem written to commemorate the death of a 36-year-old woman in a police cell after she was arrested for drunkenness.

Bronwyn Carlson, in “Data silence in the settler archive: Indigenous femicide, deathscapes and social media,” points to the fact that “the violence of the settler state is enacted through diverse practices that render Indigenous women, Indigenous transgender women, and non-binary lives unsafe and have resulted in their deaths” (84). Since non-white stories are not considered newsworthy in the mainstream media, Indigenous peoples who follow settler revisionist narratives bring to light the disappearance and murder of women, girls, and non-binary people through social media platforms. Carlson first discusses “the way in which Indigenous women have been represented historically as gendered subjects that experience racism, sexism and gendered violence” (86)—as those who are helpful but expendable, as those who do not fit the image of a desirable sexual being and engender a brutal form of misogyny, as immoral and indecent and a threat to white Australia, etc. Second, she considers the possibilities of adapting to the trappings of colonization in the form of social network engagement to uncover the archeology of everyday violence, as there is a way “to connect across vast distances and diverse populations, connecting us to a global network of Indigenous people,” (90) and speak about what the mainstream media would never show - the Indigenous truth. Finally, the author attempts to deconstruct the colonial legacy by citing numerous recent examples: over 100,000 women protested in the streets on March 15, 2020 to say enough is enough and violence against women must end, including the double standards regarding violence against women, not talking about the perpetrators, lack of attention and emotion surrounding the violent deaths of Ms. Dhu, Veronica Baxter, or Ms. Daley.

Hannah McGlade and Stella Tarrant, in “‘Say her name’: naming Aboriginal women in

the justice system,” present the cases of three Aboriginal women through “the international #SayHerName campaign, which sheds light on the fact that women of color are victims of police and structural violence, although their lives and deaths are often ignored and rendered invisible by white society and its institutions, including the law” (106). The first, Jodi Gore, was accused of murdering her partner in 2015, sentenced to life in prison, and released after four years during which three children were taken from her, only one of whom was returned. The second, Tamica Mulally, had a ten-month-old baby, Charlie, who was abducted and murdered in 2014. After Tamica tried to go home with her baby, she was beaten by Mervyn Bell in the street, ended up in the hospital, and her father unsuccessfully tried to report the baby's abduction to police. The third, Ms. Dhu, died in custody in 2014, two days after being arrested for unpaid fines. She had been assaulted by her partner before her arrest and begged for medical help, which she was denied. “The violence [Jody, Tamica and Ms. Dhu] faced was a matter of life and death, and they fought against it with all their considerable resources up until the deaths each of them encountered - and then, with their families and communities, they continue to fight.” (121) Therefore, the repeated saying of their names constitutes a strong act of resistance and a way to keep them with us.

Alison Whittaker, in “Close the Inquest,” “follows family and community members as they walk in procession to a courtroom to await the coroner’s pronouncement on the death of a 36-year-old Wiradjuri woman, Ms. Maher, in a police cell after she was taken into custody for drunkenness” (82). Based on her experience as a legal scholar, Whittaker can predict what a medical examiner will say in a courtroom - “Looks down to read things like ‘criminal history’ and ‘drug use’ and ‘antibodies’ and ‘benzodiazepines’ and we know this unsubtle and cruel clinical pivot means the Coroner will soon say ‘protocol breached’ and ‘could have been prevented’ and ‘should’ and ‘training’ and ‘apologise for any further distress’.” (128), - or not say - “And she does say these things but not ‘racism’ or ‘killed’ and then

she says ‘close the inquest’ but it never really will.” (128) The goal of this poem that closes the section is to expose the cruel practices of Indigenous femicide, and to commemorate the resistance that families and communities put up - “Like all photos on these placards, it was taken in the course of a life in the same way we’re all photographed by loved ones.” (127)

The **third part** of the book, “Refugees in the deathscape: Crimes of peace,” explores the necropolitical systems of refugee extermination in Europe and the United States. Four authors address “the deathscapes produced and maintained by a state’s crimes of peace” (131) - in the Mediterranean, the Belgian colonization of the Congo, antisemitism and the Holocaust in Austria, Islamophobia in Spain, the fascist nationalism of the former Yugoslavia, anti-immigration rhetoric related to Brexit and European Union member states, and in the care of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE).

Maurizio Albahari, in “The confined sea and the wavering of sovereignty,” first illustrates his non-binary antonyms “sea” and “sovereignty” in the title with the 2015 song “No Search, No Rescue” by Jehan Bseiso, which “brings readers to the violent existential and geopolitical interstice navigated by those with war behind them, and the sea as the only way forward” (133), given that since 1993, more than 40.000 people have died both at the EU’s external borders and on its soil during arrest, deportation, or detention. In other words, the sea is a symbol of every struggle against sovereignty. Then Albahari uses the phrase “crimes of peace,” borrowed from the psychiatric discourse of Franca Basaglia Ongaro and Franco Basaglia, “to index the liberal-democratic work of maintaining the current migration-management sovereign ‘system’ in place” (136), in the form of building fences and walls, with sensors, x-ray machines, drones, armed agents, and detention centers. And when it comes to the political space of the Mediterranean, among the crimes of peace, the author mentions slavery, mass expulsions, forced conversions, genocide, population exchanges, etc. - Mediterranean “coastal populations are

casually asked to become vigilantes of the European periphery-reporting any trespassing, and in charge of captivity" (141). For without the commission of the crimes of peace (which make the "democratic" and "liberal" European nations continue to commit crimes against "immigration") the sovereign liberal-democratic mobility regime cannot function.

Marina Gržinić, in "Racialized violence in Europe: the Genealogy of Amnesia Project and the immobilization of refugees?," begins with the massive pro-refugee movement that emerged in Vienna and Austria in 2012 and came to a brutal end in 2021 as it was suppressed by the mainstream media due to the death toll from the Covid 19 pandemic. The EU thus abandons millions of people whose plight is precisely the consequence of past colonialism and neocolonial policies. Gržinić's response to these European racist concepts is the project "Genealogy of Amnesia," but it is also an account of "the overlapping of two forms of racialization and control: On the one hand, refugees' immobilization, their forced inactivity, being sequestered in camps in Europe, and, on the other, the intensified, loosened or postponed lockdown of 'Europeans' due to Covid-19 in 2020" (149). The goal of "Genealogy of Amnesia" was to uncover memories of Belgium's genocidal policies in its former colony of Congo, reflected today in the fact that the unemployment rate of people originating from the former colonies is four times higher than in the rest of Belgium; the antisemitism in Austria during and after the World War II, which was transferred to Muslims (anti-Muslim racism) after 2000; and the turbo-fascism in the former Yugoslavia, which has been active since the 1990s until today in the form of historical revisionism and the relativization of communism and fascism. Analyzing these memories, she concludes that "to leave and to become a refugee is due to colonialism, imperialism and present proxy wars," (156) and "refugee camps are kept continuously into a form of dead territories with lives that serve for extraction, while the white wage workers are part of hyper-divisive processes regulated by time and new technologies; captured in procedures of hyper mediation, digitalization, control" (158).

M. I. Franklin, in "Life and death at the digitalized border: 'Access denied,'" focuses specifically on "the digital, networked dimensions to border-keeping at the gates of 'Fortress Europe' and the shores of the post-Brexit United Kingdom" (164). These automated border guards and the human guards who enforce deterrence, search, and rescue measures are actually private military and security companies working on behalf of government agencies. And this privatization of border control frees the state from direct involvement in the deaths - it does not kill the undesirables directly, but lets them die. In the case of the European Union, such crimes are relativized by its status as a metastate, as it "requires its member-states to submit to EU-level laws and policies and yet provides them with a venue in which they can assert national interests (namely, to the Council of the European Union) respectively" (172). For example, the European Council is responsible for the EU border management agency Frontex, which is a private sector actor. Finally, when it comes to resistance, "it is taking place in a myriad of ways and by any means available: from providing Wi-Fi connections at the border, or phone batteries and chargers, to fighting disproportionate legislation in national and international courts, to developing cross-border and cross-sector education and organizational strategies, within but also beyond academe to change public and political opinion" (176).

Jonathan Xavier Inda examines, in "Fatal prescriptions: immigration detention, miseducation and the necropolitics of uncare," the investigation into custodial neglect and its fatal consequences, primarily in the death of Juan Carlos Barres, a 26-year-old HIV-positive native of El Salvador, who died of infection because he did not receive adequate treatment in the Lerdo Pre-Trial Detention Facility in Bakersfield, California, where he was detained. In the immigration detention system, then, necropolitics has been enacted - since the early 1990s, "it has been common for individuals and groups to cast undocumented migrants - typically imagined as Mexican and now increasingly also as Central American - as criminals who endanger

the well-being of the general population and imperil the security of the nation” (185). Therefore, detention has become an increasingly profitable technology for managing migration because the more immigrants are imprisoned - the greater the profit. The necropolitics of immigration detention is closely related to inadequate and negligent medical care, which the author labels as the necropolitics of uncare. In the case of Juan Carlos, “the policies and procedures put in place at the facility to provide care, in particular for HIV/AIDS, were designed or structured in such a way as to ensure that detainees would not receive appropriate treatment” (189).

In the **fourth part** of the book, “Aesthetic witnessing in the deathscape,” the focus is again on Australia and Canada, with acts of aesthetic witness. Three chapters’ deal with “buried histories of colonial massacre and how they may be uncovered and made visible anew in and for the present,” (201), through art, in the function of bearing witness, the practice of resistance and survival, and counter-witness to state violence.

Tess Allas and Ruben Allas, in “Artistic responses to historical and ongoing genocidal violence against Aboriginal women,” present the works of several artists who, with their art, fought for justice for the victims of genocidal violence. In 2017, Terry McCue created the exhibition *Ripples of Loss in Canada*, which presents “a series of 16 paintings depicting the skeletal remains of the missing women, each clothed in a red dress which has become synonymous with the artistic movement that calls for justice for these women” (204). Just a year earlier (in 2016), Australian Tess Allas and Canadian David Garneau, two Indigenous curators, curated the exhibition *With Secrecy and Despatch*, which commemorated the 200th anniversary of the 1816 Appin Massacre. Tasmanian Aboriginal artist Julie Gough contributed to this exhibition by “uncovering and re-presenting historical stories as part of an ongoing project that questions and re-evaluates the impact of the past on our present lives,” (206) in the form of installation of videos and prints collectively titled *Hunting Ground*. First Nations

Canadian artist Adrian Stimson focuses on identity formation in terms of the hybridization of Native American, cowboy, shaman, and Two Spirit Being, which he achieves, for example, with depictions of bison in imaginary landscapes. Finally, Noongar artist Laurel Nannup commemorates the 1834 Pinjarra Massacre in her work *Quirriup*, which depicts a woman who was present at the time of the massacre.

Antonio Traverso, in “Looking into the world from somewhere else: mapping and the visualisation of racial violence in Australia,” explores “interrelated ideas in postphenomenology of technology and critical studies of visibility, decoloniality and Indigenous knowledges,” (217) with brief analytical references to Australian, Chilean and Palestinian films. The research is based on a comparative analysis of the Colonial Frontier Massacres and Deathscapes websites. The Frontier Massacres map is “a project that seeks to dot-mark the occurrence of each historically documented colonial massacre on an online interactive satellite map of Australia within a demarcated timeline: 1788–1930” (218). Similarly, Deathscapes has a section “Saying their names,” which aims to name Indigenous victims so that they are not reduced to disembodied and anonymous statistics. But “the objectifying gaze of the aerial map and the virtual globe, which the Frontier Massacres map problematically applies to the representation of Aboriginal massacres, is actively repudiated in Deathscapes’ “agonistic immersion into the horror and incommensurable pain of Aboriginal people and asylum seekers inflicted on their incarcerated bodies by the police, medical, legal and government institutions of Australia” (228).

Adrian Stimson, in “Perpetual trauma: witnessing deathscapes of the colonial project,” points out that Canada is the country that has denied its genocidal past for the longest time and that despite numerous commissions and reports, very little has been done to address the racism that affects the everyday lives of Indigenous people, what the author, a member of the Siksika First Nation, calls a perpetual state of trauma. His voice on decolonization is artistic, in the form of

painting, performance, installation and sculpture. Since there were an estimated 75 million bison in the pre-contact period, an overarching theme in Stimson's work is the icon of the bison as a symbol of resistance, change, and resilience. One of his performances, *Buffalo Boy*, presents “a campy Two-Spirited Indian Cowboy based on Buffalo Bill and his wild west shows”- “a spectacle, the embodiment of the Wild West; settlers claiming the land, Indian wars, Manifest Destiny, resource extraction and the ultimate genocide of Indigenous peoples” (245). Then there is the installation *Sick and Tired*, which “explores identity, history and transcendence and through the reconfiguration of architectural and natural fragments it exposes colonial history” (246). The installation *As Above So Below*, commemorating the 200th anniversary of the Appin Massacre in New South Wales, Australia, featured beautiful landscapes that preserve the memory of colonial violence. Finally, *Aggressive Assimilation* and *Silent Witness* address the intergenerational impact of Canadian Indian residential schools, i.e., by sitting in silence as an act of resistance to the Colonial Project.

The final, **fifth part**, consists of the poem "After Abolition" by Kyle Carrera Lopez and the editors' afterword titled "Transformative Justice." Kyle Carrero López asks in his poem - how, after abolition, imprisonment, camps and detention cells will be subjected to transformative justice, and how will new life flourish on the ruins of violence. According to the editors, that is the ultimate goal of the Deathscales project - “the abolition of the racial-prison-industrial-border complex as the governing lynchpin of the settler state” (263). It is a dream to which all the chapters of this book point as they reveal the reality of solidified violence in the form of countless unsolved murders committed by an inexorable settler state and its deadly carceral apparatuses.

Coda

Let us close this magnificent volume of analytical and affective brilliance with the afterword, "Transformative Justice," to the entire volume, in which Suvendrini Perera and Joseph Pugliese once again call for urgent action that will transform “the unexpected return of the living dead who refuse to die because of the entrenched intransigence of their colonial systems, with their settler theft of unceded Indigenous lands, racial hierarchies of privilege and subjugation and racist regimes of incarceration and elimination” (258), into a discursive and activist tool for direct transformation.

With this project of Deathscales, the murderous power of the racial-carceral state is described several times in the book, most notably in its ignorance of “the white overseers who reside outside its lethal structures and who are largely untouched by its agents of racialized violence, even as they continue to fuel its reproduction under the guise of reformism” (260). In other words, the transnational power of these necrocapitalist states has been laid bare, consisting in shared killing techniques primarily through police militarization and surveillance.

Overall, *Mapping Deathscales: Digital Geographies of Racial and Border Violence* uncovers the actions that led to the deaths of the people mentioned in the various chapters of this book: Indigenous Peoples, Black People, People of Colour, and Refugees caught in the determinable apparatuses of the carceral state that reproduce with confidence “the serial, but never justifiable, embodied figures of ‘deaths in custody’ or ‘deaths at the border’” (262). What preoccupies the editors most is the (im)possibility of Australia’s decolonization, for all the criticisms of the reformist and legislative steps taken by the Australian settler state to continue to legitimise its usurpation of Indigenous sovereignty.

Jan TURNER & Albertina VIEGAS

CONTINUOUS BEING – THE ARTWORKS OF MR WARD



Fig. 1. I am the Nganurti chick, laying down with the spear at Yankaltjungkul. Ian Ward, 2001. Photo: C. Maccarino.

My name is Ian Ward ... Yankaltjunku is a Dreaming story of my past but when I was born I was born at a different place in the bush at Rirruwa, no name but close to it. I was born and stamped with the mark (birthmark), it's like a seal or like a branded man, with the tjukurrpa (a physical feature associated with the time of Creation). I am the nganurti (turkey) chick, laying down with the spear at Yankaltjunku.¹

INTRODUCTION

These are the words that Mr Ward chose to begin his witness statement for an Australian native title legal claim over a substantial proportion of the deserts of Western Australia. It is how he announced his arrival on the earth to strangers in an alien highly prescribed legal process. What did he mean by them?

We came together to write from our shared perspective of having lived and worked for many years with the Ward Family and others at the small desert community of Warburton and the even smaller desert homeland of Patjarr, in

the far east of Western Australia. We are not writing from the perspective of anthropology or the arts, or as *Yarnangu*² (the desert word for humans and pertaining to the local Indigenous cultural world), rather we write and speak from our own experiences of intermingled lives and responsibilities. Wherever possible we have used the words and artworks of Mr Ward to speak for themselves. Our conversation is edited from ten recording sessions made via Zoom between Poland and Australia. We asked permission from Mr Ward's sister Nunykiya/Dorothy Ward, his widow Nancy Donegan and his cousin-sister Daisy/Tjuparntarri Ward. They are always in our minds. As the paper took shape, we recognised how significantly we have been influenced by, guided and are respectful of, two mentors, *Tjamu* (grandfather) Dr John von Sturmer and Dr Marrkilyi "Lizzie" Ellis. We are grateful for the opportunities and encouragement provided by Prof. Suvendrini Perera to express publicly the difficult and often inexpressible.

We explore the challenges faced living in a cross-cultural world for our highly intelligent and sometimes flamboyant friend and colleague, the late Mr Ian Ward, known to us fondly by his nickname, "Ribs". In January 2008, Mr Ward was cruelly left to die, to be "cooked" to death in the back of a prison transport van. A monstrous death and event.³ In the years immediately preceding his tragic death at 44 years of age, Mr Ward was influential in Ngaanyatjarra society as an emerging cultural leader and as a cross-cultural educator *par excellence*. He was an art-maker, a dancer, a navigator, an orator and most importantly a holder of sacred knowledge, sourced from the *Tjukurrpa* (Creation Time)⁴ by an older generation born in the desert who had lived adult lives far from Western contact. Mr Ward was both a conduit of this knowledge to his contemporaries now living in small residential communities on the fringes of mainstream Australian society and to those non-Yarnangu persons with whom he interacted.

This paper has three parts⁵: Pre-Life, as a reference to both Mr Ward's own physical

awakening by the spiritual forces that animated him into existence, and to his family living before settler society contact; Life, as a reference to his 44 years on earth; and After-Life, the continuing presence of his identity, his artworks and his voice.

Part 1

Pre-Life: *Parrkangka ngaralanytja* (among the leaves)

Mr Ward was born into the desert rhythms of foot-walking vast distances, of drinking rainwater from shallow clay pans, crevices in rocky escarpments and underground water from hand dug wells and springs, camping beneath the stars, of hunting and gathering foods, of complex cosmological knowledge. Accompanying the rhythms of seasonality were the rhythms of human aggregation and dispersal; at times it was his father, his father's four wives and their several children, whilst there were also times of visiting kin and following the large travelling ceremonial cycles that continue to unite desert families.

People lived according to the rules of conduct laid down in the *Tjukurrpa*, others may call this The Dreaming or Dreamtime. The *Tjukurrpa* was and continues to be central to all Yarnangu lives. It is everything and it is all-encompassing. It is the time when great events occurred as Ancestral Beings travelled, country and cosmos, shaping the geographic features we see today. Through their behaviour they determined how Yarnangu should conduct themselves, live, and care for the country, family and future generations. The Ancestral Beings created social order (and disorder), cultural behaviours (and misbehaviours) and importantly brought forth the languages to be spoken—the telepathic languages, respect languages, sign languages and spoken languages relevant to specific regions. The *Tjukurrpa* is in the past, it is now and it is in the future. It is embodied, literally inside, each person.



Fig. 2.



Fig. 3.

Fig. 2. Ward as an infant with his family of birth: Tjakamarra (father); Manupa, Tjungupi and Pulpuru (mothers and co-wives); Napula and Nunykiya, Ruth, Spencer (some of his siblings). Photo: I. Dunlop, 1965.

Fig. 3. Pulpuru (Mr Ward's birth mother) winnowing seed to make flour with Ward's older brother and Ngurapaya looking on. Photo: R. Gould, 1966.

*Each person was something before they was born, that is, in a 'pre-life', and this is their totem... You have to be respectful of your individual totem—for example, by not eating it. Should you eat it, it would be like eating yourself and you would become sick because you have been disrespectful to your own totem.*⁶

Desert life, with rhythms that had beat for tens of thousands of years, was irrevocably changed in the mid-1960s by Australia's participation in a British Nuclear Blue Streak Missile testing programme during the nervous years of the Cold War. This remote part of interior desert Australia was directly in what became known as the "Centreline of Fire". Government patrols established a network of tracks probing deep into the deserts seeking to locate Yarnangu and relocate them to permanent settlements.⁷

From the time of his birth Mr Ward was the subject of ethnographic representation. In 1964 Mr Ward's family were taken by vehicle, some 260 kms from the desert to the nearest European settlement, a Christian mission called Warburton.

Weeks later they were returned to Patjarr waterhole by the filmmaker Ian Dunlop for the staging of what would become an iconic ethnographic film, *Desert People*.

Upon their return to Warburton Mission, less than a year after their first contact with Westerners, the patriarch of the family was dead and his co-wives paired to different husbands. Mr Ward's family of birth was shattered. With her new husband Wiruny and only some of her children, Pulpuru (Mr Ward's birth mother) returned to the desert on foot. The young Mr Ward was once again on his ancestral lands. At the end of 1966 they were met at Patjarr waterhole by a young American couple, Betsy and Richard Gould who documented their hunter-gatherer lifestyle in great detail.⁸ Within a few months, however, there was another, seemingly permanent, relocation to Warburton Mission.

We was living with the rockhole and we were happy, everybody getting kuka (meat), and then whitefella came and they want to drop the bomb, bomb, want to drop the bomb in one certain place. All the Yarnangu pirni (desert people) had to shift

ngurra (camp, home, country) ... We came through the testing of the rocket. It was to gather us to the Mission. The whitefella took all the people into the Mission...⁹.

In the early 1980s “the northerners”, the *kayili* mob, began their journey home, away from the Mission to re-settle at the spiritually significant semi-permanent waters at Patjarr. Families camped with drums of water, replenished from rainwater filled rockholes, and began the arduous task of making a road, in some places where no vehicles had travelled before. They cut the bush with axes, burnt the tree stumps, dragged bushes to clear a “track” or a “cutline”. It was an epic undertaking without machinery.

AV: I remember travelling along the old “cutline” which was made between Warburton and Patjarr. Following a line of rockholes, it was a small, intimate road of beautiful passages which allowed one to travel by 4WD/SUV over the country as if by foot. The track hugged around the country and you felt close to the ground. We would bring out “stores”, food supplies sourced from the shop at Warburton. Rolls of professional artist quality canvas and acrylic paint were also brought there and a makeshift painting camp was assembled. I remember the priming of unstretched canvases, the mixing of paint in the “hot heat” (greater than 47°C) and the initial coats laid down as background colour. Canvases were laid on the ground with little definition between the edge of the canvas and the earth. Dorothy Ward was helpful in this regard. I remember her helping Ngipi Ward (deceased) with dotting parts of the lower section of the canvas.¹⁰ I, too, was being encouraged to lay down some dots. Being new to experiences of this lifestyle, I was coming to see, the social aspects of painting were integral to the making of the work. These works from Patjarr formed the beginning of the Warburton Arts Collection from the women’s and men’s sides.

Note: The establishment of the Warburton Arts Project in 1989 by Warburton Community senior law man Stewart Davies,¹¹ with wife and cultural stalwart Tjingapa Davies (both

deceased) and with inaugural coordinator, painter Gary Proctor and later Viegas, was a time of untrammelled possibilities.¹² The Ngaanyatjarra directive in expressing strength and belief in culture was heeded and recorded. Song, dance, performance were seen as attendant activities in support of a painting initiative.¹³ So too were camping trips out from the residential Indigenous communities to sacred places, often several hundred kilometres distant that had remained unvisited and unattended for more than twenty years. A rock art painting project, a significant part of Ngaanyatjarra cultural practice, re-emerged. The need to sustain the production of “sacra” and support that activity was seen as important.¹⁴ Men and women’s sacra, including paintings on canvas, were kept separate with strict conditions of entry restricted by gender. Alongside painting, the Arts Project took the existing Ngaanyatjarra cultural visual arts, ritual performance and oral values and introduced new technology in the form of recording song and ambient sounds, as well as glass, works on paper, ceramics, fibre works, fashion, photography, film and video, music and multimedia. Artwork productions were displayed publicly in a series of exhibitions and residencies which toured nationally and internationally to great acclaim.¹⁵

In 2000 the Tjulyuru Cultural Centre opened in Warburton Community and presented a changing exhibition programme based on the lifestyles and cultural expression of the Ngaanyatjarra, and for the first time, to a local Ngaanyatjarra audience which meant careful consideration in curatorial terms of local and direct accountability in Ngaanyatjarra exhibition practice. This constituted a new period of the project’s history with attention to commerciality. The Arts Project’s foray into the marketplace placed hitherto unknown challenges on artists unused to culture valuations based on their intrinsic worth rather than external market terms. The challenge became how to maintain a viable arts project with cultural integrity in the face of commerciality and the demands of these imperatives.

Part 2

**Life: Ngukunypa/pina yungarra kulirra
nyinarra (living own way by using own
brain/ears)**

When you look at an art, an object that's an art object or canvas or whatever, when you look at it and you know that Tjukurrpa for that, it takes you to that Creation time, to that sacred time, and that feeling of that sacred time comes through your body, you feel it. Plus, the feelings of your families, that you have seen throughout your life, seeing them practice that tjukurrpa, the going to that place, telling you the story, and dancing those dance for that place and singing the song and design, drawing the designs of those iconographies of that place onto one's body or onto a painting or onto a glass. All those emotions, all combine together, it's all like an infusion, which just comes bursting out. Through. It's a burst of this feeling, that you feel in your body, and it's everything—it's the sacredness, it's the longing for the past, it's the future, it's the now. Future because you have to pass it onto the next generation. It's everything and it's so powerful. People cry when they see that art or seeing that dance, or hearing that story, or hear singing, hearing that song. It's really, really powerful what we have for our tjukurrpa, that's representative in our art (Marrkilyi Ellis, pers. comm.).

JT: Let us begin with his mother and then we can bring Ribs in. Pulpuru is the *Minyma Nganurti*, Mother Turkey, giving birth to her Turkey Chick and he is the *Nganurti* grown to be *Wati Nganurti*, Turkey Man. When we think of *kurntili* (the late Pulpuru, our Aunt and Mr Ward's mother) what would you say?

AV: Industrious, formidable and kind. A force to be reckoned with. Firmly grounded

and whose prodigious energy was matched by few. Uninhibited and would try anything she could lay her hands on.

Despite language barriers, she seemed to have no problems meeting and communicating with whitefellas. *Kurntili* made people feel comfortable around her. She spoke about the time when Maramurtu¹⁶ came to their camp for the first time, while she was harvesting and winnowing bush food. She spoke about hearing the sound of the *yurltu* (car) before seeing it.¹⁷ I can imagine her quite gladly showing him the food she had so skillfully gathered and was happily preparing. All in her stride. *Kurntili* took to painting on canvas with ease. Dotting work was unparalleled in the colour cluster roundels she'd created.

"Pretty flower," she would say. The distinctive dot pattern, placement or "phrasing" and the filling-in of the dots was softly, delicately and deftly applied, as if to do so was to walk softly on carpet as it is to traverse over *tali* (sand dunes), *rirra* (pebble plains) or *pila* (spinifex sand plains). There is a habitus and familiarity of gestures in the way she paints, gathers and prepares bush food, lays down seed cake damper in the ashes, hunts and moves through Country. No scale was too big for her. The idea for a group painting to be made by Patjarr women was raised in the early days of the Arts Project when we were based in Patjarr and (Warburton) Ranges. She assured all that there was no need for others and proceeded to commandeer and render a dazzling work in pink of four by two metre canvas by herself.¹⁸ Anyone else could well have been daunted by attempting such a scale.

JT: Yes, *kurntili* was sure of herself and her place in the world. She had enormous cultural knowledge which provided her with the confidence to proceed and to embrace new technologies, new ways of expressing herself. I think of that time in 2002 when all those paintings, large and small, were taken from storage in Warburton and placed on the desert claypan at Mina Mina. Pulpuru said every painting had a song. The ground resounded with the tapped-out song rhythms. Often the artists and the singers' faces seemed distant, as

if they were transported in time and place to the exact locations they had physically experienced in their youth. Families camped together, campfires burned.¹⁹ Pulpuru was a leader, she certainly took centre stage amongst the women.

AV: It was an extraordinary display in self-announcement and self-presentation. Each person seized the moment to speak, demonstrate, broadcast, sing, “perform” their paintings. You felt as if the world was truly full and lived fully, and to bear witness was to be beyond the perimeters of belief. We were inside it.

JT: Pulpuru shared the same embodied spiritual presence, her *nganurti* (bush turkey) with her son and his son. This shared connection from the *Tjukurrpa*, to events in a Creation-making past, at that specific place Yankaltjunku. A place you and I were so privileged to visit. So far distant, so many high sandhills to traverse, no vehicle tracks, following the direction her lips pointed to as she scanned vegetation and chose paths through dense thickets.

That sense of relief when seeing the *rirra*, the plains of small ironstone pebbles, when a car could get to third gear! The vastness of it all and our awareness that there were so few humans in hundreds of kilometres and yet the human presence is tangible. That sense of getting to a rise and looking at the landscape below, looking at the landscape behind and again looking forward to unmapped locations, remembered so vividly by those who had walked this land. Trusting our safe-being to her rememberings.

AV: *Tjamu* (John von Sturmer) writes in the past when people walked the land, the site (mode) of witnessing varied according to whether one was sitting, standing, laying down, travelling,²⁰ whereas today most people witness the country whilst travelling in a vehicle.

JT: I remember us being at Yankaltjunku so vividly. Stretching out *kurntili*'s four-metre painting on the ground, in the crevice, between the expansive rock formations made in Ribs' words in the epic battle by the Two Bird Men as “they fought, leaving trails of chasms, twisting and turning at every corner, north, south, east, west. They speared

and killed each other and today they are lying as two rock formations, the Emu to the north, and Turkey to the south.”²¹

When I see this particular art glass disc, I think of him and his sisters and mothers at this specific place, the rituals and the reverence, of how animated and engaged in life and culture everyone was. Ribs was empowered by the spiritual *nganurti* contained within him.

AV: You're kind of inserted into the *Tjukurrpa*, and you relive it, and you keep going... to those places, like those first few instances of dancing, or not even dancing, of sitting down at Patjarr. The late-night dancing and those women, it is almost like you are in a haze. All this would be going on all night, and you are sort of in it but you have no idea. You are in this blitzed out space to take in whatever it is and I feel like that again now. I feel I am approaching from afar, do I have a right to say anything? I'm not there. Even though your spirit, your *kurrunpa*, is there.

JT: I know that feeling. That haziness is us in a transformative space, as we talk, as we reconnect from Poland to Australia, as we remember and ponder, as the emotions rise, we too are entering into a transformative state. It is hazy. It is like being on ritual ground. It's foreign but familiar. It is so breathtakingly familiar and yet it is so completely incomprehensible.

AV: All the more reason to see those pieces, those marks as standing for something, standing for a sign, standing for all those things that are mediated.

*The Seven Seals of the Ngaanyatjarra Lands is part of our Dreamtime stories of our land—holding cultural knowledge and responsibility, holding the common seal on the ground for us. I made the glass so that my background of the land I come from won't fade away. The designs and drawings are part of our home where we come from—beyond the next horizon.*²²

AV: How to enter the terrain of the glass objects? In the terrain of identity concealed

(von Sturmer, pers. comm.). Impermeable but transparent. A glazed patina. Veiled, sunken. Marks left by the self. Human faces, animal tracks, movement, a trail. Prints, impressions, trapped in a virtual resin. Was it a scene? An event? The body is split between the human body and an animal form. A doubling up. A mirroring. Appearance, reappearance. Self-appearance. A partial revelation. The image I had of them was a watery memory until I actually saw them again on the computer files recently. Their presence, virtually. It has been some time since I last saw them in real life. In the same year that he passed; in the time of the *kuli* (hottest) season, when temperatures can reach 50°C.

It was sometime in 2001. I remember, he would come to the glassworks studio at night after work and in a burst of energy created these Seven Seals designs. And the square glass, *Warnampi* (See Fig. 9). Over a few nights and it was done. The designs were put down in paint, the shapes cut out and then they were fired in the kiln. The sheet glass had slumped into the fibre roll paper templates. The moulds were placed over a fibre blanket layer which lay on top of repurposed metal plough discs. He was pleased with them when they came out of the firing days later after a slow process of annealing.

JT: You make me think of the kiln,²³ of the intense heat, the days of sealed-in cooling, as a crucible of transformation. As the Ancestral Beings, making their way across vast tracts of lands, themselves transformed from human to animal even to stars and planets. I am reminded of the visceral reality of these Ancestral Beings, embodied in individual humans and released in animal form once more upon human death.

AV: A transformation process underway - from human to animal form or is it the other way around? Single figure, dual forms. Sun side, shade side. The “portraits” are centralised. Almost like heraldry armour. Or are they more like self-representations? Is it complementary or opposite? Healthy dog, mangy dog. The *Wati Kutjarra* are virtually identical. The human male heads and animal forms, Dog, Eagle, Perentie (Monitor lizard), are posed one above the other.

The horizontal cleaving of the Perentie and Senior Male at midpoint between the wiry hair and sinewy shoulders. The markings of the perentie echoing the wavy form at the bottom. The placement of the mouth, the eyes. The marsupial in flight with an aged male in pursuit hidden among lines and tracks. It is a scene. Are we observing different instances in each narrative?

JT: Marrkilyi writes so evocatively of the *Tjukurrpa*. We use the English word “Songlines” to speak of these routes taken by the Ancestral Beings. As a word it does not convey the great cultural knowledge demonstrated in performance and song, the meta narratives.

In that time long ago when nothing existed, these Beings appeared out of nowhere in the form of humans and other creatures. Some beings in the tjukurr [creation] came from opposite directions, met and undertook actions together, whilst others glided past each other with no interaction—perhaps occasionally glimpsing each other, perhaps communicating with each other from a distance. Whilst some travelled together in parallel, others clashed. As these Ancestral Beings traversed time and space, their presence created the features of the environment... These sites became significant as places full of spirituality and sacredness.²⁴

AV: When I’ve seen him perform, it’s like this thing that sort of comes out, it’s like when he would splutter things from his mouth, he would be whatever that being, whatever that thing is. It was a total burst over a few nights. He called them the Seals (Super Heroes Series), but I think it is something else operating beyond that. It’s him. Doing his thing.

JT: I’m interested in where he got the idea of “seals”.

AV: I think it’s also coming from, thinking about his role within the Ngaanyatjarra Council.²⁵ At least that was my understanding. He was taking

on all those roles and in a sense, for me, I saw that those seals were about, it's almost like a whitefella language, these sorts of seals and stamps that he was needing to link into. A way of communicating across to us and to a more outside audience. Often there are people representing Ngaanyatjarra Council, but only he took up things in that way, he himself could only do that.

JT: Yes, when I think of other Ngaanyatjarra political leaders, they kept the *Tjukurrpa* very quiet and operated in a dignified, reserved way in the cross-cultural political sphere. Statesmen. Whereas Ribs is allowing us a brief glimpse of another world. He must have had his reasons.

AV: Using those contemporaneous ideas and technologies. It doesn't matter if it is art glass or singing on a tape so that he had a backing track to perform to in the absence of others/singers.²⁶ It's just what he did, as an individual. He crafts things from materials or the things he has around him. Like "le bricoleur", it didn't matter if it were glass or he hadn't used it before. Remember him dancing at the opening of the Cultural Centre? How he brazenly danced, turning to reveal a pair of scissors in his mouth, for the Premier of Western Australia to cut the ribbon?

*At the opening of the Cultural Centre I did the dance for the Wati Kutjarra (Two Men) and Patupirri (Bat). I've studied a lot with the old men and they taught me up about this area that's why I could dance this one.*²⁷

In making those Seals it would seem that a position was in a sense granted to him but it was only he that could make those marks and to call them Seals.

JT: Ah. Marrkilyi's translation for "Life"—that desert concept, not of being alive as opposed to dead or non-existent, but rather living in one's own way, using one's own brains, using one's own ears. When I look at the glass I see a depth, with *tjukurrpa* inside. It's like looking at something through water. The *tjukurrpa* is there but you can't quite get to it. It has been revealed but it is

also concealed. It is still and yet gently rocked by the human effort involved in holding, it is alive, pulsing with life and I am reminded of Jennifer Deger's writing that the "dappled luminescence of water on an LCD screen can provide Yolngu with a possibility of an experience with the Ancestral".²⁸

AV: Almost as if we were looking down into the rockhole itself. He always made it possible for us to know and he did it with such...

JT: Pizzazz and a twinkle in his voice, in his eye, in his movements.

AV: I've been thinking of all those little moments, but to dance in that moment of the Opening, with scissors in his mouth, to dance up to the Premier, it was not only dazzling, it was so breathtaking.

JT: It was true theatre. I remember him with the senior lawyer for Ngaanyatjarra Council, in your yard. He waited before he held aloft the *Warnampi*.²⁹ Ribs waited for the exact time when the glorious colours of a desert sunset would backlight the glass. Time stopped for we who were watching and listening, allowing us to step through the glass to the *Warnampi*, to the *Tjukurrpa*.

AV: The actual, the real and the virtual. The real image is formed by the intersection of light rays. In the firing process the glass slumps and takes on the shape of the moulds like an after-image and that after-image has a watery misty feature.

JT: Recently, I showed poor quality facsimile paper copies of the Seven Seals to a senior cultural man and a younger middle-aged man and their responses were electric. The older man gasped and became animated. He was looking at something that wasn't glass for him, seeing into the *Tjukurrpa* with an absolute immediacy.³⁰ The younger man became quite emotional, repeating "this is very, very good. This is very, very good." The next day he tried to educate others of his own personal *tjukurrpa*, and how when he passes away, his *tjukurrpa*, will take animal form and be free. Also present was Daisy, who has used the glass in political protest actions. Tjuparntarri just sobbed, aware she was in the presence of the man himself.



Fig. 4. Paintings from the Warburton Arts Collection on the ground at Mina Mina Claypan, north of Patjarr. Photo: J. Turner, 2002.

AV: It never is just about the past. It's always about the present. Whether it's generational or not, things are always remade. And everything is always updated. If you look at the glass, it has this thing of appearing and reappearing. It becomes and re-becomes what that thing is. Virtual reality—the experience inside via dreams, daydreams, the *Tjukurrpa* working from inside and through external means from storytelling to paintings, film, glass, digital media and to immersive virtual reality technology and the metaverse. Visionary experiences of ceremonial and ritual space, somewhere between dream and reality. I guess that's how the *Tjukurrpa* works. And anybody that has that connection, that recognises it, that's the true self, the true one-self.

JT: I turn back once again to *kurrurmtatja*, the spirit beings embodied in individuals. How they are their own agents. Entering and leaving human bodies, precocious, brazen, wilful, their personalities informing that of the human. Captured for a moment in skin, in glass or words but always moving.

AV: I think about people's sense of the visual, like watching Aunty paint a tree, she doesn't stop at ground level. She paints the roots and everything else. Like a rear-view mirror, like a lens pulled right back to see these things. A concept of space

in relation to the body that is all-encompassing. A certain perspectival lens.

And if the glass is to be performed. I think about those objects people use when they are dancing. And I think of Mr Fox (deceased) who was dancing near the airstrip at Warburton. Dancing with such force and conviction and everybody cried. He was holding his *tjara* (wooden shield), parrying, stomping. It was so moving, all those old men and women just cried.

JT: Marrkilyi speaks often of objects being “Instruments of Power”. Elders from Mr Ward's country are now asking that objects, viewed by the Western gaze as secular, as artefacts, be re-configured, re-imagined as instruments of power, brought into existence in the *Tjukurrpa*, and used in the sacred domain.

AV: Once something is labelled “artefact,” it is killed. Do we privilege objects too much, rather than value ephemera, or people? What are these Deathscapes? What are these Afterlives? I think these objects/productions are sacra.

JT: Yes, but by referring to them as Instruments of Power we are concealing, covering ourselves as women from that which cannot be said.

AV: When you are thinking about different styles of representation, and how to do it, whether

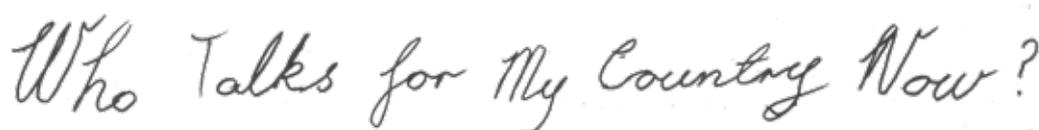


Fig. 5. Handwriting, Ian Ward, 2002.

it be on the body, or a cave or objects, and I think back to those nights that he was making them. What was he thinking of? How was he thinking, communicating this? The fact that we see this pictorial representation going between human and animal form. He is allowing us an in, isn't he? It's for us to see it, that's communicating to us.

JT: He has given us an entrance in, through our own cultural lens, but as Marrkilyi reminded me, his door is only just ajar.

AV: They are emblematic in that specific motifs are chosen. They are in block form, with not too much around. It's almost like strong symbolic forms in order for you to understand it very quickly. They are like a design for a stamp, very large stamps. It goes beyond symbolism. It is him, when he speaks or he does something, when he performs, it goes beyond what he is.

Behind it all there are hidden things. The nature of revelation - what has been revealed but not visible. Such a different approach to making marks.

DEATH, Australia Day 2008, howls of anguish, silence. Coroner's Court. Endless legal enquiries.³¹

AV: How to cite? (See Fig. 5) The words in their original form is a thought text, as spoken thought then becomes a thought image. Part of the Ngaanyatjarra poetic.³²

It also raises questions around writing in texts such as this—how the witnessing of words, actions, images, ephemera performed are engendered and socialised as are our own roles of seeing, witnessing/looking and knowing. You and I are not impervious. We too have become aware of our own sense of belonging to people and country. The ideas have a reproducibility effect which changes us and our thinking. And makes us present. The *tjukurrpa* is working in us, inside us.

Part 3

After-Life: When the *kuurti/ kurrurnpa* (spiritual essence) remains in country and with families

*I was right with him, right up ... [to when he was arrested], going everywhere, hunting, bringing kuka (meat) for us. Since he passed away, we felt lost and we had nothing. Without him, we had no help, me and my mum and my little brothers. So, we left Warburton. We don't have to stay there anymore. He went everywhere for meetings, talking up for every one of the communities, helping them, going overseas and all. So, one day I might be like him. Talk like a knowledge man and work like him.*³³

JT: His widow, Daisy/Tjuparntarri and I sat through two weeks of the Coroner's Inquiry, vacating the Court when the evidence became too intense to bear. I remember afterwards, Daisy asked if she could have one of the glass artworks to hold in Perth during the subsequent months of protest. On the steps of the Western Australian Parliament, she held above her head the *Ngarnurti* glass disc to catch the attention of Prof. James Anaya, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms of Indigenous Peoples. It was August 2009 and her actions were purposeful as she interrupted his state-sanctioned schedule. When she spoke of Indigenous deaths in custody we were in the

presence of the victim himself. Daisy asked Prof. Anaya to ascend the internal steps of the building to witness first-hand the art-glass panels,³⁴ designed by Mr Ward's mother Pulpuru, of their shared country, Yankaltjunku. Desert *tjukurrpa* inserted into the very epi-centre of Western governance! In that brief moment mother and son's glass artworks of their shared place Yankaltjunku were united. Sadly, Prof. Anaya's schedule did not permit this. Tjuparntarri felt the Special Rapporteur might understand, "he must know totems", because he was a First Nations American.

One woman trying to invoke justice against the odds. An Indigenous woman, nearly 2,000 kms from home supported by Mr Ward's cousin-brother Mitchell Biljabu (deceased), and our dear Belle Davidson (deceased), another of his mothers. By the time the press photographer took this shot³⁵ she had lowered the heavy glass disc and was speaking with Prof. Anaya. The image I remember was electrifying as she stood legs apart, elbows locked, holding the glass disc above her, her body extended, enlarged, more grandiose...

AV: On the steps of Parliament House, it's as if Daisy is holding up a satellite dish, the parabolic antenna receiving/transmitting *tjukurrpa* through radio waves.

JT: And again these glass discs channelled the *Tjukurrpa* during all the talk and legal talk about native title. Oh, this hurts. Yes all the *tjukurrpa* criss-crossing the Ngaanyatjarra Lands and yet when it came to the legal determination of native title, a case where Mr Ward had travelled with Brooksie³⁶ to so many places quietly holding meetings to unify the lands and peoples in a single claim, his own country, the Gibson Desert Nature Reserve could not be included. This exclusion, involving dispossession by the gazettal of national parks and nature reserves, arose from a legal precedent elsewhere in Australia. It brings to mind *Tjamu's* comment on native title: "it merely recognises an extant and long enduring state of affairs. Indeed, it might be seen as a secondary form of dispossession, placing the recognition of law, lawfulness, in the hands of outsiders."³⁷

*That was the Super Heroes Series for the seven tjukurrpa representing the Gibson Desert Nature Reserve and the Gibson Desert area. It doesn't have a line or fence. All comes through the Gibson Desert down through here (Warburton) and everywhere. Same tjukurrpa going through.*³⁸

AV: I was thinking about his sister, Dorothy, on the way to the native title ceremony.³⁹ She had made a series of t-shirts with a couple of young people from the Youth Arts Project (now known as Wilurarra Creative, wilurarra.com.au). She always had this unfettered approach to art making, with a heavy metal edge and there were these flame motifs young people were into which she featured on the t-shirts. There was printed text "GIBSON DESERT NR (Nature Reserve) WE GOT NOTHING" and "ANYWAY IT WAS ALREADY OURS". It was like a social action, sort of felt radical. And mummy, Mrs Giles wore one too.

JT: That same day, when the majority of desert people were celebrating a victory in the Western legal system, Ribs was assisting the most senior of cultural knowledge holders, the late Mr Giles and Mr Fred Ward, both non-English speakers, to sign with a cross a legal document for the Nature Reserve. It was typed in legal English, outlining how future talks with Government would proceed in lieu of the granting of native title. It brings to mind the feelings that Ribs expressed in his "thought text" *Who Talks For My Country Now? Nganalu mantaku kartu warralu watjanma?*⁴⁰ The sophistication of his artwork in communicating the foundation of everything, the *Tjukurrpa*, to Yarnangu and non-Yarnangu alike, compared to the incomprehensible legal document.

Of course, governments change and nothing came of that document. A legal challenge was mounted. Albie, I know you were in Poland at this time, but it was as if those years that the *kayili* (northerners) families had been scattered following Mr Ward's horrendous death, were ending. Families came together to present with strength their case that they should be acknowledged as the rightful custodians of the country, taken away from



Fig. 6 The Special Rapporteur for the United Nations and Daisy Tjuparntarri Ward holding Mr Ward's glass on the steps of Parliament House, Perth, 2009. Photo: S. Ferrier.



Fig. 7. Mr J. Giles (seated), Mr I. Ward (standing) assisting Mr F. Ward (seated) to place his mark on a legal document for the Gibson Desert Nature Reserve. Mr P. Sharp, Executive Director of Parks looking on. Photo: I. Kealley, 2005.

them by the gazettal of a huge nature reserve, and that they should have been awarded the strongest form of native title available from the Court. For ten days a battle raged: on one side the people, their spiritual allies and counsel, and on the other barristers and solicitors representing both the Australian and Western Australian governments. It was an ontological clash of cultures.

Our *kurntili*, Pulpuru, nearing ninety years, with the confusions and clarities that come from dementia, was ever present. I want to show you this photo of her sitting in the front row of women singers at the Opening Ceremony of the Federal Court. Deger's words resonate: "Old people are far more closely associated with the Ancestral than children are because they have accumulated not only a discursive knowledge of the sacra and their stories but a viscerally charged knowledge and identity that arises from a lifetime of active and embodied mimetic labor directed to a becoming-in-relation-to the Ancestral."⁴¹

It was Mr Ward's sister Nunykiya who opened the Court proceedings on the day that evidence was heard inside the Tjulyuru Art Gallery in Warburton. I remember she began, as people gathered, even before she was formally sworn in

to give evidence. She stood, alone, in front of the *Seven Seals of the Ngaanyatjarra Lands*, her hand gently caressing the Super Heroes, the Ancestral Beings of the land in question. We were reminded that Ribs was present, the *Tjukurrpa* was manifest. In a trial highly choreographed by legal counsel this day was the people's day, where they could move freely and choose the order of presentation. Nunykiya asserted that her brother should have been leading evidence, but for his cruel death. I feel emotional thinking about her singular bravery.⁴²

The Ward family is resilient. On the final day of the Federal Court hearing at Mina Mina Claypan, men, women and children, beautifully ochred and painted danced as *Warrmarla* (Revenge Warriors). It was dazzling. It was breathtaking and again it was planned, timed and performed by Yarnangu with no external interference. This is the ephemera that is so lightly considered by the Court, indeed, it was inadmissible as evidence and remains formally unrecorded in the Court proceedings.⁴³ Albie, all four of Ribs' sons are in the front row lineup. We were all so proud of them. We cried.

AV: *Ngarltutjarra...* (an expression of compassion)

Seven Seals of the Ngaanyatjarra Lands (Super Heroes Series)
 Ian Ward, born c.1963–2008
 diameter 65 x thickness 1 cm, concave clear float art glass discs
 Photo: C. Maccarino
 Artworks and text: Ian Ward, 2001



Tjukurpa Nganurti (Bush Turkey Story)

One day, the mother Emu said to the mother Turkey. 'You know what I did? I killed all my chicks.' And you know, Emu always has lots of chicks, and Turkey, had only one. Mother Emu hid all her chicks away and left one running around and told a lie to the father Emu that mother Turkey had killed all the emu chicks. Father Emu said, 'No, that's not true,' Father Emu came in anger looking to fight, stabbed the mother Turkey in the back of the neck. The father Emu got speared by the father Turkey and there they fought, leaving trails of chasms, twisting and turning at every corner, north, south, east, west. They speared and killed each other and today they are lying as two rock formations, the Emu to the north, and Turkey to the south. That place is called Yankaltjunku.



Tjukurpa Papa (Dog Story)

There were many dingos living at a place called Kulya. They used to hunt animals, eat and lived a happy life. One day, Two Men were passing through, they came across dog footprints and they said, 'Let's go and see what's inside this cave'. There they found dingos inside. These Two Men killed and ate up half of the dingos, the others escaped to the north-east, to a place called Tjiirtu. There they lived, safe from hunters and there they remain today.



Tjukurpa Wati Walawurru (Eagle Man Story)

This Eagle Man used to live in the high landmarks. He used to watch over every animal in the land. Every eagle has their boundaries. This eagle always hunts along the high plains of the country. He lived around the Partjatatjarra area in the Gibson Desert. He moves up north and comes down to the south. As he goes higher he draws every place nearer to him, so he can look after them.



Tjukurrpa Marlu (Kangaroo Story)

This old man Kangaroo has travelled a long journey. He lived with different languages, different cultures, different styles. Every place that he travels through, the language changes, every trail mark he makes, the water flows. Every landmark that he comes to, he is welcomed.



Tjukurrpa Wati Ngirtaka (Perentie/Monitor Lizard Man Story)

There was a Perentie Man (Wati Ngirtaka) who travelled from the top of Western Australia. He came through many places, leaving trails of landmarks wherever he went. On his way southwards, he could see different animals going the same direction as he, and in different directions.



Tjukurrpa Yulanya (Story of Old Man Yula)

This is the old man with the bald head, who travelled many miles chasing seven women across different places, different languages. He lived in a place called Kanamara and for a while they were all there together, ladies and all. Yula was one of the men that wanted those women for his wife but he didn't get them. The women flew into the night sky and became stars [the Pleiades constellation]. Today people perform the dance of Yula. A culture dance which many women do and perform activities representing their home countries and places and respectable ways of looking after the land of the Seven Sisters and Yula. Kurrpurrpulu we call them [sisters]. It is a really true story. The places, the marks are there, trees are there and lots of dances and performances are still taking place.



Tjukurrpa Wati Kutjarra (Two Men Story)

The boy used to scratch children with his sharp fingernails and make them cry. Their parents would swear at the man and say: "take your boy away. You are not supposed to be living here. You got this angry boy. Take him to another place, we feel uncomfortable." So he took him on a long journey. In all these places he was welcomed. Now the boy was powerful because he had been taught so much: to look after the rain, people. One day he made his way back. It is a Dreaming Story. It is real. Today they exist in their home. His father wants to stop him getting revenge on the people who hated him.

CONCLUSION

JT: How do we speak of Ribs? The liveliness, his swagger, the kerchief tied jauntily around his neck, the twinkle in his eye?

AV: His body, so lithe when dancing. His body moved, the *Tjukurrpa* activated, ready for action. The time of transformation. The body, “turned on,” changing its status. Poetic shimmer shudder.

JT: Found among the leaves in Pre-Life, fought for, contested and claimed in adulthood. The individual’s journey using one’s own ears, one’s own brain. Released spiritually in death. In so, so many actions, he was, is, the *Tjukurrpa*. The dazzling dance towards the Premier.

AV: Within the Arts Project, he could create a space for himself, a niche that allowed for innovation and performance. In that moment there is an immediacy, it is the moment of nowness, when a performer loses human form to reveal “the one before”, the original creator being. “That one now” becomes “That one ... NOW.”⁴⁴

JT: Sadly, the Warburton Arts Collection is now at risk of removal from desert Country, from the place of its creation, from families and from cultural authority. It could so easily pass from Ngaanyatjarra control. Perhaps to the State.

AV: All those old people. It can’t be for nothing. The *ninti* (knowledgeable) ones. *Tjurtu* (older sister, Tjingapa Davies) was foreshadowing this at my departure. The unspeakable.

JT: The Collection torn from its roots, objectified. How would there be another time when a Tjuparntarri, could raise a glass disc on the steps of Parliament House? When would the *Tjukurrpa* and the man formed of and from *tjukurrpa* ever be demonstrably present again?

AV: His art wasn’t an object but rather a production, as events. What’s going on in the process? There is a mystery, something exists as an idea— somehow it is converted into a painting or such. Today *Tjamu* said that art, painting, turns structure, the *Tjukurrpa*, into commodities. Commerciality destroys history. This history assaults structure and it is hard to fight history.

JT: I’m reminded of Marrkilyi’s profound words: “Our objects are not artefacts. They are simultaneously sacred and everyday. They are Instruments of Power”.

AV: *Tjamu* was raising how wanting everything, objectifying everything creates an objective universe dependent on conflict/claiming which then is part of history.

JT: History, the individual’s Life, lived by one’s own senses, lived respectfully yet vitally pushing ahead to claim, to claim a knowledge, a place. Are we saying that history hovers in a state of tension with the *Tjukurrpa*? Marrkilyi’s revelation to me is that *tjukurrpa* is THE Yarnangu organisation.

AV: In preparing this paper, each of us furthering our discussions with *Tjamu* and Lizzie has been humbling. How generous they are to share ideas long known by them.

This isn’t just about bringing the past (tradition) into the present. Rather, the present reveals that what was claimed in the past is indeed possible: ‘See, we can see with our own eyes, we were not just making this up.’ The present appearance – revelation – shows what was always possible.⁴⁵

JT: Ribs, with his flamboyant, regional vision, cross-cultural skills, was somewhat of a maverick, but arguably one of the best communicators of his time. It is not enough to create paintings or artworks alone. The risk is that artworks become avatars for the real experience of *tjukurrpa* and without human ephemera the country withers. To be with others in specific named places, to live, to visit, to dance, to sing, to drink from the water sources, to sleep with the constellations. Those creative directors of the Warburton Arts Project were *ninti*, they knew this.

Albie, do we dare to speak here of the unspeakable?

How do we speak the unspeakable? How do we say of one who has moved from a fundamental world footwalking through country, from rockhole to rockhole, with families as was done for so so many



Fig. 8. Mr Ward's mother Pulpuru (left) at Mina Mina with women singers at the Opening Ceremony for the Federal Court. Sister Nuny-kiya/Dorothy Ward (standing). Photo: J. Thomas, 2014.

*years before, then ruptured to another world of mission life, outcast and on the fringes, and then becoming a leader and spokesperson, mentor & friend to staff, teacher and guide to scientists of all kinds? A man of law, a song man who had a vision for his families and country. And always speaking for country and reminding us all of the proper ways of respecting people and country. But does this matter when Yarnangu and all Aboriginal peoples throughout history are always the subject of the unspeakable? From chains to prisoner transportation, what has changed?*⁴⁶

JT: As we write Australians are debating the Voice to Parliament, whether Indigenous Australians should have a formalised structure to engage with law-makers. How can we be debating this in 2023?

AV: It is so overdue. Ribs sought recognition. He was so intent on inserting himself at everything.

JT: His ongoing challenges to the existing political *status quo*.

AV: What is shocking is that he was so available. And now he isn't. Only in the shock of that death (von Sturmer, pers. comm).

JT: How can a man of culture, of extraordinary intellect, be reduced/reframed as a criminal by the State?



Fig. 9. Ian Ward holding his artwork at Warburton. *Wati Wamampi* (Watersnake Man). Ian Ward, 2001. clear float art glass panel 91 x 89.5 x 1 cm
Photo: E. Brites, 2003.



Fig. 10. Mr Ward's family, including his four sons and sister, preparing to dance the Warrmarla (Revenge Warrior) Dance at the Closing ceremony for the Federal Court, Mina Mina Claypan. Photo: J. Thomas, 2014.

With our memories we conjure into being the past, the person and the *Tjukurrpa* - that state of continuous being. Let's breathe and finish with Ribs' *Wati Warnampi*, the Watersnake Man, provider of life-giving water, obtained from soaks and wells in the driest of times, resident at the site where he first saw a light-skinned human and what a cross-cultural journey that began...

It's a place called Patjarr, one of the communities that is in the Gibson Desert Nature Reserve. You can see the design representing many soakwaters. He came across and performed many waterholes and soakwaters and moved on to a place called Tartja, north of the Clutterbuck Hills.

He put them through, ladies and men, performing rain dance, making rain. He used to give us water, look after us in the heat, dry water place. The soak now lies there today with plenty of water in it. When I was living at Tartja, it was my first communication with Europeans. I saw them coming over the sandhills. So I thought to myself, I might as well make a design of that place where I first saw a European.⁴⁷

We offer a caveat: One has to be cautious rendering Aboriginal thought or categories, as nothing is even vaguely familiar in the Western world (von Sturmer, pers. comm). As Marrkilyi reminds us, the door to *Tjukurrpa* and "*tjukurrpa* thinking" can only ever be opened slightly. In our grief we bear the consequences of our positions.

Notes

- ¹ Ian Ward in Jan Turner, *Visual Material and Selected Preliminary Draft Witness Statements*, The Peoples of the Ngaanyatjarra Lands, Vol. 7, report tendered to Federal Court of Australia [WCD2005/002] (Alice Springs: Ngaanyatjarra Council, 2004), 7.
- ² We are using the standardised Ngaanyatjarra orthography for all desert language terms.
- ³ Rangi Hirini, “‘Cooked’ to Death: Ten Years after Shocking Death in Custody, Has Anything Changed?” NITV, 31 January 2018, <https://www.sbs.com.au/nitv/article/cooked-to-death-tenyears-after-shocking-death-in-custody-has-anything-changed/fsgf3aujw>.
- ⁴ “*Tjukurrpa*” refers to the Creation Time when a code of living, a system for desert culture was laid down for all forthcoming generations. We use “*tjukurrpa*” to refer to instances where the *Tjukurrpa* is revealed and made visible/known to humans.
- ⁵ We thank the Ngaanyatjarra linguist Dr Marrkilyi Ellis for her translations of these headings and her confirmation that there is no Yarnangu concept of an Afterlife. We refer the reader to her biography: Lizzie Marrkilyi Ellis, *Pictures from My Memory: My Story as a Ngaatjatjarra Woman* (Canberra: Aboriginal Studies Press, 2016), and to Inge Kral and Elizabeth Marrkilyi Giles Ellis, *In the Time of Their Lives: Wangka kutjupa-kutjuparringu – How Talk Has Changed in the Western Desert* (Crawley: UWA Publishing, 2020).
- ⁶ Marrkilyi in Kral and Giles Ellis, *In the Time of Their Lives*, 17.
- ⁷ Jan Turner, “The View from Below: A Selected History of Contact Experiences, Patjarr, Gibson Desert, Western Australia,” in “Culture Contact in Indigenous Australia,” ed. Amy Roberts and Daryl Wesley, special issue, *The Journal of the Anthropological Society of South Australia* 42 (December 2018): 13–47.
- ⁸ Jan Turner, “Dr Cool and his Leading Lady: The legacy of the Goulds’ work at Patjarr,” in “Chasing the Rain: The Western Desert as a Marginal Environment,” ed. Paul Monaghan, special issue, *The Journal of the Anthropological Society of South Australia* 45 (December 2021): 41–73.
- ⁹ Ian Ward, in Jan Turner, ed., *trust* (Warburton: Warburton Arts Project Press, 2003), 1. Exh. cat.
- ¹⁰ *Wanarmpi Tjalpu-tjalpu*, 1991, Warburton Arts Collection #WAC15(L).
- ¹¹ Stewart’s “father” Wiruny was Mr Ward’s mother Pulpuru’s second husband.
- ¹² For an erudite discussion on art, ritual performance, aesthetics and the Aboriginal lifeworld in a Warburton Arts catalogue, see John von Sturmer, “Devotedly Yours,” in *Yarnangu Ngaanya: Our Land Our Body*, ed. by Gary Proctor (Perth: Perth Institute of Contemporary Arts Press, 1993): 83–89. Exh. cat.
- ¹³ Gary Proctor, “The Project,” in *Yarnangu Ngaanya: Our Land, Our Body*, ed. Gary Proctor (Perth: Perth Institute of Contemporary Arts Press, 1993), 78–81. Exh. cat.
- ¹⁴ 2002 Ngaanyatjarra Arts Strategy. Internal document, Warburton Arts Project. A considerable heritage collection was gathered with enormous community support and resources. It is believed to be the largest collection of community controlled Aboriginal art in Australia. Shire of Ngaanyatjarraku, “Tjulyuru Cultural and Civic Centre,” accessed 2 April 2023, <https://www.ngaanyatjarraku.wa.gov.au/tourist-information/attractions/tjulyuru-cultural-and-civic-centre.aspx>.
- ¹⁵ Victoria Laurie, “From Warburton to China: The Aboriginal Art Exhibition Taking China by Storm,” ABC, 25 August 2011, <https://www.abc.net.au/local/photos/2011/08/25/3302242.htm>; Victoria Laurie, “Cracking China,” Scoop, 25 June 2014, <https://scoop.com.au/cracking-china/>.
- ¹⁶ Walter MacDougall was appointed a Native Patrol Officer by the Commonwealth Department of Supply to contact and safeguard the interests of Aboriginal people during the rocket tests. His name “Maramurtu” refers to his damaged hand (maramurtu hand-short).
- ¹⁷ Pulpuru Davies in Vikki Plant and Albie Viegas, eds., *Mission Time in Warburton: An Exhibition Exploring Aspects of the Warburton Mission History 1933–1973* (Warburton: Warburton Arts Project Press, 2002), 26. Exh. cat.
- ¹⁸ *Yankaltjungkunya*, 1991, Warburton Arts Collection #WAC 039 (L). Partially represented in Figure 4.
- ¹⁹ This three-day camp allowed artists to present their artwork, held in the Warburton Arts Collection, to their extended families. As artists revealed their own paintings, men and women sang the songs associated with the specific *tjukurrpa* depicted (Songlines and Song cycles). The event was filmed by Brites, Perry and Janicki for the Warburton Arts Project.
- ²⁰ In desert languages, all objects are said to be laying, sitting or standing.
- ²¹ Both bird species are found only in Australia.
- ²² Ian Ward, Untitled and unpublished manuscript (Warburton: Warburton Arts Project, 2001).
- ²³ In 1995, three kilns including a large kiln were installed in Warburton and in 1996 artists began making artworks in slumped glass for the architectural and domestic markets. Gary Proctor, “Warburton Arts Project,” in *Oxford Companion to Aboriginal Art and Culture*, ed. Sylvia Kleinhert and Margo Neale (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 2000), 731–732.
- ²⁴ Marrkilyi in Kral and Giles Ellis, *In the Time of Their Lives*, 15.
- ²⁵ The legally incorporated body that represents the Ngaanyatjarra, Ngaatjatjarra, Pintupi, Pitjantjatjara and Manytjiltjarra

speakers who together are its members and live on what has now become known as the Ngaanyatjarra Lands of Western Australia. Information regarding the political context of the times is explained in the following section.

²⁶ A reference to Mr Ward's trip to China, as a representative of Australia, to educate an international audience about Indigenous land management practices. On this occasion he performed a traditional dance to pre-recorded music, emphasising that desert views on contemporary land management practices could not be divorced from the Tjukurrpa.

²⁷ Ian Ward, recorded by Chris Perry in a Research File Note for the Ngaanyatjarra Council, 2004.

²⁸ Jennifer Deger, *Shimmering Screens: Making Media in an Aboriginal Community* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006), 225.

²⁹ Glass artwork, see Figure 9.

³⁰ See Deger, *Shimmering Screens*, chapter 4; Fred R. Myers, *Pintupi Country, Pintupi Self: Sentiment, Place and Politics among Western Desert Aborigines* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 9.

³¹ Jan Turner, "The Impact of a Life (and a Death): Colonial Encounters and Aboriginal Desert Practices," interview with Léopold Lambert, in "The Desert," ed. Léopold Lambert, special issue, *The Funambulist*, no. 44 (November–December 2022): 48–57.

³² Created for the *trust* exhibition. Turner, *trust*.

³³ Tyrone Ward, Statement prepared for inclusion in a Deaths in Custody permanent exhibition space at Western Australian Museum Boola Bardip (2020).

³⁴ These panels were commissioned pieces, created as part of the Warburton Arts Project to be incorporated into internal and external walls and doors.

³⁵ The rights to republish the photograph in the journal and online were acquired from ZRC SAZU, Institute of Philosophy, Ljubljana, Slovenia.

³⁶ Dr David Brooks, lead anthropologist for the Ngaanyatjarra Lands native title claim.

³⁷ John von Sturmer, "Preface," in *Before Time Today: Reinventing Tradition in Aurukun Aboriginal Art*, ed. Sally Butler (St Lucia Qld.: University of Queensland Press, 2010), 18. Exh. cat.

³⁸ Ian Ward, in Chris Perry, File Note, One Claim (2005).

³⁹ Ngaanyatjarra Lands Native Title Determination ceremony, 2005.

⁴⁰ The linguist Marrkilyi notes Mr Ward's use of the continuous/never-ending tense.

⁴¹ Deger, *Shimmering Screens*, 78.

⁴² 23 August 2014 Federal Court proceedings (WAD86/2012).

⁴³ These photographs exist because it was not considered formal evidence.

⁴⁴ John von Sturmer, "To Dance in the Theatre of Absence: Some Remarks about Aurukun Carvings," in *Brought to Light II: Contemporary Australian Art 1966–2006*, ed. Lynne Seear and Julie Ewington (South Brisbane: Queensland Art Gallery, 2007), 410–419.

⁴⁵ von Sturmer, "To Dance in the Theatre of Absence."

⁴⁶ John von Sturmer and Albertina Viegas, "In Memory of Mr Ward," event text as part of the installation *Too Many, Too Few, Not Enough*, Mori Gallery, Sydney, Australia (28 July – 2 August 2009). See also "Deathscapes" case study on Mr Ward and the discussion on "necro-transport."

⁴⁷ Ian Ward, in Jan Turner, *Visual Material and Selected Preliminary Draft Witness Statements*, The Peoples of the Ngaanyatjarra Lands, Vol. 7, report tendered to Federal Court of Australia [WCD2005/002] (Alice Springs: Ngaanyatjarra Council, 2004), 9.

Bibliography

- "Deathscapes (2016–2020) – Mapping Race and Violence in Settler States." Archived website, 3 November 2020. Trove. Accessed 2 April 2023. <https://webarchive.nla.gov.au/awa/20201103065140/http://pandora.nla.gov.au/pan/173410/20201103-1648/www.deathscapes.org/index.html>.
- Deger, Jennifer. *Shimmering Screens: Making Media in an Aboriginal Community*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006.
- Dunlop, Ian, dir. *Desert People*. Lindfield, NSW: Film Australia, 1967. Documentary produced for the Commonwealth Film Unit, now held at Film Australia, Canberra.
- Ellis, Lizzie Marrkilyi. *Pictures from My Memory: My Story as a Ngaatjatjarra Woman*. Canberra: Aboriginal Studies Press, 2016.
- Hirini, Rangi. "Cooked to Death: Ten Years after Shocking Death in Custody, Has Anything Changed?" NITV, 31 January 2018. <https://www.sbs.com.au/nitv/article/cooked-to-death-tenyears-after-shocking-death-in-custody-has-anything-changed/fsgf3aujw>.
- Kral, Inge, and Elizabeth Marrkilyi Giles Ellis. *In the Time of Their Lives: Wangka kutjupa-kutjuparringu – How Talk Has Changed in the Western Desert*. Crawley: UWA Publishing, 2020.
- Laurie, Victoria. "From Warburton to China: The Aboriginal Art Exhibition Taking China by Storm." ABC, 25 August 2011. <https://www.abc.net.au/local/photos/2011/08/25/3302242.htm>.
- Laurie, Victoria. "Cracking China." *Scoop*, 25 June 2014. <https://scoop.com.au/cracking-china/>.
- Myers, Fred R. *Pintupi Country, Pintupi Self: Sentiment, Place and Politics among Western Desert Aborigines*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991.
- National Library of Australia. "Deathscapes: Mapping Race and Violence in Settler States." Catalogue. Accessed 2 April 2023. <https://catalogue.nla.gov.au/Record/7889779?+lookfor=Deathscapes&offset=1&max=4>.
- Perry, Chris. File Note, Ngaanyatjarra Council, 2004.
- Plant, Vikki, and Albie Viegas, eds. *Mission Time in Warburton: An Exhibition Exploring Aspects of the Warburton Mission History 1933–1973*. Warburton: Warburton Arts Project Press, 2002.
- Proctor, Gary. "The Project." In *Yarnangu Ngaanya: Our Land, Our Body*, edited by Gary Proctor, 78–81. Perth: Perth Institute of Contemporary Arts Press, 1993. Exh. cat.
- Proctor, Gary. "Warburton Arts Project." In *Oxford Companion to Aboriginal Art and Culture*, edited by Sylvia Kleinhert and Margo Neale, 731–732. Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 2000.
- Proctor, Gary, ed. *Tu Di, Shen Ti: Our Land, Our Body*. Chinese English edition. Warburton: Warburton Arts Press, 2011. Exh. cat.
- Shire of Ngaanyatjarraku. "Tjulyuru Cultural and Civic Centre." Accessed 2 April 2023. <https://www.ngaanyatjarraku.wa.gov.au/tourist-information/attractions/tjulyuru-cultural-and-civic-centre.aspx>.
- Turner, Jan, ed. *trust*. Warburton: Warburton Arts Project Press, 2003.
- Turner, Jan. *Visual Material and Selected Preliminary Draft Witness Statements*. The Peoples of the Ngaanyatjarra Lands. Vol. 7. Report tendered to Federal Court of Australia [WCD2005/002]. Alice Springs: Ngaanyatjarra Council, 2004.
- Turner, Jan. "The View from Below: A Selected History of Contact Experiences, Patjarr, Gibson Desert, Western Australia." In "Culture Contact in Indigenous Australia," edited by Amy Roberts and Daryl Wesley, 13–47. Special issue, *The Journal of the Anthropological Society of South Australia* 42 (December 2018).
- Turner, Jan. "Dr Cool and his Leading Lady: The legacy of the Goulds' work at Patjarr." In "Chasing the Rain: The Western Desert as a Marginal Environment," edited by Paul Monaghan, 41–73. Special issue, *The Journal of the Anthropological Society of South Australia* 45 (December 2021).
- Turner, Jan. "The Impact of a Life (and a Death): Colonial Encounters and Aboriginal Desert Practices." Interview with Léopold Lambert. In "The Desert," edited by Léopold Lambert, 48–57. Special issue, *The Funambulist*, no. 44 (November–December 2022).
- von Sturmer, John. "Devotedly Yours." In *Yarnangu Ngaanya: Our Land Our Body*, edited by Gary Proctor, 83–89. Perth: Perth Institute of Contemporary Arts Press, 1993. Exh. cat.
- von Sturmer, John. "To Dance in the Theatre of Absence: Some Remarks about Aurukun Carvings." in *Brought to Light II: Contemporary Australian Art 1966–2006*, edited by Lynne Seear and Julie Ewington, 410–419. South Brisbane: Queensland Art Gallery, 2007.
- von Sturmer, John. "Preface." In *Before Time Today: Reinventing Tradition in Aurukun Aboriginal Art*, edited by Sally Butler, 16–19. St Lucia Qld.: University of Queensland Press, 2010. Exh. cat.
- von Sturmer, John and Albertina Viegas, "In Memory of Mr Ward." Event text as part of the installation *Too Many, Too Few, Not Enough*, Mori Gallery, Sydney, Australia (28 July – 2 August 2009).
- Ward, Ian. Untitled and unpublished manuscript. Warburton: Warburton Arts Project, 2001.

Jan TURNER

for thirty years the Ngaanyatjarra and Manyjiltjarra people have generously educated and included Janet's family in their own family networks. As an anthropologist and film-maker, Turner continues to support Yarnangu visions for their future. Together they have travelled deep into desert country. She is currently a PhD student at Murdoch University, Perth, Western Australia.

Albertina VIEGAS

a long-established installation and performance artist and curator based in Bydgoszcz Poland since late 2010. A child and activist of Timor-Leste, her work operates between different geographies, histories, languages and social settings. Viegas was art adviser to the community-based Warburton Arts Project (1989–2008) and currently arts adviser to Mózg Foundation (Fundacja Muzyki Współczesnej i Form Interdyscyplinarnych / Foundation of Contemporary Music and Interdisciplinary Forms).

Acknowledgements

We thank Prof. Suvendrini Perera for editing the long original article. We wish to thank Marina Gržinić for proposing the article be published and for the freedom she has given us to tell this story in memory of the late Mr Ward. We want to thank Ms Isabela Turner for reliving these years and helping to format this work. Most importantly, we thank the people of Patjarr and the Ward family who have so generously given permission to share this story.

Łukasz GUZEK

Academy of Fine Arts in Gdansk

ART AGAINST MODERN DEATH. A Retrospective of Marina Gržinić and Aina Šmid

One of the critical reviews after the exhibition points to the general characteristic of the project by Marina Gržinić and Aina Šmid:

“Entanglement: this term emerged in my mind whilst travelling from one work to another, activating connections and mutual amplification of meanings” (Francesca Lazzarini, **“Marina Gržinić and Aina Šmid: Dissident Histories,”** Exhibitions, *Camera Austria International* 161 (2023): 87-88. <https://camera-austria.at/en/zeitschrift/161-2023/>).

The entanglement can be unraveled, the knot untied. In a global world, we walk many trails. Clarification is a choice, like the one presented in this article, one of the possibles. Despite the first impression that the exhibition is an ‘entanglement,’ the viewer is not left without a guide. The exhibition has a focal point around which this constellation of images on the surrounding walls of the gallery room revolves. It is Dada.

In the Loža Gallery, in the center of the exhibition space, opposite the entrance, a reconstruction of the exhibition facility known from the documentary photographs of the *Erste Internationale Dada-Messe* show in Berlin in 1920 has been placed. Just like there, here as well, was a

pedestal in the middle of the room, and four chairs were arranged around it, facing the gallery walls. A reproduction of this photo was pasted on the gallery floor, and the whole situation invites the visitor to re-enact the attendance at the Dada show. Dada welcomes us to this exhibition.

The curators of this exhibition answer in advance a rather fundamental question that comes to everyone's mind here: „Why make this homage to the *First International Dada Fair* (Dada-Messe), that was displayed in 1920? Because »death is a thoroughly Dadaist affair«. It is time to rewrite counter histories” (the notation with quotation marks is original and is not a direct quote, but results from the desire to emphasize the function of this statement in the ongoing discourse that structures this exhibition). This explanation we can find placed on the gallery floor. However, it raises new questions. In answering why death is Dadaistic, many aspects can be pointed out.

Dada represents the figure of an artist for whom the world of culture and art had died at that time along with existing norms, and at the same time those who died for this world and refused to participate in it, to be a part of it. Therefore, for the Dadaists gathered at the *Dada Fair* in

Berlin, the only point of reference was the art of revolutionary Russia, because it was then that it dealt a death blow to the existing culture. Among the many slogans bringing the political nature of Dada art closer to the audience were those that proclaimed the death of art: „Die Kunst ist tot/ Es lebe die neue / Maschinenkunst / Tatlins.“ Russian Constructivism was the model of political art *par excellence*. The (European) World War and the revolution were the context of modernity at that time. At the same time, they constituted the legitimacy of criticism of the contemporary culture, on the one hand, and the need for revolutionary change, on the other. Both Dada in Germany and Constructivism in Soviet Russia were killed by political totalitarianisms. Both are still alive as a point of reference for the present, which was used particularly effectively in the context of Yugoslavia, and the statement by Marina Gržinić and Aina Šmid proves it.

The reference to the historical avant-garde trend anchors the exhibition in the history of art. For Peter Bürger, Dada was the only avant-garde because it assumed the annihilation of art institutions, not its reforms. This implies that the category of style, which supported the social and artistic functioning of art institutions, is losing its importance. Instead, with Dada, the category of 'artistic means' (*kunstmittel*) is introduced, which is a shock. While the category of style is based on repetition, artistic means is a *modus operandi* that offers freedom of use in artistic and social discourse. Bürger found the Dada shock a key means because it originated on the outside of the arts but is intrinsic to the art recipients' life. And by the same token, in Dada, the social and political is prior to art. Therefore, Dada's artistic means are critical and thus dissident *par excellence*.

Dada is pivotal. All post-Dada art - conceptualism and post-conceptualism, actionism, contextual art, postmodern forms of site specific and culture specific installation, as well as contemporary critical narratives in art - have been made possible by this turn. Art has changed its placement. It is not located in the realm of arts, but

in the social realm of the beholder. In his study, Bürger does not refer to the forms of ballet, theatre, poetry, or avant-garde art trends, etc., which were used by Dada, but they all belonged to historically established genres of art. He rejects comparative methods, appropriate for art history, as useless. Instead, Bürger's method is the reconstruction of Dadaism. And reconstruction is always creating a new construction. In the Loža Gallery, we reach Dada, coming out of the present. The exhibition installation as reconstruction built upon Dada is based on the shock of death in order to subvert culture subjugation in favor of inclusiveness. This pair of contradictory terms, and the dynamics of the relationship between them, constitute the guiding line of critical thinking throughout the project. The shock evokes the postcolonial discourse of the 'other,' which today holds critical power and is as dissident as Dada used to be. In the Gržinić and Šmid exhibition, we observe how these post-Dadaist means functioned in a project that lasted for 40 years. The time span of the project is its justification. The perspective of time distance allows for reconstruction, i.e. a new present order. (Peter Bürger, *Theory of the avant-garde*, translation from the German by Michael Shaw. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984).

Walter Benjamin sees mass media images, mostly film, as originating directly in the social sphere of its participants, unlike pictures of art history whose uniqueness makes them function as distant from the viewer's reality. (Benjamin, Walter. "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," 1935). Therefore, images become inevitably political, and thus subject to critical use.

Benjamin's diagnosis was deepened by Guy Debord and the Situationists. The spectacular overall character of contemporary culture causes *recuperation*, which deprives the image of its political power, i.e., its potentially subversive properties. Situationists use images of mass-produced visual culture to change their meanings or to reverse the vector of their interpretation (*détournement*) so that the images reclaim their critical potential.

Mass culture is also the matter with which Gržinić and Šmid work. Their critical method is based on the use of cultural images, both global and domestic, in contemporary Slovenia (or former Yugoslavia).

This aspect of locality proves how this common theoretical equipment can be applied to a specific situation. The project begins at a key moment in the region's political history. After the death of Yugoslavian leader Josip Broz Tito in 1980, nationalist and separatist movements began, fueled by the growing economic crisis. In the nineties, these internal tensions were compounded by political changes in Central Europe, caused by the fall of the Iron Curtain. All these processes led to the disintegration of Yugoslavia into independent countries, and then to the ethnic civil war (Yugoslav wars - in plural as there were several conflicts between the states into which Yugoslavia was divided). This was at exactly the same time when the Laibach band gained popularity and a wide creative community was formed around the group, including visual arts like NSK and IRWIN. Laibach's style was a mockery of totalitarian aesthetics. It was used to invert its meanings, by the Situationist method. Malevich's cross, a frequent reference in the works of NSK and IRWIN (but also Gržinić and Šmid in their early films), signified an unspecified revolutionary force with subversive potential. A similar potential for building meaning had another well-known cross - from the works of Joseph Beuys. Building such references the artists called Retro-avantgarde, which in other words was an application of the method of reconstructing Malevich as the beginning of a new history of art in Central Europe (not only in Yugoslavia). Their 'retro' as a principle was explained in the film directed by Gržinić and Šmid, *Postsocializem+Retroavantgarda+IRWIN* (not shown in this exhibition but published in the DVD set released by Arge Index, Vienna, 2003), in the words of Slavoj Žižek.

The popularity of Laibach proves the accuracy of their message transmitted to the audience in Central Europe, in the momentum

of history. At the same time, in Poland, in the eighties, after a period of freedom and the influence of Solidarity, martial law was in force, and Józef Robakowski illustrated it in his assembling film (or collage film), *Art is Power*, based on footage from TV, the program presenting a Russian Army parade, with Laibach music, and then he directed the clips of the Polish punk band named Moscow. (<https://artmuseum.pl/pl/filmoteka/praca/robakowski-jozef-powietrza>). Here, too, the Situationist *détournement* of the meaning of images took place. At the same time, Gržinić, as curator of the ŠKUC gallery, organized Laibach, NSK and IRVIN exhibitions there in 1984-85, the heydays of the then still dissident group.

The use by the artists of the iconography of totalitarianism, or the star symbol from the partisan iconography in Yugoslavia, meant reaching for images close to them, present in their social sphere. Although Socialist Realism was rejected, it was also transferred to the conceptual art of the seventies in Yugoslavia, as by Marina Abramović in a performance or by Mladen Stilinović, who appropriated such iconography taken from public television to his collages. Thus, despite the originality of particular works of art and attitudes towards art, the background of the political history of Central Europe is common to the artists of the region.

Then, in 1984 at ŠKUC, along with working with Slovenian icons of contemporary culture and art, Gržinić made the Magnus project about the gay scene of Ljubljana, titled *Homosexuality and Culture*, as the participants belonged to the close social circle of the gallery: „Magnus was established through art projects – an exhibition as a cultural act – although primarily it had a social background” (Gržinić recollection, ŠKUC website <https://www.galerijaskuc.si/marina-grzinic/>). Equality and inclusiveness became a constant theme in her work to this day. However, in the eighties, to overcome totalitarianism in the countries on the eastern side of the Iron Curtain was still a major dissident stand, it was Gržinić, already at that time, who pointed out perfectly **new threats to which**

Western-style democracy is susceptible.

Šmid at some point withdrew from joint activity. Gržinić continues to work in this direction at the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna, realizing exhibition projects together with international students representing different minorities, ethnic and/or sexual. (Asma Aiad and Marina Gržinić, "Muslim* Contemporary," *Art and Documentation* no.25 (2021): 326-347. http://journal.doc.art.pl/pdf25/art_and_documentation_25_muslim_contemporary.pdf)

This activity is based on the intellectual currents of postmodern philosophy. The great achievement of postmodernism is the establishment of the meta-order of plurality as the meta-base of all assumptions. As the freedom it offers cannot be declared alone, it must be grounded in political and social practice, against any fictitious norms, pre-established by means of power. Gržinić works with the expanded concept of postcolonialism, because the 'other' could be anyone, everywhere.

Gržinić's and Šmid's film form is based on postmodern artistic methods, such as footage, assembling, appropriation, or the extensive use of quotation, juxtaposition and captions that are pointing to reinterpreted meanings which are functioning outside culture as the institution that originally produced them. Its original background is newly plowed ground on which new meanings will grow. The artists use the entire postmodern array of means, which reflects the inconsistent and heterogeneous nature of modern times since the eighties. Images of medialized culture, both created and quoted, always function in the project as ready-made, made ready to make meanings.

Guy Debord, whose Situationist film *The Society of the Spectacle* (black and white, 1974), is composed of self-quotes and quotes from literature and philosophy, where it is difficult to attribute quotes to authors, and this carelessness is intentional, as well as in cult films of the period. An earlier film, *Howlings for Sade* (1952), consists of black and white sequences but has a soundtrack with film music and quotes.

Reader, released for exhibition at Loža Gallery, edited by Marina Gržinić and Jovita Pristovšek, includes an essay by Tjaša Kancler, "Politics, Decoloniality, and Delinking in Obsession, Naked Freedom and Images of Struggle/Decoloniality" in which the author clarified the issue of Gržinić's and Šmid's references to postcolonial theory. 'Decoloniality' is a key word defining the best method of achieving inclusiveness in contemporary culture. This is articulated in the films *Obsession, Naked Freedom*, and *Images of Struggle/Decoloniality*, which are from 2008, 2010 and 2012 respectively. Thus, they were created in the same period of building the artists' reflections. The author of the essay describes these works as film collages composed of images taken from the history of cinema, both feature and documentary productions, or by the artists themselves, as records of symposium discussions, or films that are types of fictionalized documentaries, with the participation of actors playing arranged gigs. Thus, we have a mixture of many film forms. Quotation and self-quotation are mixed here, authorship is suspended, similarly to Debord, who even considered plagiarism to be justified, (thesis 207. Guy Debord, *The Society of the Spectacle* [1967], newly translated and annotated by Ken Knabb, Bureau of Public Secrets, 2014. <http://www.bopsecrets.org/SI/debord/8.htm>). For it is only when we lose track of 'who is speaking' that we pay attention to 'what is being said,' when the message can come to the fore. Therefore, it is a method very suited to the purpose of this collage of quotes reused in a reconstruction process. As Kancler concludes, Gržinić and Šmid, in the three analyzed films, use dialectics (p.14), mediated medium and socio-political context to construct their message. This remark is all the more important, as the author criticizes the lack of dialectics in contemporary narratives. The indication of dialectics, i.e., structure of thinking, transfers the use of numerous postmodern re-practices to the meta-methodological level, and not only the practice of montage, editing or exhibition arrangement.

In the *Reader* we can find an article by Marina Gržinić and Jovita Pristovšek, “Race and Its Far-Reaching Contemporary Ontological and Epistemological Implications.”

“Part 1: Marina Gržinić: Politics of Death in Europe.”

The first part is a survey of Gržinić philosophical reference points that inform crucial aspects of the Gržinić and Šmid project, and the exhibition. She reflects on key terms on which she based her artistic research and works, explaining their philosophical origin and meaning in her reasoning, and the notion of death that appears with Dadaism and circulates throughout the exhibition.

Necropolitics (and necropower) – is the keyword of Gržinić and Šmid's concept. They describe how death from the period of colonial rule returns to the present day. Necropolitics is a concept coined by the postcolonial political philosopher, Achille Mbembe, who points out that the very concept of power includes the right to kill (necropower), not only literally though that as well, but as subjugation of the normative power, that blurs the line between ‘civil rights and civil death.’ (*Achille Mbembe, "Necropolitics," Public Culture 15 (1) (Winter 2003): 11-40. doi:10.1215/08992363-15-1-11*). Gržinić added to Mbembe's view a radical political economy stand by equating necropolitics with global neo-liberal cuts in every not-for-profit sphere.

Another author who acts as a guide to this project is Giorgio Agamben, and his term ‘bare life,’ which characterizes someone who has neither property nor social rights, nothing but his own life (living death). In other words (of Agamben), life has no form. And human life should have a form, not be ‘bare.’ (Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1995).

These two complementary terms - ‘necropolitics’ and ‘bare life’ – create a system of mutual references in the Gržinić and Šmid project. As a description, they place life beyond culture, just as art located in Dada. The film is treated on an equal footing with a philosophical text, as they support each other. A part of the

exhibition was a library of films, available in the Loža gallery, as further reading (viewing) in the conducted discourse. She therefore proposed, in addition to the above readings, a set of 12 films. They are known and discussed many times in the film studies literature. However, here they create a database of images. Their accumulation, multiplication, indexation, repetition, strengthen the message of the exhibited works, the exhibition itself and the entire project, and at the same time show the nature of mass production/consumption of images, thoughts, and things. This collection of films, selected by Gržinić, includes examples from all post-World War II European production. They show the permanence of the policy of death and what Agamben and Mbembe call a ‘state of exception’ (or emergency) in world culture. Death and culture of spectacle is a contradiction that reveals a lacuna: a mass culture allure acts as camouflage of death culture supported by global political economy. Gržinić sees death as a nucleus of culture.

Let us list these films to enable the reader/viewer to reconstruct the Gržinić and Šmid necro part of their project. Since the *Reader* contains a synopsis of these films, anyone can continue this conversation for their own use. The concept of the exhibition, as well as the project by Gržinić and Šmid, has no final form. It's not about the conclusion, it's about the state of attention to the world.

Night and Fog (1956) by Alain Resnais,

The Battle of Algiers (1966) by Gillo Pontecorvo,

Early Works (1969) by Želimir Žilnik,

Salo, or the 120 Days of Sodom (1975) by Paolo Pasolini,

In a Year of 13 Moons (1978) by Rainer Werner Fassbinder,

Germany Pale Mother (1980) by Helma Sanders-Brahms,

Handsworth Songs (1986) by John Akomfrath,

In Uranium Hex (1987) by Sandra Lahire,

M.I.A.'s Born Free (2010) by Romain Gavras,

Leviathan (2014) by Andrey Zvyagintsev,

The Fool (2014) by Yuri Bykov,

Son of Saul (2015) by Laszlo Nemes.

“Part 2: Jovita Pristovšek: We Remember Carrying the Word in the Mouth. Race. Chewing.”

Jovita Pristovšek, in her part 2, linked the necro stand with transcendental philosophy, as if adding a post-colonial chapter to it, and the race issue as a metabasis of considerations. In the philosophy (i.e. European as there is no other philosophy), one can find criticism of the commodification of values, and the globalism issue as one of them, a modern take of an old debate, a contribution to the method of reconstruction widely used in the project.

For further thinking, in addition to those mentioned above, in the conversation Gržinić suggested some of her authors, contemporary researchers working at the intersection of media theory and postcolonial theory, and who broaden her own field of research and outlook on the politics of moving pictures: Trinh T. Minh-ha, a Vietnamese filmmaker and literary theorist, works in an Asian context where cultural geography transcends the national borders of this vast territory on a massive scale; Rizvana Bradley, an American scholar, linking black studies and feminist/gender studies with contemporary art, film, and time-based media; Jill H. Casid, an American scholar and artist, who situates her global and postcolonial studies in a broad perspective of visual culture – they all offer a very general view that allows to construct a meta perspective of looking at the modern world.

Let us now consider the exhibition installation and method of presentation by Gržinić and Šmid. The leading arrangement principle, which is the collage of quotations, constitutes not only the structure of the films presented, but also determines the structure of the exhibition itself.

The slideshow, located in the corner of the gallery room, does not look like a spectacular element of the exhibition, the projection of diapositives on the wall is small compared to the format of the neighbouring banners or film projections. However, it is here that we should

start the reception of the exhibition because the workshop, the method of work, i.e., the creation of a database of images - characters' faces, film frames - rephotographed from a TV screen, were revealed here. Creating an image database is a key method of dealing with the images that are embedded in our lives. At the same time, they are the base of the meanings that these images evoke, and the discussions they trigger. All of them find a continuation in the screening of film works in this exhibition or other visual materials composing the exhibition installation. Images, when taken out of the body of the film, begin to be used as ready-made images, i.e., those that can be filled with their own meaning or reconstruct it anew, here and now, as the building material of the narrative. We can see how the Gržinić and Šmid project uses variable means, all at once, in one installation.

This mosaic of images can be read with help of *The Archive of Memories* a digital archive of Gržinić activities over four decades, since the eighties, placed in the room preceding the entrance to the gallery room. For the purpose of this exhibition, the archive was organized according to categories that map her interests as social and political thinker and her public activities (“Parallel Histories of Slovenia's Empowerment and Urbanity 1980-1990-2000” <https://sistory.github.io/ljsubkultmediji/index.html>). It was also diagrammed on the wall and reprinted on the cover of the *Reader*.

The exhibition is constructed like an environment. The artist reuses the same images as still images with captions next to the film. Images surround the viewer who is immersed in their flow. There are various methods of exhibition design here. We have large flex banners, the full height of the gallery, composed of stills from films, with text placed between them (in the Dada exhibition, slogans were also placed between the paintings). Next to the banners, we have a film projected on the wall in large format, from a projector standing on the floor, and then there is a banner with a set of black and white frames from the key film, *Naked Freedom*, with captions and statements (a photo novel form), where the text is equally important

as the image; next we have two videos on the wall, then a statement important for the whole project, that reads: „The crisis in contemporary art is related to our ability to re-locate conflict and social contradiction in artistic work” (like all texts, in three languages - Slovenian, Italian and English). Then again, a banner with quotes from Gržinić, Kancler and Pristovšek, and monitors flanking the entrance to the gallery. And we come full circle around the exhibition. The viewer's method of reception must be similar to that of the artists - it is not possible to receive all images, so you have to choose. Staying with one, you actually have all of them, because the same issues are discussed in all works, just like in countless conferences, seminars and lectures at universities around the world, also by Gržinić and Šmid. For a more individual view, a bed is used, with a projection for viewing on the ceiling.

The exhibition is like a document of an ongoing conversation, or an endless panel discussion – it is composed of many fragmentary statements and pictures featured in various places, situations, contexts, by various people who meet here and now, on the walls of the Loža gallery. You can probably create a different constellation of images and sentences using the database of works by the artists. Gržinić and Šmid's project is not a call to action, a revolutionary deed (contrary to Debord). Rather, it is rethinking the surrounding reality in order to take a critical position towards it. Their statements are well grounded in film culture. The present is well anchored in history by the method of reconstruction.

However, while various arrangements are possibly based on these collected materials, the guiding idea of inclusiveness based on equality, against domination, is common on a global and local level. Today, the dissident theoretical basis is provided by postcolonial studies. The authors perceive post-colonialism not only as a historical past, but also as a contemporary phenomenon, very flexible to adapt to discourses. Decoloniality is crucial also for the functioning of European societies, because it helps to overcome nationalism. It was prejudice against minorities that caused the tragedy of the civil war in Yugoslavia. A simple

ethical principle stems from this – in our world there should be a place to live for everyone.

Marina Gržinić and Aina Šmid, *Dissident Histories (1982-2022)*, Loža Gallery, Koper, Slovenia, November 25, 2022–February 28, 2023.

illustrations



Marina Gržinić & Aina Šmid, *Dissident Histories*, Loža Gallery, Koper, November 2022. Photo by Łukasz Guzek



1



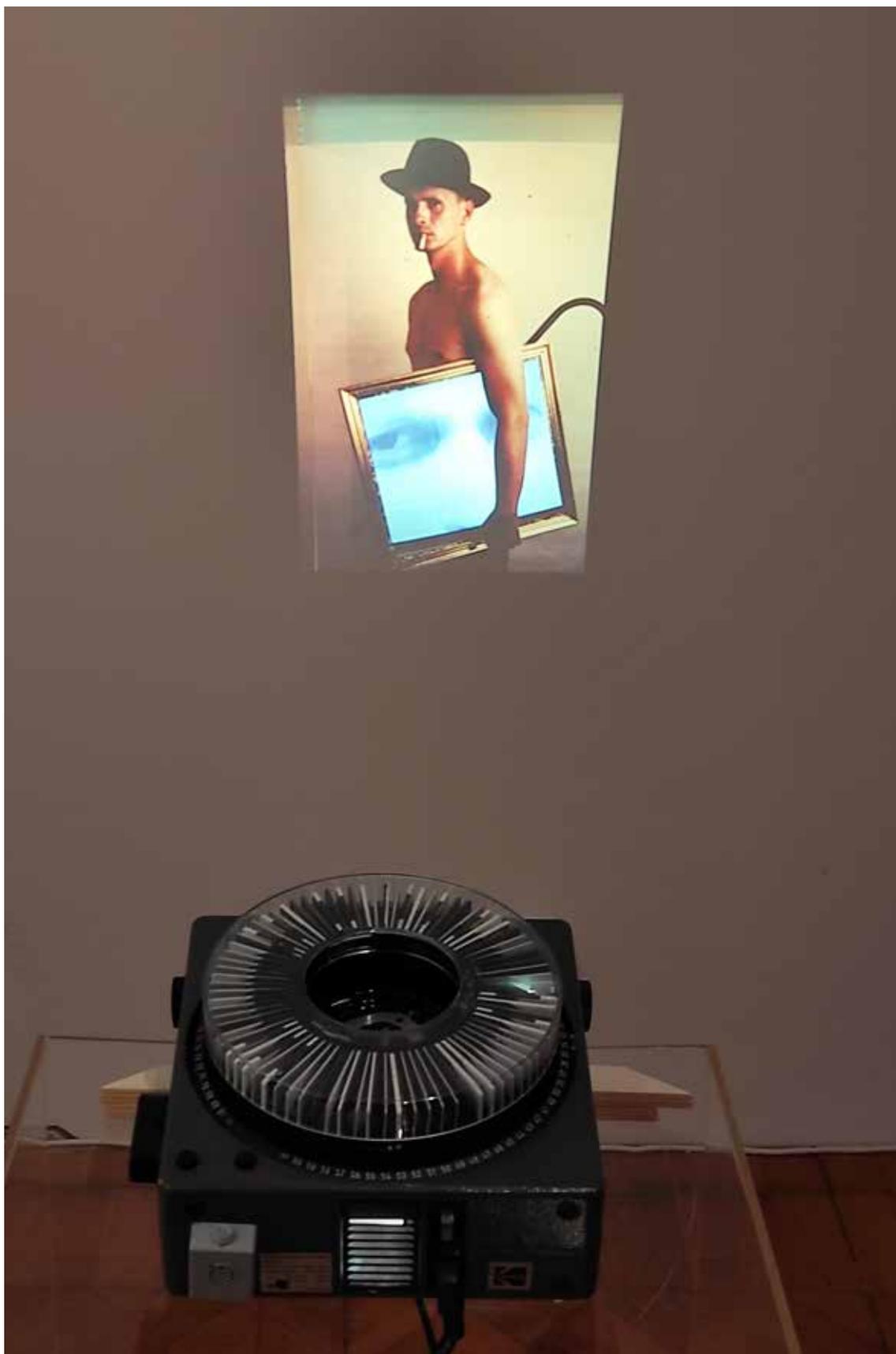
2



3

1, 2, 4. Marina Gržinić & Aina Šmid, *Dissident Histories*, Loža Gallery, Koper, November 2022. Photo by Jovita Pristovšek.

3. Marina Gržinić & Aina Šmid, *Dissident Histories*, Loža Gallery, Koper, November 2022. Photo by Ernest Ženko.



4



1



2



3



4



5



6

1. Gržinič and Šmid from the video *Bilokacija* (Bilocation), video, 1990

2. Gržinič and Mandič from the video - *Cindy Sherman ali histerija produkcija predstavlja rekonstrukcijo fotografij Cindy Sherman* (Cindy Sherman or Hysteria Production Presents a Reconstruction of Sherman's Photographs), video, 1984

3. Gržinič and Šmid from the video *Bilokacija* (Bilocation), video, 1990

4. Gržinič and Šmid from the video *O muhah s tržnice* (About the flies in the marketplace), video, 1999

5. Gržinič and Šmid from the video *Tri sestre* (Three sisters), video, 1992

6. Gržinič and Šmid in collaboration with and in the group *Meje controle number 4* (The Borders of Control no. 4) image from *Grožnja prihodnosti* (The Threat of the Future), video, 1983

7. Carrying the painting *The Sower* (Slovenian: *Sejalec*) is a 1907 oil painting on canvas by Slovenian impressionist painter and musician Ivan Grohar, depicting a farmer sowing in a plowed field on an early and foggy morning.

8. Gržinič and Šmid from the video *Sejalec* (The Sower), video and video installation, 1991

Actor Borut Mauhler reconstructs the scene verbatim from Man Ray, *Philippe Soupault*, 1922, original gelatin silver print, photograph, 11.8 x 9 cm



7



8



9



10



11



12

9. *Labirint* (Labyrinth), video and video performance, 1993/10.

10. Gržinić and Šmid, from the video *O muhah s tržnice* (On the Flies of the Market Place), video, 1999

It is a reference to the WASP mothers. The United States once had a ruling caste. It ruled for about a century, from Reconstruction to the Nixon administration, but it was not until the last years of their rule that they got a name: White Anglo-Saxon Protestants, or WASPs.

Except for a few resorts, the real WASPs have largely disappeared from view today. Since Thurston Howell III was introduced to Gilligan's Island, most Americans have known them only as cartoon characters in brightly colored vacation attire. In his insightful new book *WASPS: The Splendors and Miseries of an American Aristocracy*, Michael Knox Beran shows that this caricature is deceptive. The WASP legacy is still present, even if their accents and rituals have become punch lines. They may have lost much of their privilege and cohesion, but their achievements—including the administrative state, the educational elite, and charitable foundations—remain a dominant influence on American life.

11. Gržinić and Šmid in collaboration with and in the group *Meje kontrole number 4* (The Borders of Control no. 4) Image from *Grožnja prihodnosti* (The Threat of the Future), video, 1983 Bathroom: Gržinić and Šmid sit naked on the floor and talk about police repression.

12. Gržinić and Šmid from the video *Moscow Portraits*, video and video installation, 1990

Made in Banf, Canada. Banf is a town very close to Lethbridge (and throughout Southern Alberta) where the Ku Klux Klan is concentrated. While many people think of the Ku Klux Klan as an American phenomenon, the Klan moved to the Prairies in the 1920s and tried to establish a foothold in Lethbridge and surrounding communities. In Canada, the Klan targeted different groups than in the United States, attacking Catholics, Eastern Europeans, and people of Asian descent.

