

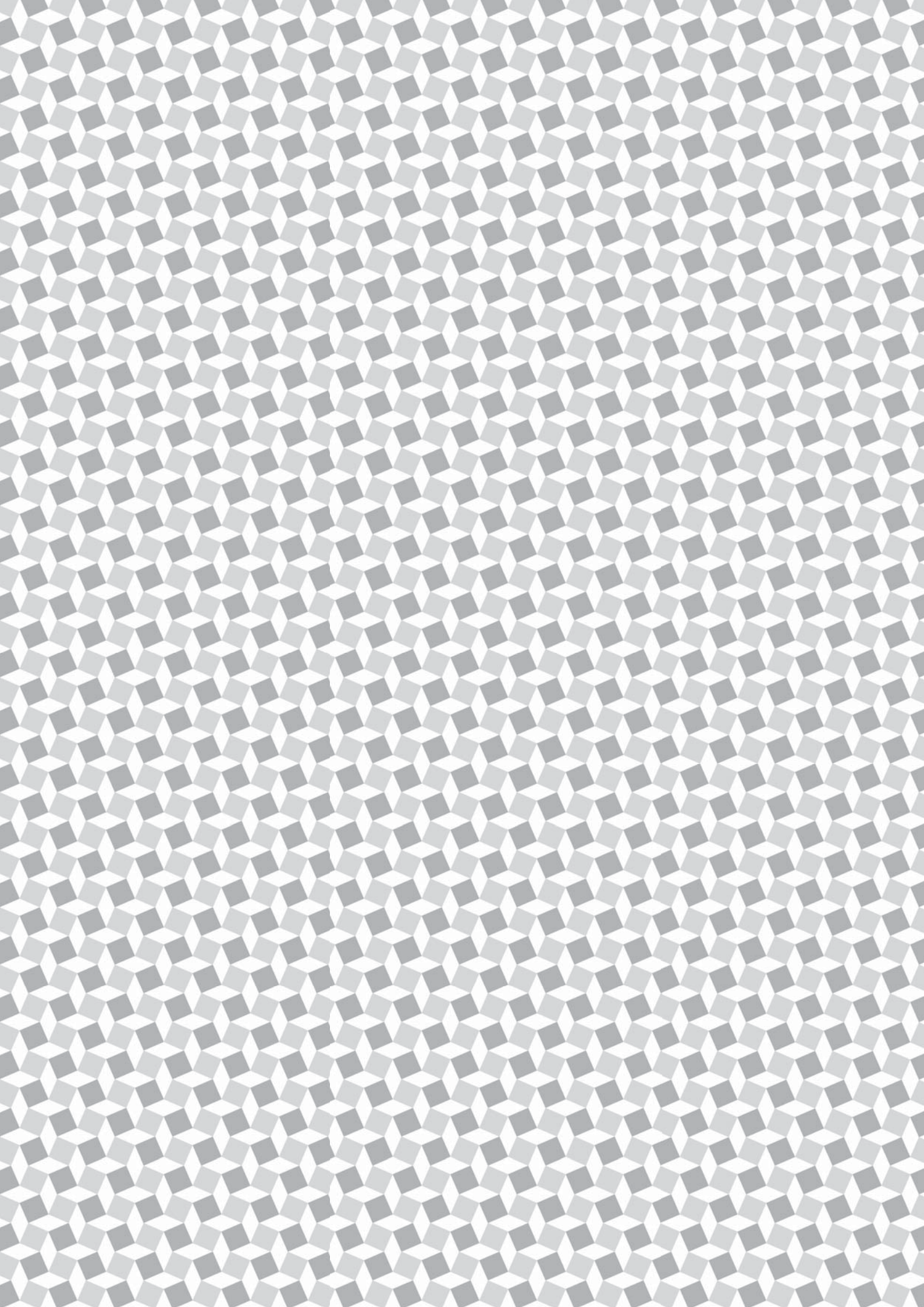
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Sicily RISING

TWELVE DRAWINGS BY SICILIAN ARTISTS

Josè Angelino • Salvatore Arancio
Mario Caruana • Carlo e Fabio Ingrassia
Domenico Mangano • Ignazio Mortellaro
Carmelo Nicotra • Paolo Parisi
Alessandro Piangiamore • Francesco Simeti
Francesco Tagliavia • Stefania Zocco

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Sicily RISING

Foreword
by Cornelia Lauf

Despite the fragility of economic circumstances, and an actual precariousness in a land where much is built on earthquake fault lines and volcanic ground, there is a rootedness, and awareness of both Eastern and Western intellectual traditions, which leads to a fascinating and extremely contemporary vision. The intention is to focus the contributions to fall within the medium of drawing. We asked the artists to treat the viability of the Mediterranean (or Sicily) as a cultural model.

Though I have resisted writing an essay, at the gentle insistence of the editor of *Sztuka i Dokumentacja*, here are a few thoughts on this special section, also in written form.

My hesitation is not due to any artful pose. It's a form of deference toward twelve wonderful creators (really, 13, since we count both Ingrassia twins) who are able to say by showing, and whom I have collected, with a gifted young curator from Palermo, in order to demonstrate the living nature of excellence in contemporary Sicilian visual practice.

A reticence to write is also the fruit of long years spent at the side of wordsmith artists, where I have been faced with the perplexing fact that despite maximum implementation of concept and language, it is the image and material matters which prevails in art. The triumph of image has somehow muted my desire to write.

And since I may not sing, though perhaps that is the medium in which I would most like to pay tribute, here a few more modest phrases: "Arte e un fatto materico," says Emilio Prini. "Art is meaning in a concrete form," states Joseph Kosuth.

Over fifteen years of life in Italy and some travel in Sicily, I have come to realize that not only do artists from this peninsula recognize a fundamental split between idea and iteration, but have managed to bridge the two better than most.

Whether it is because Italy is on the cusp between North and South, East and West, or because of its peculiar land shape, or because of millennia of invasions and the sweep of tribes and peoples, or even because the reach of the Roman Empire extended so far and is still determinant in establishing our modern legal, transport, fiscal, artistic codes – for whatever reason, contemporary Italian art is both a beginning and an end in itself.

Nowhere is the autotelic nature of Italian art more evident than in that self-absorbed, self-contained island called Sicily, whose rotten perfection are so seductive and clouding to the senses that it seems unnecessary to seek anything at all further than its fabled shores. Despite claim as one of the world's greatest exporters of immigrant labor, the island is as close to Paradise as any spot on earth, -- replete with Snake and apple – and continues to elicit marvel even in contemporary times. Its increasingly imperiled beauty has served as a pole to the imagination in a way that has preoccupied very few other immigrant ethnic groups, much more eager to shed their origins.

If we accept to believe in some kind of ping-pong of art history, with moments of great heights, and centers of production, with dialogue between artists, writers, and curators, and the creation of schools and movements, then it is just that we naturally look around for heirs to some of the great art movements of the past half century. I personally believe that now is the moment for Sicily.

Weaned on the canons of Conceptual art, I have happily accepted the beautiful tyranny, of that “prison-house of language,” to quote Frederic Jameson, for many decades. But the Anglo-Saxon post-Wittgensteinian crop of artists, though in themselves still volcanoes of activity, has yielded generation after generation of followers that have become a new orthodoxy rather than innovation.

Post-conceptual artistic practice took the form of institutional critique and “relational aesthetics” as an answer to the challenges posed by the work of artists such as Marcel Broodthaers and Hans Haacke. But also Fluxus, or the work of more minor artists such as Bas Jan Ader or Andre Cadere. Its history is well-known and mapped. However

today, we stand at a point where such critiques must necessarily take place within institutions themselves, for to witness them is impossible without an obliging framework to be ruptured. A colossal example of this tendency was the Venice Biennale pavilion, in which Haacke destroyed the Fascist era marble floor, and left it in Caspar David Friedrich-iceberg rubble, when he was selected to represent Germany. Another example, was the choice of Tino Sehgal to immaterially and performatively articulate “contemporaneity,” once again in the confines of the German Venice Biennial pavilion. A plethora of other practices oblige us to seek art within the participating frame, without which the work of artists who use alienation, appropriation, or the vernacular, would be non-existent.

But what if life itself were the frame? Where would we then be, if dead horses hanging from rafters, gentlemen politely crapping on theater stages, or soiled dolls on baby blankets, had no other bulwark than the horrendous yawning hole of everydayness? No artist using military paraphernalia, or thrift shop materials actually wishes to install in the museum of police arms (Rome) or a county fair. The frame is the actual location and defining characteristic of much art, as necessary to its completion as the speckles going out beyond the borders of a Signac, the fanciful carving encasing a Gauguin, the holes pointing to another dimension in a Fontana. By going into outer space, there was ironically an insinuation that there is no further work to be done, that there is no progress, and no final mark to be made, in the spiraling life logic of a Prini or Kosuth or Robert Barry, or Mario Merz, or many other artists.

In Italy, in a place where there ARE very few institutions to rupture, and where art has for

so long been a part of the everyday, the strength of these gestures seems all the more determined and specific, if they are made without a frame to rupture.

Often, it is said there are very few young artists in Italy, let alone Sicily. That it is impossible for artists here to measure up to Antonello da Messina, to Michelangelo and Raphael. That they are only comfortable in groups, tend not to travel, and do not obey the rules of the Miami-Basel-New York-London-Hong Kong art world. That is a fallacy.

In this Italian and in specific, Sicilian terrain, there are wonders being wrought precisely because of the relentless confrontation with the past. In a country where traces of civilization go back thousands of years, it is simply a higher standard that necessarily forces one to discriminate against banality and thus encourage a kind of modesty that would do well to be practiced elsewhere.

In a country where the drawings of Leonardo still set a standard today, it is impossible to love only the word, or the reproduction, even in a post-Duchampian century. And thus Italian artists, perhaps the foremost lovers of an art that is conceptual, find in the making of form a vibration and electricity, which is visual and synaesthetic, creating sparks and currents, as good art always has.

Futurism captured this well in its polyhedric investigations.

The conductor for making art continues to be the hand, despite great efforts to obscure this fact. The great artist must master materiality and is condemned to exercise this bravura eternally, no matter how far he or she may run to escape a relation to craft.

“There are many excellent craftsmen, but

few practical dreamers,” said Man Ray.

Today, there is less prejudice towards the stupidity of the paintbrush. The enemy (or great father) Pablo Picasso, has finally been answered, whether it is in the works of Warhol, Lichtenstein, or Polke and Richter. Other artists have stepped up to bat, to become conductors, in the way that Picasso gave rise to generation after generation of response.

It is no longer forbidden to use the hand, reduced to a machine in much Conceptual and post-Conceptual art.

Sicilian artists that I met over the course of a month with the kind assistance of Maria Giovanna Virga, agreed to articulate their ideas on place, on art and its utter most essential building block – drawing – for the purposes of this special essay.

Their works are extremely varied, and many of the artists do not even know one another. And yet, I am convinced that by looking at their drawings, we are affirming what art is, and that a making visual artist can indeed be distinguished from a cultural operator, or a theorist of postcolonial practice who uses artistic forms to paper together a body of work.

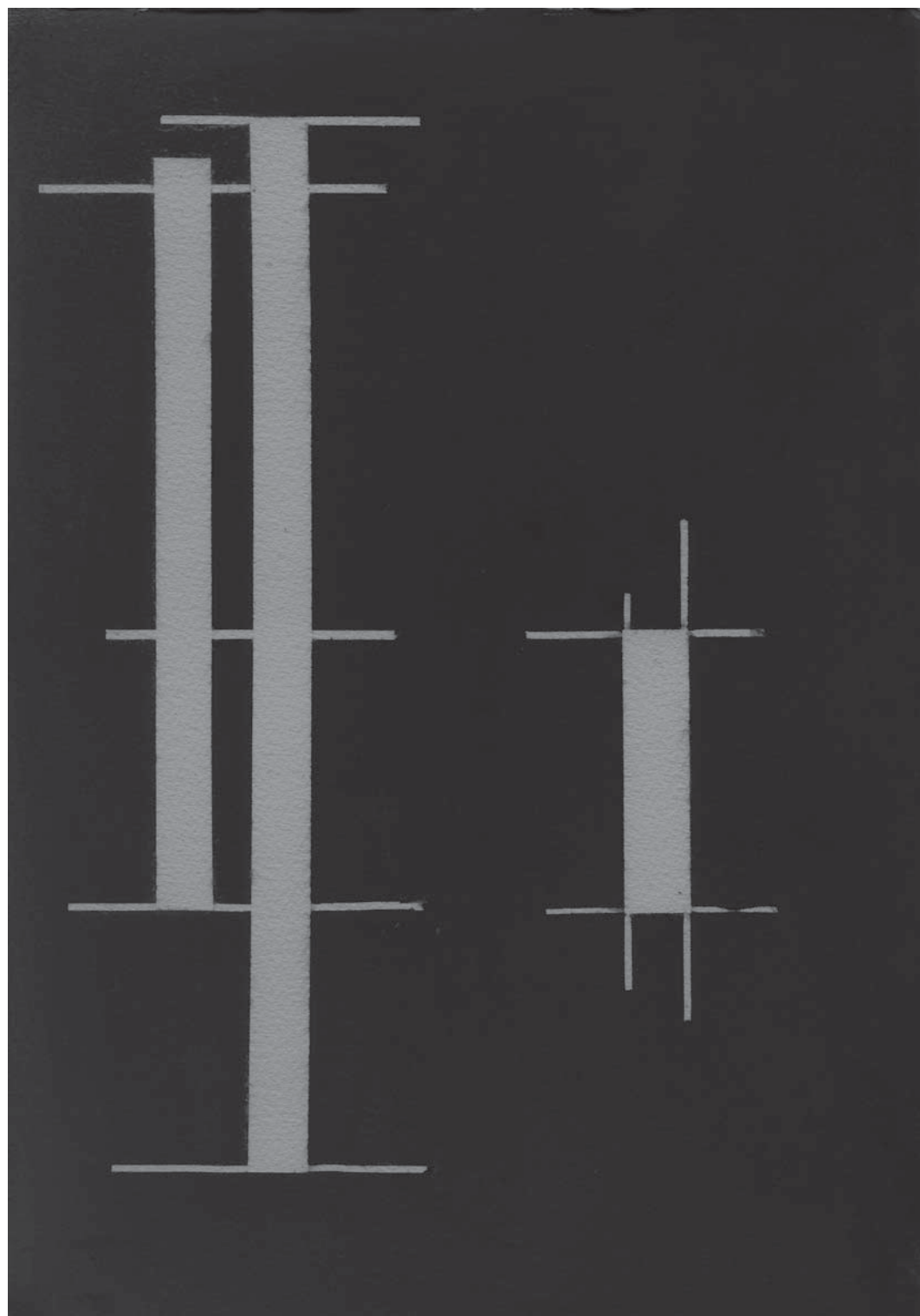
I am tired of the use of outsider artists and the drawings of the insane, begun so many years ago in the landmark exhibition of Harald Szeemann, or the collections of Art Brut. I love folk art, but distinguish it from the kind of high science I detect in the work of that person that has the ability to picture.

This editorial section is a call to arms and proof that Italian and specifically Sicilian artists can fight, and above all, have the magisterial ability right in their hands, to move the soul and mind with beauty, surely the highest purpose of culture.

Josè ANGELINO

left
Untitled
2015
Pastel on paper
29.7 x 21 cm

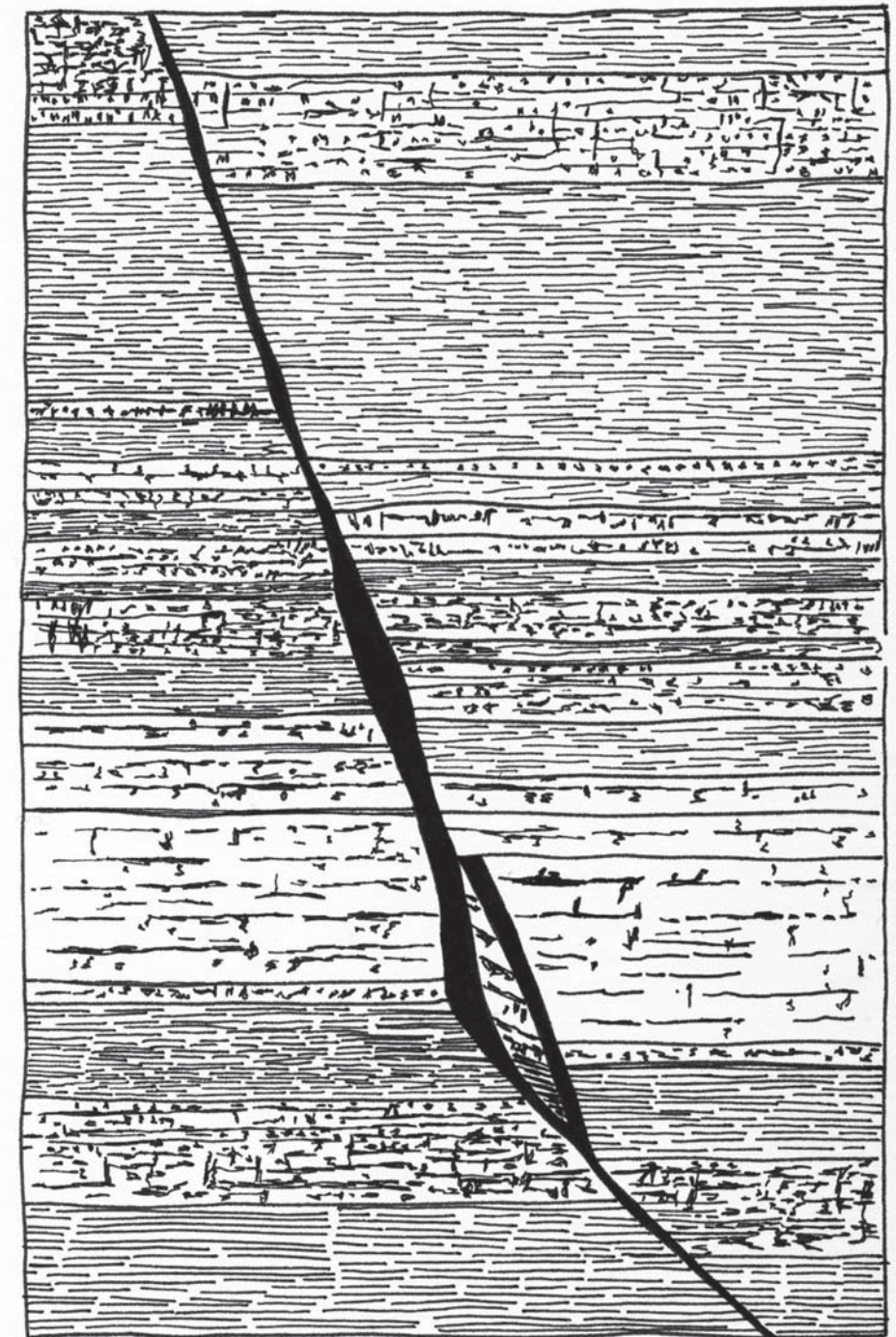
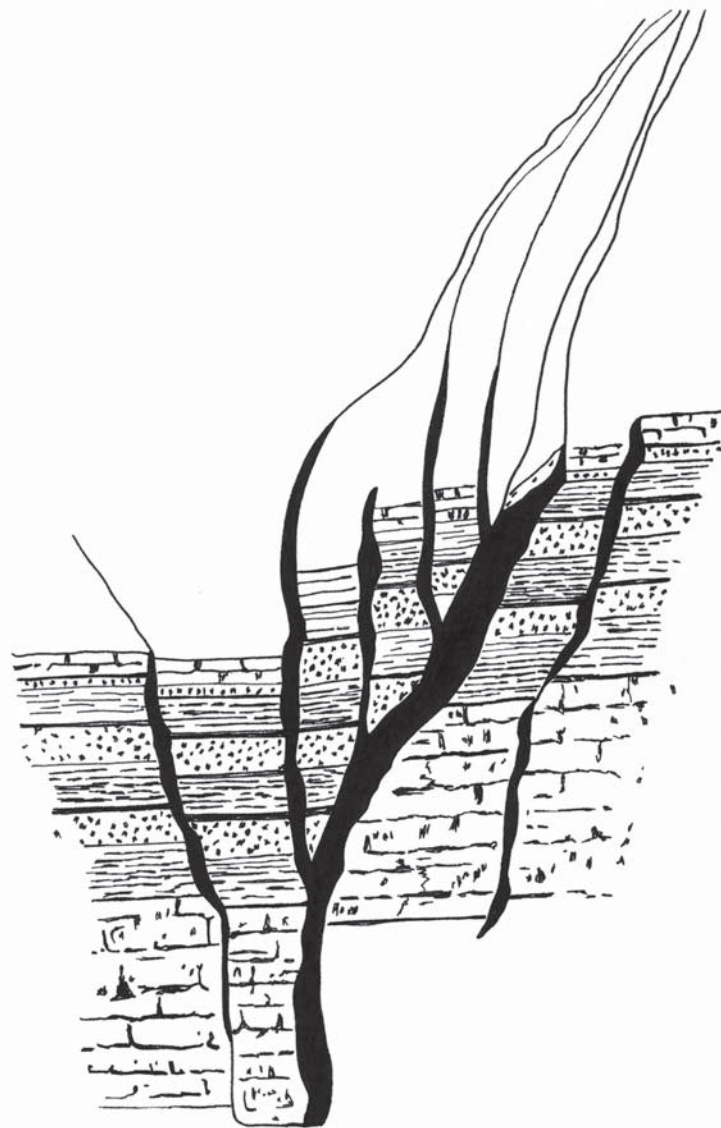
right
Untitled
2015
Ink on paper
29.7 x 21 cm



SALVATORE ARANCIO

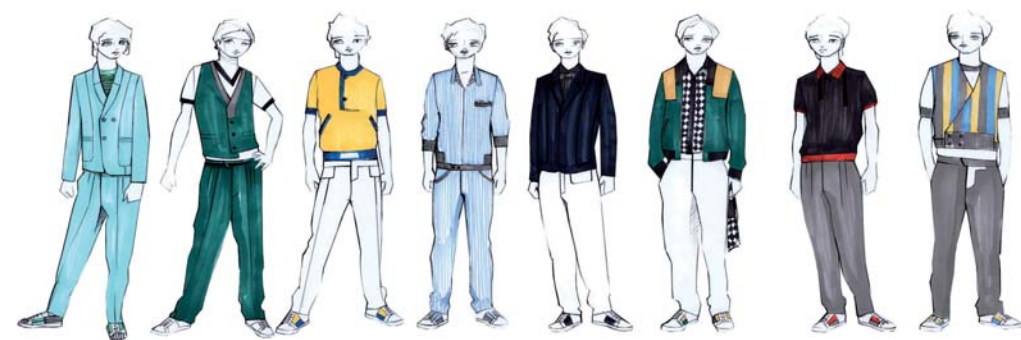
left
Split Vault Vein
2011
Ink on paper
29.7 x 21 cm
Courtesy Federica Schiavo,
Rome.

right
Lead Vein
2011
Ink on paper
29.7 x 21 cm
Courtesy Federica Schiavo,
Rome.



MARIO CARUANA

It's made of plastic
2007
Pencil on paper
29.7 x 21 cm each



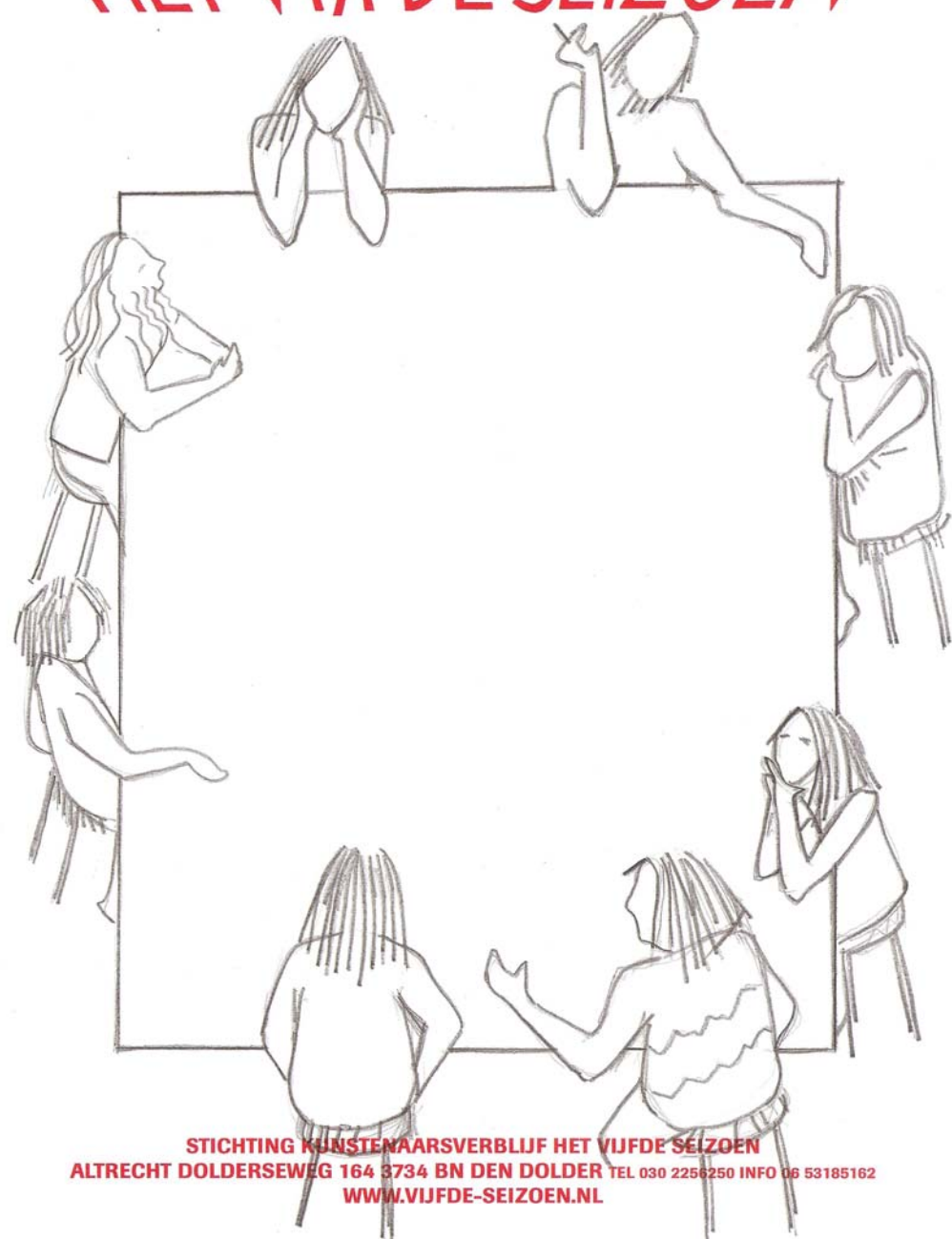


DOMENICO MANGANO

left
Niuwe Dennendal
2015
Pencil on paper
29.7 x 21 cm

right
Dilution Boat
2015
Pencil on paper
29.7 x 21 cm

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IGNAZIO MORTELLARO

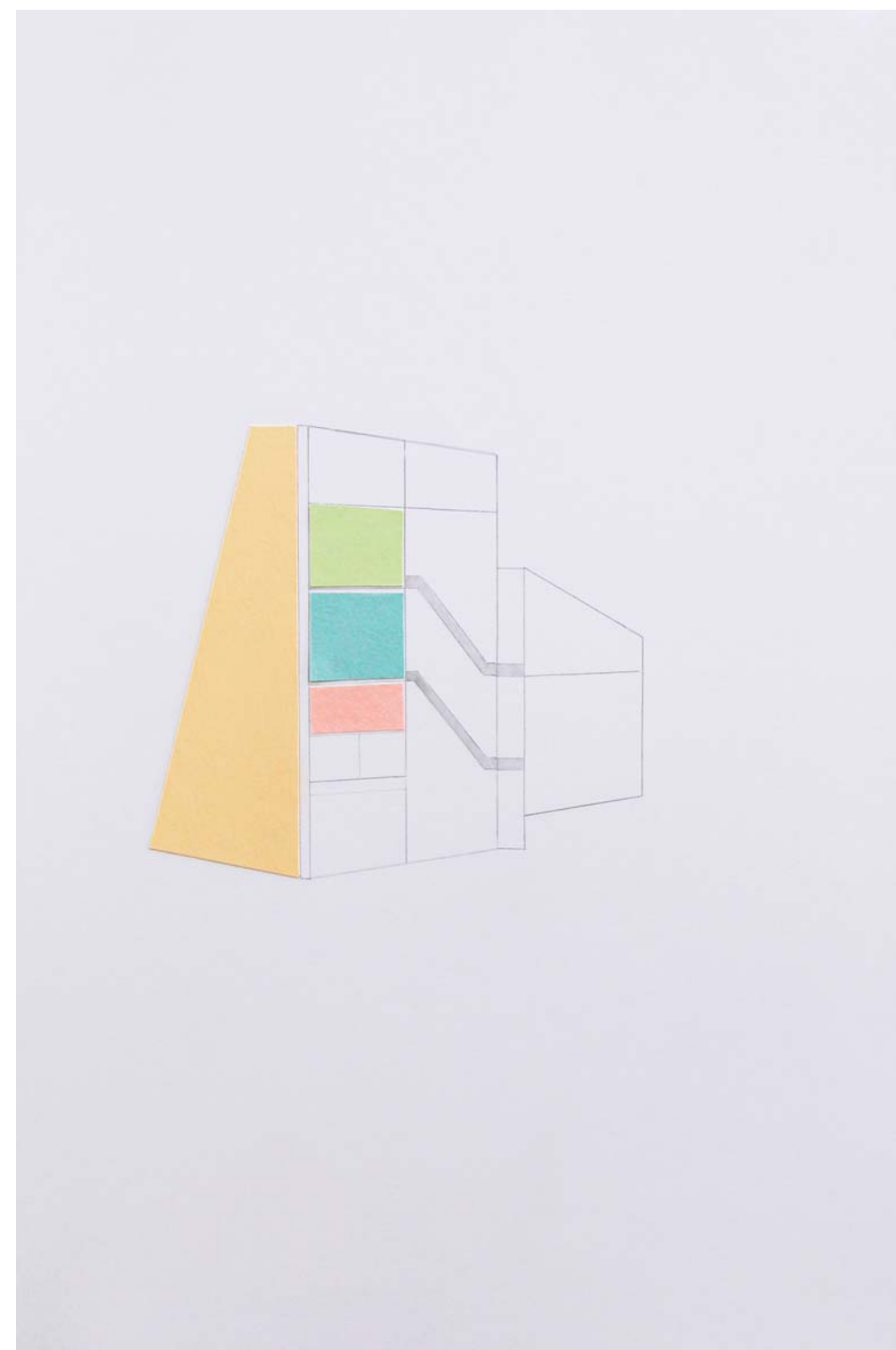
left
La pietra è ferma (The stone is firm)
2015
Brass powder on paper
48 x 33 cm

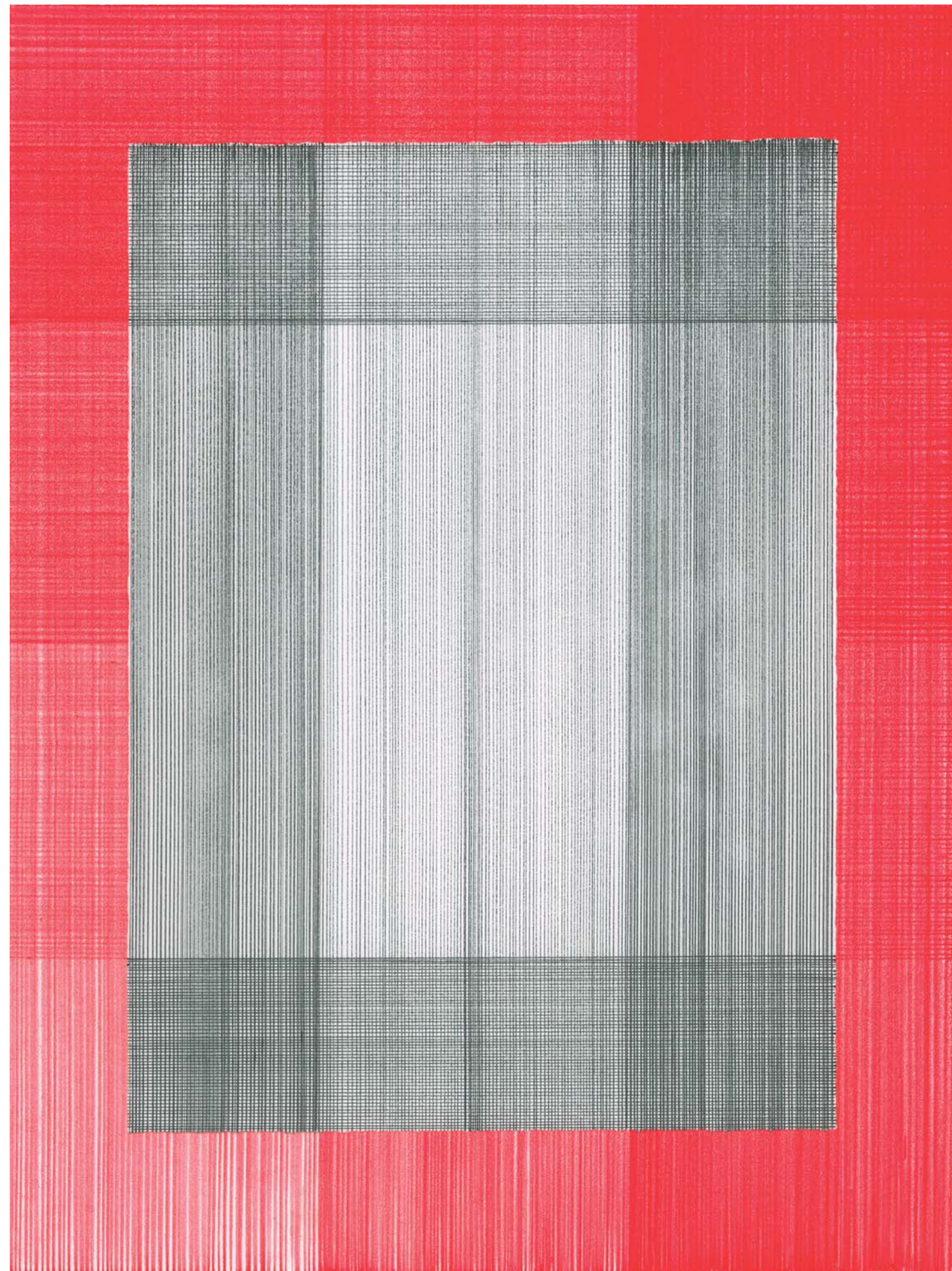
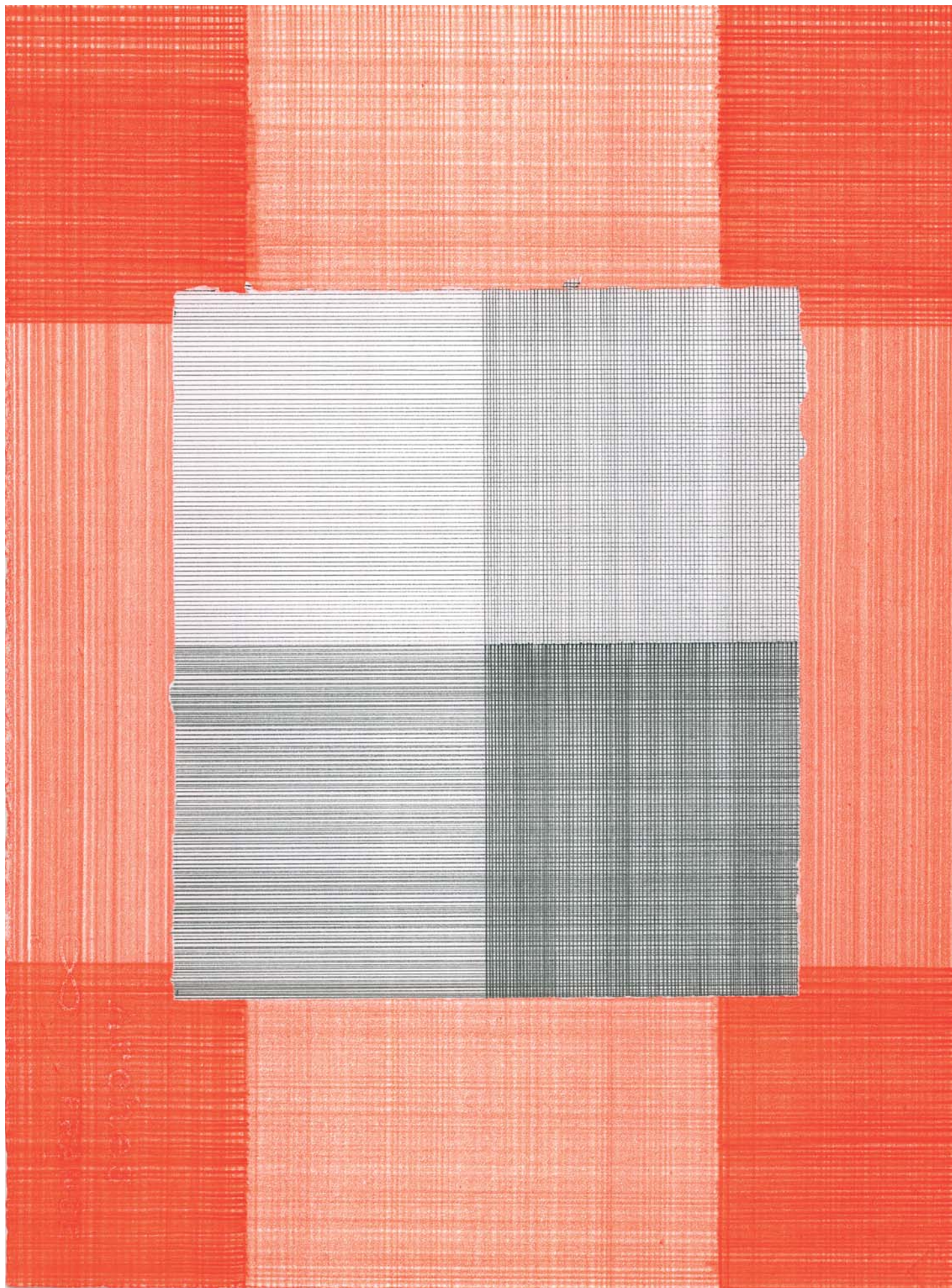
right
Circle
2015
Pencil on paper
48 x 33cm



CARMELO NICOTRA

Trace
2015
Pencil and collage on paper
30 x 21 cm





ALESSANDRO PIANGIAMORE

Untitled (ordinary facts #3)

2011

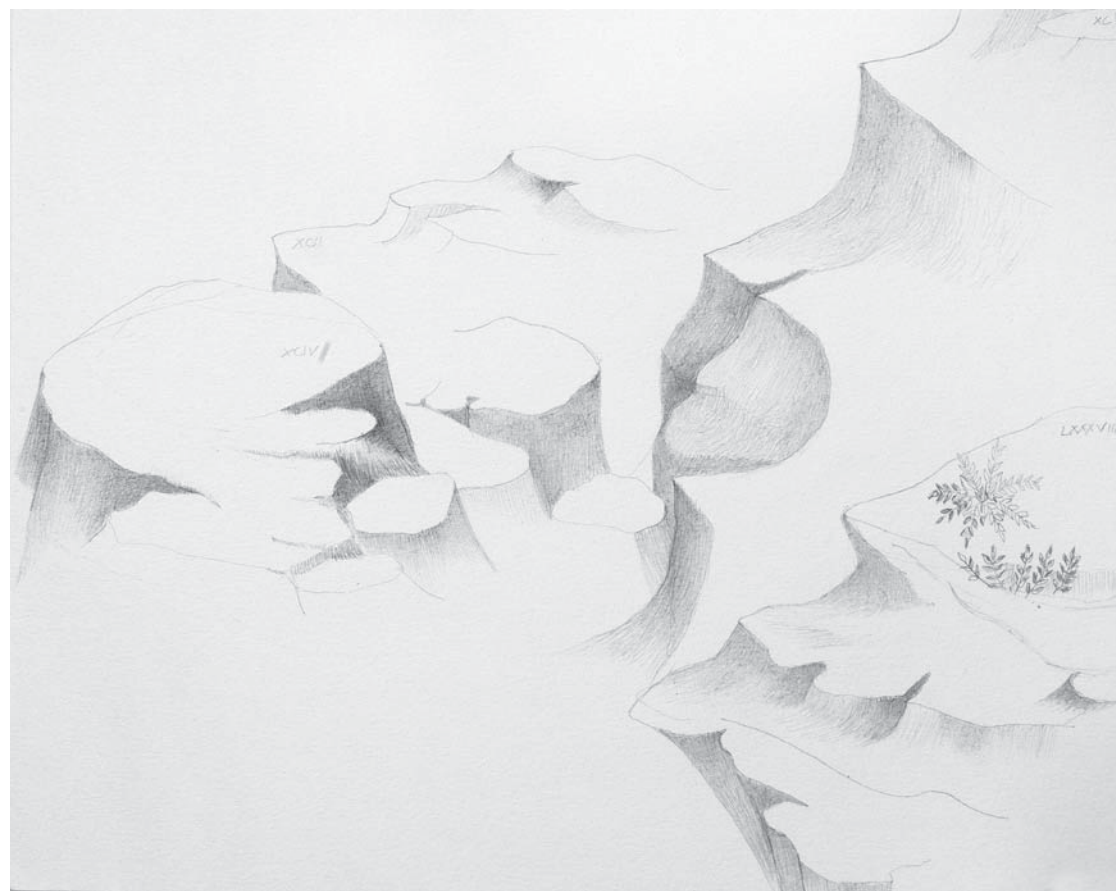
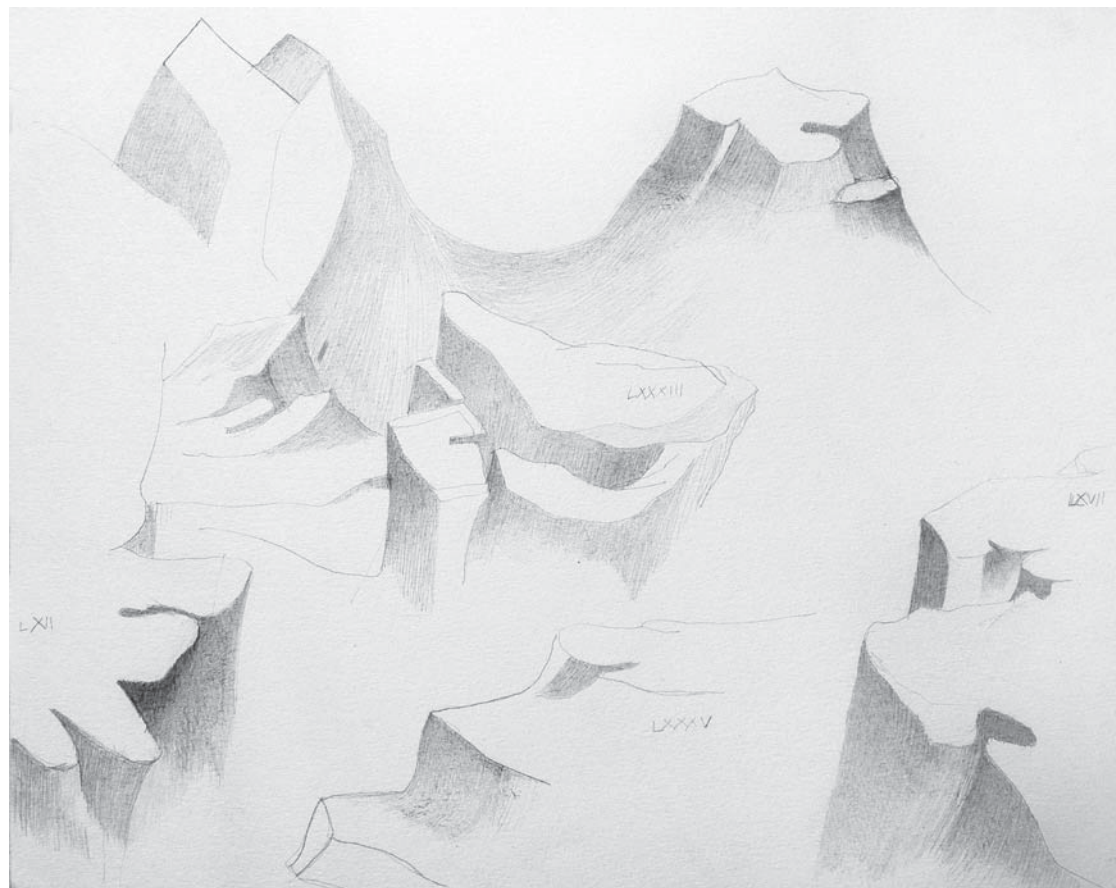
Etching and watercolor on paper

32 x 43 cm

Edition of 2 + 1 AP

Courtesy the artist and MAGAZZINO,
Rome





FRANCESCO SIMETI
left
I sassi dei Salimbeni (Salimbeni stones) 2014
Pencil on paper 23 x 28 cm each
Courtesy the artist

right
Giungla Improbabile III (Uncertain jungle III) 2015
Pencil on paper, woodcut 32 x 25.5 cm
Courtesy the artist

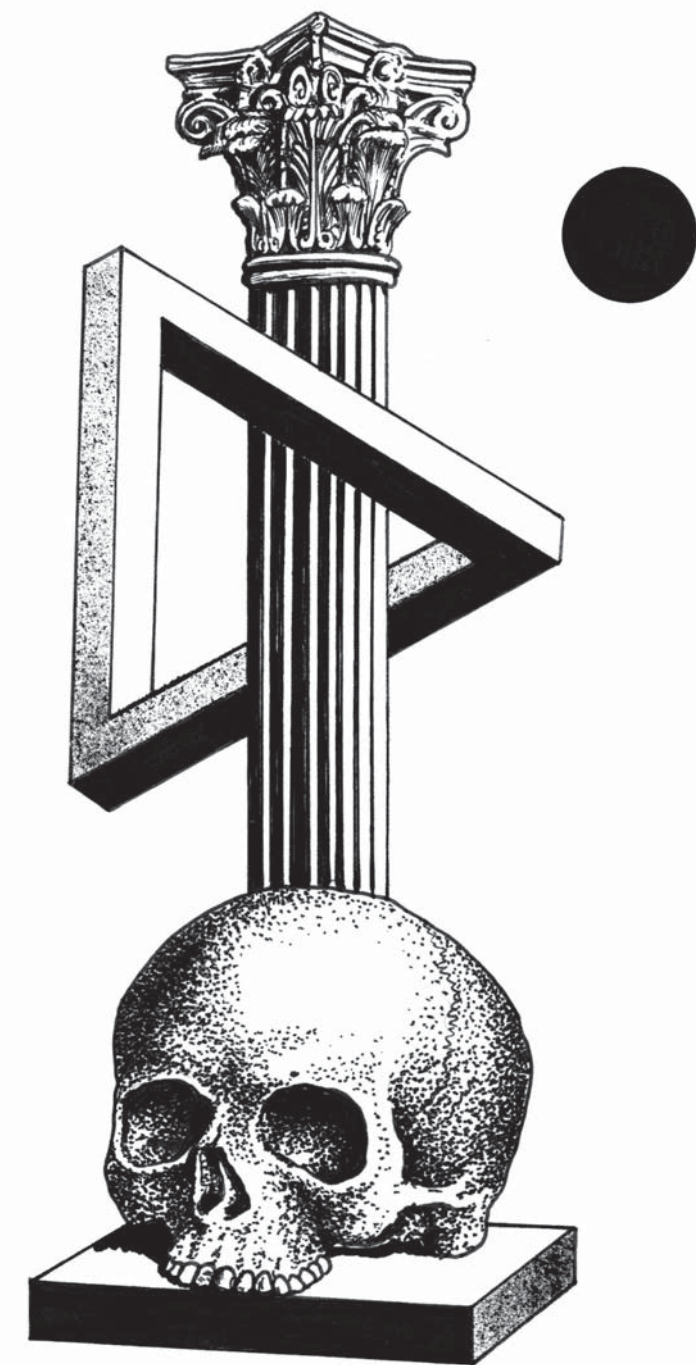
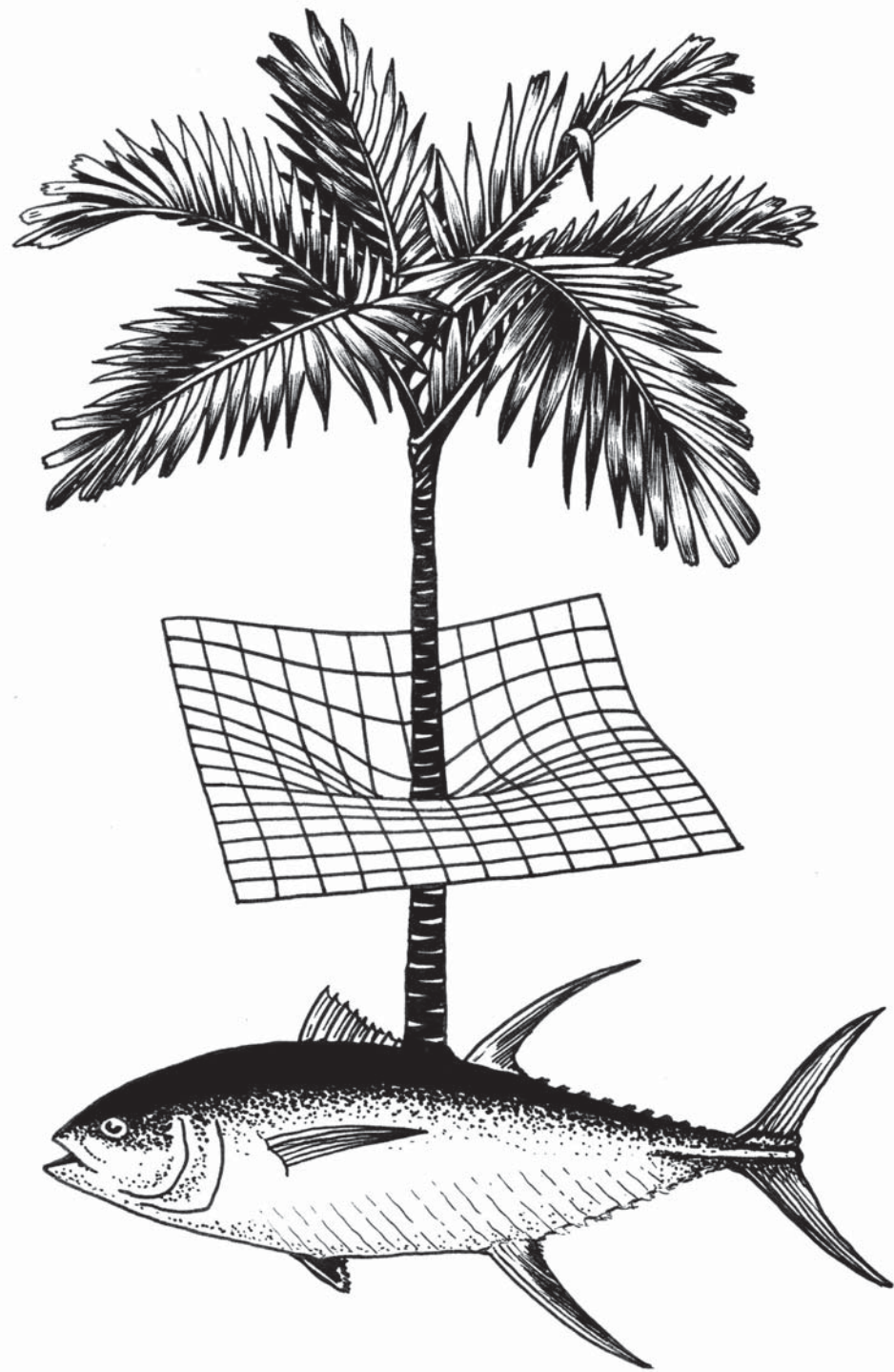
FRANCESCO TAGLIAVIA

Space/Time

2015

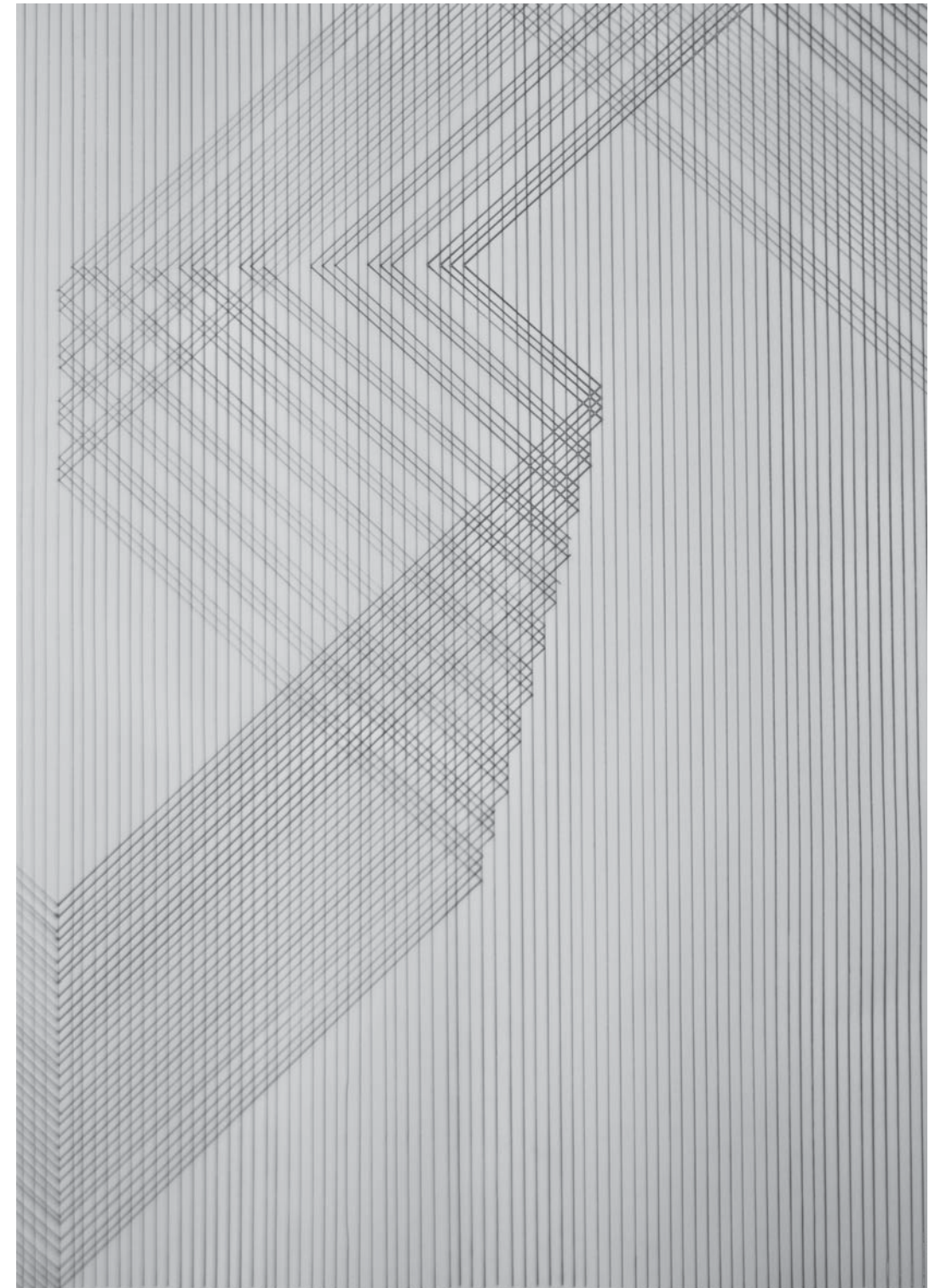
Marker and black ink on paper

29.7 x 21 cm each



STEFANIA ZOCCO

Archeologies
2015
Ink on tracing paper
350 x 62 cm



TWELVE ARTISTS

Josè Angelino • Salvatore Arancio
Mario Caruana • Carlo e Fabio Ingrassia
Domenico Mangano • Ignazio Mortellaro
Carmelo Nicotra • Paolo Parisi
Alessandro Piangiamore • Francesco Simeti
Francesco Tagliavia • Stefania Zocco

José Angelino

(Ragusa, 1977) lives and works in Rome.

After a degree in Physics at Sapienza University in Rome, his artistic career begins with a collaboration with national and international artists.

The scientific training is a distinctive element that influences the design and implementation of Angelino's artistic works. His artistic research is focused on the functioning of natural phenomena, such as creating coloured and light trails, realised from the use of gases and electricity. The manipulation of these elements is obtained inside boxes or vacuum containers, in which the visible phenomena are the result of the interaction between the electricity and gas used. The use of specific forms for the containment of the elements, and the possible insertion of small obstacles inside it, allow the artist to control and direct the flow of light in order to create new perceptual configurations. Each colour is created through a balanced use of gaseous elements that, depending on the composition, recreate the effect of small aurore.

Principal exhibitions: *European Glass Experience*, Museu do Vidro da Marinha Grande, Leiria, PT (2014); *Accesa*, Palazzo Parissi, Monteprandone, Ascoli Piceno, IT (2014); *Unisono*, Temple University, Rome, IT (2013); *Il peso della mia luce*, Operativa Arte Contemporanea, Rome, IT (2013); *Ho qualcosa da dire e da fare*, FACTORY, Macro Testaccio, Rome, IT (2013).

Salvatore Arancio

(Catania, 1974) lives and works in London.

One of the distinctive aspects of Arancio's works is the ability to create a temporal suspension, in which past and present time are combined. This manipulation of perceived time is possible thanks to a careful study on the potential of images and the efficacy of different means of representation, such as collages, sculptures, animations and video. The reworking of the graphic illustrations of the early twentieth century, for example, challenge the chronological sense of human knowledge, activating a process of alternative associations and interpretations. Special attention is paid to the natural landscape and its vegetation: caves, and volcanoes erupting. Plants, with their literal and symbolic meanings are the starting point for creating new and suggestive realities, able to appear familiar to the viewer, but at the same time unexpected. The sculptures, in particular, recall primordial natural forms, in which the erotic allusion deviates from any attempt at categorisation and research into a unique meaning.

Principal exhibitions: *The Hidden*, Ensapc Ygrec, Paris, FR (2014); *Cathedral*, AV Festival, Northern Gallery For Contemporary Art, Sunderland, UK (2014); *Dreams That Money Can't Buy*, The Independent project, MAXXI, Roma, IT (2014); *The Little Man of the Forest With the Big Hat*, Federica Schiavo Gallery, Rome, IT (2013); *Alternating Layers of Contrasting Resistance*, Rowing Gallery, London, UK (2013).

Mario Caruana

(Palermo, 1981) lives and works in Poggioreale.

After his degree in Fashion Design at Institute Polimoda in Florence, in 2010 he founded his eponymous label, specialising in knitwear fashion. Designer and stylist, Mario Caruana draws inspiration from the historical avant-garde of Suprematism and Constructivism: combining their lines, shapes and colours with the tradition of Italian knitwear. He has created a recognisable and

highly contemporary style.. The weft and type of tissue are chosen to enhance the colours and shapes of the models, creating a chromatic balance between basic and secondary colours. Each piece is the result of a careful study of proportions whose objective is to redefine and enhance the body of the wearer, exalting its presence inside the environment.

In 2014, Caruana collaborated with artist Miltos Manetas for the project *Art NewPressionism* and participated in *Roman Inspiration*, organized by Artisanal Intelligence AltaRoma, in which his collection 2015/2016 has been displayed alongside to a work of artist Marco Tirelli. The collection of Mario Caruana was presented in several fairs: *Pitti Uomo*, Florence, IT (2012); *Who's Next*, Paris, FR (2011); *Touch*, Milan, IT (2010).

Carlo and Fabio Ingrassia

(Catania, 1985) live and work in Catania.

The artistic production of the Ingrassia twins is the result of a technical and planned duality, it is accentuated by the fact that one of them is right-handed and the other left-handed; in this way each project is carried out simultaneously by four hands. This aspect gives life to a detailed technical process, in which each artist explores, during the construction of the opera, the colour composition of the pigments and the various materials used. Also the paper takes a central role in the work, because, according to its absorbent properties, the pigments are stratified creating a unique sign, in which the hand of the two authors become indistinguishable, creating a perfect harmony between sharp and softened lines. Their works are poised between painting and sculpture thanks to the inclusion of three-dimensional elements and the creation of special perspectives, able to recreate the illusion of depth and invasion of the exhibition space.

Principal Exhibitions: *Viaggio in Sicilia#6 - Quando il paesaggio è in ascolto*, Museo Riso, Cappella dell'Incoronazione, Palermo, IT (2015); *Pianeta X*, Museo Riso, Palermo, IT (2014); *Sezioni e Polvere*, Ritmo, Independent Cultural Space, Catania, IT (2013); *54° Biennale di Venezia Esposizione Internazionale d'Arte*, Padiglione Italia/Accademia, Venezia (2011); *PRE-VISIONI*, Fondazione Puglisi Cosentino, Catania, IT (2009).

Domenico Mangano

(Palermo, 1976) lives and works in Amsterdam.

From the beginning, the artistic research of Mangano has focused on the direct knowledge of small local realities: a descent inside the environment with the purpose to offer an extended reality in relation to the community. Participation in various artistic residences, in Italy and abroad, over the years has allowed him to expand his artistic and narrative expertise and to trace the history of small communities, with their habits and characters. Nothing is contrived, Mangano doesn't search the "staging", the story is unfolded through captured fragments. Recurring is photography and video, used without a documentary slant, for their expressive and imaginative qualities. His painting training is also manifested in the use of digital media: blurring, low-resolution (obtained thanks to low-tech equipment) and the use of long and static framings (able to recall "tableaux vivant") become useful tools to evoke a pictorial dimension.

Principal exhibitions: *Avantieri*, Galleria Francesco Pantaleone Arte Contemporanea, Palermo, IT (2014); *The Margulies Collection*, The Margulies Collection at the Warehouse, Miami, US (2013); *A love meal*, Collection Sandretto Re Rebaudengo at Whitechapel Gallery, London, UK (2013); *War Game*, LWZ Projekte, Vienna, AT (2012); *Italian Video Today: Double Identity*, Macy Art Gallery, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, US (2011).

Ignazio Mortellaro

(Palermo, 1978) lives and work in Palermo.

The study of reality, through its phenomena and paces, is the cornerstone of Mortellaro's artistic research. Thanks to his training as architect and engineer, his works combine the interest in many disciplines such as science, philosophy, music and literature. The drawing plays a central role in the planning opera, as a privileged instrument of synthesis

and reasoning. The production of the artist is heterogeneous, as he uses different media (sculpture, drawing, photography, video and installation) to analyse the complex relationship between man and nature. A minimal and complex reworking that redefines also the technical tools of measurement invented by man, such as geographical and astronomical maps, pendulums, geometric figures and compasses. His interest in music led him to found in 2008 the collective Oblivious Artefacts active between Palermo, Rome and Berlin, which allowed him to curate the graphic concept of several record labels.

Principal exhibitions: *Apar*, Galleria Francesco Pantaleone Arte Contemporanea, Palermo, IT (2014); *Smart Riso*, Museo Riso, Palermo, IT (2014), *Finis Terrae*, O', Milano (2014), *Thinking Underground*, Senza Filtro - Sorting For Different Arts Center, Bologna, IT (2014); *Essere io non ha misura*, FACTORY, Ex Mattatoio Testaccio, Roma, IT (2013); *Terrae Motus*, Assab One, Milano, IT (2012); *Ossidiana*, CO2 contemporary art, Roma, IT (2011).

Carmelo Nicotra

(Agrigento, 1983) lives and works between Favara and Palermo.

The town of Favara, in addition to be the place in which the artist grew up, is the primary environment of research for the realisation of his works, thanks to the direct contact with the community and a careful study of the territory, in particular the urban, architectural and anthropological changes. The artist pays attention to history, customs and costumes of the local tradition through contemporary artistic language. Each work is conceived by seeking the right balance between art materials and existing objects, in order to associate to the aesthetic preciousness the communicative immediacy. The different means employed (collage, sculpture, photography, installation, drawing, digital graphics, audio and video) allow him to investigate the issues addressed and represent some of the features that characterise the Sicilian territory.

Principal exhibitions: *Pianeta X*, Museo Riso, Palermo, IT (2014); *Give Way To Give A Way*, Schau Fenster, Berlino, DE (2014); *La materia di un sogno*, Fondazione Brodbeck, Catania, IT (2014); *A Better World*, Evento collaterale - Biennale di Venezia 13° Esposizione Internazionale di Architettura, Serra dei

Giardini, Venezia, IT (2012); 37° 19 ' 07" N 13° 39 ' 47" E, Galleria Zelle Arte Contemporanea, Palermo, IT (2012).

Paolo Parisi

(Catania, 1965) lives and works in Florence.

The reflection on the concept of experience, linked to the individual and collective perception, is the foundation on which Parisi develops his artistic practice. Sight and hearing are the senses most stimulated in his installations. The expository context is central to the creation of his work, especially when he realises colourful environments, thanks to the inclusion of plates of coloured plexiglass in the windows of the rooms. The use of these plates allows the artist to get a change of perception of daylight, which redefines the architecture through different colours, which highlight the limits and volumes. The sound perception is, instead, investigated through the creation of small rooms, presented both inside enclosed space and outdoors spaces. These environments become "listening chambers", in which the voices of the spectators are mixed with pre-recorded sounds, such as the movements of matter under the crust of the volcanoes. The pictorial research has remained a constant in his artistic production, and allows him to reflect on the relationship that it can establish with what surrounds it.

Principal exhibitions: *Residenze*, Museo Riso, Palermo, IT (2014); *Trip and Travelling | Introduction*, Klaipėda Culture Communication Center, Klaipėda, LT (2013); *Primavera 2*, CNEAI, Île des Impressionnistes, Chatou, Paris, FR, (2013); *Vis à Vis (Datura) + Observatorium (Blu.Tally)*, Museo Riso, Palermo, IT (2011); *Commonplace (Unitè d'habitation)*, Fondazione Brodbeck, Catania, IT (2011).

Alessandro Piangiamore

(Enna, 1976) lives and works in Rome.

The distance between reality and appearance is one of the interests of the artistic research of Piangiamore. To investigate these limits, the artist resorts to the attempt to represent intangible elements, not simply to represent formally. In one of his most recent works, for example, the human scent is kept in liquid form inside solid crystal, which with its ineffable and polished crystal form confer physicality to the perfume. In all his works the reality is experienced through a strong imagination, the result of a poetics that is linked to both the materials used and the slow and meticulous process of construction. Among these materials, most come from the seabed, selected both for their colours and for the possibility of creating strong allusions to other terrestrial elements. Sculpture, installation and engraving are the privileged means by artist: engravings frequently accompany the sculptures, extending their meaning.

Principal exhibitions: *Milk revolution* by Cura, American Academy in Rome, IT (2015); *Primavera Piangiamore*, Palais de Tokyo, Modules - Fondation Pierre Bergé - Yves Saint Laurent, Paris, FR (2014); *Meteorite in giardino*, Fondazione Merz, Turin, IT (2014); *Dormitorio Pubblico*, Campoli Presti Gallery, London, UK (2012); *Tutto il vento che c'è*, GAMeC, Bergamo, IT (2011).

Francesco Simeti

(Palermo, 1968) lives and works in New York.

The work of Simeti starts from a careful research of existing images from different sources: botanical books, herbaria and topical images concerning society and the environment. The organisation of this visual repertoire takes place in the creation of giant wallpaper, in which each element is assembled according to precise chromatic and compositional combinations.

The final result is a series of misleading configurations, which at first strongly start with the whole image, perceiving the colour composition, and then discovering the real subjects of the composition when it is observed closely. A gesture that, far from being decorative, has instead in itself an implicit criticism of the numbing, or in some cases disturbing, effect of images. With this aesthetic taste is joined the ability to increase the environmental reality, until it becomes spectacular through the use of panels that fragment the exhibition space, as in ancient theatrical sets .

Principal exhibitions: *Bulletin Board: Indexing*, Center for Curatorial Studies and Hessel Museum of Art, Bard College, Annandaleon-Hudson, New York, US (2014); *Billowing*, PRIMOPIANO / Diego Cassina, Lugano, SZ (2014); *Portrait of an Artist as a Young (Wo) man*, Castello di Rivoli, Turin, IT (2014); *The Art of Living* by Living-Corriere della Sera Interiors Magazine, Triennale di Milano, Milan, IT (2014); *An Artful Confusion*, Galleria d'Arte Moderna, Palermo, IT (2012).

Francesco Tagliavia

(Palermo, 1985) lives and works in Palermo.

Trained in painting at the Academy of Fine Arts in Palermo, in recent years he has focused his artistic production on drawing, assimilating and reinterpreting images extrapolated from the network and from contemporary culture. Each drawing, made mainly with markers and black ink, is imposed on the white sheet with centrality and sharp irony, developing free associations able to overturn the original source of inspiration and broaden the interpretations. Celebrities, everyday objects and media events become symbols of a critical thinking and of subversion of the popular culture. The spread of the drawings, as well as exhibitions and independent publications, occurs primarily via Internet through modern distribution platforms of content and images, such as Facebook and Tumblr: these are used the same way as artists' notebooks, in which creativity and recirculated images flow. Alongside of this production he makes faux leather modern icons, objects hovering between the portrait and the fetish.

Principal exhibitions: *Nobody*, We Cross the Line Studio, Milan, IT (2014); *Pop-up Gallery*,

South Street Seaport, New York, US (2014); *Doppelgänger*, Chiesa di Sant'Antonio Abate, Complesso Monumentale dello Steri, Palermo, IT (2014); *Lontani come rami galleggianti*, Zelle Arte Contemporanea, Ex Collegio dei Gesuiti, Alcamo, IT (2012); *Crossing of ideas*, CLANG, Scicli, IT (2012).

Stefania Zocco

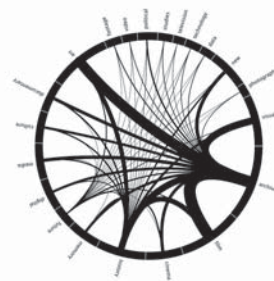
(Ragusa, 1980) lives and works between London and Palermo.

Zocco has used performance, installation, drawing and video. Her recent works have focused on the use of painting as a tool for the investigation of visual perception in relation to digital technologies. Through the traditional medium of painting the artist reinterprets the visual codes of digital languages, putting together two seemingly distant fields. Each work is made up of multiple layers of colour, often soft as if they were cloud-coloured, in which the artist adds small triangular shapes: the final image is perceived as a whole. These triangular shapes are not only reminiscent of the pixels of digital images, but at the same time their arrangement creates particular movements within the field of view, so as to attract and guide the viewer's gaze. The exhibition space participates in the composition of the works on canvas thanks to large frames in plain colour.

Principal exhibitions: *Deep East Winter Exhibition*, Mayor's Parlour Gallery Ltd, Londra, UK (2015); *Pianeta X*, Museo Riso, Palermo, IT (2014); *Save the beauty*, Magazzino Formide, Siracusa, IT (2013); *Tasty Modern*, Schwartz Gallery, London, UK (2013); *QSS*, Vegas Gallery, London, UK (2012).

**ARCHIVES OF/FOR
THE FUTURE**

The NECS 2015 Conference
Łódź, Poland, June 18-20, 2015



ŁÓDŹ ASAN archive

Edited by Tomasz Załuski

Foreword by Tomasz Załuski

With the advent of what is generally known as ‘the archival turn’ in contemporary humanities and social sciences, the concept of the archive has been broadened to such an extent that it is now one of the ‘plastic’, potentially all-embracing, yet precise, notions or metaphors that can take on various meanings and refer to spheres of reality that are quite different from one another.

One such sphere is the city. Obviously, each city can be seen as an archive, or rather as a multitude of archives. What makes each city unique, though, is a singular configuration of its archives, the way they are – or are not – connected with one another, the way they intersect or overlap, form complex stratified structures or atomized archipelagos. They can be ‘actual’ archives: material and digital; printed, photograph, film, new media; artistic, cultural, socio-political, historical etc. that are located in the city and sometimes also represent it. They can also be the city itself: its urban and architectural tissue, artifacts in the public space, traces of social life and objects of cultural memory.

What makes each city even more singular and specific are the ways it manages, makes use of and performs its archives in the service of the present – and of the future. What politics of archiving and non-archiving, a politics of remembrance and forgetfulness, it is engaged in; how it constructs, collects, processes, distributes and exhibits archival materials and plays out the tension between institutional and non-institutional archives; what artistic, cultural and social uses of the archive it makes, especially in terms of a historical politics; how it reenacts the archive as a site of imagined, spectral, phantasmagorical community, but also of symbolic and real antagonisms; if it is receptive to forgotten or suppressed archives as well as singular testimonies and how it allows them to develop their counter-archival power and open new possibilities for the future.

This thematic section aims at exploring the possibilities afforded by treating the city of Łódź in terms of an archive. The section has been designed in connection with and so as to accompany the 9th Annual NECS (European Network for Cinema and Media

Studies) Conference “Archives of/for the Future”. The latter, organized by the University of Lodz and the University of Social Sciences and Humanities in Warsaw, will take place on June 18-20, 2015, in Łódź, Poland. *Art and Documentation* is one of the media patrons of the event.

Amongst the archives that have contributed to the singularity of Łódź, there are ones generated by the extraordinary history of modernization and industrialization of the city in 19th and 20th century, its economic, material and technical transformations, social and political upheavals, habits of everyday life, popular cultures and avant-garde art. They have been all undergoing a major change due to the city’s rapid de-industrialization in the post-communist period and its search for a different economic, social and cultural identity. The search also entails inventing new functions for the city’s post-industrial heritage.

The artistic culture of Łódź has been an important point of reference and a subject of systematic research for *Art and Documentation* since the journal’s inception in 2009. There have been numerous articles and thematic sections devoted to a vast selection of artistic phenomena from Łódź, both belonging to the tradition of neo-avant-garde and to contemporary artistic movements. Even though *Art and Documentation* is open to contributions on different aspects of culture, the thematic and disciplinary profile of the journal is rooted in the study of the ‘visual arts’, in their 20th century conceptual, performative, media and documentalist transformations, ramifications and reembodiments. This is the reason why the main subject of research and analysis in the five texts gathered in this section is how “Łódź as an Archive” becomes embodied and represented in, or performed by, artistic practices, art institutions and their audiences.

Karol Jóźwiak looks at 70s-90s Łódź through the prism of art. He attempts to interpret a selection of neo-avant-garde media and installation works from the period outside their artistic or aesthetic contexts and treat them instead as a repository of urban, architectonic and social structures, a kind of visual atlas of Łódź. The examples he has chosen reflect various

artistic strategies and at the same time, a spectrum of inventorying functions of art: from documenting the city, through playing with its changing structure, to annexing urban spaces and using them as laboratories for analysis and imaginative re-creation of social life. By inventing a new usage for the artworks in question, the author discovers a new archive, another source of data for the historiography of Łódź.

Julia Sowińska-Heim shows the contemporary public space of the city to be itself an artistic-historical archive that also reflects the changing economic, social and political conditions of life in Poland. She examines the remaining material traces of three editions of the international art event *Construction in Process* that took place in Łódź in 1981, 1990 and 1993. These are: sculptures, objects and installations in the public space, most of which were improvised directly on the spot, often in direct relation to the existing context and were not meant to be permanent interventions, rather fleeting testimonies to the moment. Nevertheless, they have survived and the author follows their “biographies” by giving extensive historical information not just about the artistic context of their creation but also by reconstructing their afterlives, both in terms of their materiality and whatever changing circumstances they reflect. Sadly enough, the archive is dispersed, its elements hidden in different corners of the city, where they have often fallen into oblivion and been exposed to destruction.

Marta Ostajewska reports on her own artistic initiatives organized and performed in 2013 – 2014 in Księży Młyn, a post-industrial district in Łódź. In her projects, inspired by anthropological archive studies, object-ontology and psychogeography, she used contemporary oral histories – anecdotes, and interviews she has conducted with the district inhabitants – as well as the extensive archive of in-depth interviews with Łódź factory workers from the 1960s and 1970s from the Institute of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology at the University of Lodz. Her text offers an opportunity to become informed about some of the cities histories and memories, as it is encrusted with fragmentary quotations from the archives, both past and present. Ostajewska’s

artistic projects were meant to fill in the gaps and remedy deficiencies in relation to the Księży Młyn neighborhood, give voice to its inhabitants and create with their participation a space for being-together. As those ephemeral activities are not sufficient, the author stresses the need for a more systematic revitalization practice.

Leszek Karczewski draws on the history of the Muzeum Sztuki in Łódź, interpreting elements of the archive that it has become itself, in terms of new museology and audience development. His perspective is one of an active practitioner responsible for the educational program at the Museum. Karczewski gives a glimpse of the institution’s past educational ideas and activities, above all *Sunday at the Museum*, a series of mass meetings in the 70’s aimed at reanimating the Museum’s collection and performing it socially. In this context, some more recent attempts at deliberate audience development at the Museum are shown to be both intentionally and unintentionally rooted in the institution’s educational heritage. Moreover, the very socio-educational purpose was inscribed in the identity and functioning of the Museum already in the 1930’s, by avant-garde artist Władysław Strzemiński and the institution’s director Marian Minich. So early an origin and implementation of those ideas into practice casts into doubt the originality of the tenets of the late 20th century new museology.

Daria Kubiak and Kim Skjoldager-Nielsen take the analysis of audience development into a different direction. Drawing on the theoretical perspective of performance studies, they look at two attempts at deliberate audience emancipation through exhibition design. They analyze the performative ‘scripts’ inscribed in the way the Film Museum in Łódź shows its collection and in the exhibition *Atlas of Modernity* at the Muzeum Sztuki in Łódź, and provide a critical assessment of their potential to act as repositories for local identity and generators of social and cultural capital. As several shortcomings are identified in the analysis, certain ideas and postulates are put forward to remedy them and contribute to designing exhibitions that would perform archives as “theaters for development”.



KAROL JÓŹWIAK

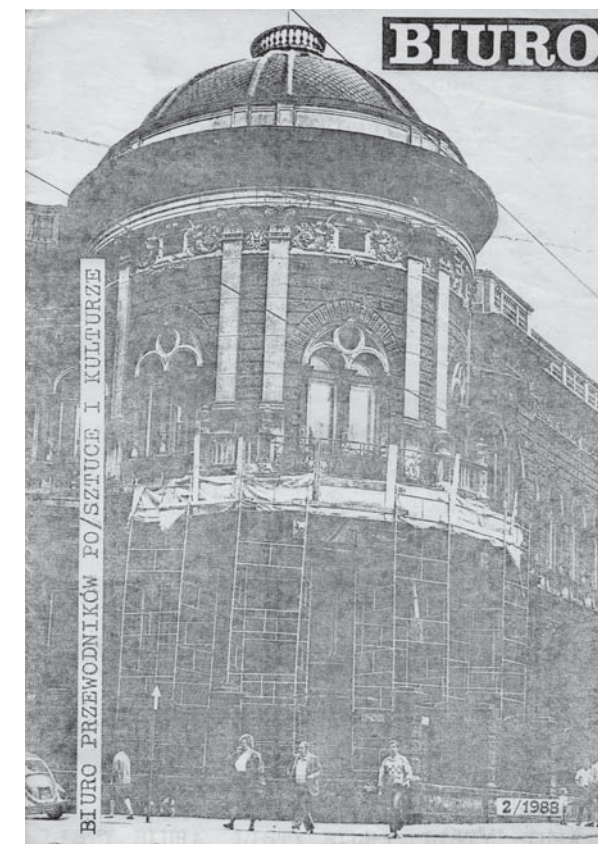
TAKING STOCK OF A CITY BY ART. NEO-AVANT-GARDE ART AS A REPOSITORY FOR IMAGES OF ŁÓDŹ FROM 1970-1990.

Just as others were active within the realm of the museum's gallery, I wanted to act within the realm of the city where the artist is absent. In 1971 in Łódź I did an artistic action...¹
Józef Robakowski

Łódź has an extraordinary place in the twentieth century history of art. The city has attracted and has drawn many progressive Polish artists since the very beginning of the avant-garde art movement. Many artists decided to settle here, amongst them the artistic couple of Władysław Strzemiński and Katarzyna Kobro is the most significant example. Strzemiński and Kobro amongst others established in Łódź the very first institutional collection of avant-garde art in Europe [The International Modern Art Collection of the a.r. group] just a few years after MoMA in New York had been established². The Muzeum Sztuki that eventually evolved from the a.r. group collection has played an important role in continuing the heritage of the first avant-garde. At the end of sixties, after a regressive Stalinist period, the artistic circle of the city took back a progressive initiative. Robakowski noticed: “by coincidence, the configuration of the alternative art scene in Lodz had been taking shape more or less at the same time”³. The beginning of the seventies “sparked hopes that the museum would promote the youngest generation of Polish artists”⁴. The reference to Strzemiński and the avant-garde played an important role in the constitution of the local artistic identity. By no means did Łódź become one of the centers of the neo-avant-garde movement by accident. It was here where “a dialogue with the historical avant-garde was established, at the same time coupled with a cut-off from the academic and traditional means of expression”⁵. That movement was highly influenced by a tendency for the affiliation between life and art and of treating reality as a starting point for the creative process. Thus, the urban context played more than ever, an important role in the artistic actions. The attention was shifted from the work of art itself onto the process, context and place of their production and exposition. Using such media as photography, film and video, the artists created at the same time both the artworks and the registrations of the city. The images stored by galleries, museums and private collections of contemporary art became in that sense a dense repository reflecting Łódź during that time. Within those artworks one can see an important part of the history of art and on the other hand they can be seen as an extraordinary documentation of the city's peculiarities and features, reflecting places that do not exist anymore or have changed. Hence in this article I propose a different reading of the history of neo-avant-garde art. I am less concerned with the issues of medium, communication, artistic ideas or message relevant to the examined artworks and rather more concerned with their backgrounds and urban contexts. I propose to approach some of the artworks as peculiar vehicles of images and information, as a source of data relevant to the history of the city. In other words, I treat a part of the history of neo-avant-garde art as a repository for historical data, or as an atlas of images of the city. By examining a few examples ordered in a certain way, I would like to sketch a part of the history of Łódź contained within it's neo-avant-garde art.



Construction in Process, still from Jozef Robakowski film, action by Sol LeWitt. Courtesy of the author.



First Page of the Andrzej Paruzel's *Biuro* art-zine, 1988. My archive.



Lochy Manhattanu, 1989, exhibition preview invitation. Courtesy of Józef Robakowski.

DISCOVERY OF THE PECULIARITY OF ŁÓDŹ

The legend of Łódź reaches back to the end of the nineteenth century, when a famous novel by Reymont entitled *The Promised Land* appeared in 1898. During less than 100 years, the city grew from a little town at the beginning of 19th century into a big industrial centre. Thus, the development of the city was an extraordinary phenomenon without any possible comparison at that time. The population grew from 767 habitants to almost 600.000 within the years 1820-1914⁶. The city's situation "teemed with dynamic and controversial phenomena – in a much different way than in Warsaw or Cracow. The basic urban and industrial structure of Łódź was developed by a single industrialization-urbanization action between 1820-1928"⁷. In regard to the history of Łódź I cite one theorist – Antoni Szram. This reference is by no means accidental: it was he himself who first acclaimed the downtown area of Łódź as an "architectural masterpiece"⁸. "The urban design of Łódź" – he claimed – "is the most excellent local example of new planning an industrial centre", which was "rare, even on a European scale"⁹. Finally Szram acclaimed Łódź as "the most precious example of urban design during the Classicism of the Congress of Poland period"¹⁰. It is precisely at the beginning of the seventies when he spread widely his ideas concerning the peculiarity of this industrial city. In a time of considering Łódź to be a damned city, horrendous due to pollution and grayness, filled with factory chimneys and exhausted proletarian people, Szram's voice seemed utterly opposite to the general opinion.

Moreover, as a city official responsible for culture he had an opportunity to influence and affect many artists with his fascination towards the city and its rich opportunities. Indeed, some of the above mentioned artists admit his support, openness and understanding towards their artistic projects¹¹. Probably thanks to Szram, Łódź was characterized by a kind of hospitality for new art and its presence in the city. Let me just quote one of the most important Łódź neo-avant-garde artists, Józef Robakowski, who while describing his large exhibition *Lochy Manhattanu [Dungeons of Manhattan]*, admitted: "The Film Museum was the main organizer of Dungeons... and its director was Antoni Szram. A very interesting person, a conservator and an art historian, a nice man, thanks to whom the Museum of the City of Łódź and the Film Museum in Łódź were created. He helped us a lot at the time and thanks to him and funding from the Museum, the exhibition was organized"¹².

CITY ACTIONS

One of the most significant actions in the context of Łódź and neo-avant-garde art is by all means Ewa Partum's installation *The Legality of Space* from 1971. The work played with different contexts; apparently the issues of censorship, permanent surveillance and the totalitarian state were the most evident. Nevertheless, the local context of the space was crucial too. The installation was placed near the square that previously used to play a central position in the city – Plac Wolności (Liberty Square). An empty place remained, left after the demolishing of a tenement building and this contrasted strangely with the representative square. While describing how the idea appeared, Partum said she was often passing by the square and the place intrigued her. She had different ideas about how to use that space but finally she just managed to create *The Legality of Space* between 21 - 23 April 1971. She filled the empty space with different signs, sometimes contradictory and ridiculous, such as "everything forbidden" and "forbidden to forbid".

Partum noticed and elaborated on a phenomenon extremely relevant to the city of Łódź – the demolishing of the urban structure of Łódź. In the seventies and eighties the process of demolishing was part of the urban planning and 'modernization' of the city. Whole frontages of the characteristic tenement houses were erased, often without any specific plan to organize the empty space or further undertaking, as in the case of Liberty square. Moreover, the destruction process did not stop with the material aspects of the space. It went further leading on to institutional abuse, expressed in Partum's work by the signs of interdictions and commands. The pessimism of the work plays with two faces of the social problem – the question of space intermingles with the question of freedom and power.

Ten years later apparently something quite similar led a group of artists to another spectacular event. *The Unveiling of The Monument of The Tenement House* was an action made by young architects preoccupied by the process of destruction in the urban space of Łódź. Although the event is not necessarily considered

an artistic action, I decided to include this example due to its artistic circle. The event was organized by such artists as Włodzimierz Adamiak, Marek Janiak and Zbigniew Bińczyk who eventually played an important role in the artistic movement Kultura Zrzuty (The Pitch-in-Culture) in the eighties. The action intended to be a kind of appeal to the people and city officials, exposing the problem of losing the original value of the city.

Just after Martial Law was abolished in 1983, a group of neo-avant-garde artists connected to the Kultura Zrzuty movement organized *An Artistic Pelegrination: LONG LIVE ART!*¹³ between 2 - 4 September. Wojciech Ciesielski, an art historian recalls this event as "particularly important" due to "the on-going discussion concerning art and the artistic attitudes of the eighties in Poland"¹⁴. Janusz Zagrodzki claims the event was the first big manifestation of so-called private art¹⁵. *Pelegrination* consisted of various spontaneous events such as exhibitions, concerts, film screenings, performances and talks in different places in Łódź. The artists moved between the particular locations carrying a banner with the words "Long live art!" on it. Apart of being a pitch for different art practices, the event itself became a kind of artistic action. In this respect the process of walking around the city from one location to another, became a collective act of mapping the city's artistic locations. The process of wandering through the city became as well important as the artistic actions happening in-between were using the city's structure as a space for art.

Involving the structure of the city within the art practice later became a feature of Andrzej Paruzel's artistic action. In the mid eighties he established the Biuro po/sztuce i kulturze [The Bureau of Guides To/After/Art and Culture] which was a sarcastic way to play with the institutionalization of culture. The idea behind the office project was principally concerned with the city space and research into its immateriality and hidden values. Paruzel in an archeological manner paid attention to the small details of the city, exposing traces of the hidden or no more existing layers of the city history, such as the ghetto, German, Jewish and Russian traditions. Special issues of art-zines were part of that action and became the only form of presentation. Although Paruzel's action was extremely innovative and original, it remained overlooked and it needs a wider elaboration.

Paruzel's another initiative was Hotel Sztuki [Hotel of Art]. It prompted many art actions in the city space, among them one extremely significant. In 1990 Paruzel invited Antoni Mikołajczyk to make an installation at Plac Wolności. It was almost the same place where twenty years earlier Partum had made her famous action. The installation is significantly entitled *Re-Construction*. Mikołajczyk in the accompanying text explains its urban context: "An empty space remained after a building was demolished at Wolności square. I filled the space with a 3-d architectural drawing of this building which existed no more, a building which previously lived its own life and had its own important place within the city landscape"¹⁶. By the use of lights the artist tried to reconstruct a part of the city that was strangely erased from the urban structure. The attention he paid to the buildings' history and its past presence at that place is significant and correlates with Paruzel's artistic investigations into the urban structure.

REGISTRATIONS

The output by Józef Robakowski is by all means the most representative example of neo-avant-garde art as a repository of images of Łódź. This artist devoted much of his activity to emphasizing both the unique artistic tradition of Łódź and the city's peculiar character. His opus magnum *From My Window* is a longue durée shot from Robakowski's window, that registered the view for over two decades, between 1978-1999. In that work a substantial historic narration intermingles with the small stories of ordinary people and his own imagination expressed by a voice commentary. The camera directed from a window towards one of the main streets in Łódź called Główna [now Piłsudskiego avenue] registers the big events such as marches and police actions during Martial Law and small stories, such as ordinary people walking their dogs, parking their cars, taking. "The author, living in a block of flats at 19 Mickiewicza Street in Łódź, presents a simple story by filming over years what he could see outside his window" – describes an art historian – "everyday, seemingly banal situations are easily transformed into extraordinary and unique events along with their actors"¹⁷. The work presents not only the visual aspect of the city of that time but also its different social, economical and political contexts. Robakowski played with the coarse reality of late communism, involving humor and sarcasm together with utopian imagery. While working on *From my window* Robakowski used the view from his window to make several other works, such as *Cars, cars!* or *Closer – Farther* (both 1985), but he also registered the city outside his apartment.

Window from Poland (1986) is an extraordinary documentation of Piotrkowska Street at that time. The artist simply put his camera on a tripod and registered the vivid life of the main street in Łódź. As the title suggests, Robakowski saw in this banal and everyday view, something extraordinary and characteristic for Poland at that time. The fact that Łódź is taken as a synecdoche for Poland is quite significant too.

SPACE ANALYZIS

In the field of media-art one can find a huge repository of images of Łódź, which is probably incomparable to any other Polish city. This is due to the presence of Łódź Film School, where in the seventies a circle of experimentalist artists, filmmakers and photographers were consolidated. In the sixties Dłubak started to teach in the Film School and in 1971 the group Warsztat Formy Filmowej was established drawing young artists interested in new media. The court and surroundings of the Film School became a playground for the experimenting artists (see: Paruzel, Bruszewski). Rybczyński started his famous animations and most of them are situated in the urban context of Łódź, e.g. *Oh, I can't stop* (1976), *Square* (1972).

There are a few artworks that draw exceptional attention in this respect. I mean the artworks that probably accidentally grabbed images of places and situations no longer existing. There are artworks mostly concerned with the purely formal aspects of the medium. The output of Antoni Mikołajczyk is a good example. Working mainly in the field of photography, he was elaborating on the question of light. Among many abstract compositions, one can find a composition of three photographs of the urban space using different light exposures (*Registration*, 1969/70). The idea behind the artwork most probably does not have anything to do with a particular urban space, but while looking at the picture deeply one can recognize the frontage of tenement houses along one of the main streets, which now does not exist (Mickiewicza Street). Andrzej Różycki paid much of his attention to the city's space. In his artistic practice he was concerned with the spiritual aspect of everyday reality. The city landscape in his art was used metaphorically to express nostalgic and melancholic feelings. At the same time he managed to document some peculiarities of the city, such as a glass-case typical for Łódź and omnipresent on the main streets of the time but now almost disappeared, or the space of different backyards, so typical for the urban structure of Łódź, with details which do not exist anymore.

Andrzej Kwietniewski did a work which directly dealt with such an aura of urban loss. In *Tango*, one of the main art-zines of the 80s, he presented a series of photographs that to a certain extent remain meaningless without their urban context. The fact that the documented address plates belong to the tenement houses demolished in the 80s shows the artist's attention for the urban changes and loss of its peculiarity. Quite a similar meaning is found in a photograph of the Łódź Kaliska artistic group, where in the background there appears the old railway station, suddenly demolished in 1982. One of the main Polish neo-dadaist group of artists from the late eighties by no means accidentally borrowed the name of the demolished building (Łódź Kaliska is the name of the railway station).

ANNEXING THE URBAN SPACE FOR ART PURPOSES

In 1981 the most important event of the Polish neo-avant-garde art movement took place in Łódź. The *Construction in Process* exhibition gathered together the most significant conceptual artists from all over the world. During one month the artists were given the possibility to prepare their installations, present their sculptures, show their performances, happenings and events all around the city. *Construction in Process* was by far the most important international art event in Poland under communism. Over fifty artists from all around the world representing different trends in art during that time came to Lodz¹⁸.

Thus, in a quite natural way, the documentation of their activities registered at the same time the urban context of Łódź. Other big events such as the second edition of *Construction in Process – Back in Łódź, Lochy Manhattanu* and many others, in a similar way contributed to both the history of art and the registration of the image of Łódź at that particular time. As I started with the list of artistic actions in Łódź by mentioning *Lochy Manhattanu*, I would like to conclude with the same example, by quoting

one of the observers and participants of that event. Janusz Zagrodzi regards *Lochy Manhattanu* “as a summary of Łódź, because I suspect that if the exhibition had taken place in a different environment, it would have been completely different (...). Lochy was more about this realm of media which could be clearly demonstrated through Łódź's experiences”¹⁹.

CONLUSIONS

Concluding my deliberations on a more abstract scale, I would like to make one more reference. What I have presented is just a series of possible examples of how art can be used outside of its most obvious disciplines such as art critique, art history and art theory. To what extent can art serve as a document within a historical or urban discourse? But isn't it a kind of abuse to use the art just as simple pieces of documentary? Can one move away from the aesthetic layer of the artwork, by paying attention to just a very banal and superficial layer of its visibility (what is on the picture, where and when it was done, does the place exist nowadays, how did it change?). Thus, does the art belong to some particular discourse, or it can be shared by such disciplines as for example, the above-analyzed history of urban structure? Putting the question differently, does the art give some extra information about the urban structure, other than that of normal non-artistic documents? My analysis is aimed at treating neo-avant-garde art not only as a vehicle of visual information but also as an example of how an artistic phenomenon can correlate with the peculiar context of its urban and historical milieu. How history can be told through the means of art history. A history where the documents are being replaced by artworks. If one would write such a history of Polish cities documented by neo-avant-garde artworks, Łódź would probably be best described.

ENDNOTS

¹ Józef Robakowski, „Rozmowa Hansa-Ulricha Obrista z Józefem Robakowskim = Hans-Ulrich Obrist interviewing Józef Robakowski,” in *Józef Robakowski. Moje własne kino* (Warszawa: CSW Zamek Ujazdowski, 2012), 19. Exh. cat.

² Ryszard Stanisławski, *Grupa „a.r.” : 40-lecie Międzynarodowej Kolekcji Sztuki Nowoczesnej w Łodzi* (Łódź: Muzeum Sztuki, 1971), 5. Exh. cat.

³ Józef Robakowski, „Łodz Progressive Art Movement,” in *Żywa Galeria*, ed. Józef Robakowski (Łódź: Łódzki Dom – Kultury Galeria FF, 2000), 16. Indeed, in 1966 Ryszard Stanisławski was elected new director of Muzeum Sztuki, simultaneously Zbigniew Dłubak starts to teach at the Łódź Film School, in 1967 Józef Robakowski moved to Łódź, and subsequently drew other artists of artistic group Zero-61, forming in 1970 Warsztat Formy Filmowej; around 1970 such artists as Ewa Partum, Paweł Kwiek, Ryszard Waśko, Zbigniew Warpechowski moved to Łódź.

⁴ Janusz Zagrodzki, “About a Place for Art. Piotr Lisowski in conversation with Janusz Zagrodzki,” in *War State*, ed. by Piotr Lisowski (Toruń: CSW Znaki Czasu, 2012), 17. Exh. cat.

⁵ Piotr Lisowski, „War State. Expanding the Battlefield,” in *War State*, ed.s by Piotr Lisowski (Toruń: CSW Znaki Czasu, 2012), 74. Exh. cat.

⁶ Antoni Szram, *Architektura Łodzi przemysłowej* = *The Architecture of Industrial Łódź* (Warszawa: Krajowa Agencja Wydawnicza, 1975), 26.

⁷ Ibidem, 26.

⁸ Ibidem, 33.

⁹ Ibidem, 38.

¹⁰ Ibidem.

¹¹ In my own personal interviews with artists working in Łódź, Antoni Szram has been often mentioned as a kind of ‘good spirit’ of different Łódź artistic circles, just to mention a few of them: Ewa Partum, Andrzej Paruzel, Józef Robakowski, Andrzej Różycki.

¹² Józef Robakowski, “The post-modern garage. Piotr Lisowski’s interview with Józef Robakowski,” in *War State*, ed. by Piotr Lisowski (Toruń: CSW Znaki Czasu, 2012), 38. Exh. cat.

¹³ Wojciech Ciesielski, “Peregrination and Kołęda In Polish Art,” in *War State*, ed. by Piotr Lisowski (Toruń: CSW Znaki Czasu, 2012), 117. Exh. cat. Subsequent details regarding the event I present according to this article.

¹⁴ Ibidem, 117.

¹⁵ Janusz Zagrodzki, *Sztuka w poszukiwaniu miejsca* (Koszalin: Galeria na Plebani, 1988), n. p. After Ciesielski, „Peregrination...”, 118.

¹⁶ Antoni Mikołajczyk, statement accompanying the exhibition (Puste miejsce po rozebrany budynku przy Pl. Wolności wypełniam przestrzennym rysunkiem architektonicznym nieistniejącego już domu, który tutaj niegdyś żył własnym życiem, posiadał swoje ważne miejsce w pejzażu miasta).

¹⁷ Maciej Cholewiński, note to *From my window*, in *Correspondences. Modern Art And Universalism*, ed. by Jarosław Lubiak and Małgorzata Ludwisiak (Łódź: Muzeum Sztuki, 2012), 708. Exh. cat.

¹⁸ Janusz Głowacki, *Muzeum Konstrukcji w Procesie* (Łódź: Fundacja Edukacji Wizualnej, 2006), n. p.

¹⁹ Zagrodzki, „About a Place...,” 22.

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JULIA SOWIŃSKA - HEIM

THE URBAN SPACE IN ŁÓDŹ AS AN ARCHIVE. MATERIAL TRACES OF CONSTRUCTION IN PROCESS

At the end of October and at the beginning of November 1981 (26.10 – 15.11.1981) Łódź hosted the first *Construction in Process*. Although it was held outside the official structures and circle of art institutions, it became an important event and an independent artistic undertaking on the international scale. At that time eminent artists connected with the avant-garde artistic trends of the day then visited Łódź. In total, the catalogue mentioned over fifty-four names of such famous artists as Sol LeWitt, Richard Serra, Richard Nonas, Dennis Oppenheim or David Rabinowitch¹. In most cases, their works had not been presented in Poland and the first opportunity to show them arose with the exhibition *Construction in Process*.

According to general assumptions of the originator, Ryszard Waśko, *Construction in Process* was meant to present the Polish audience with outstanding artists from the post-constructivist trend². In the invitation from April 1980, the exhibition was given a subtitle specifying its concept: *Construction in Process – Art of the 70s*³. The main event, namely the international exhibition, was accompanied by an exhibition titled Falochron (Breakwater), which featured Polish art of the 70s – 80s, as well as many other undertakings and various types of activities such as: a conference, a performance, video shows, discussions, concerts and others⁴. Invitations to the exhibition, signed by Ryszard Waśko, were printed on the „letterhead paper” of a quasi-institution illegally created by him called the Archives of Contemporary Thought, invented for the need of the hour and to authenticate in the eyes of artists and curators from “the West” activities undertaken⁵.

The exhibition was mainly housed on the production floor of the Budrem factory at 37 PKWN Street (currently Dowborczyków Street). It was an extraordinary space, which diverged significantly from museum interiors. As the information leaflet read: the premises of an old factory gave the general impression of abandonment and a kind of natural shabbiness⁶. It is worth emphasizing that in those days it was a pioneering idea to use a factory building for the purposes of an exhibition⁷. In this extraordinary *entourage*, artists who came to Łódź from all around the world carried out their projects. Most of the works were created especially “for Łódź”; many of them were installed or simply created directly on the spot in relation to the existing context. Since Construction in Process was a complex event going beyond the frames of an “exhibition”, it was largely based on improvisation and spontaneous activities⁸. According to Ryszard Waśko, “It was sort of an exhibition developing in time”⁹. Visitors were not only able to see the works, but also to participate (passively or actively) in the process of “coming to life”. What was very important was the idea of cooperation, linking the artistic and non-artistic community. From the beginning, *Construction in Process* was designed as an artistic and social event¹⁰. Those involved included people from artistic circles as well as “students, journalists, critics, labourers, passers-by,

audience, poets (...), writers, bar owners (...), researchers, local government activists and government officials and a multitude of volunteers coming from the local community”¹¹. As Ryszard Waśko recollects: “It was truly fantastic. Almost the whole city got engaged in the organization of CONSTRUCTION IN PROCESS and sometimes it seemed that Łódź lived and breathed the exhibition, modern art”¹².

Striving to preserve independence unhindered by official institutions and communist authorities and at the same time, requiring the support of an outside organization, the organizer asked the Łódź branch of the trade union Solidarity to take the exhibition under its wing and help in the undertaking. Thus, a wider social and political context of opposition against the regime’s dictatorship was additionally supported. At the opening of the exhibition, the head of Łódź Solidarity emphasized that „In our times it is particularly important for art not to be locked behind museum walls but to be close to man, informing his world view, his way of thinking”¹³. As the curators of the exhibition Construction in Process 1981 – The Community that Came? organized in 2011 in Łódź Art Museum, Aleksandra Jach and Anna Saciuk - Gąsowska remarked, such an undertaking as Construction in Process “was possible because of its ephemeral and from today’s perspective, unobvious yet enticing (...), alliance: artists with workers and “Solidarity” activists with local government, who agreed to collaborate for the common goal”¹⁴.

It might have been due to the atmosphere of artistic community and social solidarity that numerous artists decided to hand over their works as gifts to the citizens of Łódź. The collection was given to the Independent and Self-governing Trade Union Solidarity as “a symbolic gesture, a sign of tribute to this social movement”¹⁵. In the 80’s the collection was placed as a deposit in Łódź Art Museum and in 2005 it became the property of the museum.

At the beginning, the exhibition was scheduled to last until April 1982. It was also meant to be a “touring” exhibition and to be shown in different Polish cities: in Wrocław, Gdańsk, Warsaw, Lublin and Bydgoszcz. Yet, implementation of this plan proved impossible, mainly because of the political situation and introduction of martial law in December 1981¹⁶. However, *Construction in Process* was later continued. An international artistic event under the same title was organized in the following years: 1985 in Munich, 1995 in Israel, 1998 in Melbourne and in 2000 in Bydgoszcz. *Construction in Process* also came back to Łódź twice: in 1990 and in 1993.

Writing about the first edition of *Construction in Process*, Anda Rottenberg bitterly noted that as it was impossible for the works created in Łódź by world-famous artists to be left in the spaces where they had been made, there was a risk that the “living art of daily life would turn into a museum exhibit”¹⁷, without the context of the original place and now in the museum interior.

The sparse material traces of activities associated with *Construction in Process* which have directly survived in Łódź public space, seem all the more precious. Those created in the urban space are particularly interesting. Artistic interventions and activities frequently took place outside the buildings. Traces that have remained enrich the public space and at the same time, testify to the events from the past. Therefore, Łódź can be perceived as a sort of archive of pieces of art and cultural artefacts in the public space. The “archival collection” is made up of works created during the following Łódź editions of *Construction in Process*.

One unusual piece of evidence of the ideas associated with Construction in Process is a spatial composition by Henryk Stażewski, placed in the immediate vicinity of the Strzemiński Academy of Fine Arts Łódź (which was then named the State School of Art). Although it was only unveiled on 27 October 1982, which was a year after the exhibition, Ryszard Waśko emphasized that the idea of placing the sculpture in Łódź had arisen in 1981 during the preparations for Construction in Process. In order to stress the relationship with the Polish avant-garde tradition, Waśko asked Henryk Stażewski, a former member of the famous Łódź avant-garde group a.r. (that existed from 1929-1936) to consent to placing one of his works in the public space. He agreed to enlarge one model of a spatial composition from the collection in the Łódź Art Museum. The exhibition agenda included an announcement for unveiling the sculpture by Henryk Stażewski near the State School of Art in Łódź scheduled for the middle of November¹⁸. Unfortunately, due to a problem with obtaining appropriate material, which was typical for the reality of the Polish People’s Republic, the Transformer and Traction Apparatus Factory ELTA failed to produce the sculpture on time¹⁹. Interestingly, ELTA manufactured this untypical 7-metre construction later than expected, yet at no charge.

Eighty-year-old Henryk Stażewski, bound up with the pre-war avant-garde, was regarded as an important figure by the organizers of *Construction in Process*. A significant reference point was a non-institutionalized initiative undertaken by the artist from the a.r. group, who thanks to personal contacts, managed to build up an international collection of modern art and then, in the form of a deposit made to Łódź Art Museum in 1931, to show it to the wider public in Łódź²⁰. As in the interwar period, an international network based on cooperation by contemporary artists was established in 1981, despite numerous difficulties and right before the announcement of martial law. Also important were references



Tom Bills, *Lodz Poland*, 1990, fot. Julia Sowińska - Heim.



Gene Flores, *Bells sculpture for Lodz / Gathering*, 1991, fot. Julia Sowińska - Heim.



Spatial composition by Henryk Stażewski, fot. Julia Sowińska - Heim.



Ilan Averbuch, *Strongman*, 1990, fot. Julia Sowińska - Heim.

to the social context of the artistic activities. As Anda Rottenberg wrote in 1984 “The speciality of Łódź is the cooperation between artist and society, which is also an intentional reference to Strzemiński’s program from 1934”²¹.

After the political transformation in 1989 and the first free election in post-war Poland, which was won by “Solidarity”, an idea and opportunity arose to organize *Construction in Process* again. In 1989 the International Artists’ Museum, an unconventional “museum without frontiers” based on a network of contacts and the shared activities of artists from different parts of the world, was opened. The so-called Solidarity collection, together with the works handed over after the new Łódź edition of *Construction in Process* was going to become a fundamental part of the museum’s collection²². The new museum, “an art centre”, was going to have its seat in a former factory on PKWN Street, which meant reviving an unrealized idea from 1981²³.

An important idea associated with the undertaking *Construction in Process – Back in Lodz* from 1990 was to encompass the whole city area with artistic activities. As it was emphasized in the project published by the Construction in Process Association²⁴: CONSTRUCTION IN PROCESS – Back in Lodz was not a kind of museum space, an academy, a workshop or an educational workplace, but rather an open and living space created for artistic activities. It should be a bustling “workplace”, the area of an unending process of creation and the development of ideas within a changing social context. That is why already existing “pieces of art” could not be presented during this event²⁵. Angelika Stepken described these events as: “the largest art-happening in any Eastern European nation in the post-war era”²⁶. One condition for participating in *Construction in process – Back in Lodz* was leaving created objects and designs where they were made at least until the end of the exhibition²⁷. Some of them remained in the urban space for longer.

This is what happened with a sculpture by Tom Bills titled *Lodz Poland*²⁸. It was made in the area near the Łódź Academy of Fine Arts, in the vicinity of the spatial composition by Henryk Stażewski. Tom Bills is a well-known American artist, a professor from Yale University. He took part in a few editions of *Construction in Process*, both in Munich (1985) and in Melbourne (1998) as well as in Bydgoszcz (2000). He also participated in both Łódź *Construction in Process* events that were held in the 90’s.

His sculpture for Łódź from 1990 is a grey concrete monolith, almost 5 metres high and over three metres wide²⁹. It is a symmetrical abstract form, whose important elements are both smooth concrete surfaces and “empty” cut out geometrical forms. What is important is the idea of exerting influence by both form and space. Under the influence of a similar concept, Tom Bills has made a sculpture titled *Boat House* for the William Paterson University of New Jersey, which owns a significant collection of public sculptures. David Shapiro has described Tom Bills’ sculptures as follows: “Tom Bills’ pieces are excruciatingly economic. A simple symmetry reigns, but everything counts and is significant: the thickness of the piece, the little bits of negative space that become enormous, the monumentalism and lack of mere business, and the implication that something of immense gravity has to be confronted in the everyday. (...) Here, everything is laid bare, and yet there is an uncontrollable grace in these large and unhurried forms. This is abstract sculpture satisfying in its dignity”³⁰. Tom Bills’ sculpture is one of the few material traces of *Construction in Process* that have remained in the place of creation until today. Yet, every now and then it “interacts with the surroundings” and undergoes a temporary metamorphoses, being covered in different colours. At the moment, the largest surface is covered in peeling red paint, under which there are white patches of a bottom layer.

As part of activities undertaken during *Construction in Process*, works were created in many parts of Łódź of different character. As Sue Cramer emphasized, it is hard to imagine an international exhibition which would be comparable to this event, no matter where it would take place: in the United States, Europe or Australia with possible access to so many places in the city³¹. Interestingly, artists were allowed into Łódź museums whose profile was not associated with avant-garde art. For instance, over ten works were created in the Museum of History of the City of Lodz (currently the Museum of the City of Lodz). Some of them were made in the garden adjacent to the former palace of Izrael Poznański. Nowadays we can still see there a sculpture by Ilan Averbuch, who was born in Israel and has been working mainly in the USA. He is an author of numerous monumental sculptures placed in the public space in different parts of the world, such as Tel Aviv, Calcutta, Berlin and in many American cities like Portland, Denver, New York or Phoenix. As Averbuch emphasizes: “I work a lot on the space, in the physical and the spiritual sense and of course, also in the personal sense, between the cultures. The memories I plant in my work are memories from here together with the process they have undergone there”³². What is important for him is the context of the place and reference to the society for whom the work is created. His Łódź sculpture is titled *Strongmen*. It is made of wood, one of the materials willingly used by the artist, apart from stone, glass and metal. Averbuch also frequently uses recycled materials. The *Strongmen* sculpture perfectly matches the greenery of the garden and although it speaks a totally different language than the

eclectic facades of the palace, it holds a peaceful dialogue with the surroundings. As the artist declares, his sculptures constitute: “a dialogue between the intimate and the monumental. They are monumental, but with a question mark”³³.

The sculpture is a part of so-called Sculpture Avenue³⁴ established in the palace garden of Izrael Poznański and being an outdoor exhibition of various pieces of sculpture. It is also where a sculpture created during *Construction in Process* in 1991 by Tadashi Hashimoto could be seen for a long time. Despite efforts by employees of the Museum of the City of Lodz, in 2009 the sculpture became damaged under the influence of long-term exposure to atmospheric conditions. Hashimoto is a Japanese artist eagerly working in the public space. He has attached importance to the energy of a place/ radiating from a place. What is considerably significant about *One and Many*³⁵ which was made for Łódź, is not only the form, but also its interaction with the sunlight. The sculpture’s shadow gave it a new dimension going beyond three-dimensional physicality. The artist used mainly wood, which is one of his favourite materials, apart from steel and engineered stone. Hashimoto’s sculptures, which are based on geometrical forms, consider and combine the issues of space, light, movement and gravity. The sculpture made for Łódź had the form of an open circle placed vertically. It was the form that the author frequently used at the early stage of his artistic work. Hashimoto wrote about his Łódź sculpture: “The reading of these works foretold both change and harmony. The sculpture, *One and Many* once sited at the Museum of History in Lodz, quietly appeared as a hopeful metaphor. For many, it had the effect of celebrating the act of people gathering and starting anew in the Poland of 1990”³⁶. Unfortunately, despite efforts made by Museum’s employees, the wooden sculpture was destroyed. Then, under the influence of external factors, its reconstruction also fell into ruin.

Something different happened to the bas-relief sculptures made and given to Łódź by an outstanding Canadian artist, David Rabinowitch. Rabinowitch is a famous and respected artist and his works are stored, among others, in the Museum of Modern Art in New York. In 1990 he created his works in the stylish staircase of the Museum of the City of Lodz. The consent to placing such huge pieces by the avant-garde author in the historic building required great courage and openness. In his statements, David Rabinowitch emphasized that creating a permanent piece of art in a historic space is a unique event, which could have taken place nowhere but in Łódź³⁷. Two minimalist compositions of a large format with concentrically composed circles covering neighbouring walls, entered into an interesting dialogue between modern art and the past of 19th-century Łódź. According to the idea, the work was going to be a “sculpture – monument”, a kind of a tribute to the society of Łódź, which had overcome communism and whose engagement had resulted in the organization of an international exhibition of modern art in 1981. The context of a historically important place was significant. Here the works were accessible to the audience for twenty-three years. In 2013, the authorities from the Museum of the City of Lodz decided to cover the Rabinowitch’s works with wooden panelling and restore the place to its original, historic character. However, they were not destroyed, just fully hidden from the sight of the visitors. The official web page of the Museum reads, “In historic buildings the past and present often overlap. The Museum of the City of Łódź also contains traces of events that have happened here, shaped the identity of the place and become an inseparable part. A particular significance should be attributed to the international exhibition of an unusual character, *Construction in Process*”³⁸. Thus, a problem of the ambivalent attitude to and the look of the material traces of the event, seem evident.

Another artist whose activities undertaken within *Construction in Process* from 1990 have left a trace in Łódź was an American, Peter Downsborough. One of his works was created in front of the Museum of Cinematography in Łódź, while another one, in the form of a mural, appeared on the building at 105 Kilińskiego Street. Unfortunately, both of them have undergone complete destruction, which totally deformed the initial effect. The remains of the structure made from metal poles on Victory Square is nowadays used by the museum’s employees as a poster frame and the mural “is disappearing” not so much under the influence of human activity, but more under the influence of time. Originally, the end wall of the building was painted white and against this background Peter Downsborough placed his characteristic black elements of letters creating single words: stały [stable], jak [how], tak [yes] etc. as well as horizontal and vertical lines. As time went by, the white paint peeled off from the building, uncovering elements of the former advertisement of a carpet factory, Dywilan, which was hidden underneath. Nowadays, in the collage made by layers from various periods and modern billboards, only some remains of the words and lines can be found. The work is one of Peter Downsborough’s artistic activities confronting the problem of placement in a space and its activation. Notices introduced into them do not follow programmed sequences, but create various verbal and spatial contexts. Thanks to a strongly reduced means, the artist obtains multi-dimensional space.

The fate of the sculpture known in Łódź as *Bells sculpture for Lodz*³⁹, made by American artist Gene Flores, also hangs in the balance. Interestingly, the sculpture bears the totally different name,



Richard Nons, *Milczący Sojusznik*, 1991, fot. Julia Sowińska - Heim.



Buky Schwartz, *Sculpting the Spectator*, 1993, fot. Julia Sowińska - Heim.



Emilie Benes - Brzeziński, *Maple Cascade*, 1993, Archive photograph by Lech Czołnowski, source: >>Muzeum Artystów<< międzynarodowa prowizoryczna wspólnota artystyczna Łódź, Łódź 1996.



Emilie Benes - Brzeziński, *Maple Cascade*, 1993, Archive photograph by Lech Czołnowski, source: >>Muzeum Artystów<< międzynarodowa prowizoryczna wspólnota artystyczna Łódź, Łódź 1996.

Gathering, on the artist's web page⁴⁰, which is not without significance for its reception. Flores recollects the process of creating the work. Elements of what he calls a "kinetic sculpture" were produced in one of the post-communist factories, which was a place "with obsolete tools but with a spirit big enough for this monumental sculpture"⁴¹. This monumental steel work (20 x 24 x 12 feet) was completed in 1991 and placed at the crossroads of Kościuszko and Piłsudski Streets.

In 2007 the fate of Gene Flores' sculpture went up in the air, when a decision was made to build the Hilton Hotel in its immediate vicinity. Although construction works have not been initiated, certain preparatory actions have been taken and for this purpose the area has been secured with a fence. Unfortunately, it appeared that the fence was meant to pass through the middle of the sculpture, dividing it in two. The problem arose as a result of a decision by the district authorities to sell the plot on which the sculpture was partially placed. There has been a concept to make the investor move the work to a different place, e.g. near EC1⁴². Yet, so far the sculpture has remained in its original location.

The fate of the sculpture made by a New York artist, Richard Nonas, for *Construction in Process - Back in Lodz* was different. Nonas was also a very active and involved participant of *Construction in Process* in 1981. During the 1990 edition he made a massive steel sculpture titled *Silent Sharer*, which in February 1991 was installed in Arthur Rubinstein Passage, within immediate vicinity to the most elegant street of the city, Piotrkowska.

In the 90's, an "attack" on *Silent Sharer* evoked wide interest in Łódź. Several dozen pieces of steel appeared too tempting for local scrap collectors, who moved the sculpture away and sold it to a scrapyard. The case ended up in a court hearing and Richard Nonas' work was returned to its original place. However, only a few people kept track of the fate of the sculpture and a story about an utterly destroyed work by an American artist has almost passed into legend⁴³.

Meanwhile, in 2006, *Silent Sharer* was moved to the Sculpture Park laid out in Manufaktura in the same year. A few other works created in the urban space after *Construction in Process* have also been moved there. According to a declaration by the contemporary Marketing and Promotion Manager of Manufaktura, a huge trade and entertainment centre established in the converted buildings of Izrael Poznański's former factory, the sculptures would be cared for and have the opportunity to "speak to a larger group of people". However, the initiative may raise doubts, first of all due to the fact that the pieces of art have been deprived of their original context, which is so important for many artists. One

of them is Richard Nonas, who always creates “in” and “for” a particular space⁴⁴. Nowadays, *Silent Sharer* is located in a space with a totally different character, between a carpark and the side elevation of a main retail building. The sculpture is regarded as one of the most eminent traces of artistic activities undertaken during *Construction in Process*⁴⁵, yet it has not even been provided with the smallest piece of information about its author, time of creation, etc. It remains completely anonymous in the commercial space.

The Sculpture Park is also where the work by Buky Schwartz *Sculpting the Spectator*⁴⁶ resides. It was created during *Construction in Process – my home is your home*, organized in Łódź in 1993. The title of that edition directly referred both to hospitality and warm reception and in a wider sense, to the opening of borders and integration across divisions⁴⁷. The event was attended by 140 artists from 40 countries⁴⁸. The work by Buky Schwartz took the form of an installation placed in six spots in Łódź⁴⁹. Two parts: one from Pilsudski Street, placed in front of the Marshal Office, and the second from Piotrkowska Street, have also been moved to the premises of Manufaktura. They are slightly better displayed than the artistic work by Richard Nonas, since they have been given more space within the “market” of Manufaktura, near the representative historic gate, which used to lead to Izrael Poznański’s factory. Buky Schwartz, who died in 2009, was born in Israel but lived firstly in Great Britain and then in the USA. He created a lot of videoconstructions, installations and sculptures, which activated the audience. The installation for Łódź made of raw steel also provokes the audience to interact with it. At the top of some stairs there is a small plinth and a board with a handwritten notice: THE OBSERVER IS A SCULPTURE FACING ANOTHER PERSON. Buky Schwartz’s works are stored in many renowned museums and galleries, such as the Guggenheim Museum and the Whitney Museum in New York and the Smithsonian American Art Museum in Washington.

On the premises of Manufaktura, right next to the work by Richard Nonas, there resides an installation by Emilie Benes-Brzeziński. Yet, it was not created during *Construction in Process – my home is your home*, but was made by the artist on the premises of Łódź Manufaktura in 2006 as a part of the Łódź Biennale. The sculpture made during *Construction in Process* titled *Maple Cascade*⁵⁰, was placed in the park near Grohman’s Palace. It was then moved to a villa at 14 Tylna Street, belonging previously to the family of the Łódź factory owner, Grohman, which housed the Artists’ Museum from 1991. When the user changed, the sculpture was destroyed. The work that is currently placed on the premises of Manufaktura gives some idea about the sculpture from 1993, since both of them are an inherent part of a series of work consisting of wooden elements processed in a way that is typical of the artist. The form correlates with the space and the wood is marked with sharp tools, making cuts – scars. They are a trace of a peculiar dialogue between nature and the creator. The material that Emilie Benes-Brzeziński mainly uses in her works is wood, often processed with chain saws, a chisel or sometimes with an axe. As she emphasizes: “As I carve the trunk, I retain the essential outline and gesture of the tree, uncovering within its form a symbol of its history. The final iconic shapes enshrine this existential cycle and act as metaphors of human experience as well”⁵¹. The artist’s sculptures can be found in the public space of numerous cities across the world. Their prestige and recognition were confirmed when the work from 1998, *White Oak Verticals* (belonging to the same cycle of sculptures as the Łódź work) was awarded the First Prize at the 2003 Florence Biennale. Unfortunately, the Łódź work from 1993 was destroyed, while the one that can be found on the premises of Manufaktura has been placed in quite an inconvenient and non-representative spot in direct vicinity of the carpark. Right next to the sculpture there are concrete posts to protect it from being run over by cars.

It is worth mentioning that Emilie Berens-Brzeziński is a niece of the former Czechoslovakian president, Edwarda Benesz, and a wife of Zbigniew Brzeziński, an adviser to President Jim Carter for the United States national security.

A significant trace of *Construction in Process* from 1993 is an artistic work by Sol LeWitt. It was raised in the garden adjacent to the villa at 14 Tylna Street as a gift to the Artists’ Museum. It has been slightly luckier and has remained in the place where it was created until these days.

Sol LeWitt, a world-famous American conceptual artist was associated *with Construction in Process* from the very beginning. During the first edition in 1981, he created a composition consisting of six white geometrical figures made of chalk against a black background, on the wall of a former factory in PKWN Street. The number of figures corresponded with the number of Polish cities that were originally going to host *Construction in Process*. In 1990, an important act during *Construction in Process - Back in Lodz* was the reconstruction of this minimalist composition and thereby a return to the factory space in PKWN Street. This constituted a reference to significant artistic events from nine years earlier and provided an artistic and symbolic connection between the times of Solidarity and the post-communist era. Interestingly, the work was this time created in the operating factory hall.

Earlier the organizers of *Construction in Process* had tried hard to turn the factory in PKWN

Street, having been a silent witness to past events, into the seat of the Artists’ Museum⁵². However, they were not successful and after a few address changes the Museum had settled down in a building at 14 Tylna Street. This is where Sol LeWitt’s work was created in 1993. The artist created a white brick structure for the new place. This artistic work is an inherent part of one trend that is characteristic of the artist, within which he created geometric structures in the form of a pyramid made of geometric progressions.

In the interview given by Sol LeWitt to *Bom Magazine*, the artist emphasized that he consciously refrains from calling his three-dimensional works “sculptures”, but calls them structures, due to his way of thinking resulting more from the history of architecture than from sculpture⁵³. Fortunately, the work in Łódź by Sol LeWitt has not been destroyed, but it is not easy to see it, since at the moment the villa at 14 Tylna Street houses the Łódź District Chamber of Legal Advisors.

As shown by the fate of the majority, the few works connected with the following editions of *Construction in Process* which have survived in the urban space, this “external” archive of international artists’ achievements, are still exposed to destruction and oblivion. The archive is also dispersed and hidden in different corners of Łódź public space. However, according to the organizers’ assumptions, the artistic activities undertaken as part of *Construction in Process* related to the particular context of a place or time. They “were frequently improvised only for the moment” and were in the character of fleeting and temporary activities. There was no “overriding goal to create an object which would be commonly perceived as an exhibition piece of art; what is important here is the process of being – an artist’s existence in a particular environment”⁵⁴. Despite the assumed transitory quality of most of the artistic activities undertaken, the works that have remained should be properly cared for and their significance and context in which they were created should be remembered. These are material traces of important events from the past that should not be forgotten.

To sum up, we may quote the words of Richard Nonas:

“... 1981? It’s not so much 1981 that I want to talk about, I wanna talk to you about another world, a completely different world – a world in which art had a meaning that had nothing to do with what art has for us, here – now. A place where art really was important – where it really made a difference – where it really defined with how people dealt with all the difficulties of their lives. It had nothing to do with career, it had nothing to do with individual people’s lives, it had nothing to do with galleries and other artists. It had to do with how to figure out how to live in the world, that was impossible to live in. And that’s what this show was about. That’s what CONSTRUCTION IN PROCESS is about. And all of that is being forgotten! And it’s our challenge to try to maintain that memory. Everything changes. Everything changes. But some changes maintain a memory, and other changes don’t maintain a memory. And it’s our choice, whether we chose to remember – what the beginning of this event – this, this series of events, means”⁵⁵.

ENDNOTS

- ¹ *Construction in Process: Oct. 26 - Nov. 15, 1981, 37 PKWN Street, Lodz, Poland* (New York: Thousand Secretaries Press, 1982), accessed 02.02.2015, <http://www.digitizing-ideas.hr/pl/wpis/21040>. Exh. Cat.
- ² Inspiration and a direct incentive to organize *Construction in Process* was the London exhibition *Pier + Ocean* from 1980. Ryszard Waśko mentioned that during the exhibition he had thought that he needed to organize an exhibition in Poland presenting the most important artistic achievements of the 70s, yet at the same time, presenting the very process of creating an object.
- ³ Ryszard Waśko, no article title, in *Wydawnictwo Grupy Twórczej: Litery*, „Konstrukcja w procesie,” no issue numer, październik (1981): 4.
- ⁴ „Construction in Process,” *Solidarność Ziemi Łódzkiej: wydanie specjalne*, no. 23 (1981): 1. Flayer.
- ⁵ „Muzeum Artystów”: międzynarodowa prowizoryczna wspólnota artystyczna, Łódź. *The Artists’ Museum: international provisional artist`s community, Łódź*, ed. Komitet Wykonawczy Muzeum Artystów (Łódź: Muzeum Artystów, 1996), 15.
- ⁶ An interview with Ryszard Waśko, the main curator of the exhibition, in: *Solidarność Ziemi Łódzkiej...*, 23 (1981): 1.
- ⁷ Joanna Szupińska-Myers points at the exhibition of Robert Morris *9 at Castelli* from 1968 as an earlier example. Joanna Szupińska - Myers, “From Kunsthale to Factory,” in *Konstrukcja w procesie 1981 - wspólnota, która nadeszła? Construction in process 1981 - the community that came?* eds. Aleksandra Jach, Anna Saciuk - Gąsowska (Łódź: Muzeum Sztuki, 2012), 143.
- ⁸ It is well illustrated in Tak Imur’s recollections, in: *“Muzeum Artystów”...*, 48.
- ⁹ *“Muzeum Artystów”...*, 48. [translated by author].
- ¹⁰ *“Muzeum Artystów”...*, 7.
- ¹¹ Maciej Cholewiński, „Konstrukcja w procesie & Muzeum artystów,” *Sztuka i Dokumentacja*, no. 4 (2011): 101 – 102. [translated by author].
- ¹² *“Muzeum Artystów”...*, 22. [translated by author].
- ¹³ “Opening Statement at »Construction in Process« Andrzej Słowik Chairman of Lodz Solidarity, October 26, 1981,” in *Construction in Process, Oct. 26 - Nov. 15, 1981, 37 PKWN Street ...*, 13.
- ¹⁴ Aleksandra Jach, Anna Saciuk - Gąsowska, “Thirty Years Later,” in *Konstrukcja w procesie 1981 - wspólnota, która nadeszła?...*, 70.
- ¹⁵ *“Muzeum Artystów”...*, 70. [translated by author].
- ¹⁶ Ryszard Waśko, no article title, in *Konstrukcja w procesie...*
- ¹⁷ Anda Rottenberg, “Konstrukcja w procesie. 1981,” in Anda Rottenberg, *Prze-ciąg. Teksty o sztuce polskiej lat 80* (Warszawa: Fundacja Open Art Project, 2009), 209. [translated by author].
- ¹⁸ *Solidarność Ziemi Łódzkiej...*, 1.
- ¹⁹ *“Muzeum Artystów”...*, 9.
- ²⁰ *Solidarność Ziemi Łódzkiej...*, 2.
- ²¹ Anda Rottenberg, “Factory and environs,” *Cahier*, no. 2/3 (1984), in *“Muzeum Artystów”...*, 92. [translated by author].
- ²² Marek Koprowski, “Konstrukcja konfliktu,” *Odgłosy*, no. 51 (1989): 11.
- ²³ *“Muzeum Artystów”...*, 148.
- ²⁴ Formed in 1989.
- ²⁵ *“Muzeum Artystów”...*, 167. [translated by author].
- ²⁶ Angelika Stepken, “Letter from Lodz,” *Arts Magazine*, March (1991): 108.
- ²⁷ *“Muzeum Artystów”...*, 167.
- ²⁸ Such a title was given on the page devoted to the artist The Pollock-Krasner Foundation, accessed 03.02.2015, http://www.pkf-imagecollection.org/artist/Tom_Bills/works/8223/#!8223.
- ²⁹ As The Pollock-Krasner Foundation declares the precise sculpture’s dimensions are as follows: 16 x 10 x 4 feet, “Tom Bills,” accessed 20.02.2015, http://www.pkf-imagecollection.org/artist/Tom_Bills/works/8223/#!8223.
- ³⁰ David Shapiro, “Sculpture on Campus – Bills,” accessed 24.03.2014, <http://www.wpunj.edu/coac/gallery/sculpturecollection-bills.dot>.
- ³¹ Sue Cramer, “Report From Poland, Back to the Future,” *Art in America*, March (1991): 67.
- ³² The Open Museum Omer, “The Local and the Universal,” accessed 01.02.2015, http://www.omuseums.org/il/eng/mmosgc_1/llan_Averbuch's.
- ³³ The Open Museum Omer, “The Local and the Universal,” accessed 01.02.2015, http://www.omuseums.org/il/eng/mmosgc_1/llan_Averbuch's.
- ³⁴ So-called Sculpture Avenue in the Museum of the City of Lodz was officially opened only in 2000.
- ³⁵ This is the title given by the author on his official web page: <http://tadashi-hashimoto-sculpture.tumblr.com/large-scale%20sculpture>; while on the page of the Museum of the City of Lodz the work is titled *Sun*.

- ³⁶ Tadashi Hashimoto, “Sculpture,” accessed 23.02.2015, <http://tadashi-hashimoto-sculpture.tumblr.com/large-scale%20sculpture>.
- ³⁷ *“Muzeum Artystów”...*, 179-181.
- ³⁸ Marta Skłodowska, „Dawid Rabinowitch, *Bez tytułu*,” accessed 01.04.2014, <http://www.muzeum-lodz.pl/pl/zbiory/obiektygodnia/561-david-rabinowitch-bez-tytuu>.
- ³⁹ „Construction in Process III, 1990, Lodz, Poland,” accessed 10.02.2015, <http://www.wschodnia.pl/Konstrukcja/html/pictures3.htm>.; Aleksandra Hac, „Połowa słynnej łódzkiej rzeźby stoi na działce Hiltona,” *Gazeta Wyborcza - Łódź*, no. 94 (2010): 2; Aleksandra Hac, „Wielki ptak zamiast Hiltona,” *Gazeta Wyborcza - Łódź*, no. 185 (2010): 2.
- ⁴⁰ Flores - studio, accessed 05.02.2015, http://www.floresstudio.com/Pages/Gather/pub_gather.htm.
- ⁴¹ Flores - studio, accessed 05.02.2015, http://www.floresstudio.com/Pages/Gather/pub_gather.htm.
- ⁴² Aleksandra Hac, “Połowa słynnej...,” 2.
- ⁴³ Bianka Mikołajewska, “Arcydzieło zniszczenia,” *Polityka*, no. 28 (2001): 32-33.; Piotr Sarzyński, *Wrzask w przestrzeni. Dlaczego w Polsce jest tak brzydko* (Warszawa: Polityka Spółdzielnia Pracy, 2012), 74.
- ⁴⁴ *“Muzeum Artystów”...*, 243.
- ⁴⁵ *“Muzeum Artystów”...*, 268.
- ⁴⁶ Buky Schwartz, „Biography,” accessed 16.03.2015, <http://www.bukyschwartz.com/biography-2/>.
- ⁴⁷ *“Muzeum Artystów”...*, 470.
- ⁴⁸ „Construction in Process IV 1993, Lodz, Poland. My home is your home,” accessed 15.02.2015, <http://www.wschodnia.pl/Konstrukcja/html/pictures4.htm>.
- ⁴⁹ *Facing oneself* - such a title was given on the official web page. “Construction in Process IV 1993, Lodz, Poland. My home is your home,” accessed 14.02.2015, <http://www.wschodnia.pl/Konstrukcja/html/pictures4.htm>.
- ⁵⁰ Emilie Benes – Brzeziński, “Throw back Thursday to a 1993 piece, Maple Cascade,” accessed 20.02.2015, <http://www.thelureoftheforest.com/brzezinski-blog/>.
- ⁵¹ Emilie Benes – Brzeziński, no article title, accessed 20.02.2015, <http://brzezinski.book.art.pl/index.php/pl/8-emilie-benes-brzezinski>.
- ⁵² *“Muzeum Artystów”...*, 245.
- ⁵³ Saul Ostrow, “Sol LeWitt,” in *Bomb* 85 (Fall 2003), accessed 12.02.2015, <http://bombmagazine.org/article/2583/sol-lewitt>.
- ⁵⁴ *“Muzeum Artystów”...*, 238. [translated by author].
- ⁵⁵ “Introduction to Construction in Process,” accessed 11.02.2015, <http://www.wschodnia.pl/Konstrukcja/html/construction.htm>.

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MARTA OSTAJEWSKA

THE *FILLIN* PROJECT – ARTISTIC ACTIVITIES (SOUNDWALKS, PERFORMANCES, KNEES-UP’S, *FOOD FOR A STORY*) IN KSIĘŻY MŁYN POST-INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT IN ŁÓDŹ

Site-specific activities

The city is a place immersed in human activity. It is a total piece of art in which a „game with time and space finds its full dimension”¹. It is „not the accidental intersection of topography and biography in the light of chronology”². The city lives and breathes with human stories and it is soaked with memories. According to the object-oriented ontology and psychogeography it is not just a stage or scenography for our existence, it is an active partner whom we enter into a dialogue with every day. Artistic activities are a special type of such dialogue. Above all, the site-specific activities assume a real cooperation with the space. This is a kind of ‚relational art’ consisting of a delicate interaction with the place, playing on emotions and saturating the area with additional meanings.

One of the places in Łódź where you can find site-specific actions is Księży Młyn („Priest’s Mill”), the postindustrial district that inspires artists to create new, completely different artistic implementations. It is a place full of stories and emotions that is a living archive of the factory workers’ memories and industrial history of Łódź, but above all, the individual and moving human stories.

In the following text I will present some of the artistic activities that were carried out in Księży Młyn in 2013 and 2014, with special emphasis on the soundwalks Hard Shoulder – stories underfoot and the project *FILLin*. I will refer to the contemporary oral histories and archival memories of the inhabitants from the sixties and seventies of the 19th century, that were the starting point for creating these actions.

A Brief History of Księży Młyn

Księży Młyn in Łódź, called in German Pfaffendorf, is a unique enclave, a ‚city within a city’, the post-industrial district that over the years has been left alone and extremely neglected. It was established by Karol Scheibler on the site of a former mill village. In 1870 he bought the burned spinning mill from the previous owner and created a factory complex and settlements for workers. Księży Młyn consisted

of textile factories, villas, workers' houses and a fire station. There was a school, a hospital, workers' houses, a club (the community center) and a park. The estate was designed for skilled workers, foremen and their families. Its inhabitants knew one another, worked and spent their free time together. The flats at Księży Młyn contained belongings of luxury goods. The situation changed after the war, when the factory was taken over by the communist state. Some of the apartments were changed into the first type of communal flats. In the fast change of pace, this family safe district transformed into a deathly place full of evening brawling. The neighborhood trust created through previous years was brutally destroyed. Due to numerous omissions and deficiencies of funds, the estate and factories have been decaying for years. The revitalization began only in 2013. The City Hall renovated the apartments in Przedzalniana Street and allocated studios for artists there. In 2014 the overhaul of the estate started and it continues till today. In 2015 Księży Młyn was declared a historical monument.

Biblo Bagbins lives here and szajbleroki ³

Due to its history and aesthetics Księży Młyn has attracted artists, particularly photographers and filmmakers. In the beautiful though ruined factories, movies, music videos, or advertisements were filmed. Theatre plays, parties, fashion shows and commercial events have taken place there.

Księży Młyn has been attracting both artists and tourists. The brick houses are arranged in rows between which grow historic poplars. Kids run around the cobbled alleys, there are beautiful, slightly rusty pumps and pigeons fly above the rooftops to come back to the wire mesh dovecotes. Wild cats stroll around the bushy Cat Trail. There are still the remains of an old barrier across the old railway tracks along which in the past rode the factory train. The ruins of a huge spinning factory and warehouses can be seen with branches of young birch trees growing through the panes of shattered windows. Broken bottles and graffiti: „Franz Kafka for President” or „Biblo Bagbins lives here”. Washing drying on a line, neighbours playing cards, the atmosphere of interwar was mixed with modern banditry. Księży Młyn is a place where the greatest treasures are not historic buildings nor aging poplars nor even fantastic, crumbling factories and the aesthetics of bricks nibbled by time, but its people and their stories, the community created through generations. It is a timeless blend of small histories, full of layers and complementary strands. It is a showcase of textile Łódź which when deprived of the indigenous people, is just a pile of nicely cleaned bricks and elegant lanterns. Without *szajbleroki* Księży Młyn is an impersonal ‚museum’. Therefore as long as there is a bubbling of anger and the memories and passion of the old residents, I will be creating my projects here. I make them for the indigenous people and for all of those who were not lucky enough to meet Marysia, Wiesiek or Jurek and hear their fascinating stories. For those who wish to immerse themselves in the living atmosphere and history of Księży Młyn.

The city as a living archive

Dialogue with a place is one of the objectives of urban art. But before we start an intertextual game with space, it is worth exploring its primary characters and stories. One of the methods is to talk with the locals. Another method is just being in a phenomenological experience, tuning into the aura and atmosphere of space⁴. Yet another is to dig into the archives, dive in the history. All of these methods are mutually complementary. A place is never neutral. The assumption that it rises only when we enter is often an expression of arrogance. Just as we are curious about another person we should get to know the place in which we operate. One way may be attempting to explore the emotions and stories associated with it. By hearing the oral histories and reading the archives, by trampling again on the same paths between one façade of a building and another.

„Archives are a record of how the world was experienced by people living in earlier times (...) and archives allow the modern user to sense a former experience”⁵ - writes Waldemar Chorańczewski in the „Notes upon the nature and problems of anthropological archive studies.” Inga B. Kuźma in one of her articles states, „Our research area is the city as the subject of working memory – the city, which

can also be seen as a kind of archive”⁶. Archives of small stories, emotional, subjective and individual stories where daily life is mixed with a great history in many varying proportions⁷. Such records of the daily memories create an alternative space and time. When we research them, transform them creatively and disseminate them, thus we allow them to give voice to those who are invisible, inaudible, on the margin of society, or „beyond the pale”⁸. Archives and memoirs, as well as oral history „which are a gateway to the past and a machinery the time”⁹ exude emotions. They allow us to hear a voice from the other side. They are one of the strongest binders that build proximity and relationship. Thanks to them, we tame the given space. The place becomes more ‘ours’ and we begin to react differently to people, objects and wildlife belonging to the area. By reading the signs of the place, after a while we add our own meanings to them. City / district / place becomes a living tree within the rings of which we encrypt stories.

Oral history

Księży Młyn is buzzing with stories. Mirka, Jurek, and Wiesiek have been living in this district for years just like their parents and even grandparents and they share the memories associated with the place with pleasure.

We have lived here since before the war. I mean my parents. I was born at number nine, Księży Młyn 9, during the war. During the war my parents were moved from these apartments to the attic and the place was occupied by the Germans. After the war my parents returned here. My dad worked as a sorter at the weaving mill. My mother was a weaver. My dad knew Hebrew well, knew Russian and German but he did not sign the Volksliste... although my grandfather was a German. So, because my dad did not sign the Volksliste they degraded him and he worked as an ordinary worker. My mom is from Łódź and she lived here. She married my father. Well, daddy had an apartment here and she started to live here with him. My grandparents, my parents, me, my son, since I have a son and my grandchildren, since I have a grandson and granddaughter, were also born here in Księży Młyn. I’m here very connected. Very connected. My son has an official address here. And I hope that when we pass away he will live here¹⁰.

There are lively tales that Księży Młyn was once different. „Before, it was one big happy family”¹¹. And now „a mess of dirt, this is not what it was before”¹². Once there was a gatekeeper, there were contests for the most beautiful garden, neighbours used to play chess in front of the houses and dance on the pavement. And now „a mess, theft, and nothing more”¹³.

Trees were planted here. Around these trees were bricks. These bricks were whitened. And there were flowers near the trees. Saturday came, one played..... cabbage with peas, well, because it was the time of war, occupation, cabbage with peas, cake yeast. There were parties in the backyards here. How people partied! They were happy with what they had. One brought something, the other brought something, but today... Today we are scared to go out on the street!¹⁴.

Stories are shared by Marysia, one of the oldest residents of the estate who married her husband in spite and anger from her former boyfriend, by Krysia the caretaker on Factory Street who is decorating her garden with stuffed animals and goblins, by Jadzia and Grażynka who every weekend go to the dance hall at the surrounding plots, by girls from the Artistic Ateliers in Księży Młyn, Ewa and Natalia as well as by Andrzej, an engineer who worked in the Scheibler factory for years, actually in Uniontex since this is what the factory complex was called after the war. Andrzej recalls the moments of his first days at work the factory, the visit by the Pope, the ‘masculinity test’ and how Scheiblers’ fire brigade won the European Championship. One of the flagship anecdotal tales is the one about spitting into the Vistula river:

The story is set in the Łódź plant cotton industry named the Defenders of Peace Uniontex as it was called this way then. It refers to a group of workers, men of the automation and measurement department. In addition to normal work there were fantastic stories and

projects, sometimes unbelievable. The story I am going to tell concerns a project that began on Saturday afternoon, because on Saturday we were at work, we had to work even on Saturdays then. A group of men went to the restaurant on Targowa Street and after drinking large amounts of alcohol, they found that there was still enough time to go to Warsaw to spit into the Vistula river. And they did so. They went to the Łódź Fabryczna train station. When the train arrived in Warsaw they told the taxi driver to take them to the riverbank where the statue of a mermaid is placed. They spat into the Vistula and then tried to go back to Łódź. Trains then shuttled almost the whole day, but it was evening by then and they had to wait. Therefore they took a catnap on benches, returned to Łódź, then went home. On Monday morning at work they found out that one of the members of the expedition did not come to work. He appeared on Monday, around noon, dressed just in casual clothes, which was surprising because it was November and the first snow began to fall. It was cold. He told the story that when he was waiting at the station he met two ladies who offered him a night stay in Warsaw. And this way he lost his coat, his bag, money, and returned to Łódź only on Monday at noon¹⁵.

From the oral histories slowly emerge the living face of Księży Młyn, where rats were running around before the sewer was installed and the toilets were still in the cells, where despite the fact that „people came from various sides and spoke different languages, they lived together in harmony”, where there were „flowers, flower beds”, „oil lamps”, games such as „hide and seek”, „cabbage with peas, yeast cake”, „den”, „fairs”, „every weaver has the title of master” and „40 square meters was a fortune”. Stories linger recorded on a voice recorder. They create a mini archive of Księży Młyn history. Placed on the website they allow one to immerse oneself in Marysia’s story about the liquidated library when books were flying over the street, in the memoirs of Jurek whose grandmother learned to read at the organist’s or Wiesiek who was excited to tell about his neighbour’s stolen coal. The three of them are no longer with us. Their stories were soaked with joy, sadness, disappointment and hope. We can still listen to them or watch them since they have been transformed into a short animated documentary movie *Księży Młyn*¹⁶ and ‘archived’ on the website. It also became an inspiration for comics and illustration by Justyna Apolinarzak. The voices of the people for whom Księży Młyn was the most important place on earth can at last be heard. Before they were presented on the website, the project existed in a space within the Art Factory in Łódź. Each story recorded on mp3 could be listened to on the station created in the gallery. Each station consisted of original objects belonging to the inhabitants: Krysia’s stuffed animals along with her plant pots full of conifers, a big factory cart, documents found in the weaving mill magazines, a checkerboard and the old clock brought by Andrzej. The presentation was combined with the release of the animation Księży Młyn, tasting moonshine alcohol and traditional, Polish meals. The animated documentary also appeared at the Grand Opening of the Festival of Animation *O!Pla* at the Museum of Cinematography in Łódź. The voices of szajbleroiki began to slowly push through the cracks of Łódź cultural life.

Hard Shoulder – stories underfoot (soundwalks)¹⁷

One of the ideas for the memories to be heard out loud was to create soundwalks in Księży Młyn based on the stories of the residents, not only on the current ones but also on those from the archives. The Institute of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology at the University of Łódź has an extensive archive of Łódź factory workers. In the sixties and seventies anthropologists and ethnologists conducted a series of in-depth interviews with the residents of Księży Młyn. They were related to family histories and biography, habits, leisure activities, work, beliefs, daily and Sunday food, etc. Most of the interviews, especially those regarding the biography of the families retained a specific language and vocabulary. In a short description about the interviewee you could find his/her address, first name, last name and date of birth, sometimes the description of a job: master weaver, weaver, warehouse worker, locksmith, spinner, etc. The archives contain fascinating, poignant stories that outline the fate of workers who were living in Księży Młyn:

My father was a carpenter in Scheibler’s factory, mother worked at the weaving mill. Parents worked 12 hours a day. At night my mother laundered. She was taking a container of soup and a piece of bread to her work. My sister was 8 years old and she had to work too. I went to

school in Księży Młyn where I finished 3rd grade. At school we learned Russian and German. Teachers were all Poles. Those who could afford it sent their children to school and so the new teachers were born. My father liked to drink, but we did not walk in clogs. My father moonlighted to give us bread in the winter. He was making coffins in the winter. Children raised themselves, begrimed, spat, a child raised a child. Childhood was deplorable. In our house we had five children. I was 9 years old and I already worked. I mangled underwear. Later I worked spinning. Everyone stuck to the work with his hands and feet. You can call me a Scheibler’s grandson. For a nod of the foreman and on the blink of an eye I knew what he wanted. I had seven children. Only two are alive by now. At that time in the factory women had only six weeks of maternity leave. When a child died I had to wrap the child in a curtain from a window or linen and bury the corpse in that. There was no money for the clothes. One of the children fell ill with meningitis, there was nothing to sell, so I sold my wedding ring. I did not love my husband, I felt disgusted with him. When on the day of the wedding he kissed my hand, I was washing my hand for two days. I spent my life with him. I had children with him. Now I would have kicked him. I would not stay with him. Valeria, b. 1902, pensioner, Przedzalniana Street 57 (Andrzej Piotrkowski noted it in 1969).

I was born in Przędzalniana Street. There were seven siblings at home. My mother did not work. My father was a foreman and he worked for Scheibler. Until 1914 we shared one room. Later we had a room with a kitchen. Parents did not require any help from me. I spent time in the yard with the other children. I went to school on Targowa Street, later on Księży Młyn. I was a bit lazy. I had one notebook and I noted everything in it. My childhood coincided with the time of World War I. The factory stopped production. My father did not have work. He made boxes for ties. I used to help him. It was poverty and hunger. We walked to the factory canteen to get some soup. We took nine portions. Sometimes there was a potato in it, sometimes not. Mother always shared it among the youngest. At 16 I went to work in Scheibler’s factory. In 1930 I became a foreman. I met my wife at the factory Club. The second wife I met earlier than the first one. My second wife is a widow, I am divorced. The first wife left me during the war. Her parents signed the Volksliste. She took all the furniture, and I took her barefoot and naked. Felix, b.1906, forman, Przedzalniana Street 67 (Andrzej Piotrowski noted it in 1969).

On the basis of archival interviews from Księży Młyn, three soundwalks were created: *I was born on Szlezing, Kwela Park, snorkel and carousel, Gas lanterns and carp in breadcrumbs*. Each of them was built on a different story; they took place at different times of the year and ran along a different route. Participants received maps, headphones and mp3s with uploaded stories. Each walk took about an hour. The first one *I was born on Szlezing* (June 2014) concerned the lifestyle of workers, the rules in a factory, education, neighbourly coexistence, weddings, christenings, funerals. Walkers had the chance to enter the houses and feel the cobbled pavement underfoot. The tales from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries mingled with the rhythm of life of the current inhabitants. Unplanned and spontaneous interactions added a local colour to the walk. In addition to the passive form of listening to the story, the recipient had to also perform minor tasks such as to draw a pigeon in the sand, play hopscotch, make paper boats and place them in a bucket of water, feel, taste the space...

Go inside, up the stairs. Feel the creak of the stairs underfoot. Take a look at the structure of the stairs and cracks in the paint. Stop for a moment on a step, lean against the wall, close your eyes and smell that smell which permeates the walls. Do not be ashamed, no one will see you. And so what if they did? Otherwise, your fingers will not feel the trembling voices of szajbleroiki that are frozen in the bricks, under the paint. Jump up the rest of the steps. On the left side on the door you will find the name on the plate. Keep it in mind. Repeat it under your breath. From now on until the end of the walk, it’s your name, so try not to forget it. Station 5, Przędzalniana Street 57 (gate, smell).

Soundwalks created from fragments of archive stories, half real half fictitious, are told by the narrator, Stefek – the weaver, the hero who guided the audience and sewed together the various stations.

Oh, you are here already. Great! This scrub belongs to you? Okay, okay, no offense. Let’s move, otherwise I will get trouble from my foreman if I don’t get back to work on time. Take a map in your hand. Do you know how to push the buttons? So let’s go! Oh, I am Stefan,

Stefek, the weaver. I'll show you around everything and how it works. I will not be a hoaxer. I'll bluntly tell you everything. Because I'm not a hack, I have a real job in my hand. I was born on Szlezing. My parents moved to Księży Młyn when I was three. I know every corner here. And I went to work in 1921. My father was a greaser. They knew him here. I wasn't old enough but my father spoke to the head of the department and they took me. Of course I was not a weaver immediately. I helped everywhere. At first I had to see a lot and for the help and education my father gave a few rubles or a small bottle of vodka to this weaver who taught me the basics. Stefek-the weaver.

The next soundwalk *Kwela Park, snorkel and carousel* took place in the autumn, in October 2014. Its route ran from Źródlińska Park I by the Księży Młyn estate to the Źródlińska Park II. During the walk you could get to know the various forms of leisure activities of the factory workers: dating in the park, fairs, barrel organ and street musicians. You could listen to the old hits, make a kite fly, look at the pigeons, listen about picnics, learn how to ask a lady to dance and figure out what a ,snorkel' was:

Before the war a ,snorke' was popular. On the square were erected all sorts of carousels, big wheel with ponies. You could spin the wheel and buy different toys on the stalls. It was almost like a circus. Children from the working class families in the twenties didn't go on vacation. They spent the whole summer in Łódź. On Saturday evenings stallholders came down to the square with their tables and stalls and placed on them all sorts of toys and decorative items. There were wooden pipes, coloured cockerels with colourful feathers tucked in the tail which whistled, colourful fans, metal watches for children, rings with colourful meshes, broaches, bracelets strung on a rubber band, trumpets and many different knick-knacks from which children could not take their eyes off. Station 19, *Kermess*.

Gas lanterns and a carp in breadcrumbs was the December walk. It started in the Art Book Museum (the manufacturer's villa of Henryk Grohman), ran through the area of lofts located in the renovated complex of Scheibler's factories and ended at Kreatoora the Artistic Atelier of Ewa Źochowska. Participants roamed through Księży Młyn in the freezing cold. On the way they were tasting moonshine alcohol, throwing stones into the semi-frozen pond, telling their fortune with a straw.

The walks took place every two hours in groups of ten - fifteen people. Participants signed up by e-mail and came to the starting point on a particular hour to pick up the audio devices and maps. They returned to the same place (in the case of the third walk, the starting and the ending points were different) returned the equipment and shared their impressions. Walking caused great excitement among the participants. In particular the interaction with the space, mixing past stories with the present day activities of the estate and the unexpected meetings and conversations with contemporary residents of Księży Młyn made a special impression.

When I was on the trail, at every station I was trying to talk with people. I encouraged them to listen to the excerpts related with their place – e.g. the pigeon breeder listened to the fragment about pigeons, a resident of the building near the fire department verified the knowledge of the fire brigade, etc. It was a great complement to the walk – also the audio experience (that was a conversation!). Artur Chrzanowski, from the visitors book.

The Soundwalks were not only unusual artistic activities outside the standard distinction between the fine arts and design. They were primarily a way to reproduce the positive atmosphere of the old district, a presentation and promotion of Księży Młyn with its complicated history. A way to open it up for people who are unaware of the beauty of this post-industrial estate. The goal of *Hard Shoulder – stories underfoot* (soundwalks) was to ram art into the peripheral and neglected space, to create a platform to sustain the stories and the voices of the marginalized. Strengthening the voice of people who love this place and are strongly associated with it. If we look at the reactions of the participants of the soundwalks, all the above objectives were met. The Soundwalks became a part of a bigger project on Księży Młyn – *FILLin*. A project that intended to give a voice to the residents of the estate, so they would again feel safe and at home there. To feel that they really belong to this space, not only through the past, but also by current and future actions.

After a series of interviews with residents and artists who received ateliers in Księży Młyn, there arose the idea of creating a series of site-specific artistic actions on the estate. The interviews were full of grief and longing for a place where the residents could dance, meet and talk. The inhabitants were longing for knees-ups, pretty gardens, the order, the sense of security and a dialog. A prominent feeling was one of enclosure within the four walls and the fear of both the residents and the artists who were not fully able to open up to ,the Other'. The awakening of the spirit of the old Księży Młyn, a fulfillment, establishing a relationship both with the space and with the residents, became the main goal of the project *FILLin*. It was motivated by an aim to overcome mutual distrust in order to create a community that could work for a space and for/together with diverse local residents. All with reference to the history and family character of this postindustrial district.

The project consisted of a series of artistic, participatory activities. There was a picnic in the Źródlińska Park that included the oldfashioned games (*Peek-a-boo around the corner*), the knees-up on the pavement (*Enchanting last day of summer*), home cooking and sharing a story (*Food for a story*), soundwalks on Księży Młyn (*Hard Shoulder – stories underfoot*) and performances in the Art Book Museum (*Stop-Motion 2.1.*).

Initially residents of Księży Młyn were wary, but with time they started to participate, they shared stories, brought cakes and drinks to the knees-ups. Kids came to blow great soap bubbles and eat chocolate mousse. The actions attracted passers-by who broke through barriers. At a knees-up on one bench artists sat with the locals, then the co-owner of the shop *Train to Łódź*, local children and residents of the lofts all danced together. Participants of the soundwalks wandered through the block, immersing themselves in the authentic stories, interacting with the place, wild cats, pigeons and locals.

Systematically the project documentation appeared on the website and on Facebook. During the ephemeral actions *The story cards* and *The visitors book* were filled. On the website a cookbook was created with traditional recipes from Łódź. There also appeared urban legends and fragments of the soundwalks. For a few months anyone could participate in oral histories presented on the web. A rich video documentation containing snapshots of the artistic actions was made. Documentation of the project was shown at the Łódź Design Festival in the selected Artistic Ateliers in Księży Młyn. Information about the events appeared in local newspapers and on their websites. Catalogues of the project were available in the artistic shops and the ateliers of Łódź. They appeared also in the archives of the Institute of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology at the University of Łódź and were presented at the conference *City-Art* in the Cultural Centre CKZ in Poznań (March, 2015).

The story cards

One of the most interesting documents created during the project turned out to be *The story cards*. They were introduced for the first time during the action *Food for a story*. Initially they were supposed to be only a part of the first event but their distribution during the cooking and eating in the backyard proved to be a hit. Both residents and passersby picked up a pen and shared their stories there. In the alley in front of house number seven, a big green tent was put up with tables and chairs inside. In the corner of a big tent there were *The story cards* on which each participant could write a text connected with Księży Młyn. Tourists and residents who initially responded timidly at what was happening in their alleys sat at the table. After some time they began to share not only food but also memories. Kids from Księży Młyn were drinking hot chocolate. Jadzia from the first floor placed the speakers on the windowsill and played upbeat music at full volume. The event really got going, the artists feasted with the locals and real and fictional stories filled the cards. *The story cards* initiated the creation of a new layer of legends and anecdotes related to Księży Młyn. Here are some of them:

When the sun shines the old street takes on a warm glow. The leaves on the trees look fresh and you get the impression that the street was built recently. In a window on the first floor you can see little Marysia looking from behind the curtain. The girl lifts her head from the book and stares at you. She thinks she would like to go away and leave, away from the street and the city. Here her mother spent dozens of years, every day going to the factory. The first shift – mum makes the girl braids in the evening because she does not know how to comb her

hair. She gets up at seven and her mum goes to work at five. The second shift – after school the girl finds at home two sandwiches with sausage covered by a plate. The third shift – she didn’t manage to fall asleep before her mum left and now she is trying to find her way to bed. She does not want to open her eyes in the dark room. The first shift again.....and then the third, fourth and fifth grade. She finishes school and the factories are silent. Is it the way it was supposed to be?
Anonymous, (half-fictional half-real) story.

The first time I was in Księży Młyn was in the days when there were garden gnomes walking between the houses. It was easy to find them because they did not hide from people at all. They were quite unusual for gnomes. They wore hats and beards like dwarfs. They did not have green skin like creatures from the north of the continent should have. The gnomes could be walking in the district even today, but one day an investor from Australia came to Łódź and decided to change the workers’ housing into expensive apartments. He figured out together with the President of Łódź that they would move the residents to another location and renovate the empty houses. The gnomes were speechless. They were so clogged up that they froze with shock. The residents took those poor, solidified gnomes into the garden near the house at Fabryczna Street. After years it turned out that they had became clogged up completely unnecessarily. The investor went bankrupt, the new President of Łódź continued the renovation and the residents did not have to leave Księży Młyn. It was more or less like this.
Aleksandra, 32 years old, a fictional story.

Laundry was hanging n the window of house number 2, proudly waving at every gust of wind. Night came. A housecoat fell to the ground, then the housecoat was eaten by a cat. The cat did not survive. He lives happily in cat heaven with good memories of Księży Młyn.
Ola, 27 years old, a fictional tale.

Księży Młyn is a dream kingdom. Among the trees live little girls – princesses and a few princes with only a little power but with huge dreams. Meetings are stealthy, fulfilling only temporary needs and dreams spin on and on... towards the park, pond and adjacent firehouse.
Elżbieta, 40 years old, a fictional story.

Games and plays

Common leisure activities were an important element both in the archival stories as well as in the contemporary interviews: picnics, games in the park, the activities in the Factory Club where the theatre was, brass band and dances. On New Year’s Eve Scheibler’s workers danced at parties in the factory to the music of the fire-fighters band.

Jadzia: Once, in the old days, there were even dances next to the pond where there is now a museum, on the corner of Przedzalniana Street. We used to go there. And then, there was a Community Centre, the Club. There was a cinema, a cafe, and dance parties.
Grażynka: In the Źródlińska Park there is something round, such a thing, like a gazebo and on Sunday there often played an orchestra, a band. In the Zrodlińska Park, in the middle of the park.
Jadzia: Now also, in the summer, the whole holiday every Sunday somewhere around 17:00 there are various events.
Grażynka: And here could they not make a dance hall where we could dance?
Jadzia: But here there were picnics, dear! People danced on the pavement. That was a scene. This place here was full of people.
Grażynka: And now all gone.
Jadzia and Grażynka story, „People danced on the pavement”¹⁹.
After work, when I was a bachelor I went to play the accordion and the violin at weddings or

birthdays. Sometimes as you went down the street the whole group played and sang, it was allowed. In the yard we were doing „an opening of the season”. The neighbours from our house collected some money and set up tables in the backyard. It was playing, it was singing and drinking on this occasion. Today if someone did it they would say that he is crazy. After work we sat in the yard and talked. As it got dark everyone went to sleep. On Sunday we went into the forest, to the field. Children were taken by the hand, the food was in a bag and we went riding. In the past people were in tune with their surroundings. It was always someone’s nameday, or a wedding or so on and we always felt invited. The hosts welcomed us, giving vodka and food. Today a jumble of people live here, neighbours but I do not know their names. I do not know how they came to be here, they did not work in a factory. Not many sit in the backyard, fewer people know each other. Before the war I knew everyone in the house.
Zenon, a master of spinning, Przędzalniana Street 57.

From most of the conversations there appeared the yearning for common everyday fun, spending free time together. Therefore in the project *FILLin*, a dance party was initiated in the lanes, the *Enchanting last day of summer* and a picnic in the Źródlińska Park *Peek-a-boo around the corner*. The first event took place in spite of heavy rain. Because of the rain the knees-up started an hour later but even so the turnout was high. The harbour was moved from the grass on the paths to the pavement in front of a house so that dancers would not get stuck in the mud. Residents filled benches and chairs and Suavas Lewy mixed sounds from the twenties and thirties. There was swing, jazz and ragtime music. Jadzia from number seven Księży Młyn supplied us with the electricity. Residents brought cakes and drinks and danced together with the artists from the Artistic Ateliers. For a moment even the residents of the lofts appeared. Happy kids were playing between the benches. The co-owner of the store *Train to Łódź* serenaded dancers with coffee. The knees-up ended after dark.

During the picnic, music was also played in the park. Suavas Lewy and Marcin Garncarek were playing on ukulele, guitar and saxophone. Księży Młyn’s kids made big soap bubbles, played games (hide and seek, hopscotch, tossing a coin), created old fashioned toys, threw a frisbee and modeled things in clay. We spent the whole Sunday afternoon recalling traditional games and filled the area of the historic oak with music and laughter.

The Soundwalks were also imbued with elements of games and plays. The participants had to perform several mini tasks: fly a kite, draw a manufacturer, play hopscotch, throw a pebble into a pond, find a stick, remember the name from the plate on the door, etc. All these activities allowed the participants to establish an intimate relationship with the space, imperceptibly building a relationship with the place which thus became closer, more ,ours’. All the activities of the project *FILLin* were held in essential, non-accidental places, saturated with history and open to interactio

Stop-motion 2.1.

One of the places right on the border of Księży Młyn was an old villa that once belonged to the industrialist Henryk Grohman. Now the Art Book Museum is located there. This place is full of history, striding between yesterday and today, a beautiful building that due to an unclear legal situation is slowly falling apart. Leaking roof, breaking walls, bushy overgrown garden. This atmosphere of temporariness was reflected in the actions of performers during *Stop-Motion 2.1*. Piotr Pasiewicz, Paweł Grala and Suavas Lewy created in the garden a swaying, wooden structure accompanied by pulsating, jagged, electronic sounds. Paweł Korbus explored different horizontal dispersions. Beata Marcinkowska cut words from a newspaper and created poetry in space. Robosexi made a wooden puzzle that was arranged in a pattern melting into the floor. Tomasz Mażewski gave a concert on his own constructed sound machine. I paved the paths with my body and finally took a bath in an old bathtub filled to the brim with leaves.
The place resonated perfectly and distributed artistic energy. Artists passed through the rooms, wandered up the stairs and filled the space, touched it with their bodies and sounds. *Stop-motion 2.1*. was a transmedia action that used movement, image, word. One of the main mechanisms was reproducibility and looping.
The stop-motion technique is not only an animation technique that allows a physically manipulated object to appear to move on its own. It is also a button that stops the machine when something goes

wrong. This button is also used to stop the tape, look at a single frame, capture the moment like a fly in a spider’s web. A point between just before and just after. This combination of places, objects and people, this meeting in the fulFILLment was one of the final events of the project *FILLin*, a kind of looped dialogue.

FUL(L)fillment

Activities closely related to the urban space modify municipal codes. They domesticate the space. Such a modification of everyday practices, the spatial system of meanings of the city, undermining the utility of one dimensional space (the houses are not just used to live in and benches to sit on) leads to a broadening and redistribution of places in the city. These actions invade the space and symbolically appropriate it. Through movement and actions different from the assumed use of space, they proceed towards its peaceful takeover named by Lucia Sa as „the incorporation strategy”²⁰ – the transformation of part of the city, transforming a street into your ‘own’ space, the place. This occurs often through an element of game, play, fun, but also dance, picnic or even walk.

The space in which site-specific actions are created is often full of traces of the past, energy, the history of the place. Each site contains memories of the past. And each completed action adds a next level to the memory of the location, a crumb, a new story. Images and metaphors created by the artists remain in a space forever. Just like the colourful headphones of the soundwalks or the green arbour from which you could catch sounds of swing and jazz or taste a delicious hot chocolate or homemade bread brought by one of the artists to the action *Food for a story*. The ladies from Księży Młyn are talking about this bread even now.

The *FILLin* project was supposed to fill the gaps, fill the deficiencies in the relationships within the neighborhood, help residents to establish closer relations with the artists from the Artistic Ateliers, connect yesterday with today, also to give a voice to the inhabitants of Księży Młyn, restore the status of their memories and stories, create a mythical, safe space for a dialogue, meetings and conversations. To achieve this goal seemingly trivial actions were used: a picnic, shared cooking, dance or walking. It turned out that these type of actions become a spark to recreate the tissue of social and neighbourly trust and this can give a voice to those whom usually nobody listens to.

However, such ephemeral, one-off actions are not sufficient. Currently in Księży Młyn there are held fairs, created art studios, cafes, souvenir shops, and an Academic Centre of Design. Concerts are held in Źródłiska Park. However, Księży Młyn can gain much more if it manages to create a space in which ‚yesterday’ could meet with ‚today’, the spirit of the old Księży Młyn with the modern design and rebellious artists. A place that would ensure the continuity of the story and become a space for a dialogue, since Księży Młyn is a living archive, and its greatest asset is its people and their stories.

ENDNOTS

¹ Marcin Sieńka, „Wrażenie estetyczne jako reakcja na rzeczywistość – kontra = The aesthetic impression as a reaction to reality – versus,” <http://simon.hell.pl/wrazenie.html>. [The Lettrists or about drifting and psychogeography (...)] The Internationale lettriste movement, important from the point of view of our considerations, was initiated by the short text “Formulary for a New Urbanism” signed by Gilles Ivain (under the pseudonym was hiding Ivan Chtcheglov). The author wrote that the city is a total work of art. (...) This text has helped to develop the lettriste two interesting techniques: drift and psychogeography. Translated by author].

² Edward Relph, *Place and placelessness* (London: Pion, 1976).
³ The locals of Księży Młyn called themselves *szajblero*ki from the name of the manufacturer Scheibler.

⁴ Augustyn Bańka, *Spoleczna psychologia środowiskowa = Social psychology of the environment* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe „Scholar”, 2002). [Norberg-Schulz (1980) in his concept makes the assumption that a place has always its *genius loci*, a specific aura, and atmosphere. *Genius loci* is not a scientific category and there is no empirical evidence that it exists. According to Małgorzata Solska this category “is perceived subconsciously, acts on emotions in a sensitive and actually immaterial way” and according to Ewa Rewers is a kind of ontological metaphor. Translated by author].

⁵ Waldemar Chorążyczewski, „Uwagi o przedmiocie i problematyce zantropologizowanej archiwistyki = Notes to the nature and problems of anthropological archive studies,” in *Toruńskie konfrontacje archiwalne*, t. 4: „Nowa archiwistyka - archiwa i archiwistyka w ponowoczesnym kontekście kulturowym,” ed. by Waldemar Chorążyczewski, Wojciech Piasek i Agnieszka Rosa (Toruń: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika, 2014), 34.

⁶ Inga B. Kuźma, “Archiwum jako teren działalności społeczno-badawczej = Archive as an area of research and social activity,” in *Toruńskie konfrontacje archiwalne*, t. 4: „Nowa archiwistyka - archiwa i archiwistyka w ponowoczesnym kontekście kulturowym,” ed. by Waldemar Chorążyczewski, Wojciech Piasek i Agnieszka Rosa (Toruń: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika, 2014), 89.

⁷ The Marysia’s story (nr 19). The story is about a day when World War II started <http://www.ksiezy-mlyn.pl/slowo-opowiesci/#6>.

⁸ Magdalena Wiśniewska, “Archiwum społeczne – archiwum emocji = The social archive – archive of emotions,” in *Toruńskie konfrontacje archiwalne*, t. 4: „Nowa archiwistyka - archiwa i archiwistyka w ponowoczesnym kontekście kulturowym,” ed. by Waldemar Chorążyczewski, Wojciech Piasek i Agnieszka Rosa (Toruń: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika, 2014), 80. [“Postmodern historiography shifts the focus to the “margin” on “what is beyond the pale”. (...) Micronarratives replace place of metanarrative. (...) The memory is considered as a key – giving liberation to the groups which history has been deprived of voice. Translated by author].

⁹ Ibidem, 84.

¹⁰ The Mirka’s story <http://www.ksiezy-mlyn.pl/slowo-opowiesci/#7>.

¹¹ Ibidem.

¹² Ibidem.

¹³ The Wiesiek’s story <http://www.ksiezy-mlyn.pl/slowo-opowiesci/#8>.

¹⁴ The Mirka’s story.

¹⁵ The Andrzej’s story <http://www.ksiezy-mlyn.pl/slowo-opowiesci/#leaf>

¹⁶ The fragment of the animation movie *Księży Młyn*, <http://www.ksiezy-mlyn.pl/ruch-animacja/>.

¹⁷ The project was developed through an artistic grant from the President of Łódź in 2014. Written and directed by Marta Ostajewska, audio: Suavas Lewy, lector: Konrad Borusiewicz, graphic artist: Justyna Apolinarzak, photos: Anita Andrzejczak, video: Adam Musiałowicz.

¹⁸ The project was implemented through an artistic grant (visual arts) from the budget of the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage for 2014.

¹⁹ The Jadzia and Grażynka’s stories <http://www.ksiezy-mlyn.pl/slowo-opowiesci/#3>.

²⁰ Lúcia Sá, *Life in the Megalopolis: Mexico City and São Paulo* (London: Routledge, 2007), 58.

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LESZEK KARCEWSKI

UNINTENTIONAL REPRISE

MUSEUM AS ARCHIVE

I have written the present paper as a researcher involved in the subject of my own research. As the head of the Department of Education I have co-created the Muzeum Sztuki in Łódź since 2008. The beginning of my work at the museum coincided with the opening of a new exhibition space called ms² in Israel Poznański's former tall weaving mill turned Manufaktura, a giant commercial complex.

It is a completely unique location among Polish museums. This location and the confidence of the museum board – Director Jarosław Suchan and Deputy Director Małgorzata Ludwisiak made it possible to start the entire educational activity once again. In any case, this is what I originally thought. As a newly born museologist, I was possessed by the spirit of museology. I was convinced that the whole museum is educational in principle. I was convinced that the viewer's experience of art is not aimed at gathering knowledge about art, or at least not exclusively, but mainly at knowledge about their own subjectivity and their relationship with the world. I was convinced that the aim of a museum is ultimately the emancipation of their guests.

I was constructing educational activities inspired by the philosophical thought coming from American pragmatism and constructivism, with regard to namely John Dewey, Nelson Goodman, and George E. Hein. I rarely referred to the educational heritage of the Muzeum Sztuki Łódź while searching for new ways to work with the audience. It constituted just an archive for me.

The only idea that seemed still vital was the concept of “an open museum” by Ryszard Stanisławski, the director of the museum between 1966 and 1990. He explained the meaning of this slogan as follows:

Our main customers are industrial and working town residents and this imposes special duties on our institution and its Educational and Research Department. I think we should get those viewers. We should try to meet them by didactic and thematic exhibitions organized in other educational and cultural institutions above all, in the workplaces in Łódź and its region. We organize about 200 of these meetings a year, by an extensive campaign of lectures and consultations in cooperation with schools, which is very much appreciated by them and finally by lectures, concerts and evening talks with artists and poets at the museum¹.

At that time, I interpreted the museum opening by Stanisławski rather simply. I thought he regained a certain degree of autonomy for the museum after the Stalinist period that regulated every aspect of cultural life by central policy. To me, the cultural thaw seemed a functional explication for the popularity of some of the museum's educational initiatives of the 70s. What it made especially eligible was the phenomenon of Sunday at the Museum, a program launched in 1972 that attracted mass interest annually until 1981.

Sunday at the Museum was a series of mass meetings during the summer, organized annually between 1972 and 1981. It offered “free access to the museum collection, a fair, an orchestra of fireman

and a band from the industrial plants of Łódź, an exhibition of textiles from the Teofilów weaving mill... maybe, what it only lacked were hot sausages and beer” as Magdalena Hniedziewicz wrote in 1975². The journalist reported it only partly ironically and at the same time with admiration for its open structure, for this “risky and daring combination” of picnic mood and modern art. During the said picnic the Muzeum Sztuki Łódź opened *Emballage*, a Tadeusz Kantor exhibition, and the artist himself conducted a museum lesson for students of High School No. 29 in Łódź.

Apart from typical museum attractions Sunday at the Museum usually consisted of performances by brass and folk bands, jazz and big-beat groups and also chamber quartets. Actors recited poems in the open air. There were fashion shows and jewellery, raffles, auctions, art reproduction and goods fairs. A mass audience of labourers was attracted even if only once a year. The success of this program was understandable not only due to the limitations of the Stalinism period, but also the limitations of the Polish romantic tradition of celebrating art. It was a revolution in comparison to previous forms of museum activity, e.g., guided tours and through the combination of many diverse leisure activities it proposed a unique approach to museum policy. It can be interpreted currently as a form of deliberate audience development years before the new museology impact on Polish museums. And it was deliberate. Ryszard Stanisławski, the director of the Muzeum Sztuki Łódź at that time, was aware of this unique way of working with the audience. He presented it as early as in 1969 during the International Council of Museums (ICOM) meeting in Brussels. Another significant lecture of his on the same issue took place during a meeting of the UNESCO Committee in 1974.

To appreciate the participatory aspect of the Sunday at the Museum program, we even made a kind of re-enactment and in 2013 we did it twice in one summer during the holidays. In contrast to the picnics during the 70’s, we decided to combine events of a similar mood. The first time the keynote was humour and the second time it was a funny reactivation of the reality of the People’s Republic of Poland. However, I was primarily interested in a much more “open” project aiming at the emancipation of the audience.

*ms*³ *Re:action* (*ms*³ *Re:akcja*) was my initiative and probably the most radical educational experiment of a “new” museum. After the permanent collection of 20th and 21st century art had been moved in November 2008 into the revitalised weaving plant called *ms*² in the Manufatura complex, the said project confronted it with its new environment. We were aware of the new museology framework. We wanted to open the museum as an institution to its social environment. The whole project was based on relational aesthetics by creating a context which activated the viewer’s creativity rather than presenting them with proper works of art.

It was a two-month activity. The *ms*² temporary exhibition room constituted the museum’s DIY kit, providing the visitor with all the means of artistic expression and curatorial arrangement of artworks used by the Muzeum Sztuki Łódź, from charcoal to spray and from traditional paint to modern video means. *ms*³ *Re:action* participants, as artists and curators, created a growing display by negotiating the value of their works and of their museum concepts in confrontation with others. A valid part of the project was a series of workshops intended directly for the museum’s neighbours, carried out in cooperation with local activists. As a result, the exhibition showed what kind of museum of what kind of art was expected by its public.

*ms*³ *Re:action* was intentionally rooted in the heritage of the Muzeum Sztuki Łódź. As the museum had been created by friends forming the a.r. group for inhabitants of Łódź, the idea was to amplify that gesture and to hand the museum over to Łódź inhabitants.

But the past of the Muzeum Sztuki occurred to be more complex. An important component of *ms*³ *Re:action* was the exhibition entitled *Inwentaryzacja (nie)możliwości* (*An Inventory of the (Im)possible*). Its curator, Marta Skłodowska showed archive photos of artworks that did not survive World War II. They were put on display in shop windows in Gdańska St., combining two buildings of the Muzeum Sztuki Łódź: the old one, *ms*¹ at 36, Więckowskiego St., and the new one, *ms*² at 19, Ogrodowa St. I interpreted this initiative as a phenomenon just like the customers of local shops did.

A few years later, after a little archive research into the activities of the educational department of the Muzeum Sztuki Łódź, I found out that we had unconsciously repeated gestures from the past. In 1954 and 1956, a special edition of the museum exhibitions was organized. According to tradition, paintings hanging in shop windows along Piotrkowska St. aroused huge interest. A decade later in 1964, the reproductions of Polish paintings were hung on rural fences in the countryside in the Orava region (Jablonka Orawska) and Masuria (Stare Juchy); this initiative could be linked with repolonization of those regions. And for the third time a slightly similar event was organised in May 1970 under the slogan of “Art closer to the workers”. In eight plants solo exhibitions were displayed and workers employed there visited the museum on guided tours after a day of work³.

This discovery gave impetus to more archival research. Could it be that in the Muzeum Sztuki’s

cellars are hiding more amazing educational archives in the literal sense? Can a museum itself be interpreted from today’s perspective as an archive? My intuition suggested me towards the very core of the museum – the *Neoplastic Room* environment by Władysław Strzemiński.

On 13 June 1948, the Muzeum Sztuki Łódź, which was previously housed in a dozen or so rooms of the former city hall, opened a new space in the 19th-century former palace of the industrialist Maurycy Poznański, at 36 Więckowskiego St. The museum’s then director, Marian Minich, asked Władysław Strzemiński, the painter and theorist of art, as well being the founder of the a.r. group, to help design the interiors. The artist was assigned the task of designing the second-floor space that enclosed a sequence of exhibition rooms, while also including a narrative designed by Minich in order to educate the viewer on the history of European art.

The idea of the museum by Marian Minich was essentially educational. The most unique part of the museum collection was the corpus of the International Modern Art Collection of the a.r. group. It included works by the most progressive representatives of the European avant-garde such as Fernand Leger, Max Ernst, Hans Arp and Kurt Schwitters who donated their works to the a.r. group. Although so far exhibited at the Julian and Kazimierz Bartoszewicz Museum of History and Art (Muzeum Historii i Sztuki imienia Juliana i Kazimierza Bartoszewiczów) located at 1 Liberty Square that had opened on 13 April 1930, it had remained unrecognized by a wider public.

Minich found supporting the collection of the a.r. group an essential issue. He estimated that the Bartoszewicz’ set was collected randomly while the a.r. group collection was in his opinion, “a logical synthesis, mainly illustrating the steps of the development of Cubism and here and there – in various forms – works of futurism, purism, constructivism and neo-plasticism”; this fabric does not involve only a few surrealist works⁴. Years later, Ryszard Stanisławski shared the same opinion that Strzemiński had not created an aggregation of his own taste, but a coherent collection in accord with a cohesive image of European art from the late 20’s and 30’s, so that the collection was and still remains unique⁵. Iwona Luba suggested that the creation of the International Collection of Modern Art was for Strzemiński identical with the establishment of the museum of modern art as a modified version of the Kazimir Malevich’s (Kazimierz Malewicz’s) concept of the Museum of Artistic Culture⁶.

Hence, Minich separated the archives of historical and literary antiques from the art collection. The remaining aggregation was divided into three parts. The museum narration was begun by foreign art belonging to the former centuries with early and mature works of the Renaissance succeeded by the Italian, Dutch, and Flemish baroque. The second section was devoted to Polish art from the eighteenth and nineteenth century, supplemented by related works of the twentieth century. Then followed the third section, namely modern art, occupying almost half of the total exhibition space.

The modern art section was introduced by a small room with French impressionism and works by Cézanne, Gauguin and van Gogh presented as facsimile reproductions and as purely educational support. This was the original idea of Minich who was conscious that it broke the tradition of museum practitioners in those days, prohibiting making reproductions for exhibition halls. Minich believed however, that you could not “explain” the diverse and complex problems of modern art without reference to a corpus of work that he could not afford by any other means. Therefore, he intentionally created a database for “artists, researchers and school children”⁷. Its final “entry” was the *Neoplastic Room* by Strzemiński, a materialisation of the theoretical postulates of neoplasticism and constructivism while also a functional exhibition “device” created for the International Collection of Modern Art by the a.r. group.

The purely educational principle of the whole exhibition layout designed by Minich with the stress, as I have mentioned, on contemporary art of that time was a novelty. This extensive quotation proves that Minich was strictly aware of the pioneering nature of their work:

The systematic arrangement of this section was mostly to show the development of vision and artistic thinking, to demonstrate in what forms the artist imposes his consciousness on the surroundings, how they attempt to organize their relationship to nature. To show the road leading from the style of vividly sensed specificity in linear terms to the discovery of the world of colour blurring the tactile features of objects. It leads from a break in the continuity of space in neo-impressionism to the cubist disavowal of the naturalistic recognition of reality in representing it according to the laws of stereometry, then plane geometry. It leads from the sensual base of the impressionists’ concept to the symbolic and imaginative colour stain of expressionism proclaiming a “life of the soul” in its subconscious evolutions, which seems to announce a confusion of literary unreality of the surrealist creations⁸.

Minich applied the same method of “systematics of style” to the museum arrangement after regaining custody of the collection of the Muzeum Sztuki, interrupted by World War II. Minich perceived “the law of stylistic transformation” as the theoretical framework for both researching and exhibiting art⁹. Minich claimed already in the 30s that naïve contact with avant-garde art is impossible. He claimed

only the discovery of its formal principles and then an ability for emotional lecture of them allows the viewer the sum of intellectual and emotional experience.

Minich museological thought was fully compatible with the views of Władysław Strzemiński. The latter shared Minich's view based "on the closest possible elimination of randomness"¹⁰. In 1936, Strzemiński clearly enumerated the differences between an exhibition and a museum. An exhibition "gives the characteristics of one moment among many within the artistic life" offering "a single aesthetic impression", while a museum "displays the evolution and interdependence of individual art trends" existing "mainly for educational purposes" enabling the showing of "trends developed during every period" and avoiding "dazzling the viewer". Strzemiński stressed the importance of selection, as well as of the deliberate location of exhibits¹¹.

Moreover, Strzemiński's vast essay entitled *Teoria widzenia (A Theory of Vision)* written at the end of the 40s and published posthumously in 1958, seems to be a dialogue with Minich's idea. Strzemiński proves that sight is not a neutral and objective sense dependent only on the physiology of the eye. He shows on the basis of historical materialism that changing the ways in which man recognizes visual phenomena – that is "types of visual consciousness" – is closely connected with the change of living conditions. According to Strzemiński, for example, the Stone Age artists used only an outline to represent the subject of an approaching animal, while the creators of the Renaissance introduced the impression of a three-dimensional solid by association with the growing trade in goods. In his final argumentation Strzemiński constructed the avant-garde tradition that was working with new "types of visual consciousness", aptly recognizing the most current social changes¹². Both Strzemiński and Minich (the latter not as radically as the former) were rejecting the old art forms recognized by them as inadequate to the new times.

The Neoplastic Room, as Marcin Szeląg concluded, was the essence and the real climax of Minich's entire expository arrangement and total realisation of his idea of a didactic museum. At the same time, it was didacticism present immanently within the logical sequence of the interrelated forms of Strzemiński's design and works of art displayed and not in comments or labels accompanying the objects¹³. This kind of conviction that the museum as a whole is an educational machinery, seems to be extremely modern and foreshadows the new museology paradigm.

The *Neoplastic Room*, as an educational project in which the static contemplation of a single work of art was replaced by a dynamic experience of the exhibits unified with the expository space, was the essence of Minich's "systems of style" approach. Strzemiński designed the Neoplastic Room in full accordance with Minich's conviction that the essence of art exists in forms of perceptions and not in its iconographical content¹⁴.

The history of the *Neoplastic Room* argues that even the communists were perfectly aware of its potency. In 1949, on the orders of the Deputy Minister of Culture Włodzimierz Sokorski, socialist realism was officially decreed in Poland as the state artistic style. Under the doctrine, only art that was socialist in content and realistic in form was allowed. Consequently, the Neoplastic Room and the avant-garde, abstract – and thus "reactionary" and "formalistic" – works housed in it, became the subject of official scrutiny. On 19 January 1950, Sokorski personally signed Strzemiński's dismissal from his teaching job at the State College of Fine Arts in Łódź (PWSSP) as a matter of urgency "for the sake of the service". On 1 October the same year, the exhibition was closed down, the modernist paintings and sculptures were locked away in the storerooms and the *Neoplastic Room* itself was painted over. A few weeks later it became a stage for propagandistic art exhibitions of socialist realism. His apprentice Bolesław Utkin reconstructed Strzemiński's design posthumously in 1960.

It is worth mentioning that both Strzemiński and Minich referred to Marxism implicitly, being both influenced by historical materialism. However, they both interpreted it in a quite unorthodox manner. Although Minich appealed to the Marxist typicality as he searched for "the correct interpretation" of museum objects, at the same time, he understood them not as particular works, but rather as the historical-chronological sets of works by individual artists, determining the appropriate idea of the evolution of artistic problems¹⁵. Contrary to Marxism's belief that art is a reflection of reality, Strzemiński stressed the opposite direction, namely the ability of art to have a performative impact on social reality. And this reveals the most interesting part of Strzemiński's activity – the educational offensive.

Strzemiński was aware that the a.r. group collection with the core component of abstract painting decades ahead of audience tastes had very little chance to be recognized. Minich was aware of that too. In the archival guestbook for the years 1948-1950 among the many appreciations for the museum organizers, there are such remarks as the following:

„In contemporary art we can see a lack of artistry and in our opinion behind it there is the lack of talent for painting. A sane man can barely imagine what a picture shows" (an inscription from 7 May 1949 signed by "Schoolgirls of State High School No.8")¹⁶. Under the date 27.11.1949 a couple of unknown viewers (signatures are illegible) wrote a more radical review: "Art is beautiful and has long been used to raise

the nation's culture while Neoplastic art is degenerate art which decreases the culture". On 15 April 1950 someone (signature illegible) appealed to the director: "Sir, if you want us to keep visiting the museum, then please take off the images of Picasso (original spelling) and other lunatics like him". 28 May 1950 another guest (signature illegible) noted boldly: "[...] Works of Hans Arp, Strzemiński, Katarzyna Kobro are sick creations of people, if not sick then straying into an abstraction far from reality, rather unrelated to life and therefore unable to interest people. It is nonsense that will be removed from the walls sooner or later. And in art history, it will be defined as the transient fall".

The same guestbook can testify that Minich's and Strzemiński's educational treatments were convincing. On 13 March 1949, visitors from 'the preparatory course at the university in Łódź' left a review as follows: "The history of the development of painting reflects the development of human thought and its ways of looking at the world". I would like to emphasise the phrase "the development of human thought" as bearing witness to the deep reception of Minich's exhibition narrative. There is another slightly longer quotation from an inscription on 15 March 1949 by M. (H.?) Stryjewski:

I have been interested in painting for several years and I am able to explain the Neoplastic Room for myself and the statues and images it contained. But I'm sure that the majority of people visiting the museum do not understand most of the phrases like heliographic, unistic and lyrical composition. Given this state of affairs, it is desirable that there should be more explanations throughout the entire second floor, so that everyone can understand and fall in love with art. Without understanding no one can enjoy it.

Below there is Minich's reply: "These deficiencies will be removed in the near future". Of course this required more than sticking on a label.

Minich and Strzemiński knew that the social condition of the Muzeum Sztuki Łódź required far more than a modern and refined narrative of exposition. They introduced a complex project of museum education. In fact, Minich began a series of lectures on art for workers once a week as early as in 1937 and continued them also in 1938. In his memoirs, he noted that at first the labourers did not appreciate a refined idiom of art history and forced him to stop by constantly moving about. The delegation of workers, however, demanded the lecturing be continued, but with language altered and adapted to the conditions of audience, which Minich did¹⁷. It seems to have been an extremely modern gesture in the 30's and years before the new museology movement. The museum as an institution waived the right to possess the only and reliable truth. The museum as an institution agreed to translate the knowledge from the dialect of art history into other tongues owned by the museum public.

After World War II, Minich continued the educational mission of the museum. He created an educational department in November 1950. He was also delivering lectures on art history in the State Institute of Theatrical Art (PIST) until 1946/47 and then at the University of Łódź until 1951/52 when the whole cathedral of the history of art had been dismantled as a consequence of Social Realism imposed on Polish cultural life.

Strzemiński's educational activity spanned a larger scale. The a.r. group was founded as a transdisciplinary team of theoreticians, visual artists and poets aiming at a greater impact for social and cultural change. It affected an educational project with a holistic approach, teaching recipients of contemporary art during that time through the fields of many cultural domains such as the philosophy of art, art history and poetry. The a.r. group released a series of publications on art and poetry labelled the a.r. group Library from the late 20s. Simultaneously by campaigning for the a.r. group ideas on the international stage, through papers printed in the most important European avant-garde magazines, Strzemiński himself taught art theory and history at all levels of institutional education, at the same time indirectly raising the level of both society's self-awareness and creativity through the implementation of art. He believed in the transformative power of art that modernises not only the artistic taste of the public, but also modernises the public itself. And this is another extremely contemporary thought.

On 27 June 1929, Strzemiński wrote in a letter to Julian Przyboś, a poet and a member of the a.r. group, a remark on the necessity of establishing the museum of modern art:

It is not enough to make a good work of art. [...] Conditions should be created in which the work of art will be able to work. [...] Imagine Picasso lived and painted his paintings in some dilapidated village. No one in the village would evaluate them and after his death, all the images would be gone and no one would learn that he ever existed¹⁸.

I am certain that this could be also have been said by Nelson Goodman, proving that making "works work is the museum's major mission"¹⁹.

Today the art museum institution's mission is, according to Jarosław Suchan, the present director of the Muzeum Sztuki Łódź, "the socialization of art", namely to allow the spectator to use the art in order to become independent in their views and free themselves from the power of the spectacle. This involves not only the capitalist spectacle. The museum should promote independence from the spectacle, even if

the source of such is museum discourse itself, with its range of attractive contemporary art roles, such as being “engaged” or “critical”. The museum should provoke the audience to experience art in their own way. The aim of a museum as a pedagogical tool is simply the emancipation of the guest²⁰.

It does not sound trivial even in 2015 when, fortunately, thanks to the new museology paradigm, it is hard to imagine the museum even without a professional educational department providing a wide range of educational activities and forms of audience development.

The paradox is that the new approach to the museum as an educational machinery has in fact been existent for decades in archives. The new museology has not invented a novelty. A conviction that the museum is essentially educational has existed in the Muzeum Sztuki since its very beginning in the 30’s. And what is actually left for us is the unintentional reprise of our founding fathers’ gestures. So, reading the museum as an archive, apparently a forgotten archive should be a mandatory exercise not only for me, but also for new museology.

ENDNOTES

¹ Ryszard Stanisławski, “Muzeum Sztuki w Łodzi – »muzeum otwarte« = Muzeum Sztuki Łódź as an »open museum«.” Manuscript. Reprinted in *Muzeum Sztuki. Monografia*, vol. 1, edited by Aleksandra Jach, Katarzyna Słoboda, Joanna Sokołowska, Magdalena Ziółkowska (Łódź: Muzeum Sztuki, 2015), 476.

² Magdalena Hniedziewicz, “»Niedziela« w Łódzkim Muzeum”, *Kultura* 26–29 June (1975). Cited in Marta Madejska, “Szesnaście minut wolnego czasu. Wybrane działania oświatowe Muzeum Sztuki w Łodzi w okresie PRL = Sixteen minutes of leisure time. Selected educational activities of Muzeum Sztuki Łódź in the communist period,” in *Muzeum Sztuki. Monografia*, vol. 1, edited by Aleksandra Jach, Katarzyna Słoboda, Joanna Sokołowska, Magdalena Ziółkowska (Łódź: Muzeum Sztuki, 2015), 421.

³ Marta Madejska, “Szesnaście minut wolnego czasu. Wybrane działania oświatowe Muzeum Sztuki w Łodzi w okresie PRL = Sixteen minutes of leisure time. Selected educational activities of Muzeum Sztuki Łódź in the communist period,” in *Muzeum Sztuki. Monografia*, vol. 1, edited by Aleksandra Jach, Katarzyna Słoboda, Joanna Sokołowska, Magdalena Ziółkowska (Łódź: Muzeum Sztuki, 2015), 396-436.

⁴ Marian Minich, *Szalona Galeria = Mad Gallery* (Łódź: Wydawnictwo Łódzkie, 1963), 19.

⁵ Iwona Luba, “Koncepcja muzeum sztuki nowoczesnej według Władysława Strzemińskiego – próba rekonstrukcji = The Władysław Strzemiński’s concept of a modern art museum – trial reconstruction,” in *Muzeum Sztuki. Monografia*, vol. 1, edited by Aleksandra Jach, Katarzyna Słoboda, Joanna Sokołowska, Magdalena Ziółkowska (Łódź: Muzeum Sztuki, 2015), 68.

⁶ Ibidem, 80-82.

⁷ Minich, *Szalona Galeria...*, 80.

⁸ Ibidem, 82.

⁹ Ibidem, 153.

¹⁰ Władysław Strzemiński, “Muzeum = A museum,” in *Muzeum Sztuki. Monografia*, vol. 1, edited by Aleksandra Jach, Katarzyna Słoboda, Joanna Sokołowska, Magdalena Ziółkowska (Łódź: Muzeum Sztuki, 2015), 59. This text is sometimes attributed to Bolesław Hochlinger.

¹¹ Ibidem, 59.

¹² Władysław Strzemiński, *Teoria widzenia = A theory of Vision* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Literackie, 1969).

¹³ Marcin Szelaġ, “Testament muzealny Mariana Minicha = The museal testament of Marian Minich,” in *Muzeum Sztuki. Monografia*, vol. 1, edited by Aleksandra Jach, Katarzyna Słoboda, Joanna Sokołowska, Magdalena Ziółkowska (Łódź: Muzeum Sztuki, 2015), 279

¹⁴ Ibidem, 284. See also Marian Minich, “O nową organizację muzeów sztuki = Towards new organisation of art museums,” in *Muzeum Sztuki. Monografia*, vol. 1, edited by Aleksandra Jach, Katarzyna Słoboda, Joanna Sokołowska, Magdalena Ziółkowska (Łódź: Muzeum Sztuki, 2015), 345.

¹⁵ Minich, “O nową organizację...” 351.

¹⁶ Selection of quotations from facsimiles reprinted in *Muzeum Sztuki. Monografia*, vol. 1, edited by Aleksandra Jach, Katarzyna Słoboda, Joanna Sokołowska, Magdalena Ziółkowska (Łódź: Muzeum Sztuki, 2015), 308-324.

¹⁷ Minich, *Szalona Galeria...*, 67-69.

¹⁸ Władysław Strzemiński, “Listy do Juliana Przybosia 1929-1933 = Letters to Julian Przyboś 1929-1933,” edited by Andrzej Turowski, *Rocznik Historii Sztuki*, vol. 9 (1973): 224.

¹⁹ Nelson Goodman, “The End of the Museum?” *Journal of Aesthetic Education*, vol. 19, no. 2, Special Issue: Art Museums and Education, Summer (1985): 56.

²⁰ Jarosław Suchan, “Muzeum Sztuki: między muzeum a sztuką = Muzeum Sztuki: between a museum and the art,” in *Muzeum Sztuki w Łodzi. Monografia*, vol. 2, edited by Daniel Muzyczuk, Magdalena Ziółkowska (Łódź: Muzeum Sztuki, 2015), 42.

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DARIA KUBIAK AND KIM SKJOLDAGER-NIELSEN

THE MUSEUM AS A REPOSITORY FOR LOCAL IDENTITY AND SOCIAL CAPITAL: AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT IN PERFORMING THE EXHIBITION – TWO CASES FROM ŁÓDŹ

These years cultural institutions of various kinds are debating over similar issues: The decrease of audience numbers and the increase of their age. The audience development strategies looked for in order to handle these challenges are typically concerned with fulfilling the audience's needs with the aim to sell more tickets. Research carried out in this field shows that the level of education is crucial when it comes to attendance rates¹. With the so-called performative turn in the humanities, researching the exhibition visitor's experience has gained ground in museology and arts studies, the notion of an exhibition as something that is performed with the visitor being the crux. Questions have been raised such as how does the design of an exhibition affect the visitor during the visit and what does the visitor get out of the visit.

It seems rather straight forward: If an institution wants to increase its attendance rate, then the first concern should not be outreaching marketing strategies but the intended outcome of the visit and how to design an exhibition that could produce this kind of experience. However, as research of audience visits to exhibitions have found, exhibitions unfold as events; they are static displays of selected (archival or otherwise obtained) material only so much as they can be arranged – curated in a certain way – to present a conceptualised topic to a visitor. The intention of the curator is only a potentiality of the actual meeting that takes place, physically and cognitively, between the visitor and the exhibited objects. As Canadian curator Bruce Fergusson has it, an exhibition is a complex communicative relationship: "...a strategic system of representations"², and this problematic relational aspect is taken further by the Danish museologist Bruno Ingemann as he defines the exhibition as being constituted by a meeting "between the physical room of possibilities in the exhibition and the visitor's mental room of possibilities"³. In order to stress the performance aspect, one may use concepts developed by performance studies professor Richard Schechner: the curator can only hope that the visitor will behave in accordance with the script that is embedded in the exhibition design⁴. Hence, it is possible to argue that audience development always ought to be an integrated dimension of designing an exhibition.

In this paper we will explore different strategies of exhibition design from the performance studies approach – the exhibition seen staging for the visitor performing the exhibition. Our purpose is not to suggest ways of increasing ticket sales, as we consider this a bi-effect of a well-designed exhibition. We focus on how audience development can be a tool for audience emancipation through design. How can a design allow for social inclusion and thus become a "theatre for development". In this sense the emancipation must strategically rely on the topos or geographical place of the exhibition, in order to speak to the local sense of identity. To make this point we have chosen to analyse two exhibitions in

Łódź that for cultural reasons seem to be either uniquely associated with this city (even Poland) or located in a site that poses interesting possibilities for reaching new attendees. These are namely the Film Museum neighbouring the world-famous Łódź Film School and ms², part of the Museum of Arts in Łódź, which exhibits collections of 20th and 21st Century art next to the central shopping and entertainment venue Manufaktura. From the audience development point of view, these museums have the potential to be repositories for Bourdieusian social capital and local identity, which is readily available to large audiences. Or do they? This question we aim to answer through our exhibition analyses. Thus, the article will both address the quality of the exhibitions from the strategic point of view and contribute to the general discussion of audience development in the museum.

Audience Development

Before we enter the exhibitions, an introduction to audience development is called for. In particular, we will relate it to the somewhat puzzling concept of the “theatre of development”.

Audience development is originally a British concept. One of the first researchers, who investigated this field of study systematically, is Nobuko Kawashima (originating from the area of cultural policy studies). She described the British approach by dividing audience development actions into four categories: extended marketing, social inclusion/outreach, taste cultivation, audience education⁵. The first two categories deal with the quantitative aspects of audience development. They are targeting not-easily-reachable audiences ranging from those who have almost never visited any cultural institution to lapsed attendees. The interest of the last two categories lies more within the existing audiences. Here audience development focuses on efforts to cultivate the taste of the audience and present new art forms or endeavours to elevate the understanding and enjoyment of the arts which existing attendees currently consume. With regard to Kawashima’s approach, Danish performance design scholar Anja Mølle Lindelof notices “all those aspects taken together show that audience development covers the financial, artistic, social and educational aspects of institutional efforts in order to address the audience in new ways”⁶.

What is interesting in our context is the addition of social inclusion as a specific category in Kawashima’s understanding of audience development. It is the only one to draw attention to the attendees who are (almost) not visiting any cultural institutions. The assumption behind targeting this audience is that culture should be accessible to all people. It expresses the ideology of culture as being of universal value and its social aim is the democratisation of culture. As Kawashima points out, it “mirrors the Liberal Humanist tradition of British and European cultural policy, which insists on the rights and potential of all individuals to benefit from culture and places a faith in a common culture that transcends the social, political and cultural divisions of the nation”⁷. The stress put on “non-audiences”, people who do not feel the need to take part in cultural events, takes institutions to new territories where they focus not only on the arts, but also on the overall social development⁸. In order to make art and culture accessible for everyone, institutions have to gain awareness of the factors that create an unequal participation in the arts and find solutions for various barriers that drive away potential audiences (like ticket prices, geographic distance or the atmosphere in the venues). The design of a museum exhibition, theatre performance or concert, etc., may assist in diminishing those barriers.

If non-attendees are to be firmly included in the audience development spectrum, Lindelof suggests adding a fifth category to Kawashima’s four: “theatre for development, in which the aim is not for institutions to reach out, but to empower subaltern communities through the use of theatre methodologies and using their own language and culture to strategize solutions to their problems”⁹. Lindelof draws on the British drama-pedagogue David Kerr’s description of theatre for development as a combination of different theatre methodologies, which are being used in order to improve people’s quality of life. The term originates in programmes prepared for developing nations and in the beginning focused on rural and “low-tech” theatre, such as Augusto Boal’s Theatre of the Oppressed developed in Brazil and Peru in the 1950s and 60s. With the introduction of new media, it spread to radio (dramas) and TV (theatre and soap operas) but covered the same issues as the original theatre for development projects in Third World countries.

Theatre for development focuses on communication with and within subaltern communities and works as a kind of tool for social inclusion through art. In Third World countries it is dedicated to issues important for the local audiences, like feminism, AIDS, or children and youth projects. When compared with Kawashima’s view on audience development, especially social inclusion, there are distinctive

similarities. The main goal is to reach subaltern communities through art: To make art and culture more accessible by focusing it on those communities’ issues and by speaking to them in their own language. Art becomes an important tool not only for raising cultural awareness and Bildung itself but for addressing social problems as well. Hence, audience development does not only focus on reaching out to audiences, but also on how to empower them.

The evolution of the theatre of development has taken it into other media: radio, television and the Internet. In addition it may be introduced in connection with the arts, since cultural institutions nowadays are dealing with versatile projects, which support a breeding of hybrid forms of expression. It is no longer revolutionary to talk about “performative exhibitions”, which conceptually demands the visitor’s involvement or intervention¹⁰, or “performance-installations” that combine the theatrical with immersive and interactive environments¹¹. The idea of a theatre for development, in this view, can be transplanted to other cultural projects, in this case, museum exhibitions. The idea will remain the same: using the arts in order to empower the audience, but the medial means will change. In a semi-metaphorical sense, the performance studies approach turns the exhibition into a theatre of arts appreciation (cf. the English use of the word theatre in “anatomical theatre”, “operating theatre”, “theatre of war”).

What is more, a theatre for development does not have to focus only on specific subaltern communities. Cultural policies in Europe often consider access to the arts as a way to improve the quality of people’s lives in general. This mostly concerns the barriers that different segments have to overcome or negotiate in order to take part in culture. However, when one looks at the list of barriers in which the financial, geographical or those connected with the atmosphere of the institution are the most considerable, there are also other barriers. Surveys have found that most of the potential attendees may at one point of their lives have felt excluded from visiting cultural institutions. Therefore, a theatre for development can be used as a method for developing all audiences, not only subaltern ones.

Within this context, the main questions of our exhibition analyses are, what kind of audience strategy do they employ? How may experienced attendees and new attendees follow the exhibition and relate to it? Finally we hope answer the question as to whether or not the design of the two exhibitions integrate audience development that could emancipate their audiences in terms of local identity and social capital?

The Film Museum

The Film Museum is located at the former palace of Karl Wilhelm Scheibler, a German-born Polish industrialist, businessman and textile manufacturer. The museum’s collection consists of films, posters, set designs and puppets for animated films, technical equipment and other memorabilia associated with Polish cinematography. The museum also gives access to the palace and exhibits the story of the Scheibler family and their considerable part in the development of Łódź as an industrial city in the 19th and 20th Century.

The museum entrance is located in a white factory or workshop annex to the palace. Placed next to a park it is quite inconspicuous and easy to miss. When the visitor enters the museum and buys a ticket at the small information desk, s/he is directed to the basement, past a flight of stairs leading up to the museum cinema (which is not solely dedicated to a historical repertoire but also reruns recent releases, Hollywood blockbusters, Polish films and other productions). There are no leaflets or guide for the exhibitions unless asked for. At first, the path leads through a long corridor with movie stills from the beginning of the 20th Century and an old projector halfway along. These exhibits play a rather decorative role since there is no description or explanation about what is being presented. The next corridor is decorated with copperplates presenting people and pieces of equipment connected with film production. However, also here the objects appear to be mainly decorative since there are no text plaques offering information on what the display is about.

This corridor leads to the rooms with the collection “From negative to copy”. It presents many different devices for copying and editing and presents a history of editing using big boards on the walls with illustrations of key contributors to its technical development accompanied by text in Polish. The descriptions are linear ordered, quite detailed and include a history of montage as well. It is hard to know which of the machines on display is the one being described on the wall. They seem to be presented rather randomly. When the visitor is standings immediately next to them, the cutting boards almost invite touch and manipulation, but at the same time the exhibition design does not encourage such actions.

After leaving this collection, the visitor walks through a few rooms with old film posters. Within this collection the cafe is located. Again, one gets the impression that the posters are merely decoration for the visitors passing to the next collection, as there are no explanations in this part. The collection is randomly arranged without any evident or implied thematic structure. It may provide casual amusement when one recognises a poster or the film it is associated with, as we did with the poster of Andrzej Wajda's *Panna Nikt* and the Polish poster of Disney's *Snow White*.

The poster display leads to the ground floor, where visitors suddenly enter a very different space. This is the first floor of the palace with its elaborately decorated rooms and exhibits devoted to the former owners of the palace, the Scheibler family. We experienced this as an abrupt shift of setting, as if travelling through time and space. It is like stepping out of context because on this floor there are no film exhibits. The interiors and text and photo displays tell the story of the mid-nineteenth century palace, which was rebuilt in 1886-1888 into the form of the present neo-renaissance style. What is on exhibition here are the elements which have survived in relatively good condition: the stucco decoration, tiled stoves, painted decoration, wooden panelling and furniture, the fabrics of furniture coverings, wallpapers, mosaics, floors and stained-glass windows. The exhibition continues through a few rooms decorated in the style of the epoch, with display boards on the history of Łódź and the Scheibler family. Visitors may read the texts (all in Polish) or just look at the historical pictures or take in the atmosphere of this extraordinary place. Beside the name of the building "The Film Palace" there is no connotation with the film industry. The museum webpage describes this section of the museum in the following way: "These [elements of the decoration – our addition] constitute an authentic exhibition of the city's industrial historic past during the years of its birth and development and also refer to the history of Polish cinema: in the post-war years the palace often changed ownership and its interiors were often used as film studios"¹². However, the exhibition itself does not include this existing connection with local film production.

From the industrial times visitors go to the first floor to see a temporary exhibition on *Ida*, the Polish movie, which most remarkably won the 2015 Oscar for Best Foreign Language Film, the first Polish movie to ever do so. There, visitors may have a look at movie memorabilia: posters from different countries, awards (several in addition to the Oscar), selected scenes from the script, interviews with the artists, reviews, stills, location studies, etc. There is no specific sequence in which to see the material, although each room is dedicated to the afore-mentioned themes. All the exhibits in their non-linear order create an impressionistic take on the movie and present different aspects of its production, distribution and reception. Everything is described in both Polish and English. All the rooms in this collection are painted grey – and in that way the ambience of the black-and-white movie is conveyed.

On the same floor there are other collections being exhibited: set designs and puppets from the animated movie *Flying Machine* and the exhibition "A Contemporary of the Cinematograph. The magic of séances in stereoscopy". *Flying Machine* is a story about a journey in the footsteps of the Polish composer, Frederic Chopin: the piano inhabited by his soul becomes a flying machine and takes two children for a journey across Europe. The film was the largest European animated production realized in 2011. At the museum one may walk through a Parisian street with the flying piano and character dolls. It shows what the set of this kind of animated production is like. However, in the room there is no information about the exhibition, its purpose and reasons for showing it in Łódź.

"A contemporary of the cinematograph. The magic of the séances in stereoscopy" presents different 3D devices from early film history till today, though randomly arranged. The showpiece is an original photoplasticon. On the walls one may find a few descriptions of the presented objects and explanations of how they worked. Everything is in Polish. There is not enough historical information to track the history of the technological development and no reason given for exhibiting this collection. The photoplasticon is installed in an all too small room with its contemporary press coverage to show how the public received it. One can barely walk along the wall to read the texts or really appreciate the huge apparatus it in its entirety.

The third floor is devoted to stop motion animation. There are an overwhelming number of dolls and movie sets presented and in no discernible order, which adds confusion to the experience. There is no designated or implied path to follow, or conceptual take on the exhibited objects to suggest how to reflect upon them. The plaques present the titles of the movies in Polish, but no information is given about these movies or their production. One is left guessing about them and the significance of this major and possibly unique collection: Why is it here? What is the story? Has it something to do with a specialisation in stop motion animation at the Łódź Film School? There are a few installations which seem to be prepared especially for children: some models which children could possibly use for drawings and a piece of set decoration representing an animal's mouth through which children may crawl; but there is no information about the activities that children may partake in. The exhibits are mostly behind glass or placed at a distance from the paths so it is obvious that visitors may not interact with them.

The last parts of the exhibition are presented on the ground floor behind the Scheiblers' interiors and entitled "The miracle of animated photography" and "Movie set mysteries". They present many kinds of cameras, the turning points of film history, biographies of important inventors and a blue screen studio set-up in which on a monitor visitors may see themselves being recorded by the camera and imposed against a digital image backdrop. This is the one of the few explicitly performative exhibits in the museum. There are many descriptions placed on the walls of this section, again all in Polish. What is lacking is a description of the whole collection to explain why it has been put on display.

Considering the topos or geographical location of the Film Museum in Łódź within close vicinity to the Film School and the fact that there has been and still are, considerable film production activities taking place in and around the city, there is a potential for selecting, acquiring or borrowing archival material for exhibitions that could speak to and create awareness of this local context. This we did not see explored in the exhibitions. Most prominently this possibility exists in the interiors of the Scheibler palace which (paradoxically) is the part that the new museum attendee would associate the least with film production, despite its colloquial name "The Film Palace". The fact that it has been used as a film studio to reflect for instance, the industrialisation in Łódź in such a well-known film (later made into a TV-series) as Wajda's *The Promised Land*, makes us wonder why curators have not considered this obvious possibility in order to connect with the local audience. As it is, one has to look specifically for any relation to film production in the exhibited texts about the Scheiblers and their palace, to find a very brief mention of the palace's post-war use as a studio. Exhibitions about the use of the interiors during other productions besides Wajda's could be interesting too, not only from a local film history point of view, but also in order to offer practical insights into the use of real location if a fully equipped film set with lights, camera, microphones, booms, etc., were installed in one of the rooms. The museum obviously has a lot of technical equipment in its collections for making such an exhibition. One could also imagine temporary exhibitions that thematically or associatively connect to the history of the palace and its interiors such as the role of movie benefactors given the fact that industrialists (if not in Łódź then elsewhere) often were patrons of the arts, or to historical movies that would relate to its neo-renaissance décor.

Another potential for connecting with the local audience is shown by the large collection of stop-motion animation objects. It would not take much effort to reorganise this part of the museum into a very engaging exhibition that would connect to and inform the visitor about the activities of the Łódź animated films studio, Se-ma-for, which is one of the oldest studios in Europe. During the 65 years of its existence, there have been produced 1450 animated movies and 2 of them have won an Oscar for animated short films (in 1982 and 2008). As it is this history is lost on the visitor.

In general the Film Museum exhibits are not informative enough and there is a need for more thematic focus of the exhibition designs. In Ingemann's conception of the exhibition, the typical effect of the current displays in the Film Museum is the creation of too many possibilities between the physical exhibition and the visitor's mental room of possibilities, resulting in an impressionism, which might only appeal to the film buff.

ms²

ms² is located in the historic building of a 19th Century weaving plant, in the periphery of Manufaktura, the large shopping and entertainment centre in Łódź, next to the huge Andels hotel. The four-story museum building is visible from the entrance to the main shopping mall, sporting its iconic ms² logo on the corner of its roof and with huge banners attached to the walls. Its location seems to offer easy access to an experience of modern art to the many that do their shopping in the mall, as well as tourists who come to see Manufaktura for its historical buildings or stay at Andels hotel. It is placed there as an annex of the nearby Museum of Arts in Łódź (ms¹) and the locus of the exhibition "Collection of 20th and 21st Century Art".

The museum's main feature, besides its interesting topos, is the engaging way in which the objects within its collection are presented. Instead of a chronological order representing various periods and movements, the works of art are arranged into themes and motifs relevant to a contemporary public. The exhibition is presented on three floors and the title "Atlas of Modernity" is a tell-tail sign of its organisational concept with its connotations of geography, mapping, overview, travel, etc., applied to the abstract concept of a phase in the development of society and art. As director of the museum, Jarosław Suchan, writes in the preface to the exhibition's folder: "The 'atlas' appearing in the title defines best

the structure of the exhibition: it is an unusual collection of ‘maps’, each describing the topography of a different territory of modernity”¹³. Every floor presents a few themes that reflect different concepts connected to modernity. Different genres and authors are mixed, paintings, installations and sculptures are standing next to each other, themes are not strictly observed, they invite the visitor to create a narrative rather than present closed chapters.

The first floor opens with a large text board describing the theme of the exhibition “Atlas of modernity”. It explains the term modernity: “An age whose origins some associate with the French Revolution and the Enlightenment ideals of reason and progress, while others relate it to the industrial revolution and the development of capitalism. It is also a state of mind: a strong sense of one’s own subjectivity and the autonomy of the individual in relation to the community...” The idea behind the collection is unfolded, the non-linear, thematic-metonymic structuring principle, which might prepare/inspire the visitor to go on her/his own journey into the proposed mental topography of modernity.

All of the themes are distributed all over the three floors. The first floor has three themes: Museum, Autonomy and Capital. On the second floor one may find Experiment, Propaganda, Machine, City and Progress. On the third floor Norms and Standards, Catastrophe, Tradition, The Self, Emancipation and Revolution are being presented. Descriptions of every one of them are placed on the walls in Polish and English. Every description of a theme is accompanied by a map at the bottom of the plaque, showing which part of the exhibition belongs to it. Even though there are no sharp borders between the sections of the exhibition, it is possible to follow the development of the themes and at the same time they all connect and fluctuate. The descriptions consist of definitions of every theme. These main guiding descriptions are supplemented with elaborated presentations of some artists’ works in the various sections, but not all. This may assist interpretation of particular pieces and inspire reflection on the whole collection.

Every exhibit is presented with a title, name of the artist, technique and QR code, which refers to the individual work. Using the code to access further information with an app on your mobile may appeal to younger visitors. We did not. Instead we relied on the fewer longer descriptions. For example for *Centaur* by St. Ruby (an experimental film), *We are not afraid* by Les Levine (a poster showing a young couple, part of an exhibition in Łódź from 1981), *Vehicle* by Krzysztof Wodiczko (design and model of a vehicle constructed by the artist) or *Art = Capital* by Joseph Beuys (description of this slogan used by the artist). Those descriptions add more to the understanding and interpretation of the art, but they seem to be rather random and come up as a surprise.

There is also a local connection in the exhibition as famous modernist artists from Łódź are represented. Katarzyna Kobro, a Polish sculptor of Russian, Latvian and German origin, married to Władysław Strzemiński, member of the a.r. (Real Avant Garde) group founded in Łódź, of which the International Collection of Modern Art – one of the best collections of its time in Europe and which became the most important collection of the Arts Museum in Łódź – is represented and mentioned in connection with three themes: Autonomy, The Self, and Revolution. Władysław Strzemiński, one of the initiators of creating the collection of modern art in the Muzeum Sztuki in Łódź, member of a.r. (Real Avant Garde) group, co-founder and lecturer at the State Higher School of the Visual Arts (SHSVA) in Łódź, is represented and mentioned seven times: in the introduction, under Museum, Autonomy, Norms and Standards, Catastrophe, and Revolution.

All together the exhibition is interesting in the way it creates a metonymy between the cognitive level, theme and topography plus the actual navigation through the exhibition (using the maps); in this way the concept of the exhibition is bodily internalised in performing it. Here the curatorial script is truly embodied in the possibilities of navigation that the exhibition architecture and the organising of objects allow for: the behaviour intended by the curator is readily restored. The principle of assemblage (itself a late modernistic concept) in the way the materials are brought together without immediately or explicitly connecting, creates cognitive blanks in the mapping that invite the attendee to fill them in. Probably the exhibition becomes progressively interesting the more you know about history and culture, but even visitors who are not that informed might get an illuminating overview and performative experience of modernity. The descriptions, however, are not always easy to follow and the connotations are not that obvious, but mostly they make sense, e.g. we have Norm and Standards, The Self and Emancipation next to each other. This exhibition design appeals to the visitor to engage, explore and immerse her/himself in the collection and spend time in the museum, to see every floor in order to look for connections. This ideal visitor following the curator’s script might not sound like the typical shopper going to Manufaktura and probably s/he is not – art consumption does not equal consumerism; but none the less there is a subtle parallel between the restored behaviour in the exhibition and the restored behaviour in the shopping mall: both patterns of behaviour describe an eclectic navigation between thematic sections, in Manufaktura between the different shops each representing themes of e.g. food, shoes, clothes, electronics and each shopper’s path make up for a narrative of shopping. In parallel, the exhibition attendee’s path forms

a narrative of modernity. Even if the narratives are thematically different, they structurally resemble each other and come close to Schechner’s concept of performance, which is the “twice restored behaviour”¹⁴ of (everyday or fictional) life; the visitor not only restores the pattern of behaviour pre-scripted by the curator, which is reminiscent of the modernist flâneur’s path through the city topography, but s/he also restores the similar behaviour that is embedded in the shopper’s path. The connection might not occur to every visitor, yet it is embodied there and may ease the experience of a first-time attendee.

Conclusion

We have aimed to answer the question: Does the design of the two exhibitions integrate audience development in a way that will emancipate their audiences in terms of local identity and social capital? Breaking it down into two questions, in what sense may we perceive the two museums as repositories for local identity? And for social capital? There are no categorical answers to these questions; to answer them more fully we would have had to make qualitative surveys of audience experiences. However, since we have focused on the design of the exhibitions, we can evaluate these in terms of their potential extrapolated from our own experiences.

We understand a repository in its colloquial meaning to be a place where things are deposited or stored. Therefore, the two museum buildings and their history have to be included in the evaluation. They are not newly constructed custom-made museums, but old buildings, which are intimately related to the history of Łódź: factories and an industrialist’s palace. These are constant reminders of the city’s past. In both museums the collections and the ways they are presented or could be presented pose possible connections for the visitor to make to the city outside. These connections may be seen as factors for the formation of local identity; through the exhibitions and their objects and themes, one may have one’s identity as an inhabitant of Łódź confirmed. Furthermore, the locations of the museums are ideal for emphasizing these relationships and this is actively explored by ms². This is done partially by presenting local artists as significant persons in the Polish modernist movement, although most surprisingly through the exhibition’s thematic-metonymic organisational principle reflecting the contemporary behaviour in the next-door shopping mall. Thus, ms² achieves a performative exhibition format that may help to develop its audience in making identification with the museum easier; one may feel at ease with this kind of experience.

Local identity means having a sense of belonging to the local community. To gain access to or to develop this sense of belonging requires social capital. Pierre Bourdieu understands capital as “accumulated labour (in its materialized form or its ‘incorporated’, embodied form) which, when appropriated on a private, i.e., exclusive basis by agents or groups of agents, enables them to appropriate social energy in the form of reified or living labour”¹⁵. Capital may then be acquired through one’s experience with, one’s labour of, in this case, going to the museum. Social capital refers to having access to or being a member of a group.

These relationships may exist only in the practical state, in material and/or symbolic exchanges which help to maintain them. They may also be socially instituted and guaranteed by the application of a common name (the name of a family, a class, or a tribe or of a school, a party, etc.) and by a whole set of institutional acts designed simultaneously to form and inform those who undergo them; in this case, they are more or less really enacted and so maintained and reinforced, in exchanges¹⁶.

Going to the museum may confirm one’s relationship to the culturally active group, but it is the possibility to mentally connect to the city through the exhibited objects that may allow one to recognize visiting the exhibition as being an inhabitant of the city. The recognition of belonging to a group, i.e. having social capital, is essential for audience development. If the exhibition generates social capital through its relationship to the city it may appeal to both the attendees and the non-attendees’ urge to belong and possibly to a sense of taking pride in the cultural and artistic inheritance of one’s city – a shared ownership and hence the basis for social relations.

EDNOTS

¹ Geir Vestheim, “Cultural policy and democracy: an introduction,” *International journal of cultural policy*, no. 18 (5) (2012): 493–504.

² Bruce Ferguson, “Exhibition Rhetorics: Material speech and utter sense,” in *Thinking about Exhibitions*, ed. by Reesa Greenberg, Bruce Ferguson & Sandy Nairne (London: Routledge, 1996), 178.

³ Bruno Ingemann, “Den besøgende. Social identitet, læring og oplevelse – en metodisk discussion,” in *Udstillinger mellem focus & flimmer*, ed. by Elisabeth Bodin & Johanna Lassenius (Copenhagen: Multivers, 2006), 86.

⁴ Richard Schechner, *Between Theater and Anthropology* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985), 37.

⁵ Nobuko Kawashima, *Beyond the division of attenders vs. non-attenders: a study into audience development in policy and practice* (Coventry: Centre for Cultural Policy Studies, University of Warwick, 2000), 8.

⁶ Anja Mølle Lindelof, “Audience development and its blind spot: a quest for pleasure and play in the discussion of performing arts institutions,” *International Journal of Cultural Policy* no.21 (2) (2015): 202.

⁷ Kawashima, *Beyond the division...*, 19.

⁸ See: Bourdieu’s description of school system and cultural institutions in reproducing notion of legitimate taste: Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: a social critique of the judgement of taste* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1984).

⁹ Anja Mølle Lindelof, “Audience development...”, 203.

¹⁰ For instance, the ABBA Museum in Stockholm.

¹¹ Theatre groups like Danish-Austrian SIGNA and British Punchdrunk uses this format.

¹² The Film Museum webpage, accessed 1.IV.2015, <http://www.kinomuzeum.pl/index.php?action=muzen>.

¹³ Jarosław Suchan, “Atlas of Modernity,” accessed 20.III.2015, <http://msl.org.pl/static/upload/atlas-nowocznosci-issuu-ang.pdf>.

¹⁴ Schechner, *Between Theater...*, 36.

¹⁵ Pierre Bourdieu “Forms of Capital,” in: *Cultural Theory: An Anthology*, ed. by Imre Szeman, Timothy Kaposy (Hoboken, N.J.: John Wiley & Sons, 2010), 81.

¹⁶ Ibidem, 86.

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WARRIOR

INSPIRACJE 2015 TRAKL-TAT

PROGRAM / PROGRAMM

23.03. – 07.04 (Prolog)

Wystawa / Ausstellung „Trakl Inspiracje”
Biblioteka Austriacka, al. Mickiewicza 22
Wstęp wolny / Eintritt frei

13.04

Panel dyskusyjny „Wojna Trakla”

Paneldiskussion „Trakls Krieg”

(prof. Andrzej Chwalba, Uniwersytet Jagielloński; ks. dr Józef Bremer SJ,
Akademia Ignatianum; ppłk Dariusz Kaczmarczyk)
Aula 5. Wojskowego Szpitala Klinicznego
z Polikliniką, ul. Wrocławska 1-3, godz. 18
Wstęp wolny / Eintritt frei

14.04

Wernisaż instalacji „Wojna Trakla” Tassilo Blittersdorffa

Eröffnung der Installation „Trakls Krieg”

von Tassilo Blittersdorff

(słowo wstępne / Einführung: dr hab. Łukasz Konieczko,
Akademia Sztuk Pięknych w Krakowie)

(wystawa potrwa do/die Ausstellung dauert bis 17.05).

Pokaz filmu Karola Radziszewskiego: „MS 101”

/ Vorführung des Films „MS 101” von Karol Radziszewski

Arteteka WBP w Krakowie, ul. Rajska 12, godz. 18

Wstęp wolny / Eintritt frei

15.04

Rozstrzygnięcie Ogólnopolskiego konkursu poetyckiego
im. Georga Trakla

Entscheidung des poetischen Wettwerbs namens Georg Trakl

Honorowy Patronat: dr Emil Brix, ambasador Republiki Austrii

w Moskwie, konsul generalny Republiki Austrii w Krakowie

1990-1995 / Ehre Patenschaft: Dr. Emil Brix, Botschafter der

Republik Österreich in Moskau, General Konsul der Republik

Österreich in Krakau 1990-1995

(jury: Ryszard Krynicki, Marcin Baran, dr hab. Marek Karwala)

Arteteka WBP w Krakowie, ul. Rajska 12, godz. 17.30

Trakl-tat Party

Koncert: Roma Warmus śpiewa Rilkego

Konzert: Roma Warmus singt Rilke

Pauza In Garden, ul. Rajska 12, godz. 18.30

Wstęp wolny / Eintritt frei

16.04

Koncert zespołu Midlife Crisis „Wybrańcy bogów umierają młodo”

Konzert der Midlife Crisis Rock-Gruppe

„Von Gott erwählte sterben früh”

Klub Zielony Kontrabas, ul. Miodowa 14, godz. 20

Wstęp wolny / Eintritt frei

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tassilo blittersdorff / trakls krieg

aus dem polymorph verschränkten oeuvre von tassilo blittersdorff
kristallisiert sich ein thema: zeit.

er verknüpft es mit politischen, ästhetischen und
sprachphilosophischen aspekten.

er folgt der trennung von *temps/durée*, von *messbarer und*
gedehnter zeit. er greift aus in die *historische zeit*.

alle drei formen von zeit sind gegenstand seiner reservierten
inszenierung von *trakls krieg*. sie scheint ein mise en scène ohne
autor. der künstler greift auf die gegenständlichen und schriftlichen
quellen zurück und lässt sie sich selbst darstellen, ohne
arrangement, jenseits von interpretation.

die artifiziiellen eingriffe in die selbstdarstellung des realen sind
gleichermassen minimal wie schwerwiegend: gesteuerte und
ausser kontrolle geratene farbveränderungen, gezielte und
aleatorische selektion der dokumente - in den reproduktionen, im
feld-wörterbuch und im abfall der geschichte.

tassilo blittersdorff hat sich in früheren arbeiten (ab ca.1990) bereits
mit dem faktor zeit befasst. in einer umfangreichen serie bewirkten
galvanische prozesse far bentstehung und farbveränderung.
kupferdrähte und grafit waren das bildmaterial; gemalt haben
chemische substanzen und die elektrizität. gesteuert hat sie der
künstler. das waren neutrale veränderungen ohne künstlerisches
interesse am verfall. jedes stadium war gleichwertig.

die texte der dokumente in *trakls krieg* sollten durch das licht
gelöscht werden. die lettern sollten im verdunkelnden hintergrund
aufgehen. ihr informationsverlust war geplant.

trakls portätfoto und die reproduktion der k.u.k.

propagandistischen hetze werden im parallelen verlauf
fotochemisch getilgt. hier baut tassilo blittersdorff auch formal die
metaphorik des schwindens ein. sie macht keinen unterschied
zwischen einem frühen militaristisch instrumentalisierten porträt
und der grafik des *handgranatenwerfers*, die kurz vor dem
kriegsende keinen reklamewert mehr gehabt hatte.

das thema zeit wird durch das thema vergänglichkeit überlagert.



Tassilo Blittersdorff / Trakl's War

there's one main topic arising from tassilo blittersdorff's polymorphously woven oeuvre: time.

he connects it with political, aesthetic and linguistic-philosophical aspects. he obeys the separation of *temps / durée*, of *measurable* and *dilated time*, he extends into the *historic time*.

all the three forms of time are subject matters for his restrained staging of *trakl's war*. It seems to be a *mise en scène* with the author missing.

the artist refers to objective and written sources and makes them portray themselves without any arrangement or interpretation.

the artificial interventions into the self-statement of something real are of minimal and serious matter in the same way:

colour alterations, controlled and got out of control, specifically and aleatorically selected documents – shown in the reproductions, in the *battlefield dictionary* and in the history's leavings.

tassilo blittersdorff dealt with the time factor in earlier works of art. In an extensive series galvanic processes originated colours and their alterations by using copper wires and graphite media. chemical substances and electricity were painting directed by the artist. these were neutral changes without the artist's interest in the decline. each stage was of equal value.

the documents' texts in *trakl's war* were supposed to be deleted by the light. The letters should disperse in the getting dark background with their loss of information intended.

the photograph showing trakl and the reproduction of the monarchy's smear campaign running parallel are photochemically erased. tassilo blittersdorff has also formally used the metaphor of fading away. there's no difference between the early militaristically influenced portrait and the graphic work showing the *man throwing handgrenades* that hadn't been of any promoting effect shortly before the war's ending. the time theme is overlaid by the topic of transience.

trakl's portrait as an army officer and the propaganda script showing the *man throwing handgrenades* on its cover were the representatives of a disappearing regime that didn't want to accept its near ending.

tassilo blittersdorff confronts the government's self- definition with his reflexion viewed from the historic distance and causes the turning from its glory to its charge and from its self-favour to its disgrace.

the self- defaming function of the sources has been left to the observer.

tassilo blittersdorff adds the trace of irony. it is a little step only. it is shown in the difference between the historic statement concerning its sources and their interpretation from the historic distance.

The relics' harmless charm turns against its producer who has known about its promoting value. from today's view the historic kitsch has hidden its force of arms from 1914 to 1918. tassilo blittersdorff unpretentiously unmask it without any comment. he opens the staging for the pieces of evidence. their innocence and their ill-will are hardly to be divided – by strategy at the client, by historic analysis or sentiment at the recipient.

