

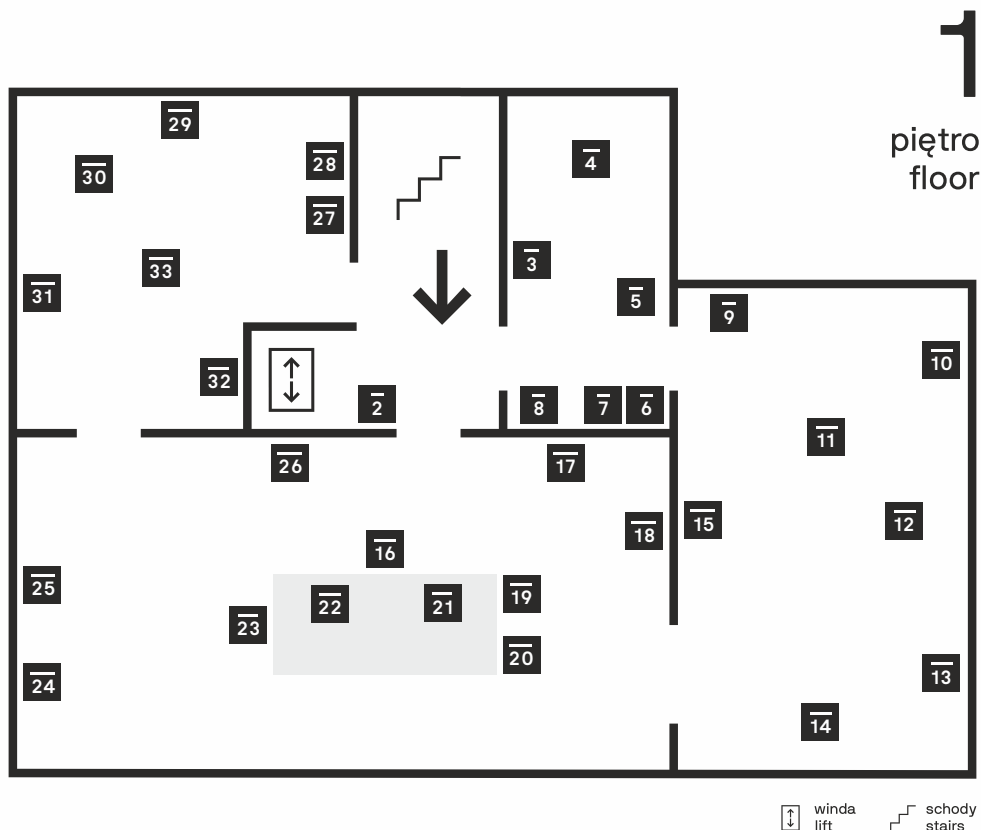
A large, stylized graphic of the word 'NOMUS' in a bold, sans-serif font. The letters are white and set against a dark background. The 'N' and 'O' are particularly large and prominent, with the 'O' having a thick, rounded shape. The 'M' and 'U' are also large, and the 'S' is a simple, bold stroke. The overall effect is a high-contrast, graphic design.

NOMUS

Collection in Action

Exhibition Guidebook

A smaller version of the stylized 'NOMUS' graphic, located in the bottom right corner of the page. It is white and set against a dark background, mirroring the design of the larger graphic above.



ground floor

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Collection in Action

How does art work? How do artists work? At this exhibition, we focus on the processes by which artistic, creative activities transform into the social activity of art and at its heart is performative art – often fleeting, it revolves around brief actions, and when documented, it continues to operate through objects, documentation, film, or photography. While the activity can take place in public spaces, galleries, or studios, it is always through these actions that artists engage with communities. Regardless of the medium and form, art is immersed in the collective experience that it shapes, comments on and reflects upon. The artworks presented at this exhibition engage a wide spectrum of contemporary issues and problems related to historical experience and the continuous social, political, economic, and cultural changes. Within the exhibition space, we refer to them through #hashtags.

The presented collection is the next stage of communalizing the art and artists' work. At its core is the Gdańsk Collection of Contemporary Art gathered by the City of Gdańsk and given in deposit to the National Museum in Gdańsk. It consists mainly of works created by the local artists, who are particularly sensitive to the challenges of the present day.

Artists

Anna Baumgart, Przemysław Branas, Agnieszka Brzeżańska, Bogna Burska, COX (Józef Czerniawski, Kacper Ołowski), Elvin Flamingo, Krzysztof Gliszczyński, Elżbieta Jabłońska, Zuzanna Janin, Martyna Jastrzębska, Hiwa K, Agnieszka Kalinowska, Andrzej Karmasz, Grzegorz Kłaman, Anna Królikiewicz, Anna Kutera, Paweł "Paulus" Mazur, Dorota Nieznalska, Hanna Nowicka, Paulina Ołowska, Anna Orbaczewska, Patrycja Orzechowska, Karol Radziszewski, Joanna Rajkowska, Katarzyna Swinarska, Michał Szłaga, Totart Transitory Formation, Teresa Tyszkiewicz, Ania Witkowska, Piotr Wyrzykowski, Marcin Zawicki, Agata Zbylut

Curator: Aneta Szyłak

Curatorial support: Mariola Balińska, Aleksandra Grzonkowska

Production and opening programme: Gabriela Brdej

Coordination of NOMUS opening: Agata Abramowicz, Anna Lipińska, Małgorzata Ludwisiak

Visual identification and graphic design for the exhibition: Ania Witkowska

Exhibition design: Grupa Gdyby (Ewa Kierklo, Stanisław Kempa)

Texts: Aneta Szyłak, Franciszek Skibiński

Copyediting: Daria Majewska

Translation: Joanna Figiel

English language copyediting and proofreading: Anna Moroz-Darska, Colin Phillips

Conservation Department: Anna Górna, Cátia Viegas Wesółowska, Anna Żychska

Inventory Department: Sławomira Bigaj, Kalina Krasowska, Małgorzata Pajkert, Sylwia Parais, Mirosław Szwabowicz, Marta Wołyńska, Michał Zasłona

Digitization and visual documentation of the collection: Janina Antczak, Andrzej

Leszczyński, Grzegorz Nosorowski

Promotion and communication: Agata Abramowicz, Adam Jurek, Klaudia Ficak, Małgorzata Ludwisiak, Pracownia Szumu

Social media: Justyna Mazur

Educational programme: Tomasz Sosnowski, Małgorzata Bujak, Wioleta Fiuk, Patryk Gacki, Karolina Pluta, Eugenia Tynna, Maria Wasińska-Stelmaszczyk and artists: Honorata Martin, Piotr Wyrzykowski

Cooperation: Marek Błoński, Maciej Cisak, Jolanta Gołębiewska, Magdalena Grus, Maciej Heliński, Jan Klosskowski, Teresa Kołkowska, Marek Koszałak, Mirosław Makowski, Ewa Martyniak, Grażyna Opanowska, Piotr Parol, Piotr Pietraszek, Anna Piórkowska, Paweł Powirski, Grażyna Skierka, Daniel Starzyński, Kazimierz Trzeciak, Józef Wardyn, Jarosław Wierzchołowski, Anna Wojdat-Zielińska

Exhibition Guidebook

Texts: Gabriela Brdej, Anna Czaban, Michał Grzegorzek, Aleksandra Grzonkowska, Piotr Krajewski, Franciszek Skibiński, Aneta Szyłak, Małgorzata Taraszkiewicz-Zwolicka, Magdalena Ujma, Maksymilian Wroniszewski, Magdalena Ziółkowska

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Photo-editing: Janina Antczak

Content editing: Franciszek Skibiński

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Translation: Joanna Figiel

English language copyediting and proofreading: Anna Moroz-Darska, Colin Phillips

Graphic design and typesetting: Ania Witkowska

Print: Grafix Centrum Poligrafii

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Project co-financed with funds from the City of Gdańsk

ANNA BAUMGART

Fresh Cherries

2010, video, 19 min 7 s

inv. no. MNG/NOMUS/15/D

Deposit of the City of Gdańsk, part of the Gdańsk Collection of Contemporary Art

The video is a document combining archival film photographs with statements by the artist and her contemporaries – historian dr Joanna Ostrowska, filmmaker Marcin Koszałka, and actress Klara Bielawka, who plays the key protagonist. The film's main theme is the stigmatization of victims of WW2, with particular emphasis on sexual slavery in Nazi concentration camps. The form of the film is not uniform – a lot of space is devoted to the para-theatrical staging in the formula of Bert Hellinger's 'systemic constellations' method, i.e. a method of treatment consisting of a constellation of people meant to support the person in therapy.

The often-unseen testimonies of female prisoners reveal further tragedy – being denied the status of a victim after the war. The film brings attention to the systemic exploitation of women, subjected to a double male objectification: forcing them into prostitution and treating their bodies as a reward for selected prisoners.



PRZEMYSŁAW BRANAS

*I Wanna Be Your Colonizer
& Untitled*

2018–2019, video, 22 min 57 s

inv. no. MNG/NOMUS/36/D

2017–2019, installation – sailor's outfit (t-shirt, trousers, jacket, shoes, cap) and a silicone mask, life-sized

inv. no. MNG/NOMUS/37/D/1-6

Deposit of the City of Gdańsk, part of the Gdańsk Collection of Contemporary Art

The cheerful photographs of the Dutch sailor with the 1930s Willemstad architecture in the background seem ominous against the backdrop of the centuries of colonization and destruction of the island. At the same time, the fact that the artist came across these images in a small provincial town in Eastern Poland symbolically indicates global processes, of which we are not only witnesses, but also beneficiaries. In an attempt to track the individual history of an anonymous sailor, by reconstructing or even re-creating his figure, Branas tries to read these processes in an individual, singular way. The artist's narrative can be interpreted in the context of contemporary geopoetics. Looking at the photographs through the prism of his own self, his own experiences, his desires and feelings, the artist incarnates the allegorical figure of a sailor and, once again, re-creates the figure of a homo viator roaming the expanses of dystopia.

AGNIESZKA BRZEŻAŃSKA

The Source

2018, fountain (sculpture and bowl from glazed ceramics, pump), ca. 68 × 66 × 67 cm

inv. no. MNG/NOMUS/44/D

Deposit of the City of Gdańsk, part of the Gdańsk Collection of Contemporary Art

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The Source is a kind of manifesto of ecofeminism, in which threads such as the cult of the water goddess and the love and admiration of fauna and flora, cognitive processes and spirituality, as well as a turn towards the fascination with primal beliefs and rituals and elements of nature in the human-nature relationship are all intertwined.

In her artistic practice, Brzeżańska uses various media such as painting, photography and ceramics and focuses on themes such as spirituality, the history of patriarchy, as well as beliefs and traditions from ethnic cultures. On the one hand, the artist draws inspiration from her travels to geographically and culturally distant places, and on the other – personal experiences resulting from direct contact with native folklore and nature. Brzeżańska's workshop is an important element of her work. She uses handicrafts, especially ceramics. *The Source* is made of clay, which, in reference to ancient beliefs and cultures, also has a symbolic dimension.



BOGNA BURSKA

Małgorzata

2006, video, 6 min 34 s

inv. no. MNG/NOMUS/7/D

Deposit of the City of Gdańsk, part of the Gdańsk Collection of Contemporary Art

AD)))

The work is inspired by the literary characters bearing the same name, the beloved main protagonists of canonical literary works: Gretchen from Goethe's *Faust*, Margarita from Bulgakov's *The Master and Margarita*, and the French queen Marguerite de Valois, known as Margot, from Dumas' novel. All these heroines are doomed because of unhappy love. They are beautiful and desirable, and simultaneously terrifying in their quest to take revenge on men for cheating and lying. The blood appearing in the work ties them together, and symbolizes their destiny – the curse that determines their fate. There is also a reference to blood as a Catholic religious symbol. The work can be interpreted from a feminist perspective, in which blood is the archetypal symbol of renewal and redemption. Thanks to the use of precise aesthetic treatments, the artist takes the viewers out of their comfort zone by forcing them to feel the tension experienced by the participant.



Grupa COX

Bicycle

(Józef Czerniawski, Kacper Ołowski)

1994, 15 black and white photographs (vintage prints), 13 x 18 cm each

inv. no. MNG/NOMUS/47/D/1-15

Deposit of the City of Gdańsk, part of the Gdańsk Collection of Contemporary Art

Bicycle is a photographic record of the artists spontaneously playing with a wheel and handlebars found accidentally in the countryside. The light and playful atmosphere of the photos manifests the creative attitude as well as lifestyle inspired by Dadaism.

It is important to 'enjoy the small things, emphasizes Józef Czerniawski. For some, capturing this performative activity may be an expression of a close relationship between friends and artists who make a joint effort, and thus strengthen the sense of community and unity. Others, analysing the work in a historical context, will find threads related to the search – and need – for freedom. The period of systemic transformation in Poland and the new opportunities emerging with the advent of 'wild capitalism' led to social, political and economic changes. Therefore, from today's perspective, the photographic documentation of the *Bicycle* performance can be read as a glorification of the joy and pleasure derived from simple, sometimes clownish activities against the backdrop of developing consumerism.



ELVIN FLAMINGO

(Jarosław Czarnecki)

From
the series
Hospital Diary

2017, 28 drawings (pigment ink, Canson paper)

inv. no. MNG/NOMUS/17/D/-1-28

Deposit of the City of Gdańsk, part of the Gdańsk Collection of Contemporary Art

1. *Incorrect Diagnosis*, 30 × 21 cm; 2. *Clone 813*, 30 × 21 cm;
3. *Virus Repository*, 30 × 21 cm; 4. *Probe 91*, 30 × 21 cm;
5. *Mosquito 2*, 30 × 21 cm; 6. *Cloned Universe*, 30 × 21 cm;
7. *Virus 463*, 30 × 21 cm; 8. *Perfect Genotype*, 30 × 21 cm;
9. *Virus 79*, 30 × 21 cm; 10. *The Beginning of History*, 21 × 15 cm;
11. *Chimneys in the Brain*, 21 × 30 cm; 12. *Amplified Viruses and Bacteria*, 30 × 21 cm;
13. *Genotype 419*, 21 × 30 cm; 14. *Virus Mutant*, 30 × 21 cm;
15. *Virus 18*, 21 × 30 cm; 16. *Winning Combination*, 30 × 21 cm;
17. *Extended Phenotype*, 30 × 21 cm; 18. *Cloning Process 128*, 26 × 19 cm;
19. *Bacterial Centre*, 25 × 21 cm; 20. *The Beginning of History 2*, 30 × 21 cm;
21. *A Failed Attempt*, 30 × 21 cm; 22. *Bacterial Warehouse*, 30 × 21 cm;
23. *Mosquito 1*, 30 × 21 cm; 24. *Probe 1302*, 30 × 21 cm;
25. *Bacterial Conversations*, 30 × 21 cm; 26. *Stabilizer*, 30 × 21 cm;
27. *Robot 1*, 21 × 26 cm; 28. *Robot 2*, 21 × 30 cm

The Hospital Diary series was created when the artist was deeply depressed and was admitted to the psychiatric hospital diagnosed with bipolar disorder. It documents the artist's emotions, struggles and pursuit of his subconscious (at the time) return to art. From that moment, over the next year and a half, the drawings multiplied and flourished in untamed biological forms and abstract realms, extending from the scale of a single cell to the entire universe. The titles provide us with some clues: bacteria, viruses, mutants, phenotypes, clones, and genotypes, as does the accompanying powerful machinery: the stabilizer, repository, warehouse, a probe, a robot.

Although the artist did not recognize for a long time these twenty-eight hospital drawings as works of art, they have the same obsessive air and systemic, multiplied details as the insect cultures inhabiting the glass incubators.

KRZYSZTOF GLISZCZYŃSKI

An Eye on a Fingertip

2015, 3 objects (plexiglass, used latex gloves covered with paint remains),

150 × 6 cm, 100 × 6 cm, 50 × 6 cm

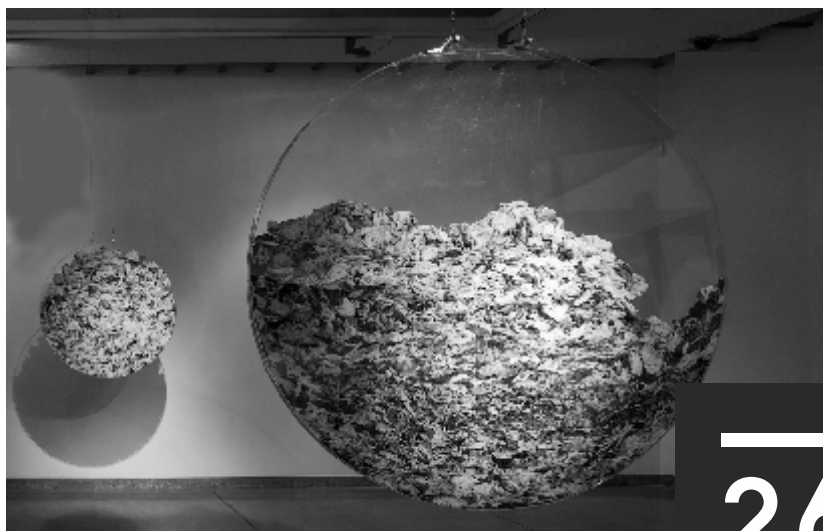
inv. no. MNG/NOMUS/40/D/1-3

Deposit of the City of Gdańsk, part of the Gdańsk Collection of Contemporary Art

AD)))

For a number of years, Gliszczyński has been steadily developing his own relationship with the act of painting, as well as creating spatial objects from its leftovers, in the context of philosophical considerations and theoretical and practical research.

One of the characteristic features of his artistic practice is the careful gathering in the studio of various waste generated in the process of artistic creation. Through the layering of multi-coloured details, the composition *An Eye on a Fingertip* evokes connotations with the collage technique or neo-impressionist mosaics. The subsequent layers of latex gloves covered with paint residues, deliberately squeezed into a transparent object, create a multidimensional painterly plane. The installation collects and records individual history, traces and gestures, as well as the matter's memory.



ELŻBIETA JABŁOŃSKA

New Life

2010, (metal frame, neon light tubes), 2 × 10 × 0.18 m

inv. no. MNG/NOMUS/12/D

Deposit of the City of Gdańsk, part of the Gdańsk Collection of Contemporary Art

In 2005, Elżbieta Jabłońska came across *New Life* in a place that later became her home. The restoration efforts lasted several years and involved several art galleries that joined forces to rebuild individual tubes-letters; in 2009, the sign was working again.

The artist links this gesture with the ideas, history and traditions of the cooperative movement in Poland and the figure of the activist Zygmunt Chmielewski – the director of the Department of Agriculture and Crown Lands and author of the cooperatives' decalogue. The values proclaimed by Chmielewski concerned not only effective cooperation, but also the importance of mutual help and respect. From the moment it was given a new life, the neon sign was placed on the roofs of art institutions, in parks, on the façade of a power plant, and travelled by barge along the Noteć River. It appeared in conflict-ridden places that await change and new life.

Elżbieta Jabłońska, *New Life*, 2010.

Deposit of the City of Gdańsk, part of the Gdańsk Collection of Contemporary Art, photo M. Macur



ZUZANNA JANIN

*A Prophecy from the Future. Notes
from a Séance Held on 1.11.1917
in Warsaw*

2017, document (pencil on paper), 30 x 20 cm

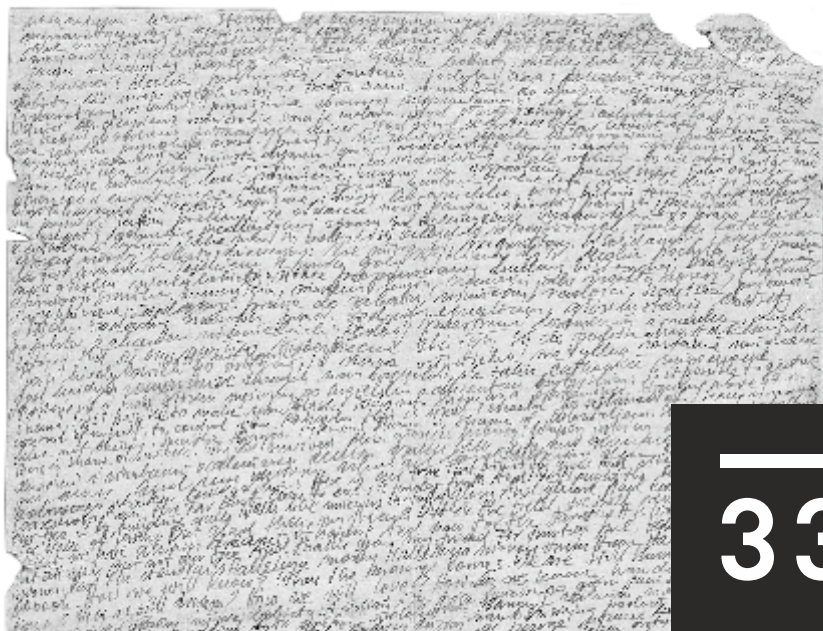
inv. no. MNG/NOMUS/3/IP

Artist's gift in the collection of the National Museum in Gdańsk (NOMUS / New Art Museum)

AD))

The artwork consists of a thin sheet of paper extracted from the family archive. It is marked with the stamp of an attorney's office in Warsaw and covered on both sides with slanted, small writing in pencil. It is a note recreated from memory by attorney Juliusz Kloss detailing his participation in a spiritualist séance held in Laski near Warsaw.

For a number of years, Zuzanna Janin has been working with all kinds of her and her family's archives and resources. These include both material objects – such as textiles, dead insects, building debris, and letters – as well as remembered family histories. The family and home constitute a crucial element in her creative process, a persistent conjuring up of ghosts and retaining them in the present day.



ZUZANNA JANIN

SHAME

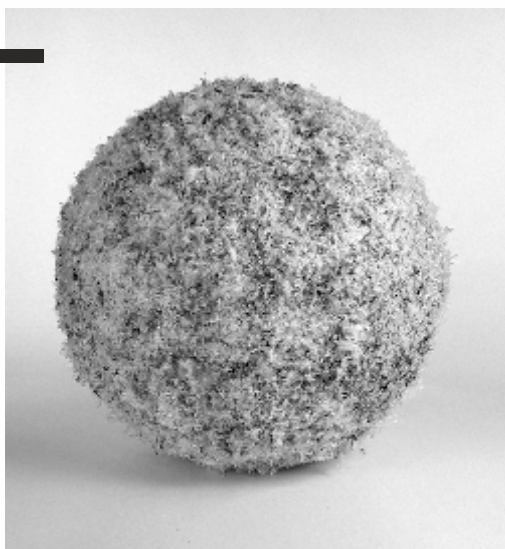
2016, sculpture (metal, feathers, tar, aluminium, polyurethane film), diameter 150 cm

inv. no. MNG/NOMUS/10/D

Deposit of the City of Gdańsk, part of the Gdańsk Collection of Contemporary Art

SHAME is a sculpture in the shape of a ball resting on an aluminium frame covered with duck and goose feathers. At close range, however, one can see and smell that there is tar underneath the feathers. This combination of materials transports us into the past, when tarring and feathering was not just a form of public torture, but above all a humiliating and degrading punishment. The artist, also active as an anti-violence and women's rights activist, often employs unusual materials and media that create a characteristic language, where personal emotions and public attitude build a unique, multi-layered conglomerate of meanings. Janin's work was inspired by Joanna Krakowska's text, *Entartete Kunst*, about a fictitious algorithm called 'SHAME', which allows uncovering, with the help of mathematics, the relationship between the level of democracy within a state and the function of decisions made in relation to contemporary art.

Apart from social attitudes towards art and the notion of community, Janin encrypts in this sculpture the functions of the internet – a contemporary tool of scorn, anonymous accusations, data and images theft, and all other forms of cyberbullying, which gives a global dimension to humiliation.



MARTYNA JASTRZĘBSKA

I Clench my Fists in Anger

2021, set of objects (clay), ca. 9 × 5 × 3 cm each

inv. no. MNG/NOMUS/57/D

Artist's deposit in the collection of the National Museum in Gdańsk (NOMUS / New Art Museum)

Clenched fists are an expression of anger that can result from both personal experiences and observations of social or political phenomena. This gesture means, on the one hand, a threat and an impending blow, and on the other – struggle, protest, but also a victory. Symbolically, anger is enchanted in an earthen mass and, through multiplication, becomes a mixture of dissatisfaction, rage, agitation, irritation, and worry. A fleeting experience is juxtaposed with the coolness, stability, and durability of the material. Paradoxically, the creation of this work would not be possible without releasing the material from a clenched fist, relaxing the muscles, and releasing emotions.



HIWA K

30 Years of Dust

2019, colour photograph (lambda, dibond), 150 x 100 cm

inv. no. MNG/NOMUS/53/D

Private deposit in the collection of the National Museum in Gdańsk (NOMUS / New Art Museum)

AD))

The photograph is a double full-figure portrait of Aleksandra Olszewska – who for many years volunteered to sweep the surroundings of the Monument to the Fallen Shipyard Workers of 1970 in Solidarity Square in Gdańsk, and the artist Hiwa K. Although she ran a souvenir kiosk at the entrance to the shipyard, she was mainly dedicated to this invisible, informal labour. Having learnt about Olszewska's history, the artist balanced her battered sweeping brush on his nose and put his arm around the woman. This gesture evokes additional associations with the artist's early work, *Cooking with Mama* (2005) that revealed to the world the many years of domestic labour performed by the artist's mother. Hiwa K notices that which is hidden, discreet, overlooked, unremarkable, and vernacular. Moving the underestimated, invisible labour of an elderly woman from a horizontal to a vertical position suddenly makes her activity stand out.



AGNIESZKA KALINOWSKA

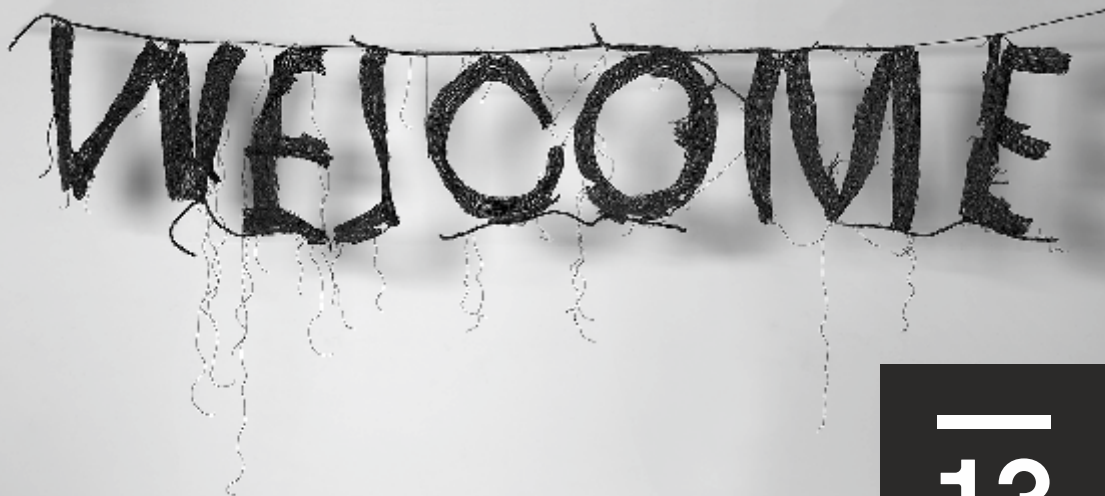
Welcome

2010, sculpture (coloured paper string), 90 x 350 x 10 cm

inv. no. MNG/NOMUS/21/D

Deposit of the City of Gdańsk, part of the Gdańsk Collection of Contemporary Art

In *Welcome*, the artist addresses the hospitality of developed countries and how this concept has recently devalued. The title of the work is in English – a global language, or the language of globalization, which was meant to enable the understanding between cultures and countries. The dishonesty and the inauthenticity of this hospitality have been exposed many times, most recently due to the ongoing refugee crisis. Deconstructing the meaning of the word welcome is literally translated into the deconstruction of the form. The distorted, corroded designate of hospitality reflects the completely distorted condition of this concept. The weed entangled in the structure appears like an unwanted guest among a farmer's crops. On the other hand, 'weed' is a relative term, as depending on where it grows, it may or may not be a desired plant, or it may even become a protected plant. Similarly, the word welcome, depending on the political situation and time, may be a diplomatic refrain or an empty slogan, which faces visitors from other countries.



ANDRZEJ KARMASZ

Self-portrait. Geisha II

2005, colour photograph (lambda), 150.5 × 122.5 cm

inv. no. MNG/NOMUS/42/D

Deposit of the City of Gdańsk, part of the Gdańsk Collection of Contemporary Art

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Self-portrait. Geisha II is part of a series entitled *Hybrids*, inspired by the experience the artist gained while studying at Joshibi University of Art and Design in Japan. The stay had a strong influence on the his work. Karmasz refers to unique artistic transgressions, and is interested in giving up personal cultural and linguistic features, as well as social and ethnic experiences to which we are accustomed and thanks to which we feel safe, and in its stead entering a different, new and unknown cultural sphere embedded in different realities.

The process of the feminization of the male body, that socially and culturally broadens the boundaries of gender identity dependent on geographic, historical and political conditions, is equally important here.



ANDRZEJ KARMASZ

Silence of Taming

2005, video, 10 min 13 s

inv. no. MNG/NOMUS/51/D

Deposit of the City of Gdańsk, part of the Gdańsk Collection of Contemporary Art

The video work *Silence of Taming* depicts the gradual feminization of the male body, showing the process of the artist's transformation into a figure with an entirely different cultural experience. The camera accompanies Karmasz from the very beginning of his entry into a new role, identity, and context. We observe the successive stages of this extensive process in which every detail is important – the way of applying makeup, pinning the hair, and draping the kimono. Entering the public space and walking along the Tokyo streets, during which the artist's authenticity is assessed, is a manifestation of gender and cultural assimilation.



GRZEGORZ KLAMAN

Man Carrying a Turtle

1989, sculpture (wood, steel), ca. 230 x 115 x 190 cm

inv. no. MNG/NOMUS/54/D

Artist's deposit in the collection of the National Museum in Gdańsk (NOMUS / New Art Museum)

The work was created on Granary Island located on the Motława River, in the centre of Gdańsk, where in the second half of the 1980s and the first years of the following decade, Klaman ran the open-air Wyspa Gallery. *Man Carrying a Turtle* is the last in a series of figurative wooden sculptures made by the artist in 1985–1989. These sculptures, sometimes embedded directly on the Island in the ruins of former granaries, were a form of intervention in the neglected and forgotten part of the city. Such interventions were characteristic of Klaman's work in the 1980s. The historical context in which they were created influenced their brutal aesthetics, reminiscent of skinning the body. Klaman's new-expressionist sculptures symbolically reflect the position of an individual confronting martial law, the dramatic events of which were felt particularly strongly in Gdańsk.



GRZEGORZ KLAMAN

Line of Fire

1986, colour photograph, 4 black and white photographs

28.8 × 39.8 cm; 13.5 × 20.9 cm, 13.1 × 20.9 cm, 13.2 × 20.9 cm, 13.3 × 20.3 cm

inv. no. MNG/NOMUS/7/IP/1-7

Collection of the National Museum in Gdańsk (NOMUS / New Art Museum)

Line of Fire is a work that clearly indicates Klamán's fascination with land art. It is motivated by the need to react to the abandoned, but architecturally and historically valuable spaces in Gdańsk and stems from the act of discovering new, non-institutional spaces for art, testing the limits of what is possible in the absence of conditions for unrestricted action within the public space.

The northern part of Granary Island, today built up with residential buildings and hotels, had been a gaping wound since the end of WWII, and the dramatic remains of the burnt out granaries provided the backdrop to Klamán's activities.

GRZEGORZ KLAMAN

Burying Books

1987, 2 black and white photographs, 40.2 × 24.8 cm, 25.9 × 40.9 cm

inv. no. MNG/NOMUS/8/IP/1-2

Collection of the National Museum in Gdańsk (NOMUS / New Art Museum)

AD)))

Burying Books was a planned, deliberate action, inspired by Granary Island – a kind of no man's land in a country without public space. Klamán called Granary Island 'ex-territorial', a kind of space beyond the jurisdiction of power and ideology. However, he did not carry out archaeological excavations or grow nostalgic for the traces of history. Klamán inverted the archaeological activity – instead of discovering, he buried, disturbing the chronology of the layers.

Both the gesture of burying books and the accompanying *Inverted Archaeology* artistic manifesto seem to be crucial for Klamán's 1980s art, but also influenced his later practice – different in form and created in a completely different political, artistic and institutional context. The point is not to know for sure what happened in the past and how the past can be depicted, but to know how to disrupt the order of things, infuse them with meaning and insert oneself there without becoming history's hostage.



ANNA KRÓLIKIEWICZ

Simple Traces *The Notebook*

2015, fabric (batiste, metal threads, rust from the Gdańsk Shipyard, shibori and stamping technique), 5.8 x 8 m; collaboration: Małgorzata Kalinowska

inv. no. MNG/NOMUS/1/D/1

Deposit of the City of Gdańsk, part of the Gdańsk Contemporary Art Collection

2015, object – a book enclosed in a box (book: 31 pages, photographs, prints on paper; cover: cardboard, cotton canvas, rust powder, varnish, wax; box: cardboard; fabric, furoshiki binding), 27 x 37 cm; photographic documentation: Małgorzata Kalinowska

inv. no. MNG/NOMUS/1/D/2

Deposit of the City of Gdańsk, part of the Gdańsk Contemporary Art Collection

Simple Traces is a large muslin fabric dyed using the shibori technique. Królikiewicz builds upon this traditional method by adding metal moulds and tools that – when wet – share their rust with the muslin. These rigid objects with strong, linear edges were taken from the dilapidating shipyard in Gdańsk – a space that embodies the memories of labour, political events and economic objectives. It is a kind of portrait in which the energy of departure spills over the last existing traces.

The Notebook is an artistic book complementing the dyed fabric, showing the process of creating the work and revealing its conceptual and material history.

Simple Traces together with the accompanying notebook is a work full of internal contradictions. It was given its form by angular objects, and yet it is soft. It fits in a small box, and yet, when unfolded, it can fill an entire room. The work is abstract, and yet can be treated as a portrait. When hung up, like a map of mysterious, never visited territories, it surprises its viewer with its organic forms.

ANNA KUTERA

Feminist Painting

1973, 8 analogue black and white photographs (contemporary prints), 50 x 50 cm each

inv. no. MNG/NOMUS/48/D/1-8

Deposit of the City of Gdańsk, part of the Gdańsk Collection of Contemporary Art

AD)))

Feminist Painting is born from the sweeping movements of the broom, everyday ordinariness, in the space of an empty studio. In this conceptual photography, there is a large dose of staging and stage-like performance. Because the camera was placed below eyesight, we – the viewers looking at the photographs – get the impression of sitting in the front row, right next to the author, as if she was creating her abstract composition just for us. This perspective also evokes the point of view of a small child, and perhaps the artist's son, who appears here for the first time, on the other side of the camera, observing his mother-artist at work.



PAWEŁ “PAULUS” MAZUR

Pure Sure

1. Part 1, 1989, comic book, 22.8 x 16 cm

2. Part 2, 1989, comic book, 22.6 x 14.5 cm

3. Part 3, 1989, comic book, 21.3 x 15.4 cm

4. Part 4, 1990, comic book, 21 x 15 cm

inv. no. MNG/NOMUS/49/D/1-4

Deposit of the City of Gdańsk, part of the Gdańsk Collection of Contemporary Art

Pure Sure was published during the time of the Polish transformation (1989–1990), which resulted in the development of significant tools of expression and a portrayal of a mood of absurdity and distance. Having observed the socio-political changes taking place, Mazur created a surreal comic book magazine, employing distortion and symbolism. The socio-political atmosphere and everyday difficulties inspired Mazur, who did not agree with living ‘under the Soviet boot’, unable to live a normal life. His political commitment, expressed both visually and poetically, in music and performance, as well as through his individual and Totart Formation’s work, is an often-perverse commentary on life in the reality at the time.

PAWEŁ “PAULUS” MAZUR, TOTART TRANSITORY FORMATION

*Totart
performance
objects*

1986–1987, ambulanceman's uniform, aviator hat, life-sized

inv. no. MNG/NOMUS/39/D/1-2

Deposit of the City of Gdańsk, part of the Gdańsk Collection of Contemporary Art

1986–1987

1. *sztrafj*, fabric, 188 × 87 cm

2. *sztrafj*, fabric, 230 × 160 cm

3. *sztrafj*, fabric, 235 × 185 cm

inv. no. MNG/NOMUS/39/D/2-5

Deposit of the City of Gdańsk, part of the Gdańsk Collection of Contemporary Art

The social and political moods of the second half of the 1980s were a point of reference and inspiration for attempts to establish and find one's place within the existing reality. The activities of Totart provided a sharp commentary on the atmosphere in the Polish People's Republic at the time. Happenings in uniforms constituted, according to their authors, a kind of mockery of the strategies promoted by the authorities, which aimed at unifying and uniforming all public services, such as the militia, fire brigades or forest guards.

The group's activities were usually collective in nature, as evidenced by *sztrafjy* – the painted fabrics, collectively prepared by Totart members, often spontaneously during public performances.

DOROTA NIEZNALSKA

*Heimatvertriebene
(Expelled from
the Native Lands)*

2014, installation (steel structure, 19 wooden original doors, video), 400 × 300 × 300 cm, 13 min
inv. no. MNG/NOMUS/4/D/1-22

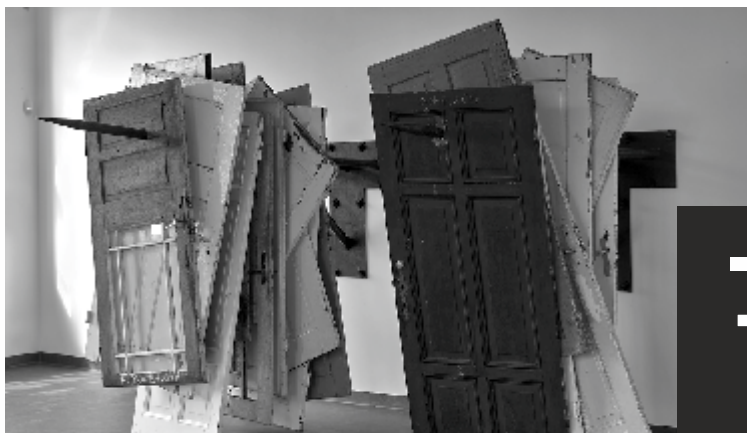
Deposit of the City of Gdańsk, part of the Gdańsk Collection of Contemporary Art

Dorota Nieznalska obtained wooden doors from houses and flats inhabited completely or mostly by the German population until 1945. The installation is accompanied by a black and white sound film featuring archival images and texts about the displacement of the German population from the so-called Regained Territories, that is, the western and northern part of today's Poland, in the years 1945–1950.

Although the subject of the work is the displacement of Germans following WWII, it can be interpreted in the context of the contemporary refugee migrations around the world. Using the term *Heimat*, which in German means the land of the fathers, the artist attempted to define the literal loss of the family home and land as a result of an armed conflict.

Meanwhile, the documentary shots featured in the film can be easily confused with images of the wartime exile of the Polish population – showing families with children and all their belongings, driving and walking in difficult weather conditions.

Nieznalska calls for the commemoration of civilian victims, exiled and expelled, uprooted from their homelands, people whose fate has placed them on the wrong side of a conflict. The individual narratives are described as universal in relation to people's entanglement in political and religious systems.



HANNA NOWICKA

Scapegoat

2015, object (wooden gymnastic vaulting box covered with cowhide, rubber elements),

125 × 85 × 65 cm

inv. no. MNG/NOMUS/38/D

Deposit of the City of Gdańsk, part of the Gdańsk Collection of Contemporary Art

AD)))

Hanna Nowicka's *Scapegoat* is a battered, worn-out school sports instrument. Over its leather seat, the artist has thrown a pile of flesh-coloured vulcanized rubber with a plump and sometimes smooth surface resembling human skin. It makes such a realistic impression that it is difficult to control the urge to touch it.

A scapegoat is an innocent victim who in ancient cultures accepted and carried the sins and guilt of the community while simultaneously being excluded from it. In the Judaic tradition, the priest of the temple in Jerusalem, having sprinkled its interior with the blood of the sacrificed bull and goat, selected another one to be led out into a desert or a rocky cliff and carry the guilt of all the people. The ancient Greeks, after selecting a *pharmakos* – typically a slave, criminal, or a cripple – chased them out of the city so that the plague or defeat would follow. Stigmatization, exclusion, witch-hunts, and hate speech as strategies of action within societies, nations, neighbourhood groups, at universities, schools, offices, and also PE classes, incessantly reproduce this old pattern.



PAULINA OŁOWSKA

The Tychy Plant

2013, oil and collage on canvas, 220 x 200 cm

inv. no. MNG/NOMUS/6/IP

Deposit of the City of Gdańsk, part of the Gdańsk Collection of Contemporary Art

AD)))

The painting appears to focus on and affirm the expressive presence of the women in view, and positions them in between the discussion on the propaganda stereotype of female labourers and the material realities of their labour. The artist pays particular attention to representations of women and women's art. She depicts them as active subjects, modifies and interprets their images, placing them in new contexts and across different media. Processing and giving new meanings to art and design involves exploring the history of art but also fashion, whose essence, after all, is presenting particular characters in a certain way.



ANNA ORBACZEWSKA

Untitled

2021, ceramic stove, 194 × 56 × 78,5 cm

inv. no. MNG/NOMUS/56/D

Artist's deposit in the collection of the National Museum in Gdańsk (NOMUS / New Art Museum)

Orbaczevska's stove emits noticeable heat. The warmth, obviously associated with this kind of device, sits in stark contrast to the content of the decorations. There is a kind of reference to 'household' and 'home', which usually brings to mind safety, being together, and caring for the family. Taking a closer look, we see that this object challenges the culturally entrenched ideals. Orbaczewska's works, including the object described here, can be considered as a discussion with the traditional motifs and forms of art or craftsmanship that strengthen stereotypical images, or even the setups of relationships between men and women, marriage and parenthood. Based on a stark contrast between the carrier of tradition and what challenges it, her work becomes a voice of cultural change, softening the boundaries of roles in relationships and introducing new ways of understanding family relationships.



PATRYCJA ORZECZOWSKA

*Deadline. Never
Ending Story*

2012, art book (146 pages, pigment ink, archival cotton paper, hardcover with embossed canvas, slipcase), 25 x 32 cm

inv. no. MNG/NOMUS/43/D

Deposit of the City of Gdańsk, part of the Gdańsk Collection of Contemporary Art

The work takes the form of an art book, consisting of various size, monochrome collages, abstract pictures resembling sea waves, and six literary essays written by Katarzyna Czacot, Agnieszka Pindera, Jonas Nobel, Stanisław Ruksza, Agnieszka Taborska, and Bartek Zdunek.

The title of the work is based on a contradiction – the final, the ultimate end and simultaneously an eternal repetition of fate. Today, deadline means a final date for completing the project, but in POW camps during the American Civil War – literally it meant the death that awaited after crossing the line / leaving the designated area of a camp. The sea personifies this contradiction or paradoxical logic – the infinity of the horizon but also the end, the risk of death and being lost in the limitless water. Orzechowska's work is intended to undergo continual changes, and its completion will be marked by the artist's death.



PATRYCJA ORZECZOWSKA

*Δ/Ornaments,
Circles, Nets*
from
the *Kinderturnen*
series

Δ/Ornaments from the *Kinderturnen* series,
2012, collage (cardboard, paper, sandpaper), 40 × 30 cm
inv. no. MNG/NOMUS/14/D/1

Deposit of the City of Gdańsk, part of the Gdańsk Collection of Contemporary Art

Circles from the *Kinderturnen* series,
2012, collage (cardboard, paper, sandpaper), 40 × 30 cm
inv. no. MNG/NOMUS/14/D/2

Deposit of the City of Gdańsk, part of the Gdańsk Collection of Contemporary Art

Nets from the *Kinderturnen* series,
2012, collage (cardboard, paper, sandpaper), 40 × 30 cm
inv. no. MNG/NOMUS/1/IP

Artist's gift in the collection of the National Museum in Gdańsk (NOMUS / New Art Museum)

AD)))

Works from the *Kinderturnen* series evoke associations with both Byzantine mosaics and art deco aesthetics. Visually delightful, they simultaneously arouse a sense of horror and uneasy questions about the nature of power – how far can one exert control over an individual or a group, in this case children unaware that they are being coached?

The artist was inspired by a training manual regarding enhancing children's physical strength and shaping their thinking to ensure they grow up to be 'decent citizens'. Orzechowska reinvents the images of training children, allowing them to play and open up to new kinds of games.

In many of her works, the artist traces the discreet forms of manipulation that are present for example in social engineering techniques used in therapy, and obsessions regarding individual and group actions as ways of building relationships in contemporary society.

KAROL RADZISZEWSKI

Kisieland
Ryszard Kisiel

Kisieland

2012, video, 30 min

inv. no. MNG/NOMUS/45/D/1

Deposit of the City of Gdańsk, part of the Gdańsk Collection of Contemporary Art

Ryszard Kisiel

2018, acrylic on canvas, 100 x 80 cm

inv. no. MNG/NOMUS/45/D/2

Deposit of the City of Gdańsk, part of the Gdańsk Collection of Contemporary Art

AD)))

Kisieland consists of several independent elements: a colour video and an acrylic painting on canvas. The first part is a record of Radziszewski's meeting with Ryszard Kisiel, an amateur artist from Gdańsk, a pioneer of the gay culture in Poland. The second part of the work is a painting interpretation of *The Indian-Shaman*, one of many photographs documenting Kisiel's performative activities at the turn of 1985 and 1986.

Kisieland fully illustrates not just the field of Karol Radziszewski's interests, but also the method of his work with archives, consisting in queering history, norms, and institutions.

Kisieland is an attempt to build a relationship between the present and the past, revealing forgotten non-normative threads and heroes. Pointing to historical continuity thus becomes a performative activity – it helps to identify and construct the identity of the contemporary queer community.

JOANNA RAJKOWSKA

Chariot

2010, multi-element installation

inv. no. MNG/NOMUS/23/D/1-44

Deposit of the City of Gdańsk, part of the Gdańsk Collection of Contemporary Art

Chariot was created for the *Estrangement* exhibition, presented at the *Showroom* gallery as part of *Polska! Year*, and relates to the history of London's Edgware Road, an ancient trade and war route. This area boasts the largest population of migrants from the Middle East in London. During the opening, the artist interacted with the audience – she played with the children, led a horse-drawn parade, and invited passers-by to write on its sides, inscribed with: 'chariot' and 'estrangement'. In Arabic, the two words differ by just a single dot. This is reminiscent of how the Arabic alphabet is treated: with hostility, due to anti-Arab propaganda, or as an exotic ornament due to its calligraphic nature.

The *Chariot* addresses the question of multiculturalism as an inseparable part of cultural, technological and social development.



KATARZYNA SWINARSKA

Digressive Identity

2015, video, 13 min 44 s

inv. no. MNG/NOMUS/2/D

Deposit of the City of Gdańsk, part of the Gdańsk Collection of Contemporary Art

The video is inspired by Olga Boznańska. Swinarska focused on the painter's work clothes, an old-fashioned, 19th-century dress, and an apron. She rented a similar one from the theatre and arranged her own room to resemble Boznańska's studio in Paris.

Playing the part of Boznańska, Swinarska says that the dress adds momentum and that thanks to it her gestures become more expressive, emphasizing the importance of the dress in building the artist-painter identity and the medium of painting itself, deemed irrelevant by the contemporary art world. The dress becomes a symbol of the conventional language of images – simultaneously attractive and out-dated.



MICHAŁ SZLAGA

*Painter from
the Shipyard 1999–2013
series*

2004, colour photograph (pigment print), 100 × 73 cm

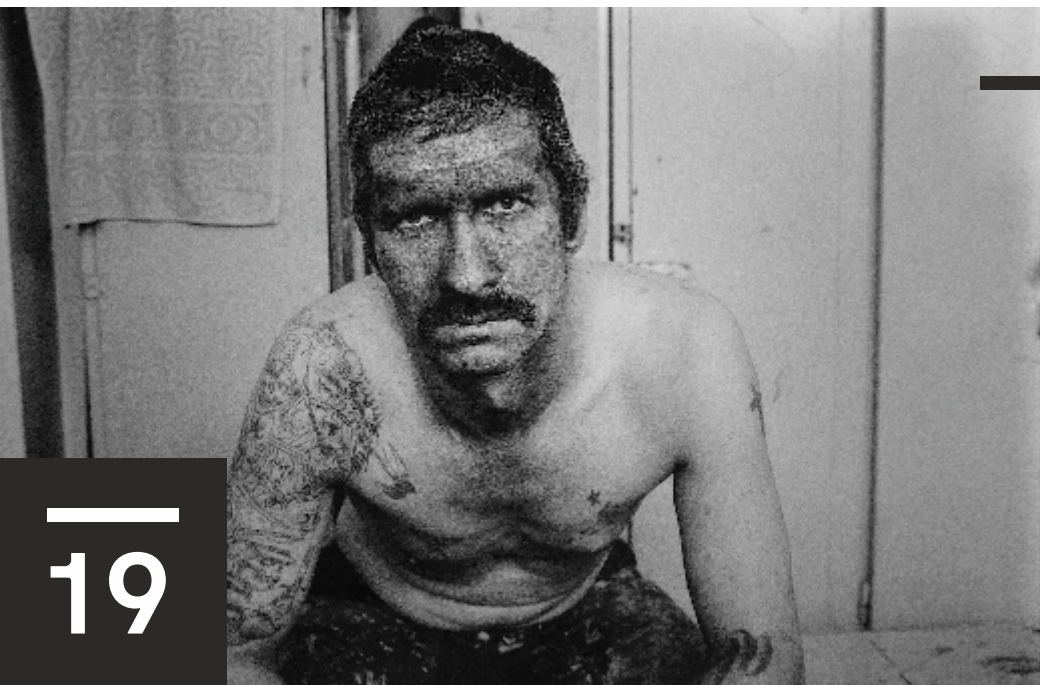
inv. no. MNG/NOMUS/11/D/1-140

Deposit of the City of Gdańsk, part of the Gdańsk Collection of Contemporary Art

AD)))

The muted colours and expertly composed landscapes and portraits are a symbolic record of Poland's transformation, and the wasted human potential and painful processes of change that took place in the countries of Eastern and Central Europe.

Szlaga assumes the role of a guardian of the legacy of the falling Gdańsk Shipyard, a chronicler of its decline, and a compassionate mourner. He looked directly into a world whose days were numbered. He creates a narrative about the shipyard's former employees; he calls for their dignity in portraits (such as *The Painter*), and shows everyday life – cloakrooms, or industrial halls, where Christmas trees were hung under the ceiling. Thus, he lends the cycle a universal character that relates to global problems, the working condition of exploited labourers that become an unnecessary burden for the new economic system.



TERESA TYSZKIEWICZ

Grain

1980, video, 11 min 30 s

inv. no. MNG/NOMUS/46/D

Deposit of the City of Gdańsk, part of the Gdańsk Collection of Contemporary Art

The video does not have a clear beginning and end. Like the eponymous grain it includes, it overflows through the screen. The grain is poured over, piled up and put into the round bodily forms that rest on the protagonist's lap. In smaller and larger fragments, a naked female body emerges from under it. Parallel to this mystery of nature (next to the grain there are beets, parsley and geraniums) and female primordality (the sound of breathing dominates in the background), scenes of the artist wearing a red jumpsuit and wig take place. The grain is replaced by white feathers. Subjectivity and intuition have replaced here the structural, systemic and analytical elements that characterized the experimental film of the previous decade. In these thoroughly sensual rituals, filled with both erotic and fetish elements, as well as references to archetypal meanings, Tyszkiewicz was ceaselessly performing using her body.



ANIA WITKOWSKA

*Friends
from
the Seaside*

2016, neon (metal frame, neon light tubes) 701.2 x 128 cm

inv. no. MNG/NOMUS/5/IP

Gift of the City Culture Institute in Gdańsk in the collection of the National Museum in Gdańsk
(NOMUS / New Art Museum)

Today, the *Friends from the Seaside* neon sign is displayed in the main hall and common space of the newly opened NOMUS in Gdańsk, where it acts as a trademark, and simultaneously draws attention to a specific section of the Tri-City art scene as well as indicates the focus of the new institution. The overlapping and interlocking model of teamwork that led to the creation of this space – alongside the city's history, the legacy of political and social events, the ideas of freedom, solidarity, equality, and openness – define NOMUS's symbolic identity.



PIOTR WYRZYKOWSKI

Copyright

1995, documentation of a performance (prints, photographs, sketches), video, 60 min

inv. no. MNG/NOMUS/50/D/1-22

Deposit of the City of Gdańsk, part of the Gdańsk Collection of Contemporary Art

The performance *Copyright* was a direct commentary to events on the Polish political scene during its transformation. In 1994, a new copyright law was introduced in Poland. During a one-off performance of *Copyright* carried out as a part of the exhibition *Antibodies* in the Ujazdowski Castle Centre for Contemporary Art in Warsaw in 1995, Piotr Wyrzykowski cut out a contour of Poland on the political map of Europe, and started reading the Copyright Law. At the same time, the sign © (copyright) was tattooed on his right arm to highlight the artist's right to his own body, as well as his exclusive right to its reproduction and the creation of its copies. The entire project was recorded with a video camera. As the artist said, 'The new Copyright Law was like obtaining new features, abilities, and skills by the body. It was undoubtedly a moment of passage to a new body.'



PIOTR WYRZYKOWSKI

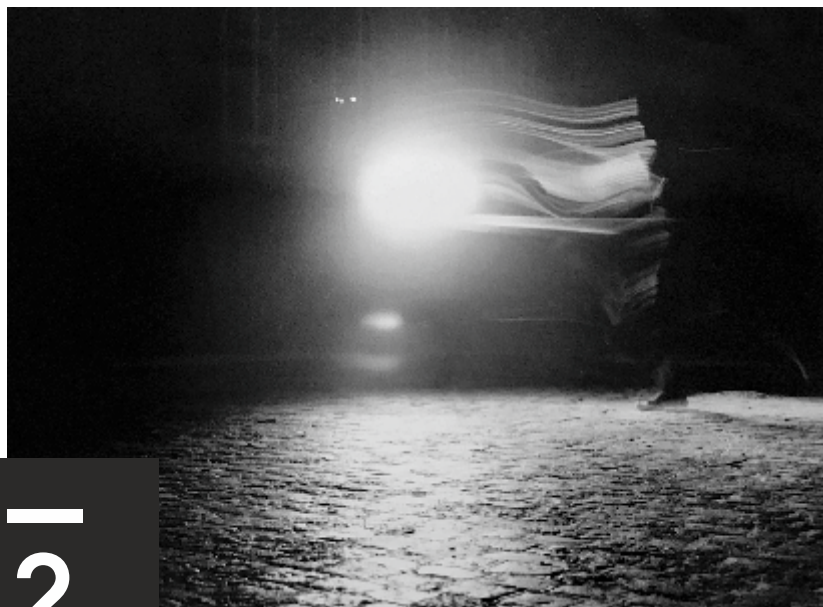
Runner

1993, video, 6 min 46 s

inv. no. MNG/NOMUS/50/D/1-22

Deposit of the City of Gdańsk, part of the Gdańsk Collection of Contemporary Art

The innovatory relation between video and performance is pictured by a set of works entitled *Runner* (1993). The video, recorded during Wyrzykowski's stay in Bremen, was made with the help of the treadmill constructed by the artist, which played the role of a camera stand allowing Wyrzykowski to film himself while running. This version of *Runner*, initial in relation to the performance, is an autonomous video work. Here, the on-camera actions were processed during electronic editing. The artist subsequently used the device he constructed for the purposes of this work in his performance. Its recording from the point of view of the audience shows the artist running around the stand-treadmill; the action is determined by his physical endurance – it is finished after his third fall. Wyrzykowski is fascinated with performance as an act of direct activity, and the strategies of its representations in media.



MARCIN ZAWICKI

Untitled (Homoimerie)

2016, oil on canvas, 4 elements, 200 x 150 cm each; artist's own mock-up and his own technique, 25 x 75.5 x 4.5 cm

inv. no. MNG/NOMUS/32/D/1-5

Deposit of the City of Gdańsk, part of the Gdańsk Collection of Contemporary Art

The eponymous *Homoimeries* is a term from Anaxagoras' philosophy describing the 'parts of all things' the qualitatively indivisible elementary particles of the universe. These elements, mixed together, set in motion by the divine, gave birth to matter. Zawicki, in turn, arranges these into models and mock-ups, sculptural prototypes, and simultaneously creates compositions based on Dutch still life paintings, in order to subject the resulting forms to the illusion and reality of the canvas. Contemporary objects appear in these tangibly organic, hallucinogenic representations-visions that make it impossible to identify any leading or coherent history. Small plastic toys or fragments of everyday plastic objects will exist in this world of matter for a long time, because their time of decay is much longer than that of the vegetables and fruits in the compositions of the Dutch masters.



AGATA ZBYLUT

Caviar Patriot

2014, gown (scarves of fans of the Polish national sports team, corset, wooden frame), 140 x 160 cm
inv. no. MNG/NOMUS/30/D

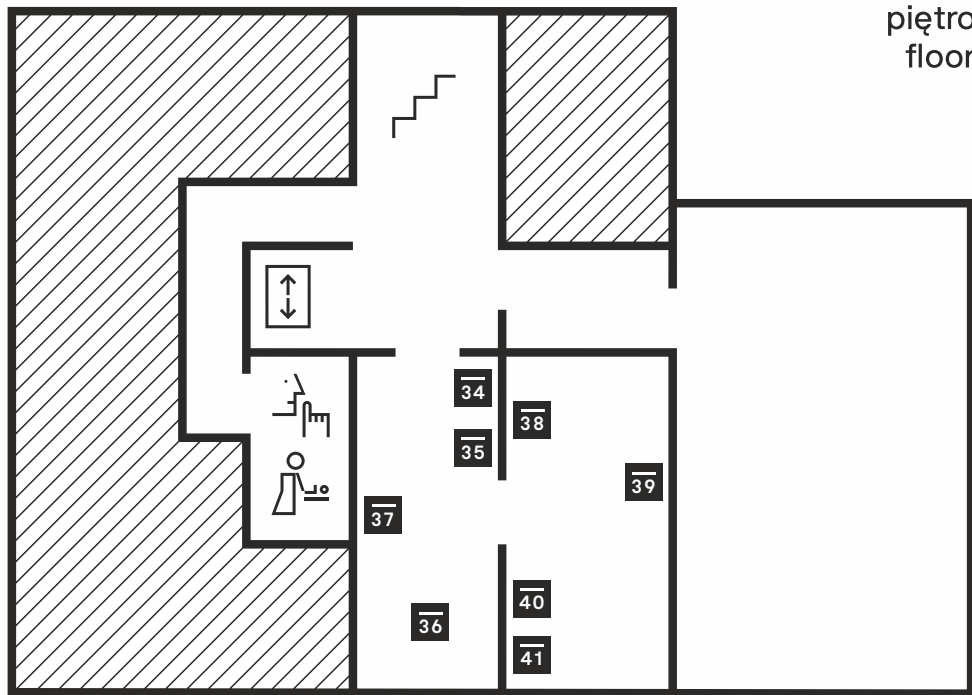
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AD)))

In Agata Zbylut's work, the body and convention play a leading role, and they most often appear in a duet: the conventions of representation and the exposure of bodies, the conventions of bodily beauty and aesthetics, conventional social roles of the body, the everyday expectations towards the body and women's bodies in general. Zbylut explores how the body finds itself in these conventions, how it succumbs to them and how it can effectively exceed them, or even dissipate them.

It would be hard to perceive *Caviar Patriot* as the artist's self-portrait. It is a sculpture-installation created from the white and red scarves of the Polish national football team, which shatters the question of women's roles, beauty canons, and social norms, and poses difficult questions about patriotism, the right to national colours and the changeability of understanding what Polishness means. At a time of the presidential elections, when according to some, adjectives such as 'national', 'patriotic' and 'Polish' gave an excuse to exclude various members of the community, government propaganda – according to others – promoted 'stadium patriotism' and the related exclusionary model of Polishness.





↑↓ winda
lift

schody
stairs

strefa ciszy
silent zone

przewijak
changing table

- 34** Patrycja Orzechowska, *Δ / Ornaments, Circles & Nets*
35 Patrycja Orzechowska, *Deadline. Never Ending Story*
36 Paweł "Paulus" Mazur, *Pure Sure*
37 Elvin Flamingo (Jarosław Czarnecki), works from the series *Hospital Diary*
38 39 Przemysław Branas, *I Wanna Be Your Colonizer & Untitled*
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on the building

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