

The image is a complex abstract graphic design. It features a grid of black lines. A prominent diagonal line runs from the top-left towards the bottom-right. A dashed arrow points from the right side towards the center. A large, empty octagon is positioned in the lower-right quadrant. A solid arrow points downwards from the bottom of this octagon. The text 'LET'S' is located in the upper right, 'OR-GANISE' is in the middle left, and 'OUR' is written diagonally in the lower left. The word 'FUTURE' is at the bottom, partially overlapping a purple arrow pointing right. A purple L-shaped block is at the top, and a purple arrow points down from the top-left. The overall style is minimalist and geometric.

LET'S

OR-
GANISE

OUR

FUTURE

BIENNALE WARSZAWA 2019

EDITORS

Piotr Grzymisławski, Joanna Janiszewska

TRANSLATION

Klementyna Dec, Jerzy Paweł Listwan

CORRECTION

Quendi Language Services

PRODUCTION

Piotr Grzymisławski, Joanna Janiszewska, Artur Szczęsny

GRAPHIC DESIGN

Karolina Pietrzyk, Gilbert Schneider, Tobiasz Wenig

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Instytucja Kultury
m.st. Warszawy



**Biennale
Warszawa**

Biennale Warszawa
Mokotowska 29a, 00-560 Warszawa
T: 0048 22 6208288

biuro@biennalewarszawa.pl
www.biennalewarszawa.pl

LET'S ORGANISE OUR FUTURE

The list of co-creators of the programme Let's organise our future, the first edition of Biennale Warszawa, is long. It includes over 400 names. The list features researchers, intellectuals, theatre creators, visual artists, composers and musicians, curators of performative and visual projects, representatives of activist communities from Poland and abroad, and residents of Warsaw, children, youth and foreigners working and living in Warsaw.

In May and June 2019, all these people invited to join the collective preparation of the Biennale programme by curators of various programming blocks will organise and participate in 56 events: theatre performances, concerts, exhibitions, lectures, conferences, workshops, tours, film screenings, congresses, and conventions which will be presented 108 times in 16 venues across Warsaw. The presentation spaces will be located in the Biennale Warszawa

headquarters at
Marszałkowska 35/40 as
well as on scenes and
in locations of partner
cultural institutions:
Nowy Teatr, Museum of
Modern Art in Warsaw,
Powszechny Theatre, TR
Warszawa, U-jazdowski
Centre for Contempo-
rary Art, Museum of the
History of Polish Jews
POLIN, Museum of Pra-
ga. Our activities will be
organised also in places
in Warsaw which may
be less obvious for
the audience: an empty
school building on
Skaryszewska street, on

the marketplace on Namysłowska street, on Kijowska street, on the route from Muranów to Śródmieście, at the Zamkowy Square, the W-Z Route and the Konstytucji Square. 41 out of these 56 events were planned especially for Biennale Warszawa.

For over a year we have been wondering together what our future should look like, how it can be organised, what institutional forms would be the most appropriate in order to go beyond the apocalyptic

visions of the future which dominated our political, social and cultural life. During this year's edition of Biennale we make another step, and through artistic activities we begin to collectively create alternative organisations and institutions which will be able to propose a different view of the future, based on such values as democracy, progress, solidarity. Therefore, the list of programme collaborators and existing partners institutions which work

with us already should be expanded to encompass the list of newly-designed organisations. These will include: a new artistic cooperative, an international organisation of women eco-farmers, a different university, a new socio-educational facility, a transnational union, an organisation for the cooperation between Eastern Europe and MENA countries, a community choir, a grass-root cultural institution, a transnational artistic ensemble and a

social forum. Creating an entire range of organisations capable of continuous, permanent work in various areas of our lives is not easy even for an interdisciplinary institution such as Biennale Warszawa. Organisations and institutions will emerge which will have to be supported and developed. A small institution with a small team will not be able to achieve that on its own. This is why the programme motto Let's organise our future is also an encour-

agement and invitation
to collaborative action.

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1

Biennale Warszawa was created in the autumn of 2017, on the basis of a small receiving theatre house, operating since the 1970s in a post-industrial space of the Norblin Factory, which, after numerous ownership changes and the takeover of the property by a private developer, was deprived of its stage and even its own office space. Biennale is a cultural institution financed from the Warsaw municipal budget. About two years ago it transformed into an interdisciplinary hub working in a continuous manner at the intersection of various disciplines, with a distinct socio-political profile, while also collaborating with other cultural institutions, non-governmental organisations and social initiatives, and preparing an “interdisciplinary event in the form of a biennale”.

The decision of the Warsaw local authority to transform the existing institution into an interdisciplinary centre can be regarded as extraordinarily progressive, considering the previous practices of local authorities in Poland. It opened up the opportunity to bring to life a different institutional model going beyond the models of public cultural institutions applied thus far. It allowed an institution to be created that combines artistic ideas with research, discursive and publishing activity, in accordance with a practice well-known and established in the art world. Primarily, however, it enabled the creation of a new type of institution that operates in parallel in the artistic and political areas, while attempting to reclaim influence not only through public debate, but also social and political life.

The first activity undertaken by the newly formed team—composed of creators, curators of performance and visual arts, researchers and social activists—was to change the previous name of the institution. The shared sentiment was that using the old name, closely tied to the former institutional model would be incomprehensible. We decided to refer to the known and, to be honest, disputable biennale format, but to apply it in a specific and slightly cynical way. Thanks to the adoption of the new name, Biennale Warszawa gained immediate recognisability and visibility, standing out against the range of various local artistic initiatives, organisations and festivals. At the same time, in order to avoid associations with or direct comparisons to large events from the area of visual or performance arts—which Biennale Warszawa would never be, not least due to its limited financial and production capacities—the main emphasis was placed on the ongoing programme of the institution, executed between subsequent editions of the festival. Therefore, “Biennale Warszawa” is, first and foremost, the name of a public institution of culture. Secondly, it encompasses two-year-long cycles of ongoing artistic, research and socio-political activities conducted collectively by the curatorial team. Finally, it designates the biennale itself, which in this instance is a complement, extension and summary of the programming carried out over two years, rather than a separate event, entered into the calendar of great exhibitions or festivals entrusted to eminent curators.

Using the biennale as a tool, and the critical approach to the biennale format, although it is entirely understandable in the context of the debate on the usefulness of organising large festivals, events and exhibitions, very often causes confusion. Difficulties in understanding the special model of Biennale Warszawa, which at the same time parasitizes and challenges the biennale format, stem partly from the lack of a reference point in a country without any large event of a similar nature. They result partly from the habit of thinking about culture in terms of established and politically neutral categories, in a sense, formats. However, the institutional model of Biennale Warszawa becomes much clearer when we remark on the programming guidelines of the institution, whose major point of reference is current politics, which incites social conflicts, increases economic inequalities and reconstructs authoritarian forms of rule. If the institutional model of Biennale Warszawa, and the programme it follows, is considered as a kind of political counterproject, it should become easier to understand what connects people from various background who decided to abandon their narrowly outlined disciplines, their artistic and academic niches, in favour of starting collaborative and active work on a programme drafting a perspective of different politics.

It would be easiest to conclude that the involvement of the institution is caused primarily by the situation in Poland, and that it constitutes a direct reaction to the rule of the Law and Justice party, including the ultra-right wing policy of the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage that (in summary) consists of reinforcing the right-wing hegemony in the area of culture and preserving national and nationalist identity narratives—by way of the overtaken or newly created institutions. A direct reaction to the right-wing cultural policy can undoubtedly be noted in the actions of the liberal Warsaw authorities that, when specifying the tasks for the new institution, inscribed in its statute the following statement: “the idea of the Biennale is based on the premise that culture and art play a vital role in building a modern, tolerant, critical society, operating with respect for democracy and civic liberties, diversity of beliefs,

religions, sexual orientations and origins.” The idea of establishing a new institution with a socio-political profile, openly and overtly working for other than right-wing values, can easily be regarded as a political gesture of the opposition and a response to the attempt by the conservative right to dominate the area of culture.

From the point of view of the institution and its curatorial team, the issue is more complicated. Right-wing politics—employing populist slogans, drifting towards authoritarianism, imposing ultraconservative legal solutions in the sphere of the worldview and perpetuating identity conflicts—is a significant, but not the sole factor we have taken into account when creating the programme of the new institution. Equally important are: a belief in capitalism as a modernisation tool—constantly present in the public debate, in Polish political and social life, as well as the Polish political imagination, which did not disappear in the wake of the global financial crisis—and the accompanying idolatrous, dogmatic approach of Polish liberal elites to the achievements of the last three decades, to the political model created within that period. In Poland, a country whose political scene for the last 30 years has been dominated by various factions of the right, where political debate focuses on identity-related and historical obsessions, and the economic debate is governed by the free market obsession, there is currently no issue more important than working out solutions that could constitute an alternative to the oppressive identity policies on the one hand, and economic policies on the other.

This is the reason why the programming guidelines of *Bieniale Warszawa* devote so much space to the future, to reclaiming political imagination that would enable us to rethink and then build a new political framework. The first two-year-long cycle of activities, inaugurated in the autumn of 2017 and concluded in June 2019, was to a large extent devoted to the topics of self-organisation, self-governance, autonomy, direct democracy, cooperativism, municipalism, political projects that could constitute an alternative to the current political model. These issues were discussed both in the historical context: in the play *Solidarity. The New Project* we were evoking the idea of a self-governing society from the programme declaration of the 1st Solidarity Convention in 1981; and the contemporary context: through Jan Sowa’s series *Solidarity 2.0, or democ-*

racy as a form of life we presented initiatives, organisations, institutions built on the ideas of autonomy and direct democracy in various places worldwide. Topics related to self-organisation and autonomy were developed at a local level in the programme Let's organise our future!—in the first Biennale edition—the Polish Social Forum, a three-day meeting of activists, debating on the projects of changes in the area of environmentalism, minorities' rights, women's rights, urban policy and employee rights, as well as a simultaneously prepared block of artistic and research activities: Taking over the stage. A polyphonic manifesto for the future by Zorka Wollny, whose objective is to create a collective voice through a democratic micro-community in the form of a hundred-person choir, Gośka Isphording's and Karol Nepelski's Variations on a Global Crowd, a musical piece set in the context of assemblies and occupations of public spaces in the recent years, and a piece by Núria Güell, whose starting points are self-organised protests for the liberalisation of reproductive rights in Poland.

Propositions of alternative, democratic solutions in the area of politics, society and economy have been accompanied since the beginning by activities initiating and creating new mechanisms of international, translocal cooperation and solidarity. Political issues were first set in a translocal perspective during the two-month interdisciplinary programme The Atlas of Planetary Violence, it was also present in the plays Global Civil War and Modern Slavery, as well as in the populist-themed exhibition Skip the Line! Almost straight away, the Biennale team decided that what needs to be juxtaposed with the peripheral character of Polish politics, fed by the messianic myth about the unique historical experience of Poles and neo-Sarmatian expectations towards the public sphere, which subject politics, education, science and culture to narrow, local, egoistic goals, while removing from the field of vision the broader international social and political context, is a project of different politics, based on international solidarity. In the face of phenomena with a planetary reach, the domination of global oligopolies, citizen migrations, the crisis of representative democracy, right-wing populism, authoritarian tendencies, climate change and environmental pollution, rebuilding and creating grass-root networks of cooperation and international connections is a political necessity. And it is in this spirit that

we should interpret the presence of the following items in the Biennale programme: the East European–North African–Middle East Forum, whose goal is to reflect on the reconstruction of relations that Poland and Eastern Europe had with the Middle East and North Africa region, which were virtually broken off after 1989; Convention of Women Farmers, curated by Marwa Arsianos, who invites to Warsaw representatives of ecofeminist collectives; and Jonas Staal's Transunions, an assembly of representatives from organisations and institutions working in the international sphere outside of the framework of national states. The topic of translocal solidarity is also raised in the discursive, visual and performance projects: a lecture by Susan Buck-Morss; a conference Avantgarde Decentered: (Semi) peripheries of Capitalism and Universal History; Exhibition of foreign artists living in Poland, curated by Janek Simon; Katarzyna Kalwat's Staff only, Katarzyna Szyngiera's Women Refugees and Dima Levitsky's Kijowska, projects stemming from the experience of migrants living in Warsaw; as well as the play Orestes in Mosul, directed by Milo Rau and produced by NTGent, a Belgian theatre whose manifesto emphasises the need to develop translocal relations.

3

The programming guidelines of Biennale Warszawa were never about the creation of a new artistic institution with a critical and political profile, which from its own clearly stated position would be able to boldly and convincingly react to negative phenomena, related, for example, to the emergence of populist or post-fascist ideologies. Biennale Warszawa was created as an institution working for positive changes in the area of culture, education, and social issues, so naturally neither the critical aspect, nor the artistic activity, despite being a constant presence, have a decisive role in its programming. Biennale Warszawa was created as an interdisciplinary institution integrating various disciplines and operating in multiple fields. While interdisciplinarity is understood here in quite a specific

way, not only as a possibility for the exchange of knowledge and experiences between disciplines, using interdisciplinary tools to describe complex issues of the contemporary world, or eliminating the distance between culture, art and reality, or combatting the alienation of culture and art by granting them a “utilitarian” aspect. Biennale Warszawa treats interdisciplinarity as a chance to go beyond disciplines, as an activist practice uniting people from various areas, establishing partnerships and creating multilateral alliances focused around progressive policies.

Interdisciplinarity (perhaps the term ‘transdisciplinarity’ would be more appropriate here) is also an action strategy used to preserve the minimum of agency in the public sphere in a situation where culture has lost its agency. Contrary to the opinions of many members of the Polish artistic world who still see in culture a tool of social change, culture in Poland (and also worldwide) has rather become one of the sectors of the economy, a promotional branch of the state, a branding support for cities. As a result of the depoliticization processes of cultural policies that peaked in Poland in the years 2007–2015, as well as the deinstitutionalization of culture since the early 1990s leading to economic polarization and the permanent separation of creators from institutions, culture has maintained some ability to influence the so-called public debate, but its impact on social, political or economic processes is quite small. To make matters worse, culture has lost its progressive character as well; in recent years, it has actually become a tool for the state to execute a regressive historical policy, and a field on which ultra-right mythologies are created and religious obscurantism is promoted. The entanglement of culture (as well as other disciplines of the broadly understood humanities) in market-and-media relations, in supporting reactionary and conservative ideological projects, cannot be overcome on the field of culture alone. Culture will not become another Baron Münchhausen and cannot pull itself out of the mire by its own hair.

The Biennale Warszawa programme can, therefore, be read as an attempt to expand the field, acting at the intersection of various disciplines, or even going beyond those disciplines, to enable the inclusion of a variety of people and social groups, organisations and institutions (that have never worked together before) in design-

ing the future and in building multilateral partnerships. This is precisely why the list of Biennale's partners include research entities, such as the Institute of Polish Culture, EUROREG UW, the Faculty of Management of Visual Culture ASP; social and activist organisations and initiatives, like Camp for the Forest, Syrena Squat and Kurdystan.info; cultural institutions, like the Museum of Modern Art in Warsaw, the Ujazdowski Centre for Contemporary Art and TR Warszawa. This is why equality and special significance in the practice of Biennale Warszawa is assigned to transdisciplinary projects such as the performance and discursive programme devoted to local government (Solidarity. New project, Solidarity 2.0), The Atlas of Planetary Violence, the research and activist project New Metropolitan Mainstream, a series of social and artistic activities devoted to new education RePrezentacje, a six-month-long pilot activity of the Centre of Inclusive Art Downtown.

Transdisciplinarity also constitutes an important level of the programme Let's organise our future! Events of an interdisciplinary nature include primarily assemblies, congresses and conferences. The Polish Social Forum initiated by Jan Sowa and Piotr Grzymisławski, Jonas Staal's Transunions, Marwa Arsanios' Convention of Women Farmers, the East European–North African–Middle East Forum curated by Anna Galas-Kosil and Bartosz Frąckowiak are all attempts at establishing relations between social, political and artistic organisations from Poland and abroad, including activists, creators, curators, researchers and the public in creating new political and social configurations. Artistic and social activities and programming blocks are also transdisciplinary in nature: Agata Siwiak's Endless Space, an interdisciplinary exhibition devoted to visions for new education, new pedagogy, created with the input of experts, researchers, activists, creators and children; Taking over the stage. A polyphonic manifesto for the future, which intertwines the areas of artistic action, social action, activism and research in action, or Nabil Ahmed's Race and Forest, an artistic project resulting from his research on archival materials.

The specific organisational model of Biennale Warszawa, which helps combine art, political activism and academic and theoretical activities, was designed exactly with the special mission of this institution in mind. It differs from both the model of a public cultural institution and a non-governmental organisation, the most wide-spread organisational models in Poland. It can offer stable employment, secure the long duration of the developed projects, and at the same time enable activities on multiple fields, with the use of various formats. It has the ability to add a political dimension to the organisational model and action programme, which in the case of Polish cultural institutions and NGOs is often considered crossing an unacceptable line in a depoliticised field of culture, and usually constitutes quite a challenge for both authorities and the audience.

Creating a new institutional model, and in fact forming a brand new institution, stems from the conviction that changes in the public sphere can be made only through new types of institutions; that the fundamental objectives of the Biennale are possible to achieve only within the new and permanent organisational formula created as a result of challenging the organisational status quo (creating an effective institution or organisation, capable of making changes in the public sphere and withstanding multiple political shifts is still possible, which has been proven in recent years by the Polish conservative and radical right wing, exercising in its traditionalism much more organisational imagination than progressive circles). Thus, Biennale Warszawa has relied on the principles of organisational art (which at the centre of its interests places designing institutions and organisations), drawing conclusions from problematic experiences of participatory art, from the failures of social mobilizations and spontaneously formed initiatives; it also applied these aspects of the theory of management that refer to the ideas of public service and common good.

This is precisely why the debate about the future and political, social, economic, cultural and educational alternatives, which Biennale Warszawa has been holding for almost two years, was de-

liberately fed into the discussion about new institutional models. It started from lectures and seminars about the collectivisation of cultural institutions, participatory art, and perspectives of organisational art. Lectures given by Kuba Szreder and Stephen Wright about making an artistic institution collective; by Georg Blokus about the need to move from participatory to organisational art; by Monika Kostera about organisational models other than those based on the systems of control; a meeting devoted to Public Art Munich 2018, the East Europe Biennale Alliance conference presenting alternative models of biennale and their survival strategies in the face of political pressure, and sometimes even physical aggression—they all presented diverse approaches to building new organisations, also with respect to the current political context in Eastern Europe.

This year's edition of Biennale Warszawa, entitled Let's organise our future!, goes further, shifts the centre of gravity towards practical actions, co-creating new socio-political, economic, educational, and artistic institutions and organisations. Concluding the series Humanities of the future, in the debate A different university, Michał Kuziak initiates work on a new shape of academia. Agata Siwiak, over a two-year-long series RePrezentacje, worked on the educational model and, together with Maciej Siuda, Agata Kiedrowicz and children from Warsaw, designs a new, democratic school. During the workshop The Art of the Cooperative, Kuba Szreder and invited guests create a new artistic organisation founded on cooperative principles. Maja Demska presents and develops the model of an alternative cultural institution—Groszowe sprawy [For Next to Nothing], a gallery set in the space of the market on Namysłowska Street. By organising in Warsaw a congress of eco-feminist collectives from all over the world, Marwa Arsanios designs an international environmental network, and through internationalisation she attempts to reinforce its political agenda. The Eastern European-North African-Middle-East Forum is the bud of a new organisation, connecting Poland with countries of the Middle East and North Africa. Jonas Staal's Transunions, by questioning the framework of a national state, speculates about the possibility of creating a new forum for international cooperation.

Organisations established as part of the Biennale activities will have the chance to survive, becoming a space for manufactur-

ing democratic and progressive political, social, educational and cultural solutions. However, there is always the risk that, due to political and economic reasons, these projects will be limited to one-time actions, or that they will remain just interesting artistic prototypes. Wishing to avoid disappointments, typical for all initiatives launched in recent years, Biennale Warszawa has adopted a different assumption: a principle evoked by Marina Garcés, Spanish philosopher, in her lecture given in January 2019 in Warsaw. She proposed that, instead of creating large, utopian, and thus elusive and rather unrealistic ideas, we should adopt a formula in transition, tested by urban movements, and consisting of the gradual introduction of changes. Based on that principle, calculated according to its own capabilities, which does not go far into the field of speculation, not expecting the creation of attractive prototypes, but pushing the cause of progress, day by day and step by step, work on the organisational and institutional projects of Biennale will continue. We should not expect too much of a wow effect, there will be no miracles. Organisations and institutions will emerge that will have to be constantly supported and developed. It is not a task for a single small institution and one small team. This is why the programme's motto Let's organise our future! is also an encouragement and invitation to collaborative action.

Translated by Klementyna Dec

Paweł Wodziński – theater director, essayist, curator. Director of Biennale Warszawa. Author of dozens of plays, including Solidarity. Reconstruction (2017), Solidarity. New project (2017), Global Civil War (2018) and texts published in "Dwutygodnik", "Dialog", "Teatr" and other periodicals.



TO RE-
FORM
THE WORLD
MEANS TO
REFORM
EDUCATION^①



Agata Siwiak

The RePrezentacje project intends to give a voice to diverse groups of people—regardless of their background, social or economic status, nationality, age and health condition—by means of activities that span the border between art, activism, criticism and social practice. The series is, as it were, a blueprint for a world where every community and every individual is recognised and represented in the public space. A vision of reality where no topic is marginalised, human needs and dreams can find complete resonance, and economic, social and cultural inequalities and resulting conflicts are articulated so as to seek solutions that make change a possibility. The first in a planned series of RePrezentacje projects is subtitled New Education and dedicated to children and adolescents. The idea is rooted, on the one hand, in indignation at the disregard for children and young people's rights and needs that prevails on the political and educational levels and, on the other hand, in the desire to find alternatives that make positive changes possible. I can see this potentiality in the feminist notion of ethics of care as well as in the educational and political practice of Janusz Korczak and his associates: Stefania Wilczyńska, Stefania Sempołowska, Maryna Falska, and Maria Podwysocka.

Workshopping for RePrezentacje began in July 2018. Our work is inspired by the awareness that „a child is already a human being” and we honour his/her “right to respect”. The workshops have taken place in various districts of Warsaw, in cooperation with local actors—NGO’s and public institutions. During the first Biennale Warszawa, we are going to open a collective space to be co-created by children and artists, named Przestrzeń bez końca (Endless Space). It will be marked with egalitarianism and respect for children, democracy and human rights.

KORCZAK: CHILDHOOD AS A DOMAIN OF LEFTIST REFLECTION AND POLITICS

Janusz Korczak (Henryk Goldszmit, 1878-1942) was aware that childhood is not a phantasmic land of no worries. He knew how cruel it can be and how this can affect later life, weighing on the condition of society as a whole. As a doctor, he visited extremely poor neighbourhoods where children were dying of malnutrition in mouldy basements. His own childhood was not easy, in spite of growing up in a well-to-do family. His father would often be unpredictable and violent; when his attacks worsened and were a danger to the family, he was placed in a psychiatric institution. Korczak was 12 at the time. Neither was he happy with his school where corporal punishments abounded. This is reflected by his ghetto diaries as well as his novel Kiedy znów będę mały (When I Am a Youngster Again, 1925) whose main character—Korczak’s alter ego—precisely describes scenes of physical abuse of children by teachers. He firmly opposed child-raising underpinned with corporal punishment: he knew this could effectively discipline a child but the suffering would stay in him as a life-long wound. In 1980, psychoanalyst Alice Miller would publish the book Am Anfang war Erziehung (known in English as For Your Own Good), which would give rise to research on “black pedagogy” analyzing impacts of violence on children. It would be found that people who were subject to violence as children, often

grow up to use violence on those in their own care, thus perpetuating the patterns of discrimination and repression.

Korczak's sensitivity to child suffering was enormous but it was not lordly and patronising. His biographer Joanna Olczak-Ronikier wrote:

The young now see him as a martyr that hopefully nobody will ever have to emulate. A man of flesh and bones turned to a monument. Someone so rebellious and teasing, always walking his own ways, must feel ill at ease when placed on a marble postument. (...) The "children's friend" cliché that stuck to him must be striking him as repulsively sweetness.²

A non-religious activist and irreverent pedagogue, fascinated by socialist ideas, he knew that "to reform the world means to reform education". His identity was formed by leftist circles of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. As a student of medicine, Henryk Goldszmit began to attend the "Flying University", an informal underground academy in post-partition Poland, which also admitted female students. He was influenced by lecturers such as a Marxist economist, anthropologist and sociologist Ludwik Krzywicki and free-thinking commentator Waław Nałkowski. It was during his college time that Korczak met Stefania Sempołowska (she was headmistress of the girls' boarding school where he tutored as part of his pedagogy training). She was an outstanding educator, children's rights militant, and opponent of racism and chauvinism, who organised a congress of delegates of teacher circles in the former Kingdom of Poland during the Revolution of 1905 and supported political prisoners. The year 1904 saw a true breakthrough in Korczak's life when he worked as a tutor at a summer camp organised for the poorest children by the charitable Summer Camp Society founded by Stanisław Markiewicz. The Society was supposed to serve everybody regardless of religion, but the camp houses were divided on the basis of creed due to the necessity of keeping a separate kosher kitchen for the Jewish children. Korczak worked with the Jewish children at Michałówka. The underlying idea was to provide a month of

² Joanna Olczak-Ronikier, *Korczak. Próba biografii (Korczak: An Attempt at Biography)*, Warszawa: Wydawnictwo W.A.B., 2002, p.10.

carefree rural life, away from poverty, hunger and slums. He believed those few weeks could empower the children by showing them that a different, better life existed. He wrote about the miseries of little Warsawians in his heart-wrenching books Dziecko salonu (The Child of a Parlour, 1907) oraz w Jaśki, Jośki i Srule (Johnnies, Joshes and Sruls, 1909).

The Revolution of 1905 was followed by significant liberalisation of the czarist regime: Polish was admitted in schools, people's universities were established. Leftist intelligentsia came out of the underground and could openly manifest its beliefs such as respect regardless of social background, class or ethnicity, sensitivity to poverty and capitalist exploitation. On the other hand, nationalism was on the rise—Roman Dmowski and his National-Democratic Party were gaining support. It can be said that Korczak operated in a reality that was as antagonised as Poland today. The present-day increased civil activity on behalf of women, refugees and political transparency coincides with a flourishing of organisations that are pro-fascist yet legalised.

In 1907, the assimilated Jews of Warsaw founded the “Pomoc dla Sierot” (Aid for Orphans) association whose aim was to support Jewish children. In 1909, Henryk Goldszmit became a member of its board, and 1912 saw the creation of Dom Sierot (Orphan Home) in Krochmalna street, Warsaw, which he managed until 1942 (under the Nazi occupation, it was moved to Chłodna and Śliska streets in the ghetto) together with Stefania Wilczyńska—pedagogue and graduate of the University of Liège, Belgium. The two educators introduced innovative methods: special boxes were provided where the children could drop their anonymous letters of complaint, questions and confidences. The letters were always carefully read and worked through by the teaching staff. Children took turns with duties, learning to be careful and acquiring a sense of responsibility for common possessions.

At a teachers' parliament convened in 1919, Stefania Sempołowska appealed for a modern school that would be independent from the Church (!) and tolerant, as well as for extending care to disadvantaged children: If the State does not take care of those children today, many more hospitals, sanatoriums, correction facilities and prisons will have to be built [tomorrow]. Children who are

left without care can be a horrible curse of our future. Sempołowska knew that violence does not occur without a reason—it is rooted in a childhood deprived of caring and love.

We need to be aware of that truth today as we look at Marches of Independence [yearly mass processions organised by nationalists on Poland's Independence Day]. Psychoanalyst Wilfred Bion⁴, looking at communities, divided them into “work groups”, which are realistic in their assessment of reality and their place in it, and „basic assumption groups”. The latter do not reflect critically on their structures, ideas or leaders. They are convinced of their infallibility, and unified in their psychotic fantasies and anxieties. They are both destructive and self-destructive, aiming to humiliate, or, in extreme cases, exterminate the phantasmal enemy. Acts of destruction tend to consolidate this kind of a group, and the resulting sense of guilt can only be dissolved by another aggressive act which is then projected on “others”, “aliens”, the threatening ones. Violence and hate from “basic assumption groups” should not be condoned, but we should be aware of our shared responsibility for what our country will be like and how the Independence Day of November 11 will be celebrated in the future. Weak kids need strength, and when they do not find it in an empathic community, they look for it in destructive formations.

In 1919, Korczak, along with Maryna Falska—educator and socialist with a revolutionary past and liaisons with the Polish Socialist Party—and Maria Podwysocka, inaugurated the children's home called *Nasz Dom* (Polish for Our Home) in Pruszków near Warsaw, which moved to the Warsaw district of Bielany less than a decade later. The institution was established by the Department of Working Class Child Care that was founded for that specific goal by the Central Committee of Trade Unions, of which Falska was an associate. The home housed both Polish and Jewish children. This was Korczak's dream come true: he believed that a better world was possible, without ethnic, class or religious divisions.

3 Ibid., p. 243.

4 See Hanna Segal, „From Hiroshima to the Gulf War and after: socio-political expressions of ambivalence”, in: [Psychoanalysis, Literature, War. Papers 1972-1995](#), Hove, Sussex, and New York: Routledge, 1997, pp. 157-168.

National independence inspired the pedagogue to initiate a unique experiment, designed to prepare children and adolescents for conscious participation in a democratic society: it was to instil in them a system of state organisation, respect for the common good and social sensitivity. *Nasz Dom* turned into a self-governed republic—a newspaper was published which served as a platform of free expression, and children as well as tutors were subject to one judiciary, whereby all matters were decided with utmost respect for the child’s dignity and on presumption of innocence. Writing was another avenue for Korczak’s work to raise children’s socio-politico-economic consciousness. The main character of his novel *Bankructwo małego Dżeka* (*Little Jack’s Bankruptcy*, 1924) founded a cooperative where everything was put to the service of the common good. The writer presents to children a world where social responsibility is understood as overriding the rules of a free-market economics. This positive story is actually an exception in Korczak’s writing. The democratic children’s homes he organised with so much effort in real life—utopian worlds premised on a belief in equality and fairness—were taking shape in reality, while those same ideas were falling apart in his literary works, morphing into dystopian visions, best exemplified in *King Matt the First* and *Król Maciuś na bezludnej wyspie* (*King Matt on a Desert Island*). It is as if fiction became a reservoir for his sense fear, powerlessness and disillusionment.

POLAND

There are striking similarities on many levels between the reality in which Korczak lived and our own time, especially the recent years when Roman Dmowski’s ideas have seen a revival. Rights of the weakest, including children, continue to be disregarded. Leftist activists are taking over the responsibilities which a democratic state should bear. The right-wing policies are destructive for the commons, feeding into the rise of nationalist attitudes. The radical right’s phantasmal enemy has many faces: a Jew, a refugee, the so-called “gender ideology”. Fascist-leaning militias legally march on official holidays, hate talk has conquered the public media. The weak government is primitively playing the cards of a mythical national

community, “sacredness of family” and the Catholic One God to win the votes of those Polish people who are frustrated and disillusioned by the neoliberal transformation.

This is the reality for children and young people in Poland today. They are growing up with their rights disrespected and their agency unrecognised, steeped in insecurity. Without asking their opinion, the government decided to institute a reform of education, the results including uncertainty whether secondary schools would have enough places for primary school alumni. Young people are deprived of the right to secular and rational education in sexual and gender issues. The PiS government is unleashing a disgusting smear campaign against LGBTQIA+, oblivious to the fact that non-heterosexual children are sometimes bullied and hounded in schools, which has led to a number of suicides. Violence on the part of the Roman Catholic Church is pervasive—from its most appalling forms like child rapes covered up by Church authorities to religion classes where young people are instructed about the “sins” of contraception, abortion and homosexuality. A generation that is being raised in guilt will have to either act out violently by reproducing the discriminatory ideas, or turn the violence inwards, leading to self-aggressive and self-destructive behaviours. The Roman Catholic morality also presumes disregard for women’s rights, as well as discrimination against girls early in life, reproducing patriarchal and misogynous clichés that find their way to officially approved textbooks.

On the other hand, the rightist politicians are cunningly appealing to societal sensitivity to economic exclusion—an exclusion that has been persistently ignored for the last three decades of neoliberal state policies. The state inconsiderately hands out the 500+ allowances for families with more than one child, and makes populist promises of universal handouts to more and more sections of society. Poverty is a fact and a strengthened welfare system is necessary, but that of the ruling party sounds rather like pre-election propaganda. A single mother of one child is the system’s pariah, not entitled to the 500+: she has not kept a husband and family and is not supporting the nation with subsequent pregnancies. Children’s home charges will not see the 500+, either. Pecuniary allowances for caregivers of the disabled are extremely low in Poland, absolutely inadequate for the costs of treatment and rehabilitation.

There is no system of assistance for people with disabilities, no support once the compulsory education is completed, no well considered system of vocational activation, or financing for parents and caregivers. A school management can legally refuse admission of a disabled child and suggest home schooling, which amounts to forced isolation and a secondary exclusion. The weakest ones are not a concern of the ruling class.

Let's consider the situation of Poland's children from the perspective of ruthless numbers. The children and adolescents' mental health statistics are alarming. In 2017, 730 people in Poland under 18 attempted suicide, of which 116 were successful. As of writing this, on April 1, 2019, Warsaw's last psychiatric ward for children was just shut down. The medical staff was no longer able to work in conditions which precluded providing young people due care. The queues for admission to children's psychiatric hospitals number in the dozens, help is only extended to those whose life is considered at risk. Unhospitalised young people in need of medical assistance will have to reach a critical point to be given a hospital bed, albeit in a corridor of an overcrowded facility. An increase in disease occurrence is noted in late September (the school year begins on September 1), the situation is alleviated in June (last month of school).⁵ School is hardly a supportive space any more. One factor is outrageous work conditions for teachers: after the PiS "de-form" they frequently have to combine jobs in more than one school to attain full-time employment. Their salaries are dramatically low, often forcing them to look for additional paid activities. This is hardly a recipe for educators' identification with the school or group of students; they simply have no time. All this is compounded by education censorship and hijacking for propaganda purposes. In the name of national education, a teacher presenting a "non-patriotic" approach to a history lesson, e. g. about the Volhynia genocide or Jedwabne pogrom, is threatened with prison. Failed insurrections and the axioms of Poles being oppressed, noble and innocent are supposed to be the exclusive reference points for historical and civic education of Polish children and adolescents.

5 See <http://weekend.gazeta.pl/weekend/1,152121,24209415,40-dzieci-czeka-w-kolejce-na-przyjecie-do-szpitala-kryterium.html> (as accessed on March 26, 2019)

Young people are fed up. Less and less confident in their political agency, they do not have the strength to protest. We may complain at their unwillingness to get engaged, to fight, and to vote, but first of all, we, as adults, should take responsibility for the kind of world we have created for them. This resounded very loudly during the RePrezentacje workshop with young people 10 Days of Anger and Love which was conducted by the Siksa collective at the Bemowo Culture Centre. During the open show, workshop participant Svetlana Sukhorukova read out her text Trzy setki milczących słów (Three Hundred Silent Words):

I, member of the Z Generation born on the frontier of ages, will refrain from dealing with political problems and global calamities. I don't want to splash off my pain. I have seen it in your tears. I prefer to shout silently. I'm pissed off with the question what makes me pissed off. (...) My pain and anger are an atomic bomb whose shock wave could cover the whole Galaxy. But I'm never going to push the red button. I want you to be alive. I want you to be happy begetting your children, even as that undermines the planet. Even as you rear them as a pack of dogs fighting for domination, comparing the form of their genitals, or the shine and length of their hairs.

The world model created by the adults and present in public space—that of hateful talk and discrimination—is being reproduced in school and playground settings. A 2017 report of Fundacja "Dajemy Dzieciom Siłę" ("Empowering the Children" Foundation)⁶ presents a frightening image of Polish childhood:

- growing numbers of children are hospitalised due to mental disorders;
- Poland is second in Europe (next to Germany) in terms of fatal suicidal attempts by children aged 10 to 19;
- one in five children has experienced physical violence from an adult person they know, but in the recent years there has been an increasing percentage of parents who have never given their child a spanking;
- 12% of children have experienced some form of sexual abuse; only 50% of parents have talked to their children about such a risk;

6 <https://fdcs.pl/problem/dzieci-sie-licza-2017/>(as accessed on March 26,2019)

- 11% of teenagers have sent intimate photos via Internet or mobile phone;
- 5% girls and 4% boys experience repeated, long-lasting cyberbullying.

Anti-discriminatory and anti-violence education in schools should be the basis of violence prevention, yet in Poland this is hampered by the “mythical family” being regarded as an overriding value. In 2015, Poland ratified the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence. The Polish government has not to this day fulfilled its duty of instituting a regulation that ensures the victim’s immediate separation from the perpetrator. On the contrary, according to applicable law, an adult victim of domestic violence, in most cases a female, is supposed to first go through the process of mediation with the perpetrator in the name of saving the family / marriage (for “what God has joined together, let man not separate”). Children whose life, health or sanity are threatened, find themselves in the same situation. The state whose priority is to protect Catholic moral standards and institutions does not side with the youngest ones. Their victimisation will be reflected by our weak sense of community.

REPREZENTACJE: RELATIONALITY, EMPATHY AND ETHICS OF CARE

Korczak believed in the law, but care and empathy were equally important to him, as reflected in his pedagogic achievements as well as his writing: diaries, books on education and novels. From the outset of our work on RePrezentacje, I wanted these two categories to be present as objects of practice and analysis in artistic and social processes that include children. My understanding of the importance of care and empathy in art expressed through relationship building and inclusion was born out of long years of practice in this area, reinforced by the reading of feminist researchers, most notably Carol Gilligan and Judith Butler.

According to American psychologist and feminist activist Carol Gilligan, absence of care and empathy precludes the chances of democratic community building. The researcher points out that under patriarchy, independence and rationality are typically masculine qualities while emotionality and care belong to the cultural continuum of womanhood and are not taken seriously on the level of socio-political agency. She cites the study of young boys who, due to cultural norms, and following the dictate of injunctions such as Boys don't cry. Act as a man! Don't be a sissy! gradually amputated the vulnerable, emotional parts of their selves. As they became more "manly", that is not showing their weakness or dependence, they also became increasingly aggressive and self-aggressive. Gilligan notes that patriarchy in fact does not privilege anyone; it only creates patterns of oppression which are then applied in the name of "higher values" and the letter of law. She calls for activating "a different voice" whereby caring is neither masculine nor feminine, but remains just human. As she writes, "Within a patriarchal framework, care is a feminine ethic; within a democratic framework, care is a human ethic." ⑦

Ethics of care contradicts the patriarchal figure of a "lone sheriff" who pursues justice on his own—it is relational and presumes human interdependence. Judith Butler wrote in Notes Towards a Performative Theory of Assembly⑧:

If I am to lead a good life, it will be a life lived with others, a life that is no life without those others; I will not lose this I that I am; whoever I am will be transformed by my connections with others, since my dependency on others, and my dependability, are necessary in order to live and to live well. Our shared exposure to precarity is but one ground of our potential equality and our reciprocal obligations to produce together conditions of liveable life. In avowing the need we have for one another, we avow as well basic principles that inform the social, democratic conditions of

7 Carol Gilligan, Joining the Resistance, Malden, MA: Polity Press, 2011, p. 22.

8 Judith Butler, Notes Towards a Performative Theory of Assembly (Mary Flexner Lectures of Bryn Mawr College), Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2015, p. 201.



Greta Thunberg during the climate strike in front of the Swedish parliament in August 2018. Her speech from the UN climate summit in Katowice will be a part of the [Endless Space](#) installation, source: commons.wikimedia.org, photo: Anders Hellberg

what we might still call “the good life”. These are critical conditions of democratic life in the sense that they are part of an ongoing crisis, but also because they belong to a form of thinking and acting that responds to the urgencies of our time.

Butler also notes that not all group of people have the status of “entities deserving to have rights and protection, to be free and belonging to the political community”. Therefore, their status must be safeguarded on the political-legal level, and if this is denied, the denial should be made visible.

The first venue where we initiated our activities was the Centre for Foreigners in the Targówek Fabryczny district, particularly dedicated to women with children who seek refugee status in Poland or international protection. Organisationally aided by Fundacja dla Wolności (Foundation for Freedom), which runs a children’s

activity room at the centre, we began a month-long series of choreographic workshops that were conducted by Kaya Kołodziejczyk together with a group of artists practising parkour. Participants of the movement workshops were gaining more trust in their own bodies, stimulating imagination and learning to overcome obstacles. They also worked with artists to create an installation revealing the places of their earlier travels, including the countries where they were denied a chance to stay. Another outcome of the activities was a series of video works by Teresa Otulak—the artist had to face a particular challenge posed by the necessity of concealing the children’s faces. Their image must not be publicised for the sake of security, their own and that of their mothers. Residents of the centre want to remain anonymous largely for political reasons, but also, in some cases, because they are being sought by their families—women coming from radically patriarchal cultures where their rights are not respected sometimes decide to flee, escaping domestic violence.

The same “invisibility” challenge confronted us in a children’s home in Białołęka (a branch of the “Chata” [The Cottage] Complex of Small Forms of Care and Education), dwellers of which worked with artists Anna Smolar, Michał Buszewicz, Dominika Korzeniecka, Hanna Maciąg and Rafał Paradowski. The aim was to co-create a theatre show in a way that was based on a democratic process, where it is essential to set rules for collective work so that every person feels that her/his rights and needs are being honoured. Before we even started the rehearsals, we were told by the home manager Elżbieta Stencel that we are not allowed to reveal the children’s image. The reason was possible discrimination and contempt in the school community—on the one hand, the children are stigmatised by their peers and their parents (sometimes, deplorably, also by teachers), on the other hand they refuse to accept patronising attitudes and pity. Most prefer to keep their residence secret. As one of the boys explained, It’s a very good principle [not to publicise one’s image]. Otherwise... if somebody falls over on the stage... Look, a home child fell over! And no matter the topic, they will be thinking: Oh, the home child... Or they will pretend to laugh just to please us. So we had to choose between two ways: either to go ahead with the show while concealing the residence identity of

the children, or to speak about it openly, cutting away the possibility of public promotion and performance. We opted for the latter—it was very important to us to emphasise the value of working with facilities that too rarely find themselves in the field of social visibility and concern. The première took place in Nowy Teatr (New Theatre), only inviting guests from the detailed list agreed on with the child actors. Subsequent shows were to be played for closed audiences in schools and kindergartens, and information about the children’s home were not to be disclosed in these cases. Two months after the première, an extraordinary thing happened: the young people decided to offer shows for open audiences. When Marta Michalak—producer and programming coordinator of RePrezentacje—and I explained that someone they know may appear in the audience, and someone else may find online information about their home, the same boy who earlier told us why they did not want to be revealed, said: Well, that’s the cost of being famous. The children’s emancipation from their usual shame and fear of stigmatisation was one of the most touching moments during the work on RePrezentacje.

Korczak’s novel protagonists—King Matt the First and Kajték the Wizard dreamed about caps of invisibility; children of children’s homes and refugee camps are often condemned to invisibility due to political and social reasons. As a curator of participatory projects, I have until now seen what philosopher Jacques Rancière calls “inclusion in the space of visibility” of the people I invited to cooperation as one of my main tasks, realised by giving them a voice and enabling their physical presence within the circulation of art and in public spaces so they could be heard and seen. As a team of creatives, we had to ask ourselves what to do when being invisible is somebody’s only protection in a threatening environment. The reason why facing this dilemma was not easy lay not only in the choice of arts as a medium and form of communication with our potential audiences, but, first and foremost, in that we could not dismiss the feeling that “invisibility” is not the children’s choice and desire but a necessity which, in the case of children’s home residents, was additionally charged with shame and fear of rejection.

In our work for RePrezentacje, we constantly tried to examine the tensions between the children’s choices and wishes, and



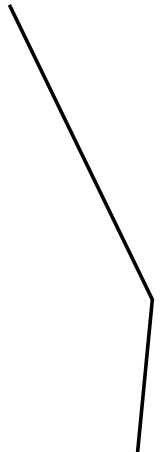
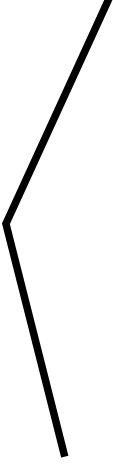
Work on the new space for children during the workshops at the Ujazdowski Castle Centre for Contemporary Art.



Workshops series Create it with SIKSA. 10 days of anger and love within the RePrezentacje program; both photos: Biennale Warszawa 2018, own materials

the needs of us, the grown-ups. This was also true for the place whose architecture was co-created by residents of the Białołęka Cottage, Targówek Fabryczny centre for foreigners, pupils of the Special School Complex No 89 at Skaryszewska Street and grown-up artists—Maciej Siuda and Agata Kiedrowicz. The original idea of the project I proposed was to have them all design a Children's Institution for Civil Affairs—a direct inspiration by the pedagogic practice of Janusz Korczak. However, as we proceeded with the workshops, getting immersed in children's imagination and experience, the original name began to sound like an abuse of the children—a misappropriation of their social and political sensitivities. Convinced of the performative power of language, our project team decided that the “adult” language of power and hierarchy will have no place in the workshops. Eventually, the place was given the name that the children themselves invented: Przestrzeń bez końca (Endless Space)—which seems much more likely to inspire social and political reflection. The questions which arise from it will be uncomfortable to us adults. But if we want to “organise our future”, and, in fact, a “good future”, we have to incessantly ask them, look for ways to process them, and most importantly, to act on them: Can there be a world where children's opportunities are not limited by their place of residence / class / colour / political status? Does the world created by adults allow us to believe that children live to see their own maturity? To what extent do the spaces in which we live challenge or reproduce mechanisms of power and oppression? As adults, where does our responsibility for children and young people's rights begin and where does it end?

Agata Siviak – culture and theatre studies expert, curator and producer of performative and interdisciplinary projects, she is the artistic director of the Close Strangers Festival. She executed her projects in prestigious public cultural institutions, as well as e.g. a children's home, a social welfare centre, and a detention centre. She is currently working on an original project RePrezentacje for the 1st edition of Biennale Warszawa.



TRANSNA- TIONAL ALLIANCES

Bartek Frąckowiak – curator, culture researcher, theatre director, including: Julia Holewińska's Borders (2016), Natalia Fiedorczuk's Workplace (2017) and documentary-investigative play Modern Slavery (2018). He published in various theatre and socio-cultural magazines, including "Autoportret", "Dialog", "Didaskalia", "Political Critique", and "Teatr". Deputy Director of Biennale Warszawa.

Bartek Frąckowiak

We will not be successful in organizing our future if we only operate on a micro scale, even if we engage in the best kinds of projects, based on self-organization and self-management, we have to include and consider global or translocal levels. If we really want to have a future, we must try and take up the challenge of creating new, translocal organizations that will be designed differently from the current international organizations, which are often dysfunctional and ineffective. Think about the United Nations, an international institution that, in recent decades has repeatedly failed to meet the challenges of subsequent global crises. Could it be that one cause of the weakness of international organizations is that their processes, protocols, representations and decision-making are all based on the concept of a nation-state?

The nation-state concept is somewhat misleading. It is not always easy to discern whether what we are dealing with is a sign of its power or its weakness. Does the present rise of nationalist tendencies, neofascism and the turn to the right, which can be observed in many places around the world, testify to a renaissance of the nation-state or, on the contrary, its last convulsions, vehement attempts to defend that idea, undermined from many sides at once by transnational capitalism? The nation-state actually came into being in order to protect the interests of local capital and to regulate accumulation. Is it still playing this role? Does it still have any means to do so? The consideration of the nation-state cannot ignore the fact that it has oftentimes served emancipatory purposes, and that demands for new nation-states have formed a part of processes of decolonization and the liberation of the oppressed. Is it still possible for the nation-state to be a vehicle of progressive poli-

tics and emancipation? Or has it ever been? Without answering these difficult questions concerning the nation-state, we will never arrive at effective modes of acting on a global scale. However, that is just the starting point of our Biennale, a springboard for reflection on new initiatives that can be imagined and brought into existence on the levels below and above the nation-state.

A world of planetary interrelations requires envisioning new institutions

We are operating in a world of intensive interrelations, where very few problems can be solved at the level of local communities alone. Neighborhood self-help initiatives, trade unions, progressive and grassroots social movements' activism, or many other kinds of local level actions—none of these will have a critical impact on the expansion of the nation-state, increasing economic disparities and uneven development, climate change, the global division of labor and its associated migrations, modern slavery, or new forms of structural violence. None of those problems can be successfully dealt with at the levels of any of the local structures. It is true that a return to seemingly safe havens of old institutions and old solutions—and to familiar scales and perspectives—is now happening as an automatic defensive reaction in many places around the world. This kind of response to globalization and its challenges is not new. We have witnessed similar processes many times in the past.

Increasing scales of international cooperation and interdependence in various historical periods have always provoked a reaction of opposite forces that aimed at separation, disconnection and closure. Think, for example, about the 19th century globalization, which saw its boom towards the end of the century, but then lost momentum after the political turmoil of World War I and the Great Depression of the 1930s. Interestingly, capital flows between some countries, expressed as a proportion of the gross domestic product,

were bigger in the late 19th century than they were in 1990s. As we can see, an international financial market is nothing new, and international interrelatedness has had its times of expansion, followed by phases of contraction.

This was, in part, because the institutional development necessary to effectively support communities and protect them against relations based on exploitation, theft or fraud could not catch up with the pace of dynamic changes in the economic and social environments.^② Institutions evolve more slowly than their environment. In addition, various actors on the geopolitical power map are not interested in institutional maturity and the adaptability of the institutions to present challenges. They would rather have them archaic, devolved and in decline, sluggish and inefficient. Institutional chaos promotes “good deals”.

Still, it is apparent that there is no return to old scenarios, solutions and blueprints. This underpins the importance of working to develop a new type of translocal institution, one that has a power to shape relations among people from different cultures, nations and geographic contexts into new forms of alliances, solidarity and collaboration, so as to find adequate responses to the major challenges of our present global interdependence. That work must begin with some effort of social imagination; exploring limits in order to cross them. Gradually stretching and transforming the realm of what is imaginable today. Such action requires courage to speculate, to leave the comfort zones characterizing specific disciplines, to think and imagine “across the lines”, traversing disjunctive fields and domains, such as arts, science, politics and management.

1 Hendrik van den Berg, International Economics. A Heterodox Approach, New York and London: Routledge, p. 10.

2 Ibid., p. 12.

To be capable of transforming the world, politics has to begin with specific material issues ③

The Biennale, under the heading Let's organise our future, will include four international forums, three of which will be translocal assemblies, and the fourth one will present the results of a translocal investigation into a case of environmental destruction. In these frameworks, we want to design new planetary organizations and institutions whose role will be to create, maintain and develop new alliances, new forms of solidarity and new models for cooperation. All of them begin with material specifics, historical or contemporary, forming a basis for their speculative potential.

The exchange of practices concerning plant cultivation and seed reproduction, and the sharing of knowledge on soil cultivation means and food preservation among women from Rojava (a Kurdish region of north-eastern Syria), Lebanon's Bekaa Valley, the Lublin region in Poland, Mexico's Chiapas state or the Indian Punjab make the material starting point for Marwa Arsanios's Convention of Women Farmers. As members of ecofeminist collectives, mostly coming from the global South, share and exchange knowledge on agriculture, the curative potential of herbs and wild plants in places with limited access to medicines, they are at the same time creating foundations of new, transnational and progressive politics of commons. Those who are normally immersed and typically isolated in their local political contexts are getting a chance to see one another and to create a forum of cooperative networking.

3 The title paraphrases a fragment of Eyal Weizman's sentence: Transformative politics must begin with material issues, just as the revolutionary vortex slowly gathered pace around the maggots in the rotten meat on board the Potemkin. See: Eyal Weizman, 'Introduction: Forensis' in: Forensis. The Architecture of Public Truth, Sternberg Press and Forensic Architecture, 2014, p. 11.

Their activities frequently take place as part of global aid economy. They receive support from various NGOs that deal with combating starvation, achieving developmental goals or refugee relief. Such is the context of activity of people like Khadija, the leader of a women's farming collective in the eastern Bekaa Valley, next to the Syrian border, which teaches refugee women how to use wild plants, preserve food, and practice cheap and green cooking. Marwa Arsanios points out that female farmers like Khadija are often made to accept and own the parlance of the global aid economy, where phrases like "economic independence", "development", "women's entrepreneurship" and "women's empowerment" are considered neutral, while they actually emphasize individual responsibility and individual achievements of women.⁴ That perspective, Arsanios stresses, carries the danger of gender essentialism, which sees "global womanhood" as a category in itself, separated from real social class and race issues that have been fundamental for internationalist feminist politics. Instead of taking up the subject of the responsibility of the State and corporations for the roots of hunger and agricultural decline in the Middle East, such as uneven wealth distribution, the mismanagement of water distribution or the overexploitation of groundwater (as in the Bekaa Valley), soil despoliation by chemical fertilizers, toxic water pollution or the land ownership law, it seems that NGOs are trying to compensate the negative effects, while ignoring the causes and burdening women's collectives with the responsibility of filling the void resulting from the State's neglect.

Marwa Arsanios's project involves material specifics related to agricultural practices (as women's response to environmental destruction and the States' misguided economic-development policies), become a vehicle for addressing a more general subject of a new program for feminist internationalism. It could be a framework for new forms of imaginary, cooperation and universal solidarity. Seeds, soils and plants, as well as the associated infrastructure, become a medium whereby planetary problems are projected. It is by starting from such specifics, rather than just abstract ideas, that a process of political transformation can begin. Arsanios's idea is

4 Marwa Arsanios, *Who's Afraid of Ideology? Ecofeminist Practices Between Internationalism and Globalism*, e-flux, Journal #93, September 2018, reprinted in this catalogue.

based on the concept of politicizing through internationalization. This, in turn, is done by creating a field of visibility for the collective initiatives of various female farmers, a forum that enables them to see one another.

This kind of perspective is shared by Eyal Weizman of Forensic Architecture, who refers to Arjun Appadurai's "methodological fetishism" as a postulated multi-layer political practice. It involves a "microphysical analysis in which the part or detail becomes an entry point from the reconstruction of larger processes, events and social relations, conjunctions of actors and practices, structures and technologies, may take place."⁵ This is the methodology underlying Marwa Arsanios's Convention of Woman Farmers.

In a similar way, Race and Forest by Nabil Ahmed (a Forensic Architecture collaborator) and INTERPRT—an investigatory organization concerned with environmental crimes—starts out with a historical detail, placing it in the wider context of the activity of the International Criminal Court. It deals with Case 1307/7150, in which Poland, as part of the UN Commission on War Crimes, raised charges against nine German people, mostly the heads of forest departments in the General Government territory in 1947. They were accused of the planned destruction of Polish forests. The indictment formulated by Polish prosecutors was among the first in history that dealt with environmental destruction and that was filed with international legal institutions. The crime, which, following the vocabulary of INTERPRT, today could be referred to as ecocide, a name imitating genocide, where nature is the victim, was treated by the Polish prosecutors as a part of war crimes. That pioneering approach can be an important precedent and model to be followed in the future.

INTERPRT is striving to make ecocide a crime in the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court. This seems especially relevant and logical nowadays when nation-states and corporations are equally responsible for the destruction of nature. Nation-states are not interested in suing their own representatives who are responsible for structural crimes. The consequences of those crimes, however, extend far beyond the boundaries of national territories. In this situation, it seems necessary that the powers of trying

5 Eyal Weizman, op. cit., pp. 18-19.

crimes of ecocide be transferred to international institutions. The question remains whether the International Criminal Court, itself operating within the logic of the old paradigm of international institutions, would be able to undergo institutional transformation sufficient to include ecocide in the list of offenses that qualify for trial? The INTERPRT project also brings into being another type of international forum within the Biennale, namely the Forensic Forum. The Latin origin of the word forensic also evokes the meaning of “forum” itself. The Latin *forensis* can be translated as “adequate with regard to the forum”. The original notion referred to the Roman Forum, the place where the realms of politics, law and economy overlapped. Gradually the Forum evolved into a place solely related to law, and forensics began to be understood only as the application of medical and scientific methods in judicial and investigative practice.⁶ This kind of forum was a place where various material evidence of crimes—inanimate objects that had no power of speaking for themselves—were presented and explained. So they needed a special translator from the “language of things”. As Weizman notes, “Forensis thus establishes a relation between the animation of material objects and the gathering of political collectives.”

INTERPRT is creating a forum in a similar sense. It will not be a political gathering, like many other Biennale events, but rather a collection of evidence, material objects, animated, brought to life and arranged in spatial relations that make them speak. Archival documents, the aerial photographs of forests, interviews, spot analyses, cartographic and the results of legal research, will comprise an installation reconstructing case No. 1307/7150. The reconstruction purpose is not just to rewrite history or to tell a story that has been largely unrevealed until now. It is oriented primarily towards the present and future: it is pointing to current cases of forest destruction in Poland (Białowieża and the Vistula Spit), and ultimately looks to the transformation of the system of international legal institutions (International Criminal Court).

6 Ibidem, s. 9.

An Experiment in Cultural Geopolitics: the Eastern Europe-North Africa-Middle East Forum

52

Poland, as well as other post-socialist countries, had a history of continuous and intensive contacts with Middle East and North African countries from the 1960s until the moment of its political transition. That absolutely incredible period of geopolitical alliance with what was then called the Third World abounded in colorful examples of translocal solidarity, international relations based on a vision of planetary commons, as well as person-to-person and inter-institutional friendships. Many Polish people know somebody who was delegated to work in Libya, to conduct research in Iraq, or to build roads in Syria. We may also remember the Palestinian students who would come to Polish universities in the 70s and 80s, but few of us know that in the 1960s Warsaw, SGPIs (now the Warsaw School of Economics) had an Institute for Research on the Economies of Underdeveloped Countries, which created very interesting development plans for countries that today would be referred to as the Global South. Recalling that moment in Poland's history may be very meaningful and inspiring today, given that the right wing is playing on prejudice against refugees and igniting islamophobic sentiments. Regarding that period as an archive of (partly) lost opportunities, the creators are aiming to revive some of them and trying to use them as a reference for designing present-day forms of relations, alliances and solidarities between the Central and Eastern Europe and the Middle East and North Africa.

To better explore and understand that archive, two lines of research were initiated: ethnographic interviews in Lebanon and archival inquiries in Warsaw. Both of them will be presented during the performative lecture at the Biennale. The ethnographic interviews made by Inga Hajdarowicz (in cooperation with Prof. Beata Kowalska, Anna Galas-Kosil and myself) in Lebanon between 2018 and 2019 recorded the stories of Palestinians and Lebanese who lived, studied

and worked in Poland in the 1970s and 80s, and then, for diverse reasons, decided to move back to Lebanon. Memories of the political transformation in Poland are mixed with those of the Lebanese civil war; we hear them comparing life in our country in the early 90s with the socio-economic realities of the Middle East. The other narrative line corresponds to fascinating archival research that was carried out in cooperation with renowned reporter Max Cegielski. From visual and text contents from magazines such as *The Polish Review* (1962-1972), and *Poland*, to the archives of Michał Kalecki and the Polish School of Development, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, LOT airlines, Orbis, Budimex, Polservice and other foreign trade companies, we recount colorful social situations playing out behind the scenes of official politics and trade exchange. Instead of focusing on art or architecture, our research is primarily concerned with hard and soft infrastructures created in the course of that cooperation, the social contexts associated with work, the political economy of the exchange between the so called Second and Third Worlds. These perspectives are our source of inspiration.

Now that Polish foreign policy towards the Middle East and North Africa is practically non-existent, or has taken on grotesque forms such as the so called Middle East Conference in February 2019, organized without the participation of Iran or Palestine, the time is ripe for outlining a new vision of relations between our region and the Middle East and North Africa. Our gathering will involve 12 international participants who are interested in designing such relations and founding an organisation that will work for new forms of transnational cooperation and solidarity. We want to discuss the challenges for the developing economy, ecology and climate change, arts and cultural policies, based on scientific knowledge in some cases, on artistic speculation and fantasy in others, with a view to making a map of transregional relations and creating a conceptual architecture of a new organization. We intend to propose program guidelines for such a project, as well as some concrete ideas that could be achieved within the coming years.

Our response to islamophobia, anti-refugee rhetoric and the discourse of cultural differences will be an attempt at defining the realm of the transnational common good, and identifying the best organizational forms that its daily practice could take.

Equally important, we find it essential to create an alternative cartography where Poland is not necessarily viewed as a part of the Modern West, but instead coexists on the same plane with other semi-peripheral and peripheral regions, within other modernities and their associated spatio-temporal logics. Poland and other former Eastern Bloc countries had better be looked for in the East and South, rather than the West and North. A Palestinian, an Iranian, a Syrian, a Pakistani, a Bengali and a Vietnamese will be the natural allies and friends of the region's people under this experiment in cultural geopolitics. The outlining of these alternative demarcations and speculation on their possible ramifications seem exciting enough for us to dedicate an additional month-long residency that we are organizing together with ReDirecting: East, CSW Zamek Ujazdowski. The residency will include five curators from various European and Middle-Eastern countries, with whom we will continue the efforts to establish an organization that will, for at least two more years, work to create, maintain and develop relations between former Eastern Bloc countries and the Middle East and North Africa.



Trans-Unions: an experiment on radical political imagination

If a nation is an imaginary community, how do we imagine a transnational one? This question is the point of entry for the Transunions project, a collaboration between Studio Jonas Staal and Biennale Warszawa. Of all the forums within the Biennale, this one probably has the most universal ambitions. They include designing a new transnational institution that would not reproduce the shortcomings of nation-states or failing international institutions such as NATO or the UN. If the present crisis of political imagination means both an inability to envision alternative arrangements, or a third, fourth and fifth way, and the failure to understand the destructiveness of our present ways, then the only opportunity for a change process to be initiated seems to set our current imagination into

radical motion. This is not about some unlikely speculations; what is needed is speculation within the hypothetical conditions to verify and test the viability of new, transnational subjectivities. This motion of imagination involves the creation of a new institution, as if it really existed. However, this is not a purely playful activity, because we will be operating on real data of concrete political demands, strivings, experiences and subjectivities.

What kinds of media, symbols, signs, anthems, means of communication, values and institutions could create a space of possible new relationships between organizations, parties, activists or movements that operate in the realm of global politics? How can we imagine a planetary government that pursues progressive policies of mitigating disparities or a radically responsible climate policy? Staal argues that artistic imagination can anticipate actual politics, creating space for it, mapping a “visual morphology” of the future, one that “unionizes” diverse alternative imaginaries into a new transnational gathering.

This test of artistic imagination, an attempt to bring into being and test some new, translocal institutions, forms a starting point of truly progressive future politics. If we want the future to be more than the object of trend reading and passive following, more than an outcome of technocratic probability theory, if we want it to result from ongoing agency of engaged political subjects in many places of our global reality, we need to speed up the movement of our imagination in designing new institutions, balancing on the thin line between arts and politics.

Translated by Jerzy P. Listwan

TRANS- UNIONS

Jonas Staal - founder of the artistic and political organization New World Summit and initiator of the New Unions campaign. Staal's work includes interventions in public space, exhibitions, theatrical performances, publications and lectures. He focuses on the relationship between art, democracy and propaganda. Staal regularly writes for the e-flux magazine.

Jonas Staal

THE CRISIS OF IMAGINATION

1

The crisis of the European Union is being explained to us as a political crisis, as an economic crisis, and as a humanitarian crisis. These descriptions are accurate, but they seem to overlook a more structural crisis that underlies them: the crisis of imagination.

A recurring tendency in art discourse is to describe the political importance of art in terms of the imagination. If we cannot imagine a different future, how could we ever act towards such a future politically? In this line of reasoning, artistic imagination might even precede political action. But there seems to exist a second dimension to the crisis of imagination that is less often invoked, namely the lack of imagination when it comes to understanding how devastating our present actually is, how little change the stakeholders of our reality are willing to accept, no matter how many alternative imaginations we confront them with, and no matter how “realistic” or “democratic” these alternatives might be.

This dual crisis of the imagination—a lack of imagination to understand our disastrous present as much as to project our desired future—is best illustrated through the Brexit dichotomy. One side of this dichotomy is defined by the Leave camp, an amalgam of opportunist Tories and racist ultranationalists, and consists of the projection of a mythical past, fueled by a residual sense of superiority of a decaying Empire. The other side of the dichotomy is defined by the Remain camp, led by the Eurocratic elite, who propose the continuation of what they consider to be the proven formula of brutal austerity politics, in the guise of liberal democratic reform. Neither the Leave nor the Remain camp seems to grasp that what they propose as a return to the past or continuation of the European cartel's business as usual does not form a competent answer to the devastating crises that we are facing. The endless renegotiations of Brexit, with the aim to maintain a global market while staging a separation, will only deepen the disillusionment of the Brexiteers. The continuation of the austerity doctrine will just as well deepen existing inequalities and the further erosion of whatever remains of the right to self-determination of EU member states, creating the conditions for the Nationalist International of Wilders, LePen, and the rest of their cronies to gain strength.

The Leave and Remain camps are positioned as opposites, but actually they rely on one another fundamentally. The Eurocrats' austerity politics, a euphemism for economic terrorism, fuels the desire for a "return" to national sovereignty under the by now famous Brexit banner "Let's Take Back Control!" Simultaneously, the rise of the ultranationalists has reenergized pro-European forces; compared to the racist and violent future-pasts they propose, the status quo of the austerity elite suddenly comes across as salvation. As such, the Leave and Remain camps form two competing factions in the same hostage situation: either way we choose, we will inevitably support the legitimacy of the other. In order to reclaim not our borders but our political imagination, it seems essential to reject both options and stand firm on the demand of a third, fourth, or fifth option to come.

Both the Leave and Remain camps address the crisis of the European Union, either through a prolongation of the present (Remain) or as a return to a mythical national sovereign past (Leave). In



New Unions: DiEM25, Athens (2017), Studio Jonas Staal, Sporting Basket Arena, Athens, photo: Jonas Staal

both scenarios the imaginative category of the future is absented in addressing the organization of our present. So how can we stand firm in the face of Brexit and say, “I prefer not to,” while instead engaging a propositional future—the third option, or “third space”? Is a Parallel Union, a Transcontinental Union, or a Transunion not within the grasp of our imagination? And if the imagination is indeed the site of struggle for artists and cultural workers, what propositions have they contributed in order to imagine our disastrous present, as much as desired futures?

2

UNIONIZING THE IMAGINATION: PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

Art and politics are not the same, but they do create the conditions for each other's manifestation. Political literacy and vi-

sual literacy influence one another greatly. Artistic imagination can contribute to the morphologies of alternative futurities, while politics can enable infrastructures to turn these imaginaries into material reality. In the best cases, emancipatory art and emancipatory politics author each other into being, and construct a new reality through one another's competencies. This is important for artists and cultural workers that wish to contribute to the imagination of a new transnational politics to break through the hostage situation imposed by the Brexit dichotomy: we do not and should not imagine new worlds from scratch, but learn from and contribute to the imaginaries that have been tirelessly build, theorized and programmatically articulated by popular mass movements, pan-European platforms and emancipatory political parties, sometimes over a period of decades. Thus our challenge is to develop the symbols and narratives—the visual morphologies—that unionize these various imaginations into a new transnational assembly.

Site-specificity is, in this context, a crucial aspect. For the Transunions assembly that takes place June 22, 2019, as a collaboration between my New Unions campaign and the Warsaw Biennale, this concerns the Palace of Culture and Science in Warsaw, which was “gifted” to Poland by order of Stalin as a symbol of internationalism, exemplified by the surrounding sculptural reliefs that represent revolutionary, proletarian workers from around the world. Obviously, there should be no present-day desire to provide any retrospect legitimacy to the murderous Stalinist regime which turned the idea of internationalism into an authoritarian management of proxy regimes and parties, reinforcing Stalin's own ideological betrayal of the revolution in the form of his “socialism in one country.” The Palace of Culture and Science monumentalizes an ossified internationalism, although it must be said that in the reality of the policies of communist Poland, it did actually exist. From the Cold War onwards, Poland—in its alliance with the Soviet Union—invested substantially in post-colonial nations of North-Africa and the Middle East. Polish architects, planners, engineers and artists traveled abroad to develop infrastructures such as the fair area in Accra, the master-plans of Baghdad, Algiers and the region of Tripoli as well as housing neighborhoods in Iraq, Libya, and Syria.

The site where Transunions take place thus embodies something of a historical dilemma: Stalinism must remain in the dustbins of history, but the internationalist heritage it appropriated and squandered—and of which the monumentalized workers guarding the Palace continue to remain witness – should be recuperated. The hard turn to ultranationalist and alt-right parties today across the European continent, would benefit from being reminded of the major achievements that international cultural exchange brought about, in seeking for a new common language of a new world in the making. And while the Comintern was brutally weaponized, the lack of a Transnationale today shows its disastrous consequences: authoritarian-capitalist states pursuing aggressive foreign policies dominate transnational trade and military agreements, and subsidize corporate actors that disproportionately influence our political and economic life. This leads to terrifying situations in which the Rojavans, who bravely fought and sacrificed to protect their multiethnic and multireligious region in North-Syria against the Islamic State while establishing their own feminist democracy in the process, are forced to ask support from the Trump regime as the Erdoğan dictatorship threatens with their massacre. As Kurdish Women’s Movement activist and thinker Dilar Dirik argued, that would be the moment to call upon a “Left Air Brigade”—but in the post-Comintern world, there is no such thing.

All of these questions—including the last, complex issue on how a transnational union deals with the question of power and international solidarity—are embodied in the very material infrastructure of the Palace of Culture and Science. A ghost of internationalism, that stands both for all that is to be rejected, and all that is to be gained from re-engaging these fundamental questions if we aim to make a future of emancipatory governance possible. Therefore, unionizing the imagination does not mean abolishing the past, but inviting history as an actor to the assembly, to debate and listen to it, to learn from it and reject some of it. A genuine assembly does not only include humans of the here and now, but also the past, the present and the future.



Unionizing the Polish Parliament (2018), Jonas Staal, Powszechny Theater/Forum for the Future of Culture, Warsaw, photo: Jonas Staal

3

PRE-ENACTING OUR TRANSUNIONIZED FUTURE

One of the many things that the participation of this particular internationalist history in the Transunions assembly can tell us, is that in the process of challenging the Brexit dichotomy to articulate our third, fourth and fifth options, we might benefit more from investing in the idea of the “Union” rather than in that of “Europe”. In other words, transnational unionization is not the same as transnational Europeanization, of which we have already witnessed the consequences in the disastrous colonial empires of the past. What Poland’s past internationalism can hint at, is the possibility of transcontinental unionization, from the Middle East to North-Africa and Europe.

This is why the Transunions assembly has aimed to gather various organizations from across continents involved in theorizing,



The Scottish-European Parliament (2018), Jonas Staal, Video still, CCA Glasgow

mapping and practicing new models of emancipatory transnationalism in the fields of politics, economy, ecology, education and culture, striving to establish new models of planetary egalitarianism. This includes the Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization (UNPO) that forms an alternative to the present-day UN, the African Cultural Policy Network that develops cultural infrastructures across the African continent, the Kurdish Women's Movement that promotes an alternative model of stateless world confederalism, the Democracy in Europe Movement 2025 (DiEM25) that aims to democratize the EU towards a progressive federation, and the Transnational Institute which has for various decades developed a multifaceted understanding of transnational democracy.

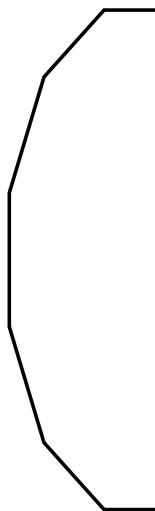
Articulating our third, fourth and fifth options beyond the discussed dichotomy thus begins with abandoning Europe as the cultural category that would articulate a new social contract for transnational unionization. Instead, it seeks for other common pillars, such as the democratization of politics, economy, education and culture, combatting offshore tax havens, prosecuting climate criminals and turning corporations into cooperative models under the precariat's control. Unionizing the imagination of transnational politics, simul-

taneously means unionizing a new transnational social contract that emerges from a common understanding of the intersections of collective conditions of oppression, which might be more severe in one region than in another, but very often can be traced to the same sources of exploitation of labor, culture and ecology. The ultranationalist state, the transnational corporation, or the most disastrous intersections of the two, must both be abandoned simultaneously for transnational unionization to establish a new emancipatory hegemony.

From an artistic point of view, the challenge is to transform the sites of the internationalist past to those of a transnationalist future. To imagine the new infrastructures and symbols of transnational parliaments, to reorganize the stars of austerity of the flag of the European Union and unionize them into a new whole, to build on the emancipatory monochromes of red, purple and green, that have formed the visual and ideological horizons of emancipatory politics, feminism and radical ecology. From the archeologies of past-futures, our re-constructivism seeks to enable—visually and materially, infrastructures of our future-present. This is what Transunions aims to do, to propose an alternative site of assembly through insurgent symbols of a new transnational, where emancipatory political platforms can gather to pre-enact the future in the present. To show that, if we can imagine a transnational future in the present, if we can identify new representatives and propose new choreographies of a transnationalism to come, then the seeds are planted for it to turn into political, tangible reality.

The power of imagination can enable a trajectory into futures that previously were unthinkable. But once we can think it up, once we liberate the force of collective imagination, we enable our capacity to realize the union of many unions that we so desperately need.

The first section of this essay was previously published as part of the text [Let's Take Back Control! Over our Imagination](#), by Mihnea Mircan and Jonas Staal, *Stedelijk Studies*, #6, Spring 2018.



WHO'S AFRAID OF IDEOLOGY?


ECOFEMINIST
PRACTICES
BETWEEN
INTERNATIONALISM
AND GLOBALISM



Marwa Arsanios

THE COMMONS MEETS NGOs

67



In a cooperative in Hermel, east of the Bekaa Valley in Lebanon, on the border with Syria, Khadija is running a workshop teaching Syrian women living in neighboring refugee camps how to preserve seasonal vegetables for the winter. She is cooking green fava beans on one side of the oven and tomato paste on the other. While explaining every step in the cooking process and the benefits of each vegetable, its type, origin, and local source, she pours the beans and the paste in a jar, closes it, and turns it upside down on the table. “That’s how you keep the pressure in and avoid any air leaks.” Every jar will serve as a meal for the family, with a portion of rice on the side. It’s spring and the contents of these jars will be eaten next fall or winter. Buying fava in March is very cheap, since it’s in season. “We are learning how to eat cheap and healthy,” she says while stirring the tomato paste, which has been cooking on a low fire for the past thirty minutes. “Always buy seasonal vegetables and conserve them for the coming season. Each season has its vegetables and each vegetable has its preservation process.”

I met Khadija in her cooperative, which consists of a three-room workshop and a big kitchen. It is surrounded by a plot of land that she inherited from her mother and turned into a food production cooperative, where she grows most of the crops and where women can gather, share knowledge, and learn from each other about food preservation, crop cultivation, seed preservation, and different ways of treating the soil. She has been running this cooperative for seven years, despite the local politics and the tensions with Hezbollah (the dominant party in the area), which often tries to make it difficult for her to continue with the cooperative. Meanwhile, she has continued to pursue her activities, producing seasonal jams and other food provisions that she sells to sustain the cooperative. Regarding the political tensions, she says to me: “Hezbollah could benefit from the fact that I am creating a micro-economy and transmit forgotten knowledge, but instead all they think about is how to have sole hegemonic power. They don’t want any growth that is outside of their control.” In fact, small independent organizations and cooperatives supported by international funders are usually left to do

their work, unless it is believed that they oppose the dominant political power; the latter situation leads to clashes, tensions, and difficulties, such as indirectly pressuring the farmers to slow down their work or to stop it completely.

This cooperative is funded by USAID (United States Agency for International Development) and has collaborated with different groups since 2013, especially humanitarian refugee organizations. When Khadija was approached by USAID (as part of their program to fight hunger), she was already known for her skills and knowledge regarding the edible and medicinal wild plants she gathers. It is an old practice that many women carry on. Usually it is transmitted to them by their mothers or another elderly woman in the family.

Khadija opens a folder where she has gathered an extensive archive of dried wild edible weeds. She has a precise knowledge of the use and medical benefits of each plant. “This is precious knowledge from my mother. She was also a farmer and owned this piece of land that I inherited from her.” After each workshop on cheap, healthy food and edible wild plants, the products are equally divided between the women to feed their families.

Since 2012, the flow of refugees from Syria has led about fifty international NGOs to set up camp in the Bekaa region. As the immediate crisis-solving apparatus, they settled in the area with the highest density of refugees. The few food cooperatives and NGOs run by women in the region became spaces where the transmission of knowledge happens. A few have begun to be used as support spaces for refugee women, in collaboration with humanitarian NGOs.

Before 2011 and the eruption of the Syrian revolution, these kind of initiatives (mostly funded by USAID and the EU) had found their place on the map of Lebanon’s eco-conscious urban middle class. In urban areas they could sell produce to restaurants and directly to customers at farmer’s markets. After 2011, many employed low-wage Syrian women, turning the cooperatives into fully-fledged businesses or transforming themselves into useful spaces for women from the camps—sometimes both.

The cooperative Khadija runs seems to want to reinforce the politics of the commons through the transmission of a knowledge that is embedded in a very specific geography and seasonal landscape. This knowledge of wild plants, often considered “bad herbs”

in modern agricultural practice, is at the core of this cooperative.

What makes this construction of the commons possible in this case is in fact the global aid economy (USAID funding). The cooperative cannot fully sustain itself yet, since the food and herbs it produces doesn't bring in enough money.

Many nongovernmental women's organizations have emerged in the Arab world in the past twenty years, and even more since 2011 to deal with the refugees crisis, a lack of nutritional resources, domestic violence, and women's health issues. Though some do not present themselves as explicitly feminist, many deal with women's issues or create spaces that specifically support women. Others more directly present themselves as feminist through research, discourse, and knowledge production. Often compensating for a lack of state structures, NGO structures work within the global economy and produce discourses that travel within and are shaped by this global economy. While many of these small initiatives adopt a language of "empowerment," "development," "economic independence," and "women's entrepreneurship," they also function within a very small locality, and their political struggle often becomes isolated in local politics. Gender essentialism—"women's empowerment"—overtakes any class or race discourses, which are at the core of internationalist feminist politics. "Global womanhood" becomes a category or a class in itself. Hunger is separated from class and from the failure of states to provide and distribute wealth equally. The main political aim becomes fighting hunger, without any reflection on what has caused this hunger—for example, the failure to subsidize farmers' material needs; the historical mismanagement of water distribution, which has led to drought in many areas; the overexploitation of underground water (like in the Bekaa valley); the distribution or subsidization of fertilizers for farmers, which over many years has damaged the soil; toxic waste polluting the water; and more generally the laws around property or land ownership, which favor the few at the expense of the many. NGOs do not address this mismanagement at the state level; instead, they try to compensate for it.

"Entrepreneurship" and "independence" become the ultimate goals of women's emancipation, privileging narratives of individual achievement (as in the case of Khadija's co-op); rather than demanding redress from the state for its failure, individuals are ex-

pected to bear the responsibility building structures to make up for where the state has failed. Terms like “empowerment” are used to describe these projects, which really only emphasize “powerlessness” and corner women into a narrative of victimhood. The mission of NGOs is then to intervene in order to empower the victim and “save her,” without taking into consideration the existing and historical collective support networks among women—especially among women farmers; this ill-considered intervention often risks breaking up these networks in order to single out individuals and support them. These nongovernmental structures, functioning within the global capitalist economy, produce an apolitical managerial discourse that risks erasing the existing struggles of feminists.

FOOD AND THE 2011 UPRISINGS

In 2008, as the price of cereals doubled across the world leading to hunger riots in Egypt (April 2008), Syria’s policy of food self-sufficiency pursued since the Ba’athist revolution of 1963 appeared vindicated. Syria had the most thriving agriculture of the Middle East. It was highly subsidized and accounted for up to one third of the Gross Domestic Product and employing up to a third of the working population. It enabled almost half of the nation’s inhabitants to stay in the countryside, especially in the North East of the country, the Jazira, which is the source of two thirds of cereal and cotton production, partly thanks to irrigated zones developed as part of the State Euphrates Project. However, this achievement was in question after three consecutive dry years (2008–2010), in which Syria had to receive international food aid for nearly one million persons, its emergency cereals reserves were exhausted and tens of thousands of peasants fled to main city suburbs in search of informal work. Its agricultural work force may have dropped from 1.4 million to 800,000 workers in this

period. Some believe this is also linked to the dismantlement of Syria's socialist agriculture.

—Myriam Ababsa, "Agrarian Counter-Reform in Syria (2000-2010)"^①

One immediate trigger of the 2011 uprisings throughout the Arab world was the increase in the price of bread and other nutritional basics due to the failure of self-sufficient agricultural production. Movements, whether grassroots or opposition parties (such as the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt), were met with repressive state violence, and in the case of Syria this has led to the ongoing war, the displacement of about six million people, the killing of half a million, thousands of rapes and abuses against women, disappearances, torture and unaccounted deaths in the regime's prisons, the use of chemical weapons by the regime—all this without having a clear account of the consequences of this violence in the domestic sphere, and without having a clear account of the damage and violence inflicted upon animals, trees, plants, water, and the land. The demands of the uprisings, from very basic food and economic needs to human rights, have been met with brutal crackdowns. States reacted to their own collapse with violent repression. (The one exception might be Tunisia, where certain laws that used to enshrine gender inequality have been abolished.)

The lack of capacity to produce cereal and to meet the demand for bread was one of the factors that finally cracked the repressive regimes' system of control. In the case of Syria, this lack was partly due to the slow dismantling of socialist agriculture and to the ensuing liberalization process, most apparent after the reforms of the 2000s. Could we talk about a failure of the agrarian revolution's ideal of self-sufficiency? We can certainly talk about a failure of the whole ideological apparatus that brought about the agrarian revolution, with its industrialized monoculture. Perhaps we can talk about the failure of the myth that monoculture will resolve the problem of hunger. Within the ecology of uprisings, the question of agriculture and the dismantling of the socialist agrarian revolution was at the core of the ideological failures of the repressive regimes. The anti-hunger program that Khadija's cooperative is part of

1 In *Agriculture and Reform in Syria*, ed. Raymond Hinnebusch (University of St Andrews Centre for Syrian Studies, 2011), 83.

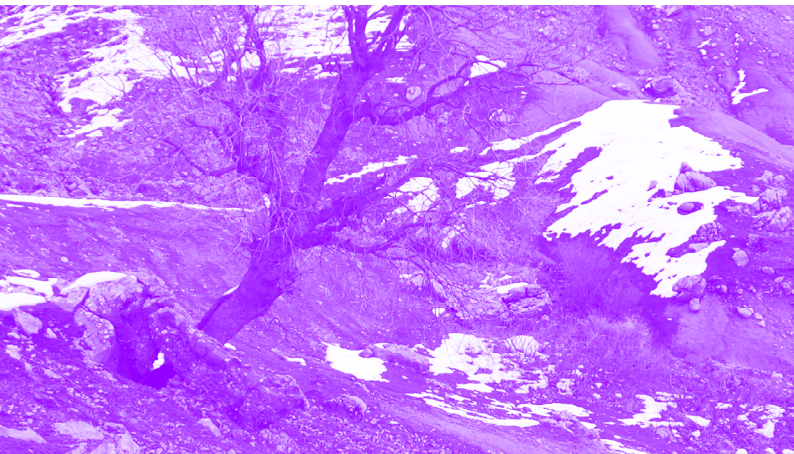
comes in the wake of this slow dismantling of the self-sufficiency ideal.

On the one hand there is a broad network of women's NGOs spread across the region, which are dealing with the immediate consequences of the refugee crisis. On the other hand we have witnessed the emergence, in the Kurdish area of northern Syria, of a feminist and ecological agenda that is nonetheless in a precarious situation, since it depends on an alliance with Washington, which allied with the Kurdish forces in order to fight ISIS. Though we should not necessarily compare the Kurdish struggle to the rest of the Arab uprisings—since the Kurdish autonomous women's movement has been organizing for forty years—new potential was given to this movement by the Syrian regime's loss of full control and by the 2011 revolts. The Kurdish experiment in autonomous governance (a bottom-up democratic confederalism) might have to shift from its current form, as the Syrian regime is unlikely to accept a regional fully autonomous government. But what is certain is that it has already established and institutionalized a feminist and ecological popular movement.

Perhaps the already established agricultural cooperatives and ecofeminist projects will be able to tackle the failures of the agrarian revolution, poised as they are to renew the ideal of self-sufficiency.

(NO-STATE SOLUTION, AUTONOMY, AND NGOS

Pelshin is a guerilla fighter. We set up a meeting with her in one of the women's houses in Sulaymanyah, Iraqi Kurdistan. She happened to be in the city because she was undergoing a foot operation. She was walking with crutches but remained surprisingly nimble, moving alongside me at a normal pace and climbing stairs without help. We sat with her for about five hours, first discussing a text she wrote about ecology during wartime, and then conversing freely for the rest of the time. I was trying to understand how the ecological paradigm is practiced in the communal life of the gueril-



Marwa Arsanios, Who is Afraid of Ideology 1, 2017. Film still

las, how it is inseparable from the feminist paradigm and the gender struggle, how all these paradigms were made possible structurally through different organizations and committees, through the production and transmission of knowledge, and through the relation between this knowledge and praxis.

Pelshin:

There is a contradiction between ecology and war. When I joined the guerrillas twenty-four years ago, I entered a war atmosphere. The conditions were such that you sometimes needed to cut parts of trees, to have something to lie down on or to protect yourself from animals.

The understanding of ecology in the women's movement was strongly influenced by these kind of experiences and contradictions. Our ecological consciousness within the movement evolved within our communal life in these conditions of war.

There's always a strong parallel between the massacre of nature and that of women. We, the women's movement, had to protect our existence.

I was in the mountains of Dersim for three years, where there are a lot of mountain goats. We were hungry many times during those three years, but only once did we kill goats for food. That is a rule of the guerilla.

I want to point out something about my personal experience. I remember my childhood. My first ecological teacher was my mother. She taught me that we as humans have a place in nature, like trees and birds. I have the right to exist, like all other species in the same place. You shouldn't hurt the earth, you should protect it. Don't kill trees, don't kill animals. But we are the children of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, so it took a long time for this philosophy to reach us. But these things transmitted by my mother are the signs of this old philosophy.

Pelshin is one of the ideologues of the women's movement. She serves on multiple committees; one of them is the jineology committee (Kurdish for "the study of women"), which is a project to rewrite the history of science from the perspective of women. The committee also publishes a quarterly journal, Jineology. Thinking of different paradigms of the communal life within the party and the relationship between knowledge, ideas, and practice, Pelshin presents us with so many contradictory ideas and situations from guerilla life. How to inhabit these contradictions? In the case of the autonomous women's movement, the conditions of existence are in complete contradiction with the ecological paradigm, due to the war situation. But the ecological paradigm itself and the way it is practiced were born from the guerillas' communal situation and their life in the mountains.

The gender struggle within the Kurdish guerilla movement began forty years ago. Since then the women's units have built a solid autonomous structure on an ecofeminist and socialist foundations, following the "cutoff theory," which calls for the establishment of all-female units separate from male units, in order to build an independent female structure and leadership. The Kurdish movement has been influenced by Murray Bookchin's concept of social ecology, which proposes that the world's ecological problems stem from social problems, which themselves arise from structures and relation-

ships of domination and hierarchy. At the core of this internationalist movement is the concept of self-defense (with an ecological bent).

On the subject of self-defense—the core concept of the women’s movement—I interviewed Dilar Dirik over Skype. Dilar is a member of the Kurdish women’s movement. She spoke to me from her apartment in Cambridge, where she is now finishing up her doctoral thesis on the movement.

Dilar:

Self-defense actually comes from nature itself. It is something that is very organic. Every existence, whether human or not, relies on a means of protecting itself. In the human context it cannot just be in the sense of the army or states or police and so on. Rather, we must think of collective ways of protecting ourselves, because in a world in which indigenous cultures are being eradicated, in which women are being subjected to modern-day sex slavery, rape culture, domestic violence, and so on, it is simply not an option to not think about how we can defend ourselves. In liberalism, in liberal thought and philosophy in general, the expectation is that people should surrender the means of protection to the state. The state should have a monopoly on the use of force. The assumption is that you as an individual member of society should not have the agency to act because the state should decide on your behalf what is dangerous to your existence.

Look at the universe itself, how ecologies work, how environments work, how beings and existences interact with each other. They do not necessarily do so according to the social Darwinist concept of competition and survival of the fittest. Ecology is always based on interaction, on mutualism—on cooperation, if we want to use human terms. We need to understand ourselves as part of nature, but with the acknowledgment of course that the capitalist system has made us alienated from nature. In the case of the Kurds, for example, the mountains have historically always been a very strong protector of people who have been persecuted. In 2014, when ISIS attacked the Yazidis, the first thing that they did was to flee to the mountains. Land-

scapes, natural geographies, and water have always been sites of protection for people. This is not because nature is there to serve humans, but rather because humans are part of nature. Until the creation of states, big cities, and especially capitalism and industrialism, people understood how to live together with nature. I know this from my own grandparents' village. They have a very different relationship to the animals they raise. They sing songs to the mountains, not about the mountains. I think many different cultures, especially indigenous people, have this kind of relationship with nature, which is very much a comradeship. For the Kurds and other groups who have always understood themselves in relation to a specific geography, who have never been part of a dominant state, and who have in many ways very local ways of organizing their lives, relying on geography to survive, the relationship to nature is like a friendship rather than an alliance.

Destroying nature is part of a policy of assimilation on the part of the dominant nation-states. The less people are aware of their link with nature, the more likely they are to become liberal individuals, with loyalty only to the state. So the more we are connected to nature through geography, the more likely we are to be conscious of ourselves, be conscious of our place in the universe, our place in ecology in general. The state is actively trying to destroy that because the state is very well aware of the connection between humans and nature. The state knows that in order for it to be legitimized and justified, it needs to break this link between humans and nature.

It is important here to think about the ways in which non-governmental organizations can learn from the autonomous women's movement, whose politics go far beyond liberal pacifist feminism. As Dilar states in her article "Feminist Pacifism or Passiv-ism?": "Liberal feminists' blanket rejection of women's violence, no matter the objective, fails to qualitatively distinguish between statist, colonialist, imperialist, interventionist militarism and necessary, legitimate self-defense."² Could nongovernmental organizations, which often em-

phasize individualistic achievement, learn from the collectivist principles of the autonomous women's movement and resituate the struggle in a collective and historical context? Instead of talking about "independence" as a goal, could we think about "interdependence"? Within a neoliberal global economy, discourses on "empowerment" replace discourses on "emancipation." Rights are emphasized over demands. Self-defense becomes a legal issue that is handed over to the state.

The agricultural cooperatives that are being implemented by the autonomous women's movement specifically in Northern Syria also come as a response to years of state agricultural policies that tried to break the ties between farmers and the land through strict agricultural and land laws. The purpose of the cooperatives is now to repair this damage through the collective work that a cooperative demands.

LAND, COMMUNES, COOPERATIVES, AND SELF-SUFFICIENCY

In between wheat fields a small village is being built up. The houses are made of mud in the traditional and most sustainable way, just as they have been built here in the region for thousands of years. The newly planted garden makes a change in the landscape: little fruit trees, olive trees, tomato plants, cucumber, watermelon, paprika, aubergine and a lot of wildy growing portulac all around, needing just a little water and earth to grow. The village is called Jinwar, and it is a women's village.

With the planting of the communal garden the women are aiming to create a base of self-sufficiency for the village, but also to maintain the connection to the earth and food. In an area of quasi-desert and wheat mono-culture, being the result of the Syrian regime's policy to industrialize agriculture since the 1970s. It will change

the territory, revive the ground and create an example of how a commune can live and work with the land in a sustainable way.³

This is how a women's commune that is being built in the north of Syria describes itself. It is one of the ecofeminist projects of the autonomous women's movement, striving to create self-sufficient agricultural production for the village but also trying to repair the land after a history of industrialized wheat monoculture and drought. At the same time, the members of the commune are repairing themselves, their relationship to the earth, creating an intimacy with the land. This intimacy encompasses different dynamics and affective relations between humans, nonhumans, and matter.

The commune is built on state-owned land that was taken over by the autonomous government after the Syrian regime's forces were pushed out of the north. Eventually, thirty houses will be built on the land, inhabited mostly by widowed women with their children, and other women who want to live away from traditional domestic life. Most of the state-owned land was turned into agricultural cooperatives, some of which are women-only. The cooperatives are run by the farmers themselves, with technical supervision from the autonomous government's agricultural department. In this area of the country—the Jazira region—the Ba'athist regime had established state farms and cooperatives in the late 1960s. They were run by representatives who strongly supported the regime, and the cooperatives functioned as a control mechanism for propagating Ba'athist ideology. In addition, the Ba'athist regime paid the farmers a paltry monthly salary for their labor, and this intentional impoverishment was a way for the regime to maintain control over the different ethnic groups living in the area. Today, almost all of the territory formerly occupied by these state-owned farms has been taken over by the autonomous Kurdish government. There are now about fifty-eight cooperatives spread all over the region, which have helped make the region agriculturally self-sustaining for the past seven years.

It remains to be seen how many of the ecofeminist projects spearheaded by the Kurdish women's movement will survive this tumultuous period, as the autonomous region begins to negoti-

3 See: <https://internationalistcommune.com/jinwar/>

ate with the Syrian regime over territory and resources (oil), and as reconstruction deals are made in the wake of major fighting. For all the power and success of these projects, a crucial question must be asked: Are we falling back into a gendered division of labor, where women are placed in the role of caretakers?

At a conference on “decolonial practices” held at the Akademie der Kunst in Berlin this summer, Françoise Vergès said:

Women are often put in the position of cleaning and caring for what is broken. There are fifty-three million domestic workers in the world who are cleaning the city for the white middle class ... We must think about waste and the production of waste as a capitalist mode of production. Women are now expected to clean and care for what has been broken in the earth, for the damage that has been done to the earth, to the land. But before rushing and doing the naturalized work of “repair” and care, let’s take a moment to think about how it was broken, why it was broken, and by whom.⁴

All the projects I have discussed—from the NGOs working within the constraints of the international aid economy to the ecofeminist projects of the autonomous women’s movement—are necessary alternatives. But they can only exist in a more sustainable manner if the question of responsibility is articulated: Who has inflicted the damage?

The Syrian regime has pointed to drought and climate change, rather than their own crimes and corruption, as reasons for the uprisings that began in 2011. In this way, the regime has used ecological concerns to cover up its own repressive violence and intentional mismanagement of resources. In an interview with a Russian TV channel in 2016, Asma al-Assad talked about the 2008–11 drought as one of the worst in the history of the modern Syrian state and as the main reason for what she called the “crisis.”

The response to this should not be to dismiss climate change and drought as factors in the uprisings, but rather to insist that the regime should bear the responsibility for the drought—another one of its many crimes. Only then can the ecofeminist work of repair and growth begin to bear fruit.

4 Françoise Vergès, comments made during panel discussion at “Colonial Repercussions” conference, Akademie der Künste, Berlin, June 23–24, 2018

Unless otherwise noted, stills are from Marwa Arsanio's video *Who is Afraid of Ideology 2* (2018). All images courtesy of the author.

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Marwa Arsanios is an artist, filmmaker, and researcher who reconsiders the politics of the mid-twentieth century from a contemporary perspective, with a particular focus on gender relations, urbanism, and industrialization. She approaches research collaboratively and seeks to work across disciplines.

CREATORS

- A 100 Flag, Duraid Abbas Ghaieb, Susana AbdulMajid, Ryszard Abraham, Szymon Adamczak, Agnieszka, Nabil Ahmed, Yassim Al Haj Saleh, Carlos Fernando Dimeo Álvarez, Amina, Amina Marwa, Anastazja, Katarzyna Andrejczuk, Samanta Arango Orozco, Diana Arce, Marwa Arsanios,
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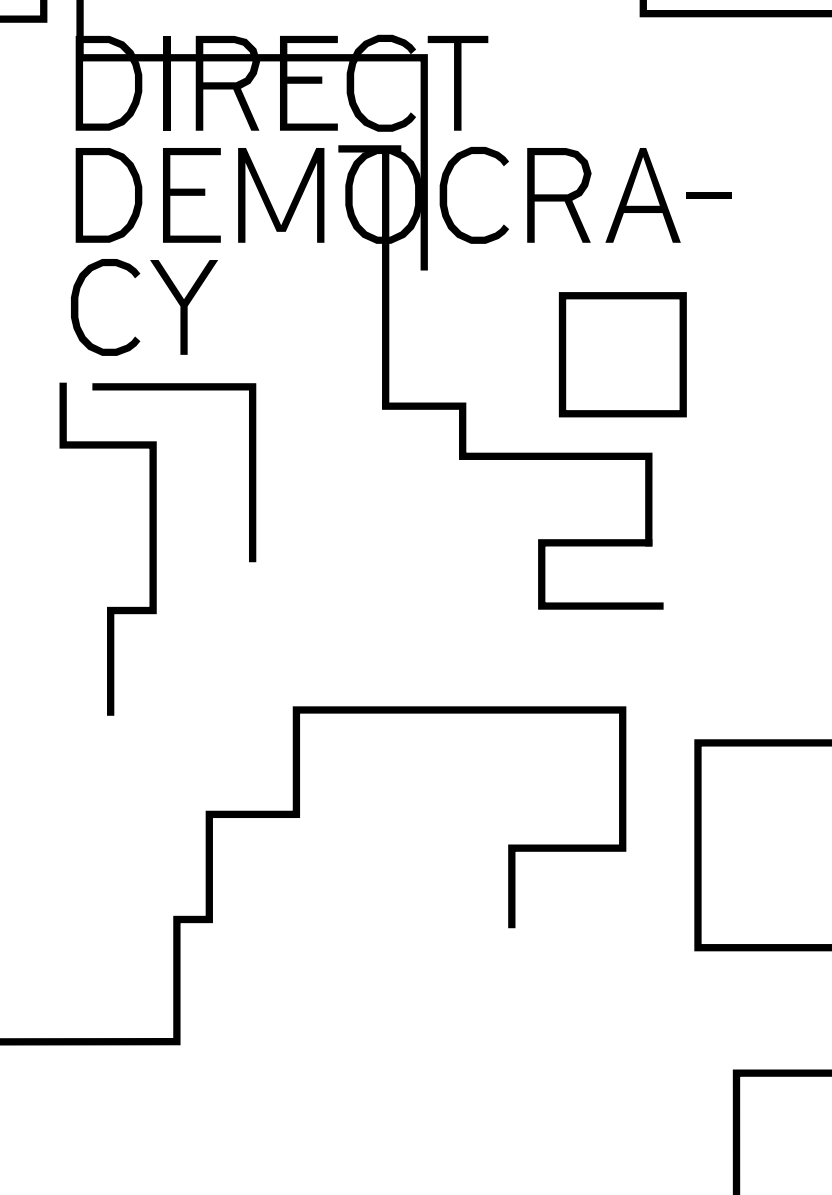
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DIRECT
DEMOCRACY



THE ART OF THE COOPERATIVE

88

WORKSHOPS, LECTURES, PRESENTATIONS,
ARTISTIC-ECONOMIC ACTIVITY



participants: Kathrin Böhm, Binna Choi, Adelina Cimochovicz, Kuba Depczyński, Katherine Gibson, Kasia Kalinowska, Bogna Stefańska
individuals and initiatives participating in the picnic:
Ciach, Maja Demska, Senna Collective, „Dobrze” Food Cooperative, Bródno Sculpture Park, Aleka Polis, „Porozumienie” Project, Alicja Rogalska,
Anti-fascist Year, Hałda Rokitnikowa, Anka Siekierska, „Krzak”
Cooperative, 100 Flags, Alicja Wysocka
curator: Kuba Szreder

A weekend with social economies in art and beyond:
presentations and lectures of the Centre for Plausible Economies (CPE,
Centre for Plausible Economies, London and international Community
Economies Research Network (CERN), artistic and economic activities with
Re:drawing the Economies, an art cooperative in 1:1 scale.

The Art of the Cooperative is devoted to experiments at the intersection of art and economy, collective reflection and playing with social economies in art and outside of it. The programme is the result of the cooperation with the Centre for Plausible Economies and Community Economies Research Network which work in the area of social economies, i.e. economic systems that aim at serving the community and not amassing the capital. CERN and CPE draw inspiration from the feminist critique of capitalism in order to better understand and support its alternatives. CERN is an association of consumer and production cooperatives, exchange networks (for machines, files or knowledge), democratically formed enterprises, cultural institutions and artistic collectives from all over the world—from Australia to Bolivia, Korea, Great Britain, Netherlands, to Poland. Their purpose is a grassroot movement to socialise economy understood in its everyday practical dimension—how, where, for whom and with whom we work, shop or spend our free time. They are looking for an alternative which would be effective here and now, in a micro- and macroscale, in everyday life and in systemic solutions.

The Centre for Plausible Economies is an artistic and economic centre which searches for alternative solutions to the issue of artistic poverty, using artistic imagination in the economic practice. The CPE programme responds to the growing social demand. Artists

realise that most of them are more likely to find poverty and exclusion on the art market, rather than the promised moon and adoration in the spotlight. That is why alternative art worlds emerge at such a rapid pace. Socially useful museums 3.0 appear. Attempts are being made at reforming artistic institutions in the spirit of feminist economies. Artists work on a life-size scale, they execute their ideas in the collective practice; they throw themselves into the current of social imagination. Not only do they create paintings, but they also take them to protests. They set up cooperatives and hair salons, dressed as wild boars they speak for the sisterhood of all beings, and organise strikes in support of the Earth. The programme includes not only the economic dimension of these enterprises. Its aim is to take up these ideas to further stimulate the economic imagination and shift the limits of what seems possible—in art and outside of it—even by a few millimetres.

The first day will include lectures and presentations of artists, curators and theoreticians affiliated with the CPE and CERN. One of the invited speakers is the initiator of the CPE, Kathrin Böhm, a London-based artist and the founder of Company Drinks, an artistic enterprise specialising in the production of sodas from fruit picked during walks in shared public spaces, or from plants universally but mistakenly rejected as tasteless. Each bottle manufactured by Company Drinks is at the same time a work of art, and CD runs its bars on local markets, in serious institutions and museums, as well as international art fairs. Binna Choi, curator and director of CASCO Art Institute in Utrecht, will speak about the evolution of CASCO from an “ordinary” art institution into an institution of common goods. Katherine Gibson, a world-renowned feminist economist, will speak about social economies and why the economy based on the circulation of money is only the tip of the iceberg.

On the second day, we would like to invite you to an open idea picnic titled Re:drawing Economies. Katherine Gibson and Kathrin Böhm work with the maps of everyday economies. These are diagrams illustrating how people try to survive day to day, how they organize their workplaces or systems of exchange—where they work and with whom, what do they manufacture and offer, how, with who and for what they barter, for whom and why they do it.

Such maps are often created *in situ*, during the workshops, they are arranged from what is at hand, drawn or painted, they allow

people to better understand economic systems in which they function daily. In Warsaw, maps will be drawn together with the invited group of artists, collectives and cooperatives, but anyone can join the mapping activity. The event will take place in the picturesque park in front of the Ujazdowski Castle Centre for Contemporary Art where a potluck picnic will be organized. We will fire the bread oven built in 2012 on the initiative of Juliette Delventhal—artist, chef and U-jazdowski resident. Organizers will provide pizza dough and staff, guests are asked to bring remaining ingredients.

An important element of the Art of the Cooperative programme is an artistic and organizational process culminating in the establishment a new post-artistic work cooperative in Warsaw. The May meeting will be the occasion for its first manifestation. The cooperative will be supervised by the team including: Adelina Cimocho-wicz, Kuba Depczyński, Kasia Kalinowska, Bogna Stefańska.

The project curator is Kuba Szreder, university lecturer, sociologist by education, theoretician and curator who has, for years, been analysing the political economy of the art circuit, as well as inventing and practicing its alternatives.

The Centre for Plausible Economies (Centrum Możliwych Ekonomii)—established in 2018 by Kathrin Böhm and Kuba Szreder—is a para-institutional research centre affiliated to the Company Drinks in London. The mission of the CPE is considering the economic dimension of contemporary art, stimulating economic imagination and practicing economic alternatives in art and beyond.

Community Economies Research Network is an international research network, connecting social researchers, activists and members of the art world who share a common aspiration to gain a better understanding and popularisation of community economies.

24.05

Biennale Warszawa, 34/50 Marszałkowska Street
17.30–20.30 free entry

25.05

Ujazdowski Castle Centre for Contemporary Art,
2 Jazdów Street (square by the bread oven)
12.00–15.00 free entry



A DIFFERENT UNIVERSITY?

91

DEBATE

participants: Michał Kuziak, Beata Kowalska, Tomasz Majewski,
Andrzej W. Nowak, Krystian Szadkowski

The closing debate of Michał Kuziak's seminar series Humanities of the future.

In 1995, Bill Readings published his book The University in Ruins—one of the most interesting publications diagnosing the condition of the university in late modernity. The author believes that the state of crisis in which the Humboldtian model of a university found itself stems from the processes of the collapse of the modern national state, whose legitimisation—both in terms of modernity and creating the national culture—it was supposed to serve. Capitalism, which is globalising the world in its neoliberal form, does not even need such a university; instead, it offers a university subject to the objectives of an instrumental mind, the principle of “excellence” understood in line with the logic of a bureaucratic corporation.

At the same time, following Immanuel Wallerstein for instance, we can talk about the crisis related to the understanding of the field of science and the disciplinary divisions that determine it. In this instance, they also have their historical character, which emerged in the late 18th and early 19th century, responding to the worldview of the times, including in the political and economic dimensions.

In Poland, within the reality of the constantly underfinanced university, which for a long time has been used by the state to implement social policies that enable reducing unemployment statistics, at a moment when one reform is closely followed by another to repair the previous one's faults and generate new ones, we will try to ask questions concerning the possible and necessary university. A university that should be considered a common good, but which will be a sanctuary not only for cognitive benefits, which is obvious, but also for critical reflection, imagination and empathy, allowing for thought about the future and building good relationships with others.

29.05 Biennale Warszawa, 34/50 Marszałkowska Street
18.00 free entry



SOLIDARITY. THE NEW PROJECT

PERFORMANCE

direction, set design: Paweł Wodziński

dramaturgy: Piotr Grzymisławski

music: Karol Nepelski

video: Magda Mosiewicz

multimedia: Łukasz Jara

sound design: Łukasz Maciej Szyborski

composer's assistant: Sławek Kyryłow

consultation: Jan Sowa

cast: Beata Bandurska, Magdalena Celmer, Paweł L. Gilewski, Hanna Gruszczynska, Mirosław Guzowski, Maciej Pesta, Martyna Peszko, Sonia Roszczuk, Jan Sobolewski, Anita Sokołowska, Łukasz Maciej Szyborski, Małgorzata Trofimiuk, Jakub Ulewicz, Piotr Wawer Jr, Małgorzata Witkowska, Konrad Wosik

premiere: 29th October 2017

running time: 2 h 30 min

1 intermission

September and October 1981 saw the First Congress of the "Solidarity" Trade Union Delegates in Gdańsk at which the Union's Programme Declaration was adopted. Similarly to the whole Declaration, one of its sections, entitled "Self-Governing Republic", proposed a new state system based on the concept of self-government, self-organisation, autonomy and control exercised by employees.

It was the first attempt at implementing the concepts of democratising public, social and economic life in a strongly centralised state, but also a proposal of a new alternative political model and a state organisation of a different kind, built on the principles of autonomy and self-government.

Minutes from the Congress, archived video materials, audio recordings of the debates and statements made by the delegates became a canvas for the theatre performance which is in fact a performative reconstruction of the events from 1981. The authors of the performance focused on three distinctive moments during the Congress. Its first part presents speeches made by the delegates of international trade unions which position Solidarity on the map of the international labour movement in the context of the global economic crisis. The second part is devoted to the conflict between the delegates and the union authorities with respect to self-organisa-

tion of employment institutions, deemed an end to democracy within the union. The third part is based on presenting respective items of the “Self-Governing Republic”, illustrating the concept of the new state organisation.

Based on historic documents, the performance also poses a question about today’s alternative political projects and different models of organising the public sphere. Through references to the proposals put forward by the protesters in Greece, Spain, Ukraine, the USA, France and the Middle East, pointing to the similarities between their expectations and the goals of Polish employees in 1970s and 1980s, it attempts not only to introduce a left-wing perspective of the Solidarity’s heritage into the Polish political debate but also to regain Solidarity as a set of democratic social and political concepts built on the ideals of equality and self-government.

30.05 TR Warszawa / ATM Studio,
384 Wał Miedzeszyński Street
20.00 tickets

POLISH SOCIAL FORUM

FORUM

coordinators: Piotr Grzymisławski, Jan Sowa
partner: Syrena Art Collective



The idea of the Polish Social Forum responds to the need to organise the future, i.e. looking for realistic alternatives in the area of social, political and economic organisation. With its name and formula, the Polish Social Forum refers to similar meetings held regularly in various places worldwide, e.g. the European Social Forum and the World Social Forum, organised for over two decades in Porto Alegre in Brazil.

Participants of the Forum will include organisations and individuals working for progressive social change (including in the areas of ecology, minorities’ rights, women’s rights, urban policy and

employee rights), but not connected with the state administration. This does not mean that we want to turn away from politics, paying homage to the utopia of an apolitical civic society; it is that we would rather bet on grass-roots movements transforming the social practice and awareness that goes with it. It is the crucial moment of a socio-political change that, as a variety of sociological research indicates, is ahead of what happens in the world of institutionalised politics. Polish society is, in almost all respects, more progressive than the political class that reportedly represents it, which only confirms the slogan appearing frequently during the Occupy movement and the Indignados rallies: Politicians do not lead. They follow.

We want the Forum to be a practical consideration of horizontal self-organisation, self-governance, mutual assistance, social justice and solidarity. We do not, however, aim to organise an academic conference or a series of panel discussions about the ailments of the contemporary world for the “talking heads” to share their insights. We consider the theoretical reflection to be hugely valuable and necessary, but in this instance we want to enhance the meeting, whose context is a practical, self-organised activity carried out on the basis of autonomously controlled resources—own free time, own skills and knowledge, voluntary contributions, own business activity for the cause, spaces occupied as squats, etc. A similar initiative has already been organised in Poland; it did not, however, transform into a continually functioning platform of cooperation, which would undoubtedly be beneficial for the consolidation of Polish activist communities. This is why, as a part of our effort to organise the future, we decided to refer also to this formula of an activists’ assembly.

The Polish Social Forum consists of two days of debates and discussions accompanied by artistic and discursive events: a performance of the play Solidarity. The New Project directed by Paweł Wodziński, the premiere of the book edited by Jan Sowa, Solidarity 2.0, or democracy as a form of life, summarising a six-month series of lectures and debates devoted to the horizontal self-organisation and democratic alternatives to parliamentarism, as well as the screening of Oliver Ressler’s films about democracy.

The session of the Forum will be accompanied by the choral commentary of the Polin Choir which is one of the constituting elements of the polyphonic manifesto for the future—a musical piece that will be heard in its entirety on 23 June.

The Forum is also carrying out the mission of Biennale Warszawa as a public institution that remains rooted in the field of culture, but whose point of existence is active participation in working for the common good and making the field of culture a place supporting the shaping of progressive activism.

31.05 Biennale Warszawa, 34/50 Marszałkowska Street
17.00–18.30 for registered participants

1.06 Biennale Warszawa, 34/50 Marszałkowska Street
11.00–19.00 for registered participants

2.06 Biennale Warszawa, 34/50 Marszałkowska Street
11.00–19.00 for registered participants

SOLIDARITY 2.0, OR DEMOCRACY AS A FORM OF LIFE

editor: Jan Sowa

BOOK PREMIERE

participants: Monika Kostera, Marcin Koziej, Joanna Pawluśkiewicz,
Jakub Rok, Jan Sowa, Maria Świetlik
moderator: Magda Malinowska

A meeting with social activists and researchers of democracy summarising six months of lectures, seminars and debates, led by Jan Sowa. It is, at the same time, the conclusion of a year-long work devoted to self-organisation, self-governance, autonomy and direct democracy. The debate is also the introduction to and promotion of the book, collecting statements made by lecturers.

Its author, Jan Sowa, proposes the perspective of expanding and shifting the consideration of the socio-political condition of contemporary societies by taking a sideways look at their very foundation—democracy: the axis of the reflection he suggests is marked not by the political present day, i.e. the reality of parliamentary and representative system, but the conviction that democracy is a certain form of collective life, with the acknowledgement of political

power as the common good at its base. Liberal parliamentarism presented in this light turns out to be only one possible method of the democratic organisation of power and, contrary to popular belief, not the most democratic one. This perspective is supported by seven interviews the author conducted with people directly involved in self-organised, democratic initiatives, or dealing with their systematic study: where issues of the contemporary Rojava (Kurdistan) meet Nestor Makhno and his Free Territory of the Ukrainian grasslands at the beginning of the 20th century, the Camp for the [Białowieża] Forest meets the Occupy and Indignados movements, Polish cooperativism meets the utopias of digital democracy, and the collectivisation of cultural institutions meets the democracy of egalitarian tribal communities and employee democracy.

31.05 Biennale Warszawa, 34/50 Marszałkowska Street
19.00 free entry

WHAT IS DEMOCRACY?

FILM

director: Oliver Ressler
2009, 118 min.

What is democracy? is not one question, but is actually two questions. On the one hand, the question relates to conditions of the current, parliamentary representative democracies that are scrutinised critically in this project. On the other hand, the question traces various approaches to what a more democratic system might look like and which organisational forms it could take.

The project asked numerous activists and political analysts What is democracy? in 15 cities around the world, in Amsterdam, Berkeley, Berlin, Bern, Budapest, Copenhagen, Moscow, New York, Rostock, San Francisco, Sydney, Taipei, Tel Aviv, Thessaloniki and Warsaw.

The interviews were recorded on video starting in January 2007. Even though all interviewees were asked the same question, the result was a multiplicity of different perspectives and viewpoints

from people living in states that are usually labeled “democracies”.

This pool of interviews builds the basis for a film in eight parts, which (re)presents a kind of global analysis of the deep political crises of the Western democratic model. In one video, Adam Ostolski (Warsaw) explains that originally “the modern idea of democracy was connected to the notion of progress” and parliamentary states “had some tendency to become more and more democratic by including new types of political actors, such as workers and women. [...] But since the 1980s, since the neoliberal trend in politics and economy we have a regression of democracy.” Lize Mogel (New York) notes that the situation has changed in such a way that when you think about representative democracy today “you are not necessarily talking about individuals being represented, but more capital being represented.” Nikos Panagos (Thessaloniki) even argues that “representation and democracy are incompatible terms. Therefore, under no circumstances could the present system be called a democracy. It is just a sophisticated form of oligarchy.” While some subjects in the videos elaborate their ideas of direct democracy or decision-making processes of indigenous communities, David McNeill (Sydney) raises the issue of whether it makes sense “to continue contesting for the right to own and define the term democracy” or whether “it has been so corrupted and polluted by the conservatives that claimed ownership of it, that it is better to be surrendered.”

The film discusses the contested notion of “democracy”, which is misused for the maintenance of order by those in power, while at the same time “democracy” still represents an ideal hundreds of million people in the South desperately want to achieve. Today it seems almost impossible to be against “democracy”, even though it is getting emptier and emptier. A potential strategy could try to fill what is called “democracy” with new meaning. In this sense, the film presents a multi-layered discourse on democracy, which expresses a broad field of opinions that go beyond the borders of nation-states and continents.

The film has eight parts with the following titles: Rethinking representation, Politics of exclusions, Secrecy instead of democratic transparency, New democracies?, Is representative democracy a democracy?, Direct democracy, Reclaiming Indigenous politics and Should we consign the Western democracy model to the ash heap of history?

concept, interviews, camera and sound recording: Oliver Ressler
 interviewees: Kuan-Hsing Chen, Noortje Marres, Lin Chalozin Dovrat,
 Thanasis Triaridis, Tone Olaf Nielsen, Jo van der Spek, Cheikh Papa Sakho,
 Wolf Dieter Narr, Tiny a.k.a. Lisa Gray-Garcia, Joanna Erbel, Yvonne Riano,
 Trevor Paglen, Tadeusz Kowalik, Adam Ostolski, Boris Kagarlitsky, Michal
 Kozłowski, Lize Mogel, Rick Ayers, Nikos Panagos, Macha Kurzina, Gabor
 Csillag, Zachary Running Wolf, Jenny Munroe, David McNeill

video editing and production: Oliver Ressler
 image editing and subtitles: David Grohe
 animation: Zanny Begg
 composition and sound editing: Rudi Gottsberger
 footage: Sierpien 80 (@ Telewizja Polska S.A.)
 translation for English subtitles: Harold Otto

31.05 Biennale Warszawa, 34/50 Marszałkowska Street
 21.00 free entry



TAKING OVER THE STAGE. A POLY- PHONIC MANIFESTO FOR THE FUTURE

PRE-ENACTMENTS.
 TOURS OF THE WARSAW
 OF THE FUTURE

TOUR

Alicja Rogalska

The team collaborating on tour itineraries: Agnieszka Haska (sociologist and cultural studies expert), Viera Hres (Warsaw resident from a Faraway Country), Edka Jarzab (performer and sonic artist), Jerzy S. Majewski (varsavianist), Joanna Ostrowska (historian and film studies expert), Monika Sadkowska (climate activist), Beata Siemieniako (lawyer and housing activist), Jerzy Stachowicz (cultural studies expert, academic lecturer), Irena Szanser (Esperantist), Marek Ślusarz (local activist)
 guides: Jolanta Gęgotek, Oleksandr Hres, Agnieszka Pogorzelska
 curator: Ewa Chomicka
 partner: Muzeum Historii Żydów Polskich POLIN

Pre-enactments are guided tours around Warsaw, based on a futuristic narrative focusing on social and political threads of alternative, diverse, egalitarian, environmental and fair futures of the Polish capital. Streets, buildings, institutions, monuments, elements of the urban space, trees and plants, everyday activities and gestures will be interpreted through the filter of future utopias, as if they were present even now, or existing within our reach. Tours will be planned by an interdisciplinary team comprising local residents, activists, researchers into sci-fi, immigrants and other people normally excluded from debate on the future of the city and the state. They will become guides of the tours, whose route will connect the POLIN Museum and the venue of Biennale Warszawa.

Pre-enactments tours are part of the project titled Taking over the stage. A polyphonic manifesto for the future is an interdisciplinary project, with intertwined areas of artistic activity, social activism and research in action. It opens up the platform for designing the future through reinforcing grass-root communities, encouraging those who deny themselves “social competences” to use their voice in the public debate to speak up and design, thereby creating space for inclusive, engaging social debate.

start: POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews,
6 Anielewicza Street—end: Biennale Warszawa,
34/50 Marszałkowska Street
15.00 registration required

2, 8,
9, 15, 16, 23.06

TAKING OVER THE STAGE. 100 A POLYPHONIC MANIFESTO FOR THE FUTURE | POLIN CHOIR

CONCERT

Zorka Wollny, Kuba Pałys, Christine Schörkhuber
curator: Ewa Chomicka
partner: Muzeum Historii Żydów Polskich POLIN

The social choir for the future involves creating an experimental manifesto prepared by a collective choir of amateurs and professionals, Poles as well as representatives of minorities and immigrants, diverse groups that will work together around issues connected to projects for the future, inclusion-exclusion, social integration, community, and collective voices. The manifesto will become a collection of social experiences, guidelines and directions for change, presenting the multiplicity of perspectives and experiences, but also looking for what is common, including the possibility of creating new alliances. At the level of methodology, the action will be an attempt to face the category of a “social project” and expand the fields of participation. Despite looking for what we share, we will not be insisting on finding harmony; on the basis of the common rhythm and structure, we will be rather looking for a collective polyphony based on individual expressions, and attempts to achieve and maintain mindfulness to others. There will be room for chance, pauses and quiet voices. Preludes to the final manifesto will be heard during selected Biennale Warszawa events in the form of interventions and choral commentaries. The final piece will resound on 23 June 2019 in the Biennale Warszawa main venue, as well as the public space around it.

project members: Agata Katarzyna Grobel, Agnieszka Osowska, Aneta Rajca, Anetta Przybył-Bryńska, Anna Jurkiewicz, Anna Krzystowska, Anna Rączkowska, Anna Wieczorek, Barbara Baranowska, Barbara Popławska, Barbara Szymanowska, Barbara Walczak, Beata Belska, Cezary Pruszko, Dagmara Siwczyk, Dominika Jędrzejczak, Edyta Pawłowska, Elżbieta Balano, Elżbieta Jasińska, Elżbieta Pachała-Czechowska, Elżbieta Zawada, Emilia Korsak, Ewa Chomicka, Irena Klein, Irena Wiesiołek, Joanna Olejniczak, Joanna Stankiewicz, Jolanta Mrówczyńska, Jolanta Nałęcz-Jawecka, Justyna Orlińska, Kaja Makaruk, Kamil Dziadek, Katarzyna A. Liszewska, Katarzyna Andrejczuk, Kazimierz Gutowski, Kinga Wołoszyn-Kowanda, Lena Frankiewicz, Magdalena

Miśkowicz, Magdalena Zaczek, Malina Chojecka, 101
Małgorzata J. Berwid, Małgorzata Czumt, Małgorzata
Kozek, Marcjanna Bulik, Maria Gromadowska, Marzena
Czuba, Michael Leiserowitz, Natalia Borawska,
Natalia Kanabus, Natalia Obrębska, Octavian
Milewski, Piotr Woźniakiewicz, Renata Dziurawiec,
Renata Kamińska, Ryszard Abraham, Svitlana Vlasova,
Urszula Iwińska, Urszula Strych

23.06 Biennale Warszawa, 34/50 Marszałkowska Street
18.00 free entry



FOR NEXT TO NOTHING / TURNS

EXHIBITION

artists: Małgorzata Goliszewska, Karolina Mejncka,
Marta Krześlak, Dominika Olszowy

curator: Maja Demska

A marketplace: a collection of random objects, a ritual establishing the rhythm of life in a district, a caricature of capitalism, a grotesque theatre with a shabby set design. By visiting it regularly, one can closely follow the circulation of objects—interesting, disgusting, mostly worn out. They gain symbolic value for several hours when the trade is made, turning back to worthless rubbish afterwards. What does not sink into the mud returns to circulation the following week. At the marketplace, it is difficult to avoid the impression that the end of the world really is right around the corner.

Throughout the last year, in commercial and service unit No 34 at the Namysłowska marketplace, I have been organising For Next To Nothing—a series of events in which invited artists have offered their services and objects loosely connected to their artistic practice—beauty treatments, photo shoots, a barter of artefacts amassed at the margin of their creative work. To pay the first rent for the unit at the marketplace, I cut and sold my hair as part of one of the invited artist's activity (fortunately Biennale Warszawa has a

production budget). However, the economic realities of young creators' lives are not the principle subject of For Next to Nothing, and the services offered in the course of the project are the most peculiar around. At the marketplace, each transaction is a pretext for conversation—an opportunity to gossip, complain and spin conspiracy theories. This particular social and entertaining dimension of For Next to Nothing outlines the direction of TURNS: a series of events that will be organised in unit 34 and at the Namysłowska marketplace during this year's edition of Biennale Warszawa.

Within TURNS, four artists—veterans of OLX (the Polish equivalent of Craigslist), experts on para-artistic side jobs and odd commissions that often force site-specific things to be performed in a non-specific way, reminders of old projects and memories of past exhibitions that no one knows what to do with: neither leave, nor throw them away. If, in the overpopulated world ruined by overproduction, there is still room for all these things used for excursions into the embarrassing territory of kitsch—they will take a closer look at the visual and performative aspects of the marketplace: its architecture, commercial offer, mechanisms of operation and social relationships. Like at the marketplace, all the events will be based on the principle of re-entry into circulation: from creative scraps, failed technological experiments and remains of installations of undetermined status, halfway between a museum and a dump—this is the essence of the Namysłowska marketplace.

Maja Demska

1–2, Namysłowska marketplace, unit No 34
 10.00–14.00 free entry
 8–9, 15–16, 22–23.06



CONCERT

VARIATIONS
ON GLOBAL CROWD

composer: Karol Nepelski
performer: Gośka Isphording
curator: Piotr Grzymisławski

Organised with the financial support of the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage from the Culture Promotion Fund within the programme of "Commissions for composers" carried out by the Institute of Music and Dance.

Variations on Global Crowd are listening in on urban assemblies, finding in the crowd in a city square, a moment of focus that alleviates anxiety. From Buenos Aires, to Cairo, Istanbul, New York, Madrid, Kiev and Warsaw, this is the sound of overdrive and re-composition into a new form, going beyond its initial representation. They are listening closely to the social power released at grassroots level.

Although protest movements that respond to the needs and desires of so many have not managed to achieve lasting change and create new, more democratic and just societies; this collective expression of the desire for change is constantly nagging, when diversity creates strategy and freely formulates the idea of the assembly, thus establishing the mechanism for shaping a social alternative.

The new piece of music for amplified harpsichord and sampler composed by Karol Nepelski is a quest for the mood that accompanies mass assemblies in cities all over the world, in which, nevertheless, solidarity or residents' discontent has led to socio-political changes. The electronic layer of the sampler uses short excerpts of recordings (samples) available on social media, such as Facebook, YouTube and Twitter: sounds of the crowd, public concerts, the audio sphere of city meetings and protest movements, as well as speeches of leaders, politicians and authority figures. It is a quasi-opera, with the sampler in the role of the human voice (voices of individuals and entire groups of people), and the harpsichord as the accompanying orchestra.

The world premiere of the piece will be entrusted to the internationally-renowned harpsichordist, an outstanding interpreter of contemporary music—Gośka Isphording.

The prelude will consist of a street action (2 June) on the Square on front of the Royal Castle in Warsaw, a place where the echoes of the Black Protest—the most important social gatherings in recent years in Poland—still resound. Gośka Isphording will play for the accidental audience the main theme of the piece, referring to the collective awareness of the place.

A week later in TR Warszawa, the premiere of the piece will take place. The performer will also perform a programme of pieces for harpsichord to accompany Variations on Global Crowd, whose creation—similarly to Nepelski's piece—was inspired by listening to social moods and voices of change.

Program of the concert:

1. Peter Ablinger Voices and Piano (selected fragments)
2. Ailis Ni Riain 2 Steep 4 Sheep
3. Jukka Tiensuu Veto
4. Ángel Faraldo Music for Computer and Harpsichord
5. Karol Nepelski Variations on Global Crowd

2.06

Zamkowy Square

18.00 (prelude) free entry

11.06

TR Warszawa, 8 Marszałkowska Street

19.00 (premiere) tickets



FREE POLAND

ACTION

Czarne Szmaty Art Collective / #czsz

On 4 June 2019, 30 years after the transformation of the political system, we will respond to the need to build Free Poland.

Together with the citizens of our country, we asked ourselves the following questions:

Where should Free Poland be located?

What should Free Poland look like? Whose face should it have?

A face of an actress? A woman singer? A model? A women politician? Or perhaps a feminist?

What is the gender of Free Poland? Gender: M/ F/ Q.
 Is Free Poland white? Non-white? Or rainbow-coloured?
 Should we build it a statue? Where?*

(*Please, do not vote for the Piłsudski Square, it's already crowded!)

“In my opinion, the statue should be placed in the middle of the Vistula River. Carrying waters from rivers across Poland, the Vistula will wash the base of the statue and thus it will sufficiently symbolise the emotions of the entire nation.”

“The statue should stand in Theatre Square. Justification: Theatre Square marks the heart of Warsaw.”

“Three hundred years ago, Holy Mary proclaimed herself Queen of Poland. It was not Poles who came up with the idea of proclaiming the Blessed Virgin Mary as the Queen of Poland. It was Mary herself who asked to be thus invoked. The Polish Nation has always sensed that all that is good comes from God, and to God has to be made an offering. Lech Wałęsa knew that as well when he asked for Mary's intercession in the fight against Communism. So Free Poland should have the face of the Mother of God. The face of the Virgin.”

“Free Poland should be rainbow-coloured, but the rainbow should also include white—please find the attached illustration :)”

“An international competition should be announced to select the design of the statue, in order to give specialists from various countries an opportunity to visualise and represent in the statue, admired by the whole wide world, the suffering, bravery and heroism of the Polish nation, and Polish women in particular. Another very important argument in favour of this concept is the fact that such a competition would allow our women artists, sculptors and architects residing abroad to participate.”

The Free Poland project was created by the Czarne Szmaty /#czsz Collective on the basis of the conducted social consultations.

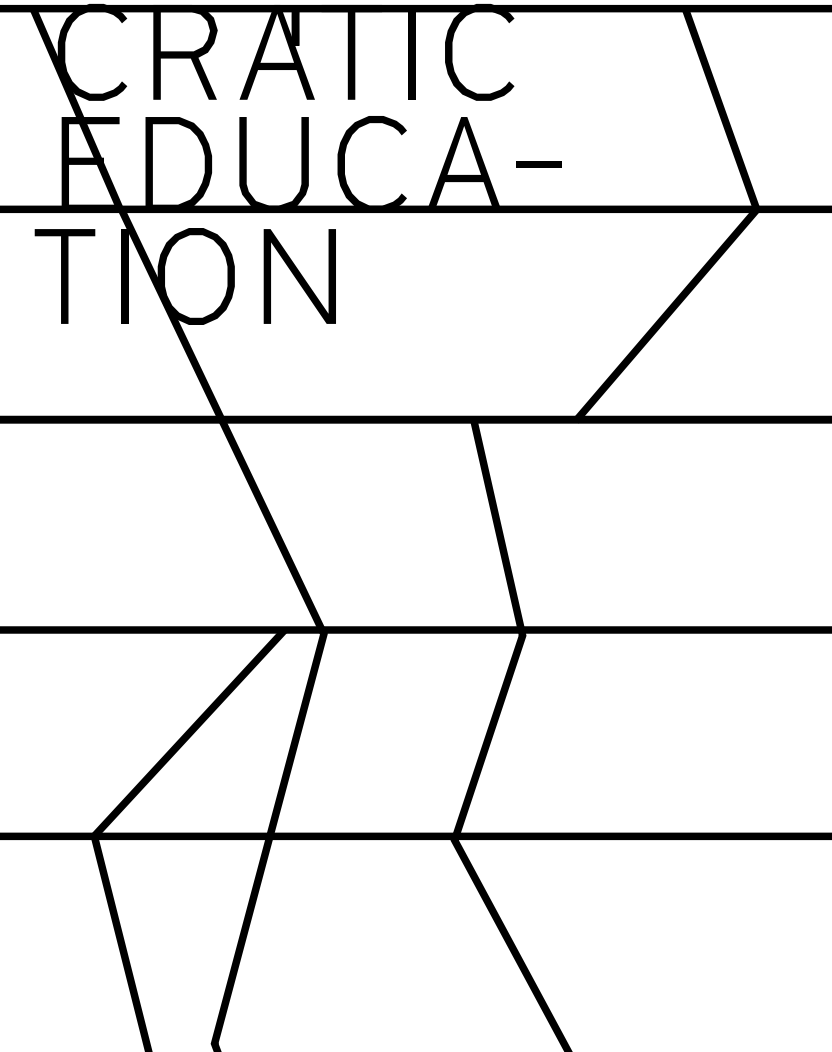
On **4 June** 2019, 30 years after the transformation of the political system, you will meet Free Poland!

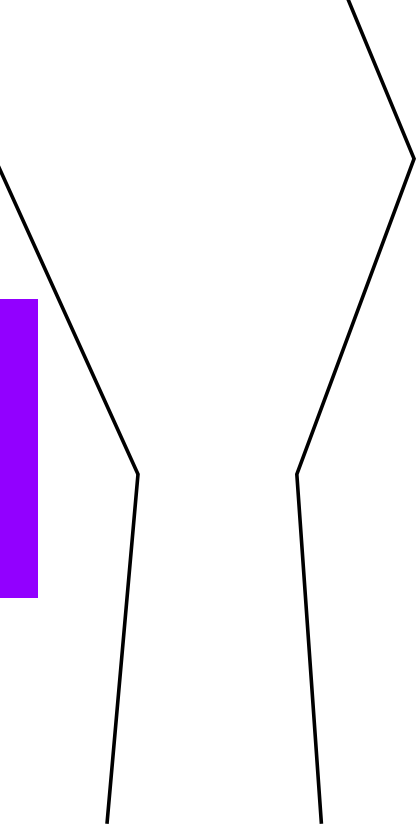
DEMO-

CRATIC

EDUCA-

TION







INSTALLATION, PLACE

young creators: Ada Branecka, Agnieszka, Aleksandra Gruszecka, Amina, Bolo, Dagmara, Damian, Daryna, Doma, Dominika Wasilewska, Emilia, Gabrysia, Gosia, Greta Thunberg, Hava, Iza, Jasmina, Jovan, Julia, Justen, Kamcio, Kamil, Kamil Kućmierowski, Kasia Nowak, KS, Kuba, Magda, Magomed, Marek, Maria Surowiec, Mariam, Marika, Marta Fidura, Medni, Natalia, Natalia, Natalia S., Nastka, Olga Ciężkowska, Paweł, Piotr, Ramzan, Rayana, Renata Dziubiak, Rolando, Ruda, Sabina, Samira, Said Magomed, Sonia, Sulim, Sumaja, Svetlana Sukhorukova, Sylwia, Tanzila, Tymek, Weronika, Wiktoria, Władek, Zelam
(personal data of certain young artists were not disclosed at their own, or their guardian's request)

adult creators: Edgar Bąk Studio, Piotr Buratyński, Michał Buszewicz, Iwona Chmura-Rutkowska, Iga Fijałkowska, Alex Freiheit, Radek Hoffman, Agata Kiedrowicz, Dominika Klimek, Kaya Kołodziejczyk, Dominika Korzeniecka, Piotr Macha, Hanna Maciąg, Mariusz Marciniak, Teresa Otulak, Rafał Paradowski, Aleksandra Rajska, Patryk Raszkowski, Yara Said, Maciej Siuda, Anna Smolar, Konstanty Usenko, Gosia Warrink

curator: Agata Siwiak

installation design: Agata Kiedrowicz, Maciej Siuda

cooperation on the project, implementation of the installation:
Klaudia Filipiak

producer, programme coordinator: Marta Michalak

coordination, substantive assistance: Anna Majewska

coordination within Special Schools Complex No 89: Teresa Gronek

The project organised within the all-year-round activity of Biennale Warszawa–RePrezentacje. New Education.

Organisational partners: Bemowskie Centrum Kultury, Ujazdowski Castle Centre for Contemporary Art, Fundacja dla Wolności / Przystanek „Świetlica” project, Nowy Teatr in Warsaw, Teatr Polski im. A. Szyfmana, Teatr Powszechny im. Z. Hübnera, Zespół Małych Form Opieki i Wychowania „Chata”–the Białołęka branch and Stowarzyszenie „Chata 11”, Special Schools Complex no. 89

A space designed by children and youths in a workshop process accompanied by researcher and curator Agata Kiedrowicz

and her collaborators Aleksandra Rajska and Iga Fijałkowska. The results of the workshops—models built by children, plans drawn, needs expressed—were used by architect Maciej Siuda as the basis for a project executed in a disused part of a school building.

The initial premise of the creative team was to design a Children’s Civic Affairs Institution. A direct inspiration for our activities was the theory and practice of Janusz Korczak—a revolutionary educator who implemented mechanisms based on democratic procedures in the children’s homes he managed: justice was in the hands of a judiciary system to which teachers were subjected equally to the children.

The longer we worked at our workshops and the deeper we delved into the children’s imagination and experience, the more we felt the initial idea for the name seemed a misuse towards children—an appropriation of their social and political sensibility. Believing strongly in the performative power of the language, as a team working on the project, we decided that the “adult” language of power and hierarchy would not be used during the workshops. Eventually, the place took on a name invented by children: Endless Space, which provokes important questions. Is it possible to imagine a world where children’s opportunities are unrestricted by the place where they live, their social class, skin tone, or political status? Does the world created by adults instil a belief that children will live to reach maturity? To what extent do spaces in which we live undermine or reproduce mechanisms of power and oppression?

The designers of Endless Space are residents at the Centre for Foreigners in the Warsaw district of Targówek Fabryczny, a children’s home in Białołęka as well as students of the Special Schools Complex No 89. A particular living situation of young designers—disability or lack of a stable home, this intimate sphere that guarantees safety—is translated into a hybrid design of an ultimately public space (understood by adults as “children’s institution”). In their work, the public unexpectedly becomes the private, and “domestic”.

Endless Space is a democratic place for meeting, playing, resting and debating, as well as a performative archive and an exhibition of projects created by young and adult artists within an almost year-long programme RePrezentacje. New education. They are accompanied by pieces that constitute the context of the entire programme (e.g. Refugee Nation Flag by Yara Said, ICOON for Refugee

by Gosia Warrink and an excerpt from the exhibition Gaudiopolis from OFF-Biennale Budapest).

We want to make sure that in this space, the voice and needs of children and youths resound the loudest. But it is in equal measure a place for adult audiences, whom we want to encourage to listen to this voice and treat it seriously.

Special Schools Complex No 89, 8 Skaryszewska Street

31.05–30.06 12.00–20.00 (Tuesday to Sunday) free entry

30.05 18.00 opening

1.06 guided tour of the exhibition: Agata Sowiak
12.00 (for youth and adults) free entry

8.06 guided tour of the exhibition: Maciej Siuda
12.00 (for youth and adults) free entry

14, 17, 18.06 guided tour of the exhibition for groups:
10.00, 12.00 registration required

16.06 guided tour of the exhibition: Justyna Sobczyk
14.00 (no age limit) free entry

22.06 guided tour of the exhibition: Agata Kiedrowicz
12.00 (for youth and adults) free entry

23.06 guided tour of the exhibition: Agata Sowiak
12.00 (no age limit) free entry

29.06 guided tour of the exhibition: Marta Michalak
12.00 (no age limit) free entry

30.06 guided tour of the exhibition: Anna Majewska
12.00 (no age limit) free entry



WORKSHOPS

idea and programme concept: Justyna Sobczyk

curator: Agata Siwiak

faculty: Joanna Berendt, Maja Kowalczyk, Daniel Krajewski, Agnieszka

Kryst, Emilia Kulpa-Nowak, Barbara Lityńska, Paulina

Orbitowska-Fernandez, Martyna Peszko, Magda Sendor, Aleksandra Skotarek,

Justyna Sobczyk, Cecylia Sobolewska, Marta Stańczyk, Piotr Swend,

Sebastian Świąder, Justyna Wielgus, Maja Wyborska

Difficulties and conflicts which we can observe both in the school and the theatre environment usually stem from difficulties in communicating. I regard the fact that teachers and artists are unprepared for teamwork and regular everyday coexistence as a systemic problem which requires immediate intervention. The consequences of this situation in the area of communication are immense and often constitute a real obstacle in activities that we carry out.

I treat the School of Applied Empathy as a project both developing and necessary in the artistic and social “Endless space” created within the “RePrezentacje” programme. The School was established for those who wish to build partner relations in a school team, theatre team, or any other community. The foundation of the programme are classes based on the Nonviolent Communication (NVC) concept created by Marshall Rosenberg. Of course, the School is not a systemic response to the problem; it is rather a temporary prototype and the proposed lessons are organised as “tuition” for children, youth and adults.

Justyna Sobczyk

Marshal Rosenberg (1934–2015) was a clinical psychologist, mediator and creator of the method he called Nonviolent Communication. He grew up in the suburbs of Detroit where he was bullied by his peers a lot, mostly for his background. Rosenberg devoted his

entire career to looking for the answers to two questions: “What drives people to use violence against other people?”, and “What makes it possible to remain empathetic and understanding even in the situation of a growing conflict?” He conveyed his ideas to teachers, parents, guardians, educators and social workers. He supported resolution of regional and ethnic conflicts in Israel, Palestine, Ireland, Russia, Bosnia, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Sri Lanka, Rwanda and Nigeria. He created an international organisation, the Center for Nonviolent Communication (CNVC).

Special Schools Complex No 89, 8 Skaryszewska Street

THE WORLD OF EMPATHY ACCORDING TO MARSHALL ROSENBERG

INTRODUCTORY LECTURE

Joanna Berendt

Marshall Rosenberg asked: Do you want to be right or do relationships the right way? Are your words to be like windows, or rather like walls?

Joanna Berendt will present the figure of the NVC creator through practical examples of his activities. She will demonstrate on what foundations the world of dialogue, cooperation and trust relies on in this approach. Because what we say (out loud or in our heads) can either bring us closer together or set us apart. The question is: what are we ready for today in relationships at home, at work, with children? Do we want to form relationships which we would like to have?

4.06

Special Schools Complex No 89, 8 Skaryszewska Street
18.00 for youth over 14 and adults / free entry

FOUR STEPS TO UNDERSTANDING

The lesson titled Four steps to understanding aims at introducing the principles of Nonviolent Communication to workshop participants. Words can build and open hearts, they can hurt, they can create relationships, but they can also build walls which separate us from one another. Behind what we do and say as adults, behind our words and deeds, there is the need to fulfil universal human needs which are shared by everyone, regardless of age. Because who does not appreciate support, cooperation, being heard and acknowledged?

During the workshop we will indicate four components of communication which can help us in our day-to-day communication and teach us to build relationships based on dialogue instead of fighting.

- 5.06** Special Schools Complex No 89, 8 Skaryszewska Street
17.00 conducted by Joanna Berendt, for adults / registration required
- 6.06** Special Schools Complex No 89, 8 Skaryszewska Street
10.00 conducted by Paulina Orbitowska-Fernandez and Magdalena Sendor, for youth aged 15-18 / registration required
- 6.06** Special Schools Complex No 89, 8 Skaryszewska Street
17.00 conducted by Paulina Orbitowska-Fernandez, for youth aged 15-18/ registration required
- 9.06** Special Schools Complex No 89, 8 Skaryszewska Street
10.00 conducted by Paulina Orbitowska-Fernandez and Maja Wyborska, for children (age 7-10) and guardians/ registration required

REACHING FOR POWER WITHOUT VIOLENCE

instructor: Emilia Kulpa-Nowak

Where there is a lot happening around us, it can be sometimes difficult to find your own voice, listen to it and trust yourself.

During the workshop we will examine how emotions can allow us to articulate our own voice and how can we understand our inner needs and follow our path. Together, we will look for the ways to discover our inner power and use it to communicate with others.

6.11.11.00 Special Schools Complex No 89, 8 Skaryszewska Street
 06 for youth over 14 / registration required

Lesson 3.

THE CLASS OF EMPATHETIC SOUNDS

instructor: Sebastian Świąder

Composers develop an extraordinary ability to listen in to the imagination and mood of other people, as well as translate emotions into the language of sounds and pass them on further. Remembering that music can evoke a similar mood and feelings in strangers, we will try to use sounds to practice empathy.

How to really listen to another person? Is it possible to write down someone's or one's own emotions in sounds? With the use of simple instruments and atypical methods of sound notation we will try to compose melodies and design musical tracks. We will check how to convey someone's perspective of looking at the world through ears and vibrations. We will test out looping and recording. We will also build simple musical machines which, like barrel organs, will be able to play the sounds we recorded on demand.

7.06 Special Schools Complex No 89, 8 Skaryszewska Street
 10.00 for youth over 12 / registration required

8.06 Special Schools Complex No 89, 8 Skaryszewska Street
 10.00 for children and their guardians / registration required

THE ARCHITECTURE OF RELATIONSHIPS

instructors: Małgorzata Kowalczyk, Barbara Lityńska, Justyna Sobczyk,
Marta Stańczyk, Piotr Swend, Justyna Wielgus

The inspiration for the workshop was the practice of a choreographer and educator Alito Allesi whose main idea is to make people with and without disabilities work together. The objective of the lesson is to discover one's own limitations and explore opportunities and potential in meeting with the Other. We believe that practicing mutual presence gives a chance for deliberately designing creative situations, open to diversity, which are not based on exclusion. Workshops were organised within the project of the Centre of Inclusive Art: Downtown which, deprived of its own permanent space, started to manufacture individual forms in the area of the "delicate architecture" of which human relationships consist, as an alternative to communication and cooperation. Can relationships and communication strategies be shaped? What this abstract form, created in the course of a dynamic activity, says about us individually, and collectively—as society?

9.06

Special Schools Complex No 89, 8 Skaryszewska Street
17.00 for youth over 16 and adults / registration required

LET'S SIT!

instructor: Martyna Peszko, Cela Sobolewska

Siddha literally means "fruitful", "fulfilled", "master". In meditation we practice a kind of masterly focus, being "here and now", together, mindful and sensitive to one another, all people and phenomena around us. Meditation is working with our awareness and presence. A group practice enables feeling the power of coexistence, collaboration, and supports empathy.

Through simple exercises consisting of breathing together, making sounds together, or moving, we can feel the closeness to other people and the power that comes out of it. Meditating together is for everyone.

8, 9.
06

Special Schools Complex No 89, 8 Skaryszewska Street
10.00 for youth over 14 and adults / registration required

Lesson 6.

THE EMPATHY MOVEMENT

During the lesson we will discover the relation between a moving body and empathy. Through various movement and composition tasks from the discipline of contemporary choreography and major dancing practices, we will increase the awareness of our own bodies in motion and as a result—its sensitivity. The important aspect of this issue is both working with the space of the body and the space in which it moves and dances.

We will focus on the relationship of bodies: on working with conscious sight, looking and observing, concentration and involvement, complementing one another and forming a single shape together.

We will study movement as a result of conscious choice and not an order, looking for the answer to the question: what is the creative potential of empathy and emotionality for movement and dance. What is the link between emotionality and bodily execution? Should we use empathy and the sphere of emotions in the process of self-reformation (through the strategies of minimalizing and maximising, capturing and releasing a single gesture, thought or feeling)?

instructor: Agnieszka Kryst

5.06
11.06

Special Schools Complex No 89, 8 Skaryszewska Street
10.00 for youth over 14 / registration required

Special Schools Complex No 89, 8 Skaryszewska Street
18.00 for adults / registration required

WHAT IS IT LIKE TO BE A THING?

instructor: Justyna Wielgus

The label of thing may also apply to items which are neither physical nor real". So alongside such obvious objects like a car or a jug, it includes dragons and unicorns, atoms and stars.

Graham Harman

During the lesson we will try to answer the following questions: What is the community between a human being and an object, a thing? Why objects remain both in the field of vision and invisibility? What relationships and tensions human beings form with other, non-human" objects with which they share space?

10.06 Special Schools Complex No 89, 8 Skaryszewska Street
17.00 for youth over 14 and adults / registration required

MEDIATION—THE WAY TO GOOD RELATIONSHIPS

How to support children and youth in conflict resolution without taking over the responsibility on their behalf? This requires the skill to show empathy and asking questions which allow children to maintain the responsibility for resolving the conflict without the danger of leaving them alone with emotions they feel during such a conflict. It can be learned.

instructor: Magdalena Sendor

7.06 Special Schools Complex No 89, 8 Skaryszewska Street
17.00 for adults / registration required

YOU RETARD!

You retard! is one of the most common insults used by children and youth in schools. The workshop will concentrate on disarming this term through meeting with the actors of Theatre 21. We want to support young people with knowledge and experience which will make them realize what offensive, hurtful words mean to another person. The purpose of the workshop is to become open to the diversity and uniqueness of another person.

10.06

Special Schools Complex No 89, 8 Skaryszewska Street

instructor: Daniel Krajewski, Justyna Sobczyk

12.00 for youth over 12 / registration required

11.06

instructor: Aleksandra Skotarek, Justyna Sobczyk

13.00 for youth over 12 / registration required



METHODOLOGY OF THE FUTURE

WORKSHOPS for teachers, animators and other people working with the youth

curator: Agata Siwiak

partner: Center for Citizenship Education

School is not an isolated education lab, a place of learning which prepares for the adult life, but one of the centres of social life. A field of ongoing negotiations where interpersonal conflicts resound and media narratives are manifested. It also constitutes one of the most important areas of political, ideological manipulation, as well as the tool of class reproduction. However, a local elementary school can still be a meeting place for people from various social classes, with different cultural capitals and life experiences. In this diversity we see the power of the school's po-

tential to animate, which bursts social bubbles and builds internally diverse communities gathered around a single purpose—education. This is why we provide teachers with tools to talk to their students about urgent problems of the contemporary world. We raise issues connected with migrations, preventing discrimination and hate speech. We sensitize to the critical analysis of the media, images and texts of culture.

Maja Dobiasz-Krysiak, Center for Citizenship Education

CRITICAL THINKING

instructor: Maja Dobiasz-Krysiak

We are bombarded from all directions with information that affects us. It shapes our sense of what the norm is, our way of looking at the world, standards of attractiveness and our sense of self-worth. It is no longer tradition, but YouTube videos, Facebook and Instagram posts and Disney animations that shape our behaviours, but as propaganda tools they discriminate less attractive lifestyles and situations. During the workshop we will raise the following issues:

How to recognise manipulation and influencing techniques in media and other messages in our surroundings?

How to analyse and interpret the images around us (movies, photos, memes, etc.)?

How to debunk current myths and stereotypes through a genre analysis?

12.06 Special Schools Complex No 89, 8 Skaryszewska Street
 10.00 for teachers and people working with the youth in final grades of elementary and high schools / registration required

DIFFICULT TOPICS

instructor: Karolina Giedrys-Majkut

The school is not a place isolated from social life. Students and teachers arrive with beliefs concerning politics, choices moti-

vated by their outlook on life or religious reasons, acquired either at home or in a peer group. If they are radical opinions which evoke strong feelings, they can spark conflicts and become an axis of divisions within the school. Film education can assist us in reflecting on this subject. It can also serve as a tool for stimulating empathy, cautiously introducing taboo topics through the media intermediary, and enabling the creative analysis of a microhistory. During the workshop we will raise the following issues:

Is there room at school for difficult topics? Is it better to prevent or raise them when crisis occurs?

How to talk to young people about controversial questions that fire up the adult world?

How to work with films to better communicate and open difficult discussions?

13.06 Special Schools Complex No 89, 8 Skaryszewska Street
10.00 for teachers and people working with the youth in final grades of elementary and high schools / registration required

GENDER EQUALITY

instructor: Małgorzata Leszko

Girls are good at languages, boys are good at maths. It is always a “miss” who takes care of children in the preschool, and a “sir” who runs civil defence training. School reproduces (and often also reinforces) social gender inequality, divisions and gender stereotypes from the earliest years. But all teachers can influence the change of this status quo. During the workshop we will raise the following issues:

- How to discuss gender equality at school?
- How to create school friendly to students on the entire gender spectrum?
- How to support the development of interests and passions of students without subjecting them to gender profiling?

17.06 Special Schools Complex No 89, 8 Skaryszewska Street
10.00 for teachers and people working with the youth in elementary and high schools / registration required

DIVERSITY

122

instructor: Malina Baranowska-Janusz

We function in a world diverse in terms of class, culture, religion, ethnicity and society. We represent various family models, lifestyles, and approaches to tradition. But all these differences are particularly strongly concentrated at school, as it is a meeting place of various social groups. During the workshop we will raise the following issues:

- How to deal with the ambiguous nature of the world and become open to diversity?
- How to practice your own freedom without infringing upon the freedom of others?
- How to celebrate differences and do not perpetuate stereotypes?

18.06 Special Schools Complex No 89, 8 Skaryszewska Street
10.00 for teachers and people working with the youth in elementary schools / registration required



THE TAMING OF THE SHREW SIKSA

CONCERT

costume design: Tomasz Armada
curator: Agata Siwiak

SIKSA is the last representative of the future choreographic turn in the punk genre. Rebellion made to order without organising tenders & clickbait controversy. A two-headed stage singer, a grave seriousness with square shapes of the bass. Unqualified NOISE-FITNESS instructor dividing train-

ing into endurance, power and combination workout. The “Freiheit aerobic five” which she developed, based on conditions of instability and imbalance is not tailored to participant’s individual needs. She lives in Gniezno—condition-wise, it is the worst advertising for the city since the Baptism of Poland in Magdeburg in 966. She wants to be to the Czechs what Ewa Farna is to Poles. Former superhero. She has not performed at Męskie Granie.

SIKSA

SIKSA is a feminist punk duo formed by Alex Freiheit and Piotr Buratyński. The vocalist herself says she “doesn’t like hussars, national poets and the battlefield boys. She performs and won’t die”. She sings about the most difficult and painful issues, about rape and symbolic violence. Both the concert at TR Warszawa and SIKSA herself is about the coming of age. In the lyrics of her latest songs, she explains why she outgrew the superhero role.

Within the collaborative project of Biennale Warszawa and RePrezentacje. New education, SIKSA conducted a workshop for the youth titled 10 days of anger and love. As a result of this event, an ephemeral performing group EASTERN BLOC / **восточный блок** was formed. Alongside SIKSA, the participants explored their voice based on “love-related and triggering experiences” and during the official celebrations of the Polish Armed Forces Day, the group had an aerobic workout in order to relax the body instead of tensing it up inside the uniform.

1.06

TR Warszawa, 8 Marszałkowska Street
20.00 tickets



EDUCATION NOW! ¹²⁴ PEDAGOGICAL WEAK THOUGHT, NO FUTURE AND THE TURN TOWARD THE PAST

DISCUSSION PANEL

participants: Maria Mendel, Tomasz Szkudlarek, Tamás Tóth

curator: Agata Siwiak

A modern education project is by its nature progressive and assumes educating for the future. However, it inevitably becomes entangled in conservative tasks of education oriented on cultivating the past and with liberal visions dominated by living “here and now”.

During the panel we want to initiate with our invited guests a discussion which will treat the problem of future not only in the categories of progress and hope, but also fear. We will consider the question of the present, but as a space haunted by the spectres of the past which does not necessarily mean the time past, as well as the phantasms of the future which, similarly, might or might not herald different, perhaps better times than the time we live in.

In this perspective, “how” can on the one hand mean a weak border, a liminal sphere between much stronger orders of the past and the future. On the other hand, the present can be understood as the dominant time due to the fact that, unlike others, is simply is.

In the course of our talk and the discussion which it will initiate, we plan to use our previous analyses concerning the retro-mania, currently dominating various political representations related to the idea of going back to the past and colonising the public space; we will talk about our studies on the spectral dimension of the present, historical and progressive politics, pedagogical narrative of the present and cultural negation of the future (no future). Every-

thing in order to reconsider the status of education as a phenomenon of the present. How to live with spectres? How do we manufacture the future? What is the point of denying future—including the refusal to participate in politics? How to use the pedagogical dimension of the weak thought and the power of weak education?

3.06

Special Schools Complex No 89, 8 Skaryszewska Street
16.00 free entry



REVOLUTION SCHOOL 1918–1939

FILM

director: Joanna Grudzińska
France, 2016, 52 min.

The film based on unique archive materials tells the story of the fight for a “new school”.

In Europe traumatized by the WWI, educators believe that the world without violence is possible. In France, Austria, Great Britain, Poland, USSR and Italy people like Maria Montessori, Celestin Freinet, Ovide Decroly, Janusz Korczak or Alexander Neill profoundly transform the way people think about education, placing the child in its centre. Working against the established patterns of damaged and calcified societies in which they live, they try to come up with a different kind of school. A Swiss educator Adolphe Ferrière forms an International League of New Education, following the example of the League of Nations. Twenty years later, when the League's heated debates become a consolidated division into pragmatists and idealists, with the advent of totalitarian regimes, the dream about the change shatters and is finally defeated on the eve of the new war.

Although this dream of progressive education was smashed by totalitarian ideologies of the 20th century, its echoes resonate within the walls of contemporary schools louder than ever. Because

education will always remain the centre of every social and political project.

Direction, screenplay: Joanna Grudzińska
 screenplay: Léa Todorov, Laurent Roth, François Prodromidès
 sound: Josefina Rodriguez
 editing: Raphaëlle Martin-Hölger, Catherine Zins, Emmanuelle Gachet
 music: Sébastien Gaxie
 production: Les Films du Poisson, ARTE France

3.06

Ujazdowski Castle Centre for Contemporary Art,
 2 Jazdów Street
 20.00 free entry



THE RIGHT TO SCHOOL

meeting with the participation of youth aged 14-19

introduction: Iwona Chmura-Rutkowska PhD, Stanisław Godlewski
 curator: Agata Siwiak

Who does the school belong to?

Who designs schools? Who writes core curriculums and textbooks? Who determines regulations, timetables and everyday rules of functioning in schools? Who sorts the children according to their address, age, gender and intellectual abilities? Who does the assessment? Who organises entertainment and creative activities? Who decides about clothes, food, physical activity, the colour of walls, library purchases, and every other aspect of life in schools?

And why it is not the students?

Why adults disregard the voice, ideas, feelings and the perspective of children and young people?

Who are the students? School's customers? A raw material to be processed? Imperfect adults who need to be shaped?

It is a common belief that the school is a place where teachers have the power and parents' legitimization to maintain this type of relationship with the use of the advantage of knowledge and ex-

perience, persuasion, the principle of respecting your elders, imposing values and norms, and sometimes also fear. All these strategies are founded on the idea that this asymmetry is obvious. How can democracy, children's and human rights be learned in such a school setting?

Who then—almost one hundred years after the writings of Janusz Korczak—seriously believes that a child's subjectivity, inscribed in various documents concerning Polish education, is worthy of being exercised in practice?

As this catalogue goes to press, the strike of Polish teachers, fighting for the improvement of working conditions in public schools, is still ongoing. The salaries of people who share the responsibility for raising children, and thus are directly responsible for the future of our country and the world, are criminally low. Subsequent reforms of the education system are not oriented on instilling civic awareness and tolerance in young people, and they do not fully develop their intellectual and creative potential. Discussions around the shape of the school—teachers' work conditions and core curriculums—are in the heart of the current political debate.

But each discussion lacks an important, if not the most important voice: no one asks children and youth how they imagine the school of which they would like to be a part.

The debate will be held in the form of a Long Table. This mode of discussion was conceived by an American feminist collective Split Britches. The idea is to create the conditions for a democratic conversation that would not be moderated, which makes all the participating voices equally legitimate. Moreover, no moderator and the long table etiquette shifts the responsibility for the shape of discussion to all its participants.

15.06 Special Schools Complex No 89, 8 Skaryszewska Street
13.00 free entry



THE MAP OF VIOLENCE

DEBATE

participants: Agata Diduszko-Zyglewska, Marek Lisiński,
Joanna Scheuring-Wielgus
moderator: Renata Kim

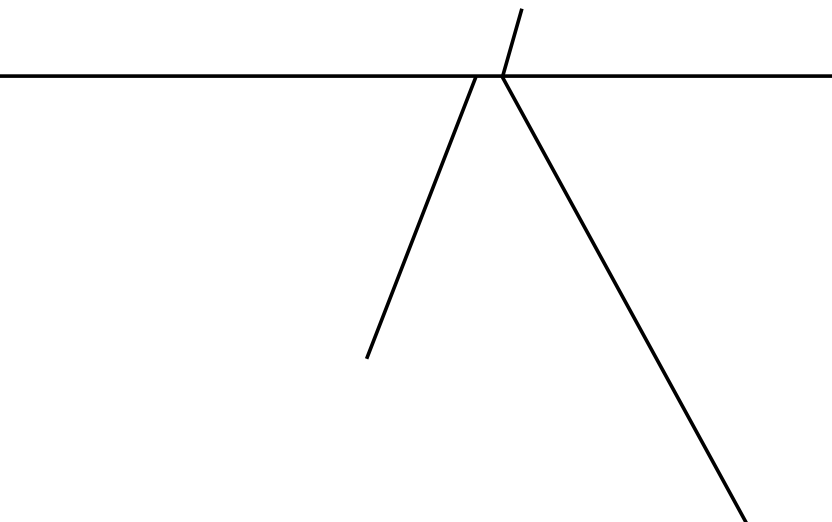
Sexual violence perpetrated by the Catholic Church is a tragedy that has affected children all over the world, including in Poland. Covering up this crime by the clergy is a common practice of church institutions and officials of the Catholic Church. Children and youths—the protagonists of the project RePrezentacje. New education—constitute one of the most disregarded communities in public and political discourse. A situation where they do not have the right to a defence and where their voice is not heard can no longer be ignored.

The participants of the meeting The Map of Violence will include Agata Dziuduszko-Zyglewska, Marek Lisiński and Joanna Scheuring-Wielgus—co-creators of the map of the church paedophilia, which is a systematised collection of information about incidents of sexual abuse of children by Catholic ministers. It includes information published in Polish local and national media, as well as data gathered by the “Nie Lękajcie Się” [“Do Not Be Afraid”] Foundation thanks to reports from victims. For many years, the Foundation has been documenting incidents of sexual abuse by paedophile priests, running a helpline and a safe mailbox for the victims it supports in the process of claiming damages from the perpetrators, by providing psychological and legal assistance. The map is constantly being updated, so it does not reflect the complete scope and scale of the problem yet. Due to the nature of sexual abuse of children, most of these crimes are never exposed, which, owing to the social status and authority bestowed on the perpetrators by the Church, is particularly common in the case of crimes committed by members of the clergy.

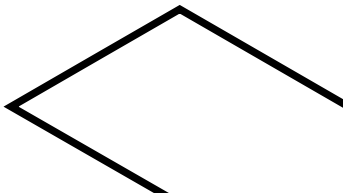
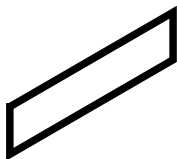
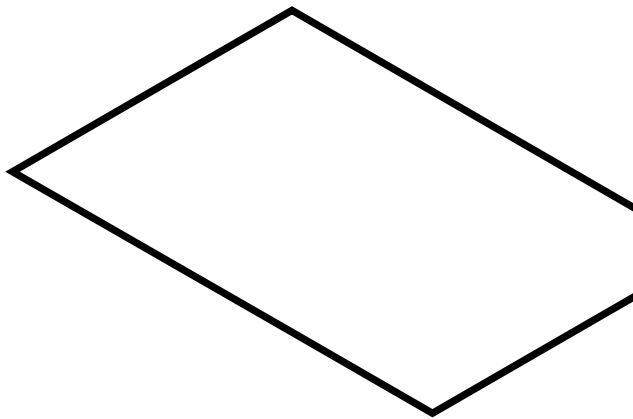
In February 2019, the map was presented to Pope Francis during a visit by the project initiators to the Vatican. Meanwhile, the first sentence in Poland ordering the Church to pay compensation for the sexual abuse of a minor by a priest was passed in Poznań on 13

September 2018. The Poznań precedent gives hope for the universal recognition of the moral and legal responsibility of the Church for crimes committed by people employed within its structures.

18.06 Biennale Warszawa, 34/50 Marszałkowska Street
18.00 free entry



TRANSNA- TIONAL METROPOLIS





EXHIBITION OF FOREIGN ARTISTS LIVING IN POLAND

EXHIBITION

artists: Mamadou Góo Bâ, Katy Bentall, Delphine Bereski, Larisa Crunțeanu, Attila Csörgő, Léann Herlihy, Yulia Krivich, Planeta Kuz, Aditya Mandayam of Brud, David Maroto, Lude Reno, Jana Shostak, Aleksander Sovtysik, Arjun Telwar and Sandro Wysocki, Yael Vishnicki-Levy
curator: Janek Simon

The exhibition features work by over a dozen foreign artists who live and work Poland. Members of this group have practically no common denominator. Some of them arrived in Poland by accident, perhaps due to personal matters. The arrival of others was determined by more general historical processes, such as migrations from Vietnam in the 1990s, or more recently, migrations from Ukraine and Belarus. The artists come from various generations and they operate within art institutions in various ways. Some participate in the international art circuit and treat Poland as a cheap place to live; for others, having a presence in Polish art galleries is an important objective. They share a relative lack of visibility in Polish mainstream cultural institutions and a complete lack of structures to support their activity. The exhibition and the accompanying research project will attempt to change this situation, examining more general conditions of this type of process along the way. To what extent is the creation of a tactical, in a sense, category of “foreign artists” necessary? A similar question can be asked in relation to other excluded groups striving for recognition, such as sexual or ethnic minorities.

In recent years, Polish cities have changed significantly. There are over a million Ukrainians living in Poland, there are Indians and Pakistanis delivering food on bikes, and empty spaces in city centres are being transformed into Armenian or Georgian restaurants. Screenings of Bollywood films in the Luna cinema in Warsaw usually draw a full house. It seems that what the political right wanted to “protect” us from so eagerly, namely the diffusion of the mono-

cultural character of our country, to some extent has already happened. The exhibition attempts to answer the question: to what degree is this process reflected in the work created by artists based in Poland.

6.06 Biennale Warszawa, 34/50 Marszałkowska Street
19.00^{opening}

7-30.06 Biennale Warszawa, 34/50 Marszałkowska Street
12.00-20.00 (Tuesday to Sunday) tickets



WOMEN REFUGEES KATARZYNA SZYNGIERA

PERFORMANCE

creators: Beata Bandurska, Milena Czarnik, Leyla Elsanova, Hava Hava, Luna JJ, Aleksandra Matlingiewicz, Martyna Peszko, Gulbarg Sayfova, Katarzyna Szyngiera

The project carried out with the financial support of the Capital City of Warsaw within the Integrated Revitalisation Programme for the Capital City of Warsaw until 2022.

On 1 January 2019, 372,239 foreigners had valid documents confirming their right to reside in Poland. According to the report issued by the Office for Foreigners, 4,135 people applied for international protection in Poland in 2018. As a result, 212 were granted refugee status, 221 subsidiary protection, 10 the right of residence on humanitarian grounds, 36 a permit for a tolerated stay, and 10 asylum. At the same time, in 11 centres for foreigners and elsewhere, there are around 3,500 people who have applied for international protection and who usually wait for about a year to have their application processed. Depending on the granted status, the foreigners have a certain set of rights and possible financial aid.

This information can be found, with considerable difficulty, on the website of the Polish Office for Foreigners. It leaves an impression that the presence of refugees is a taboo subject that, just in case, should not be raised in the public space, in order not to cause an uproar. At the same time, following available reports, we can clearly see that each year the number of people covered by international protection in Poland increases. The lack of an honest discussion about the functioning of refugees in Polish society leads to mutual misunderstandings and prejudices. Regardless of what we think about receiving foreigners who are forced to seek shelter in our country due to the difficult situation in theirs, we usually have no idea who they are, or what their daily life looks like.

We are a group of women comprising refugees from Iraq, Dagestan and Tajikistan, a Chechen activist as well as Polish actresses, a director and a choreographer. On stage, we will openly discuss what we share and what divides us: we will talk about common values and joys, mutual concerns, individual plans, women's roles and rights, cultural differences, traditional cuisines, or on our reading of the male narrative in William Shakespeare's Hamlet. We want to underline that refugees come to Poland carrying not only their tragedies, but above all, their life and work experiences, interesting skills and constructive plans for the future.

7, 8.06

Zygmunt Hübner Powszechny Theatre,
20 Zamoyskiego Street
19.00 tickets



AUDIOWALK

direction: Dima Levytskyi
dramaturgy: Szymon Adamczak
space design: Palce Lizać Art Collective
performer: Vera Popova
actor: Konrad Wosik
sound: Radek Duda
internet application project: Szymon Kaliski
curator: Anna Galas-Kosil
partner: Praga Museum of Warsaw

The project carried out with the financial support of the Capital City of Warsaw within the Integrated Revitalisation Programme for the Capital City of Warsaw until 2022.

The project Kijowska revolves around forms and representations of locality in a globalised city. Our attention is drawn to one of the largest migration waves in the modern history of Europe, namely, the movement of Ukrainians to Poland in the last five years. According to various sources, the number of migrants from Ukraine has reached at least two million people. In conditions when migration affects most indicators of the sustainable development of society, we want to think about the opportunities that it carries and the issues that it poses.

Kijowska Street in Warsaw's Praga district becomes for us a topological prop. Speaking about migration, we inevitably encounter issues of urbanisation, the presence or absence (lack) of public (private) space, models of neighbourhood relations and socio-political barriers. The Praga district gives us an opportunity to carry out this conversation.

The project consists of a series of meetings in the Praga area, in the format of a built-up community dweller co-organised with local partners. The main value of these encounters for us is to strengthen social ties and foster cultural exchanges between residents. We are also interested in ways of making a communal representation possible. The series of meetings will conclude with an event during which participants will be invited to pose together for a "collective photo".

The artistic part of the project Kijowska takes the form of an audio walk held in the Praga area. A team of artists, led by Kiev-

based director Dima Levytskyi, proposed this form of site-specific theatre in order to root and to comprehend the peculiarities of migrants living in Warsaw within a shared urban space.

- 9.06 Praga Museum of Warsaw, 50/52 Targowa Street
19.00 tickets
- 10.06 Praga Museum of Warsaw, 50/52 Targowa Street
12.00, 19.00 tickets
- 12.06 Praga Museum of Warsaw, 50/52 Targowa Street
12.00, 15.00 tickets
- 13.06 Praga Museum of Warsaw, 50/52 Targowa Street
12.00, 19.00 tickets



MODERN SLAVERY

PERFORMANCE

concept, direction: Bartek Frąckowiak
concept, dramaturgy: Natalia Siewewicz
set design, costumes: Anna Maria Karczmarzka
music, sound: Krzysztof Kaliski, Maciej Szymborski
light: Michał Głaszczka
maps and data visualization: Jakub de Barbaro
director's assistant: Zuzanna Grajcewicz

cast: Beata Bandurska, Magdalena Celmer, Martyna Peszko,
Anita Sokołowska, Maciej Pesta, Konrad Wosik

premiere: 17th May 2018
running time: 2 h 45 min
1 intermission

They are practically everywhere. In fashionable Warsaw restaurants, on construction sites, in closed factories, in processing plants, orchards and farms. They come from Ukraine, Belarus, Korea, Philippines, China and Vietnam. Sometimes they are Poles. The Global Slavery Index report reveals that in 2016 in Poland, there were over 181,000 modern slaves, which amounts to 0.476% of the Polish population. However, slavery here is not a metaphor describing any

kind of exploitation. This concerns situations of unpaid forced labour, related to human trafficking or fictional debt. We decided to investigate and discover where these statistics come from, and to what situations, places and histories they are connected. And eventually, to answer the question: why is this phenomenon entirely invisible and rarely commented on in the public sphere? These activities resulted in a performance-exhibition.

Alongside an in-depth analysis of the local situation, we confront testimonies, narratives, visual materials, documents and thoughts from various places across the world, outlining a history of capitalist development from the perspective of slavery. However, in the end, it is not the historical perspective that becomes a matter of overriding importance but the archaeology of the present and the reflection on slavery as a symptom of the future of work. If we want to imagine a different kind of employment than hired work based on hierarchy, subordination and violence, we need to rethink its most radical extreme, which is modern slavery.

We show slavery as a global contemporary phenomenon in its various forms and expressions, related to dramas and biographies of various people from a range of different cultures, religions and races. What we want to underline, however, is the fact that slaves do not live on faraway, phantasmic and unreal plantations, but also right behind the wall of the most sophisticated restaurant in Warsaw. After all, in slavery indexes, Poland ranks in the disgraceful first place in the European Union. So, we will tell you also about today's Warsaw and its slavery stories—stories of particular people. For this very purpose, we have attempted a documentary investigation. Its reconstruction constitutes a significant part of the performance-exhibition. The attempt to understand slavery in contemporary Warsaw gives rise to a new topography of the city. We discuss it by creating a particular alternative counter-cartography of urban violence.

Each crisis of capitalism and the resulting slump of the economic growth requires the process of primary capital accumulation to be repeated in a new form. Precisely then, dispossessions, particular movements of human masses and migrations occur and new forms of colonialism emerge. This is also when slavery gains particular significance. It is not a barbaric relic of the past, an oriental mirage looming into view out of historical accounts of journeys to Africa. It is not only a fantasy about the 19th century American

South, or the image of ships transporting slaves to the Americas within the transatlantic slave trade. Currently, all over the world, there are many more slaves—people who are not paid at all for their forced labour—than crossed the Atlantic during the 350 years of the slave trade. According to the Global Slavery Index from 2016, there are currently as many as 45.8 million people living as modern slaves. Overall, the details of their experiences are a mystery to us.

11, 12. 06. Biennale Warszawa, 34/50 Marszałkowska Street
19.00 tickets



STAFF ONLY

PERFORMANCE

direction, set design, costumes: Katarzyna Kalwat
dramaturgy: Piotr Grzymisławski
text: Beniamin Bukowski
music: Wojciech Blecharz
cast: Carlos Fernando Dimeo Álvarez, Jodie Baltazar,
James Malcolm, Ifi Ude

The performance which demands a radical redefinition of the notion of the national culture. It becomes the expression of creators-migrants' need to integrate, and to broaden the notion of national acting practices. Can theatre become the new Tower of Babel?

It is a unique time for Poland. Within the last three years, due to the wave of economic migration, Poland has been witnessing rapid and radical changes in the structure of its society. Therefore, what becomes a key issue is the cultural identity of contemporary Poland, and the space that is left for foreigners and immigrants. There are no national integration programmes that would allow foreigners to build their future in Poland in a safe and stable way. In this case, values like openness, liberalism and progressiveness do not al-

ways match the basic experience of the excluded strangers, “aliens” trying to find their place in Poland. For us as theatre creators, equally important are the social changes reflected in the space of culture: in theatre and more broadly—on the art job market. The “glass ceiling” is strong both in theatre and in film: unemployed foreign actors do not find work in state cultural institutions. Theatre, traditionally considered as a space of engaged social criticism, avant-garde explorations and institutions fighting for freedom, perversely becomes a tool for reinforcing the divisions it claims to combat.

We are inviting migrant artists to work together with us on redefining the meaning of being an actress or an actor and resident of Poland. We want to confront the feeling of alienation and the new meaning of everyday struggle from the stranger’s perspective. Thus, the project aims to launch a study on the essence of the art of acting in the contemporary, multicultural and globalised world. We want to analyse the tension between the creative dimension of an actors’ work and building an expression based on cultural identity. We want to answer questions concerning the strategies that migrant actors may adopt to get an opportunity to be employed in their line of work. Must they and can they become “true Poles”, ridding themselves of their identity, accent, tradition and skin tone? These experiences help us to formulate our shared dream and plans for the future.

We start with the image of the national culture and its integrating character, incorporating diverse experiences and conditions of individuals. We want it to lead us to a permanent change, at least in a microscale, where the invited artists would have the opportunity to shatter that glass ceiling.

21, 22. TR Warszawa, 8 Marszałkowska Street
06. 20.00 tickets



MAPPING MULTICULTURAL WARSAW

140

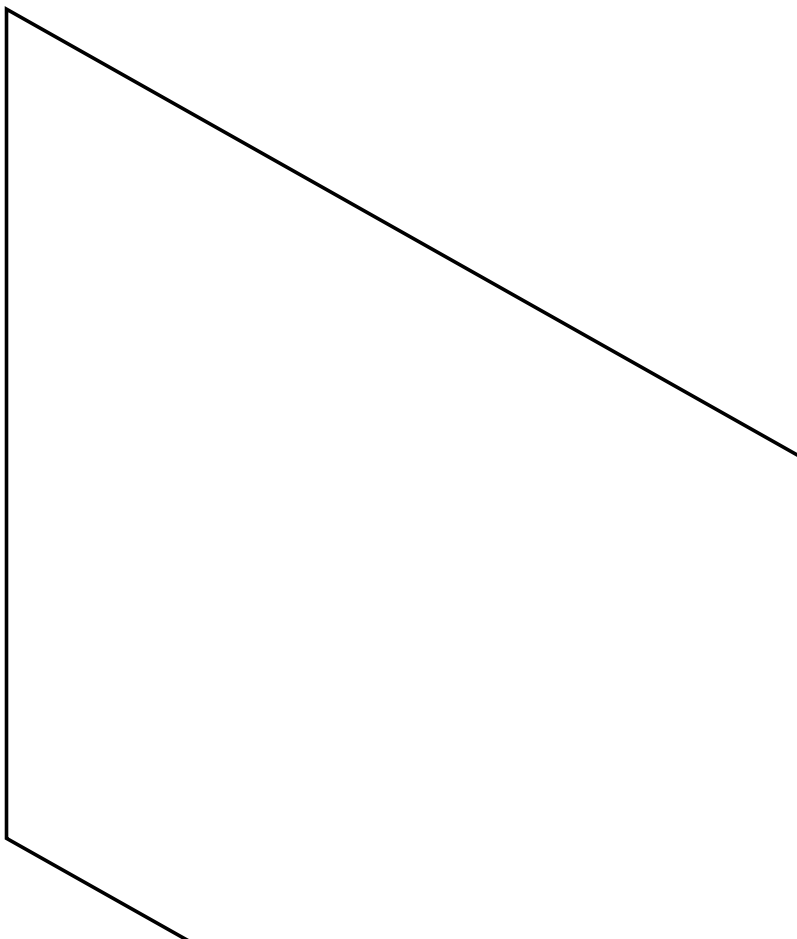
Presentation of the research project of Biennale Warszawa and the Academy of Fine Arts

participants: Marcelina Grzeńkiewicz, Julia Kinaszewska, Magdalena Kopańska, Jan Sowa, Barbara Swadzyński, Agnieszka Zawistowska i Weronika Wood

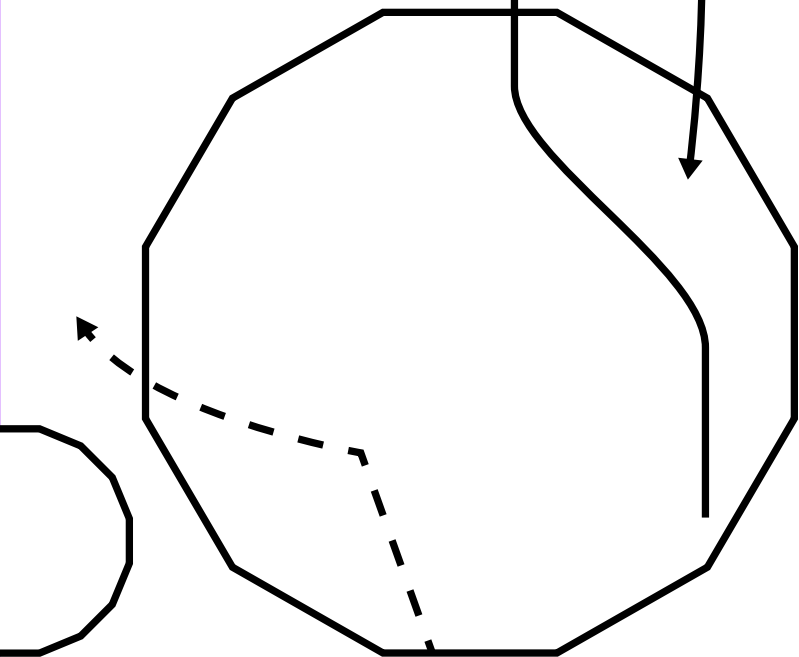
In 2018, researchers working for Biennale Warszawa under the direction of Katarzyna Wojnar PhD from EUROREG UW prepared an interactive map of Warsaw, developed according to the methodology of the New Metropolitan Mainstream (NMM) designed by a research and activist network INURA (International Network for Urban Research and Action: <https://www.inura.org/v2/index.php/activities/nmm-project/>). Taking this map as their point of departure, a team formed by Biennale Warszawa and the Faculty of Management of Visual Culture at the Warsaw Academy of Fine Arts completed it with data concerning multiculturalism in Warsaw. Of particular interest were places and areas connected to the cultural activity of ethnic and national minorities. In addition, the initial NMM map of Warsaw was supplemented with information concerning both contemporary and historical areas of cultural diversity—from the national Philharmonics basement at Sienkiewicza Street, which, before the war, housed a night club where a Nigerian—Augustine Agboola Browne—worked as a musician and taxi-dancer, to the Jarmark Europa marketplace shut down in 2010, to the still open, multi-cultural market at Bakalarska Street. Such a configuration of the research perspective is an attempt to go beyond the well-known pattern of the invisible and underappreciated minority, towards an appreciation of the subjective and active position of minority groups.

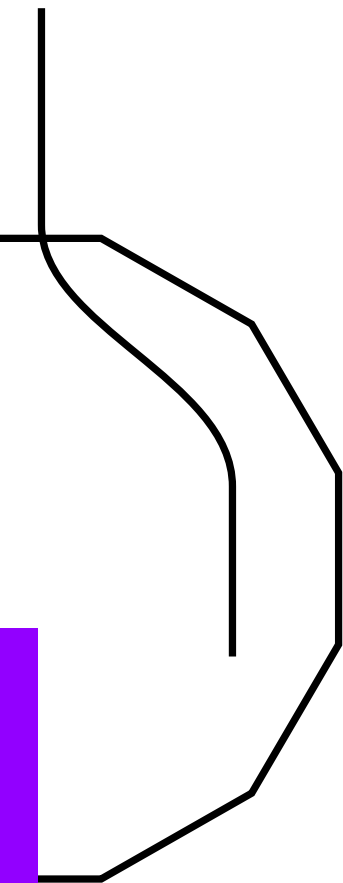
During the meeting, both the entire map of Warsaw created using the NMM method, and its extension concerning multi-cultural Warsaw, will be presented to the larger public for the first time.

21.06 Biennale Warszawa, 34/50 Marszałkowska Street
17:00 free entry



TRANSNATIONAL SOLIDARITY







THE MISSING DENOMINATOR— UNIVERSALISM AND PROGRESSIVE CULTURAL POLITICS

SYMPOSIUM

participants: Teodor Ajder, Claudia Ciobanu, Anna Curcio, Ulrike Guérot, Alexandre Lacroix, Andrzej Leder, Robert Pfaller, Ana Teixeira Pinto, Ovidiu Țichindeleanu

curator: Jan Sowa

partners: French Institute in Poland, Austrian Cultural Forum, Goethe-Institut Warsaw, Italian Culture Institute in Warsaw, Netherlands Embassy in Warsaw, Camões Institute, Romanian Cultural Institute, EUNIC Warsaw

Universalism seems to be one of the most ambivalent and contradictory, yet also valuable elements of European cultural legacy. On the one hand, as it was put by the French philosopher Alain Badiou, it was Christianity that established the foundation of universalism, which does not distinguish between ethnic, national or cultural identities, but rather treats every human person as equal and essentially the same, as “there is no partiality with God” (The Epistle of St. Paul to the Romans, 2, 11). On the other hand, the ideology of universalism was an important part of the colonial project and a mean of keeping the subalterns in check: white conquerors claimed the supremacy of European values and norms—religious, cultural or social—and declared them universally valid in order to force the subjected populations into obedience and destroy their ways of life. It has remained one of the prime reasons for mistrust that many societies and ethnic groups express towards the Western claims of universalism.

These predicaments surrounding universalism are far from being just a subject of investigations for historians, philosophers or sociologists. The global and thus universal nature of challenges that we are facing—such as global climate change, massive migrations,

unchecked influences of financial institutions, terrorism etc.—form the foundation of some kind of new universalism of the task of utmost importance. These are the threats that humanity can successfully counter only as a unified subject. The latter requires us to establish some kind of common denominator—a universal perspective that would allow us to look beyond particular attachments to race, ethnicity, gender or nation, and to define all men and women simply as equal members of the human race. Unfortunately, no such project seems to be anywhere on the horizon. Is Europe still capable of inspiring the world in this respect? Does the European project, despite all its shortcomings, make it more likely or easier in any way?

The planned symposium will focus on the issue of universalism on three separate, but related levels. Firstly it would investigate the conditions making a new universalism possible: what needs to happen for such a universalistic project to appear and for Europe to have its place in the process? How might it be constructed, what kind of ideas, values, norms, goals or practices could serve as the constituting factors for a universal project that would overcome the heritage of oppressive Western universalism of the colonial enterprise? Secondly, it would attempt to determine what role culture could have in constituting this new universalism. Thirdly, it would enquire what part in carrying out this task could be played by public cultural institutions and progressive cultural politics.

The symposium is to be followed by a book that will be published by the end of 2019 in Polish and English.

13.05 Biennale Warszawa, 34/50 Marszałkowska Street
12.00–14.00, 15.30–17.30, 18.00–20.00 free entry



NATION STATE. FOUR ESCAPE STRATEGIES

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Núria Güell

EXHIBITION

Four works by Núria Güell, laid out in a maze of basements at MA3450, concern using the rules of the system (state and capitalism) against it. However, it is not just about the criticism of the current state of affairs, or revealing the mechanisms of power and systemic violence. What becomes much more important is creating alternatives: on the borders of the system and in its gaps and crevices, in order to install in the overtaken and transformed codes some micro utopias, the germs of new political and economic projects, and most importantly—new organisations. Stateless by Choice shows the way through the bureaucratic torment of the artist. The work illustrates the artist's attempt to get rid of her citizenship, and as a result erase the brand of national identity and dispose of her rights and obligations towards the state. Meanwhile, Troika Fiscal Disobedience Consultancy and Degenerate Political Art use the mechanisms of fiscal paradises to create new organisational models that enable activist-efficient fiscal disobedience and go outside of the financial system of a state that operates as a tool at the services of global capitalism and its institutions (like the ECB or the IMF). Finally, How to expropriate money from the banks? is conceived as an instruction for citizens to use finance and economics, a set of guidelines to apply in their everyday lives to defeat the economic monster.

All these works function simultaneously in two dimensions: on a speculative level that puts in motion our imagination and thinking, and on a very practical level that enables us to use the created manuals, instructions, plans, organisations and methods in very particular circumstances of our everyday lives. If we want to organise our future, we need to learn how to effectively operate within the system, in relation to the system and with it, and Núria Güell's works are an excellent starting point. Their additional value lies in the fact that they are not naively innocent, and the Spanish artist does not

shy away from entangling, overtaking and using various power relations for their own undoing.

2.06 Biennale Warszawa, ul. Marszałkowska 34/50
20.00 opening
4-30.06. Biennale Warszawa, 34/50 Marszałkowska Street
12.00-20.00 (Tuesday to Sunday) tickets
06



AVANTGARDE DECENTERED: (SEMI) PERIPHERIES OF CAPITALISM AND UNIVERSAL HISTORY

SYMPOSIUM

participants: Cristina Bogdan, Boris Buden, Vasyl Cherepanyn, Ana Ofak, Agata Pyzik, Alia Swastika

curators: Piotr Sikora, Jan Sowa

partner: MeetFactory

When it came to analysing social and economic development on the global scale, much of 20th century social science was dominated by what is called “modernisation theory”. From Daniel Lerner in the 1950s to Francis Fukuyama in the 1990s, a stream of pundits affirmed that the world was on a path to global convergence, and that “the developed countries were showing the developing ones their future”, to use a well-known Marxists quip (yes, the left had also had its affair with the modernisation theory). The fall of the Iron

Curtain and the disintegration of the former Soviet Bloc seemed to confirm that brave vision.

Even a brief look at the contemporary social and political zeitgeist proves how delusional that belief was. Not only are the (semi)peripheries of the capitalist world-system—from Central-Easter Europe to India to the Philippines to Brazil—less than eager to imitate the West and to follow its path of development towards modern liberal institutions, but rather the opposite seems to be true: the centre is sliding more and more towards modes and patterns of socio-political organisation typical for the peripheries, with a turn towards nationalism, various forms of primordialism, a growing role of religion in public life, failing institutions of collective action, the increasing influence of an oligarchy and a mounting trust in authoritarian ways of solving social problems, to name just a few phenomena accompanying the contemporary global right-wing populist revolt. The future of London, Berlin or Paris seems to lie in Warsaw, Budapest, Johannesburg or Manila, not the other way around. Socio-political avantgarde has been de-centred for good and for bad: even if it means a reactionary vanguardism on many occasions, there may also be hope to be found in emancipatory and progressive struggles undertaken at the peripheries of capitalism.

The proposed symposium will try to map this shifting landscape, with a special focus on the condition of the (semi)periphery. By doing so, it will attempt to coin possible conceptual alternatives to such notions as “3rd world”, “developing countries”, “post-communism” or “post-colonialism”, which are all becoming more and more obsolete. Shying away from culturalist explanations that refer to such fantasies as the “culture of poverty”, our discussion will rather explore a more universal dimension of the contemporary crisis that tends to manifest itself in a very similar way despite the peculiar cultural and social circumstances of any given country or region.



7.06

Biennale Warszawa, 34/50 Marszałkowska Street
12.00–14.00, 16.00–18.00 free entry



EAST EUROPEAN- NORTH AFRICAN- MIDDLE EAST FORUM

RE-DIRECTING EAST / DESIGNING FUTURES

RESIDENCY

curators: Marianna Dobkowska, Bartek Frąckowiak,
Anna Galas-Kosil, Ika Sienkiewicz-Nowacka
partner: Ujazdowski Castle Centre for Contemporary
Art
cooperation: Mazovia Institute of Culture

Within an artistic and research-oriented project devoted to the relations between Poland and the countries of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), Biennale Warszawa, together with the Ujazdowski Castle Centre for Contemporary Art, will host a month-long international curatorial residency. From over one hundred applications submitted to the Re-Directing East programme, five participants were selected to work throughout June with the teams from both institutions, as well as special guest experts. Aziza Harmel (Tunisia/Holland), Mariam El-Nozahy (USA/Egypt), Rachel Dedman (UK/Switzerland/Lebanon), Francesca Masoero (Italy/Marocco) and Radoslav Istok (Slovakia/Sweden) will have the opportunity to develop their individual projects concerning the relations between the former Eastern Bloc and MENA countries, and speak about them during an open meeting entitled North Africa—Middle East Europe. In the second part of the residency, the participants will work on alternative models of transnational cooperation, the possibility of building alliances and solidarity mechanisms outside of national

states, as well as the model of transnational organisation of the future that would bring the concept of the planetary community into reality.

3-30. Ujazdowski Castle Centre for Contemporary Art,
2 Jazdów Street
06



FORGOTTEN
INTERNATIONALISM.
FILMMAKERS OF
THE WORLD, UNITE!

FILMS

screening introduced by Tereza Stejskalová

The theme of the evening is temporary residence of students from the “Third World” in Czechoslovakia and the attendant cultural exchange in the field of film, as well as the little discussed connection between the Czechoslovak and post-colonial culture.

The Algerian director Mohammed Lakhdar-Hamina (1934) and the Syrian director Nabil Maleh (1936-2016) are considered founding fathers of their national cinematography, key figures in Arab film. Due to their politically engaged and aesthetically radical work, they are also read and recognised on an international level. However, there is little acknowledgement of the fact that in the 1960s both studied at FAMU in Prague, a fact which necessarily influenced their work.

Other distinguished directors to study at FAMU include the Sri Lankan director Piyasiri Gunaratna (1939) and the Tunisian documentarist Hafed Bouassida (1947), as well as dozens of other directors, cameramen and scriptwriters from various countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

A whole range of students from the “Third World” studied in the socialist countries of the Eastern Bloc. This form of support was within the context of communist internationalism and solidarity

with countries battling with the legacy of colonialism, albeit motivated by Cold War power struggle. Of the students who chose artistic disciplines, the largest number studied film, since this appeared to be an effective educational and political tool. The Gerasimov Institute of Cinematography in Moscow (VGIK), the National Film School in Łódź and FAMU in Prague thus made a contribution to the development of African and Asian cinematography.

Although, after their return home, each of the aforementioned film makers played a significant if not entirely key role in the development of Asian film, they left little behind in Czechoslovakia, virtually no trace in the local cultural memory. The evening is devoted to the films made by these directors during or immediately after their studies in Czechoslovak production and which remained stored in the Czech National Film Archive. They are abandoned images as today nobody lays any claim to them. At the same time, they are witnesses of a forgotten tradition of internationalism and an important cultural exchange. They remind us of the role played by Czechoslovak art in creating pathways to cultural emancipation of countries with a colonial past, and raise never-asked questions concerning the influence that these temporary residents had on Czechoslovak culture and politics. It is no coincidence that in some films of the Czechoslovak New Wave we find criticism of the racism that students from the "Third World" encountered. This was despite the fact that the mention of racism was taboo in Czechoslovak society at the time. An example of mutual influence is provided by the graduate film by Drahomíra Vihanová, a story of an African music student in Prague.

The films are in the Czech language (with the exception of Winter in Czechoslovakia, which is in Sinhalese) with Polish and English subtitles.

Films screened:

1. Krishna Vishwanath Black and White
2. Nabil Maleh Caution! Child? (Pozor! Dítě?)
3. Piyasiri Gunaratna Winter in Czechoslovakia (Zima v Československu)
4. Drahomíra Vihanová Fugue on the Black Keys (Fuga na černých klávesách)

PIONEERS OF GLOBAL SOLIDARITY. WHAT THE ALLIANCE OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF POLAND AND MENA COUNTRIES LEFT US?

153

DEBATE

moderator: Przemysław Wielgosz

participants: Monika Bobako, Beata Kowalska, Antoni Grześczyk

Similarly to other post-socialist countries, from the 1960s until its political transformation, Poland maintained permanent and close relations with Middle Eastern and North African countries. This quite improbable period of geopolitical alliance with the so-called Third World is full of colourful examples of translocal solidarity, international relations realised on the basis of the vision of the planetary common good, as well as friendships between people and between institutions. Many of us know someone who went for a contract to Libya, did research in Iraq, or built roads in Syria. Perhaps we remember Palestinian students who came to Polish universities in the 70s and 80s, but we rarely know that in the 60s in SGPiS (as the Warsaw School of Economics was then called) there was a Department of Research on the Economy of Less Developed Countries, where very intriguing development plans were being created for the countries nowadays described as the global South. It seems that today, when the political right plays off of anti-refugee sentiments and incites Islamophobic attitudes, returning to this moment in our history can be vital and inspiring.

The debate will bring back this partly forgotten thread of the Polish Modernity. The invited guests will try to frame it as an archive of (partially) lost opportunities, in order to revive some of them, and on this basis attempt to design present forms of relations, alliances and solidarities between Central and Eastern Europe, and Middle East and North Africa.

8.06

Biennale Warszawa, 34/50 Marszałkowska Street
18.00 free entry

THE SUITS THAT WE HAVE IN OUR COUNTRY ARE NOT SUITABLE FOR THE TROPICAL CLIMATE

154

PERFORMATIVE LECTURE

scenario: Max Cegielski, Bartek Frąckowiak
direction: Bartek Frąckowiak
research in Lebanon: Inga Hajdarowicz, Beata Kowalska
actors: Magdalena Celmer, Anita Sokołowska

This performative lecture juxtaposes two narratives based on the studies which Biennale Warszawa is carrying out within the long-term artistic and research programme devoted to the relations between the Central and Eastern Europe, and the MENA region.

The first of the two, based on ethnographic interviews carried out in Lebanon in 2018 and 2019 by Inga Hajdarowicz (in cooperation with Prof. Beata Kowalska), collects stories of Palestinians and Lebanese, who in the 1970s and 80s lived, studied and worked in Poland, and later, for various reasons, decided to leave for Lebanon. In their narratives, memories from the period of the Polish political transformation are interlaced with the civil war in Lebanon. We hear them comparing the living situation in Poland of the early 90s with the socio-economic reality of the Middle East.

The second narrative line reflects the fascinating archival research carried out in collaboration with the well-known reporter Max Cegielski. From visual footage and articles from magazines such as The Polish Review (1962-1972), Poland, to the archive of Michał Kalecki and 'Polish school of development', Ministry of Foreign Affairs, LOT, Orbis, Budimex, Polservice, and other international trade companies, we tell the story of colourful social situations taking place behind the scenes of the official politics and trade.

8.06

Biennale Warszawa, 34/50 Marszałkowska Street
20.30 tickets

EAST EUROPEAN- NORTH AFRICAN-MIDDLE EAST FORUM

ASSEMBLY

moderation: Max Cegielski

political commentary: Patrycja Sasnal

participants: Khaled Barakeh (Syria/Germany), Rachel Dedman (UK/Switzerland/Lebanon), Mariam Elnozahy (USA/Egypt), Aziza Harmel (Tunisia/Holland), Radoslav Ištók (Slovakia), Francesca Masoero (Italy/Marocco), Jamil Mouawad (Lebanon), Yasmina Reggad (Algeria), Yassin al-Haj Saleh (Syria/Germany)

curators: Bartek Frąckowiak, Anna Galas-Kosil

collaboration with: CSW U-jazdowski

Due to the fact that Polish foreign policy towards the Middle East and North Africa is virtually non-existent, or it takes a grotesque form, e.g. the Middle-East conference organised in February 2019 without the participation of Palestine and Iran, the time has come to design a brand new vision of the relations between our region and the Middle East and North Africa. The assembly we have organised (within the Middle East Europe Forum series) will feature an international group of 12 participants interested in designing the relations between these three regions and creating an organisation working for new forms of transnational cooperation and solidarity. By discussing challenges connected to the development economics, ecology and climate change, art and cultural policy, some based on scientific knowledge, others on artistic speculation and imagination, we would like to design a map of transregional relations and create a conceptual architecture of the new organisation. We will present the programme policy for such an enterprise and concrete ideas to be executed in the coming years.

We want to respond to Islamophobia, anti-refugee rhetoric and debates on cultural differences with the attempt at defining the transnational common good and determining the best organisational form to practice it on a daily basis.

The research and artistic project devoted to the relations of Poland with the countries of the Middle East and Northern Africa, considered in the historical perspective, documenting the relations in the 1960s, 70s and 80s, and attempting to (re)create the mechanisms of interregional cooperation today.

9.06

Biennale Warszawa, 34/50 Marszałkowska Street

10.00-18.00 free entry



REVOLUTION TODAY

156

Susan Buck-Morss

LECTURE

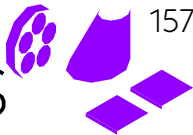
The twenty-first century has already witnessed unprecedented popular mobilizations. Unencumbered by old dogmas, mobilizations of opposition are not only happening, they are gaining support and developing a global consciousness in the process. They are themselves a chain of signifiers, creating solidarity across language, religion, ethnicity, gender, and every other difference. Trans-local solidarities exist. They came first. The right-wing authoritarianism and anti-immigrant upsurge that has followed is a reaction against the amazing visual power of millions of citizens occupying public space in defiance of state power. We cannot know how to act politically without seeing others act. This talk shows 100 images to demonstrate how much of the new revolutionary vernacular we already share.

10.06 Biennale Warszawa 34/50 Marszałkowska Street
18.00 free entry



CONVENTION OF WOMEN FARMERS

Marwa Arsanios



157

CONVENTION

participants: Samanta Arango Orozco (Columbia), María Estela Barco (Mexico), Nina Józefina Bąk (Poland), Joanna Bojczewska (Poland), Kahdija Chahine (Lebanon), Paula Gioia (Germany), Kasia Kalinowska (Poland), Dorota Metera (Poland), Berivan Omar (Rojava), Monika Podsiadła (Poland), Ariel Salleh (Australia), Ewa Smuk Stratenwerth (Poland), Mercy Vera (Columbia)
curators: Bartek Frąckowiak, Anna Galas-Kosil

In light of the urgency on the climate change issue, and while governments and corporations have been ignoring it for decades now without wanting (most often) to take any responsibility on the matter, women farmers have been mobilising their means and knowledge to carry out the work of repair. I believe this kind of resistance front to climate change should be enhanced, learned from and worked with intensively.

How do these communities of farmers, each in their own context, organise their communal life and live together with nature and non-human species while maintaining a certain power balance and without disrupting each other's ecologies? If one also thinks about the land, and the possibility for this land to be cured from a history of marginalisation, mistreatment and drought, what can one imagine as ways to cure this land? How can the land offer a possibility for a "worker" of the land to approach, re-work and repair the land, while at the same time repairing oneself, one's own body and relationship to the earth.

Marwa Arsanios

This convention will take the form of an assembly bringing together women farmers from Syria, Lebanon, Mexico, India, Poland, Denmark and Greece, where they will be asked to exchange knowledge around their various cooperatives and communes in general, and their agricultural tools and methodologies in particular.

The assembly will unfold into public presentations and in conversation with ecofeminists, philosophers, scientists and climate activists.

The conclusion will consist of a screening of two parts of Marwa Arsanios' film Who is afraid of ideology?, as well as the concert of a group Kompost. The Convention will be accompanied by the choral commentary of the Polin Choir which is one of the constituting elements of the polyphonic manifesto for the future—a musical piece that will be heard in its entirety on 23 June.

Marwa Arsanios's recent projects have revolved around questions of ecology, feminism, social organisation, nation-building, war and economic struggle. She is a founding member of the artist organisation and project space 98 weeks research project. Marwa is currently a teacher at the Dutch Art Institute. She obtained her MFA from University of the Arts, London (2007); and was a researcher in the Fine Art department at the Jan Van Eyck Academie (2011-2012). She is currently a PhD candidate at the Akademie der Bildenden Kunst in Vienna.

14.06 Biennale Warszawa, 34/50 Marszałkowska Street
11.00–18.00 closed event

15.06 Biennale Warszawa, 34/50 Marszałkowska Street
10.00–18.00 free entry

WHO IS AFRAID OF IDEOLOGY?

direction: Marwa Arsanios

FILM SCREENING

Who is afraid of ideology? (2017) Part I, 23min. shot in the mountains of Kurdistan in early 2017, primarily focuses on the Autonomous Women's Movement in Rojava and its structures of self-governance and knowledge production. This is a guerrilla-led movement that views gender liberation as a coexisting and equal struggle to that of resolving the conflicts of war, feudalism, religious tensions

and economic struggle. But despite its core emphasis on ecology and feminism, the autonomous women's movement is not a liberal project. It is an ideology that has emerged from and is practiced through war. The movement's most recent participation includes the Syrian Revolution which began in 2011 and remains ongoing.

Who is afraid of ideology? (2018) Part II, 28min. looks at different ecofeminist groups including the Autonomous Women's Movement in Rojava and the way they attempt to take care of the land and themselves. Taking this as an example of an alliance between a community of women, nature and animals, Arsanios focuses on different aspects that such alternative economy and world rebuilding proposes. The film also problematises the role "naturally" assigned to women, potentially falling back into care work.

15.06 Biennale Warszawa, 34/50 Marszałkowska Street
19.30 free entry

COMPOST

CONCERT

A fresh, punk project, using electro-rap to perversely analyse political and emotional processes. The authors create an engaged description of reality, distancing themselves from the omnipresent distancing. They raise issues of the eco-feminist political economy, housing policy and the essence of life. Band members: Kasia Kalinowska and Nina Józefina met and now work in the Warsaw Food Co-operative "Dobrze". This is their first musical collaboration. The concert will feature tracks from the collection Bezwstydné Interwencje [Shameless Interventions].

15.06 Biennale Warszawa, 34/50 Marszałkowska Street
20.30 free entry



RACE AND FOREST ¹⁶⁰

EXHIBITION

INTERPRT

research: Filip Wesołowski

film: Aleksandra Żwan

In 1947, as part of the United Nations War Crimes Commission (UNWCC), Poland brought charges of war crimes against eleven Germans for the destruction of Polish forests. Prosecutors accused chiefs of forestry departments of the General Government in occupied Poland (1939–1945) of conscious devastation of Polish forests in order to supply timber for German war efforts, while at the same time taking measures to conserve their own forests—prima facie a war crime under article 55 of the 1907 Hague Convention. Case no. 1307/7150, as it was filed in the UNWCC, sets one of the earliest precedences of prosecution based upon environmental destruction at the time of the birth of modern international law after the end of the Second World War.

And yet the destruction of the Polish forests was part of a greater crime of genocide in which forests and forest planning played a significant role. The ‘Waldlager’ (forest camp) in the Rzuchowski Forest near the village of Chełmno nad Nerem was the first Nazi German death camp where scientific methods of mass killing such as mobile gas vans were first tested.

In the first period of the camp’s operation (1941–1943), industrial wood furnaces to incinerate bodies and a secret reforestation program were put to use in order to hide the evidence of mass graves. Archeological works carried out by the Museum of Konin between 1986 and 2004 has revealed the extents of an efficient extermination camp. What further evidence of the atrocities lies beneath the forests remains mostly unexplored.

Together with Biennale Warszawa, INTERPRT, an environmental crimes investigation project, will reconstruct case no. 1307/ 7150 using archival and visual research and undertake new spatial analysis of the Rzuchowski Forest. In particular, the official Gazette “Wald und Holz” (forest and timber) of the forestry department of the General Government reveals vast evidence of not only the use of scientific forestry to manage Polish forests but also rare glimpses into

ideology-driven environmental racism and climate politics of the Third Reich.

Race and Forest is part of INTERPRT's broader research on the visual and material culture of spatial, scientific, media and documentary evidence from Nuremberg to the creation of the International Criminal Court that has helped shape different initiatives, experiences and positions of International Humanitarian Law (IHL) where it intersects the legal protection of the environment.

13.06 Museum of Modern Art, 3 Pańska Street
20.00 opening

14-27. Museum of Modern Art, 3 Pańska Street
12.00-20.00 (Tuesday to Sunday) free entry

06



Studio Jonas Staal

ASSEMBLY

co-chaired by: Chris Keulemans (writer, journalist), Joanna Warsza (curator)
with contributions by: Diana Arce (Black Lives Matters Berlin), Zdenka Badovinac (L'Internationale), Fernando Burgés (Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization, UNPO), Angelo Camufingo (Black Lives Matters Berlin), Fiona Dove (Transnational Institute, TNI), Amgad Elmahdi (International Water Management Institute, IWMI), Mike van Graan (African Cultural Policy Network, ACPN), John Jordan (The Laboratory of Insurrectionary Imagination, Zone a Defendre ZAD, Notre Dame des Landes), Abderrahim Kassou (Alternatives Forum Morocco, FMAS), Dounia Kchiere (former United Nations employee), Esra Küçük (Young Islam Conference/Maxim Gorki Theater), Lorenzo Marsili (DiEM25/European Alternatives/School of Transnational Activism), Andrzej W. Nowak (philosopher, Poznan University), Siana Bangura (Black Lives Matters UK), representative of Kurdish Women's Movement and many others.

curators: Bartek Frąckowiak, Anna Galas-Kosil

TRANSUNIONS gathers various organizations invested in theorizing, mapping and practicing new models of emancipatory transnationalism in the field of politics, economy, ecology, education and culture, striving to establish new models of planetary egalitarianism.

The nation-state is in crisis. With the rise of neoliberalism, it has become a tool to subsidize and benefit corporations which are operating increasingly independent from any democratic control. This state-sponsored global corporate-economy has generated intense anxiety that has fueled ultranationalist sentiment and a growing support of authoritarian regimes to "take back control." Simultaneously, we are faced with interrelated planetary threats, from offshore tax-havens to species-threatening climate change, that are addressed neither by corporations nor by national governments in an effective way: they contribute to their cause, rather than their solution.

During TRANSUNIONS transnational organizations, parties, civil platforms, think tanks and activist groups, gather to discuss (1) the meaning of the nation-state; (2) the challenges and gains of transnational organizations today; and (3) the future of a new trans-

national union. Gathered together around a single table, they pre-enact a new transnational order of the future into the present.

TRANSUNIONS will take place in the Palace of Culture and Science on 22nd June, a monumental architecture surrounded by sculptures of internationalist revolutionaries, “gifted” from Stalin to the Polish people. From the Cold War onwards, Poland—in its alliance with the Soviet Union—invested substantially in post-colonial nations in North-Africa and the Middle East. Polish architects, planners, engineers and artists traveled abroad, to develop infrastructures such as the fair area in Accra, the masterplans of Baghdad, Algiers, and the region of Tripoli as well as housing neighborhoods in Iraq, Libya, and Syria. In a time of growing ultranationalism, Transunions redefines this internationalist heritage in light of a new transnational horizon.

TRANSUNIONS will be accompanied by a student meeting of the School of Transnational Activism. During the meeting we will also hear the choral commentary of the Polin Choir which is one of the constituting elements of the polyphonic manifesto for the future—a musical piece that will be heard in its entirety on 23 June.

21.06 18.00–21.00 closed event

22.06 **Palace of Culture and Science, 1 Defilad Square**
11.00–19.15 free entry





ORESTES IN MOSUL

164

PERFORMANCE

direction: Milo Rau
dramaturgy: Stefan Bläske
text: Milo Rau & ensemble based on: the Oresteia by Aeschylus
set design: ruimtevaarders
costume design: An De Mol
light design: Dennis Diels
film: Daniel Demoustier, Moritz von Dungern
film editing: Joris Vertenten
musical arrangement & composition: Saskia Venegas Aernouts
direction assistance: Katelijne Laevens
production: NTGent & Schauspielhaus Bochum
co-production: Tandem Arras-Douai
With the support of Belgian Tax Shelter & Romaeuropa Festival.

cast: Duraid Abbas Ghaieb, Susana AbdulMajid, Elsie de Brauw, Risto Kübar, Johan Leysen, Bert Luppès, Marijke Pinoy

The Oresteia is not only the one single trilogy that has come down to us from classical antiquity and one of mankind's greatest tragedies, but it also represents the myth of the foundation of civilisation, whereby the principle of the blood feud, the never-ending cycle of revenge, an eye for an eye, was replaced by the principles of justice, integration and reconciliation. Milo Rau will stage this tragedy with a mixed ensemble of European and Iraqi actors. The process includes research and activities in Mosul, where the Jihadi caliphate of ISIS was declared in 2014.

Milo Rau had the idea of staging a present-day version of Aeschylus' Oresteia while he was conducting research for his play EMPIRE (2016) in northern Iraq on the frontline facing ISIS. 'It is as if you were in a television scene and in a classical epic at the same time,' as Rau puts it. How is it possible to stop the never-ending chain of violence in which the parties of the Syrian-Iraqi civil war and their Western allies find themselves?

In the first two parts of Aeschylus' Oresteia there appears to be no way out: death has a domino effect—Orestes is pursued by the goddesses of vengeance after he murders his mother Clytemnestra and her lover Aegisthus. He did this out of revenge because the two of them killed Orestes' father, Agamemnon (and his mistress Cassandra). For her part, Clytemnestra murders her husband Agamemnon out of revenge because he sacrificed their daughter

Iphigeneia to the wind to go to war with Troy. The only one who can stop this violence is Athena: she calms down the goddesses of vengeance by allotting them a place in society. Where hate has not helped, the loving embrace now succeeds.

Milo Rau retains the ancient grandeur of the tragedy, but links it to present-day issues. What does it mean: being “civilized” in a globalized world? What is, on a general level, the relation of the so-called West and the regions in the Middle East that is fuelling our oil-based economy? What is the responsibility of artists in doing international projects? What can, what should be done in the wide field between colonialism and ignorance? What can be a revisited ORESTEIA for today?

23.06 Nowy Teatr, 10/16 Madalińskiego Street
20.00 tickets



INSTITUTION

DIRECTOR: Paweł Wodziński
DEPUTY DIRECTOR: Bartosz Frąckowiak
CURATOR OF THE INTERNATIONAL PROGRAM: Anna Galas-Kosil
CURATOR OF RESEARCH AND PUBLISHING PROJECTS: Piotr Grzymisławski
CURATOR OF DISCURSIVE AND RESEARCH PROGRAMS: Jan Sowa
CURATOR OF SOCIO-ARTISTIC PROJECTS: Agata Siwiak
HEAD OF PRODUCTION: Marta Michalak
TECHNICAL MANAGER: Marek Jeżewski
HEAD OF COMMUNICATIONS: Artur Szcześniey
HEAD ACCOUNTANT: Barbara Ogieńło
HR AND PAYROLL SERVICES: Barbara Grzybowska
FINANCIAL AND ACCOUNTING SPECIALIST: Dorota Miąsko
OFFICE MANAGER: Bożena Marczykowska
OFFICE: Grażyna Reczulska
IT SERVICE: Michał Markowicz
PUBLIC PROCUREMENT: Mateusz Saczywko
LEGAL SUPPORT: Paweł Siemianowski

TEAM

PRODUCTION: Marta Michalak
PROJECT COORDINATION: Antoni Beksiak, Agnieszka Brzezińska, Matylda Dobrowolska, Ola Knychalska, Anna Majewska, Ela Petruk, Dominik Skrzypkowski
TECHNICAL COORDINATION: Z.U.CH.
PUBLIC RELATIONS: Artur Szcześniey
PROMOTION: Joanna Bernacka, Joanna Janiszewska, Łukasz Orłowski
SOCIAL MEDIA COMMUNICATION: sidorowicz.co
FESTIVAL OFFICE: Klara Duniec

VISUAL IDENTIFICATION: Karolina Pietrzyk, Gilbert Schneider, Tobias Wenig
WEBSITE: Michał Szota
TRANSLATIONS: Klementyna Dec, Artur Kociałkowski, Jerzy Paweł Listwan, Marianna Wartecka
PHOTOGRAPHY: Monika Stolarska
VIDEO: Filip Madejski
SOUND IDENTIFICATION: Piotr Ceglarek, Ronnie Deelen

PROMOTERS: Estera Florek, Mateusz Kaczyński, Filip Madejski, Anna Oleszczuk, Anna Palusińska, Marta Przasnek, Katarzyna Sinet, Zuzanna Skupniewicz, Teresa Soldenhoff, Julia Strzezińska, Karolina Szyma, Tamara Wachal

INSTITUTION



PARTNERS



austrückie forum kulturalne



Kingdom of the Netherlands



U-jazdowski



Ministerstwo
Kultury
i Dziedzictwa
Narodowego.



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Warszawa

NOWY
TEATR



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Teatr, który się wtrąca



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INTERPRIT

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NEW
UNIONS



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PRO-GRAMME



THE MISSING DENOMINATOR
—UNIVERSALISM AND
PROGRESSIVE CULTURAL
POLITICS
SYMPOSIUM
12.00–14.00, 15.30–17.30,
18.00–20.00
Biennale Warszawa

13.05
free entry



**THE ART OF
THE COOPERATIVE**
WORKSHOPS, LECTURES,
PRESENTATIONS,
ARTISTIC-ECONOMIC
ACTIVITY
17.30–20.30
Biennale Warszawa,
12.00–15.00
Ujazdowski Castle Centre
for Contemporary Art
(square by the bread oven)

24.05
free entry

25.05
free entry



A DIFFERENT UNIVERSITY?
DEBATE
18.00
Biennale Warszawa

29.05
free entry



ENDLESS SPACE
INSTALLATION, PLACE
18.00 opening
Special Schools Complex No 89

30.05
free entry



**SOLIDARITY. THE NEW
PROJECT**
Paweł Wodziński
PERFORMANCE
20.00
TR Warszawa / ATM Studio

30.05
tickets



POLISH SOCIAL FORUM
FORUM
for registered participants
17.00–18.30
Biennale Warszawa

31.05



**SOLIDARITY 2.0, OR
DEMOCRACY AS A FORM
OF LIFE**
editor: Jan Sowa
BOOK PREMIERE
19.00
Biennale Warszawa

31.05
free entry



31.05
free entry

WHAT IS DEMOCRACY
director: Oliver Ressler
FILM
21.00
Biennale Warszawa



1.06
free entry

**FOR NEXT TO NOTHING /
TURNS**
EXHIBITION
10.00–14.00
Namysłowska marketplace



1.06

POLISH SOCIAL FORUM
FORUM
for registered participants
11.00–19.00
Biennale Warszawa



1.06
free entry

ENDLESS SPACE
INSTALLATION, PLACE
guided tour of the
exhibition: Agata Sowiak
12.00 dla młodzieży i dorosłych
Special Schools Complex No 99



1.06
tickets

**THE TAMING OF THE SHREW
SIKSA**
CONCERT
20.00
TR Warszawa



2.06
free entry

**FOR NEXT TO NOTHING /
TURNS**
EXHIBITION
10.00–14.00
Namysłowska marketplace



2.06

POLISH SOCIAL FORUM
FORUM
for registered participants
11.00–19.00
Biennale Warszawa



2.06
registration
required

**PRE-ENACTMENTS.
TOURS OF THE WARSAW
OF THE FUTURE**
TOUR
15.00
POLIN Museum



2.06
free entry

**VARIATIONS ON GLOBAL
CROWD**
Karoł Nepelski,
Gośka Isphording
CONCERT
18.00 prelude
Zamkowy Square



**NATION STATE.
FOUR ESCAPE STRATEGIES**
Núria Güell
EXHIBITION
20.00 opening
Biennale Warszawa

2.06
free entry



**EDUCATION NOW!
PEDAGOGICAL WEAK
THOUGHT, NO FUTURE AND
THE TURN TOWARD
THE PAST**
DISCUSSION PANEL
16.00
Special Schools Complex No 89

3.06
free entry



**REVOLUTION SCHOOL
1918-1939**
FILM
director: Joanna Grudzińska
20.00
Ujazdowski Castle Centre
for Contemporary Art

3.06
free entry



FREE POLAND
Czarne Szmaty Collective /
#czsz
ACTION

4.06



**THE SCHOOL OF APPLIED
EMPATHY**
**THE WORLD OF EMPATHY
ACCORDING TO MARSHALL
ROSENBERG**
WORKSHOPS

Joanna Berendt
18.00 for youth over 14 and adults
Special Schools Complex No 89

4.06
free entry



**THE SCHOOL OF APPLIED
EMPATHY**
**THE EMPATHY MOVEMENT
WORKSHOPS**
10.00 for youth over 14
Special Schools Complex No 89

5.06
registration
required



**THE SCHOOL OF APPLIED
EMPATHY**
**FOUR STEPS TO
UNDERSTANDING**
WORKSHOPS
17.00 for adults
Special Schools Complex No 89

5.06
registration
required



**THE SCHOOL OF APPLIED
EMPATHY**
**FOUR STEPS
TO UNDERSTANDING**
WORKSHOPS
10.00, 17:00 for youth aged 15-18
Special Schools Complex No 89

6.06
registration
required



**THE SCHOOL OF APPLIED
EMPATHY**
**REACHING FOR POWER
WITHOUT VIOLENCE**
WORKSHOPS
11.00 for youth over 14
Special Schools Complex No 89

6.06
registration
required



**EXHIBITION OF FOREIGN
ARTISTS LIVING IN POLAND**
EXHIBITION
19.00 opening
Biennale Warszawa

6.06
free entry



**THE SCHOOL OF APPLIED
EMPATHY**
**THE CLASS OF EMPATHETIC
SOUNDS**
WORKSHOPS
10.00 for youth over 12
Special Schools Complex No 89

7.06
registration
required



**AVANTGARDE DECENTERED:
(SEMI)PERIPHERIES OF
CAPITALISM AND
UNIVERSAL HISTORY**
SYMPOSIUM
12.00-14.00, 16.00-18.00
Biennale Warszawa

7.06
free entry



**THE SCHOOL OF APPLIED
EMPATHY**
**MEDIATION – THE WAY TO
GOOD RELATIONSHIPS**
WORKSHOPS
17.00 for adults
Special Schools Complex No 89

7.06
registration
required



**EAST EUROPEAN-NORTH
AFRICAN-MIDDLE EAST
FORUM | FORGOTTEN
INTERNATIONALISM |
FILMMAKERS OF THE
WORLD, UNITE!**
FILMS
19.00
Biennale Warszawa

7.06
free entry



7.06
tickets

WOMEN REFUGEES
Katarzyna Szyngiera
PERFORMANCE
19.00
Zygmunt Hübner
Powszechny Theatre



8.06
tickets

WOMEN REFUGEES
Katarzyna Szyngiera
PERFORMANCE
19.00
Zygmunt Hübner Powszechny
Theatre



8.06
registration
required

**THE SCHOOL OF APPLIED
EMPATHY**
**THE CLASS OF EMPATHETIC
SOUNDS**
WORKSHOPS
10.00 for children and their guardians
Special Schools Complex No 89



8.06
tickets

**EAST EUROPEAN-NORTH
AFRICAN-MIDDLE EAST
FORUM | THE SUITS THAT WE
HAVE IN OUR COUNTRY ARE
NOT SUITABLE FOR THE
TROPICAL CLIMATE**
PERFORMATIVE LECTURE
20.30
Biennale Warszawa



8.06
registration
required

**THE SCHOOL OF APPLIED
EMPATHY**
LET'S SIT!
WORKSHOPS
10.00 for youth over 14 and adults
Special Schools Complex No 89



9.06
registration
required

**THE SCHOOL OF APPLIED
EMPATHY**
LET'S SIT!
WORKSHOPS
10.00 for youth over 14 and adults
Special Schools Complex No 89



8.06
free entry

**FOR NEXT TO NOTHING /
TURNS**
EXHIBITION
10.00–14.00
Namysłowska marketplace



9.06
free entry

**FOR NEXT TO NOTHING /
TURNS**
EXHIBITION
10.00–14.00
Namysłowska marketplace



8.06
free entry

ENDLESS SPACE
INSTALLATION, PLACE
guided tour of the
exhibition: Maciej Siuda
12.00 for youth and adults
Special Schools Complex No 89



9.06
registration
required

**THE SCHOOL OF APPLIED
EMPATHY**
**FOUR STEPS TO
UNDERSTANDING**
WORKSHOPS
10.00 for children (age 7-10)
and guardians
Special Schools Complex No 89



8.06
registration
required

**PRE-ENACTMENTS.
TOURS OF THE WARSAW
OF THE FUTURE**
TOUR
15.00
POLIN Museum



9.06

**EAST EUROPEAN-NORTH
AFRICAN-MIDDLE EAST
FORUM**
ASSEMBLY
10.00–18.00 free entry
Biennale Warszawa



8.06
free entry

**EAST EUROPEAN-NORTH
AFRICAN-MIDDLE EAST
FORUM | PIONEERS
OF GLOBAL SOLIDARITY.
WHAT THE ALLIANCE OF THE
PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF
POLAND AND MENA
COUNTRIES LEFT US?**
DEBATE
18.00
Biennale Warszawa



9.06
registration
required

**PRE-ENACTMENTS. TOURS
OF THE WARSAW OF THE
FUTURE**
TOUR
15.00
POLIN Museum



THE SCHOOL OF APPLIED
EMPATHY
THE ARCHITECTURE
OF RELATIONSHIPS
WORKSHOPS
17.00 for youth over 16 and adults
Special Schools Complex No 89

9.06
registration
required



9.06
tickets

KIJOWSKA
Dima Levytskyi
AUDIOWALK
19.00
Praga Museum of Warsaw



10.06
registration
required

THE SCHOOL OF APPLIED
EMPATHY
YOU RETARD!
WORKSHOPS
12.00 for youth over 12
Special Schools Complex No 89



10.06
tickets

KIJOWSKA
Dima Levytskyi
AUDIOWALK
12.00, 19.00
Praga Museum of Warsaw



10.06
registration
required

THE SCHOOL OF APPLIED
EMPATHY
WHAT IS IT LIKE TO
BE A THING?
WORKSHOPS
17.00 for youth over 14 and adults
Special Schools Complex No 89



10.06
free entry

REVOLUTION TODAY
Susan Buck-Morss
LECTURE
18.00
Biennale Warszawa



11.06
registration
required

THE SCHOOL OF APPLIED
EMPATHY
REACHING FOR POWER
WITHOUT VIOLENCE
WORKSHOPS
11.00 for youth over 14
Special Schools Complex No 89



11.06
registration
required

THE SCHOOL OF APPLIED
EMPATHY
YOU RETARD!
WORKSHOPS
13.00 for youth over 12
Special Schools Complex No 89



11.06
registration
required

THE SCHOOL OF APPLIED
EMPATHY
THE EMPATHY MOVEMENT
WORKSHOPS
18.00 for adults
Special Schools Complex No 89



11.06
tickets

VARIATIONS ON GLOBAL
CROWD
Karol Nepelski,
Gośka Isphording
CONCERT
19.00 premiere
TR Warszawa



11.06
tickets

MODERN SLAVERY
Bartek Frąckowiak
PERFORMANCE
19.00
Biennale Warszawa



12.06

METHODOLOGY OF THE
FUTURE
CRITICAL THINKING
WORKSHOPS
10.00 for teachers and people
working with the youth in final grades
of elementary and high schools
Special Schools Complex No 89



12.06
tickets

KIJOWSKA
Dima Levytskyi
AUDIOWALK
12.00, 15.00
Praga Museum of Warsaw



12.06
ticket

MODERN SLAVERY
PERFORMANCE
Bartek Frąckowiak
19.00
Biennale Warszawa



13.06

registration
required

METHODOLOGY
OF THE FUTURE
DIFFICULT TOPICS
WORKSHOPS
10.00 for teachers and people
working with the youth in final grades
of elementary and high schools
Special Schools Complex No 89



13.06
ticket

KIJOWSKA
Dima Levytskyi
AUDIOWALK
12.00, 19.00
Praga Museum of Warsaw



13.06
free entry

RACE AND FOREST
INTERPR
EXHIBITION
20.00 opening
Museum of Modern Art



16.06
free entry

FOR NEXT TO NOTHING /
URNS
EXHIBITION
10.00–14.00
Namysłowska marketplace



14.06
registration
required

ENDLESS SPACE
INSTALLATION, PLACE
10.00, 12.00 guided tour of the
exhibition for groups
Special Schools Complex No 89



16.06
free entry

ENDLESS SPACE
INSTALLATION, PLACE
guided tour of the
exhibition: Justyna Sobczyk
14.00 no age limit
Special Schools Complex No 89



14.06

CONVENTION OF WOMEN
FARMERS
Marwa Arsanios
CONVENTION
11.00–18.00 closed event
Biennale Warszawa



16.06
registration
required

PRE-ENACTMENTS. TOURS
OF THE WARSAW OF THE
FUTURE
TOUR
15.00
POLIN Museum



15.06
free entry

FOR NEXT TO NOTHING /
URNS
EXHIBITION
10.00–14.00
Namysłowska marketplace



17.06
registration
required

ENDLESS SPACE
INSTALLATION, PLACE
10.00, 12.00 guided tour of the
exhibition for groups
Special Schools Complex No 89



15.06
free entry

CONVENTION OF WOMEN
FARMERS
Marwa Arsanios
CONVENTION
11.00–18.00
Biennale Warszawa



17.06

METHODOLOGY OF THE
FUTURE
GENDER EQUALITY
WORKSHOPS
10.00 for teachers and people
working with the youth in elementary
and high schools
Special Schools Complex No 89

15.06
free entry

THE RIGHT TO SCHOOL
13.00 meeting with the participation
of youth aged 14–19
Special Schools Complex No 89

registration
required



15.06
registration
required

PRE-ENACTMENTS.
TOURS OF THE WARSAW
OF THE FUTURE
TOUR
15.00
POLIN Museum



18.06

registration
required

ENDLESS SPACE
INSTALLATION, PLACE
10.00, 12.00 guided tour of the
exhibition for groups
Special Schools Complex No 89



15.06
free entry

WHO IS AFRAID OF
IDEOLOGY?
direction: Marwa Arsanios
FILM SCREENING
19.30
Biennale Warszawa



18.06
registration
required

METHODOLOGY OF THE
FUTURE
DIVERSITY
WORKSHOPS
10.00 for teachers and people
working with the youth in elementary
schools
Special Schools Complex No 89



15.06
free entry

COMPOST
CONCERT
20.30
Biennale Warszawa



18.06
free entry

THE MAP OF VIOLENCE
DEBATA
18.00
Biennale Warszawa



**MAPPING MULTICULTURAL
WARSAW
PRESENTATION
OF THE RESEARCH
PROJECT
OF BIENNALE WARSZAWA
AND THE ACADEMY
OF FINE ARTS
17:00**
Biennale Warszawa

21.06
free entry



TRANSUNIONS
Studio Jonas Staal
ASSEMBLY
18.00–21.00 closed event

21.06



STAFF ONLY
Katarzyna Kalwat
PERFORMANCE
20.00
TR Warszawa

21.06
tickets



**FOR NEXT TO NOTHING /
TURNS
EXHIBITION**
10.00–14.00
Namysłowska marketplace

22.06
free entry



TRANSUNIONS
Studio Jonas Staal
ASSEMBLY
11.00–19.15
Palace of Culture and Science

22.06
free entry



ENDLESS SPACE
INSTALLATION, PLACE
guided tour of the
exhibition: Agata Kiedrowicz
12.00 for youth and adults
Special Schools Complex No 89

22.06
free entry



STAFF ONLY
Katarzyna Kalwat
PERFORMANCE
20.00
TR Warszawa

22.06
tickets



**FOR NEXT TO NOTHING /
TURNS
EXHIBITION**
10.00–14.00
Namysłowska marketplace

23.06
free entry



ENDLESS SPACE
INSTALLATION, PLACE
guided tour of the
exhibition: Agata Siwiak
12.00 no age limit
Special Schools Complex No 89

23.06
free entry



**PRE-ENACTMENTS. TOURS
OF THE WARSAW
OF THE FUTURE
TOUR**
15.00
POLIN Museum

23.06
registration
required



**TAKING OVER THE STAGE.
A POLYPHONIC MANIFESTO
FOR THE FUTURE**
POLIN Choir
CONCERT
18.00
Biennale Warszawa

23.06
free entry



ORESTES IN MOSUL
Rilo Rau
PERFORMANCE
20.00
Nowy Teatr

23.06
tickets



ENDLESS SPACE
INSTALLATION, PLACE
guided tour of the
exhibition: Marta Michalak
12.00 no age limit
Special Schools Complex No 89

29.06
free entry



ENDLESS SPACE
INSTALLATION, PLACE
guided tour of the
exhibition: Anna Majewska
12.00 no age limit
Special Schools Complex No 89

30.06
free entry



31.05–
30.06
free entry

ENDLESS SPACE
INSTALLATION, PLACE
12.00–20.00 (Tuesday to Sunday)
Special Schools Complex No 89



7–30.06
tickets

EXHIBITION OF FOREIGN
ARTISTS LIVING IN POLAND
EXHIBITION
12.00–20.00 (Tuesday to Sunday)
Biennale Warszawa



4–30.06
tickets

NATION STATE. FOUR
ESCAPE STRATEGIES
Núria Güell
EXHIBITION
12.00–20.00 (Tuesday to Sunday)
Biennale Warszawa



14–27.06
free entry

RACE AND FOREST
INTERPRT
EXHIBITION
12.00–20.00 (Tuesday to Sunday)
Museum of Modern Art,
3 Pańska Street



3–30.06

RE-DIRECTING EAST /
DESIGNING FUTURES
RESIDENCY
closed events
Ujazdowski Castle Centre
for Contemporary Art

INFO Point of Biennale Warszawa 2019

34/50 Marszałkowska Street (between Konstytucji Square and Zbawiciela Square) (open daily from 24 May to 30 June, opening hours: 12:00-20:00)

BIENNALE WARSZAWA 2019 INFORMATION:

tel. 0048 730 390 601

e-mail: biennale@biennalewarszawa.pl

- Tickets for events of Biennale Warszawa 2019 are available online at www.biennalewarszawa.pl and:
 - Go Out application,
 - INFO point of Biennale Warszawa 2019, 34/50 Marszałkowska Street,
 - Kiosk Kultury, 5-7 Krakowskie Przedmieście Street,
 - website ewejsciowki.pl,
 - ticket office and website of TR Warszawa ("Solidarity. New Project", "The Taming of the Shrew.SIKSA", "Staff Only", "Variations on Global Crowd"),
 - ticket office and website of Teatr Powszechny ("Women Refugees"),
 - ticket office and website of Nowy Teatr ("Orestes in Mosul"),
 - ticket office and website of the Praga Museum of Warsaw (selected audio walks: 12, 13.06)

Biennale Warszawa

Institucja Kultury Miasta Stołecznego Warszawy

ul. Mokotowska 29A, 00-560 Warszawa

0048 22 6203490, 0048 22 6208288

VAT PL 5251000514

biuro@biennalewarszawa.pl

www.biennalewarszawa.pl

ADDRESSES

1. Biennale Warszawa, 34/50 Marszałkowska Street
2. Ujazdowski Castle Centre for Contemporary Art, 2 Jazdów Street
3. TR Warszawa, 8 Marszałkowska Street
4. TR Warszawa / ATM Studio, 384 Wał Miedzeszyński Street
5. Zygmunta Hübnera Powszechny Theatre, 20 Zamojskiego Street
6. Nowy Teatr, 10/16 Madalińskiego Street
7. POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews, 6 Anielewicza Street
8. Museum of Modern Art, 3 Pańska Street
9. Praga Museum of Warsaw, 50/52 Targowa Street
10. Special Schools Complex No 89, 8 Skaryszewska Street
11. Namysłowska marketplace, unit No 34
12. Zamkowy Square
13. Palace of Culture and Science, 1 Defilad Square

