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At no time during the registration for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy has the author been registered for any other University award.

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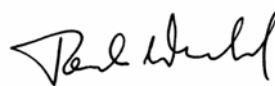
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THE UNKNOWN

That what I say is not what I mean

Tomasz Wendland

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Introduction

This PhD thesis comprises a body of practice and a written element. The body of practice is based upon artworks produced and exhibited between January 2000 and October 2007. In order to fully contextualise the work completed between these dates, I also refer substantially to earlier examples of my practice from as far back as 1987.

My work is an accumulation of practical experience in a number of different fields. This includes Drawing, Painting, Sculpture, Object, Installation, Performance, Photography, Video and Sound. In addition my teaching and curatorial practice are seen as closely related and have enabled me to locate my practice in a wider field of reference.

The written element of this thesis seeks to provide a critical account of, and a commentary upon the development of my practice during this period. This critical account is underpinned by a discussion of the notion of the “unknown” and related concepts, as manifested in the writings of certain medieval Christian scholars and mystics, and continued in the writings of later 16th century Spanish mystics. A personal relation to the “unknown” rather than an “understanding” of the “unknown” is identified as a central premise underpinning my practice. Consequently, I have chosen to focus upon those who acknowledge the “unknown” with the consciousness that it will remain “unknown”. Therefore, for example, I omit reference, in the medieval context, to such a significant

theologian and philosopher as Anselm from Canterbury whose ontological approval for God's existence does not seem to usefully relate to my concerns with the felt sensation of the "unknown". Consciously I have decided not to relate to Heidegger. In his phenomenological approach there seems to be a lack of an external presence. This presence I name the "unknown" and it is with whom I conduct a dialogue through visual practice. I also draw briefly upon writings of individuals from a wide and sometimes divergent range of contexts who seem to share a similar humility in their awareness and attitude to the "unknown". Through a consideration of the work of 45 visual artists selected from diverse historical and cultural contexts I have been able to identify the manner in which visual art and visual languages may parallel medieval mysticism and form a bridge between this tradition and contemporary circumstances. The "unknown" then is the answer to my question "What is it that I search and I cannot name". Now I think I realize what I say and what I mean – the "Unknown", I use the word more often in my texts.

The "Unknown" is a meta message, a meta meaning hidden in between the lines of my texts. The "Unknown" is present all the time and perhaps it is impossible to picture it differently. Throughout the thesis two parallel concepts overlap and interweave. The first: "What I say is not what I mean" is just like my garden, a description of my works and my thoughts. The other: "The Unknown" is a result of a rational analysis of all manifestations of my work as outlined in the following chapters. The first one is a prime source, an artist talk. The other one is an observation from a curator's perspective attempting to analyze my own and other artists' works and to present the most significant concepts and thesis. Although "my garden" seems to be a private declaration, in the first place it reflects what I believe in and that I am sure of. The value of these chapters is in a dialogue between a private life of mine and art that is a means through which I initiate my thoughts.

THE UNKNOWN

That what I say is not what I mean

Tomasz Wendland

Synopsis

This work is a confession in front of both myself and the one who reads my words and looks at my images. It is unusual to confess with images, because they uncover what we hide with words.

Through a body of visual arts practice completed between 2000 and 2007 and its accompanying written commentary and critical account, I have attempted to address notions of the “unknown”. In this enquiry, the “unknown” is understood to be hidden between “what I say and what I mean”, where, for example, consciousness has no access between drawing and intention, or between prediction and intuition.

This enquiry has proceeded through a multiplicity of media and modalities.

In the – Personal Introduction – I describe some of the social, religious, political and artistic conditions of Poland in the 1980’s and 90’s, and the way this context has influenced my ideas and practice.

In the early chapters – ‘Beginnings’ – ‘Confessions’ – ‘Architectural Objects’ – “Drawings on the Wall” – I trace the development of work between 1987 and the beginning of the research period in 2000. I identify the way that the making of these works enabled me to filter the major strands of concern that I later recognized as the fundamental conceptual and thematic elements of my current practice. In these chapters I describe the development of a sequence of works

which lead from early interactive performances, installations, objects, through “altered” wardrobes, into architectural objects and wall drawings. I identify a number of key aspects emerging from these works to do with absence and presence explored through languages of light and darkness, spatial ambiguity, linear illusion, motion and trace.

The central chapters are concerned with the work of the research period 2000 - 7. These chapter headings – ‘Video’ – ‘Photographic Works’ – ‘Scores – the Drawing Concerts’ - ‘Obituaries’ – ‘The Unknown – Negatives - Black Light’ - are organized around the various modes of work that contribute to the research period. Although these modes might be seen as discrete they are in fact highly interwoven, dialogic and interdependent. Throughout, themes and concepts born in earlier work are identified and developed. In – ‘Video’ – relationships to drawing are identified, whilst repetition, looping and transposition open up questions of time, duration and eternity, thus initiating the discourse of the “unknown”. ‘Photographic Works’ examines questions of the “still” and of “doubling” where both work to displace the human figure into hyper-natural environments where a meeting with the unknown might occur. ‘Scores – Drawing Concerts’ how these concerts are based on the power of line, as a consequence of honest, organic movement of hand and body in a response to kinetic impulsion and the rules of necessity in live action. Connections are made between this work and repetitive movement in the video works. The relationship between sound and the act of drawing is considered. ‘Obituaries’ describes a series of works in which death announcements, as they appear in a number countries and cultures, are put into a new context and transformed. With the destruction of the message of the obituary, the presence of the “unknown” is tested in both its personal and universal aspects.

‘The Unknown – Negatives – Black Light’ is a chapter that includes the most recent work. The work described in this chapter draws together multiple strands from across the whole body of previous work and is strongly related to other artists whose work deals with the absence of light. This work became the strongest bridge to the mystics who describe darkness as the most secure condition for a meeting with the “unknown”.

‘Mystics and Teaching’ - examines the relationship between notions of mystics and my experience of what occurs between myself and students in a pedagogical context. It examines how procedures described by mystics, while facing the unknown, can be employed as methods to provoke appearance of the “unknown” for each individual in the creative process. ‘Artists and Curatorial Work’ attempts to locate my research in a wider context of artist’s practice.

In conclusion, the following text will seek to demonstrate how the body of work produced between 2000 and 2007 has engaged the viewer in a distinctive felt communion with the ineffable and the “unknown”. This body of work has sought to visualize and manifest the “unknown” in a direct, physical and sensual engagement between artist, artwork, and viewer. In other words, the central premise of the work is set within a personalised relation to the “unknown” rather than an objectivised “understanding” of the “unknown”.

Personal Introduction

My life began in a religious family, in a religious country, and my entire recreation had a religious context. I went to church with playmates from my block, played football with them in the yard. We played ping-pong in the church room. As an altar boy, every year after Christmas we used to go to visit people's homes to talk and pray together.

Everywhere, even in the communist-controlled school, life had its Christian sub layer. In our separated world we felt free because there was no other idea of freedom than the one we had. Being used to limitation, everything which was new, different, conquered, and which went beyond our expectations, but also everything that we longed for was a source of joy. Today, going back to those days we could say "so little meant so much".

Twenty years ago in Germany I met a young Vietnamese of about my own age. His formative years had run in parallel with my own but on completely different tracks. While I was playing ping-pong in the church hall, he was running away from his country on a boat or raft to some island in the sea, trying to evade capture, until he landed in a place where Americans had organized a refugee camp. He was eventually granted political asylum and was given the chance to leave for Germany.

But those remote years are gradually fading into memory. This world, my previous "self", has long ceased to be my shelter. Today, everything is available

within fractions of a second at the whim of an individual. We are so busy, so taken over from outside, that we do not recognise our slavery – lacking consciousness, tempted and dazzled by new technologies, communication, and consumer offers which turn us into products, losing our own identity, seduced by the media. The things that attract us to the developments of civilisation are also a danger and a threat. What we used to describe as freedom is now standardized under the excuse of human rights. Human rights offer another standardisation of freedom to that which we knew.

In the 1990s in this part of the world, some people could not adjust. Some lost their own thread, or, seduced by phantasies, did not recognize their own individual limits. In a different way than we knew, humans were now becoming consumer goods themselves. Everything is for sale. What will be the point of communicating if everything becomes similar, if humankind is only able to move in limited categories? The virtual world will be a gate to the garden of madness, fantasy, forbidden thoughts, joys and desires. It will tempt us with the fulfilment of our individual dreams, which are inaccessible in the real, physical world. In such a future, art remains the most important area of action and searching, an individual field for defining our own identity, creative actions, unbound by standards and mighty economic laws. In this context, my works – both texts and drawings, video installations and performances as well as my conception of the Inner Spaces Art Festival and IF Museum Inner Spaces which I run, will hopefully take on a more personal and profound meaning.

My surroundings taught me trust, gave me a sense of safety, respect for bread which should never be thrown away and which had to be marked with the sign of the cross on the underneath before being sliced. For everything we receive we receive from God. Maybe everything.

I remember the absurdity of the May-Day Parades, which began before tribunes (stands occupied by the communist party and the city authorities) and the crowd that was forced to gather, appearing just before the parade began and disappearing into the park between the trees immediately after marching had ceased. I rushed to buy hot sausages, candyfloss, and sometimes it was possible to get a Czech record of Oscar Peterson and James Brown. A couple of weeks later, at the end of June, the whole of Poland, all the towns and villages, all the churches organised Corpus Christi processions. The same crowds took part in constructing kitschy street altars and singing; girls scattered flower buds, women carried a rosary, men held banners, altar boys rang bells, priests burned incense and a brass band made up of parishioners followed along. I remember a discussion with a professor at Poznan Academy of Fine Arts who persuaded me that the inspiration for beauty could be found everywhere. One does not even have to sit still in the countryside to draw. It is enough to stand at a garbage can to be inspired to create a perfect composition.

My world was being created unnoticeably. Some events took on their meaning after some time and the stronger the meaning the more I tended to notice them. One day I was at a Benedictine monastery in Lubin. I was making drawings for a group of archaeologists. They wanted to make an excavation on the next day on a site where there was a huge pile of rocks left over from previous archaeological work. In the morning, I decided to move the rocks and began carrying them to another place. It started raining but I went on carrying the stones in a sort of calm trance. Everyone sheltered inside, but I felt so good that I carried the stones until dusk. Maybe it was the weather or the monastery,

but for the first time in my life I discovered meditation embraced in activity.

I go back to those days pretty often and cannot marvel enough at my experience, which was had exclusively by me in front of the eyes of strangers who had no access to what I was participating in. Inner spaces have their place in most of my actions, which bear the character of meditation.

Realisation resembles a dream inside which you are and in which you actively participate as if in a parallel reality. This is when things for which there is no time in everyday life happen. The process that takes place at the time is similar to the growing of flowers – their development cannot be observed but the flower is just there.

I do not know whether it takes courage but I know that it requires trust, that there comes the moment when I know and I do not know why. The life surrounding me is just the way I see it and I am becoming what the surrounding is. It takes isolation to realise things, watch them, and wait – it also takes work. One rather needs courage to abandon attention and concentration. “Growing mature in someone else’s garden with the tip of the knife glued in chocolate. Carefulness”.¹

¹ from my work “Annunziazione”, 1994

The Beginnings

In this chapter I introduce an early body of work that was to provide some of the foundations and established many of the principles that inform my more recent work. I focus, in particular, on two constructional works made in the early 1990's.

These, in turn, drew substantially on drawings made between 1987-1990 in Germany. The works explored modes of spatial illusion created through combining drawing and three dimensional form: holes, repetitions, and simple cubic three dimensional form. Building compositions from the rhythms of trees and their shadows, I started to create spatial illusions which could only be viewed correctly from one particular angle.

The Beginnings

It was 1991 and it was a rare pleasure for me to be assisted by a Belgian artist.

I collected some cardboard sheets from various shops and together with my Belgian colleague we started gluing and constructing a cube measuring 1/1/2 metres. (il. 1) We covered the interior and exterior of the cube tightly with brown sticky tape. The form was hung in the entrance gate of an old tenement house above the heads of passers-by on ropes made of brown plastic sticky tape.

I made little holes in the solid walls of the cube and stuck matches into them.

No one noticed that there was a black rubber hosepipe running from the top to the inside. Everyone was watching the form in silence and after a while it started moving, swaying, and changing its shape. Its walls began to cave in and the bottom became convex. Later on water started pushing out the matches one after another and leaked out of the holes. The reason for the sculpture's movement and changing form was becoming clear, thus bringing the form to life. Silence intensified the tension. Everyone shared the same undefined feeling of anxiety. Plastic ropes started to stretch under the growing weight and creaked so that running under the form, which now hung lower and lower, turned into a sort of gamble and became a game with people getting very excited and screaming. Everyone calculated the weight of the lowering solid.

Two cubic metres of water were hanging only one metre above

the ground. Water was leaking out, creating streams which trickled onto the street and then went down the gutter. A tremendous bang pushed the viewers back some distance, but the ropes did not break yet. After about 25 minutes the form collapsed on the cobble-stoned pavement. Time seemed to have stopped and the shape, that was still living and changing its shape, bulged until it resembled the body of a slaughtered animal. One could see the upper opening from which water was pouring out. Water was falling straight from the hanging hose into the hole of the dead form. I was full of thoughts about the quiet passage of things, the unfinished end of things, and perhaps the beginning of others; about the destruction in which I participated, not knowing the imminent results.





1. "Performance" – Academy of Fine Arts, Poznan, 1991

In a strange youthful way my work provoked what may be found in my realisations today: architecture, opening, crater, sound, movement, death. Time is a medium of action. Never, though, had I felt like a performer. I never wanted to be an actor, although, by its nature, performance remains close to me. I do not like being an object of observation – I do not like pretending with my body. But I do like starting, observing processes, which happen to both the viewer and myself for the first time.

Although I create a visual image, this does not mean that I understand it. Mostly, the final stage of a work is as new for me as it is for the observer. The only difference between me and the observers is that I was ready to provoke this material appearance.

I like it when objects are actors or when a dialogue with the observer begins or when the viewer takes part in a provoked situation that ceases to be mine. There is another work which continues to surprise me again and again. It is so simple. I made it, as far as I remember, in 1991. (il. 2) I built three forms from old pieces of cardboard, sticking them together with brown parcel tape. There was a circle and two parts of a circle, but, strangely enough, these were actually bigger than the whole. Part of the circle was open. I had placed three bricks inside. The observers mentally constructed an image in which bricks were all round the inside even though they could only see those that were actually there.

Suddenly, one could notice a tiny staircase on the side of the circle, which immediately changed the proportion of the circle. The object in the middle seemed to be a part of a larger circle, but why should one think so?

It was what it was, not a part of anything. In time, three bricks appeared supporting the form, as if it would not be able to keep its shape on its own.

In any case there was a certain relationship, a kind of collaboration between them, a permanent tension, and a balance of energy. The third "part of a circle" was placed on its edge and a brick placed inside the form so that it permanently kept the other end up. These three games between paper forms and bricks excluded any understanding of, or possibility to name, what was essential in what one saw. One saw, one could even understand the language of what was said, but one could not grasp or define any meaning. This work was planned to preclude any possible meaning. It occupied one's mind, and on another level it confronted us with what we could see, but nothing more. It seemed to purify our minds and prepare us to accept the presence of the unknown. To become aware of the unknown means to recognise it as a field, to separate it from the known. A certain knowledge and ability is required to recognise matters which we cannot name. If I cannot call something by its name, it doesn't mean it doesn't exist.

Alternatively, if I can call it by its name, it doesn't mean that it does exist. We are living between what we know and what we don't know: not in between, but in one or both areas. Life without art is limited to, and punished with, what we know. People's attention, today, eliminates interest in the unknown as a non-functional, irrational, inapplicable field: there is no space for parallel values in the predictable model of today's society. No decision may be irrational. "People say that in a conventional war you need approximately 40 thousand machine

gun bullets to kill a single soldier. From a point of view of effectiveness, 39999 bullets are going to waste as only one becomes “the one”. Logic might suggest that it is a strikingly disproportionate and an absurd waste of power and means. We will pay your attention to those bullets which did not kill anyone and we will praise its inefficiency”.²

²

Art Energies, Alicja Kępińska, page 11, Wiedza Powszechna, Poznan 1990



2. "Untitled" – Academy of Fine Arts, Poznan, 1991

The Confession series – Wardrobes

In a subsequent series of works made between 1996 and 1998 I continued to combine architecture and installation. Holes were a meeting point between inside and outside, “sacrum” and “profanum”, filled sometimes with light and sometimes with darkness. Darkness or a lack of light had become the most important experience in my life – a presence of the absent.

These objects were inspired by a confessional, a piece of furniture that is meant to provide an intimate space for dialogue with God along with the help of a priest. Before that, in other cultures, it was used for exchanging secret information. Video was used as a medium, here, for the first time, towards the end of this series.

The Confession Series: Wardrobes

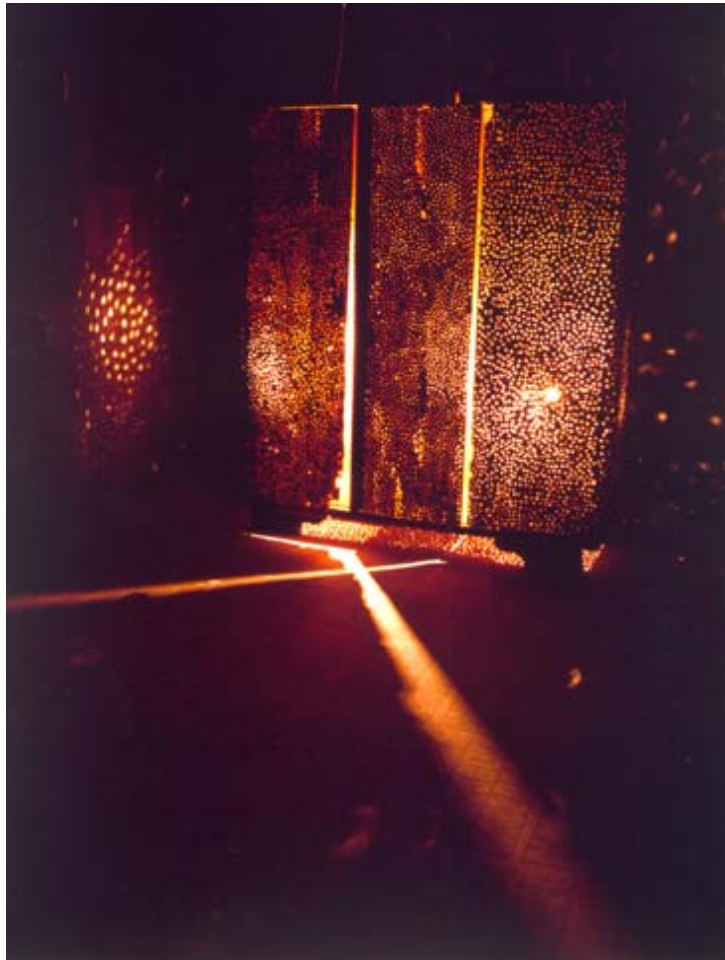
In 1996 I spent six weeks drilling holes into a big old wardrobe in Berlin. (il. 3)

I drilled around 10,000 holes. The wardrobe turned into a mesh. It became very fragile. In the room I wallpapered the walls, the ceiling, the windows, doors and door-handles with original obituaries from the Glos Wielkopolski daily newspaper.

On some days, one whole page of the newspaper is filled with obituaries.

Sometimes not enough people die to fill an entire page. Then there are empty spaces filled with various advertisements for the living. I accepted this by leaving free places on the walls, cutting out the ads. There were free spaces.

My three-winged wardrobe stood in the middle and inside it, behind the side door, I had hung electric light bulbs, which I set in pendulum motion from time to time. Hundreds of tiny light spots appeared on the walls, escaping through the mesh of the wardrobe, slowly losing speed and gradually finding their final position somewhere on the obituaries. The interior of the room was also intended to resemble catacombs in old monasteries where the bodies of the dead were walled in, with the name and date on the gravestone. To get inside the room you had to go through a narrow passage, walking on obituaries printed in negative. I cannot say what the negatives of the obituaries might have meant. But I could not ignore the chance of making this kind of image.



3. "Obituaries" – light installation, Polish Galleries in Podewil, Berlin, Germany, 1996 (page 29-30)



Another time I made an identical wardrobe, but on the opposite wall there was a large projection of the face of a priest listening to a confession and talking on both sides of the confessional in turn. Nothing was audible. One could only see a face that expressed involvement in an inaccessible mediation. There are two other wardrobes from the series “Confessions” which are important for me. In Ipswich (il. 4) I found two old drawers and placed them one on top of another and left the lowest doors opened as if it was an oven. I damaged the upper part, cutting out pieces of wood and placing them on the lowest shelves, as if it was wood for heating. A chair was cut in two and the two halves placed on both sides of a “confessional” in such a way that it was impossible to sit down and talk through the drilled holes. The form looked like a tower standing against the light, in front of the window. One could see the light falling through the small



4. "Confession" – installation, Gallery, Ipswich, UK, 1998

openings in the "tower", the stove / confessional, a tower, and a helplessness in meeting with the visible presence of light. By coincidence, I noticed that through the gallery window there was a church tower on the other side of the street that was visible through the "windows".

The first time I made a work specifically about the impossibility of dialogue was in Centrum Rzeźby Polskiej (Polish Sculpture Centre) in Oronska. (il. 5)

Somewhere in the village I found the lower part of a huge wardrobe. It had three drawers at its base. I set it vertically on golden coloured carved legs under a skylight so that light was let in through the upper opening and was



5. "Confession" – installation, Polish Sculpture Centre – Oronsco, Poland, 2004

visible in the drilled holes in the sides. Again, it was similar to the grille in a confessional. The two-metre high wardrobe was too tall for a person to reach the holes in order to speak. If I had wanted to have a conversation I could have stood on a small stool but the wardrobe had unevenly cut legs. There were also small holes in the little stool: a desperate act of wanting a conversation.

From a distance, the wardrobe resembled a human figure standing too close to the wall to open itself. I was surprised by the rightness of my decision to place on top of the filing cabinet the stone I had used to make the funnel. I cannot explain why, but I experienced certainty that it was the right decision.

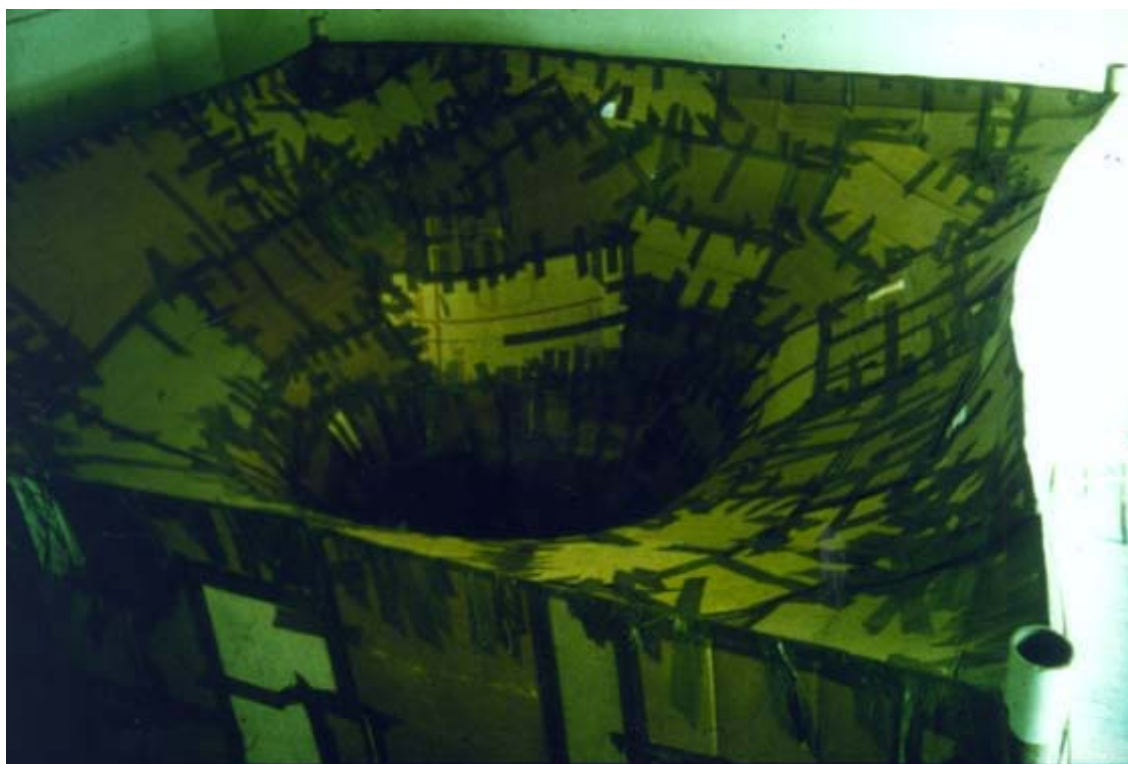
Architectural Objects

This chapter deals with my continuing fascination with texture and building spatial forms. In these architectural objects, drawing disappeared from the surface and allowed form to work for itself. However, a new understanding of drawing emerged. It was initiated by the brown Scotch tape that was an essential element in the works' construction. The most significant aspects of the works were: holes, light, overlapping forms, and illusions of scale resulting from manipulation of their proportions in relation to the body.

The final look of my works was a result of accepting the organic processes of evolving forms that provided their own justification. This way all my works are a kind of model of, or reflection upon, the universal laws that rule how the world is built. These architectural forms often referred to sacral spaces which tend to have similar features in various religions. The architectural forms of these buildings often become a source of mystic experience in their own right.

Architectural Objects

I began working with this kind of architectural form in Jan Berdyszak's studio at the end of my studies at the Poznan Academy. (il. 6) I filled an almost square studio with a slightly smaller one made of cardboard boxes collected from different shops. The link between them was the brown sticky tape. My form was architectural and a bit taller than a man – over two metres. One of the elements that attracted a lot of interest were three-cornered stools placed at the corners; these invited observers to sit on them and look inside over the secret door. What they saw was a concave funnel-shaped cardboard roof which ended low above the floor. One had the impression that the funnel was huge and only when the head of another curious person appeared over the opposite side of the wall did the proportions change radically. In the wall there was an entrance, as if to a tent, hidden under a hanging sheet. When you went inside, your attention was focused on the strong light falling on the centre of the floor, which became slightly lower in the middle. There were two windows in the studio, so one could recognise the light as a natural force. In my “temple”, one could see the effect of the light but not its source.



6. "Funnel" – installation, Academy of Fine Arts, Poznan, Poland, 1991

In 1992 I built a one and a half ton cardboard pyramid in a room of a former German bunker. (il. 7) When it was completed I turned it upside down so the pyramid stood on its point. The weight changed the form, flattening the point and curving the surface. The empty center again attracted light but gave no light back. In the very narrow space there was little space for viewers, so the kinetic form confronted them, making them afraid of the movable weight. The only additional object was a spirit level indicating that a perfect level is only a transitory and rare moment of life.



7. "Funnel" – installation, Meeting and Creativity – Polish German Art Festival, Poland, 1992

The rain is pouring down. In Rozemberok, Slovakia, for a whole week, I rolled up left-over newspaper into one growing circle out of which I later formed a funnel. When I was finished, dried paper glue wrinkled the texture of the funnel adding a whiter colour to it. The funnel pointed upwards in the form of a cone and its end was open. Despite the fact that light got inside it remained quite dark in there. Beside it there stood a filing cabinet with metal drawers; the higher drawers were opened more than the lower ones. They were open to light

trickling into the room through the window hidden behind the filter of a stretched white canvas sheet split vertically with one small slit. All three objects presented different ways of reacting to light.



8. "Funnel" – installation, Czech Republic, 1992



9. "Pyramid" – installation, Yad Labanim, Tel Aviv, Israel, 1993

In the Yad Labanim Museum in Tel Aviv I executed a slightly higher funnel, or maybe a pyramid sandwiched between two walls (ill. 9). For a few days I walked around the city with a cart collecting cardboard packaging, which I stacked one on top of the other until I achieved such a level that I could not look inside the form. I positioned the peak of the pyramid on limp metal legs in another place, so that you could stand under it. A symbolic space emerged between the hole at the top of the pyramid (too high to look inside) and its displaced peak (under which you could stand). The space between the particular height of a person. The peak of the pyramid cast a triangular shadow onto the wall, which symbolised a spiritual present. For the first time the shadow, the absence of light, played an active role in my work.

These works inspired me to begin a further work, this time in the form of an artist's book, which soon turned out to be a model of an unusual temple in which the mysticism of space was created by geometry, harmony and light. The inside, in the shape of an ellipse placed in the cube, was closed by a dome which gradually narrowed from its base to the top. The opening in the dome, however, was in the shape of a circle. In an upward direction, the opening of the circle also gradually turned to an ellipse, this time turned by 90 degrees from the one below. This way a cross was formed. Everything was hidden behind high walls of rectangular proportions. The upper part of the temple resembled an amphitheatre. The whole of this was made of layers, which were visible from outside and inside. The layers also posed an interesting artistic problem: such work takes time and thus it is a process which allows one to observe the development of a form. At the same time the form shapes one's reflections, imposing its own laws, and thus opposes the violence of our mind with its will and reason. We could benefit from

observing matter which has formed over millions of years and possesses the wisdom of laws that have evolved during our planet's formation. We are subject to, and part of, world processes: their mystery of time and infinity, the spirit or idea. We probably have no idea that we participate in them. Nature tells us that even the most transparent glass, when put in layers, very soon covers things deeper and deeper. My work's title "What I say is not what I mean" is possibly an attempt to simply express becoming aware of sometimes catching my mind participating in something which goes beyond the ability of observation.

Self reflection is admitting to not being the embodiment of oneself, or to the fact that I am the owner of myself, in as much as I can say I know who I am. However, most of the time, we are engrossed in the countless external stimuli and the projections surrounding our decisions and reactions so that we lose consciousness of our essential existence. I would call the temple a temple of awareness or maybe even unawareness. An extremely interesting question, as a consequence of this, is the issue of human dignity. Where is it really? What is the one and only exceptional value of ours which in the context of the universe lets us hope for a small, separate, privileged position?

In 2002 in Mishima, (il. 10) Japan, for over a month, I had been constructing the stairs of a temple built at the top of a mountain, at the very beginning of a track, where pilgrims descend to the temple of Kishibojin and further down to the Buddhist temple on the outskirts of the village. One can admire the view of the mountains, valleys, and a river fading into the distance.

Sometimes you could see the other peak – Mount Bandaj San, one of the

highest peaks after Fuji-San. Every day I was taken to the mountain, and left alone with a piece of advice: "if a bear appears, do not run away. Look at his eyes, talk gently to him and slowly step back". After that I only heard the sound of the car engine slowly retreating through the trees. When I heard a melody rising up from the village at noon - funnily enough a melancholy Russian song played on a Glockenspiel - I knew somebody would come and pick me up for a lunch. The second time they collected me was just before sunset. After my experience with carrying stones, I was ready to enjoy working alone with 10 tons of wood. I was happy to observe time passing very slowly, enjoying it's endless presence.

I felt as if the presence was becoming infinity, as my work did not have to be finished at all. Sometimes pieces of wood were as thin as a leaf and had to be placed precisely to balance the construction. The stairs were my temple of loneliness and a place to meditate in front of Bandai mountain. It's 5.30 in the morning - A dwarf is playing the piano - some improvisations vaguely based on various jazz music standards. **Michel Metruciani**.

Incredible. You get up at five in the morning, turn on the TV and on Mezzo Emotion Channel there's someone engrossed in his own world. Who? Someone neither Italian nor Jewish nor American. He's going bald with an excessively pushed-forward chest, around thirty. It seems that he does nothing all day long but play music. All he does is learned. It is not learned. One can only play like that if it takes all day long. He seemed to have nothing else but that. Actually now it's 5.30 or a couple of minutes later.



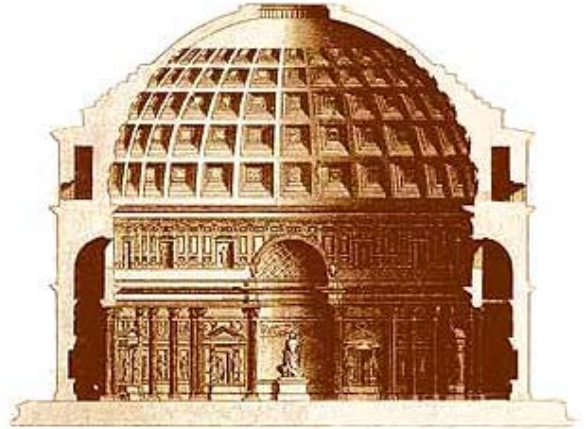
10. "Temple" – sculpture installation, wood, Mishima, Japan, 2001

At least that's what I'm telling you. No, actually I could use my advantage that I am writing it and you are only reading and the only thing you can do is accept what I'm writing. Actually it was 5.30 or so. Right now when I'm typing the same text (which means exactly this sentence) it's exactly 4.19 and 59, oh! Ten seconds further. It's the same type of darkness as in the morning and I've come back to the starting point where it hasn't started yet. It was night here and it still is. The night and thought from the morning is even more real. I think that people wait everywhere like senior citizens who work at guarded parking lots - those who take extra jobs at retirement age spending nights in a small booth, working shifts. If our planet Earth, our spaceship were flat, every one on it would go to sleep at the same time and nobody would be watching. When the unexpected moment comes who will be awake and let us know? I squeezed my fingers underneath the peel of a big fluffy orange and my fingertips became wet in an unpleasant way. A sweet scent spread around.

The Temple

Through my architectural projects (ill. 6,7,8,9) I unconsciously drew nearer to the idea of a temple, a sacred place, whose extraordinary strength is usually constructed through a symmetrical central layout. The closest example for me, with which my work has the most in common, is the Roman Pantheon (ill. 11,13).

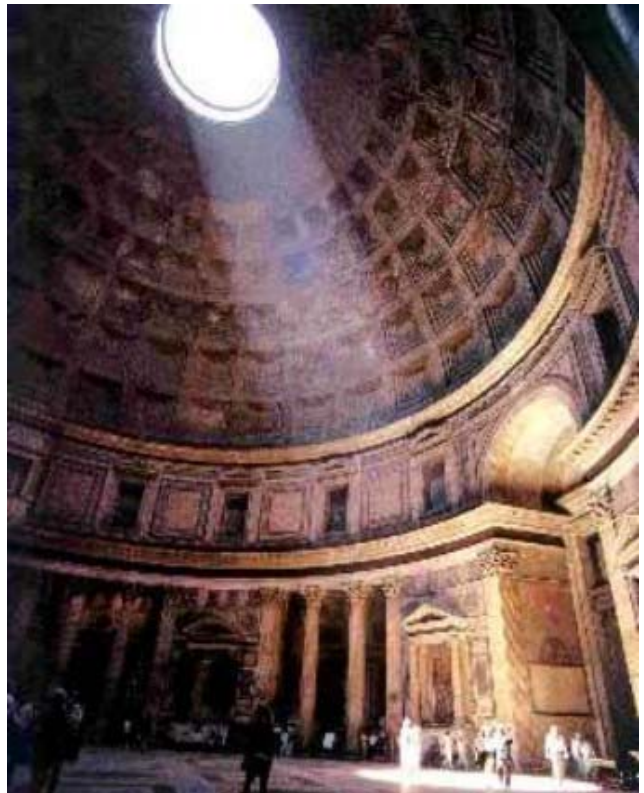
It turned out that the cross section of my work resembled an hourglass: it was like the Pantheon in Rome with another Pantheon on its roof but upside down. In Poland obituaries are called “klepsydra” (hourglasses) although they do not resemble them at all. (il. 12) The upper shape of my temple was open to the world, and the lower one almost closed. One Pantheon like a funnel is full of physical light and the other one is filled with darkness. The light becomes mystical as a stream of light falls into the lower area; its source is invisible but its action can be observed. In the middle of the lower temple a staircase appears so it is possible to climb up and stand in the light. I made the model during the winter in Centrum Rzeźby Polskiej (Polish Sculpture Centre), Oronsco – a cold winter in the East of Poland.



11. Pantheon – Rome, Italy



12. Hourglasses



13. Pantheon – Rome, Italy

I had plenty of time. I cut many cardboard sheets, putting them in layers and observing what was happening. With the passage of time I only realised the significance of the work's shape and the consequence of putting layers one onto another as if they were pages in a book. I was busy cutting off the tough pieces of excess cardboard when I realised that an amazing shape had appeared.

The thing that was intended to become an artistic book about light suddenly became architecture animated by my imagination - a model of a giant temple, the inside of which, you could only see by squeezing one eye together.

This work was remade in 2007 at Mishima in Japan (il. 14) as a sculpture in wood placed on a concrete pillar.

Before I present another cycle of works I would like to refer to an older work from 1996, which was done in Gallery "U Jezuitów" in Poznan, situated in the tall cloisters of a baroque monastery. (il.15) Every few metres, I placed plinths, supporting three-metre long vertical iron rods in a line. On the ends of the rods I put "fish eyes" or peep-holes, which are normally mounted in the front doors of houses or apartments. The rods bent under their own weight and their flexibility caused an unusually beautiful movement, resembling the movement of tall plants in a wind. The viewer could come up, take hold of one of the rods and look through the peep-hole. If you looked with one eye through the peep-hole, you noticed that the image seen through the lens covered the image seen with the other eye. This kind of optical experience is confusing for the brain.



14. "Temple" – object, wood, 70x70cm, Yamabiko Museum, Mishima, Japan

For example, the image of the corner between two walls was situated in the same corner. The same was covered with the same. The same was situated in the same. The same contained the same. The same, although transparent, covered the same or maybe even concealed the same. But the image in the fish eye did not stay the same as the one shown in the photograph. The image changed as quickly as the movement of a swinging rod. The photographs (il.15) show us that the image in the centre is permanent and stable.

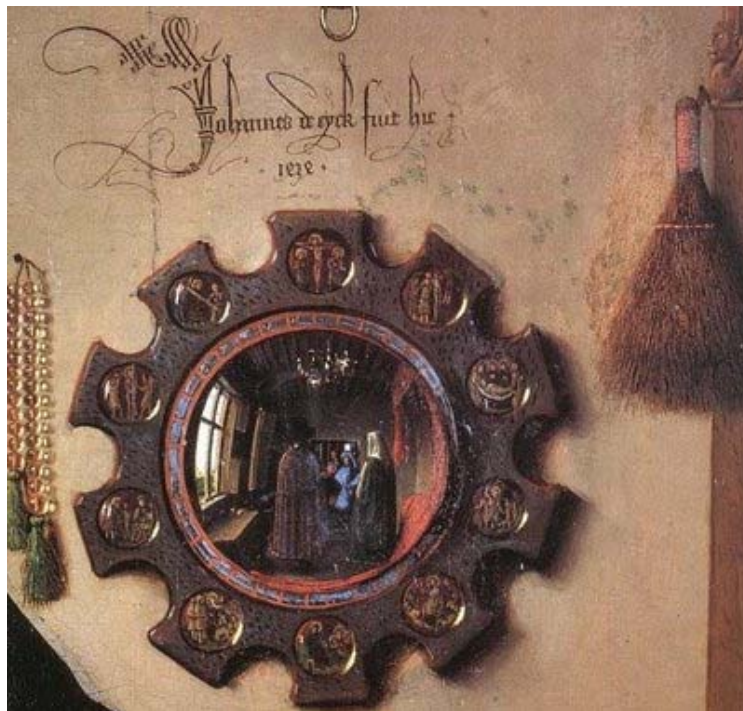
Nonetheless, it is not inside. Inside there is nothing. And even if there is something it is constantly changing. In this work, once you had seen this phenomenon, you could imagine what was happening with the shifting or swinging image without looking at it. So your consciousness was following the swinging rod, even though you didn't have to see it. Experiencing the view through this fish eye was enough to occupy the mind with a concept of a transparent image covering its original physical presence. It is one of my works that is very closely related to my drawings and the looped video works (as a matter of fact it is a video work), which showed the limits of our cognition and the matter, which, in spite of being visible, cannot be comprehended. By the same token the work's sensory layer made everyone experience reality in a different, intellectually inaccessible dimension. Even if in some remote future we succeed in flattening a fact to fit rational knowledge, there will still be room for uncertainty or maybe the certainty of the presence of parallel areas in which we exist but about whose existence we have no idea. Successful works are those which shine through the surface of the picture. The illustrations (il. 16 - 19) present works which relate thematically to the language of reflections on the curved surfaces of glass and mirrors since Middle Ages painting.

In my works it is significant to peep through a fish eye into another



15. "Funnel" – installation, Jesuits Gallery, Poznan, Poland, 2004

space. However, in the works of the other artists that I refer to here we can spot reality outside the frame. Hence, we can see both: what is presented in a painting as well as the surrounding space. Many artists have used this device to show a supernatural world: watching the Holy Spirit, or Christ's presence or his death. In "Still Life" (il. 17) one can see the reflected image of a window on a wineglass placed amongst fruit, fish and meat. The cross formed by the framework of the window can be interpreted as a symbol of "vanitas" –

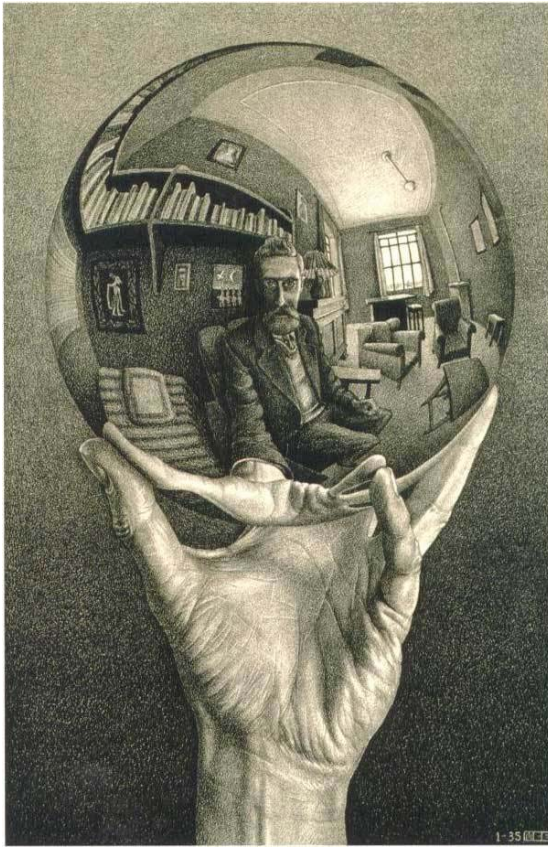


suggesting passing; while the reflection of the light may be a symbol of blessing.

16. "Giovanni Arnolfini and Wife" – detail, Jan van Eyck, oil on wooden board, National Gallery, London, 1434



17. "Still life" – Willem Claesz Heda Haarlem 1594-id.1682



18. "Predictions" – lithograph,
Maurits Cornelis Escher, 1935



19. "Saint John Baptist and Donator,
Henrich Von Werl" – Robert Campin,
Madrid, Prado, 1438

Drawings On The Wall

In this chapter I introduce the cycle of wall drawings made between 2002 and 2008 which draw substantially on the spatial projects of the late 1990's.

After these spatial projects I longed to work with surface. I decided to research this through the act of drawing onto wall surfaces. Wardrobes and small rooms as material objects invite the audience to look inside only by using their eyes. Door holes lead to spaces hidden behind apparent walls.

Neither the wall nor the door or the space was anything else but a real gallery wall. These works play with light; however, the light does not shine; it only seems to fill the space. In a drawing from Witerbo active darkness appeared. It glows, it is active, it functions like light, but in fact it is its lack.

Drawings On The Wall

Another area of my work is drawings on walls – sites accessible to the eye, but inaccessible to the body. On the white wall of the gallery I draw a line which separates the surface so it can be interpreted once as a floor, once as a wall, still another time as immaterial space opened behind an illusionary wall. Finally we come back to the realisation that it is a simple white wall with lines painted in black paint.

As a matter of fact there is nothing unusual about it. Drawings are an illusion of the third dimension (nothing new) which is possible only when the viewer finds one appropriate place in the gallery from which all lines create the illusion as designed. There is only one point at which the artist is able to suggest another reality. From any other point of viewing the drawing offers only an interesting geometrical composition on the wall.

The work below was made in Pallazzo Callebresi in Viterbo, Italy in 2002. (il.20) Unfortunately I was not able to photograph the first door on the right hand side. The perspectives of two doors on the right side were extended into the wall with a drawing of a door in the middle on the top of the black pyramid. I confronted the viewer with a subtle trick. Through the third door drawn on the wall darkness seeps through, looking to the observer like a continuation of the actual floor.



20. "Untitled" – drawing installation, lead pencils, Pallazzo Callabresi, Viterbo, Italy, 2002

Two different photographs present two different perspectives of a drawing on the wall in the corner of a room in the gallery. (il. 21) It appears that there are two staircases climbing up behind a broad pillar in the centre.

When I mentioned symmetry as a rule of my drawing somebody noticed that there were seven steps on the left side and six on the right side. I answered that I hadn't noticed that before, but found it not to be in conflict with the rule of symmetry. The suggestion that there is a common place behind the pillar where the staircases could meet is very convincing.

I do not want to manipulate the observer. My intention, within the three-dimensional world in which I live, is to capture those moments when questions arise about dimensions that possibly surround us without our being able to enter into them. The drawings in photographs (il. 21) make us doubt what we would usually recognise. Perhaps many times we see things that we do not understand, or that we do not necessarily understand because we are always

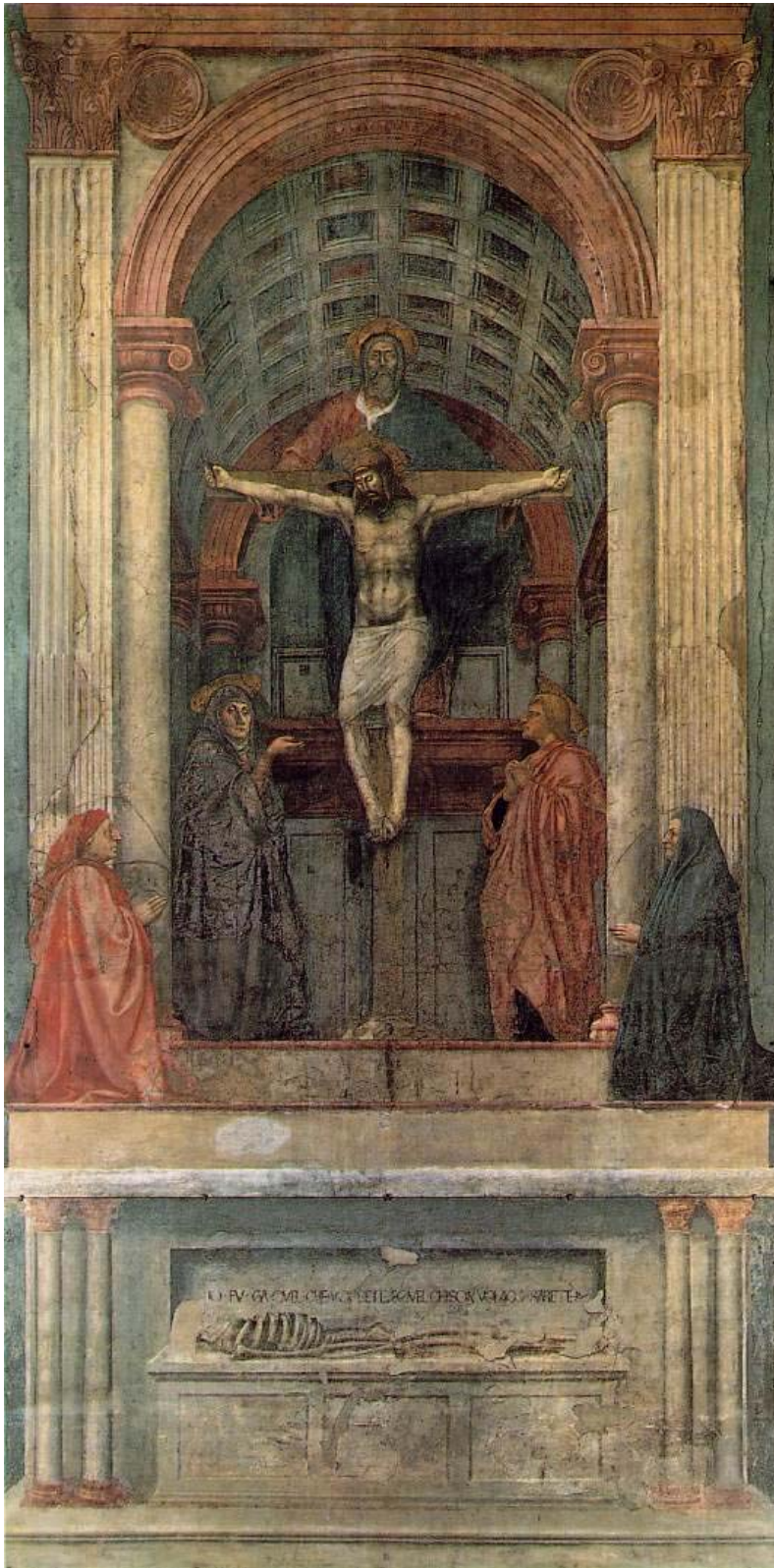
looking at them from the same point of view. How can we say we know what we mean if we only look at things from one position? Is there only one place where the meaning reveals its intentions? Maybe there is a wisdom of ordinary people in looking at matters from only a single perspective, but being an artist I have found many other perspectives, even though I cannot name them yet.



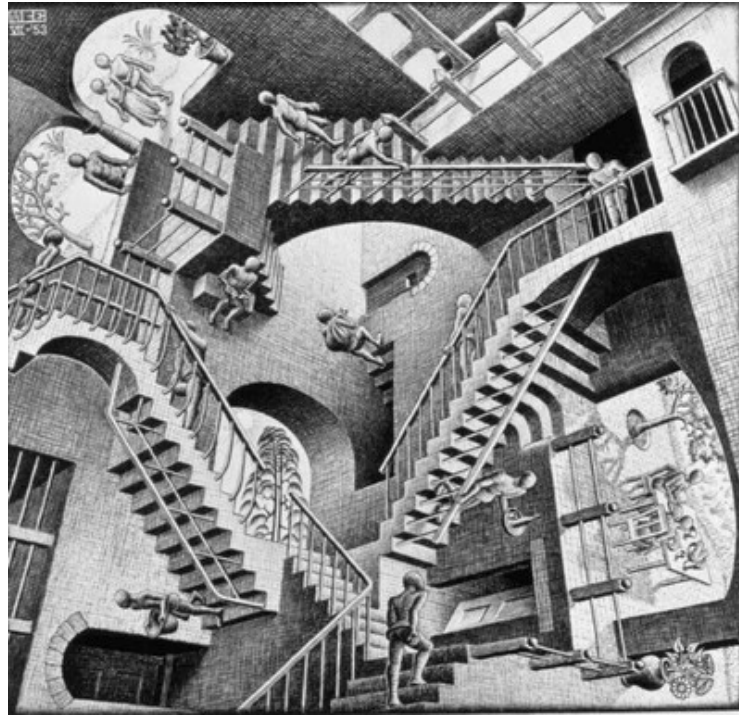
I suppose that **Andrea Masaccio** may have faced quite similar questions when he painted The Holy Trinity between 1426 and 1428. (il. 22) The image on the wall of Santa Maria Novella church, Florence, Italy, features the crucified Jesus Christ with Mary and Saint John standing next to him. The details of the figures are in fact three-dimensional but the whole silhouette appears very flat within the three-dimensional illusionary perspective of Renaissance architecture in the background. Two stones converge at the foot of the cross and define the eyeline and the position in which the viewer is situated, so that the entire composition achieves its effect. Actually, the painting is leading the viewer through the space of the church until he finds himself at the right spot. That is amazing! Masaccio still leads a dialogue with each person visiting the church.

Masaccio's work may be interpreted as the meeting of two visions of the world: one rooted in medieval times in which paintings of Jesus, Mary and St. John symbolically present ideas, and one rooted in the Renaissance, in which the world of philosophy and mysticism is depicted by means of spatial illusion based upon a new rational attitude towards the physical world.

One could ask about the relationship between my works and **M. C. Escher's** drawings. (il. 23) There is one thing they have in common, namely the illusion of space. But I am more interested in showing the presence of other worlds than in playing games with illusion for its own sake. We see what we see but the drawing suggests the presence of other spaces, of passages where the stairs might converge and lead further. It is rather our imagination that becomes anxious and tries to guess what next.



22. "The Holy Trinity" – Andrea Masaccio, fresco, 1427-1428, Santa Maria Novella in Florence, Italy



23. "Relativity" – lithograph, Maurits Cornelis Escher, 1953

All my works seem to suggest the presence of things that are inaccessible or even unimaginable in everyday life. The privilege of art is to show images that do not exist in our reality, and, even if they may exist, that have no rational earthly explanation. In the course of my practice I eliminate one by one things which I am able to name and talk about. Instead of creating images I could simply write about them. However, there is no reason to illustrate things which can only be discovered or provoked by confronting words with each other. My drawings are primitive; they are painted with a brush intentionally imprecisely to escape from the ideal illusion. (il. 24) My writing is a sort of wandering in my memories and my soul. Both drawing and writing move at the borders of their own rules and grammar. They can also be found in the awareness of gestures, in decisions made by the hand, in the energy of a man, which at this very moment might not be making any decision because the movement of the hand is faster. My hand sometimes speaks faster than my words.



24. "Untitled" – drawing installation, ON Gallery, Poznan, Poland, 1997

However it takes a moment of concentration, as I am aware that in a moment the hand will be faster than observation. Any time when I think about a drawing I bear in mind the discussion about how long the present lasts. It is probably possible to measure it. When we observe sounds on the xylophone as they are formed every second, we have the sense of melody and unity. We join them spontaneously into a chain. Their relation with the previous ones are built up

in our memory and projected as an expectation into the future. The sound which is coming confirms our memory and projection, and in this way we establish a continuity with what went before. After some time we learn to expect and anticipate tones as they make some sense - a canon of rules which in reality does not exist.

That which I can recognise and name I eliminate, because that has already been done. If I throw a stick in one direction in a field it does not mean that I am obliged to retrieve it like a dog. If I throw a stick it is to eliminate or exclude this direction, to feel free to research what is not indicated yet. This is an example of the relationship between what I say and what I mean. My entire work consists of using the mind and awareness to prevent my own work from illustrating my thoughts. In everyday life my thoughts are reasonable, justified and purposeful. In art I do not speak. The question is who speaks then? "I don't know", I might answer, but if it goes well it is certainly not me. Asking questions is the expression of my own consciousness, some kind of waiting for an answer.

I would call these strategies visualisations or realisations. The rule should be that what I see surprises me despite the fact that I made it with my own hands.

The mystic, **Simone Weil**, says "I can only knock, someone else opens up".³

The gift of knocking is not only intuition or talent; it is knowledge learned from the above words. It requires practice in concentration. But what does

concentration mean? It means to learn to wait. "I do not knock at your door.

I wait until you will notice a lack of my knocking and open". There is a moment when art starts without my decision and it finds a right way to happen. Partly, I feel that it is not my own drawing. I was the right one to let it happen.

³ page 65, Simone Weil " Hipernatural consciousness" – selected thoughts
Instytut Wydawniczy PAX 1986

Video

This chapter focuses on the development of video works commencing in 1996 and continuing until the present. Video images seem to be the least material of all. Their presence is some dangerous magic, as their act of appearing is always immensely strong. It often turns out that, despite their aggressiveness, video works are empty and lose in competition with works made of concrete material. I cannot exclude any language of art. In my work, up to this point, works in different media did not join into any unity. I did not see myself as a person whose realisations were somehow related to one another. In the latter part of this section I refer to works in which I combine the video and sonic image with material presence.

Video Works

In my opinion video and photography could be compared with peeping through a hole, a slot, something just like a funnel. We can look into the world on the other side whilst remaining in our own world. We create a barrier that raises our awareness of participating in everyday life. Watching, we watch secretly, from the other side of the funnel. Simultaneously, we see condensed light that is a carrier of messages from another world. Darkness is also an information carrier but probably inaccessible to our consciousness. Similarly, as in architectural forms, a funnel functions like a filter, a sieve, revealing only partially a reality. Video lets narration enter into my works. Contrary to a linear concept of time, time is repeated, looped, closed into a circle. Here, illusion functions as a projection of a light-based image into a darkened room. However, in the moment that the light appears, so the image disappears. I usually use sound together with video. Later in my practice, it becomes fused with drawings. I will come back to video, as a medium, in a work titled: 'Fugue'. This musical concept of a composition introduced some new possibilities of building the composition of an image and I started to look for new ways of meeting the invisible and inaudible.

My video works are always looped. The word "fugue" itself suggests an unusual relation to time, space and events. In my art I do not want to say anything that would be about persuasion, opinion, reflection, observation, or suggestion. My

video works always last as long as the time inherent in them.

Works of art may be witnesses of their time or they may pass away with time.

The theory that contemporary art is increasingly using time as a carrier is by no means new. We live partly in actual time and partly in the time created by the press, television and the internet. Even though we do not want to be manipulated we increasingly enjoy being manipulated. We lose control in the moment when images from the past purport to be from the present or even the future. Manipulation has always been an important part of communication. The contemporary methods of persuasion are a common technique, and they are clearly described by **Donald Rumsfeld**:

"You're going to be told lots of things.
You get told things every day that don't happen.
It doesn't seem to bother people. They don't check source.
It's printed in the press.
The world thinks all these things happen.
They never happened.
Everyone's so eager to get the story
Before in fact the story's there
That the world is constantly being fed
Things that haven't happened.
All I can tell you is,
It hasn't happened.
It's going to happen."

Secretary of Defence Donald Rumsfeld ⁴

A message becomes a fact which is so powerful that it is unimportant whether it happens, but it is important that it has been said. What often matters is the promise of a word or a suggestion of a word that has not been uttered. The word is an event competing with reality and it can be stronger than reality, involving the recipient in a parallel dimension. My video works are simply the

⁴ feb. 28, 2003, Department of Defense briefing; <http://www.slate.com/id/2081042/>

radiation of light, tempting the observer to enter a world for as long as the projection takes place in the dark room. What you have seen has perhaps never happened, but it is going to happen in your phantasy.

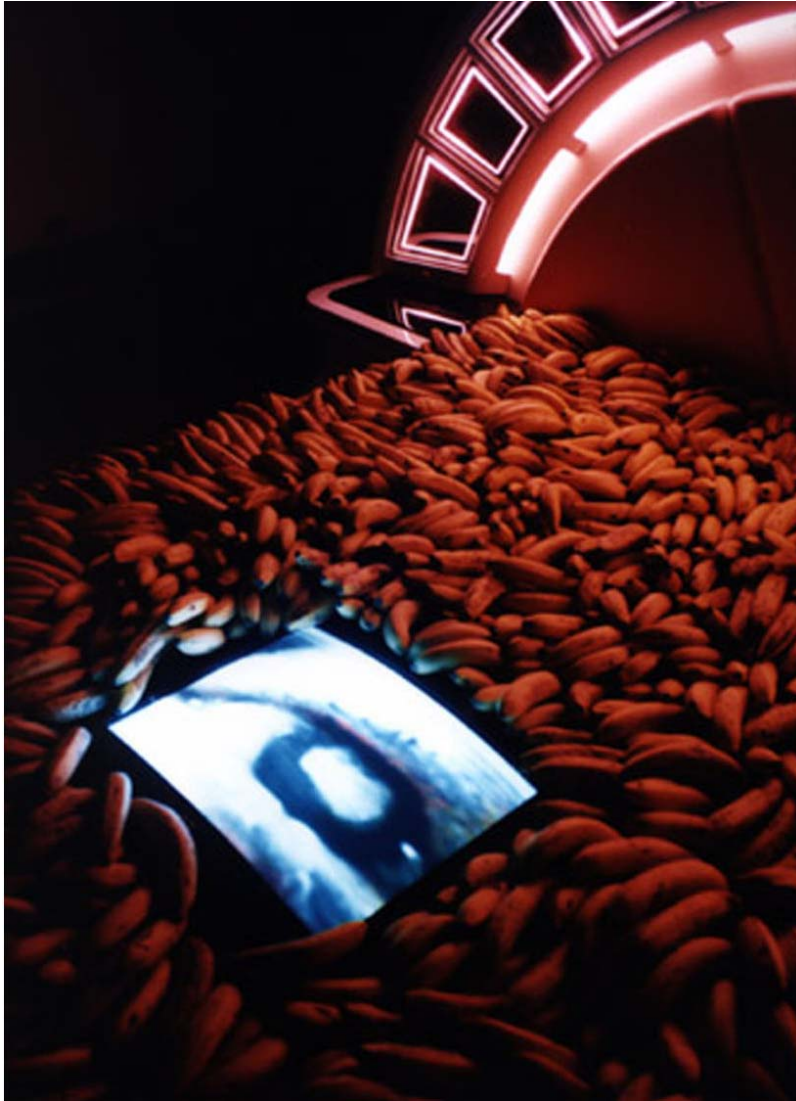
Why not performance? Our common understanding of the term 'performance' originated in the theatre, similar to children's games in which they decide who will be an Indian and who a cowboy, thus creating for a period of time an agreed reality with the intention to make it as close to the truth as possible. Video can be theatre, but it is closer to a painting on the wall – it can be admired but it is impossible to participate in it physically.

My first significant video work is called "Annunziiazione" – "The Annunciation". (il. 25) Religious inspiration often appears in my works – first of all Christian, then that of other religions. I filled an unusually kitschy Italian bed made of pink leather, plastic cornices, little black marble tables topped with an arc of mirrors and neon lamps resembling a rainbow, with 160 kilos of bananas. In the middle of it I put a TV with a picture of a blind woman's eye – the pupil of the moving eye was covered with leucoma. Although the eye saw nothing the observer was given the impression of being observed.

In a two storey gallery space, in the floor of the upper storey, above the screen, I cut a rectangular opening to create the impression that the image of the eye was placed on the surface of the floor. Next to it stood an empty chair, a place to wait. The viewer could observe the image and smell the odour of bananas going brown on the ground floor of the gallery or go upstairs to find the image of the eye permeating through the floor. Even though the eye was, to us, obviously blind, it was watching us, as we crossed the floor on the upper level, carrying the message of that which we don't know.

Video pieces for Stuttgart in 1996 and for Bonn in 1997 further developed

this approach. In Stuttgart, the work comprised three video images of a heart recorded during an operation, together with three old tape recorders hanging on the gallery wall.



25. "Annunziiazione" – installation, bed, TV, 160kg bananas, ON Gallery, Poznan, Poland, 1995

One heart was projected on the wall and two others were visible on the exposed tubes of two TV sets which were placed on two swings, swinging as if moved by a man and gradually slowing down. The heartbeats and the soundless moving swings were always in an irregular relation to each other. They were confronted with the sound of tapes revolving which, after they ran out, smashed at the plastic cover of the tape recorders.

In Bonn I presented images of three heads recorded during ultrasound

research. (il. 26) The images showed a head starting from the tiny spot at the beginning of the nose and finishing at the back of the head and then back again. The animation was very fast, so the first spot of light turned out to be an explosion of light which quickly disappeared in the darkness. Although I had invited two friends and participated myself, this investigation did not enable the viewer to recognise any individual differences between the shape of the heads.

Later, I used the same images in the National Museum in Poznan, but here I worked with ten elderly women and men. For one week they came to lie down from 10.00am to 6.00pm in my installation space. They peacefully lay along the walls in the darkness, as if they had intuitively accepted their existence. When visitors entered the room, the figures on the floor were invisible because of the darkness, but as their eyes became accustomed to the darkness, they could see the bodies lying still on the floor. Some visitors surprised me by lying down on the floor themselves, joining the elderly people already lying there.

This was the first time I worked with human presence as a part of an installation. My respect for life and older people sometimes makes me think about ways of expressing the evanescence and dignity of man. I tried to confront myself as a temporary owner of another person's body and, in a similar way, as an inhabitant of my own.

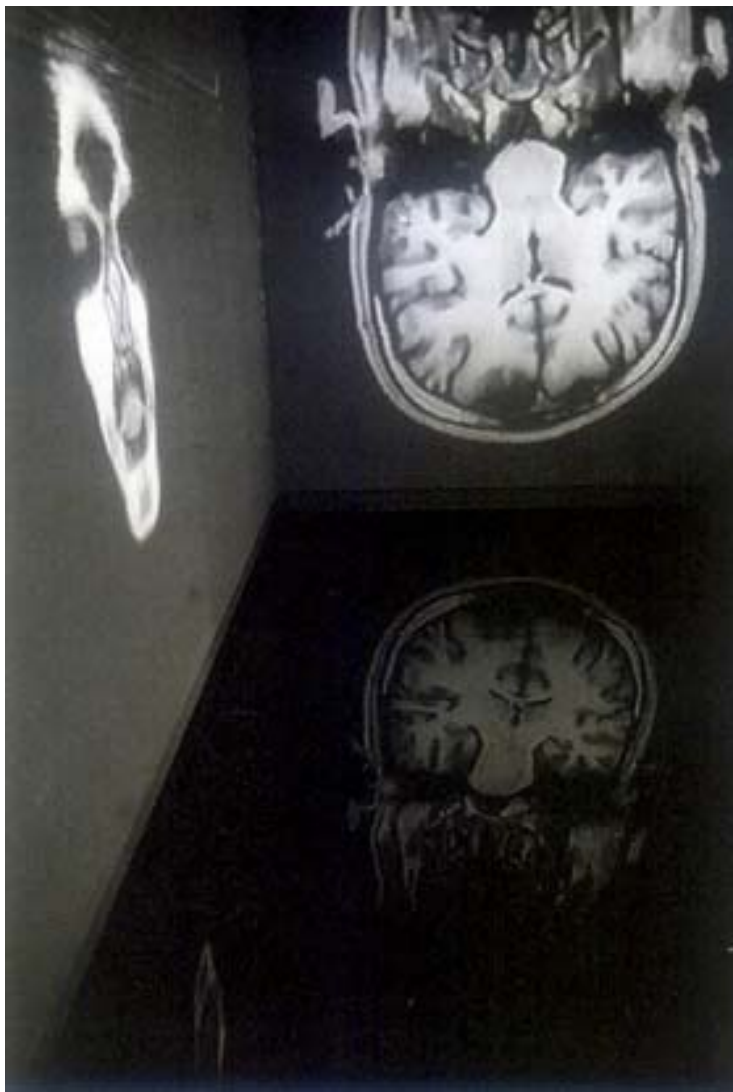
Sometimes, when I watch my hand placed in a strange position, I am surprised that it is part of me. For example, I am amazed that I observe everything from the perspective of my head. I identify myself with my head as the centre of myself. Why do I not identify myself with my hand and observe myself from that perspective?

My hand is only a machine for my head, not the opposite. Of course it is partly because we think through our eyes, nose, ears, mouths, that when we touch in

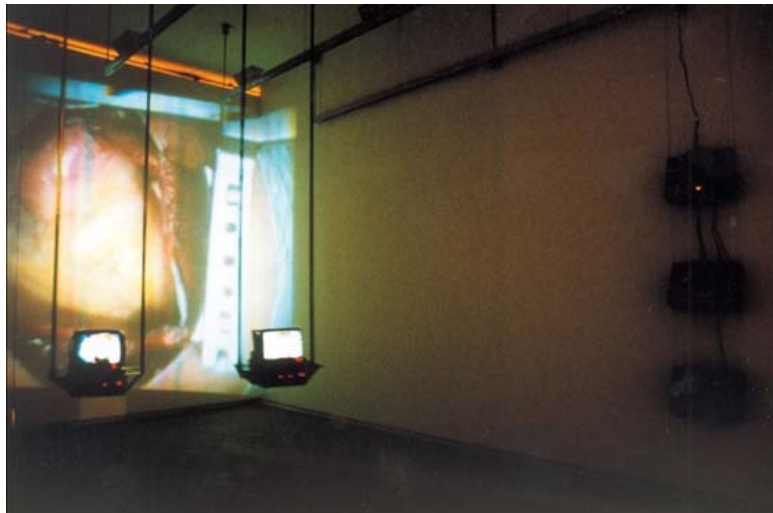
the darkness we do not think with our hands. We just know what we touch.

We know it in our head. We are always in our head. Machines. I like to lie or sit down sometimes as if my body were dead. I try to relax my muscles until I have lost all control of my body. I try to feel myself outside my body as if it would fall down by itself. Confrontation with a real body, with a person who is exhibited, can be discomforting, involving a viewer as part of a planned intrigue.

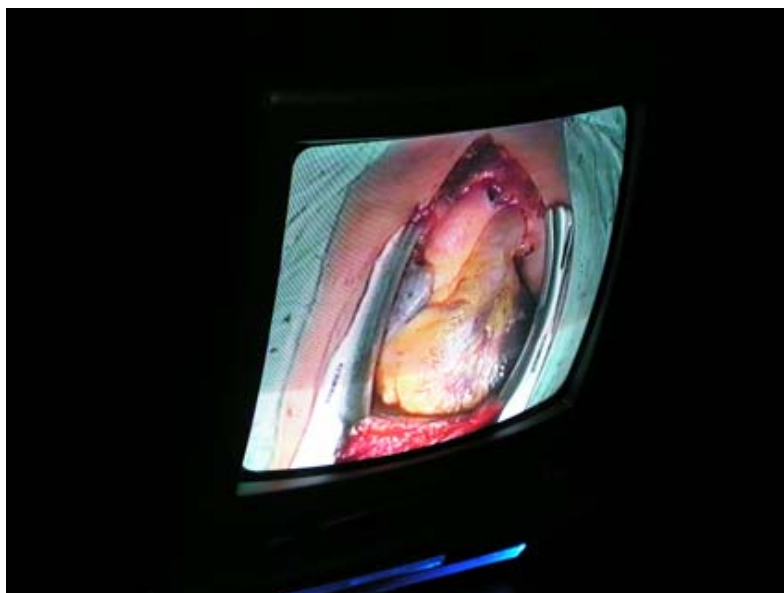
In the video installations in both Stuttgart and Bonn, I was looking for the existence of the hidden, essential place in the human body where the spirit is housed. Neither the heart nor the head revealed anything. The human body remained merely a machine.



26. "Untitled" – video installation – 3 video projections, IFA Gallery, Bonn, Germany, 1996



27. "Hearts" – video Installation, 2 TVs, 1 video projection, 3 recorders, IFA Gallery, Stuttgart, Germany, 1996



28. "Hearts" – video installation, Patio Art Centre, Lodz, Poland, 2006

In Stuttgart I constructed swings which recalled the innocence of childhood, when there is no consciousness of death or time. (il. 27, 28) The tapes were revolving as if somebody has just finished playing music. The ends of the tapes were hitting the plastic body of the tape recorders, causing sounds in irregular rhythms. The edge of the swings was sharp. The monitors had been opened and robbed of their housing, like hearts during surgery. Pure machines. I had also started to pay attention to the rhythm between images.

Later I started to work on videos, inspired by the fugue as a Baroque conception, a musical composition of sequences based in time; parallel; overlapping or one after another; repeating; playing backwards.

It marked a return to my recurrent questions about the presence of the unknown in other dimensions at the same time. This provides a gap for that which I cannot say, for what I cannot mean. Some artists speak about what is “in between” as having major value. Perhaps. You cannot put your finger on the place where the unknown exists. You can only exclude those areas where the known has already been recognized. Words such as ‘between’ cannot guarantee that you will find the unknown there.

The prosperity that we experienced at the beginning of the 1990s, together with the accompanying superficial life style and kitsch that surrounded us, became a danger. A blind eye sees what we cannot see. It is my annunciation of something, my anxiety. The works using ultrasound scans of the head – the passage from the nose to the occiput and back, and the installation using an image of a pounding heart - were an attempt to find a place called the soul, the seat of thoughts and feelings. The images were intended to show that the inside of the skull is specific to each person and that fat grows around the heart hiding its real shape. Man appears to be a machine, the centre of which is

placed somewhere beyond the body.

On the one hand, looking into the intimate parts of the human body discourages us from thinking about man as a creature containing a part of eternity.

On the other hand, the temporary presence of a body is a model of the past universe as well as a projection of the future. In a conversation with my friend, **Father Patryk**, we arrived at some essential limits of cognition. Our knowledge is able to shift the limits of cognition further and further and negate dogmas that science previously created, including the fields of the known and the unknown which we can grasp. What we do not know is also present. There is that which we know exists, and also that which we do not know exists.

The Unknown

As we know,
There are known knowns,
There are things we know we know.
We also know
There are known unknowns.
That is to say
We know there are some things
We do not know.
But there are also unknown unknowns,
The one we don't know
We don't know.

Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld ⁵

In the face of mystery one of the tools is faith. We assume something based on knowledge, logic, intuition and intentions. Faith constructs visions, and it is not

⁵ February, 12, 2002, <http://www.slate.com/id/2081042/>

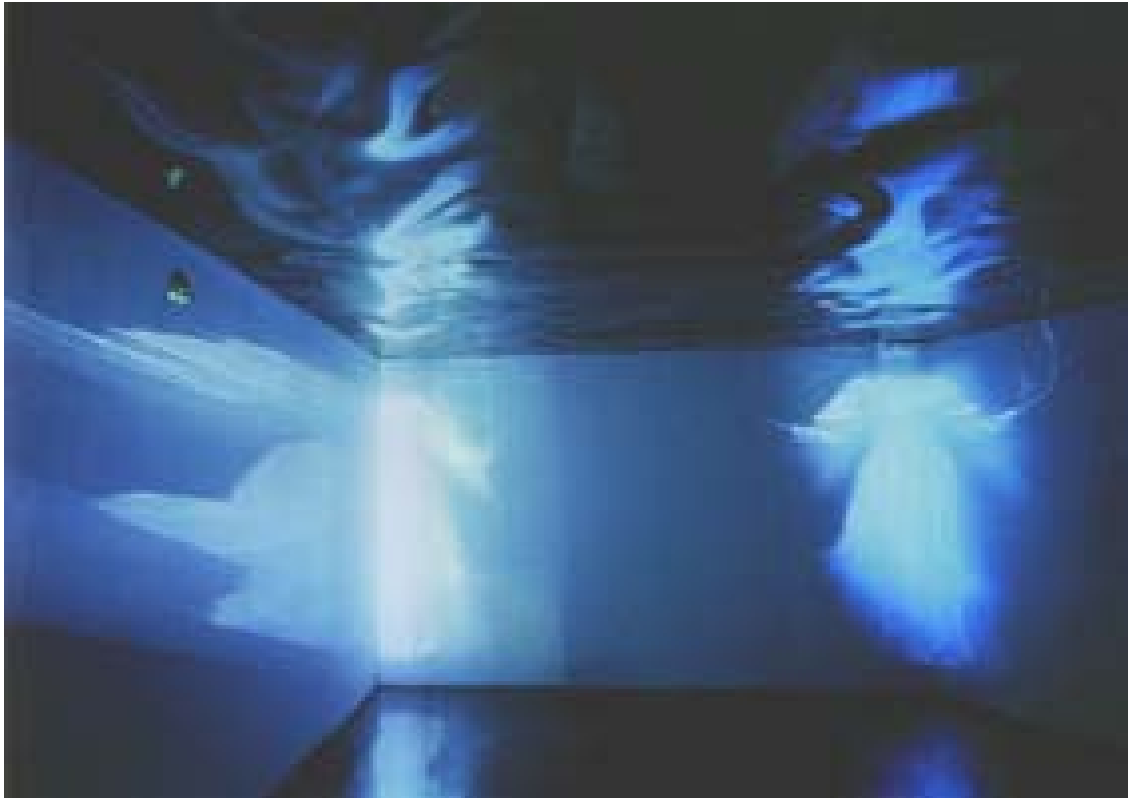
important whether these represent the probable or improbable. With faith, we create a world that could be remote from the one in which we are enclosed. Faith, in its religious sense, is much more powerful when it puts the hidden creator in the position of the one hiding behind his own creation, his image. Whatever is said in religion requires faith as its basis. The absurdity of accepting faith despite the unconditional fact of death is the ultimate sign of my dignity. The courage of utopia in art could be compared to conceptualism resigning from the matter (body), for an idea can remain itself even without an image. Compelled to die we leave the decision to the executor. Besides, we can assume that dying is a necessary evil, an image or an event seen from a wrong perspective – a perspective from which one can see only the evil aspect of the event. The history of religion shows that the relationship between God and human beings has always been renegotiated on the initiative of God. It appears that he always realised that his own creatures no longer fitted in with his divine plan, or his projection. Some say there were two important trees in the garden and from one of them it was forbidden to pick fruit. I do not know if it was possible to avoid doing this. In choosing the fruit of the tree of knowledge we lost life. He might feel shame watching his creatures, mortal humans, carrying on with their unconditional faith. We do not have any place to come back to. In art, I often don't know 'why' I did something although I know I was right. I also sometimes know that I disagree with something although I don't know why, yet. This type of objectivity, basically negated by science and certainly by society, is an everyday working tool of an artist. The video installation realised at Dartington entitled "Angels" left me in no peace of mind until 2004. (il. 29)



29. "Angels" – video installation, 3 video projections, Dartington College of Arts, Dartington, UK, 1997

The three overlapping video projections featured a girl in a Holy Communion dress, jumping with a skipping rope. One of them was projected in negative. Her leaps and her arm movements sometimes overlapped, but, for most of the time, one could observe the struggle between the two silhouettes: the white and the black. After a few minutes watching the video projection there appeared a short moment when the two irregular rhythms of the jumping white and black girl appeared perfectly synchronised. The white hand and the black hand were turning the rope simultaneously. In the centre, around the heart, it was possible to see the third reversed projection of the little girl.

In Hanover (il. 30), in a specially constructed room whose corners were obtuse, or acute angles, I realised the girl's projections in the corners.



30. "Angels" – video installation and sound, 3 video projections, Expo 2000, Kunsthalle Faust, Hannover, 2000

Depending on an observer's position it happened that the girl could be seen as a whole or the image was distorted into an abstract movement which could only be seen on one wall.

The ceiling and the floor were clad with mirror tiles causing the image to be reflected on the floor and ceiling. The three projections covered all the walls, filling the entire space with the skipping girl's continuous movements. For the first time my work was combined with sound. Many years ago, in Bonn, I studied Germany's strange language by repeating phrases and expressions heard from my fellow students. I already knew how to react and which expressions to use in a certain situation. For both parties it was a surprise when I managed to anticipate my German friend's statements or to say the same statements simultaneously.

It appeared unclear whose thoughts were being expressed and who was

speaking. It was like stealing the other person's voice in order to utter thoughts anticipated by another person. It soon became a rule that the person whose thoughts I was repeating started repeating them after or before me.

In this moment, the whole dialogue and the voices were nobody's, for none of the imitations and answers could belong to one person in an unambiguous way.



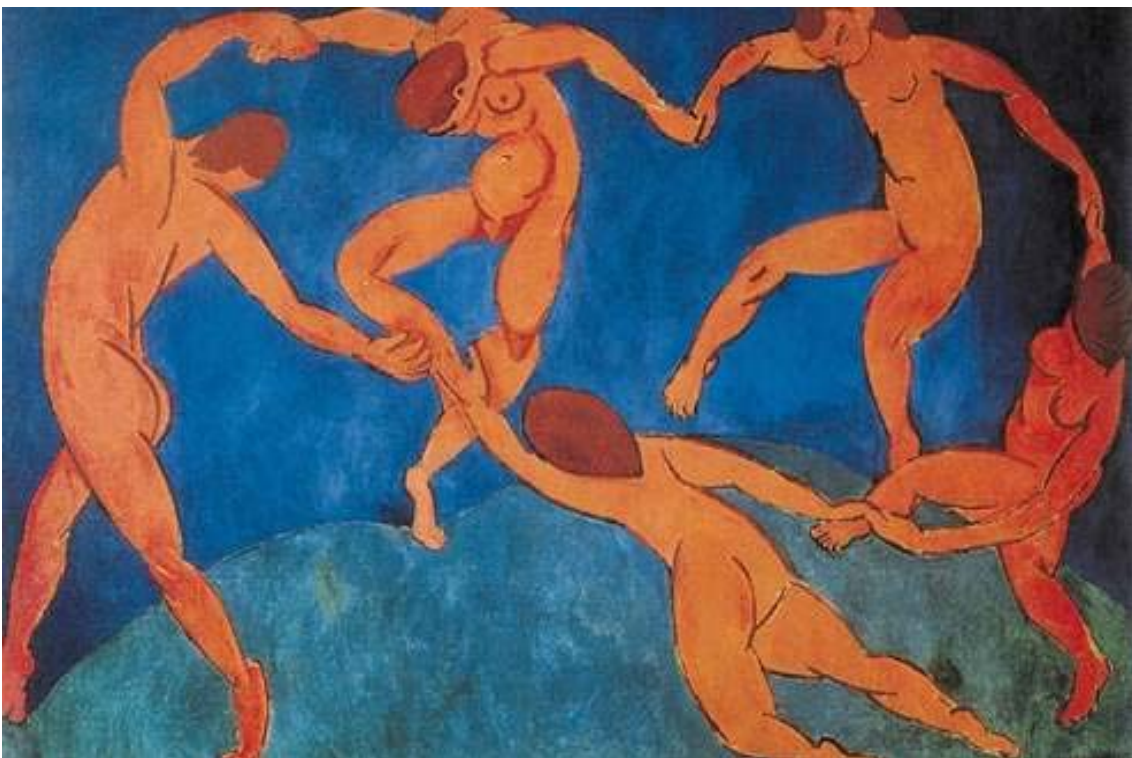
31. "Angels" – video installation, Nanjing Senghua Art Center, Nanjing, China, 2004

Repeated phrases became a conversation, creating a repetitive melody going in its own direction. This inspired me to search for the presence of parallel phenomena and objects, for events which happen before they happen, or are going to happen. In a music studio I stood embracing a girl. I squeezed against her lungs right at the moment at which she was exhaling air. When I let go of her, for a moment she continued gasping for air. Her breathing-in actually became accelerated, altering her breathing and making it unnatural and difficult to interpret because of its sound and irregular rhythm.

It emerged that my breathing had also become unusual, something I had not anticipated, as my lungs were also constricted. I pushed her voice out or kept her so she that could not breath in. When I suddenly released her, she sucked in air creating a sound. Later, I looped the sounds so that they could begin to be recognised as a repetitive melody, the tones of which entered the sphere of privacy, intimacy, of strong mental experiences and reactions. This never-ending dance – a jumping and unstopped melody of breath - imprisoned the girl in eternal repetition with no way out. The work touches a similar theme to that which appears in the works of **Edvard Munch** (il. 32), **Henri Matisse** (il. 33), or **Caspar David Friedrich** (il. 34) – loneliness on the verge of the mystery of life, to which there is no answer, and to which, sometimes, the scream is an involuntary reaction. I relate this theme to two images: first, an old stone wall remaining in the shadow and a division between a garden and over - illuminated landscape with a small stone wall with tiny doors left slightly ajar to let a ray of light from an eternal space into earthy life; second, contemporary photographic work by **Weng Fen** (il. 35) showing a young girl dressed in an innocent school uniform sitting astride a wall.



32. "Dance of life" – Edvard Munch, oil on canvas, Nasjonalgalleriet, Oslo, 1899



33. "Dance" – painting on canvas, Henri Matisse, The Museum of Modern Art, New York, 1909



34. "Landscape with falling apart wall" – aquarelle, Caspar David Friedrich, Kunsthalle Hamburg, 1837



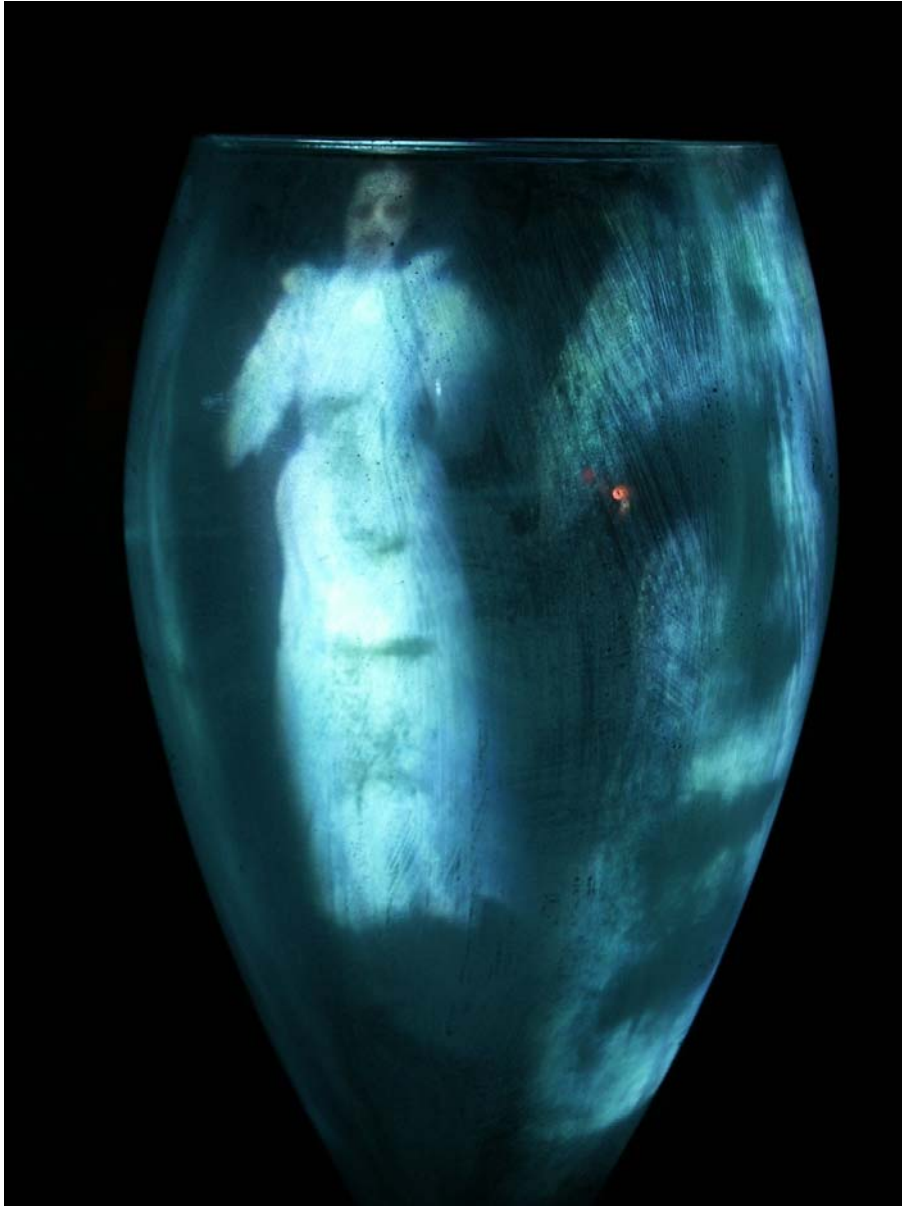
35. "Sitting on the Wall" – photograph, 160 x 200cm, Weng Fen, Shenzhen, 2002

In Shanghai I repeated the video of the skipping girl but now accompanied by a projection of an old woman also trying to jump with a skipping rope. (il. 31)

The images were projected on glass vases in a darkened space. Each image became double owing to the projection going through both surfaces of the vase. Both the young girl entering adulthood and the old woman were participating in a circle of life, unaware of what they were a part.



36. "Angels" – video installation, Art Peripheries – Media Factory, Pecs, Hungary, 2004



37. "Angels" – video installation, Art Peripheries – Media Factory, Pecs, Hungary, 2004

In yet another version in Pecs, Hungary, (il. 36,37) the projection of a young girl ran parallel to an image of a beating heart – both cast on a big foil-wrapped loaf of meat hanging on chains, so that the two projections were displayed side by side in a single line. The movement of the beating heart was difficult to recognise because its colours blended with the colour and structure of the raw meat. The same soundtrack of breaking breath accompanied the installation.



38. "Wedding" – installation, "Gartus Obscurus" exhibition, Galeria Miejska, Wrocław, Poland, 2004

It was in May 2004 that I participated in an exhibition “Gartus Obscurus”, City Gallery, Wroclaw, Poland. This second instance of using meat in my work was more confrontational, but still done with a great respect for the body as a physical presence of life. (il. 38)

I covered the table with large cuts of meat making them look like a tablecloth hanging down over the edges of the table in a regular way. Above the table I hung a crystal chandelier. On the meat tablecloth I placed miniature figures of a bride and groom with their witnesses. Right before them was a small girl waving to a priest who appeared to be standing on the opposite river bank. A musical box was mounted on the side of the table, provoking visitors to wind it up. Its solemn and sentimental music slowed down and faded away after a while. The smell of decomposing meat soon became a part of every visitor's experience in the gallery, confronting them at the same time with the sublime atmosphere of the wedding ceremony, the wonderful world of melody, and the reality of which the couple were unaware: they trod on rotting meat as if on the dying soil of the earth.

The earth was covered with death right up to the horizon. By manipulating scale, I allowed the viewer to participate in the installation as if from a hiding place, to see things from a perspective just as we observe life on earth when traveling by plane. The viewers who entered the gallery were drawn to my work in the cellar by the smell of rotting meat and, at the same time, the seductive melody.

I did not mind when, three days later, the owner of the gallery phoned to beg me to terminate my installation. It had reached the limits. It had become unbearable.

In New York and Kyoto I realised two works, which even more explicitly referred

to death and the sacrifice of killing an animal. (il. 39)



39. "Hannya shin gyo" – interactive installation, FusionArts Museum, New York, USA, 2004

In many cultures, sacrificing creatures to gods is probably carried out with great respect towards nature. Tribes fought for their lives by hunting food. When they sacrificed animals they had killed to pay tribute to their gods; they were renouncing things which were necessary to satisfy their own needs. Today killing – in a broader sense – of nature all over the globe is propelled by consumerism. In this work, however, there was a hidden trap waiting for the observer. In front of the slices of raw meat, which were fastened to the wall with screws, were installed strange and primitive appliances which, in turn, were connected to electric cables, which converged in one place – a black box with a button placed on the floor in front of the viewer's foot. The button tempted the viewer to step on it and see what would happen. One could hear the buzz of black electric shavers scratching layers of meat off the wall. Actually, what really happened could only be seen when the observer approached the wall. Apart from the fact that much in our lives participates indirectly in killing, my realisation was above all spiritual.

On the side walls to the left and right the viewer could listen to devices playing Buddhist prayers, "Hannya shin gyo".⁶ The melodies were played with mutual delays which created specific cacophonic waves and vibrations, sometimes erasing certain sounds. Overlapping prayers were mixed with the sound of six electric shavers, creating a common, unique mantric sound relating to death as a mystery owned by Buddha. One can experience similar overtones listening to Benedictine monks singing psalms to God. Death or killing takes on a new sense in the face of the eternity of time. For me it is fascinating to constantly come across similarities between the roads of a mystic and an artist, even though both can sometimes fail to recognize the presence of what is spiritual

⁶ Sutra of heart – sang during the buddhist meditation

in their cause.

One moment in **Father Maksymilian Kolbe's** life (il. 41) (a catholic priest who died in Auschwitz Birkenau concentration camp) has a special value in the context of my reflections, and forces me to ask several important questions about strategy, the approach to mystery, reading reality, maintaining a dialogue and recognizing the moment of a right decision.

However a reservation has to be made about that which an artist calls mystery, which to the mystic is surely God. For the mystic this is something that is beyond human understanding, unknown, almighty, infinite; **Moses** saw Him, **Paul** went blind when he saw the burning bush, the Apostles saw Him on Tabor mountain in the shape of light, and Peter said: "Lord, it is good for us to be here".⁷

However, the artist creates reality which is not a picture of anything. What we see is recognisable; there may even be some intended message, a play of associations.

It is a mystery despite the fact that no one has seen the mystery so far. How do we recognise mystery then? The art of advertising is basically about eliminating mystery in the sense that the message must be unambiguous. It is the engineering of sending messages. This excludes provoking what the artist searches for – a meeting with something he cannot express. Provocation, therefore, becomes a strategy of the artist. Waiting is also a strategy. Waiting in a mystic's case occurs by prayer, to an artist it means creation. According to

Master Eckhardt, a mystic does not pray. "His only prayer is to grow similar to

⁷

Bible - New Testament, Matthew 17/1

17Six days later, Jesus took with him Peter and James and his brother John and led them up a high mountain, by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became dazzling white. Suddenly there appeared to them Moses and Elijah, talking with him. Then Peter said to Jesus, 'Lord, it is good for us to be here; if you wish, will make three dwellings here, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.' While he was still speaking, suddenly a bright cloud overshadowed them, and from the cloud a voice said, 'This is my Son, the Beloved; with him I am well pleased; listen to him!' When the disciples heard this, they fell to the ground and were overcome by fear. But Jesus came and touched them, saying, 'Get up and do not be afraid.' And when they looked up, they saw no one except Jesus himself alone.

God”⁸, the God that remains a mystery. For me, eliminating that which I know so that only the unknown remains in my work, is my ultimate goal and desire. I try to eliminate what may be described, motivated or interpreted. What remains is beyond comprehension.

The difficulty is how to provoke an image of the unknown. How to wait for it. Realisation has two aims: to express oneself and get a message across to somebody else, or to confront oneself with an image which reveals something which has never been disclosed before. Now, what I see is more than has been shown. Manifestation is also creation but is intentionally minimised where the process of dialogue with matter is inessential. Dialogue is listening to the provoked. The important thing in dialogue is not the projection of what I know but the meeting or projection of what I do not know. Art amazes me. What Italians called “transcendere” – to transcend, for me as an artist is happening exactly at this very moment.

It is my privilege that I can set a trap for my thoughts. Kolbe received his God possibly without an attempt to understand him since one either accepts or assesses. Faith is trust by definition. To trust is probably the highest dignity that we possess. In the painting by **Robert Campin (the Master of Flemalle)**, **St. Joseph** is preparing a mousetrap. The strategy of trap. (il. 40)

⁸ page 163, Master Eckhardt, Deutsche Predigten und Traktate (W Drodze, 1987)



40. "St Joseph" – the right wing of "Triptych of Merode Altarpiece", Robert Campin, (the Master of Flemalle)
c. 1425, oil on wood, The Cloisters, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York



41. St. Maksymilian Kolbe, 1940

Somewhere in my understanding art is a trap and expression by accident.

Reading is reality. **Maksymilian Kolbe** was listening to something.

The prayer was certainly a way of being attentive – more listening than speaking.

Provoking. Art may also be a way of active waiting – in which if something appears one would certainly recognise it.

At a morning assembly, as usual, tens of prisoners were chosen for death in the gas chamber. One chosen man started begging to be let back to the row; he wanted to live because he had children. Kolbe stepped out of the row, came up to one of the officers and offered himself instead of the man. In those conditions we would consider the Kolbe's action totally absurd. He would become just another man sent to his death. The SS-men, surprised as they were, accepted his offer. A moment gave the possibility of choice although it was probably not a matter of choice. Kolbe could not be wrong in recognising this moment, which only he experienced. No rational justification made sense here. For Kolbe's to be an objectively rational act, He should have made certain, firstly, that the stranger would be guaranteed survival in the camp. Then he would have had to make one decision, which, even in itself, was heroic. Let us imagine the life of a man with the same awareness, but who hesitates and, for whom, a moment later, the course of events becomes irrevocable.

Until this moment, what Kolbe had been waiting for in his life and had remained inaccessible, now was uniquely manifested. A form of Holy Communion was taking place for him.

He was placed in solitary confinement. From this moment, I imagine that his spiritual life became increasingly meaningful whilst his physical life lost its importance.

A similar revelation can happen during the creative process when, in the act of

working with physical materials, things start to happen which are beyond physical appearance. I provoke a presence of what is invisible. This becomes essential for me. I do not know if I can say what that means.

I know, though, that what the Greeks called decorum⁹ fills me with the feeling of unjustified awareness. If it was not so I would feel bad. It is a specific form of justifying one's choices. The feeling that something is good in some situations is impossible to measure.

It is similar in discussions – we often cannot agree with someone's point of view, but, at the same time, we are not convinced about the correctness of our own convictions - we cannot be precise about them, let alone, justify them. Creation is the process of dialogue with an undefined person during which we ask questions, form answers, and negate them. We often do not know the justification of our decisions, although we consider them to be right. What we visually accept is often incomprehensible and yet it uncovers the presence of layers which may be meaningful. Often if somebody asks me about the meaning of my work I cannot answer, because the work is new and unknown for me too.

I am however, my work's mediator or an old carrier, or there are hidden in me experiences the presence of which I can now feel. Perhaps I can use the word supernatural (i.e. something not given to me as a 'thing', but which is accessible through my own will). A meeting with mystery is a foretaste of what I am unable to produce myself. What brings artists closer to the mystic is their desire to see at least fractions of reality, which are not their projection. What I am trying to

9 Decorum – Definition: 1. dignity: dignity or good taste that is appropriate to a specific occasion;
2. appropriateness of artistic element: the compatibility of an element such as

describe are my reflections after many years of searching. Mystics call this prayer to God; some artists may name it provoking the mystery.

Photographic Works

This chapter focuses on a series of photographic works called 'Doubles' in which one frame is multiplied in order to provide its mirror image. Photography as a medium uses the experience of other media such as drawing, installation, architectural works and video. In later descriptions of my works I blend notions of line, illusion, form and space. I also suggest that an image can be a still frame of a story that might give an impression of a surrealistic dream. Repetition may be used as a means of building up a new space.

Works from a series titled "Negatives" transpose light with shadow resulting in images which reveal a new dimension, a new texture, a new energy, and which appear hidden from the human senses. Through this conversion between light and shadow we may notice the things we cannot understand.

Photographic Works



42. "Inner Spaces I" – digital photography – Poznan Art Fairs, Poznan, 2005



43. "Inner Spaces I" – digital photography, 6mx 1.55m, 2 Asia – 2 Europe, Shanghai Art Centre Shanghai, China, 2005



Since I was a child photography has been part of my "adventure". I owe it to my Father who during the war started to work in the photographic studio of an Estonian German – **Nylander**. I am writing the surname for the first time, as, so far, it has only been present in my Father's words. For this reason it was misspelled.

After the war my Father worked at a harvesting machines production plant where he became boss of the photographic studio. I remember that place. A couple of years later, with my Mom, he opened their own photo business, which continued through the more conscious years of my youth. With great curiosity I helped with various works, e.g. taking photographs at International fairs, taking pictures of different machines placed somewhere outdoors, or photographing churches, sacred paintings, processions, holy communions and other church events.

It was an almost illegal job as the production and distribution of sacral photographs was as equally illegal as pornography. It was seen as causing harm to the lay country's propaganda in which **Joseph Stalin** (who just like me used to be an altar boy) forced people to replace religious icons with his own portrait in every Soviet Russian's home. I recently learned this and I thought to myself that we often do not know how deeply rooted we are in some knowledge and cult. Unaware of one's own traditions, it is only when colliding with others we discover the knowledge running in our veins.

When I look closely at art in the USA and Western Europe, and for some time now in China as well, I get the impression that art factories such as the ones of **Marco Costabi**, New York, and Chinese art appearing on the market are not

evoked by the need of reflection.



45. "Stansted" – Digital Photograph, 2003

Awareness of an unuttered feeling is the stronger the more it is complemented by the richness of one's own or one's national past.

What I should believe in? In images of Stalin, or Holy Mary, whose pictures were in every home in Poland? Stalin was conscious of the power of the image. Driving my car, I heard on the radio an interesting talk about the Czech author Konowicz who wrote in one of his books: "in the church there were only old women and men. They were not scared any more of communists. They were scared of death".¹⁰

My Father was also an artist / photographer. He won many prizes and exhibited quite often. But he could not win the fight with the connections and competition that, in the times of socialism, were largely dependent on co-operation with, or membership of, the party. I remember when he photographed the first secretary of the communist party with his wife receiving gifts at a Poznan International Fair. Suddenly he was grabbed by the arms and taken to a secret police office, where after checking his documents and workplace, he was let go with a prohibition on publicising the photos. The receiving of presents turned out to be improper material for publication in a state where everyone was

¹⁰ from the radio reading

supposedly equal.

Somebody once said a wise sentence that “if your complexes are the power of your development, it is good that you have them”. And so I try to observe my past, finding there the source of decisions I make in the present.

In 1972 my Father realised one of the first colour photography exhibitions, with the introduction of elements of solarisation, overlapping negatives, inversion and chemical intervention during processing. With that exhibition he finished his artistic activity seeing no sense any longer in fighting the environment in which he had to work. Perhaps my stubbornness is a continuation of my father's unfulfilled creative desires. Maybe my inborn resistance to the violence of the authorities tells me to create art and run a gallery, to animate artistic movement that is independent of pseudo social links and situations. My religious upbringing became a basis for different decisions from the ones made by

Joseph Stalin.

Let us now go back to my photographs. During my studies at Poznan Academy of Fine Arts in the atelier of **Wojciech Bruszewski** I transcended the limitations of traditional photography by experimenting with different forms of recording: film, photography, sound. My experiments sometimes finished with performance. The events were an unusual experience. For example we started by dividing **Andy Warhol's** work – ‘Electric Chair’ into squares 1x1 centimetres and then into a four-grade scale of greyness through which we defined the value of separate fields of the picture. We each created different mosaics, which interpreted the picture according to our own sensitivity and decision making. Then came a tape similar to a film tape consisting of strips filled with square fields drawn by us in different grades of brightness. The tape was used by us as a temporary recording of four sounds.

Each one of us chose one simple musical instrument – tambourine, triangle, hit-hat or a flute or so - deciding to play one shade of greyness. Thus fully focused, we started playing for three hours in front of a camera.

The camera randomly recorded our sign-language arguments about who was supposed to be playing. It also recorded our laughs and the disappearance of one of the musicians under the table when he was no longer able to keep a serious face. Human weakness eliminated part of the scores. Our motto “the man is a machine” eventually turned out to be untrue.

This academy memory remains in my mind as it taught me thinking through form so that in following form, meaning is generated. Each form is defined by its consistency and logic forces us to reflect upon it, drawing upon previous experiences, and, finally, it makes us design and generate new possibilities.

I have been working with photography again for the last two years. In my photographic notes an interesting problem started to appear. I called it “Doubles”.

I photographed: people waiting in the London Underground (il. 46); empty factories in Pecs, Hungary; my wife on a pier (il. 43); a football pitch at Dartington at night; a view on the river from a bridge in Poznan; and other things. The pictures were composed so that after repeating them or joining them with other pieces, new worlds would be formed. Often by repeating its mirror reflection, the presence of something extraordinary was revealed in our everyday surroundings. There is also introduced a new element of some exceptional geometry or world asymmetry.



46. "Doubles" – photograph, 2004

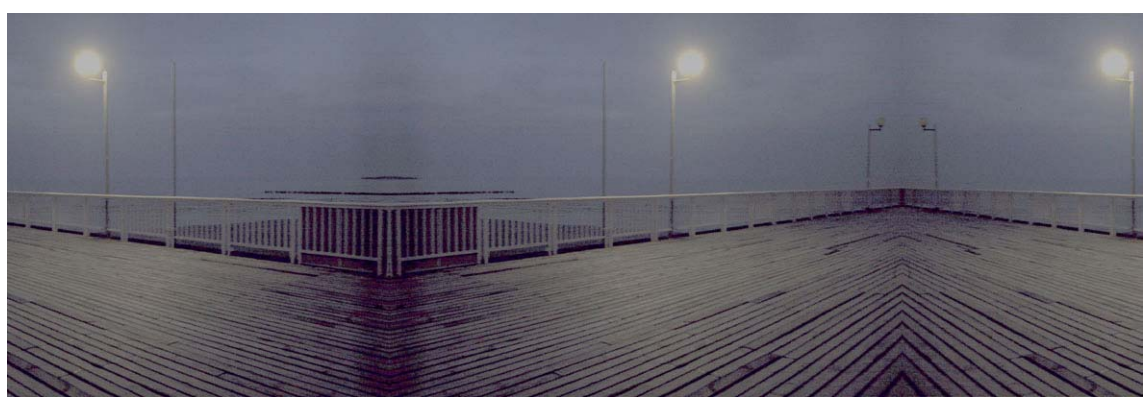
At first glance these photographs appear to be simple representations of reality, but a moment later one sees that something is not right.

One discovers almost identical fragments, then one learns that they are really the same. The continuation of a view is replaced by a repeated and reflected fragment, which encloses the universe in a claustrophobic space. The recurring motif used in my drawings on walls, implying the illusive presence of a different world, is sometimes also based on play with perspective and symmetry.

The world of symmetry is similar to a black hole, which once caught by the eye, cannot pass beyond the composition's frame.

I wonder whether there exists such a concept in music? In the view from the bridge in Poznan, the photographed light on the edge of the frame seems inessential, a mistake in a typical photo. However by repeating it and combining it with the rest, it becomes a mystical overexposure.

The mirror not only reflects and reproduces some fragment of reality but also covers and excludes another. We appear to be born and raised in a world



where geometry, symmetry and repetition are normal phenomena. However in nature virtually nothing is repeated, symmetrical, or equally rarely, geometrical. The reason probably lies in the fact that life is a process and everything ceaselessly changes, develops or dies. Symmetrical situations are rather prepared. They are the result of human will, and cost a lot of attention and work.

47. "Inner Spaces III" – digital photograph, IF MUSEUM Inner Spaces, Poznan, Poland, 2005

A symmetrical picture is a still image, appearing as if dead. Caspar David Friedrich (il. 48, 49) used a similar "double" method to construct a virtual surrounding with a gate to "the unknown" world. Two nearly identical parts establish a reality in which suddenly a gate appears which enables the procession of monks to recognise a goal in the space behind the image. There is a Kandinsky picture which I admire: (il. 116) the oversized woman with a tiny dog is on a street in Moscow. Next to her there is a small table that is out of scale.

Objects are viewed from different perspectives. Suddenly there is a black spot in the blue sky which has a shape similar to a cloud. I always wonder: has Kandinsky painted this spot on the top of an existing image, or has he deliberately left a free place in his painting in order to fill it with black paint? In my photographs, symmetry is also a kind of quotation, not of a "sentence" from outside the image, but a doubling of what already exists inside it, something additional, in order to cover and reveal a consciousness of another dimension within the previous one. The black surface in Kandinsky's painting is surely from another dimension, which cannot be named. On the other hand symmetry and geometry in architecture, design and everyday-use objects are so necessary and accepted that we may sometimes feel annoyed

by the fact that an object has a flaw of asymmetry, or when a painting on the wall is hung a little slanted.

I am fascinated by the problem of covering or uncovering the same by the same. The same twice. Once it covers, replaces, eliminates what should be, and is underneath, it makes you feel uneasy because it appears useless. How can one say that something is useless since if it were useless it would have to be deprived of all function; to have no reason to exist. We have the possibility of carrying out the act of creation without any reason, without giving any meaning



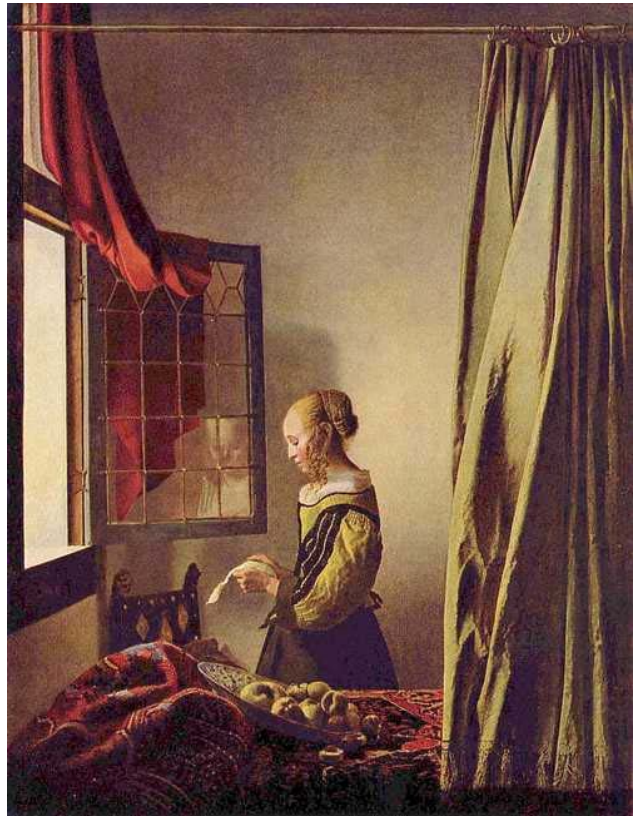
48. "Monastery Cemetery in the Snow" – oil on canvas, Caspar David Friedrich, 1819



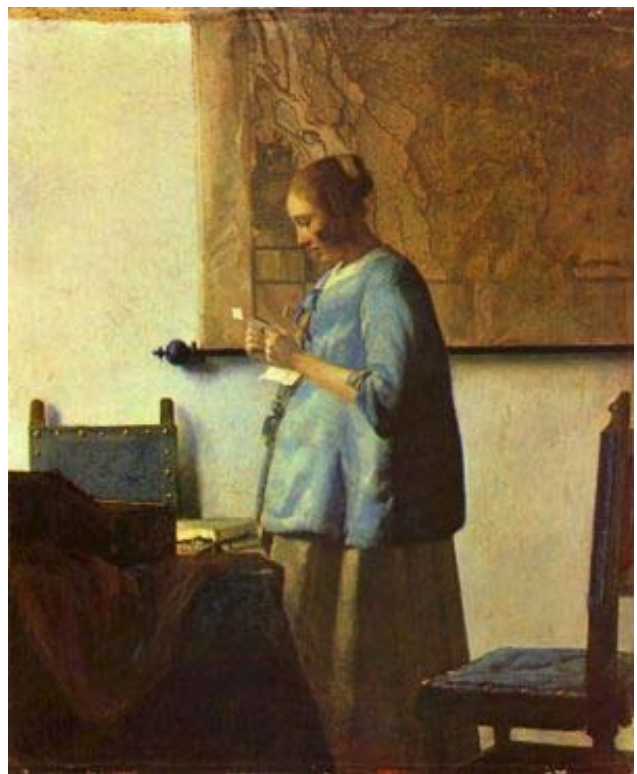
49. Monastery image with right part reversed

to it, without identity or intention. We may, for example, cut out a face from a newspaper and start shifting it to many possible places without justification. No one can forbid us to do so and we cannot justify it to anyone.

The "play", however, has its immensely deep meaning. It allows us to observe



50. "Girl Reading a Letter in Front of the Window" – Jan Vermeer van Delft, 83x64,5cm, oil on canvas, Gemäldegalerie, Dresden, 1658



51. "Woman in Blue Reading a Letter" – Jan Vermeer van Delft, after 1664, oil on canvas, 46,5x39 cm, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

a play without rules: the play whose presence cannot be negated. We also cannot negate its presence in a world in which everything has its grounds, reasons, and consequences. The consequences are a reason for subsequent events, strictly motivated. We are unable to think differently. Events seemingly inconsistent are signals indicating the presence of dimensions inaccessible to our trained brains.

The works of Chinese artist **Weng Fen** (il. 111) provided an initial inspiration for the development of these works. Other associations were also formed, for example, with the paintings of **Vermeer van Delft** (il. 50, 51), and **Edvard Munch** (il. 53) who has always touched me deeply.

In photographs by Weng Fen there are often Chinese pupils in school uniforms standing on sky scrapers' roofs in Shenzhen, sitting on walls, always seemingly between two worlds, on their edges. The tradition of enlightenment in the face of the unknown, is continued by **Caspar David Friedrich**. (il. 52)



52. "Monk by the Sea" – Caspar David Friedrich, oil on canvas, Alte Nationalgalerie, Berlin, 1809



53. "Two Human Beings – the Lonely Ones" – Edward Munch, Museum Oslo, 1899

At the beginning of the 20th century **Rudolf Steiner** described two women standing outdoors in winter, watching a sunset. One of them said: "Look, what a beautiful view". The other one replied: "let's go home, it's cold".¹¹ Two almost identical women the faces of whom we cannot see. Two different sensitivities.

The subject of my photograph was an elderly man in the London Underground who may have been waiting for a train's arrival. He was reading a newspaper. He did not know I was taking a picture of him. Between the pillars and the station's walls was an open perspective – the view of the platform from a train running in the opposite direction. I made copies of the photograph and joined them together so that the man stood in two places alone. The pillar in the middle of the photograph divides the space and the elderly man has no idea that his presence is doubled. The space behind him takes on additional depth but for him, in his intimate newspaper reading and waiting, it is

¹¹

from the lecture by Winfried Ogilvie during my studies at the Alanus Kunsthochschule in Alfter

unacknowledged.

In another video work, a girl is choking for air. Water sprays on her face, getting into her mouth, nose, ears, eyes, and makes breathing difficult.

The permanent fight for breath became my inspiration once again. In the recording studio I had pressed against a girl's chest, making her breathless.

The girl falls in the looped scene lasting half a second and which is repeated many times. After a while the rhythm changes and the tension decreases.

Looping traps the girl in time. Time becomes prison. On another screen we see calm breathing during sleep which seems a relief to the viewer, and after a second, it becomes clear that this figure, too, is locked in the loop. No-one lasts and no one passes away.

My works are probably going in some direction, but it is fairly obvious that I do not know where. Of course, I might forecast plots arising from previous experiences, but I cannot foresee life. How many times do we dream real life scenes, mixed together, and surprising memories, and accidental images, not making a rational unity. What I say certainly is not what I mean. It does not mean that my thoughts are wiser, deeper, or exceptionally spiritual. I feel, though, the presence of several layers spinning some plots by themselves – plots overlapping and permeating one another, sometimes manifesting their presence like a hungry man and then becoming silent, closing themselves in their own dimension. I sometimes have the impression that awareness wanders between the selfish body, desires, ambitions, dreams, satisfaction, memories, common sense, and layers probably called the spirit. All the layers communicate and influence one another, playing the same games. I may be sometimes watching them but even I do not know what that means. The field for my dialogue is life, group plays, art. My church teaches me that man

consists of the body, sensible mind, and the spirit. With the passage of time it has become simplified to the body and the spirit.

Perhaps it is sometimes better to simplify. In another place where Jesus scares away bad spirits out of a possessed man, Jesus then asks the man, "What is your name?" He replies, 'Legion'; for many demons had entered him".¹² Is this man unity, or harmony? Surely prayer and meditation speak about unity?

Art confronts me with layers, which appear during my searches.

When I concentrate and try to write something essential to me it usually results in the statement that "what I write is not what I meant". In art I cope with it by enjoying, almost encouraging myself to realise what I surely did not mean.

I discover areas inaccessible to words, enjoying the fact that I managed to notice or even realise what I cannot name. There are many different notes made in the last couple of years in my attempts to track my processes of creation.

They could not provide material for polemic because they were hastily scribbled under some impulse. They remain traces of associations, uncensored attempts to lock thoughts into words, to see them from the distance. Perhaps they are more authentic because they are not connected with anything and concern nothing but themselves.

¹²

Bible, Luke 8/26 – look at page 161

Scores – Drawing Concerts

In this chapter my experiences with drawing and sound are brought together in a discussion of the drawing concerts made between 2003 and 2007.

These works again deal with limits of cognition. It becomes obvious that we cannot translate drawing into sound and sound into drawing. Incompatible experience of time and space raise questions about the order of the universe and leave us without answers. At the same time individual decisions and experience appear as a justified inner part of the outer world. Scores are recordings of episodes that constitute a specific order and together with other episodes interact with each other. They, then, become our knowledge, too. However, I do not try to justify them.

Drawing Concerts

During my studies at Poznan Academy of Fine Arts in Poznan, I was very much fascinated by drawing and the individual energy hidden in it that emanated by means of gestures, lines, spots and blurs. Authentic power could not be concealed underneath well-designed compositions structured and based on planned concepts. Waiting and striking at the moment when internal readiness appeared left no room for a single moment of doubt. The gestures had to be sure and certain, one after another, without deliberations. When traces came after the hand it was necessary to believe that another move would be appropriate.

A moment of weakness stiffened the hand slowing down the pace and made everyone shy. From the drawing emanated the energy of the person, through moves made with the wrist, the eye, and the arm, with the entire body starting from the waist or knee. A gesture sometimes began with a move of the feet and then drawing resembled dancing. Now I can see how close we were to Japanese calligraphy. The drawing uncovered maturity or its lack. Years of running workshops in Poland and Germany gave me opportunities to observe the individual gestures of many people. Sometimes drawings were careful works rendered with hard pencil; another time they were pictures made in

complete oblivion of one's existence. A student from Turkey, **Fezi**, drew a portrait of a model. I was trying to remind him about observing reality. A while later, standing barefoot, all stained in paint, charcoal and pencil he stated with horror that what he had created was the picture of Madonna. Perhaps it was not a study of a model but certainly it was a study of areas of his own personality. Fezi standing in front of his work was part of the realisation.

Once I met an American artist, **Morgan O'Hara**. (il. 54) Her drawings were inspired by music. Her hands full of pencils moved just like a seismograph on paper.

The artist was focused on obtaining the most objective reaction to sounds by responding to them in the most automatic way whilst being part of the entire performance at the same time. I was a bit worried, though, by there being too much room for personal emotions, for interpretation via the artist's personality and subjective gestures. The work, however, made a huge impression on me and inspired me to search for relations between sound and the visual form.



54. "Formal Arrangements – Live Transmission" – drawing, Morgan O'Hara

My preparation for this type of searching arose from my previous experiences with the sound from **Bruszewski's** atelier, as well as with discussions about the

co-operation of art forms in **Rudolf Steiner's** philosophy and anthroposophy.¹³

In the meantime my adventures with drawing experiments included: dialogue via group painting and drawing; drawing self-portraits on a sheet of paper stuck to one's own face with the eyes closed; and drawing the person sitting opposite you, experiencing him or her only by touching the face with the other unoccupied hand. All these adventures prepared me for another challenge, which was looking for objective relations between the form and the sound. One of the group searches I conducted was drawing one's own shadow. Following the moving contour, the experiment's participants drew forms which were more and more different from their own silhouettes. In a short while they became dancers, chasing their own shadows as choreography. One could observe a weird ballet of unexpectedly changeable dynamics and unpredictable configurations between the participants. Attempts to find a dialogue between the line and the sound seemed too intentional however, with too large gaps enabling freedom of interpretation either by the sound or drawing. At Alfter, July 2001 (il. 59-65) a group of about 14 people sat with pencils and eyes closed on chairs set in rows one meter from the wall. There was silence. Suddenly, after some time, I heard a gentle scratching of a pencil against the wall. The wall acted as a resonating box amplifying the sounds of drawing. After a while another person joined the action of drawing. The dialogue, with closed eyes, consisted of listening to one's own sounds and of making decisions to participate, or fight with those of others. The pace and dynamics depended on each participant. It was also interesting to listen to

¹³ Rudolf Steiner characterized anthroposophy as follows: "Anthroposophy is a path of knowledge, to guide the spiritual in the human being to the spiritual in the universe.... Anthroposophists are those who experience, as an essential need of life, certain questions on the nature of the human being and the universe, just as one experiences hunger and thirst."

a dialogue with a wall. I acted as one of the participants without exercising any influence on the performance's course. Silent parts, solos and sudden accelerations were a result of the participants' sensitivity. Similarly, in some sensitive way, a point was reached when the concert faded away and one could sense some sort of agreement in the air that this was the appropriate moment to stop. It was an unusual experience. Similar concerts were realized in Germany, Great Britain, Hungary, Japan and the USA. (il. 55-58) Each time everything depended on the sensitivity and initiation of the participants. Different scores were created and different qualities of music emerged. A recording of the concert played in Budapest in a negative version revealed other surprising qualities, and raised questions about the interpretation of the negative.



55. "Drawing Concert" – "Shahzug" Performance Festival, Ernst Museum, Budapest, Hungary, 2003



56. "Drawing Concert" – "Shahzug" Performance Festival, Ernst Museum, Budapest, Hungary, 2003



57. "Drawing Concert" – "Die Beherrschung der Natur", Kunsthalle Faust, Hannover, Germany, 2003
18 participants



58. "Drawing Concert" – Howl Festival, FusionArts Museum, New York, USA, 2004

Despite an awareness that the work was about drawing and the collective

dialogue that would emerge sonically at the beginning, all participants tended to draw rapidly. When they entered into a conversation it was with their neighbour. Sensitivity grew stronger day by day, based on new experiments. An orchestra playing different symphonies each time was created. It often happened that several people played together amplifying one another and almost creating a common tone.

Drawings are like musical scores, which differ from one another although a common feature unites them. In spite of being an authentic record or rather trace of a concert they are probably impossible to be played or read by musicians. However, when you play a concert the eyes suddenly follow points on the wall, lines take on their sound, but one cannot decide how the piece of music spreads in time and how to read the score's drawing. The real wonder of the actions is their objectivity for there is no possibility of individual interpretations of the sound by drawing, or the other way round. One of the participants decided to write the word "art" on the wall. But drawing anything creates sound and remains insensitive to the performer's meaningful intentions. Both very young and very elderly people may take part in the concerts. A proof of that could be the concert performed at the end of workshops in Alfter near Bonn, 2002.

It seemed that everyone intuitively felt that the concert was coming to an end after the powerful and vigorous group and individual pieces. The last moments of silence, though, were interrupted by a girl who calmly raised herself from a chair and started to scratch the wall rhythmically with a metal brush resembling a toothbrush. She was standing there like that for a dozen or so seconds, keeping both the audience and musicians alert. Her scraping was subtle, quiet and regular.



59. "Drawing Concert" – Alanus Kunsthochschule Alfter/Bonn, Germany, 2003



60. another day

After a couple moments someone stood up and joined in. Then someone else started doing the same and a passionate brawl began. It didn't last long.



61. Using all the tules to sound
"Drawing Concert" – Alanus Kunsthochschule Alter/Bonn, Germany, 2003



62. the young solist
"Drawing Concert" – Alanus Kunsthochschule Alter/Bonn, Germany, 2003

One could hear fewer and fewer sounds and silence came, and then a storm of applause was heard. When we opened our eyes we saw the concert's record on the wall, a specific musical score which was impossible to be read by any musician. Later on when we were listening to the concert's recording and looking at the wall it was hard to tell which sound referred to which place. Actually, one could only recognise the sounds and lines, which lasted longer. The circles, made sometimes by several people at the same time, lasted long. The short, broken scratches caught the eye because the sound attracted attention to them. Finally, the knocked-in points in an obvious way constituted remembrances of pencils knocking and clattering against the wall. You could not read the most important thing, though: the thing which makes music different from the image and the spread of the piece of art in time.

We would notice a drawing in a twinkling of an eye and then we would perceive recognisable forms and objects. The strongest colours attacked the eyes. Only then did we force our senses to search the entire surface of the picture in order to find a content, story, narrative, or sense. Our eyes wandered all over the canvas like a wayfarer among elements of the landscape. On our way we came across local events, dramatic stories which soon built up stories to be told through our imagination.

Even though the image may be quite abstract we recognise the intrigues of compositions and decisions made by the artist; we discover a balance which decides whether the picture is entirely an event in time - because watching it is real time stolen from us by the drawing. Music is quite different. If one wants to be able to say something about it, it is necessary to listen to it from the very beginning to the end. You cannot have your own view on the whole piece of music until it happens completely. All colours, lines, spots and contrasts happen in time and make a composition until the last second. In my creations the two dimensions frequently meet. In a way we were watching a dead picture while listening to music - as if to an echo of a dead body, to conversations of those who had passed away.

The above-described concert was a result of two week's effort. We often performed on the same wall by both drawing and scraping off , thus uncovering new paint layers and disclosing the room's history in the history of the performed sounds. At some moment a colour for which we had no sound equivalent appeared - although one could describe certain similar features between a yellow colour and the sounds of our memory. Drawing per se, however, independently from the crayon's colour, produced sound and the closed eyes did not decide the drawing's character.

Sometimes I broke the existing rules, thus surprising the workshop's participants by introducing greater and greater freedom and transcending the limits of creation, and at the same time showing that freedom has limits which we discover for ourselves. During one of our concerts, at a moment when everyone played passionately, I noticed an old apple lying by the window. I threw it from a distance between the heads of the participants. The unexpected noise, which I cannot describe, surprised everyone. They hesitated for a while but to my satisfaction they understood the gesture and carried on their dialogue. The apple started to slip down the wall leaving a wet line behind it. Drawing does not have to be done by drawing a line on a surface with a brush or a pencil. The concert must be an imitation of reality. Reality is music. After two weeks of playing the concert, amazing visual results could be seen. There were more and more layers of pencil drawing; in fact the layer of lead was so intense and so polished that the wall started to shine, revealing the underlying texture of the wall. Here and there layers of paint were peeling off revealing other colours or even plaster beneath. Little music stories were inside bigger ones, or even inside the plaster beneath.



63. Final Score from the "Drawing Concert " after two weeks – Alanus Kunsthochschule, Alfter/Bonn, Germany, 2003



64. Details from "Drawing Concert" – Alanus Kunsthochschule, Alfter/Bonn, Germany, 2003



65. Details from "Drawing Concert" – Alanus Kunsthochschule, Alfter/Bonn, Germany, 2003

It was a new experience to think about drawing as a piece of music that could be read as a conventional musical score, or the other way round. Most surprising was playing the recording of our concert in the same room where we could see the drawing on the wall. We found that music did not refer to any of the recordings. We were unable to read the drawing in time according to the music played. We could feel the same emotions, however, in both music and silent scores on the wall. It was impossible to find satisfying answers to such questions and issues as: time on surface, layers in music, seeing the missing part of a drawing. Probably no answer was a good answer. All I knew was there were two parallel worlds, one born from the other, but still remaining dramatically different.

Also significant was the emotional bond that grew among the participants who did not know much about music but eventually became specialists in playing a form of music that nobody had any idea about. We were closer to each other after each concert when we discussed what had just happened during playing: who had had solo parts and why, whose mood had been translated to music, who could not get into playing easily that day and why. Everyone was a musician now and felt the burden of group responsibility for our concerts.

When we finished playing, and our concert was over, 140 people in the audience clapped their hands. We realized that we had played quietly, in a conservative manner, in order to be understood by our listeners.

Then my thoughts went back to thinking about the clash between the music and the recording. Father John, a Benedictine monk, responsible for inter-religious dialogue, once told me that all monks meet the same God through mediation. But as soon as they utter words about the experience they use words that do

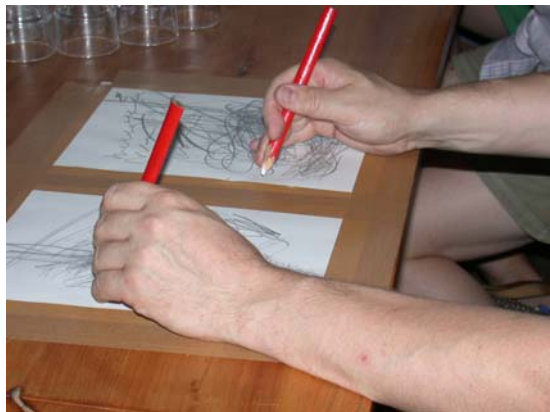
not represent their thoughts and feelings. Then they start uttering different Gods' names and they realize that each God is different.

One of my numerous activities around music was an adventure called "Partitura Mensa" (Refectory Score). (il. 66, 67) We were sitting among people eating and trying to focus on the surrounding sounds and noises.

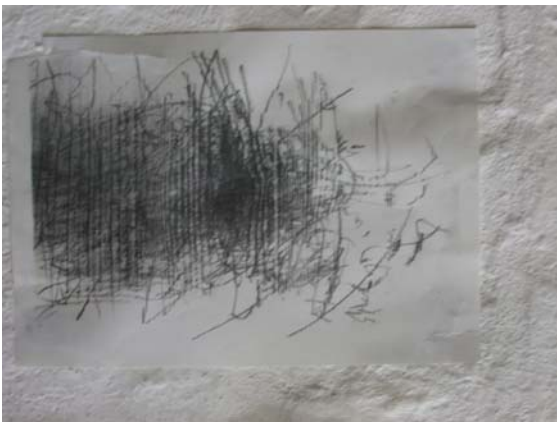
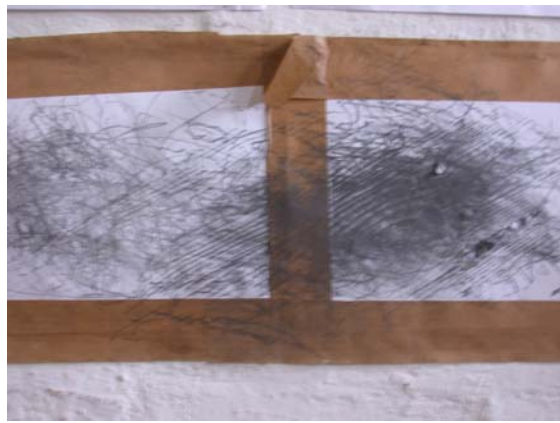
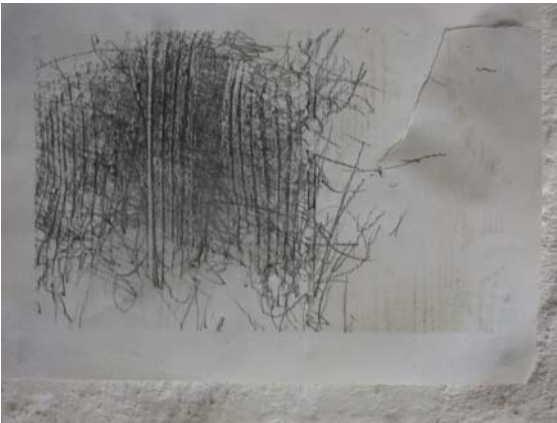
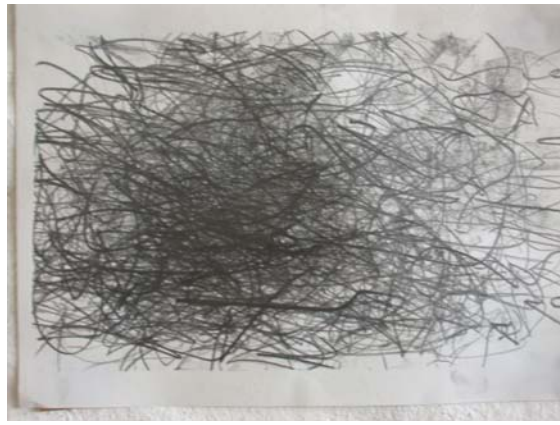
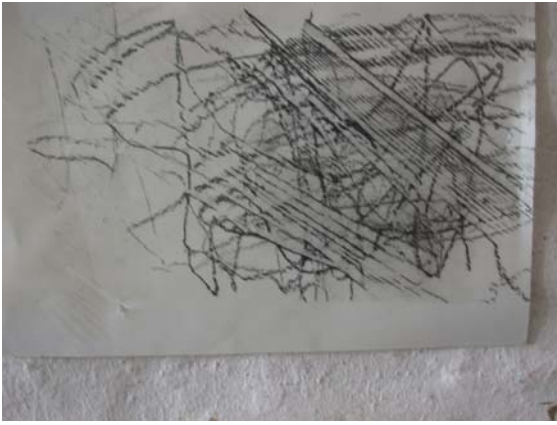
On the table were two sheets of paper. Under the feet of each person making the drawing were two pieces of paper glued to the floor so that both hands and feet could scan the reality of sounds coming from four sides. Decisions turned out to be more difficult than we had expected: the most trivial one was probably that we were hungry as well as wanting to draw, and the food's smell reached our consciousness. There was an extremely large number of sounds. The noise of hitting plates and the clank of forks, spoons, and knives, and smacking lips, (including our neighbour's comments and polite questions about what we were doing).

It surprised me a lot when I heard the scratching of other musicians' pencils and noticed how their music had become reality to which I should also react.

I was doing a concert about a concert. We sat in the cafeteria to scan it as a whole and its different fragments. The noise seemingly spread all over the room but it had its local aspects. Making decisions at once and reacting subconsciously, sending orders to the feet and hands so that each one of them was doing something different. One cannot compare it to a drummer playing as the drummer projects one music from one source. We had a countless number of stimuli; reactions were different, in different rhythm, intensity and suddenness. The brain functioned only to transmit and to acknowledge lack of control.



66. "Partitura Mensa" – drawing concert, Alanus Kunsthochschule, Alfster/Bonn, Germany, 2003



67. "Scores" – Drawings from "Partitura Mensa", Alanus Kunsthochschule Alfter/Bonn, Germany, 2003

The drawings done with the feet contained one more interesting trace in the print of the floorboards. I left one of the drawings together with a paper tape to preserve the part of the uncontrolled drawing with feet. My desire was to gather several musicians and perform the concert of the refectory score. Each musician would receive one drawing to perform from.

My students were not afraid of drawing once they started to focus on the

correlation between sound and drawing. Learning takes time and it is not a singular experience. Learning is a process. Therefore, it led us to another experiment. We went to a student canteen to have lunch. We scattered around. We attached four pieces of paper to the floor and a table. We attached pencils to our feet and hands. We were ready to make a transcript of sounds we could hear in that particular place. With our eyes closed we tried to transfer the sounds of people eating, using cutlery, crockery, talking, children laughing and even people asking questions about what we were doing; we tried to transfer all that to the surface of paper by using pencils. In that way we were having our lunch. We kept recording sounds during the whole lunchtime. A vivid discussion started when we hung the drawings on a wall. A common opinion was that we were unable to record the sounds that we had heard. Basically, we could control our legs less, but they recorded low-resonance sounds. An interesting question arose: had we intended to draw other people drawing as well? It would have been just a quotation. But one was sure, that it was the case: we could easily point to fragments of the transcript and identify those which had been drawn with eyes open. They looked insincere. They seemed unnatural.

Searching for interactions and correlations between sound and a drawing as a process stretched in time took its course in different ways. We now took random and casual objects, and stood in two lines facing each other. Then, we were trying to slam the objects against a stony floor. We had to know that making decisions takes and that this would result in delays; we had to know that objects vary in weight and shape and that they would fall with different speed. It took us a while to figure it out and to become fluent enough in making noise exactly as we wanted.

By chance I chose a piece of silky fabric and strangely enough when it hit the

ground it made no sound whatsoever. There was action but no sound.

Therefore, there was a visual image with no sound representation. At another time the rhythm was distorted by an improper decision to throw an object into the air instead of the ground. Thus, the timing was incorrect and silence broke into the sound composition. It was intriguing to check how musical concepts such as delay transferred to drawing might work in this context.

I asked a group of students to make a still life by doing frottage images of objects. Surprisingly, the drawing turned into a concert again: one could hear one's instrument play: a metal heater, rubber doormat or wooden logs.

Someone using a glass pane was making visual silence, as its frottage was just a grey smooth surface. Eventually all the frottage images were put together onto the wall creating linear compositions: scores consisting of various frottage elements. It was quite natural for us to put everything in a line. But then we started adding elements below and above the main line of composition. Then, we realized we had to use a larger number of musical instruments to play it.

Some parts were overlapping, some were colourful, others were of a particular shape. Later on, ready-mades appeared such as cartons, wrappings, packages and newspapers. Sound-inspired drawing proved how everyday routine activities like eating could be compared to drawing. We do not give second thoughts to the act of painting, sculpting or drawing. Most of the time we wait for the results of our actions. While drawing a still life we can see some pots, apples, pears, candles, a table, forks, a table cloth, glasses, a fragment of a chair or window. A person eating was doing exactly the same but backwards. All the elements were disappearing. However, some new objects appeared such as a soup bowl, dessert dish or a glass of water. The drawing was happening backwards. People eating were de-constructing a drawing not with

the help of a pencil, rubber, charcoal or a finger but by using a spoon, fork, knife or a tea-spoon. However, their body movements were very precise just like an artist's drawing. Both diner and artist performed a specific dance. Drawing either with pencils or cutlery was a process stretched in time accompanied by necessary sounds. Therefore the processes were controlled by specific rules. In a similar manner to drawing, diners had to move their hands according to their eating decisions.

Lines and surface are sunk in time. They cannot exist outside time. Black and white exposed to light work differently from colour. Black and white reveal contrast while colour is a subject of saturation. We cannot tell if grey is yellow, blue or pink. In paintings when colour is darkened and reduced, black and white appear. That is the end of paintings. On the other hand, drawing often uses only black and white avoiding even grey scale. Painting is a process which occupies time as well. We can watch someone painting. I am deeply interested in the process of shapes appearing and disappearing, and their emerging correlations and conclusions.

A similar level of sensitivity was revealed in "Drawing Performance" arranged by Morgan O'Hara. She was one of the guests invited to Inner Spaces Festival 2002 in Poznan. She asked everyone to leave the Gallery and meet by my Volkswagen Transporter. Then, she asked the group to take out everything that had been accumulating in there for years, and arrange it on the pavement. Rubbish was put together in a pile and removed. Everything else created a rational mosaic.

It was simply ordered and the pattern was not subject to aesthetic thinking. It was a result of cleaning.

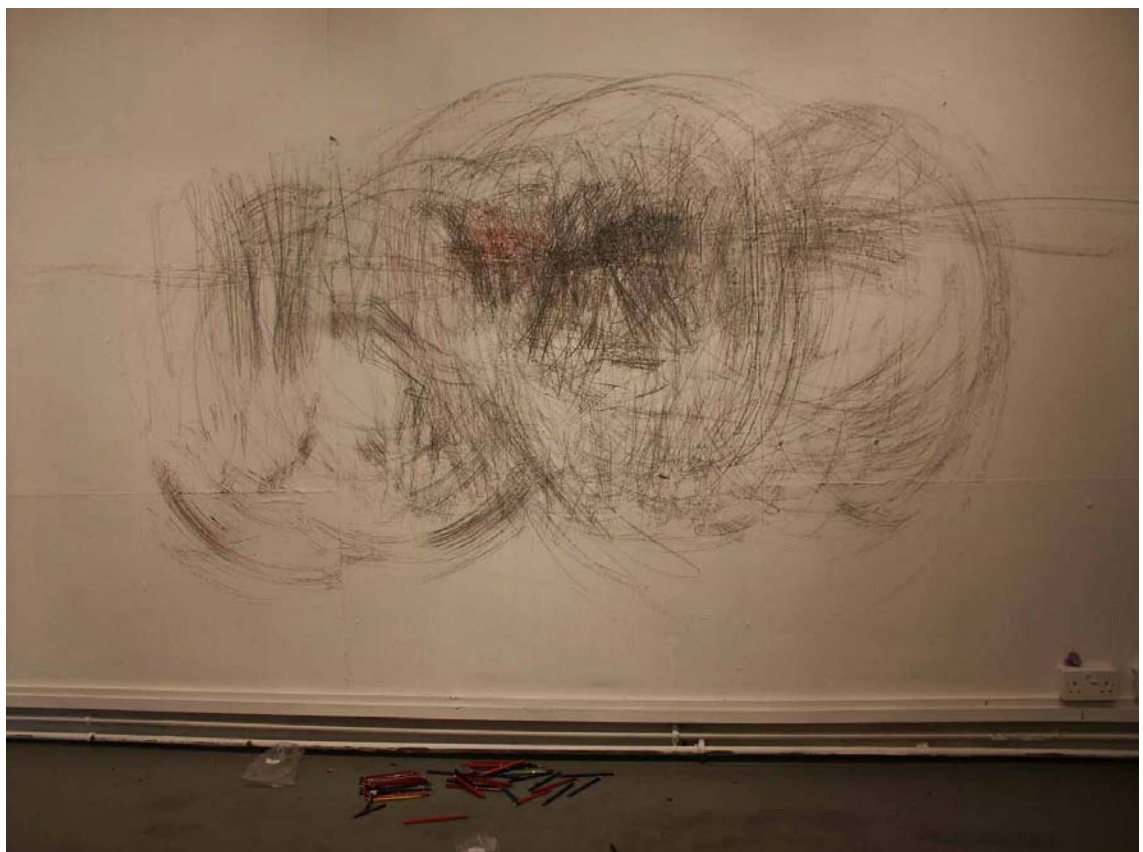
Next came washing and hoovering my car. It was similar to using a rubber

in a traditional act of drawing on paper. The car was looking better, it was looking more like a car than before. Finally, everything went back in the trunk but in a correct new order. I tried to watch all this action not from a practical, functional perspective but by concentrating only on the formal aspect of the processes that were taking place. I tried to see the everyday activities in a different light, a formal light.

From the beginning of my work with drawing and sound the possibility of a solo concert or rather a solo performance had always existed. I was waiting for the moment when I had gained more experience so that such a concert would have a stronger basis and depth. For this work at Dartington, (il. 68) four musicians and an opera singer were ready to react to each of my movements. I was wearing a tuxedo and white shirt; I took off my shoes. In my hands I was holding about thirty pencils and colour crayons. I assumed a certain strategy of drawing. One summer in New York I noticed that, after drawing for some time, a situation emerges when the desire to cover a large area with lines, so that a large black surface is created, leads to physical exhaustion. Therefore, we have to fight with a surface, with duration, and the limits of the body. I am afraid that I cannot be unnatural and pretend. The performance was an attempt to draw as quickly as possible, until exhaustion brought the action to a close, so that the surface within my arms' reach was all drawn black. I knew that it was impossible. I wanted to confront the audience with my internal effort. I wanted time, helplessness, passing, lasting, stubbornness and desire to be the score for the concert.

The musicians surprised me at the very beginning. Standing in front of the wall with handfuls of pencils, I had to put the pencil tips to the wall to bring them all close one surface. At that moment I heard a sound resembling the sound

produced by an electric short circuit.



68. "Drawing Concert" – "Crossing Time II", Dartington College of Arts, Dartington, UK, 2005

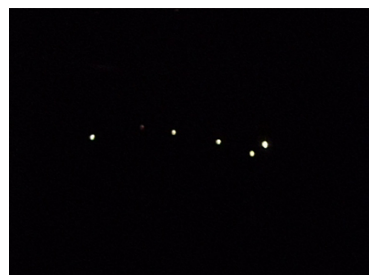
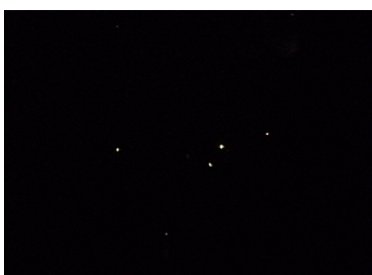
The feeling was unusual, for whenever I had to set the pencils evenly I was afraid of electricity, but I felt nothing. My gestures in silence turned out to be immensely strong. Later on, when I became too tired to move my hands, the music stopped and my deep breath sounded like a solo part until the moment when, despite being breathless, I tried to keep drawing. These breaks were repeated a number of times and it was becoming clear that my intentions were impossible to enact. Further surface shadowing was getting pointless. Tiredness did not let me draw with such a quick pace. My hands and arms were aching. To leave the last traces of my actions I ran along the wall several times, virtually drawing with my feet. I bowed to the audience. The concert was over. When I watched the video record, I recollected a photograph of **Tadeusz Kantor** standing on a chair half-sunk in the sea and conducting the waves. (il. 69)



69. "Sea Concert" – Tadeusz Kantor performance, photography – Eustachy Kossakowski, Poland, 1967



70. Before the concert. Preparations of the musicians and projection of drawers from the other room



71. Movement of small torches fixed on the end of pencils



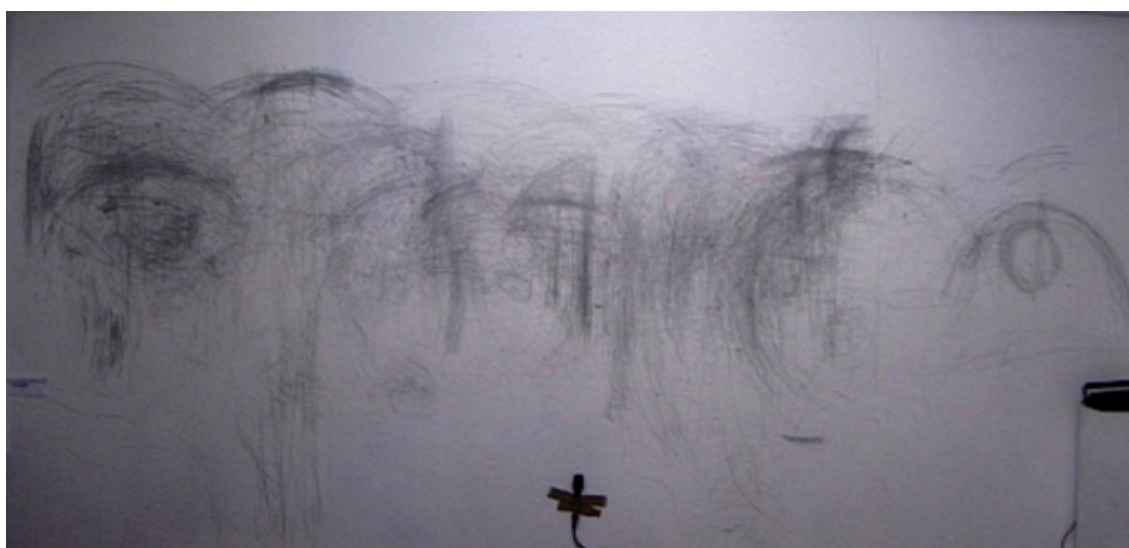
72. Playing musicians, myself walking between two spaces



73. Projection of the lights in the musician's room

The most complex drawing concert occurred at Dartington College of Arts in 2001. (il. 70-74) I wanted to examine the interrelation between recorded sound and drawing.

To achieve that in a dark room there were five people drawing on a wall with their pencils equipped with a tiny light. A video camera recorded the scene of moving lights onto the wall of the neighbouring room. Five musicians played music reading from the track of the little lights.



74. Score remaining after the "Drawing Concert", Dartington College of Arts, UK, 2001

Therefore, two simultaneous concerts were played. The audience could choose to move from one to the other, hence creating their own musical composition. It was easy to expect that these two concerts would have nothing in common, apart from the fact that one was the outcome of the other. Moreover, when the concerts were finished, and all the lights were on again, the recording of the drawing concert had nothing in common with the music that had just stopped. Unbelievably, the relationship between these two concerts seemed very close. Nevertheless, none would dare to play the same music again, simply on the

basis of the drawing recording, or draw the same concert on the basis of the music they had just heard. Therefore, there remained a huge asymmetry between the visual and the aural.

Fugue

Apart from sound performances and video works I performed a work that sparked off many questions related to the roots of my artistic practice. I called it: 'Fugue'. (il. 75) I had long been interested in sound that resulted from either experiencing an image or a body. The sound used in the work 'Angels' shown in Kunsthalle Faust in 2000 was produced in a music studio. A girl tried to breathe regularly into a microphone placed next to her mouth. For the recording I held her tight, stopping her breathing. As she tried to gasp for air, so I violently and suddenly pushed out all her air with one strong grip.

Once repeatedly duplicated, this sound created a dramatic melody full of fear, dismay, delight, rapture and timidity, together with madness and insanity.

The sensations were repeated like a monk's chant falling into the mystic trance of a prayer.

'Fugue' was inspired by Jan Sebastian Bach. Conceptually it was based on repeated fragments that were copied, multiplied, played backwards and overlapped, creating a sequence of musical events looped in time. In a similar way I used short video clips of a girl who defends herself and chokes as water gushes into her face. There are three screens projecting three different scenes played forward and backwards. The girl is trapped, as in a fugue, in never-ending time.



75. "Fugue" – video and sound installation, Kunstforum Bonn, Germany, 2006

The work is actually a music composition based on a composition of images spread in time. A fugue is a piece of music structured according to the rules of Nature, but most of all, it is an intellectual riddle, a creation of virtual reality uncovering looped independent areas due to their symmetry and repetition that keep our minds imprisoned, causing anxiety and fear of the presence of the Unknown.¹⁴

¹⁴ fugue (Fr. 'fugue', Ger. 'Fuge', It. 'fuga'). Type of contrapuntal comp. for particular no. of parts or 'voices' (described thus whether vocal or instr., e.g. fugue in 4 parts, fugue in 3 vv.). The point of fugue is that the

vv. enter successively in imitation of each other, the 1st v. entering with a short melody or phrase known as the *subject* (different from sonata-form 'subject' in that it is merely melodic and short). When all the vv. have entered, the *exposition* is over. Then (normally) there comes an episode or passage of connective tissue (usually a development of something that has appeared in the exposition) leading to another entry or series of entries of the subject, and so on until the end of the piece, entries and episodes alternating.

Contrasts of key constitute an important element in fugal construction. In the exposition the subject first appears, naturally, in the tonic key; the 2nd v. to enter with it does so a 5th higher (or 4th lower), i.e. in the dominant key, the name *answer* now being attached to it; the 3rd is a repetition of the subject (in a higher or lower octave) and so on, subject and answer, tonic and dominant keys, thus appearing alternately, according to the no. of 'voices' engaged. One function of the *episodes* is to effect modulation to various related keys, so that the later entries may have the advantage of this variety, but once the exposition is over it is not considered necessary that further series of entries shall always alternate as to keys in the subject-answer manner.

In addition to the subject there is often a *counter-subject* appearing in the exposition and probably later in the fugue. It is of the nature of a melodic acc. to the answer and subject (generally in double counterpoint). The v. which has just given out the subject or answer then goes on to the countersubject whilst the next v. is giving out the answer or subject and so on.

Sometimes in later entries there is overlapping of the subject, each v., as it gives out, not waiting for the previous v. to finish it but breaking in, as it were, prematurely. This device, which is called *stretto*, tends to increase the emotional tension of the entry in which it occurs.

Occasionally, after the exposition (and possibly before the 1st episode) there is a *counter-exposition*, much like the 1st exposition in that the same 2 keys are employed. Appearances of the subject (in the exposition or elsewhere) are sometimes separated by something of the nature of the episode, but shorter, called a *codetta*.

There exist 2 types of fugue with 2 subjects (or *double fugue*), one in which the 2 subjects appear together from the outset, and another in which the 1st subject is treated for a certain time, the other then appearing and being likewise treated, after which both are combined. In choral fugues (e.g. in an oratorio movement) there is sometimes a free instr. part, an *accompanied fugue*. The device of pedal is often employed in fugue, especially near its close.

There are cases in which, instead of the answer being an exact replica of the subject (*real answer*), it is slightly changed in 1 or 2 of its intervals (*tonal answer*), resulting respectively in a *real fugue* and a *tonal fugue* (an absurdity since the tonal treatment may not extend beyond the exposition).

<http://www.classicalarchives.com/dict/fugue.html> – Classical archives

Obituaries

This chapter addresses the 'Obituaries' cycle of works made primarily between 2001 and 2004.

In these works, I manipulate a quotation – using a newspaper advertisement. Each work interferes with the visual structure of a message. This action has formal and philosophical consequences – it reveals in obituaries the possibility of facing only the surface triviality of questions. Suddenly, they reach further than simply the tragedy of someone's death. They pose questions about the intangible but provide no answers.

Obituaries

After my grandfather's death my mother suggested that I went with her to my grandmother's home as there were plenty of objects which were left and probably no one from the family would want to take them. She thought that, being an artist, I could find something of interest. What she really meant, though, was one thing which still inspires me today. My grandfather during World War II started collecting obituaries. I guess it was only after the war that he pedantically started to glue them into a notebook, one beside another, sometimes overlapping, so that it was sometimes possible to read the one underneath. He collected obituaries until he died in 1991. He chose politicians, officers, charity workers, musicians, artists, actors, people from the family and completely unknown individuals. Perhaps they were people he had come across during World War II in General Government (the zone of Poland officially occupied by Germans since 1939). Some were certainly his neighbours or work colleagues or people with interesting stories. It was a certain array of people who meant something in my 92-year-old grandfather's life. For me, perhaps half of them were recognisable. He was also a stamp collector. Sometimes I imagined him sitting at his old desk gluing in his obituaries and then reading them like a book page by page when my grandma would go to sleep. Perhaps they all made a narrative.

Obituaries in most countries are easily recognisable in their form. They are

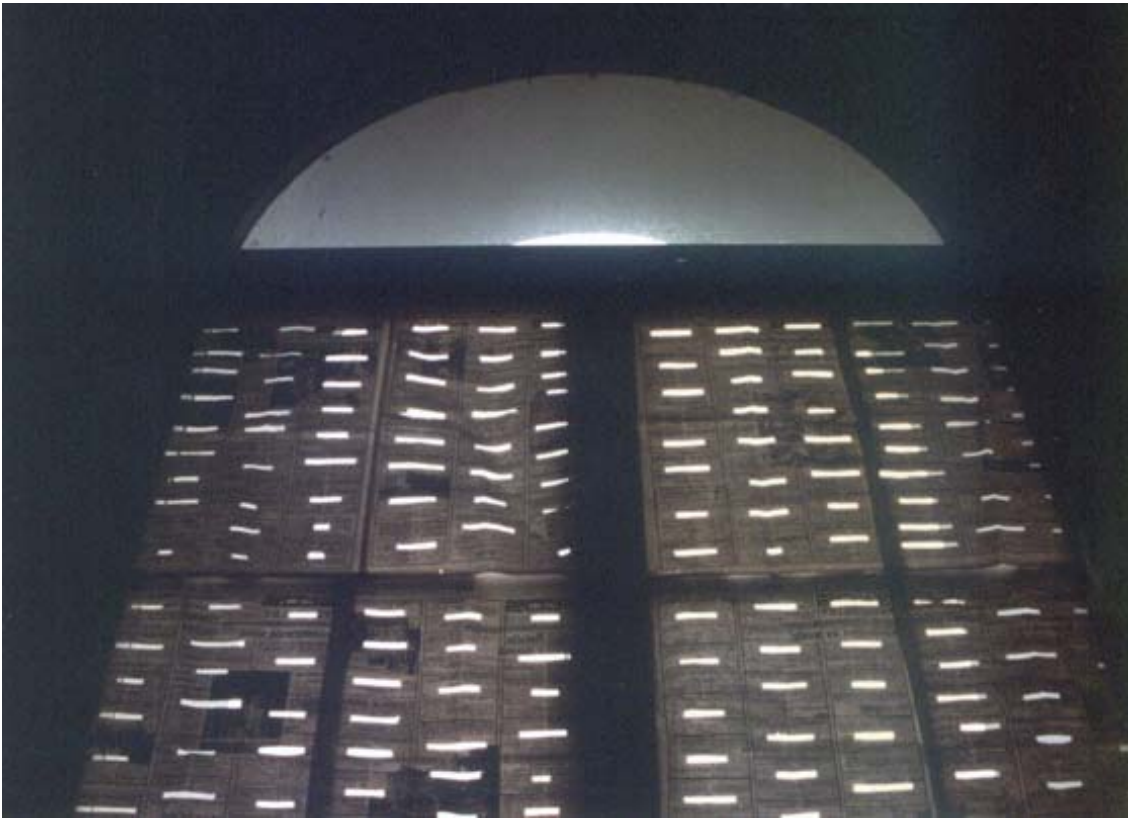
usually large and include a name or sometimes a photograph, a cross or fern leaves and a black frame. Obituaries are usually placed at the end of a newspaper. Sometimes, like in Canada, they are mixed with new birth announcements so, for a person not knowing the language of death, it mingles with the beginning of the eve of life. Rich or famous people have big obituaries, sometimes several, because their friends, work colleagues, brothers in arms, trade unions, relatives and sometimes important institutions, extend their condolences. An obituary is often the only instance of making a person's name known to the public: their only public appearance.

Usually only few people buying a newspaper know the person and even fewer people are truly moved by the fact of this person's death. The black frame, then, separates the deceased from the vigorous life that happens on the newspaper's pages every day. An obituary is actually a space from behind the world which suddenly appears in our daily existence's dimension.

My first realisation of these ideas was an installation in a palace at Skoki, Poland. (il. 76) I used entire pages of obituaries from newspapers, cutting out all the names from them and then sticking the pages onto windows and entrance doors around the building and in the entrance lobby. By cutting out the names, light could be let inside the room but not much could be seen through the openings. The upper arc-shaped windows were not covered. One could see the sky through those.

I easily accepted the fact that there was no light in the openings which I left in the obituaries on the doors and windows in the lobby. It was dark in there.

The hall suddenly became a waiting room or the River Styx.



76. "Obituaries" – installation, Skoki Palace, Skoki, Poland, 1993

Darkness was not just a hole but active energy, something alive, like a wind in the stillness of air. Blackness and darkness are not a lack of something or emptiness. The darkness did not draw anyone in or push them out. It was like a state of deep motionlessness and suspended movement, an uncertain state, potentially ready to accept any change.

I wouldn't like to refer to darkness as an emanation of evil forces because it is a one-sided view. In the mystic poetry of **St. John of the Cross**, night and darkness provide a state of safety in which the senses are not led astray, and do not confuse the spirit.

Another realisation was created during an exhibition entitled 'Memories'.

(il. 77, 78) These works are sorts of monuments to mostly unknown people.

I enlarged the obituary to a huge size printing it on transparent tracing paper.

Transparency is a specific state for what now attempts to be absent, losing its



77. "Obituaries" – installation, CCA Inner Spaces, Poznan, Poland, 2001

visuality whilst, at the same time, remaining physically on the spot. Is the body a presence or only a proof of existence and a trace? Each obituary also had it's own number.

I started enlarging it until it became the only sign present on a piece of tracing paper, several meters long. A blow-up is a word which signifies intensified attention, inward-looking observation. But enlargement may also serve as a method of erasing traces and losing the sense of wholeness.

I am glad that I can add one more sense to somebody's life, another mission, although it's only in the form of art. During the same exhibition I realised one prayer, a mantra or reading of psalms. High tones resembled female voices and low ones imitated voices of singing monks. Listening from one side I had the impression that the voices were wandering. The lonely chair is always a kind of witness, but without a person.



78. "Obituaries" – installation, CCA Inner Spaces, Poznan, Poland, 2001

In another work I enlarged cut-outs from Japanese newspapers. For those who don't read Japanese, these obituaries are fairly difficult to recognise there. In one line there may be several of obituaries, sometimes with portraits of the dead next to those of the newly born. This time the photocopy was done on black paper with light reflected only at a certain angle. From the hanging black strips of obituaries I created a labyrinth in the centre of which an oblique light



shone. (il. 79)

79. "Obituaries" – black photocopy on black paper, MAMU Gallery, Budapest, Hungary, 2002

In France (il. 80) I responded to a given site. In a large dark shed I built a small room, an interior within an interior. For the second time inspiration came from the idea of a sacrum in a sacrum. In Jerusalem Jesus Christ's grave is hidden in a chapel which is situated in the middle of a church hiding the entire hill of Golgotha. The idea of a sacred place hidden inside another building surely did not start in the times of Christianity. In contemporary art the subject has been expanded by **Bill Viola** who has realised works referring to the mysticism of **St. John of the Cross** (il. 127) and his idea of hermit-like concentration and seclusion. Ultimately, it also relates to remaining in dialogue with God despite various adversities, threats and temptations.



80. "Obituaries" – installation, C.R.A.N.E. festival – Burgundy, France, 2000



81. "Obituaries" – installation, Inner Spaces exhibition – MAMU Gallery, Budapest, Hungary, 2002

In MAMU Gallery, Budapest, I installed an image of hundreds of overlapping paper obituaries, blown by an electric ventilator fan (il. 81). Loose obituaries were placed on the floor between the fan and the wall. When I switched on the ventilator, what happened was surprising. One of the obituaries did not leave the area and only swirled in the air like a leaf and then fell down in the corner of the room, only to re-catch the wind after some time. The performance was accompanied by the loud hum of an electric motor and the rustle of the paper obituaries on the wall flapping against one another. I got the impression that the wind was trying to bring them to life but their movement was the movement of a still life.

My recollection of prayer whispering reappeared. In this work, the prayer also has its intentions. When, on television, they stopped broadcasting the news the speaker explained that they had just received film material which had to be shown immediately. A film maker was shooting scenes during a safari in Africa. From one bank of the river he was observing an antelope drinking water on the other side. The quiet scene was interrupted by a crocodile, which unexpectedly attacked from the water catching the antelope and trying to drag it into the river. The antelope braced its legs and the crocodile grabbed it several times. Suddenly a rushing hippopotamus appeared and attacked the crocodile thus defending the antelope. The latter fell to the ground and then tried to rise. The hippopotamus tried to pick it up with its huge nose. It succeeded a few times but the bleeding antelope fell over again and again. The journalist informed everyone that the antelope had been bitten too severely and died of excessive bleeding.

In 2004, or possibly 2003 a documentary photographic contest was won by a reporter who managed to take a picture of a small orphaned child during a war

in Africa. The child was trying to move on the ground on its hands and knees and, before it, stood a vulture. After gaining the prize the photographer was asked what happened next. He said that he did not know. Some say the prize was taken away from him after that statement.

As I mentioned earlier one of the reasons for presenting obituaries is the idea of adding some extra meaning to the lives of unknown people. Perhaps many people die with the feeling that their lives were meaningless and did not end with anything essential. Perhaps they died in loneliness knowing that not much of their dreams were fulfilled. Perhaps their death was of little significance and did not remain in anybody's memory.

In Tokyo, 2002, (il. 84) in a concrete room I hung original obituaries from Japan and Poland. On the opposite wall were two collages resembling eyesight-testing charts. The letters were cut out from the obituaries on the neighbouring wall and then enlarged or reduced in size so that one could hardly read them. The letters were chosen in a way so that all meaning was lost. The cross lost its meaning and only looked liked the letter "t". Below there were blue empty chairs reminding me of the paintings of **Andrzej Wróblewski**. (il. 82)



82. "The cue is waiting" – Andrzej Wróblewski, 1956, oil on canvas, 140 x 200 cm, National Museum in Warsaw

These works talked about loneliness and the anonymous life of individuals.

The same images were installed In another place – in a small wooden house in the Japanese countryside. (il. 85) They were much more related to a farm and house, as if it were a private chapel or altar to commemorate members of the family in the Japanese tradition. The old floor of dry wood and earth was a natural contrast for the black and white "obituaries".

The works in Para Globe Gallery, Tokyo, (il. 86) were made from Japanese newspapers. Deep black openings initially seemed to be merely a black spot on the newspaper's surface. The works were close to my installations whose basic meaning was the crater and the path of light - the crater which suggested two attitudes of openness and concentration. At the one end, the crater is open to chaos but at the other end it leads to what passes through it into another dimension. Lack of an obituary opens an unknown dimension.



83. Eye test chart



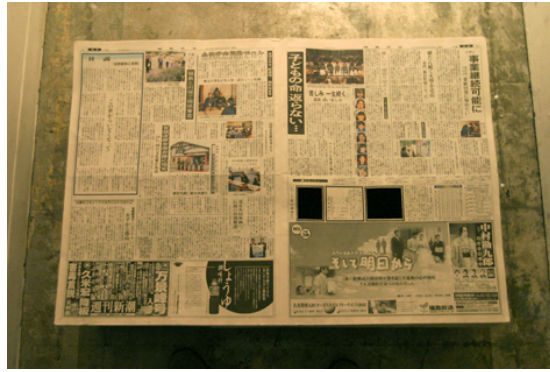
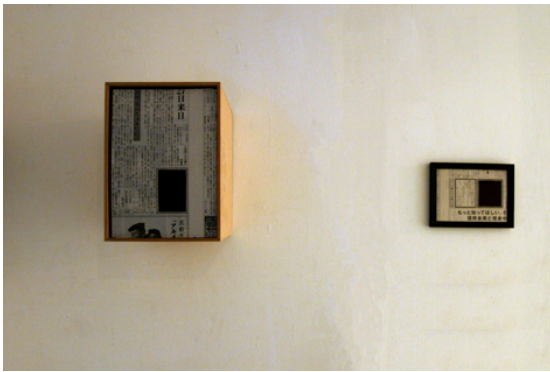
84. "Obitiaries" – collages, MMAC Festival, Tokyo, Japan, 2001



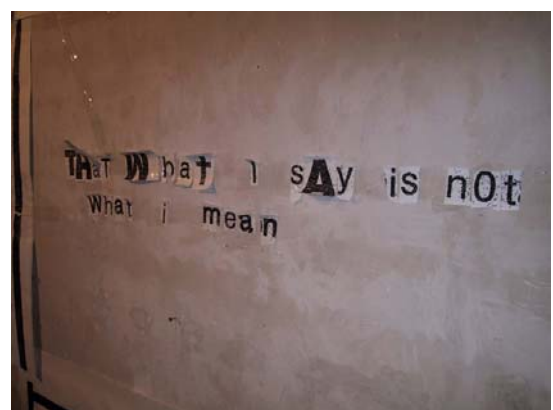
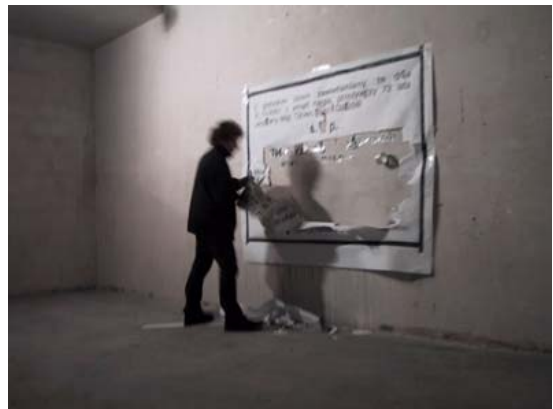
85. "Obituaries" – collages, landart show, Iwaki, Japan, 2001

The last work I would like to present happened in 2001. (il. 87) I placed on the wall an enlarged obituary of a person unknown to me. I started to cut out all the text, using only a few letters that were slowly constructing the sentence "That what I say is not what I mean". The usual frame around the obituary was cut at the corners and each of the strips reversed, so that the exterior space became an interior and the interior space became an empty space. With this work I wanted to express that in a very easy way we can place in doubt many established rules and open up a visual presence that does not respond easily to intellectual recognition. We can only say: "that what we see does not relate to anything. It excludes anything we know, yet".

Art does not present theories, does not defend any points of view.



86. "Obituaries" – objects, Para Globe Gallery, Tokyo, Japan, 2004



87. "Obituaries" – performance, CCA Inner Spaces, Poznan, Poland, 2001

The Unknown – Negatives – Black Light

In this final chapter I introduce my latest works that in certain ways reflect many of the visual journeys that I have taken. They are “negatives” of my works. I have tried to reveal another reality that is enclosed in a visual everyday surrounding. I returned to an energy that I first came across in Skoki in 1993 when I used obituaries to compose my installation.

Darkness seems to radiate and suck you in - it is lack of light but at the same time it is its own presence. A work ‘Inner Spaces’ created in 2007 for Hangaram Museum in Seoul consists of four parts. The principal photograph is built with two identical pieces put together symmetrically creating a new space. The photograph I used was a documentation of my exhibition from the series: ‘Obituaries’ in Tokyo in 2001.

The Unknown – Negatives – Black Light



88. 37b78f21622fa8f0e4ad9823e27a4290,21,1.jpg



89. Zdj_cie097.jpg



90. Cadillac 1961 convertible cabrio 3.jpg



91. "Black Light "– digital photography – 2007

In this work, I have drawn on photographs of my own as well as Internet found footage. (il. 88-91) I have used the original names from the Internet. The photo on the left-hand side (il. 88) shows a Korean student who first made a video recording of himself and then committed a massacre at a US University. The photo on the right-hand side presents a speedometer of a Cadillac for sale.

The photo in the middle I took myself in a dead end street in the UK. It was given a random number by my camera. The biggest photo (il. 91) is a manipulated documentation of my exhibition in Tokyo. The space I created resulted from copying one half of it. I manipulated the photos to operate as negatives not for the mere effect of inverted contrasts but because they create a special reality. The man's face is surrounded with a violet-like halo as if it were from another spiritual reality. The middle photo (il. 81) presents a street with a No Entry road sign to a negative reality, which is a potential possibility even if it is not present in our environment. On the Cadillac's speedometer (il. 90), the pointer is stopped between forty and fifty miles per hour, between two spaces of blackness.

Reality stopped at 6588.5 miles and the last trip took 348.6 miles.

In the photo below (il. 91) as well as in the picture with a cross, one can see black light shining and reflected on the floor. The orange chairs enclosed by a greyish blue space stress emptiness and waiting.

These photos complement each other in a mysterious way. Although I am the author of what I see, the meeting between me and the unknown stays intact. My latest works, referring to repetitions, negatives and black light, are a fusion of my artistic experience. It is an experience filled with landscape, obituaries, spatial illusion, and time via drawing and music. However, my latest works come close to the thoughts of the mystic who I respect the most – St. John of the Cross. (il. 92) The inconceivable, the invisible, and the unknown do not evoke fear in him. On the contrary, he stays pure despite earthly and sensual experience. His mind can follow an inner voice and his intuition.

Both the surname of a Buddhist monk, Xu Yun - Empty Cloud, and 'Cloud of Unknowing', the title of the writings of an unknown English priest from XIV



92. Copy of the original "Mountain of Excellence" by St. John of the Cross, Madrid Biblioteca Nacional



Art that relates to our senses is an incentive to cross the boundaries and push the limits of materiality in our life. Nevertheless, it does not uncover those things that are not for our eyes and that are beyond the reach of our mind.

The drawing is a copy of a Mountain of Excellence – Carmel Mount – (il. 93), with three paths leading to it. On the left path there is an inscription: heavenly goods; on the right: earthly goods; under the middle you can see: “A narrow path to excellence” and the words ‘nothing, nothing’ are also written there. The drawing is completed with poetry of St. John of the Cross explaining how to get through nothing. “In such destitution, the spirit will find peace and rest because it does not lust for anything. Nothing will distract its attention on the way upwards, and nothing will drag it down as it will be in the heart of obedience”.

The path through nothing is a way whereby a man and his soul are led by an inner voice omitting the temptations of the senses and the mind. St. John of the Cross describes the path in a different excerpt from his poetry.

1. On a dark night, Kindled in love with yearnings -- oh, happy chance!
-- I went forth without being observed, My house being now at rest.

2. In darkness and secure, By the secret ladder, disguised -- oh, happy chance!
-- In darkness and in concealment, My house being now at rest.

3. In the happy night, In secret, when none saw me,
Nor I beheld aught, Without light or guide, save that which burned in my heart.

4. This light guided me More surely than the light of noonday,
To the place where he (well I knew who!) was awaiting me
-- A place where none appeared.

5. Oh, night that guided me, Oh, night more lovely than the dawn,

Oh, night that joined Beloved with lover, Lover transformed in the Beloved!

6. Upon my flowery breast, Kept wholly for himself alone,
There he stayed sleeping, and I caressed him, And the fanning of the cedars
made a breeze.

7. The breeze blew from the turret As I parted his locks;
With his gentle hand he wounded my neck And caused all my senses to be
suspended.

8. I remained, lost in oblivion; My face I reclined on the Beloved.
All ceased and I abandoned myself, Leaving my cares forgotten among the
lilies.

St. John of the Cross – Works, The first book – Active night of senses,
chapter 1, St. John of the Cross

Mystics and Teaching

My creative work also includes my teaching. In talking to others I often make reference to the scripts and experience of the mystics. In this chapter I use certain examples from international workshops and other educational projects to examine some of these connections. When I explore the limits of my own knowledge and consciousness and provoke new experience through artistic activities, I find surprising parallels with the same questions that mystics asked even if in a quite different context and linguistic form.

Mystics and Teaching

Saudi Minister of Health Department Hamad ibn Abd Allah al-Manei reported that 345 people were killed recently in Mina near Mecca, trampled to death during a ritual stoning of the devil. They were trampled when thousands of pilgrims were crossing al-Dzamarat Bridge. According to traditional stories, it was here that Abraham was tempted by the devil. In the past few years similar accidents have taken place. In 2004 alone nearly 250 people were trampled. This year over two million pilgrims have come to Mecca to celebrate. Again, recently, at least 76 people died in Mecca when a pilgrim-house collapsed.

Mystics often face the impossible. **St. Teresa of Jesus Child** compares spiritual growth to a garden where flowers blossom as a result of the work of a gardener and a concealed co-operation with God. Then, she continues: “by saying 'souls should not creep up any further until God has raised them', I mean the spiritual way of speaking, which is understood by those who have some experience; if someone is not able to grasp the meaning of what I am saying, I cannot explain it differently.”¹⁵

¹⁵

page 199, Teresa of Avilla. Works, Barefoot Carmelite Publishing House, 1987

Let us focus on **St. Teresa** for a moment: "it happens particularly to me, the one who is blessed by God to a great extent. God abducts will and, as it seems to me, reason, because you cannot reason any more but concentrate on God and rejoice over him." ¹⁶ 400 years later a Polish artist **Jaroslav Kozlowski** wrote: "the longer I see, the better I do not understand." ¹⁷ Knowledge, then, may be divided into two categories: the knowledge we can understand, and the knowledge we have, although we do not understand it.

The understood becomes a tool for searching the inconceivable even if it results only in indicating the boundaries of the inconceivable. And it seems that we could call the past the things we know, and call the future the inconceivable things. Maybe that is the reason why craving for life results in what we desire, what we do not possess, and what we do not know. And if I was supposed to teach, certainly I would teach what I do not know to those who wish to discover the unknown.

The world flattened into one dimension of reason takes away all the knowledge of the mystics and of artists; access is not possible via compulsory education, higher education or the laws established by state administrations. Alvin Toffler in his book "Future Shock" says "The system of mass education is an ingenious machine used by the industrial era in order to 'produce' the most needed kind of adults for a particular era. One question was raised, how to drill children to a new lifestyle in a world where time is no longer measured by the natural cycle of sunrise and sunset as well as phases of the moon but by factory sirens and rhythmic clock ticking." ¹⁸

For Muslims, Dzamarat Bridge is a place where you can get a different perspective from the one that you obtain sitting in a classroom. In western

¹⁶ page 154, Teresa of Avilla. Works, Barefoot Carmelite Publishing House, 1987

¹⁷ from lecture of Alicja Kępińska

¹⁸ page 391, Alvin Toffler - Future Shock – Zysk i S-ka Wydawnictwo s.c. 1998, copyright 1970

civilization traces of the mystics become a blur. One of my friends, who happens to be an economist, told me that perfection is not reached by creating a flawless Mercedes but by producing millions of vehicles of identical and repetitive quality.

St. Teresa of Jesus Child often discussed the subject of understanding without reasoning; even **Donald Rumsfeld** states that “there are so many unknown” issues “we do not know that which we do not know”¹⁹. Existence of the unknown is beyond human reason. What is more, if, during the next million years or so, some things are not discovered or named, they will function as if human reason has never existed. An English monk of XII century calls it “a cloud of the unknown”.

The diary of a Chinese monk **Xu Yun** (Empty Cloud) (il. 94) consists only of his memories and notes of his one hundred and twenty year life. He sometimes describes one or two years of his life in one sentence – as a life lived in a cave. The idea of Buddhism is to reach emptiness free from time, space and passing. In **St. Augustine's** Confession Book, time and the presence of God overlap. God exists simultaneously in time and out of time. According to him God has already done everything that will happen in the future, even in thousands of years time, if the world is supposed to last that long. What took place thousands of years ago is happening to him now.

On one hand I claim that my thought, “what is, it is and what is not, it is also”, is the only sensible reflection if you are conscious of what is inconceivable, present and only slightly recognizable. On the other hand, humility, as an awareness of the relation between me and the inaccessible brings to mind the words of **St. John of the Cross**, “Satan offers many distractions and, by suggestions, creates in the human mind concepts and words which

¹⁹ look at the page 69

cunningly ruin someone's soul, deceiving with probable things".²⁰



94. Xu Yun – Buddhist monk – lived 1840-1959

Therefore, we are surrounded by things we call the truth, by things we call a lie, and by things that are almost true. Hence, we are closed in a cloud of what is, (even if it is not) and guided by reason or a different decision-making tool in a space filled with things and images of things. Thus, the mystics discuss the problem of illusion, loss, distraction or even temptation that sneaks into souls through the senses, through materiality and carnality. **St. John of the Cross** illustrates the state of his soul whilst waiting to meet God.

During the daytime it is kept in solitary confinement, but at night, not tempted by any stimuli, it finds its shortest way to its destiny. Again we can observe

²⁰

from lecture of Jan Berdyszak, at the Academy of Fine Arts, Poznan

the existence of a secret knowledge, another way of judgment, which is not discussed at any stage in the present education system. In our civilization each decision must be based on logical thinking, and each objection proposed through rational argumentation. Yet there are times when we would like to object, even if we do not know why. "The better I do not know" means leaving all available and over-used interpretations, rejecting the known, and following only the unknown, the empty cloud. Hence, cognition is not a product of the knower. **Master Eckhardt** when faced with a question "what is the prayer of an isolated heart?" gives the following answer: "isolated purity cannot pray, because the one who prays, expects things from God, to be given things or to be deprived of things. An isolated heart does not crave for anything, it does not possess things that it would be willing to lose. That is the reason why you cannot hear it praying, its only prayer is to emulate god". ²¹ Then, he says: "the object of an isolated heart is not this or that. If I want to write on a wax board, I would be distracted by anything that has already been written on it; even the most noble things will stop me from writing. So, if I do wish to write something on it, first, I need to wipe away and erase the things that already exist. A board is ready to be written on, only if it is totally blank. Similarly, when God wants to enter my heart in a sublime way, everything called as this or that has to be gone, then a heart can be isolated". ²²

In the Bible in Luke 8/26, Christ takes evil forces away from a man. When asked: "Jesus then asked him, **'What is your name?' He said, 'Legion'; for many demons had entered him**". ²³ I have an impression that a man consists

²¹ page163, Master Eckhardt, Deutsche Predigten und Traktate (W Drodze, 1987)

²² page 93, Master Eckhardt, Deutsche Predigten und Traktate (W Drodze, 1987)

²³ Bible, Luke 8/26

As he stepped out on land, a man of the city who had demons met him. For a long time he had worn no clothes, and he did not live in a house but in the tombs. When he saw Jesus, he fell down before him and shouted at the top of his voice, 'What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg you, do not torment me'- for Jesus had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. (For

of many personalities and has many faces, and that different events provoke different aspects of these personalities.

It is possible that a Greek concept of harmony concerns unity of a character, and creativity is a surprising result of an often unexpected explosion. The easiest thing would be to say that art is a personal quest for God. Even if artists would agree about his presence, then most would probably not to accept this statement. The idea of art is not an empty wax board on which God can write his words. The idea of art is an inner dialogue with everything, about everything, at the point where spirituality and carnality meet. Art is close to mysticism, as they both accept and possibly delight in the unknown, and at the same time put man in a different, transcendent context.

Despite the fact that art is sensitive in comparison with other human activities, it is eager to use the strategies of the everyday. Art learns from the processes that rule a world of interrelated phenomena and their mechanisms.

It immediately strives for the right of unlimited creativity and the capability of creating new values. Unfortunately, art might be quite misleading as we are not able to state if the things we create are truly created or just re-created; what becomes a material object is only a visualization of an idea existing out of time.

It is the unusual privilege of an artist to have the possibility to realize and research what is unknown, to follow intuitions where the body is extension of the mind, where idea and time are a short moment.

On page 60 answering **Simone Weil**: "...I only knock, someone else opens"²⁴ , I reply: "I do not knock, I wait until you hear a lack of my knocking and open". A

many times it had seized him; he was kept under guard and bound with chains and shackles, but he would break the bonds and be driven by the demon into the wilds.) Jesus then asked him, **'What is your name?'** He said, **'Legion'**; for many demons had entered him. They begged him not to order them to go back into the abyss. Now there on the hillside a large herd of swine was feeding; and the demons begged Jesus to let them enter these. So he gave them permission. Then the demons came out of the man and entered the swine, and the herd rushed down the steep bank into the lake and was drowned.

certain strategy of provocation is hidden here, which assumes the existence of other values than those that are predictable and their consequences clearly defined. Provocation assumes the existence of a provoked, where a new interaction and a different context may develop. Art makes no sense if it is pure copying, imitating and repeating of an already known.

Art might be defined, bluntly, as a form of kitsch, which stresses the idea more than the recreated object. That dramatic description illustrates the concept of invention and discovery rather than art. An artist is a mystery to himself where all the above elements and values overlap. Artworks represent the world that surrounds the artist, as well as the artist himself, revealing the intended and the concealed. Therefore, artworks become a multi-threaded voice of an author with an accompanying unintended content.

Running workshops in Poland, Great Britain and Germany has given me the opportunity to obtain a different perspective. Approaching time and cultural aspects of my artworks enables me to confront my thoughts with the thoughts of my students who have unexpected, and at times radical, views. The first day of a workshop needs a lot of courage. I enter the unknown space with a group of strangers who are hidden in silence, watching me closely and listening to me carefully. Art, like mysticism, requires a great deal of individual commitment and experience, which transgresses rational reality. Mystics often faced the impossible. My students and I are connected by the experience of things impossible to describe, which from the outside are not accessible or noticeable. I often refer to the experience of mystics, as I deeply believe that art and mystics share the same concept: that in the field of the least measurable relations between a man and a drifting world there is a certainty of existence manifest in almost mathematical references and processes. Over the years

of teaching and creating new formulae for workshops, I have worked out a number of methods for inspiring others and searching for values. Students very often focus on improving their manual skills and hope to overcome their own limitations. They believe that the teacher will be the right person to share their thoughts, and that she/he is an intelligent and skillful group leader who can approach everyone individually.

On the first day of workshops, standing in a group of people who have different backgrounds and expectations, I can either be factual and discuss the subject of the workshops and focus on improving students' techniques or, instead, open up possibilities and hope that students will trust me and my words, and see that what I say goes beyond words.

By chance I heard on the radio an interview with a Polish actor, **Jan Machulski**, who was talking about his work in theatre. A particular sentence that he uttered made me feel as if he was sharing the same unrecognized experience: "Each performance must be exhausting for me. If I want audience to believe me, they must see that it is exhausting for me" ²⁵. Hence, each time I am standing in front of interested but skeptical students I know that I cannot hesitate; I have to reveal my personality, passion, beliefs and share my points of view. I need to create group energy with respect for the individual dynamic of each participant; otherwise my workshops will only scratch the surface. Every time I run workshops on the portrait and then the whole figure, I assure my students that I will guarantee that they will improve their drawing of face in a week. But then I ask them a question: "What are we going to do next?" After a week, skepticism is gone and everyone begins their personal quest.

²⁵

from the radio reading



95. Drawing workshop in Rheinau, Switzerland, 2006



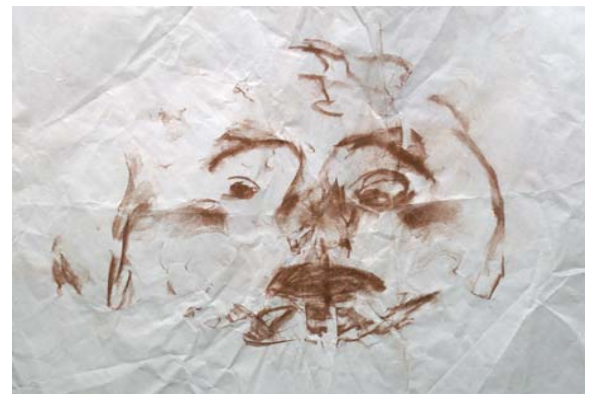
96. Drawing workshop in Alanus Kunsthochschule in Alfter/Bonn, 1999

For them, parallel drawing of the face with a partner, with eyes shut, and only using hands to detect someone's features is a totally new experience. (il. 95, 96) Touching someone's face transgresses our own as well as our partner's intimacy. However, it reveals that looking is like touching, a taking away without any consequences, absorbing what our eyes want to see. Touching takes courage. A portrait is only a starting point towards an open composition of

experiencing others and their accompanying emotions. Slowly I become one of the participants in a collective venture. Another experience of self is drawing a self-portrait with a sheet of paper pressed into your own face. Suddenly, I become a spectator of an extraordinary show. (il. 97) All the faces disappear under white paper sheets. All bodies become anonymous. In time, some details appear; sometimes I can recognize the shapes of eyes, ears, lips and nose. I am surrounded by peculiar creatures. Their expressions are highlighted by uncontrolled lines, stains and traces of charcoal.



97. "Self portraits" – Sommerakademie in Rheinau, Switzerland, 2006



98. "Self portraits" – Sommerakademie in Rheinau, Switzerland, 2006 (page 161, 162)

People I already know are hidden under masks. Flattened paper sheets reveal grotesque faces. (il. 98) The most surprising thing is that after several trials, drawings of one person can easily be separated from the rest, despite the fact that they were not able to control the process or check their results.



An image inspired by other senses, uncontrolled by sight, brings a different aesthetic scope. Moreover, it provokes researching into the unknown relations existing in time, space, sound and their transcription. In the summer of 2006, in Rheinau, Switzerland I carried out an extremely interesting experiment which was an attempt at capturing time in drawing. A group of ten people sat at a table covered with a sheet of paper and closed their eyes. One person started

drawing a line, and when it came close to a neighbouring person, he or she took over the drawing without opening their eyes, guided only by the sound that the pencil made. One person passed the sound to the next until it returned to the one who had started it.

The drawn circle was a transcript, a record of a wandering sound, its dynamics: slowing down, accelerating, interruptions, pauses and disorientation.

The next trials were impressive as they created an orchestra out of the pencils. The transcript was astonishing to me. What was an uninterrupted musical piece, on paper, did not seem to be continuous at all. Sound continued smoothly but the lines finished and started in totally different places. One quick sound was drawn with an impetuous and sprawling line by one person, but someone else drew it more intensively almost in a single spot. Pencils became differently tuned “violins”.

In Switzerland we performed a similar project to the one in a student canteen. It took place at Wintertur Street on the banks of Rhine, at a swimming pool.

(il. 99, 100) At Wintertur Street, sitting at a table in a café, we were listening to street sounds: traffic, pedestrians, children, waiters, background music and train announcements. There were eight of us sitting there with eyes closed and pencils attached to our hands and feet. Passers-by were intrigued. We were focused on our task. Drawings were full of expression, intense, easily driven by stimuli. I wanted to find out what the impact would be of a change of environment on our drawing. Therefore, we went to a swimming pool in an open space at the banks of the Rhine. Everyone there were also interested in what we were doing. The drawings turned out to be quite similar, though. Maybe the only difference was in an improved ability to be simultaneous.

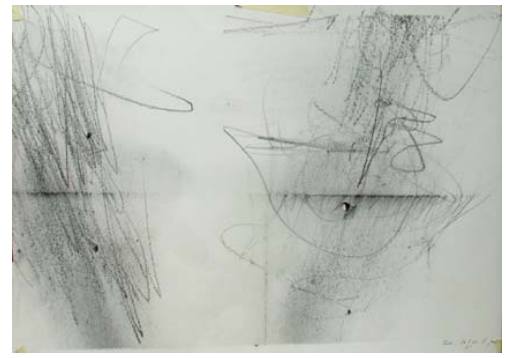
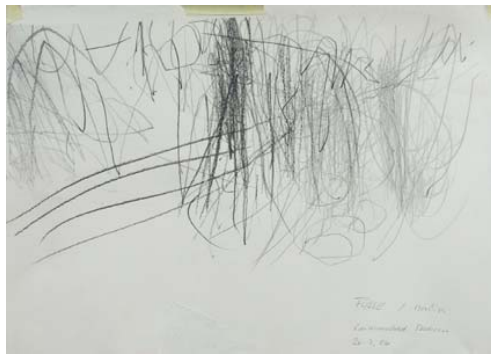
In Alfter, in another series of workshops led by three people (a musician,

a dancer and me) the eight participants were mainly professional musicians.
(il. 101) We focused on examining and experiencing the interrelation between movement, sound and image. Again we used frottage images taken from everyday objects in order to compose a score. It was played with a piano, cello and drums.



99. "Drawings with Hands and Feet" – Rheinau, Switzerland, 2006

At the end of this chapter it is worth while to return to the concerts described on pages 109-116. Usually accidental participants of my actions (because these are people who want to take part in my workshops and not a chosen group of



100. "Drawings with Hands and Feet" – Rheinau, Switzerland, 2006

people) interact in a mutual dialogue. They represent different occupations, ages and interests. Participation in the concert and other actions is like a trigger that activates processes and reactions that find their record in the form of drawings or sound recordings. Deep in the background of my educational



101. Workshop in Alanus Kunsthochschule Alter/Bonn, Germany, 2006

decisions is the desire to “open up” the participants to new experiences and to enter into contact with the deepest regions of their personality and spirituality. Artistic abilities in this case appear not only to be inessential but even troublesome when attempting to free authentic processes. Aesthetic values are not the subject of judgement. The visualisation of feelings and decisions made as a result of various impulses and the final reflections about oneself are surprising. We face visual facts, which are an uncontrollable record of what is beyond understanding. Hence mysticism, which is a posture towards the

unknown, is so close to my teaching.

Artists and my Curatorial Work

In this chapter I refer to my curatorial experience and establish some principal links and key discourses which locate my project in a wider frame of visual arts practice. I construct a rationale for the artist / curator.

Artists and my Curatorial Practice

As opposed to art in many other countries controlled by Soviet Union, Polish art consistently resisted socialist propaganda. Since the late 1960's there has been a developing tendency for setting up artist-led galleries. Two artist-led galleries - AT and ON - still continue in Poznan to this day. The name "ON" itself is a very good example of independent art circulation in those times. "ON" comes from a non-existent founder name: Olgierd Nowak. The gallery name was created not for conspiratorial reasons, but through irony.

In 1987 I took up postgraduate studies at Kunsthochschule in Alfter, near Bonn, Germany. I felt chosen by destiny, then, and I felt the urge to share my freedom and experience with other students in Poland. In 1989, when political changes were about to happen, I organized a conference on 'Civilization and Culture' at Skoki, near Poznan. I invited about a hundred guests from Europe, including:

Johannes Stüttgen, **Josepha Beuys'** assistant; **Konrad Oberhuber**, a director of Albertina Museum graphics collection in Vienna; and **Arne Klingborg** – Ytterjärna Kulturcentrum architect from Sweden. Since then my curatorial and artistic practice have always overlapped. Writer **Witold Gombrowicz** always reiterated that your actions will stand for you. That summer I realized there was no difference between putting my intuition and emotions into material objects called art and organizing artistic events where

other artists manifest their work. Both are a result of intellectual processes for me. In the first case, art involves my manual work, in the other case, curatorial practice seeks co-operation with others who create their own artworks. My need for making individual projects is mixed with a need for a dialogue with people speaking other languages but discussing either the same or different subjects. Inviting other artists to share a venture brings to my mind a story called, if I'm not mistaken, 'Ten Little Indians'. I can remember rather vaguely a film I saw once when I was a little boy, possibly based on **Agatha Christie's** story. At a castle on a desolated island ten people were invited who did not know each other. From the very start, at a table, appears a layer cake with the figures of ten Indians. Each time one of the guests dies, one Indian disappears from the cake. Everyone gets suspicious. Everyone starts thinking about the reasons why they have been invited to the castle. Starting any exhibition I become the eleventh person, the hidden one. Inviting particular artists does not mean I want to get answers to my questions. All it means is that I would like to initiate a venture that will unfold without my supervision. Initiating and stimulating is a creative process that separates the known (my own) from the potential (the provoked).

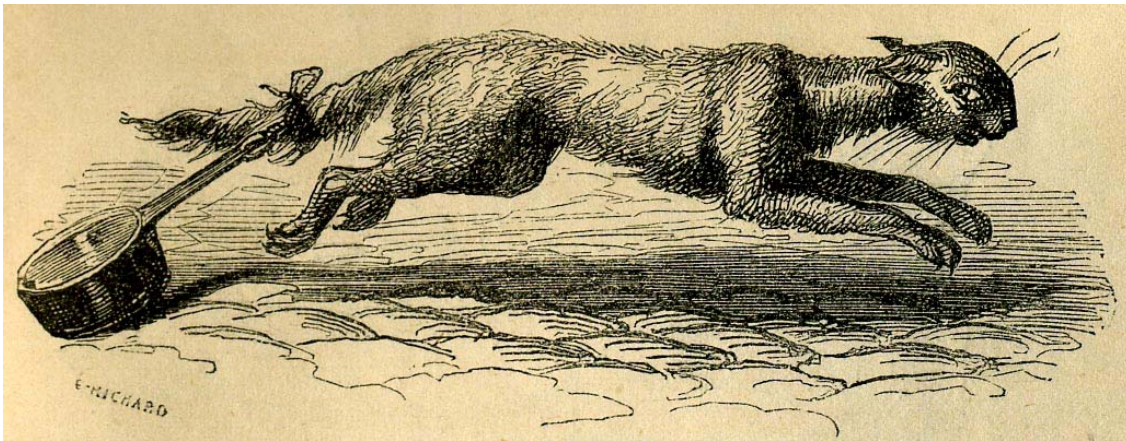
Making any decisions, maybe not making them, letting things come and go, letting waves travel sometimes far away from the mainstream of life, I look over my shoulders. It is quite hard to ponder what might have happened if I had chosen differently. I am not sure if it makes sense to think that way.

People I have met, words they have spoken, actions they have taken, all this has become a part of my life. Sometimes it is just someone crossing the street. During some rainy autumn, in the mid 80s, in a quiet part of Western Berlin, I was leaving a cafe chatting with a friend. Then, I noticed a tiny man wearing

a baggy coat walking nervously on the other side of the street. After a few seconds he turned around the corner. In that moment I was sure it was an actor, who starred in **Stroszek B.**, a movie by **Werner Herzog**.

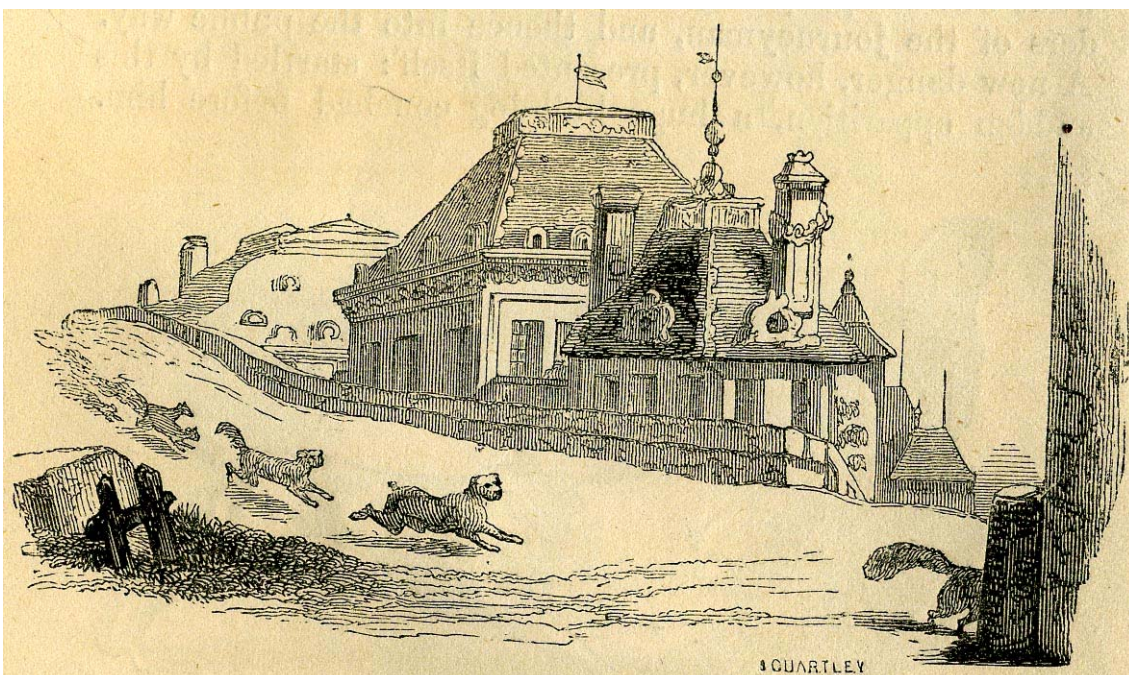
A friend of mine did not know who I was talking about. I excused myself, and ran after the mysterious man. But it was too late, he was already gone.

I felt as if I was part of a film. Two lonely old men believed that when they would leave Berlin for America, their dreams might come true, and finally they might be happy. The money they had been saving for years was soon gone in a new



and indifferent society.

102. "Dame Mitchell and Her Cat" from "Picture Story – Book (four hundred illustrations by eminent artists)"
London, George Routledge & Co., 1855, page 5



103. "Dame Mitchell and Her Cat" from "Picture Story – Book (four hundred illustrations by eminent artists)"
London, George Routledge & Co., 1855, page 32

In some little town, among small houses, near a main road, there was a great ferris wheel; Stroszek's friend sat on a seat of the wheel. It went up, and when it came down he was dead.

Memories and emotions never come in the right order. Writing about artists and artworks I would rather follow my way of thinking. Sometimes they are just images buried in my mind so deeply that I can neither understand nor explain them. One of them comes from a story "Dame Mitchell and Her Cat" in "Picture Story-Book", with a subtitle: "Four Hundred Illustrations by Eminent Artists" published in London in 1855. From the fifth page of the book I can remember a cat running with a skillet tied to the tip of its tail. But it is a mystery why it got mixed up in my mind with the illustration, from the same story, on page thirty



two. (il. 102, 103)

104. "Details" Roman Opalka, acryl on canvas, 1965 onwards

I do not want to search for the sort of explanation **Rudolf Arnheim** or **Ernst H. Gombrich** might give for the state of my mind by analyzing the way I see and interpret the illustrations. I prefer staying on the other side of the mirror.

The same level of anxiety is triggered by **Roman Opalka**'s numbers, (il. 104) which record his passing life. Number 1 was a decision to imprison himself in open infinity. Even when he hurries, even if he wants to write the biggest possible number of figures, even if he continues writing after death, he cannot reach infinity. Any thought is exhaustive: it seems not good enough to discuss an artwork; to be not the thing I want to say. Hence, what Opalka says is more than he thinks.

Emotions, rather than a voice of reason, might have been the spark for **Jaan Toomik** (il. 105) to shoot a video of himself dancing to the music of **Jimmy Hendrix** at his father's tomb. Toomik titled it "Dancing with Dad", which evokes a simple association – dancing with the dead.



105. "Dancing with Dad" – Jaan Toomik, video projection, 2003

The subject of dance and death has often been raised, starting with the **Unknown Krakow painter** (il. 106), and continuing with **Henri Matisse** and **Edvard Munch**. It is also the theme of a piece of barely emerging artist whose work might be even more meaningful than he meant it to be. **Radek Plonski** (il. 107) is a History Department graduate; he left for Sweden to make money from drills, fret saws and other equipment in order to make his primitive but genuine

light boxes. I have a feeling that they are an elegy for those who used to be hippies and those who, with time, became a part of capitalism and

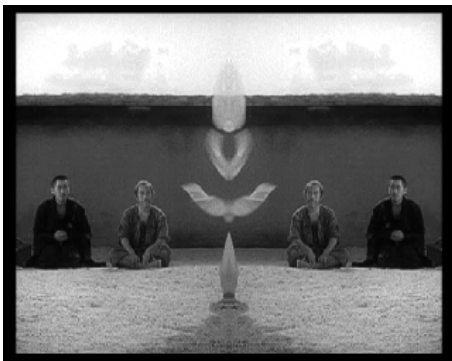
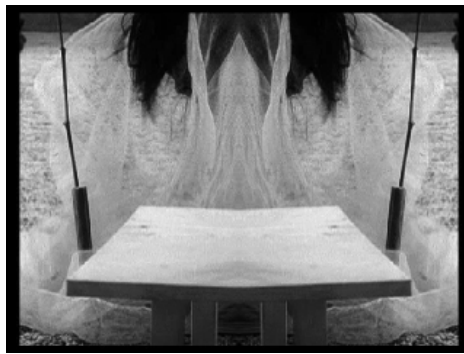


consumerism. The first lost their ideals, the latter never realized ideals existed.

106. "Dance with Death" – The unknown Krakow painter, oil on canvas, Bernardine Church in Krakow, Poland, 1670



Magic dance results from using a simple video technique of mirroring in a work by **Nicolas Provost** (il. 108) titled "Papillon d'Amour", 2003, based on "Rashomon" by **Akira Kurosawa**. The story of Kurosawa's film is lost; it is replaced by a new one – an abandoned woman vanishing in an absence of space which emerges from the symmetrical editing of the same shot. The expression of her movements, and pieces of her silk dress, bring to my mind an image of a butterfly fighting death, fluttering in despair. The image is accompanied by calming and slow-played bass music.



108. "Papillon d'Amour" – Nicolas Provost, video, 2003

A Japanese artist, **Chirusa Muro** (il. 109) manipulates images as well. In her video at the top of a frame one can see legs dangling, and at the bottom swinging hands. Both start swinging more and more and eventually they disappear. Then, all we can see is grass. There is also a different projection of

an idyllic landscape with a geyser gushing at times. There is a justified but inexplicable correlation between those two images. Maybe it is a projection of heaven on earth where natural laws do not apply.



109. "If you were born on the ground, what would be there?" – Chigusa Muro, video installation, Caso Gallery, Kyoto, 2004



110. "Shinjuku" – Roger Bourke, video installation, 2005

Similarly, in **Roger Bourke's** video work (il. 110), movement is the most significant carrier of meaning. People are shot statically. They are continuously

going down the escalator, and their reflection, just above the edge of the image, splits, as if flesh were disappearing and vanishing into another level or space.

The projection is located above the surface of water, which seems to be a black sarcophagus lid. I am astonished, here, by all that cannot be seen.

In photos of Chinese artist **Weng Fen** (il. 111) there is also an idea of two worlds meeting, which is such a ubiquitous theme in the European art tradition. A young girl is sitting astride a wall which seems to be a border between an old and a new part of China. Her bag is on the old side but she is looking into the new part of Shenzhen, which is tempting in its modernity. Those photographs seem to be quite straightforward, having to do with China, excited with its new prosperous economy. Hence, Weng Fen's shares it's excitement with rapid change, and is looking into the future with hope of success for China's citizens and the country itself. The most important is the new and the future.

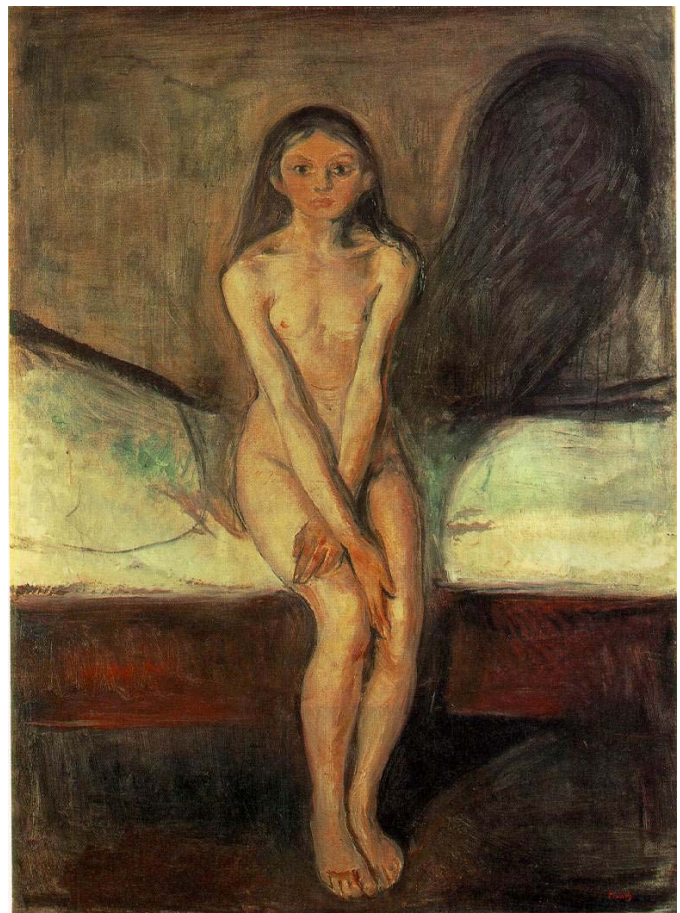


111. "Bird's Eye View" – Weng Fen, Shanghai, photography, 160 x 200cm, 2004

Edvard Munch's painting, "Puberty" (il. 112) shows a girl sitting at the edge of two worlds: childhood and adulthood. The shadow of the past is not tangible but at the same time it seems to be a scary ghost of the future.

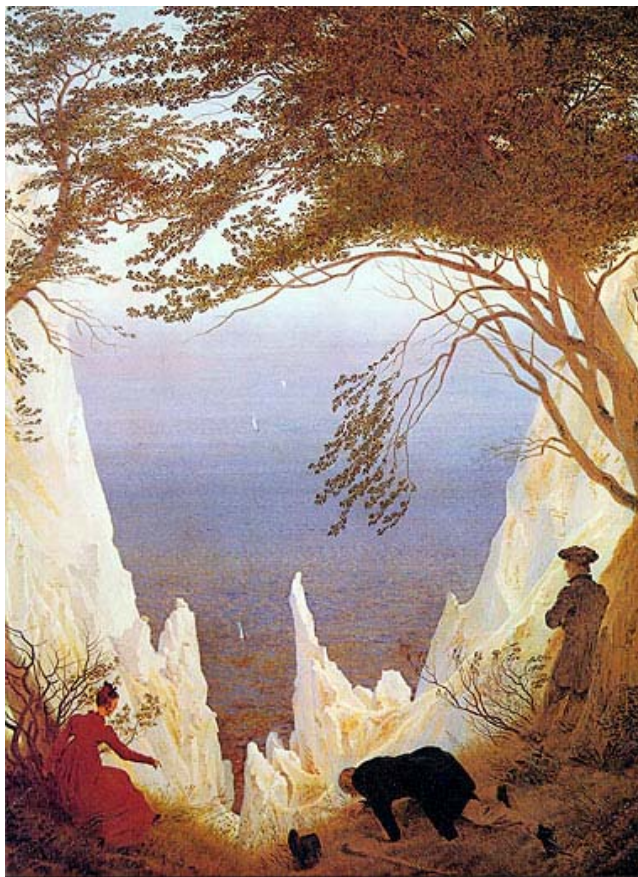
The landscape painting of **Caspar David Friedrich** “Chalk Cliffs on Rügen” (il. 113) is the most symbolic illustration of the secret of life: the meeting point of carnality and the symbolism of death. Light stands for God and supernatural powers. In art, light and shadow often mean something other than they really are. But in time physicality and intangible being can be seen at the edge of the rocks and in the silhouette of a tree. In the background, drifting white sailing boats stand for human souls. An old man is looking down; a young woman in red and a lad stay at the edge. In the above paintings a shadow is leaning towards a life, they are interested in light and shadow correlation.

Kazimierz Malewicz painted “A Black Square On White Background” (il. 114) and here we meet a new quality of art where a formal aspect meets a metaphysical one. Malewicz committed suicide. In art there is less and less light and blackness starts giving out its energy. In my works I often use a concept of

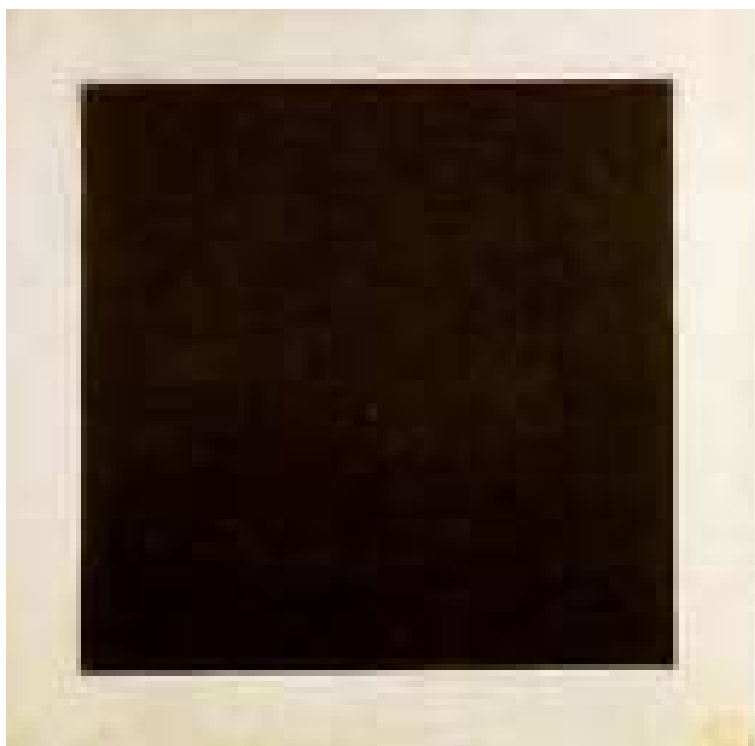


Black Light.

112. "Puberty" – Edvard Munch, oil on canvas, 151 x 110 cm, Nasjonalgalleriet Oslo, 1895



113. "Chalk Cliffs on Rügen" – Caspar David Friedrich, oil on canvas, 90.5 cm × 71 cm, Museum Oskar Reinhart am Stadtgarten, Wintertur, Germany, 1818



114. "Black Square on White Background" – Kazimierz Malewicz, State Russian Museum, St Petersburg, Russia, 1913

There is similar thinking in a video work by **Victor Alimpiev** (il. 115) from Russia. In a series of my works titled "Angels" one can find a similar thread of ideas: purity and violence. A group of young girls are participants in an innocent game: someone orders them to tap, they tap their fingers against desks; someone then orders them to stop, they stop. The sound they make is like bombing. In the video there are flashes of lightning images. I get the impression that their tapping is a powerful enough force to cause the bombing in Yugoslavia or Iraq. "Summerlightnings" deliberately ignores the thoughts of war that the video brings to my mind.



115. "Summerlightnings" – Victor Alimpiev, video, 2004

There is a painting "Lady in Moscow" by **Wasily Kandinsky** (il. 116) that is absolutely remarkable for me in that it first drew my attention to blackness, the lack of light, the hidden, the presence of the missing. Until this very day I have

not found an answer to the question of whether the black shapeless spot is there for a purpose. Maybe I am not even looking too hard. Maybe I do not want to solve the mystery. Is it possible that under the black spot there might be a piece of cityscape? A woman, a table and a dog are painted in a different manner from the background landscape. Yet another element of the painting is a pink spot which seems to represent a rose. Thanks to the black spot, though, we can enter a night dream. The power of creativity gives the artist the right to put together the most incoherent elements. What is, it is. What is not, it also is. The painting lives its life in our imagination; there might exist countless representations and interpretations of one image.

Umberto Eco comes to quite a similar conclusion: "Due to the fact that a sentence can potentially contain any other sentence, a text can generate an infinite number of meanings".²⁶ However, I would rather draw attention to two parallel levels of meaning. The first is evoked by the observable and the known (the black spot), and the unknown (what is under the black spot) ; and the second is the presence of blackness - the presence of the missing.



116. "Lady in Moscow" – Wasily Kandinsky, oil on canvas, 108.8 x 108.8cm, Städtische Galerie im Lenbachhaus, Munich, 1912

Wolfgang Laib (il. 117) looks from a different angle at the concept of surface.

He creates a surface out of flower pollen on the floor of an old factory.

It seems to give off light itself. When I studied in Alanus Kunshochschule in Germany I focused on the experience of colour. Water colour gives the opportunity to play with overlapping transparent levels of colour. More levels of colour intensify an impression of light; fewer levels can soften it. Therefore, a surface itself can give an impression of light or darkness while both can become a source of energy.

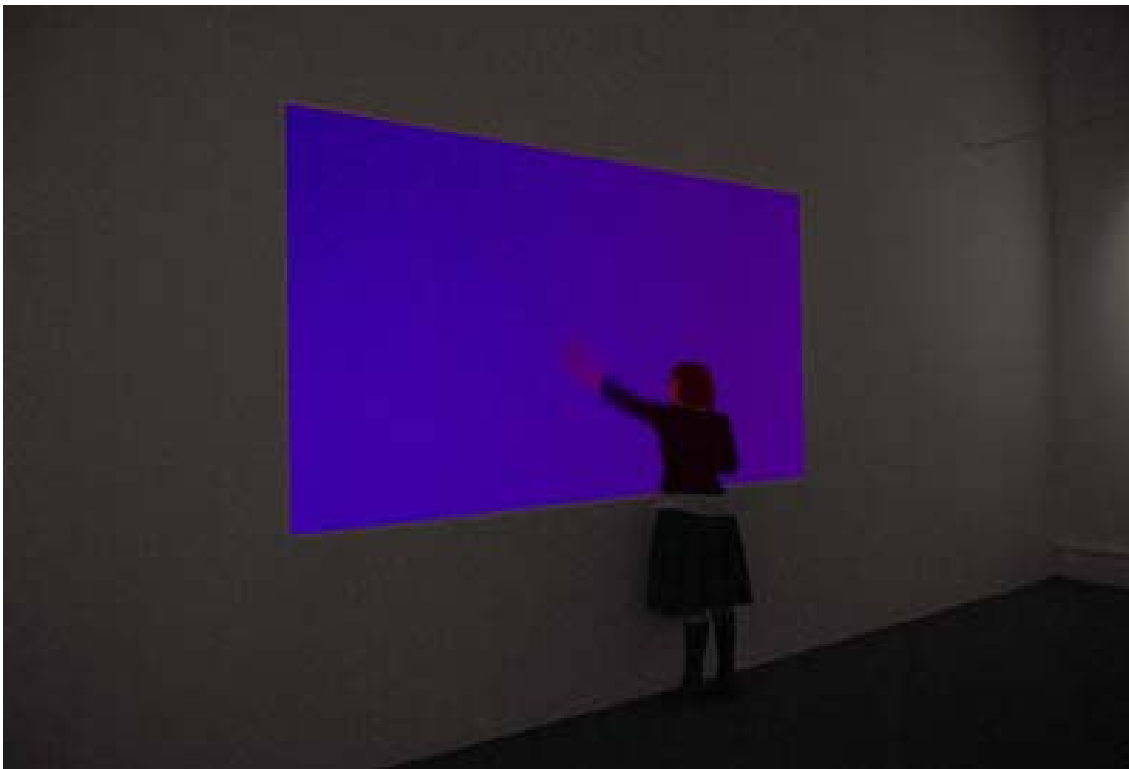


117. "Pollen Square" – Wolfgang Laib, installation, 220 x 240 cm, 1996, CAPC Bordeaux, France, 1985

Works of **James Turrell** (il. 118) do have such levels of energy. They play with light and darkness; they mislead the viewer. When I experience his works I think I know how they are supposed to work. I imagine a wall with some kind of fluorescent paint on it, or maybe some special kind of lamps lit to create the blue rectangle on the wall. So, I walk up to it and want to touch it and to see my

shadow on the wall by putting my hand against it. I am totally surprised to find out that there is a hole in the wall. Behind that wall there is a space lit blue. My logic has been misled.

Among many works by the Chinese sculptor, **Xiang Jing** (il. 119) I was fascinated by this particular one: a bust of a girl in a sequence of movements. Illusion is often considered to be of evil origin, deceiving, seducing and exercising control over a man. Saint John of the Cross, in his poems, describes a soul trying to reach God. First, it has to wait in isolation during daylight, and then at night leave and follow God's path when the senses stop playing tricks.



118. "Space Division 'Slow Dissolve' ", James Turrell, light installation, Hannover, Sprengel Museum 1989



119. "The Woman in the Mirror – Night Life" – Xiang Jing, fiber glass, acrylic, 65×55×75cm, 2002

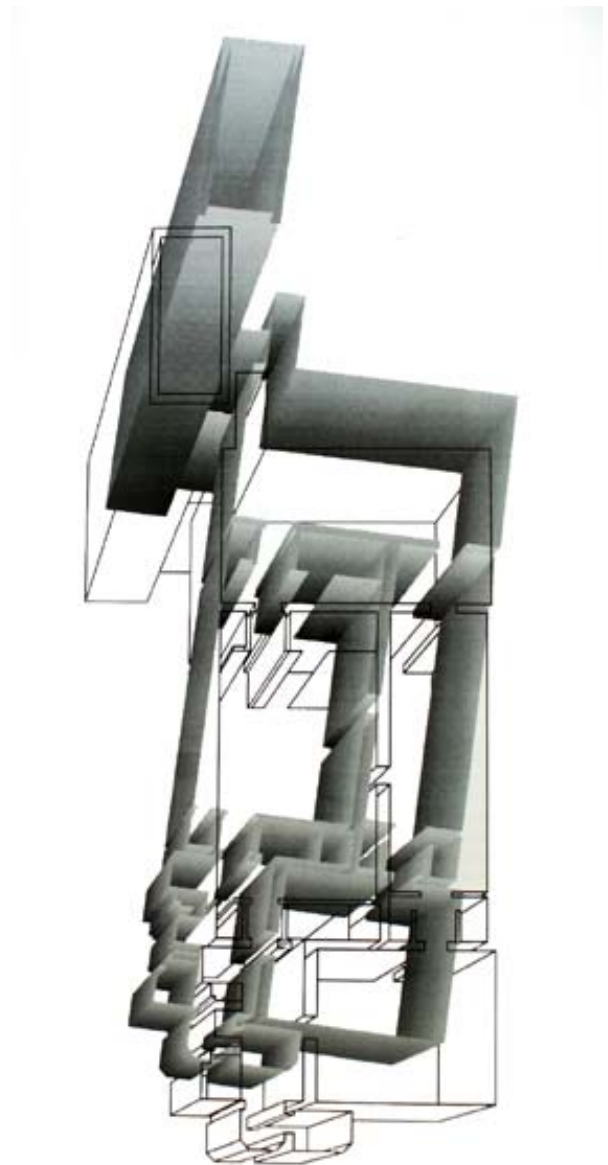
There are paintings, such as the one in National Museum in Poznan, where one can see a human figure with three faces representing the “Allegory of the Holy Trinity” (il. 120); there is another possible interpretation of this picture – the splitting of personality.



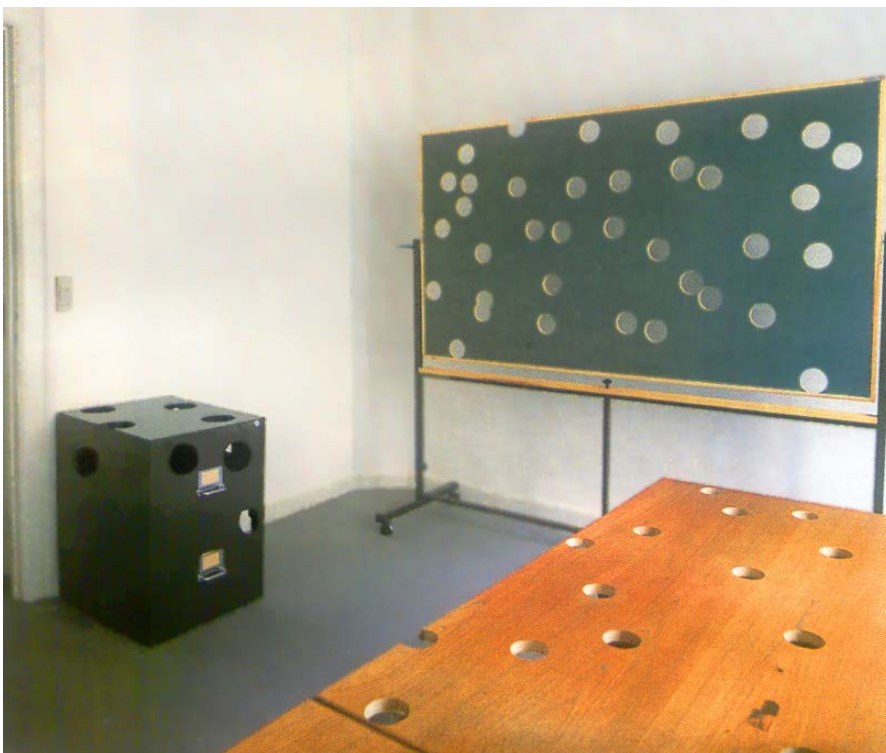
120. “Allegory of the Holy Trinity” – Painter (unknown) active in Poland, 17c., oil on wood, Poznan National Museum

A large scale installation by **Magdalena Jetelova**, 1996, titled “Translocations” (il. 121), occupied the whole building of the Mathildenhöhe Institute in Darmstadt. There appeared to be double the same space, shifted, moved. The same happens when a sound is played in another room as if it were recorded. This work touches on a rare subject in sculpture which is time delayed through repetition and duplication. We desire to reach knowledge which is only accessible

through our senses. We use art as a tool to visualize what is not accessible with our mind. We are provoked by the disorientation of our senses.



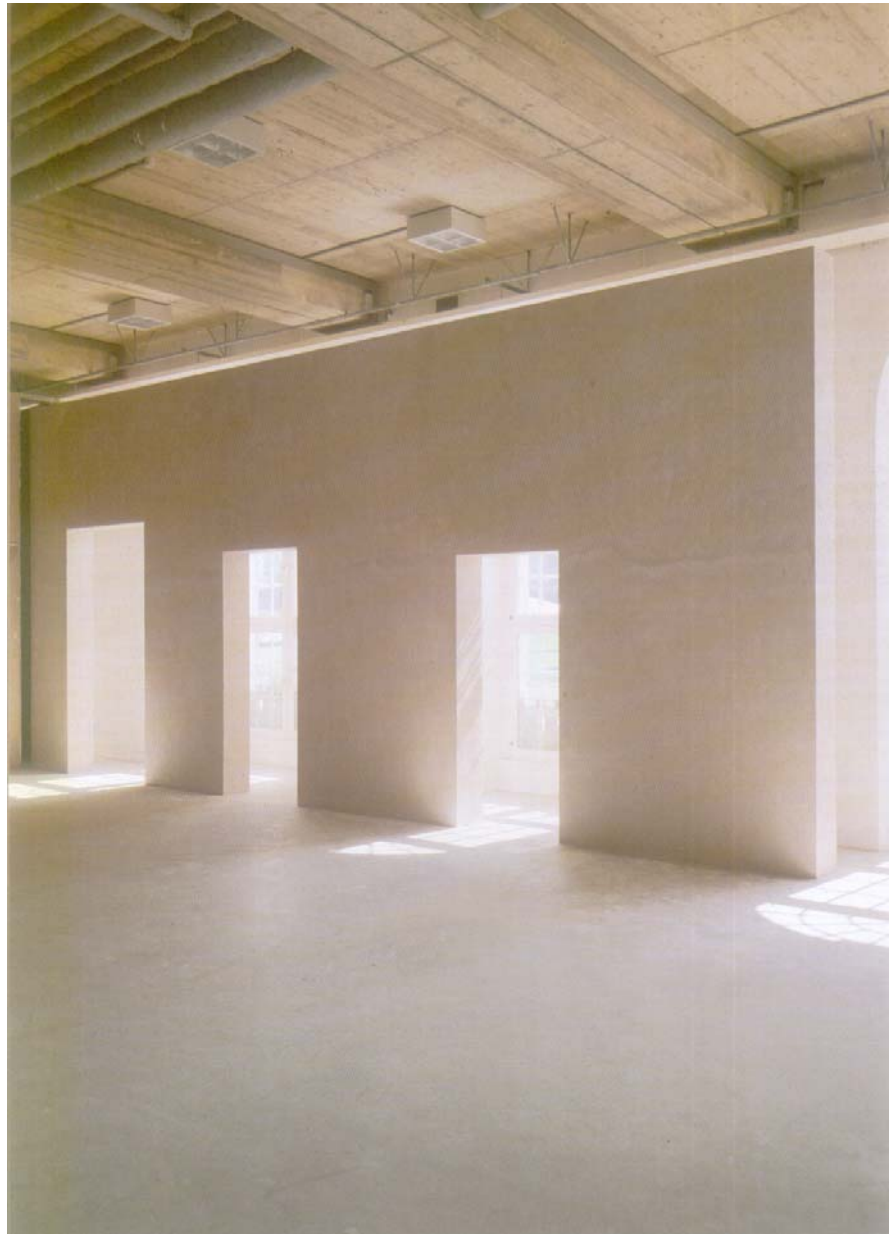
Jans Haaning's (il. 122) work alludes to all my reflections and rapture over the seen and the tangible which are present only in one's consciousness. I think I know what I see: everyday objects. Objects I know by heart without giving them a second thought: a table, a board, a chest of drawers, a floor, walls and light. One thing makes me wonder though: how many holes can an object have and still remain itself without losing its identity? How big a fragment of an object must be present to represent itself? Does absence exist on the board's surface or maybe it invites the neighbouring surface to interact with the one that is still there. Is the missing part gone or is it just absent? What is the absence of the board? Does the absence exist in the room, behind the board on the wall or does the absence exist only on the board's surface? Anyway, where and how are the missing parts of the board stored? Its physical absence is not equal to its absence in me. Its absence affects me more than its presence. It proves that the absent is even more present in my mind. Possibly the photograph that I "see" is not what it is supposed to mean.



122. "Office prepared writing" – Jans Haaning, desk, archive, blackboard and office, Tapko in City, Sobork, Denmark, 1992

Similarly, **Imi Knoebel** (il. 123) uses the play of light, a hole and a wall.

He does not create the illusion of reality though he tames light through changes in a building's architecture. Along a line of windows the artist has built an additional wall with a window-like rectangular hole, meant to reduce the number of light spots that logically should be there. One can only ponder that the missing light spot is not there as a result of a piece of wall replaced with a window frame. The missing part is completed by the logic of human mind. Still, I can feel the presence of the missing as it provokes my thinking.



123. "Help! Help! Otherwise I will be lost" – Imi Knoebel, installation, Documenta 7 Kassel, 1987

If it is not the end of time, then the cinema screens and theatre stages of **Hiroshi Sugimoto** (il. 124-126) become gates to eternity placed here and now, suggesting that eternity is leaky and full of holes. Becoming a part of the surface filled with light we enter a dimension we have never experienced before even though we are quite sure that behind the flat screen the landscape still unfolds everyday existence.

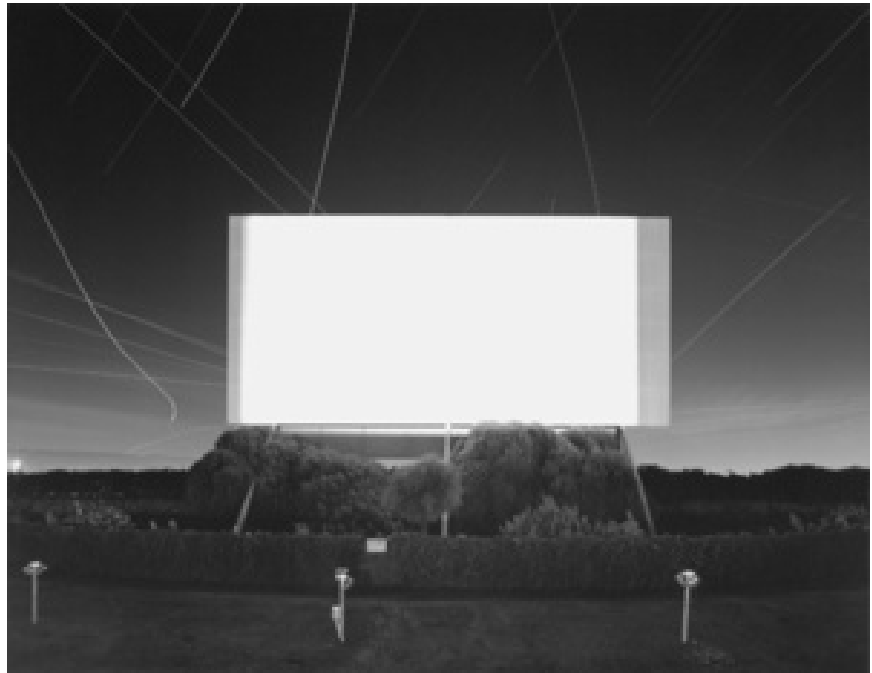


124. "Ohio Theatre" – Hiroshi Sugimoto, gelatin-silver print, "End of Time" Mori Art Museum Tokyo, Japan



1980

125. "Al. Ringling, Baraboo" – Hiroshi Sugimoto, gelatin-silver print, 42.3 x 54.2 cm, 1995



126. "Union City Drive-in" – Hiroshi Sugimoto, gelatin-silver print, Union City, USA, 1993

All these works discuss the same theme: a chakra of death – the unknown element buried in human flesh, somewhere between infinity and eternity.

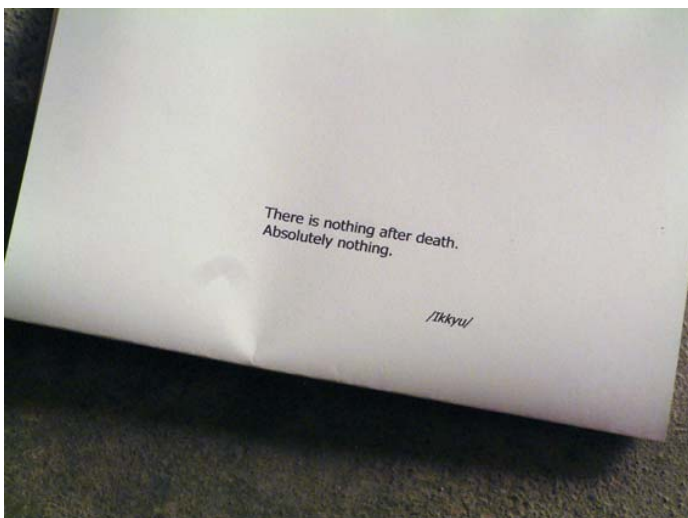
The best possible example to illustrate my thoughts is a work by **Bill Viola**, "**Room for St. John of the Cross**", 1983. (il. 127) Standing in a darkened room we are surrounded by a black and white landscape of mountains. The moment we hear an avalanche sliding down, the image starts to shake. In the middle of the room there is also a small hut and a welcoming yellowish light coming out of it. Inside, on a tiny table, on a small screen we can see the same landscape of mountains against a blue sky, an ideal tranquil heavenly view.

The hut is a hermitage for St. John and is a symbol of his peaceful and pure soul standing on a Carmel mountain, a meeting place with God. The scenery is till the same image of mountains – disturbed and dreadful, filled with deceiving temptations and illusions destroying the peace

of souls. The same twice, but differently.



127. "Room for St. John of the Cross" – Bill Viola, video installation, 1983



128 "Untitled" – Andrzej Peplonski, installation, IF MUSEUM Inner Spaces, Poznan, Poland, 2005

Similarly, in the work of **Andrzej Peplonski**, (il. 128) two pillars in my gallery and two paintings on a wall define the space where one can see an abandoned bike with a wheel still turning. Has an accident just happened? When we come closer we can recognize palace interiors with classic pillars. The owner of the bike is gone. On the floor there is a piece of paper with a quotation of Ikkyu, a monk: "There is nothing after death. Absolutely nothing".

The mystics and artists that I have presented constitute my "essential environment" in which I create my works and communicate with others.

Perhaps meeting someone eye to eye would be too surprising as we mainly communicate through words and produce images. Probably one thing we have in common is that "nothing" is everything missing. It is a place full of things that are absent in the here and now.

Today

Written between Sunday the 28th September and 20th October 2008

August 2008. Georgia, provoked by Russia, moved its military forces to Southern Ossetia. In reply, using the pretext of defending the Russian people, Putin invades Georgian territory, bombarding the country; its military areas, airports and the harbour town Sityi. Not long ago, Russia acknowledged Southern Ossetia and Georgia as sovereign countries, as a means of obliterating borders, so that it might incorporate both Georgian territories into its own state.

How valuable proves to be the experience gained in those former communist years.

What seems most important to me is an ability to evaluate reality; to develop an awareness of double meanings, of camouflaged strategies, deceitful intentions. Nevertheless this distrust of power stands in opposition to the Christian tradition of the Polish people. Two traditions are actually intertwined here: the Christian tradition from the moment of accepting baptism in 966 by Mieszko I; and the liberation struggles from the time of the first partition of Poland in 1772 to 1989 when the Russian occupation ends. At the heart of these partitions lay the cooperation of Russia and Prussia at the Convocation of Sejm in 1774. On the 11 April these powers signed a secret annex to the Allied Treaty in which they agreed a united

military attack against Rzeczpospolita, when both sides had come to the conclusion that their interests were in danger.

All forms of struggle against the Prussian, Nazi and Communist powers were forms of patriotism. Resistance toward power was expressed, for example, through neglecting work, because every type of work, at the end of the day, served the occupant. Being in a single communist block we mainly worked for the success of Russia. (After many years it was revealed that all communist countries “freely” took part in maintaining a fund that supported communism around the world, including the work of communist parties in capitalist countries, especially France and Italy.)

It was the Catholic Church, with its moral strength, which was linked for hundreds of years with the fight for freedom for the country and nation, for human dignity. On a Sunday we went to church where we found out about a different truth than the one that we heard on the radio or television. The reconciling of resistance and destruction, integrity and permanent theft, distrust towards the system and kindness towards people, was a method of life. It was a norm.

The country was divided into “us” and “them”. We were all waiting for better times. The thought of real freedom was unrealistic. Within the system, our dreams were limited to the possibility of buying goods without food cards, a washing machine, a television, a small Fiat, an occasional trip abroad, maybe some luxury from the West, and a whole orange all for yourself at Christmas. The West was accessed through shopping catalogues and seemed like some kind of endless paradise. The American Embassy, using the magazine “Ameryka”, promoted the USA as a country of wealth, freedom, progress, imagination, security and global thought. The reply from

the USRR was the magazine "Putieszestwie". It was printed on poorer paper, in a smaller format, promoting a woman on a tractor, Russian nature, academic paintings and the multiculturalism of the Russian republics; and all this was joined by the undying friendship of the allies of the great power. Nobody could imagine the fall of the Warsaw Pact. Therefore we lived within the existing frames of reality, albeit with a western complex. In the new capitalist reality, deep in our unconsciousness, we still refer to these experiences.

The somewhat unexpected liberation from the previous system did not of itself deliver the possibility of searching for one's own path. Western capitalism turned out to be an instant implant. By joining the European Union we were forced to apply new norms and accept priorities that the EU determines will be appropriate for our country. There remains a little bit of mysticism, a feeling for national ties, a readiness to help one another, improvisation in all circumstances, the need for freedom, and the desire for development and success. The law and various regulations are treated in a flexible manner, interpreted depending on the situation and need, which often helps in life and is an occasion for dialogue and active interpersonal relations.

The laws that are coming from the European Union, not unlike the previous regulations of the Party, limit personal independence in making decisions, constrain innovation and, most importantly, they objectify the human, dictating relations that lack feelings and ties.

Now, from a perspective of the 19 years since gaining freedom, I ask myself the question: is contemporary Polish Art a continuation or a negation

of the work from the 70's and 80's? This question is equally strongly related to my own practice, which is embedded in the artistic life of my country.

The first artist that comes to my mind is Roman Opalka, whose art definitely has an immense meaning for me. His personal attitude towards passing, towards a personal feeling of time and its record, found an individual way of speaking at the very beginning of his practice that still continues today.

Similarly, Izabella Gustowska or Jarosław Kozłowski, to identify the artists who are closest to me in the Poznan art circle, have remained in their world of self reflection, in their own language of speaking. At the beginning of the 90's it seemed that freedom, the possibilities of gaining wealth, buying the dreamed of consumer goods and the unlimited possibility to travel around the world would replace the need to create one's own vision of the world.

The youngest generation did not treat art or the opportunity to study at the Academy of Fine Arts as an opportunity to escape to a different reality, into a different environment. "Applied Art" immediately offered the possibility to be financially independent. The artist would become a useful person, and even indispensable in the world of competition and advertising.

His personal ambitions took second place, but he could compensate for this financially as he gained success in a different field closer to society.

After the economic crisis of the late 1990's, "High Art" was also touched by commercialization, the art market and a new category of artist maintained by a gallery. What was worse, art's value now depended on its market value.

Maybe this is not surprising to many people, but being brought up in the previous era I cannot solely see the positive sides of these changes.

Therefore I am glad that I can now present the works of a few artists whose

works explore the boundaries of our sensuality and understanding.

Konrad Kuzyszyn in a work titled "Potrójny Ukłon" (A Triple Bow) (il. 129) uses the simple function of a mirrored video and presents himself bowing in front of a wall. The technical effect allows for a pulsating appearance and disappearance of the person in the middle of the screen, through his multiplication and the presence of a shadow which falls in various directions.



129. "Potrójny Pokłon" (A Triple Bow) – Konrad Kuzyszyn, video, 2005



130. "Singing Lesson 1" – Artur Żmijewski, video, 2001

Artur Żmijewski (il. 130) constructs a simple video document. We see a choir singing in a protestant church, at first we think that perhaps the recording is of

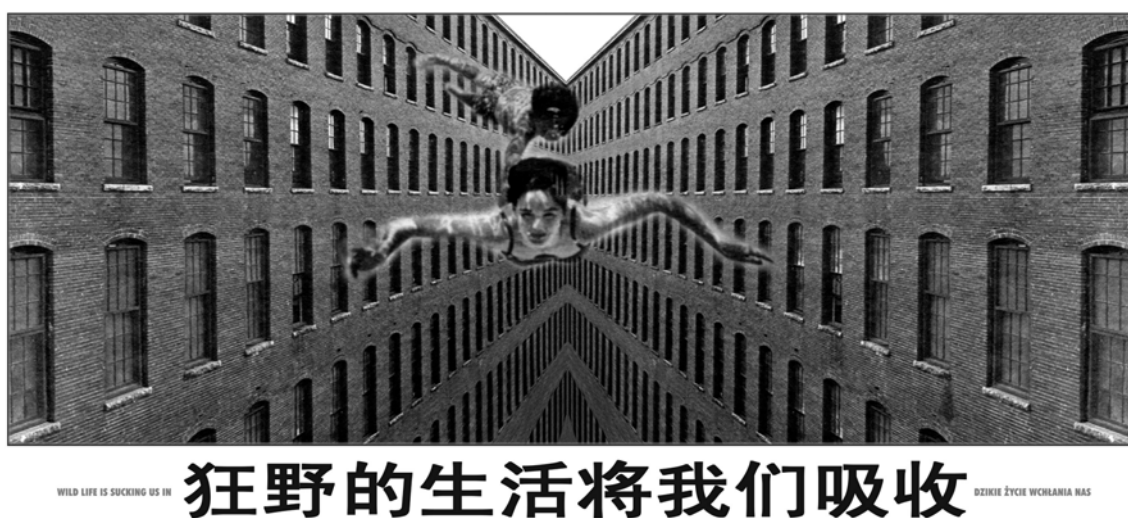
bad quality, or the text is in some unknown language. Slowly we realise that the women and men in the choir are deaf and their hand gestures become obvious to us although the song which is rising up to God is not heard by them. The works of Ryszard Waśko (il. 131) are paintings of 2 x 1.2 metres, copies from the news on television. Their beauty is in conflict with their immediate reality, confirmed by the texts on the canvas. The abstract beauty of the works' composition and colour suggests the abstraction of the drama that provided the subject for the chosen scene. The autonomous decisions of painting take away the reliability of those events, as if wanting to confirm the "prophecy" of Donald



Rumsfeld.

131. "TV-Series" Ryszard Waśko, oil on canvas, 2003

In his banners, Jacek Staniszewski (il. 132) (this one made in a special Chinese version for the exhibition '2 Asias – 2 Europes' Shanghai 2005) tears into the hidden emotions of humanity, imaging them through different layers of dream fantasies. Their appearance in public situations, on city billboards for example, creates the possibility for a direct confrontation of the viewer with his repressed ego.



132. "Dziki Życie Wchłania nas" (Wild Life is Sucking Us) Jacek Staniszewski, photomontage, billboard, 2003

Although Poland was not absorbed into the borders of a different country, as in the case of the DDR, it was definitely brought into an area of different value practices. The shaping of Poland's identity is the result of making decisions in the face, not so much of a planned, but rather a current reality. The struggle for autonomy depends on an awareness, at the start, and the evaluation of the need for compromise.

At the end, there is the ability to evaluate one's own skills and to address the question who do we want to become? There is art that is a mark of time. There is art that is a mark of the human.

Summary

In this thesis, I have presented 50 of my own works, often in relation to the work of other artists. My attention has focused on developments in my work from the period of 2000 to 2008.

In the first chapter 'Personal Introduction' I described my youth experiences of living in Poland, which in my opinion, have had an important influence on the development of my artistic attitude and sensitivity. In the last chapter 'Today' I discovered that there is a thread which runs between the experiences of the past and how I live and react to the reality which surrounds me today. These two chapters provide a type of "bracketing" that situates my artistic practice in a particular historical truth. The political context, the religious tradition and interpersonal relations in my closest community have influenced and continue to influence my fields of interest within arts practice, as well as in the shaping of my system of values.

In the chapter 'Beginnings' I referred to my drawings from the late 80's with their fundamental interest in spatial illusion, three dimensional form, the hole, repetitions, rhythms, and architectural elements and devices. The three works realized from cardboard in the early 90's continued my discovery of the meaning of form that shapes space; and its spiritual connotations. Their minimalist form, simplicity and attention to light and darkness established the

central question concerning the presence of the Unknown.

In 'The Confession Series: Wardrobes' I described a series of works which formed a continuation of my architectural sculptures, but, now, were strongly inspired by the confessional furniture used in the Catholic Church as a place of dialogue with God. Even though it seems that this dialogue is obvious to me, it is a dialogue that becomes almost impossible. My works express the helplessness and the desire for such a dialogue with the absent and the unknown, as represented by light. Two important elements appear: obituaries and the form of the "funnel".

'Architectural Objects' emphasised the importance of the language of pure form: circle, bow, pyramid, funnel, and their mutual relations generating universal reflections such as emptiness, layerings, movement, change and harmony. The specificity of site was also examined here. These works make me aware more and more that "What I say is not what I mean". The works become like some kind of temple or place of meeting with the unknown.

In the following section, 'Temple', I was absorbed by the problem of the mystic qualities of light in architectural form, especially in relation to the form of a funnel as a transgressional form linking one space to another. Light, understood not as lighting but as a phenomena, becomes a carrier of image which can cover and hide what exists in the reality behind it. In another case light reflected from a mirror introduces image of a line of sight into another reality. In this section I began to refer to the symbolic and illusionary aspect of light in the history of art.

In the chapter 'Drawings on the Wall' I presented works that are strongly reliant on the space in which they are created. Even though they use the language of geometrical illusion, their intention is to confront the viewer with a presence

of what is not accessible, but strongly present in consciousness. The physicality of these works creates access to what is beyond the senses.

In the chapter, 'Video, light was again understood as phenomenon and as a carrier of moving image. Important for me is the awareness that it is also going through a funnel in which it changes from a stream of energy into an image that forms an illusion of reality. My concern, here, was with the different experience of the unknown when it becomes present through a realistic image. The recognition of objects such as eye, heart, brain, jumping girl does not fully equate with the understanding of the event that was taking place in front of our eyes. When the projection stops only an empty space remains and the image recalled from memory seems never to have existed. A most important factor in my video works is time, which imprisons the ordinary fact, isolating it from commonplace reality, and transferring it into an infinite dimension. In this way, the presence of mystery in every moment of our lives may be revealed. In the same chapter I referred to my works in which I used meat. In both the video projections and in the installations the aspect of sacrifice is common.

Things are happening in front of the viewer's eyes as a visual performance involving him/her emotionally. The act of sacrifice takes place in front of the unknown being, an invisible partner in the dialogue.

In the next chapter, I discussed photographs that are based on the idea of the duplication and multiplication of a "scene". This new reality suggests an unsettling order hidden behind an "ordinary" environment. The intervention of the rules of symmetry into our reality cause unexpected events, when things happen twice at the same time.

The chapter dedicated to 'Scores – Drawing Concerts' opened another approach towards the unknown. Rational relationships between the appearance

of line and sound dissolve in the final visual and sonic results, creating a vacuum of understanding in the disruption and dislocation of intention and structure. Various experiences and investigations that relate to drawings and sounds lead me to create a composition of video footage as a “concert” based on the idea of a fugue. Reflections dealing with time, duration, repetition, quotation, looping, reversing were used in a flexible game with the moving image.

In the chapter ‘The Unknown - Negatives - Black Light’ I presented work that searches for the unknown through different forms of art. From the mid 90's I was tempted by the idea of black light, which I had first experienced through the obituaries. Selected images converted into negatives reveal parallel presences of a spiritual dimension that occur at the same place and at the same time in our reality. I relate my work to a drawing of Saint John of the Cross that represents the way to achieve a direct communion with “Nothing” which I name the “Unknown”. I notice that darkness can behave similarly to light, radiating energy, as if it had a physical body and an active existence.

The final chapter ‘Obituaries’ includes the longest period of my artistic practice from 1993 till today and includes works produced in various mediums. Inspired by ordinary newspaper advertising and using various visual means I examined different aspects of an anonymous death. Obituary as a last document of a person’s life brings us to an edge of unknown infinity and eternity that has increasingly defined the field of my investigation. Several questions were raised for the first time, for example, about holes, absence, light and darkness, negative and positive, reduction and enlargement, singularity and repetition, content and framing.

In the chapter ‘Mystics and Teaching’ I described the relationship between

the teachings of selected mystics and my educational practice.

In my pedagogical work I attempt to extend the consciousness of an artist in developing his individual strategies for provoking the unknown. My educational work confirms that the existence of the unknown is beyond human reason but that it can be experienced through the artistic practice.

In the chapter 'Artists and my Curatorial Work' I reflected on my curatorial practice and simply presented some works by various artists, coming to the conclusion that the one thing we have in common is that "nothing" is everything that is missing.

My own reflections towards art are joined by reference to many thinkers and, particularly, mystics. In the chapter 'Teaching and Mystics' I looked for influences that might exist between the wisdom of the mystics and my approaches to teaching. This thesis begins with a 'Personal Introduction' into memories of my life and early artistic practice in the 1980's. At the end, in the chapter 'Today' I reflected on the current situation, which is totally different from the one that existed at the beginning of my practice. However, some processes are strangely repetitive in this part of the world.

Finally, the external contexts of the historical, philosophical and cultural environment, and my own artistic work seem to operate as a mirror that enables me to consider my personal integrity and dis-integrity. I began this project with the title "That what I say is not what I mean". All the time, however, I was accompanied by the feeling of a kind of creative helplessness. Discovering the world through creating my artistic works was joined by a conviction that the space of the unknown is increasing disproportionately. All the time the notion of the unknown was half consciously passing through my mind. Throughout this project, I was referring to this concept without being aware that, at the end, it

would become the essence of what I was looking for.

The unknown, understood as the lack of substance or presence, or simply absence of meaning, became for me the presence of what is not accessible but intensively present. It seems to me that my artistic practice has brought me to a method of how to approach the unknown. I have come to realize that I was more and more tempted to eliminate meanings from my works rather than to define a clear message. This became a kind of “personal technology” designed to gain the presence of the unknown in my art works. Being rooted in a Christian heritage, I feel privileged to have access to such a form of reflection where the unknown can be written with a big “U” to suggest that the “Unknown” can be understood as a presence; and even as a personalized presence.

Returning for the last time to Saint John of the Cross, that which is known lacks integrity and that which is the unknown remains the ultimate and recognized aim. In a similar way, making an artwork is my way of speaking, of absorbing possible interpretations of what becomes visual, and confronting myself and the other with what occurs but remains invisible. Finally, I have come to the conclusion that it is the “Unknown”, itself, which integrates the artwork. All possible values and interpretations can be imposed on an artwork, but these interpretations cannot agree upon what is “essential”. Therefore the “Unknown” has become my single aim, providing an opportunity to face, through my artistic practice, that which is not accessible and remains infinite and internal. In this thesis, I have attempted to describe subtle moments in which a meeting has taken place between my temporality and the presence of the “Unknown”. I am aware that I share my personal artistic experience, and that many of my own experiences are in common with those of other artists; and I am also aware that this is only one of many possible roads towards such experiences. I hope that

my own experience will enrich the knowledge and understanding of artistic strategies in facing the “Unknown”.

Tomasz Wendland

Curriculum Vitae

Tomasz Wendland

born 19.07.1960 in Poznan/Poland

Education:

4 year Art History at UAM University in Poznan.

Art Academy in Poznan (Pedagogy, Drawing, sculpture - Dyploma)

Alanus Kunsthochschule Alfter/Bonn Germany (Paintings - Dyploma)

Work:

1992-4 Teacher at the IILO in Poznan - Secondary School (art and art history)

since 2003-2004 Academy of Fine Arts in Poznan

since 2005 WSHE w Lodz

Lecturer:

Dartington College of Arts - UK - since 1996

Alanus Kunsthochschule Alfter/Bonn - Germany

Lectures:

Theology Departement at the Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznan

Fine Arts Academy, Stuttgart (Germany)

Suffolk College, Ipswich (UK)

Sommer Akademie Alanus Kunshochschule - since 1992

Sommer Akademie w Rheinau - Switzerland

Since 1999 - Director
IF MUSEUM Inner Spaces w Poznaniu
free.art.pl/csw_innerspaces

Awards:

City of Poznan and Głos Wlkp. "Medal Młodej Sztuki" 1998
Stypendium from the Minister of Culture and National Heritage 2005

Works In the collections:

FusionArts Museum New York, Duolun MoMA Shanghai,
Kyo Hoshino in Japan, SIPA Korean Print Art Promotion Committee, Seoul
and private collections in Germany, Poland (Ford) and USA.

Publications in catalogues from the show in China, France, Japan, Germany,
Poland, Italy, USA,
and Art magazines: Arton, Art in China, Art Monthly, Exit, Obieg, Czas Kultury,
Gazeta Malarzy i Poetów, Magazyn Sztuki, Orońsko, Praesens, Spam, Żywa
Galeria.

Individual shows:

1989 - Painting-Objects, Gemälde Hagen, Bonn, Germany
1989 - Painting-Objects, "Civilization and Culture" Seminar, Skoki Palace,
Poland

1990 - Paintings-Objects, "Chaos Turn Into A Chance" Conference, Hamburg,
Germany

1993 - Installation "Flags", ON Gallery, Poznan, Poland
1993 - Installation "Black Hole", U Jezuitów Gallery, Poznan, Poland

1995 - Installation "Annunziiazione", ON Gallery, Poznan, Poland

1996 - Performance - Alanus Kunsthochschule, Alfter/Bonn, Germany
1996 - Performance, Kunst Akademie Stuttgart, Germany

1997 - Video-Installation, ON Gallery, Poznan, Poland
1997 - Performance, Skoki Palace, Poland
1997 - Video-Installation, Dartington Gallery, Dartington, UK

1998 - Performance, Neue Kunst im Hagenbucher Gallery, Heilbronn, Germany

1999 - Video-Performance, Alanus Kunsthochschule, Alfter/Bonn, Germany

2000 - Sound-Installation – "In Memoriam", CCA Inner Spaces Multimedia,
Poznan, Poland
2000 - Installations In Memoriam, BWA Katowice, Poland

2001 - Drawing Installation, Alanus Kunsthochschule, Alfter/Bonn, Germany
2001 - Sculpture Installation in Landscape, Mishima, Japan

Group shows:

1988 - Painting, Antroposophy Congress, Finlandia House, Helsinki, Finland
1990 - Painting objects, "Regionale IV", Kunsthalle Bonn, Germany
1990 - Painting objects, "Krajobraz" Krakow, Poland

1992 - Performance, "Absent Art" Festival, ON Gallery, Poznan, Poland
1992 - Installation, Polish-German "Meeting and Creativity" Exhibition, Poznan, Poland
1992 - Installation in landscape, Tri Angel, Schersberg, Germany
1992 - Installation, "5632m3", Mosina, Poland

1993 - Object, "Different Book" Exhibition, ON Gallery, Poznan, Poland
1993 - Polish-Slovakian Meeting, Rozemberok, Slovakia
1993 - Installation "Waiting", 7 Artists from Poznań, Torun, Poland
1993 - Installation "Black Hole", "U Jezuitów" Gallery, Poznań, Poland
1993 - Installation "Readyness", Yad Labanim Museum, Tel Aviv, Israel
1993 - Installation "Mirroring Fields", Hoffmann Gallery, Poznan, Poland

1994 - Installation "Confession II", Polish Sculpture Center, Oronsco, Poland
1994 - Installation "Confession III", "Small Narratives", BWA Poznan, Poland
1994 - Installation, Inner Spaces, Skoki Palace, Poland

1995 - Drawing installation, ON Gallery, Poznań, Poland
1995 - Installation "Confession IV", Christian Culture Week, Pallottines Church, Poznan, Poland
1995 - Installation "Confession V", Polish Galleries, Podewil Gallery, Berlin, Germany

1996 - Installation, VII Sacral Art Biennale, Gorzów Wlkp., Poland
1996 - Installation, "Inner Spaces", Arsenal Gallery, Bialystok, Poland
1996 - Installation, "Inner Spaces", Arsenal Gallery, Poznan, Poland
1996 - Installation, "Inner Spaces", Wyspa Gallery, Gdansk, Poland

1997 - Video-Installation, Polish-German Meeting, Orońsko, Poland
1997 - Video-Installation, "Inner Spaces", "U Jezuitów" Gallery, Poznan, Poland
1997 - Video-Installation, Kubus Gallery, Hannover, Germany
1997 - Installation, Polish Culture Festival, Rennes, France

1998 - Video-Installation, IFA Gallery, Stuttgart, Germany
1998 - Video-Installation, „Porta Maggiore” National Museum in Poznan, Poland
1998 - Video-Installation, IFA Gallery, Bonn, Germany
1998 - Video-Performance, "Kunstflut" Apollinaris & Art, Bad Neuenahr, Germany
1998 - Performance, "Odpryski" Performance Festival, ON Gallery, Poznan, Poland

1999 - Installation, "Sites Abroad", Ipswich, Anglia
 1999 - Installation, "Mediations", CCA Inner Spaces Multimedia, Poznan, Poland
 1999 - Video-Installation, "Illusion - Illumination"- Festival, CCA Inner Spaces, Poznan, Poland
 1999 - Performance, "Doublebound" Art Festival, Jaszbereny, Hungary
 1999 - Instalation-Performance, Obituaries, BWA Torun, Poland

2000 - Computer pictures, Christo Morto 2000, CCA Inner Spaces, Poznań, Poland
 2000 - Installation, C.R.A.N.E Festival, Burgundy, France
 2000 - Video - installation EXPOO 2000 Balance, Faust Kunsthalle, Hannover, Germany
 2000 - Installation, performance, International Artists Meeting, BWA Katowice, Poland
 2000 - Installation, INNER SPACES in MAMU Gallery, Budapest, Hungary

2001 - Installation - Via Festival, Artekno Gallery, Paris, France
 2001 - Performance - Continuum 2001, CCA Inner Spaces, Poznan, Poland
 2001 - Installation, Poznański Factory, (Stowarzyszenie FABS), Lodz, Poland
 2001 - Paintings and Drawings, Aizu Art College, Mishima, Japan
 2001 - Drawings, Landscape Art Meeting, Iwaki, Japan
 2001 - Drawings and Performance, MMAC Festival, Tokyo, Japan
 2001 - Drawing performance, AAA Festival, St. Jean sur Richelieu, Kanada
 2001 - Drawing performance, AAA Festival, Montreal, Canada

2002 - Drawing installation, Guardando l'Europa, Palazzo Calabresi, Viterbo, Italy
 2002 - Drawing installation, Obserwujac Europe, CCA Inner Spaces, Poznan, Poland
 2002 - "Obituaries", Yamabiko Museum, Mishima, Japan
 2002 - "Obituaries", Good Morning Tokyo, Polish artists exhibition, Seshion Suginami, Tokio, Japan
 2002 - "Obituaries", X Festiwal Inner Spaces, CSW Inner Spaces, Poznan, Poland
 2002 - "Partiture", Drawing Performance, Die Beherschung der Natur, Faust Kunsthalle, Hannover, Germany
 2002 - "Partiture", Drawing Performance, Crossing Time Galeria, Dartington, UK
 2002 - "Obituaries", MAMU Gallery, Budapest, Hungary
 2002 - "Partiture", Schachzug, Performance Festival, Ernst Museum, Budapest, Hungary

2003 - Drawing Concert - performance with musicians, Dartington College of Arts, UK
 2003 - Performance, Art Action, Harta Performing Monza, Monza, Italy
 2003 - Drawing Concert, Dartington College of Arts, UK
 2003 - Obiect, Facing Nature, CSW Inner Spaces, Poznan, Poland
 2003 - ARTACTION, International Performance Art Festiwal, Monza, Italy
 2003 - Sound Drawings, Performance 14 Sommerakademie, Alfter, Germany
 2003 - "Obituaries"- MMAC Festiwal, Paraglobe Gallery, Tokyo, Japan
 2003 - "Obituaries", Yamabiko Museum, Mishima, Japan

2003 - TRANSFUSION, FusionArt Museum, New York, USA
2003 - "Angels", video installation, Nanjing Sengua Art Center, Nanjing, China

2004 - Drawing Concert, FusionArts Museum, Nowy Jork, USA
2004 - "Angels", video Installation, Art Peripheries Festival, Pecs, Hungary
2004 - "Memories", Installation, Galeria Miejska, Wrocław, Poland
2004 - "Memories", Video installation, Computer Art Festival, Maribor, Słowenija
2004 - "Obituaries", Instalacja, FusionArts Museum, New York, USA
2004 - "Obituaries", Installation, Yamabiko Museum, Mishima, Japan
2004 - "Obituaries", Sound installation, Para Globe, Tokyo, Japan
2004 - "Obituaries", Sound installation, Łódź Biennale, Łódź, Poland
2004 - Photography, MATCH, Kunsthalle FAUST, Hannover, Germany

2005 - Photography, Crossing Time Festiwal, Dartington, UK
2005 - Fugue, Crossing Time Festiwal, Dartington, UK
2005 - Inner Spaces, photography, Poznan Art Fair, Poznan, Poland
2005 - "Drawing Concerts", Art Poznan Fair, Poznan, Poland
2005 - "Drawing lesson", video, Yamabiko Museum, Mishima, Japan
2005 - "Drawing lesson", video, Sojo Gallery, Kumamoto, Japan
2005 - "Fugue", wideo, Contact - Context, Kunstlerforum, Bonn, Germany
2005 - "Fugue", wideo, Contact - Context, Galeria Miejska Arsenał, Poznan, Poland
2005 - "Inner Spaces", photography, Art affair, Kunsthalle Faust, Hannover, Germany
2005 - "Inner Spaces", photography, Art Fair Arena, Berlin, Germany
2005 - "Fugue", video, Poznań Art Now II, Galeria Miejska BWA, Bielsko Biala, Poland
2005 - "Fugue", video installation, Duolun MoMA, Shanghai, China
2005 - Inner Spaces, digital photography, Art Center Shanghai, China
2005 - "Drawing Concerts", Hi Shanghai, MMAC Festiwal, Shanghai, China

2006 - Photography, Instalacja, Inbetween, Woo Lim Gallery, Seoul, South Korea
2006 - Photography, SIPA Art Fair, Hangaram Art Museum, Seoul, South Korea
2006 - Photography, Fukushima Biennale, Fukushima, Japan
2006 - Video Instalacja, Come into my world, Lodz Biennale, Lodz, Poland

2007 - ASIA - EUROPE Mediations, MONA Collection, Poznan, Poland
2007 - Architectural Object, Yamabiko Museum, Mishima, Japan
2007 - Polish and Middle European Print Art and Photo, Hangaram Museum, Seoul, South Korea
2007 - Random in Random, Muzeum for Contemporary Art in Radom, Radom, Poland

Curatorial work:

1988 - Antroposophy Congress, Finlandia House, Helsinki, Finland
1988 - Europa - Impulse fur Zukunft - Congress, Trier, Germany

1989 - Civilisation and Culture Conference, Palace Skoki, Poland

1990 - Chaos turn into a Chance - Hamburg, Germany
 1990 - Alanus Kunsthochschule - Arsenal Gallery, Poznań, Poland

 1991 - Energies towards the Future - Conference-workshop, York, England
 1991 - Towards Sources of Creativity - Conference-workshop, Silna, Poland

 1992 - Open Place - Closed Space - Conference-workshop, Silna, Poland

 1993 - Festival Inner Spaces I, Galeria ON, Poznan, Poland

 1994 - Polish-German Meeting, Polish Sculpture Center, Orońsko, Poland
 1994 - Festiwal Inner Spaces III, Pałac Skoki, Poland

 1995 - Christian Culture Week, Kościół Pallottinów, Poznań, Poland
 1995 - Festival Inner Spaces IV, Pałac Skoki, Poznań, Poland

 1996 - Inner Spaces", Arsenal Galeria, Białystok, Poland
 1996 - Festival Inner Spaces V, Arsenal Galeria, Poznań, Poland
 1996 - Inner Spaces", Wyspa Galeria, Gdańsk, Poland

 1997 - Festival Inner Spaces VI, Galeria ON, Poznań, Poland
 1997 - Polish-German Meeting, Polish Sculpture Centre, Orońsko, Poland

 1998 - Inner Spaces - IFA Gallery, Stuttgart, Germany
 1998 - Dotyk - National Museum in Poznań, Poland
 1998 - Festival Inner Spaces VII, Poznań, Poland
 1998 - Inner Spaces - IFA Gallery, Bonn, Germany

 1999 - „Illusion - Illumination”- Festival VIII, CCA Inner Spaces, Poznań, Poland,

 2000 - Christo Morto 2000, CCA Inner Spaces, Poznań, Poland
 2000 - Festival Inner Spaces IX, CCA Inner Spaces, Poznań, Poland
 2000 - Balance - EXPOO 2000 Balance, Faust Kunsthalle, Kubus Gallery, Hannover, Germany
 2000 - Inner Spaces in MAMU Gallery, Budapest, Hungary

 2002 - Guardando l'Europa, Palazzo Calabresi, Viterbo, Italy
 2002 - Festival Inner Spaces X, CCA Inner Spaces, Poznań, Poland
 2002 - Good Morning Tokyo - Wystawa Artystow Polskich, Seshion Suginami, Tokyo, Japan
 2002 - Festival Inner Spaces X, CSW Inner Spaces, Poznań, Poland
 2002 - Die Beherschung der Natur - Faust Kunsthalle, Hannover, Germany

 2003 - Facing Nature - CSW Inner Spaces - Poznań, Poland
 2003 - Festival Inner Spaces X - CCA Inner Spaces, Poznań, Poland
 2003 - Return to Nature, Nanjing Sengua Art Center, Nanjing, China

 2004 - Art Peripheries Festival, Pecs, Hungary
 2004 - Howl Festival - FusionArts Museum, New York, USA
 2004 - Festival Inner Spaces XII - Poznań, Poland
 2004 - Poznan Art Now - Łódź Biennale I, Łódź, Poland
 2004 - MATCH - Kunsthalle FAUST, Hannover, Germany

2005 - Crossing Time Festival, Dartington, England
2005 - Lunacy - Yasuyuki Saegusa - Poster - CCA Inner Spaces, Poznań, Poland
2005 - Back to the Future - Shanghai Arts, CCA Inner Spaces, Poznań, Poland
2005 - Passages to Olymp - Sojo Gallery, Kumamoto, Japan
2005 - Contact - Context - Kunstlerforum, Bonn, Germany
2005 - Contact - Context - Galeria Miejska Arsenal, Poznań, Poland
2005 - 2 Asias - 2Europes - Duolun MoMA, Shanghai, China
2005 - Art Center Shanghai, China
2005 - Hi Shanghai - MMAC Festival, Shanghai, China

2006 - Woo Lim Gallery, Seoul, South Korea
2006 - SIPA Art Fair, Hangaram Art Museum, Seoul, South Korea
2006 - Come into my world, Łódź Biennale II, Łódź, Poland

2007 - I Collection show of MONA Inner Spaces, Poznań, Poland
2007 - ASIA - EUROPE Mediastions, MNP and WSNHID, Poznań, Poland
2007 - Polish and Middle European Print art and photography, SIPA Art Fair, Hangaram Museum, Seoul, South Korea

Appendix

Mentioned artists and important persons to me:

Victor Alimpiev, Alan Ginsberg¹⁶, Unknown Author – The Cloud of Unknown, St. Augustine, Rudolf Arnheim, Jan Berdyszak, Josepha Beuys¹⁵, Roger Bourke, Breugel, Wojciech Bruszewski, Agatha Christie¹³, Marco Costabi, Vermeer van Delft, Master Eckhardt, Umberto Eco²³, M. C. Esher, Jan van Eyck, Weng Fen, Fezi, Caspar David Friedrich, Ernst H. Gombrich, Witold Gombrowicz, Grzegorz, Witold Gyurkowicz, Jans Haaning, Jimmy Hendrix¹⁹, Werner Herzog, Magdalena Jetelova, Wasilly Kandinsky, Tadeusz Kantor⁸, Alicja Kepinska, Arne Klingborg, Imi Knoebel, Maksymilian Kolbe¹⁷, Konowicz, Jaroslaw Kozlowski, Akira Kurosawa, St. John of the Cross¹², Jan Machulski, Kazimierz Malewicz, Andrea Massaccio, Michel Metrucciani, a director of Albertin Museum graphics collection in Vienna, Moses⁶, Edvard Munch¹⁸, Chigusa Muro, St. Teresa of Avilla¹, Olgierd Nowak, Nylander, Konrad Oberhuber, Donald Rumsfeld⁹, Morgan O'Hara, Brather Patrick, St. Paul, Nicolas Provost, Roman Opałka²², Andrzej Peplonski, Radek Plonski, Rembrandt van Rijn⁷, Josef Stalin^{5,10}, Rudolf Steiner⁴, Johannes Stuttgen,

Hiroshi Sugimoto², Alvin Toffler, James Turrell¹⁴, Xu Yun, Bill Viola³, Simone Weil¹¹, Andrzej Wroblewski, Xiang Jing, Tomasz Wendland²¹, Stroszek B.²⁰...



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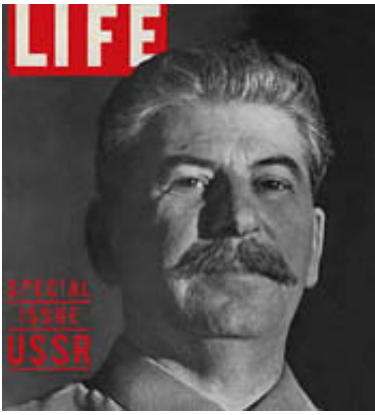
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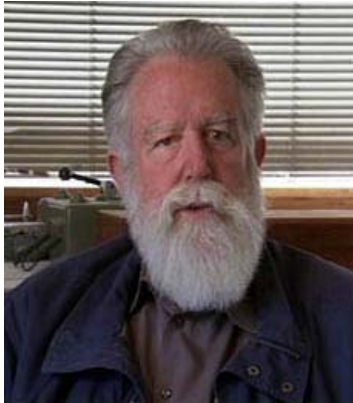
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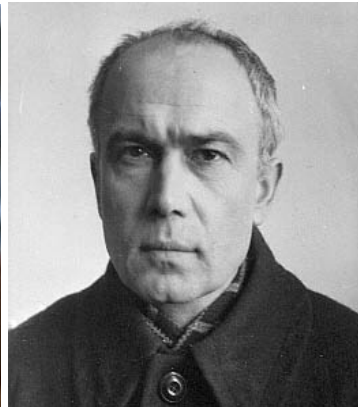
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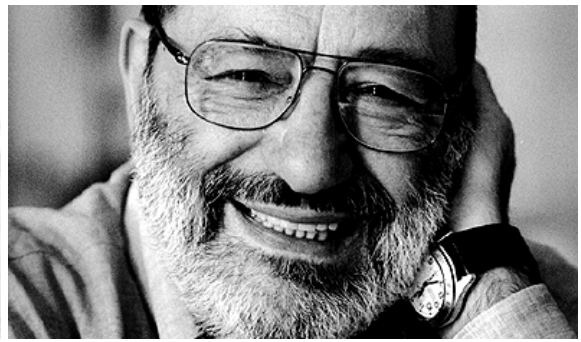
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Robert Campin (c. 1375 – 26 April 1444), now usually identified with the artist known as the "Master of Flémalle", is usually considered the first great master of Early Netherlandish painting. This had been a matter of controversy for decades; Campin's life is relatively well documented for the period, but no works in assessable condition could be securely connected with him, whilst a corpus of work had been attached to the unidentified "Master of Flémalle", named after the supposed origin of a work.

Willem Claeszoon Heda (December 14, 1594, Haarlem – c. 1680, Haarlem) was one of the earliest Dutch artists devoted exclusively to the painting of still life.

Andrea Masaccio (born **Tommaso Cassai** or in some accounts **Tommaso di Ser Giovanni di Mone**; December 21, 1401 – autumn 1428), was the first great painter of the Quattrocento period of the Italian Renaissance. His frescoes are the earliest monuments of Humanism, and introduce a plasticity previously unseen in figure painting.

Maurits Cornelis Escher (June 17, 1898 – March 27, 1972), usually referred to as M. C. Escher, was a Dutch graphic artist. He is known for his often mathematically inspired woodcuts, lithographs and mezzotints. These feature impossible constructions, explorations of infinity, architecture and tessellations.

Simone Weil (February 3, 1909 – August 24, 1943), who occasionally used the anagrammatic pen name Emile Novis, was a French philosopher, Christian mystic, and social activist.

Johannes Vermeer van Delft or Jan Vermeer (baptized October 31, 1632 – December 15, 1675) was a Dutch Baroque painter who specialized in domestic interior scenes of ordinary life. His entire life was spent in the town of Delft. Vermeer was a moderately successful provincial painter in his lifetime. He seems to have never been particularly wealthy, perhaps due to the fact that he produced relatively few paintings, leaving his wife and eleven children in debt at his death.

Rudolf Steiner (born 25 February 1861 in Murakirály, Austria-Hungary (now Donji Kraljevec, Croatia), died 30 March 1925 in Dornach, Switzerland) was an

Austrian philosopher, literary scholar, educator, artist, playwright, social thinker, and esotericist.[1][2][3] He was the founder of Anthroposophy, Waldorf education, biodynamic agriculture, anthroposophical medicine,[4] and the new artistic form of Eurythmy.

Tadeusz Kantor (April 6, 1915 – December 8, 1990) was a Polish painter, assemblage artist, set designer and theatre director. Kantor was well renowned for his revolutionary performances in Poland and abroad. Born in Wielopole Skrzyńskie, Galicia (in what was then Austria-Hungary), Kantor graduated from the Cracow Academy in 1939. During the Nazi occupation of Poland, he founded the Independent Theatre, and served as a professor at the Academy of Fine Arts in Kraków as well as a director of experimental theatre in Kraków from 1942 to 1944. Following the war, he became known for his avant-garde work in stage design including designs for *Saint Joan* (1956) and *Measure for Measure* (1956). Specific examples of such changes to standard theatre were stages that extended out into the audience, and the use of mannequins as real-life actors.

Rembrandt Harmenszoon van Rijn (July 15, 1606 – October 4, 1669) was a Dutch painter and etcher. He is generally considered one of the greatest painters and printmakers in European art history and the most important in Dutch history.[1] His contributions to art came in a period that historians call the Dutch Golden Age.

Andrzej Wróblewski (1927 – 1957) was a Polish painter who died in a tragic mountaineering accident in 1957 when he was only 30. He is recognized by many as one of Poland's most prominent artists in the early post World War II era, creating an individualistic approach to figurative painting.

Jarosław Kozłowski – polish conceptual artist, Born Jan 28 1945, Srem, Poland.

Saint Teresa of Ávila, known in religion as Saint Teresa of Jesus and baptized as Teresa de Cepeda y Ahumada, (born March 28, 1515 at Ávila, Old Castile, Spain, died October 4, 1582 at Alba de Tormes, Salamanca, Spain) was a prominent Spanish mystic, Carmelite nun, and writer of the Counter Reformation. She was a reformer of the Carmelite Order and is considered to be, along with Saint John of the Cross, a founder of the Discalced Carmelites. She became the first female to be named a Doctor of the Church in 1970 and is one of only three females to be awarded that honor, along with St. Catherine of Siena, made so in 1970 and St. Thérèse of Lisieux, made so in 1997.

Saint John of the Cross (*San Juan de la Cruz*) (June 24, 1542 – December 14, 1591) was a major figure in the Catholic Reformation, a Spanish mystic, Carmelite friar and priest born at Fontiveros, a small village near Ávila. Spanish mystic, born at Fontiveros (Fontiveros) on the 24th of June 1542. He became a professed Carmelite in 1564, and was ordained priest at Salamanca in 1567. He met with much opposition in his efforts to introduce the reforms proposed by St. Teresa of Ávila, and was more than once imprisoned. His real name was Juan de Yepes y Alvarez; in religion he was known as Juan de San Matias until 1568, when he adopted the name of Juan de la Cruz. Broken by persecution, he was sent to the monastery of Ubeda,

where he died in 1591; his *Obras espirituales* were published posthumously in 1618. He was beatified in 1674 and canonized on the 27th of December 1726. The lofty symbolism of his prose is frequently obscure, but his lyrical verses are distinguished for their rapturous ecstasy and beauty of expression. Some of his poems have been translated with great success by Arthur Symonds in *Images of Good and Evil*. John was made a Doctor of the Church in 1926 Canonization 1726

Hsu Yun (Traditional Chinese: 虛雲大師, Simplified Chinese: 虚云大师, Pinyin: Xū Yún Dà Shī, "empty cloud") (1840-1959) was a renowned Chán master and one of the most influential Buddhist teachers of the 19th and 20th centuries. Although many aspects of his life (particularly his great longevity) are disputed by historians and Chán scholars, this article attempts to give an accurate biography, based largely on his own writings and those of his colleagues and successors in Dharma.

Donald Henry "Rummy" Rumsfeld (born July 9, 1932) is a businessman, a U.S. Republican politician, the 13th Secretary of Defense under President Gerald Ford from 1975 to 1977, and the 21st Secretary of Defense under President George W. Bush from 2001 to 2006. He is both the youngest (43 years old) and the oldest (68 years old) person to have held the position, as well as the only person to have held the position for two non-consecutive terms, and the second longest serving, behind Robert McNamara. Rumsfeld has also served in various positions under President Richard Nixon, served four terms in the United States House of Representatives, and served as United States Ambassador to NATO. Rumsfeld was an aviator in the United States Navy between 1954 and 1957 before transferring to the Reserve. In public life, he has also served as an official in numerous federal commissions and councils. ABC and BBC news consider Rumsfeld to be the most controversial defense secretary in US history.

Aurelius Augustinus, Augustine of Hippo, or Saint Augustine (November 13, 354 – August 28, 430) was a philosopher and theologian, and was bishop of the North African city of Hippo Regius for the last third of his life. Augustine is one of the most important figures in the development of Western Christianity, and is considered to be one of the church fathers. He framed the concepts of original sin and just war.

Johannes Eckhart O.P. (c. 1260 – c. 1328), also known as Eckhart von Hochheim and widely referred to as Meister Eckhart, was a German theologian, philosopher and mystic, born near Erfurt, in Thuringia. *Meister* is German for "Master", referring to the academic title *Magister in theologia* he obtained in Paris. Coming into prominence during the decadent Avignon Papacy and a time of increased tensions between the Franciscans and Eckhart's Dominican Order of Preacher Friars, he was brought up on charges later in life before the local Franciscan-led Inquisition. Tried as a heretic by Pope John XXII, his "Defence" is famous for his reasoned arguments to all challenged articles of his writing and his refutation of heretical intent. He purportedly died before his verdict was received, although no record of his death or burial site has ever been discovered. Well known for his work with pious lay groups such as the Friends of God and succeeded by his more circumspect disciples of John Tauler and Henry Suso, he has gained a large following in recent years. In his study of medieval humanism, Richard Southern includes him along with Saint Bede

the Venerable and Saint Anselm as emblematic of the intellectual spirit of the late Middle Ages

Jan Machulski (born 3 July 1928 in Łódź) – Polish movie theater, TV actor.

Witold Marian Gombrowicz (August 4, 1904 in Małoszyce, near Kielce, Congress Poland, Russian Empire – July 24, 1969 in Vence, near Nice, France) was a Polish novelist and dramatist. His works are characterized by deep psychological analysis, a certain sense of paradox and an absurd, anti-nationalist flavor. In 1937 he published his first novel, *Ferdydurke*, which presented many of his usual themes: the problems of immaturity and youth, the creation of identity in interactions with others, and an ironic, critical examination of class roles in Polish society and culture. He gained fame only during the last years of his life but is now considered one of the foremost figures of Polish literature.

Joseph Beuys (IPA: [ˈjoːzɛf ˈboʏs]; May 12, 1921 – January 23, 1986) was an influential German artist who came to prominence in the 1960s. He is most famous for his ritualistic public performances and his energetic championing of the healing potential of art and the power of a universal human creativity. As well as performances, Beuys produced sculptures, environments, vitrines, 450 prints and posters, and thousands of drawings. He was also a committed teacher and increasingly devoted much of his energy to German politics. A charismatic and controversial figure, the nature and value of Beuys's contribution to Western art has elicited a hotly contested and often polarised debate.

Dame Agatha Mary Clarissa, Lady Mallowan, DBE (15 September 1890 – 12 January 1976), commonly known as **Agatha Christie**, was an English crime fiction writer. She also wrote romance novels under the name **Mary Westmacott**, but is best remembered for her 80 detective novels and her successful West End theatre plays. Her works, particularly featuring detectives Hercule Poirot or Miss Jane Marple, have given her the title the 'Queen of Crime' and made her one of the most important and innovative writers in the development of the genre.

Werner Herzog (born **Werner Stipetić** on September 5, 1942) is a German film director, screenwriter, actor, and opera director of Croatian descent. He is often associated with the German New Wave movement (also called New German Cinema), along with Rainer Werner Fassbinder, Margarethe von Trotta, Volker Schlöndorff, Wim Wenders and others. His films often feature heroes with impossible dreams or people with unique talents in obscure fields.

Rudolf Arnheim (July 15, 1904 – June 9, 2007) was a German-born author, art and film theorist and perceptual psychologist. He himself said that his major books are *Art and Visual Perception: A Psychology of the Creative Eye* (1954), *Visual Thinking* (1969), and *The Power of the Center: A Study of Composition in the Visual Arts* (1982), but it is *Art and Visual Perception* for which he was most widely known. Revised, enlarged and published as a New Version in 1974, it has been translated into 14 languages, and is very likely one of the most widely read and influential art books of the twentieth century.

Sir Ernst Hans Josef Gombrich, OM, CBE (30 March 1909 – 3 November

2001) was an Austrian-born art historian, who spent most of his working life in the United Kingdom. *The Story of Art*, first published in 1950 (currently in its 16th edition) is widely regarded as a seminal work of criticism and one of the most accessible introductions to the visual arts. Originally intended for adolescent readers, it has sold millions of copies and been translated into more than 30 languages. Other major publications include *Art and Illusion* (1960), regarded by critics to be his most influential and far-reaching work, and the papers gathered in *Meditations on a Hobby Horse* (1963) and *The Image and the Eye* (1981). Other important books are *Aby Warburg: An Intellectual Biography* (1970), *The Sense of Order* (1979) and *The Preference for the Primitive* (posthumously in 2002). A complete list of his publications was published by JB Trapp, *E.H. Gombrich: A Bibliography* in 2000.

Roman Opalka (1931) In 1965, In his studio in Warsaw, Roman Opalka, a French born painter of Polish origin, began painting a process of counting - from one to infinity. Starting in the top left-hand corner of the canvas and finishing in the bottom right-hand corner, the tiny numbers are painted in horizontal rows. Each new canvas, which the artist calls a 'detail', takes up counting where the last left off. Each 'detail' is the same size (196 x 135 cm), the dimension of his studio door in Warsaw. All details have the same title, 1965/1-00; the idea does not date although the artist has pledged his life to its execution: 'All my work is a single thing, the description from number one to infinity. A single thing, a single life. Over the years there have been some changes to the ritual. In Opalka's first details he painted white numbers onto a black background. In 1968 he changed to a grey background 'because its not a symbolic colour, nor an emotional one', and in 1972 he decided he would gradually lighten this grey background by adding 1 per cent more white to the ground with each passing detail. He expects to be painting virtually in white on white by the time he reaches 7 777 777, about a decade away at the current rate: 'My objective is to get up to the white on white and still be alive.'

Jimi Hendrix (November 27, 1942 – September 18, 1970) was an American guitarist, singer and songwriter. Hendrix is considered one of the greatest and most influential guitarists in rock music history.[1] After initial success in England, he achieved worldwide fame following his 1967 performance at the Monterey Pop Festival. Later, Hendrix headlined the iconic 1969 Woodstock Festival.

Henri Matisse (December 31, 1869 – November 3, 1954) was a French artist, noted for his use of color and his fluid, brilliant and original draughtsmanship. As a draughtsman, printmaker, and sculptor, but principally as a painter, Matisse is one of the best-known artists of the twentieth century. Although he was initially labeled as a Fauve (wild beast), by the 1920s, he was increasingly hailed as an upholder of the classical tradition in French painting.[1] His mastery of the expressive language of color and drawing is apparent, in a body of work spanning over a half-century, and won him recognition as a leading figure in modern art.

Akira Kurosawa (Kyūjitai: 黒澤 明, Shinjitai: 黒沢 明, *Kurosawa Akira*, 23 March 1910 – 6 September 1998) was a prominent Japanese film director, film producer, and screenwriter. His first credited film (*Sanshiro Sugata*) was released in 1943; his last (*Madadayo*) in 1993. His many awards include the

Légion d'Honneur and an Oscar for Lifetime Achievement.

Edvard Munch (December 12, 1863 – January 23, 1944) was a Norwegian Symbolist painter, printmaker, and an important forerunner of Expressionistic art. His best-known painting, *The Scream* (1893), is one of the pieces in a series titled *The Frieze of Life*, in which Munch explored the themes of life, love, fear, death, and melancholy. As with many of his works, he painted several versions of it. Similar paintings include *Despair* and *Anxiety*.

The Frieze of Life themes recur throughout Munch's work, in paintings such as *The Sick Child* (1885), *Love and Pain* (1893-94), *Ashes* (1894), and *The Bridge*. The latter shows limp figures with featureless or hidden faces, over which loom the threatening shapes of heavy trees and brooding houses. Munch portrayed women either as frail, innocent sufferers (see *Puberty* and *Love and Pain*) or as the cause of great longing, jealousy and despair (see *Separation*, *Jealousy* and *Ashes*). Some say these paintings reflect the artist's sexual anxieties, though it could also be argued that they are a better representation of his turbulent relationship with love itself.

Caspar David Friedrich (September 5, 1774 – May 7, 1840) was a 19th century German Romantic painter, considered by many critics to be one of the finest representatives of the movement.

Kazimir Severinovich Malevich (Russian: Казимир Северинович Малевич, Polish: *Kazimierz Malewicz*, Ukrainian Казимір Северинович Малевич, German: *Kasimir Malewitsch*), (February 23, 1878 – May 15, 1935) was a painter and art theoretician of Polish descent, pioneer of geometric abstract art and one of the most important members of the Russian avant-garde and Suprematist movement.

Umberto Eco (born January 5, 1932) is an Italian medievalist, semiotician, philosopher, literary critic and novelist, best known for his novel *The Name of the Rose* (*Il nome della rosa*, 1980), an intellectual mystery combining semiotics in fiction, biblical analysis, medieval studies and literary theory. Recently his 1988 novel *Foucault's Pendulum* has been described as a "thinking person's Da Vinci Code,"[1] and was re-issued by Harcourt in March 2007.

Hiroshi Sugimoto (杉本博司, Sugimoto Hiroshi), born on February 23, 1948, is a Japanese photographer currently dividing his time between Tokyo and New York City. His catalog is made up of a number of series, each having a distinct theme and similar attributes.

Bill Viola (born America, 1951) is a contemporary video artist. With a career spanning 35 years his significant contribution to the genre of video art is today widely acknowledged on the international stage.

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