EWA AXELRAD SELECTION OF WORKS 2011-2018

Hold & Sway 2018	contact
Breakblood Breaksoil Breakwater 2018	ewa.axelrad@gmail.com
Shtamah 2017	+48 606 996 169
Let's go. Yes, let's go. (They do not move) 2017	+44 7517 444 097
Minimum, Necessary, Objectively Reasonable 2015-2016	www.ewa-axelrad.com
Fetor. Greetings 2014-ongoing	
Zadyma 2014	Gallery contacts
<i>Warm Leatherette</i> 2012-2013	BWA Warszawa ul. Marszałkowska 34/50
Untitled 2012	00-554 Warszawa www.bwawarszawa.pl
<i>Is It Safe</i> 2012	bwawarszawa@gmail.com +48 725536075
Plant 2011	+48 504493429
CV	COPPERFIELD 6 Copperfield Street London SE1 0EP www.copperfieldgallery.co

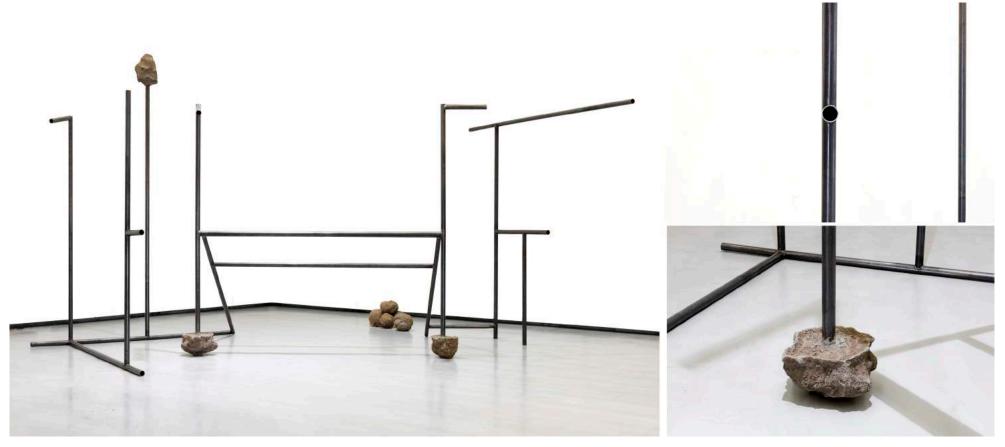
com info@copperfieldgallery.com +44 7845 594 54



steel, concrete, dimensions variable (approx 4m x 7m x 3m)



steel, concrete, dimensions variable (approx 4m x 7m x 3m)



,In an attempt to understand and trace back the nationalist sentiments of her generation at the time of major political divisions in Poland, Ewa Axelrad chose to go back to a time and place where we were last the same; to *trzepak* – a structure common to many European countries. Originally designed for the purpose of carpet beating, the *trzepak* became a default meeting place and stomping ground for youngsters of different generations.

In her research Axelrad looked into territorial behavior as one of the deep roots of patriotism, and employed the *trzepak* as an example of a structure around which individuals or groups, from a very early age, would use their bodies to claim territory. The understanding of boundaries and territories usually correlates with reaching sexual maturity - when individuals start to perceive a previously neutral, "unmarked" place as a territory. This tipping point of the familiar becoming unfamiliar and the potential for change in perception provided the shape and combative character of the sculpture exhibited by the artist. Uprooted from its neutral context, Axelrad presents the device as a defensive battleground. It also reflects how the artist feels about Poland right now: as a home that has the potential to turn on you. ' exhibition text from 'Waiting for Another Coming' at CAC Vilnius







soft silicone filled with air $45 \times 50 \times 80$ cm



soft silicone filled with air $45 \times 50 \times 80$ cm

Breakblood Breaksoil Breakwater I and *II* are a continuation of the themes explored in *Shtamah* (2017): the longing for unity and the rise of nationalist sentiments. Both works were commissioned by Albertinum, Dresden for *Beyond the River*, exhibition taking place in Bad Muskau Park. The park's main feature is river Neisse which in 1945 became a dividing line between Poland and Germany.

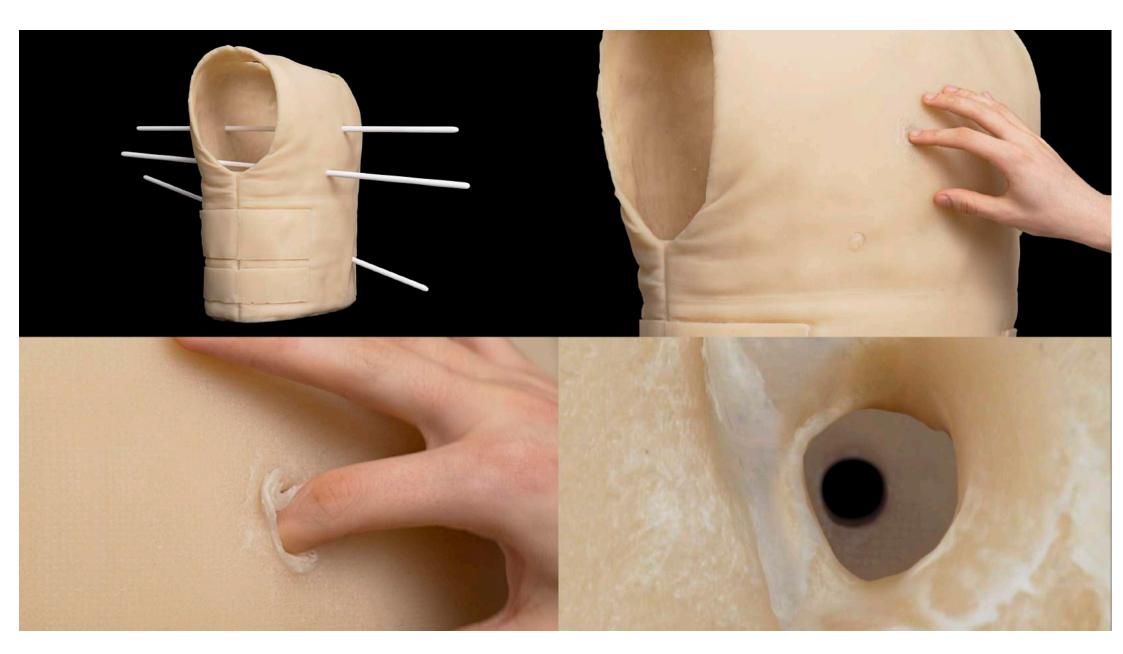
The work consists of two pieces in dialogue with each other; the hard breakwaterlike mass and a torso (based on Belvedere Torso*) made of thin layer of soft silicone and filled with air. Upon touch the solid-looking sculpture suddenly feels very vulnarable and wobbly, as if it was filled with water.

The forms of both pieces are a result of research into in the way nationalist groups perceive their bodies and how they view the bodies of others. The project is largely informed by Klaus Theleweit's seminal work *Male Fantasies*, which studies a 'soldier male' on an example of Freikorps (early 20s German grass-roots paramilitary formations). Theweleit looks at Freikorps from psychoanalytical and physiological perspective. Through studying the language used in their diaries and letters he discovers that their fears and desires fall into two opposing categories: on one hand the threat (communists, Jews, certain type of women) is imagined as 'red flood, a tide, a threat that comes in waves', whereas on the other hand what the soldier male aspires to be is an impenetrable hard disciplined body safest in a formation with other tight bodies.

Theleweit sees parallels with Margaret Mahler's findings about psychotic children, whose development is affected by an emotionally and physically detached type of upbringing, which results in the fact that normal stage of self-other differentiation is disrupted. The child's sense of a separate self doesn't form and it's ego is very fragile. He/she doesn't tolerate animated reality well, rapid changes in the environment and social relations are too complex and unpredictable. All these present a constant threat of fragmentation or dissolution. In Theleweit's view, the maintenance mechanisms that a soldier-male develops are designed to build an armor-enclosure that will prevent his body from ,spilling over': he hardens his body through training, wears a uniform which keeps him tight and erect, joins a group to become a formation.



* Iconic sculpture from the Vatican collection, author unknown



above: stills from 4K resolution video with sound, duration: 4"35' low resolution video can be viewed on on https://ewa-axelrad.wistia.com/medias/5qj6la8of5 password: sztama

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Shtamah #2, 2017
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ash wood flag poles, steel pole holders, dimensions variable above: installation view at Wrocław Contemporary Museum

Shtamah #2, 2017



ash wood flag poles, steel pole holders, dimensions variable above: installation view at Wrocław Contemporary Museum and at Zachęta National Gallery, Warsaw



photograph; Giclee print on dibond in wooden frame, 125 x 100 cm

'The Polish word *sztama*, pronounced *shtamah*, brings to mind interesting connotations. It smacks of boys' solidarity. A dictionary of the Polish language explains it in rather innocent terms, as "a relation between friends or companions entailing mutual help." It is derived from German der Stamm, which means tribe. However, many examples could be quoted that analyse how this seemingly positive phenomenon transforms into group aggression.

The works made especially for the exhibition at Wrocław Contemporary Museum analyse the mechanisms of prompting people to come together and display aggression. An important element of this study is the process of unification, losing one's subjectivity and merging with the group, which can be achieved through body painting, putting on masks, armours or uniforms. In the military context, the subject of solidarity and renouncing individuality in favour of the common cause and the fighting spirit was analysed by Napoleon's strategists, for example, who termed this elusive phenomenon esprit de corps. Ludwig Stomma explains this phrase as "brotherhood of arms" or "athletes' love", which makes it possible to "replace the mawkish conscience with a uniform."

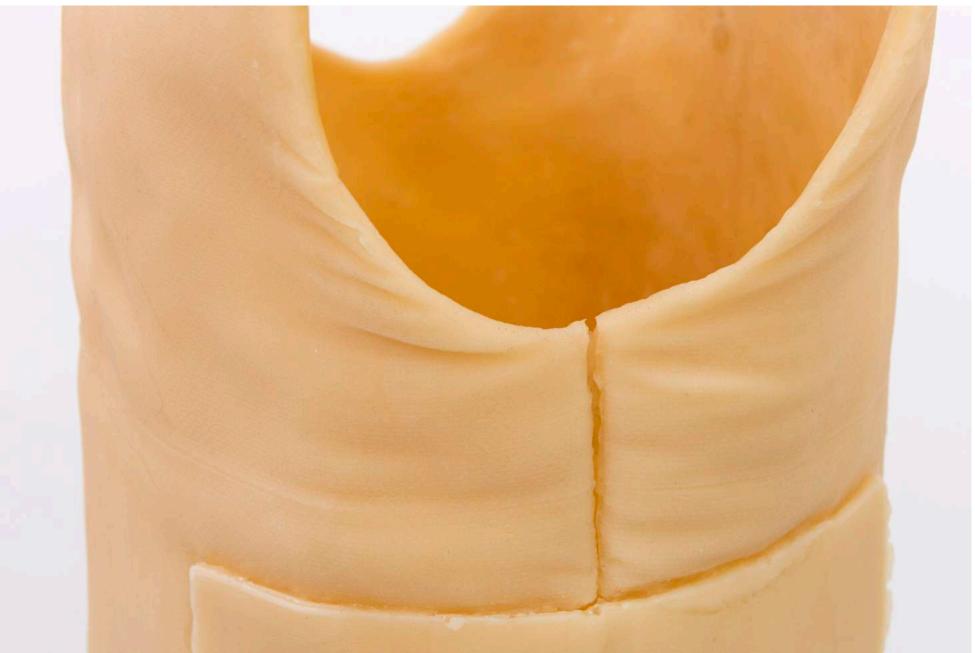
Axelrad, in a critical way, draws upon the deeply rooted mixture of fascination, fear and prejudice that gave rise to the western European fantasy of tribalism. A crucial thread present in the exhibition is also the notion of a sacred and enticing character of uniforms, which symbolically ties the wearer to the ranks of the army, police or paramilitary groups.'

exhibition text by Sylwia Serafinowicz from *Shtamah* at Wrocław Contemporary Museum

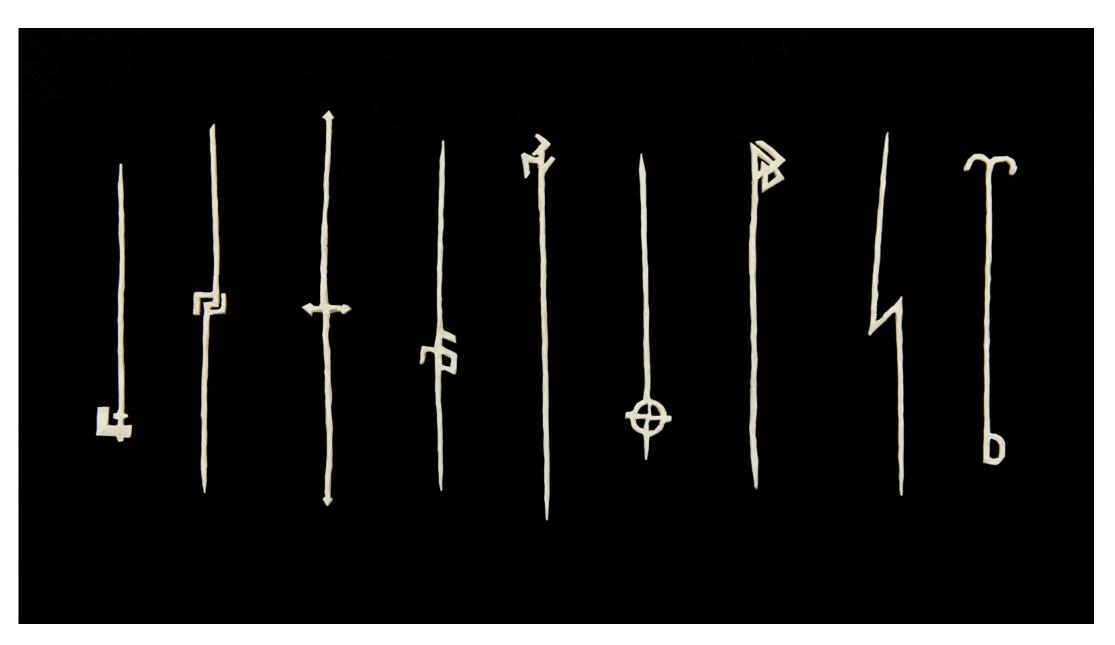
Shtamah #4, 2017



sculpture, wax, 57 x 42 x 37 cm above: installation view at Copperfield, London



sculpture, wax, 57 x 42 x 37 cm above: detail



resin spillikins, dimensions variable



Let's go. Yes, let's go. (They do not move), 2017

Bold Tendencies is a not-for-profit creative enterprise and arts organisation that has been based in Peckham, South East London since 2007 and is located on the disused top four floors of the municipal car park. Every year it commissions temporary and permanent works of art to form a summer sculpture park.



'Ewa Axelrad's long-standing interest in the dynamics of public disturbance has resulted in a number of reactionary works addressing this powerful contemporary subject. Her new sculpture, Let's go. Yes, let's go. (The do not move) references Trafalgar Square, an iconic London meeting point associated with global gatherings and protests. Situated on the roof of the multi-storey car park, Axelrad's work directly interacts with Richard Wentworth's Agora which was commissioned by Bold Tendencies in 2015. Both artists stress the importance of a discourse between art and its local environment and community. Axelrad was inspired by a conversation she had with Wentworth which discussed how urban spaces and decisions are made in order to control public movement and prevent public unrest. Interestingly, in London there is no central square which could accommodate such a protest.

The sculpture in Peckham can be read as a surreal, abandoned site encountered in an unexpected place but also as an enforcement of the agora, wherein visitors can meet, sit and socialise. The lions at Bold Tendencies are transformed from a monument of triumph and power into domesticated big cats guarding a broken barricade. The work represents the artist's sense of public disillusion with protests and widespread doubt in their ability to generate real change. The title, taken from Beckett, connects the installation to a theatre stage, the protest acted out therefore, a futile public spectacle.

Axelrad chose cinefoil – a thin black aluminum that is normally used to shape lighting in theatre and film industries - to make the installation fragile and impermanent, creating a clear contrast with the sculptures in Trafalgar Square. Cinefoil was also selected due to the sound it makes in the wind and rain, as well as its tendency to crumple and naturally weather in appearance giving the work a tired, time-worn character.'

Please note, the silver painting on the ground is the work by Richard Wentworth, the hair wigs on the lamp posts are a piece by Isaac Olvera

Let's go. Yes, let's go. (They do not move), 2017



site-specific installation, May-September 2017 black aluminum foil, mixed media, $3 \times 15 \times 16m$



site-specific installation, May-September 2017 black aluminum foil, mixed media, $3 \times 15 \times 16m$



site-specific installation, May-September 2017 black aluminum foil, mixed media, $3 \times 15 \times 16m$



The trigger for the entire project has been the increasing tension and distrust between the public and the authorities manifesting itself in the police-civilian encounters.

Anomalia originates from my interest in the shifting power dynamics (dominationsubmission) with the focus on a moment of capture of a suspect with the use of often disproportional and hence grotesque level of force. The sculpture aims to reflect on the self-perpetuating image and rethorics of primitive beast-hunting-like practices, as a result of which the capture of a suspect becomes a social spectacle.

The title of the project refers to guideliness for US police officers defined after a number of incidents involving exessive use of force. The force used should be only 'minimal, necessary, objectively reasonable'.

Other works in the project focus on the grey areas of this term: on a 'slippage', on the fluidity of thresholds between protection and opression, on actions-gone-wrong and in particular on opression in the name of 'protection/care'.

Anomalia from project Minimum, Necessary, Objectively Reasonable 2015-2016



resin and composit cast, 100 x 100 x 75cm

Anomalia from project Minimum, Necessary, Objectively Reasonable 2015-2016



Minimum, Necessary, Objectively Reasonable #2 from project Minimum, Necessary, Objectively Reasonable 2015-2016



glass, mercury, 70x5x5cm

Minimum, Necessary, Objectively Reasonable #5 from project Minimum, Necessary, Objectively Reasonable 2015-2016



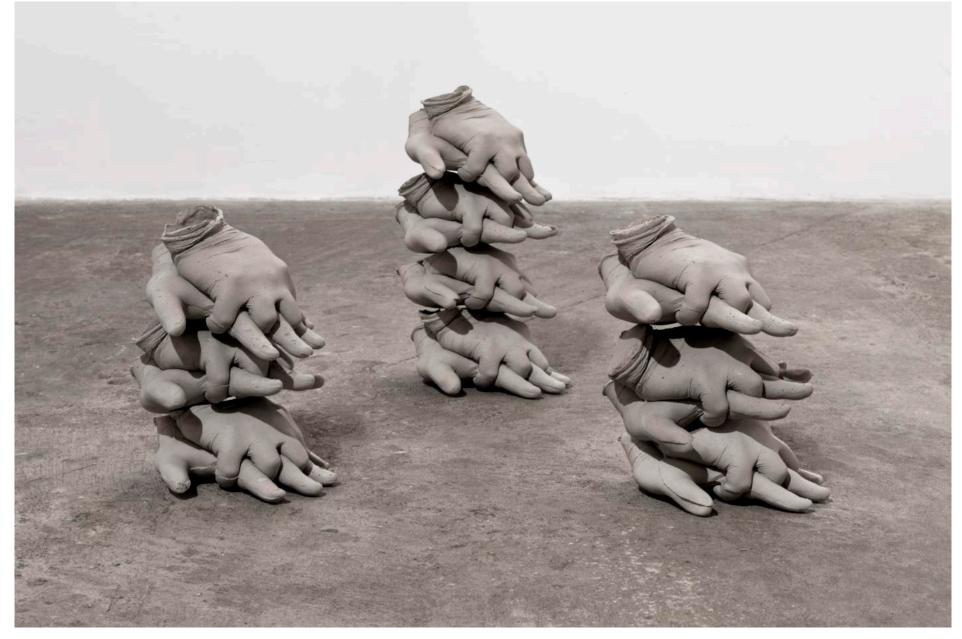
steel, latex, 200x70x70cm

Minimum, Necessary, Objectively Reasonable #1 from project Minimum, Necessary, Objectively Reasonable 2015-2016



stacks of life-size hands in a cardiac massage position concrete composit, dimensions variable

Minimum, Necessary, Objectively Reasonable #1 from project Minimum, Necessary, Objectively Reasonable 2015-2016



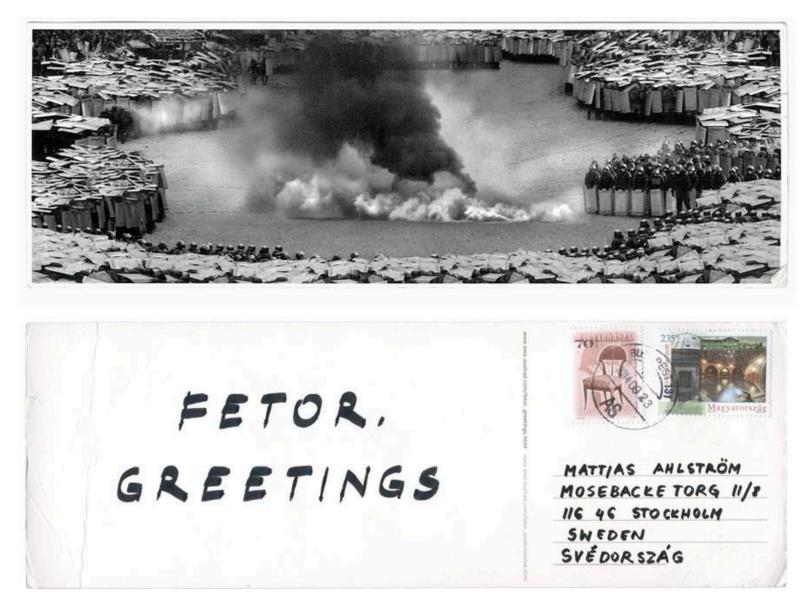
stacks of life-size hands in a cardiac massage position concrete composit, dimensions variable

Minimum, Necessary, Objectively Reasonable #4 (II) from project Minimum, Necessary, Objectively Reasonable 2015-2016





installation view at The Ryder Projects, London, 2016



Fetor. Greetings is a made up postcard that uses images that have circulated in the media of the recent years' riots, mainly in Europe. The situation presented on the card is a fictitious one. The fact that it looks as if it could have easily happened creates a shadow of doubt, maintaining both familiarity and a sense of distance through a kind of 'historicisation'. One of my interests is the 'mythologisation' of public unrests, the self-perpetuating urban legends of clashes. It struck me over the last years that people just keep 'sharing' images of protests sometimes without deeper reflection on the actual political motivation of each side. We're almost obliged to 'share', even when we don't fully understand or have a genuine interest in the politics of each complex situation. Another inspiration for this piece was 'riot tourism', a very current phenomenon possible only with today's social media, which amounts to traveling to the place of public disturbances in order to attend a riot. 'Stable' societies seek stronger, raw stimuli in the 'real' world, in the 'real' conflict.

This piece exists in two forms: as a mail-art piece (above), an edition of 300 postcards sent from various locations (11,5 x 33cm) and as a framed photograpic print on Baryta paper (next page)

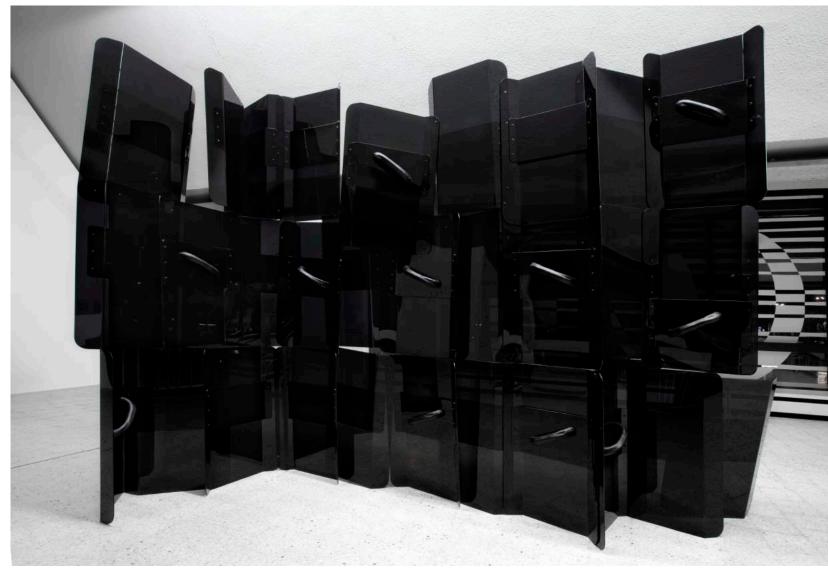


' (...) the rush of adrenaline while dodging tear gas, pepper spray and being blinded by Molotov cocktail explosions, there are plenty of beautiful countries with restless people to head to. Remember that violent dissent in some countries earns hefty penalties if you're arrested, but experienced journalists, tourists and dissidents know that you should always have a good cover story and always stay moving. Observing social revolution (or destruction) can be a life-altering experience for many different reasons. It may affirm ideals or crush dreams, strengthen the will to fight or cripple a movement — or if we're getting extreme, you may die!'

' (...) It is a risk not only from stones being thrown, riot police, tear gas and stampeding crowds, but also the threat that by the time you get to the right location, the riot may have ended. I am sure it has happened many times, someone has seen the Greek or Iceland riots on the TV and hurried to get a plane ticket. But they haven't checked the news and by the time they get there it has all blown over.'

'(...) A riot can simultaneously be a tragedy and a triumph, and still stands as one of the most exhilarating activities in human history. The risk can be high, but perhaps for you the aweinspiring sensation of feeling rage turned into jubilation, justice being served, and watching change from the ground up is worth it.' *

This piece exists in two forms: as a mail-art piece (previous page), an edition of 300 postcards sent from various locations (11,5 x 33cm) and as a framed photograpic print on Baryta paper (above). The text above consists of quotes taken from websites that bring together riot tourists.



The installation originates from my interest in the temporary structures formed by the riot police units in situations of unrest, the reoccurring image within the last years throughout Europe, the Middle East and beyond.

In Zadyma the shields face each other rather than a public, forming a clinch in order to make it ambiguous which side is a defensive or offensive one. The sleekly finished semi-opaque reflective perspex is used to confuse viewer's the perception, but most importantly to define the language of the installation. I link the sense of 'untouchability' of riot police units with the fetishistic design of the contemporary body armor and tactics, which - due to their anonymity often generate behavior that would not be socially acceptable in other circumstances.

mixed media, 300 x 420 x 150cm installation view at Museum of Modern Art Warsaw

Zadyma, 2014



mixed media, 300 x 420 x 150cm installation view at Museum of Modern Art Warsaw

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Zadyma, 2014
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mixed media, 300 x 420 x 150cm installation view at Museum of Modern Art Warsaw



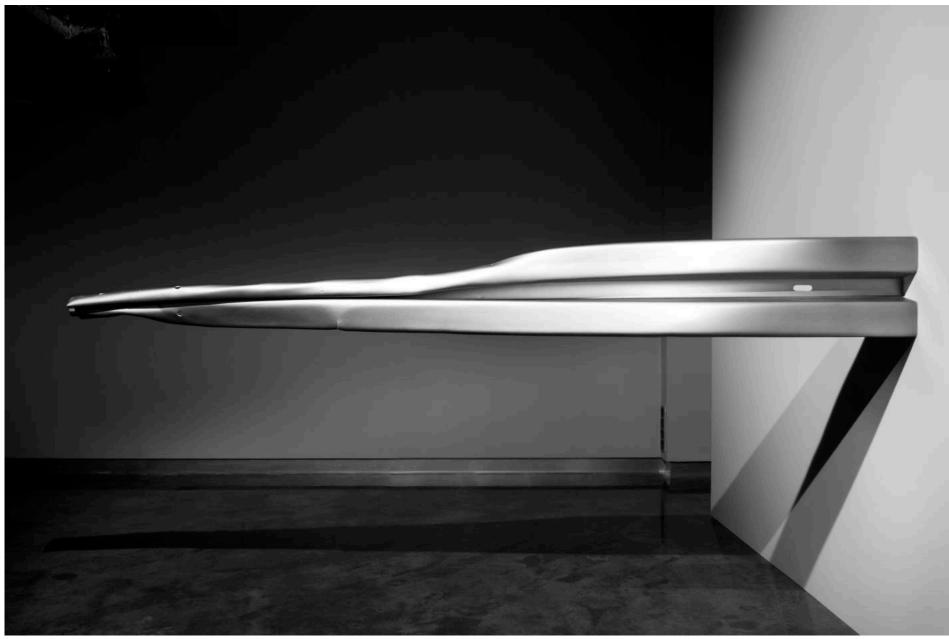
vinyl, steel, foam, 60 x 120 x 60cm

Warm Leatherette from project Warm Leatherette, 2012



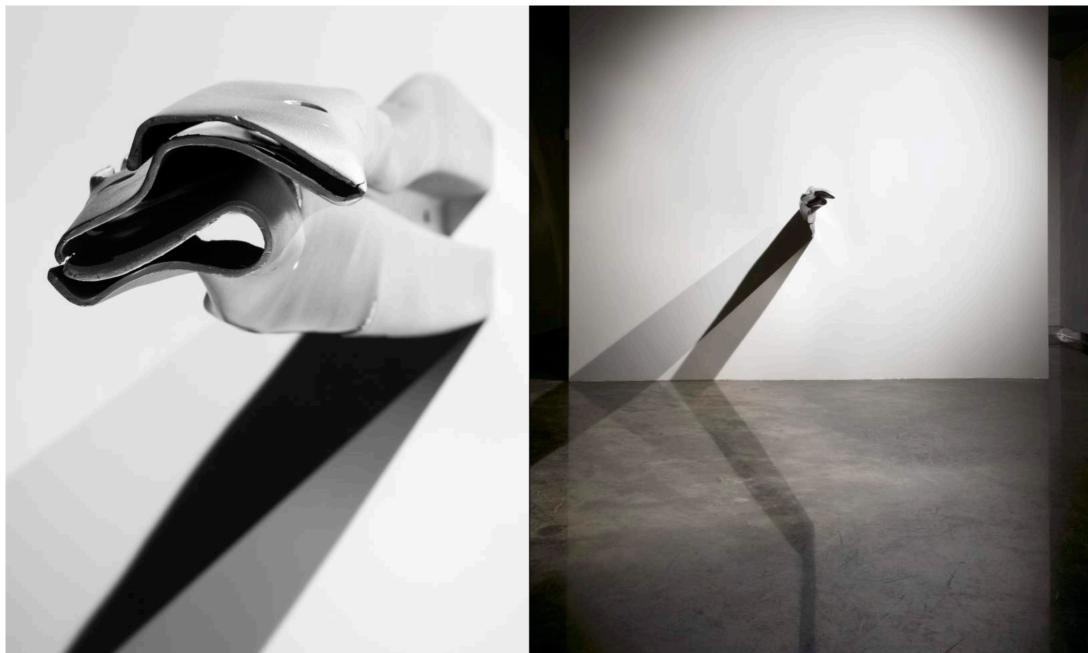
vinyl, steel, foam, 60 x 120 x 60cm

The Absorbent from project *Warm Leatherette*, 2012

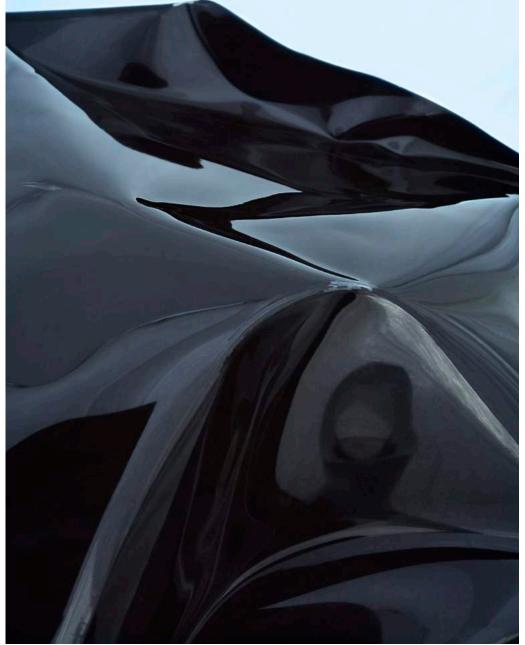


steel, car body paint. The barier was painted with the same color as the vehicle it collided with

The Absorbent from project *Warm Leatherette*, 2012



steel, car body paint. The barier was painted with the same color as the vehicle it collided with



Lambda print on dibond, perspex, wooden frame, 155 x 122cm

The title of the project is borrowed from David Miller's music piece *Warm Leatherette* written as his response to JG Ballard's novel *Crash*.

It stems from my interest in control, and specifically a conflict between one's desire to keep it with the pleasure of loosing it. The car seat sculpture is a formal exploration of the border between the human and the vehicle, which, as a result of an ecstasy of speed merge into one. This piece and others in the project are preoccupied with the fetishistic potency and a sculptural dimension of speed and a crash. Through placing the intimate next to the cool representation of a crash I have attempted to address the sense of confusion between the solid and the precarious present in our relationship with technology and its aesthetics.

I aimed to examine how we relate to the images of accidents, and in particular, our desire to construct a meaning out of the fragments which we are 'allowed' to see and the pleasure that we get from compensating for what has been taken away from us-viewers. The idea that runs through the whole project is that in my (European) culture almost devoid of the view of 'real' death (that is not seen through media), the explicit image of death becomes quasi-pornographic. By projecting the human body onto the car body, the crash artifacts become pornography too.

Fluids #2 from project *Warm Leatherette*, 2012



Lambda print on dibond, perspex, wooden frame, 155 x 122cm

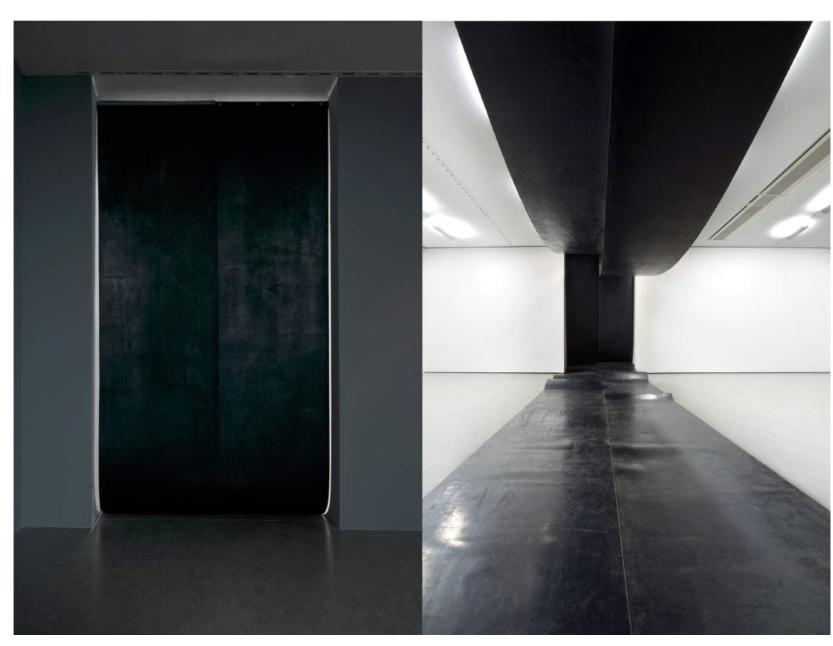
Fluids #3 from project *Warm Leatherette*, 2012



Lambda print on dibond, perspex, wooden frame, 155 x 122cm



installation view at BWA Warszawa, 2013



The work consists of a chewing gum and an installation of 800kg of heavy-duty industrial transmission belts. It resulted from a close collaboration with the curator P. Lisowski on his group show *Epidemic* titled after Lars Von Trier's film, an autothematic reflection on the process of writing a script for a film. Similarly the show revolved around the exhibitionmaking itself.

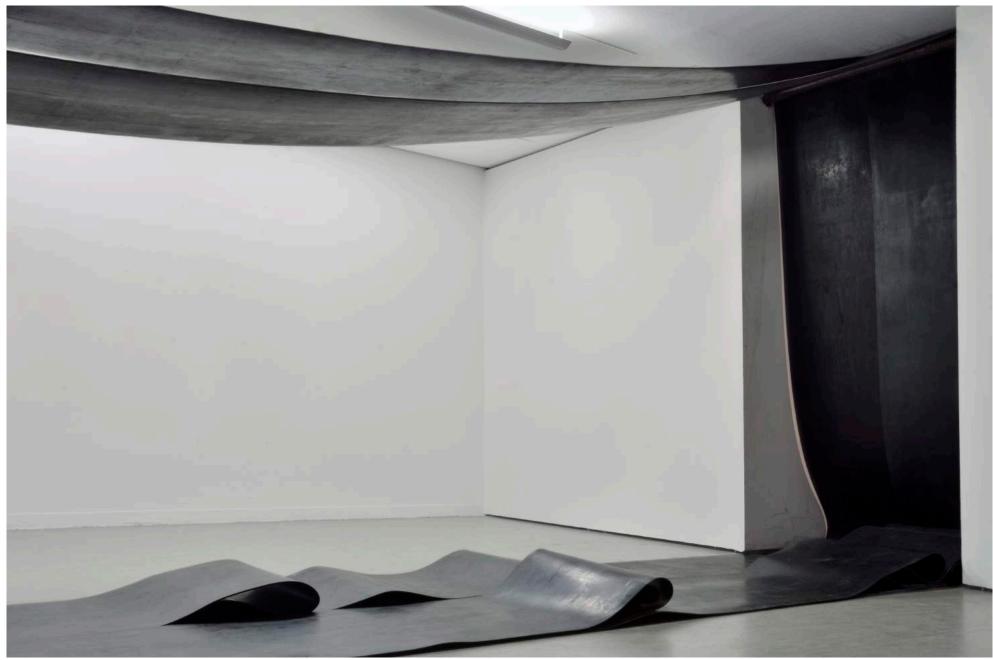
My hand-made and rolled chewing gum anonymously placed upon the entrance to the exhibition was offered to the viewers visiting the show.

The second piece was positioned in the centre of the exhibition. The rubber-belts installation physically split the show into two parts, as a result of which the viewers had no choice but to squeeze through the heavy rubber belts in order to see the rest of the exhibition. The piece acted as a symbolic internal 'mechanism' of the 'exhibition-body'.

The layout of the exhibition:



site-specific installation for the show Epidemic. Two closed circuits of 800kg rubber belts generating an intense smell



site-specific installation for the show Epidemic. Two closed circuits of 800kg rubber belts generating an intense smell



hand-made chewing gum anonymously placed at the entrance to the exhibition. dimensions variable

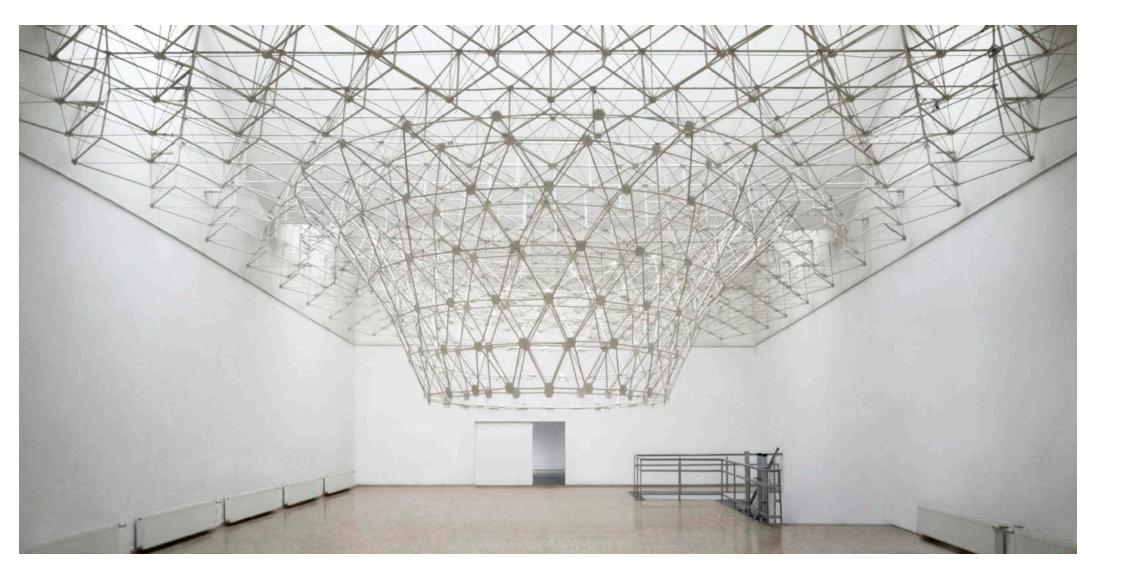


The photograph depicts a gold tooth which I bought from a smelter. It was my ongoing interest in the subject of the widely-understood hygiene that lead me to work with the practice of gold teeth being refined into pure gold.

The use of photography allowed me to distort the perception of the tooth's scale: normally photographs of small objects have very narrow depth od field. However, by taking and stitching the images with different depths of field I produced an image on which the tooth is read as much larger than in reality.

In a historical Polish context the piece touches upon the infamous activities of so called 'diggers' - people living in the areas close to Nazi death camps searching the mass graves in hope of finding gold overlooked by the Nazis. It remains to be a sensitive, repressed and often denied subject within the Polish society.

Duratrans print in a wooden frame, 100x125cm



site-specific installation, mixed media, an accretion of the gallery ceiling, Galeria Arsenal, Poznań

CV

EDUCATION

2003-2008 Master of Arts, Academy of Fine Arts, Poznań

SOLO SHOWS

- 2017 Shtamah, Copperfield, London Shtamah, Wrocław Contemporary Museum, Wrocław Satis, The Ryder, London
- 2015 Minimum, Necessary, Objectively Reasonable, BWA Warszawa
- Warm Leatherette, BWA Warszawa, Warsaw 2013
- 2012 Plaque: Description, BWA Warszawa at Winter Salon, Warsaw V_k , Czytelnia Sztuki, Museum in Gliwice
- 2011 Oranż, Ende Neu in Biala Gallery, Lublin Suche, Arsenal Gallery, Poznań

GROUP SHOWS (SELECTION)

2018	Waiting for Another Coming, CCA Ujazdowski Castle, Warsaw	2015	Myth, Center for Contemporary Art Tbilisi, Tbilisi
	Waiting for Another Coming, Contemporary Art Centre (CAC) Vilnius		Crisis Is Just a Beginning, BWA SIC!, Wrocław
	Proba Sil, BWA Katowice, Katowice		State of Life. Polish Contemporary Art within a Global
	British Summer Time, Copperfield, London		Circumstance, National Art Museum of China, Beijing
	The State is Not a Work of Art, Tallinn Art Hall, Tallinn		Prohibited Acts, SURVIVAL 13. Art Review, Wrocław
	Beyond the River, Albertinum Dresden at Bad Muskau Park & Schloss		Procedures for the head. Polish Art Today, Kunsthalle Bratislava
	Ideal-Types, HE.RO Gallery Amsterdam	2014	Diabły, Ende Neu, Galeria Biała, Centre for Culture, Lublin
	Mediations Biennale, CK Zamek, Poznań		People Are Strange, BWA, Olsztyn

Artistry, 100 Years of Polish Sculpture, Art Museum Bourse, National Museum, Riga

Swags & Threats, Trafo, Szczecin 017

> White Memory – 1989/2018 Art in Malta and Poland, St James Cavelier, Valetta

Views 2017, Deutsche Bank Foundation Award exhibition at Zachęta National Gallery, Warsaw

Let's go. Yes, let's go. (They do not move) site-specific installation for Bold Tendencies, London

We have the weights, We have the measures, Copperfield, London

The Dynamics of Decline, BWA Warszawa, Warsaw

After the Rally, Studio Gallery, Warsaw 2016

Money to Burn, Zacheta National Gallery of Art, Warsaw

The Touch, Centre of Polish Sculpture in Oronsko at BWA Kielce

Rozproszone Widownie, Galeria Art Stations, Stary Browar, Poznań

Labour Relations, Wrocław Contemporary Museum, Wrocław

Memory At Last. Art in Poland: 1989-2016, Galleria civica di Modena, Palazzina dei Giardini, Modena

The Silence of Sounds, Wrocław Contemporary Museum, Wrocław

Za Ścianą, Centre of Contemporary Art in Torun

	Wracając do Źródeł, Galeria Arsenał, Poznań	
	Czech Pope, Małopolski Ogród Sztuki, Kraków	
	As You Can See. Polish Art Today, Museum of Modern Art, Warsaw	
	On Generation and Corruption, BWA Contemporary Art Gallery in Katowice	
2013	<i>What Can Be Described Can Also Take Place</i> , Botkyrka Konsthall, Stockholm	
	Epidemic, Centre of Contemporary Art in Toruń	
	The Handy Ones, Arsenal Gallery, Poznań	
	Withered, Kisterem Gallery, Budapest	
2012	Alphaville, Griffin Art Space and BWA Warszawa, Warsaw	
	Warsaw: The Day After, Galerija Vartai, Vilnius	
	Aaakupunktura, Kordegarda, Warsaw	
	Arbeitsdisziplin, Arsenal Gallery, Poznan	
2011	<i>The Institute of Mental Health is Burning</i> , Newport Museum and Art Gallery, Newport	
	Guerrillas, Arsenal Gallery, Poznan	
	MIR, Arsenal Gallery, Bialystok	
2009	EASTinternational, Norwich	
	The Voies Off Festival, Arles	
	I Like All These Pictures, , Starter Gallery, Poznan	
	AWARDS & GRANTS & RESIDENCIES	
2018	Launch Pad LaB Residency, La Bossierre, France	
2017	Nomination to Paszporty Polityki 2017 Award	
	Nomination to VIEWS 2017, Deutsche Bank Foundation Award	
2013	LOCIS residency at Botkyrka Konsthall, Stockholm	
2010	Conran Award Royal College of Art nomination	
	Arts Council Grant for participation in EAST International	

2009	Bursary at Royal College of Art	
	Mloda Polska Scholarship	

PUBLICATIONS (selection)

- 2018 The State is Not a Work of Art texts by Katerina Gregos, Mark A. Jubulis, Ivar Sakk, Anthony D. Smith, Jonas Staal and Marek Tamm Published by Lugemik & Tallinn Art Hall ISBN 978-9949-9934-9-9
- 2016 On the Path of Knowledge. The phenomenon od Poznan School Published by University of Arts Poznan ISBN 9788365578150

La Memoria Finalmente. Arte in Polonia 1989-2016 texts by Marinella Paderni, Andrzej Leder and Joanka Zielińska Published by Silvana Editoriale, 2016

Locis

2014 texts by Dobrila Denegri, Joanna Sandell and others Published by Leitrim County Arts Office, Centre of Contemporary Art 'Znaki Czasu' in Toruń and Labirynt Press ISBN 978-91-982281-0-6

> On Generation and Corruption texts by Marek Kuś, Marta Lisok, Jan Trzupek, Michal Kolecek, Wojciech Bednarz Published by BWA Contemporary Art Gallery, Katowice 2014 ISBN 978-83-88254-76-5

2013 Warm Leatherette 2013 texts by Huw Hallam and Tomasz Plata Published by Muzeum in Gliwice ISBN 978-83-89856-54-8

Aaakupunktura

2012 texts by Mirosław Bałka and Anna Miczko Published by Kordegarda, 2012 2011 Towards a Creative city. Art in Poznan 1986-2011 chapter by Witold Kanicki A Return to Reality. On Poznań Photography of the 21st c.
Published by Galeria Miejska Arsenał, Poznan 2011 ISBN 978-83-61886-31-0

GUERRILLAS

texts by Anna Czaban, Jacek Staniszewski and Dawid Wiener Published by Galeria Miejska Arsenal, 2011 ISBN 978-83-61886-26-6

MIR

texts by Zuzanna Hadrys and Michal Lasota Published by Arsenal Gallery, Bialystok, 2011 ISBN 978-83-89778-22-2

2010 *PICKING UP, BOUNCING BACK* texts by Jean-Luc Nancy, Alexander Duttmann and Olivier Richon Published by The Royal College of Art 2010 ISBN 978 1 907342 07 3

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