

# Elaboration

“Creativity is like your portrait, the result of everything.”  
*Antonio Lopez*

Janette Winterson in her text for *The Guardian* pondering over the place of Art in life, wrote that there are instruments in a man that bring out other sounds than a full stomach or warm home. They surprise us, make us hesitant, question what we have and who we are, somehow interfere in the material life which is rational in pragmatic world - they make us mad and tired, move away from simple, rational plans - but they exist. Art is to stubbornly remind us about them. Art moves our awareness from the outside to the inside, heading on a completely different dimension and different energy. Time we spent with Art is the time we spent with ourselves, without any tricks.<sup>1</sup>

Collecting materials for my tenure I had to ask some important questions again. What is the goal of Art in the artist's life, why do we choose this kind of fate, how much can we say and to who can understand this message? Who wants to listen to us? How to speak, to be honest but understood avoiding direction of easy populism? How much logical strategy and disciplining is in our unemotional utterance in the so-called creative consequence, and how much intuition, instinct and emotions? And finally- being forced - why our art is the way it is? Why do we choose such methods, workshop or content? And even though we try, how often does it happen that our art is being called Art?

Looking at my achievement the mind rebels and suggests that it would be more logical to stick to one technique - but after these several years it is clear to me that the choice of the most effective artistic strategy without inner consent, without constantly renewed contact with my sensitivity - for me as a human being and an artist- is not an appropriate way, and above all, it would not be my way. My understanding of Art as a researching process, testing and experiencing the world leads me to take the risk in searching for the new ways of expressions adequate to the places where I present my works and, above all, to the narrative, I want to visually and intellectually create.

Most of my artistic work refers to the widely understood landscape, initially seen mainly as nature, then as a mental, imaginary landscape where people locate their fights between Nature and Culture, identity as an individual and member of the community. This is the reason why a large part of your article is devoted to my vision, understanding and perception of landscape, which as an artist, I run dialog with. My works were presented in galleries, in public spaces, but most of them could be found in the natural environment such as fields, forests, parks. In the selection of works that prove my artistic achievements of the recent years, I try to show the interest in open air, as well as also other important artistic experiences that influenced my perception, modified it and - hopefully - deepened. I show the works I think are important to me not only because they gave satisfying results, but also those which were the way of an important process.

Simply speaking my output is the result of everything. It is the result of what we know and what we have been taught, what we feel and what we deny; it is slot in the time and the spirit of the period we live, but it also penetrates all the corners of the artist's personality. There is no way to write about “everything”; we can neither see nor define many aspects. In the text below I try to present the important internal and external factors, thoughts and philosophies that affect my choice of topics; forms, methods and artistic intentions; finally creative processes are often important as the work itself.

## **LANDSCAPE, SCENERY**

My first inspiration and a source of admiration was nature.

The ancients did not consider the nature as an artistic phenomenon, only if it was imitated by the man had it a chance to become Art. According to Hegel and Gadamer nature becomes a carrier of meanings and has artistic value, only when there is an intervention of human thought - the spirit. Because Art allows a person to see the value and beauty of nature, and nature although exists regardless of Art is perceived in a way the man has been taught to see it, including artistic interpretation as well. The artist does not copy nature, but presents the possibility of perceiving it. What is more, in the perception, as Nietzsche wrote, happens the interpretation and the transfiguration.

For a long time the sculpture drew material and inspiration from Nature. The location, in our modern sense, first and foremost was a space in the garden or the park where the sculptured block and its arrangements have their place. Born in the middle of the last century movement of Land Art treated the Earth as a sculpting material. This artistic movement denounced the commercial and institutional nature of Art, appealed to impaired awareness of our participation in the environment, to the spirit of the place and the material, and the value of work as a conversation with Nature. Next decades of the twentieth century brought new philosophies and artistic practices which were glorifying the power of contact with Nature (Nature Art, Environmental Art). Smithson and his followers as well as their physical effects significantly influenced the perception of Art and its role, but they also had a measurable impact on spatial planning, landscape architecture, and thinking about the park and garden. Shortly speaking, they had a direct impact, at least among specialists, on vision and understanding of human activity in the landscape. Most of the Land-Art or Nature Art works are known from the photographic documentation, and in contrary to the initial intentions they operate in the commercial galleries all over the world. Their ephemerality strengthened the role of photography and video, as a document.

After graduation, my interests also headed this way. In the last 15 years, large part of my artistic activity has been associated with nature; I have participated in nearly thirty open air meetings, in parks (Arboretum Bolestraszyce, Arboretum Horn, University Botanical Garden in Lviv, Botanical Garden in Kiev), in squares and city squares (Bielsko - White, Tarnobrzeg, Rudnik nad Sanem, Vilnius, Kielce, Hamburg ) wilde nature (forest Zapustka k. Strzyżawy, field near Harbutowice, fields near Rodaki, Bukowina Tatrzańska, Podlaskie, the River Bug) where I have contemplated nature, worked with it and struggled with such challenging neighborhood. artistically .

Initially, my work in outdoor locations appealed to the tradition of the nature art, the idea of Land Art both by the very fact of locating works in the open air and using natural materials. These works were mostly short-term, ephemeral actions blending gradually in the landscape (Palcem po wodzie " Standing on shaky ground ), or removed after in my opinion they "died away" ( Zmarszczka dla A. "A wrinkle for A."). I used wood, branches, willow, leaves, paper. Later I started more and more frequently to work with permanent materials. Quite quickly I realised that the energy from nature transferred to the interior acts much more strongly and provide different information than in its natural world. On the basis of such thinking, and I have prepared several exhibitions and works that confront the organic material and form with a sterile environment of the gallery (Prawa półkula - Right hemisphere, Maria córka Anny-Maria, the daughter of Anna., Jaka brzoźka, taka skórka - The birch, the skin, Pewnego popołudnia - One afternoon).

In consequence I started to search for larger contrasts in material and form as well as in their realizations in nature. Soon , I focused on presenting much more reception possibilities of the work, so that the visual - intellectual conversation with the viewers gave a chance for understatement, irony, and humor, to make this conversation intrude the safe, accepted ways of thinking and interpretations.

## WEED AND KITSCH

"Auch das unnatürlichste is Natur" (also unnatural is nature)<sup>2</sup>

Goethe

Reflecting on the relationship between artificial and natural in nature and culture I analysed - surprisingly similar - the notion of weed in the garden and kitsch in culture. As Andrew Kostolowski states:

*"(...) The problem of weed shows the principle of acceptance or rejection of a given system; presents literally and figuratively the game between the natural and cultural, relevant and unwanted. Weed, like kitsch is inevitably linked to human cultural activities, the irrationality of rational development of what is useful, good and beautiful. "*

"Weed is a plant of the inner disposition of being in the wrong place"<sup>4</sup>

C. Taxter

This mechanism of rejection applies to both objects and ideas produced by man. The effect of the crapulence, overproduction leads sometimes to eradication of inconvenient elements, and remove from what's actually believed to be good and beautiful. The philodendron which is exterminated in the gardens of Mexico is at the same time cultivated in Polish houses; the nettle in some gardens is treated as a pest but in others collected as a medicinal herb. The context changes the value.<sup>3</sup>

Thinking on the relationship between natural and artificial contributed significantly on the selection of materials and the idea of my future work.

At that time it was for me a kind of "liberation" from the internal compulsion of action with natural materials and a form of aid to find other meaning of the work in Nature and with Nature. Now I believe that that formal and ideological procedure turned out to be better to show multilayer competitions between man and nature, more relevant to my artistic researches and sensitivity; and in a sense, it conditioned the next steps in my professional path.

I started to use the mass products of so called "culture" purposely such as: garden figures, plastic animal toys, artificial stones that offend their naive imitation of nature, but they still apply to it. I used them in my installations in the open air and sculptures made of branches, wood („Zabliźnienie. Las“, 2008- To citratized. Forest, 2008; „Stones“, 2009; „Wyspy- Islands“, 2010 „Private Horizontal Line“, 2010).

For sure, the work „Zabliźnienie. Las“, 2008- To citratized. Forest, 2008 (which was a part of my artistic Phd dissertation) was the most symptomatic and strongly influenced my next works. I decided nonchalantly to oppose the natural world with plastic elements for the first time. As a result I painted white, kitschy garden gnomes which referred in some way to the classicism, but above all as a contrast to the surrounding, living world of nature. White colour fixed one hundred element group of dwarfs set in the valley of the impressive, beautiful beech forest and also referred to the blooming white anemones.

Anthropomorphic perversity of a dwarf was also very significant according to the fact that being created by the man on his image is still suspended between the human world and the natural world, which I pointed out in the doctoral dissertation.

Anyway, this flirt with kitsch in the form of dwarfs was parallel to work outdoors. Although I was being trapped as the "lady of dwarfs for some time", I think, it was important for my artistic development, because it was the time to study the variety of content in a relatively similar form.

## **DWARF STORIES- THE EXERCISE ON THE CAPACITY OF THE FORM**

A group of dwarfs from the line production recalled popular in everyday life forms. All the factors; mediocrity, baseness of the material and the very nature of solids were playing with ugliness, which I would call "common"; the ugliness unwelcome in Art, but persistently appearing in everyday life. It was the ugliness that attracted me so much as a medium of inevident truths.

Plastic dwarfs showed me an attractive feature of kitsch which is speed and emotionalism of the viewer reaction. There were always strong reactions from the ordinary passers-by, but also more discerning audience was trying to uncover the layers of information and undertake the game with meanings. I must admit that lack of such emotional reaction combined with the analysis, following the reactions I missed in my earlier works, which I thought to have been more refined within the meaning of classical sculptures. I started to dwell on the idea of a dwarf as an invented by the human link between the human world and nature, thanks to his fairytale connotations, but first and foremost his relationships with middle-class yearning for cheap, or even free, trouble-free helper - I used the figures of dwarfs in the next artistic realizations portraying them different ideological significance.

As the owner of hundreds of white dwarfs I was asked by galleries to arrange the exhibition inside the gallery (BWA Ostrowiec, the exhibition "Various stories"- „Różne historie“, 2011), or outside the gallery (Kielce, Artists' Square ,

installation "Tales for Adults" - „Bajki dla dorosłych“ , 2011). Three dwarf incarnation I believe are important and effective in showing important content.

In the work entitled. "White. Syberia " - „Biało. Syberia“(2009), I used a group of white figures in the winter, snowy landscape with dramatic, stormy sky. The work became important to me not only due to its visual appeal, but also by discovering once again the narrative, deeply symbolic character of the landscape, especially related to Polish national history and the iconography of Polish art associated to my work. White characters (although being mindlessly smiling gnomes) set in the snow, as they were in a move through the harsh winter ground gained a dignity and seriousness by recalling stories of Siberian convicts. Figures of dwarfs joined by the color with the ground could be treated as the metaphor of human journey through life, but the context of Polish drama strengthened this message. It was also insignificant for me that the landscape where I set the figures is the land of my family inherited from several generations. This note of belonging to the land, the people, the landscape and its cultural heritage will be more and more visible in my later works.

The second important experience although different from the above situation, also emphasised a place, its history and identity to build the idea of work. Being invited by the German group Kioer (2010) in collaboration with Waldemar Sulewski I introduced the installation Import / Export for one of the districts of Hamburg. The area in which the work was to occur, during the Second World War, had been the area of labor camp for young people from Eastern Europe, where due to the proximity of the famous factory producing aircraft and aviation equipment prisoners had been engaged to paint military camouflage. The first work which I suggested was the installation called "Garden", where in front of the houses of former managers of the factory I set a seemingly idyllic, bourgeois composition of flowers and dwarfs similar to the compositions we can find in front of German houses nowadays, except the fact that dwarfs helping in the gardens had had camp striped uniforms. The organizers asked for another project. The work "Garden" was made public a few years later in the Warsaw gallery XX1 during my solo exhibition "Confiserie Polonaise" (2013). In Hamburg it was finally agreed to mount the work "Import / Export. Camouflage" in which several plastic gnomes were painted in such way that they disappeared in the architecture of the district. Camouflage had a double meaning here - once as a reference to the tasks of the prisoners and twice, as a way to hide the shameful history of exploitation of "irrelevant" prisoners from Eastern Europe (the Nazi ideology proclaimed Slavs as manpower for the Reich). The fact that such dwarfs were obligatory in most of German gardens after the opening of the borders and they were very first objects of trade with western neighbor was an additional associations. Soon I used camouflage motive of dwarfs in close to the border with Ukraine, in Bolestraszyce Arboretum. There are two dwarfs, one painted in the pattern of the field uniform the Polish army and the second - in the Ukrainian both hiding in the bushes, almost invisible.

The idea of the dwarf as an employee of difficult social status I applied to the installation: "Fairy tales for adults" at Artists Square in Kielce being invited by Kielce BWA. The opening of exhibitions consisting of my installations, and the second exhibition: illustration to the children's book "Mary and the Seven Dwarfs" took place on the Children's Day, hence the title given to my work. On one of the main squares of the city I set in the form of a parade a group of dwarfs with banners in several languages "illegal work".

In the BWA in Ostrowiec Świętokrzyski on my solo exhibition "Various stories" dwarfs were set on the grass in a similar group, but in the company of a schizophrenic white girl without a face could be perceived as a psychedelic - fairy tale. Similar expression could be felt in the work „Trudne przypadki - Difficult cases" where I combined those kitschy plastic gnomes with stuffed animals - deers from one hunter collection.

## **GALLERY PLACE AS A TRANSFER OF NATURAL MENTAL AND LANDSCAPE**

The background of wild nature in contrast to the sterile white walls of the gallery is very demanding, especially for the works, which material is shaped directly by nature itself.

In my exhibitions I moved elements borrowed directly from Nature to the galleries several times, such as: branches, leaves, spikes, as well as "living" material as grass, flowers. From the perspective, I can see that my exhibitions in galleries were like organic compositions: archipelagos, growths or maps.

In the multi-element works, a single item is not identical, but in some way repeated as something belonging to the same family. Every arrangement, however, is different. Single exhibition in my case is often equal to one installation, which takes into possession the entire gallery.

These arrangements can be regarded accidental and intuitive, but depending on the characteristics of the place they must be characterized by internal logic, to fit in a given space ( Wyspy -Islands, Confiserie Polonoise). Several exhibitions were in form of drawings with spatial elements which displayed on the gallery walls refract static vertical, white surface ("D # 4213D).

The space is often arranged as if it refers to the experience of "being in the landscape." One of the first such attempts was the exhibition "Prawa półkula -The right hemisphere." In pure architectural space I combined living tissue of cut branches from old garden trees covered with scars from cutting. I created a hemisphere- a skull plotted with nervous drawing of branches. In the installation "Prywatna linia horyzontu - Private Skyline" cords of connected small twigs carried by helium-filled were floating in the air of the room sensitive to every movement and breathing of people inside the gallery. Mobile drawing of lines was hulking up, changing position and tearing in order to lie softly on the floor, tired.

The theme of spatial line in the gallery, which is pushing its borders, looking for the strength of organic growths as expressive gesture of the human hand appears in the installation *Abrrh +* presented in gallery XS in Kielce in January 2010. The whole composition and information carrier are poppy flowers, but they are not natural but produced by the culture. Made together with my mother and aunt paper flowers, which are used to decorate holly paintings and sacred shrines. I was very keen on to present several layers of understanding the meaning of the poppy: a symbol of bloodshed, its psychedelic abilities and folk ornamentation. A year later, at the invitation of gallery XX1 in Warsaw I built similar exhibition with poppies as a star, but with a reinforced cacophony message of symbols. Red color of poppies gained more dramatic meaning in the claustrophobic room with no windows. Plastic flies appeared, accompanied by an annoying buzzing sound. I felt a very strong sense of belonging to the local Polish community then and cultural awareness of its influence on the creation of a specific spirituality conditioning for the perception of the world. Title of the exhibition is "D # 4213D which is the color code of red Polish flag.

## **LANDSCAPE FROM FAMILY TO LANDSCAPE MENTAL**

My experience, working in nature exhibitions in art galleries, traveling, literature, cooperation with landscape architects, and probably many other factors have formed my view of landscape space both as a man and a sculptor. I am a part of it, and I observe it with neverending intentness.

When I visit my family, I always walk the same paths of the hills and fields of Jurassic area repeating the same, my favorite ritual routes but at different times of day and year and in different periods of my life. The views that I see and experience are never the same. My experience and what others have taught me change the incentives and information that speaks to me. In the first place I receive universal essence, cause I feel as a part of the world. I wonder why after so many travels some places speak to me with such force that it touches my emotions, sadness, happiness, as if some internal strings were twitching. In the natural landscapes and their archetypes I can sense of the primary and fundamental sacred area, and the contact with it makes me aware of the spiritual nature of man. This awareness allows me to acquire and exchange the enormous amount of energy. I look at the landscape as a typical human being, its user and a part of it or the sculptor at the same time- I look at the distribution of blocks, the dominant rhythms, structure, texture and some details.

Then I try to look at the landscape as an expert of different areas: for example as a landscape architect I can see the terrain, interior landscaping, but walking with an ornithologist I see and listen to the birds, or with the forester I learn tree species etc. What is more I perceive the view through the history and culture of these areas: the structure of the royal hunting village, then the village consisting of peasants working on the fields of their master and then the space of turbulent history of the people who lived there. Looking at picturesque lanes I can not miss the traces of generations tied to the land with love or the decree, uprisings and wars or simply with the travel route. They had probably seen this piece of land and forest differently.

And finally, I see my favorite piece of land through the prism of Art. In a distant view of the old willows I can find the eighteenth-century English landscape painting; the spring, evenly ploughed field of Modrian's images, limestone rocks of Breugel images and Lech Majewski's film, which was filmed here.

*"(...) We learn to see the beauty in nature driven by the eye and work of the artist," "we can not look at nature differently than through the eyes of experienced people who were brought up in a certain artistic culture"*<sup>5</sup>

*Hans Georg Gadamer, Timeless beauty*

There are also further layers. Sometimes we allow to be fooled; We look at peaceful, gentle landscape, admire distant views, the rhythm of trees, the play of light, the murmur of grass and the sounds of birds. Then we learn that in the woods not far from here there were partisans killed, Jews were hidden, women raped... This motionless of the nature pierces then even more; because it seems to be only a stage, which accepts with modesty and indifference scripts of human affairs.

Polish landscapes, alike many areas of Central and Eastern Europe and the Balkans which were silent witnesses and lose their innocence when we compare them with dramatic events. Such a clash of idyllic views with the knowledge hidden in those old dramas change perception of the landscape; it stops to be just a mild nature, and becomes a land of memory, pride, shame, and a whole range of feelings. Tim Enderson wrote that we are more involved in the iconography of landscape national symbols or literary and film associations than we suspect; the landscape also belongs to a certain narrative typical for the identity of the imagined homeland.<sup>6</sup> The ideological, national, class, economic significance is immediately visible etc ..

The phenomenon of the the landscape, as it would seem, universal is altered by the human presence and activity and not free from manipulation and propaganda. The national identity image of forests, fields with stacks of hay, avenues with willows, roadside shrines, wooden mansions and houses is more vivid in our memories and imagination than what we can see today. It expires with time and changes related to spatial planning. The political system, customs, religion and values have a direct impact on the collective imaginary of the landscape. Therefore even the landscape is sometimes a tool of manipulation and propaganda.

In the thirties, when after a long separation Pomorze, Silesia and Polesie wer back in Polish borders photo album of Jan Bułhak "Fotografia Ojczysta -National Photography" was full of pictures presenting, frankly speaking, basically German architecture with Polish titles and, groups of people in Polish folk costumes. Of course, it was important to support identity with the lands of not so obvious and unambiguous belongs to Polish cultural circle. In the eighties, when I was a child it was always surprising to see, on different leaflets, typical Polish landscapes as the lowlands covered with willows. For a child born in the hills of Jura Krakowsko - Czeszochowska national landscape were hills and rocks. In one of the esseys of Łukasz Gorczyca I found the memory of Polish willow in the analysis of the Christopher ERBEL photography, which represents the Temple of Providence, a cross and a birch.<sup>7</sup> It may not be the birch in the picture, really, but the critic guided by the current public debate in Poland could not anything but the birch. It's very interesting to see how the discussions and emotions associated with the disaster in Smolensk affected the "importance" and the power of the symbolic birch. Has it become more Polish than the willow in our decade?

Derived from the Romanticism character identification with the landscape as the picture showing the inner feelings also presents a huge potential in the transmission of emotions. The landscape is therefore an emotional image as well as culturally and nationally mental image. It is impossible to understand it with only the reason. Such not obvious situations are very attracted to me; rational recognition of the phenomenon is impossible, only emotions (which carry indirect information) provide deeper insight, reach uncontrollable and even unconscious areas, complete the collection. It is also the combination of matter and spirit that we find in art.

## POLISH MELANCHOLY

*"Melancholy (...) It houses the joy brought to half and is partly doomed to transform into existential sadness. (...) Melancholy is born with a particular failure, one or many of them. (...) The world of melancholy is divided into two different spaces: the upper, ideal and utopian, and lower daily and mundane. (...) The Creative condition of melancholy is imagination. Thanks to melancholy we can breath and we suffer."*<sup>8</sup>

Jozef Tischner, *Chochół w Sarmackiej* -The mulch in the Sarmatian melancholy

*"Our reality and everyday life is muddy, ryish - fieldy oaky, woody, mown, dark, snowy - hovelly."*<sup>9</sup>  
Ziemowit Szczerek, *Polskie kolonie zamorskie*

I have been traveling a lot in the last 15 years. They were lasting several months trips to the United States, Mexico, and shorter ones to different places of eastern and western, Europe, Eurasia, Africa. Finally, they were weekly distances between Kraków to Kielce, Kielce to Warsaw and the changing landscape seen through the window of the train or the car like in the film. I have been observing subsequent transformations of this complicated organism which is Polish landscape; Perpetual constructions, extensions, demolitions, buildings painting, signs and advertisement boards, cutting down old trees, planting thuyas, replacing fences with more massive and tighter ones. The villages, which over the years has changed their physical and spiritual character from shredded strips of fields, which lost their balks over the years and have become a thicket, or on the contrary a huge area of mono-cultural cultivation. There is still a lot of glitz to cover dearth and contrasts, which is sometimes even grotesque. On the other hand, there is still stunning surfaces of undeveloped nature, sometimes almost wild, sometimes dramatic, which has created and still creates an elegiac background for great historical events and everyday lifes, or for unexpectedly appearing large advertisements of civilization to buy. All this gives some strange image of exuberant imagination, ineptitude and melancholy, which as Gombrowicz wrote "on these plains opens to all winds," "under the heaven fainting, ending Europe" pours from views and people. When I come back from trips abroad I must admit that I can see everything somehow brighter. Starting from the airport, especially when after leaving the airport my country amazes me anew. However familiar is the view, but for a while I have the opportunity to see it with the eyes of the visitor this common but non-obvious land. But after several days, and I feel completely blended into the reality, I grew up and I constantly refer to.

For some time, I felt the tension associated with this complex organism of my family being written in the country of continual discussions about the history and its new versions; I deeply felt this mix of "high", idealistic and proud with the prosaic, envious, everyday – therefore the need to "rewrite" and filter it through my work has grown easily. From the topics of more universal meaning my interest has shifted to my origin, physical and mental landscape of my home country. I have to admit that it wasn't a rationally planned process and I am not able to say when for the first time I pertrained to Polish "situation" that the themes of national art become "hot" in few years.

My artistic activity in the last few years has characteristics of engaged art, but my language was never a direct protest, shocking or looking for media hype situations. These works do not usurp the right to political expression, although to some extent, they touch this subject. They do not assume, however, any arbitrary judgments. On the contrary they whipped away from the one-way perspective. Stripped from their meanings symbols show the strength of their emotional speech which is more important than reason in a sense of belonging to a national community. I am sure that in the background there is literature, which brought up generations: dilemmas of the Romantics poets and their inconsistency in the vision of a Pole, especially in Slowacki and Norwid poetry. Then , Młodopolska mulch dances and conversations between intellectual and the peasant of Wyspiański; mythological history of Sienkiewicz, realistic Żeromski and Gombrowicz "Polishg kisser."

I try to look for poetical metaphorical figures translated into a visual language. It is important that the work is visually attractive if not beautiful in terms of aesthetics. The visual or sensual stimuli should be an important gate to its full content.

The attempts to dialogue with the complexity of the landscape according to Polish nature culture, country appear in several of my works. As one of such I consider "Biało/Syberiada - White / Syberia " (2009) which is the first were

the most important characteristics affecting the subsequent projects are visible: the introduction of set, artificial item and the change of its vision and meaning, the use of words - the title as a skeleton key opening new package of associations, undermining well-worn "certainties" in determining the beauty and the ugliness, the sublime and the crap. Much more literal in sensing the national meaning are installations: "ABR h +" and "D # 4213D", which use powerful symbols of the red colour on the national flag in combination with the poppy as a folk paper flowers symbol, motives in the literature and hallucinogenic properties of plants. For the works: "Horse and the Polish case" and "Borderline" the subject of imaginary national landscape is crucial. I decided to introduce a physical presence and performative actions that completed and reinforce the narrative. The landscape is both the static component of the work as a specific place in space, where I put objects, a form of living scenery, in which the action takes place.

In recent realizations in the open air, I have tried, quoting after Tischner: "two different spaces: the upper, ideal and utopian, and lower daily and mundane." Those upper spaces, are: national myths and ethos; in my opinion, within the meaning of sculptural matter: the nobility of the natural landscape and material taken from that landscape. Everyday spaces and works mundane in the content I see as the abuse of common symbols and national spirits, in excessiveness and misunderstanding of the best traditions, in the complexes of rural origin, although it is nearly universal, in pretending, in mediocrity and in love of glitz. I try to find a transmission of this prosaic, dissonant sound on the matter of sculpture, both in the material and its expression, as well as in the form. A plastic horse - a museum dummy in landscape ("Horse and the Polish case"), old, used, rural agricultural tools painted showy, shining pigment ("Borderline"), buzzing, plastic flies with hand-made paper poppies made by Koło Gospodyń Wiejskich (Society of women from a small village).

Perhaps this tiding of sacred and the profane, the greatest possible aspirations and naive vulgarity attracts me in the landscape of my country the most. I think life in Poland is such, but also, more broadly - I sense the truth about the human condition and the condition of the art, especially contemporary one in a similar way. I agree with Jerzy Ludwiński that contemporary art more and more increasingly penetrates and merges with the ordinary life.

## THE SELECTED WORKS AS POSTDOCTORAL WORK

As a postdoctoral work I chose a collection of works in the open air (installations, artistic actions), which are linked to the landscape, but they also contribute to their physical presence in it. In each case, these are in situ installations, relating to a specific place: its shape, structure and the colour of the existing natural forms, the formal context and the content that it brings. The interference with a block or system of blocks assumes consistency with the environment and the probability of existing such a view (a horse in the meadows, tools on the outskirts of the village, swing on trees). At the same time, painting (whitewashing, the positioning to reflect the pigment), the use of contrastive color of the surface emphasizes their artificiality in the landscape; purposive drive somebody round the bend, stating the area of a quote typical for art.

In content and transmission my works are the dialogue of "Polishness" of Polish landscape and ideological, historical and emotional cargo enchanted in this term. They are certainly readable for a man who knows the local, cultural code - was raised and educated in Poland, is familiar with the set of Polish books, films and paintings. I believe, however, that these works present a visual universalism understood by the sensitive man of different nationalities. I was convicted to it by their presentations to international audiences.

## HORSE AND THE POLISH CASE. DISINFECTION OF POLISH ROMANTIC LANDSCAPE

*V Land Art Festival,  
Podlaski Przełom Bugu, Bubel Łukowiska, 11 July 2015*

I chose the statue of a white horse as one of the representative elements of the Polish national imaginary. The horse exists as a symbol of our historical and spiritual landscape; It is an integral part of the painting iconography, literature, filmography describing national most important events, armed actions and the fate of individual Poles. In the classics of historical painting it not only has a function of the war machine to carry knights and soldiers, but also as a symbol of national pride, the idea of freedom, imagination or romantic heroism. It is tied to the fate

of the Pole. The horse is a breadwinner of the peasant, a source of pride for the master, and a faithful companion for a soldier, giving him freedom. The names of the horses of important Polish leaders: Jan Czarnecki, Jan Sobieski, Jozef Pilsudski are famous. Our neighbors used to say: "Pole without a horse is like a body without a soul,"

I wanted to create a landscape scenery, which is a specific quote for national landscape of Polish iconography (Grottger, Brandt, Kossak, Rodakowski paintings or Munk, Wajda movies). This is a view of the high probability - horse on the meadow, but at the same time shining whiteness of the silhouette of the animal evokes the situation of the strange landscape, surreal, catching the eye with its inevidency.

Kamila Leśniak wrote in "V Land Art Festival" catalogue (...) the artist confronts the viewer with the nostalgia for a lost paradise – more and more controversial myth of the Borderlands. Let's have a look more closely. Whiteness of the scenery is not the result of a simple paint, but lime used for disinfection, also corpses. So this is also an attempt to disenchant the myth, clear the field for the new content. In fact, however, this psychedelic landscape says a lot about the Polish identity, which is characterized by rich imagination. There is the reason why, the realization is called "Horse and the Polish case", the diagnosis is merciless and ironic: a syndrome searching he Polishness in the smallest manifestations of reality. (...) <sup>10</sup>

The work "Horse and the Polish case" combined installation in the landscape with an artistic action outdoors. This is the first work I decided on literal, physical presence, being a part of the narrative and direct confrontation with the presence and the audience reaction. During the opening dressed in overalls I splashed the lime on the horse and its surrounding.

A few months after placing the work on the Janów Podlaski meadows the epilogue appeared- the change of the management in the nearby horse stud brought on a discussion in media about the position and the importance of Polish horse breeding studs for the country today.

## **BORDERLINE**

*Exhibition: Dialog miejsc – Places dialogue, Szczerze Pole Gallery  
Curator: Mirosław Moszkowicz  
Kryspinów, April 10, 2016*

In the romantic tradition the landscape appears as a metaphor for internal life of the hero. Borderline in psychology means personality disorders, literally: "the personality of the border", "stable instability". Such personality is marked by unstable self-image marked by strong emotions and a tendency to self-harm.

The backbone of the work called "Borderline" was a combination of Młodopolska reflection on the nature of Polishness and unstable idea of fraternizing peasants with the masters ("Wesele -The Wedding" by Wyspiański) with contemporary tensions, the eternal struggle and accusations of Poles with different visions of patriotism and service for their country.

The area of intervention is the edge line of water and the land- boundary between two worlds. Along several meters partly in water, partly on the shore there were placed old tools used as the dialogues between masters and peasants, countrymen and strangers, Christians and non-believers: forks, scythes, sickles, swords. The tools are physically present by its mass and scale, but at the same time they are unified into a set of shapes by painting white. Coated with a fluorescent pigment are surrounded by a luminous glow, which at the end of the day gives pastel coating, and at night is lit greenish light- then the tools become strange, unreal. It is not quite clear whether the water thrown them there, or just unveiled what used to be covered. This created place seems to be nobody's, abandoned by the actors / characters

In the etude film "Borderline", based on the installation I decided at a very economical, minimalistic means. Three moving images slowly follow one after the other, the pass of the time is visible on ly in the moves of water and the silent signs of life around, we can see the persistence and continuity of metaphorical fight landscape.

## “SWING”

*VI Land Art Festival, “Home”  
Bubel Łukowiska, 9 July 2016*

Two simple outdoor swings: White and red are suspended between twin willows in a beautiful scene just over the border river Bug.

My “Swing” is a swing, which can not be used or it is difficult to do that. You can not reach the saddle, people who swing bump against each other, constantly going into collisions.

The work is conceptual in nature: the act of swinging associated with freedom and joy is denied here because of the construction of the object. Swinging and obtaining the amplitude allowing the swing is impossible.

“Swing” is a response to the festival motto “Home” and refers primarily to the tense political situation in Poland in 2016. But at the same time the context of its location on the border area, where historically the notion of home as nationality is not as clear and unambiguous may add a new layer of reading, especially since the colour of white and red combination is present on the flag of the Belorussian opposition.

Epilogues of the art narratives are often as surprising as the life itself: sixty plastic dwarfs are kept in the monastery chapel, artificial horse stands in the meadow of Janów Podlaski; the presentation of the film etude “Borderline” was postponed by the organizers on April 10, the anniversary of the Smolensk air crash and the white and red swing ‘serves’ people who try to use it, despite being difficult to climb on it and swing.

### PRZYPISY / NOTES:

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- <sup>3</sup> Katarzyna Krzykawska, „Zabliźnienie. Między naturalnym a sztucznym.”, *Akademia Sztuk Pięknych w Krakowie*, 2008
- <sup>4</sup> C. Taxter za: Andrzej Kostołowski, *Powrót do ogrodu, Nature and/of Art*, Bunkier Sztuki, Kraków, 2004, s. 29 – 33
- <sup>5</sup> Hans Georg Gadamer, *Aktualność piękna, przeł. Krystyna Krzemieniowa*, Warszawa 1993, s. 41, cytuję za: Janusz Krupiński, *Intencja i interpretacja*, Akademia Sztuk Pięknych, Kraków 2001
- <sup>6</sup> Tim Endersor, *Tożsamość narodowa, kultura popularna i życie codzienne*, tłum. Agata Sadza, Kraków 2004, s. 55 – 93
- <sup>7</sup> Łukasz Gorczyca, *Stan wody. Wilanów. Dwutygodnik*. ISSN 2299-8128
- <sup>8</sup> Józef Tischner, *Chochół sarmackiej melancholii w: Hawaikum. W poszukiwaniu istoty piękna*. Wydawnictwo Czarne, Kraków 2015
- <sup>9</sup> Ziemowit Szczerek, *Polskie kolonie zamorskie w: Hawaikum. W poszukiwaniu istoty piękna*. Wydawnictwo Czarne, Kraków 2015
- <sup>10</sup> Kamila Leśniak, tekst w katalogu 5 Land Art Festival, Fundacja Latająca Ryba, Lublin 2015, s. 7

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