

Diana Lelonek, born 1988 in Katowice, Poland. Graduated from the department of Photography in the Faculty of Multimedia Communication at the University of Art in Poznan (PL). Phd at Interdisciplinary PhD Studies, University of Art in Poznań. Currently she works at the Academy of Fine Art in Warsaw. Diana Lelonek explores relationships between humans and other species. Her projects are critical responses to the processes of over-production, unlimited growth, and our approach to the environment. She uses photography, living matter, and found objects, creating work that is interdisciplinary and often appears at the interface of art and science. She participated in several international biennale, festivals and group shows at: Edith-Russ-Haus for Media Art, Oldenburg; Kunstraum Niederosterriech, Vienna; Temporary Gallery, Cologne; Tallin Art Hall; Culturescapes Festival, Basel; Musee de l'Elysee, Lausanne, Latvian Center for Contemporary Art, Kunstmuseum Bonn, Tinguely Museum, Basel, Re.connecting Earth Biennale, Geneva; Sainsbury Centre For Contemporary Art, Norwich; NTU Centre of Contemporary Art, Singapore; Tokio Photographic Art Museum; A.I.R Gallery, NY.

Education & work experience:

from 2021 Lecturer at Academy of Fine Art in Warsaw, Faculty of Artistic Research & Curatorial Studies

2019 PHD at Intermedia department, Faculty of Multimedia Communication, University of Art in Poznań

2014-2018 Lecturer at Photography Department, University of Art in Poznań

2011-2014 University of Art in Poznań, Photography Department, MA

Selected Solo Exhibitions:

Solarstalgia, Splot Gallery, Sopot Photofestival, Poland, 2025

Centre For Living Things, Belfast City Hall, Belfast Photofestival, Northern Ireland, 2025

Sun Catcher, Set espai d'art gallery, Walencja, Spain 2025

Solarstalgia, lokal_30 gallery, Warsaw, Poland, 2025

Solarstalgia, Glacier Garden, Luzern, Switzerland, 2024

Melting Gallery (in collaboration with Denim Szram), Brandenburgische Gesellschaft fur Kultur und Geschichte, Potsdam, Germany, 2023

Solastalgia, SET espai d'art gallery, Valencia, Spain, 2022

Coal and Fruits, Off/Format Gallery, Brno, Czech Republic, 2022

Palace, Museum of Warsaw, Poland 2021/2022

Compost, Arsenal Gallery Białystok, Poland 2021

Zukunftsfieber, Polish Institute, Dusseldorf, Germany, 2021

Buona Fortuna, Fondazione Pastificio Cerere, Roma, Italy, 2020

Raport, Contemporary Art Center Bydgoszcz, Poland, 2019

Center For Living Things, Buero Gallery, Culturescapes Festival, Basel, Switzerland, 2019

Endling, Labirynt Gallery, Lublin, Poland, 2019

Center For Living Things, Ballarat Photography Biennale, Australia, 2019

New Archeology: Liban i Płaszów, Museum of Modern Art Cracow (MOCAK), Cracow Photomonth, Poland 2017

Yesterday I met a really wild man, Warsaw Gallery Weekend, Lookout Gallery, Warsaw, Poland, 2015

Zoe-Therapy, Center of the Contemporary Art Ujazdowski Castle, Warsaw, Poland, 2015

There is nothing there, anyway, (with Marek Kucharski), Cracow Photomonth, Poland, 2014

Long Before, Lookout Gallery, Warsaw, Poland 2014

Selected Group Exhibitions:

Humanist Modernity. Maciej and Stanisława Nowicki, Museum of Architecture, Wrocław, Poland 2026

Man – Environment – Dialogue? National Museum in Kielce, Poland, 2026

Power Lines, Merlin Cultural Square, Budapest, Hungary, 2026

The Hawks and Sparrows, lokal_30 gallery, Warsaw, 2026

Si la neige ne revenait pas, Pyxis Exploration Numérique Laussane, Switzerland, 2026

Radical Hope, Golden Thread Gallery, Belfast, Northern Ireland, 2025

Sea Art Festival, Busan, South Korea, 2025

Everything is interaction, Kunstfestival Begenhungen, Chemnitz, Germany, 2025

Material Flows, the hidden afterlives of plastic waste, Zone2source,

Amsterdam, Netherlands, 2025
Every single thing that exists in this infinite universe is either...,
Galerie im Körnerpark, Berlin, Germany, 2024
Transformations. Modernity in the Third Polish Republic, National
Museum in Cracow, Poland, 2024
Missing, Tartu Art House, Tartu, Estonia, 2024
Re.connecting Earth Biennale, Stadtgalerie, Kiel, Germany, Poland,
2024
Gezwitscher, Kunsthalle Wilhelmshaven, Germany, 2023
The Stuff of Life / The life of Stuff, Sainsbury Centre for
Contemporary Art, Norwich, UK, 2023
Re.connecting Earth Biennale, Geneva, Switzerland, 2023
Derriva, SET espai d'art, Valencia, Spain, 2023
Imagine a breath of fresh air, Studio Gallery, Warsaw, Poland, 2023
Little John, Pragovka Gallery, Prague, Czech Republic, 2023
Hay, Straw, Dump, Gallery Vaclav Spala, Prague, Czech Republic, 2023
Prix Bob Calle, Academy Des Beaux-Arts, Paris, France, 2023
Decolonial Ecologies, Riga Art Space, LCCA, Riga, Latvia, 2022
State of Emergency, Center for Contemporary Art at Zitadelle
Spandau ZAK, Berlin, Germany 2022
Territories of Waste, Tinguely Museum, Basel, Switzerland, 2022
Sleepless in Warsaw, A.I.R Gallery, New York, US, 2022
Dorothea von Stetten Award, Kunstmuseum Bonn, Germany, 2022
XIX Biennale Donna, PAC Padiglione d'Arte Contemporanea, Ferrara,
Italy, 2022
Overview Effect, Museum of Contemporary Art, Belgrad, Serbia, 2021
Lago Mio, Lugano, Switzerland, Switzerland 2021
Sapporo International Art Festival, Sapporo, Japan, 2021
Free Jazz III, NTU Centre for Contemporary Art, Singapore, 2021
Slow Life, Ludwig Museum, Koblenz, Germany, 2020
Twilight of the Anthropocene, Zbrojownia Sztuki, Gdańsk, Poland,
2020
Love letter to the Earth, Tbilisi Online Biennale, Georgia, 2020
The Camel Never Forgets, Lokal_30 gallery, Warsaw Gallery Weekend,
Poland, 2020
Korembi, BWA Katowice, Poland, 2020
Spring in the Józef Bem housing estate, Arsenal Gallery, Białystok,

Poland, 2020
Slow Life, Ludwig Museum, Budapest, Hungary, 2020
Mather of the Anthropocene, Centrala, Birmingham, UK 2020
Herbarium Novum, BWA Bydgoszcz, 2020
Simple Gestures, BWA Katowice, 2020
Sopot's Photography Festival, Sopot, 2019
**Her Own Way – Female Artists and the Moving Image in Art in
Poland: From 1970s to the Present**, Tokio Photographic Art Museum,
Tokio, Japan, 2019
Nature\Nature, Kunstraum Niederoesterreich, Vienna, Austria, 2019
Heart of an old crocodile exploding over a small town, Temporary
Gallery, Cologne, 2019
Matter of the Anthropocene, Mathare Art Gallery, Nairobi, Kenya, 2019
The Art of Being Good, Tallin Art Hall, Estonia, 2019
Pangea United, Museum of Art, Łódź, Poland, 2019
Human-Free Earth, Ujazdowski Castle Centre for Contemporary Art,
Warsaw, Poland, 2019
The Most Beautiful Catastrophe, Centre for Contemporary Art
„Kronika”, Bytom, Poland, 2018
Fundation Vordemberge-Gildewart Prize, Mocak, Cracow, Poland,
2018
Grand Prix of Photofestival, Łódź, PL, 2018
Riga International Biennale of Contemporary Art RIBOCA, Riga, 2018
Landscapes of Anthropocene, Baltic Gallery of Contemporary Art,
Słupsk, Poland, 2018
For Beyond That Horizon Lies Another Horizon, Edith-Russ-Haus for
Media Art, Oldenburg, Germany, 2017
Je to tak, jak se vám to zdá, Dům umění města Brna, Brno, Czech
Republic, 2017
Central by East Central, Arsenal Gallery, Białystok, Poland, 2017
Zeitgeist, Lokal 30, Warsaw Gallery Weekend, Warsaw, Poland, 2017
Art Work, Arsenal Gallery, Kiev, Ukraine, 2017
Such a landscape, WRO Media Biennale „Draft Systems”, Wrocław,
Poland, 2017
Pernicious Predilection, Labirynt Gallery, Lublin, Poland, 2017
Single Shot, The Fort Institute of Photography, Warsaw, Poland, 2016
Bones of all man, Center of the Contemporary Art, Toruń, Poland, 2016

Photo Poland, Festival Les Recontres d' Arles, France, 2016

ReGeneration 3, Format Festival, Quad Gallery, Derby, UK, 2016

ReGeneration 3, Museo Amparo, Puebla, Mexico, 2015

Unbearable impossibility of concentration, City Surfers, Prague, 2015

ReGeneration 3, Le Musée de l'Elysée, Lausanne, 2015

Awards:

Prix Bob Calle du livre d'artiste, nomination for the book „Wasteplants Atlas” Paris, 2023

Dorothea Von Stetten Award, Kunstmuseum Bonn, 2022

The Most Beautiful Book of the Year Award 2021,

Honorable Mention for the book „Wasteplants Atlas”, Warsaw 2021

Polish Graphic Design Award (nomination) for the book „Liban and Płaszów: New Archeology”, 2020

Winner of Polityka's Passport, Prize by magazine „Polityka” for visual arts, 2019

Award of the Vordemberge-Gildewart Foundation 2018

Grand Prix Fotofestival Łódź, Nomination, 2018

Honorable Mention, ING Foundation of Polish Art, during Warsaw Gallery Weekend, 2017

“Talenty Trójki”, nomination, prize of Polish Radio, 2017

Honorable mention from art critics and press, WRO Biennale, 2017

ReGeneration 3, an international project devoted to the emerging photographic scene, brings together 50 artists with 25 different nationalities, Le Musée de l'Elysée, Lausanne, 2015

Collections: Le Musée de l'Elysée in Lausanne, Kunstmuseum Bonn,

National Museum in Warsaw, Museum of Arts in Łódź, National Museum in Szczecin, Arsenal Gallery in Poznań, Arsenal Gallery in Białystok, Studio Gallery in Warsaw, Museum of Warsaw, Museum of Gliwice, Silesian Museum in Katowice,

National Museum in Wrocław

Warsaw Rubble Pigment
120 cm x 90 cm, technique:
dichromate gum print with
pigment derived from rubble,
watercolour paper, 2026

Work commissioned by the National Institute of Architecture and Urban Planning for the exhibition 'Humanist Modernism. Maciej and Stanisława Nowicki'. In this work, Nowicki's designs for the reconstruction of Warsaw have been rendered using pigment obtained from fragments of rubble I found. These are bricks – remnants of pre-war tenement houses, as well as later elements of Warsaw's Anthropocene. The geological strata of Warsaw consist largely of rubble. The pigments I have produced are a tangible testament to the city's history. The act of grinding the rubble and reducing it to pigment refers to the production of rubble concrete in post-war Warsaw, which was widely used during its reconstruction. Rubble was an omnipresent material in the war-torn city, which is why the capital's reconstruction project had to take this fact into account. Maciej Nowicki's design also took into account the ubiquitous presence of rubble. It was upon this rubble that new buildings were to be erected. The embankments designed by Nowicki were intended to define a new grid of streets, residential and commercial spaces. In doing so, they would permanently alter the local topography, with anthropogenic layers forming new elevations and depressions. I propose the new term 'rubble pigment' to describe colours derived directly from the layers of Warsaw's anthropogenic strata. The attached samples form part of a larger research project I am currently undertaking, the aim of which is to create a colour palette of Warsaw Rubble Pigment.



Changing Room
Sea & Art Festival, Busan,
South Korea

27.09-02.11.2026

„Changing Room, the third chapter in Lelonek’s ongoing exploration of speculative climate futures, focuses on the evolving coastal ecology of the region, shaped by global warming and biodiversity shifts. This installation situated on Dadaepo Beach, transforms an everyday beach facility into a contemplative space for environmental reflection. The structure, built as a functioning beach changing room, is wrapped in printed textile featuring digitally collaged images that visualize predicted environmental transformations. Collaborating with local researchers, Lelonek grounds her vision in scientific projections: biodiversity loss, sea level rise and marine heat waves are all part of the imagined futures she presents.

The act of changing clothes becomes a quiet metaphor for deeper transformation—landscapes, climates, and collective imagination. Changing Room doesn’t only project dystopian outcomes; it also gestures toward the possibility of renewal.

Through the layered visuals of multispecies coexistence, adaptive ecosystems, and resilient futures, Lelonek offers glimpses of what may lie ahead for the visitors.”

<https://www.saf2025.org/en/exhibition/changing-room>







Solarstalgia
Solo Show
Glacier Garden, Luzern, Switzerland
16.05.2024-08.09.2024

„The Glacier Garden in Lucerne, styled as a “Journey to the Centre of Time”, is the setting for another installation by Lelonek. In this case, the artist evokes the abrupt arrival of the Anthropocene using recycled sheets – the very same material that was used to cover the Rhône Glacier, in a style reminiscent of Christo’s wrapped buildings, in an attempt to slow the melting of the ice, but with no real effect other than to pollute the glacier, the ice cave and the river. Lelonek captured the devastating impact of sunlight by coating the sheets in photosensitive paint then exposing them in a camera obscura to the sun as it tracked across the sky. She employed two old, camera-less techniques: solarigraphy (long-duration images of the sun’s path) and cyanotype photography (contact prints), which William Henry Fox Talbot described as “The Pencil of Nature”. The installation’s name, Solarstalgia, is a blend of two words: “solar” and “solastalgia”, the distress we feel when confronted with an overwhelming amount of bad news about climate change.”

<https://artforglaciers.ch/en/gletschergarten-lucerne-diana-lelonek/>



„Solarstalgia”, Glacier Garden, Luzern, Switzerland, 16.05.24 – 08.09.24 <https://artforglaciers.ch/en/gletschergarten-lucerne-diana-lelonek/>



Solarstalgia

Solo Show lokal_30, Warsaw, Poland

31.01-26.04.2025

Presented at lokal_30, Diana Lelonek's exhibition is associated with the artist's return to her roots, namely to photography, which she studied at UAP in Poznań. The artist also looks back to the very beginnings of this field of art, by employing early photographic techniques – solarigraphy, cyanotype, and anthotype. The works created in this way are unique – no two prints are the same. They are also produced in close relationship with nature, which has been at the centre of Lelonek's artistic practice for a number of years. The title of the exhibition directs our attention towards the sun, which was once the essential factor in the process of producing photographs. As André Rouillé writes, the material character of photography, resulting from the exchange of energy between the object and the image, has given way to the mathematical and logical universe of digital images. The show's title, Solarstalgia also draws on the term "solastalgia," used to describe the melancholy and distress caused by environmental catastrophe.

In early 2024, Lelonek was invited to give a solo presentation at the Glacier Garden Museum in Lucerne as part of the exhibition series *Watching the Glacier Disappear*. The artist was no stranger to the subject. In 2019, together with the German composer Demin Szram, she had completed Melting Gallery – an installation combining sounds recorded on melting glaciers: Rhône, Aletsch, and Morteratsch. The artist's latest project was inspired by the practice of covering the Rhône glacier with tarpaulins intended to protect it from melting. Unfortunately, the effect was the opposite. And to make matters worse, the tarpaulins, made of artificial plastic, further burdened the environment by polluting the glacier and the water at the source of the Rhone with microplastics.

Lelonek set out to develop photographs on large sheets of fabric with the use of the light-sensitive cyanotype technique, which relies on exposing a layer of cloth or paper coated with this substance to the sun. One of the first people to use this technique was the British botanist and photographer Anna Atkins, who in the mid-19th century, by pressing plants to sheets of paper coated with iron salts, produced an extraordinary negative atlas of algae. Atkins' achievement, as well as the Prussian blue obtained through the use of cyanotype – which resembles the colour of glaciers – ultimately inspired Lelonek to use this sunlight-dependent technology.

In order to create the solarigraphs, which were later developed in cyanotype, Lelonek first had to travel to the mountains. Her destination was a shepherd's shed located on an alpine pasture. In early spring, the artist and her partner set off for the Alps, taking turns carrying a large box containing a camera obscura with light-sensitive paper inside. For two months, the sun streaming in through a hole in the camera drew its path against the background of the monumental mountain peaks. The end result of this process was a negative in which the sun literally burned its mark.

The experience of working with the sun and early photographic techniques awakened the artist's curiosity for experimenting with the material aspects of photography and minimising the use of inorganic materials. "When I was creating these cyanotypes, I thought to myself that I want to find something that would be organic and closer to the earth. Actually, one such technique is the anthotype. It was used in the 18th century, before the invention of photography, and relies on the photosensitive properties of plants. It's a simple technique, but requires plenty of time and patience."

The anthotypes shown in the exhibition depict Văcărești Nature Park in Bucharest, created on what was once one of the largest urban wastelands in Europe, where plant-life and wildlife flourished following the abandoned Ceausescu-era reservoir and dam project. Lelonek gathered plants, squeezed their juices, drained them, and immediately painted the fabric, which soon turned light-sensitive. She then exposed it to the sun, sometimes for several weeks. "Each plant has a different growing season and also a different exposure time. So, one really needs to tune into the rhythm of the seasons, the rhythm of growth and flourishing. I use this technique as a way to escape the overproduction of photography, because unlike digital techniques, each image takes time, patience, and focus. I'd look for plants and then sit and squeeze for a few hours. In my work, I rely on ruderal plants collected in urban wastelands, mainly: Canadian goldenrod, tansies, nettles, yarrow, and common mugwort."

The solar turn in Diana Lelonek's work is directly related to her search for techniques that are as minimally invasive as possible, a wish to free oneself from the dominant technology and follow the path of photography's material nature. It is also a turn towards the basic, life-giving processes of solar energy and photosynthesis.

Curator: Agnieszka Rayzacher

Translation: Joanna Figiel



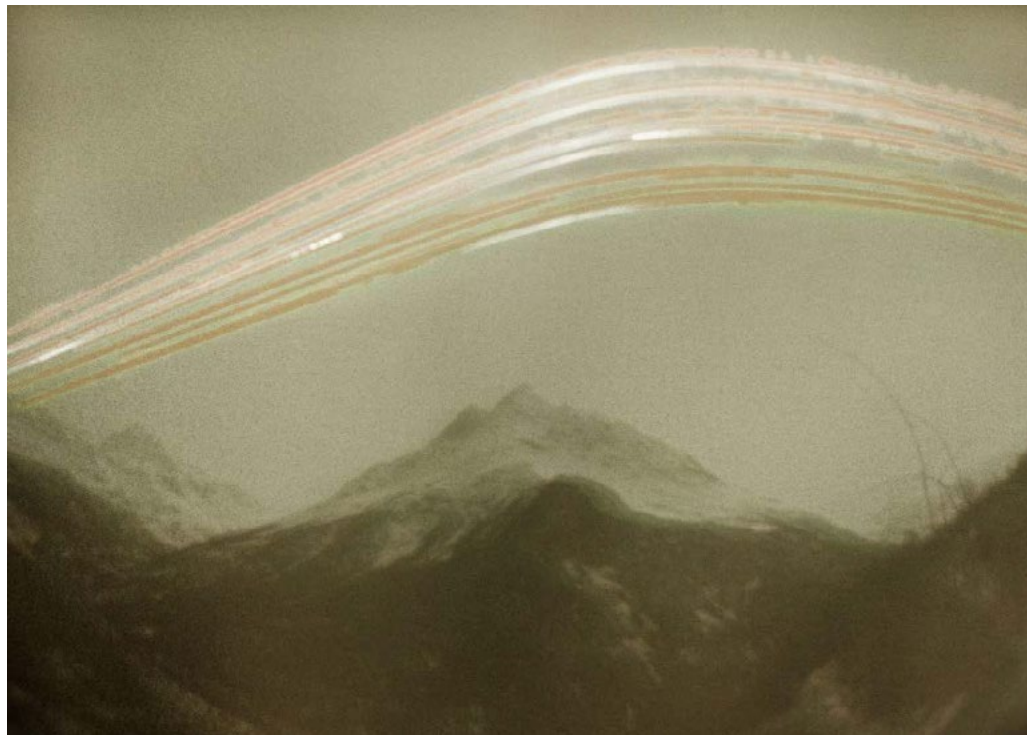
„Solarstalgia”, solo show, lokal_30 gallery, Warsaw, 31.01-



„Solarstalgia”, solo show, lokal_30 gallery, Warsaw, 31.01-25.04.2025



„Solarstalgia , solo show, lokal_30 gallery, Warsaw, 31.01-25.04.2025”





„Sun catcher”, solo show, SET espai d'art gallery, Valencia, 14.02-18.04.2025



„Sun catcher”, solo show, SET espai d’art gallery, Valencia, 14.02-18.04.2025

Non-Human Transformation (in progress) series of Anthotypes on paper and fabrics 2025

Anthotype is a 19th-century photographic technique, fully vegan, utilising the phenomenon of plant photosensitivity. Juices extracted from plants are light-sensitive emulsions, and photographs are exposed to sunlight. Sometimes, creating a single image takes several weeks (gathering plants, extracting juices, multiple layers of coating on paper or fabric, and days of exposure to sunlight).

I use this technique to escape from the rapid production of art and the overproduction of photographs because, unlike digital techniques, each image requires time, patience, and focus. It emerges through direct contact with plants, soil, water, and sunlight, dependent on plant growth cycles and seasons. It is impermanent – it must be stored in the shade, and over time, it fades. I am drawn to its processual nature and transience.

The anthotypes displayed here capture views from Văcărești Park in Bucharest, which I visited as part of the research project, *Non-human Transformation: Plants and Animals in the Process of Political Transformation in Central and Eastern Europe*. The park was established on one of the largest urban wastelands in Europe, where nature reclaimed the area following the abandonment of an unfinished retention basin project from the Ceaușescu era.



„Solarstalgia”, lokal_30 gallery, Warsaw, solo show, 2025



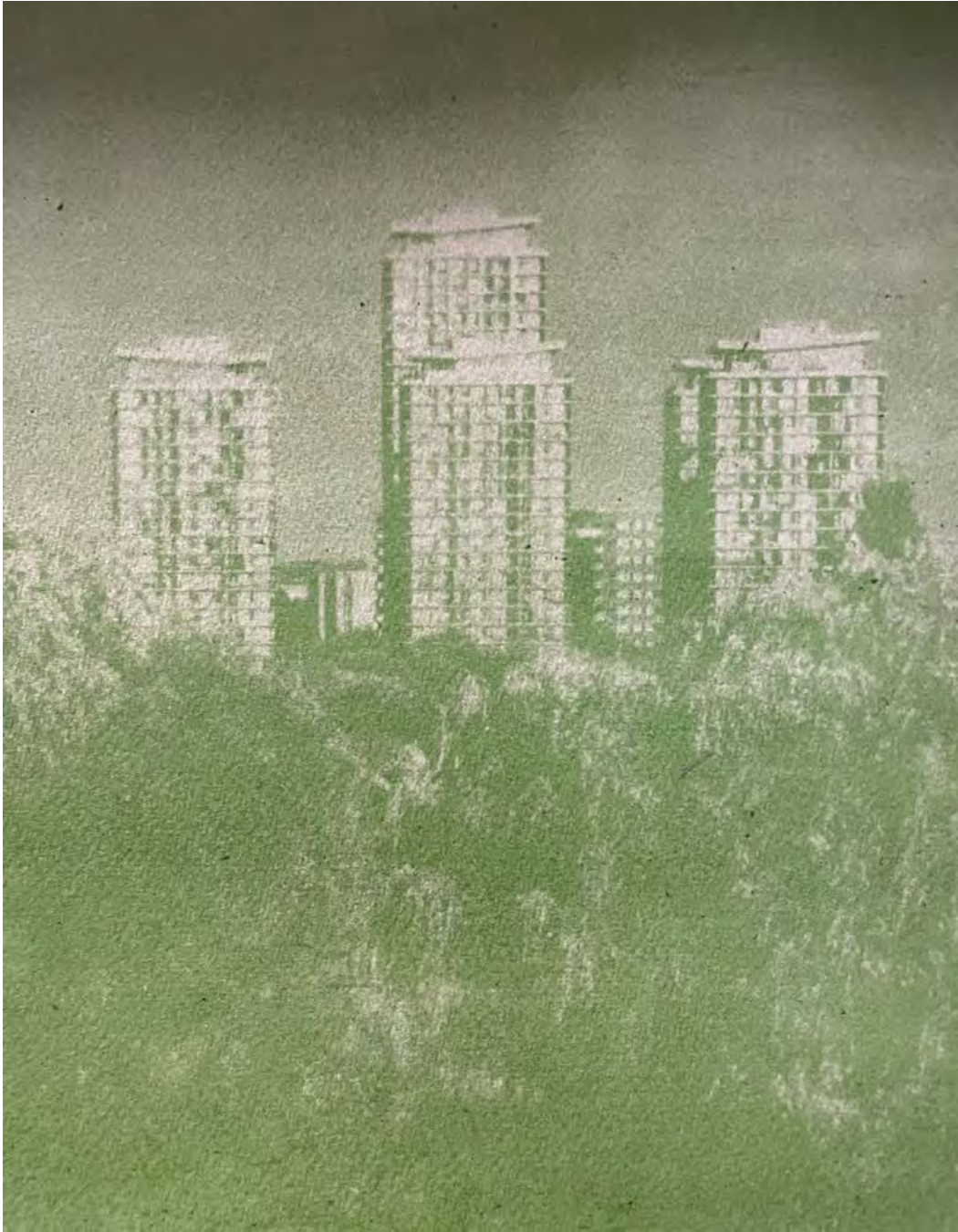
Fragment of a papyrus scroll, showing a green and brown textured surface.

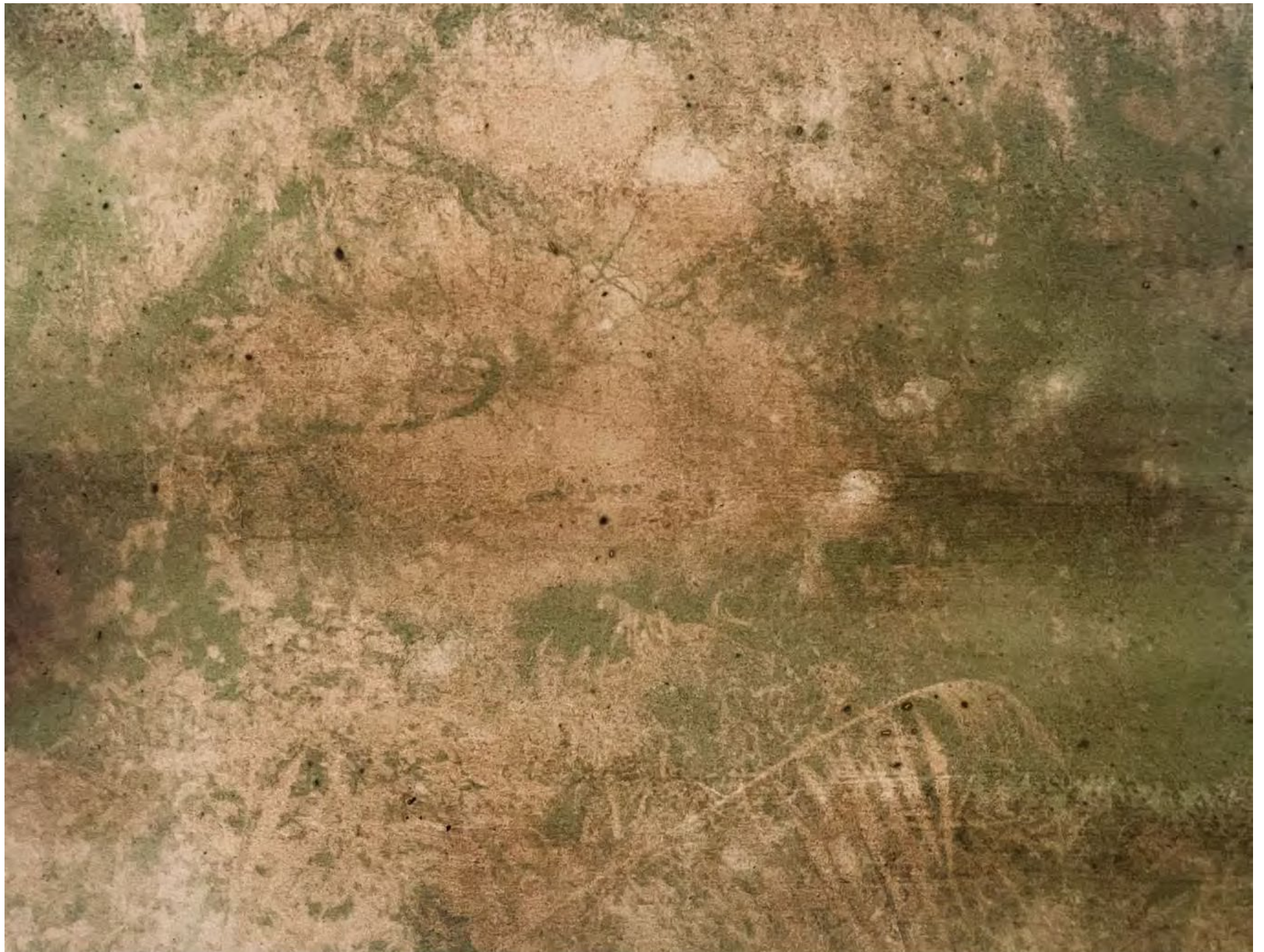


Four fragments of ancient papyrus or paper, showing various textures and colors.













Geneva (after melting glacier)

Re.connecting Earth Biennale, Geneva, 2023

photographic triptych printed on canvas, 100 x 135 cm

„Diana Lelonek presents a panorama divided into a series of three photographs hung from the eaves of the historic Pâquis landing stage building, as if these images, the same size as the windows, replaced them.

Taken by the artist during a residency in Geneva a few weeks before the exhibition, the photographs show the harbour directly from the Quai du Mont-Blanc, and have been edited to reveal what the city would look like in a distant future when the lake has dried up. What Geneva would look like if the glaciers and tributaries of Lake Geneva dried up. Looking beyond scenarios of rising temperatures, Diana Lelonek projects herself in images into a dystopia that may not be as unreal as all that..”

<https://geneva02.reconnecting.earth/en/artworks/geneva-after-melting-glacier/>













Stork, a sacred bird, three-channel video installation, 2023

A three-channel video installation entitled “Stork, a sacred bird” (2022) is a video recording of my observations of the white stork population at the Getliņi landfill site. Located just outside Riga, it is the largest mixed landfill site in the entire Baltic region. It was here that I first saw storks feeding on food waste brought in by countless trucks. My encounter with storks at the Getliņi landfill site has been my closest encounter with these birds so far, and the first time I was able to watch them up close and in such large numbers. The film is something between a nature documentary and a speculative theory, in which I quite freely reinterpret scientific facts. To me, the sight of a stork on a landfill site is a great pretext for deconstructing, decolonizing, and critically reassessing the cultural entanglement and representations of the stork. Most of all, I see this as an opportunity to demythologize the stork as a bird inseparably entwined with the idealized view of nature. In order to understand and accept the sight of storks on landfill sites, we must first consider the nature that surrounds us. This is what real, unretouched nature actually looks like – it is ambiguous, toxic, altered, and complex.

Project was made as a part of the program Island Of Kindship (<https://islandsofkinship.org/>) in collaboration with Latvian Center For Contemporary Art LCCA







Vai varbūt atkritumu poligons ir vieta, kur valda sajukums, kur tiek izaicinātas pastāvošās normas un patriarhālais dalījums?



„Bio-Chem” exhibition, Center of Contemporary Arts, Radom, 2024



„Bio-Chem” exhibition, Center of Contemporary Arts, Radom, 2024

The Waste-stork manifesto

2023 (text) / 2026 (fabric), toned cyanotype on cotton fabric, 150x300cm

1. The white stork is a cultural construct created by the system of patriarchy and anthropocentrism - this construct must be overturned in order to be able to look at the stork as it is and accept it as a species in all its complexity.
2. The image of a stork on a green meadow, deeply rooted in European culture, especially in Eastern Europe, is a fiction. It is a tool to maintain an idealized vision of nature and cover its true complexity, toxicity and ambiguity.
3. Interspecies coexistence in the era of the Anthropocene is associated with working through, demythologizing and overthrowing the existing paternalistic approach to other beings.
4. Idealizing the white stork species - as a beautiful bird swallowing a green frog in idyllic nature - is a false image, infantilizing and depriving it of subjectivity, its own decision-making and agency.
5. Looking with respect at the stork as it is also implies accepting the uncomfortable truth about what nature is in the era of the Anthropocene - with all its entanglement, toxicity and multi-layered connections.
6. Storks have learned to use open garbage dumps and this fact should not be sad or indignant, this fact should be taken with relief, because there is a liberating and revolutionary potential in it.
7. The stork in the landfill can no longer be a symbol of a romantic vision of nature.
8. A garbage-swallowing stork does not fit into nationalist narratives, so it can be liberated from being a national bird, e.g. Latvia, Poland or Lithuania.
9. The stork swallowing garbage does not necessarily fit the vision of the bird „bringing” children in this sense, the garbage dump also frees it from the system of patriarchal control.
10. The dump is visited more often by storks that have not started families and do not feed chicks, in this sense the dump can also be a way out of the heteromatrix
11. A stork that doesn't bring babies is still a real stork. Parenting is a choice, not a compulsion. My body, my choice!
12. Garbage, so it is a chance to overthrow not only a false vision of nature, but also patriarchy, which is the cause of climate change and the destruction of the earth.
13. The dump makes it possible to obtain food for old storks, sick storks, storks with disabilities, which would lose in the fight for dwindling amphibian resources.



storks with disabilities, which would lose in the fight for dwindling amphibian resources.

14. A landfill is only seemingly a desert of biodiversity. Many species use its resources on a daily basis. Living in a landfill is often the only option when there are not enough amphibians and small rodents to feed on.

15. Whoever learns to use garbage will survive. In the era of the sixth great extinction, this is an important skill.

16. The Anthropocene forces all living beings, both non-human and human, to change their behavior. Living in a toxic, polluted and littered landscape is a fate shared by all (albeit to varying degrees).

17. The possibility of living outside contaminated areas - has undoubtedly become a privilege. A privilege that belongs to the few and is a luxury. Some species are privileged to live in a closed, strictly protected wildlife reserve, while others live within the affluent, closed and also strictly protected borders of nation-states. In this context, the stork as a „national symbol” requires critical deconstruction and decolonization.

19. A garbage dump can be read as a horizontal structure on which new inter-species communities of the future, new meanings and ontologies are created.

20. Do not look away from storks in landfills, watch them closely. It's time to start learning from multi-species and complex garbage dump ecosystems!





1. Bocian biały jest konstruktorem kulturowym stworzonym przez system patriarchy i antropocentryzmu - konstrukt, ten należy obalić, by móc spojrzeć na bociana takim jakim jest i zaakceptować go jako gatunek w całej jego złożoności.

Obraz bociana na zielonej fałdzie, zakorzeniony głęboko w kulturze europejskiej, a w szczególności filozofii. Jest narzędziem mającym podtrzymać wyidealizowaną tożsamość przetrwania i prawdziwą tożsamość.

porzeźnię z szacunkiem na bociana takiego jest jakąś równowagą i tym czym żyje w sobie artysta - z całym jej dniem, oksygenem i wielowarstwowością.

5. Bociany nauczyły się korzystać z okazywania się w miejscach, gdzie nie powinni być. To jest ich sztuka i ich siła.

7. Bocian polnie śmieci nie pasuje do egzystencyjnych realiów, więc może zostać wyobcowany z życia ptaków starożytności. Łotwy, Polska, Litwy.

9. Bocian, przetrwał nie dlatego że jest więcej, tylko dlatego że jest inny. W tym sensie śmieć jest nie to, co się wydaje, ale to, co jest.

10. Bocian który nie przynosi dzieci jest nadal prawdziwym bocianem. Rodzicielstwo to wybór nie przymus. Moje ciało, mój wybór.

11. Śmieć, więc jest szansą na obalenie nie tylko fałszywej wizji natury ale także patriarchy, który jest przyczyną zmian klimatycznych i wyniszczenia ziemi.

12. Śmieć daje możliwość zdobycia pokarmu dla bocianów starych, chorych, bocianów z niespełnosprawnościami, które przetrwałyby w walce o kurczące się zasoby przetrwania.

15. Antropocentryzm niszczy wszystkie żywe istoty zarówno te nie-ludzkie jak i ludzkie do zmiany zachowań. Życie w toksycznym, skażonym i zamkniętym krajobrazie to los, który współdziała ze wszystkim (choć w różnym stopniu).

16. Możliwość życia poza obszarami skażonymi - niepodważalnie stała się przywilejem. Przywilejem który dotyczy niewielu i jest luksusem. Jednym gatunkom przywilej, tak dają życie w zamkniętym, ściśle chronionym rezerwacie, innym zaś życie w ramach zamożnych, zamkniętych i również ściśle chronionych granic państw narodowych. W tym kontekście bocian jako symbol narodowy wymaga krytycznej dekonstrukcji oraz zdekolonizowania.

13. Śmieć jest biogeochemicznym, biogeochemicznym, biogeochemicznym. Wiele gatunków na co dzień korzysta z jego zasobów. Życie na wysypisku jest często jedyną opcją, w braku odpowiednich ilości płazów i małych przynosi, którymi może żywić.

17. Śmieć można czytać jako horyzontalną strukturę, na której powstają nowe międzygatunkowe wspólnoty przyszłości, nowe znaczenia i ontologie.

18. Nie odwracajcie wzroku od bocianów na wysypiskach, bacznie je obserwujcie. Czas zacząć uczyć się od wielogatunkowych i złożonych śmieciowych ekosystemów!

The Hawks and Sparrows, lokal_30 gallery, Warsaw, 2026

Wasteplants

Dorothea von Stetten Award
Kunst Museum Bonn, Germany
2022

Wasteplants tend to be pushed to the margins of human culture. They occupy land that is condemned (postindustrial or over-exploited) and abandoned by the humans who have sapped it of its forces, allure, and vibrancy. Wasteplants are discovered at the end of the world: yet this “end” can be understood as a wasteland, retreat, or periphery of human society. For this very reason, wasteplants exemplify the postulates of “dark ecology” (Timothy Morton) 3 . They resist the traditional ecological narrative that the world must be cleansed and re-deemed. Instead, they teach us to accept, love, and live amidst that which repels us—that which we have denied desirability and meaning. They express a specific affirmation of life that carries no promise of stability. Likewise, they call attention to the real existence of monstrous, terrifying objects that are indifferent to humans. These objects cannot be transformed through the harmonious idea of “deep ecology.” Wasteplants prove that clean bonds do not exist and that every encounter is necessarily toxic and impure 4 . They form a dynamic and generative entanglement of nonhumans and the detritus they have seized as their own: a morass that we, as humans, are unable to comb apart.

Wasteplants are a collective: a coalition of allies and intimate nonhumans. Their bonds generate responsibility (response-ability). The plant organisms that co-create wasteplants are typically classified as ruderal (rudus meaning rubble) to distinguish them from more desirable, cultivated plants. Wasteplants carry human disgust and abjection in their name. They exist outside of agrarian law and order and teach us that it is only from an anthropocentric perspective that the autonomous activities of plants seem disorganized. Lelonek did not grow her objects; she collected them. In this way, she shares this uncertainty with other collectors.

Diana Lelonek offers more than a reductive anthropocentric dualism between nature and culture: she disrupts traditional visions of memory and heritage that underly our notions of conservation and salvage. The artist’s ephemeral and spontaneous objects exist in a constant state of transformation and have their own aesthetics of precarity - they are remarkably flexible.









Wasteplants Atlas

book
2021

Diana Lelonek's herbarium is fundamentally distinct from its historical precedents. It is not a collection of dried specimens but, rather, a report on the effects of human activity on certain species of plants. Lelonek has conducted research in landfills and postindustrial slag heaps on sites that may seem minimally conducive to floral life. She is fascinated by the capacity of certain plant species to adapt to new, unnatural, and often entirely synthetic soil matrices and to create hybrid wasteplants. Lelonek's work calls attention to transformations in the natural world provoked by human activity in the age of the Anthropocene, now that humankind's supremacy over nature has begun to undermine the very basis of the Homo sapiens species and that of planet Earth as a whole. In this light, Lelonek's herbarium is a watershed event, for hers is likely the first herbarium of a new era in which these de-humanized hybrid forms will incrementally gain precedence over the flora we have thus far deemed "natural."

Marek Wasilewski

Diana Lelonek: Wasteplants Atlas / Atlas śmiecioroślin

Curator: Marek Wasilewski

Photographs by: Diana Lelonek

Graphic Design and Typesetting: Krzysztof Pyda

Editorial Coordinator: Jacek Zwierzyński

English Translations: Eliza Rose

Proofreading in English: Vanessa Gravenor

Copy-editing and Proofreading in Polish: Justyna Kniec, Monika Stanek

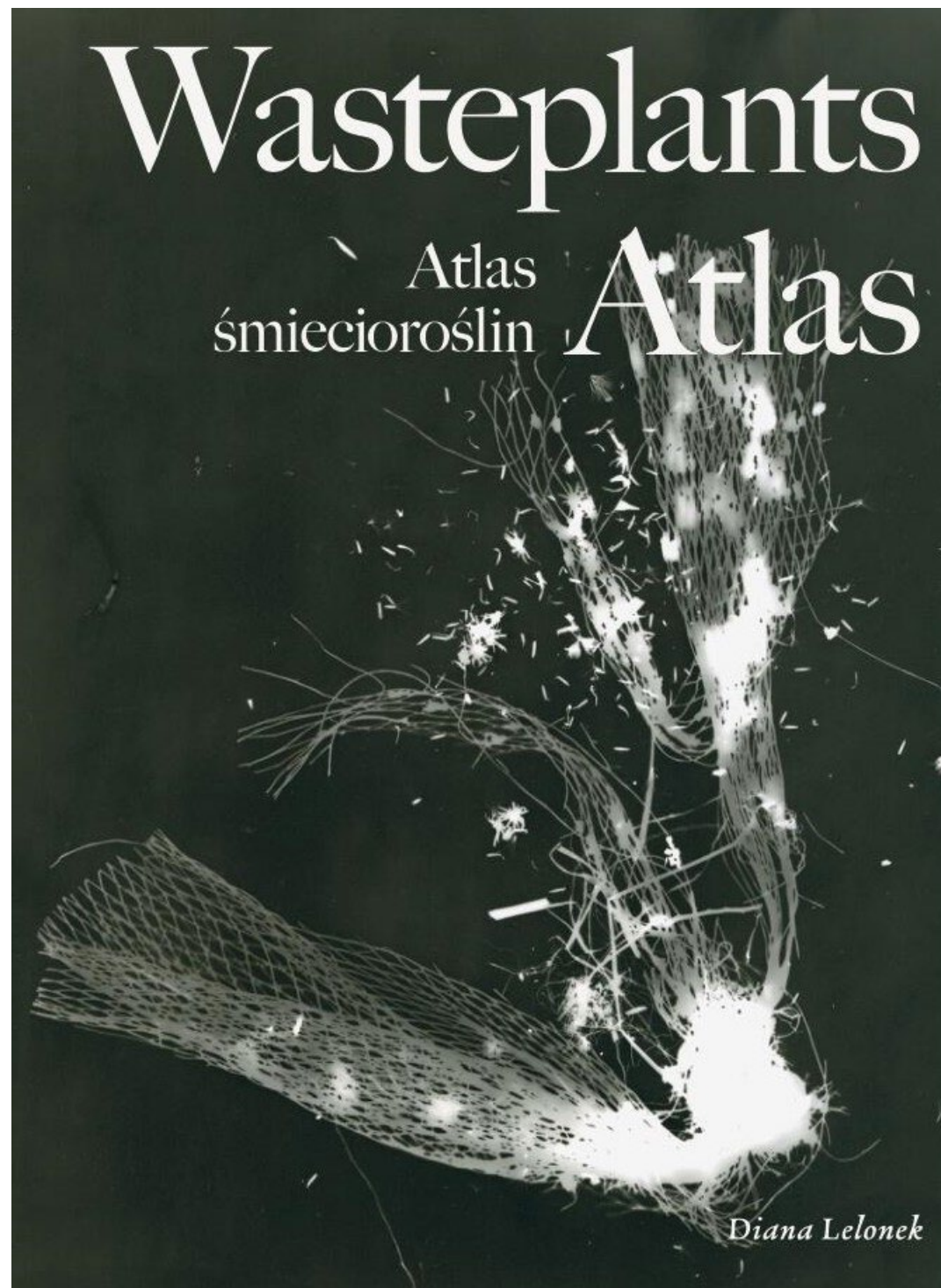
Prepress: Krzysztof Krzysztofiak

Printed by Moś & Łuczak

Published by Galeria Miejska Arsenal
with the Participation of Lokal_30

Dimensions: 24 × 32 cm

Pages: 112 + 8 s.



Compost

Solo Show

Gallery Arsenal, Białystok, Poland, 2021

„Compost” examined the circulation of art institutions through the lens of crisis, suspension, and decomposition. The exhibition emerged from experiences of the pandemic, which exposed the fragility of systems of artistic production and distribution, while prompting questions about the social role of cultural institutions in the face of global transformations.

Within the gallery space, I created an environment composed of remnants from previous exhibitions, stored objects, compost, and construction debris. The installation resembled the abandoned backstage of an institution after a catastrophe, where the boundaries between artwork, waste, and organic matter become blurred. Accompanying films and photographs developed speculative future scenarios in which galleries and museums lose their conventional functions, becoming sites of shelter, cultivation, and coexistence between humans and other organisms.

The exhibition’s title, Compost, functioned as a metaphor for transformation—a process of decay that does not signify an ending, but rather the emergence of new forms of life and new modes of organization. The project reflected on overproduction, the climate crisis, and the need to imagine alternative relationships between people, institutions, and the environment.





'Compost Bin', a 2021 installation created from items found in the storerooms of the Arsenal Gallery in Białystok, includes, amongst other things, remnants from previous exhibitions and fragments of set designs from various exhibitions.



The exodus of people from the Gallery, 2021, photography, render, 131 × 197 cm

The photograph depicts staff at the Arsenal Gallery in Białystok leaving a dilapidated building overrun by fungi, in a vision of a potential post-apocalyptic future. The work addresses the precarious situation of cultural institutions in the current economic and political climate. The title and visual design refer to Zbigniew Libera's famous photograph „People Leaving the Cities” (2010), recycling that image. The work was created specifically for the exhibition „Compost” at the Arsenal Gallery in Białystok.

Compost video 5:00 min 2020

Compost, 2020 (work in progress) is part of a series of plant- focused videos that Diana Lelonek made as a 'non-physical resident' at Lago Mio (Lugano). It tells how representatives of the Homo sapiens species one day decide to be voluntarily composted and to pass on the areas they inhabit for weeds, fungi, and lichens to grow freely. It remains unclear what caused the changes in their brains that led to the permanent blurring of their ego and abandonment all forms of production leading to the eventual collapse of neoliberal capitalism.

<https://lagomioresidency.ch/artists/dianalelonek/>

<https://vimeo.com/481630313/b43b35c740>



Forms of survival video 8:00 min 2020

This video is inspired by all e-mails about cancelled exhibitions that I received during the first lockdown in the spring 2020. The video is a vision of what could happen with museums, art institutions and artists in the near future. Video take in advance not only possible consequences of Covid-19 but also climate crisis, collapsing vision of democracy and economic breakdown.

<https://vimeo.com/443827611>



Center for the Living Things 2016-ongoing

collection of found objects covered with mosses and plants, aquariums, series of photographs, reaserch's documentation, maps, performative walks, workshops etc.

The Center for the Living Things is the research para-institution founded in 2016, in order to examine, collect and popularise the knowledge concerning new humanotic nature forms. All exhibits gathered in the Institute's collection are abandoned objects, used and no longer needed commodities – wastes of human overproduction, which have become the natural environment for many living organisms. Specimens were found in illegal waste dumping site, where the transgression of man-derived objects and plant tissues take place. These hybrids of plants and artificial objects are difficult to classify, as they are contemporaneously animate and inanimate. Exhibits collected in Center for the Living Things can't be conventionally classified. Recently, wastes have been taking over behaviours from living matter. In the process of overproduction, ceaseless demand of constant update of possessed goods is the reason why most of unnecessary products seem to be out of control. Center for the Living Things is aimed to describe mechanisms appearing in the sphere of rejection and uselessness. In this sphere, products are no longer tools used by people. Products participates in almost every process that occurs in biosphere, hence we can't definitively deide economic or social processes from so-called natural process.

more: www.centerforlivingthings.com

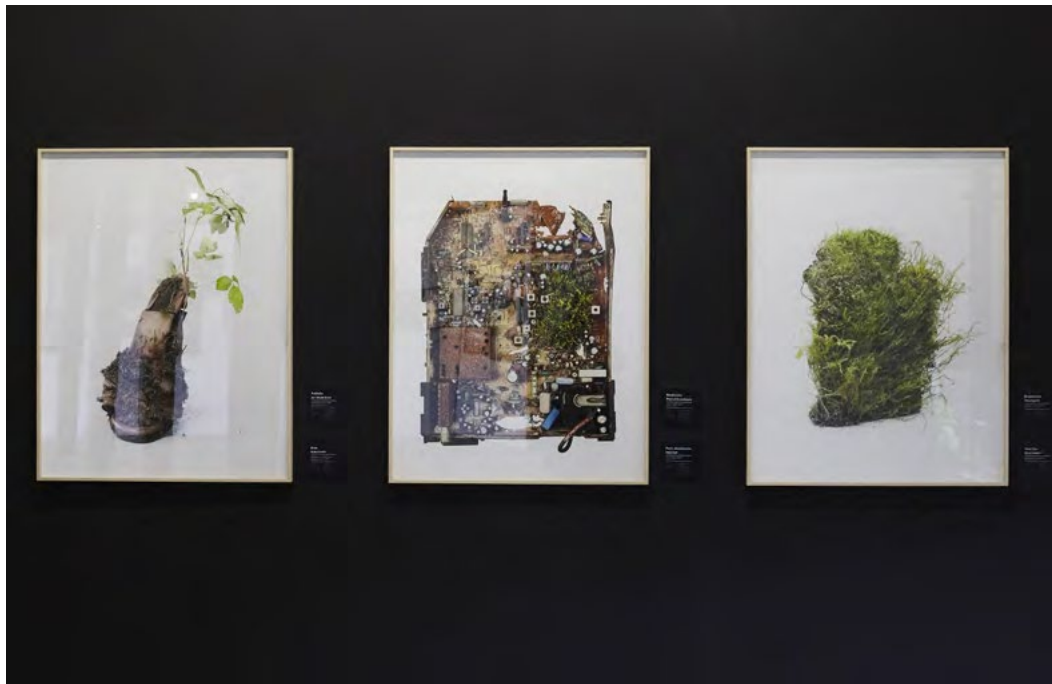
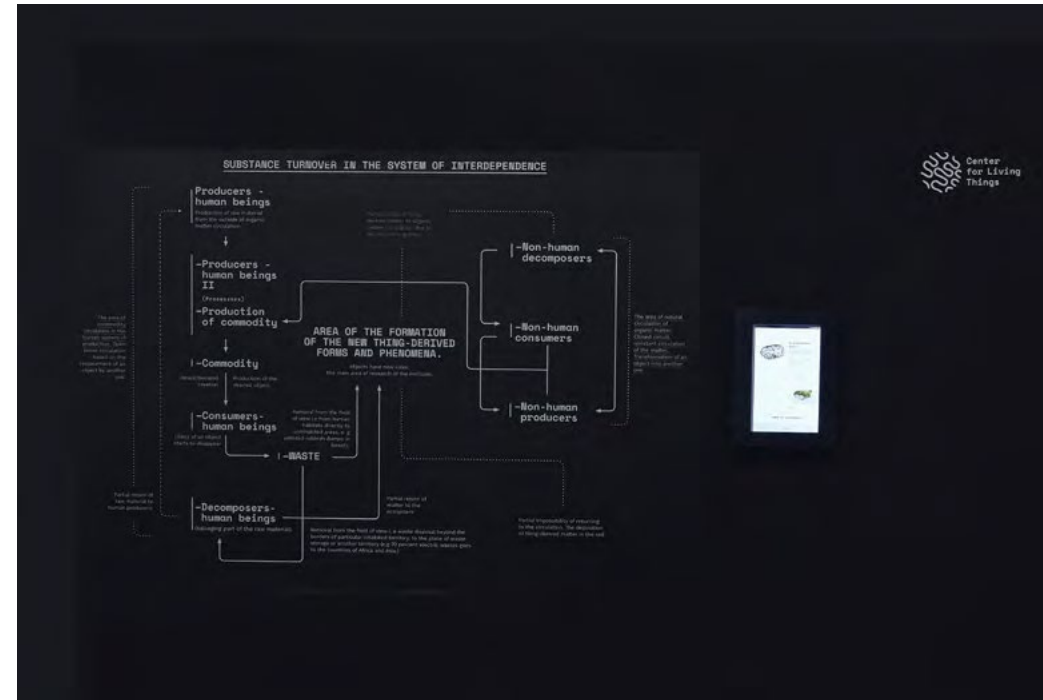




Center For Living Things, Buero Gallery, Culturescapes Festival, Basel, 2019



Riga International Biennale of Contemporary Art RIBOCA, Riga, 2018



Center For Living THINGS, Installation view, Grand Prix Fotofestiwal, Łódź, 2018 3 photographs 100x80cm, 4 photographs 40x54cm, diagrams, ipads, aquarium 120x60x60cm with living-objects



Tortulla muralis (twisted moss) on the motherboard of an RTV device photo-
Motherboard Nature, photograph of the found object, 2017, 50x60 cm



Schistidium apocarpum (Hedw.), Ceratodon purpureus (Hedw.) on a plastic
PET environment, photograph of the found object, 2017, 50x60 cm

Barbórka, mixed-media installation; sound, 2020

Buona Fortuna, retrospective solo show,
Fundazione Pastificio Cerere, Rome
February 2020

Saint Barbara's Day, commonly known as Barbórka, is a traditional, annual celebration of the miners' labor, accompanied by parades, religious services and concerts of miners' orchestras. Celebrated in Upper Silesia, the mining region where Lelonek was born and raised.

In the installation, the figure of Saint Barbara usually carried by the marching miners is replaced by different species of ruderal plants—the plants which are first to colonize disturbed lands of former mines and abandoned industrial areas. Bringing back life to dry, post-industrial grounds, those plants also carry symbolic, magical and medical use in folk tradition. The species have diverse purposes such as rituals of cleansing and abortion (*Artemisia Vulgaris*), a psychedelic drug (*Datura stramonium*), and to cure depression and hysteria (*Tanacetum vulgare*). The work connects cultural rituals to the deep history of coal formation, and to natural folk knowledge. It is a prototype for looking for a new model of the post-industrial culture, in which the extractivist perspective is replaced by the intimate connection with earth, and not its exploitation. Object constructed by Tomasz Partyka. Sound installation consists of record from the march of the miners' orchestra from the Bytom-Borek mine on Saint Barbara's Day on December 4, 2019, composed by Bartosz Zaskórski. As the industrial Upper Silesia transforms, the mine was closed in January 2020, making the recorded sounds yet another archive. It is the last celebration of the mining tradition in the Bytom-Bobrek mine, in a society which is forced to rethink how to transform the culture based on destructive industry.

sound: <https://soundcloud.com/diana-lelonek/barborka-bartek-zaskorski-diana-lelonek>



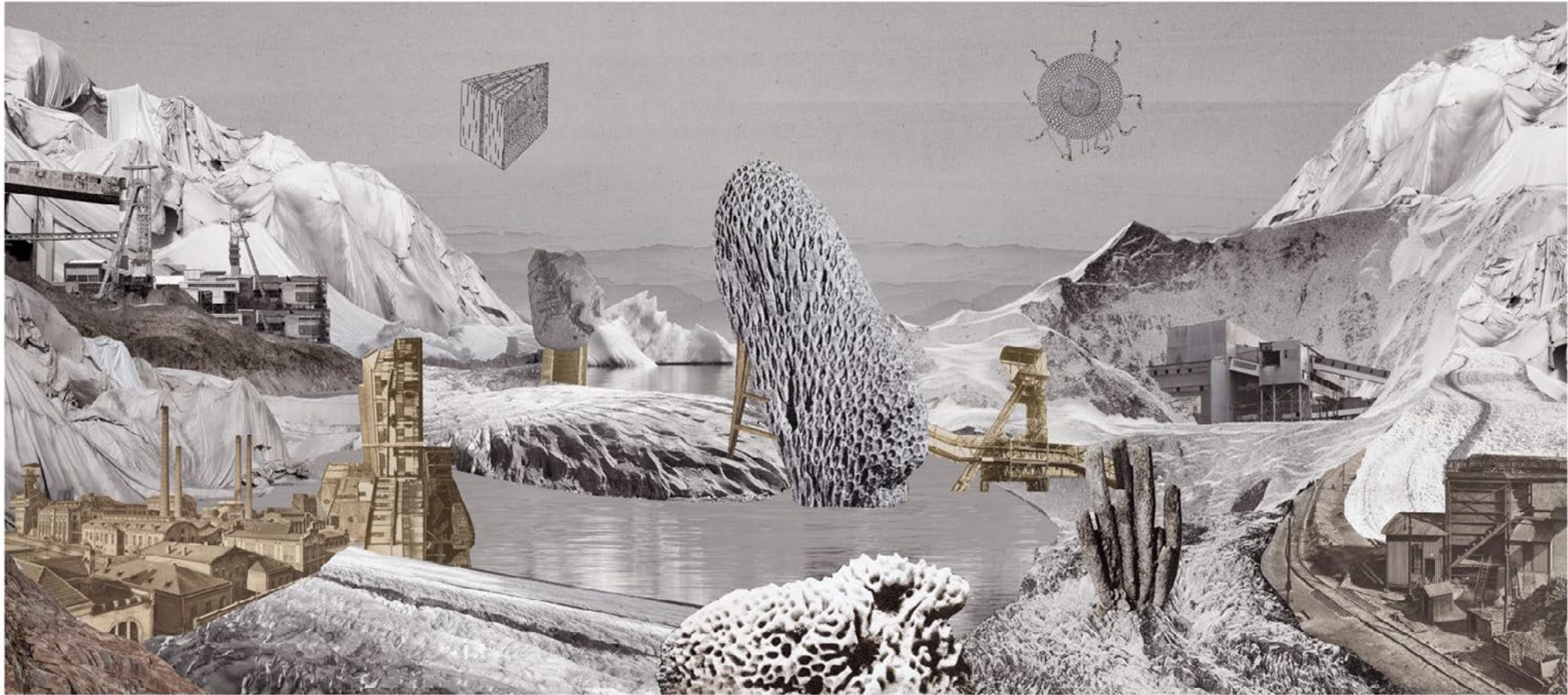


Barbórka (collages), 2020-21

Series of 48 collages, various sizes from 30x40cm to 80x200cm
commissioned by Silesian Museum

Series of 50 collages based on the archives of the Silesian Museum (including the series „Black Diamonds” by Max Steckel). Archival photos from the beginning of the Coal mining industry in Silesia region have been combined with new pictures of recently closed Silesian mines, archival and actual photos of Alpine glaciers, as well as drawings and photographs cut from vintage books about botanics, biology and geology.





Birds (A Funeral Altar) , 2019

Installation, 9 pieces, 5×2 meters, photographs in wooden, handmade, up-cycling frames, 2019

The installation, consisting from photographs of birds found on a Baltic seaside and photographs of selected objects from the collection of the Natural History Museum in Basel, presenting extinct bird species: Kauai O – o, Seaside Sparrow, Wandering Pigeon. Installation was made during the residency program of Photography Festival „W ramach Sopotu”, Sopot, PL 2019 and was continue during the residency at Atelier Mondial, Basel, 2019 as a part of Culturescapes Festival in collaboration with Natural History Museum in Basel.

Installation view: Solo Show „Raport” at BWA Gallery, Bydgoszcz, PL, 2019







Endling

Multichannel audio installation „Endling”, solo show at Labirynt Gallery, Lublin, PL, 2019

„The exhibition refers to the problem of the inevitable extinction of species caused primarily by human activity. “Endling”, which is the title of the exhibition, stands for the last member of species. The term was first used in the “Nature” journal in April 1996. It reappeared in 2001 in the National Museum of Australia at the exhibition presenting skin of the last Tasmanian tiger.

The artist created a sound installation of bird voices recorded by scientists. The composition includes voices of birds that are considered to be extinct. This poignant piece is the final call with no answer. It is an act of regret and an attempt to depict the irreversible degradation of the natural environment. Dark empty gallery space became physical representation of nothingness, a hostile spectre of the future that has already begun even though we tend not to see it.

Curator: Aleksandra Skrabeł

<https://soundcloud.com/diana-lelonek/endling>

<https://vimeo.com/user10405517>



Melting Gallery

multichannel sound installation, 2019
in collaboration with: Denim Szram

The sound installation was created during residency in Basel as part of the Culturescapes festival. The recordings collected on three melting Alpine glaciers: du Rhone, Aletsch and Morteratsch are a kind of symphony of disappearing glaciers. The sound of a slowly trickling catastrophe, whose arrival is hardly spectacular, is blurred, present everywhere and nowhere, and gives rise to anxiety and is lined with fear. Alpine glaciers are disappearing very quickly; some of them have already gone forever. A trip to the glacier, listening to the ubiquitous sounds of uniform dripping, resembles a countdown. The sound is a direct sign of irretrievable loss. The multi-channel sound installation presented in an empty exhibition space, fills the room with sound, while the classic 'white cube' form has not been filled with objects. The emptiness is a kind of manifesto but also a question: what is the place of art in the climate crisis? It is also a question about the overproduction of objects within the process of production art, the art world being a market that constantly craves new projects, trends and works. The production race sometimes lacks the space for us to stop and feel.

Concept/records: Diana Lelonek
Composition: Denim Szram

<https://soundcloud.com/diana-lelonek/meltinggallery>



Installation view: „Buona Fortuna”, Fondazione Pastificio Cerere, Rome, 2020

Nightingale Concert (*Luscinia luscinia*)

June 2019, action in the urban space

There is a nightingale living in the centre of Warsaw. The bird, which usually doesn't like crowded and noisy spaces, chose as its shelter a rose bush on Patelnia – the “Frying Pan”, the patio at the south entrance to the Centrum station of the Warsaw Metro.

Apparently, it has been living there for several years. Every year in May and early June, in the evening, at night, and in the morning, one can hear its song. Experts say that it is a phenomenon that it chose this location. After all, the “Frying Pan” is one of the busiest spots in the city, located at the intersection of busy transport routes and always swarming with people.

Nightingales like to be heard. The one from Warsaw city centre must sing louder than its relatives in the suburban areas – it is not easy to drown out the passing trams. Still, hardly anyone stops to listen to its song.

As part of the exhibition “City Squares. An Instruction Manual” that took place at the Zodiak Warsaw Pavilion of Architecture in June 2019, I invited people to listen to the nightingale's concert together. The space of a busy square in the city centre has become a space for listening, being together, and awareness. After a two-hour wait, the nightingale began its performance.

In the rhythm of the nightingale's song, the “Frying Pan” has become a space worth stopping at, a space to listen together, to be with each other, experience time in a different way, and shape the sense of an interspecies intimacy. This concert was the beginning of a series of events during which we collectively listened to seasonal concerts performed by: frogs, crickets, birds, and other creatures.



<https://vimeo.com/376437937>

<https://soundcloud.com/diana-lellonek/nightgaleconcert>

Polyphony

sound, action in public space, virtual protest, 2020
in collaboration with: Edka Jarząb

„Polyphony” is a reaction to the polish government’s attempts to pass a stricter anti-abortion law during the covid-19 pandemic, a time when demonstrations in public space were impossible due to the ban on travel and assemblies. joining the process of developing new strategies of protest on social media, diana lelonek proposed a reference to collective chanting typical for demonstrations in public space.

women interested in participating in the campaign chanted pre-agreed slogans in their own flats (private space), and mailed chant recordings to the artist. edka jarząb, a musician working with lelonek, arranged all recordings into a single musical piece. played by demonstration participants from windows, balconies and mobile loudspeakers on the day of the scheduled parliamentary vote regarding the so-called “kaja godek draft law”, the audio work allowed voices of women from throughout poland to be heard all over warsaw, pandemic-related restrictions notwithstanding. it was one of the many creative forms of women’s protests during the period.

Concept: Diana Lelonek
Composition: Edka Jarząb

<https://solidarityandagency.online/en/diana-lelonek/>



The evening of interspecies love , 14.02.2020

Installation, magic's herbal drinks

The special performative evening and exhibition dedicated to ruderal plants, harvested in the areas of failed investments. This plants are first to colonize disturbed lands of former mines and abandoned industrial areas. Bringing back life to dry, post-industrial grounds, those plants also carry symbolic, magical and medical use in folk tradition. Heals, reverses evil spells, eliminates bad energy, cleanses soil, mind and bodies contaminated by exploitation. As a ruderal plants, they love to growing everywhere where the system failed. Through their rhizomes build the foundations for the egalitarian societies of the future.

Installation view: Solo Show „The evening of interspecies love”, Pamoja Foundation, Cracow, 14.02.2020



Post-exhibition catalogue , 2019

I decided to move funds for the exhibition catalogue and buy two photovoltaic screens instead of this. This installation supply in energy all works during my solo show „Report” at BWA Bydgoszcz (<https://www.galeriabwa.bydgoszcz.pl/>). „Post-exhibition catalogue” will stay on the gallery’s roof and will produce solar energy for next expositions. In Poland 80% of the energy is still coming from coal. BWA Bydgoszcz Gallery is now the first gallery in PL where the gallery’s space is powered by solar energy.

„The installation of two photovoltaic screens, acting as an exhibition catalogue. The solar installation works in a number of ways: it is an artistic object, whose main role is the production of alternative energy supplying the exhibition. Redirecting funds to this form of publication stands in opposition to overproduction, and the montage itself is treated as a performative action, documented and presented within the exhibition space. The roof of the gallery becomes an extension of the exhibition space, including its ideological dimension, which begins to have a real impact on the practice of life. This is the starting point for a broader discussion on alternative ecological methods that can be applied within the art world (...) The screens on the roof were installed by the guest invited to collaborate on this project: Antoni Rogala and the activist Solar Ninja, who both try to give people energy independence by various methods. For several years, Antoni has been trying to convince the housing community of his Puławska 266 estate in Warsaw to use the roof surface of the block for a solar power plant. Antoni calculated that a roof area of 2200 m² is enough for an installation or many small installations that will supply all 100 apartments with energy. The activist Solar Ninja cultivates urban solar guerrilla actions by placing photovoltaic screens on the roofs of housing blocks, dodging procedures and hacking the system.”

Installation view: Solo Show „Raport” at BWA Gallery, Bydgoszcz, PL, 2019



Seaberry Slagheap 2018-ongoing

„In the Konin Coalfield, opencast mines have led to the degradation and modification of the landscape, drying out of lakes, formation of slagheaps, and resettling of entire towns. Although mining is doomed to fail (lodes will only last for another 30 years, and mining is becoming less and less profitable), there is no coherent vision of a post-coal reality. The question of how to conduct the just transition of the region remains open. Diana Lelonek proposes a solution: reinventing the character of the region. To do so, she uses the potential of seaberry, a plant that grows abundantly in post-mining areas, and can cope well with barren soil. Seaberry is also a plant known as a „superfood“, rich in vitamin C and antioxidants. Lelonek suggests making the seaberry the new symbol of the region, and creating a line of local food products, based on its fruits picked up on slagheaps. Seaberry Slagheap is an artistic project and an actually existing initiative producing jams and juices. It offers a positive vision of development for the degraded region, from which locals and small-scale manufacturers could benefit. At the same time, it problematizes the categories of green and conscious consumption. The stall created by Lelonek refers to „ecological“ aesthetics, currently used both by local sellers, as well as countries or international corporations. One of the reactions of capitalism to the advancing climate change is not to redefine the principles on which it is based, but to profit from the growing ecological awareness of society. Consumers are held responsible for the upcoming catastrophe, and consumption is presented as the only available method of saving the world.“

Kuba Gawkowski (from the curatorial text to „The most beautiful catastrophe“, Center For Contemporary Art „Kronika“, Bytom, 2018)

https://artmargins.com/seaberry-juice-in-extractivist-ruins-the-cosmopolitical-art-of-diana-lelonek/?fbclid=IwAR0Xbn_Xb3x2dJX960G8Jh35d-J3aZhDZpwLclNcSbU-MDJuc9ssgD9fQDOs <https://www.pismowidok.org/en/archive/2018/22-how-to-see-the-antropocene/a-creeping-disaster>





HAŁDA
ROKITNIKOWA



Nowhere in Poland is sea buckthorn found in such large amounts as on the post-opencast mining lands. In eastern Wielkopolska (Greater Poland), seaberry bushes grow on numerous slagheaps left by the opencast mines. This species co-creates the steppe and seaberry landscape typical for this region. The mine, obliged to reclaim the land it exploited, plants such vegetation types that are able to grow on completely barren, dry soil. With its properties, seaberry is one of the few plants that take root in these conditions.

The fruits, the juice was made of, were picked up on the Józwin I slagheap on the post-opencast mining land.



Opencast mining involves draining out large amounts of groundwater. As a result, a cone of depression occurs, and causes drainage of the area in the vicinity of the opencast mine: the surrounding croplands, forests, and water reservoirs. The most depressing effect can be seen in the example of the Gniezno Lake District. A group of beautiful, natural lakes is drying out at a fast rate. Bridges, standing not in the water but in the middle of fields or in the shrubbery, are slowly becoming a showpiece of the region.

Photograph: The beach in Przyjezierze village, a warning sign of steep fault just at the shoreline. The drying-out of Ostrowskie Lake is so severe that it has been divided into two separate water reservoirs.



During the construction of the opencast mine system, the mine resettles the whole villages. According to the law, residents are obliged to leave their homes, for which they receive compensation. However, they cannot decide to stay where they have lived. This construction is connected not only with the permanent change of the function of a given area - the removal of the village together with its infrastructure and the surrounding farmlands - but also with the breaking of social ties and the destruction of the local community.

Peaches from which this product was made were picked up in the village Izabelin (municipality of Kleczew), resettled by the mine, in the last weeks of the village existence.





Installation view, Eco Stand by Seaberry Slagheap at „The most beautiful catastrophe”, Center For Contemporary Art „Kronika”, Bytom, 2018



Stoisko Rokitnikowej Hałdy na wystawie „Najpiękniejsza Katastrofa”, CSW Kronika, Bytom.



Installation view, Eco Stand by Seaberry Slagheap at „The most beautiful catastrophe”, Center For Contemporary Art „Kronika”, Bytom, 2018

Ministry of the Environment overgrown by Central European mixed forest

digital collage, billboard and photograph 100x150cm, June 2017

Billboard in the center of Warsaw, June 2017

Zeitgeist, lokal_30 Gallery, Warsaw Gallery Weekend, 2017

“Landscapes of Anthropocene”, Baltic Gallery of Contemporary Art, Słupsk, 2018

The artwork was created as a part of a billboard campaign at the center of Warsaw organized by the Sputnik Photos Collective along with invited artists, including Joanna Rajkowska and Michał Frydrych. The artwork was a response to the policy of the Minister of the Environment - Jan Szyszko, regarding the Białowieża Forest logging, which had the highest intensity during summer 2017. Additionally, the artwork appeared as gallery print (100x150cm) and posters for sale. All the income from posters sale was donated to support the activists from the Camp for the Protection of the Forest.



New Archeology: Liban and Płaszów

series of photographs, found objects, video, 2017

Re Gallery, Museum of Contemporary Art in Cracow (MOCAR), Cracow Photomonth, 2017

"In this exhibition, Diana Lelonek presents her project *A New Archaeology for Liban and Płaszów*, examining the complex history of two seldom considered sites in Krakow. The artist immerses herself in the abundance of natural and man-made traces discovered at the sites of the Liban quarry and the remains of the Płaszów concentration camp. Lelonek's work is based on the processes that take place in nature and what they reveal about these places' past. She searches for prehistoric traces and indications of the difficult recent history, while also considering the contemporary uses of both sites.

During her research, Lelonek has uncovered and transferred to the gallery items as varied as fossils from the Jurassic period, remnants of the site's use as an internment camp in the Second World War, artefacts from the shooting of Steven Spielberg's film *Schindler's List*, and junk left by the users of the sites. All of these objects have over time undergone the natural process of erosion. They have been levelled by nature to become one history—with fossils, parts of the film set, and abandoned tin cans functioning as the archaeological specimens, which the artist has discovered and considered. These construct a narrative of society's post-war mentality and are a record of the times and the transformations that have occurred. They also point to the current function of this area—a space in which collective memory is expressed.

Lelonek's project is a piece of research which was initiated by curator Gordon MacDonald, especially for Krakow Photomonth. Right up until the exhibition opening, the artist strove to face up to the places, their history and its contemporary function. This exhibition is the result of a short commission and the first iteration of Lelonek's engagement with this subject and these sites."

Curator: Gordon MacDonald



PWN Encyclopedia, photography of the found object, from the series: A New Archaeology for Liban and Płaszów, 100x70 cm, 2017



Mac charger, photography of the found object, from the series: A New Archaeology for Liban and Płaszów, 40x60 cm, 2017



Installation view, Re Gallery, Museum of Contemporary Art in Cracow (MOCAK), Cracow Photomonth, 2017

New Archeology for Liban and Płaszów – Book, 2019

The material in this volume is the second iteration of a project which originally took the form of an exhibition during Krakow Photomonth 2017: Diana Lelonek, A New Archaeology for Liban and Płaszów (MOCAK Museum of Contemporary Art in Krakow, April– June 2017, guest curated by GordonMacDonald). The photographs comprising this project are of objects the artist found in the course of her field research in the Liban Quarry and on the site of the former Krakow-Płaszów concentration camp in Krakow, as well as of exhibits loaned by the Geological Museum in Krakow.

This project was made possible thanks to a grant for Diana Lelonek from the “Młoda Polska” (Young Poland) grant program.

Project partner: Foundation for Visual Arts

digital version: https://issuu.com/diana_lelonek/docs/diana_nowa_archeologia_preview



Zoe - therapy

Mixed media, installation with living-objects (photographs cut from books parasited by mold and bacterias at petri-dishes and glass boxes), series of 15 large formats photographs, 2015-2016.

The project by Diana Lelonek can be treated as a shock therapy of a kind, but also as a sophisticated act of vengeance. It is a Vendetta carried out with biological weapons, systematically and with scientific precision. The battle is fought with colonies of microbes: fungi and bacteria. The enemies seem tangible: some of them are looking at us as from portraits published on the pages of Władysław Tatarkiewicz's "Encyclopaedia of Philosophy". However, these black and white representations of classical philosophers, authors of fundamental works within European humanistic thought, are only a substitute of the real target. The images symbolise the actual object of the attack: the extremely complex philosophical, anthropocentric and hierarchical vision of human history, as well as the dualist concept of a world divided into the allegedly wonderful culture and the idyllic nature, the powerful human beings and organisms inferior to them, the wretched body and the perfect spirit, the good familiar things and the bad alien ones. Lelonek transforms the gallery space into a laboratory, where she tests different kinds of parasitism of microorganisms on the products of European civilization. Until now, territorial expansion and subjugation of weaker (understood as inferior) species was a characteristic typical only and exclusively of Western society and culture, and specifically - as the artist points out - white and wealthy Europeans. This time the tables have turned. What was suppressed and denied can finally take revenge, at least metaphorically.

Marcin Krasny, Curator

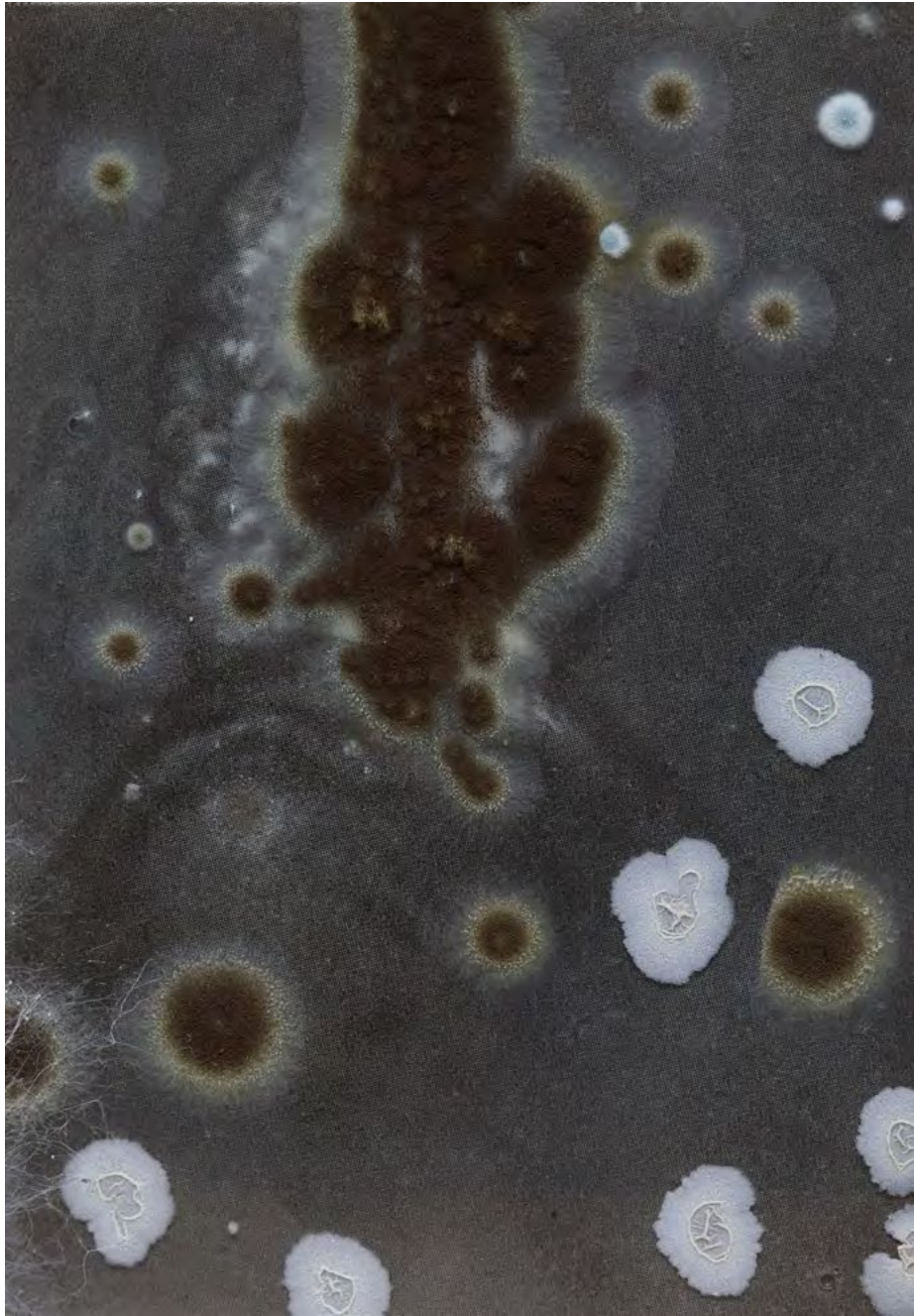




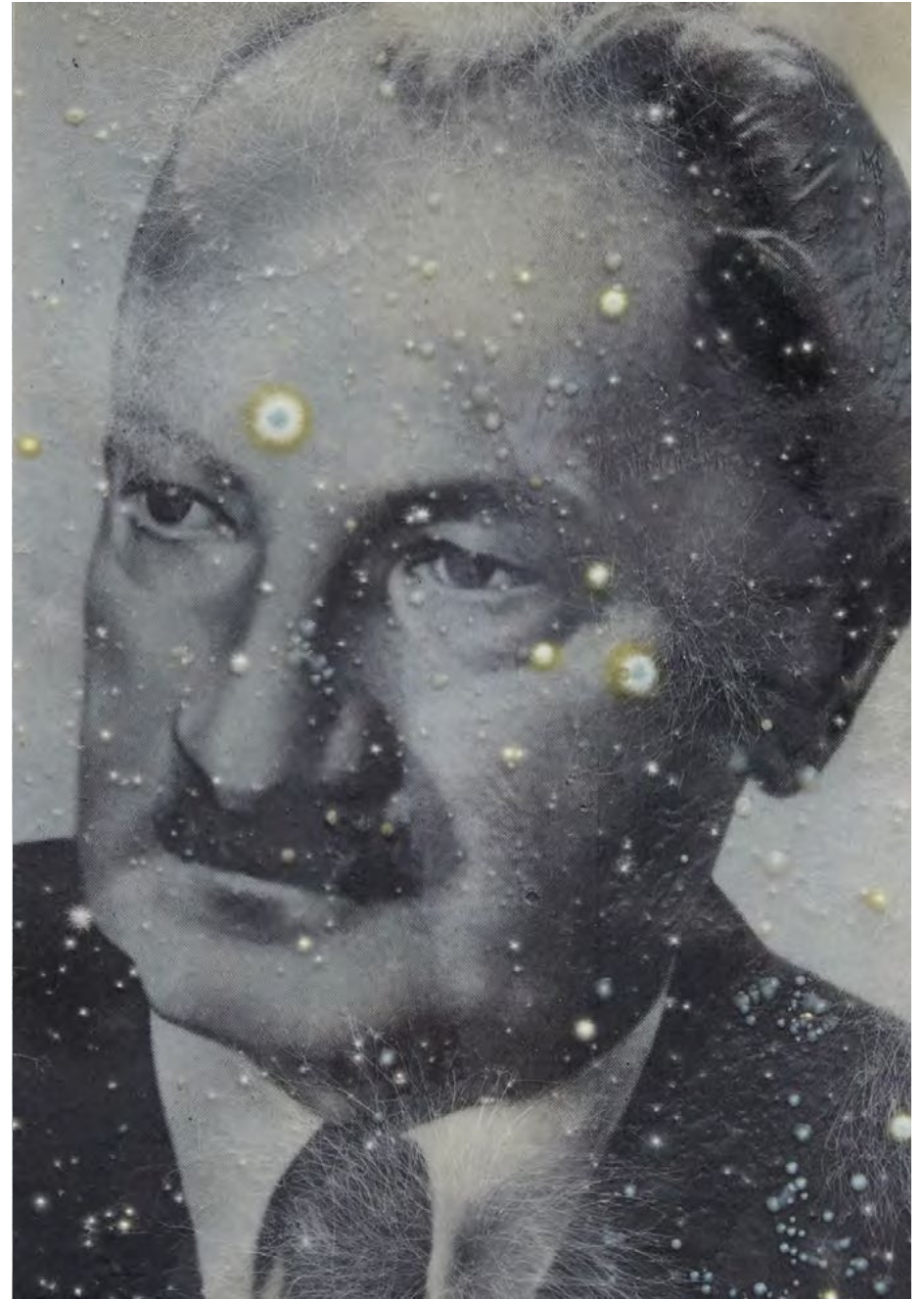
Edmund Husserl parasitized by *Aspergillus flavus*, from the series: "Zoe-therapy" 100x70cm, 2015



Arystoteles parasitized by *Scedosporium apiospermum*, from the series: "Zoe-therapy" 150x10cm, 2015



Edmund Husserl parasitized by *Aspergillus flavus*, from the series:
"Zoe-therapy" 100x70cm, 2015



Arystoteles parasitized by *Scedosporium apiospermum*, from the series:
"Zoe-therapy" 20x30cm, 2015



Academy overgrown by various species of molds and bacteria, from the series: **"Zoe-Therapy"**, 56x70, 2017



Installation view “Zoe Therapy”, laboratory moved to the gallery space, Center for Contemporary Arts “Ujazdowski Castle”, 2015

Yesterday I met the really wild man , 2014-15

6 photographs 100x80 cm

Diana Lelonek's work draws on the ideas of posthumanism, and similarly to this intellectual movement, it criticizes humanism for its anthropocentric perspective. She manages to blur the line that separates humans from the rest of the world. The naturists who pose for her photographs are shown in a way that brings to mind representations of herds of animals or primal, nomadic tribes usually depicted in the surroundings of nature. The elements of modern urban architecture, or industrial infrastructure shown in the background, rule out the vision of a return to nature. The artist selects places in-between, in which the suburbs of cities and civilization are taken over by synanthropic vegetation. Naked human figures presented in natural surroundings send our historicistic consciousness back to primordial times, but the elements of civilization place them firmly in the present. The resulting visual dissonance is a clever way to uncover the artificiality of divisions that the modern cultural discourse relies on. As Monika Blakke notes in a conversation about Diana Lelonek's works, humans do not need to return to their animalistic past, because in fact they never ceased to be animals in the first place. They don't need to return to nature as they never existed outside of it. Photographs from Lelonek's Yesterday I met a really wild man series place humankind in this context, portraying it as just another species in the universe called nature/culture. Her work discards artificial divisions into the human and the non-human, nature and culture, and once again, it opposes speciesism.

Curator: Katarzyna Różniak, Lookout Gallery, Warsaw 2015



Untitled, from the series **Yesterday I met a really wild man**, 100x70, 2015



Untitled, from the series **Yesterday I met a really wild man**, 100x70, 2015



Untitled, from the series **Yesterday I met a really wild man**, 100x120, 2015

Long Before

the series of 10 photographs - various sizes

Long Before is an expression of longing for nature and its connection with our ancestors. Nature in Diana Lelonek's works is extraordinary – tempting and disturbing at the same time. It evokes a stream of contrasting emotions: longing, fascination and anxiety.

When searching for the origins of these emotions, the artist escapes from the present, where nature seems to have been tamed for ages, and goes back to the distant past, when humans and nature were still connected by a primeval bond. In order to recreate this bond, she tries to make humans equal to other species. She portrays naked men as a herd spied on by a hidden camera like animals in wildlife documentaries. She deprives them of the core of their identity: of their faces, which she covers with moss and soil. She tries to capture them with her camera as they used to be – unified elements of nature deprived of individuality. However, other works from the series reveal the process of evolution and civilisation of man to be irreversible. The 'wild' naked men rush off, visibly embarrassed, to put on their swimming suits, telegraph poles spoil the wild landscapes, and modern haircuts show from beneath the moss that covers women's faces.

The artist lets these elements reveal the futility of her trials to connect with nature and she focuses on an empty space – the void that remains after the bond between humans and nature has been broken. The return to nature turns out to be impossible.

Katarzyna Różniak, Curator



Untitled from the series **Long Before**, 60x80, 2014



Untitled from the series **Long Before**, 60x80, 2014

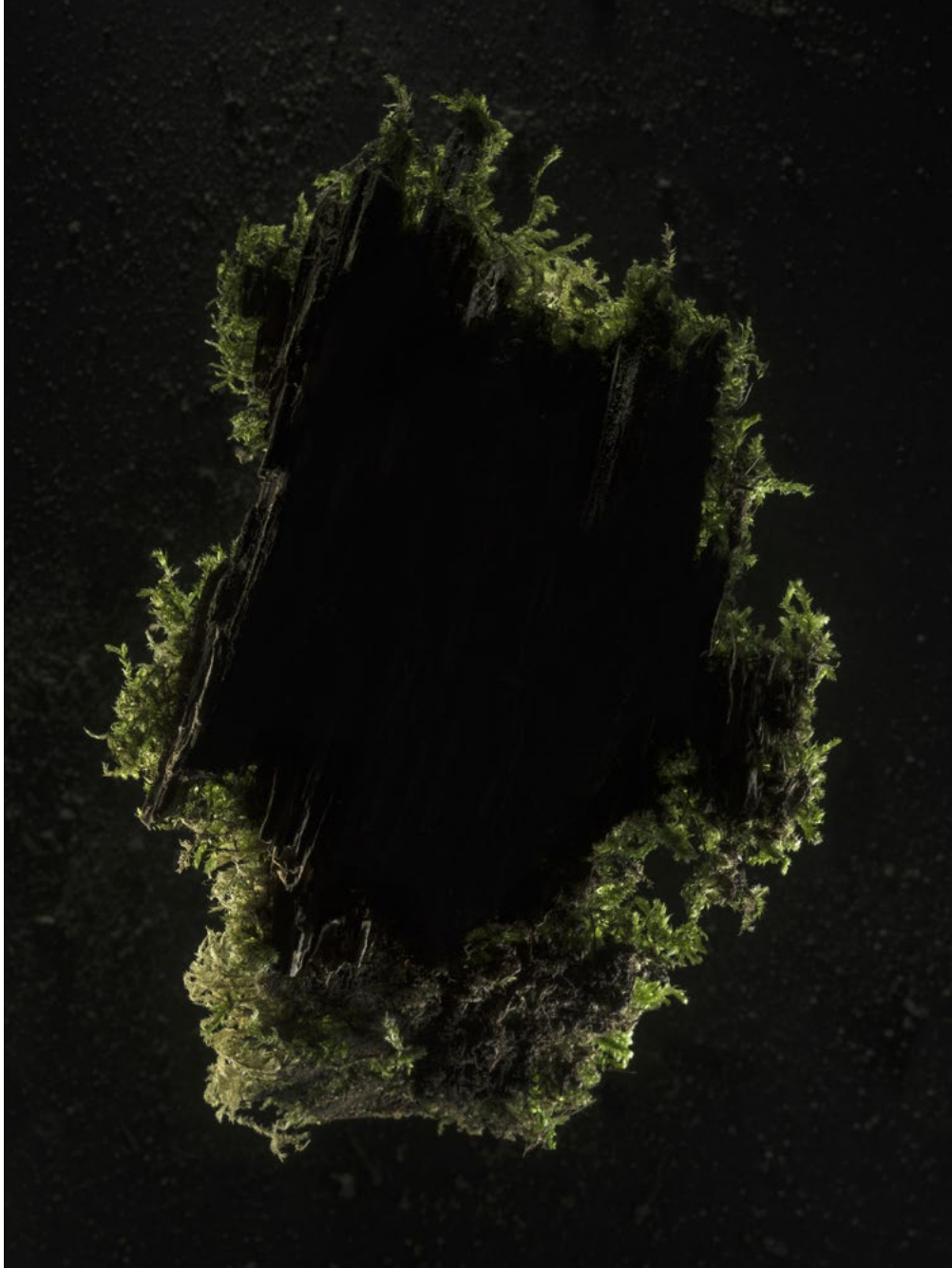




Untitled from the series **Long Before**, 40x60, 2014



Untitled from the series **Long Before**, 60x80, 2014



Untitled from the series **Long Before**, 100x120cm, 2014



Untitled from the series **Long Before**, 60x40, 2014

There's nothing there anyway

parasited book 'The Origin of Species' by Charles Darwin, 1909 issue, 552 pages

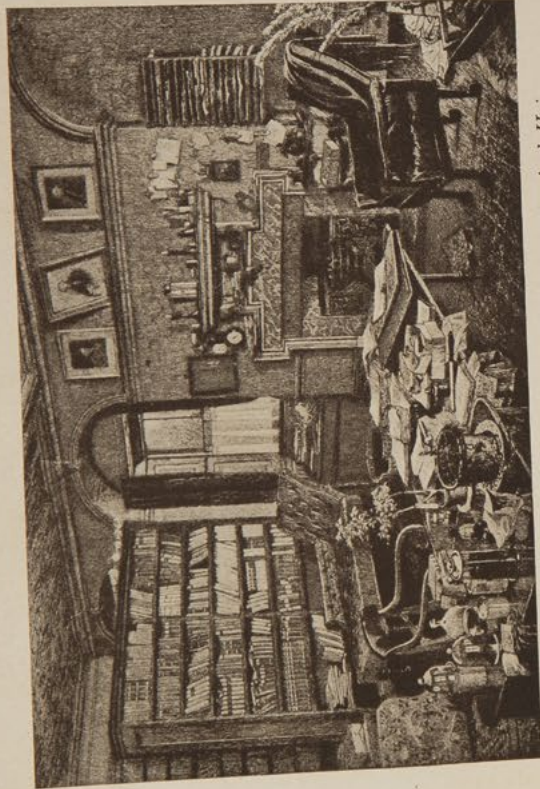
photo wall paper, 12 photographs

There are places which, even before departure, conjure up ideas of the spaces we will be facing. Although Australia is no longer the Terra Australis Incognita of the past, Diana Lelonek and Marek Kucharski arrived at the country's border in a similar spirit to the explorers of centuries past.

During preparations for their expedition into the depths of the island continent all they heard was "There's nothing there anyway". Although they made efforts to locate themselves among the fauna and flora of the epic outback scenery, the photographs taken during the trip suggest that there, the presence of humans can exist only in the form of traces taking on meanings connected with a time when it was the forces of nature that ruled.

By placing the photos in a quasi-scientific fashion alongside anonymous photos from other parts of the world and reproductions of living organisms from science textbooks found upon their return, they allude to the working methods of 19th-century naturalists. Continuing their journey, they subjectively adapt the theory of evolution from Charles Darwin's *The Origin of Species*, according to which all species derive from earlier forms. The process of erasing the words from the book and combining the new sections with pictures becomes a way of reaching for the primeval powers of the subconscious which the image can reveal.

Gunia Nowik, Patrick Komorowski; Curators



Darwin's Study at Down, Kent. From an etching by Axel Haig

THE HARVARD CLASSICS
EDITED BY CHARLES W ELIOT LL D

THE ORIGIN OF SPECIES

BY
CHARLES DARWIN
DIANA LELONEK, MAREK KUCHARSKI
WITH INTRODUCTIONS, NOTES
AND ILLUSTRATIONS



"DR ELIOT'S FIVE-FOOT SHELF OF BOOKS"

P F COLLIER & SON
NEW YORK



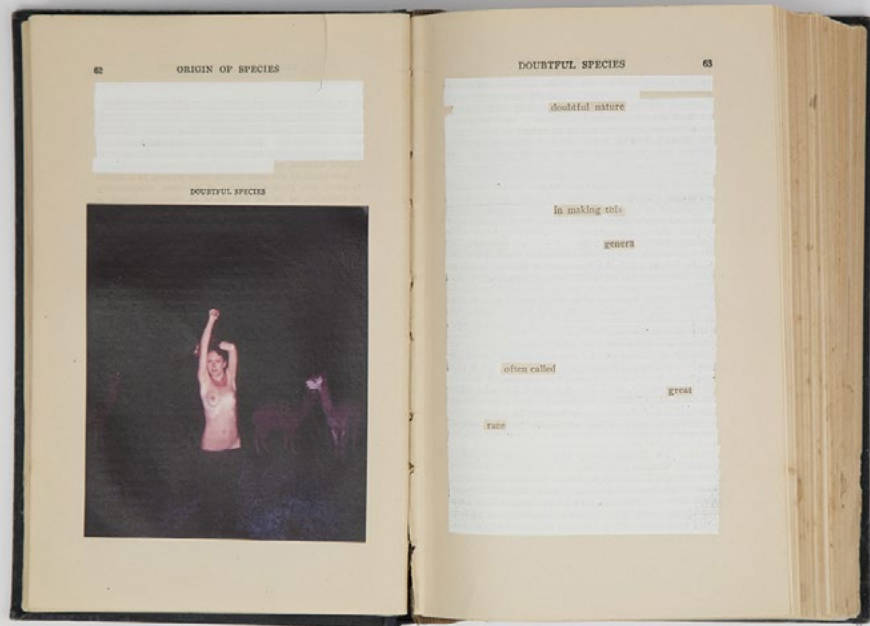
ORIGIN OF SPECIES

CHAPTER I

VARIATION UNDER DOMESTICATION

our domestic productions-
man's power of selection

we are domestic productions
so uniform
different from, those which had been
exposed under nature.



I have seen,
 an
 enemy
 The fear
 even in England,
 the greater
 uninhabited islands
 are not more fearful than
 strange habits
 that
 I can only repeat







Installation view, Greenroom Gallery, Krakow Photomonth Festival, Cracow, Poland 2014

