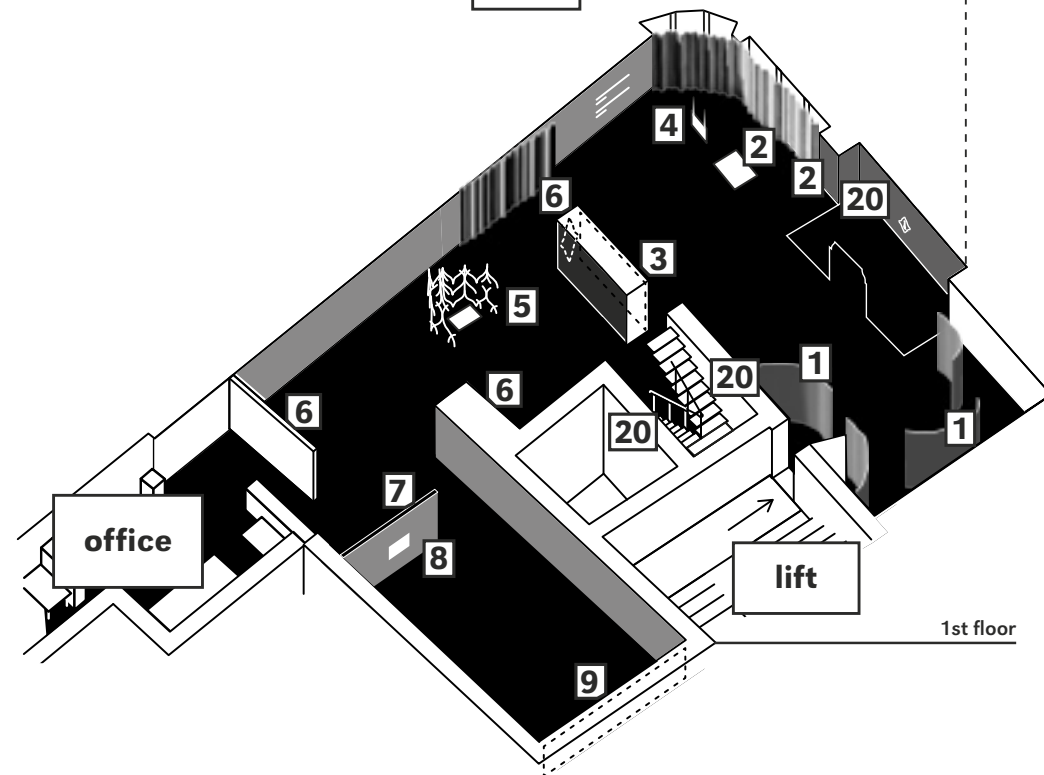
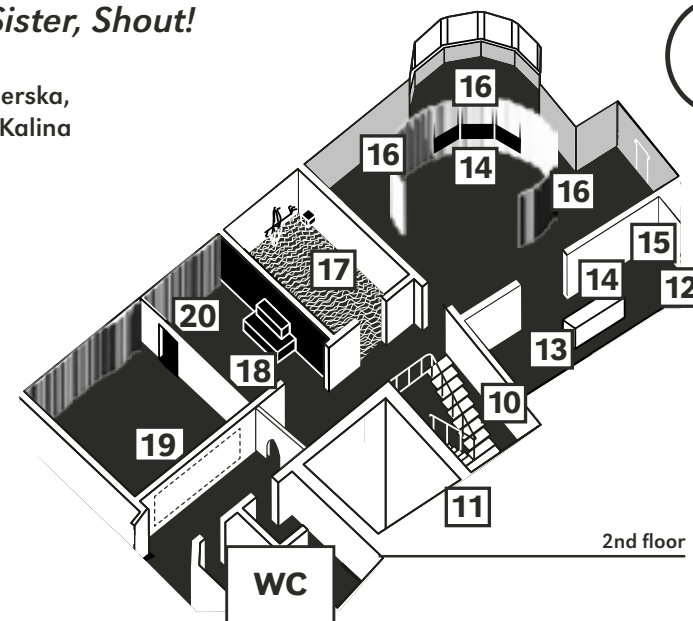


curators:  
Agata Cukierska,  
Katarzyna Kalina

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# Shout, Sister, Shout!

artists: Maciej Cholewa, Barbara Gryka, Dorota Hadrian, Irena Klepfisz, Lidija Mirković, Ewa Noras, Anna Piotrowska, Marta Romankiv, Pragati Sethi, Małgorzata Szandała, Alla Zagaykevych

curators: Agata Cukierska, Katarzyna Kalina

coordination: Agata Gomolińska-Senczenko

visual identification: Marcin Wysocki

set design: Agata Cukierska, Katarzyna Kalina

technical cooperation: Robert Ćwieląg, Kobra, Jan Kukułka, Wojciech Major, Dominika Malska, Iwona Sobczyk, Anna Sokołowska, Dariusz Trzeja, Paweł Wątroba

volunteer: Patrycja Klimek

cooperation: Rozbark Dance and Movement Theatre in Bytom, Fundacja Rozwoju Tańca Eferte

patronage: Wisława Szymborska Foundation

media partners: Bytomski.pl, Gazeta Wyborcza, Magazyn Szum, Notes na 6 tygodni, Radio Katowice, Ślązak, Ultramaryna

sponsor: Proen Gliwice Sp. z o.o., Piekarnia Cukiernia Kwapisz

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1

Małgorzata Szandała, **Sie / They, Sisters**, 2023

prints on fabric, 3×3 m

Their fate is unknown. We do not know where they were deported to, where they died. No mementos or photographs of them have survived. I try to imagine their faces. I find them on the pages of pre-war newspapers – in advertisements for women’s products, Nivea creams, Palmolive soaps and offers from German travel agencies. Smiling women’s faces, still carefree, gazing off into the distance.

The faces of the women in the adverts could be just that: Elsa Croner or Marianne Kohn, or all the other women. They are just faces in adverts, figures in drawings, they can disappear unnoticed.

2

Małgorzata Szandała, **All that was left for her was the joy of the journey**, 2023

archives: lightbox and German and Austrian newspapers in a display case („Berliner Illustrierte Zeitung” Nummer 18, 2. Mai 1935, „Das Illustrierte Blatt. Frankfurter Illustrierte” Nr. 16, 15 April 1939, „Verkehrswirtschaftliche Rundschau” April 1938)

*Fur Sie bleibt nur die Freude an der Reise* – this is the caption of a photograph advertising a travel agency in the magazine ‚Das Illustrierte Blatt’ of April 1939 (special edition on the occasion of Führer’s 50th birthday). Looking at the picture of a woman against the backdrop of a picturesque valley, one could paraphrase the title as: „All that remains for her is the joy of travel”. As an advertising slogan, it sounds ordinary, but its pronunciation can vary and depends on the context. We will perceive it in a completely different way when we think of the reality that changed so much in the following years – when we think of the deportations of the Jewish population to death camps, when we see people crammed into freight cars, not yet knowing what awaits them at the end of their journey. The language itself is also significant: calling it a journey signals a kind of displacement resulting from the collective consciousness’s rejection of knowledge of the crime (which occurred during the Second World War and continued, to some extent, for many years in the post-war period).

## Female figure against a landscape background

Landscape painting, so favoured by the Nazis, depicted the beauty of nature, mountain landscapes (watercolours by Adolf Hitler himself depicting Alpine

landscapes are also known), forests, small villages as well as distant open spaces. For the Nazis, reflecting both the soul of the Nation (Volk) and the vast expanses of living space (Lebensraum) needed by the Third Reich. The train rushing into space that we see on the pages of newspapers of that time can be read as a symptom of the expansionism of that era.

In our story, the figure of the woman against the landscape eventually disappears from the picture – her soul does not belong to the soul of the Nation.

**3** Małgorzata Szandała, **Landshaft. Disappearance**, 2024  
video (1'19'')

Among other things, Volkism holds that the human soul is part of the larger soul of the Nation (German: Volk), which is the soul of the world. The soul of a people is shaped by the landscape (German: Landschaft) and, once shaped, is not subject to change, and that national characteristics are determined by the landscape in which the nation was formed at the beginning of its history; e.g. the characteristics of the Jews were formed in deserts and therefore, according to this concept, this nation is to be characterised by shallowness, barrenness and dryness. (...) The opposite is the climate of the North, characterised by the damp and cold forests of Pragermania, where people long for the sun – that is why Germans are people of light (Lichtmenschen); their blond hair and blue eyes indicate purity of soul. The Pragermans, as a settled people, are supposed to be a people rooted in the land; the Jews, as the original nomads, are supposed to be a naturally uprooted people, with a nomadic mentality, incapable of loving their homeland and rooting themselves permanently in any land; their nomadism supposedly reveals itself in the form of a natural tendency to cosmopolitanism. [Wikipedia]

**The Volkist landscape – a landscape that absorbs**

We are thus entangled in various relations with landscapes. The landscape, made up of two words – country and image – is something partly mystical, it is basically an idea. It is also a completely invented image, necessary for the nation-state, which has its terrain with boundaries drawn on maps and marked in space. Only those who belong to the nation can live in it. The Volkist landscape is a landscape that predates those who do not correspond to the delimited criteria: those who do not have a proper soul.

It is in this landscape that the female figure disappears. He consumes her, devours her. No trace is left of her.

- \* The landscape also devours the disappearing people in the forest on the green border.
- \*\* Land is also the land and what lies within it: natural resources, deposits, fertile soils. The war in Ukraine is also about land and its natural resources.

**4** Małgorzata Szandała, **Die Reise / The Journey (the Road to Berlin)**, 2023/2024  
video (1'46'')

Once again the train rushes through space, through fields, villages and forests. The road to Berlin, the snapshots of which we are watching, is again a story concerning disappearance.

Else Croner, educator and writer, was born on 4 May 1878 in Bytom. She spent her teenage years in Breslau and was one of the few women in Germany who had the opportunity to study at university. She then moved to Berlin, where she lived and worked for many years until around 1932. After '35, the trace of her disappears until 1942, from which the last information about her comes: she dies in a Berlin hospital after a suicide attempt.

I get on the train, go to Berlin, look out the window at the fleeing landscape, I want to see the world through her eyes.

**5** Maciej Cholewa, **We Walked Through the Fields**, 2024  
installation: sculpture, metal + video story

The inspiration for the installation entitled *Szłyśmy przez pola* (We Walked Through the Fields) was the story of Margareta Fuchs, who, along with thousands of others, experienced the consequences of the 1938 operation *Polenaktion*.

On 28 October 1938, Margareta Fuchs, a saleswoman in a luxury fashion house living in Bytom, received an *Ausweisung-Befehl* (deportation order). The reason was the Jewish origin of her husband, a tailor, Ignatius Fuchs.

After trying unsuccessfully to intervene at the Polish consulate in Opole, Margareta returned to her flat, which turned out to be sealed, and found the police in the house instead of her husband and 13-year-old daughter. She was allowed to take 10 marks with her and was immediately taken to the police station, where she was placed in a cell. In the middle of the night, a hired bus took her to the Dąbrowa Miejska area, to a forest on the then German-Polish border between Bytom and Radzionków. Together with two thousand other people, she was forced to cross the green border without prior notice or preparation. The refugees were subjected to violence from both the SS and the reluctant Polish border guards, who were ordered to push them back into German territory.

Eventually, Margareta managed to get to the Radzionków area, where she camped out for a few days and from there made her way into Poland. Despite the tragedy of the whole situation, Margareta could talk about luck. As part of the same action, the events taking place in Zbąszyń, where a transit camp was set up for around 6,000 stateless persons who were not allowed to enter Poland, made the strongest history. Due to the weather and the lack of adequate infrastructure, conditions in the camp proved particularly difficult. In spite of the efforts of the Polish Red Cross and Jewish charities, there were situations in which imprisoned people took their own lives as a result of hunger, fear and ill-treatment.

Among those in the Zbąszyń camp was the family of Herschel Grynszpan, who, in retaliation, carried out an assassination attempt on the secretary of the Third Reich embassy, Ernst vom Rath. The German authorities of the time used this event as a pretext for the pogrom against the Jews that we know as Kristallnacht.

In their testimonies, Margareta and her husband describe the gradual and slow process of the deformation of bourgeois everyday life in Nazi Germany, culminating in their violent expulsion from the country. The ordinary suburban forest through which they had to flee becomes monstrous, and the chaos, very bad weather conditions, darkness and omnipresent violence they describe turn out to be the universal experiences of refugee people who are actors and actresses in wars and political events also taking place today.

Apart from the tragedy in Zbąszyń and the few mentions of the action, information about the thousands of people driven across the border in Bytom, near Chojnice and Wschowa was ignored in the press of the time and, despite the enormous scale of the repression, remains little known to this day.

In the narrative layer of the installation *We Walked Through the Fields*, a fragment of Margareta Fuchs' testimony about the green border between Bytom and Radzionków intermingles with literary fiction inspired by the Alpine folk tale about Sennentuntschi, puppets created by men to satisfy their sexual needs. According to the legend, the creatures created from hay, moss and other materials available at hand came to life and accompanied the men until they wanted to leave them. The abused dolls took revenge by brutally killing their creators and decorated their homes with skins torn from their bodies. The metalwork form alludes to an excerpt from the story, becoming a metaphor for fetishes created from darkness, great stories and borders.

The work refers to the theme of the dangers of national myths. Romantic narratives become more and more detailed over time, and when fiction mixes with the everyday they come to life influencing political reality, legitimising violence and exclusion.

6

Anna Piotrowska, Ewa Noras, ***All About My Scream!***, triptych, 2024  
concept and realisation: Anna Piotrowska, Ewa Noras  
soundscape: Anna Piotrowska  
camera, editing: Aleksandra Kępińska  
organisational support: Martyna Frasz  
technical support: Kobra, Paweł Murlik, Dastin Greczyło, Kuba Zapartowicz, Krzysztof Soszka  
partners: 10 years! Rozbark Theatre, Dance Development Foundation\_ eferte

The title of the triptych by Anna Piotrowska and Ewa Noras *Wszystko o moim krzyku!* (*All About My Scream!*) is a paraphrase of the title from the film drama directed by Pedro Almodóvar *Wszystko o mojej matce* (*All About My Mother*). The expression of the scream itself can be the result of certain entanglements, relationships, impossibilities and incapacities resulting from fears. At the same time, screaming can represent strength, courage and a desire to communicate one's needs.

As artists for whom the closest medium is the body, movement and physicality, we started a conversation about the essence and meaning of the scream itself and its physiology. The first association was Edvard Munch's painting *The Scream*, which has become a symbol of expressionism in art. Stunning is the grimacing androgynous figure that has become part of the collective cultural identity. In the artist's diary, we find the sentence: ‚(...) I felt an infinite scream piercing nature’, which pushes us to examine whether there is a need in us for the scream as a source not only derived from fear, but also as a source of power and presence, marked by individual experience. Munch, in the act of observation, doubles the narrative. It is a world made up of the scream of nature, a sound felt rather inwardly, bodily. It is also a world of the scream of a figure or character perceiving the scream of nature. Anxiety in this interpretation is caused by the noise of an aggressive world that incapacitates the individual, becomes an existential trap of powerlessness and disillusionment. It itself becomes indistinct, undefined, frightened, fearful and suffering. We wish to explore in a sublime way the layers of our bodies to express inner emotions by creating a space to consider the process of screaming. We ask ourselves, what is it? What is its organics? What is the pre-stage? Is the courage to scream a sign of my consciousness? Of my disagreement with something or someone? Is shouting a sign of noticing myself? A kind of marking of the territory, or a shedding of frustration? Do we have space in our lives for its expression?

Shouting is a kind of exposing an emotion that is often born out of tension and pain. What are the places where we are free to shout? What is the sense of awkwardness to one's own voice, all the more raised? Unknown to us is often the vibration, echo, range and strength of our inner experienced emotion hidden in our voice. A shout is a FORM that arises from tension to relaxation. We knew that we were not looking for the image in which it is exposed. We are curious about the moment of decision to scream. Its expression becomes introverted, moving away from individuality. We experience crying into a pillow, we bite our jaw, we gnash our teeth, we suppress the intensifying expression of the presence and power of ourselves. Whatever the experience, whatever the trauma, it is important to understand how can I inhabit my body? How, regardless of the situation, can I live in harmony with myself? What does a scream contain! What do we know about the scream? Especially our own. Is screaming part of testing boundaries?

7

Irena Klepfisz, *Etlekhe verter oyf mame-loshn / A few words in the mother tongue*

from the volume *Her Birth and Later Years: New and Collected Poems, 1971-2021*, publisher Wesleyan Poetry Series, 2022  
poem on lightboxes

8

*Bed Doll No. 21*, a play by Djordje Lebović directed by Jan Kulczynski, Television Theatre, 1971

A 1971 play that did not receive its television premiere until 48 years later.

Djordje Lebović, the author of a play written in the 1960s, tackles the painful subject of the sexual abuse of female concentration camp prisoners selected by the Nazi authorities for forced labour in brothels. It is a taboo subject that, for many reasons, was not addressed in the post-war discourse on the Holocaust. Twenty years after the end of the Second World War, an unexpected guest turns up at the flat of the doctor Dr Wilma Jelinek, a neat, middle-aged woman – the lawyer Emil Grabner, a former SS officer, the commandant of the brothel in Auschwitz, known by the Germans as the „Dolls' House”. What begins is a tense conversation between the victim and the torturer about the events of a time when the struggle for survival and the preservation of dignity confronted women with tragic choices. The play was not broadcast on television after its realisation due to the subject matter raised and the oppositional commitment of Halina Mikołajska, who played the title role.

Author: Djordje Lebović

Translated by: Edward Płaczek

Directed by: Jan Kulczynski

Set design: Wojciech Sieciński

Television production: Joanna Wiśniewska

Cast: Halina Mikołajska (Wilma Jelinek), Henryk Borowski (Emil Grabner), Stanisław Zaczek (Husband) and Włodzimierz Press

9

Barbara Gryka and Wiktoria Dragan, Martyna Gawor, Natalia Gola, Julia Gucwa, Małgorzata Kita, Wiktoria Kłós, *Swish, Slash, Slide*, video, 2023/2024

movement work, performative actions: Patryk Dariusz Gacki

photography: Marcin Polar  
voice: Agata Cukierska  
lace making: Beata Młynarczyk-Gryka

The work is the result of a workshop with girls from Youth Education Centre in Radzionków. The first stage was to build together an architecture of hopes and dreams about what might happen when the residents leave the centre.

Based on the guidelines of Rudolf Laban's creative gymnastics, choreographic actions were combined with words and rhythm. Pressing, pushing, twisting, cutting, sliding, flicking, drifting, shaking – these are the girls' gestures, each one referring to the slogan in their own way after hearing it. In the audio layer, we hear texts that deal with the workshop participants' ideas of what a perfect day might look like.

**10** Alla Zagaykevych, ***Can you hear me, Sister? (Чи ти чуєш мене, Сестро?)***, 2024  
electroacoustic installation

The electroacoustic installation is conceived as a space for the symbolic search for one's own freedom, one's own path, one's own exit - from total darkness to light. The musical material of the installation consists of electronically generated noises and sounds of a woman's voice - whispering, singing, breathing...

**11** ***The Palm***, 2024, neon  
design: Marcin Wysocki  
execution: IRSA neon

Twenty seven bones,  
Thirty five muscles,  
Nearly two-thousand nerve cells  
Are in each of our five fingertips.  
That is more than enough  
To write "Mein Kampf" or  
or "Winnie-the-Pooh"

(Wisława Szymborska, *The Palm*, from the volume *Enough*, 2011)

**12** Lidija Mirković, Stojna Marinković's 1902 illustrated travel book.

Stojna Marinković 1902 -1970

The history books won't remember my grandmother, she wasn't important in any way, but she led a rather remarkable life as a Gypsy\* in her time.

She was born in Serbia in 1902 as the daughter of a farmer and a musician. She was the eldest child and only daughter of her parents, who were not rich but had enough money. They were able to send all their four sons to school, at a time when school education was not yet common. According to custom and practice, Stojna was not allowed to go to school. Although she was brought up in the Vlach Roma tradition, she enjoyed freedoms that most women of her time (Gypsy and non-Gypsy) did not have. She was allowed to smoke early, travel alone, divorce and marry a man 15 years younger. The invasion of the German army ended Stojna's idyllic and safe life, if an idyllic and safe life for Gypsies is at all possible.

Before World War II, Šabac was a prosperous, peaceful town with about 15 000 inhabitants. After the invasion, the district where Stojna lived was burnt down by the German Wehrmacht. All her brothers were partisans on the front line, her husband was killed as a partisan fighting against German troops and she lost all her possessions. During this difficult time, Stojna was left alone with three young children and her frail mother. After the German army entered the town, two camps were established in a short time. The preferred victims were Jews and Gypsies. Already in August 1942, Dr Harald Turner, head of the German military administration in Serbia, reported: „Serbia (is) the only country where the Jewish and Gypsy question is solved”.

Stojna never overcame her hatred of the Germans and remained traumatised throughout her life. Although many members of her family lived in Germany after the war, for example her eldest brother Draga, she refused to visit them. She used to say: „I will never set foot on German soil”.

When Stojna was a little girl, her father used to buy her books with no written words, only pictures. These were travel books with landscapes of the world. I inherited one of them.

\* The artist uses the term “Gypsies” exclusively.

**13** Lidija Mirković, *Z-10889*, video, 2011

At the end of 2008, sitting in front of my computer, I found reports and videos about right-wing groups and their propaganda. The killings of Gypsies in Hungary had just taken place. I was so shocked that I cried for three days. From childhood my mother hid that she was a Gypsy, so I always tried to be a confident Gypsy woman. That's how we raised our adopted son. But he didn't like to be seen as a Gypsy either. My mother looks like a Gypsy, and so does my son. Most of my Gypsy family look like Gypsies. Except for me. After that day, I asked myself if I was doing the right thing by teaching my son and mother to show their ethnicity. Can I take responsibility for this? What if history repeated itself? Would I be brave enough to stand beside my loved ones? What if the killings from Hungary reached Serbia or Germany? Would I be spared? Would I want to be left out? Would I go into hiding? What would happen to my family?

Z-10888 is the number of Albine Weiss, a German Sinti, the last Gypsy woman registered under this number in the books of Auschwitz. The idea of marking myself as a Gypsy woman had been growing in me for three years. From time to time I had the impression that the mark was burning on my left hand. The burning eventually stopped and I began to wonder if I really wanted to live with such a stigma for the rest of my life. Then the burning started to return more often, so I felt an almost physical need to immortalise this number on my body. I got the tattoo in December 2011. All members of my Gypsy family were part of the armed resistance during the Second World War. In the former Yugoslavia, my mother was recognised as the daughter of a fallen soldier.

**14** Lidija Mirković, *Angela, Žaneta, Danuta*, 2023

The artist's residency in Bytom is summarised in four conversations in the form of video works. Their protagonists are three Roma women, residents of Bytom: Angela, Žaneta and Danuta, as well as Lidija. With this work, the artist wants to start a long-term process of creating a museum of Roma women; the heroines answered the artist's questions about their basic values, vision of happiness, needs and dreams. For Lidija Mirković it is extremely important to make Roma women visible and audible, now we can get to know them better.

**15** Lidija Mirković, archive photography, 2012  
lightbox

The photograph was taken during the workshop A Man for a Day, conducted by Diane Torr on 28-29 July 2012 at the Berlin Theaterhaus. Torr's original workshop was about performing masculinity and was mainly aimed at women. Their aim was to put female participants into masculine roles in order to evoke or reinforce the awareness that gender is merely a repetitive set of gestures and behaviours. Pictured here are Lidija Mirković and one of the participants after their image transformation.

**16** Lidija Mirković, Dialogue with Carmen, continuation of the cycle started in 2011, photographs taken in Bytom and Zabrze, 2023

Carmen is one of the most distinctive figures in European culture and literature. Just as Shylock from Shakespeare's works became the object of anti-Semitic projections over the centuries, so the figure of Carmen has shaped perceptions of the Roma community since 1845, when Prosper Mérimée published the novella on the basis of which Georges Bizet later created his famous opera.

Carmen is a sensual, wild creature of nature, a femme fatale. She is usually portrayed as a black-haired Roma woman with large earrings, deep cleavage and promising eyes – a fearless, independent woman, confident and coquettish. Carmen can be found everywhere: in opera and operetta, numerous films, musicals, music videos, ballet, puppet theatre, modern dance, literature, fairy tales, illustrations, cartoons, comics, paintings, kitsch decorations and advertisements.

All of these are joined by the fact that they reproduce and reinforce existing stereotypes, following narrative conventions and locating the dangerous, evil and sinister in the outside world.

Each photograph follows the same pattern: A Gypsy woman holds in her hands a photograph portraying Carmen. The artist leaves it up to the person to decide whether or not to show her face. This arrangement is meant to ironically express that the people involved in the project are aware of socially binding stereotypes and that they are ready to enter into a dialogue

with the photographically captured image present in the continuum of their daily activities.

- 17** Dorota Hadrian, *Toma*, 2023  
sculpture, audio  
voice: Toma and Agata Cukierska

Toma is 67 years old. She comes from Ukraine, from the Kryvyi Rih. 10 days after the Russian invasion began, she came to Poland with her three cats. At first she earned money cleaning offices in a Katowice bank, but now she cleans stairwells in Bytom blocks and tenement houses.

Dorota Hadrian's work refers to the most depreciated sector of work – the domestic helper or cleaning lady. Between 53 and 100 million people worldwide work in this sector. There is a progressive feminisation of migration, to which the migration wave from Ukraine also contributes. Ukrainian women, along with other women from Central and Eastern Europe and the Global South, very often find employment in the domestic services market as cleaners. They are referred to in the literature as the 'immigrant class', 'international proletarians', 'servants of globalisation'. A factor attracting migrant women is the increased demand for paid domestic help in developed countries. The vast majority of them still work informally. A contract is therefore a privilege for a few. No pension contribution is made on their wages, they are not entitled to paid holidays and often to health care. In addition to the instability and temporariness they experience, they also remain 'invisible', cleaning offices in corporations – before or after employees leave, cleaning stairwells from the morning, often remaining impersonal. Dorota Hadrian placed the figure of Toma on the ceiling to emphasise her invisibility; in this position she does not disturb anyone and can do her work in peace.

- 18** *Silesian Dances*, Eugeniusz Cękałski, video 1936; *Shout, Sister, Shout*, Rosetta Tharpe, audio, 1938

Reportage showing traditional Silesian dances from 1936 combined with a piece by Sister Tharpe from 1938.

- 19** Marta Romankiv in collaboration with Pragati Sethi, *Ph. Pragati Sethi*, 2024, video  
voice: Pragati Sethi

According to the Central Statistical Office, currently 25 per cent of doctors in Poland are of retirement age, while at the same time hospitals are sounding the alarm about the shortage of doctors, and according to OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) 2020 calculations, there is a shortage of between 30,000 and 50,000 doctors in Poland.

Pragati Sethi is a medical student whose university moved to Bytom with the start of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukrainian territory. In June 2024, Pragati plans to pass the final exam that will allow her to obtain her medical licence. However, her years of study will not translate into the opportunity to work where she currently lives and studies, as her licence will not be accepted in the European Union due to complicated formal procedures.

In their joint activities, Marta Romankiv and Pragati Sethi focus on the dreams of the future doctor to be able to practice her profession in the place where she currently lives. The girl shares the knowledge she has gained through a recorded video work in which she gives her dream medical consultation. In addition, Pragati draws the documents she longs for, necessary to practise her profession within the European Union.

- 20** Neon signs at the exhibition  
made by: Neon IRSA,  
designed by: Marcin Wysocki, Agata Cukierska, Katarzyna Kalina,  
collaboration: Kamila Mróz