

Katarzyna Szeszycka

Professional Summary

2019

Personal Information

Full Name: Katarzyna Szeszycka

Diplomas and Academic/Artistic Achievements

- Doctorate in Fine Arts, attained 2015 from the Academy of Fine Arts, Gdansk, Poland
 - Scope: Fine arts, doctoral dissertation titled '*Is the meadow without light green?*' *About colours in dim light.*
 - Doctoral dissertation tutored by Dr. Krzysztof Polkowski (Higher Doctorate) and peer reviewed by Dr. A. Tyczyńska (Higher Doctorate) and Dr. R. Florczak (Higher Doctorate)
- Master of Arts, attained 2008 from the University of Arts, Poznań, Poland
 - Scope: Drawing Workshop of Dr. A. Tyczyńska (Higher Doctorate)
 - Masters dissertation titled *A Comparison of the Art Therapy Method in Addiction Therapy in Two Centres of the Monowka Association: Marianówek and Babigoszcz*, tutored by Prof. Z. Melosik. Reviewed by Dr. J. Ryczek

Teaching History

- **Present Employment, commenced 2018:** Assistant Professor, II Drawing Studio, Academy of Art, Szczecin, Poland
- **2015-2017:** Assistant Professor, VII Image Studio, Academy of Art, Szczecin, Poland
- **2014-2015:** Assistant, Drawing Workshop of Dr. Bartek Otocky (Higher Doctorate), Academy of Art, Szczecin, Poland
- **2012-2013:** Instructor, Department of Painting and New Media, Academy of Art, Szczecin, Poland; Assistant, II Drawing Studio of Prof. Tomasz Wendland, Academy of Art, Szczecin, Poland; Assistant, III Painting Studio of Prof. Wojciech Łazarczyk, , Academy of Art, Szczecin, Poland
- **2011-2012:** Commissioned lecturer, postgraduate studies, and Manager of Culture, University of Szczecin, Poland; Commissioned Assistant, Studio of Painting and Drawing of Prof. R. Tokarczyk, Department of Visual Arts, Academy of Art, Szczecin, Poland
- **2010-2011:** Volunteer Assistant, Studio of Painting and Drawing of Prof. Ryszard Tokarczyk, Department of Visual Arts, Academy of Art, Szczecin, Poland

Submissions Meeting the Formal Requirements

Requirement: Article 16, section 2 of the 14th March 2003 Act on academic degrees and academic titles, including degrees and titles in the field of art

Submission of Evidence: Impulse Response

List of Included Works:

1. *untitled (volcano area)*, 2016, oil on canvas, 100 x 130cm
2. *untitled (volcano area)*, 2016, oil on canvas, 120 x 80cm
3. *untitled (volcano area)*, 2016, oil on canvas, 120 x 102cm
 - *The Empty Landscape*, individual exhibition, Collectiva Gallery, Berlin, Germany, 2.09 - 7.10.2016
 - *volcano area*, individual exhibition, Modern Art Gallery ms44, Świnoujście, 2.04 - 2.05.2016
 - *Painting/Katarzyna Szeszycka*, individual exhibition, accompanying event 25. Festival of Polish Contemporary Painting, Gallery Level 4, Philharmonic the name of M. Karłowicz in Szczecin, 12.10 - 12.11.2016
 - *Impulse response: The Empty Landscape, volcano area*, Individual exhibition, National Museum in Szczecin, 25.04 - 19.05.2019
4. *untitled (volcano area)*, 2016, oil on canvas, 32 x 40 cm
 - *volcano area*, individual exhibition, Modern Art Gallery ms44, Świnoujście, 2.04 - 2.05.2016
 - *Painting/Katarzyna Szeszycka*, individual exhibition, accompanying event 25. Festival of Polish Contemporary Painting, Gallery Level 4, Philharmonic the name of M. Karłowicz in Szczecin, 12.10 - 12.11.2016
5. *untitled (volcano area)*, 2016, oil on canvas, 38 x 27 cm
6. *untitled (volcano area)*, 2016, oil on canvas, 39 x 33 cm
7. *untitled (volcano area)*, 2016, oil on canvas, 54 x 36 cm
 - *volcano area*, individual exhibition, Modern Art Gallery ms44, Świnoujście, 2.04 - 2.05.2016
 - *Painting/Katarzyna Szeszycka*, individual exhibition, accompanying event 25. Festival of Polish Contemporary Painting, Gallery Level 4, Philharmonic the name of M. Karłowicz in Szczecin, 12.10 - 12.11.2016
 - *Impulse response: The Empty Landscape, volcano area*, Individual exhibition, National Museum in Szczecin, 25.04 - 19.05.2019
8. *4, (The Empty Landscape)*, 2016, oil on canvas, 150 x 200 cm
 - *volcano area*, individual exhibition, Modern Art Gallery ms44, Świnoujście, 2.04 - 2.05.2016
 - *Impulse response: The Empty Landscape, volcano area*, Individual exhibition, National Museum in Szczecin, 25.04 - 19.05.2019
9. *untitled/fjord (The Empty Landscape)*, 2016, oil on canvas, 70 x 90 cm
 - *The Empty Landscape*, individual exhibition, Collectiva Gallery, Berlin, Germany, 2.09 - 7.10.2016
 - *Painting/Katarzyna Szeszycka*, individual exhibition, accompanying event 25. Festival of Polish Contemporary Painting, Gallery Level 4, Philharmonic the name of M. Karłowicz in Szczecin, 12.10 - 12.11.2016
 - *Impulse response: The Empty Landscape, volcano area*, Individual exhibition, National Museum in Szczecin, 25.04 - 19.05.2019
10. *see sea, (The Empty Landscape)*, 2016, oil on canvas, 150 x 170 cm
place of presentation:
 - *volcano area*, individual exhibition, Modern Art Gallery ms44, Świnoujście, 2.04 - 2.05.2016
11. *untitled/lake(The Empty Landscape)*, 2019, oil on canvas, 150 x 220 cm
 - *Impulse response: The Empty Landscape, volcano area*, Individual exhibition, National Museum in Szczecin, 25.04 - 19.05.2019
12. *The Model of Swarm*, 2019, intermedia work
place of presentation:
 - *The Model of Swarm*, individual exhibition, TRAFostacja Sztuki in Szczecin, 25/04 - 30/04. 2019

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Introduction

I started my PhD in 2013 at the Department of Painting in the Academy of Fine Arts, Gdańsk. It was completed with the defence of the presented work in June 2015. In my doctoral thesis, titled '*Is the meadow without light green? About colors in dim light*', I analysed the abstract concept of visual perception and how this creates emotion. I followed the theory of the law of colour stability by Jan Młodkowski, considering the expected reaction from the stimulus of dim light. I was looking for the results of creating intentional disorder.

The work is based on a series of bio-art experiments, *White Plants* (2013) and *White Meadows* (2014-2015), and on observations developed in other media, such as painting series and video. The exhibition accompanying the thesis included a selection from the full range of work.

I became interested in the idea of developing plants without light for *White Meadows* well before its final realisation in my thesis. Pieces of the bio-art experiments were presented at the Mediations Biennale in Poznań in 2014, and in following this idea, I took part in the international program *Artists in Residence* in Aso, Japan, in the same year. I spent two months in the city, in the giant caldera of the active Aso San volcano, and the experience encouraged me to further my thesis idea; I wanted to examine how the extremes of nature belong on their own plain. The experience and material I gathered also became a contribution towards other new ideas, combined with scientific information.

After obtaining my doctoral degree, I took part in 20 collective exhibitions, both in Poland and abroad. I have attached a detailed list with this document. I have also undertaken over a dozen activities in urban space and have prepared 9 individual exhibitions. The most important of them are:

- *Freedom to Sencow* - rooftop, People's Island, Budapest, as part of the new dictionary of old ideas program, 2018
- *The Animal Project* - National Museum in Szczecin, 2017
- *Katarzyna Szeszycka, Tim van den Oudenhoven* - Collectiva Gallerie/Artesantader XXVI Feria International De Arte Contemporaneo Palacio de Exposiciones y Congresos de Santander, Spain, 2017
- *LAS - Meeting with the creator in unexplained circumstances* - Wzorcowa Gallery, Szczecin, 2016
- *The Empty Landscape* - Collectiva Gallery, Berlin
- *Volcano area* - City Art Gallery ms44, Świnoujście
- *The Dim Light* - BWA, Ostrowiec Świętokrzyski, 2015

Among the most important collective exhibitions I will mention:

- *Zooestetyka - iconography, symbolism and critical image dimension of animals in contemporary art*, Museum of Contemporary Art, branch of the National Museum in Szczecin, 2019
- *Adolescent* - Gallery level 4, Philharmonic of M. Karłowicz in Szczecin
- *the new dictionary of old ideas* - TRAF Ostacja Sztuki in Szczecin, 2019; Labor Gallery, FKSE - Fialtal Képzőművészek Stúdiója Egyesület, Budapest, Hungary 2018
- *Painting Competition Leon Wyczółkowski*, post-competition exhibition, Municipal Gallery BWA, Bydgoszcz, 2018
- *Idealists and provocateurs* - City Gallery BWA, Bydgoszcz
- *Szczecin Avant-garde* - National Museum in Szczecin, 2017

- *Miracle* - City Gallery, Gdańsk, 2017; Zona Sztuki Aktualnej Szczecin, 2016
- *Absurd, nonsense, oxymoron* - Karnataka Chitrakala Parishath Art Complex, Bangalore, India

The basis of my practice, derived from a reflection on the needs of the work I have submitted, is thinking about the boundaries of perception in the context of space.

The space experience is multisensory and complex due to its dependency on the reliability of the senses. Sight analyses the depth of space, using only our eyes, and our perception is dependent on the limits of visibility. As such, we receive only a piece of space. This piece is complemented by what we understand from our hearing and gravitational sense. Sensitivity to stimuli is finite within the boundaries of perception, and those boundaries are individually diverse. What would happen if we started to create false or abstract sensual impressions? How closely could we analyse the limits of perception?

The basis of impulse response is that knowledge and experience of learned responses to stimuli allows a person to predict the response of the system¹. I applied the name '*Impulse Response*' to my work to figuratively refer to the boundaries of our perception of space. The goal was to build circumstances where I could try to approach those boundaries; I examined how we could perceive the end of open space (*The Empty Landscape, volcano area*) and in particular, how we perceive it alone (*The Model of the Swarm*).

"Artistic activity is a form of reasoning, in which perception and thinking intertwine."²

In my work, I considered the multisensory aspects of the perception of space with the mind of an experimental researcher. In the work I have submitted, this relates to the limits of sight (via painting) and hearing (via intermedia). The result of this combination was *Impulse Response*.

Firstly, I will explain some of the context and inspiration for my early ideas, in which I explored my initial concept of searching for the limits of perception. After this, I will elaborate on the central implementation of the work that came from this inspiration. Finally, I will summarise the impressions I have been left with, and my goals for furthering this idea post-doctorate. I have begun to implement these ideas by using public space, the realm of 'guerrilla art', as both an individual and collaborative project. This project is ongoing and is my current focus and brings in further ideas from other inspirations to work alongside those I have already discussed. Whilst these reflections are critical to the work I have submitted for the habilitation process, it is also critical to my personal creative path. This part of this text will conclude with a depiction of the cultural background from which I have come.

As a supplement to this text, I have attached the publication UPSIDEART 2013 | 2018, in which I write about what I have been doing in the field of popular culture and also within the Upside Art Foundation, of which I am a co-founder.

1. Artistic Work: the Background of Impulse Response

Natural space that excludes an urban environment and is free from human disturbance is considered as an original condition with no cultural context. It is neutral and unaffected. The experience such a space provides, its smells, its organic structure, its visual impressions, has always been multisensory for me. As part of my considerations, I examined this multisensory aspect and took it to pieces. In my earlier projects, I originally included the cultural context of a place, and came to the realisation that this can create an abstract perception of it; this piqued my interest in the mechanisms of perception.

First off, I thought primarily of the image (perhaps a cultural trait), and I worked using classical imaging techniques and audio material. Over time, I became more aware of their possibilities and decided to analyse them more.

The search for light-dependent uniqueness and its limitations formed the basis for my work on *Fullness – Implementation* in 2012, and in succession, *Fullness – A Supplement* the following year. My inspiration was the use of dim light in landscapes, and our perception of the colours it possesses.

This was the first moment I looked at this in detail. Although light (or the lack of it) was not central to these earlier works, it did get them off the ground.

The focus of *Fullness* began to move to the history of my sense of belonging to a place and those people associated with it^{1,2}. I decided to call it *Fullness* because of the range of multidimensional and multisensory feelings it provided, and also to refer to the overwhelming message I received from the media I used. The title indicated the end of this stage of my work, closing the year-long conceptualisation of my original ideas and the materials I had used to express them.

The paintings included in *Fullness* depict individual portraits in natural landscapes, some of which are 'empty'. They were designed to be reminiscent of romantic masters and baroque, irrational light. I invited the photographer Konrad Królikowski to collaborate with me in the development of the project. We worked together for a year, and to quote my thesis:

"We quoted old masters using modern heroes. We combined the old aesthetics with the new in our '*Jesus Is My Homeboy*' series (2003) by David LaChapelle, and the light contained in the video image of the song '*What Else is There?*' by Royksopp (2005). We placed our selections in light boxes. The trail of light manipulation seemed inexhaustible to me through painting and photography, but I also understood that it had to end."¹

Fullness premiered in 2012 at the Museum of Contemporary Art, a branch of the National Museum in Szczecin. A piece of the painting collection shown at that time won the GRAND PRIX Award of the Minister of Culture and National Heritage at the Festival of Polish Contemporary Painting in Szczecin² in the same year.

It was my first project that was designed to be research. It evolved; on one hand it became a study of the border between photography and painting, and on the other it was an opportunity to study the boundaries of visibility.

Whilst working on *Fullness – Implementation*, I defined the environment as existing within residual lighting that triggers increased perception as a research condition. In my doctoral thesis, the subject matter was me, set in the context of my own sensual perception.

"*Fullness* is about calmness in the natural world. There is silence even in the flight of birds in the night. Both immobility and silence allow better concentration on sight and enhance the eye's concentration on colourful sensations. In an era of constant noise in urban areas, experiencing the conditions provided by unpolluted nature is an intense, whole experience. It is the optimal condition in which to observe, without the disturbance of civilisation, and it is so rarely available to the regular person."³

In this description, there is already a sense of how intuitive the senses are. However, I thought at the time to create an abstract visual impression, which would lead to the background for doing the same to the full range of our senses. I began to look for a way to recreate the lack of light. This is where my doctoral thesis was born, and it grew for two years in the form of a bio-art project of creating white meadows out of organic plants that grew without light.

"The project *White Plants* is designed to illustrate the experience of conscious immersion, of being in an environment that deliberately disturbs the basic laws of colour stability. According to these laws, we assign specific colours to objects, and at the same time exclude our other senses and our consciousness. When we actively disrupt our normal circumstances, our attention is sharpened and we begin to genuinely observe. 'Detecting discrepancies requires concentration'. With even a degree of difference or discrepancy, our attention to being selective increases, and manifests in growing levels of concentration. The stimulus must pass through a conscious attention filter. This state causes the feeling of being conscious in the here and now.

¹*Is the meadow without light - green?*, Academy of Fine Arts in Gdańsk, 2015

²Catalog 24. Festival of Polish Contemporary Painting, Szczecin 2012

³Ewa Wójtowicz, *An Alien Eye. Artistic journey as a production of paintings*

Growing white plants was for me the most interesting, yet sufficiently intensive opportunity to create the conditions necessary to recreate this experience. I used a natural organic material that would maintain the strategy required to create the feeling of a sufficiently large space.”³

Remaining impressed by Turrell and Eliasson, I continued to base my work on visual impressions, but I also included scent and touch. I did not define the complexity of the process of creating our perceptions of space (which depend on a myriad of sensual inputs, but a good deal on sound, such as echoes). I only had my own intuition and experiences, such as my description of the silence of the night. The soft texture of the organic matter on the floor suppressed the sound of movement, leaving the only audible sound to come from the space enclosing the meadow; from the boundary of hearing perception. The physics of sound formed the basis for my later work, *The Model of the Swarm*.

In 2014-2015, I created *Night, Aso San* and *Typho*. They were based on my experiences and the materials and understanding I had since gathered during my artistic residency on the island of Kyushu in Japan. I have elaborated on this further in my doctoral dissertation. To complement this work, I will describe the experience I had on Kyushu, because this served as my starting point to the projects *Volcano Area* and some of *The Empty Landscape*.

“I did not see forests, neither coniferous nor deciduous, only cedar forests, which are a kind of category in between. They build shapes so exuberant from their needles that they do not associate with the ascetic European forest. The undergrowth density is unobtainable, grass is over half a meter. These areas contain enormous powers of nature. People living in these areas are characterised by humbleness towards the "sleeping" volcano, typhoons and floods, causing mud deposits destroying all their belongings on one day. This humility is already contained in the name of the volcano itself: Aso San means literally Aso Pan.”³

Immediately, the activity of the volcano caused all access to the zone to be stopped. However, the tangible consequences of earlier floods, eruptions, cyclones and the recovery of island vegetation were visible. I went to the meteorological archives they had kept since the 1930s and explored empty space: an old roller coaster factory, and a sake factory in Uchinomaki. It was in the latter that I collaborated with Arabella Muray on *After Sake – Sound Sculpture*. The basis of this work was the different audible qualities of different materials and how it created movement and interaction. I also created *Site Specific – The Flood*, several videos and extensive photographic material. They are summarised in *AIA, Artists in International Residency Programme, Aso, 2014*⁵.

2. Post-Doctoral Achievement: The Implementation of Impulse Response, 2016-2019

After further scientific research, I created a series of paintings about the limits of vision in space:

- *Volcano Area* – Premiered at the MS44 Municipal Contemporary Art Gallery in Świnoujście, 2016
- *The Empty Landscape* – Premiered at Collectiva Gallery, Berlin, 2016

I combined them with four pictures with the series *Tjfuny* and *Aso San*.

The first exhibition was a presentation that was extended to include photographs and videos. The second included only paintings. They both featured large-scale oil paintings inspired by the liminal experiences found in nature, such as typhoons, active volcanoes and several diverse, open spaces.

The Empty Landscape presents open spaces in extreme visibility conditions. They incorporate large areas of delicate gradients, from which the colour that indicates the shape of earth or water emerges. The gradients were all opaque inks. They reflect how physical the mist can feel

³*Is the meadow without light - green?*, Academy of Fine Arts in Gdańsk, 2015

when scattered with light. The scale was possible thanks to refinement of the soil technologies I had used, applying it repeatedly with a putty knife, which was part of the workshop on my doctoral thesis. The water and earth surfaces were created with laser-based inks. The colour scheme is muted and in subsequent works, it approaches a more monochrome, smooth surface. The contours are blurred as the shape develops. The impact was designed to be the silence of visual perception and creating an abstract image in the mind.

Volcano Area is visually richer and more expressive, though the palette is similar. It focuses on shape, such as soft smoke, dust or clouds, which in most works contrast with the textures of the substrate. The scope is wider and the textures more variant, combining flat-tiled backgrounds with meaty paint or a luminous and more delicate ink. Sometimes the backgrounds themselves were designed to feel more active and dynamic.

In both series, the final canvases were an interpretation of photographs, influenced by my experience of the subjects and their space and liminal visibility.

I visited Iceland twice in 2016. The second experience was different to all of my prior ones, as it was a journey through wastes. I could gather new material and remember my previous experiences of the intensity of open silence and raw space. I added a new work that expanded the exhibition, depicting a fjord, into the exhibition 25. Contemporary Painting Festival in Szczecin at the Philharmonic of M. Karłowicz⁴.

“... By emphasizing the creative role, instead of the intentionally conducted game with tradition, Szeszycka prefers to locate her creative energy closer to the raw pole of retreat from the smoky curtain of promotions that surrounds works of high art; in this way, it finds a niche in artistic culture, where sometimes the depreciated workshop proficiency suddenly becomes a tool that can foster the desi-limental relationship to excessive fetishisation of art and its reception. In this way, she reveals some kind of bankruptcy inevitably inscribed in Western culture, or rather the need for simplicity; a statement that hits the heart, skilfully synthesizing the basic tensions in the dialogue of ‘nature’ with ‘culture’.”⁵

In painting this series, I diluted the origins of the central piece by losing visibility and recognising space. By painting, I can achieve what is not possible in other imaging techniques; even today’s photographic technology is still not able to reflect the level of sensitivity that belongs to our sense of sight.

In these series, the study of the limits of visibility in the landscape was produced via painting. In 2017, I looked for new ways of doing things. I decided to shift the focus from visual perception to that of our hearing. The combination became *Impulse Response*.

Intermedia implementation: The Model of the Swarm

If we close our eyes or lose our sense of sight, how can we experience space? We rely first on our hearing, recognising that movement always takes place within a space. The movement we hear allows us to grasp an idea of the space it inhabits. I began to imagine a space filled with a mobile structure composed of different points.

“Swarm. The phenomenon of nature, an organic formation. It is characterised by simplicity, lack of central control, autonomy of the individual and possession of a consolidation nucleus - cohesion. It illustrates the feature of nature, which is the pursuit of the simplest solutions. The swarm is mathematically described⁶but it is not deterministic, it is interactive. The essence of the swarm is not fully understood.”

A swarm alongside a mobile spatial formation impresses on our sense of sound. How quickly

⁴ Catalog 25. Festival of Polish Contemporary Painting, Szczecin 2016

⁵ Ewelina Jarosz, *In the eternal shadow of destruction. About new works of Katarzyna Szeszycka*, the text appeared in the catalog for the individual exhibition *Volcano area*, ms 44, Świnoujście

⁶ 1987, Craig Reynolds, official website <http://www.red3d.com/cwr/boids/> access: 01.04.2019

are we able to imagine it when we hear it? When we hear the movement of many objects, do we automatically imagine space? I decided to build the physical conditions necessary to answer these questions in the swarm model. I assumed that what is seen would be meaningless. I decided to work without the requirement of visibility and continue with the abstraction of one of our senses. I assumed that the participant of the experiment would be in a closed room without light and subjected to sound only.

When we are in a direct relationship with the individual presented in the space, we begin to identify them by the sounds we hear. The situation changes when the participant recognises that there are more individuals, and that they behave in a systemic manner that might be appropriate for a swarm of insects. The swarm will behave interactively with and react to the participant.

What conditions needed to be met for a participant to be able to perceive the variability of the mobile structure, but that the whole is interactive? The mechanisms of spatial perception of human sound, using only a pair of ears, allows us to determine the direction of a sound through movement of the head, changes in characteristics and frequency and the Doppler effect⁷. *The Model of the Swarm* had to take this into account.

I called together an interdisciplinary team that met in the Marine Department of the National Museum throughout 2018. At the meetings, we discussed possible solutions. We discussed research analysis, solid concepts, psychoacoustics and programming environment issues.

We started with Platonic solids⁸, finally deciding to enter the installation in a form with 42 *icosphere* tops. It is a combination of two geodesic domes, a sphere built on the bases of two triangles, equilateral and isosceles, whose cross-section is a regular decagon. We cut one of the vertices to achieve its stability without an additional supporting structure. At each of the other vertices of the body and at the base we installed audio points.

The swarm model uses spherical sound emission from 41 speakers placed in the sphere and one subwoofer. It is intended for an individual recipient, isolated from the environment in terms of both acoustic and visual stimuli. Thanks to this, the change in the orientation of the recipient's head allows for a fuller experience of sound sources (there is no limitation of emission to the horizontal plane). The whole has been programmed in C++ to have the greatest possible control over the environment⁹. The use of the sphere with loudspeakers and the digital synthesis of sound sources enables the mechanisms of spatial perception of human sound.

The sound used for modelling does not imitate anything, it is considered as a signal, each in audible ranges. The sound, the signal, is to be organised in the framework of $\langle x,y,z,w,t \rangle$ (space in the spatial coordinate system, frequency and volume of sound). This is due to the abstraction process.

The starting situation is given: a sound is provided, the participant's movement modifies the structure and, as a result of transformation, leads to the creation of a unique structure. In real time, the algorithm is overwritten, which creates this formation, each time different (as in the image of the Japanese Norimichi Hirakawa, *Irreversible*¹⁰). The sounds move and order according to a mathematical algorithm mapping the swarm. The recipient experiences a sense of being inside an *active* structure (swarm), experiencing being in space. It also has an influence on her. The movement is different and unique each time. The whole is a study of the perception of space through the sense of hearing and spatial location, altered from other sources.

The recipient is an interactor and co-creator. However, it does not co-create visibility, or is not confronted with it, as in part *The Empty Landscapes* - in *The Model of the Swarm* this formation is created in his mind. *The Model of the Swarm* was conceived as a sensual exercise, which is to allow

⁷This effect is a phenomenon that allows us to register the difference in frequency sent by a mobile source when we are moving with respect to this source.

⁸ Lakatos. *Proofs and Refutations*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976

⁹ coding language characterised by: *high output code performance, direct access to hardware resources and system functions, easy creation and use libraries* (written in C++, C or other languages), *independence from a specific hardware or system platform and a small runtime environment*.

¹⁰ access 3.10.2017: exhibition *Seven*, WRO ART Center, Dom Słowa Polskiego, Warsaw Gallery Weekend, 2017

drawing a spatial object in the mind along with a suggestion of its movement, enabling the perception of spatial formation movement. It is assumed that spatial awareness may be associated with this.

Ryszard Kluszczyński was involved in this part of the implementation of *Impulse Response* and he describes it as ambiguously standing at the interface between science and art¹¹.

I believe *The Model of the Swarm* can also qualify as generative art, post-media and interactive intermedia because it connects them all, and exists at other interfaces between psychophysiology, acoustics, programming, technology and art.

It creates a field for many variables and layers and meanings can be added or subtracted to and from it. I called it a model because by putting the selected sound under the output signal, we changed its reception on a cultural level, which allows it to be modified as a context. Under n -, everything can be put on pod x in function. It will adopt another meaning, a whisper or a different cry, a word, a field of meanings and reception. An emergent context can be developed there and we can try to manipulate the emotional reaction of the recipient.

The next variable is the nature of the movement itself. Its entropy depends on the interaction. The model can also be developed on a technological level and can be enriched by tracking the movement of the head. These are developments toward deepening sensory compatibility and increasing its scope in the context of sensory egalitarianism. We are all individually different, more so in our responses to auditory senses than to our visual ones.

The starting point in my work was the experience of nature and painting that was realised at the highest possible level for me, consistent with the art and high standards of craftsmanship. I endeavour to make them self-sufficient as well as compatible with other media projects, where I explore the boundaries between the media and perceptual limits. *The Model of the Swarm* was designed to cross the bridge between *The Empty Landscape* and *Volcano Area*. I left only the inferences of the creations of the viewer's mind with the help of an artificial environment.

I ask:

- o When do we start/stop seeing?
- o When do we start/stop hearing?
- o When do we recognise?
- o When do we identify?

Submitted Works:

Impulse Response was presented in Szczecin in April 2019. It is a summary of my work around the issue of the limits of visibility and audibility gathered around the perception of space.

Impulse response: The Empty Landscape, volcano area

Curator of the exhibition: Director of the National Museum Lech Karwowski

Organiser: The National Museum in Szczecin

25.04. - 19.05.2019

Event partners: TRAFostacja Sztuki in Szczecin, Department of Painting and New Media at the Academy of Art in Szczecin, Freedom Gallery, OFF MARINA Przystań Kultury

Impulse response: The Model of the Swarm

Event organiser: TRAFostacja Sztuki

Opened: 25.04.2019, one-day event

Freedom Gallery/OFF Marina Przystań Kultury

Event partners:

National Museum in Szczecin, Department of Painting and New Media, Academy of Art in Szczecin, Department of Electrical Engineering of West Pomeranian University of Technology, Department of Signal Processing and Multimedia Engineering, Freedom Gallery, OFF MARINA Przystań Kultury

A publication documenting this undertaking is under preparation.

¹¹ Ryszard W. Kluszczyński *art @ science. About the relationship between art and science*

3. Post-Doctoral Projects and Work

In 2017, I started work on a project called *Without*, which is intentionally meant to recall the messages contained in my prior work. In this series I am going back to the idea of swimming pools¹², this time focusing on abandoned pools and creating different geometric forms in the centre of the frames. Some are empty with gradation on the drying water, others are covered in vegetation or in the degradation process. The interiors were done in a laser workshop, whilst the peripherals were treated minimally, sometimes with a wide, flat brush. In this series there are no human figures, but rather the world left behind by them. The time between the present and last human contact goes undefined. I maintained an economical approach to this work, aiming for minimal visual distractions, much like in *The Empty Landscape*.

This work was presented in the show of Arte Santander in Spain, in combination with a photographic series by Tim van der Oudenhoven¹². In 2018, some of this work qualified for the post-competition exhibition as part of the gallery III Competition by Leon Wyczółkowski (BWA, Bydgoszcz, 2018¹³).

At the same time, a photographic series was being created as part of a workshop run by the Maritime Department of the National Museum in Szczecin called *Post-Industrial 2013-2018*. This series followed the same themes of timelessness and undefined light. The pieces portray post-industrial structures, such as closed parts of railway infrastructure and the remains of a synthetic gasoline factory in Police, Stocznia Szczecińska. There were also pieces of the Odra river basin, bridges, power plants, Dolna Odra, Pomorzany, Zakłady Chemiczne Police and the industrial waste area called White Mountain.

All of these pieces were made with analogue photography in both medium and small formats, in colour. The workshop continues and I have plans to collate the series and make it public in 2020.

During a residence in Hungary in 2018, I created another new series that documented the core of urban life. Budapest is called the European capital of the homeless. In the Budapest metro, Station 3 is the centre of this capital. The area used to house the most troubled districts of downtown Budapest, though is now in a very visible transformation thanks to gentrification. Groups of the homeless stay at stations for several days, often being removed, only to come back. I created this series near the Deli Palyaudvar, looking for empty spaces to echo the then recent change in Hungarian law that prohibited homelessness. My work was shown at Labor Gallery in Budapest and at TRAF0 in Szczecin in 2019.

My most recent collection is called *Adolescent*. I started it in 2018, and it is largely comprised of sizeable oil paintings. So far, it has only been made public in part; once as a piece in a collaborative exhibition called *Idealists and Provocateurs* in the Bydgoszcz BWA in 2018, and again as part of the exhibition *Adolescent* at the Szczecin Philharmonic¹⁴.

In this work, I have returned to issues of identity using paint and photography. Scaled over two, two metre long portraits developed in a laser workshop, I have portrayed the faces of teens. It starts with a picture of my daughter, showing her during one of her frequent nosebleeds. This was a freeing act for her; she had always avoided portraits, but found the blood liberating. The curator of the exhibition at BWA in Bydgoszcz Małgorzata Kopczyńska writes:

“Confronting the viewer with such an image, Szeszycka explores the limits of our emotional hypothermia - we are constantly visually bombarded with the images of victims of disasters, fights and accidents. The sight of someone else's suffering is commonplace. Is it for everyone? Is blood dripping from physiological and developmental causes less dramatic, or just as dramatic as blood flowing from the wound? Blood on the girlish face, which is still "creating", is the face of the child's transformation

¹² catalog for the exhibition Artesantander 2010 / Panorama Polonia Palacio de Exposiciones y Congresos, catalog accompanying the exhibition, Santander, Spain, 2017

¹³ catalog for the post-competition exhibition of the 3rd Polish National Painting Competition Leon Wyczółkowski (BWA, Bydgoszcz, 2018).

¹⁴ *UPSIDE ART 2013 - 2018, Szczecin 2018*

into a woman, she does not express any violent emotions in the interpretation of Szeszycka. The calm expressed on it is in contrast to the internal storm, the struggle for oneself, the maturing identity that accompanies every human being in this period of life.

We are all fighting, in various ways, for ourselves, for those for whom we respond. How much is our acceptance of this fight, how many resignations caused by the defeat, and how much triumph of winning? There are always costs to fight, regardless of its results and effects. Sometimes, blood loss is the smallest problem.”¹⁵

This series is being expanded, but though the idea of blood was central for my daughter, it will not remain the focus of it. It will continue with the theme of identity. The premiere of this collection is planned for June 2019 at the Berlin Collectiva Gallery.

I continue to work on my interests in sense and space, and my current endeavours in this sphere are part of another piece of work, *LAS Meeting with the Creator in Unexplained Circumstances – 2016*. The forest is a specific site of interest here, where the sense of smell is most important. The description of the event on the internet was:

“For two years the Kinoteatr has been hosting the Wzorcowca Gallery inside, which in turn, on the last straight line introducing everyone to the field, or into the forest, is going to close its activity at this address. Part of the situation will be a black supper (prepared by Szczecin experienced skippers¹⁶ with Food not bombs¹⁷), as well as beverages. Night life, or pure creativity. Open event - welcome!”

The idea I was working with here came out of the specificity of the gallery. Wzorcowca Gallery was created in the space of the Kinoteatr Pod Żółtym Leszczem in Szczecin in 2014. From the beginning it was a place of sanctity and copyright, appointed by head Rafał Bajena, a film producer. He initiated a series of over 25 collections there. He did not try to adapt the gallery, appreciating how each component of it created the uniqueness of the whole. I fully accepted this going in, understanding that it would be the last of a series of exhibitions. I decided to take on the task.

My approach was to take my idea, rather than in pieces, as a whole. I decided to recycle my Christmas tree and adopted those thrown away, in total around a thousand coniferous trees, of which I used about three hundred. *Forest* was inverted by 180 degrees, making a more intense effect than natural. Essential oils accumulated in one area took over for a long time. It remained for another four months. The event had its own strengths and its participants remember it fondly. The goal had been achieved. The experience was intense but unobtrusive, a background rather than a core.

The Animal Project was another venture carried out under *Creative Scholarship of the City of Szczecin* in 2017. It was about the observation of human-animal relationships, based on the work of people who handle wild animals on a daily basis. A piece was created showing a portrait of a preparator who presents exhibits for nature museums in north-west Poland for training centres and hunting clubs. These places also rehabilitate animals. I worked with him for around six months. I decided not to go ahead with portraying a second, competitive physiotherapist from the Wild Animals Refuge in Szczecin because it was too human and there were many contradictions that arose from it. I expanded my search, still looking for polarity and dissonance.

I again invited Konrad Królikowski to join me. We created a photographic series without individual titles, of frozen wild animals created in studio photography, with clean, white backgrounds and soft light. We used the mobility of studio lighting we had found during our work on *Fullness*. We

¹⁵ in the publishing house accompanying the exhibition *Idealists and provocateurs*, BWA Bydgoszcz, 2018

¹⁶ *skipiarcz* a man recovering food suitable for consumption from supermarket garbage cans

¹⁷ a social initiative involving the distribution of warm, [vegan](#) meals for poor, homeless and unemployed people. The action is accompanied by an anti-government and anti-war message, and its guiding idea is to show that when the authorities spend money on - in the opinion of activists - unnecessary reinforcements, many people die of hunger. Food Instead of Bombs was created in the 80's [The twentieth century](#) on the initiative of a dozen or so anti-war and anarchist activists in [Cambridge](#). Currently, the action takes place regularly in many cities in [North America](#), [Europe](#) and also in [Asia](#), [Australia](#), [Africa](#).

carried out an investigation from Szczecin Basta!¹⁸ Animal Initiative on industrial animal husbandry. The collection of statements we gathered shows how the pro-animal movement is perceived by those outside it.

All of the work was closed with the critical voice of an observer, an anarchist, a man who cannot be accused of lacking support for the initiative, or lack of knowledge about its history. His sharp, dark sense of humour is present throughout his analysis. I individually created a photographic collection of wild animals in interior space, depicting the genetic and anatomical anomalies in the Department of Animal Anatomy of the West Pomeranian University of Technology. I also photographed exhibits in the National Museum of Szczecin's archives, some of which came from extinct species. Not all of these were included in the final collection.

I selected the materials for the collection and presented it during an event at the National Museum of Szczecin in December 2017. I included a video diptych, some of which also appeared in *Fullness*. The first VHS images came from the 90s and showed horses running on the edge of the forest. The second, recorded in 2013, is the video recorded in the last days of another movie. It was shot in the same place as the first by my daughter and features her asking questions, the first of which is "does she know that she is dying?". The entire exhibition was a memoir of many attitudes that people adopt in relation to other species. Some of these were purely aesthetic, others told a story. They indicated dichotomies; the agent said that as a child, he started working with a tanner, because he wanted to capture the beauty of animals (like the hero in the picture *Taxidermia* by Györgi Pálfi from 2006). The anarchist depicted a utopian, idealistic, anti-slaughterhouse perspective and pointed at the hypocrisy in it. The images I had taken of living animals in interior spaces looked like taxidermy, but the frozen carps looked alive. Only a closer look revealed the truth.

4. Artistic Practice: Guerrilla Art

After changes in the Polish political system, activity in public space began to include the expression of different, often extreme, attitudes and values. They became available to everyone. As part of the maturation of subsequent generations of street artists, the evolution of these methods and their transformation into street and urban art flourished. The full historical, social, environmental and contextual background of urban art is beyond the scope of this text, but I will introduce select, important ones.

Guerrilla art is a broad definition and includes work such as adusting and subvertising that interfere with the original meaning of commercial advertising. It intercepts and hacks the message, adding new context (for example, Janusz III Waza, or RTS vs. LKS¹⁹, Radical Creative Action) and 'culture jamming', or intercepting and changing the purpose. This can be done with architecture. It is considered part of artistic, urban guerrilla warfare²⁰. I define it as existing within a world that is illegal, anti-system, isolated and knowledgeable about the terrain and schemes of the system.

In this way, guerrilla art is separate to street art, which gradually became institutionalised and licensed. This split is related to the separation of one world into two; street artists do not always come from the background of street practitioners and may not have experience of the world that existed before institutional street art. It pushes street art toward the official and commercial realms, which is commonly thought to deprive them of their environment.

The closest relation to the project today is *Glamrury* and *Berlinkidz*²¹, then not available to the network resources²². This group was the most descriptive means of expression we had at the time. After almost a decade, others have taken shape, and other groups like ours would be *Pussy Riot* and

¹⁸ Szczecin animal initiative

¹⁹ ŁKS/RTS, Mr. Tu Nie Stał, Łódź, 2017

²⁰ *The Art of Rebellion* 3, 4. Masterpieces of Urban Art, Mainaschaff, 2016

²¹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IEgzVrRC0s> a film summarizing the group's previous activities, published on January 8, 2019; 03/22/2019

²² <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CXvq2qzubuE> early activities of the group, the film published in 2015; access: 03/22/2019

War Group.

Our activity consisted of quick reaction and discursive kitsch. We wanted the chance to communicate directly to those observing the institution. We wanted to provoke social engagement, not just capture a message.

The name was inspired by the title of the edition of the Festival of Contemporary Art, Glamour. It was the first event we entered unannounced, wanting to draw attention from the monopoly of financed art in Szczecin and open the discourse.

We kept the name and the project has grown quickly. Its momentum has surprised us. Other young activists and artists have joined us. We did the first *rooftops*²³ and illegally painted over legal graffiti. We organise demonstrations under cultural institutions. We break the hold of local art barons. We travel across Europe to commercial galleries and salons to quite Szczecin: *Karol does not have plates at home, because the home of the plates, the house of plates is closed*²⁴.

We try to cross and break borders, create works in urban space, such as *Free houses for Free people* in quarter 21 in Szczecin²⁵.

Glamrury is now receiving invitations to graffiti and street art events, including *Divergence* in Jakarta and Upfest - The Urban Paint Festival in Bristol in England. The project was founded by women and is fundamentally feminist (though I shall skip this part!). We closed the project because, as the founders entered academia, we did not feel able to maintain the uncompromising attitude that formed the core of our work. We preferred to kill the project than to compromise or censor ourselves.

Two years later, I met Prof. Wojciech Łazarczyk and Dr. Krzysztof Łukomski. Together, we created the UPSIDE ART foundation, which was also able to cross the boundaries of generally acceptable channels of popular culture and art. Some of the things we have done have been summarised in a publication published in 2018, which I have attached to this text.

The summary of this time is that it was a valuable experience in terms of pushing the limits of personal, institutional, occupational and social limits.

After obtaining my doctorate, I continued to work in urban space, both collaboratively and individually. As part of the project *Absurd, Nonsense, Oxymoron* in Bangalore, I worked as part of a group. The starting point for the workshops at Karnataka was a cargo container. The effect was spatial, and was made of cardboard boxes corresponding to the word 'air' in the most prevalent local languages.

The starting point for the workshops at Karnataka in Bangalore was a container cargo. The final effect was spatial, made of cardboard boxes (container capacity) *rooftop* on the roof of this institution corresponding to the word air / air in the most popular of the local languages. The real challenge was to put the 'air' on the roof, which eventually ended with success²⁶.

In 2018, the TRAFOSztacja Sztuki in Szczecin proposed to participate in the residency program under the name *The New Dictionary of Old Ideas*, organised in cooperation with Fiala Képzőművészek Stúdiója Egyesület from Budapest and Meet Factory from Prague. Even before leaving, I decided that a residence in Hungary would be an ideal pretext for re-using funds from the current *guerrilla art* in the context of Fidesz's policy. I chose the password for the project dictionary: *protest*. Faced with the old yacht factory on the Buda Island in Budapest and with my own fear of heights, I made a large-format inscription *Freedom to Sencow*. In its simple street form, as well as the direct transmission, it was a clear reference to other inscriptions that were created in Szczecin as a result of activities with the local anarchist and anti-fascist community. I decided to present this selection in TRAFOS during the summary *The New Dictionary of Old Ideas* in 2019:

²³ rooftop inscription on the top of the building, painted from the roof

²⁴ the legendary, restored from the 90s, an inscription on the Castle Route Of P. Zaremba in Szczecin

²⁵ described later in the occasion of publishing it as part of "The New Dictionary of Old Ideas" in 2019 at TRAFOS in Szczecin

²⁶ link to the movie with documentation <https://vimeo.com/198502588>

- *Lukashenka Chuj, Lukashenko, Nu Pagadi, Szczecin, Solidarna and Belarus*. These slogans were a spontaneous reaction to the repressive actions of the Belarusian government against protesters against Lukashenko's introduction of unemployment tax in 2017 (footbridge on Wilcza Wyszyński, Eskadrowa Streets in Szczecin)²⁷
- *I do not have time for war* was created in the context of ravages in Polish foreign policy, that the current government practiced consistently (Wiskord factory, Szczecin)²⁸
- *Free Houses for Free People*. This old slogan was the leitmotif of the series of shares in 2010. They evoked a reaction of the media and institutions (STBS) involved in changes in the so-called Quarters 21. The revitalisation of the city centre of Szczecin has for years been in the form of vacant space around the demolished quarter. There were no such "subtleties as gentrification", they were all displaced. We wanted to regain the city space for those who want to actively and creatively work in it (now you can compare it to the Tri-City Polexit). It has been transformed, among others in the initiative of the Defenders of Stalingrad 17 - meeting places for artists and presenting their achievements²⁹. In addition, the state of affairs after a decade is unchanged.

There was more work done in urban space in 2016-2018: *Europe* at the Wiskord factory, large-format posters *Ravens* on two viaducts (Wilcza Street and Tomaszowska Street in Szczecin) and other minor ones. Most of them were implemented under the common name of the project *Poverty with Misery*.

²⁷ link to documentation <https://vimeo.com/211760596>

²⁸ link to documentation <https://vimeo.com/165680164>

²⁹ along the way he was the first one organized by the foundation Upside Art UPSIDE ART WEEKEND vol.01 2013. The demolition of the mural can still be identified from cultural activities in this quarter *Jazz in free time* and that would be it.

In Conclusion

The birth of my artistic work lies in my childhood, in a forester's lodge. The proximity to nature shaped me and became my base, developing into a love and appreciation of natural landscapes. In my family home, I watched conservation efforts, in a paradoxical way certainly not related to the general profession of a forester. Covering forest areas excludes them from being a manageable resource³⁰.

A strictly economic balance became negative. Whilst working in the State Forests, my father participated in the establishment of 7 reservations³¹. This taught me the ability to contest conditions and social sensitivity. At the same time, growing in such isolation made me curious of other people and groups, urban structures and subcultures. In their contradictions, there was punk rock, which became a defined element of my young identity, helping me to define it and compensating for its intensity.

At the beginning of my work in art, I stayed on the border between the city and the country. I studied in the city, watching others but also acting with an anti-fascist community using graffiti and sub-graffiti. My home was still in the forest, located halfway between the city and the sea. I practiced living in parallel.

Initially, my paintings were about self-reflection. In my early work, man was the axis of performance, always in a gesture, in a detail, and very rarely set in any space whatsoever. I based my work on photo archives. After exploring my own identity, I began to analyse that of others, aware of the uniqueness of the access I had to both worlds. I wanted to have authentic experiences, understand real emotion and constituted identities within them. This created *Beautiful proud and young people who have nothing interesting to say* (Scholarship for Young Artists of the Marshal of the West Pomeranian Voivodeship, 2009) and *I've come up with a way, I'll pretend to be deaf and mute* (New works, Collectiva Galerie, Berlin 2009).

I reflected differently here; there was an awareness of the problems in the path I had chosen, that being to become a functioning professional in commercial art. On the one hand, this was a mercantile world, and on the other, I felt a need to criticise capitalism. A question arose in me about the validity of artistic idealism, whether the profession was useful.

As a result, painting began to finance my activism. It became a basic and permanent means of expression and research, describing and maintaining my practice. I justified it.

Art is a personal experience, both from the position of the creator and the recipient. The creators adopt different strategies. They choose different perspectives for them: the prism of problems, general or global issues or the lens of their own. They study theories or develop subjective experiences, combine or separate the first and the second. Practicing art allows creating situations that help to approach selected phenomena in an abstracted, direct form. The multiplicity of strategies and sources of inspiration remains infinite. But we always resonate this reality through our own sensitivity. It is formed by previous experiences, those spoken of and those not. Nevertheless, the basic role of art is to remind us that we are free.

³⁰ strict nature reserve - the highest classification unit of the protected area

³¹All reserves were created in the Goleniowska Forest in the Rokita Forest District, they are: Cisy Rokickie them. prof. Stanisław Król, Goleczewske Uroczysko, Przybiernowski Swamp Forest, Wiejkowski Forest them. Zbigniew Wabiszczewicz, a forester, Black Lake Reserve, Wolczenica River Gorge Reserve, Samliński Bór im. Ranger Henryk Zięciaka.

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