

10

Wstęp / Introduction

Daniel Muzyczuk i Tomasz Załuski
*Jak rekonstruowaliśmy archiwum Galerii Wschodniej /
How We Reconstructed the Archive of Galeria Wschodnia*

26

Badania / Research

Tomasz Załuski
*Galeria Wschodnia – biografia miejsca /
Galeria Wschodnia – A Biography of the Place*

424

Prolegomena / Deliberations

Daniel Muzyczuk
*Prolegomena do nauk ekonomicznych
prowadzonych od kuchni.
Trzydzieści lat Galerii Wschodniej /
Deliberations on Economics Cooked Up
in the Back Room.
30 Years of Galeria Wschodnia*

Prace / Works

Daniel Muzyczuk
*Badania ekonomiczne prowadzone
od kuchni – faza druga /
Deliberations on Economics Cooked Up
in the Back Room – Phase Two*

Mikołaj Iwański (tekst / text)
Jakub de Barbaro (grafiki / illustrations)
*Analiza modelu ekonomicznego oraz reprezentacja
wyników badań statystycznych /
Analysis of the Economic Model and Representation
of Statistical Research Results*

486

Teksty historyczne / Historical Texts

Jerzy Busza
*Wspomnienia z wystawy, której nie było /
Memories from an Exhibition Which Did Not Take Place*

Józef Robakowski
*Wschodnia – galeria życia /
Wschodnia – The Gallery of Life*

Jolanta Ciesielska
Na przykład Wschodnia / For Example Wschodnia

Maria Morzuch
Kręgi Wschodniej / The Circles of Wschodnia

Adam Klimczak
W kręgu Wschodniej / The Wschodnia Circle

Maciej Cholewiński
*Wystawa nieśmiała i inne eseje o Galerii Wschodniej /
A Shy Exhibition and Other Essays about Galeria Wschodnia*

570

Z archiwum Galerii Wschodniej / From the Archive of Galeria Wschodnia

860

Kalendarium wydarzeń / Timeline of Events

900

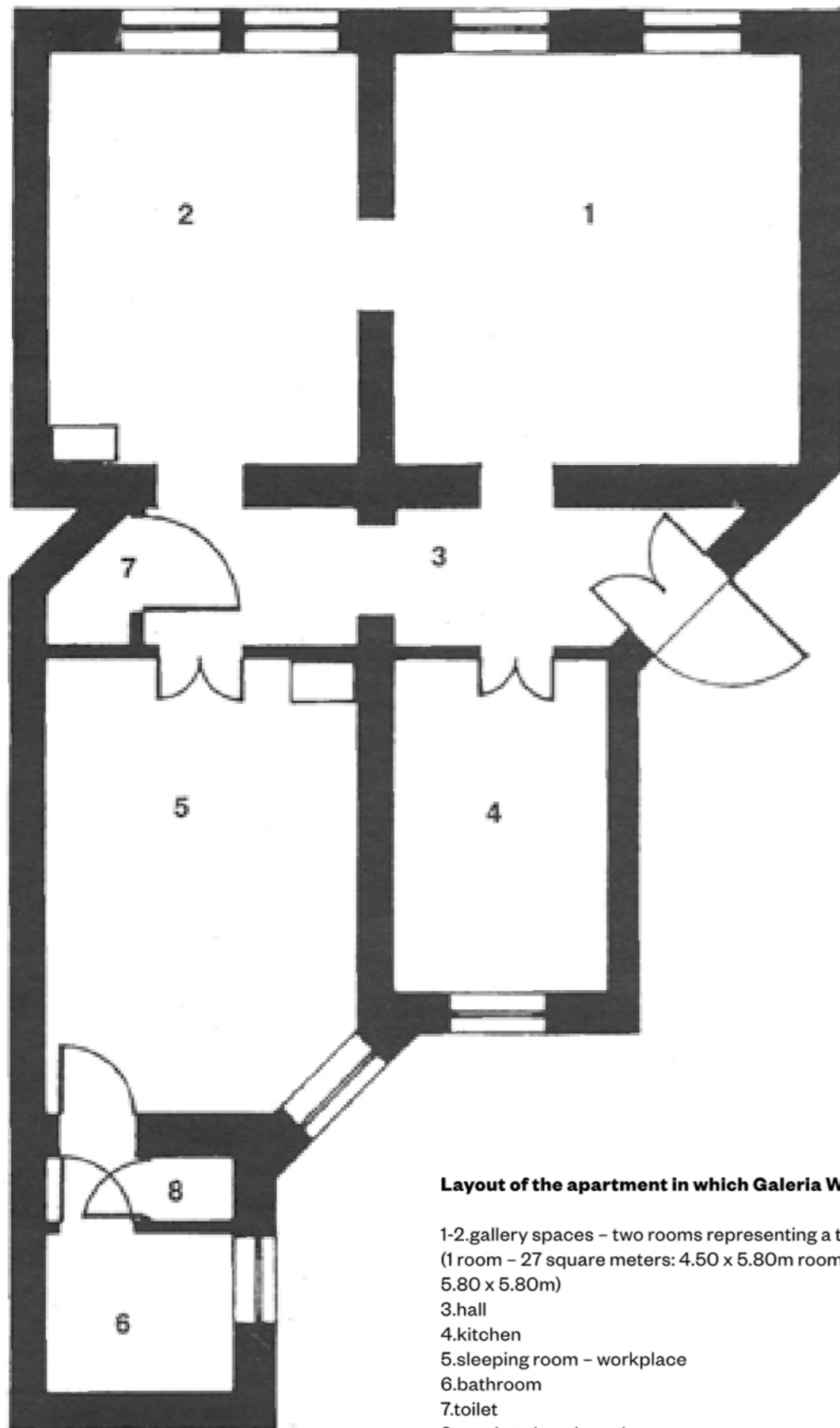
Bibliografia / Bibliography

How We Reconstructed the Archive of Galeria Wschodnia

Daniel Muzyczuk i Tomasz Załuski

The history of the alternative gallery movement in Poland has yet to be subject of a comprehensive analysis. Each year, however, there are more and more studies, presentations and discussions concerning the individual phenomena that make up this historical panorama. Archives of successive galleries are explored, interviews with their creators and animators are conducted, stories of witnesses of history are collected, documentation exhibitions are organized, books with source materials and scholarly analyses are published. Efforts have also been made to develop general guidelines that could serve to compile such a cross-sectional and comparative narrative about the activity of Polish alternative galleries. Key issues that should be covered undoubtedly include the artistic ideas behind the founding and operating of such places, as well as the related self-organization activities. The complex relationship between such initiatives and the changing political, economic, social and cultural circumstances, as well as the various strategies and tactics employed therein, should also be examined. Finally, such narrative has to include the reconstruction and analysis of international networks of contacts, communication and cooperation, on which many galleries built their program

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In the last decade, the following have been published: *Galeria AT. Czas personalny a przestrzeń*, exhibition catalog (Radom: Mazowieckie Centrum Sztuki Współczesnej Elektrownia, 2010); B. Czubak, J. Kozłowski [eds.], *Beyond Corrupted Eye. Akumulatory 2 Gallery, 1972–1990* (Warsaw: Zachęta National Gallery of Art, 2012); A. Markowska [ed.], *Permafo 1970–1981* (Wrocław: Wrocław Contemporary Museum, Motto Books, 2013); B. Czubak [eds.], *Net. The Art of Dialogue* (Warsaw: Fundacja Profile, 2012); B. Czubak [ed.], *Art of Exchange. Józef Robakowski's Collection [Latent Capital 4]* (Warsaw: Fundacja Profile and Wilanów Palace Museum, 2013); J. Kowalska, *Galeria Wielka 19* (Poznań: Stowarzyszenie Czasu Kultury, 2016); J. Kiliszek [ed.], *Dziekanka artystyczna. Fenomen kultury niezależnej na Krakowskim Przedmieściu w Warszawie 1972–1998* (Warszawa: Akademia Sztuk Pięknych w Warszawie, 2017).



Layout of the apartment in which Galeria Wschodnia is located:

- 1-2. gallery spaces – two rooms representing a total of 61 square meters (1 room – 27 square meters: 4.50 x 5.80m room – 34 square meters: 5.80 x 5.80m)
- 3. hall
- 4. kitchen
- 5. sleeping room – workplace
- 6. bathroom
- 7. toilet
- 8. overhead cupboard

activities, identity and symbolic capital. This kind of networking makes it necessary for any future history of the alternative gallery movement in Poland to set its object within a broader translocal, global or – to use a term that links these two concepts – “glocal” perspective. And although a translocal-global history of alternative galleries seems to be a thing of an even more distant future, there are already studies that comprise presentations and analyses of the activities of separate, unconnected ventures of artists from different regions of the world, as well as research on the history of actual networks and cooperation within certain regional or geopolitical entities.

The book that we hereby present to our Readers can be treated in such a broader perspective as another contribution to a comprehensive, panoramic history of the Polish gallery movement portrayed in its international network. It tells the story of Galeria Wschodnia, founded in 1984 in Łódź, in an apartment located in a nineteenth-century tenement house. Without losing sight of the translocal analytical and comparative perspectives that we have just listed, we try to focus on presenting the individual specificity of this place and its operation in the local conditions of Poland and Łódź. For over thirty years now, Wschodnia, run by artists Adam Klimczak and Jerzy Grzegorski, has been presenting works that are part of the tradition of experimental art, mainly objects and installations – especially site-specific installations – performances and activities with new media. The gallery has always been an important cultural and communal place and a focus point of organizational and artistic initiatives of Łódź – and not just Łódź – artists. Already in the 1980s, thanks to its openness and “contribution-based” program, the venue started to build its own nationwide and international network of contacts and cooperation. These local and translocal ties have developed over the decades and remain active to this day. As a result, Wschodnia’s history is also a narrative about the adventures of the associated artistic milieu – Łódź-based, Polish and international. It is a story about interpersonal bonds, intergenerational relations, community and rivalry, confrontations and conflicts, myths and artistic policies. Finally, it is a story about idealism and its inherent pragmatism, which sets artistic ideas in real conditions and operatively strives to make them come true.

Thus, Wschodnia’s history can be categorized as a phenomenon of survival. The history of the gallery is an emblematic testimony to the self-organization, operability and perseverance of the local artistic community – they form a series of activities and initiatives through which the hosts of this alternative place “found themselves” in the changing constitutional, social and political, as well as legal and economic conditions. In the rhythm of energetic

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See Ł. Guzek, “Ruch galerijny w Polsce. Zarys historyczny. Od lat sześćdziesiątych poprzez galerie konceptualne lat siedemdziesiątych po ich konsekwencje w latach osiemdziesiątych i dziewięćdziesiątych,” *Sztuka i Dokumentacja*, 2012, No. 7, p. 13–30; A. Pindera, A. Ptak, W. Szczupacka [eds.], *Inicjatywy i galerie artystów* (Toruń: Stowarzyszenie Sztuka Cię Szuka, 2014); J. Wowrzeczka, *Negocjatorzy sztuki. Studium socjologiczne galerii artystycznych w Polsce*, doctoral dissertation supervised by prof. dr. hab. Wojciech Świątkiewicz, Uniwersytet Śląski, Instytut Socjologii, Katowice 2004, in particular p. 161–298.

3.

See e.g. G. Detterer, M. Nannucci [eds.], *Artist-Run Spaces* (Zurich–Dijon: JRP Riniger, Les presses du réel, Zona Archives, 2012).

4.

See K. Kemp-Welch, C. Freire [eds.], *Artists Networks in Latin America and Eastern Europe*, special issue of the magazine *ARTMargins*, 2012, Vol. 1, Issue 2–3, and the soon-to-be-released book by K. Kemp-Welch, *Networking the Bloc. Experimental Art in Eastern Europe 1965–1981* (Massachusetts–London: MIT Press, 2019).

breakthroughs, continuations or crises, moments of inertia, suspension or hiatus, they negotiated the framework in which they came to act, adapted to it, tried to change, circumvent or create a new one. The execution of their grassroots artistic initiatives would not have been possible without this pragmatism of means and actions. Wschodnia is also the story of the continuation of the idea of an alternative gallery movement from the 1970s in the following decades, as well as of “prolonged duration”, vitality and adaptability of the neo-avant-garde formation. Having been active for over thirty years, against the background of profound political changes, the transition from the economic and socio-political realities of the late People’s Republic of Poland to the “shock” of the transformation of the early 1990s, the progression of wild “turbo-capitalism” in post-socialist Poland and the spread of the mechanisms of global neoliberalism after the country’s accession to the European Union, the gallery is an extraordinarily important place and can be examined as an example of broader processes of transformation of alternative artistic culture and self-organization initiatives in the local and international context.

The idea to write a book on the history of Galeria Wschodnia was first formed in 2014, on the gallery’s thirtieth anniversary. There was no source research on Wschodnia’s history at the time, and the gallery archive itself was incomplete, scattered, lacking any structure and context. There was no photographic documentation or paper publications related to many exhibitions and events, and only a handful of materials were digitalized. The existing texts on the history of the gallery were just of general nature, and circulating narratives on this subject contained inaccuracies, as did the presentations done by the gallery itself. At the beginning of the 1990s, Wschodnia hosts began working on a book that would synopsise the gallery’s activities in the previous decade and include a set of documentary materials – photographs and critical texts – from all of its exhibitions and events. The book was to be titled *Dokumenty Galerii 1984–1989* [Documents of the Gallery 1984–1989] (in another version: *Dokumenty faktów 1984–1989* [Documents of Facts 1984–1989]) and was intended as the first in a series of publications presenting Wschodnia’s activity. Unfortunately, none of these publications have ever seen the light of day. In order to symbolically refer to this unfinished project, evoke the memory of the promise contained in it – and in a way keep it, on behalf of Wschodnia hosts, many years later – we decided that our book, which tells the story of thirty-three years of the activity of this place, should be titled *Galeria Wschodnia. Dokumenty 1984–2017*. The publication required undertaking long-term archival and research work. Its prelude was an artistic activity tellingly titled *Rekonstrukcja* [Reconstruction], organized and conducted by Karolina Breguła in April 2011, as part of III Festiwal Sztuka i Dokumentacja [3rd Art and Documentation Festival]. The artist became interested in the gallery archive, and when it turned out that it was dispersed, incomplete and unstructured, she initiated an action meant to organize its content. During the event Breguła, Grzegorski and Klimczak, dressed in white protective suits and gloves, were searching the archives and, together with the audience participating in the event, putting them into folders dedicated to particular exhibitions and events. At the turn of 2012 and 2013, Breguła also produced a video entitled *Wschodnia poprzedniego wieku* [Wschodnia of the Previous Century], presenting the statements of people associated with Wschodnia on selected events in the history of the gallery. Both of these actions were symbolic gestures which demanded that the work be undertaken and continued in the form of a methodical reconstruction of the archive and a proper research query. At the turn of 2013 and 2014, a preliminary curatorial research was carried out by Daniel Muzyczuk for the purposes of the exhibition *Prolegomena do badań ekonomicznych prowadzonych od kuchni. 30 lat Galerii Wschodniej* [Deliberations on Economics Cooked Up in the Back Room. 30 Years of Galeria Wschodnia]. In cooperation with the gallery hosts, he made a prelimi-

Galeria Wschodnia – A Biography of the Place

Tomasz Załuski

*It is therefore a living place, with a clear personality,
a place far from the sterile void of official art salons.¹*

Introduction: life-in-art

How to best define the phenomenon of Galeria Wschodnia in Łódź? In the catalogue of II Biennale Sztuki Nowej [2nd Biennale of New Art] organized in 1987 – I will return to that later – Grzegorz Dziamski attempted to synthetically describe and conceptually organize the phenomenon of the gallery movement, which developed intensively in Poland at the turn of the 1960s and 1970s. He referred to a multitude of names that define this kind of artistic life: “authorial galleries”, “laboratory galleries”, “galleries without conventions”, “other”, “independent”, “experimental” and “non-institutional” galleries.² He also reconstructed the shared features of their activities. They opposed traditional art, which was closed to experimentation, and the institutions that presented it – official galleries, museums and exhibition offices, with their traditionalism, conservative exhibition policy, bureaucracy and inertia. The positive program of those “other” places, on the other hand, was marked by such elements as deliberate commitment to new artistic tendencies, values, attitudes and concepts not yet verified, at the stage of crystallization and development, which could not be unambiguously identified and classified. This was linked to the search for adequate ways of revealing new artistic phenomena and the desire to create presentation formulas that would be as closely aligned with their specificity as possible. This led to a change in the identity and function of the gal-

1
This is how journalist Marek Miller characterized Galeria Wschodnia in 1987 – see M. Miller, “Off Off Piotrkowska,” *Kalejdoskop*, February 1987, No. 2, p. 46.

2
G. Dziamski, “Galerie alternatywne w Polsce,” in: Z. Polus, *II Biennale Sztuki Nowej*, exhibition catalog (Zielona Góra: BWA w Zielonej Górze, 1987), p. 10. At least three terms could be added to this list: “informal”, “unofficial” and “private” galleries.

lery, which ceased to be limited to the presentation of ready-made projects and became actively involved in the process of stimulating the development of art and the production of artistic events.³

Dziamski rightly emphasized that the gallery movement generated many names to help with its self-identification, but none of them was undisputable, as it described only a selected, partial aspect of the movement’s activity. Many “independent” galleries – ran by trade unions, schools, students, etc. – were in fact dependent on various institutional or economic factors.⁴ The “non-institutional” galleries, which grew out of grassroots, self-organizing initiatives and informal activities, in many cases evolved into more traditional and conventionalized places of art presentation. An analogous case was the “galleries without conventions”, which emphasized their open character and the break with the existing models of institutionalized exhibition, but most often quickly developed their own conventions and models. Even the term “authorial galleries”, probably the most popular in the 1970s, could not cover the whole phenomenon in question. It emphasized the creative nature of the concept of the gallery’s functioning, the question of personal responsibility for its formula, program and artistic choices. Dziamski did not write explicitly why it had a fragmentary character, but his analysis can be supplemented by pointing out that not all of the places that made up the gallery movement were based on original concepts, not everywhere the concept of their functioning was closely interlinked with the leader, nor was the authorship always identifiable and “undispersed”. Finally, Dziamski proposed the term “alternative galleries”, treating it as a collective concept, which describes the whole phenomenon in a general and relatively neutral way.⁵

Following this apt suggestion, in the text I will talk about the “alternative gallery movement” as a general context of reference for the activity of Galeria Wschodnia, and I will approach it as an individual example of an “alternative gallery”. This choice is also supported by the fact that in the second half of the 1980s, at a time when Wschodnia was undergoing intensive development and building its identity, “alternative” was a frequently used term in the description of the gallery movement in Poland. Nowadays, while emphasizing the local, historical specificity of this phenomenon in its Polish edition, this concept also allows us to inscribe it in a broader, international context and historical narratives about “alternative” spaces or artistic places in other countries.⁶ Sometimes the ambiguity and lack of precision that characterize the category discussed here is pointed out, to some extent rightly so. However, this does not change the fact that it retains the value of generality, which is absent from such contemporary terminological proposals as “artist-run spaces”. And although the latter term fits Wschodnia perfectly, it characterizes only one of its aspects. Nor can it, due to its frag-

3
Ibidem, p. 11.

4
In many cases, if the concept of “independence” is to be retained, it should be limited to program issues and the activities of a gallery should be analyzed in terms of the relationship between its program independence and its institutional and economic dependencies, or more specifically in terms of the way in which it negotiated its program independence.

5
See G. Dziamski, “Galerie alternatywne w Polsce,” op. cit., p. 11–12. An even more neutral term is proposed by Łukasz Guzek, who speaks generally about “gallery movement” or “the movement of galleries”, although he also tends to consider the whole history of this phenomenon in relation to the “conceptual gallery” model in the early 1970s – see Ł. Guzek, “Ruch galeryjny w Polsce. Zarys historyczny. Od lat sześćdziesiątych poprzez galerie konceptualne lat siedemdziesiątych po ich konsekwencje w latach osiemdziesiątych i dziewięćdziesiątych,” *Sztuka i Dokumentacja*, 2012, No. 7, p. 13–30.

6
See for example M. Rachleff, “Do It Yourself: Histories of Alternatives,” in: L. Rosati, M.A. Staniszewski [eds.], *Alternative Histories. New York Art Spaces 1960 to 2010* (Cambridge and London: The MIT Press, 2012), p. 23–39.

mented nature, be the key to the history of the gallery movement to which Wschodnia belongs.

In the text I analyze the specific character of Galeria Wschodnia from the perspective of what I call “the biography of the place”. Both concepts that make up this category stem from the discourse that emerged in the artistic circles associated with the gallery’s activities as early as the 1980s, and at the same time have theoretical references to contemporary humanities. Thus, Wschodnia was – and I am writing about this in detail later on – referred to as a “place”, an “open place”, a “living place”, and even as a “gallery of life”. In the 1980s, the gallery was a place in the artistic, social, anthropological and cultural sense: a place where not only did artistic ideas and new possibilities for art come to fruition, but also where interpersonal and environmental bonds were established, individual and group biographical trajectories intersected, and artistic culture understood as a form of life in art developed. It was a place that created its own milieu, establishing an important landmark in artistic space. The “life” of Wschodnia was closely linked with the life of the artistic community gathered around it. As a result, the gallery has always been an extremely sensitive seismograph of the milieu’s “tectonic movements”, evolutions, vibrations and shocks, shifts and dislocations, accumulations and collapses, and the processes of concentration and disintegration.

Wschodnia has been and still is a very “open” and “artistic” place: what has always defined it is the fact that it has “given room” to various artistic ideas and practices, changing community and social relations, growing networks of contacts and cooperation, transformations in artistic culture and the external factors that have conditioned it: economic, social, political and legal. It yielded to these different forces – albeit not without resistance, evasion and negotiation – allowing them to transform and imprint their traces, and changing according to the way in which it was used. Its history is at the same time an accumulated, stratified memory of all the variable factors that for over three decades have shaped its existence in the material and symbolic dimension. Thanks to this, the presented case study of Galeria Wschodnia, the outline of a specific “biography” of this “living place”, does not concern only the specificity of the gallery itself or even the broader mechanisms of alternative galleries in Poland in the 1980s and beyond, but also provides insight into the history of the Łódź artistic community in its national and international network, and offers valuable material for research on the economic, social and political conditions of artistic and cultural production in Poland since the 1980s until today.

“Biography” is not only a convenient metaphor, but also refers to the “cultural biography of things” – a research perspective that was one of the inspirations for my analyses. This perspective shows the “social life of things”⁷ and the transformation of their status, values and meanings

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See A. Appadurai [ed.], *The Social Life of Things. Commodities in Cultural Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986). Ewa Domańska writes about the “biography of things” as a perspective which, despite the declared interest in things, remains too anthropocentric, because in fact it focuses on the relations between things and people. E. Domańska, *Historie niekonwencjonalne* (Poznań: Wydawnictwo Poznańskie, 2006), p. 104–127. Although I acknowledge that Domańska’s criticism is justified in the context of research on things, I try to use the potential of the “biographical” perspective in my text, due to different research objectives.

depending on the changing modes of use and local historical conditions. Following a thing, reconstructing, analysing and interpreting the various stages of its “life”, the subsequent transformations to which it has been subjected, provides data on the culture of its users.⁸ It makes it possible to capture such thing in its materiality, to treat it as a causative factor around which a community of its users is formed (sometimes the thing is even treated as a non-human element of such a community), as well as to extract from it the memory of the configuration of local material, technical, economic, cultural, social, political and legal conditions, etc., which shaped its identity and the ways in which it was used. One of the important issues addressed in this type of research is the economic context of existence and functioning of the thing, determined by the opposing – but also intertwining – aspects of commoditisation (utilitarian and exchange value) and singularization (absolute value situated outside the possibility of exchange). This allows us to analyze economic mechanisms in culture and at the same time define it by striving for the singularization of things: “Culture ensures that some things remain unambiguously singular, it resists the commoditization of others; and it sometimes resingularizes what has been commoditized.”⁹ All these aspects can be successfully applied to Wschodnia, which has not only been an individual thing that requires a whole range of activities carried out within the framework of changing economic systems to exist and function, but is also a place of singularization of a multitude of other material things used in the production of artistic works – things that have become, for a longer or shorter time, a part of the gallery’s material and symbolic space.

Combining all these references and inspirations, I try to create something that I would like to call a material and milieu-oriented biography of Wschodnia. Apart from the characteristics of the gallery’s activity and the history of its artistic endeavors, this biography takes into account the material transformations of the place of the gallery itself, the economy of its maintenance and financing of its activities, the artistic and social life of the milieu gathered around it, in its community and agonistic dimension, and finally – changing conditions of life and artistic production in Poland since the 1980s until today. The most general question I try to answer based on the multitude of forms of the memory of Wschodnia – from the documentation in its archives and other institutional archives, through published testimonials of the reception of its projects, to interviews with participants of events – is what methods of action were used by people associated with Wschodnia in order to “negotiate” the existence and functioning of the gallery under changing economic, legal, social, political and cultural conditions. What self-organizational strategies and operative tactics did Wschodnia invent and use in order to partially adapt to its determinants, how did it try to use and exploit the opportunities they gave, and how did it attempt to change them, function outside them or create completely new conditions, fully in line with the specifics of its aspirations and actions?

8

Igor Kopytoff, one of the authors of this research perspective, explained what it means to follow the “life” of things on the example of a car: “The biography of a car in Africa would reveal a wealth of cultural data: the way it was acquired, how and from whom the money was assembled to pay for it, the relationship of the seller to the buyer, the uses to which the car is regularly put, the identity of its most frequent passengers and of those who borrow it, the frequency of borrowing, the garages to which it is taken and the owner’s relation to the mechanics, the movement of the car from hand to hand over the years, and in the end, when the car collapses, the final disposition of its remains. All of these details would reveal an entirely different biography from that of a middle-class American, or Navajo, or French peasant car.” – L. Kopytoff, “The cultural biography of things: commoditization as process,” in: A. Appadurai [ed.], *The Social Life of Things. Commodities in Cultural Perspective*, op. cit., p. 67.

9

Ibidem, p. 73.

Wschodnia – The Gallery of Life

Józef Robakowski

Wschodnia Street – like Piłsudskiego Street – is famous for its sleazy bars, slums, poverty, dirt and a large mass of private little shops. Local attractions include a bar called “Golonka” [The Pork Knuckle], the annual Corpus Christi celebration, the apartment of the poet Zdzisław Jaskuła and Galeria Wschodnia... This is the heart of Łódź, and it beats with a full force of a nightmarish art-life.

Grabowski, Markowski, Filko, Sztabiński, Krüll, Berdyszak, Cegiela, Duraj, Laskowski, Ledwoński, Mikołajczyk, Bigoszewski, Kamiński, Chętko, Bikont, Knittel, Grzegorski, Nędziniński, Kwiek, Lewczyński, Natalia LL, Pacholski, Klimczak, Robakowski, Wojnecki, Rydet, Kalinowska, Misson, Różycki, Blaine, Rytka, Bory, Miccini, Ciesielski, Hofter, Andre, Sarenco, Verdi, Bills, Böhm, Downsborough...

It is a phenomenon on a global scale when normal, everyday life coexists with art, new art. An ordinary tenement apartment acquired in 1981 survived the Martial Law as an independent gallery by virtue of the work of two fanatics of current art – Adam Klimczak and Jerzy Grzegorski. Their superhuman effort is fulfilled as a unique opportunity for the artists performing there – an opportunity to be free, unrestricted, completely in their own right, in the aura of numerous viewers and art experts of all generations. The popularity and life of the Gallery, which has been operating continuously for six or seven years now, is based on its open nature, both for artists and audiences. The only criterion for the “bosses” of Galeria Wschodnia is the high quality of artists found sometimes in the most obscure places.

Gribling, Honory, Hilgemann, Hill, Janssen, Levine, LeWitt, Lowe, Maurer, Matsuzawa, Mertz, Mohr, Nonas, Oksiuta, Panhuysen, Partum, Łazikowski, Rabinowitch, Dziubak, Schabraq, Waško, Weiner, Winiarski, Bałdyga, Kwietniewski, Libera, Rzepecki, Paruzel, Smoczyński, Truszkowski, Dovsing, Kafka, Samosionek, Teatr im. Kici-Koci, Warpechowski, Przybyła, Płotnicka, Łazarczyk, Kwaśniewski, Gajewski, Fliciński, Orłowski, Zamiara, Czerwonka, Schabracq, Rickels, Wersche, Klassen, Nieslony, PioTrowski, Poppel, Vaara, Petryk, Ducki, Czerwińska, Dembiński, Odoliński, Taszycki, M. Waško, Janaszewski, Czuraj, Czajkowski, Przybielski, Kiniorski, Filonik, Wielogórski, Świetlik, Darge, Breyne, Burnet-Smith, Fredrikson, Dudek...

Klimczak and Grzegorski are extremely active, they tend to be wherever problems important for the present art emerge. Sensitive and vigilant, they are guided by infallible intuition, looking for authentic artists with an inquisitive nature. The intensive life of this PLACE stems from their resistance to the current fashions, global brand trends or commercial opportunism. They work in their own way, without giving in to “experts” and “specialists” or generational categories, although they are open to the so-called external proposals, many of which they are happy to implement. Their program is fulfilled in all media, without professional “resistance”, as a private alternative gallery, maintained at their own expense, based on sympathizers, artists and people of good will. It is certainly the best Polish gallery today because it was born out of enthusiasm, honest work and eagerness of a large artistic community from all over the country.

Raynard, Checefsky, Cassara, Świdziński, Golec, Murak, Pereszlenyi, Balázs, Várnagy, Studio Art Video 235, Vedder, Gruber, Bódy, Międzynarodowy Magazyn Video Infermental, Blume, Meissner, Kaprow, Fischer, Palestne, Raskin Stichting, Günther, Rybczyński, Weibel, Sharits, Czukay, Bunne, Yello, Rosenbach, Janiak, Guillaumon, Raes, Jumalan Teatteri...

Klimczak and Grzegorski are artists themselves, which may explain everything. Excellent artists, too, and their own original spatial installations incite audiences to reflect on the issues they address. Their works are difficult, they need to force their way into Polish art. The most important thing is that the artists appear where needed although this does not mean that they attend major official artistic demonstrations. In order to understand all this, one has to follow them, find their gestures in the gray life of Łódź, because it was this theme that gave them life and it is in this life that they are truly authentic.

1990

The Circles of Wschodnia

Maria Morzuch

During the eighties Galeria Wschodnia has won itself a significant place in Łódź, creatively filling the space between the stable and varied public life of art in the city and the sphere of the short-lived and volatile enterprises, as well as the rising galleries which exhibited and sold works of art.

The liberality of the gallery on Wschodnia Street – its strategy without strategy – has practically created a new receptive place where the roads of artists from different places and generations cross. It so happened that in the past decade of the complicated Polish reality everything that was just beginning, that was a debut, attracted a lot of attention. Galeria Wschodnia did not shut for the “young” or “old”; on the contrary, it created a field for coexistence and intermingling of various artistic circles. We are familiar with this liberality; there are no generation divisions, the Gallery does not limit itself to the exhibitions of the local artists or to the one selected branch of art. Artists who put their works on display in the Gallery come from Warsaw, Poznań, Koszalin, Gdańsk, Lublin, Cracow and from all over the world – there were Germans: Dieter Krüll, Sibylle Hofter, Hilmar Boehle; Peter Downsborough, an American; Ivan Kafka, a Czech; Paul Panhuysen, a Dutchman; artists from Lyon in France and from Hungary. Zbyszek Warpechowski's performances took place here, as well as the international video meetings organized by Józek Robakowski and the installation of Antoni Mikołajczyk. You could meet people who felt at home in the Gallery and those who experienced Łódź, Poland and the “natives” for the first time, those who were able to bring us all together, so that new relations arose thanks to the people from the outside.

The activity of the gallery is by definition conceived by Jurek Grzegorski and Adam Klimczak as capacious, the right to make error taken into account, just as this flat-gallery is capacious physically. It is the potential of space. It meets the challenge when economy and the meaning of asceticism of an object in pure space is necessary, and it also works when it centers around a

whole number of objects. This interior may correctly carry a point and the precision of a straight line cutting across the words (which thus become different) in a pure, neutral background (the exhibition by Peter Downsborough, *i/and*, 1987).

This is what might happen in a two-room flat with a stove, at once separated and joined by the door. The empty door-space helps to connect two spaces simultaneously or to differentiate various parts of an exhibition – or it becomes a different frame of a nearby work of art. *Ścierki wizytek* [Visitant Nuns Floor Cloths] by Teresa Murak, the crude beauty of everyday history is hung between as a “leftover”, Hilmar Boehle and Jurek Grzegorski used it as two suggestions in one exhibition, Kafka suggested a possibility of a different view. Sometimes an artist feels at safe in the dimensions and repetitions of the gallery's architecture to transport the cohesion of the space of his own workshop, as it happened in the case of an exhibition by Marek Chlanda.

Artists invited to Galeria Wschodnia test and verify themselves, others made their debuts here and important attempts, still others – the experienced ones – diagnosed their current state of being. There was a very important meeting with Warpechowski, a show with his granddaughter (sic!) entitled *Azja* [Asia]. Through such a demonstration of this rare instance of nepotism, through public reading of this diary Warpechowski made very personal comments on the pain and suffering of life, interpersonal relations in Eastern Europe. We felt it was a very private gathering.

The Gallery means the flow of information and you do not have to travel far in order to see the latest videos by an American Paul Sharits or the Germans Vedder and Gruber. All thanks to Józek Robakowski, who brought us the international edition of a video review, known throughout the world as “Infermental”, together with its authoress, Vera Bódy. Another artist connected with Łódź, Antoni Mikołajczyk, began his light shows in Cologne (Moltke-rei), where he met with a favourable response. He presented his installation in Poland for the first time in 1985, in Galeria Wschodnia – the light rays disciplined by a given shape of parallel lines and their reflections created an image of something non-existent or something that would cease to exist almost immediately.

But the Gallery is also a place of specific and measurable games, like Sibylle Hofter's exhibition *Budujemy mosty dla Pana Starosty* [Building Bridges for the Foreman], when the artist joyfully filled the gallery with her objects-handworks. Thanks to their unpretentiousness and their own joy of life she integrated the gallery space in a new way, new also for us, for the spectators. In the materials available in Poland she managed to find a new quality and she came up with an idea of her own work as a factory manufacture, a Łódź factory, of course. And another German artist,

Kalendarium wydarzeń / Timeline of Events

Kalendarium obejmuje wszystkie wydarzenia składające się na historię Galerii Wschodnią w latach 1984-2017. Są to przede wszystkim projekty zorganizowane przez samą Wschodnią i zrealizowane w jej siedzibie, rzadziej – w przestrzeni miejskiej Łodzi. Są to również przedsięwzięcia współorganizowane z innymi galeriami i instytucjami artystycznymi, polskimi lub zagranicznymi, zrealizowane w różnych miejscach, także poza Polską. Wreszcie, są to imprezy zewnętrzne, na których Wschodnia prezentowała się poprzez dokumentację swej historii i/lub twórczość związanych z nią artystów i artystek. Nie uwzględniono tu natomiast projektów, w których prowadzący Galerię Wschodnią – Adam Klimczak, Jerzy Grzegorski, a po 2000 roku także Ewelina Chmielewska uczestniczyli jako indywidualni artyści, organizatorzy lub kuratorzy, nie występując pod szyldem galerii.

Podstawą dla opracowania niniejszego kalendarium był spis wystaw i innych wydarzeń związanych ze Wschodnią tworzony na bieżąco przez prowadzących galerię. Został on

zweryfikowany, poprawiony i uszczegółowiony w oparciu o dostępne źródła: zachowane zaproszenia Galerii Wschodniej, informacje podane w lokalnej prasie drukowanej – w miesięczniku „Kalejdoskop” i łódzkim dodatku do „Gazety Wyborczej” – oraz (w przypadku ostatnich lat) na portalach internetowych związanych z Łodzią.

Ogromna różnorodność przedsięwzięć Galerii Wschodniej, a także zmieniające się warunki polityczne, społeczne i ekonomiczne, w jakich przyszło jej działać, sprawiły, iż dużym wyzwaniem było ujednoczenie zapisu poszczególnych wydarzeń. W efekcie format ich zapisu zmienia się w zależności od charakteru informacji. Jeśli nie podano inaczej, wszystkie wydarzenia miały miejsce w siedzibie galerii. Aby pokazać dynamikę przemian materialno-organizacyjnych warunków działalności Wschodniej, a także prześledzić jej instytucjonalne usieciwienie, uwzględniono też dostępne informacje na temat podmiotów, z którymi galeria współpracowała bądź które udzieliły jej

wsparcia – finansowego, sprzętowego, lokalowego, patronacko-medialnego itp. Kalendarium zachowuje też inne ślady zmian, jakie nastąpiły w trzydziestotrzyletniej historii galerii. Do początku lat 90. w opisach występuje określenie „komisarz”, w okresie późniejszym – „kurator”. W tytułach oraz opisach gatunkowych wcześniejszych realizacji zachowano oryginalną pisownię słowa „video”. Do 2006 roku prowadzący Galerię Wschodnią „lokalizowali” też prezentowanych artystów i artystki, podając

The timeline covers all events that make up the history of Galeria Wschodnia in 1984–2017, primarily projects organized by Wschodnia itself and hosted on the premises, or, more rarely, in the urban space of Łódź. These also include projects co-organized with other art galleries and institutions, Polish or foreign, carried out in various places, also outside Poland. Finally, these are external events during which Wschodnia presented itself through the documentation of its history and/or the work of its artists. However, the timeline does not include projects in which the management of Galeria Wschodnia, namely Adam Klimczak and Jerzy Grzegorski, and since 2000 – Ewelina Chmielewska, participated as individual artists, organizers or curators, and did not represent the gallery itself.

This timeline has been based on a list of exhibitions and other events related to Wschodnia, compiled on an ongoing basis by the gallery's administration. It has been verified, corrected and expanded on the basis of available sources: preserved invitations, information printed in local press – “Kalejdoskop” monthly and the supplement to “Gazeta Wyborcza” in Łódź – and, in recent years, on Internet websites dedicated to Łódź.

The great variety of projects carried out by Galeria Wschodnia, as well as the changing political, social and economic conditions under which it had to operate, made it a major challenge to develop a uniform model for

na zaproszeniach nazwy miast – w przypadku twórców polskich, lub krajów – w przypadku twórców zagranicznych. Nie dotyczyło to jednak wystaw zbiorowych. Oba te fakty znalazły odzwierciedlenie w kalendarium. W przypadku kilku wystaw i projektów zbiorowych, w których brało udział ponad pięćdziesięcioro osób, lista uczestników i uczestniczek została pominięta. Pozostałe informacje zamieszczone w opisach wiążą się ze specyfiką poszczególnych projektów.

the records of particular events. As a result, their format changes depending on the type of information. Unless otherwise stated, all events took place at the gallery's premises. In order to show the dynamics of material and organizational changes in the conditions of Wschodnia's activity and to follow its institutional networking, available information on the entities with which the gallery cooperated or which provided support – funding, equipment, premises, media patronage – has also been taken into account. The timeline also retains other traces of changes that took place in the thirty-three-year history of the gallery. Until the early 1990s, the descriptions included the title *komisarz* [commissioner], later replaced by *kurator* [curator]. The original spelling of the word “video” has been preserved in the titles and descriptions of earlier projects. Until 2006, the management of Galeria Wschodnia “localized” featured artists, providing the names of cities (in the case of Polish artists) or countries (for foreign artists) in their own record of events. However, this did not apply to group exhibitions. Both these facts have been incorporated into the timeline. In the case of several group exhibitions and collaborative projects in which more than fifty people were involved, the list of participants has been omitted. Other information included in the descriptions is related to the specific nature of individual projects.

1984

28 II – III

Janusz Cegiela, Paweł Duraj, Jerzy Grzegorski, Adam Klimczak, Mirosław Ledwośniński (Łódź)

Wystawa grafiki / Exhibition of Graphic Prints

IV

Zygmunt Laskowski (Łódź)

Malarstwo / Painting

VI (otwarcie / opening: 1 VI)

Leonard Grabowski (Łódź)

Typografia, książki unikatowe, obiekty ekstatyczne / Typography, Unique Books, Ecstatic Objects

16 XI – 16 XII

Wiesław Markowski (Gdańsk)

Wiesław Markowski 1938–1978. Malarstwo, grafika, rysunek / Painting, Graphic Prints, Drawing

1985

8 II – III

Stano Filko (Czechosłowacja / Czechoslovakia)

Białe przestrzenie. Prace z lat 1973–1978 / White Spaces. Works from 1973–1978

III

Grzegorz Sztabiński (Łódź)

6 lat (obrazy, rysunki) / 6 Years (Paintings, Drawings)

IV (otwarcie / opening: 12 IV)

Dieter Krüll (RFN / Federal Republic of Germany)

Rysunki, obiekty / Drawings, Objects

V (otwarcie / opening: 7 V)

Jan Berdyszak (Poznań)

Katedra (instalacja 1985). Studia po... (grafika 1979–1983) / Cathedral (1985 installation). Studies After... (graphic prints 1979–1983)

25 X – XI

Jacek Bigoszewski (Łódź)

Horyzont (malarstwo, projekty scenograficzne) / Horizon (painting, stage design)

9 XII – 15 I (1986)

Antoni Mikołajczyk (Łódź)

Lina, przestrzeń, światło (instalacje i fotografie) / Line, Space, Light (installations and photography)

1986

II (otwarcie / opening: 3 II)

Andrzej Chętko, Leonard Grabowski (Łódź)

Mail-Game (sztuka poczty / mail-art)

25 II – III

Marek Kamiński (Katowice)

*Malarstwo, fotografia, videoperformance „Per Ass, Hole and Cello” / Painting, Photography, Videoperformance “Per Ass, Hole and Cello”
współpraca / collaboration: Stowarzyszenie Twórców Kultury / Culture Creators Association*

III

Piotr Bikont, Krzysztof Knittel (Warszawa),
Marek Nędziński (Kraków)

Piotr Bikont i przyjaciele. B.O. (Pętla – partytura filmowe, koncert) / Piotr Bikont and Friends. B. O. (Loops – Film Scores, Concert)

5 – 26 IV

Postawy. Fotografia / Attitudes. Photography

komisarz / curator: Antoni Mikołajczyk

Paweł Kwiek, Jerzy Lewczyński, Natalia LL, Antoni Mikołajczyk, Zdzisław Pacholski, Józef Robakowski, Andrzej Różycki, Zofia Rydet, Zygmunt Rytko, Stefan Wojnecki

21 V – 20 VI

Elżbieta Kalinowska (Koszalin)

Znak i przestrzeń / Sign and Space

współpraca / collaboration: Stowarzyszenie Twórców Kultury / Culture Creators Association

27 XI – XII

Arias Misson, Julien Blaine, Jean-Francois Bory, Eugenio Miccini, Sarenco, Franco Verdi (Włochy / Italy)

Logomotives 1963–1986. Visual Poetry – poezja wizualna

1987

7 – 12 II

Andrzej Ciesielski (Koszalin)

Piszęcosłyszę / IwritewhatIhear

20 II – 15 III

Sibylle Hofter (RFN / Federal Republic of Germany)

Budujemy mosty dla Pana Starosty. Obiekty, obrazy / Building Bridges for the Foreman. Objects and Paintings

IV (otwarcie / opening: 4 IV)

Utopia i Rzeczywistość / Utopia and Reality

komisarz / curator: Antoni Mikołajczyk

Carl Andre, Tom Bills, Hartmut Böhm, Peter Downsbrough, Frank Gribling, Jerzy Grzegorski, Ewerdt Hilgemann, Anthony Hill, Alexander Honory, Servie Janssen, Adam Klimczak, Les Levine, Sol LeWitt, Edward Łazikowski, Peter Lowe, Dóra Maurer, Yutaka Matsuzawa, Albert Mertz, Antoni Mikołajczyk, Manfred Mohr, Richard Nonas, Zbyszek Oksiuta, Paul Panhuysen, Andrzej Partum, David Rabinowitch, Józef Robakowski, Alexander Schabracq, Ryszard Waśko, Lawrence Weiner, Ryszard Winiarski, Zbigniew Zieliński

2 – 3 V

I Majówka Artystyczna Złote Czółko (obrazy, obiekty, instalacje, koncerty, projekty, akcje, wideo) / Golden Forehead – 1st May Day Art Picnic (paintings, objects, installations, concerts, projects, actions, video)

Galeria Mieszkanie Świetlica „U Zofii”:

Mikołaj Smoczyński, Janusz Dziubak

Galeria Wschodnia: **Janusz Bałdyga, Jerzy Grzegorski, Marek Janiak, Grzegorz Klaman, Adam Klimczak, Andrzej Kwietniewski, Zbigniew Libera, Anna Płotnicka, Adam Rzepecki, Jerzy Truszkowski, Ewa Zarzycka**

6 – 23 V

miejsce / space: Biuro Wystaw Artystycznych / Art Exhibition Office, Zielona Góra

II Biennale Sztuki Nowej (malarstwo, grafika, performance, prezentacje autorskie, filmy, wideo, odczyty etc.) / 2nd Biennale of New Art (painting, graphic prints, performance, presentations, films, video, talks, etc.)

galerie / galleries: **Akumulatory 2** (Poznań), **Galeria AT** (Poznań), **Galeria BWA** (Lublin), **Galeria Działań** (Warszawa), **Pracownia Dziekanka** (Warszawa), **Galeria Foto-Medium-Art** (Wrocław), **Galeria „po”** (Zielona Góra), **Galeria RR** (Warszawa), **Galeria Wielka 19** (Poznań), **Galeria Wschodnia** (Łódź), **Zakład nad Fosą i Ośrodek Działań Plastycznych** (Wrocław), **Galeria 72** (Chełm)

komisarze wystawy Galerii Wschodniej / curators of the Galeria Wschodnia exhibition: Jerzy Grzegorski, Adam Klimczak

artyści i artystki zaprezentowani przez Galerię Wschodnią / artists presented by Galeria Wschodnia: **Andrzej Ciesielski, Jerzy Grzegorski, Sibylle Hofter, Marek Janiak, Elżbieta Kalinowska, Adam Klimczak, Andrzej Kwietniewski, Zbigniew Libera, Antoni Mikołajczyk, Adam Rzepecki, Jerzy Truszkowski**

29 V

Andrzej Paruzel (Warszawa)

Sznurowadła w kolorze zieleni weneckiej (instalacja) / Venetian Green Shoelaces (installation)

27 VI – 20 VII

Peter Downsbrough (USA)

i (AND)