

NATALIA SZKRABA

JUST LETTERS

16 SEPTEMBER –10 OCTOBER 2021

Galeria Design UAP

ul. Wolnica 9 | bud. E UAP | Poznań

What is life for us? Who are we? Why are we here? In our daily hustle and bustle, we rarely reflect on these questions. We are immersed in a moment. We plunge into everyday problems, issues of survival, as well as in social, economic and political problems. In my opinion, however, there is something more that a human being may not be able to comprehend.

We are surrounded by people. We communicate with someone every day. We are in constant communication with ourselves, thoughts appear and disappear. We observe what is happening and participate in what is happening. Man is one of the main objects of our reality. Sometimes it is difficult for us to sense or understand other people, their thoughts and actions. Language is one form of communication. This, in turn, can be turned into letters, words and sentences. But before that happens, thoughts come to us.

In my project, I intend to show the relationship between the thoughts of some people and the perception of others (viewers). A thought as memory, a thought as perception, a thought about fears, a thought as a decision, a thought as an action. Man is like a vessel filled with thoughts. And sometimes it is difficult for other people to understand, see and find our thoughts. When one person shares their thoughts with another person, that thought takes on a slightly different meaning. Therefore, our communication is sometimes difficult because the person is often subjective and cannot always see what is happening from the outside.

JUST LETTERS. This project answers six questions. These are just letters, just words, just sentences. But they have come a long way to be here in this place and in this space. I hope that these answers will help convey the images of people who participated in the project and will make it easier to come into contact with their thoughts. And they will allow you to create a certain general image of today's young people. I would like these answers to appeal to the viewers. In my project, I discuss the subject of a mask. A mask as an image through which other people perceive a person, a mask as an image through which this world is perceived. The mask is a symbol of transformation, change and, at the same time, concealment and mystery. The mask is endowed with the ability to transform the present time into the desired one and to overcome the limits of one's nature. In

the ancient theatre, masks not only laughed or cried, but also embodied dozens of different human types and states of mind. Interestingly, the ancient Greeks did not call theatrical masks 'masks'. The Greeks used to say 'prosopon', which literally means 'what you see in front of you'. The ancient Greeks referred to face with the same word. This means that both a face and a theatrical mask were 'prosopon'.

The project is also sociological in nature. I sent 168 letters with questions and received 14 responses, which I used as the basis for my project. The questions were sent to Poles aged 25 to 40 who were involved in creative activities. The questions were as follows: 'What person has influenced your views the most?'; 'Why?'; 'What are you most afraid of?'; 'What item do you associate with yourself?'; 'Why?'; 'What is your first memory in life?'; 'Close your eyes for a moment, what can you see?'; and 'If you could send a message all over the world, what would you say in 30 seconds?'. Overall, 154 people did not send any answers to the questions, which has been presented in the form of an installation. The project consists of several graphic sheets and films.

In my graphic sheets and films, I have combined two languages: Polish and Belarusian. The Belarusian language is represented by the Polish alphabet. In this part of the project, I want to show the topic of the Borderland. What is the mutual influence of two cultures, two nations. The Polish-Belarusian borderland and the influences and similarities of the languages, music and folk arts. Borderland for me is, above all, crossing the boundaries of my own culture and entering the meeting point of cultures and their dialogue.

Natalia Szkraba

1988 – born in Soligorsk, Belarus

2008-2011 – studied at the State College of Fine Arts in Gomel (the Faculty of Painting)

2011-2017 – studied at the Belarusian State Academy of Fine Arts (the Faculty of Monumental and Decorative Painting)

2021 – is a scholarship holder of the Gaude Polonia Scholarship Programme of the Minister of Culture

JUST LETTERS

Curator: prof. dr Janusz Bałdyga

Photos: Paweł Turłaj

Actress: Katierina Szimanowicz



Uniwersytet Artystyczny
im. Magdaleny Abakanowicz
w Poznaniu



FUNDACJA
NOWA
UAP

POZnań*