

I appear to myself as the place where something is going on, but there is no 'I', no 'me'. Each of us is a kind of crossroads where things happen. These crossroads is purely passive; something happens there. A different thing, equally valid, happens elsewhere. There is no choice, it is just a matter of chance.

**Claude Lévi-Strauss, *Myth and Meaning*<sup>1</sup>**

The title of this exhibition alludes to a physical phenomenon that allows the velocity of liquid's flow to be determined relative to time and space. The works entitled *II, From the Series of Everyday-Life Collections* (2021) by Anna Goebel and *Constant Presence despite the Inevitable End* (2021) by Dorota Tarnowska-Urbanik are the results of a certain suspension of an individual perspective. On the other hand, they fit into some collective experience of the pandemic and the resulting isolation and unpredictable events. This state, often conducive to meditation on everyday life, brings out abandoned things from the seemingly ordinary spheres of life. In the 15th century, they were situated in painting on the other side of the sacred-profane dialectic, that is, vision and reality, which was beyond the painting. Cabbage leaves, pieces of cards, sheets of tracing paper, notes and, most of all, the treatments that these objects have undergone are therefore special products of 'reflection on what is unnoticeable and constitutes a multiplied challenge'.<sup>2</sup>

The effort resulting from the practical aspect of creating these works, the endless repetition of activities consisting of preparing fragments of paper and leaves, as well as copying and rewriting them reveal difference, thanks to which we do not only see what is different, but also 'that by which the given is given'<sup>3</sup>. The copies and the originals thus acquire an equivalent or permanent status, again abolishing the tendency of our subjectivity to position itself towards one or the other, one or the other side. The resulting element can be read over and over again and it allows man to 'retreat within himself'<sup>4</sup>. When we add conversations with friends, correspondence and notes from everyday life to these treatments, we will receive a broad range of what the ancients referred to as work or self-care.

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<sup>1</sup> Claude Lévi-Strauss, *Myth and Meaning*, London, 1978, p. 2.

<sup>2</sup> *Semiotyczne wymiary codzienności*, (eds) A. Grzegorzczak, A. Kaczmarek and K. Machtyl, Poznań, 2018, p. 7.

<sup>3</sup> Gilles Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, London and New York, 1994, p. 140.

<sup>4</sup> Marcus Aurelius as quoted in M. Foucault, *The History of Sexuality: 3: The Care of the Self*, London, 2019, online version; no pagination, [https://books.google.pl/books?id=ahWfDwAAQBAJ&hl=pl&source=gbs\\_navlinks\\_s](https://books.google.pl/books?id=ahWfDwAAQBAJ&hl=pl&source=gbs_navlinks_s) (accessed on 21 October 2021).

Self-culture is a strategy of getting to know oneself, creating oneself, experiencing oneself and the moment when 'the work of oneself on oneself and communication with others were linked together'<sup>5</sup>.

We know from *The Decameron* that the best place for recreation is a garden close to nature.

Boccaccio's *giardino* not only 'made it possible to escape the plague raging in Florence'<sup>6</sup>, but was also a place of fun and, above all, it made it possible to disconnect oneself from the world. Anna Goebel's gardens and labyrinths have the properties of the real world and the world of fantasy. It is a garden freed from the form of things known to us; it is combined of endless paths, lines diverging into waves and margins (cabbage does not resemble *brassica*). Just as art conquers nature in Boccaccio's gardens, so art in the artist's gesture releases nature of dissected vegetable. On the other hand, the mere excess of matter and the strategy of repetition and hapticity blow up the absence of the thing represented in the still life by ostentatious illusion (*trompe l'oeil*), providing an actual representation.<sup>7</sup>

The exhibition contains one more story that belongs to the collection of the history of the painting itself. Making the marginal (which were the elements of still life and writing in the 16th century), also known as *parerga* (what is additional to the work)<sup>8</sup>, the leading theme of the works is another gesture that Stoichita describes as 'transformation of the anti-image into an independent image' (the reverse takes the place of the obverse).<sup>9</sup> The intertextual play with the image and what is beyond it are thus another artistic gesture that sets the flows presented in the unknown directions of interpretation, experience and the status of the existence of the work itself. It should also be noted that the *parerga* used to frame works. In the works displayed at the exhibition, what is out of frame not only occupies their centre (*ergon*), but by freeing the image from its frames, we stop thinking about the centre and its limits in general.

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> *Muzyka w ogrodzie – ogród w muzyce*, (ed.) Sławomira Żerańska-Kominek, Gdańsk, 2010, p. 153.

<sup>7</sup> The Japanese Tosa school defined the artist's tasks in the process of making good representations. The last level of initiation released the spirit filling the body and it was made possible by breaking the rigor of the suggestive copy of objects in the picture in favour of the traces of its presence. Total deformation was allowed, which freed the world governed by the law of nature for the benefit of the world of art.

<sup>8</sup> J. Derrida writes: it is an additional thing or being preoccupied by something, activeness or performance, which is situated next to or just next to [...] because it lacks the self [...], more in: *La vérité en peinture*, Gdańsk, 2003, pp. 66-67.

<sup>9</sup> V. Stoichita, *Ustanowienie obrazu*, Gdańsk, 1999, p. 34.

Despite the perceivable differences in the use of materials, it can be said that in the spaces inhabited by the works of both artists, there are currents that go in the same direction. This phenomenon known as laminar flow arises smoothly. So fabrics do not separate our bodies from the outside, nor are they woven in relation to verticals and levels. Once being an astonishing parergonal embellishment, they are now becoming universal textuality.

The resulting fields also allow the desired absorption of the outside,<sup>10</sup> again blurring the boundaries of the works. The pieces of art are devoid of 'ideological statements' and convey pre-affective values hidden somewhere in blackness. Confined spaces are broken and the royal rule collapses. Art is born, originating from the abstract lines described by the authors of *A Thousand Plateaus* in the following way:

Such a line is inherently, formally, representative in itself, even if it does not represent anything. On the other hand, a line that *delimits nothing, that describes no contour*, that no longer goes from one point to another but instead passes between points, that is always declining from the horizontal and the vertical and deviating from the diagonal, that is constantly changing direction, ... the nomadic line... which ... unleashes the power of repetition ... Free action proceeds by disjunction and decentering ... disjoint polytheism instead of symmetrical antitheism.<sup>11</sup>

The self-organising flows in the works displayed are a process that has no beginning or end. It is an uninterrupted image of intensity, vibrating on itself, which grows and avoids any orientation or external purpose. The French thinkers have described this phenomenon as a plateau.

The power of these works lies in the non-dogmatic multiplicity that can be combined with something else, which is best expressed by the formula: pluralism equals monism.

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<sup>10</sup> In physics, black is not a colour, but a state of complete absorption of light.

<sup>11</sup> Gilles Deleuze, Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, London and New York, 2004, p. 549.

