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THE SPACE OF GESTURE

DOCTORAL DISSERTATION

In the field of art, in the discipline of fine arts and art conservation

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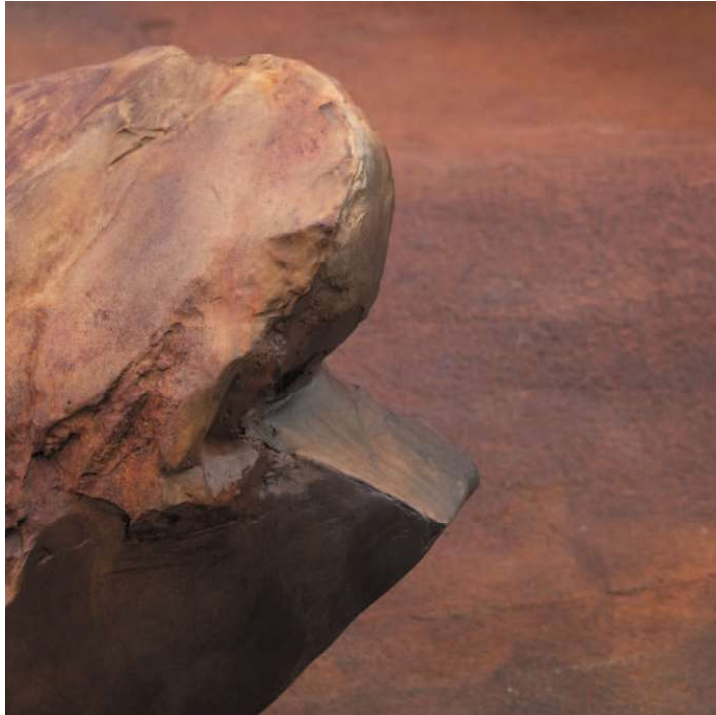
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“The resilience of art is best demonstrated by works created not in joyful elation and the glow of fame, but amidst doubts, fears, rejection, as well as disbelief and self-denial”¹.

¹ M. Poprzeczka, *Impasse, Resistance, loss, powerlessness, art*, Fundacja Terytoria Książki, Gdańsk 2020, s. 9.



THE INTRODUCTION

The aim of this dissertation is an attempt to explain the artistic realization of my doctoral project. For me, it represents a place to organize my thoughts, a symbolic collection of doubts and uncertainties, a depiction of experiences, trials, work with imagination, and the need for expression. The relationship between the creator and the work is usually an intimate, personal matter that words cannot interpret. Something remains in the form of a mystery, which is intriguing if it is not fully revealed.

My work is a sculptural realization consisting of two elements. They constitute a complete whole, but are the result of a different kind of expression. In this dissertation I will try to intuitively introduce the viewer to the area of my exploration, but this is not an accurate description of the work. As Olga Tokarczuk writes: "Describing is like using - it destroys, the colors rub off, the edges lose their sharpness, and finally what is described begins to fade, to disappear"². When I embarked on the realization of *The Space of Gesture*, my visions were vastly different from the final form of the work. The creative process is a complex act in which the creator must agree to constant changes. They come unexpectedly, ruining planned, orderly thoughts. Insufficiency and the unfulfilment of one's own intentions and expectations motivate and prompt the discovery of new areas. Work is thus the result of personal journey, somewhat defined by the title. Both, the concept of space and the gesture evoke associations with vast, unbounded areas of interpretation, but I have appropriated them to describe my own experiences.

The dissertation is divided into short chapters where I strive to explain the words which serves as interpretation of my project.

2 O. Tokarczuk, *Flights*, Wydawnictwo Literackie, Kraków 2007, s. 79.

THE GESTURE

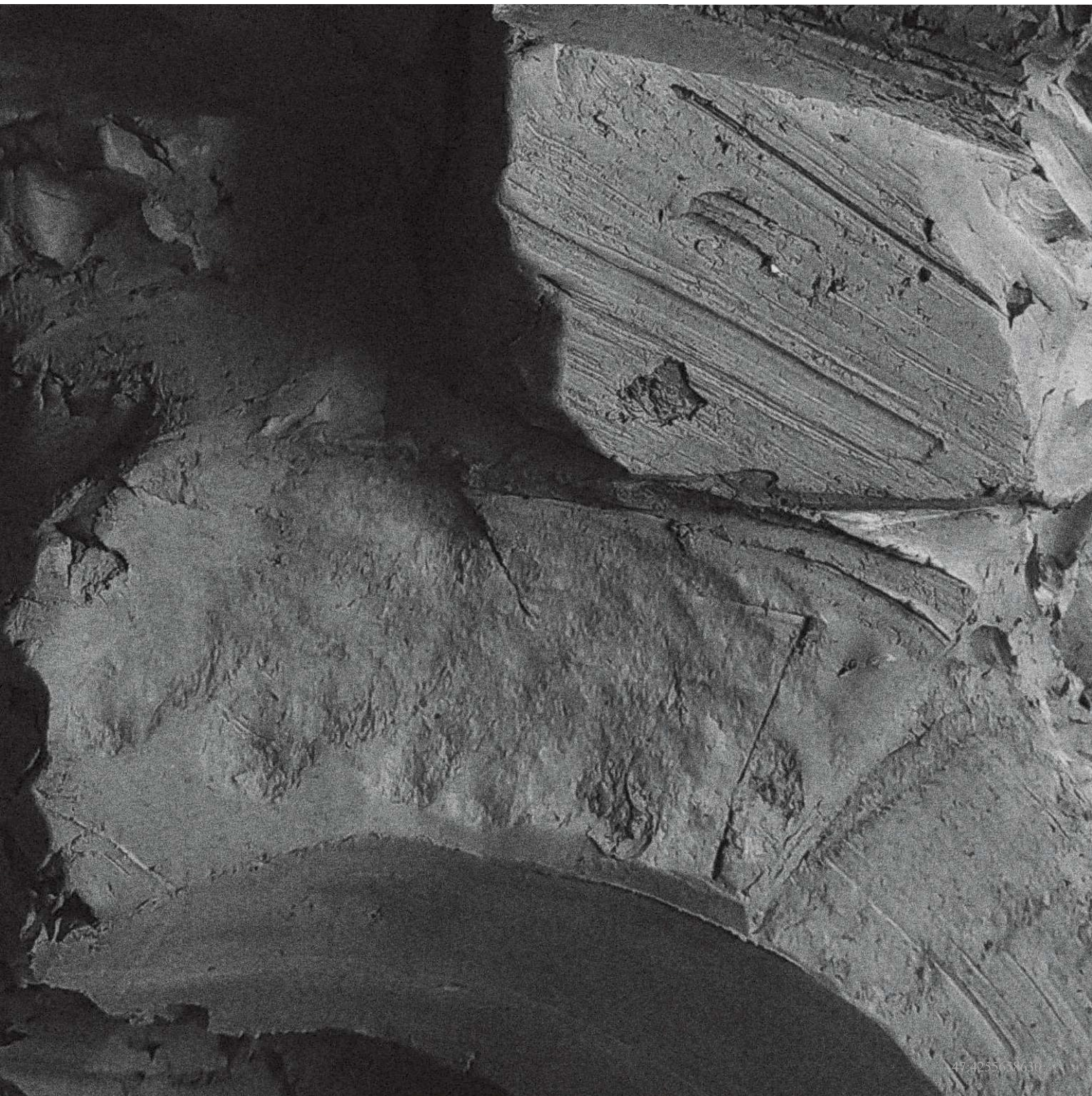
Gesture — this word came to my aid when I tried to define my work, unify my actions, find a common point, and name what and how I want to narrate. In my understanding, gesture was associated with expression, a swift movement of the wrist. Regardless of the artistic discipline, it appeared as a means of expression, an unrestrained statement, genuine and sincere brushstrokes, fingerprints in clay. I begin this dissertation with this word. However, its meaning is fuller. A gesture is an expression of courage, a decision.

The concept of gesture can be understood in various ways. The first and most common association with gesture is a hand movement. In this sense, a gesture is a means of communication or a symbolic action. “Research on gestures is not new, but it was not until the 20th century that linguists began to study this phenomenon, distinguishing gestures related to language from those that are independent of verbal flow (emblems) or are related to the emotional-psychological state of the subject (nonverbal expressivisms)”³. In the creative process, gesture, also as movement, is rather an emotional expression, a means of artistic expression.

“Dunikowski unceremoniously brings the meaning of grand gestures into art, embodying the most primitive, blunt, and perhaps most expressive instincts of expression in people with broad, lush, and plastic imaginations. Just as he wants to depict infinity, great space, hopelessness, loss, with a sweep of the hand, he draws powerful lines of inclination, suppression, explosion, dream, struggle, impulse, fall, annihilation, loss and plea. Such sculpture is a hundred times more direct and primal [...] due to its ability to convey the fundamental dynamics of human emotions [...]”⁴.

3 A. Zalaźńska, *Gestures depicting the conceptualization of time (using examples of statements by Poles)* [in:] *Poetics of Gestures: Language, Literature, Culture*, red. T. Bielak, J. Pacuła, L. Romaniszyn-Ziomek, Wydawnictwo Naukowe Akademii Techniczno-Humanistycznej, Bielsko-Biała 2014, s. 54.

4 C. Jellenta, *The Playing Summit: synthetic-critical studies*, Kraków: S. A. Krzyżanowski, Kraków 1912, s. 112.



Manual, spontaneous artist's hand gesture is connected with emotions' indulge, exteriorize of self-expression of inner experience. In art history, it adopts a form of sign. That signature mark as a separate part of personality reveals artist's identity.

„The contemporary gesture is impatient, nervous, quick, and hurried, yet at the same time restrained. It lacks the ,decisive simplicity with which people of the past reached for everything [...], where only the starting and ending points mattered. Between these two simple moments, countless transitions slipped in.”⁵.

In the visual arts, the concept of gesture has most prominently marked itself in painting as a trace or stance represented by „gesture painting” and actions devoid of control over the image. However, the creative gesture can be considered differently than the ideology of spontaneous, individual expression. It is not only an accidental, automatic act but can also result from a specific choice or decision. Shifting the meaning of gesture is often connected with an engaged stance on transforming reality or the processual nature of the work. Elżbieta Kalinowska, in her article „Art as a Private Gesture,” refers to a historical artistic event from 1989: „Art as a private gesture, in my intentions, was a correction of the entrenched image of consciousness and reality, one of the possibilities for articulating free expression in every respect. (...) Art as a private gesture marked a time of revolutionary changes, programmatically initiated freedom of thought and creation, and annulled all state and institutional acquiescence to the practice of creativity in any field”⁶.

5 M. Popiel, *Rodin, or the World: Two Cosmogonies by Rainer Maria Rilke and Georg Simmel*, [in:] *Spaces of Theory*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe UAM, Poznań 2018, s. 28.

6 E. Kalinowska, *Art as a Private Gesture*, Art_and_Documentation_18_section1_anex_kalinowska.pdf [20.02.2024].

I use the gesture as a mark that lasts only a moment but is the result of a longer process. In the private space of the studio, we experience movements, doubts, and attempts. These create gestures, even the shy ones revealing the identity of the creator. In my view, a gesture is a phenomenon related to movement and life. It is an indefinite fragment of the creative process that determines the final character of the work. Free from formal boundaries, it can be an impatient expression of the need for expression, but also as a thought, a hermeneutic gesture is an integral element of the creative statement.

The art of sculpture, providing a sense of three-dimensional space in which we can exist, touch, observe, and feel, is also an area of meaning through gesture. The sculptural gesture, not only the one captured in the plastic material, is associated with spatial vision, the creation of space, and movement around and within it. After all, a gesture can be a conscious conceptual action, an intention. Always individualized — what is it?" How to define it? Or perhaps the gesture is me? It is anyone who feels the need to express. An individual marked by a trace, thinking, capable; a proof of the author's existence.

SPACE

The word *space*, like *gesture*, encompasses a multitude of meanings and directions of action. Experiments with space relate to significant changes in the history of sculpture, such as the opening of the solid form or the movement of shapes. „The task of sculpture is not to mould this or that figure. The essential basis of sculpture is space and the manipulation of this space, the organization of rhythm and proportions, and the harmony of form connected with space”⁷. Katarzyna Kobro’s theory of sculpture treats space as the most crucial sculptural issue. The space surrounding the solid form has been absorbed into the sculptural form, becoming an immanent part of the composition. In the Manifesto by Naum Gabo and Antoine Pevsner, it is stated: „We reject the solid form as a way of representing space. Space cannot be measured by solid form any more than liquid can be measured by linear means. Look at our actual space: is it not a continuous depth? We recognize DEPTH as the only form of representing space”⁸. In sculptural work, the analysis of the concept of space has expanded the means of expression to include movement, light as a building material for form, and even action over time. These explorations relate to the connection of sculpture with its surroundings, to sculptural compositions that integrate and absorb the surrounding space. Moreover, treating space as a component of form has changed the presentation of sculpture, discarding pedestals in favour of accepting the existing situation—spatial divisions such as walls, floors, and geometric compositions. Incorporating space into sculpture has expanded the artwork, transforming it from a single solid form into a complete, unconventional situation. Sometimes, artists also enter natural space and intervene in the landscape through real changes. However, their actions are focused rather on the idea and process’ records.

7 K. Kobro, *Untitled statement (incipit: For people incapable of thinking)*, „Forma” 1935, nr 3, s. 14; cyt.za: M. Czyńska, *Leap into Space*, Wydawnictwo Czarne, Wołowiec 2015, s.9.

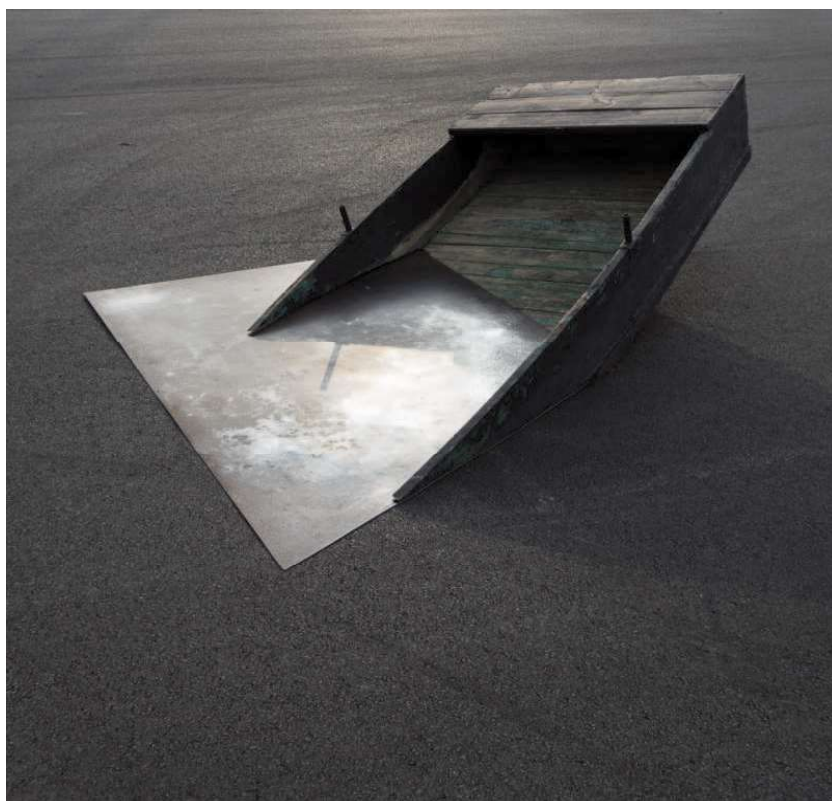
8 N. Gabo i A. Pevsner, *The Realist Manifesto* [w:] J. Białostocki, *20th Century Art*, PWN, Warszawa 1971, s. 48.

Social space is a different issue. Creative action forms oriented on life experience orbit, common space, local, public, etc. prove the sense of social affiliation or artist's mission.

As children, we get to know space in our own backyard. We experience nearby squares, hills, and forests. The best playground for me was the area around the pond near my family home. Measuring the horizon line, the sun setting behind it, the vast surface of the water's mirror, the labyrinths in the wet sand were objects of carefree, yet unaware, play with space. I captured these memories in my work *Diary*, where I used a real object from the described place and time. The work became an attempt to capture the imagined, sensory space, a diary that I wanted to keep.

2022

Diary



I address the topic of space in the classes I teach at the Institute of Fine Arts. The name of the module, Creative Actions in Space, obliges me to ask myself and my students about space. It is usually associated with a vast, open area, an unattainable horizon, an open field. Students in the Game Design and Virtual Space program design cyberspace. Our activities focus on sensitive observation of the real world to create a faithful illusion or a poignant interpretation. Thus, we speak of a fragment of space, a sublime sphere that we analyse thoroughly. Unlike the discipline of sculpture, such creativity encloses space, creating an independent, new, isolated situation.

The physical aspects of space, the connection with the surrounding, the real situation and even the transformation of reality into an artistic installation by the creator's decision have expanded over time to include another dimension of space – the imaginary. Freely shaping space according to individual decisions and visions involves opening up to personal reflections. An artist, free from traditional conventions, directs their explorations toward the intellectual significance of space. The inspiration is their own personality and internal states. These are the sources of ideas, the suggestions of form. Space has become not only a means of artistic expression but can also be seen as a carrier of meanings and emotions. Sculpture is not just a physical object but a tool for expressing thoughts, feelings and ideas.

In the context of these abstract concepts, a spiritual space emerges – a symbolically designated zone of experiences related to being, existence. In my understanding, spiritual space is something inexpressible, private, subjective. It is associated with discovering one's own identity, as well as a sense of freedom and transcendence.

The creator projects symbolic space of its own. The area of experience, thoughts which the author expresses by the means of gesture. It can be closed, separated, but a recipient with its own imagination can be also invited. Some time ago I came up with a significant size plane – rusty sheet metal which captivated me with its intense colour, form as the squashed parts of the sheet resembled non-ironed fabric, but first and foremost it captivated me with its scale. The visually striking object was compelling to me since it triggered in me determined movements – I measured its width with my arm span, I encircled it, I sat next to it, viewing like a painting. Then, I had no knowledge how to use the plain, but from the very first encounter with the matter gave me the feeling of a new flair of space.

MATTER

„Although to this day the concepts of form and content define the way we think about art and within art, and these concepts are treated as a complementary pair, too often in this context we forget about the third concept, that of matter. Perhaps indeed matter is heavy, resistant, difficult (as various mythologies present it), and the spirit risks being immersed in it. However, what would art be without it, without taking on its challenge?”⁹. At the beginning of my licentiate studies, I discovered Anselm Kiefer's works. Initially, I was inspired by the issues he raised. With time, my enthrallment with Kiefer's works opened my way to quest for the form and relation between the creator and the matter. An artist employs old books, age worn textiles, dried flowers, broken vessels, everything which helps to compose an authentic and sincere story. Lead, soil, glass – every used material has its own significance. It was the genesis of my interest in art-work matter.

In 2021, I created a series of drawings entitled *Addressee unknown*. It was a highly private work, a sort of letters to my Grandma whom I never got to know, whom my Mum did not manage to get to know. A set of small-sized works was a response to a poignant problem of lost relationship. Hearing my Mum stories, full of sorrows and grief, I felt a need of writing a letter, my emotion's transcript, establishing a contact. I presented a mother's portrait with the help of a drawing, I desired to create a direct story about her, a map of her face, the lighting and shadow, the surface of her skin. I applied handmade paper, which texture complemented my impression. While detaching pieces of paper surface I obtained light, fluffy spots with different roughness.

9 J. Krupiński, *Matter of the image* [in:] Scientific and artistic notebooks of the Faculty of Painting of the Academy of Fine Arts in Cracow, nr 3, Kraków 2001, krupinski.asp.krakow.pl/content.php?page=docs/materia_obrazu.htm&type=teksty, [10.03.2024].

The soft paper contrasted the area hatched with gleaming graphite. The visible texture of the paper complemented my drawing.

2021

Addressee unknown



Working with matter is a process of shaping a conscious attitude for the creator. On one hand, listening is important. Being a good listener is often more challenging than being a good speaker. Staring, being present, and remaining silent teach humility and allow understanding of the content. On the other hand, the creator cannot be an unnoticeable addition dominated by the existing state. Therefore, the practice of collaboration is crucial. The content of the material is directly linked to the form of the work created by the artist.

2019

Traces of matter



The sculpture studio sessions began with preparing the structure. On easels, we placed bases made of nailed-together boards measuring approximately 0.5 × 0.5 meters. They were worn out by previous years' students and were meant to be used by the next ones as well. Time and work were preserved in the form of round stains in the middle of the surfaces. There were fragments of resin or plaster, remnants from sculpture castings. The wooden boards had changed colour, dried clay, embedded nails—all these created images I could not escape. Each time, my imagination suggested portraits.

I enjoyed browsing through the worn-out bases in the storeroom near the studio. During my doctoral studies, I finally decided to create a series of paintings/objects in which I inscribed imagined faces.

The matter of an artwork is a wise choice, complementing the idea. This is evidenced by *The Madonna of the Poor* sculpted by Jan Kucz from potato sacks, or the white host and crumbling clay creating a vivid poetics in the work *Hunger*. Antoni Rżęsa sculpted with respect for wood and its history. Matter contains part of the mystery. Therefore, interacting with it, getting to know it, is much more valuable.



During my doctoral studies, I discovered the need for experimentation. It allows for transcending traditional principles concerning technology and artistic disciplines. In my activities, I take on challenges related to discovering matter, traces of time, mixing painting and sculpting experiences, accepting chance, numerous decisions, and attempts. In the work *The space of gesture*, I used large steel sheets, which became a pretext for reflection and exploration. It is a material that can be formed, preserving the enforced shape. Simultaneously, it entranced the eyes sensitive to playing colours, engages the touch through diverted texture. It consolidates in one space the term of gesture, courage of action, movement and the possibility of spacious creation and a drawing on a surface. At the same time, it is supposed to be the physical witness of changes, gestures and experiences. The locating of the object initiated my search for additional elements from which I intended to create a set of works. I gathered steel sheets of various sizes and shapes. I started my work with drawing. The surface area already contained an image—red-brown rust stains, scratches. I integrated my drawing into the existing composition. Polished fragments became mirrors. I experimented with acid to make rust the painting medium. However, all these efforts proved insufficient. I felt that my actions were dominated by the material's allure.

Everyday life can be difficult. Working as a teacher placed me within the rigid confines of a system. As a highly sensitive person, I absorbed the emotions of children dealing with severe physical and mental dysfunctions. I came to know their aggression, fears, doubts, and rebellion. I collected everything, holding it inside. Although I sometimes felt a sense of satisfaction, believing I was succeeding in building supportive relationships, reality often delivered a sudden blow. The education system lacks reflection on what is most important. Bureaucracy, haste, advertisement, hierarchy, and so on, proved to be what mattered. Everyday life can be difficult because we represent a different kind of consciousness and sensitivity. We brush against each other in tight spaces and time, yet we experience something entirely different. I am generally a quiet person. I usually treat my frustrations and anger as intimate, personal matters. When I found myself in a place that imposed a challenging structure of functioning, I realized that the area where I have the most courage to speak is art. Drawing, painting, and sculpture became my therapy. When creating, I am not quiet; my gestures are loud and clear.

ASYLUM

I let myself mention this work because I have a strong sense that it was a very fruitful time for the described piece. Physically, I worked late into the evenings; I couldn't afford to spend much time in the studio, yet I created it in my mind. It was my escape from difficult challenges and often painful failures. My thoughts circled around the large piece of metal, creating a map of gestures I could imprint on it. I imagined entering a space whose ceiling was defined by bent metal.

The encounter with the material was like meeting a close person after a long absence. Rediscovering anew, confronting the after-image of imagination with the real. Fascination with something new—not new, a sense of the physicality of the experience. The large object became for me a small fragment of reality that already contained my emotions, my need for expression. Though it remained visually in the same state in which I found it, it became an asylum of gesture.

The initial painting and drawing attempts proved insufficient. Therefore, I decided to use steel sheet metal as the material for the sculpture. The already existing folds evoked associations with fabric, a more human form, connected to humans.





(SELF-)PORTRAIT

Considerations about the human being constitute a universal issue frequently explored by creators. Examining subjectivity and identity opens an intriguing field of exploration leading to self-understanding and self-knowledge. Experiencing oneself in action and analysing one's signature gesture is for the creator a path to understanding humanity, but primarily oneself. Karl Jaspers analyses the essence of human existence through experiencing the moment, being in a situation, and living through it. Since our presence in the world, our experiences, and our choices shape the human condition and define identity, we become subjects of contemplation for ourselves.

In my previous work, I have been developing the theme of the portrait. Initially, it was a studio portrait, then an impressionistic one, until it became an immaterial, non-physical problem. Understanding the essence of the portrait is aided by the reflection in the mirror, offering possibilities for reading, interacting with the face, feeding a fascination with the body and the mystery of being. By closing the eyes, the definition of the face escapes, but images appear through which one can see better and more. It is a simple gesture through which questions about humanity become clear.

Despite understanding the portrait holistically, as a complex image representing a person, it still evokes my associations with the face. As Josef Tischner writes: "The face is human truth. The face contains some reflection of ideal beauty, ideal goodness, ideal truth. It can captivate, enchant, lift one above the prose of the world towards the poetry of existence. But it is also fragility, lostness, harm, or poverty"¹⁰. Thus, the face is not read as a literal image but as an expression of the inner self.

¹⁰ J. Tischner, *Philosophy of Drama*, Wydawnictwo Znak, Kraków 2006, s.84.

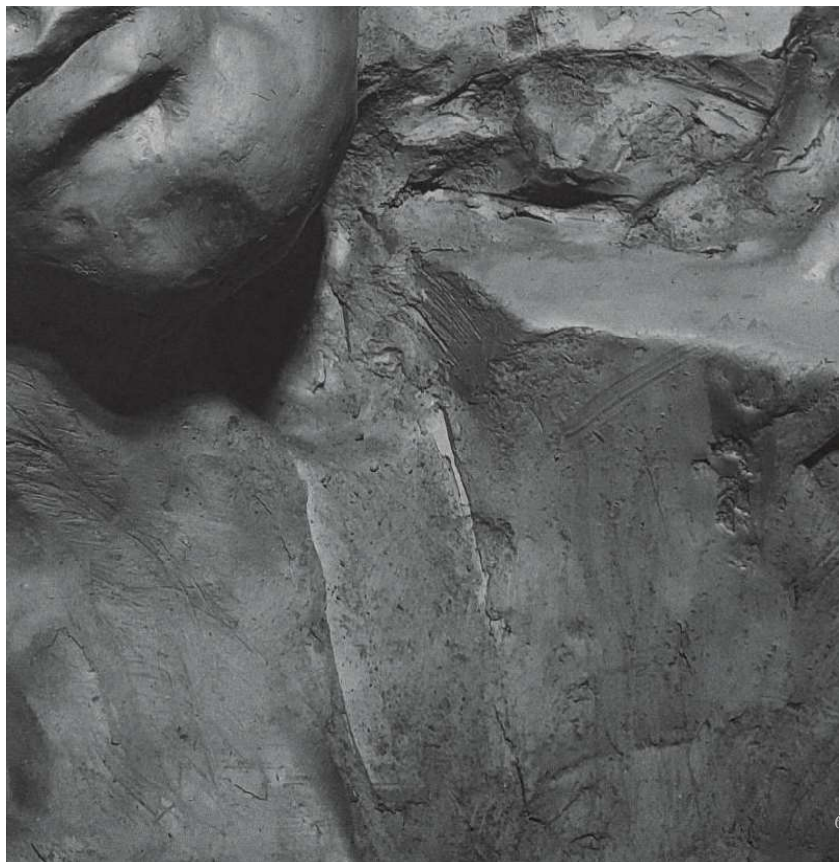
I feel that even an undefined fragment of the body—a tense forehead or a soft cheek sculpted in stone or clay—intensifies the sensation of the sculpture’s life. Sculpture does not involve replicating an image but creating a new existence. By smuggling corporeality into the sculptural composition, in a more or less literal way, I perceive the work as an opportunity for a human encounter. To perceive the sculpted body, to commune with it, is to seek a relationship with one’s own physicality. Such awareness gives the possibility to form the body through my own. Through the body I have a sense of existence, I feel. With the senses of touch and sight, I both create and recognize. A portrait engages my attention, although I am stumped over defining the portrayed person. Humanity as a whole is my model. I have perceived dependence in frequent drawings of figures, the outcome of artistic search seems to be the closest to my own face.

CLAY

The situation of receiving an artistic realization that includes a face turns out to be an encounter. It is an encounter with the Other, an encounter with another human being, but also an intimate encounter with one's own Self, which one wants to discover. The sense of organic form provokes cognition. In the described doctoral realization, I sculpted the face I know best. It became a starting point for me to create a self-portrait, which is also evidenced by deformations, understatements or fragments of geometry. I used the matter of clay. It is a special material for me to depict a portrait. The resistance it offers influences hand gestures, expression and making expression visible. The force with which I form the clay is fixed and enhances the impression of the sculpture's movement. The sculpted self-portrait, however, is merged with the lump of clay, its form released by differentiating the surface. Finger reflections, hasty, strong strokes are a continuation of the self-portrait, a fixation of the gesture, a signature.

Shaping in clay is associating with a simple, precipitant sketch of final realization in a different material. For me, clay is ideal material to create a story about a human. The motives of attachment to the ground, mutual links between human and nature can be separated there. Raw and wet clay provokes a desire to touch it and preserve my image in it. That practice soothes the nerves, relieves anxiety, quietens. It was especially visible to me during therapeutic activities in a pottery workshop. Kids love clay. It teaches them patience and helps to fight the stress. In critical situations like outburst of anger, the clay cured to be the best ally.

The work *The space of gesture* is a form of self-portrait. I believe that every creative activity contains the artist's self-portrait. My doctoral studies were a period of formal exploration, bold experiments, understanding matter, and reflecting on the essence of creative work and the reason for thought. I define my position somewhere between the following concepts: image — abstraction, form — content, plane — volume, imagination — reality, creation — trace, self — human, contemplation — frenzy. I want my work to be more than just an intimate story; I want it to provoke an encounter. While I convey my own experiences, I hope that the viewer will be able to find their own reflection, and that the metaphorical, symbolic space will grow into a narrative about humanity.



TENSION

The tension heightens the experience. The hidden presence creates an energy that draws the viewer into the encounter of the portrait, the subject, the situation.

The juxtaposition of a literal sculptural self-portrait with the geometric form of a bent metal sheet was a challenge to find the relationship of the two. I included dramatic questions about the human condition, creation in spite of and in spite of, experiences, inclinations in the parts of the work in different ways. Their relation thus had to create a situation of complementary structures. The frozen portrait impressively released from the lump of clay creates tension with the steel background. I wanted to contain it, to hide it in the space of the large, geometric form of the corroded sheet metal. After all, it was a place, a companion, a carrier. I based my considerations on my previous experience in painting and drawing, color and texture became the common point. The sculpture made of clay was fixed in a material containing iron, which gave the possibility of painterly creation. Rust became an important means of expression. A lump of clay lying on the ground, containing the imprint of my hands or stone carving mallets, fixed in another material, gained a new quality.

Matter allows you to express something more strongly. The lump in which I notice the movement of my hands, the rocky body, the metallic shape, is associated with a fragment of a celestial body. As if it were an arrival from afar, a meteorite, a cosmic detail. This led me to further considerations.

„Familiar with the spaces
from Earth to the stars,
we get lost in the space
from the ground to head.
It is interplanetary
from grief to tears”¹¹.

¹¹ W. Szymborska, *Friends (Calling to the Yeti 1957)* [w:] *Selected Poems..*, s. 42; cyt.za:
I. Pisarek, *The Motif of Cosmos and Sky in Wisława Szymborska's Poetry*, [ruj.uj.edu.pl/server/
api/core/bitstreams/ce9f94a0-ba5e-44ba-bc8c-5a3cadafd4ce/content](http://ruj.uj.edu.pl/server/api/core/bitstreams/ce9f94a0-ba5e-44ba-bc8c-5a3cadafd4ce/content), [20.02.2024].

SIZE

„The range of sizes of useless, three-dimensional things constitutes a continuum between monument and ornament. [...] In the perception of relative size, the human body enters the overall size continuum and establishes itself as a constant of this scale”¹². The human body is the natural reference point we use as viewers. We immediately compare the object to proportions we know. An object smaller than us naturally creates an intimate context. Rather, large-sized objects are attributed to a public situation; we view them from afar, embracing the larger space in which they exist. I realize that monumental forms dangerously seduce the observer. Emotionally, we go to extremes in awe or conversely, overwhelmed by size, we are stuck in experiencing a new situation. I made the decision related to accepting the weight, the size of the form with a sense of uncertainty. After all, it is easier to bring a small element, a detail into the gallery, to smuggle it in unnoticed, quietly. The reception of the work, however, is meant to provoke an encounter. Awareness of one's own presence in contact with the work takes the problem of scale to a more non-literal, metaphorical level, and the encounter with a monumental shape can turn out to be an experience of its own, a quiet, intimate one.

12 R. Morris, *Notes on sculpture. Texts*, Muzeum Sztuki w Łodzi, Łódź 2010, s. 20.

STONE

Stone as a material, tool, shelter, or foundation is evidence of human presence, its existence. The symbolism of stone creates a vast issue. We set it in opposition to the fragility of human existence; its weight, resistance, and strength remain relevant topics of consideration and inspiration. A sculptor sees history in stone. In my works, stone often appeared in the form of a theme. It suggested the modeling of the form to me. In my doctoral work, I present a figure emerging from a clay mass, where fragments of geometry akin to the shape of metal, visible welds, deformations, handprints, and beaters' marks appear. The cast, using iron, intensified the impression of the stony mass. It evokes associations with a boulder. I notice many dependencies, discovering a fascination with the stone motif, a subconscious impetus for action. I build a new narrative. However, I do not want to name or define the formed shape. My goal is not the illusion of the material, which I could have used; I want the work to contain these associations while being simultaneously unconstricted, a dissimilar quality, triggering discovery.

SUMMARY

I set the intimate context of the space by the materiality and tactility of the form. It is a trace of my presence, a gesture. The described realization is the result of experience gained, explorations in the field of sculpture, but also drawing and painting. Initial plans for the form of the work assumed a complete departure from sculptural figuration, an attempt to merge illusion with material by means of painterly creation or even acceptance of found images. However, the figure sculpted in clay appeared as a result of the need to externalize personal frustrations, to vent emotions. It is the result of a hasty gesture, an expression of expression. It is also perhaps a consequence of the exploration of the portrait motif. I decided to enclose it in a massive background of sheet metal, which became an important medium for me. Reflections on gesture as a hand movement, imprint, trace, but also a decision, thought, idea are just a fragment of a vast theme. The essence of the reflections, however, is gesture as an individualized feature. Intangible evidence of existence, which materializes in the work. During the creation process I am accompanied by doubts, thanks to them, I deepen my thoughts, question what has been created. The symbolic space of consideration is enclosed in a sculptural object. This is how I understand *The space of gesture* — I mark with traces, I create, I doubt, I am.

ABSTRACT

When embarking on the realization of *The space of gesture*, my ideas were far different from the final form of the work. The creative process is a complex act in which the creator must accept constant changes. They come unexpectedly, ruining planned, sequenced thoughts. The unsatisfactoriness, the failure to meet one's own intentions and expectations motivates, prompts one to explore new areas. Thus, the work is the result of its own journey, which in a way is defined by the title. Both the notions of space and gesture evoke associations of unfathomable, vast areas of interpretation, but they have been appropriated by me to name my own experience.

The dissertation is divided into short chapters, in which I try to explain the words used to interpret the work. Gesture - associated with the movement of the wrist, associated with emotional expression, became an important issue for me during the search for the author's definition of the essence of creative work. It was a link, a means of expression of my previous expressions. I realized that it is not just a physical trace, but a conscious conceptual action, an intention. I reduce the concept of space to the symbolic one, which the artist expresses through gesture. It is an intimate, secluded area, to which the viewer can be invited with his own kind of sensitivity.

The work *The space of gesture* is a form of self-portrait. I believe that every creative activity contains a self-portrait of the artist. The sculptural realization consists of two elements. They form a complete whole, but are the result of a different kind of expression.

The matter of the work is a wise choice, it complements the idea. The time of my doctoral studies was a period of formal exploration for me, an attempt to understand matter. In the work *The space of gesture*, I used a steel sheet of large size, which became a pretext for consideration and

exploration. It is a material, moldable, retains an imposed shape. At the same time, it captivates eyes sensitive to the play of colors, engages the touch through varied texture. It merges into one space the notion of gesture, courage of action, movement and the possibility of spatial creation and drawing on a plane. The object became a physical witness to change, a companion of thought long before the work was begun. Initial plans for the form of the work included a complete departure from sculptural figuration, an attempt to merge illusion with material by means of painterly creation or even acceptance of found images. However, I made the decision to sculptural shape the steel plane - to spatialize the form.

The figure sculpted in clay appeared as a result of the need to externalize personal frustrations, is the result of a hasty gesture, an expression of expression. It is also a consequence of the exploration of the portrait motif. I used the matter of clay, which is a special medium for me to depict a person. The resistance it offers influences hand gestures, expressing and making visible movement, expression, the author's signature. I decided to fix the sculpture in a material containing iron, rust became a painterly means of expression, which gave the opportunity to discover a new narrative of the work.

The described realization is a kind of intimate story. The hidden presence creates an energy that draws the viewer into exploring the portrait, the object, the situation. By smuggling corporeality into the sculptural composition, in a more or less literal way, I perceive the work as an opportunity for encounter. I smuggle in my own experiences, but I hope that the viewer will be able to find his own reflection, and the metaphorical, symbolic space will grow into a narrative about humanity.

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DOKUMENTACJA PRACY

PHOTOGRAPHIC DOCUMENTATION



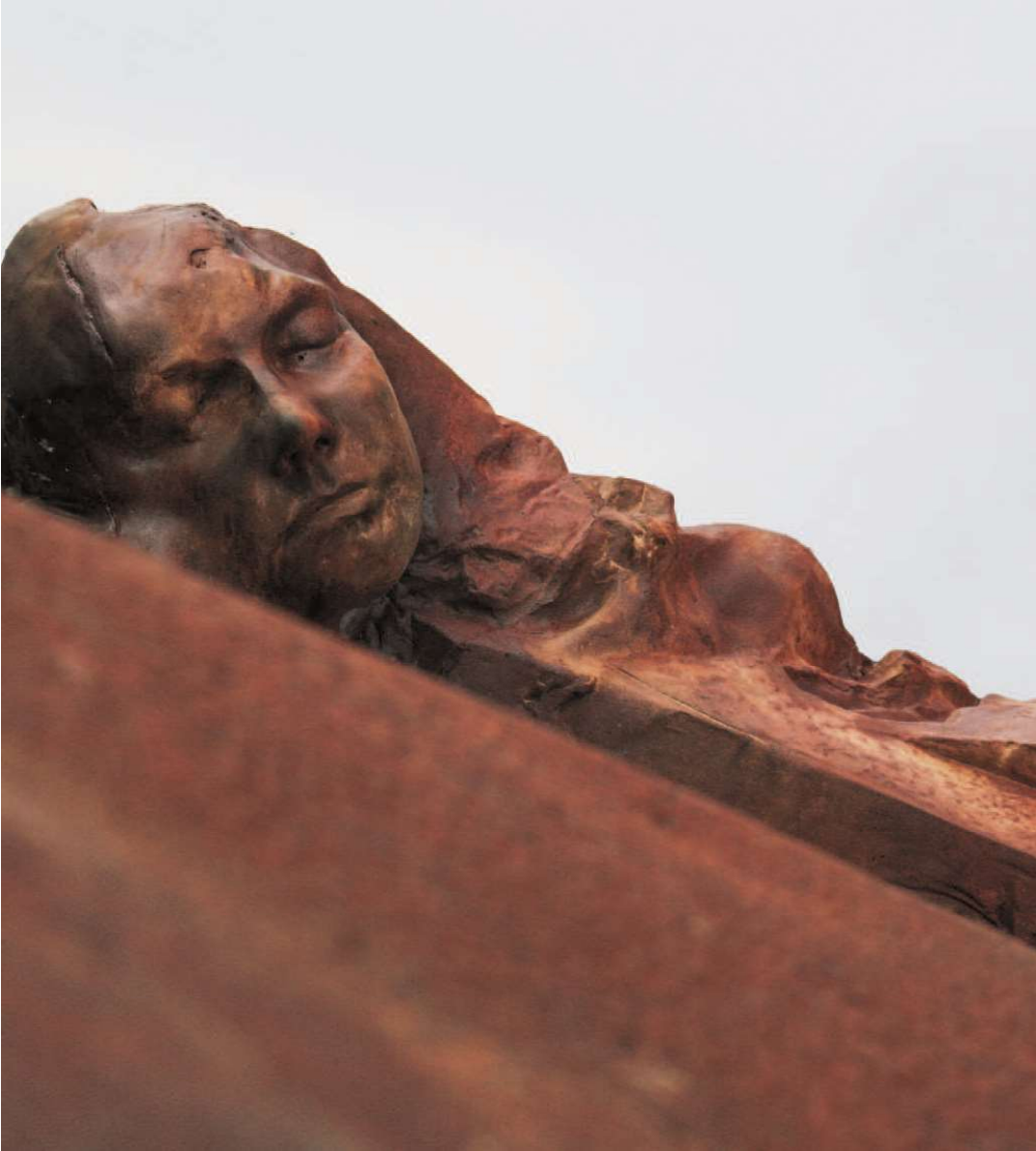
Gips polimerowy (proszek mineralny
i żywica akrylowa), proszek żelaza.
Stalowa blacha (wymiały: 180 cm × 380 cm)

Polymer gypsum (mineral powder
and acrylic resin), iron powder.
Steel sheet (dimensions: 180 cm × 380 cm)









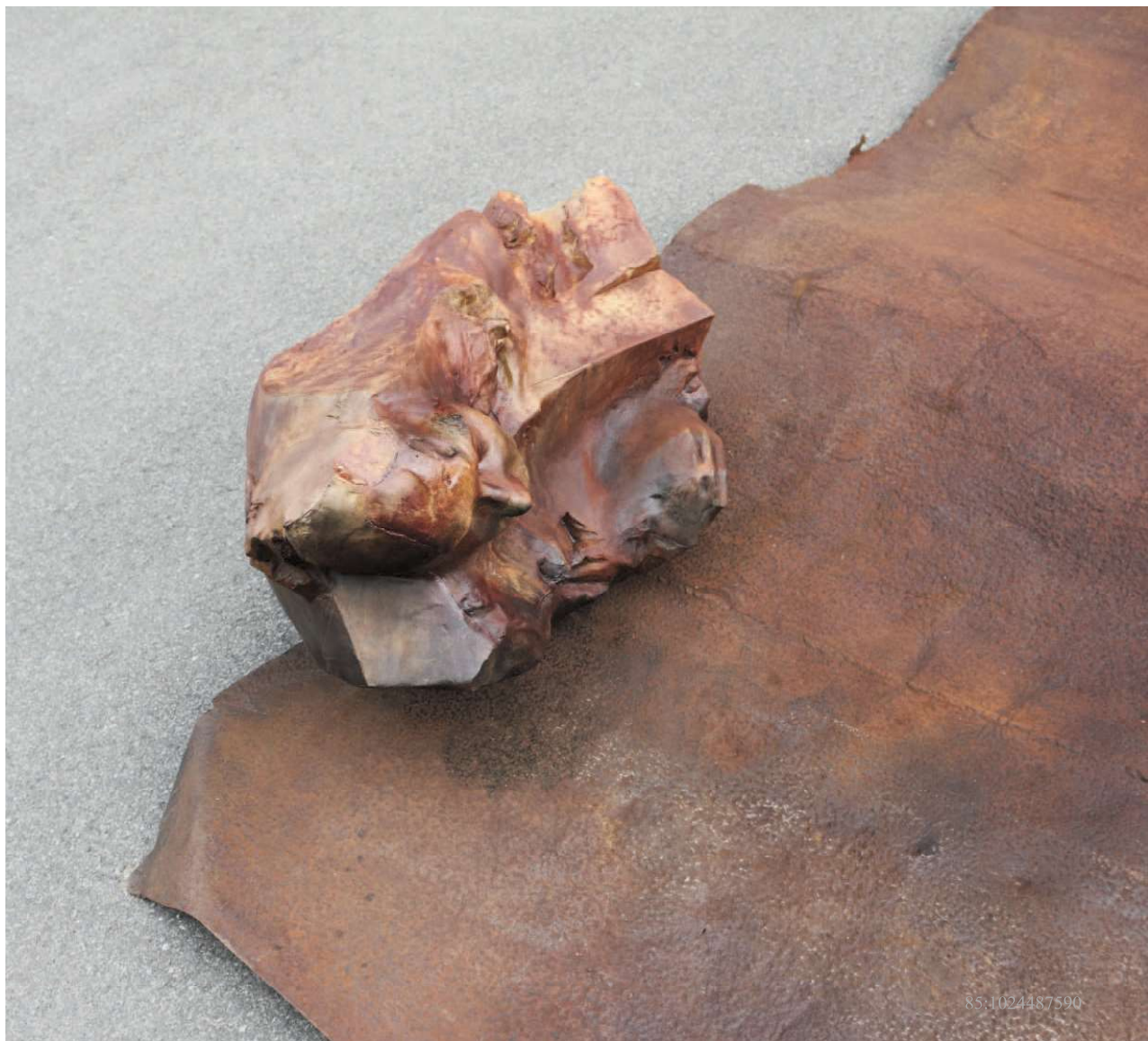




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PROCES POWSTAWANIA PRACY

DOCUMENTATION OF THE CREATION PROCESS





Działania rysunkowo-malarskie

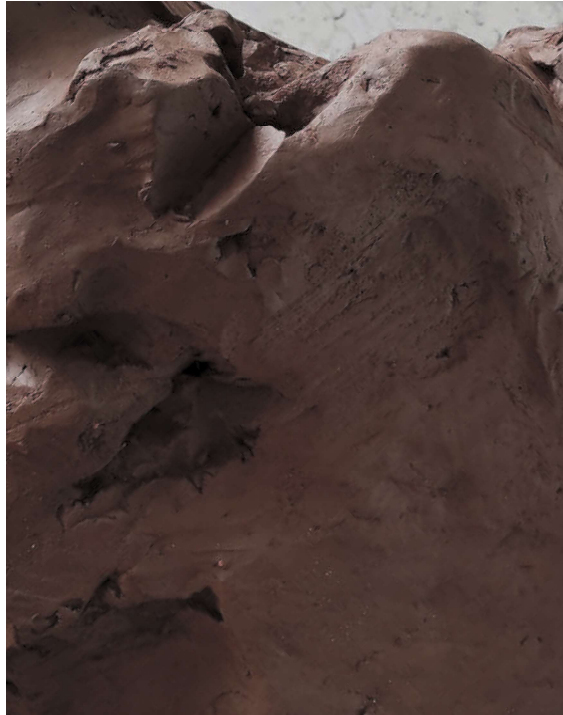


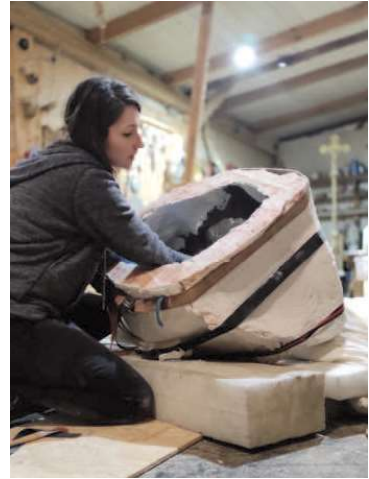




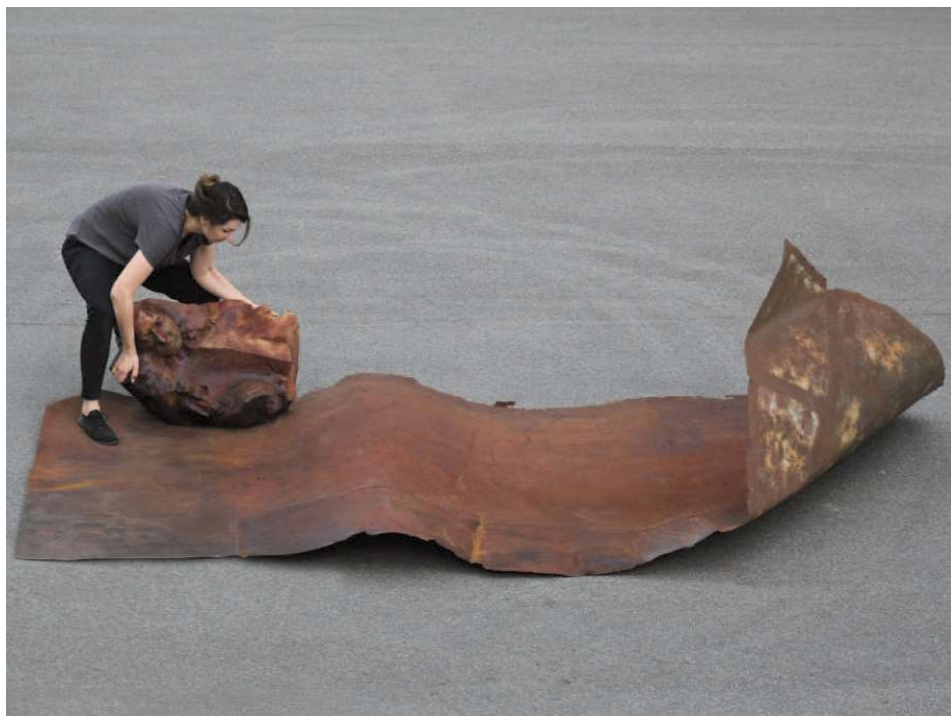
















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