

Audio description script of the exhibition

Touch the Art

We are entering a narrow and long room with a high ceiling (4 meters wide, 20 meters long). The interior is white – except for two stripes on the left wall, which are green and pale pink, 80 cm wide, painted throughout the entire length of the room. There is a monitor on the right side and a film is being displayed on it.

The film *Touch the Art*

The colour film is assembled from many scenes that change quickly to the rhythm of the music. The average time of one shot is no longer than 4 seconds. The film presents children working with artists (two men and three women) in different spaces throughout the Ujazdowski Castle Centre for Contemporary Art. Together, they experiment with or create from various materials, including strings, bamboo, cardboard, sponges, foam, and foil. They glue, paint, draw, build, or play on real fruits connected by cables. As a result of their actions, fabulously colourful works are created: a tent made of foil and coloured paper, a boat made of polyurethane foam as well as sponge and bamboo, textured paintings, and an abstract composition on the wall. There is also one scene outside in the film; children are wearing jackets, some have hats on their heads. They exit the building with one of the artists. In the background, an autumn landscape – leaves on the trees are turning yellow.

Bartosz Kokosiński *World Mas*

In front of the entrance into the large hall there is a colourful construction, which Bartosz Kokosiński has named *World Mass*. It consists of several cubes connected together, reaching a height of approximately 2 meters. One is significantly higher, giving the impression of an inaccessible tower, which unlike the others, you can not enter it. The construction was invented by children whom the artist met during his workshop. Each participant designed a mock-up of a space that was important to them, and Bartosz enlarged them and combined them into one solid mass. He built it from varying materials, including wood, cardboard, plastic and painted it in different colours and patterns: stripes, stains.

Some walls are grey-black, others are very colourful. In addition, he covered them with foil and paper, placed colourful cardboard boxes on the roof, also richly decorated. The interior is lined with grey sponges, styrofoam, and foam. He placed a mast on the top, on which a long transparent foil hangs. The construction gives the impression of being temporary, built with materials that were just at hand. The

colours of the construction or fantasises on how to decorate it are not the only example of children's free imagination, the tower on top is also inspired by this same creative power. Its shape resembles a rectangular face – the hole in the middle, surrounded by a red foam hose is the mouth, and from the colourful cartons placed on top, two pipes are "sticking out" like bulging eyes.

Bartosz Kokosiński *Foamee*

This object is about 1.5 meters by 3. It was made of various sponges, also of plastic foam. Large pieces of other sponges and foam tubes with different cross-sections are wrapped in a large sponge. Some of them are noodles for learning how to swim or exercise in water. *Foamee* is held together by a band of bent wood. The sponges differ in colours; what they have in common is that they are all very soft and very snugly. Typically, sponges are found in the bathroom or we sleep on them on a foam mattress. This time, Bartosz used the material to make an object that is reminiscent of his earlier works – *Paintings Devouring Reality*.

They were uniquely bent and contorted canvas paintings, inside which the artist placed various objects. Depending on the theme of the painting, these were pieces of furniture, toy cars, or clothes. The painting in our exhibition is more like a sculpture because it has not been hung on the wall and you can look at it from all sides, hug it, and even check how much it weighs. At the end of the room, there are black and white pillows with holes in the middle, allowing you to enter them or to create tunnels. They are not artistic works, but part of the exhibition's equipment.

Zuzanna Hertzberg *Ż*

We enter the next, lower, square room with sides that are about 15 meters long, white and spacious. This room is filled with paintings of various sizes, which are placed on special metal frames with wheels. Two of them are larger: they are 130 cm tall and 150 cm wide. They are painted on canvas using different types of paints and varnishes. The three smaller ones – 65 by 75 cm – are enamelled and are made of bent sheet metal. They are all abstract, they do not represent anything specific; they are composed of colourful, irregular blots. In the canvas paintings, shades of red prevail. The paintings on the metal sheets are multicoloured. Thanks to the special frames with wheels, the layout of the paintings can be freely juxtaposed and moved. We can all become curators, that is, people who influence the appearance of the exhibition. The artist designed a specific arrangement for the paintings, and this is where all the fun begins – but after that, it's over to you! Apart from the fact that

Zuzanna's paintings are incredibly colourful, they also have interesting textures. Some surfaces on the canvas are rough, on the metal sheet – smooth, but the shapes of the blots can be felt.

Justyna Wiśniowska *Bouba*

There is a corridor on the left side: 2 meters wide by 10 meters long and 2.5 meters in height. Its white walls are overgrown with abstract soft forms made from pale pink sponge. Some are large, about half a meter long, others tiny, less than 10 cm, some are oblong, others round, but all are oval and want to be hugged. Some are individually scattered, while others form large "family" clusters. They grow on the walls, on the ceiling, but are also nestled into corners. It grows inside the space it's in, like a mysterious plant or a large mushroom.

Krzysztof Topolski *Touching #4*

From the corridor one enters a small hexagonal room – one of the castle's towers. Five of the walls have large windows, the sixth is a wide entrance. A platform raised thirty centimetres completely covers the floor. You can enter this space after walking up a small step. This platform is a light, blue-green. If you sit on it or lie down, you will be able to feel it vibrating. Its vibration is caused by special devices mounted underneath. They turn sounds into vibrations. Acoustic waves into kinetic energy. What we feel is actually music. In this way, your entire body can receive music composed by the artist. The work proves that sounds are more than just audio, but can be tactile. Small parts of *Bouba* can be found on the walls. Its fragment has nestled between the windows. In the next room, also as spacious as the one with the paintings and the one painted white, there are two works: from Agata Królak and Alicja Bielawska.

Agata Królak *Wow! Abstract!*

The work is located on the right wall from the entrance. On a dark-grey background reaching a height of 2 meters and extending for 5 meters of this and another 2 meters of the neighbouring wall, there are a lot of scattered colourful shapes on it: red, light blue, yellow, green, pale pink, and black. These shapes vary: waves, arcs, circles, rays, grids, stars, polygons, etc. Some have patterns on the surface: dots, small spots – splattered with a paint brush. They are all magnets. Agata Królak invites you to create your own story using magnetic shapes, which she cut out and painted by herself. They do not resemble anything specific, they are rather colourful elements from which an abstract picture can be created. Large surfaces affect us differently than small details – they arouse different associations. What matters is the

ambience, how many elements there are and how they are related to one another, but also the contrasts.

Alicja Bielawska The Wind Was Blowing and the Sea Breeze Brought Dreams Pouring In

In the corner, opposite the magnetic painting, there is a colourful installation. On an irregular 20 cm tall platform – covered in a red carpet, similar in shape to a triangle with the dimensions of 7.5 meters at the base and 5 meters in height – stands a two-meter frame. Wide ribbons in green and various shades of blue were hung from its upper band, forming fluttering walls through which you can enter inside. At this point, the platform is at the same level as the floor, thanks to which in the middle we feel as if we were walking on a gently undulating field. Maybe we're in a tent, or maybe in an open-work pavilion in the garden? Maybe the blue stripes are trickles of water, and the green ones are grass? But then, what is the red carpet beneath our feet? An additional bar with yellow ribbons hangs under the room's ceiling. The sun's rays? In the world built by Alicja, everything is possible and nothing is permanent. Shapes and colours change depending on the light; they are temporary phenomena. You can move them, watch them flicker, sit down inside the work, or lie down and daydream about distant journeys.

Alicja Bielawska – presentation of works from the workshops

Colourful photos are being shown on a small TV. They all present spatial works made of various materials: empty paper rolls, cardboard, foams, sticks, coloured paper. They were photographed mostly against a white wall, held by someone not visible in the frame. They are of various sizes and shapes; some made only from skewers, while some are large and made from boxes, stuffed with sticks like antennas, with tape all over, filled with colourful materials. These large ones were photographed on the floor. Each of the works is a well-thought-out composition. Some are complicated, whilst others are very simple, minimalistic, such as oblong pieces of yellow insulation foam on a shiny silver surface of rectangular cardboard. This is a documentation of the works that were created during workshops with the artist.

The next large room contains only one work, but it consists of several elements.

Anna Panek *Cut'n'Sew*

The work consists of four platforms and five abstract paintings. The paintings have different dimensions, four of them are similar to squares with a side measurement of 1.5 meters. One is smaller: 120 cm wide, 40 cm high. The platforms are regular: two of them – blue – are segments of a circle with a radius of two meters. One – red-pink – is a square with a two-meter long side. The next – white – would be the same as the square one, if not for one of the sides being concave. Three were put together in the corner of the room. One, blue, is on the other side of the room. It seems lonesome, because it is not accompanied by a painting, while three paintings in green, blue, black, and red are hanging over the other ones. Two white and purple paintings were hung between the platforms. Paintings are usually painted on canvas with paint, but Anna Panek had a different idea. Her paintings were made from cut-up and sewn together fragments of fabrics with interesting textures. Here, the painting process consisted in arranging pieces of fabric, matching them up to each other, and finding the rhythm of the ready-made colours and forms: circles, semicircles, almond-shaped and more irregular ones. The lines that were created by sewing together the individual pieces play a very important role: they are the structure that organizes the work. While paint often blurs the boundaries between colours, but with sewing, the seams provide clear-cut border lines. You can touch the paintings, and in this way, you can also look for familiar forms and shapes in them, or fantasize about imaginary worlds.

In the next room we find the works of three artists: Mateusz Kula, Robert Kuśmirowski, and Norbert Delman.

Robert Kuśmirowski *Phonomen*

On the right side from the entrance stand two old, large electro-technical devices in the shape of cabinets about 40 cm deep and 170 cm in height; one is narrow, about 50 cm, the other is wide at 130 cm. Next to it on the wall hangs a megaphone connected to a small box.

All the equipment is destroyed, dirty, and grey-brown. Against the background of the other works they look poor and gloomy, but their beauty and attractiveness are hidden in their archaism – there is not a single digital display. Instead, gauges, ceramic electric plugs, hand-operated knobs and switches, buttons, wires, cables... It's "retired" equipment from collapsed factories and closed production plants. The unusual contraption emits sounds – music composed by the artist. It has been put together from recorded sounds produced by similar devices – it's their last, farewell song. Such machines and buildings no longer exist, and in their place, modern

housing estates are being built. Robert Kuśmirowski wants to save their unique character from oblivion.

Robert Kuśmirowski *Pass It On*

The second work is a collection of 21 portraits in square frames of 25 cm by 25 cm; they have been hung in two rows. The portraits were painted by children from two different primary schools in Warsaw. The work documents a painting experiment carried out with pupils of grades 4 and 7, the originator of which was Robert Kuśmirowski. The artist proposed that the pupils play a game of painterly Chinese whispers. The first participant had to make a copy of a reproduction of a painting chosen by Robert, each subsequent pupil would copy the work of the previous one. In the exhibition, we show some of the works that illustrate the sequence of changes that the work has undergone in the process. You can see how the portrayed character has changed. The paintings have their own specific order, but you can freely swap them around so as to create your own composition.

Mateusz Kula *The Alliance*

The Alliance is a colourful installation composed of many elements. It is quite big, consuming half of the space inside the room. It was built from furniture and toys from IKEA, as well as devices and equipment most often used by the elderly. Next to, among other things, the stools, tunnels, and children's chairs there are also walking sticks, assisting movement, exercise tapes, special pillows, mattresses and many other items. These elements were built to slightly resemble a playground or outdoor city gyms. The installation also has within it a wigwam with a diameter of approx. 270 cm made from bamboo poles, wrapped in colourful foil, tape, and covered with colourful paper. The artist built it with children partaking in his workshops during the autumn of 2018.

The title alliance is a special bond that often connects grandparents with grandchildren, but also the children's need for special items to learn how to walk, and adults – to be able to continue walking. Every adult still has a bit of a child in them, and each of you will be an adult one day.

Norbert Delman *Totem for the Harpy*

The last work is presented in a tower, just like the one with the vibrating floor. Here in the middle of the space, there is a plastic blue pool with a diameter of 3 meters and

a depth of 75 cm. Its white and blue interior is half filled with water. In the middle of the water, there is a semicircular structure made from light, stiff foam and styrofoam floating on the water. On top of it is the titled harpy. The entire sculpture is about 1.5 meters tall. The harpy supports itself on three thin legs, covered with yellow mounting foam. The upper part of her frail body is covered by shiny ceramic scales. From between them, pink hair grows – resembling the feathers of an exotic bird. The same hair hangs from three thin plastic arms. On each of the three thin necks, there are embedded heads made from white mobile phone mounts. The harpy has yellow plastic bands clamped on each of the three necks, orange ones on the shoulders. Two strips stick out of each head like poles. Harpies are mythical creatures – half-woman and half-bird. They lived in the sea and caused violent gusts of wind, bringing mortal danger to sailors. Norbert tries to appease these dangerous beings by building for them a totem of their likeness. Water bars the path to the harpy. Many explorers of new lands, castaways as well as fugitives once traveled through seas and oceans. We can drop paper ships into the water and see how they will deal with this aquatic journey.