



MONIKA SHADED

VISUAL ARTIST

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PORTFOLIO

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Monika Shaded (born 1983 in Ciechanów) is a visual artist. She graduated from the Faculty of Artistic Education at the University of the Arts in Poznań (Poland), where in 2008 she completed studies in art criticism and promotion as well as art education. In the same year, she defended her diploma in painting with distinction. In 2013, she obtained a PhD in fine arts. She is an Assistant Professor in the 8th Painting Studio at the Magdalena Abakanowicz University of the Arts in Poznań (Poland).

Awards and Honors:

- Second Prize at the 4th International Biennale of Artistic Textile in Poznań (2023),
- Finalist of the 2nd edition of the international competition Lodz Abstract Art Festival (LAAF) (2026),
- Scholarship from the Minister of Culture and National Heritage,
- Artistic Scholarship of the City of Poznań,
- Scientific Scholarship of the Marshal of the Greater Poland Voivodeship,
- Second-Degree Rector's Award of UAP for organizational contributions to the university.

Exhibitions:

She has presented her work in solo and group exhibitions in Poland, including at the Arsenal Municipal Gallery in Poznań, BWA Gallery in Bydgoszcz, BWA Gallery in Piła, and Szewska 16 Gallery in Poznań, as well as at festivals such as SLOT Art Festival, FAMA, and Poznań Art Week. A complete list of exhibitions is available at: monikashaded.com/omnie.

Curatorial Activity:

- Curator of the International Painting Competition of the Three Bridges Foundation (1st, 2nd, and 3rd editions),
- Member of the curatorial team of the Maria Dokowicz Competition for the best diplomas at the University of the Arts in Poznań,
- Curator of the „Heart for the Heart” Gallery at the Cardiology Hospital in Poznań.

Teaching Activity:

Actively involved in art education for children, youth, and adults; she has collaborated, among others, with the National Museum in Poznań. She teaches drawing in postgraduate studies at the Faculty of Painting and Drawing at UAP.

Artist Statement:

The artist works in painting, drawing, and installations within the field of artistic textile. Her works are imbued with existential content, expressed in a poetic manner through the use of symbols, signs, and associations. She is interested in exploring the „ultimate mystery”—that which remains unnamed and beyond full understanding—as well as questions concerning the meaning and motivations of human life. In her practice, she uses ephemeral materials such as paper and fabric, which carry connotations of fragility, transience, and memory.

Personal:

Wife and mother of three sons: Daniel, Dawid, and Ben.

Website: www.monikashaded.com

Instagram: @monikashaded



I SEE HOW THE WIND BLOWS

Title of the work: **I SEE HOW THE WIND BLOWS**

Year: **2025**

Technique and dimensions: 12 spatial works; foil, each measuring 1.5 m × 2.5 m; wooden poles, 2.4 m in length.

One-day artistic action as part of the jubilee 55th edition of the FAMA Festival / municipal beach, Świnoujście.

Description:

I See How the Wind Blows is an installation in which the wind itself becomes a co-creator of the work, setting in motion light, semi-transparent flags. Through them, what is invisible gains form and rhythm, and the title phrase becomes a metaphor for the fleeting and elusive nature of reality.





STANDARDS

Title of the work: **STANDARDS**

Year: **2024**

Technique: dyed paper

Dimensions: 10 works, each measuring between 3 m and 7 m in length and 1 m in width

Description:

„No world is possible without verticality, and this dimension in itself calls to mind transcendence“.

Mircea Eliade

I was inspired by the very form of the banner, accompanied by reflection on its cultural significance. My points of reference included military standards and church banners, as well as the ritual context that surrounds them. I was particularly drawn to the performative aspect of presenting banners, which carries the qualities of a colorful celebration.

The banners were made of paper, which reinforces their ephemeral character. I chose shades of gray—often associated with ash—as a form of lost memory of what no longer exists. Ash, created through the process of burning, is impermanent and fleeting, endowing it with strong connotations of transience and destruction.









CLOUD

Title of the work: **CLOUD**

Year: **2025**

Technique: wadding, wool, glue, felting

Dimensions: 300 cm × 800 cm

Description:

(...) In its contrast—or perhaps more accurately, in its complement—appears the cloud: ever-changing, light. As Wisława Szymborska wrote, it „is not burdened by the memory of anything.” The cloud is a transitional form, pulsating with light and shadow.

It is a sign of intuition, a sign of the invisible. It conceals and reveals, hiding the path or showing it. It may bring rain and cleansing, but it can also blur the contours of the world, ushering in a state of uncertainty.

A fragment of the curatorial text by Monika Kurmin-Winterhagen





ICARUS

Title of the work: **ICARUS**

Year: **2025**

Technique: dyed paper, 200 cm × 200 cm × 400 cm

Description:

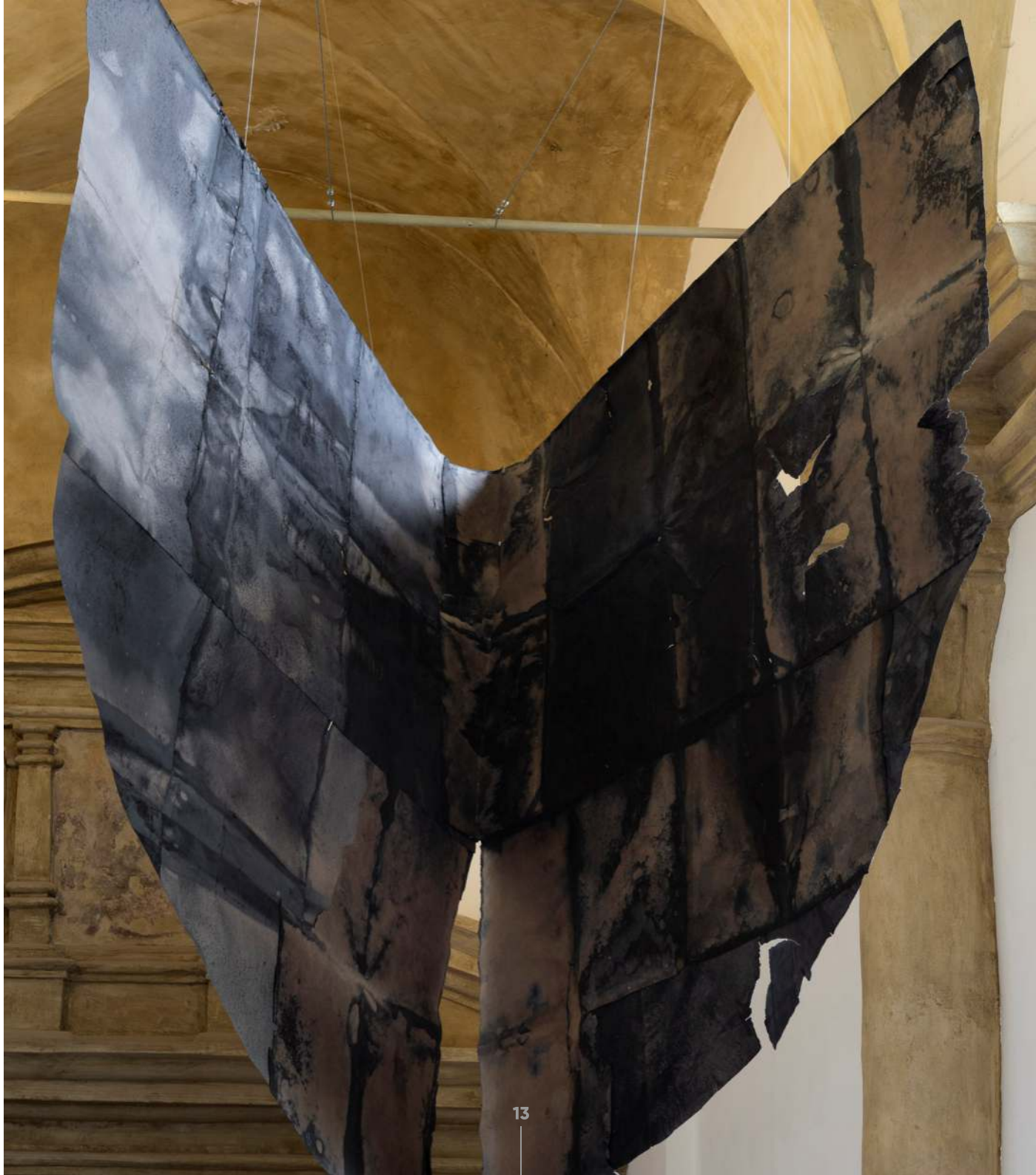
In Pieter Bruegel's painting „Landscape with the Fall of Icarus“, Icarus's tragedy goes unnoticed—he perishes amid the everyday concerns of others. His dramatic fall is almost invisible. How often do we ourselves pass indifferently by the fates of contemporary Icaruses?

The war in Ukraine, condemned to an unequal struggle, continues—a fight against ruthless political cruelty, the morality of Minos. Daedalus and Icarus were not merely flying—they were escaping. They were prisoners.

Icaruses are associated with youthful fervor, enthusiasm, devotion to an idea, and the desire to change the world. Their flights often end in a fall. Yet it is precisely this attitude—mad courage, readiness to take risks, and disregard for consequences—that has the power to change the course of history.

The fall of Icarus does not signify a journey into invisibility. It is a testimony that it is worth striving for something greater. The very path toward freedom and dreams has value—regardless of its outcome.





WAY AND WAYS

Title of the work: **WAY AND WAYS**

Year: **2025**

Technique and dimensions: WAY, dyed paper, 1.5 m × 17 m / WAY, film, 10 min / UNTITLED, drawing, 200 × 615 cm. Presented at the two-person exhibition (with Marcin Lorenc) entitled WAY AND WAYS as part of the 5th International Biennale of Artistic Textile.

Description:

Monika perceives her artistic practice as a deeply personal and existential experience. A significant role is played by symbols that most often refer to phenomena of movement, drifting, and crossing boundaries. These include boats, clouds, walls, gates, banners, and flags. The artist creates these elements primarily from paper—a fragile material particularly vulnerable to damage. The fragility of the medium is, in a sense, provoked and intensified through processes of dyeing, soaking, and layering with glue, while impermanence becomes an additional symbolic layer of her work. The symbolic dimension of Monika's practice intertwines in a distinctive way with its materiality—phenomena are revealed through objects, while at the same time the objects remain what they are; nothing is concealed here. The several-meter-long scroll, assembled from many layers of dyed paper, is also a way—one along which the artist walked back and forth, ultimately leading to its destruction. In doing so, she once again emphasizes her interest in what is impermanent, fragile, and ephemeral.

A fragment of the curatorial text by Wojciech Gorączniak





IMPRINT OF IDEAS

Exhibition title: **IMPRINT OF IDEAS**

Year: **2024**

Gallery: Kraska Art Gallery (Faculty of Biology, Adam Mickiewicz University),
Poznań

Description:

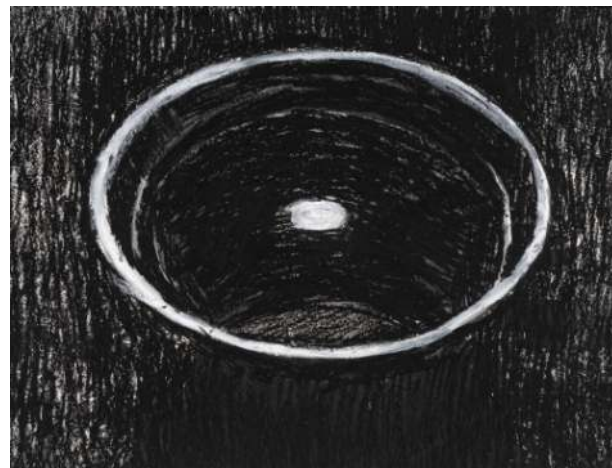
I presented drawings and artist books from recent years, including works that occupy the margins of my practice. Primarily, they relate to various stages of my spatial and painterly projects, such as Shore, Home, Return, Passage, and Rivers. Executed on paper, these works are, above all, records of fleeting moments, landscapes, and situations. I explore motifs such as gates, boats, rivers, and wells, working through their diverse variations.

Landscapes without human presence frequently appear in my work. Only traces remain, such as the door of an abandoned barn, a drifting boat, or a worn path leading over a hill. Some drawings refer to forms recognizable in the final installation, while others “break” from the original concept. The exhibition also includes ongoing series that I am currently developing.

I aimed to reveal the process, to characterize intuition, premonitory ideas, fragments, and creative records that “hide” behind the final realization. My goal was to show transformations in the formation of ideas and their final execution. Elements of the process—sketches, notes, and recordings—detached from the contexts in which they were created, begin to form an independent space. They disperse in multiple directions, no longer controlled or anticipated by me.







MIGRATIONS

Title of the work: **MIGRATIONS**

Year: **2024**

Technique: risography

Edition: 4 numbered and signed copies

Description:

This series of four artist books captures birds frozen mid-flight, creating a visual record of their movement. Each book is unique, presenting different directions, clusters, and densities of silhouettes, tracing a map of their invisible trajectories. Suspended in space, the birds appear to float in timelessness—beyond any discernible beginning or end.

The scroll format, unfolding in a linear progression, reflects fluidity and continuous narrative, where movement is not paused but carried endlessly forward. What we see is only a fragment of a larger whole—a story unfolding between moments, within the ephemeral space of the record





DOOR

Title of the work: **DOOR**

Year: **2024**

Technique: dyed paper

Dimensions: 300 cm × 400 cm

Description:

Doors often symbolize transitions between different worlds or states—from light to darkness, the known to the unknown, the everyday to the mysterious. They represent beginnings and endings, transformation, and change. Unlike walls, doors are open spaces, allowing boundaries to be crossed. Jan Białostocki noted that gates and doors have symbolized thresholds between forms of existence since ancient times, marking passages to otherworldly realms.

DOOR evokes a threshold, reminiscent of a portal or curtain. My son, drawing from video games, described it as a gateway to another world. For me, the work is linked to the figure of home, evoking reflections on ultimate matters. I feel homelessness, ineffable longing, and the desire to journey home. I recall images of humans in transit, of emigrants. As C.S. Lewis wrote:

"If we find ourselves with a desire that nothing in this world can satisfy, the most probable explanation is that we were made for another world".







BURNING

Title: **BURNING**

Year: **2024**

Technique: dyed paper

Dimensions: 130 cm × 40 cm

Description:

„A work may be born under the rule of destruction: under the reign of ashes, during a flight into mourning, in connection with absence“.

Georges Didi-Huberman



BURNING fragment of the work



DELTA OF BEGINNING AND END

Title: **DELTA OF BEGINNING AND END**

Year: **2023**

Technique: risograph, series of 10 numbered and signed copies

Description:

In the ceaseless flow of the river, we discern the drama of our transience and the fragility of human life. Time, like a river, is both undefined and eternal. In its mirrored waters, the truths of life and death, beginning and end, are reflected.



UP

Title: **UP**

Year: **2023**

Technique: dyed paper

Dimensions: 12 works, 29 cm × 42 cm

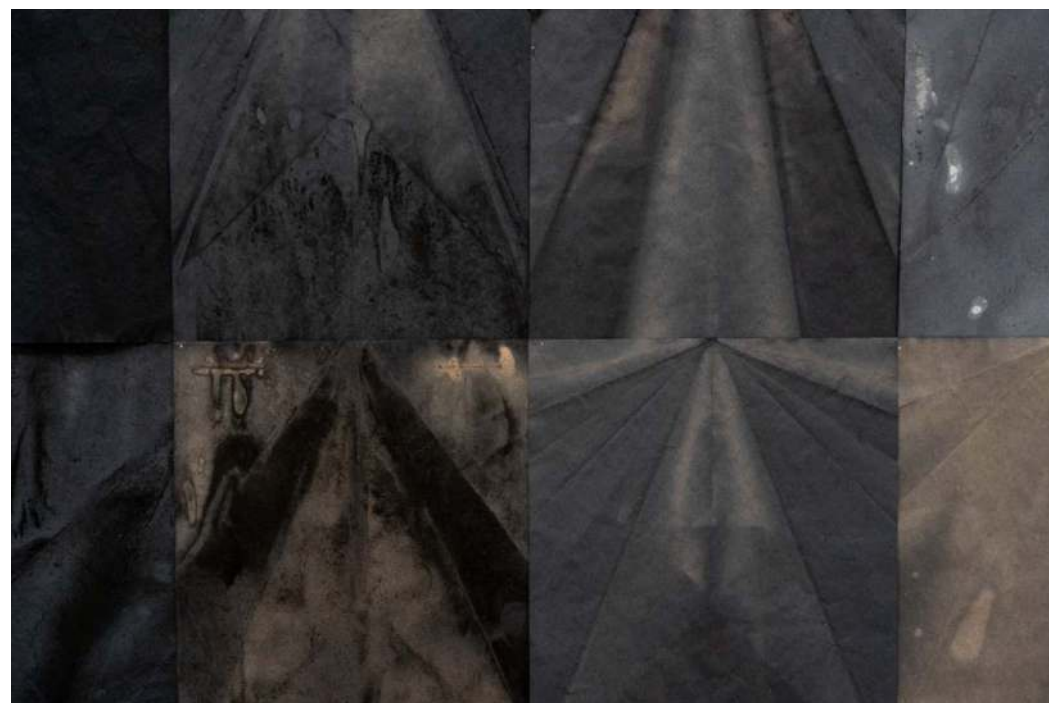
Description:

The Up series draws inspiration from paper airplanes. The title refers to the direction of flight, yet in the context of black-dyed paper, it can be interpreted as a "negative" of these paper toys, whose lightness is infused with existential weight.

(Excerpt from the text accompanying the group exhibition „Self-Flights”, Szewska Gallery, Poznań, 18.10–6.11.2023)



Fragment ekspozycji wystawy
„Samo-loty”, Galeria Szewska w Poznaniu.





HOMECOMING

Title: **HOMECOMING**

Year: **2023**

Technique: dyed paper

Dimensions: height 48 cm, length 250 cm, width 90 cm

Description:

This work reflects on the fragility of human life. I constructed a boat from dyed paper using origami, recalling childhood play of floating paper boats on water. The fragility and ephemerality of the paper construction can be read as a trace of existence. I employed shades of gray, often likened to ash, evoking lost memories of what no longer exists. Some art historians interpret gray as the experience of the absence of color. Georges Didi-Huberman referred to it as “the color of the past”:

„A thing painted in gray is painted according to the fiction of a past color, which is another name for bleaching, but also for time that has passed”.

Wassily Kandinsky described gray as a mixture of opposing white and black—two silences: the first heralding birth, the second death.









THE BANK

Title: **THE BANK**

Year: **2023**

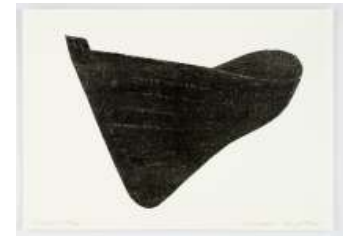
Technique: risograph

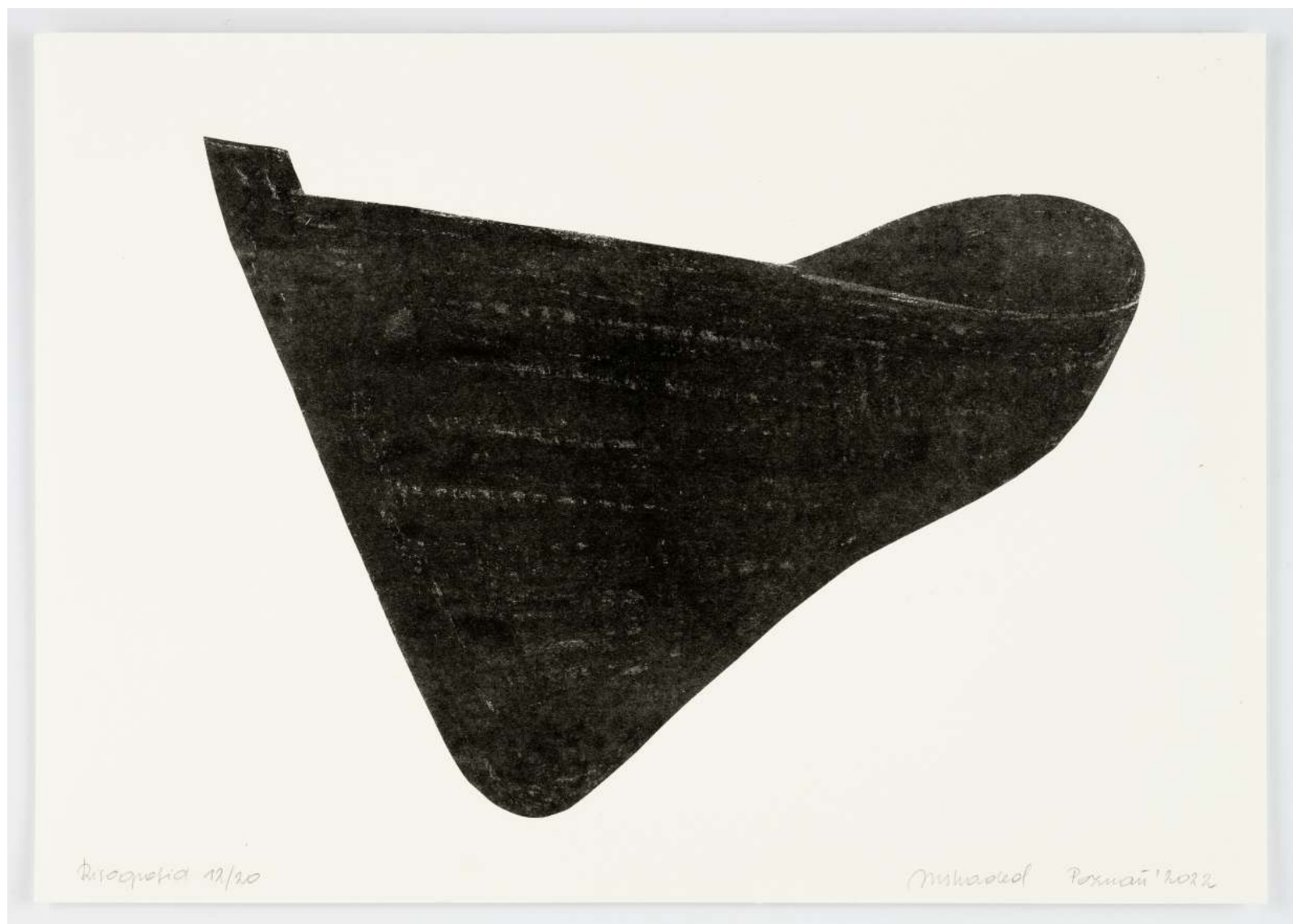
Dimensions: 42 cm × 29 cm

(Printed at the Paper Laboratory, Series of 20 numbered and signed copies)

Description:

The creation of this series coincided with the outbreak of the war in Ukraine. The vastness of human suffering and the weight of countless personal tragedies evoked in me a deep empathy for pain. During this time, I found companionship in the words of Zbigniew Herbert and his poem „The Bank”. I produced a series of drawings in oil pastel on paper. The central motif became a boat leading to the opposite shore. I explored its various forms—not only drifting alone along a winding river through mountains, but also fragments of its structure, interiors, and components. From this series, the artist book *The Bank* emerged, realized in risography.





BOAT

Title: **BOAT**

Year: **2023**

Technique: pastels

Dimensions: 100 cm × 450 cm

Description:

It was from this series of drawings that the idea arose to depict a boat at its natural scale—as a symbol of journey, refuge, and concealment. The work was presented at the Museum of Writing and Printing in Grębocin, set within a historic Gothic church. The gallery occupies one of the aisles, accessed through two entrances. One of them is an unused, historic door, which became the inspiration for creating the large-scale work (1 × 5 m) executed in oil pastel.

During the opening, the door was left ajar. Light streamed through, casting the shadows of visitors as they passed through the „boat.” In this way, the work became partially inhabitable: one could enter it, hide within it, and experience a sense of shelter, merging the observer with the imagined journey of the piece itself.



RIVERS

Title: **RIVERS**

Year: **2023**

Technique: pastels

Dimensions: a series of works with dimensions from 29 cm x 21 cm to 42 cm x 29 cm

Description:

Inspired by the poetry of Czesław Miłosz

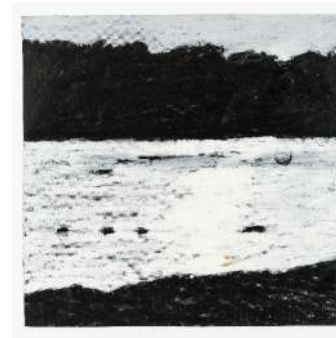
Slowly, step by step, I entered your waters,

And the current took me silently by the knees, (...)

Your unceasing flow carries me further and further.

There is no past, no future—only the eternal present.

Czesław Miłosz „Rivers”



HIDING PLACE

Title of the work: **HIDING PLACE**

Year: **2019**

Technique: acrylic on canvas

Dimensions: a series of works with dimensions from 120 cm x 100 cm to 170 cm x 130 cm

Description:

The forest is a mysterious place, reminiscent of a kind of room or enclosure, where branches and leaves form a canopy and tree trunks act as walls. It is full of hidden corners, shelters, and secret retreats.

It is also a space where one can hide, almost disappear, and shield oneself from others or intruders. The work evokes the phrase I heard as a child: „beyond the mountains, beyond the forests“, which conjures imaginary yet tangible lands—places that exist between reality and imagination.

In the forest, as Piotr Dumala once noted in an interview, one can lose the sense of time, because the forest exists outside of time. Personally, I find that this space allows me to step back from everyday life and immerse myself in an alternate reality.







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