



Who Will Write the History of Tears Artists on Women's Rights

26.11.2021 – 13.02. 2022

Wybrzeże Kościuszkowskie 22, Warsaw

The Museum of Modern Art in Warsaw will open the exhibition *Who Will Write the History of Tears*. It gives voice to women artists who through their personal perspective restore an existential dimension to abortion, freeing this issue from the power of destructive stereotypes. The opening will be held on Friday, 26 November 2021, at the Museum on the Vistula. The curators are Magda Lipska, Sebastian Cichocki and Łukasz Ronduda.

The title of the exhibition is borrowed from a work by the American artist Barbara Kruger, *Who Will Write the History of Tears* (1987), which will be on display at the museum in Warsaw. Alongside it, a now-legendary poster that first appeared on the streets of Warsaw exactly 30 years ago, in the autumn of 1991. A black-and-white portrait of a woman, in close-up, her face divided in half: negative and positive. A huge inscription against a red background: "Your body is a battleground." The New York artist prepared the Polish version at the request of Milada Ślizińska based on her work *Untitled (Your Body Is a Battleground)* from 1989, regarded today as one of the most important works of the 20th century. At that time there was a heated debate underway in Poland over women's reproductive rights.

Around the world, this debate has raged for over a century. Differing visions of society and the state, the role of religion, and the limits of individual freedom clash. Who should have the deciding vote? This issue can fundamentally divide people and provoke acts of aggression. As **Magda Lipska, co-curator of the exhibition**, said: "The account of individual experiences—and especially women's perspective—is lost in the debate. The aim is to wrest the topic of abortion from the control of political clichés and to restore its personal dimension."

Co-curator **Sebastian Cichocki** added: "The exhibition was developed under an 'Our Many Europes' grant. Together with other museum institutions, we reviewed the art of the 1990s and its key traditions impacting current art. Our principal partner was the National College

of Art and Design in Dublin. We identified numerous similarities between the social situations in Poland and Ireland in which the battle for women's rights was central."

A documentary film was created especially for the exhibition, based on oral history, depicting the protests in defence of women's rights in Poland in the 1990s. **Łukasz Ronduda** commented: "We recall historic events marking the successive phases of this battle. We give voice to the women who participated in these events."

This battle for women's rights is being waged all over the world, and is linked with transformations underway in contemporary societies. At the Museum of Modern Art in Warsaw, works will be presented relating experiences of women from countries including Argentina, Ireland, Poland, Portugal, Spain and the United States—countries that have become the site of mass protests and heated public debate. These debates have largely—but not immediately—led to recognition of women's full reproductive rights.

The exhibition space, designed by the German architect Johanna Meyer-Grohbrügge, will allude to the legendary exhibition *Womanhouse*, organized in 1972 by Judy Chicago and Miriam Schapiro, the first feminist exhibition in the United States. Among other events, the exhibition will also be accompanied by a film programme prepared in conjunction with the Millennium DOCS AGAINST GRAVITY Festival.

Artists:

Archive of Public Protests, Artists' Campaign to Repeal the Eighth Amendment, Anne Maree Barry, Anna Beata Bohdziewicz, Andrea Bowers, Tony Cokes, Cecelia Condit, Elektra KB, Rachel Fallon, Viola Głowacka, Guerrilla Girls, Patricia Hurl, Teresa Jakubowska, Anna Janczyszyn-Jaros, Maja Kleczewska, Dominika Kowynia, Barbara Kruger, Ewa Kuryluk, Alice Maher, Ana Mendieta, Fina Miralles, Mia Mullarkey, Małgorzata Mycek, Joanna Piotrowska, Luiza Prado de O. Martins, Paula Rego, Mariela Scafati, Agata Słowak, Elena Tejada-Herrera, Teresa Tyszkiewicz, Weronika Wysocka

Curators:

Magda Lipska
Sebastian Cichocki
Łukasz Ronduda

Who Will Write the History of Tears

26.11.2021 – 13.02. 2022

Opening: 26.11, 18.00

Wybrzeże Kościuszkowskie 22

Opening hours:

Tuesday-Thursday 12.00-19.00

Friday 12.00-20.00

Saturday 11.00-20.00

Sunday 11.00-18.00

Museum of Modern Art in Warsaw:

artmuseum.pl/en

historielez.artmuseum.pl/en

Press kit:

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Siedziba Muzeum
 oraz wybrane projekty
 realizuje m.st. Warszawa



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