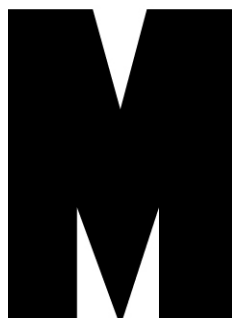


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Autumn opening of MSN Warsaw's new home

Press release, 18 June 2024

On 25 October 2024, the Museum of Modern Art in Warsaw will open its new home on Plac Defilad. The welcome for the new building—an agenda of events open to all—will last for three weeks and give visitors a preview of future activities at the museum. In addition to an exhibition of selected works from the MSN Warsaw collection, the opening will include performance pieces, social and educational events, concerts, lectures, and the new edition of the Warsaw Under Construction festival. The museum's publishing wing will offer new titles, and the new cinema in the building will show its first screenings, accompanied by an extensive public program.

Construction in the final stretch—formal delivery of the MSN Warsaw building

The new headquarters of the Museum of Modern Art in Warsaw, designed by the New York studio Thomas Phifer and Partners at the street address **ul. Marszałkowska 103**, are nearly complete. The finishing touches are underway to prepare the building for handing over: cleaning, polishing, and hydrophobization of the façade to ensure long-lasting protection against weather and grime, combined with application of a silicate copolymer-based coating. The suspended façade of white architectural concrete will be the first of its kind not only in Poland, but in Europe. The interiors are undergoing their final fit-out with flooring, lighting, sanitary installations, and fixtures for offices and reading rooms. Dozens of systems are being installed and adjusted, from fire protection to ventilation and plumbing, necessary for the everyday operation of the museum and efficient display of exhibitions.

“I wish all public buildings were constructed as solidly as the new home of MSN Warsaw on Plac Defilad,” said **Mikołaj Mundzik, the museum's deputy director for investment**. “The materials and technologies used for the project are timeless, resisting deterioration and the need for future costly repairs. The design for construction and fit-out of the interior has been executed consistent with the finest examples of modernism from the 1950s and 60s. Some of the solutions evoke universal forms and details that have been part of architecture

and construction forever. Significantly, the high-quality solutions have not inflated the construction costs. Compared for example to other public projects in Warsaw, the costs are typical, or indeed low when the durability of the structure is factored in.”

The forum shared between MSN Warsaw and the future home of the theater TR Warszawa is also growing greener. Eleven tall honey locust trees planned in the fall will shelter the museum square visible from the Plac Defilad side. **The shaded forum alongside the glazed ground floor of the museum was designed as a future meeting place for Varsovians. A café, bookstore and auditorium**, open to all, will operate in this space, which will also host **fringe events** accompanying exhibitions, along with additional events acquainting audiences with art, education and architecture: **debates, discussions, workshops and artistic events, open to all**, inspired by the museum’s agenda and jointly shaped by the communities centered around MSN Warsaw: collectives, social movements, NGOs, and cultural institutions. **The museum refers to this aspect of its activity as its Public Program.**

Shared, social museum—consultations, civic council, and Gallery A

Recruitment underway for the Artists’ Civic Council

For the first time ever at a cultural institution in Poland, the council will be open to practitioners in various fields of art, in different professional circumstances, and with a range of views on what art should be and the role it should play in society.

Jakub Depczyński, curator of MSN Warsaw’s Public Program, explained: “As part of the project ‘Shared Museum: Artists’ Civic Council,’ we inquire directly with Warsaw’s creative community how MSN Warsaw can help improve their situation and better meet their needs and expectations. We want to hear their voices, and also learn their ideas and proposals—all so that we can implement the solutions they believe will best serve Warsaw’s entire artistic community.”

“Shared Museum” is a project carried out by the independent researcher and artist Michał Laskowski, MSN Warsaw, and the Shipyard Foundation. **Do you make art? Sign up!** Participation in the council is open to all persons living or working in Warsaw who create contemporary art, and those who may or may not have completed a formal art education but are engaged in artistic activity as their main occupation—and those aspiring to work in this field and cooperate with museums, galleries and other cultural institutions in Warsaw. **Applications may be filed through the online form available on the websites of MSN Warsaw and the Shipyard Foundation from 17 June through 22 July 2024.** The council is the first project to be carried out in the MSN Warsaw Public Program.

The priorities for the MSN Warsaw Public Program will be decided by the **MSN Warsaw Public Program Social Council** now being formed, and the council will also oversee proper implementation of its aims. The members of the council will represent various Warsaw communities and stakeholders—cultural, academic, artistic, activist and urbanist—for the most part not directly connected to the art world. **MSN Warsaw will also cooperate with**

the city's municipal cultural institutions, making its space, resources and infrastructure available to theaters, cultural centers, libraries, and social cultural institutions. Every cultural institution run solely or jointly by the City of Warsaw will be able to use selected rooms and other spaces at the museum free of charge to carry out any activities on their agenda.

Also operating on the ground floor of the new MSN Warsaw building will be **Galeria A**, jointly created by a team of curators and invited artists, artistic collectives, and groups and communities from the art world or combining art with other fields, such as activism or social work. Galeria A is pitched first and foremost to experimentation—collective and process-based measures, a non-standard approach to creating exhibitions and programs, and interdisciplinary research and participatory projects. The gallery's programming will be based on a relay model: the collectives, individuals, organizations and creative communities invited to the gallery by the MSN Warsaw team in 2024 will nominate the entities carrying out their projects in 2025, and so on. Galeria A and its program will expand along with successive invitations, seeking to bring artists, researchers, activists and curators from all over Poland together through networks of interconnecting relationships.

What's happening starting 25 October 2024: Opening weekend, collection × 2, WWB16, performance, lectures, concerts, installations

Opening weekend: The Collection in Two Acts—25 October 2024 and 21 February 2025

The opening and first few weeks of operation of MSN Warsaw in its new building will primarily feature the presentation of several large-scale sculptures and installation pieces by Polish and international women artists. The showing of selected works in the spaces of the various galleries will help to reveal the architectural values of the new building, which will be discussed during the opening by the architect Thomas Phifer. **This event will offer a foretaste of the first showing of the MSN Warsaw collection, planned to open on 21 February 2025.**

According to **Joanna Mytkowska, director of MSN Warsaw**: “We are launching our operations with a show of works by women. In this way we will continue the global trend of catching up on our understanding of forgotten or ignored women artists, covering up these blank spots with patches of color. Thus, for the museum, this portion of our collection gathered over the past 20 years will serve as a manifesto of support for neglected portions of the art scene and a continuation of the search for missing figures from art history. These efforts have resulted for example in the great posthumous blossoming of the popularity of Alina Szapocznikow, whose work *Friendship* will be seen by our visitors on the opening day. So we are showing both historic works, including a large *abakan* by Magdalena Abakanowicz, as well as works by contemporary female artists of international importance, such as Sandra Mujinga from the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Cecilia Vicuña, the Chilean icon of feminist art. The selected works perfectly reflect the context of the site and the long presence of MSN Warsaw on Plac Defilad, addressed in this year's edition of the Warsaw Under Construction festival.”

Opening weekend: *Warsaw Under Construction 16; Tough Love; The Museum Between the Palace and the Square*

All the way back in its first edition, the Warsaw Under Construction (WWB) festival examined the context of construction of a new home for MSN Warsaw on Plac Defilad. Over the following years, the curators and invited artists entered in their works into a dialogue with the Palace of Culture and Science and the history of the space surrounding it. They raised such questions as who will regain this urban square, and whether it will be a socially friendly place if it passes into private hands? They debated with urban activists and the city authorities over the type of public space to be created around the museum's new building, and reminded us that after 1989, the urban life of the Polish capital injected its energy here, filling the space of Plac Defilad with bus stations, parking lots, shopping arcades and food joints. The square, which stood apart from the dynamic transformation of other neighborhoods, only seemed on the surface to remain empty. *Warsaw Under Construction 9* in 2017 was entirely devoted to Plac Defilad at a significant moment in its change into a central urban square.

On Plac Defilad today, we see the large mass of the museum with its minimalist façade of white concrete, placed between the soaring structure of the Soviet-era Palace of Culture and Science and Domy Centrum, a set of retail structures stretching for a length of 350 meters. After two decades operating as a nomadic institution, the museum is now permanently embedded in the surrounding cityscape. The present and history overlap in many aspects of MSN Warsaw's new home, the touchstone for the agenda of the 16th Warsaw Under Construction festival, titled *Tough Love*.

Tomasz Fudala, creator and co-curator of the festival, explained: "For 16 years we have treated Warsaw Under Construction as a tool for wrestling with questions about the city in which we live. It quickly became obvious to us that this year's 16th edition would take up the topic of the urban context of the museum's new home. It will also narrate the history of the surroundings of the Palace of Culture over the past several decades, and address the memory of the place and new fantasies about this urban square and the future agenda of MSN Warsaw. More broadly, the festival will take up the phenomenon of contemporary museums and their presence in the life of cities."

This year's festival was prepared in cooperation with the team of **GTA Exhibitions, the gallery of the Department of Architecture at ETH Zurich**, whose students regularly visit Warsaw. Students working in the architectural studio at the Harvard Graduate School of Design were also invited to participate. The fruit of their work is a set of mock-ups presenting variations on the theme of the MSN Warsaw agenda. The planned exhibition, involving Polish and foreign artists, will be divided between two sites: the ground floor of the new building and in the museum's original home at ul. Pańska 3.

Opening weekend: Dancing about architecture—Polish and international cooperation and the Turnus Show

The agenda for the opening of the new building of the Museum of Modern Art in Warsaw will include **a review of the Polish choreography scene of the last 10 years**, as well as **a special occasion to explore the museum's architecture through motion, dance and performative practices**. The invited artists will reexamine works already familiar to the Polish audience, returning years later to works previously shown at MSN Warsaw in its earlier incarnations, as well as new projects premiering at the same time as the opening of the new building at ul. Marszałkowska 103. We will witness works by well-established artists, pieces by the younger generation, and performances by the Polish dance community scattered across Europe and rarely presenting their works in Warsaw. We will show works in process, dance performances and choreographic installations, including group extravaganzas in addition to chamber-scaled solo pieces.

According to **curator Magda Komornicka**, "Before the works from the MSN Warsaw collection settle into their new home in the new exhibition halls, these spaces will be filled with bodies, movement and sound. The performative program will encourage visitors and artists alike to experience the new building firsthand. We want the viewers to sense the height and proportions of the empty rooms, the texture of the walls, the temperature of the floors, the scent, colors and light of the museum's architecture. We want to draw viewers' attention to what is not usually seen in an exhibition."

The second wave of performance pieces in the launch of MSN Warsaw's new home will be overseen by curators from the Kontakt Collection, an independent art foundation based in Vienna creating a nomadic collection of art from countries of Central, Eastern and South-Eastern Europe. Its name alludes to the 1969 work *Contact (Anti-Happening)* by the Slovak artist Július Koller, an iconic figure in the history of the neo- and post-avant-garde. Kontakt combines collecting with research work and initiating exhibitions, often held in non-museum spaces such as an office building or a supermarket. This year, the organization is celebrating its 20th anniversary. Currently there are more than 150 artists from 20 countries represented in its collection. The collection includes performances, happenings, visual and experimental poetry, mail art, and sound works from the 1960s–1990s. Works from the collection are loaned to contemporary art museums around the world. **The program prepared for MSN Warsaw includes not only performances and actions by contemporary artists, but also reconstructions of two of Koller's "anti-happenings" and a performative exhibition.**

In the museum's performance activities, we will also invite you to *Turnus—Show what you can do!*—a performance in which anyone can take part. The only limitation will be the parameters of the cinema and the motto PERFORMANCE. The cinema includes a stage, auditorium, sound system and screen; otherwise, we do not limit the form. You could present a video, give a poetry reading, or create a ten-minute tableau vivant on stage. Fun, accessibility and exaggeration are the order of the day—a show full of hugs, applause, and winning performances on the cinema stage.

The museum also plans to showcase the building's architecture through music. During the opening weekend we invite the public to **three concerts by world-renowned female**

musicians from Poland and abroad, whose work intersects pop, the visual arts and alternative culture, and who boldly experiment with styles, music genres, and their own image.

Opening weekend: Kinomuzeum, book launches

The film program will launch alongside the opening of the new MSN Warsaw building. The screenings at Kinomuzeum will cover European arthouse repertoire, genre films, films by artists, documentaries and animation, as well as encounters with creators, and discussions about the art of film with film scholars and practitioners. The cinema will also provide a forum for screening the museum's own extensive film resources. The Kinomuzeum schedule will include retrospectives, films accompanying exhibitions at the museum, thematic reviews, and broad educational offerings for viewers of all ages. The screening room in the new museum will be found on the lower level (-1), accessible via the Cinema Tower occupying the northwest corner of the building.

The museum's publishing arm, **Wydawnictwo MSN**, is preparing special publications marking the opening of the new building. A volume by the architectural and urban anthropologist Michał Murawski, titled *Form of Friendship: The Museum on the Square*, will include an essay by the author, interviews with such figures as the building's architect Thomas Phifer, architecture critic Deyan Sudjic, urbanist Marlena Happach, and folks from the Sunflower Solidary Community Center. The book will be issued in Polish and English. The second item published on the occasion of the museum's opening is an album by Marta Ejsmont, a photographer who has documented the process of construction of the MSN Warsaw building over the years. It will offer a unique artistic record of how the new building arose.

Partners—cooperation old and new

The museum's strength, and its task, is building good, strong relationships. In many areas of its operations, MSN Warsaw establishes partnerships aimed at strengthening the institution and realizing its mission and goals. This allows it to build an open, accessible program for the broad public, while also unleashing synergies between social groups and communities. The opening of the museum's new home scheduled for 25 October 2024 could not occur without the support of the **City of Warsaw** and long-term partners: **consultancy EY**, **patron of MSN Warsaw**, and **law firm DZP**, **MSN Warsaw's legal partner**. The new opening on Plac Defilad also means new cooperation, and thus the brands **Audi** and **Invest Komfort** have become strategic partners of the **Museum of Modern Art in Warsaw**.

Łukasz Zadworny, Audi Brand Director for Poland, said: "We share with MSN Warsaw courage in thinking and acting, and faith in the future combined with respect for the past and the world around us. Art has always arisen from challenging the established norms and limitations, from the need to express one's own view without compromise, and to push new boundaries. We prize these pioneering forms of expression most highly—this is evident in

our design, which we stress just as strongly as new technologies. This is why working with MSN Warsaw was a natural choice for us.”

Michał Ciomek, vice president of Invest Komfort, commented: “We understand the role of artists in the contemporary world. We support artistic education and the dialogue sparked by creative individuals. Hence our decision to cooperate with the Museum of Modern Art in Warsaw. Our patronage will extend to the museum’s operations as well as the opening of the new building. We are thrilled to be part of this key cultural event in Poland this year. Each of our residential developments is created with a view to how it will resonate with the society, the city, the culture, and the existing architecture. That’s why we also supporting the architectural and educational pathways with our patronage.”

Educational projects are a key area of the museum’s operations. An example is the project Primary Forms, developed over the past three years in cooperation with the Roman Czernecki Educational Foundation (Fundacja EFC)—a periodic program for pupils at primary schools throughout Poland. The foundation has now joined the partners for the opening of MSN Warsaw, while also supporting the activities surrounding Primary Forms addressed to the broader public.

E.ON will be the exclusive partner of the newly opened Kinomuzeum at MSN Warsaw.

Announcement: Bródno 2024, and Maria Prymachenko held over to 14 July

For 15 years, the **Bródno Sculpture Park** has been a place where MSN Warsaw (lacking a home of its own) could develop its collection of contemporary art in public space, in conjunction with the city’s Targówek district. In July the museum will vacate its temporary headquarters on the Vistula River, and in September will move to its new building. This summer of transition and change in the scale of operations will be the starting point for two projects which MSN Warsaw will implement in the new season at the Bródno Sculpture Park: *Lexicon of Independent Exhibition Initiatives* and *Between Ecstasy and Disappointment*. These initiatives will address the tension between the independent and unofficial, and the ordering structure of the museum.

Over the past two months, over 25,000 people have visited the Museum on the Vistula to view the works of Maria Prymachenko. In light of the huge and unflagging public interest, the museum has decided to extend this exhibition of 89 colorful gouaches by one of the most popular Ukrainian artists ever. ***A Tiger Came into the Garden: Art of Maria Prymachenko* at the Museum on the Vistula will run for two extra weeks, ending 14 July.** Curated by Szymon Maliborski in cooperation with Ukrainian art collector Eduard Dymshyts, this is MSN Warsaw’s last exhibition in its current location. The next exhibition will open on 25 October 2024 at the new headquarters of the Museum of Modern Art in Warsaw at ul. Marszałkowska 103.

Construction of the MSN Warsaw building is financed by the City of Warsaw. The general contractor is Warbud S.A.

The building is designed by the New York architectural firm Thomas Phifer and Partners in conjunction with APA Wojciechowski sp. z o.o., and the designer of the constructions and installations is engineering firm Buro Happold. A consortium of Ecm Group Polska sp. z o.o. and Portico Project Management sp. z o.o. serves as contract engineer for the project. The museum's legal adviser for the development is KKLW Kurzyński Łyszyk Wierzbicki Sp.k.

