

JASMINA CIBIC

THE PALACE

21.05—29.08.2021

1 **THE GIFT, 2021** SINGLE CHANNEL HD VIDEO, STEREO, 25"

The film explores particularly charged monikers among political gifts of architecture, art, music, and dance pertaining to national and ideological structures. The locations include: the buildings of the Palais des Nations in Geneva, Oscar Niemeyer's French Communist Party Headquarters in Paris, the Palace of Culture and Science in Warsaw, and Mount Buzludzha in Bulgaria, all created as gifts with highly specific political purposes. *The Gift* follows three characters representing culture as the only offering that can unite a divided nation.

11 **THE GIFT: ACT II, 2019** SINGLE CHANNEL HD VIDEO, STEREO, 2'43" IN LOOP

The second chapter in Cibic's film project renders a speech (appearing in 1) delivered by the Artist, one of the characters in the first chapter of the film, into movement. Voiced at the beginning of the exhibition, this choreographed attack on political forces comes as a reminder of what is at stake if the bond between culture and society is broken.

5 **EVERYTHING THAT YOU DESIRE AND NOTHING THAT YOU FEAR, 2018** PRINT ON POLY-COTTON VELVET; CURTAIN, DIMENSIONS VARIABLE

This curtain has patterns drawn from the tapestries that graced the halls of the former Palace of Federation in Belgrade, a building where Yugoslavia's President Tito inaugurated the Non-Aligned Movement in 1961.

6 **REVOLUTIONARY ARTISTS, 2021**

7 **FOUNDING FATHERS, 2020**

8 **YOUTH RELAYS, 2020** THREE SERIES OF C-TYPE PRINTS, EACH 100 x 80 CM

This salon-style installation presents three series of photographic still lifes against curtained walls. They are portraits of specific rose varieties, state-endorsed relay-race batons, and an early twentieth-century art collection, all of which were gifts to promote transnational solidarity during key historical moments in Europe. Shot against a dark backdrop, the objects have moths and other insects crawling across their surfaces, recalling the tradition of *vanitas* paintings, the inevitable mutations of ideology and sociopolitical memory, and the symbolic power of cultural capital.

9 **LIPIZZANER 508 NAEPOLITANO THAIS XL (B. 11.04.2005), 2020** C-TYPE PRINT, 200 CM x 150 CM

A photographic portrait of the Lipizzaner 508 Neapolitano Thais XL which was presented in 2009 as an official state endowment to the Middle-Eastern dictator Muammar Gaddafi. This gift is an embodiment of the Trojan Horse, a gift given in the aftermath of a financial crisis in hopes of establishing economic collaboration. It acted not only as a pawn in soft-power strategies, but was also complicit in the production of ideology.

2 **THE PLEASURE OF EXPENSE, 2019–21** METAL STRUCTURES, EMBROIDERED FABRIC HAMMOCKS, *SOUND AND *PERFORMANCE

This installation combines political rhetoric on culture and female absence from all the nation-building acts of twentieth-century politics. Here the all-female ensemble performs archival statements that were historically hijacked from women, and instrumentalised art and architecture. Sung while reclining on hammocks embroidered with political slogans, the performance blends state power, culture, and the artist's body into a single spectacle.

***THE PLEASURE OF EXPENSE: ACT II—THE PALACE OF SOLIDARITY, 2021**
Live performance with singers, Małgorzata Duda, Paulina Jabłonna and Marlena Rygiel, May 21, 2021. Lyrics and concept by Jasmina Cibic, composed by Barbara Kinga Majewska. Based on a fragment from Allgemeiner Völkerversöhnungs Marsch op. 11 by Franz Brabes, a composition donated to the League of Nations, Geneva.

***THE PLEASURE OF EXPENSE: ACT II—THE PALACE OF SOLIDARITY, 2021**
Recording: University of Music in Łódź Studio, Wojciech Grabowski.

4 **TOPICAL DEVICES V.4, 2018** IRON, WOOD, DIMENSIONS VARIABLE

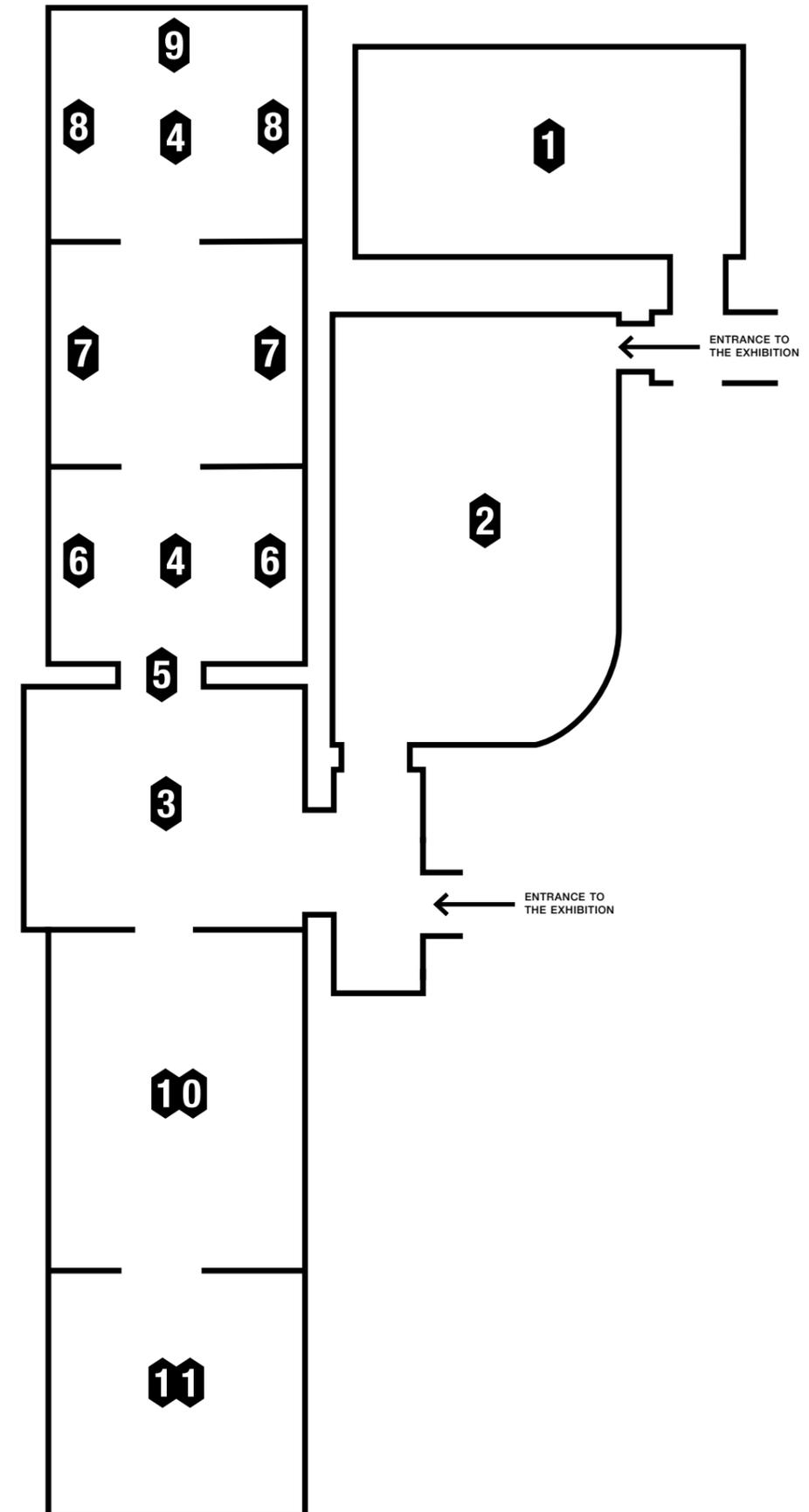
3 **AN IMMOVABLE GUIDING STAR ON OUR JOURNEY TO TRANSFORM, 2021** FORGED IRON, 185 CM x 185 CM x 30 CM

Architectural forged iron recalling fences and gates designed to prevent citizens from entering the government buildings, decorated with the words of Szymon Syrkus commenting on the Palace of Culture and Science in Warsaw in 1952.

10 **ALL THAT POWER MELTS INTO NOISE: ACT II, 2020–21** ACRYLIC AND PEN ON SNARE DRUM, WALLCOVERING AND *PERFORMANCE

A performative installation drawn from a number of gifts to the Palais des Nations, donated in the 1930s (on the threshold of World War II), and more recent donations that aim to colonize the building with new political power relations.

*Live performance with drummers, Patrycja Urbańska and Dagmara Karandys, held on May 21, 2021. Score written in collaboration with Maja Povše based on music donated to the League of Nations, stored at the Archive of the United Nations, Geneva.



6 **REVOLUTIONARY ARTISTS, 2021**

SERIES OF C-TYPE PRINTS, EACH 100 x 80 CM

The series is made up of portraits of the backs of paintings from the International Collection of Modern Art, gifts of the European artists themselves. These works were donated in response to an appeal from the a.r. group, whose members later entrusted them to the care of the Muzeum Sztuki.

From left to right:

Władysław Strzemiński: Unist Composition 8 (1931), MS/SN/M/72

Sophie Taeuber-Arp: Composition (1931), MS/SN/RYS/6

Maria Nycz-Borowiak: Still Life (1928), MS/SN/M/38

Wanda Chodasiewicz-Grabowska: Planimetric Composition (ca. 1926), MS/SN/M/20

Max Ernst: Sun and Forest (1928), MS/SN/M/21

Fernand Léger: Les deux profils / Two Profiles (1926), MS/SN/M/36

7 **FOUNDING FATHERS, 2020**

SERIES OF C-TYPE PRINTS, EACH 100 x 80 CM

The second set of images depicts roses bred and named after founding fathers of the European project, among them politicians opposed to fascism. Many of the flowers depicted have almost disappeared from gardens on our continent.

From left to right: *Rosa Konrad Adenauer, Rosa Sandro Pertini, Rosa Jean Monnet, Rosa Souvenir de Robert Schuman®, Rosa Helmut Kohl, Rosa Charles de Gaulle.*

8 **YOUTH RELAYS, 2020**

SERIES OF C-TYPE PRINTS, EACH 100 x 80 CM

Portraits of sculpted batons used in the Youth Relay, a popular annual event held in the former Yugoslavia to celebrate the birthday of the federation's President Tito. Young people from all six republics would come together to participate in this concerted effort to promote social unity and anti-nationalist sentiment. From 1957 to 1987, the batons were crafted by artists and ceremonially presented to the president as gifts.

From left to right: *1972, Branko Mandić; 1970, Liljana Žežova; 1981, Ivan Ižak; 1971 Nemzija Janjeva; 1964, Josip Harcet; 1967, Miodrag Strunjaš.*

10 **ALL THAT POWER MELTS INTO NOISE: ACT II, 2020–21**

INSTALLATION: ACRYLIC AND PEN ON SNARE DRUM, WALLCOVERING AND *PERFORMANCE

An installation combining two series of gifts donated to the League of Nations by amateur and semi-professional artists. These snare drums symbolize anthems and marches, two forms of music integral to the nation state, both its formation and its dissolution. The instruments are adorned with paintings of proposed designs for the League's flag. The walls of a room are covered with patterns Cibic draws from one of the more recent gifts to the Palais des Nations in Geneva in 2016—a Russian salon with a mash-up of nationally representative scenography, merging the current political elite's aesthetic ideas and Kazimir Malevich paintings.

Tere-Tere_Proposal n.1660, Weg der Einigkeit_Proposal n.1082, Un pour Tous_Proposal n.720 B, Spravedlnostou k pravde. Pravdou k ludstvu_Proposal n.72, Proposal n.759, Proposal n.493 B, Neue Zeit_Proposal n.148 B, Justitia Pax Veritas, Humanite_Proposal n.615, Grotius_Proposal n.1664, Entwurf der Fahne_Proposal n.690 B, Entente_Proposal 390 A, Eendracht maakt macht_Proposal n.1626, Devise_Proposal n.232 A, Devise - Einheit in ewigkeit_Proposal n.275, Bonaventura_Proposal n.761, Concordia atque simplicitas_Proposal n.694, 2π_Proposal n.1082

JASMINA CIBIC THE PALACE

Jasmina Cibic investigates how gift-giving is embedded in the twentieth-century European landscape of international relations and the formation of national identity. Throughout the exhibited films, photographs, sculptures, and multi-part installations, the artist spotlights specific transnational alliances formed in the aftermath of economic and humanitarian crises.

The Palace presents the material remnants of pacts in the form of art and architecture. On the one hand, these testify to the need for reconstruction and renewal, and on the other, they are instruments of political persuasion and mechanisms of soft power in themselves. The parts of this exhibition are based on historical discussions in political diplomacy and art, emphasizing their convoluted relationship.

The Gift uses allegory, with which the artists test the concept that culture can be used to counteract social polarization. The film presents three finalists in a competition for the perfect gift for a divided nation, each suggesting a different approach to establishing their relationship and reinstating communication between feuding citizens. The action takes place in buildings that were gifts; the headquarters of the French Communist Party in Paris (from the architect Oscar Niemeyer), the Palace of Nations (from donations by members of the League of Nations) and the Palace of Culture and Science in Warsaw (Stalin's present to the Republic of Poland). They house institutions established to serve society, ensure world peace, and build education and culture. This last task is also performed by Muzeum Sztuki in Łódź, located at the Palace of Maurycy Poznański, where we are.

In the enfilade of the Poznański's palace rooms, references to a number of gifts are collected and presented as proof of faith in common ideals. They include photographic portraits of roses bred as tributes to politicians who combated fascism and of relay batons presented to the leader of the Yugoslav federation during an annual celebration to unite the citizens of all the republics.

Moreover, the exhibition features a photographic portrait of the International Collection of Modern Art, a generous gift from European artists donated in response to an appeal from the a.r. group.

The Palace brings back memories of other projects built on a sense of solidarity in twentieth-century Europe, in which artists, both professional and amateur, were also involved. These were gifts donated by the citizens of the Member States to the League of Nations, including music (hymns and marches) and visual art.

Jasmina Cibic always begins with archival research. She combines historical ready-mades into new performative narratives. By scripting, quoting, andre-/en-acting, she draws attention to the similarities between stagecraft and statecraft. She seems to be playing a double game: on the one hand, she deciphers the mechanisms of power; on the other, she builds her own allegorical structures.

Trying to unravel the complicated links between art, gender issues and state power, Cibic encourages viewers to reflect on strategies used in building a national culture. This subject is particularly relevant today, when national identity is undergoing transformations and nationalism is on the rise.

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HONORARY PATRONAGE

National Institute of Architecture and Urban Planning

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