



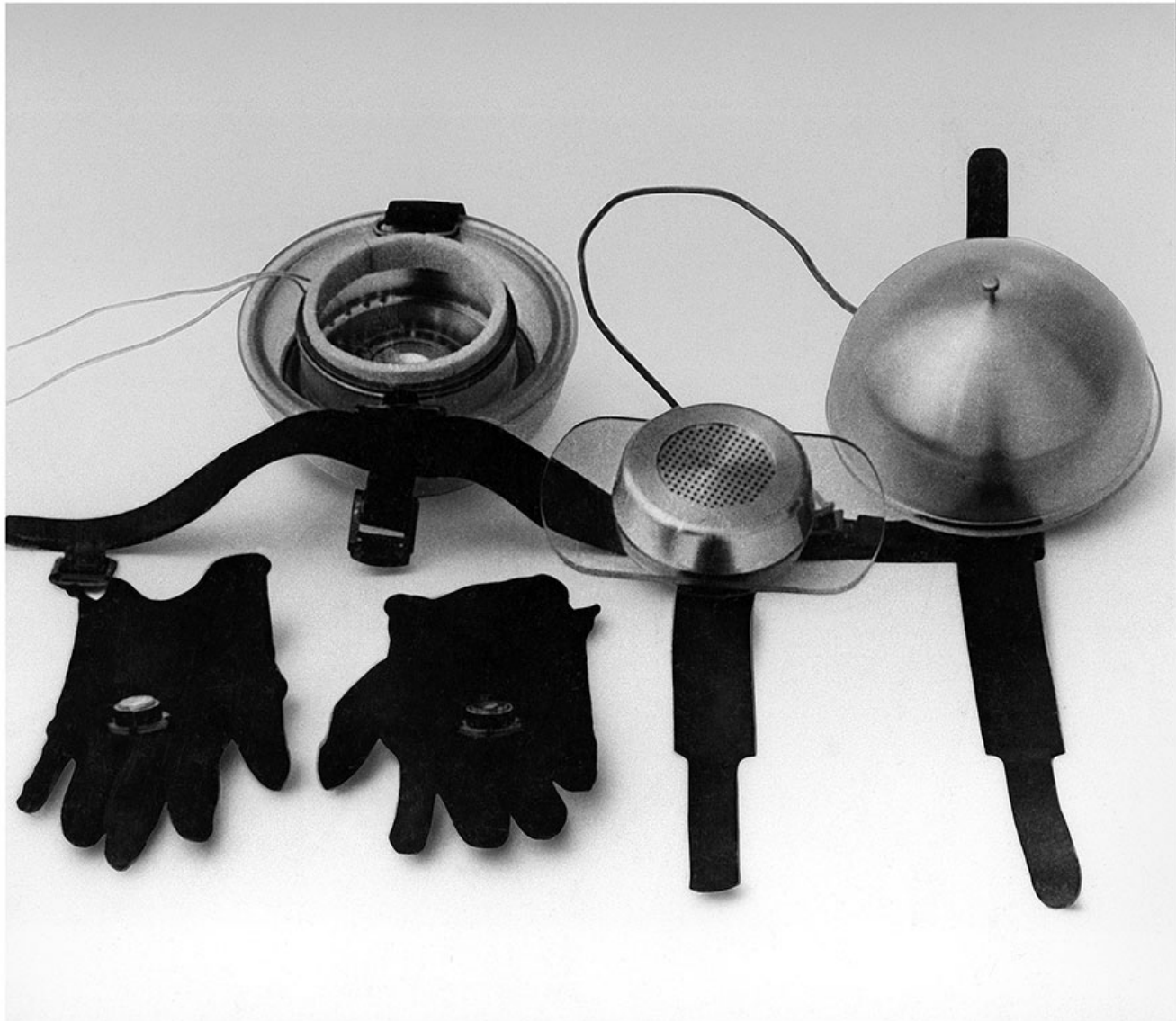
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Personal Instrument

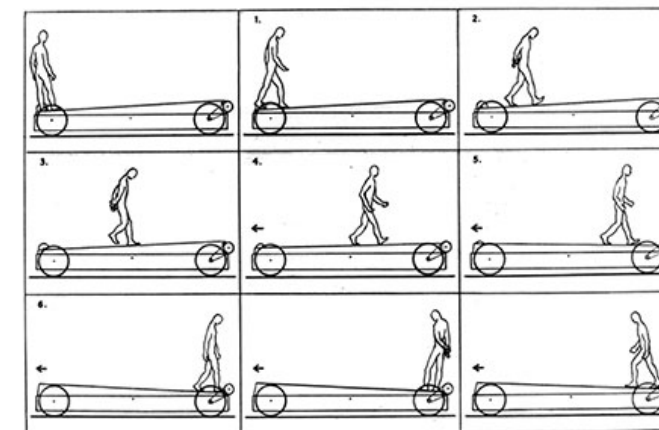
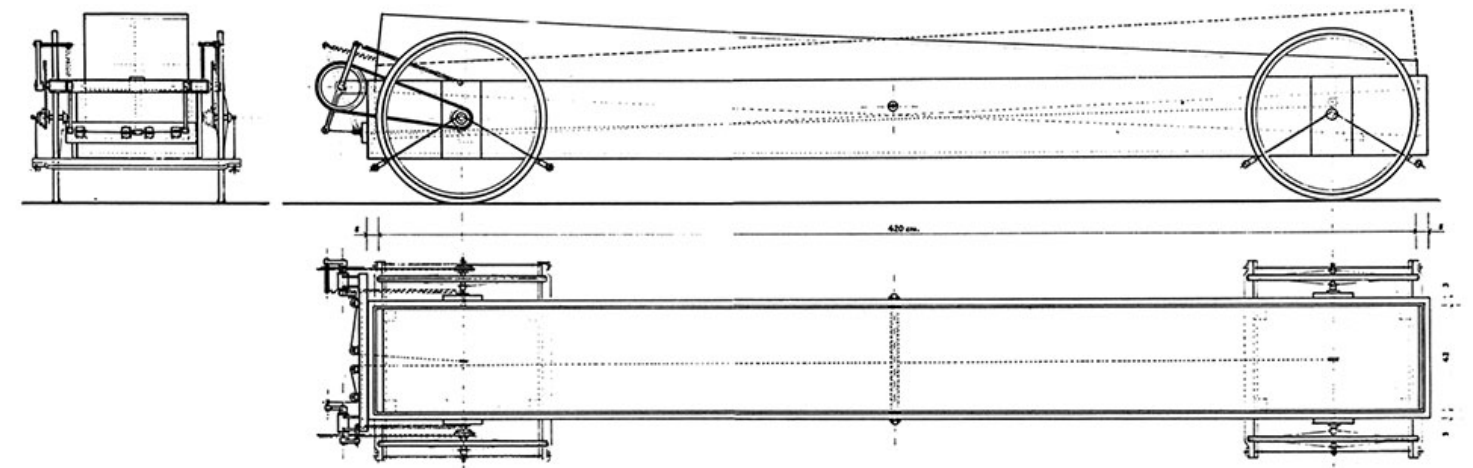
1969

Personal Instrument was exhibited for the first time at the Współczesna Gallery in Warsaw in 1971. The main structure was constructed in a prototype lab at PZO (Polskie Zakłady Optyczne) optical works; electronic elements such as electro-acoustic components and transistor filters were designed and assembled by Wojciech Makowski at the Polish Radio Experimental Studio. During the development of *Personal Instrument* Wodiczko worked as a design consultant for the Studio, which was directed by Józef Patkowski. A microphone placed on the forehead receives sounds from the environment and transmits them to electroacoustic filters located in two soundproof shell earphones. Filters are controlled by two photocells fastened to each hand. The movement of the hands regulates the amount of light reaching the photo-receivers and thus the intensity of filtering. When both hands are closed in fists (photo-receivers dark), the filtering device works at peak capacity, and no sound is heard. Turning the hands directly to the light switches off the filters, and all sounds from the environment are heard. The right hand's photo-receivers control the low-pitch filter (high pitch sounds are heard). The left hand's photo-receivers control the high-pitch filter. The waving of hands creates *glissando* effects.



Warsaw, 1972

The instrument transforms the sounds of the environment.
The instrument functions in response to hand movements.
The instrument reacts to sunlight.
The instrument is portable.
The instrument can be used any place and any time.
The instrument is for the exclusive use of its author.
The instrument permits the author to attain virtuosity.
KW



Warsaw, 1973

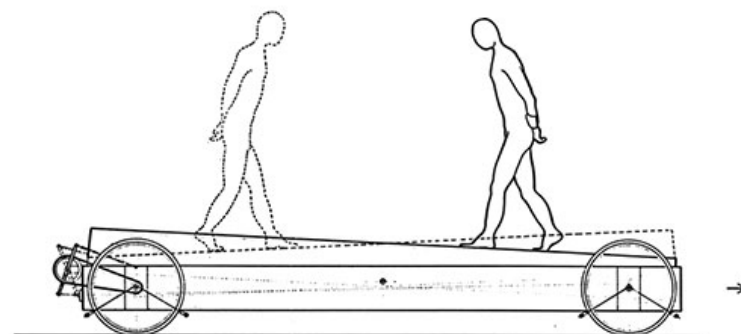


The 1970s

Vehicle I

1971–1973

The artist, walking up and down the tilting platform, causes a seesaw movement; the energy thus generated is transmitted by a system of cables and gears to the wheels, which, as a consequence, move the vehicle forward. The vehicle moves in a uniform motion in a straight line in one direction only. Vehicle is for the exclusive use of the artist.
KW



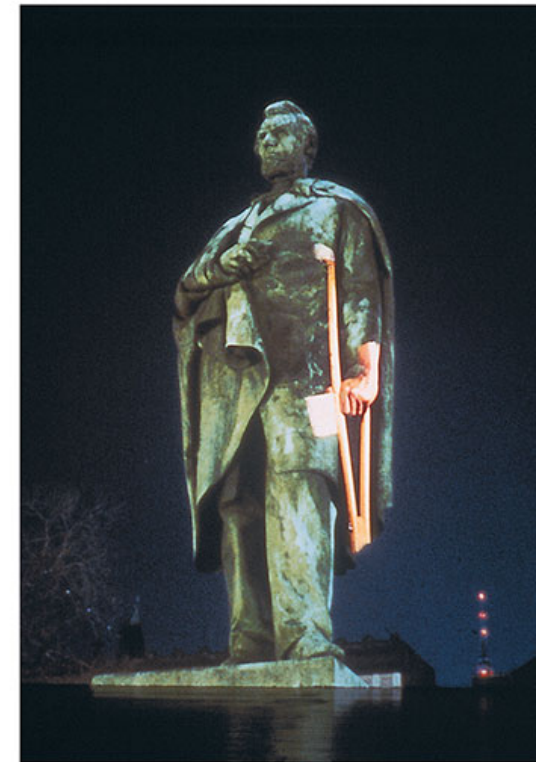
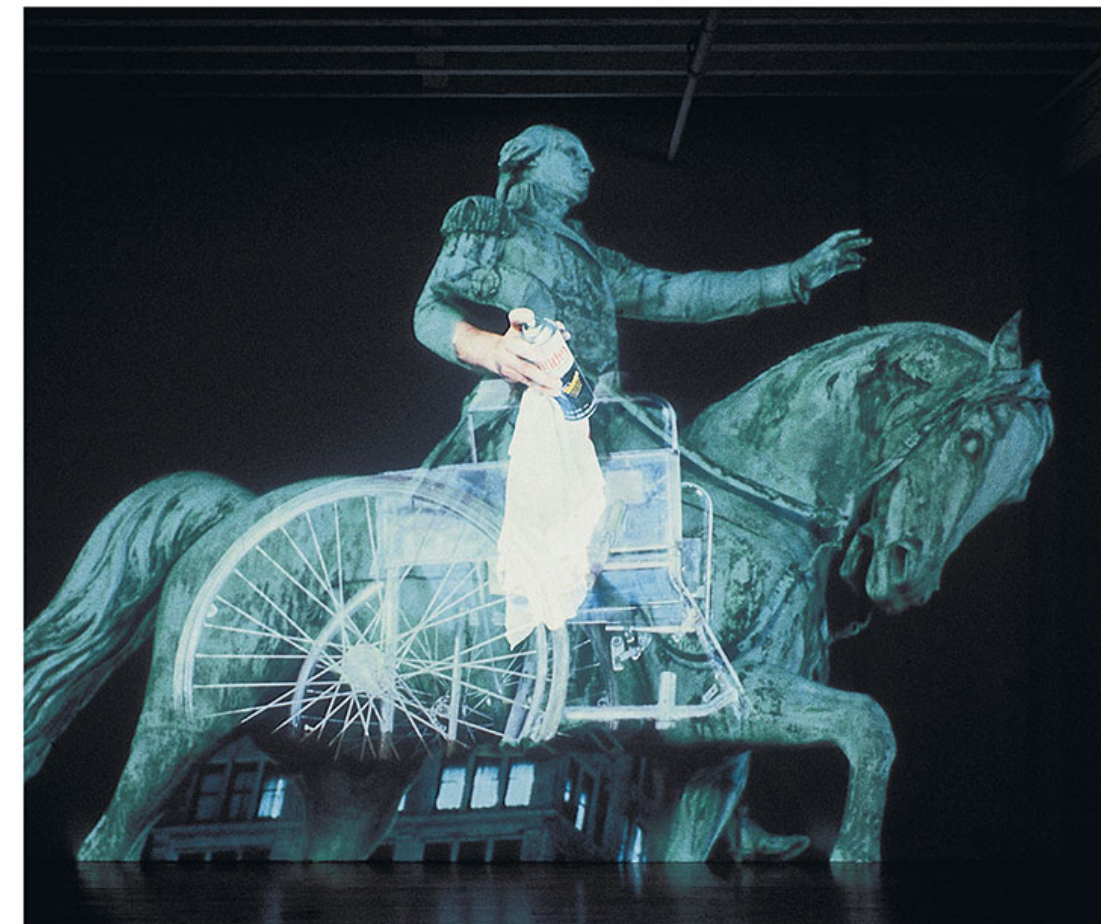


Homeless Projection: A Proposal for Union Square

49th Parallel, Centre for Contemporary Canadian Art, New York, New York, 1986

Presented in-gallery as a proposal for Union Square Park, the projection took place at a time when, following the park's revitalization, the whole Union Square area had been slated for redevelopment to improve the precinct's social status. The project dealt with the social effects of gentrification, presenting homeless people who were to be evicted from the park due to the renovation, and whose number would also increase as rising rents would force low-income residents from their homes. Projected on the gallery's four walls, the images, consisting of superimposed slide projections, presented a proposal to transform the iconography of four neo-Classical, freshly renovated monuments in the park. Wodiczko was proposing to use the statues of Abraham Lincoln, George Washington, General de Lafayette, and the James Fountain as backgrounds for screening images of objects associated with homeless people: shopping carts, wheelchairs, wooden crutches, plastic bottles of windshield cleaner.

Curator: France Morin.





Porte-Parole Mouthpiece

1993

Instrument designed and tested at the Interrogative Design Group, Center for Advanced Visual Studies, MIT; built at Brooklyn Model Works.

Projects featuring the *Porte-Parole Mouthpiece* carried out in: Stockholm, Malmö, Helsinki, Warsaw, Angers, Trélazé.

The *Porte-Parole Mouthpiece* is the second in a series of Wodiczko's *Xenological Instruments*, more radical, a kind of cultural prosthesis enabling the users to communicate and express themselves and overcome their sense of alienation. Encircling the jaw, the device resembles a mask with a small built-in video monitor and small loudspeakers. The screen displays the image of the user's lips as they narrate their story: "the immigrant's actual testimony is replaced by a moving image of their mouth and the sound of their voice." Worn on the face as an extension of the user's body, the device turns the user into a cyborg exhibiting their virtual strangeness. The work's second version was equipped with an adjustable monitor that could be pushed aside to expose the mouth, allowing the user to switch freely between "broadcasting" pre-recorded statements and speaking "live." The small-size screen, the artist wrote, "drives viewers to come closer to the user's face in order to see the image of the moving lips and hear the voice. As a result, the distance between immigrants using the Mouthpiece and non-immigrants is reduced not only physically but also, let us hope, in the psychological sense."

Helsinki, 1993



Trélazé, 1997

Helsinki, 1993





Guests

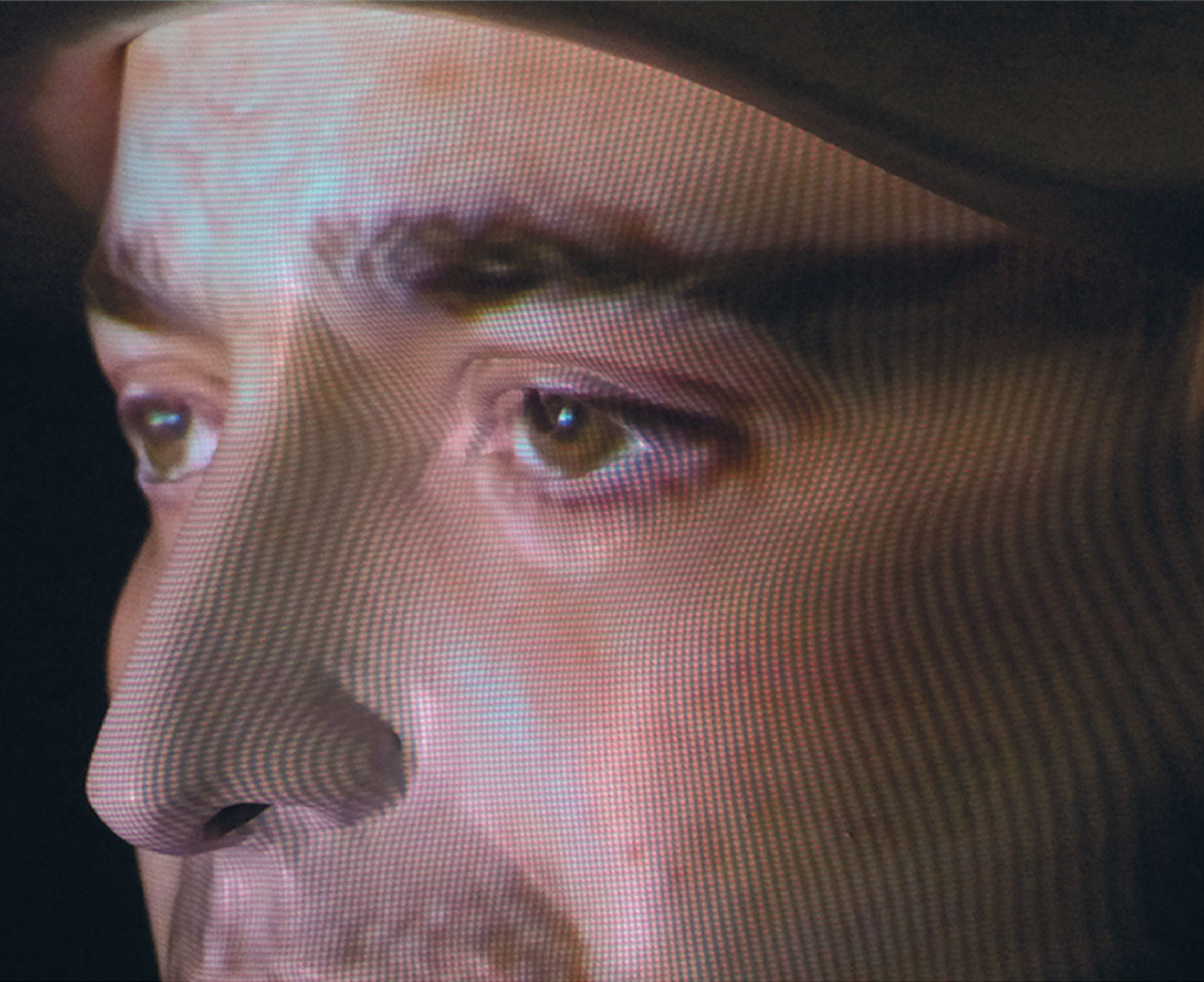
Polish Pavilion, 53rd International Art Exhibition, Venice, 2009

The project coincided with a rise in anti-immigrant views in many European countries. The “guests” are immigrants arriving in Europe where internal borders have been scrapped but external ones are being tightened, and where an official discourse of acceptance and legalization coexists with immigration-regulating procedures. The project featured immigrants residing in Poland and Italy and originally hailing from Chechnya, Ukraine, Vietnam, Romania, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Pakistan, and Morocco. Immigrants, who are “not at home” and remain “eternal guests,” were given an opportunity to speak up, to make themselves visible in public space. The projection shows what happens behind the illusion of windows: immigrants performing various chores, washing windows, cleaning, resting, chatting, exchanging comments about their tough living conditions, unemployment, trouble legalizing their stay. The visibility of the different figures is limited, the slightly blurry images making it hard to discern clearly what is really happening behind the glass. This allusion to the visibility of immigrants, who are almost “at a hand’s reach” yet “on the other side,” behind image-distorting windows, refers us to their ambiguous status, their social invisibility.

Organized by the Zachęta – National Gallery of Art, Warsaw.

Project curator: Bożena Czubak.

Another version of the projection was presented at Atlas Sztuki Gallery, Łódź, 2010.



Blessures invisibles

Galerie Gabrielle Maubrie, Paris, 2014

Images of veterans talking about their war traumas and difficult experiences during service and in civilian life were projected on a copy of a bust of Napoleon, their unrecognizable faces animating the sculpture. Embodying an historical figure, the veterans publicly shared their wartime experiences that are seldom mentioned in the media. At the same time, the projection revived the memory of "one of the greatest commanders in history" through a contemporary reflection on the role and impact of wars on people's lives.

