

Manggha Museum of Japanese
Art and Technology

**REPORT
ON ACTIVITIES**

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Andrzej Jajszczyk

Wystawa dla Albrechta
Exhibition for Albrecht

Exhibition for Albrecht, 26.11.2015–7.01.2016

Scenario and design by Joanna Haba

On Wednesday, the 25th of November, the Manggha Museum inaugurated the ‘Exhibition for Albrecht’, a small show in memory of Albrecht Lempp, Stuttgart-born translator of Polish literature into German and activist advocating Polish-German cooperation, who died in Warsaw in 2012. He translated the work of such authors as Janusz Głowacki, Stanisław Lem, Maria Nurowska, Jerzy Pilch, Andrzej Stasiuk, and Olga Tokarczuk, to name just a few. In 2000, he devised the literary programme of the Polish presentation during the Frankfurt Book Fair, where Poland was the guest of honour. The works shown in the exhibition are by Albrecht’s widow, Elżbieta Lempp, and his sister, Henriette Lempp.

Elżbieta Lempp’s exhibit includes sixty black-and-white photographs collectively titled *An Exhibition Which Is Not*, in reference to the fact that they come from the opening and closing frames of a film roll, which do not have standard sequential numbers and are often meant for disposal as waste. The photographs are displayed simultaneously on two screens, one showing the series entitled *OA, When Reality Enters the Frame*, made up of opening frames, and the other *36A, When Reality Should Not Be Here*, comprised of closing frames. The shots are sometimes naturally truncated because they did not fit into the extreme frame in a roll, and yet these photos are interesting: sometimes for the sheer fact that they show a well-known person, for example Czesław Miłosz, and some other times just because they form an interesting blurry abstract image. Of course everyone can perceive the metaphor of their preference in this unusual presentation: after all, don’t we often experience a situation where something important happens to us just before or at the very end of a prescheduled event, at a time when we might as well have missed it?

Elżbieta Lempp was born in 1957 in Będzin. She studied Slavic Philology at the Jagiellonian University in Kraków, and for a few years taught Slavic languages at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Her interest in photography dates back to that period. She is known for her photographic portraits of people involved in cultural activities, especially writers.



The other part of the exhibition (interlaced with the first one), by Henrietta Lempp, is entitled *Light, Dark* and comprises three ceramic installations. I have been the most impressed by *Gifts of the Night*, composed of eight hundred ceramic capsules in varying shades of gray, laid out on the floor. The uniqueness of each capsule is in contrast to the orderly array of the whole as a circle. Another installation in which objects are arranged on the floor, entitled *So Much Life*, is made up of about a hundred flowerpot-like vessels. Each symbolizes a member of one of the many generations of a family and states that person's date of birth, and also the date of death in the case of those who have already passed away. Here, the various objects, individualized by slight differences in shape and firing marks, as well as the dates, form a circular whole, too. It is an interesting parallel for

not only the family but also a specific society, or possibly all of humanity. Hanging on a wall is the installation *Bone Shadows*, composed of thirty dark square ceramic tablets deployed irregularly over a matrix of sixty-three light-coloured areas. Each tablet bears a painted image of a fragment of a bone. In all three installations, each of the components is different while those within each composition retain considerable similarity. Another common feature shared by all the objects is the smoke firing technique used in their making.

Henriette Lempp was born in 1956 in Tübingen. She studied photography and ceramics in Germany, Norway and France. She is now a university teacher in her native city.

The exhibition was opened by Bogna Dziechciaruk-Maj, Director of the Manggha Museum, whereupon the two artists addressed those present. The most moving story, however, was told by the well-known poet and Jagiellonian University researcher Bronisław Maj. He spoke about Albrecht Lempp, his merits to Poland and Germany, and above all remembered him as a wonderful, warm and friendly person. The opening was attended by two other well-known poets, Ryszard Krynicki and Adam Zagajewski. I had a chance to engage in a fascinating conversation with all three of them, about their writing techniques, labouring effort and failure in their work. That conversation was much like the final frame in a roll of film in Elżbieta Lempp's installation – a fascinating complementation for an interesting exhibition opening.

Sprawozdanie z Działalności
Muzeum Sztuki i Techniki Japońskiej Manggha 2015

Manggha Museum of Japanese Art and Technology
Report on Activities 2015

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Druk / Printed by
Drukarnia Pasaż, Kraków

ISBN 978-83-62096-57-2

Wydawca / Publisher
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