

Galeria Monopol is pleased to invite
to a performance by Zbigniew Warpechowski

Nothing

March 27 at 6 pm

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If you think that nothing is better than something think about a 'nothing' which is the best.

Zbigniew Warpechowski, 1973

After many years, Zbigniew Warpechowski revisits the notion of 'Nothing', a central motif in his work. The first action on this theme took place in August 1972 at the Richard Demarco Gallery in Edinburgh, where the artist presented a series of performances (including *NOTHING*, which consisted of scattering sheets of paper with the title word on the street). At the end of the exhibition, a *Plate Auction* was held, in which 60 plates bearing the artist's fundamental statements could be acquired. These objects were part of the installation entitled *Dishing*, first presented at the Krzysztofory Gallery in Krakow in 1971. Shortly before the auction, Warpechowski stipulated that the concepts written on the unsold plates would become the subject of his future works. One of them was *NOTHING*, which became the theme of many of his performances in the following years.



Richard Demarco Gallery, Edynburg, Wielka Brytania, sierpień 1972

Nothing + Nothing + Nothing + Nothing

Lublin Theatre Spring, Lublin, Spring 1973

In a performance entitled *Nothing + Nothing + Nothing + Nothing*, which took place as part of the Lublin Theatre Spring in 1973, Warpechowski evoked the notion of the noumenon – the incomprehensible 'thing in itself' – developed by Immanuel Kant and described in the *Critique of Pure Reason*. According to the artist, in the performance the idea of 'Nothing' 'as an object of artistic play (subject) was dialectically investigated'.

The performance consisted of four 'Nothings':

First Nothing: Małgorzata Dłużniewska cut the artist's hair with scissors in the shape of the word 'NIC' [NOTHING].

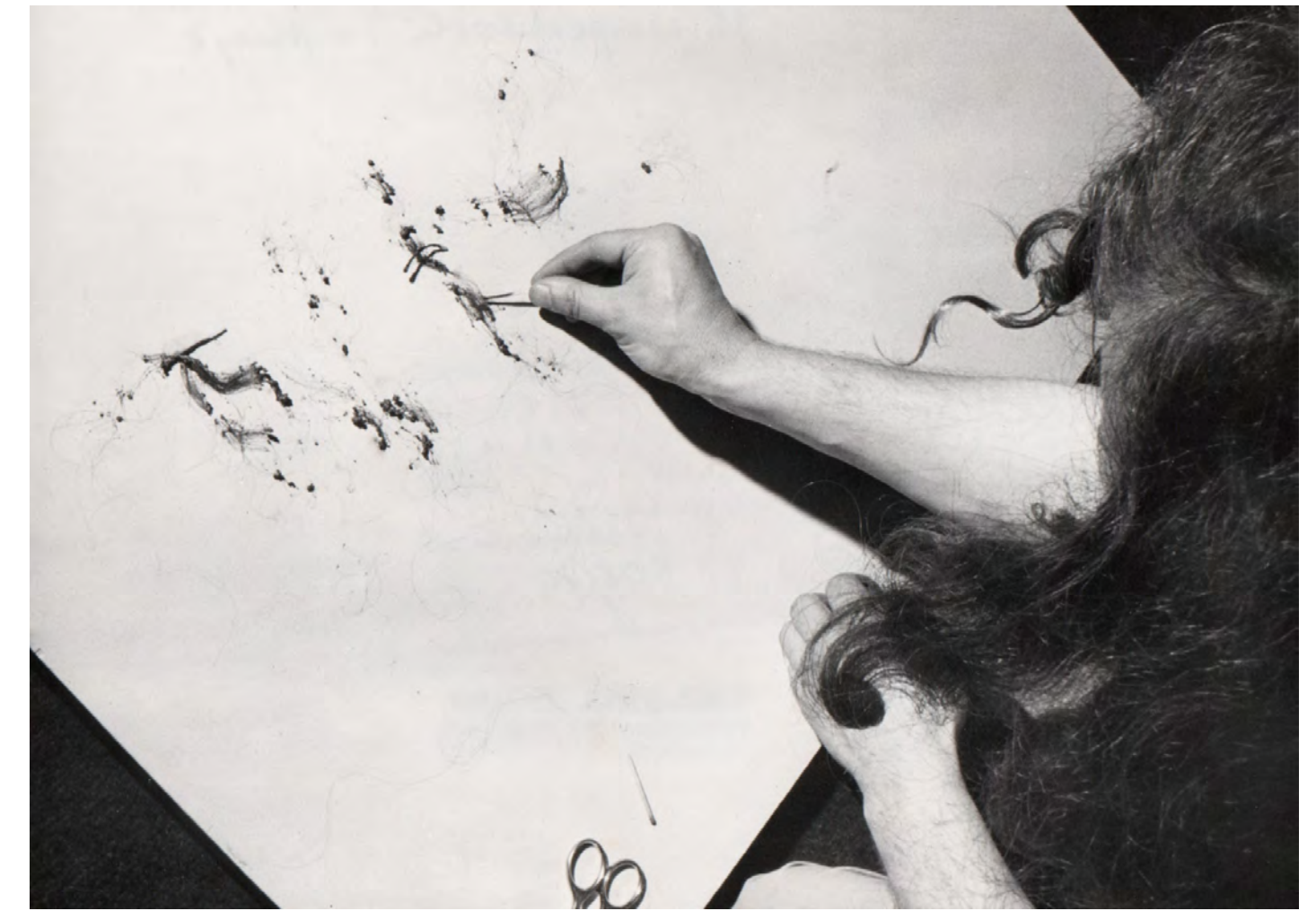
Second Nothing: Individual handfuls of hair corresponded to the letters 'N, I, C' [NOTHING].

Third Nothing: Warpechowski arranged the hair on the board to form the word 'NIC' [NOTHING].

Fourth Nothing: The hair was set on fire – 'nothing remained'.

At the same time, a series of objects was presented in Lublin under the title *An Attempt to Represent the Colour of Reality – Nothing*.

The performance was recreated, together with *Dialogue with a Fish III*, at the DESA Gallery in Krakow in 1974.



Nothing + Nothing + Nothing + Nothing, Lublin Theatre Spring, Lublin, 1973

Non-Intervention – Nothing

Educational Film Studio, Łódź, 1974

The performance *Non-Intervention – Nothing* was created by Zbigniew Warpechowski for the film *Living Gallery* by Józef Robakowski, shot on the premises of the Educational Film Studio in Łódź in 1974. On a table in an open space, the artist placed an aquarium with a fish and a cage with a bird side by side, connected by a red ribbon. It was a motif that recurred in the artist's work. The ribbon connecting the animals was arranged to form the word 'NIC' [NOTHING]. Then the artist, dressed as a hockey goalkeeper with a mask and the word 'NIC' [NOTHING] written on his forehead, opened the cage with the dove, which flew away carrying a fish tied to its leg.



Non-Intervention – Nothing, Educational Film Studio, Łódź, 1974

Prayer for Nothing

Łódź, Autumn 1974

Prayer for Nothing was based on Warpechowski's conviction that avant-garde artists tend to use series of photographs to demonstrate a certain creative process, rarely presenting a single photograph. The artist inverted this tendency by creating a situation for one particular photographic image, calling it a 'photo-scene'. In the Autumn of 1974, he went with a photographer he knew to an artificial hillock in Łódź heaped up from rubble and rubbish. The result was a series of photographs of the artist in various poses, such as kneeling or jumping, recorded from below with a camera with a wide-angle lens. Of the entire film, Warpechowski selected one photograph, of poor technical quality, with overexposure and scratches, and enlarged it to a 70 × 100 cm format. The work was presented in a group exhibition in Lyon, alongside works by artists such as Niki de Saint-Phalle and Jean Tinguely.



Prayer for Nothing, Łódź, 1974

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