

**Talk: Aneta Szylak****Tuesday 11th September // 18:00**

Aneta Szylak, curator and art theorist, co-founder and currently director of Wyspa Institute of Art - the intellectual environment for contemporary visual culture - in the former Gdansk Shipyard premises in Poland and Vice-President of the Wyspa Progress Foundation. Early in her career, she became interested in participatory practices, which resulted in her commitment today to performativity, contextuality and open, dynamic forms in exhibition- and institution-making. Her long-term involvement in the groundbreaking, alternative and politically involved Gdansk art scene bore fruit in her interest in collective forms of work. In 1998, Ms Szylak founded the Laznia (Bathhouse) Centre for Contemporary Art and was its Director until spring 2001. Her exhibitions were characterised by a strong response towards the cultural, political, social, architectural and institutional context and included in 2006: Ewa Partum: The Legality of Space and Artur Zmijewski: Selected Works at Wyspa and a group show You won't feel a thing: On Panic, Obsession, Rituality and Anaesthesia in Kunsthaus Dresden. Earlier work includes: Dockwatchers [2005, Wyspa], Palimpsest Museum [2004, I Lodz Biennale], Health & Safety [2004, Wyspa], Architectures of Gender [2003, SculptureCenter, New York], All You Need is Love [2000, CCA Laznia]. Her writings have been published in Aprior Magazine, n.paradoxa, Art Journal, ArtKrush. Art Margins. She co-edited a book The Site of Idea. The Idea of Site [1995] covering the first 10 years of the Gdansk alternative art scene. In 2005, she was given the Jerzy Stajuda Award "for independent and uncompromising curatorial practice". She has lectured at many art institutions and universities, including New School University, Queens College and New York University, both in NYC. She taught Curatorial Studies at the Jagiellonian University (Krakow) and worked as a guest professor at the Akademie der Bildende Kunste in Mainz, Germany. Currently she is writing her PhD thesis, entitled "The Palimpsest" at Goldsmiths College, University of London, Visual Cultures Department [Curatorial/Knowledge Research PhD]. She is also co-curating with Hiwa K. a series of workshops and an exhibition Estrangement [2007-2009] dealing with cultural translation and dissemination of knowledge between Europe and the Middle East through visual means and the fostering of discourse of cultural competence.