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Review of the doctoral dissertation of Mr Karol Krukowski drawn up in connection with a doctoral degree conferment procedure in the field of art, in the discipline of fine arts and art conservation, initiated by the Artistic Discipline Council of the Eugeniusz Geppert Academy of Art and Design in Wrocław

Personal details and education:

Mr Karol Krukowski was born on 27.05.1980 in Reszel. He completed primary and secondary education. After passing his maturity exam, he completed the first level study programme at the AFA College of Photography in Wrocław, where he defended his diploma thesis under the supervision of Prof. Piotr Komorowski.

He continued his studies at the Faculty of Art at Zielona Góra University (est. 1999). He graduated in 2006 with a master diploma; his diploma supervisor was Prof. Wiesław Hudon.

In 2019, he took up his doctoral studies. Currently he is a doctoral student of the inter-faculty doctoral study programme at the Faculty of Graphics and Media Art of the Eugeniusz Geppert Academy of Art and Design in Wrocław.

On 24 June 2020 the Artistic Discipline Council of the Eugeniusz Geppert Academy of Art and Design in Wrocław, pursuant to resolution no. 09/2020, decided to appoint the doctoral commission in Mr Karol Krukowski's doctoral procedure, in which I was selected as a reviewer.

What is worth emphasising in this part of the review, is Mr Krukowski's additional education, which is directly connected with his teaching and popularisation activity in the field of photography.

In May 2007, he completed a qualification course at the Academy of Fine Arts in Poznań (now UAP), acquiring a teaching qualification.

In July 2012, he passed an exam for the rank of an appointed teacher before a commission established pursuant to the Regulation of the Mayor of Wrocław.

Moreover, in June 2014 he completed a tutoring course at the College of Tutors Foundation in Wrocław.

Evaluation of teaching and organisational achievements:

Mr Karol Krukowski's professional activity is related to artistic photography both in his didactic, popularisation and artistic activity.

Since the beginning of his studies he has consistently developed his professional experience. Since 2004, he has been working as a lecturer and teacher of photography. He is a supervisor of diploma papers and a curator of exhibitions connected with the didactic process as well as plein-air workshops. He is an animator of meetings and workshops connected with the field of photography. The main area of Mr Krukowski's activity is Wrocław and the Lower Silesian Province.

The activity declared in the submitted documentation is confirmed by facts from Mr Krukowski's professional experience:

2004 - 2008 - lecturer at the Jan Cybis Complex of State Art Education Centres in Opole
2008 - 2014 - instructor at the Regional Education Centre in Wrocław
2010 - 2013 - lecturer at the AFA College of Photography in Wrocław
2010 - 2013 - lecturer at the International Forum of Photography *Kwadrat* in Wrocław
2008 - 2014 - teacher at the Technical School of Photography no. 15 in Wrocław

2015 - 2019 - lecturer at the University of Lower Silesia in Wrocław

2015 to present - teacher at the *ALA* Artistic and Academic Secondary School in Wrocław

2019 to present - one-person business activity with photography education profile *Karol Krukowski - Karol on Photography* within which he operates a school and offers online lectures, workshops, plein-air workshops and consultations.

This activity is connected with online educational activities, an aspect which Mr Krukowski particularly emphasises in his documentation. Apart from the aforementioned classes, Mr Krukowski runs his channel popularising the art of photography on YouTube called *Karol on Photography*. It has almost 5,000 subscribers, over 210,000 views and over 30,000 hours of viewing.

I assess the list of activities and the course of pedagogical experience of Mr Karol Krukowski presented in the documentation positively.

Together with the above-mentioned additional experience related to pedagogical courses, these experiences appear to me as a planned and evolutionary development, the logical complement of which is a doctoral study programme and continued academic and didactic career.

Awards and distinctions:

Mr Karol Krukowski has won prizes, distinctions and has been a finalist in national competitions. I consider the following to be the most significant:

- A distinction in the form of a scholarship for an artistic project, awarded by the Board of the Lower Silesian Province in June 2007.
- An award in the form of a six-month artistic scholarship, granted by the Minister of Culture and National Heritage in November 2011.
- A distinction in the form of a scholarship for an artistic project, awarded by the Board of the Lower Silesian Province in October 2013.

Evaluation of artistic achievements:

The issues of the doctoral student's employment, due to their didactic and popularizing character, have been discussed in the previous parts of this review. Therefore, I would like to focus on Mr Krukowski's experiences and achievements relating to his artistic activities. What seems extremely important to me is that they are closely connected with didactic and popularizing activities.

They concern the field of artistic photography.

The link that connects these activities is the form of artistic photography with particular emphasis on the aspect of text and content forming the context for a visual image narration.

In the presented documentation, a separate annex is a description of the most significant artistic projects connected with the field of artistic activity of the doctoral student. In my opinion, the selected events deserve special attention:

2015 - Registration of the performative activity entitled *Passage* as part of the European Capital of Culture in Wrocław

2012 - Individual exhibition *Portrait of Gulliver and other images from the servant's diary*, BWA Wrocław, Dizajn Gallery

2012 - *Shattered - Dream*, Dizajn Gallery, Wrocław

2006 - *Inhabitants*, Teatr Polski, Wrocław

2006 - *The Invisible Map of Wrocław*, BWA Bydgoszcz

2005 - *The Invisible Map of Wrocław*, Raster Gallery, Warszawa

2004 - *The Invisible Map of Wrocław*, première show of the exhibition, BWA Awangarda Gallery, Wrocław (This exhibition has been presented many times in important galleries in Poland).

Apart from the above mentioned activities connected with public presentation of his achievements in the form of individual exhibitions and collective projects, Mr Karol Krukowski is also active in the field of publishing, carrying out projects connected with book publications of his photographic works. Two books in particular are worth mentioning:

2012 – *Rozbite – marzenie [Shattered – dream]*, BWA Wrocław, ISBN: 978-83-89308-91-7

2004 – *Niewidzialna mapa Wrocławia [The Invisible Map of Wrocław]*, Ośrodek Postaw Twórczych, ISBN: 83-917373-0-6

What is particularly important, for the publication of *Shattered - dream* he was a finalist in the prestigious competition for Photographic Publication of the Year (2013).

On the basis of these facts, the type and quality of works presented in the documentation in the field of artistic photography and activities using this medium as a narrative tool, as well as the activity of the doctoral student, I state that the achievements of Mr Karol Krukowski meet the requirements of the Act. His work is coherent and consistently carried out.

Evaluation of the dissertation and doctoral work:

The doctoral dissertation of Mr Karol Krukowski, whose supervisor is Prof. dr hab. Maja Wolińska, consists of a theoretical part and a practical part in the form of an album publication (a picture book). The title of the doctoral dissertation constituting the basis for applying for the title of doctor is *Pręgierz [The Pillory]*.

I positively assess the entire dissertation. The theoretical part is entitled: “The pillory.

Photography as a leading structural element of a picture book.”

It is a text composed of seventeen parts with the following titles: *Introduction, Before, So far, Picture books, Genius locci, At the source, Plague, Inspiration: the pillory, Wrocław's pillory; history, Image and text, Pure photography and photographic conventions, Assumptions of implementation, Photographs that I made up, or about staging, Intention and implementation, After.*

It also includes a *List of illustrations, Bibliography* and an *Appendix: a model*. The whole work

consists of 75 numbered pages.

Let me first focus on the description of the work. I would like to emphasize its comprehensiveness, the good level of analysis and stylistic correctness. It is helpful in the preparation of a review of the practical work.

The presented work entitled "The pillory. Photography as a leading structural element of a picture book" is the crowning of my doctoral dissertation and the effect of my photographic experience. The passion for photography, which I pursue as an educator and artist, has accompanied me for over twenty years. The photographic medium treated not only as a carrier of image, but also, or maybe above all, as a tool for narrating the world is in the circle of my interests. In my work, I focus on the unconventional use of photography in publications, i.e. on the examination of structural solutions, a different look at the illustration of a novel plot, on photography as a tool for dialogue with history and places [...] Creating the book "The Pillory", I wanted to check whether photography can become the main element of this genre combining literary text with image.

Dissertation/Introduction/ p. 5

Information about individual components of the dissertation.

Particularly valuable in the whole dissertation is the fragment referring to the implementation assumptions on pages 42-43. It is there that Mr Krukowski refers to the basic formal and visual conditions of his project and it is this short chapter which convinces me of the purposefulness of the research, artistic and interpretative activities undertaken in the whole practical part of the dissertation.

A large part of the theoretical work consists of interview transcripts. These are the chapter *Image and Text* (pp. 30-38), a conversation with Dr Adam Sobota, a photography historian, the chapter *Photographs I made up, or about staging*, a conversation with Beata Rojek, a painter, (pp. 44-55) and the chapter *Intention and Implementation*, a conversation with Krzysztof Solarewicz, a photographer and photography theoretician (pp. 56-63).

I assess positively this way of mentioning important threads of artistic and research work, showing creative struggles and the context of open form, to which, as a reviewer, I have access, and I emphasize the originality of using this form of communication of one's creative process.

The literature used in the dissertation is very appropriate. The bibliography includes over 23 items, which are cited in the text of the dissertation in a way that is not only appropriate, but also demonstrates Mr Krukowski's narrative freedom. They confirm his ability to develop a specific polemic with the available sources of knowledge. I can therefore conclude that the dissertation demonstrates the candidate's general theoretical knowledge in the discipline and his ability to conduct academic and artistic work.

The indication and evaluation of the aim of the candidate's work seems to be obvious in the case of the proceedings in question. Mr Karol Krukowski's aim was to create an artistic work, a publication in the form of a picture book modified in relation to the candidate's analysis, which would innovatively explore and combine the photographic image and text.

In my opinion, this objective has been accomplished. The result of artistic and research activities is the author's project referring to an important place in Wrocław, in which the main driving force of the activities turns out to be the combination of these two methods of narration.

The doctoral student has applied several research methods in his activities, both those relating to technology, literature, the aspect of conversation, as well as the innovative form of coexistence of two narrative tools.

I evaluate the application of these research methods very positively.

The solutions used in Mr Krukowski's work are a classical photographic form in three different conventions and a kind of a travesty of the picture book. The photographs in the album were taken in several styles; to refer to the fragment concerning this aspect it is worth quoting the dissertation (p. 40): *the reporting-documentary, amateur and staged convention*.

In the next part of the work the author assigns specific pictures to particular conventions.

And although I do not agree with the proposed division, and especially with the assignment of particular pictures to categories, the very reflection and self-analysis seem to me valuable.

One could say that they are a kind of introduction, since the album presented by the doctoral student is not only well prepared visually, but in an extremely skilful way leads us along a certain preconceived rhythm and current.

Mr Krukowski's intentions become clear to me as a viewer immediately; how innovative his actions are at the junction of photography and words.

Mr Krukowski's way of thinking about the picture book is also significant. One could say that a picture book is conventionally intended for the youngest audience. The second apparent dogma is the presence of drawings in this type of publications.

Mr Krukowski seems to successfully question both rules.

He addresses his publication to a much wider audience than children and instead of drawings he includes photographs in it.

The function of text as a form of communication parallel to visual narration is significant.

The attempt to juxtapose almost abstract forms in the first three spreads of the album seems to confirm and foreshadow the impressions mentioned above.

A statement in the first person referring to the pillory is accompanied by photographs describing it in an extremely crude way.

Taken probably at night, in the light of a flash exposing the stone, grey structure of the main character, they introduce us into the area of narration and constitute the main character.

In my opinion the innovative work of Mr Karol Krukowski consists precisely in permeating and complementing within the narration in such a skilful way that the open form of the text coexists with the photographic image. As if constituting only one reality that can be read, or rather that photography, in spite of its apparent documentary character, would refer to a wide field of representations and intuitions.

These fascinations connected with the combination of text and photographic image, or rather with their relations, may be found in many previous works by Mr Karol Krukowski. It is worth mentioning here his work of 2012 *Portrait of Gulliver and other images from the servant's diary*.

When I began working on my PhD thesis, I had already had four publications. In all of them I explored in various ways the relation between the photographic image and the text. In most of them I also attempted to analyse the genius locci by means of photography.

Dissertation/So far/ p. 11

However, for me there is a much more intriguing element in the work of Mr Krukowski than the issues connected with the relation between the text and the image. It is the context of reinterpretation, analysis and discussion of a given place, mentioned in the fragment above.

This theme seems to be most fully present in the project created together with Maciej Bączyk entitled *The Invisible Map of Wrocław*. The project of 2006 was chronologically earlier than Gulliver.

It was a kind of a guidebook to Wrocław based on conversations with blind people and an innovative approach to the form of a guidebook or a map. Over a period of two years, on the basis of these conversations, 31 images of spaces were created where aspects other than visual ones determined their presence in the project.

Mr Krukowski's activities and creative explorations did not lack traces of reconstruction, e.g. contemporary portraits of people associated with the plague epidemic in 17th century England. This fact is important for me because it is somehow also present in the doctoral dissertation, a photographic project which refers to an attempt to break the chronology of time, to build casket stories, to refer to facts which could have happened before things known to us from chronicles of those times happened.

The part of the dissertation that discusses the results of the research may cause some dissatisfaction. The results are presented very briefly. In fact, the author devotes to it one chapter (one-page) in his dissertation (After, p. 64).

However, in spite of such a small volume and a limited discussion, as a reviewer I am convinced by the coherent manner of the entire project and by the contexts resulting from the interviews included in the dissertation.

I can state that during the analysis of the provided materials, the dissertation and the practical part constituting the essence of this work, I did not notice any irregularities in the above-mentioned materials or in the dissertation.

“The Pillory” is not a photographic album, nor is it an illustrated book. I believe that it is a rare case of a picture book that puts photography before text, contrary to its formal structure. In the course of my work I have learned that it is worth trusting my intuition and not accepting all the advice of the masters. [...] Despite these lessons, or perhaps because of them, I believe that in “The Pillory” I managed to reflect on the issues that are the most important to me, to show the everlasting, to capture the spirit of time and place.

Dissertation/After/p. 64

In my opinion, the facts mentioned in this review and the context of all the materials included in the documentation allow me to state unequivocally that the dissertation (and the results of the research) constitute an original solution to an artistic problem.

Conclusion:

Taking into account the facts, the dissertation and the project of Mr Karol Krukowski, I conclude that they meet the requirements set out in Article 187 of the Act of 20 July 2018 Law on Higher Education and Science (consolidated text: Journal of Laws of 2020, item 85, as amended) and that he deserves to be granted the degree of doctor in the field of art, the discipline of fine arts and art conservation.

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