

Signs of Freedom. About the Endurance of the Polish National Identity

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November 10th, 2018 – March 31st, 2019

The Royal Castle in Warsaw – Museum

This exhibition, a part of the long-term “Independent” programme, stands for a record number of exhibition rooms (30), nearly 500 works of art obtained from numerous institutions and private collections, as well as several hundred documentary photographs, accompanied by edited films, soundtracks, historical comments and archive documents. It is also a monumental historical fresco, depicting in the chronological framework from 1914–1989 the struggle to establish, defend and exercise national sovereignty. Hopefully, it is a reflection on the nature of national identity.

The artistic structure of the exhibition revolves around masterpieces of Polish art by Jacek Malczewski, Maksymilian Gierymski, Bruno Schulz, Zofia Stryjeńska, Adam Bunsch, Wojciech Weiss, Krzysztof Kamil Baczyński, Jan Lebenstein, Władysław Hasiór, Edward Dwurnik and Antoni Rząsa, referring to specific historical events, social movements and human attitudes. Jan Matejko has been appointed narrator of the exhibition, as he is viewed as both a very talented painter and a historian, closely observing the past and accurately predicting future events. His large format paintings: *Batory at Pskov*, *Constitution of the 3 May*, *Rejtan*, or *the Fall of Poland* and *Skarga’s Sermon* represent the basis of the exhibition’s structure. They should be viewed as timeless marks of the ideological and ethical choices made by individuals and groups, and as history repeating itself.

The goal of this presentation is to show the situations in which the nation found itself, and the human attitudes based on a shared set of values against the background of Polish history. Landscapes play an important role, viewed as enclaves of Polish identity. The faces of participants of historical events, documented on photographs, and their personal accounts in the form of letters, diaries, records and memoirs, are instruments which enable the depiction of the human experience.

The soundtracks and visualisations, presented here as an important element of the exhibition, consist of unique old recordings (programmes from Polish Radio and Radio “Solidarity”) taken from the Archive of Polish Radio and programmes from Polish Television. The accompanying rock and blues songs from the 1970s and 1980s were symbols of the young generation’s hope and liberty. They were signs of freedom.

The presentation aims to be a work which is open to interpretation and interaction with an audience ready to express their insights into Polish nature. “My Poland” is the last themed narrative path which wraps up the series of exhibitions, at the same time connecting with the present. It offers a collection of self-portraits from a photographic contest titled “selfie” which were taken by contemporary Poles, viewed in the context of national tradition and contemporary Poland.

The exhibition is accompanied by a dedicated publication, including essays by distinguished Polish historians and numerous illustrations plus an audio guide in two language versions. It is supplemented by a diverse educational programme, including screenings, concerts and attraction days.

Opening hours

Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays: **10 a.m.– 6 p.m.**

Fridays: **10 a.m.– 8 p.m.**

Sundays: **11 a.m. – 6 p.m.** (last admittance 1 1/2 hours before closing)

Notice!

On **November 30th** and **December 8th** the exhibition will be open till **midnight** (last admittance at **10.30 p.m.**).

Ticket prices: normal **20 PLN**, reduced **10 PLN**, children and adolescents aged up to 16 – **1 PLN**, family ticket (at least one child below 18) – **5 PLN** per person, normal group ticket (groups from 10 to 30 people) – **5 PLN**, reduced group ticket – **1 PLN**. Individuals with tickets for accompanying events will receive **free of charge registration tickets**.

In November admission is FREE (registration tickets oblige).

Organizers:

The Royal Castle in Warsaw – Museum, Adam Mickiewicz Museum of Literature, Ministry of National Defence Republic of Poland (The Department of Education, Culture and Heritage; Military Center for Citizenship Education; Polish Army Museum)



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NA LATA 2017–2022

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