



## GALERIA X 1978 – 1990 BROCHURE TEXT

The "x" Gallery was established by Zbigniew Makarewicz - sculptor and critic - in 1978, as a branch of the Polish Artists' Association (PAA). After approving the gallery's program, the Board of the Wrocław District PAA offered the Gallery the use of a the show-room in Jatkci Street in Wrocław and financed its basic expenses. The inauguration of the gallery's activity took place on May 8. 1978.

Right until December 13, 1981 the three small rooms (measuring 35 m<sup>2</sup> in all) housed exhibitions, performances, artistic events, film and video shows, concerts, lectures and discussions.

We presented the work of Polish artists, many of them local, but also that of Belgian, British, Canadian, Czech and Slovakian, French, Geor German, Italian, Mexican, Romanian, Venezuelan and Yugoslavian artists.

Though we could offer artists limited space and modest means, those were compensated by the great generosity of art enthusiasts - friends of the Gallery - who looked after artists in their homes, made their studios available to them, and offered unselfish assistance of very kind in carrying out the program of the Gallery.

Thanks to this aid and the determination of our Association Board, the Gallery was able to ignore official plans for its cultural activities, as well as the requirements of censorship. This, however, was the cause of further difficulties such as the restriction of information concerning the Gallery's activities.

Thanks to the cooperation of art critics, scientists and lovers of the arts from all walks of life, the "x" Gallery was able to undertake a research project covering the history of plastic arts in Lower Silesia since 1945.

With the announcement of martial law on December 13, 1981, all these diverse developing activities were suspended, while in June 1983 the PAA, with which the Gallery was associated was made illegal.

It is significant that not one of the artists associated with our Gallery has cooperated with the martial law authorities. Many of us became involved with the independent artistic movement, working in the underground for the delegalized Independent Autonomus Trade Union "Solidarity." Some faced internment, arrest, imprisonment, were harassed in various ways and driven to emigration.

Nevertheless, through traditional bonds of friendship and art we have survived this trial. Those bonds have, to a certain extent, been rebuilt and even creatively developed through such independent Wrocław initiatives as the "Workshop on the Moat", the "Fine Arts Center" at the Wrocław Polytechnic and the "Isle" Gallery attached to the Arch-diocesan Museum (located in the basement of St. Martin's Church). The research project on Lower Silesian plastic arts was continued at the Center for Documentation and Propagation of Art (dissolved in reprisal by the communist administration in 1984) and was subsequently taken over by Wrocław University and the Polish Academy of Sciences.

When in 1989 as a result of a Round Table decision the PAA was legalized once again, the General Assembly of the Wrocław District PAA turned to Zbigniew Makarewicz, asking him to reopen the Gallery as an honorary branch of the creative association.

Much like the Association itself, the "x" Gallery possessed neither funds nor a residence, yet

with the assistance of its numerous friends it organized the first promotional event since 1981, initiating a series of television presentations entitled "Man and Space" on the Wrocław TV Network (the guests were, among others. Frederick Abrams from the USA.

We intend to maintain old ties to make new contacts with artists both at home and abroad. The financial aid we receive today from the Ministry Culture and Art, as well as from regional authorities, no longer has strings attached, such as the requirement to carry out plans imposed from above.

As a result of cooperation with a group of scholars from the University of California, Berkeley, we intend to organize a Fine Arts Promotional Center in Wrocław, working within an international scheme.

The "x" Gallery has been and will remain a promotional Gallery, a place for creative dialogue, where full attention may be given to artistic values and no external hierarchies need be respected.

Now that we are gradually coming out of the years of destruction caused by the inhuman totalitarian utopia, when a new social and economic order is in the making, we stand for those values which cannot be evaluated in terms of prestige or money. This is a risk, yet it is one which we believe must be taken right now.