

Press release

From 15 September 2021

Jasmina Cibic

to 2 January 2022

Stagecraft

MAC LYON



Jasmina Cibic, *The Gift*, 2021 [film still]
Three channel 4K video
Courtesy of the artist

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For Jasmina Cibic, every film project sees this artist-researcher delving into the archives, the accounts recorded there as well as the silences, in order to reveal the attitudes of all forms of power – whether state, government, party political or diplomatic – towards the arts.

For the exhibition *Stagecraft*, Jasmina Cibic has brought together several years of research into political gifting of culture, which she unravels as the centrefold of the exhibition at macLYON in her film *The Gift*. This film features several emblematic buildings, including the French Communist Party Headquarters in Paris, the Palace of Nations in Geneva, the Palace of Culture and Science in Warsaw and Mount Buzludzha in Bulgaria, all of which, in their collections and architecture, constitute gifts in their own right and have a profoundly established artistic vocabulary entirely at the service of political dramaturgy.

This project by Jasmina Cibic is part of her research into the notion of soft power, which was the basis of her exhibition for the Slovenian pavilion at the 2013 Venice Biennale.

Curator: Matthieu Lelièvre

For several years, Jasmina Cibic has explored the notion of the “gift” and in particular, the forms and the role that its activation plays, primarily between the arts and politics. The gift, as it was analysed by Marcel Mauss, one of the founders of social anthropology, through rituals like the ceremony known as “potlatch” (from the Chinook term meaning “to give”), has largely influenced generations of artists. Inscribed in a circular economy, the gift can take the form of a social contract that transforms an especially costly tradition for political purposes into a public spectacle. This process is no stranger to another notion that the artist also strives to deconstruct: that of “soft power” (or cultural diplomacy), a concept that characterizes a non-coercive or “soft” method, used for example by a certain state to impose its cultural, economic, ideological and political influence.

The macLYON presents the latest film by Jasmina Cibic in its final form to the public for the first time. This film is entitled “The Gift”. Produced between 2019 and 2021, it presents, in the form of an allegorical story, a competition during which an Artist, a Diplomat and an Engineer compete to determine which of the arts, music and architecture, would be the best gift to guarantee the cohesion of a divided society. In spite of themselves, their rhetoric leads them to define what characterizes the conditions of aesthetics and the representation of power. The four women who audition the candidates embody four contemporary allegories listed as fundamental by Franklin Delano Roosevelt during his Four Freedoms Speech in 1941. Jasmina Cibic transposes these references, which had a widespread impact, including the US government commission of the painter Norman Rockwell in 1943 to create four famous commissioned paintings that have since become national emblems: “Freedom of Speech, Freedom of Worship, Freedom from Want, and Freedom from Fear.”

Jasmina Cibic develops her projects as a tangle of events, accounts and testimonies that she interweaves to break down the past and create the conditions for an alternative reading of the present. According to the artist-researcher, her working method relies on a performative mode of operation since she collaborates with many professionals, including researchers, archivists, historians and political scientists, in order to bring together all of the necessary elements required in the writing of a screenplay. In this way, she produces a para-historical interpretation based on archives, transcriptions of debates and speeches, and accounts of events that really existed or ones that remained unrealized. It is for this reason that each of the scenes of the film was shot in emblematic buildings that embody, each in their own way, the use of the arts by politicians. The headquarters of the French Communist Party in Paris gifted and built by Oscar Niemeyer; the Palace of Nations in Geneva gifted by members of the League of Nations; the Palace of Culture and Science in Warsaw, given to the Polish people by Joseph Stalin; and Mount Buzludzha, gifted to the socialist movement in Bulgaria by the citizens.

In Jasmina Cibic's work, several themes intersect in a space and time that are intentionally superimposed so as to construct new paradigms. The scenography of the exhibition *Stagecraft* takes as its starting point the staging of *The Miraculous Mandarin*, a ballet written by Béla Bartók and performed for the first time in orchestral format on 27 November 1926 in Cologne. The piece was an immediate failure as the audience did not appreciate neither the

libretto nor the composition. As a result, it was censured by Konrad Adenauer, then mayor of the city, for its immorality and decadence. According to Jasmina Cibic, at that time, Modernist language was an elite affair, not yet intended for the masses. After its entry into the repertoire of the Belgrade Ballet, Yugoslavia decided to restage the ballet in 1958 at the Brussels World Fair, with a Modernist architectural and scenographic dimension, a conscious stylistic positioning that was also resolutely political. The aesthetic vocabulary of this patriotic spectacle was supposed to be an instrument of emancipation from the Soviet yoke for a country that did not, however, seek to enter the bosom of the Western bloc, but instead to define a new political order, that of the Non-Aligned countries.

The prostitute is the bait used by the bandits to lure and rob the rich mandarin. Likewise, these figures borrowed from the ballet are regularly used by Jasmina Cibic as allegories of art, exploited by politics, especially in the context of soft power.

World fairs are a research topic that fascinates Jasmina Cibic, in that they allow her to analyse the way in which the mechanisms and scenography of power are constructed, as well as the tools for the construction of national identities. All forms of the arts are used to serve the ideologies of national representation. The iconic Brussels World Fair, known as the “Expo 58”, was the first event of its kind after the Second World War, having left enough time for countries to move forward in their physical, economic and above all, ideological reconstruction. It was also a landmark event in the strengthening of the positions of the participating countries in the context of the Cold War and in particular for Tito's Yugoslavia, and of the attempt to assert itself outside the great blocs of East and West.

A particularity of this “Expo 58” was the importance of the programming of ballets, dance and choreography through the noteworthy productions of Merce Cunningham, Maurice Béjart and many others. The link between dance and the affirmation of national identity has never been so clearly orchestrated.

If dance is an art that might seem removed from ideological and political issues, it is not. Dance is a clearly identified instrument for the demonstration and organization of power. Examples include Louis XIV who created the Royal Academy of Dance in 1661, Soviet Russia, and even Korea, which is particularly well expressed in *Nixon in China*, an opera by John Adams.

The search for a perfect image destined to concretize a choreography and even a pantomime of power is characteristic of an attempt at seduction which fits perfectly into the logic of the conquest of minds and bodies by means of soft power.

The aesthetic and carefully considered qualities of Jasmina Cibic's pieces are not foreign to this form of manipulation by the senses exercised at state level, which brings us to question the interpretation of Emmanuel Kant, who in his *Critique of Judgment* considered beauty to be a symbol of freedom.

Matthieu Lelièvre, curator

The exhibition *Stagecraft* unfolds across half of the second floor of the macLYON. Visitors can access it after having discovered the highly theatrical and scripted universe of Delphine Balley.

Jasmina Cibic conceives her exhibition projects as a form of total art and includes the immediate environment of her films in a continuous dialogue between the scenography, the films and the objects intended to construct the narrative. The exhibition and its entire arrangement form a stage destined to decompose and recompose the spectacle of political power.

This is why visitors first enter the space via a long corridor, where the luminous partitioned ceiling is constructed from motifs that immediately plunge them into the atmosphere of a Modernist performance.

The corridor leads onto the first room, which reproduces and transposes the environment of Béla Bartók's pantomime ballet *The Miraculous Mandarin*—which premiered at the Cologne Opera in 1926—as it was reproduced in 1958 in Brussels. The constructed elements, and a symbolic stage, with sculptures and spaces that can be activated by performers, make up the display area, providing the decor with a sculptural status, thereby symbolizing the very principle of *Stagecraft*.

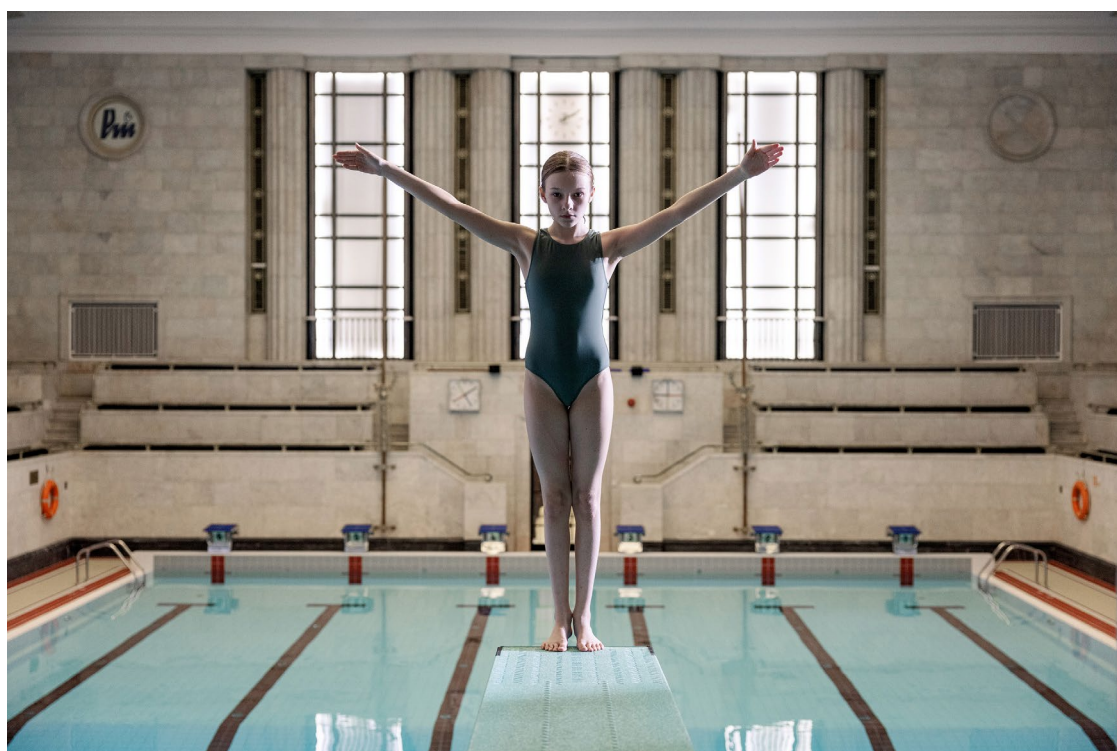
Jasmina Cibic simultaneously plays here, as in her film, with various time frames (created in the 1920s, this ballet has had numerous choreographic versions), in order to put into perspective a series of paradoxes relating to the relationship between the arts and political power. She also makes use of allegories to stage her analysis of history and political codes. The exhibition continues in the large room dominated by

three big screens, on which the film *The Gift* is shown. A large bench invites viewers to sit and immerse themselves in this 27-minute artistic and rhetorical journey.

The Gift is the result of extensive documentary research and a shooting schedule that spanned three years, several countries and numerous international collaborations. Jasmina Cibic conceives this experimental film and the archival research that forms its base, as a global project brought to life in a collaborative and international production of exhibitions, screenings and editions. She sees this project as a means of resistance in the face of the decay of international inter-European relations and the rise of nationalism.

At the macLYON, *The Gift* is presented in its final form to the public for the first time.

A catalog, illustrated with exhibition's views and specially commissioned texts, will be published.



Jasmina Cibic, *The Gift*, 2021
Three channel 4K video
Production still by Andrzej Stawiński
Courtesy of the artist

Born 1979 in Ljubljana (Slovenia), Jasmina Cibic lives and works in London. She is a graduate of the Accademia di Belle Arti, Venice, and Goldsmiths' College, London. She represented Slovenia during 55th Venice Biennale in 2013, with the project *For Our Economy and Culture*.

In the last two years several solo exhibitions were dedicated to Jasmina Cibic at venues including the Museum of Contemporary Art Ljubljana, Phi Foundation Montreal, BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art, CCA Glasgow and others. Cibic was awarded the Ben Award for Best Immersive and Time Based Art (2020), MAC International Ulster Bank Award (2016) and Best International Artist Award Charlottenborg Fonden Copenhagen (2016). She has been shortlisted for the renowned Film London Jarman Award (2021).

Her statement on Lyon's exhibition:

“This is an exhibition about culture and cultural production in times of political and ideological crisis. It is a project about us – the cultural producers and spectators of critical content. It's a project that reaches into depths of historical case-studies and examples of culture deployed as a Trojan horse of political and national power. And it is our contemporary condition which constitutes the perfect time to be delving into historical ready-made witnesses hijacked culture in the name of ideology – as we stand in a world crumbling before our eyes.

For years I have been investigating specifics of successful and failed national icons, from cave beetles named after Hitler to the Palace that hosted the first conference of the Non-Aligned Movement in Belgrade in 1961. This exhibition at macLYON distils decades of my research into a single artistic sentiment – which simply states how universal and timeless the hijacking of culture by ideology is. We live in a time when the nation has lost its centrality as a political category and yet reasserted itself in a surge of right-wing populism. We live in a moment fully echoed within the featured story told in this exhibition.

My project at macLYON attempts to unveils how culture can become a tool exploited by powers to define relations and rule situations that are becoming catastrophic emergencies today. In other words, it intends to produce knowledge, by unveiling hidden relations, “quoting” real fragments of the past to provide the viewer with a visionary and penetrating tool for understanding of the present.”

Jasmina Cibic

Solos shows (selection)

2022 (upcoming)
Most Favoured Nations, Museum der Moderne, Salzburg

2021
21.05 – 29.08 : The Palace, Muzeum Sztuki, Lodz

2020
The Foundation of Endeavour, Museum of Contemporary Art Metelkova, Ljubljana

2019
An atmosphere of Joyful Contemplation, CCA Glasgow
The Pleasure of Expense, Cooper Gallery, DJCAD Dundee
Spielraum, Tobačna 001, Ljubljana

2018
Everything We Do Today will Look Heroic in the Future, The Significant Other, Vienna
Everything that You Desire and Nothing that You Fear, Phi Foundation, Montreal
This Machine Builds Nations, BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art, Newcastle

2017
NADA, National Gallery of Macedonia, Skopje
The Spirit of Our Needs, Kunstmuseen Krefeld House Esters
Topical Devices, Northampton Contemporary, Northampton
Firm Foundations, Gallery Zak Branicka, Berlin
The Nation Loves It, Crawford Gallery, Cork
A Shining City on a Hill, Space O, Aarhus 2017, Aarhus

2016
Tear Down and Rebuild, Esker Foundation, Calgary
Building Desire, Apoteka, Vodnjan
NADA: Act I, Vjenceslav Richter Collection, Museum of Contemporary Art, Zagreb

2015
Spielraum, Onomatopee, Eindhoven
Building Desire, Museum of Contemporary Art, Vojvodina
Tear Down and Rebuild, Salon of the Museum of Contemporary Art, Belgrade
Spielraum: Give Expression to Common Desires, MGLC, Ljubljana
Spielraum: The Nation Loves It, Ludwig Museum, Budapest

2014
Fruits of Our Land, Saw Gallery, Ottawa and LMAK Projects, New York

2013
For Our Economy and Culture, Slovenian pavilion, Venice Biennale, Venice



Jasmina Cibic, 2021. Photo Pete Moss

Group shows (selection)

2021

Bigger than Myself: Heroic Voices from ex Yugoslavia, MAXXI, Rome
 18th Tallin Print Triennial, Tallin
 EKO Triennial, Maribor
 39th EVA International, Limerick

2020

Going South, 30th Memorial of Nadežda Petrović, Čačak
 37th Dokfest Kassel, Kasseler Kunstverein, Kassel
 3rd Industrial Biennial, curated by Branka Benčić, Rijeka

2019

Steirischer Herbst, special artist commission, Graz
 12th Kaunas Biennial, special artist commission, Vytautas the Great War Museum, Kaunas
The ABC of Bauhaus, Kaiser Wilhelm Museum, Krefeld
 54th Zagreb Salon, HDLU, Zagreb

2018

No Looking Back, Okay?, UGM Maribor
 Jarman Award Touring, Whitechapel Gallery, MAC Belfast, Nottingham Contemporary, Towner Art Gallery, Spike Island, Glasgow Film Theatre, Dundee Contemporary Arts, Turner Contemporary, Exeter Phoenix, FACT Liverpool, Firstsite Colchester, G39 Cardiff, HOME Manchester
Stranger Than Paradise, Meet Factory, Prague
Toward a Concrete Utopia, MOMA, New York
Marvellous Cacophony, 57th October Salon, Belgrade
Volatile Dreams, Kunstmuseum Ahlen and Marta Herford
Unsettlement, Monash University Museum of Art, Melbourne

2017

Symptoms of Society, Zhejiang Museum of Art, Hangzhou and Guangdong Museum of Art
 Open Frame Award, Wiesbaden Museum of Art
 Charlottenborg Spring Exhibition, Best international artist award, Charlottenborg Fonden, Copenhagen
Nieuw Amsterdams Peil – Where do we go from here?, tegenboschvanvreden, Amsterdam
Aéroports /Villes-Mondes, Gaité Lyrique, Paris
 Videonale e.V., Kunstmuseum, Bonn
 Casebooks, Ambika P3, London

2016

Bartok, Ludwig Museum, Budapest
 Monitoring, 33. Kasseler Dokumentarfilm- und Videofest, Kassel
 MAC International, Metropolitan Arts Centre, Belfast
We are the Centre..., The Hessel Museum of Art and the Center for Curatorial Studies, Bard College, New York
Cold Front from the Balkans, Pera Museum, Istanbul
Cinemaniac: Think Film, Pula Film Festival, MMC Luka, Pula
Terminal P, La Panacée, Montpellier
Beyond the Globe: 8th Triennial of Contemporary Art – U3, Museum of Modern Art, Ljubljana
Low-Budget Utopias, Museum of Contemporary Art, Ljubljana
Acquisitions 2012–2015, Museum of Contemporary Art Vojvodina, Novi Sad

2015

3LHD, Museum of Contemporary Art, Zagreb
2005–2015 Crisis and New Beginnings, Museum of Contemporary Art, Ljubljana
Was It a Car or a Cat I Saw, Škuc Gallery, Ljubljana

Darker and Darker Grows the Landscape, Le Commun, Geneva

Demented Architecture, City Gallery, Wellington
Art and Authority, Museum of Contemporary Art Banja, Luka
Heroes We Love, UGM, Maribor
Die Magie der Kunst, Künstlerhaus, Vienna

2014

Art and Authority, Museum of Yugoslav History, Belgrade
 Black House, EKKM, Tallinn
Disturbances, International Centre of Graphic Arts, Ljubljana
BoomBang, NN Contemporary Art, Northampton
Art and Authority, The Gallery of Matica Srpska, Novi Sad
La Magia dell'Arte, the protagonists of Slovene contemporary art 1968–2013, Vila Manin, Passariano
Open Frame, Nassauischer Kunstverein, Wiesbaden

Film screenings (selection)

2020 Whitechapel Gallery, London
 2019 *Fruits of Our Land*, Mesto Žensk, Kinoteka, Ljubljana
 2019 Solo screening: *Nada trilogy*, Belvedere 21, Museum of Contemporary Art, Vienna
 2019 *Les Rencontres Internationales*, Louvre, Paris
 2019 *Les Rencontres Internationales*, Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin
 2018 Jarman Award touring programme, Whitechapel gallery etc.
 2018 SALT, Istanbul
 2018 Solo screening: BALTIC Gateshead
 2018 Segal Centre Film Festival on Theatre and Performance, New York
 2017 Solo screening: Norlandsopera, Umeå
 2017 *Les Rencontres Internationales*, Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin
 2017 *Up-Close*, Whitechapel Gallery, London
 2016 Solo screening: *Spielraum*, CCA Laznia, Gdansk
 2016 Solo screening: *Artist Cinema*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Zagreb
 2016 *Les Rencontres Internationales*, Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin
 2016 *Les Rencontres Internationales*, Gaité Lyrique, Paris

Awards (selection)

2021 Film London Jarman Award Shortlist
 2021 Film London Lodestars
 2020 BEN AWARD 2020 for «Best Immersive and Time Based Art» for *The Pleasure of Expense*, B3 Biennial of the *Moving Image*, Germany
 2018 Film London Jarman Award Shortlist
 2018 Nominated for Paul Hamlyn Award
 2017 *Aesthetica Art Prize* Shortlist
 2016 MAC International Ulster Bank Award Winner
 2016 Best International Artist Award, Charlottenborg Fonden, Copenhagen

The Gift is a research project, which over time has taken the form of multiple exhibition chapters and will conclude at macLYON with a large scale immersive three channel film installation, shown for the first time in its final version.

The entirety of the film was shot in emblematic buildings that embody, each in their own way, the use of the arts by politicians and diplomacy: the headquarters of the French Communist Party in Paris gifted by Oscar Niemeyer; the Palace of Nations in Geneva gifted by members states of the League of Nations; the Palace of Culture and Science in Warsaw, gifted to the Polish people by Joseph Stalin; and Mount Buzludzha, a citizen-funded tribute to the socialist movement in Bulgaria.

The Gift is co-commissioned and coproduced by macLYON; FLAMIN – Film London Artists' Moving Image Network with the financial support of: Arts Council England and steirischer herbst '19; a coproduction of Waddington Studios London. With the support of Muzeum Sztuki in Łódź; Cooper Gallery DJCAD, University of Dundee; Northern Film School; UGM Maribor Art Gallery; Nations Unies, Genève; Espace Niemeyer, Paris and the Palace of Culture and Science, Warsaw.

Synopsis:

The script for the film is drawn from archival traces on discussions about soft power and cultural diplomacy that led to some of the most iconic architectural and artistic manifestations within European space.

The storyline follows three men - the Gifts of Art, Music and Architecture - as they participate in the final round of a competition that seeks the perfect gift for a divided nation; a gift that must be both aesthetically impressive and politically adequate. The competition takes place within a perfect setting for the spectacular competition: an open and transparent assembly hall that appears to break with the burden of antiquated political style, cutting away from the past and propelling itself into the future. Filmed in the French Communist Party's headquarters in Paris, itself a gift by its architect Oscar Niemeyer. Within this set-up the Gifts are judged and scrutinized by allegories of Four Fundamental Freedoms who drive the discussion into its very destruction: a collapse of the symbolic tie between state and culture, a reminder of past ideals and their collapse in the rise of populism.



Jasmina Cibic, *The Gift*, 2021 [film still]
Three channel 4K video
Courtesy of the artist
© Oscar Niemeyer / Adagp, Paris, 2021

The locations :

The film opens with a scene that takes place in the swimming pool of the Palace of Culture and Science in Warsaw. Three young girls climb the pool's diving platform tower as a voiceover points out the problem: the nation is broken and an ideal gift must be found in order to reconcile it. The young girls, heralds of societal ideals and hopes, metaphorically announce the competition with their carefully choreographed platform dives.

Oscar Niemeyer's French Communist Party (PCF) headquarters in Paris represents the center stage location in the film. This is where the competition of the three Gifts takes place. Its futurist architecture is a gift itself – its plans gifted by the architect, who worked pro bono on the project. He stated of his relationship with his 'client': "Our shared views and political struggle were far more important than architecture."

Having worked with Le Corbusier on the 1952 United Nations Building in New York and his own projects of the National Congress as well as the iconic government buildings in Brasilia, Niemeyer was no stranger to the intimate relationship between architecture and political power. After the Brazilian government was overthrown by a rightwing military dictatorship in 1966, Niemeyer entered self-imposed exile in Europe. His design for PCF came at a critical time for the party and functioned largely as a material gesture of consolidation as the party faced significant losses in seats during the 1968 election.

The architecture and decor have long been a symbol of state power in French history - from the Palace of Versailles to Pierre Paulin's 1984 Presidential office interior designed for François Mitterrand - Niemeyer's preoccupation with formal unity resulted in a work that seemingly transcended political divides.

The architecture of the PCF, presents an open and transparent assembly hall that appears to break with the burden of antiquated political style, cutting away from the past and propelling itself into the future. A pure scenographic cut with political style.

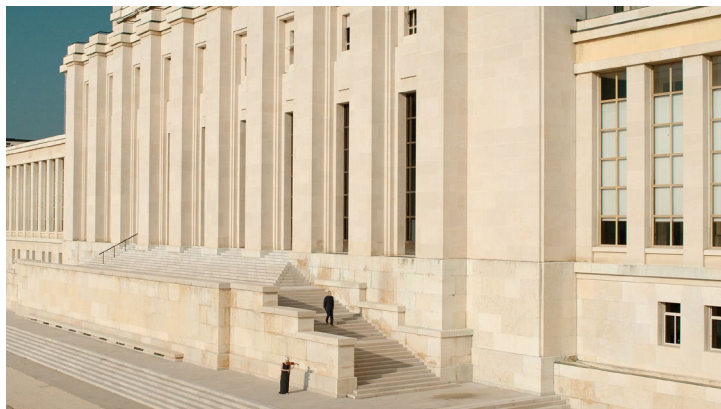
The Palace of Culture and Science in Warsaw or - as it was originally named – the 'Joseph Stalin Palace of Culture and Science' was built between 1952 and 1955 by almost 10,000 construction workers and engineers. It is often seen as an unwanted gift from the Soviet Union to the new soviet state of Poland as a way of positioning the Union's stronghold in the region. Designed by the Russian architect Lev Vladimirovitch Rudniev, the building was a feat of constructed ideologies interweaving.

The three fundamental roots are the representation of national motifs, which the architect collected during site visits to Polish cities, which collide with the western idea of the skyscraper and Soviet monumental classicism.

The Palace of Nations in Geneva was originally built to house the first attempt of transnationalism in Europe – the League of Nations, which miserably failed at the very essence of its goal: to stop the Second World War. The location for the Palace was gifted by the city of Geneva and its interiors were composed by donations by the Member States of the League of Nations. The Palace was designed by five architects working to the brief of representing the concept of peace whilst remaining functional for the activities laid out by the League. After an initial open call to choose a single architect, the committee decided to instead select a number of different nationals to collaborate - in order to avoid the proposed building to potentially bearing the mark of a specific national style. The final construction concluded in 1938 just at the brink of Second World War.

The Palace of Nations is also decorated, and its interiors enriched, with gifts which kept growing with time as the League of Nations evolved into the United Nations and new members continued to offer their gifts in all shapes and sizes: from dances performed at special days of celebration to paintings and sculptures.

The original interior decoration and artworks are today slowly being replaced by new gifts (UAE, Qatar) which are effectively new scenographic aides at illustrating the new world power relations, overriding the old gifts that illustrated their giver – the colonial Europe of 1930s. Further debates on the suitability of the 1930s symbolism and political fitness for the contemporary UN are also taking place and questions of how to return an unfitting gift are taking place.



The Memorial House of the Bulgarian Communist Party sits on Buzludzha Peak, high up in the mountains of Bulgaria. It was opened in 1981 (coinciding with the PCF Paris), as a citizen-funded tribute to the socialist movement in Bulgaria - but since the country's transition to democracy it has laid abandoned. This is the location for the last scene of *The Gift*, where a drone shot exiting the domelike structure will reveal the abandoned surrounding - critically engaging with “apocalyptic weather conditions” - and how Geo-political exotification of territorial othering obfuscates deeper and universally shared meanings of the function of culture within ideological discourse.



The characters / The three Gifts:

The Engineer (Gift of Architecture)

The Engineer is a firm believer of the need for a connection between the (unknown) authority and the People. His arguments inhabit the spectrum of socialist characteristics while he poses as a keeper of the idea of connecting society and architecture. He is bold, vigorous and determined.

His speech to the Four Freedoms is accompanied by a physical illustration of his idealism. As he speaks, he assembles a model of his proposed gift: an architectural maquette. This model is the non-realised, last pavilion of former Yugoslavia at a World Expo (Montreal 1968) - an avant-garde creation that was omitted in lieu of a standardised design by committee that paved way to newly up-risen nationalism of the country in the late 1960s. The words of his monologue are drawn from politically committed engineers and architects who worked on the architectures that feature in the film, some of the key buildings that gave space to seminal political discussions of the 20th Century.



Jasmina Cibic, *The Gift*, 2021 [film still]
Three channel 4K video
Courtesy of the artist

The Diplomat (Gift of Music)

Goethe's quote “architecture is frozen music” became far more intriguing ever since Margaret Thatcher began using it in many of her speeches on building and architecture. Why do Diplomacy and Politics adore Music and Architecture? The use of music as a lubricator of cocktail receptions within representational power grounds is well documented, but in *The Gift*, the Diplomat sets up this relation with a different twist.

As he presents his monologue directed to the Freedoms, he drifts from the space where the competition takes place into a dream like scenario: he is transported (via a *deus ex-machina* theatrical method) from the Futurist theatre into an antiquated time of suspended temporality. He finds himself within corridors of the Palace of Nations, all clad and inhabited by the decennial of colonial depictions (gifts) of and by stately mother nations.

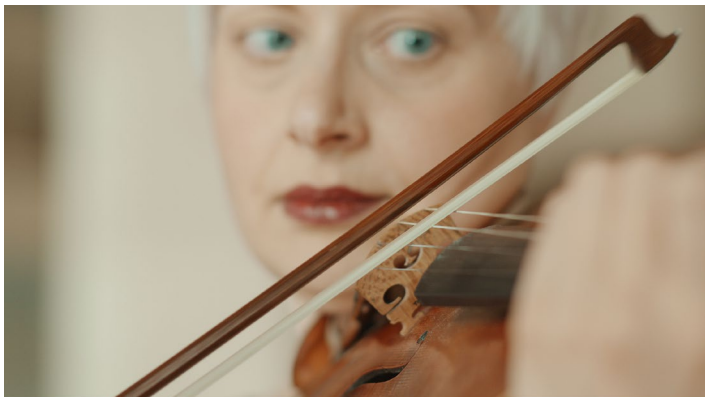
His words are drawn from political and diplomatic conundrums on expired political gifts and their functions, none of them ever disclosing the actual form of the concepts they argue for.

“Our gift will be immaterial”, he declares.

As he travels through the spaces, he repeatedly encounters a violinist, who builds up a melodic score, which he is somewhat forced to interact with. As he passes her, he fixes and re-tunes her note - until she plays the tune as designed by him. Or does she trick him into becoming complicit within her authorship of it?

The melodic score is drawn from the donations to the League of Nations by amateur composers during the Palace's closure during Second World War. These are scores that were never performed but were deposited within the archive of the Palace.

They are all Hymns and Marches - and as such point to the dialectical nature of the belief of what a national discourse and a nation state need - a Hymn to announce it and a March to enter a war with and potentially announce its demise.



The Artist (Gift of Art)

The Artist's speech is drafted from many artist's words on ideology behind artworks throughout 20th and 21st centuries; artworks created as donations and gifts to diverse political believes. The monologue merges these - amongst others - statements surrounding the futurists' gifts to Mussolini, communists' gifts to the Communist Party and contemporary artist's donations to cities and states. The Artist is the keeper of this fictitious collection but also an amateur artist himself. His monologue arrives last and takes on from where the other two Gifts were left ideologically - he opts for chaos and destruction.

As he vehemently takes center stage, his behavioral pattern merges with the violence of his rhetoric. He is accompanied by two dancers, who translate his monologue into a choreographed exercise spanning across historical political choices of movement that adorned some of the history's most awkward relations to statecraft including choreographies of state processions for key ideological leaders as well as human body poses drawn from the artworks donated to political power. The dancers' choreography echoes the Artist's political statements, and is appropriated in reclaiming the movements that had been held hostage by ideological discourse of not so far bygone histories.

Four freedoms

In the film, the Four Freedoms are cast as four women, who now judge whether the idea of a perfect political Gift does exist, should it have the right to exist or should it be destroyed, or perhaps preserved for the future.

Freedom of Speech
Freedom of Worship
Freedom from Want
Freedom from Fear



Jasmina Cibic, *The Gift*, 2021 [film still]
Three channel 4K video
Courtesy of the artist



Delphine Balley, *Figures de Cire* [*Wax Figures*]

Delphine Balley has spent more than twenty years developing her expertise in photography and video. The exhibition *Figures de cire [Wax Figures]* is conceived as a journey into time and the vernacular. It is a narrative ensemble consisting of three screenings, *Le Pays d'en haut [The Land Above]*, *Charivari [Hullabaloo]* and *Le Temps de l'oiseau [The Time of the Bird]*, as well as a series of photographic prints and a sculpture.

By adopting the hermetic atmosphere of family portraits and the tradition of genre painting, Delphine Balley creates a portrait of universal human stiffness, in keeping with the exposure time needed for a view camera. She establishes relationships between vibrancy and fixity, formlessness and stability, truth and falsehood. *Figures de cire [Wax Figures]* probes the dysfunctional nature of rites and social representations and invites visitors to take their place in the procession, in a fictitious symbolic architecture and an incomplete narrative, in which marriage and funeral ceremonies merge. Delphine Balley tells a story of appearance and disappearance, the cycle of a life whose motifs and relics survive the passage of time.

Curator: Agnès Violeau



Delphine Balley, *Le Temps de l'oiseau*, 2020 [Film still]
HD colour video, sound, 17'27"
Courtesy of the artist

Christine Rebet, *Escapologie* [*Escapology*]

Christine Rebet is fascinated by illusion and deception. She prefers drawing because it is manual and spontaneous, and she produces hundreds and thousands of drawings in ink, which she assembles frame by frame using traditional, early animation techniques. Repeated drawing, which is the origin of moving pictures, creates what she calls her "paper cinema."

Christine Rebet re-interprets personal and collective traumas and mixes history and fiction in fantasy worlds. The subjects of her films are universal and evoke not only political reality, but also the destruction of the world, the oppression of human beings, and the idea of metamorphosis. She transcends imagery with a disturbing poetry, using manipulative techniques to explore the audience's subconscious mind. She creates an imaginative fantasy through which to escape from the world. In her exhibition *Escapologie [Escapology]*, Christine Rebet presents six animated films, including one specifically made for this exhibition. This new film is inspired by the traditional songs of pearl fishermen and sailors in the Persian Gulf. For this exhibition, the strange world of the six films is complemented by paintings and murals as well as drawings.

Curator: Marilou Laneuville



Christine Rebet, *Ultravision*, 2020
Otolithe series
Ink on paper, 24 x 32 cm
Courtesy of the artist

Established in 1984 in a wing of the Palais Saint-Pierre, in 1995 the Musée d'art contemporain de Lyon moved to the site of the Cité internationale, a vast architectural ensemble spread over one kilometre on the edges of the Parc de la Tête d'Or, in Lyon's 6th arrondissement and gathering hotels, restaurants, offices, housing but also a casino or a cinema. The work of architect Renzo Piano, responsible for the entire site, the museum conserves the facade of the atrium of the former Palais de la Foire, overlooking the park. The Palais was designed by Charles Meysson in the 1920s.

The 6,000m² museum is spread over several floors and presents modular spaces that are perfectly adapted to the needs of the different artistic projects welcomed by the museum, as well as new forms of contemporary expression. The macLYON focuses on current national and international art, in all its forms, offering exhibitions and a wide programme of transdisciplinary events.

Its collection includes over 1,400 works. A selection of these is shown in rotation at the macLYON as well as in several partner structures. Works of its collection are regularly loaned for exhibitions in France and all over the world. It consists mainly of monumental works and ensembles of works, dating from the 1940s to the current day, created by artists from all over the world, the majority for exhibitions at the museum or for the Biennales d'art contemporain de Lyon, for which the museum oversees the artistic direction.

Brought together in an arts pole with the MBA since 2018, the two collections form a remarkable ensemble, both in France and in Europe.



View of the Musée d'art contemporain de Lyon. Photo Blaise Adilon

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OPENING HOURS
Wednesday to Sunday,
[from 11am to 6pm]

ADMISSION
● Full: 8€
● Concessions: 4€
● Free for visitors under 18

ACCESS
● By car
Along quai Charles de Gaulle, carpark
P0 and P2, reduced rate for our visitors
● Ridesharing
www.covoiturage-pour-sortir.fr
● By bus
Stop Musée d'art contemporain
Bus C1, Gare Part-Dieu/Cuire
Bus C4, Jean Macé/Cité internationale
Bus C5, Cordeliers/Rillieux-Vancia
● By bike
Several Vélo'v stations around the
museum
Cycle lane from the Rhône's banks to
the museum