

***Remember Me...* Przemysław  
Jasielski**

curators: Agnieszka Jelewska, Michał Krawczyk

Documentation (excerpt) submitted for the competition  
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## Exhibition concept: Remember Me...

Remember Me... by Przemysław Jasielski is an installation that generates a story about the cultural and social relationship between human beings and machines; a retro-futuristic vision that intertwines the past with the future. Jasielski's project is a large-scale object which engraves images of humans and machines, in translucent layers of plexiglass, slowly filling them with black liquid. The artist's original technique for creating images refers to the tradition of engraving, while also employing an automatic and generative system. In a semi-transparent matrix, a black liquid, suggesting a biological post-life<sup>1</sup>, irregularly fills up hollow channels. It circulates throughout the system, dripping into vats placed at the bottom, from whence it is pumped back into the system. This visual phenomenon is generated by a combination of the artist's intentions, the operation of the machine's hydraulic system, the physical properties of the liquid, and the matrix itself. The resulting images overlap to form unique palimpsests, at the same time blurring the mimetic and figurative character of the prototype drawings.

The drawings, cut into layers of plexiglass, have a significance of their own – they were based on stills from a 1978 documentary on the production system at the Passenger Automobile Factory in Warsaw<sup>2</sup>. The film, directed by Antoni Dzieduszycki, glorified the new world in which human labour would be minimized and replaced by robotization, and where the factory system would be automated. As an art historian and art filmmaker, Dzieduszycki presented his reportage from the factory in a form that was permeated with the experience of the avant-garde and cybernetics. In Jasielski's artistic deconstruction of this documentary, the idea of factory automation also becomes one of many media-constructed narratives about the entanglement of systems of power, technology, and the project of the future, with the management of the human body, labour, and time. In the comics book style of his drawings, Jasielski emphasizes the robotic dimension of human work – the workers are given modern tools and overalls – which somehow integrates them even more with the production line. These images are devoid of any sign of human effort and the importance of physical labor. When the various ways in which the human body is exploited are hidden, this allows thought to focus on increasing productivity. Human labor, as 'living labor', is displaced by a new product – automated 'dead labor'. Thus arises modern capital, which must constantly be in motion in order to be transformed back into 'living labor' and retain its productivity<sup>3</sup>.

In many parts of the slowly globalizing world, the late 1970s and the entire decade of the 1980s witnessed an acceleration in efforts to build social trust in technology. All technologized cultures experienced an acceleration of production through automation, robotization and computerization. In Poland, this time overlapped with the rise of social tensions and resistance to communist totalitarianism. The double process of clamping down on civil liberties and freedoms, and at the same time of promoting an illusory vision of society whose continuity is to be guaranteed only by technological development, unexpectedly reveals the general pattern of cultural acceleration that we are currently dealing with. Just as in the utopian and propagandistic vision of the 1970s and 1980s the bodies of workers were integrated with factory production lines

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<sup>1</sup> J. McBrien, *Accumulation Extinction. Planetary Catastrophism in Necrocene, [in:] Anthropocene or Capitalocene? Nature, History and the Crisis of Capitalism*, ed. J. W. Moore, PM Press 2016.

<sup>2</sup> *Narodziny Poloneza*, dir. and scen. A. Dzieduszycki, R. Świerczyński, M. Jeliński, Telewizyjna Wytwórnia Filmowa Poltel, 1978.

<sup>3</sup> L. Floridi, C. Öhman, *The Political Economy of Death in the Age of Information: A Critical Approach to the Digital Afterlife Industry*, "Minds and Machine" 2017, no. 27(4).

## EXHIBITION SCRIPT – SUMMARY:

### **Remember Me...**

Viewers entering the interior of the very brightly lit pavilion are confronted with a centrally positioned panoramic installation consisting of flat, semi-transparent surfaces. They are connected to a hydraulic system that gradually pumps a black liquid through a closed circuit. The liquid slowly, selectively fills the hollow channels in the matrix, thereby creating or revealing large-scale engravings which represent people surrounded by machines. The matrices are based on archival stills from a documentary about the Passenger Automobile Factory in Warsaw, which were redrawn by Jasielski and subjected to modifications that prevent the figures from being unequivocally situated in time. The drawings combine elements of the past and the future. The matrices fill disproportionately, under the pressure generated by the hydraulic system, entailing the constant generation of unique images. The liquid also flows continuously into a vat located at the bottom of the structure, from whence it is pumped again and returned to circulation. The fully automatic, electronically controlled hydraulic system creates a three-dimensional object composed of tanks, pumps, valves, switches, sensors and pipes. The sequential appearance and disappearance of drawings is accompanied by the natural sounds of the hydraulic system, but these also organically merge with a designed soundscape wherein – from time to time – slightly processed human voices become prominent. These voices intensify in response to the presence of viewers in the exhibition space and depend on the number of people in the room. The sound material will be obtained from various archival recordings. The exhibition will be accompanied by a virtual brochure and a printed catalogue.