

Re-enchanting the World.

Małgorzata Mirga-Tas

curators: Wojciech Szymański, Joanna Warsza

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[winnig project]

Małgorzata Mirga-Tas *Re-enchanting the World*

For many years, the Polish-Roma artist Małgorzata Mirga-Tas has been involved in depicting history and portraying everyday life in Roma settlements in her hometown of Czarna Góra, as well as in the regions with which she has the strongest ties - Podhale and Spisz in southern Małopolska. Her works - sculptures, paintings, spatial objects and large-format textiles - are strongly and literally marked with individual and relational experience and collective Polish-Roma history. The artist uses textiles and materials that are literal carriers of history, often belonging to and used by the people she portrays.

Re-enchanting the World, Mirga-Tas's new project for the Polish Pavilion at the Venice Biennale, is an attempt to expand the Polish and European iconosphere and art history with representations of Roma culture. The title is inspired by Silvia Federici's book *Re-enchanting the World: Feminism and the Politics of the Commons* (2019), which proposes re-enchanting as a way of recovering the idea of community and rebuilding relationships with others, including non-human actors: animals, plants, water or mountains. Thus, re-enchanting - a non-violent process in which women play an important role - reverses the unfortunate fate of the world, taking off its evil spell and charm.

Małgorzata Mirga-Tas will design and make a series of twelve large-format textiles that will cover the walls of the Polish Pavilion in Venice. Referring to the title of the 59th edition of the Biennale (*The Milk of Dreams*), the artist will create a magical world, constantly subjected to re-enchantment. The layout, form and motifs of the fabrics refer to the famous 'calendar' fresco cycle from the Renaissance Palazzo Schifanoia in Ferrara. It depicts astrological symbols, the deccan system, allegories of months and cyclicity, which are close to the signs and representations of Tarot cards used in Romani culture. The symbolism of the interior of the palace and the international migration of images across time and continents and their circulation - between India, Persia, Asia Minor, ancient Greece, Egypt and modern Europe - as described by the famous art historian Aby Warburg, become a visual and ideological point of reference for the artist. Mirga-Tas, referring to images of key importance for European art history and visuality, will "appropriate" them and inscribe in them a specific Polish-Roman identity and vernacular historical experience.

The project of the Polish Pavilion is based on the idea of transnationality, cyclicity, and the change of often appropriated meanings, proposing a new narrative about the constant cultural migration of images and mutual influences between Roma, Polish, and European cultures. By constructing her own version of the Renaissance interior in the Polish Pavilion, the artist proposes a kind of temporary and adventurous asylum offering hope and respite to the viewers. The exhibition will be a potential place for establishing new, temporary relations, a refuge beyond time and place, in which (as in Schifanoia, described by Warburg) the paintings collected by the artist reveal - when you listen to them more closely - "beneath the manifold traces of their wanderings from age to age and from nation to nation, that a [...] heart still beats within them."