44

Widok. Theories and Practices of Visual Culture

title:

Rebels, Herbalists, Activists, and Guides: The Figures of Witches in Contemporary Curatorial Projects

author:

Marta Kudelska

source:

Widok. Theories and Practices of Visual Culture 44 (2026)

URL:

https://www.pismowidok.org/en/archive/44witches-wisdom/rebels-herbalists-activists-and-guides

publisher:

Widok. Foundation for Visual Culture

affiliation:

SWPS University

University of Warsaw

keywords:

witch; art curating; exhibition; contemporary art; female collectivity

abstract:

The article analyzes six contemporary curatorial projects invoking the figure of the witch as a tool of social critique and recovery of female knowledge. Combining curatorial and scholarly approaches, the author uses an interdisciplinary methodology (visual studies, art history, feminist theory). The main thesis argues that the witch, as a liminal figure, enables the reconstruction of excluded narratives of embodiment, spirituality, and resistance. The text emphasizes the transformative power of art and the diversity of curatorial strategies addressing women's histories and experiences.

Marta Kudelska - Curator and art critic. In 2024, she earned a PhD in the humanities in the discipline of art studies. Her research focuses on the relationship between contemporary art, Romanticism, magic, and esotericism. She works at the Institute of Culture at the Jagiellonian University.

Rebels, Herbalists, Activists, and Guides: The Figures of Witches in Contemporary Curatorial Projects

Introduction: Personal Perspective, Motivations, and Methodology

I would like to begin this text with a personal remark. My own experience in this field provided the starting point for the topic I address here, namely the representation of witch figures in curatorial projects. Since 2018, I have examined a phenomenon that I define as the "romantic turn" in contemporary art.[1] By this term, I refer to the growing fascination among contemporary artists with themes related to magic, horror, esotericism, alternative forms of spirituality, and what Mark Fisher describes as the "weird and the eerie."[2] The witch figure clearly belongs within this constellation of interests.

I have devoted several exhibitions specifically to witches, starting with *Czarna Trylogia* (*The Black Trilogy*) series at the Bałtycka Galeria Sztuki Współczesnej (2018–2020), through *Salon odnowy magicznej* (*Magical Wellness Spa*) at Widna Gallery (2021), to the *HEX* exhibition (2025) presented at Galeria Lotna. While preparing these exhibitions, I gradually began to notice that other curators also undertook the topics that I found interesting. I started to wonder why this theme had captured their attention, and what motivations guided their actions. As both a curator and a researcher of contemporary art, I decided to attempt to describe and understand this phenomenon.
This text constitutes the next stage of my work exploring such a broad area of contemporary art.

I selected the following exhibitions for analysis: *I Will Put My Own Soul into the Magical Storm* (2020), *Magical Engagement* (2020), *Sabat* (Sabbath; 2021), *Odczarować czarownice: Wiedźmy, wieszczki, zielarki* (Disenchanting Witches: Witches, Seers, Herbalists; 2022), *Wiedźmy* (Witches; 2023), and *Krew korzeni* (Blood of Roots; 2025). Although these exhibitions differ in their concepts and means of expression, they share the motif of the witch as a symbolic, liminal figure, rich in diverse cultural meanings. In this article, I argue that this figure functions in the analyzed exhibitions as a tool to tell stories about violence against women, spirituality, corporeality, and community, and as a specific critique of dominant historical and contemporary narratives.

I focus on these six exhibitions for several reasons. First, they took place within a short period. Second, they appeared in different institutions: both public and private, in museums and galleries. Third, I found it crucial to write about exhibitions I had seen in person, not just in photographic documentation. Hence, I based my research on my own memories, photographs, descriptions of individual works, and curatorial texts, and on conversations with the curators themselves. The discussions in question allowed me to understand why they chose to curate exhibitions on witches, what motivations guided their efforts, and how they interpret the witch figure.

I tried to identify the common features of the selected exhibitions and to outline the differences between them. While analyzing this material, I focused primarily on exploring how the artists used the witch figure in the exhibitions and what image of the witch emerges from their works. Attempting to answer this question, I also reflected on how this witch figure, rooted in the context of historical persecution, transforms into an active and engaged character, connecting the past with the present, and even projecting possible future scenarios.

Figure 1. Adam Adach, "Iskra", 2020, oil on canvas, work featured in the exhibition "I Will Put My Own Soul into a Magical Storm", BWA Warsaw, 2020, courtesy of BWA Warsaw.

In search of answers to my research questions, works on both historical witch persecutions and the classic studies by Bohdan Baranowski[3] and Jacek Wijaczka[4] also proved helpful. Moreover, I consulted contemporary works, such as *Historia z wiedźmami. Procesy o czary w ukraińskich województwach Rzeczypospolitej XVII i XVIII wieku* (A History with Witches: Witch Trials in the Ukrainian Voivodeships of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries) by Kateryna Dysa,[5] *Czarownice, mieszczki, pokutnice* (Witches, Bourgeois Women, and Penitents) by Michał Ślubowski,[6] and *Magia i procesy o czary w staropolskim Lublinie* (Magic and Witch Trials in Early Modern Lublin) by Magdalena Kowalska-Cichy.[7] I also drew on studies that placed the topic in a broader cultural context, including *Czarownice. Studia z kulturowej historii fenomenu* (Witches: Studies on the Phenomenon's Cultural History)[8] and *Czarownice, czarownicy, czary. Obrazy kulturowe, literackie, artystyczne* (Witches, Wizards, and Witchcraft: Cultural, Literary, and Artistic Representations).[9] Notably, Polish-language research on the development of the witch's iconography in art remains a distinct minority. The few examples include Joanna Gacek's text "Obrazując czarownice – niedocenione źródło w badaniach początków kształtowania się stereotypu czarownicy" (Depicting Witches: An Undervalued Source in the Study of the Witch Stereotype's Origins).[10]

The Witch as a Figure of Exclusion: Victim of Violence and Social Fear

Who is a witch? According to the simplest dictionary definitions, a witch is "a woman subject to the influence of the devil, possessing the power to cast spells."[11] The image of a woman endowed with the ability to wield "magical power that can harm someone or something"[12] remains particularly linked to early modern witch trials in Europe. Therefore, a witch means a woman who practices magic, understood as the set of "beliefs and practices based on the conviction that supernatural powers exist, which can be mastered and invoked through spells, rituals, and charms."[13] In other words, a witch equals a woman who possesses supernatural powers and uses them to achieve her intended goals.

However, as witch studies[14] emphasize, there is no single universal model of a woman labeled a witch. To this day, no coherent theory explains the reasons behind the mass persecution of women in Europe between the fifteenth and seventeenth centuries.[15] We also lack a unified model for the treatment of accused witches. In the past, the situation of witches at the territories of contemporary Poland differed from what we know from Western European history.[16] This difference becomes even more complex when we look at the figures of witches in non-European cultural contexts, namely in Africa, Asia, India, or Saudi Arabia. However, one factor seems to connect these diverse histories: the emergence of witchcraft accusations reflects "certain social anxieties,"[17] and women have remained their most frequent victims.

Today, the Western European – and more broadly, the Euro-Atlantic – model of the witch along with its associated imagery has become the dominant interpretive framework for understanding and representing witches in global culture.

Numerous popular contemporary images of witches derive from this framework. As Tomasz Raczkowski notes, the witch now serves as a metaphor for what escapes social norms, representing the excluded – the feminine, the irrational, and the extra-cultural.[18] Her identity, shaped at the intersection of various exclusion forms, carries a subversive potential against dominant social norms and symbolic orders.

The nineteenth-century French historian Jules Michelet became the first person to clearly articulate this perception of the witch in his Romantic thought – a perception now widespread in visual culture and the humanities. To cite the historian Agnieszka Brzezińska, Michelet's book *La Sorcière* sees witches as "romantic rebels, persecuted by the obscurantism embodied by the Catholic Church and the Inquisition."[19] In later centuries, this interpretation of the witch figure has served as a starting point for feminist reinterpretations of the witch as a figure of resistance. As Magdalena Bednarek writes, the witch evoked associations with women operating outside the canon of accepted norms and behaviors; therefore, she became an icon of second-wave feminism and an embodiment of contemporary womanhood: rebellious, independent, and openly defying the violence directed at her.[20]

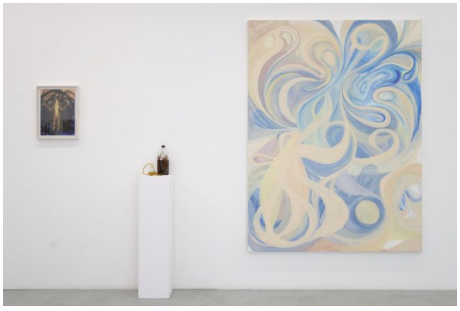

Figure 2. Exhibition view *I Will Put My Own Soul into the Magical Storm*, BWA Warsaw, 2020, photo by Bartosz Górka, courtesy of BWA Warsaw.

The theme of violence against women served as one of the key curatorial premises for Zofia Krawiec in creating the exhibition *I Will Put My Own Soul into the Magic Storm*. She mentioned this aspect in our conversation:

> My motivation to create this exhibition came from my personal experience of online violence – public shaming and

> overwhelming reactions, often directed also at me. These voices gave me a strange and incomprehensible sense of agency, but they also demonized me based on my image in social media. … This entire experience became my starting point for reflecting on violence against women, especially collective violence, which different people often fuel further.[21]

Thus, Krawiec's personal experience with digital forms of violence became a starting point for her broader reflection on the mechanisms of stigmatization and demonization of women, especially regarding collective, often internalized forms of oppression. The exhibition curated by Krawiec, centered on the witch figure, referenced the historical persecution of women labeled as witches. Above all, it highlighted and updated these mechanisms of violence and stigmatization in relation to contemporaneity.

One of the works the curator selected was Adam Adach's painting *Iskra* (Spark) (Figure 1). In this canvas, rendered in muted shades of yellow, blue, brown, and green, we see a range of female figures, although a careful eye will also notice a man dressed as a police officer. Some of the women depicted in the painting cover their mouths with medical masks. Above this dense and tightly packed composition, enormous bats hover, as if closely observing the entangled human bodies below. Both Adach and Krawiec interpret the painting as a reference to the time of the pandemic and the lockdown, and to the moment of the exhibition's opening. That period marked a time of crisis that, like any liminal situation, exposed structures of violence and symbolic tension.

Figure 3. Exhibition view *Disenchanting Witches: Witches, Seers, Herbalists*, Katowice History Museum, 2022, photo by Arkadiusz Ławrywianiec, courtesy of the Katowice History Museum.

In the context of Krawiec's statement cited above, we can also read Adach's painting as an allegory of collective panic, control, and oppression – forces that the titular "spark" may ignite. This seemingly insignificant event can trigger an escalation of various forms of violence. The symbolic presence of female figures in Adach's painting, shown in a state of physical compression and subjected to an intense institutional and collective gaze "from above," makes the mechanisms of control, exclusion, and objectification visible. The institutional gaze appears as the suggested figure of the police officer, while the collective gaze takes the symbolic form of the bats hovering over the scene. For Adach, the bats suspended above the human figures also serve as a visualization of an omnipresent, inhuman observer. This observer functions as a metaphor for social surveillance and for the projection of fear, which societies direct toward specific groups in moments of crisis. In this sense, we can view Adach's painting as an illustration of the stigmatization process: individual bodies become inscribed into a collective narrative of threat and burdened with responsibility for the crisis, in a way analogous to the mechanisms that historically targeted women labeled as witches.[22]

A similar line of reflection informs the exhibition *Odczarować czarownice. Wiedźmy, wieszczki, zielarki* curated by Magdalena Toboła-Feliks and Agnieszka Fedorów-Skupień. In this exhibition, the curators placed the figure of the woman-witch within a historical framework. They emphasized that they aimed to reveal the mechanisms of stigmatization and elimination

directed at women identified as witches at the threshold of the early modern period:

> We wished to tell a story that would stand on the side of those unfortunate women, while neither accusing nor criticizing the other side. Rather, we sought to reveal the mechanisms that may have led the society of the time to act as it did. We wanted to reconstruct the worldview and mentality of people in that period: they genuinely believed in stories of magic, curses, and spells, and they truly feared witches and the consequences of their actions. This very fear drove them to search for a scapegoat – a woman they identified as a witch.[23]

Thus, the common denominator of both exhibitions lies in the curators' motivation to present the witch figure as an embodiment of collective fears and social projections which require a concrete, bodily carrier in times of crisis. The witch continues to concentrate the affects of others, who cannot understand or navigate a new and unfamiliar situation. In moments of crisis and uncertainty, people transfer intense collective emotions, such as anger, fear, frustration, or even desire, onto others. Theorists such as Sara Ahmed argue that affects circulate between bodies and become anchored in figures perceived as threats to the social order.[24] Thus, a woman, especially one who transgresses the norms of gender, behavior, or submissiveness, becomes an easy target for such projections, which may emerge following a very little trigger. As Toboła-Feliks concludes in her text on witches, "some seemingly insignificant crack, a minor ambiguity, a minimal deviation from the prevailing norm was enough for a sudden wave of doubt to enter the mind … and make one believe that someone's wife, mother, or daughter was a witch."[25]

In this way, a woman identified as a witch represents a victim of violence, not its perpetrator. She becomes the materialization of social fears, which society answers with exclusion and with symbolic – and oftentimes real – annihilation. Margarita, the

heroine of Mikhail Bulgakov's novel, declares: "I have become a witch from the grief and calamities that have struck me."[26] The witch's body serves as a catalyst for destructive emotions – as their visible and social embodiment. Thus, the witch turns into an object of symbolic and physical violence, as she did in the past. The explanation for this violence lies beyond her, within a social need to control what people have long perceived as dangerous, unpredictable, and resistant to prevailing norms.

This very act of violence against the female body recurs in many contemporary studies on witches. Authors such as Silvia Federici[27] and Mona Chollet[28] address this topic in their books, analyzing it both as a component of the processes tied to the rise of capitalism and as an instrument of historical mechanisms that excluded women from the public sphere. Evoking Michel Foucault's spirit, Federici writes as follows in *Beyond the Periphery of the Skin*:

> Bodies are also texts on which power regimes have written their prescriptions. As the point of encounter with the human and nonhuman world, the body has been our most powerful means of self-expression and the most vulnerable to abuse. Thus, our bodies are evidence of the pains and joys we have experienced and the struggles we have made. Histories of oppression and rebellion can be read through them.[29]

Hence, acts of violence – not magical powers associated with doing harm or casting spells – truly connect contemporary women with their historical predecessors. The vision of the witch as a woman-victim, to which the curators refer in their exhibition projects, depicts a spiral of violence against women. In this spiral, successive historical moments reproduce the same mechanisms of exclusion and repression, regardless of the era; only their form changes.

Figure 4. Exhibition view *Disenchanting Witches: Witches, Seers, Herbalists*, Katowice History Museum, 2022, photo by Arkadiusz Ławrywianiec, courtesy of the Katowice History Museum.

Today, people no longer inflict pain with objects such as those displayed in the exhibition *Odczarować czarownice. Wiedźmy, wieszczki, zielarki*: an executioner's sword, treatises on how to identify witches, or bills for the preparation of stakes. Instead, we more often encounter a form of violence administered slowly but consistently. This violence takes the shape of misogynistic behavior, abusive social relations, or hate speech circulating in social media. Toboła-Feliks and Fedorów-Skupień write: "The historical phenomenon of witchcraft functions as a kind of mirror which reflects social fears, misunderstandings, various anxieties, fear of the unknown, and a lack of tolerance and understanding of otherness."[30]

The violence discussed by the curators of both exhibitions proves multidimensional: systemic, symbolic, and economic. If we had to identify a pattern, a modus operandi that leads to labeling a woman a witch, we could indicate the interplay of these three orders: systemic violence – institutional forms of control and sanction; symbolic violence – stigmatization and demonization; and economic violence – material dependency and exclusion. The exhibitions in Katowice and Warsaw revealed numerous practices that limit women's autonomy, both in the historical contexts of witch trials and in contemporary actions. The exhibition *Odczarować czarownice. Wiedźmy, wieszczki, zielarki* literally reconstructed the mechanisms of institutional control aimed at women of the period. The executioner's swords, demonological treatises, and bills for the stakes displayed in the exhibition serve as material evidence of a system that used law and religion to subordinate women's bodies, knowledge, and labor. The structure of the exhibition itself reinforced this point, guiding visitors through the stages of a woman's transformation

into a witch. In a similar way, Krawiec highlighted contemporary systemic forms of violence against women. Speaking about her motivations for creating the exhibition, Krawiec cited online harassment that involved public humiliation in digital spaces. This represents a new form of inquisition – one that no longer takes place in courtrooms or torture chambers, unfolding instead on the internet and in other spaces of social activity.

Moreover, both exhibitions revealed the symbolic dimension of violence, showing that control over women operates not only through law and its institutions, but also through images, collective narratives, and cultural imagination. Adach's painting clearly illustrates this symbolic dimension of violence, as do the historical depictions of witches presented in the Katowice exhibition. Adach's work renders female figures as objects of scrutiny and control, while the medical masks become symbols of social fear and anxiety, visualizing the collective panic associated with the pandemic and the restrictions in place at the time. This serves as a symbolic representation of how the female body becomes a screen for collective fantasies of guilt and threat. We see the same dynamic in the prints and engravings displayed in Katowice: the witch appears terrifying, with a hunchback and hooked nose, because this repulsive physiognomy reveals her inner evil.

Furthermore, this symbolic order intersects with economic violence, likewise present in the exhibitions under discussion. In the figures and stories of herbalists, midwives, or women working with nature, which I describe below, we can discern traces of the devaluation of women's care work and intuition-based knowledge. The witch figure is not merely a metaphor of exclusion; it also serves as a tool for recognizing complex, interdependent forms of violence. The history of witches reminds

us that violence represents a multi-dimensional phenomenon which combines elements of control, objectification, and dependency.

Reproduction, Corporality, and Sexuality

Katarzyna Szopa emphasizes that "witches appear wherever an attack on life takes place, and specifically on the conditions of its reproduction."[31] Many historical studies on witches and their trials report that they performed procedures aimed at "restoring menstruation" or "inducing abortion."[32] Alongside these accounts, scholars frequently note that the spread of Christianity generated an increasing opposition against abortion and resulted in attempts of its legal prohibition, particularly in societies under the Catholic Church's influence. Consequently, herbalists, midwives, and other women knowledgeable about fertility control became targets of social criticism and ostracism, and they could face imprisonment or even death.

The tendency to link the witch figure with women's reproductive rights has a long-standing tradition and continues today. The nationwide protests in Poland in the fall of 2020, triggered by the tightening of abortion laws, represent a notable example. Many participants marched through cities carrying banners that clearly referenced witches.[33] The phrase "witch hunts"[34] frequently appeared in the press, referring to the media backlash against women who had undergone abortions and the doctors who assisted them. Meanwhile, conservative politicians described the protests as "witches' sabbaths."[35]

Figure 5. Jagoda Dobecka, *Generatiua libertatem est ius humanum*, 2020, acrylic on canvas, courtesy of the artist.

Did the threads linking witches to women's reproductive rights find reflection in the curatorial practices central to my text? Did they somehow permeate from the social context into the exhibitions themselves? Or did they simply rank among the motivations or sources of inspiration for the curators when investigating the topic of witches? Not all of my interlocutors answered these questions directly. For Lidia Krawczyk, co-curator of *Sabat*, the narratives outlined here emerged as an initial inspiration for the exhibition, but she ultimately abandoned these threads throughout its development. Krawczyk stated as follows:

> At first, I imagined the exhibition taking the form of a protest; I thought about incorporating actions based on that format. I even considered including those symbolic black umbrellas. However, this idea very gradually and subtly faded as Magda and I began to work on it more intensively. We turned toward greater abstraction and metaphysics, moving away from a manifestly political approach.[36]

Meanwhile, Krawiec frequently addresses issues related to women's sexuality and corporeality, including abortion, especially in her curatorial texts, interviews, and later activities. One month before the opening of the exhibition at BWA Warszawa, *Szum* (Swoosh) magazine published Krawiec's text that partly analyzed the witch figure and partly served as a preview of the exhibition she was curating. In the text, Krawiec writes: "Women's sexuality and bodies were the obsession of witch hunters and something that provoked their fear."[37] At the exhibition itself and in its accompanying text, Krawiec expands on this theme and refers to witch hunters, whom she associates both with historical inquisitors and with contemporary instigators of verbal and physical violence against women.[38] Krawiec also articulates the connection between abortion and the witch figure in an interview for the portal Ofeminin. There, she recalls past women accused of witchcraft who "were interested in medicine, worked as

herbalists, helped women undergo abortions, or assisted in childbirth."[39]

But did these threads actually appear in the exhibition she curated? The works presented at BWA Warszawa included a small piece by Agnieszka Brzeżańska (Figure 2). On a white pedestal, Brzeżańska placed a perfume bottle alongside a jar filled with herbs. This was *pusanga*, which holds magical properties in Amazonian tradition, serving to strengthen family bonds and romantic relationships.[40] Thus, we encounter herbs and a symbolic herbalist, but the purpose of her potion is not abortive. Instead, the mixture aims to foster closeness and strengthen existing relationships.

Although Krawiec frequently references women's sexuality and fertility control in her statements, her exhibition did not address abortion directly. This likely stemmed from the context in which the project emerged: several months before the mass protests triggered by the tightening of abortion laws, and during the pandemic period, which highlighted the need for care and communality. In Krawiec's curatorial narrative, the witch represented a figure of care, not of radical rebellion. She was someone who heals, nurtures relationships, and creates a space of resistance through tending to those marginalized and objectified by patriarchal culture: people with diverse sexual orientations, animals, and plants.

Herbalists, Potions, and Magical Objects

Herbalists and folk healers, herbs and plants, and mysterious potions and elixirs, all frequently linked to witch trials, also appeared in the other exhibitions and played an important role. When reviewing archival photos from the Katowice exhibition *Odczarować czarownice. Wiedźmy, wieszczki, zielarki*, we note especially the deep, intense green of the walls with occasional white-line drawings of plants (Figure 3). Moreover, one of the

exhibition rooms was filled with a strong scent of herbs, immersing visitors in their presence. Toboła-Feliks notes:

> We collected them together during the preparations for our exhibition. In fact, working on it often took us into the field. We searched for plants connected to the theme we were exploring, those that women in the past could actually have used.[41]

The herbs included rose, lavender, mullein, rosemary, lemon balm, and wormwood, as well as Canadian goldenrod, which filled one of the herb walls at the exhibition[42] (Figure 4).

The artists participating in the exhibition *Wiedźmy*, curated by Agata Groszek, also acknowledged these botanical fascinations. Anna Orbaczewska's paintings feature numerous plant-inspired elements, while Justyna Koeke incorporated flowers into the training equipment she created. In the curatorial text, Groszek even refers to Dorota Buczkowska and Bogna Gniazdowska as "herbalists."[43] In Gniazdowska's works, plant stems resemble blood vessels, and their clustered forms evoke humanoid beings. Buczkowska shares her fascination with plants that shape her perception of the world. Meanwhile, in Jagoda Dobecka's painting, two humanoid mandrakes appear alongside the goddess Hekate, a dog, and snakes (Figure 5).

Figure 6. Exhibition view *Sabat*, Podbrzezie Gallery, 2021, photo by Michał Maliński, courtesy of the curators.

Mandrake also appeared beside another magical plant known as *silphium* in the exhibition *Magical Engagement*, thanks to the works of Małgorzata Gurowska and Natalia Biało. Due to its humanoid shape, mandrake became the subject of many legends, fairy tales, fears, and speculations. Carelessly pulling mandrake out of the ground could allegedly result in a storm at best; at worst, it might cause the death of an inexperienced adept of the

occult arts. People believed that mandrake had a soporific effect and used it as the basis for some love spells.[44] The mandrake root had demonic properties, yet it promoted fertility as well.[45] In turn, silphium had the reputation of a panacea in ancient times. Like mandrake, this plant could serve as an aphrodisiac, but it also showed contraceptive and early abortive properties. "Silphium resembled a large fennel in appearance, and its fruit may have been the prototype of the heart symbol. A clear identification of this plant with any known species remains impossible,"[46] explains Biało, adding that silphium "became extinct as a result of human activity."[47]

Figure 7. Exhibition view *Disenchanting Witches: Witches, Seers, Herbalists,* Katowice History Museum, 2022, photo by Arkadiusz Ławrywianiec, courtesy of the Katowice History Museum.

People attributed similar extraordinary properties, useful for magical elixirs, to angelica, also known as wild celery, mentioned alongside beetroot in the curatorial text for the exhibition *Krew korzeni*. Healers used angelica's soothing qualities in the context of menstruation and childbirth, and people carried its root for magical protection. During the performance that concluded the exhibition, the artist Angelika Puff distributed small vials filled with this enchanted plant to all those gathered. Bezoar, an organic formation that develops in animal stomachs from undigested food remains, was also believed to have magical properties. In the exhibition *Sabat*, bezoar assumed the form of pink, soft sculptural objects by Natalia Kopytko, displayed on golden stands (Figure 6).

But what tools should one use to prepare magical potions from all these enchanted artifacts? What instruments would one need for cutting, crushing, boiling, simmering, and brewing? What belongs in *la cocina de las brujas*,[48] "the witches' kitchen,"

whose iconographic roots we find in the paintings by Frans Francken and David Teniers? Pots, mortars, pestles, and bowls from past centuries, borrowed from ethnographic collections, appeared, for instance, in the Katowice exhibition. As the curators explain, they "wanted to show the tools and vessels these women might have used"[49] (Figure 7). Meanwhile, more overtly magical and fantastical objects like cauldrons marked with mysterious symbols, ritual knives, fanciful ladles, and goblets, beside contemporary items such as humming juicers, appeared on a table covered with a white tablecloth in the exhibition curated by Katarzyna Oczkowska (Figure 8). Magical tools also featured in the exhibition *Sabat*. However, they seemed far more grotesque and evoked a distinctly fairy-tale provenance. Who could possibly drink from Dominika Olszowy's large, wrinkled teacup? What magical beings might sit at a table set with Alicja Pismenko's colorful, twisted tea service of cups and mugs (Figure 9)? Perhaps only those who do not belong to a rationalized world, those who arrive from afar, from outside time, from the wasteland, where they live their lives as witches.[50]

Sisterhood, Collective, and Community

But why weigh and brew all these potions at all? Why gather herbs and flowers or browse through old herbals in search of forgotten recipes? Why sit at twisted tables covered with a tablecloth stained with beet juice (Figure 10)? What tools can pour the souls of long-dead witches into inert objects and allow them to tell their stories?[51] Why would one resurrect and summon witches today?

The recurring presence of witches in curatorial practice serves a dual purpose. On the one hand, it recalls a history of women's suffering and harm. On the other hand, it turns the witch into a symbol of women's strength, agency, and mutual support. A contemporary motif closely tied to the witch figure, one that curators frequently invoke, is the collectivity of women

accused of witchcraft in the past. Although no evidence confirms that women's sabbaths actually took place,[52] legends, fairy tales, and folklore have preserved these gatherings. Across centuries, artists played a major role in shaping and sustaining this imagery. One need only recall Hans Baldung's engravings of naked women gathered in forest clearings, Jean-Baptiste Pitois's demonic dances, or Francisco Goya's grotesque visions of witches' sabbaths. Margaret Murray's *The Witch-Cult in Western Europe*[53] also significantly contributed to the idea of women's secret, ritual gatherings. Even if we recognize their fictional status, we cannot dismiss the power of this image. Today, we may view these mysterious sabbaths and other assemblies as symbolic representations of a group that threatens the dominant male social order. The fear they provoke reflects anxiety about change, namely about overturning a familiar world and its rules, however unjust those rules may be.

Krawiec often returns to this idea of witch collectivity. She argues that the witch trials severed or weakened the bonds that had once existed among women. When discussing her exhibition, she noted that "in the past, sisters, neighbors, mothers, and daughters stood together, supporting and protecting one another."[54] Years later, when speaking about her book on the contemporary reception of the witch, she observed that "women began to fear contact with other women, because their meetings were easily labeled sabbaths"[55] (Figure 11). Collectivity also forms a central theme in the exhibition *Wiedźmy*.

Figure 8. View of Angelica Puff's solo show, *Blood of the Roots*, Jak zapomnieć Gallery, 2025, photo by Michał Maliński, courtesy of Jak zapomnieć Gallery.

In her curatorial text, Groszek emphasizes: "MEETINGS. All kinds. Meetings with friends, with patients, with other therapists, with artists. This exhibition emerged from meetings. Relationality guides my choices, and my aim is to strengthen those softer, subtler energies"[56] (Figure 12).

Lidia Krawczyk and Magdalena Lazar, the curators of *Sabat*, speak in a similar spirit about the need to stay together. Their desire to create space for other women shaped both the exhibition's title and its process. In our conversation, Krawczyk emphasized:

> Our exhibition took shape through meetings with other women. In a sense, it built itself through conversation, through being together. We visited many artists in their studios, listened to what they said, and sensed their sensitivities. The project did not revolve solely around Magda's and my own visions. Our work relied on meetings, on building shared understanding. Above all, it relied on listening to other women. We wanted to make room for different sensitivities.[57]

One accompanying event even assumed the form of a communal bonfire for curators, artists, and other women. Anna Siekiera, co-curator of *Magical Engagement*, also described a collective origin: "During my social gatherings with Zosia and Paweł, we began to imagine creating an exhibition together. We realized we wanted to combine magical and activist threads, which mattered deeply to all three of us."[58]

Figure 9. Alicja Pismenko, *Untitled*, 2021, ceramics, photo: Michał Maliński, courtesy of the curators.

Toboła-Feliks and Fedorów-Skupień described a similar collaborative dynamic in preparing *Odczarować czarownice*. Beside collecting herbs, they mentioned the context of the

exhibition itself. Toboła-Feliks recalled:

> When I started working at Katowice History Museum, I mentioned that I wanted to prepare an exhibition about witches. Jolanta Barnaś, the museum's visual artist, had a similar idea independently; interested in the topic for a long time, she wanted to give it a go. We knew, however, that developing such a complex project alone would be a challenge. So Agnieszka and I joined forces. Our interests complemented one another and both centered on the witch figure.[59]

After the exhibition opened, the curators experienced another form of women's collectivity:

> We led countless guided tours. Groups came from all over Poland. Most participants were women, who often traveled hundreds of kilometers, even from the coast, to see the exhibition. That brought us enormous satisfaction. Even today, years later, someone occasionally stops me in the street to ask whether I co-created that exhibition about witches. This is very kind, and it shows how necessary this project was.[60]

Oczkowska, the curator of *Krew korzeni*, likewise emphasized encounter and mutual discovery in her collaboration with Puff:

> At first, I did not intend to frame Angelika's exhibition around the witch figure, even though it matters deeply to me. I approached her work without a theoretical filter. The theme emerged through direct contact with Angelika – through getting to know each other via art, personality, performance, and her personal history.[61]

Figure 10. View of Angelica Puff's solo show, *Blood of the Roots*, Jak zapomnieć Gallery, 2025, photo by Michał Maliński, courtesy of Jak zapomnieć Gallery.

Thus these women's gatherings, these "witches' sabbaths" recurring in the curators' practice appear as an integral element of their work, but also as a source of inspiration for further actions, or even as the final outcome of their projects. Collecting herbs in preparation for an exhibition, meeting with artists, shared conversations among curators, the exchange of thoughts, feelings, and impressions, an openness to the stories of others, all these elements are, in fact, practices that subtly reshape our experience of the world. They reveal its other face. We may describe these seemingly minor gestures, incongruent with our contemporary reality, as anachronistic micro-rituals, since they refer to older forms of communal gathering, rhythms of work, and attentive exchange of experience. However, they are not rituals in the traditional sense, namely "symbolic activities performed according to strictly defined, formalized rules that constitute an act of socially significant meaning."[62] Instead, these small-scale practices emphasize repetition, attentiveness, and the communal dimension. Above all, they serve to foster an appreciation of our interdependence with other people, objects, animals, and the surrounding reality.

In *The Ahuman Manifesto: Activism for the End of the Anthropocene*, Patricia MacCormack, a scholar who describes herself as a witch, refers to similar processes as "occulture." By this term, MacCormack understands all phenomena present in contemporary culture that in some way relate to magic or ancient beliefs. We may situate contemporary fascination with witches within this framework.

> Occulture seeks to change perception, to change the world, when the current modes of perception, activism and creativity

> may feel as if they are not doing enough or are not adapting as well as they could. It is an alternative way to find inspiration, neither better nor worse than any other … a form of spiritual artistic practice because it uses acknowledged falsity, fiction and fabulation, coupled with belief as a commitment to attending to changing contemporary truthful scenarios by utilizing a weird toolkit of somewhat rigid but nonetheless queerly bendy practices in order to maintain a hope in this world.[63]

The curators also turned to this type of practice in their projects. They immersed themselves in the past – ancient fairy tales, myths, legends, and rituals – to extract from them elements that might prove useful today. They investigated how small, consistent actions rather than modern technologies might influence and shape contemporary reality.

In the exhibitions created by these curators, witches appeared in allegorical and symbolic forms. They expressed the contemporary longing for the lost world of women's creative powers and an attempt to resurrect and reshape those powers. Art played a particular role here: it became a visualization of these forms and provided a voice to groups whose experience has remained marginalized or entirely overlooked. Krawiec mentioned this aspect when describing a phenomenon she calls "pink magic" after Maria Pawlikowska-Jasnorzewska. To Krawiec, this phrase denotes "a specific belief and practice focused on thinking about relationships

Figure 11. Zuza Krajewska, *Women's Circle 2* , from the *Solstice* series, Jeziorniak Lake, 2019, photograph, photo by Bartosz Górka, courtesy of BWA Warsaw.

between people, as well as human relationships with other species and nature, characterized by equality and emancipation. This is socially engaged magic, whose spells influence the change of the future."[64] In fact, Krawiec compares art itself to magic: "perhaps art is a kind of magic for me? It fulfills a need for spirituality, something beyond everyday life, something I can deeply commit to."[65]

The curators of *Magical Engagement* expressed opinions in a very similar spirit. Siekiera emphasized that "magical thinking is highly necessary when engaging in activism. I feel that it forms an indispensable part of action. Without faith in collective agency, it is difficult to do anything, knowing the gravity of the challenges we must face along the way."[66] In turn, for Zofia nierodzińska, magic manifests in everyday actions:

> For me, magic casts spells on a reality that can sometimes be very difficult to accept. I believe that using such simple phrases as "good morning" or "nice to see you," and designing various utopias, namely speaking about what we would like to change and how we would like to act differently together, can influence how we live and function with one another in society.[67]

This influence on reality becomes the driving force behind the curators' actions. Although the process remains oriented toward the future, its foundations and motivations stem from experiences rooted in the past. "This vision is fueled by images of burned and tortured foremothers, not by emancipated daughters of the future,"[68] writes Katarzyna Szopa, paraphrasing Walter Benjamin's thought on history. The witch's power has its source in the past, which propels her to act. Awareness of what has happened creates the future. In this way, witches and their supernatural abilities can currently serve not only as symbols originating in the past, but also – or above all – as active figures announcing a new world, free from the injustices of history. From this perspective, the witch becomes

a harbinger of change – the one who halts the swelling current of misogynistic violence flowing through centuries.

But what does this transformative power embodied by the witch actually comprise? To what kind of knowledge would she refer in her actions? What tools might she use to turn thought into deed? Could art help her today? According to the French historian André Rouillé, art is both a procedure and faith.[69] Magic also represents a form of faith, since the person who practices magic believes in the possibility of influencing the world through rituals, gestures, or words.

Curators often present magic, namely the outcome of the witch's activity, as a form of resistance. In this perspective, the witch becomes a contemporary woman engaged with the surrounding world.

Figure 12. Exhibition view *Witches*, Inne Towarzystwo, 2023, photo by Bartosz Kokosiński, courtesy of Inne Towarzystwo.

This approach links the witch figure and magic with forms of contemporary social resistance, and its roots reach the movements of second-wave feminism, initiated in the 1960s and the 1970s. As Natalia Sielewicz notes, that period saw civic actions which "flirted … with spiritual practices, such as the neopagan religion of Wicca and its feminist branch, Dianic Wicca, of the 1970s, and leftist movements drawing on the attributes of witchcraft."[70] Examples included the activity of the group W.I.T.C.H. that incorporated performative events into its public actions and, for instance, cast spells on Richard Nixon and the Wall Street stock exchange while proclaiming anti-capitalist slogans. Magic as a tool and form of social resistance also appears in more recent times. The protests initiated in April 2016 by Indigenous Americans, known as #NoDAPL, opposed the construction of the Dakota Access Pipeline. Their participants often invoked elements associated

with magical rituals.

This form of magic, understood as contemporary activism, appeared in the exhibition *Magical Engagement*. Although the exhibition itself lacked direct references to the witch figure, it presented the image of an active individual drawing on old folk knowledge and rituals to transform the surrounding reality in accordance with her will. Thus, the curators view magic, especially that which employs folk rituals, as a tool aimed at changing the world – at both influencing and creating reality. By invoking the symbolism contained in ancient rituals, following Silvia Federici, the curators attempted to undertake actions aimed at the "re-enchantment of the world," that is, "to recognize the existence of a logic other than that of capitalist development."[71] For the curators, the revival of this kind of thinking in *Magiczne zaangażowanie* transcended the visual or narrative layer of the exhibited works and appeared as "a manifestation of utopian imagination, focused on creating a new vision of communal life."[72] Hence, the exhibition featured the documentation of the activities undertaken by the collective Siostry Rzeki (River's Sisters), works by Daniel Rycharski referencing folk beliefs, and the documentation of climate and nature activism. By invoking magic, spells, and rituals, the curators sketched a vision of a new world order based on a sense of community, emphasizing that organizing into groups constitutes the condition of the desired change. According to Sarah Jaffe, this is what contemporary magic represents: magic means organization, and organization equals contemporary magic.[73]

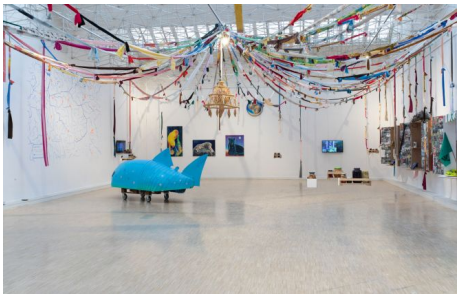

Figure 13. Exhibition view *Magical Engagement*, Arsenał Gallery, 2020, Poznań, photo by Anastasia Jęchorek, courtesy of Arsenał Gallery.

At this point, we must ask about the meaning of such practices, their strength, and their real impact on the surrounding reality. In 2024, the magazine *Szum* published the article "Od megakryzysu do hiperawangardy: zygzaki heksizmu" (*From Megacrisis to Hyper-Avant-Garde: The Zigzags of Hexism)* by the Polish philosopher and artist Tomasz Kozak.[74] The text initiated a discussion about contemporary uses of the witch figure in art and the humanities through the eponymous category of hexism. Yet, as Agata Czarnacka observes, one can hardly discern in Kozak's text what hexism actually entails: beyond presenting hexism as the sum of the practices performed by selected women such as artists, curators, or directors, Kozak makes no attempt to problematize it more precisely.[75]

Kozak accuses women practicing hexism of "attributing agency to activities such as knitting, care work, or a pinch of angry Sunday spells instead of engaging in a fierce struggle for systemic power at the macro level. The phraseology of love, circulated as a substitute for politics, an opiate for women, plays an important role here."[76] In this way, Kozak suggests that many contemporary artistic projects invoking the rhetoric of magic, sisterhood, community, and the witch figure lapse into "hyper-politics" – aesthetically interesting and intense, yet devoid of real agency.

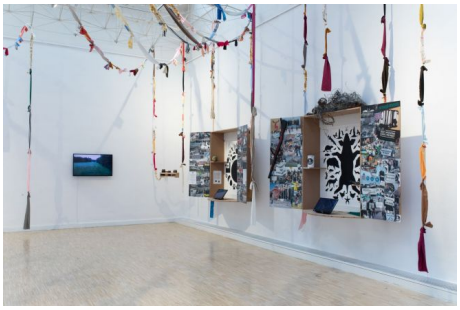

Figure 14. Exhibition view *Magical Engagement*, Arsenał Gallery, 2020, Poznań, photo by Anastasia Jęchorek, courtesy of Arsenał Gallery.

Agata Czarnacka and Helena Łomnicka polemicize with Kozak. Łomnicka notes that Kozak relies on excessive simplification of the phenomenon he criticizes, an over-idealization of rationality, and the marginalization or negation of care practices, women's knowledge, and folk practices, among other things. His analysis, Łomnicka argues, thus participates in the logic of symbolic and economic violence directed against women.[77]

Although Kozak's position seems polemical and generalizing, it provides an important pretext for reflection on the witch figure's status in contemporary culture and art. We may ask whether contemporary artistic practices, including the exhibitions discussed here, truly destabilize or undermine the patriarchal order, or whether they remain part of its rebellious yet controlled circulation. Do they perhaps reproduce the witch as an inspired romantic rather than an active, destructive rebel? Given the growing popularity of the witch figure and associated practices, might we witness a phenomenon of witchwashing?[78] Within this framework, witchcraft becomes a certain aesthetic or practice that turns the witch into a fashionable symbol of female power and rebellion, stripped of the historical and political context of violence against women.

As Kozak shows, any such practice of resistance today faces the threat of absorption by the logic of the market and institutions, and thus may become a desirable form of expression rather than enacting real critique and change. To avoid this mode of thinking, let us view the exhibitions analyzed here not only as narratives of female strength and harm, but also as symptoms of contemporary social tensions and uncertainties. Such a perspective allows for a critical assessment of the risk of simplifying the witch figure and transforming her into a fashionable symbol devoid of historical context. Notably, contemporary interest in witches links to experiences of anxiety caused by various factors: the pandemic, war, and the climate crisis. Therefore, we may read the witch figure as a symbol of a person functioning in times of uncertainty and constant threat.

For the abovementioned curators, magic, care, and sisterhood become strategies of survival – a gesture of breaking away from patriarchal structures. The witch figure emerging from these curatorial practices remains suspended

between emancipation and melancholy, which in this context signifies an awareness of the limitations, dangers, and difficulties accompanying women's actions. The witch embodies a tension between the need for autonomy and emancipation and the necessity of survival and security in a world full of anxiety. Through these contradictions, she becomes an agentive figure, particularly resonant for a younger generation of women, demonstrating that action can coexist with reflection and caution. The contemporary witch unites the need to act with a longing for meaning: care for others becomes a form of resistance, and practices associated with magic serve as an expression of politics in the sense of desired social change. Thus, the popularity of the witch figure represents an attempt to find a language and form for expressing women's experience in times of instability and threat, showing how the past, reflection, and the present can converge in action. The witch's power overlooked by Kozak reveals itself precisely in these contradictions and constitutes the starting point for attaining the necessary self-awareness to transform the surrounding world.

The Witch's Knowledge: Voices from the Underworld

As stated above, a certain degree of self-awareness proves crucial for acting in the abovementioned way. This concerns both the knowledge of oneself and an awareness of one's relationship with the world in its physical and symbolic dimensions. The latter includes knowledge of what has remained repressed and concealed, hidden deep within the "folds of structured knowledge."[79] Precisely through this form of activity grounded in the acceptance of oneself and of what surrounds and inhabits humanity, we can speak of magic in a metaphorical sense, understood as a transformative experience that opens new possibilities for action. Magic thus becomes akin to a primal

instinct: a will and determination to survive in a world that appears frightening, alien, and dangerous, although it once seemed familiar and safe. Unsurprisingly, curators' projects often invoke the "excluded among the excluded":[80] women, girls, elderly women, animals, plants, non-heteronormative individuals, and all kinds of Others. For them, faith in a better world may remain the only hope within a patriarchal reality, which feels inaccessible and hostile. Imagination, intuition, and belief – not "the sage's glass and eye," as Adam Mickiewicz put it – remain the only agents of change.

"*Wiedźmy* is an exhibition about intuition, premonitions, energies, personal quests, and experiences,"[81] writes Groszek. This is precisely the re-enchantment of the world described by Federici: a reclaiming of bonds with nature, with other beings, and with their forgotten knowledge. "Witches and witchers are those who know,"[82] Groszek adds. Yet this wisdom differs radically from the accepted and institutionalized knowledge, as it often draws on premonition and memory, eluding rational frameworks of understanding. Today, we can hardly say much about its sources or even its form. The witch's knowledge remains a deeply hidden secret – the power to realize desires and to summon forces concealed in the recesses of the human mind. But how does one reach these forces? How does one uncover what Maria Janion describes as "noises [and] clusters,"[83]

Figure 15. Performance by Angelika Puff during her solo show, *Blood of the Roots*, Jak zapomnieć Gallery, 2025, photo by Paweł Sobczak, courtesy of the Jak zapomnieć gallery

fragments of a larger whole that seems impossible to reconstruct?

"Learning about plants and fungi, I have a deep sense that I am simply recalling them, that they have always been with me, and that my roots are in the earth,"[84] suggests Buczkowska, one of the artists featured in *Wiedźmy*. Yet Buczkowska does not explain what those roots reach or what life-giving source they connect with. This remains in the realm of imagination. However, Puff descends into this subterranean world. *Krew korzeni*, curated by Oczkowska, becomes Puff's private katabasis, which we can only accompany and observe. In the fairy tale accompanying the exhibition, Oczkowska writes:

> Roots surrounded her on all sides. She knew she was here because of them. She remembered the knowledge of plants and the special properties of their roots – passed from mouth to mouth, from generation to generation. Knowledge appropriated and repressed, once held primarily by women.[85]

The descent into the underworld aims to find the root of the beet (*Beta vulgaris*) and angelica (*Angelica archangelica*). These plants, or rather their life-giving parts hidden underground, serve to help the heroine "restore what was taken from her."[86] The roots that appear in the narrative and those present in the exhibition as blood-red beet bulbs pressed into juice become symbolic "fragmented pieces of herself."[87] The journey she undertakes seems dreamlike and fairy-tale in tone, yet not solitary: when wandering in darkness, one may "meet others of us."[88]

During the opening, Puff drank freshly pressed beet juice and shared it with the visitors (Figure 15), performing a strange ritual. On one level, she evoked symbolic cannibalism: beside their extraordinary properties, the roots she consumed represented the mutilated and forgotten women of the past. On another level, the performance became an act of awareness and purification.

By drinking the symbolic blood of these women, the heroine absorbed their knowledge into her own body. Thus, the witch's knowledge also entails the knowledge of the dead, of our historical roots, and of the body, the latter born of sensory experience.

In shaping her interpretation of Puff's art, Oczkowska draws on Margaret Murdock's *The Heroine's Journey*,[89] which reinterprets Joseph Campbell's monomyth[90] from a female perspective. Its elements include the journey into the underworld: the heroine leaves a safe space to confront danger and, above all, herself. The underground realm Puff enters resembles Jung's "shadow" – the repressed part of the psyche. Paradoxically, although this "shadow" remains unwanted, we cannot live without it. As Jung writes, "to become conscious of it involves recognizing the dark aspects of the personality as present and real. This act is the essential condition for any kind of self-knowledge."[91] In this symbolic underworld, filled with fragments of witches' bodies, transformation can occur. Rather than losing oneself in darkness, this change constitutes a "movement towards revelation."[92] The latter involves accepting oneself and recognizing the past. Upon returning to the surface, "we will be entirely different."[93]

Figure 16. Luka Woźniczko, detail from a work presented at the *Sabat* exhibition, Podbrzezie Gallery, 2021, photo by Michał Maliński, courtesy of the curators.

The dark and strange realm of the dead also features other guiding figures. Echoes of this realm appeared in *Sabat*, in Luka Woźniczko's paintings (Figure 16). Behind dancing skeletons stand powerful beings, which Oczkowska names Hecate and Persephone.[94] The first represents the Greek Titaness of magic, crossroads, necromancy, spells, and spirits, and the mistress of phantoms. The second rules the underworld and guards the souls

of the dead. Still, these are not the only names of these ancient beings. The curators of *Odczarować czarownice* mention Baba Yaga,[95] a ghastly old crone who most likely represents a trace of a Slavic initiation deity.[96] In turn, the curators of *Magical Engagement* invoke many other names: "the Sumerian Uttu, Na'ashjé'ii Asdzáá among the Navajo, the Greek Arachne, and in Hopi mythology, Kokyangwuti – a woman outside of time, representing all that is good, invoked in moments when one needs advice and care, also called Spider Grandmother."[97]

According to Ovid, the spider figure symbolizes female creative power and the ability to weave stories. At *Magical Engagement*, it appeared in the form of a folk spider crafted by Jadwiga Anioł. The large, colorful, and lightweight figure enveloped the exhibition space with its tendrils (Figure 17). A similar spider-like being by Małgorzata Markiewicz appeared at the exhibition *Wiedźmy* (Figure 18). The thin yet strong thread emerging from its body also run through the exhibition *Sabat*, whether in the form of Marta Niedbał's monstrous textile or as the dark thread connecting all the works, woven into the exhibition space by Małgorzata Malwina Niespodziewana. This delicate thread also constitutes a specific boundary. True, it allows closeness and enables connections between different strands, yet when necessary, it also offers the possibility of escape and the preservation of distance.

Figure 17. Exhibition view *Magical Engagement*, Arsenał Gallery, 2020, Poznań, photo by Paweł Błęcki, courtesy of Arsenał Gallery.

This spider-like liminality, this in-between position, resonates with the witch figure described by the American ecofeminist Starhawk. In her opinion, the word "hag," associated with witches, once meant "the wise woman who sat on the hedge

– the boundary between the village and the wild, the human world and the spirit world."[98] Therefore, the hag represents a liminal figure: human and nonhuman, present and invisible, real and imagined. For the witch today has many faces. We identify the witch with "transgression on every level – physical, psychological, medical, political, religious, and economic,"[99] write the curators of *Sabat*, adding that "she is wisdom, but not the kind that we can associate with the rationality of ancient philosophers,"[100] and that "she is a very handy figure when one wishes to speak about metaphysics and nature."[101]

Conclusion

What figure of the witch emerges from these curatorial narratives? Can we identify common points within this multilayered story? Or is it easier to indicate the differences? Indeed, we could hardly confine this curatorial witch within rigid frameworks of unequivocal conclusions. Even her very appearance on the exhibition ground poses considerable challenges. Violence against women and protests connected with the tightening of abortion law, although frequently invoked, do not represent experiences that all of my interlocutors share. Although these themes did appear in my conversations with the curators, they did not always constitute the source of their motivations for organizing exhibitions about witches.

The analysis of the selected exhibitions reveals the witch figure as highly diverse yet symbolically coherent. All these curatorial projects recognize the witch as a figure of violence directed against women, and as a figure of exclusion, both historical and contemporary. For the curators, the witch becomes a symbol of a woman placed outside the boundaries of social order and marked by otherness. Her knowledge has resisted domestication and lacks wide acceptance by society. Simultaneously, the witch represents a figure of resistance that shapes her own language

of expression and defies dominant narratives.

Nearly all of the exhibitions emphasized the informal character of the witch's knowledge: embodied, ritual, and sensory. Work with plants, numerous references to herbalism, magical elixirs, and ritual objects featured in virtually all of the exhibitions discussed here. Their presence underscored the witch's connection to forms of knowledge not legitimized by scientific institutions yet firmly rooted in folk and intuitive experience. Thus, the witch figure enables curators – and artists – to reclaim the forms of knowledge that have been pushed to the margins or entirely repressed.

Figure 18. Exhibition view *Witches*, Inne Towarzystwo, 2023, photo by Bartosz Kokosiński, courtesy of Inne Towarzystwo.

The differences between the selected curatorial projects concern primarily the dominant emphases chosen for the narratives and the aesthetics of the exhibitions themselves. Some, such as *Odczarować czarownice. Wiedźmy, wieszczki, zielarki*, had a more documentary character, focusing on restoring memory and historical justice. Others, such as *Sabat*, *Wiedźmy*, *Krew korzeni*, and *I Will Put My Soul into the Magic Storm*, adopted a more experimental, often highly sensual and metaphorical form, concentrating on corporeality and sensory effects. In turn, projects such as *Magical Engagement* foregrounded the witch figure's potential as a tool of contemporary activism, social self-organization, and mutuality.

However, all of these curatorial practices presented the witch as a figure operating on the threshold: between nature and culture, the past and the present, or fantasy and reality. This very liminality makes the witch such an attractive and capacious figure for art curators. The exhibitions discussed in this article reinterpreted the history of witches and constructed new models of female community and spirituality. In this way,

they highlighted a contemporary need to reclaim space for nonhierarchical, empathetic, and affective forms of knowledge and activity. Thus, the witch that appeared at those exhibitions was simultaneously a rebel, herbalist, social activist, and guide.

Further research could study the witch figure in curatorial projects from an artistic perspective, aiming to identify the form the witch assumes within artistic practices themselves. One could also deepen this inquiry by analyzing the impact of these artistic and curatorial narratives on audiences, indicating how to treat the witch figure as a real tool of social transformation. Comparative analyses across other cultural media such as film, literature, theatre, or music also seem justified. It is equally important to reflect on the witch figure's instrumentalization which progresses in contemporary culture and art. Another thread that interests me concerns the role of art institutions as magical spaces, both ritual and political. As a construct created by curators, the witch announces new orders of knowledge and community. In this sense, she narrates the past and actively participates in the creation of the future.

Writing about the future, I would like to note one issue that seems particularly worthy of consideration in the time to come: the methodology of researching witch figures and images in contemporary art and culture. What tools should we use for this endeavor? Which theoretical framework should guide us in examining this contemporary fascination and historical phenomenon? Stories about witches naturally remain profoundly multilayered, incorporating narratives connected to human existence: fear, violence, hope, death, and exclusion, but also contact with magic and mystery. Contemporary research on witches in both present and historical dimensions proceeds at the intersection of feminism, decolonial studies, post-Marxism, queer studies, and posthumanism. However, it clearly shifts emphasis from the history of witches as a story of women's repression

toward a history of knowledge, relation, and spirituality.

Thus, we cannot view witches solely as victims of patriarchy or anti-capitalist activists; we also need to see them as figures proposing alternative modes of existence in the world. Therefore, witch studies should include analysis of violence, but without detaching themselves from practices connected with imagination, magic, or spirituality, for only then can we grasp the complexity inherent in the phenomenon of witches and the fascination they evoke. For example, one can hardly situate historical witch trials solely within the context of emerging capitalism, without considering the broader context of beliefs, superstitions, and magical thinking of the time. We see this today as well, since many communities perceive magical practices as possessing a spiritual dimension that resists translation into economic categories.

Contemporary feminist narratives of strong, emancipated, exceptional women who rejected the conventions of their time prove equally difficult to impose on witches. We know that for many of those women, our present-day postulates and narratives would have seemed entirely incomprehensible. We cannot view witches exclusively as figures of female emancipation, because their stories also remind us of fear, uncertainty, and harm. At the same time, similarly to queer and postcolonial perspectives, this perspective requires great vigilance toward its own limitations. Specifically, it risks romanticizing the witch as a figure of otherness without sufficient grounding in historical, cultural, and local realities, thus leading to anachronism. Consequently, when studying witches today, we should ask ourselves whose narratives and problems we project onto the witch figure.

Therefore, contemporary witch studies should be both critical and empathetic: capable of recognizing violence and exclusion, yet also open to what escapes materialist categories – the realm of imagination.

1 Marta Kudelska, "O zwrocie romantycznym. Sztuka współczesna a tradycja romantyczna," *Elementy. Sztuka i design* 2 (2020): 46–65.

2 Mark Fisher, *The Weird and the Eerie,* (Repeater, 2017).

3 Bohdan Baranowski, *Procesy czarownic w Polsce w XVII i XVIII wieku* (Wydawnictwo Replika, 2023); Bohdan Baranowski, *Pożegnanie z diabłem i czarownic*ą (Wydawnictwo Replika, 2020).

4 Jacek Wijaczka, *Czarownicom żyć nie odpuścisz. Procesy o czary w Polsce w XVII i XVIII wieku* (Wydawnictwo Replika, 2022).

5 Kateryna Dysa, *Historia z wiedźmami. Procesy o czary w ukraińskich województwach Rzeczypospolitej XVII i XVIII wieku,* trans. A. Lazar, K. Kotyńska (Wydawnictwo Warsztat Kultury, 2024).

6 Michał Ślubowski, *Czarownice, mieszczki, pokutnice* (Wydawnictwo Marpress, 2020).

7 Magdalena Kowalska-Cichy, *Magia i procesy o czary w staropolskim Lublinie* (Wydawnictwo Episteme, 2019).

8 Adam Anczyk (ed.), *Czarownice. Studia z kulturowej historii fenomenu* (Wydawnictwo Sacrum, 2017).

9 Adam Anczyk (ed.), *Czarownice, czarownicy, czary. Obrazy kulturowe, literackie, artystyczne* (Wydawnictwo Naukowe Akademii Ignatianum, 2020).

10 Joanna Gacek, "Obrazując czarownice – niedocenione źródło w badaniach początków kształtowania się stereotypu czarownicy," *Ogrody Nauk i Sztuk* 2 (2012): 297–308.

11 "Czarownica," *Słownik języka polskiego PWN*, accessed July 21, 2025, https://sjp.pwn.pl/sjp/czarownica;2450247.html.

12 "Urok," *Słownik języka polskiego PWN*, accessed July 21, 2025, https://sjp.pwn.pl/slowniki/urok.html.

13 "Magia," *Słownik języka polskiego PWN*, accessed July 21 2025, https://sjp.pwn.pl/sjp/magia;2480459.html.

14 Academic studies on witches, magic, and witchcraft in a broad sense.

15 Dysa, *Historia z wiedźmami*, 195.

16 Michael Ostling, *Between the Devil and the Host: Imagining Witchcraft in Early Modern Poland (*Oxford University Press, 2011).

17 Tomasz Raczkowski, "Peryferyjne (de)konstrukcje. Czarownice i ich potencjał demaskatorski z perspektywy krytycznych ujęć filmowych," *Czas kultury* 2 (2021): 28.

18 Raczkowski, "Peryferyjne (de)konstrukcje," 27.

19 Agnieszka Brzezińska, *Córki Wawelu. Opowieść o Jagiellońskich królewnach* (Wydawnictwo Literackie, 2017), 566.

20 Magdalena Bednarek, *Baśni przeobrażone. Transformacje bajki i baśni w polskiej epice po 1989 roku* (Wydawnictwo Naukowe UAM, 2020), 211.

21 My conversation with Zofia Krawiec conducted on March 25, 2025. Recording and transcript remain in my archive.

22 Magdalena Toboła-Feliks, "Jędze, gadaczki, szkodnice… Jak budowano narracje kreujące wizerunek czarownicy," in: *Ludowa historia kobiet*, ed. P. Wielgosz (Wydawnictwo RM, 2023), 125–46.

23 My conversation with Magdalena Toboła-Feliks and Agnieszka Fedorów-Skupień. Recording and transcript remain in my archive.

24 Sara Ahmed, "The Performativity of Disgust." In *The Cultural Politics of Emotion* (Edinburgh University Press, 2014): 82–100.

25 Toboła-Feliks, "Jędze, gadaczki, szkodnice," 129.

26 Mikhail Bulgakov, *The Master and Margarita,* trans. R. Pevear, L. Volokhonsky (Penguin Books, 2016), 270.

27 Silvia Federici, *Caliban and the Witch* (Penguin, 2021).

28 Mona Chollet, *In Defence of Witches* (Macmillan, 2024).

29 Silvia Federici, *Beyond the Periphery of the Skin: Rethinking, Remaking and Reclaiming the Body in Contemporary Capitalism* (PM Press, 2020), 53.

30 Magdalena Toboła-Feliks, Agnieszka Fedorów-Skupień, "Odczarować czarownice. Wiedźmy, wieszczki, zielarki," information on the website of Muzeum Historii Katowic, https://www.mhk.katowice.pl/index.php/dla-zwiedzajacych/wystawy-czasowe/881-odczarowac-czarownice, accessed April 21, 2025.

31 Katarzyna Szopa, "Zaklęta wyobraźnia. Czarownice polskiej poezji kobiet lat 60., 70. i 80 .," *Czas Kultury* 2 (2021): 15.

32 See e.g. Roman Tokarczyk, "Normatywne ujęcia antyprokreacji," *Roczniki Socjologii Rodziny* 12 (2000): 213–236; Kinga Michalska, "Łąki nam nie odbiorą. O aborcji ziołowej," *Krytyka Polityczna*, October 12, 2016, https:// krytykapolityczna.pl/kraj/laki-nam-nie-odbiora, accessed April 23, 2025.

33 These included, for instance, "We are the granddaughters of witches you failed to burn," "You will not burn these witches," "So, when will you start burning witches?" and "I can be a witch for you, but you are the ones pushing yourself onto the stake."

34 Available at Human Right Watch, September 16, 2023, https://www.hrw.org/pl/news/2023/09/14/poland-abortion-witch-hunt-targets-women-doctors, accessed April 23, 2025.

35 See Roman Korona (@Roman_Korona), https://x.com/Roman_Korona/status/1854244306145497179, X (formerly Twitter), May 24, 2025; "Poseł Grzegorz Braun: Rząd wykorzystuje sabaty czarownic do przykrywania istotnych problemów," *Podkarpacie24,* May 24, 2025, https://podkarpacie24.pl/posel-grzegorz-braun-rzad-wykorzystuje-sabaty-czarownic-do-przykrywania-istotnych-problemow-4025.

36 My conversation with Lidia Krawczyk and Magdalena Lazar. Recording and transcript remain in my archive.

37 Zofia Krawiec, "W czarodziejską burzę włożę własną duszę w BWA Warszawa," *Magazyn Szum*, July 15, 2020, https://magazynszum.pl/w-czarodziejska-burze-wloze-wlasna-dusze-w-bwa-warszawa, accessed April 23, 2025.

38 Zofia Krawiec, "W czarodziejską burzę włożę własną duszę," curator's text, BWA Warszawa, https://bwawarszawa.pl/pl/w-czarodziejska-burze-wloze-wlasna-dusze, accessed April 23, 2025.

39 Zofia Krawiec, Kaja Głuchowska, "Czy powinna spłonąć na stosie? Nowe spojrzenie Zofii Krawiec na ludobójstwo czarownic," *Ofeminin*, July 22, 2020, https://www.ofeminin.pl/swiat-kobiet/to-dla-nas-wazne/nowe-spojrzenie-zofii-krawiec-na-ludobojstwo-czarownic/mqkytvy, accessed April 23, 2025.

40 I thank Agnieszka Brzeżańska for clarifying this to me.

41 My conversation with Magdalena Toboła-Feliks and Agnieszka Fedorów-Skupień.

42 Ibidem.

43 Agata Groszek, "O Wiedźmach w Innym Towarzystwie," *Magazyn Szum*, February 9, 2024, https://magazynszum.pl/o-wiedzmach-w-innym-towarzystwie, accessed April 24, 2025.

44 Barbara and Adam Podgórscy, "Mandragora," *Wielka księga demonów polskich. Leksykon i antologia demonologii ludowej* (Wydawnictwo KOS, 2018), 288.

45 Katarzyna Ceklarz, Urszula Janicka-Krzywda, "Mandragora," *Góralskie czary. Leksykon magii Podtatarza i Beskidów Zachodnich* (Wydawnictwo Tatrzański Park Narodowy, 2024), 138.

46 Description of Natalia Biało's work "Σίλφιον" in the exhibition *Magical engagement*, exhibition leaflet.

47 Paweł Błęcki, Kinga Mistrzak, Zofia Nierodzińska, Anna Siekiera, "Magiczne zaangażowanie," curatorial text for the exhibition, Galeria Arsenał w Poznaniu, https://arsenal.art.pl/exhibition/magiczne-zaangazowanie, accessed April 24, 2025.

48 Reference to Govi's painting *The Witches' Kitchen*, from 1797–1978.

49 My conversation with Magdalena Toboła-Feliks and Agnieszka Fedorów-Skupień.

50 Hélène Cixous, "Śmiech Meduzy," trans. A. Nasiłowska, *Teksty Drugie: teoria literatury, krytyka interpretacja* 4/5/6(22/23/24) (1999): 149.

51 I refer to Stanisław Grochowiak's poem "Nasza wiedźma" from *Menuet z pogrzebaczem* (1958).

52 Brian P. Levack, *The Witch Hunt in Early Modern Europe* (Pearson Education Limited, 2006), 19.

53 Margaret Murray, *The Witch-Cult in Western Europe*, (Createspace Independent Publishing Platform, 2018).

54 Zofia Krawiec, "Szukam czegoś ponad codziennością," interview by Basia Czyżewska, *Vogue*, July 25, 2020, https://www.vogue.pl/a/zofia-krawiec-szukam-czegos-ponad-codziennoscia, accessed April 25, 2025.

55 Zofia Krawiec, "I ty, chłopaku, możesz zostać czarownicą," interview by Paulina Januszewska, *Krytyka Polityczna*, November 18, 2023, https://krytykapolityczna.pl/kultura/czytaj-dalej/i-ty-chlopaku-mozesz-zostac-czarownica, accessed April 25, 2025.

56 Groszek, "O Wiedźmach w Innym Towarzystwie."

57 My conversation with Lidia Krawczyk and Magdalena Lazar.

58 My conversation with Anna Siekiera. Recording and transcript remain in my archive.

59 My conversation with Magdalena Toboła-Feliks and Agnieszka Fedorów-Skupień.

60 Ibidem.

61 My conversation with Katarzyna Oczkowska. Recording and transcript remain in my archive.

62 Maria Libiszowska-Żółtkowska, Janusz Mariański, *Leksykon socjologii religii* (Wydawnictwo Verbinum, 2004), 353.

63 Patricia MacCormack, *The Ahuman Manifesto: Activism for the End of the Anthropocene*, e-book edition (Bloomsbury, 2020).

64 Krawiec, "Szukam czegoś ponad codziennością."

65 Ibidem.

66 My conversation with Anna Siekiera.

67 My conversation with Zofia nierodzińska. Recording and transcript remain in my archive.

68 Szopa, *Zaklęta wyobraźnia*, 11.

69 André Rouillé, *Fotografia. Między dokumentem a sztuką współczesną*, trans. O. Hedemann (Wydawnictwo Universitas, 2007), 341–42.

70 Natalia Sielewicz, "Od Burning Mana po magic mema. Techno-pogaństwo w czasach wojen kulturowych," *Magazyn Szum*, January 28, 2021, https://magazynszum.pl/od-burning-mana-po-magic-mema-techno-poganstwo-w-czasach-wojen-kulturowych, accessed May 1, 2025.

71 Silvia Federici, *Re-enchanting the World* (PM Press, 2019):188.

72 Szopa, *Zaklęta wyobraźnia*, 12.

73 Sarah Jaffe, "All Organizing Is Magic," *Verso Books*, November 25, 2019, https://www.versobooks.com/blogs/news/4465-all-organizing-is-magic?srsltid=AfmBOopX8r0RqUcODo8zuXgPh-ov8FiV1trV8gF9SMoWfeWXVhCW9xwE, accessed May 5, 2025.

74 Tomasz Kozak, "Od megakryzysu do hiperawangardy: zygzaki heksizmu," *Magazyn Szum* , April 26, 2024, https://magazynszum.pl/od-megakryzysu-do-hiperawangardy-3-zygzaki-heksizmu, accessed November 9, 2025.

75 Agata Czarnacka, "Te straszne czarownice. Feministyczna tarocistka patrzy na 'Zygzaki heksizmu' Tomasza Kozaka," *Magazyn Szum*, May 3, 2024, https://magazynszum.pl/te-straszne-czarownice-feministyczna-tarocistka-patrzy-na-zygzaki-heksizmu-tomasza-kozaka, accessed November 9, 2025.

76 Kozak, "Od megakryzysu do hiperawangardy: zygzaki heksizmu."

77 Helena Łomnicka, "Magia w służbie neomarksizmu. Na marginesie 'Zygzaków heksizmu' Tomasza Kozaka," *Magazyn Szum*, June 7, 2024, https://magazynszum.pl/magia-w-sluzbie-neomarksizmu-na-marginesie-zygzakow-heksizmu-tomasza-kozaka, accessed November 9, 2025.

78 The concept emerged during the classes I conducted in 2024, titled "Forgotten Art History," devoted, among other topics, to the functioning of the witch motif in contemporary art and mass culture. The course forms part of the Contemporary Culture Laboratories program at the Institute of Culture of the Jagiellonian University in Krakow.

79 Irit Rogoff, "From Criticism to Critique to Criticality," *Transversal*, January 2003, https://transversal.at/transversal/0806/rogoff1/en, accessed May 5, 2025.

80 Łukasz Kozak, *Upiór. Historia naturalna* (Fundacja Evviva L'Arte, 2020), 18.

81 Groszek, "O Wiedźmach w Innym Towarzystwie."

82 Ibidem.

83 Maria Janion, *Projekt krytyki fantazmatycznej* (Wydawnictwo Pen, 1991), 5.

84 Groszek, "O Wiedźmach w Innym Towarzystwie."

85 Katarzyna Oczkowska, "Krew korzeni," curatorial text from a leaflet, in my archive.

86 Oczkowska, "Krew korzeni."

87 Ibidem.

88 Ibidem.

89 Margaret Murdock, *The Heroines Journey,* (Shambhala, 2020).

90 Joseph Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces,* (Ingram Publisher Services, 2008).

91 Carl Gustaw Jung, *Aion: Researches into the Phenomenology of the Self* (Princeton University Press, 1968), 8.

92 Robert Macfarlane, *Underland*, (Penguin, 2019), 21.

93 Oczkowska, "Krew korzeni."

94 Ibidem.

95 Toboła-Feliks, Fedorów-Skupień, "Odczarować czarownice."

96 Andrzej Kępiński, *Encyklopedia mitologii ludów indoeuropejskich* (Wydawnictwo Iskry, 2001), 63.

97 Błęcki, Mistrzak, nierodzińska, Siekiera, "Magiczne zaangażowanie."

98 Starhawk, *The Spiral Dance* (Harper & Row, 1979), 126.

99 Lidia Krawczyk, Magdalena Lazar, "Sabat," curatorial text, in my archive.

100 Krawczyk, Lazar, "Sabat."

101 Ibidem

Bibliography

Ahmed, Sara. "The Performativity of Disgust." In The Cultural Politics of Emotion. Edinburgh University Press, 2014, 82–100.

Anczyk, Adam, ed. Czarownice. Studia z kulturowej interpretacji fenomenu. Katowice: Wydawnictwo Sacrum, 2017.

Anczyk, Adam, ed. Czarownice, czarownicy, czary. Obrazy kulturowe, literackie, artystyczne. Kraków: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Akademii Ignatianum, 2020.

Baranowski, Bogdan. Pożegnanie z diabłem i czarownicą. Wydawnictwo Replika, Poznań 2020.

_____.Procesy czarownic w Polsce w XVII i XVIII wieku. Wydawnictwo Replika, Poznań 2023.

Bednarek, Magdalena. Baśni przeobrażone. Transformacje bajki i baśni w polskiej epice po 1989 roku. Wydawnictwo Naukowe UAM, Poznań 2020.

Biało, Natalia, Description of her work "Σίλφιον" in the exhibition Magical engagement, exhibition leaflet.

Błęcki, Paweł, Kinga Mistrzak, Zofia Nierodzińska, i Anna Siekiera. Magiczne zaangażowanie. Curatorial text. Galeria Arsenał w Poznaniu. https://arsenal.art.pl/exhibition/magiczne-zaangazowanie/.

Bulgakov, Mikhail, The Master and Margarita. Translated by R. Pevear, L. Volokhonsky. Penguin Books, 2016

Brzezińska, Agnieszka. Córki Wawelu. Opowieść o Jagiellońskich królewnach. Kraków: Wydawnictwo Literackie, 2017.

Campbell, Joseph. The Hero with a Thousand Faces, Ingram Publisher Services, 2008.

Ceklarz, Katarzyna, Janicka-Krzywda Urszula. Hasło Mandragora, W: Góralskie czary. Leksykon magii Podtatarza i Beskidów Zachodnich,

Zakopane: Wydawnictwo Tatrzański Park Narodowy, 2024.

Chollet, Mona. In Defence of Witches: Why Women Are Still on Trial, Translated by Sophie R. Lewis. Macmillan, 2024.

Cixous, Hélène. "The Laugh of the Medusa," Translated by K. Cohen and P. Cohen. Signs Vol. 1, No. 4 (Summer, 1976): 875-893.

Czarnacka, Agata. Te straszne czarownice. Feministyczna tarocistka patrzy na „Zygzaki heksizmu" Tomasza Kozaka, „Magazyn Szum", 3 maja 2024. https://magazynszum.pl/te-straszne-czarownice- feministyczna-tarocistka-patrzy-na-zygzaki-heksizmu-tomasza-kozaka/,

„Czarownica." Słownik języka polskiego PWN. https://sjp.pwn.pl/sjp/czarownica;2450247.html.

Dysa, Kateryna. Historia z wiedźmami. Procesy o czary w ukraińskich województwach Rzeczypospolitej XVII i XVIII wieku. Translated by Anna Lazar, K. Kotyńska. Wydawnictwo Warsztat Kultury, Lublin 2024.

Federici, Silvia. Beyond the Periphery of the Skin: Rethinking, Remaking and Reclaiming the Body in Contemporary Capitalism. PM Press, 2020

_____.Caliban and the Witch. Penguin, 2021

_____.Re-enchanting the World. PM Press, 2019

Fisher, Mark, The Weird and the Eerie. Repeater, 2017

Gacek Joanna, Obrazując czarownice - niedocenione źródło w badaniach początków kształtowania się stereotypu czarownicy, „Ogrody Nauk i Sztuk" 2012, nr. 2: s. 297-308.

Groszek, Agata. O Wiedźmach w Innym Towarzystwie. „Magazyn Szum", 9 February 2024. https://magazynszum.pl/o-wiedzmach-w-innym-towarzystwie/.

Human Rights Watch. Poland: Abortion Witch Hunt Targets Women, Doctors. 16 September 2023. https://www.hrw.org/pl/news/2023/09/14/poland-abortion-witch-hunt-targets-women-doctors

.

Jaffe, Sarah. All Organizing Is Magic. „Verso Books", 25 listopada 2019. https://www.versobooks.com/blogs/news/4465-all-organizing-is-magic.

Janion, Maria. Projekt krytyki fantazmatycznej. Wydawnictwo Pen, Warszawa 1991.

Jung, Carl Gustaw. Aion: Researches into the Phenomenology of the Self. Translated by R.F.C. Hull. Princeton University Press, 1968

Kępiński, Andrzej. Encyklopedia mitologii ludów indoeuropejskich. Wydawnictwo Iskry, Warszawa 2001.

Kochan, Anna. "Wywołanie chorób przez czarownice – poglądy uczestnika procesów o czary (przypadek czarownicy powołanej)." Tematy i Konteksty 2021, no 11(16): 204–213.

Korona, Roman (@Roman_Korona), X, https://x.com/Roman_Korona/status/1854244306145497179".

Kowalska-Cichy, Magdalena. Magia i procesy o czary w staropolskim Lublinie. Wydawnictwo Episteme, Lublin 2019.

Kozak, Łukasz. Upiór. Translated by Eliza Rose. Fundacja Evviva L'Arte, Warsaw 2020.

Kozak, Tomasz. Od megakryzysu do hiperawangardy: zygzaki heksizmu, „Magazyn Szum", 26 kwietnia 2024. https://magazynszum.pl/od-megakryzysu-do-hiperawangardy-3-zygzaki-heksizmu/

Krawiec, Zofia. Szepczące w ciemnościach. Wydawnictwo Znak Horyzont, Kraków 2023.

_____. "I ty, chłopaku, możesz zostać czarownicą." Rozm. Paulina Januszewska. Krytyka Polityczna, 18 November 2023. https://krytykapolityczna.pl/kultura/czytaj-dalej/i-ty-chlopaku-mozesz-zostac-czarownica/.

_____. "Szukam czegoś ponad codziennością." Rozm. Basia Czyżewska. Vogue, 25 July 2020. https://www.vogue.pl/a/zofia-krawiec-szukam-czegos-ponad-codziennoscia

.

_____. "W czarodziejską burzę włożę własną duszę w BWA Warszawa ," Magazyn Szum, 15 July 2020. https://magazynszum.pl/w-czarodziejska-burze-wloze-wlasna-dusze-w-bwa-warszawa/.

_____. W czarodziejską burzę włożę własną duszę. Curatorial text BWA Warszawa, https://bwawarszawa.pl/pl/w-czarodziejska-burze-wloze-wlasna-dusze/

_____. Kaja Głuchowska. "Czy powinna spłonąć na stosie? Nowe spojrzenie Zofii Krawiec na ludobójstwo czarownic" Ofemin, 22 July 2020. https://www.ofeminin.pl/swiat-kobiet/to-dla-nas-wazne/nowe-spojrzenie-zofii-krawiec-na-ludobojstwo-czarownic/mqkytvy.

Krawczyk, Lidia, Magdalena Lazar. Sabat. Curatorial text.

Kudelska, Marta. "O zwrocie romantycznym. Sztuka współczesna a tradycja romantyczna." Elementy. Sztuka i design 2020, no 2: 46–65.

Levack, Brian P. The Witch Hunt in Early Modern Europe. Pearson Education Limited, Harlow 2006.

Ławska, Wioletta, Marta Makara-Studzińska. "Przemoc domowa w pandemii COVID-19: Przegląd aktualnego piśmiennictwa." Perspektywy Kultury 2022, no 42 (3): 535–548.

Łomnicka, Helena. "Magia w służbie neomarksizmu. Na marginesie „zygzaków heksizmu" Tomasza Kozaka." Magazyn Szum, 7 czerwca 2024. https://magazynszum.pl/magia-w-sluzbie-neomarksizmu-na-marginesie-zygzakow-heksizmu-tomasza-kozaka/.

MacCormack, Patricia. The Ahuman Manifesto: Activism for the End of the Anthropocene. E-book edition. Bloomsbury, 2020.

„Magia," Słownik języka polskiego PWN, https://sjp.pwn.pl/sjp/magia;2480459.html

.

Macfarlane, Robert. Robert Macfarlane, Underland. Penguin, 2019

Michalska, Kinga. "Łąki nam nie odbiorą. O aborcji ziołowej." Krytyka Polityczna, 12 października 2016. https://krytykapolityczna.pl/kraj/laki-nam-nie-odbiora/.

Murdock, Margaret. The Heroines Journey. Shambhala, 2020.

Murray, Margaret, The Witch-Cult in Western Europe, Createspace Independent Publishing Platform, 2018.

Oczkowska, Katarzyna. Krew korzeni. Curatorial text.

Ostling, Michael. Between the Devil and the Host: Imagining Witchcraft in Early Modern Poland. Oxford University Press, 2011.

Podgórscy, Barbara i Adam. Mandragora. In Wielka księga demonów polskich. Leksykon i antologia demonologii ludowej, 288. Wydawnictwo KOS, Katowice 2018.

Raczkowski, Tomasz. „Peryferyjne (de)konstrukcje. Czarownice i ich potencjał demaskatorski z perspektywy krytycznych ujęć filmowych.” „Czas Kultury” 2021, no 2: 27-32.

Rogoff, Irit. "From Criticism to Critique to Criticality." Transversal, January 2003. https://transversal.at/transversal/0806/rogoff1/en.

Rouillé, André. Fotografia. Między dokumentem a sztuką współczesną. Translated by. Oskar Hedemann. Wydawnictwo Universitas, Kraków 2007.

Sielewicz, Natalia. "Od Burning Mana po magic mema. Techno-pogaństwo w czasach wojen kulturowych." Magazyn Szum, 28 January 2021. https://magazynszum.pl/od-burning-mana-po-magic-mema-techno-poganstwo-w-czasach-wojen-kulturowych.

Szopa, Katarzyna. "Zaklęta wyobraźnia. Czarownice polskiej poezji kobiet lat 60., 70. i 80..." Czas Kultury 2021, no 2: 11-18.

Tokarczyk, Roman. "Normatywne ujęcia antyprokreacji." Roczniki Socjologii Rodziny

2000, vol. 12: 213–236.

Toboła-Feliks, Magdalena, Jędze, gadaczki, szkodnice...Jak budowano narracje kreujące wizerunek czarownicy, W: Ludowa historia kobiet, Przemysław Wielgosz (ed.), Wydawnictwo RM, Warszawa 2023.

Toboła-Feliks, Magdalena, Agnieszka Fedorów-Skupień. Odczarować czarownice. Wiedźmy, wieszczki, zielarki. Muzeum Historii Katowic. https://www.mhk.katowice.pl/index.php/dla-zwiedzajacych/wystawy-czasowe/881-odczarowac-czarownice.

„Urok," Słownik języka polskiego PWN, https://sjp.pwn.pl/slowniki/urok.html.

Ślubowski, Michał. Czarownice, mieszczki, pokutnice. Wydawnictwo Marpress, Gdańsk 2020.

Starhawk, The Spiral Dance. Harper & Row, 1979.

Wijaczka, Jacek. Czarownicom żyć nie odpuścisz. Procesy o czary w Polsce w XVII i XVIII wieku. Wydawnictwo Replika, Poznań 2022.

Żółtkowska-Libiszowska Maria, Mariański Janusz, Leksykon socjologii religii, Wydawnictwo Verbinum, Warszawa 2004.

Author's conversations, recording and transcript in the author's archive:

Conversation with Lidia Krawczyk and Magdalena Lazar.

Conversation with Zofia Krawiec

Conversation with Zofia nierodzińska.

Conversation with Katarzyna Oczkowska.

Conversation with Anna Siekiera.

Conversation with Magdalena Toboła-Feliks and Agnieszka Fedorów-Skupień.