

Maciej Gąbka

Portfolio 2025

www.maciejgabka.com

Statement

He is an intermedia artist; author of sculptures, objects and photographs. A graduate of the Department of Graphic Art and Visual Communication in the area of Artistic Graphics (2017) and the Department of New Media in the area of Intermedia (2020) of the University of Arts in Poznan. In his artistic practice, he uses various materials, on which he works together with teams of subcontractors using the latest technologies.

In his conceptual practice, Maciej Gąbka investigates the impact of normative systems on the society - the ethical and moral qualification of norms by people. Gąbka concentrates on exploring and understanding the factors that push people to make everyday decisions, judgments, or give them a sense of duty to perform specific actions. He also touches on issues related to the possibility of interpreting the outside world (including the world of things) through norms. Gąbka often approaches this area of his interest by referring to the materiality of objects and patterns present in visual culture.



b. 1993; Lives and works in Warsaw

education:

2020 MFA Intermedia, University of Fine Art in Poznan

2017 MFA Graphic Arts, University of Fine Art in Poznan

prizes and grants:

Ministry of Culture and National Heritage scholarship

Finalist of 15th and 18th edition of Hestia Artistic Journey Competition, Museum of Modern Art in Warsaw

Finalist of 40th Edition of Maria Dokowicz Competition

Finalist of Alicja Kepinska Award (2017; 2020)

Nominated to Esteemed Graduates of Academies of Fine Arts

President of University of Fine Art in Gdansk Prize on X Student Graphic Biennale

selected exhibitions:

2024 User Experience, AV17 Gallery, Vilnius (solo exhibition)

2023 Takas (The Path), International Contemporary Art Fair ArtVilnius

2022 Get out of the path, Spectra Art Space (Starak Family Foundation), Warsaw (solo exhibition)

2022 The 40th Edition of Maria Dokowicz Competition, Poznan

2020 Familiar feeling, Rodriguez Gallery, Poznan (solo exhibition)

2020 Unessensial, SKALA, Poznan

2020 In praise of transience, 01_Gallery

2019 18th edition of Hestia Artistic Journey Competition, Museum of Modern Art in Warsaw

2019 MESH, Polonez, Poznan

2018 Hybridity in graphics, Wozownia Gallery, Torun

2018 Triennial of Polish Graphics, Muzeum Śląskie, Katowice

2018 International Print Triennial Color in Graphic Art, Wozownia Gallery, Torun

2018 Voyager's Record, SKALA, Poznan (Poznan Art Week)

2018 After Positive, AT Gallery, Poznan (solo exhibition)

2018 After Positive, Art Pavilion ERGO Hestia, Warsaw (solo exhibition)

2018 Best Polish Diploma – Graphic, SMTG, Cracow

2017 Esteemed Graduates of Academies of Fine Arts, Zbrojownia Sztuki, Gdansk

2017 Différance, Arsenal Gallery, Poznan (solo exhibition - diploma project)

2016 15th edition of Hestia Artistic Journey Competition, Museum of Modern Art in Warsaw

Get out of the path

site-specific installation, Spectra Art Space (Starak Family Foundation), 2022;
relief objects

documentation: Grzegorz Demczuk, Paweł Bobrowski, Marek Krzyżanek

Get out of the path is a project in which I examine the flexibility of the meaning of the concept of norm and normativity. A common theme connecting each work is the analysis of the authority of socially accepted rules, which compel people to act, see, speak, or think in specific ways. Each realization is a research-based commentary on specific norms, whose value and place in society correspond to the content of the work. The main theme of this series revolves around norms present in broadly understood design – repeated patterns that organize and categorize the world of people and things. The works refer to abstract forms born in the mind of the designer, which – from the person working on the shape of a car mirror to the programmer collaborating with AI on graphics for smartphones – are always limited by various regulations. Ultimately, the compositions embedded in objects stem from the analysis of repeated patterns, which form fragments, frames drawn from visual culture. The title of the series refers to replacing the mythical gesture of the artist with a "path" (a term from Illustrator) traced in a graphic design project, along which the machine's head cuts each composition.





Get out of the path, Spectra Art Space (Starak Family Foundation), 155 x 700 cm, wood, acrylic, plexiglass, 2022









Untitled XXXVI (Get out of the path), 120 x 90 x 5,5 cm, wood, polyurethane paint, plexiglass, 2024





Untitled XXXVII (Get out of the path), 120 x 90 x 5,5 cm, wood, polyurethane paint, plexiglass, 2024





Untitled XL (Get out of the path), 120 x 90 x 5,5 cm, wood, polyurethane paint, plexiglass, 2024





User Experience

(AV17) Gallery, 2024

documentation: Laima Milkintė

In the solo exhibition “User Experience”, Maciej Gąbka presents his latest works – reliefs and sculptures – that illustrate the relationship between humans and objects as it arises through their physical interaction. The title is associated with the term “user experience” (UX), which describes the overall feelings and impressions that a person encounters when interacting with everyday products, services, or systems. It encompasses not only functionality and ease of use but also emotional, aesthetic, and contextual aspects. Each artwork is accompanied by commentary based on scientific research, discussing and legitimizing specific standards and explaining representations of normative behavior. The exhibition depicts our everyday lives, where any behavior that is considered outside the norm is noticed and has consequences. The objects in the exhibition reveal how we adhere to established rules and perceive the world through normative filters, allowing viewers to make connections between the works in the exhibition and their own personal everyday experiences. The artist’s role here becomes similar to that of a designer, who constructs the forms of ordinary objects on the basis of statistics and observations of visual culture. Meanwhile, the aim of “User Experience” becomes to ensure that the interaction between the human and the product, in this case, the viewer, is intuitive and effective, thereby increasing user engagement.

Text for the exhibition *User Experience*, (AV17) Gallery, 2024





User Experience, (AV17) Gallery, 2024









Familiar feeling

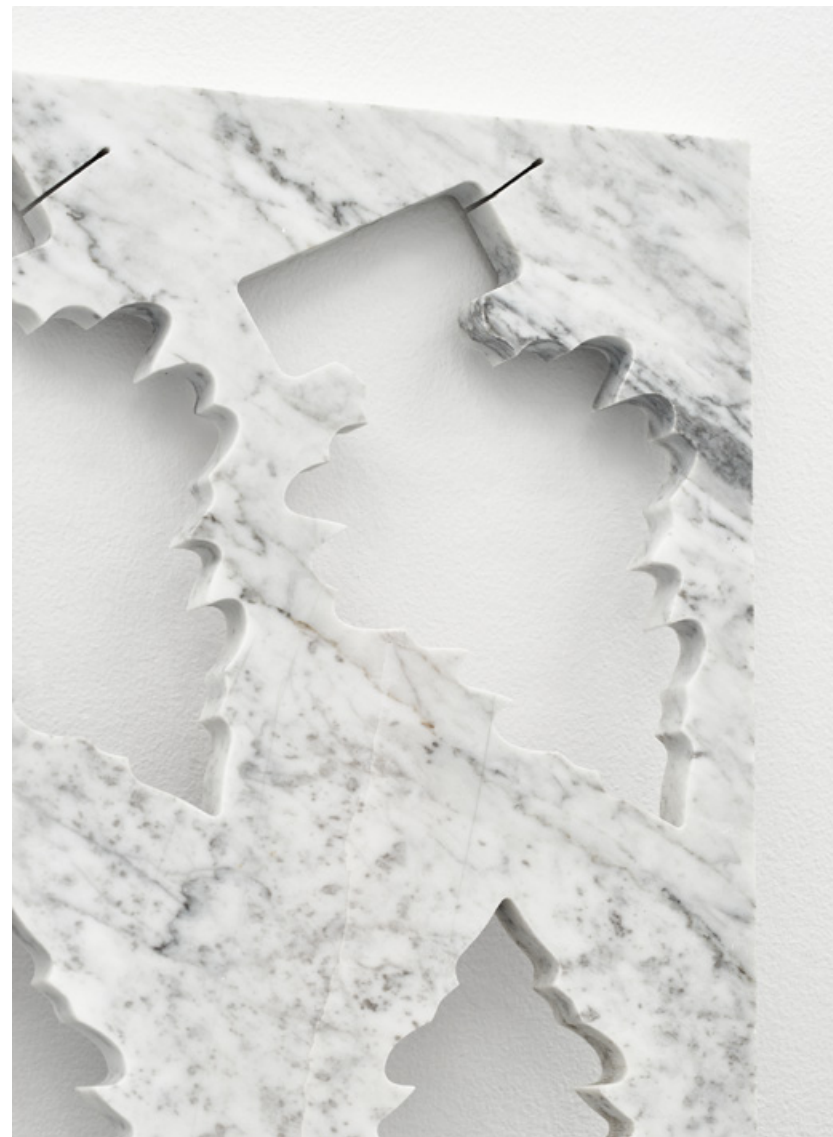
Rodriguez Gallery, 2020

documentation: Tomasz Koszewnik

Apparently, the process of defining the concept of 'norm' brings hesitation whether this concept might entail the liar paradox or the illusion of truth. Apart from the overriding task of a 'norm', which comes down to – paradoxically as it sounds - standardization and imposing of certain ideals, a series of multiplying contradictions should therefore be expected within the limits of the 'norm'. Dedicating even a relatively small amount of time to its importance allows to notice some of the incongruencies. Normative absurdities are hidden in the form of linguistic constructions that lost all the value; gestures that turn into shallow automatisms, objects that became completely indifferent to us, or absurd human aspirations that only prove the authoritarian influence of norms.

Familiar Feeling are visualizations of particular representations of normative behaviors. The model way of depicting art was used to exhibit objects whose content refers to model thinking through the prism of the cultural norms that surround us.

Text for the exhibition *Familiar feeling*, Rodriguez Gallery, 2020



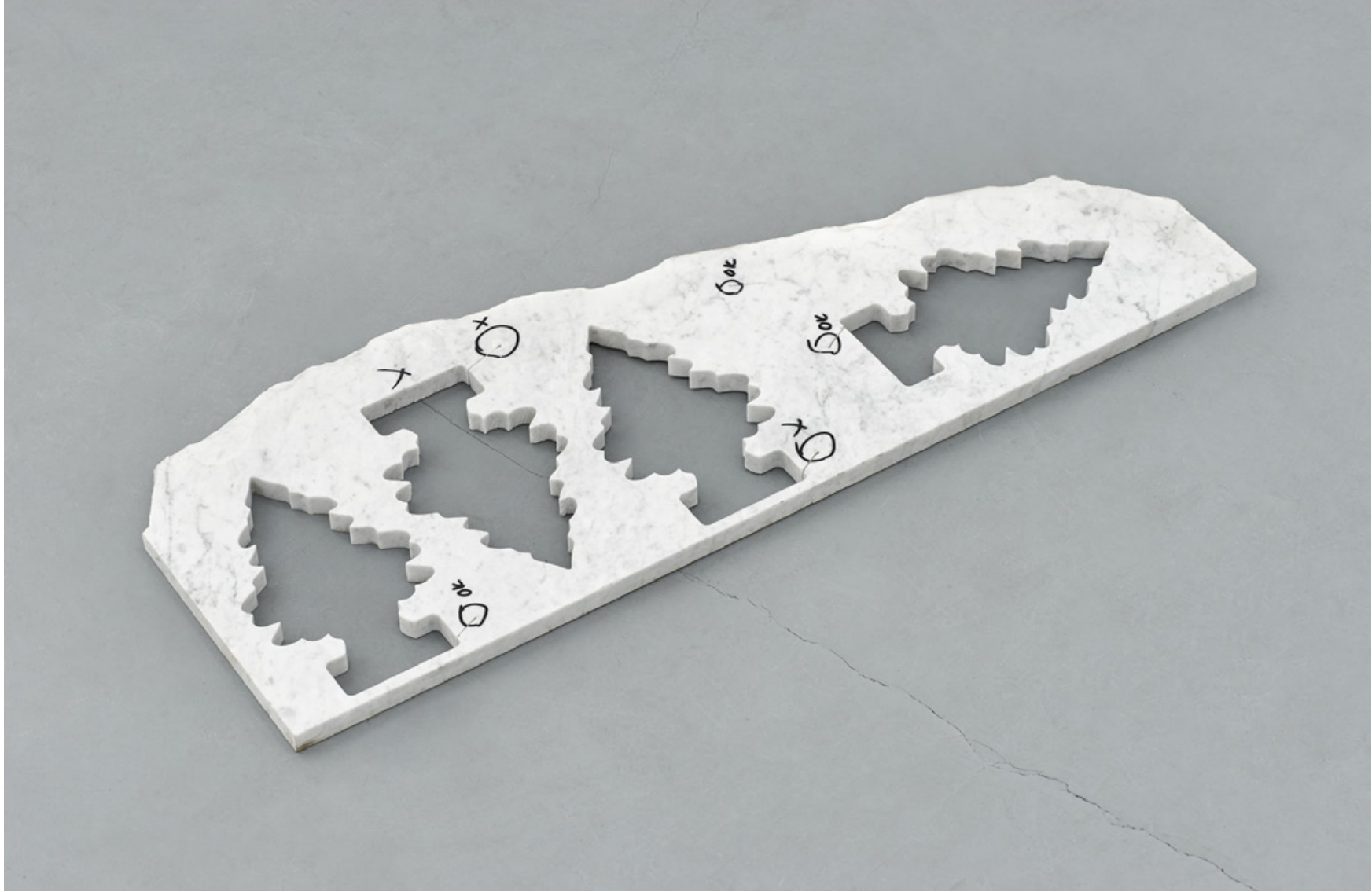


Familiar feeling, Rodriguez Gallery, 2020













Familiar feeling (USB 2.0), 50 x 72 cm, pigment print, 2020



Familiar feeling (Memory card), 50 x 72 cm, pigment print, 2020



Familiar feeling (Fintrop; 365+), 50 x 72 cm, pigment print, 2020



Soft touch I, 25 x 145 x 95 cm, UV print on synthetic material, 2020





Soft touch II, 145 x 72,5 x 5 cm, UV print on synthetic material, 2020





Soft touch III, 5 x 110 x 30 cm, UV print on synthetic material, 2020



Familiar feeling (Wunder-baum), 20 x 11,8 x 2 cm (each), marble, 2019





Non-functional objects

satin stainless steel sculptures, 2019

documentation: Tomasz Koszewnik

The relationship that is established between a person and an object is the result of prior empirical examining its material properties. Objects become integrated with generally accepted norms, which define the cognitive attitude in a given environment and thanks to this integration, the recipient is able to connect the presented objects to their original function and place them in a conventional, everyday scenery. The slightest intervention on the marked element is tantamount to knocking the viewer out of his visual habits and creating a new mechanism of learning (comprehending) his own environment.

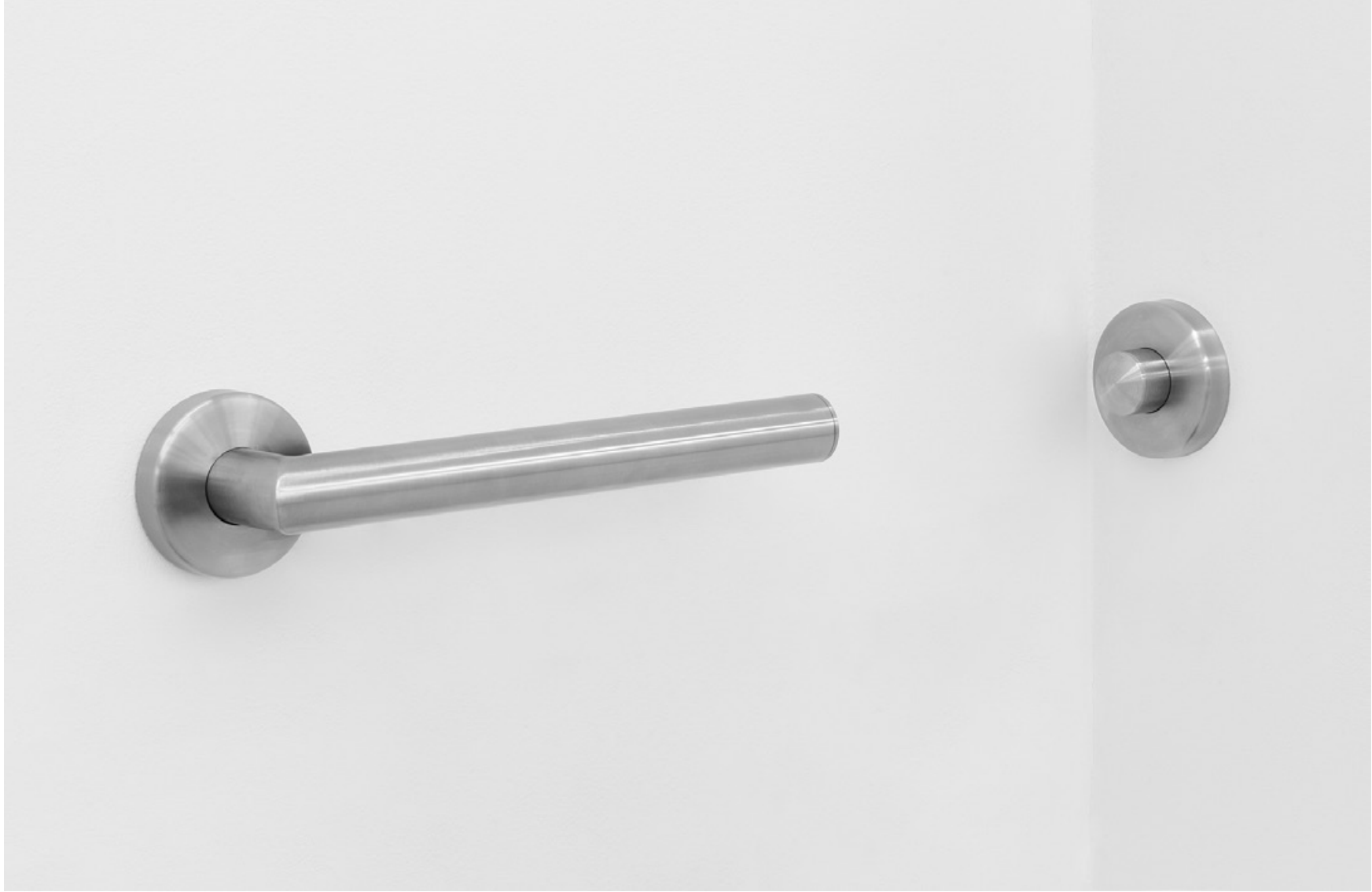
The designed objects, thanks to the possibility of configuring them and their universal character, have the ability to adapt to any space.

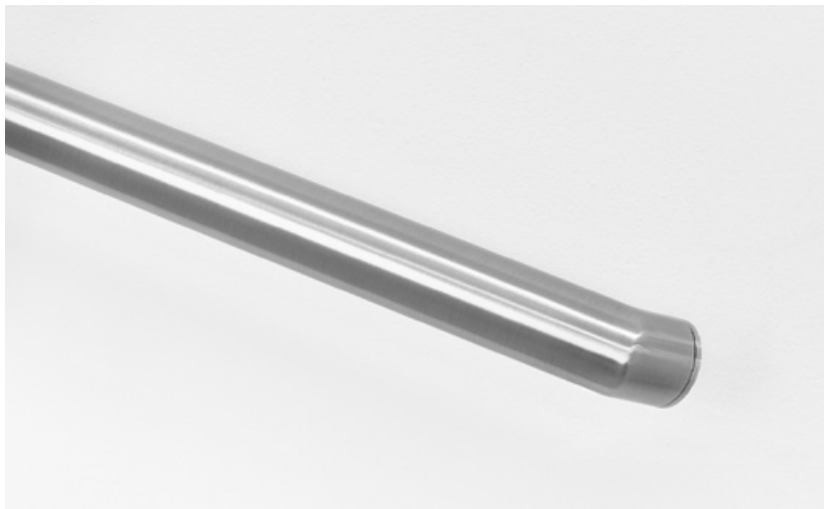


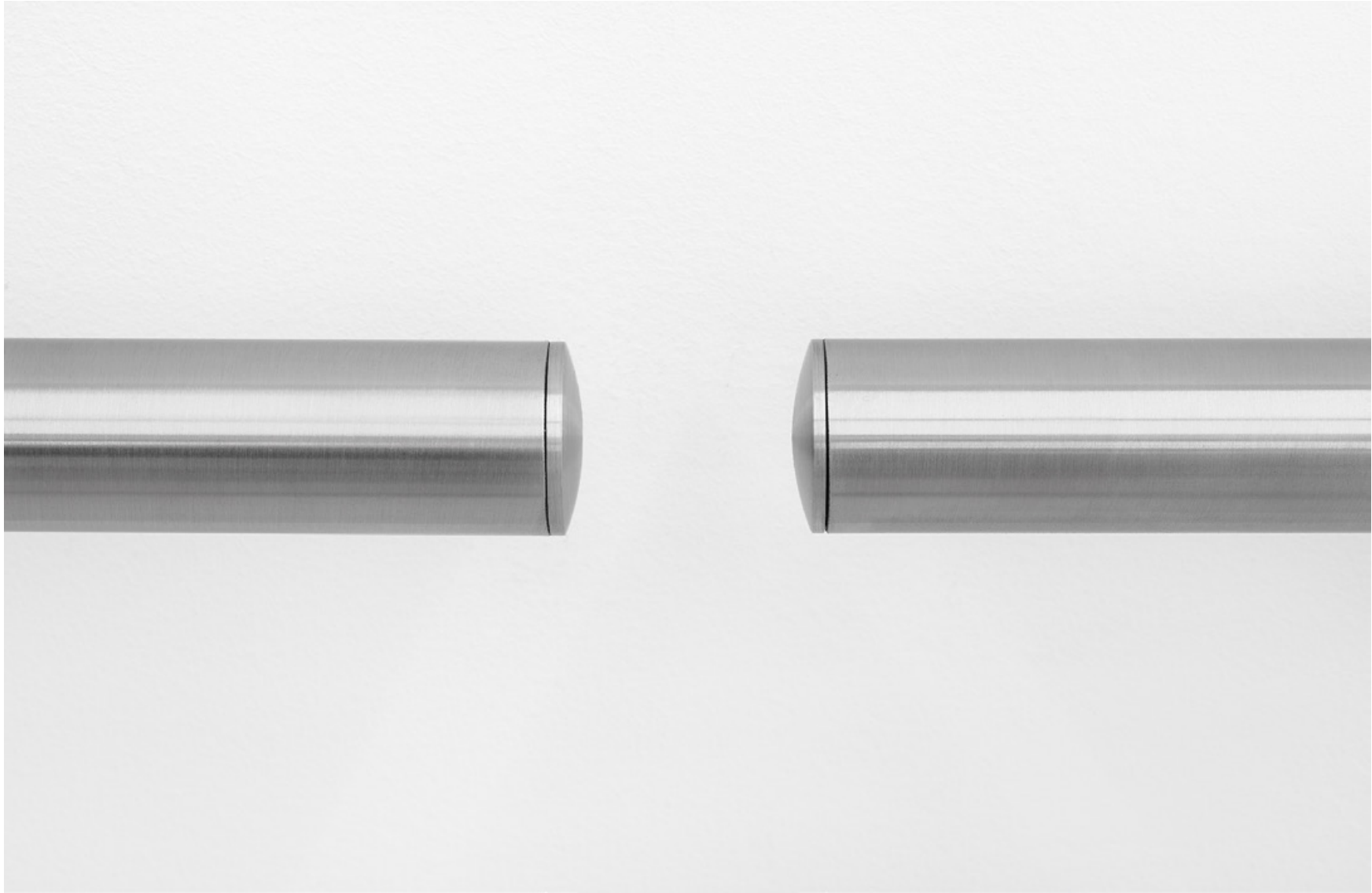


Non-functional objects, variable dimensions, satin stainless steel, 2019









After positive

satin stainless steel and plexiglass sculptures, 2019

documentation: Tomasz Koszewnik

The installations juxtapose two, extremely different, contradictory materials in a subtle, but at the same time expressive way. The metal elements extract from the surroundings those phenomena that are usually overlooked by the viewer. The material properties of the artwork that is usually marginalized and escapes human attention becomes highlighted, thus questioning the potential of a human being to explore its immediate surroundings.





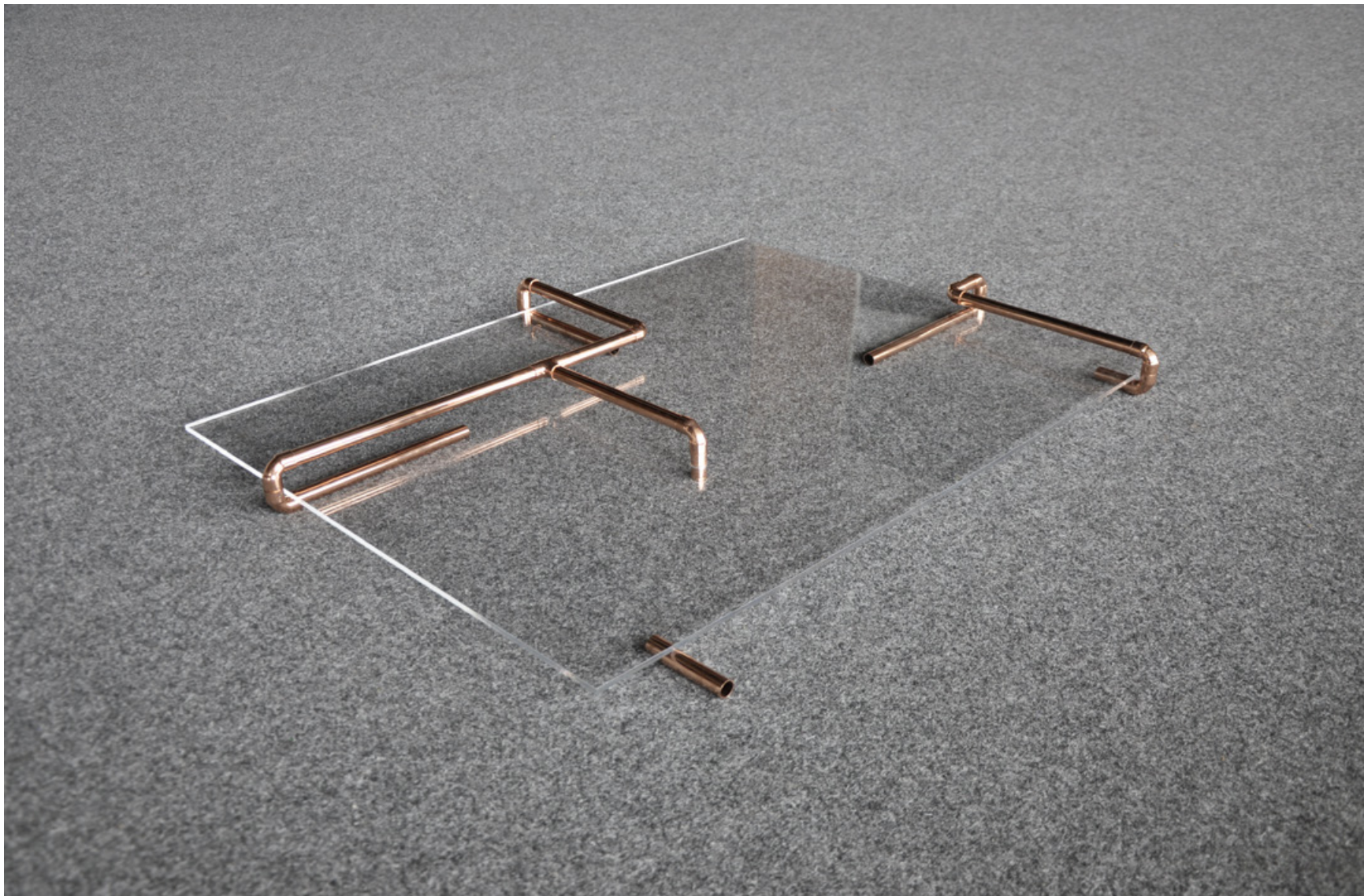
Untitled LXIII, 30 x 140 x 83 cm, satin stainless steel, plexiglass, 2019



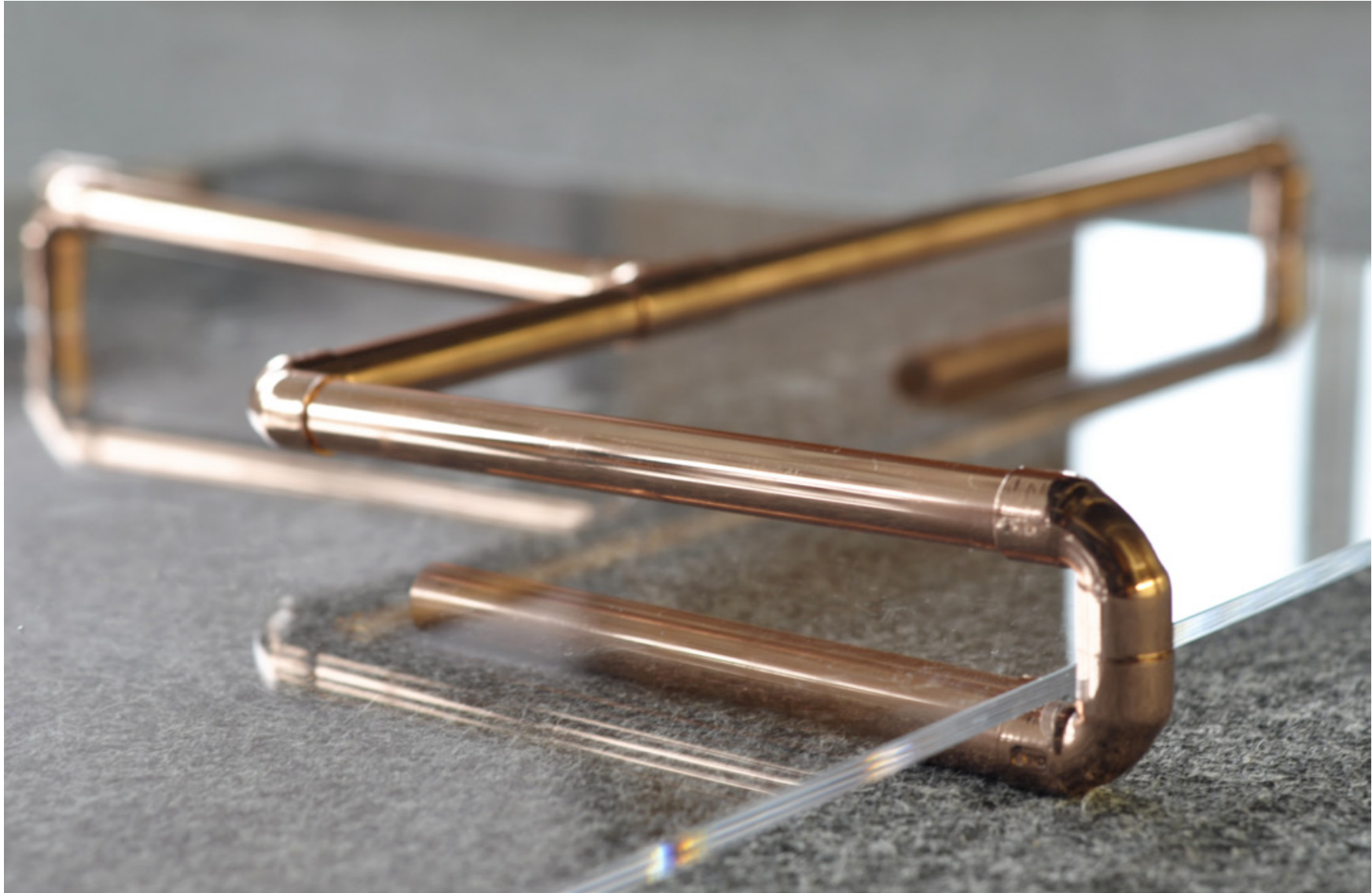


Untitled CIII, 45 x 68 10 cm, satin stainless steel, plexiglass, 2019





Untitled CLXVIII, 6 x 80 x 60 cm, plexiglass, copper, 2019





After positive

Art Pavilion ERGO Hestia, 2018

documentation: Piotr Litwic

After Positive deceives us a bit by blurring the clarity of the border between presence and absence. It suggest that our habit of perceiving the positive as strongly present in reality should not be so obvious. In his practice Maciej Gabka conceives the strategy of combining white and transparent surfaces differently. His artwork throws us of the scent. It puts us in a situation of permanent doubt and forces us to pose questions concerning the (non)presence. His works require active stance from us, because these works balance between materiality and dematerialization. They play with our inclinations to declare with confidence that something is or is not. Consequently, his multimedia practice asserts that doubt may be an inspiring and positive aspect of the human condition.

An excerpt from Marta Smolińska's text *After Positive: In Praise of Doubt* accompanying the Maciej Gabka's solo exhibition in the Art Pavilion ERGO Hestia in 2018





After positive, Art Pavilion ERGO Hestia, 2018









Différance

Arsenal Gallery, 2017

One of the author's fundamental assumptions is to cast doubt on the deeply entrenched binary system in our culture in the cognitive context. The artist refers to two contrasting positions using a paraphrase of the terms positive and negative. The positive image relates to empirical knowledge – finite, complete, while its opposite is a created image that refers to negativite. By expanding the meanings of these graphic terms, we encounter the dialectics of two conflicting attitudes that function within the realm of a single work of art. The main purpose of the author's use of epistemological metaphor is to pose the question of what lies between positivite and negativite. The gradual transition from transparent matter, through semi-transparent blacks, to its profound value, is synonymous with uncertain movement between positivite and negativite; what we automatically call truth and falsehood.





Différance, Arsenal Gallery, 2017









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