

THE TRAIL OF OPEN-AIR SCULPTURES AND INSTALLATIONS in Nowa Huta



OSIEDLE
TYSIĄCLECIA

MISTRZEJOWICE

OSIEDLE
ZŁOTEGO WIEKU

PLANTY
MISTRZEJOWICKIE

OSIEDLE
BOHATERÓW
WRZEŚNIA

PIASTA KOŁODZIEJA

OSIEDLE
PIASTÓW

SZPITAL
IM. L. RYDYGIERA

OSIEDLE
WYSOKIE

W. BRONIEWSKIEGO

RONDO
CZYŻYŃSKIE

BIENIOWSKA

OSIEDLE
SPÓDZIELCZE

PARK
WIŚNIOWY
SAD

OSIEDLE
PRZY ARCE

RONDO
KOCMYRZOWSKIE

BIENIOWSKA

OSIEDLE
ZGODY

OSIEDLE
SŁONECZNE

PARK
RATUSZOWY

PARK
SZWEDZKI

OSIEDLE
GÓRALI

OSIEDLE
SZKOLNE

PARK
SZWEDZKI

OSIEDLE
WILLOWE

OSIEDLE
STALOWE

OSIEDLE
WANDY

OSIEDLE
MŁODOŚCI

OSIEDLE
NA SKARPIE

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NA SKARPIE

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SZPITAL
IM. S. ŻEROMSKIEGO

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WANDY

SCULPTURES
IN THE INNER COURTYARD
OF THE STEFAN ŻEROMSKI HOSPITAL

SCULPTURES IN NOWA HUTA

The construction of the Nowa Huta district was one of the key projects of the Six-Year Plan. Designed from scratch as a new, independent town, it was supposed to strengthen industry, be a counterbalance for the conservative Kraków, and give the rural population a chance for social advancement by attracting them to the industrial plants. The functional and convenient architecture and urban spaces were to compensate for the hardships the workers and farmers had suffered before. Through cultural institutions and a number of initiatives, the authorities also made sure to keep the inhabitants of the district busy in their free time. The "Hutnik" Housing Association was one of the contributors to the promotion of arts and the supporter of the artistic environment in Nowa Huta. It cooperated with the regional management of the Association of Polish Artists and Designers (ZPAP) and the "Nowa Huta" Artistic Association (initiated by Janusz Trzebiatowski in 1969). This resulted in e.g. studios and scholarships for artists, exhibitions, catalogues, and sculptures that were to adorn the estates and promote modern art. Most of the projects discussed herein were probably completed as part of that initiative. The exceptions were *The Dolphin*, *The Fly Agarics*, and most probably *The Putto*.

The knowledge on the Nowa Huta sculptures that are no more can be drawn from photo archives. In this way, we can learn about the works displayed in the Ratuszowy Park – *The Skier*, *The Man with a Bird* and *The Totem*, as well as the image of a mother with two children and a swan in the Wiśniowy Sad Park. Nearby, there was also a concrete mosaicked work shaped like a donkey, and a giraffe – an example of a metal sculpture. The author of some of the installations in the Kolorowe estate was probably Waleria Bukowiecka.

The trail of open-air sculptures and installations in Nowa Huta includes projects located on the territory that belongs to five administrative districts of Kraków typically associated with Nowa Huta. It features sculptures and installations – unrelated to the memory of specific people or events – which have been preserved to this day. The information about them comes from e.g. publications on Nowa Huta, the activities of the "Hutnik" Housing Association, artists' monographs, and press articles. The sources of inspiration have also been interviews with authors, artists, or individuals active in the Nowa Huta artistic life. Unfortunately, some information on the authors, original titles, or creation dates has been lost. Therefore, the square brackets contain the titles that the locals have come up with.



1 **MARIAN KRUCZEK, THE CONQUERED SPACE**
1973, metal

Location: Tysiąclecia estate, nearby block of flats 53.
The sculpture was made of industrial waste – pipes, chains, machine components. The author, Marian Kruczek (1927–1983), graduated from the Academy of Fine Arts in Kraków. In 1956, he moved to Nowa Huta, where he e.g. co-created the "Widzimiście" Puppet Theatre and initiated the

"Pod Chmurką" Open-Air Gallery, which was located next to a block of flats in the Centrum D estate. Although a painter by profession, he is most remembered for his sculptures and reliefs.



1A **MARIAN KRUCZEK, THE CLOGS, 1965, concrete and metal**
THE LITTLE LOVER, 1969, concrete and metal
Location: C. K. Norwid Cultural Centre, Górali estate 5.

Other sculptures by Marian Kruczek in Nowa Huta are also noteworthy, although they are displayed inside the C. K. Norwid Cultural Centre, rather than in the open air.

They were made e.g. of objects and scraps found in junkyards. They were the artist's favourite sculpture materials, which he used to create surreal compositions. His works show references to the human figure and animals.



2 **ANTONI HAJDECKI, THE COSMIC SPIRAL**
1974, metal

Location: Tysiąclecia estate, nearby block of flats 29.
Antoni Hajdecki (1927–1991) graduated from the Academy of Fine Arts in Kraków. He is mainly known for his *Monument to the Militant Proletariat* (1986) located by Ignacy Daszyński avenue, the Ivan Konev's monument (erected in 1987, demolished in 1991), as well as abstract sculptures in the public space, e.g. in the city of Rzeszów or Tychy. *The Cosmic*

Spiral relates to the then popular subject of space travel, which was also an inspiration to other artists (e.g. in Tychy, there is *Kosmonada* and *The Space Plane II* by Stefan Borzęcki, or *The Cosmic Experience* by Jerzy Nowakowski).



3 **WIESŁAW BIELAK, THE SHAPE OF SPACE**
1974, Pińczów limestone

Location: Bohaterów Września estate, Kleeberga street, nearby block of flats 5.

The sculpture is an abstract composition with a synthetic form. The author, Wiesław Bielałak (born 1943), has graduated from the Academy of Fine Arts in Kraków, used to be a member of the "Nowa Huta" Artistic Association, and worked at a studio in Róż avenue in the 1970s. From the very beginning of his artistic career, he has been fascinated with nature and organic forms. His works blend into the landscape that surrounds them.



4 **WIESŁAW BIELAK, MOTHERHOOD**
1974, Pińczów limestone

Location: Piastów estate, nearby block of flats 3.
The subject of motherhood has also inspired his other work (*The Little Myth*), which – unlike the Nowa Huta piece – is an abstract composition. Due to severe damages, *Motherhood* was thoroughly refurbished in 2017. Any defects were repaired, and the whole piece was significantly "rebuilt".



5 **ANONYMOUS, [THE BEAR CUBS]**
1970s, stone

Location: Wysokie estate, nearby block of flats 13.
A zoomorphic sculpture, most probably depicting two bear cubs or penguins facing each other. It is characterised by a compact, aggregate form. It has a rough surface, imitating plumage.



6 **WINCENTY KUĆMA, RIPENING II**
1975, artificial stone

Location: Przy Arce estate, nearby block of flats 5.
The sculpture is commonly known as *The Pea Pot*. It is part of a larger series: *Ripening I* (1974) is located in the Krakowski Park, and *Ripening III* (1975) can be found in the garden outside the artist's studio. Wincenty Kućma (born 1934) has graduated from the Academy of Fine Arts in Kraków and is the author of e.g. *The Warsaw Uprising Monument* in Warsaw (1989). Since 1990, he has been devoted to religious art, creating altars, stations of the cross, stained glass.



7 **ANONYMOUS, [THE GUITAR]**
1970s, artificial stone, metal

Location: Planty Bieńczyckie park, Przy Arce estate, nearby block of flats 9.
The popular name of the piece refers to its shape. The disintegrated, strongly geometric form may suggest that the sculpture was inspired by cubism. Initiated in France around 1906, cubism expanded the perception of form and space in sculptures. Cubist artists disregarded the achievements of ancient art, e.g. the principles of perspective and mimetic reflection of reality.



8 **ANONYMOUS, [THE SNAIL] lub [THE SHELL]**
1960s, concrete, mosaic

Location: Wiśniowy Sad Park, nearby a playground.
The sculpture is an example of organic abstraction. Following socialist realism (1949–1956), abstract works, especially based on biology, became popular in Polish art. The mosaic technique used to decorate the sculpture was commonplace in the period of the Polish People's Republic (PRL). The most famous ceramic manufacturer at that time was the "Kamionka" Ceramic Products Cooperative established in 1947 in Łysa Góra near Tarnów.



9 **MAGDALENA JAROSZYŃSKA, THE LITTLE MERMAID**
1963–1965, artificial stone

Location: Wiśniowy Sad Park, nearby Boruty-Spiechowicza street.
The mermaid figure – coincidentally the coat of arms and symbol of Warsaw – refers to the fact that the Wiśniowy Sad Park was financed by the Social Fund for the Rebuilding of the Capital. *The Little Mermaid* is one of the few works by Magdalena Jaroszyńska (1925–2009) – a sculptor, actress, and co-founder of Piwnica pod Baranami. She was also the author of Józef Lompa's monument (1965) in Opole, designed by Joanna Domaszewska. Both pieces are characterised by similar simplicity of the form.



10 **RYSZARD WÓJCIK, EDWARD RYBICKI, THE DOLPHIN**
1969/1970, concrete, glass, metal

Location: Górali estate, nearby blocks of flats 23 and 24.
Originally, *The Dolphin* was a fountain. It was initiated by the locals – Edward Rybicki and Ryszard Wójcik. The idea came to their mind in 1967 and the project was completed with the help of the estate residents. It contributed to more changes in the park – new benches, game tables, and dustbins. It ceased to function when the passage between blocks 23 and 24 was blocked up and the plans to build a closed circuit were abandoned. Some 15 years ago, the fountain basin was filled with earth and replanted.



11 **MAURZY GOMULICKI, THE FLY AGARICS, 2014, metal**
THE FLY AGARICS II, 2016, metal, wood

Location: the park outside the Nowa Huta Cultural Centre, Jana Pawła II avenue 232.
The Fly Agarics were part of a project of the Ludwig van Beethoven Association. They were followed up by *The Fly Agarics II* – three seat sculptures. Maurzy Gomulicki (born 1969) is a photographer, graphic artist, author of videos and animations. His works easily combine the so-called high and low art. All of his urban space projects amaze with colours, forms, and subjects, forcing the spectators to abandon their usual associations. They praise life and vitality.



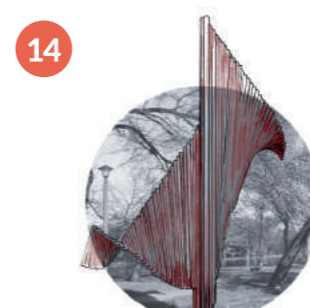
12 **ANONYMOUS, [THE PUTTO] lub [CUPID]**
1960s/70s, artificial stone

Location: Zgody estate, the park behind block of flats 7.
The sculpture was most probably a private initiative of an amateur artist, who wanted to adorn the surroundings. The term "putto" refers to an ornament in modern art depicting a little, sometimes winged, naked boy. Such form was related to Cupid (the god of love) presented as a handsome young man or boy with wings, a bow and a quiver full of arrows.



13 **WIESŁAW BIELAK, THE FISH TANK**
1975, Pińczów limestone

Location: Ratuszowy Park.
The sculpture presents a resized fish tank scene – two fish swimming in different directions. The stone was processed in a very soft way, matching the natural images. The choice of material also reflects the subject. Pińczów limestone is a variety of lithothamnium limestone of algal origin, whose structure contains compacted seabed layers.



14 **STANISŁAW MAŁEK, THE ASCENT**
1977, metal

Location: the park by the crossing of Bulwarowa street and Solidarności street, nearby the Nowa Huta Reservoir.



In 1977, Stanisław Małek (a graduate of the Academy of Fine Arts in Kraków) received a studio at the Jagiellońskie estate. To return the favour, he decided to make a sculpture. Due to its size and technique (welding), he needed the help of the fine section and wire mill staff. They worked for over a month. The involvement of the steelworks resulted in a number of articles emphasising the unprecedented cooperation between an artist and an industrial plant. The value of the community action was estimated at PLN 195,000.



15 **LUCJAN ORZECH, BIRDS**
1978, metal

Location: Willowe estate, nearby block of flats 12.
In the 1960s, the Ministry of Culture and Art decided to intensify the actions aiming at raising a new generation of audiences from among the working class. One of the tools was the patronage of industrial plants, which – in cooperation with artists – were to promote modern art by organising events (symposiums, biennials) and purchasing works of art for workplaces. The use of materials widely available in any industrial plant – H-shaped profiles or pieces of steel sheet – suggests the involvement of Vladimir Lenin Steelworks in the project. Probably, the factory workers took part in the process, which was quite a popular practice at that time.



16 **LUCJAN ORZECH, SMALL ORGANS**
1978, metal

Location: Wandy estate, nearby block of flats 24.
Metal sheets, wires, rods, and welding – the materials and technique characteristic for industrial rather than artistic activity, entered the arts in the early 20th century. Two Spanish artists – Pau Gargallo and Julio González – are considered the fathers of the "welding" trend and were quite prolific in this field. In Poland, a group of artists experimenting with metal in the late 20th century included e.g.: Jerzy Jarnuszkiewicz, Władysław Dariusz Frycz, Antoni Hajdecki.



17 **ANONYMOUS, [THE GIRL], [THE PRESCHOOLER] lub [ANIA]**
1960s/70s, artificial stone

Location: Na Skarpie estate, in front of Public Kindergarten no. 46.
The sculpture represents a girl wearing a dress or a school apron. The figure (e.g. the hands) and the clothes are depicted schematically. On the other hand, despite the aggregate form, the girl's face is portrayed in a more realistic way. There is a local anecdote connected to the piece, in which the girl is a child that was not picked up from the kindergarten by her parents.



18 **ANONYMOUS, SCULPTURES IN THE INNER COURTYARD OF THE STEFAN ŻEROMSKI HOSPITAL**
1960s/70s

Location: inner courtyard of the Stefan Żeromski Hospital.
There are four sculptures, probably by various authors. The first piece was made in stone and is a schematic representation of a human body shown from the waist to the knees. The interesting element is the peculiar hollow on the abdomen. Another work is a female nude. It is not a realistic depiction. However, the soft and organic properties of the composition are unambiguously associated with a body. The third sculpture is an archer. Like the previous two, this piece is also characterised by a synthetic form, which, however, does not hinder the identification of the subject matter. The organic and synthetic composition evokes associations with Henry Moore's works. Moreover, some similarities between the nude and the archer may suggest that they were both created by the same author. The fourth sculpture is of a completely different character. Made of clay covered with ceramic glaze, it is an abstract composition.

