

# Paulina Łuczak

# Ehej!

26.02 – 19.03.2021

Originally, the exhibition was supposed to open last spring. Could the title referring to the sonnet of Mikołaj Sęp-Szarzyński sound differently at that time? In the thriving but cacophonous world, it was to be a warning cry, a memento. The last few months, more bluntly than art can do, allowed us to experience the ephemeral nature of life, the fragility of intricately constructed plans and the impermanence and relativity of what seemed to be a guaranteed element of everyday life. Today, this title is a rather humble sigh. Perhaps in this form, it is even closer to the quiet nature of a candle, which is the main character of the exhibition.

A candle is an ordinary object that directs our thoughts to unusual areas. It has taught me that as long as the flame vibrates, everything can still change – the form has not taken its final shape. In the period of time between being ignited and extinguished, the wax constantly transforms itself, melts and solidifies in an unforeseen place, thus surprising us. Observation of the movement and the simultaneous feeling of heat, light, the smell of smoke and the quiet sounds accompanying the combustion process allow us to experience this impossible moment, which it is now. By keeping the flame alive, I learn to be present. I carefully observe the changes taking place during combustion and the swaying of the flame, experiencing the short history of the candle, which begins with a flash and ends with smoke.

When a candle goes out, the elapsed time of movement and energy are recorded in its damaged and irregular form. Burning candles are a piece of memory for me. Their shapes capture the blasts of air flowing around them, caused by everything that was happening around: a conversation held in front of them, gestures expressing concern and closeness at the holiday table, laughter, and activities justified by tradition. Through stains, streams and traces of soot, they resemble past events, most often unique in the context of everyday life. When I find an old candle in a drawer, I can guess for whom, when and by whom it was lit. To whom it gave light and heat, and who passed on this light and warmth.

Potential forms are created when wax is poured into cold water. By searching for familiar shapes in them or in their shadows, I can imagine the future with hope. Their fragile structure, however, is a warning against over-trust in plans and dreams.

A candle has a rich symbolism – it covers all life, including the past, present and future. In my opinion, the most important existential tip that a candle gives is that each dangerous element (chaos) can be tamed in its own way. You can use the power and properties of fire without being absorbed immediately and completely. Being aware of this, the shouted or whispered word 'ehey' does not arouse fear, but only reminds us to focus on what is the most important.

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**Galeria Szewska 16**  
**the exhibition is open**  
**from 9.00 a.m. to 7.00 p.m.**

Paulina Łuczak (1995)

A PhD student in the discipline of art sciences at the Doctoral School of the Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań

2014–2018: BA studies in the field of painting at the University of the Arts in Poznań, a diploma under the supervision of prof. dr. hab. Jerzy Hejnowicz

2014–2019: BA and MA studies in the field of art history at the Adam Mickiewicz University

2019–2020: MA studies in the field of archival science and documentation management at the Adam Mickiewicz University

Group exhibitions:

Visual Experiment – Attempt 4, Jan Tarasin Art Gallery in Kalisz (18 December 2020 – 20 March 2021) | honorary mention

Danger/Comfort, as part of the Meeting of Young Culture Researchers, Institute of Art History, Wrocław (10–11 May 2018)

5th Drawing Studio, Window on Art Gallery, Culture Centre in Kutno (10–31 January 2018)

Re-actions 4

Promotion Gallery, Academy of Fine Arts in Krakow (17–30 March 2016)

Faculty of Sculpture and Intermedia, Academy of Fine Arts in Gdańsk (12–30 April 2016)

Aula Gallery, University of the Arts in Poznań (18–28 October 2016)

The exhibition at the Szewska 16 Gallery is the artist's first individual exhibition.