

Magdalena Filipczak

Desire to Meet, *Pragnienie spotkania*

In the following text I refer to this doctoral abstract as well as the artworks entitled Desire to Meet '*Pragnienie Spotkania*'. This diptych is composed of video art pieces entitled Meeting I '*Spotkanie I*' and Meeting II (Pool) '*Spotkanie II (Basen)*'.

desir'e¹ *n.* unsatisfied longing, feeling that one would derive pleasure or satisfaction from attaining or possessing something; expression of this, request; thing desired; lust. ¹

meet² *v.* (met). **1.** *v.t.* come face to face with (person coming from opposite direction); go to place to be present at arrival of (person, train, etc.); make the acquaintance of... ; ~ (person) **half-way**, (fig.) respond to friendly advances of, make a compromise with; ... **2.** ... ~ **the eye, ear**, be visible, audible; ~ person's **eye**, see he is looking at one, look at him in one's turn; **more in it than** ~ **s the eye**, hidden qualities or complications. \ **3.** oppose in battle or duel or contest; grapple with (evils etc.). **4.** come by accident or design into the company of. **5.** experience, receive, suffer, (one's death, fate, etc.). ²

This abstract is in three parts. Part I, The Issue of Encounter *Zagadnienie spotkania*, focuses on the human gesture as a means of communication, and on the concepts of touch and dialogue. In addition, this part of the work touches upon the aspect of departure and waiting for the Other, as well as exploring the notion of diffidence.

In part II, entitled The Issue of Encounter - Painting and Poetry '*Zagadnienie spotkania a malarstwo, poezja*,' I turn to the following artists: Edvard Munch (with regard to the concept of jealousy), Andrzej Wróblewski (concerning the issue of death), and Rainer Maria Rilke (with regards to the issue of longing).

¹ " Desire ". 1982. *The Concise Oxford Dictionary Of Current English*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

² " Meet² ". 1982. *The Concise Oxford Dictionary Of Current English*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Part III, entitled Personal Artistic Works in the Context of the Issue of Encounter, '*Własne działania artystyczne w kontekście zagadnienia spotkania*' contains descriptions and analyses of my own artistic realisations, i.e. video art pieces entitled Touch I, The Recurring Image That Never Fades from Memory '*Dotyk I, Powracający wciąż obraz nie daje o sobie zapomnieć,*' Meeting I '*Spotkanie I,*' and Meeting II (Pool) '*Spotkanie II (Basen).*'

The desire to meet arises in every person, because it is only through being together that man can have an existence. Apart from being a natural human necessity, this encounter is also a risk, because in order to enter into dialogue with another person we must overcome our fear of rejection. The video art works entitled Desire to Meet I and Desire to Meet II (Pool) are the capturing of a moment of waiting, of longing for a fellow human being.

The first piece of video art was created in an abandoned hotel, setting the scene for a young woman to walk around amidst projected films. These films projected in different sizes, depict the relationship between women and their daily routines such as caressing, washing and combing. The dialogue here unfolds through touch and presence. Here, the hotel evokes a safe place as well as a haven during travels. This haven is given to us only for a moment, for as long as our visit there lasts. The hotel chosen is derelict, presenting a contrast between the excitement of the initial meeting of the women and the starkness of this deserted place.

The second video art piece was created and set in a space surrounding a swimming pool. The pool, as a container filled with water, evokes here a sense of a mother's womb. It is a safe place, a refuge, cut off from the rest of the world. The surface of the water serves as a mirror, reflecting the film projected just above it. The young woman observes the reflection and engages in a dialogue with it, desiring to immerse herself in it. Immersion here is a return to foetal waters. Both her image and that of the older woman reflected in the surface of the water, disappear abruptly upon jumping into the water, ultimately causing the mirror surface to shatter.