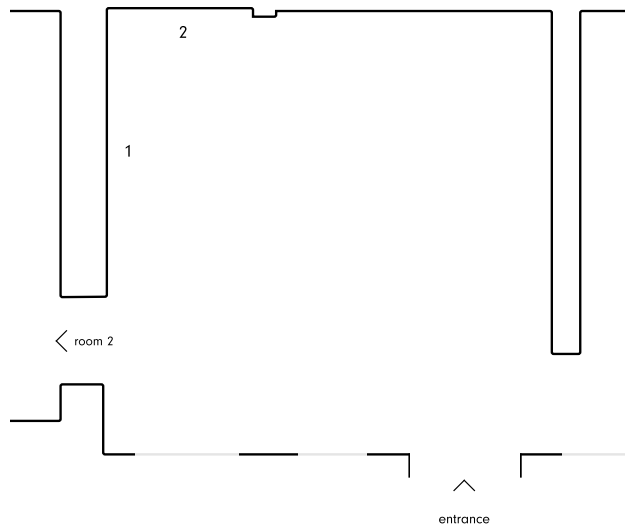


1. Grzegorz Kowalski
Excavation, 2025
UV print, dibond
137 x 117 cm

2. Unused excerpt from
the documentary *Imago Krzysia*, 2019
dir. Adam Janisch and Barbara
Janisch
1'50"

As part of the exhibition, Grzegorz Kowalski, a friend of Jung and the author of the documentation of Jung's performances, created a presentation dedicated to him. It consists of two elements: a 1981 portrait of Jung printed on mirror and a short film excerpt. Kowalski used a fragment of his own statement for the documentary *Imago Krzysia* (2019) directed by Adam and Barbara Janisch, the son and

daughter of Dorota Krawczyk-Janisch. The filmmakers focused on Jung and the relationship between the artist and their family. Kowalski's statement was not included in the final version of the film. In it, he recalls dreams in which Jung visited him after his death and a recurring fantasy—the need to imagine what his friend's body might look like many years after his death.



room 1

The film *Imago Krzysia*
is available on Vimeo:



Krzysztof Jung (1951-1998)

Known mostly as a performer, prolific painter and portraitist, called “the painter of trees” during his lifetime, Jung has become more celebrated over the last few years for his male nudes, intimate drawings, rarely or never shown in public, revealing his queer side and giving an insight into his private life. His works were included in the first large manifestations of LGBTQ-related art, such as *Ars Homo Erotica* (2010), curated by Paweł Leszkowicz at the National Museum in Warsaw, and the *Heritage*

pop-up exhibition organized as part of the Pomada 7 Queer Festival (2017). The changing reception of his works was recapped by his solo exhibitions at Salon Akademii in Warsaw (2016) and the Schwules Museum in Berlin (2019) as well as the first two presentations of Jung's drawings at Gunia Nowik Gallery: *In the Middle of the World* (2021) and *Boys* (2023). As Jung stated in his will, his friend Dorota Krawczyk-Janisch, based in Berlin, became the sole caretaker of his works after his death.

Grzegorz Kowalski (b. 1942)

Artist and teacher. As a sculpture student at the Warsaw Academy of Fine Arts, Kowalski studied under Oskar Hansen and Jerzy Jarnuszkiewicz. In the 1970s, together with a group of artists deeply influenced by Hansen's concept of Open Form, he founded Repassage Gallery in Warsaw. Treating art as a language of communication, he developed new artistic forms that incorporated the creativity of others, such as his *question actions*—collections of visual and tex-

tual responses to existential questions posed to a group (e.g., *Could you and would you like to treat me as an object?*, 1979). As a professor at his alma mater, Kowalski integrated similar collective art practices into his teaching, shaping a new generation of artists. In the 1990s, his students, including Paweł Althamer, Katarzyna Kozyra, and Artur Żmijewski, became leading figures in Polish Critical Art. He lives and works in Warsaw.

Gunia Nowik Gallery
Bracka 20a, Warsaw, Poland

Krzysztof Jung Performer

featuring Grzegorz Kowalski
curated by: Karol Sienkiewicz

Feb 19 – Mar 29, 2025

Krzysztof Jung (1951-1998) brought vitality, eroticism, and homoeroticism to the Repassage Gallery on Krakowskie Przedmieście in Warsaw. There, after completing his studies, he developed his concept of „plastic theatre”, creating a series of performances dedicated to his friends.

In the gallery space, Jung wove intricate webs of thread resembling spiderwebs. With his threading, he connected naked bodies, constructing protective cocoons or traps. In this sensual way, he explored his fascination with corporeality, interpersonal relationships, emotions, feelings, and the mutual dependencies they create. His performances also carried hidden messages addressed to specific individuals.

In 1993, the Zachęta National Gallery of Art in Warsaw held an exhibition summarizing the activity of the Repassage Gallery. At that time, Jung was responsible for arranging the room dedicated to the period when he himself managed the gallery (*Repassage 2*, 1978-1979).

Within a separate, threaded space, he placed photographs from his own performances. The original prints, preserved in the archive, are being shown for the first time in over thirty years.

The documentation of Jung's performances, displayed on a table in the center of the gallery, is complemented by a selection of his drawings. These works provide additional context for his performances, depicting people, places, and recurring motifs significant to the artist.

The photographic documentation of Jung's performances at Repassage Gallery was created by Grzegorz Kowalski, who was closely associated with the gallery. As an annex to the exhibition, Kowalski has prepared a new work dedicated to his friend, entitled *Excavation*. Its main element is a portrait of Jung, welcoming visitors as they enter the gallery. Kowalski juxtaposes Jung's electrifying sexuality with a memento mori reflection on the impermanence of the human body.

1. *Diploma studies*
1976
Górków near Warsaw
slides from the archive of Krzysztof Jung

Jung's first threading took place in the spring of 1976 as a rehearsal for his diploma thesis *Visual and Non-Visual Aspects of Space*. His friend Sławomir Gajus served as the model. The photographic studies from this project depict his bound

2. *Metamorphosis*
March 10, 1978
Repassage
photo by Grzegorz Kowalski

Jung's first performance at the Repassage Gallery was inspired by a story by Franz Kafka. The artist connected a naked model, Ryszard Nowicki, to a dozen or so seated participants using a web of threads. Grzegorz Kowalski recalled: "The person moved, trying in vain to straighten his legs and arms, fell to the side, hit the floor with a dull thud. (...) He tensed his muscles, the threads cut into the body, snapped. (...) Bound to the

3. *Love*
March 10, 1978
Repassage
photo by Grzegorz Kowalski

The photographs document two rehearsals that preceded the public performance at the Repassage Gallery. Jung's models were his friends, Mary Olejniczak and Jerzy "Stoma" Stomiński. He first connected their naked bodies with white thread as they sat back-to-back, then extended the network into a spiderweb above them. During the actual performance before an audience,

4. *Cocooning*
January 17, 1979
Repassage 2
photo by Grzegorz Kowalski

During the so-called winter of the century, Krasimira Dimczewska visited Poland. Jung invited her to participate in a performance at the Repassage Gallery. Naked, they wove threads around seated participants and four white vertical pipes in the center of the gallery. As the

body and close-ups of threads digging into his skin. Threading became a signature element of Jung's spatial interventions and performances, especially at the Repassage Gallery. There, in 1977, he made his debut with *Space Tangled in Public*. In March 1978, also at Repassage, Jung threaded a chair, dedicating the installation to Krasimira Dimczewska, a Bulgarian artist and his great love from his art school days.

chairs, we physically felt what our eyes saw and our ears heard—every movement of the 'victim' was transmitted by those countless threads that tethered us to him." Jung dedicated his first performance to his friend, Wojciech Karpiński (**drawing a**). He met the writer during a holiday in Zakopane in the spring of 1975. It was Karpiński who suggested he read Kafka's story, guided by Jung's fascination with entomology, which at the time manifested in his insect-erotic drawings.

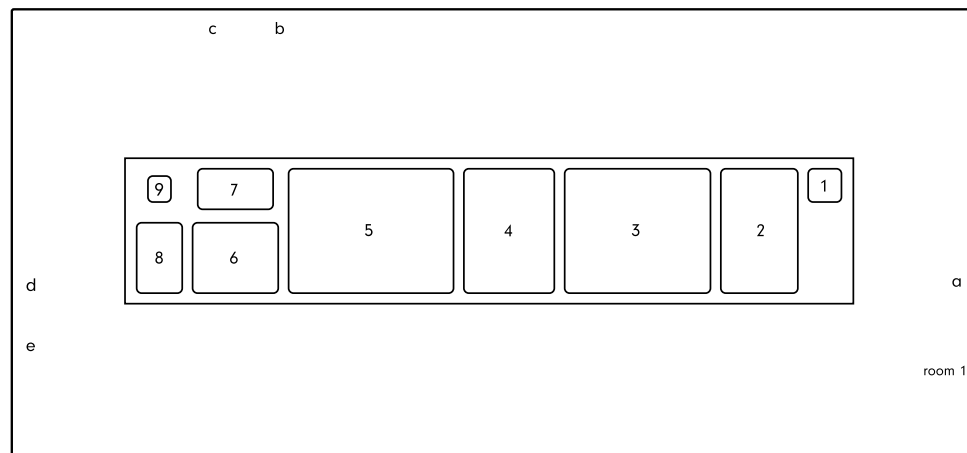
Andrzej Bersz set the threads on fire. Grzegorz Kowalski recalled "numerous small flames creeping up the threads of the structure hanging from the ceiling." Czesław Furmankiewicz intervened, extinguishing the flames with his fingers, burning his hands in the process. The performance was dedicated to Furmankiewicz. He later explained: "One evening, we talked about my statement on the possibility of experiencing the transcendent sphere of pure love through art."

web thickened, they began to entwine themselves within it, eventually forming a cocoon. The performance was dedicated to Grzegorz Kowalski, who recalled: "I searched for personal meanings within it. However, I did not feel the need (and it would be a bit inappropriate) to ask Krzys about them. Besides, we both avoided moments that could force us into a literal interpretation of motivations. Some things were meant to remain unsaid."

5. *Creating Through Others and the Horizon of Freedom*
May 20, 1980
Re'Repassage
photo by Grzegorz Kowalski

At the beginning of the performance, Jung lay in the middle of the gallery, buried in sand. Mary Olejniczak distributed spools of thread to those present. Their ends, hidden within a pile of sand, were tied to the artist's body. Emerging naked, Jung broke these bonds and began weaving his own cocoon. The remains of the performance were on

display in the gallery for the next ten days. Jung's text accompanied the performance, in which he wrote: "What is creation through others if not constant communion with them? And yet, being among people, being for people is almost an instinctive, biological need. So, to fight for absolute freedom for oneself—no, no, it is too arrogant to claim that I truly possess such individuality. It is the multitude of human lives that moves us forward in time and expresses us." Next to the photographs, we present a typescript of Dorota Krawczyk-Janisch's text from the archive.



6. *Joint Performance*
November 25, 1980
National Confrontations „Young Art – Łódź 80”, Art Propaganda Center in Łódź
photo by Janusz Prajs (exhibition copy)

7. *Conversation*
December 22, 1980
Re'Repassage
photo by Grzegorz Kowalski

At the end of 1980, two performances took place within a month, differing in detail, each involving Jung himself, Wojciech Piotrowski—his partner at the time—and his friend Dorota Krawczyk-Janisch. Seated opposite each other on

chairs, the two men first sewed their clothes together, then removed them. Meanwhile, a woman, enclosed in a black, cuboid "cage" made of black canvas, slowly cut it into strips, gradually revealing herself and her nakedness. Dorota Krawczyk-Janisch recalled in 1999: "There were several significant layers: the personal one, meaning our emotions, agreements, and misunderstandings; the experience of being separate, apart, when one is gay; and the act of opening up to others—a symbolic connection, not only erotic but also creative." Wojciech Piotrowski, first a partner and then a long-time friend, became the subject of many of Jung's intimate drawings (**drawing b**).

8. *Trace*
Dziekanka Gallery
May 4, 1989
photo from the archive of Krzysztof Jung

In the early 1980s, Wojciech Karpiński emigrated from Poland, and his Parisian apartment became Jung's second home. During his first visit to Paris in 1983, introduced by Karpiński, Jung met the circle of the Parisian "Kultura", including the painter Józef Czapski and the writer Konstanty "Kot" Jeleński. Under Czapski's influence and inspired by his work, Jung focused on painting.

Jeleński's death in a hospital in Paris on May 4, 1987, was a shock for the entire community. On the second anniversary of his death, Jung commemorated him with a performance epitaph. It took place in the Dziekanka Gallery in Warsaw, where, in the 1980s, some artists previously associated with Repassage, which had been shut down with the introduction of martial law, moved their activities. In the same month, Jung opened his first painting exhibition, entitled *Paradise*, in Dziekanka.

9. *Light for Mikołaj*
1980s
pencil on paper

The drawing *Light for Mikołaj* remains a mystery. Despite efforts, it has not been possible to determine what it concerns. Although titled and dated July 23 by Jung, the year of its creation remains unknown. It may refer to some private event or be a sketch of an idea for a performance that Jung never realized. Here, this drawing represents numerous actions by Jung that were deliberately undocumented—private gestures that survived only in the memory of participants and witnesses or were lost to time. It evokes Mikołaj, with whom Jung was in love in the early 1980s and whom he portrayed many times (**drawing c**). Their sep-

Dariusz Chudzik, the artist's partner, and the artist's friend and model Artur Burchacki, participated in the performance. The room's darkness was contrasted by a white canvas lying on the floor, and Jung threaded the space above it. On the canvas, a naked Dariusz lay, filling the plaster negative of his body. He was painted white on his back. A naked Artur appeared in the room as the sower, with the canvas draped over his shoulder, throwing stones onto the floor. Darek stood up, tearing the thread web and left the room. After some time, Artur returned and placed small lit candles on the stones. The destroyed white spiderweb and, as Jung described it, "the negative of an aroused torso" remained in the room.

In 1989, Jeleński's homosexual relations and the actual cause of his death—AIDS—were not widely known. Only his closest circle of friends were aware of his illness. Today, Jung's performance can be considered one of the first works in Polish art addressing the epidemic, dedicated to someone who died from AIDS. During Karpiński's visit to Poland in the summer of 1991, Jung traveled with him to Rybienko, a settlement on the Bug River where Jeleński had spent his childhood summers. The result was a series of landscapes by Jung marked by queer memory (**drawing e**).

aration was painful. On December 11, 1982, in the presence of several people, including Mikołaj, Jung staged a performance titled with a quote from the Book of Job: "Instruct me, and I will be silent; show me where I have gone astray." He tied himself with threads, cut his hair while watching Mikołaj's face in a mirror, set fire to the cut hair, and used a knife to free himself from the bonds. During his name-day gathering in 1986 at Jungówka, the summer home of the Jung family, the artist withdrew from his friends, placing small candles along the slope. The action symbolized his departure. "A magnificent illumination took place before our eyes – the slope lit up with dozens of lights," recalled Kowalski in a text in the catalogue for Jung's posthumous exhibition.

a. *Portrait of Wojciech Karpiński*, ca. 1985–1990, pencil on paper 50 × 36 cm

b. *Man in Bed (Wojtek)*, 1979, crayon on paper 49 × 64 cm

c. *Mikołaj, smiling*, ca. 1981/82, pencil on paper 28,5 × 20,5 cm

d. *Untitled*, ca. 1979, pencil on paper 51 × 36,5 cm

e. *Landscape (Rybienko)*, ca. 1991, watercolor on paper 29 × 42 cm