

Joanna Fluder

BRUISE, SHINE ON MY SKIN

Opening: Friday, May 22, 2026, 6–9 pm

On view till: June 20, 2026

Tue-Fri: 4–7 pm, Sat: 12–7 pm

polana institute



Joanna Fluder | *Bruise in the Shape of a Declaration: I Will Weep All My Seeds over Your Dead Body*
2026 | gouache on paper | 27.9 x 35.6 cm

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Joanna Fluder | *Bruise in the Shape of Giving Birth to Shared Thoughts*
2025 | gouache on paper | 27.9 x 35.6 cm

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The exhibition by Joanna Fluder at the Polana Institute is a strongly personal narrative about domestic violence, told from the perspective of the skin – or rather, through the wide range of bruises appearing on the body. While understood as a symptom of healing – the gradual resorption of blood diffused within the subcutaneous tissue – they also follow a distinct chromatic sequence imposed by physiology: from red and purple, through blue and green, to yellow. Fluder is interested in the paradox of the bruise's aesthetic – its ambiguous forms, iridescence, and a certain "beauty" that emerges directly from violence. "A bruise is an attempt at communication by the body, which cries out through colour and form across the skin while the voice remains trapped in the throat." This biological cycle becomes a language for what cannot be spoken.

A large group of gouaches on paper forms a kind of colourful, bio-derived tapestry. The bruises generate their own layered narratives. Although the imagery recalls children’s literature – marine spirits, anthropomorphic insects, oversized flowers – the titles, each beginning with “bruise in the shape of…”, lend the works a markedly heavier tone. Their close juxtaposition is deliberate. Skin, membrane, vessel, membrane, drop… These recurring organic motifs are meant to shimmer at a distance, glistening like the bruise of the title. Healing takes time, and the number of works produced becomes its record. Fluder’s poetic, surreal gouaches trace a form of inner escape; the safe, coastal realm she has been constructing for years opens up a space for a gradual reckoning with fragments of the past. She does not romanticize violence; instead, she adopts a narrative she can inhabit.



Joanna Fluder | *Bruise in the Shape of Head-First Dives at the Very Edge of the Sea*
2026 | gouache on paper | 27.9 x 35.6 cm

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Joanna Fluder | *Bruise in the Shape of an Injured Finger*
2025 | gouache on paper | 35.6 x 27.9 cm

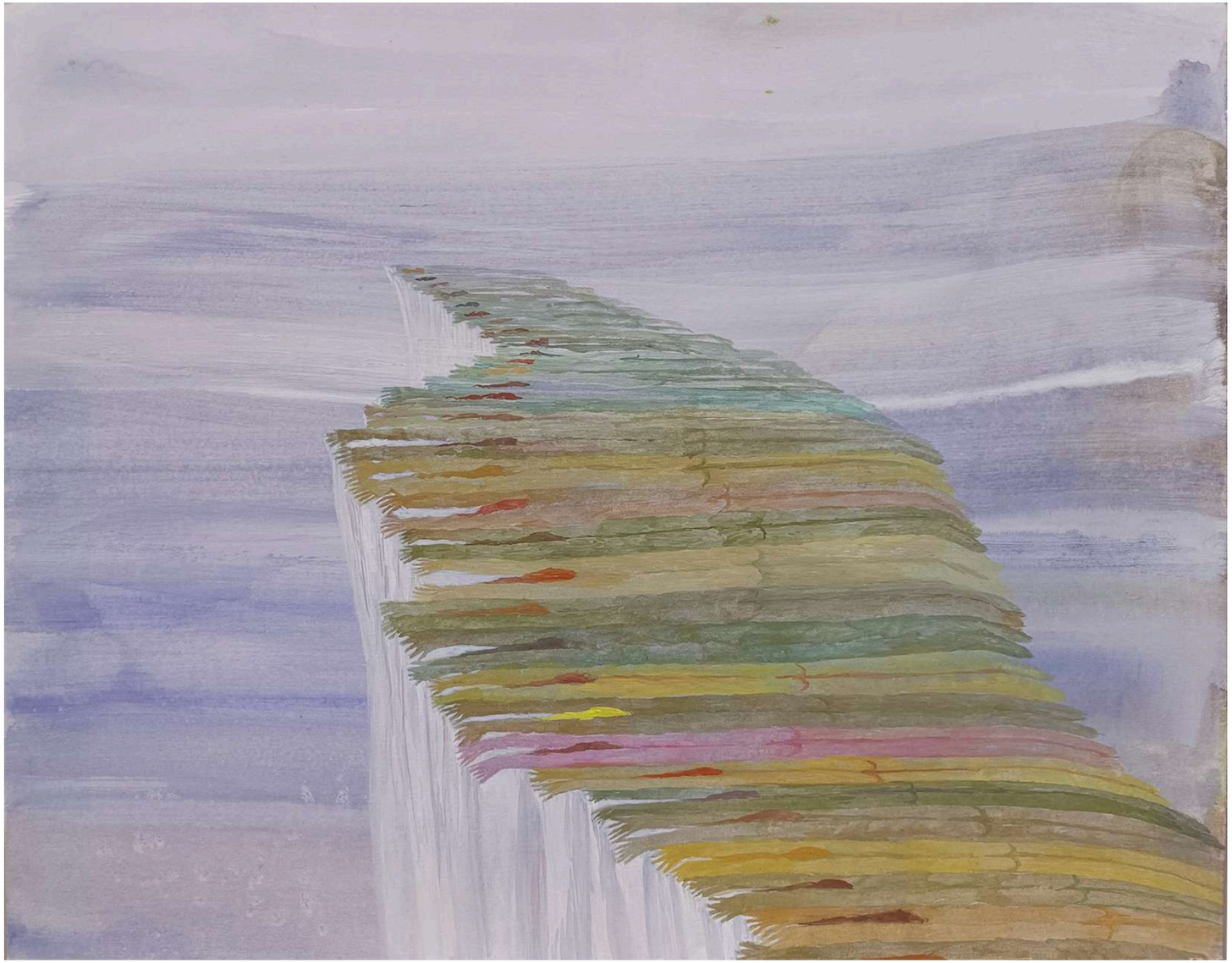
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Joanna Fluder | *Bruise in the Shape of Women Burned by the Heat of the Domestic Hearth*
2025 | gouache on paper | 35.6 x 27.9 cm

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Repetition is a central strategy in Fluder’s practice. A series of several dozen gouaches on paper, all bearing similarly structured titles, is accompanied by “Litany to the Bruises,” which functions like a mantra intended to hasten healing. In a trance recalling religious devotion, Fluder “recites” a litany addressed to her bruises, asking them for both mundane and more consequential things. She asks them to “move their wings”, but also to fund additional lessons for her children. In the litany, the bruise becomes a member of the family, a life partner. It is not enough that it heals, that it changes shape and colour. Fluder exposes its uselessness, only to finally pass it on to imagined allies – “goddesses who take all bruises upon themselves”. These goddesses alone are able to make use of bruises; they feed on their materiality. As in the work “Bruise in the Shape of a Cliff,” they sacrifice their bodies for others without losing any sense of play. Only they are capable of this.



Joanna Fluder | *Bruise in the Shape of a Cliff*
2025 | gouache on paper | 27.9 x 35.6 cm

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Joanna Fluder | *Bruise in the Shape of Digging in the Earth*
2026 | gouache on paper | 35.6 x 27.9 cm

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Joanna Fluder (b. 1981) is a visual artist working across painting, sculpture, video, and ceramics. She graduated from the Faculty of Painting at the Academy of Fine Arts in Kraków, where she completed her diploma in 2006 in the studio of Leszek Misiak.

Her work explores the relationship between humans and nature, the social role of care, as well as neurodiversity, gender, and feminist concernes within the context of life in the post-Anthropocene. She constructs a dreamlike visual language, drawing on surrealism and personal mythology.

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For many years, she worked in a domestic setting, creating at the kitchen table while raising children. This experience has shaped the spontaneous and expressive character of her art, rooted in the rapid recording of dreams, memories, and everyday situations. For the artist, painting has become a form of reflection and resistance to social norms.
Her work has been presented in solo exhibitions, including “Slime” at Zachęta – National Gallery of Art in Warsaw (2025) and “Observation Point” at the Gdańsk City Gallery (2011). She has also participated in numerous group exhibitions, such as: “Rewilding: the Breath of Creeping Shadows” at BWA Warszawa (2025) and “Nightwatching” at Potencja Gallery in Kraków (2020).



Joanna Fluder, phot. Bartosz Wajer @chicco_gallery

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ALL GOUACHES ON PAPER

SELECTION OF PROMOTIONAL WORKS

ARTIST PORTRAIT

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