

Work of Krystyna Ziach in Rijksmuseum Collection

Website of the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in
the Netherlands, 10 October 2012

In the fall of 2012 works by Krystyna Ziach have been included in the collection of the Rijksmuseum Amsterdam as part of the museum's plan to broaden the collection with modern art from the XXth and XXIst centuries.

Reopening of the renovated Rijksmuseum in the spring of 2013

The Rijksmuseum Amsterdam is the largest museum of the Netherlands and one of the most significant museums in the world. The museum has become particularly famous for its collection of paintings from the XVIIth century, the Golden Age of Dutch masters such as Rembrandt, Frans Hals and Vermeer.

The imposing building in which the museum has been located since the end of the XIXth century is on the Top 100 List of Dutch State Monuments. Since 2003 the museum building is undergoing the most important conversion in its history. The museum's reopening has been planned for the 14th of April 2013.

In line with the character of the existing collection, the museum wishes to broaden its scope with art from the XXth and XXIst centuries and in this way to start off a dialogue between old and modern art.

Krystyna Ziach is the first Polish artist of whom works have been included in the modern art collection of the Rijksmuseum Amsterdam.

After studying at the Art Lyceum of Krakow (1968-1973), Krystyna Ziach continued her education from 1973-1979, also in Krakow, with sculpture at the Academy of Fine Arts and simultaneously, history of art focusing on modern art at the Jagiellonian University under prof. M. Porebski.

The sculptures she made for her final project were shown at the Zacheta National Gallery of Art in Warsaw, in the context of the exhibition "The Best Work of Graduates from the Academies of Fine Arts in Poland in 1979".

After finishing both studies Krystyna Ziach left for the Netherlands in 1979, where she completed her art education in Enschede at the Academy of Fine Arts (AKI) in 1982, specializing in photography, video and graphic art.

As of 1983 she has been living and working in Amsterdam as a visual artist in the fields of autonomous photography and photo and video installation.

The works of Krystyna Ziach included in the Rijksmuseum collection are from two series: *Geometry I* and *Baroque* from the series "Metamorphosis" (1983-1985) and *Inner Eye I* and *Inner Eye II* from the series "Inner Eye" (2004-2010). In connection with Ziach's 1994 exhibition "A Chamber of Mirrors", Reinhold Misselbeck, curator of photography and new media of the Ludwig Museum in Cologne, wrote:

"/.../ With the series "Metamorphosis" (1983-1985) art critics considered Krystyna Ziach for the first time as an early representative of 'staged photography' and 'photo performance'. /.../ For Krystyna Ziach photography is the medium which helps her to integrate different aspects of her work: the concept, painting, performance, and later on also sculpture and spatial arrangements, together make up a new totality."

The photos from the series "Inner Eye" (2004-2010), have a conceptual character and are inspired by the work of the Surrealists. In the images the emphasis is on what is concealed, not on what the camera reveals. *"/.../ These images are of all time, by appealing to our personal imagination they inevitably create an interaction between the universal and the individual. /.../ Images seeming to offer themselves in a mediating role between spirit and matter, nature and culture, the conscious and the subconscious, between dream and reality."* (Text fragments from the book *"Infinity & Archê/ Krystyna Ziach"* 2006, written by Florent Bex, Honorary Director of the Museum of Contemporary Art MuHKA in Antwerp.)

From 1984 onwards Krystyna Ziach has exhibited in Europe, the US and Japan.

With the series "Metamorphosis" she participated in 1986 in "The Second International Portfolio of Artists' Photography" in the Litget Gallery in Budapest, Hungary; in 1987 she showed this black-and-white series at the ZPAF Gallery in Crakow and at Gallery Graphic Station in Tokyo, Japan. In 1988 she had her solo exhibition "Japan" in Arti et Amicitiae Amsterdam, followed in 1989 by the exhibition "Géographies Humaines" at the Musée de la Photographie in Charleroi, Belgium.

She further showed her work a.o. at the Camden Arts Centre ("Outer Space" 1992) and the Whitechapel Art Gallery ("Worlds in a Box" 1995) in London, at the Museum of Fine Arts in Houston Texas ("Tradition and the Unpredictable" 1994) and at the Photography Museum in Sittard, the Netherlands ("A Chamber of Mirrors/ Ten Years of Photoworks by Krystyna Ziach" 1994).

The solo exhibition "Archê" followed in 1996 at the Netherlands Photo Museum in Rotterdam and in the same year she participated in "Container '96, Art Across Oceans" in Copenhagen, Cultural Capital of Europe in 1996. In 1998 she presented her video installation "Blue Core" at the 18th Netherlands Film Festival in Utrecht. In 2000 she showed the exhibition "Aqua Obscura" at the Natural History Museum Rotterdam and participated with her work in the exhibition "Cos-Play" in Arti et Amicitiae in Amsterdam.

In the period 2002-2007 she took part in the annual exhibition "Grosse Kunstausstellung NRW" at the Museum Kunst Palast in Düsseldorf and in 2004 in the exhibition "Hypegallery" at the Palais de Tokyo in Paris. In 2008 her solo show "Infinity & Inner Eye" was included in "Photoquai-1ère Biennale des Images du Monde" in Paris and in 2009 she participated in the exhibition "Water-Currents" at the Thessaloniki Museum of Photography in Thessaloniki, Greece. In 2010 she showed her work at the Centre of Visual Arts Rotterdam, in 2011 in Arti et Amicitiae Amsterdam and in 2012 at the Foundation of Visual Arts Amsterdam.

Works of Krystyna Ziach are included in the collections of the Rijksmuseum Amsterdam, Museum Kunst Palast Düsseldorf, Museum of Contemporary Art MuHKA Antwerp, Maison Européenne de la Photographie Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France Paris, Musée de la Photographie Charleroi, Ludwig Museum Cologne and Museum of Fine Arts Houston Texas and in several private collections.

Her work has been published in several personal catalogues such as: "Japan", "Melancholy" and "A Garden of Illusion"; catalogues a.o: "Outer Space" and "Worlds in a Box", The South Bank Centre, London, "Container '96, Art Across Oceans", Copenhagen Cultural Capital of Europe, "Grosse Kunstaussstellung NRW", Düsseldorf, "Photoquai, 1ère Biennale des Images du Monde", Paris; magazines a.o: "Camera International", Paris, "Connaissance des Arts", Paris; newspapers a.o: "The Guardian" and "The Financial Times", UK, "Westdeutsche Zeitung", Germany, "De Volkskrant", "Het Financieele Dagblad" and "Trouw", the Netherlands; books a.o: "Photography as Visual Communication", the Netherlands, "L.F. Gruber-A Photographic Homage", Germany, "Le Portrait Photographique depuis 1960", Paris.

In 2006 the book "Infinity & Archê /Krystyna Ziach" with texts of Flor Bex and Janneke Wesseling was published at Thieme Art in the Netherlands.

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