

## *Tomorrow crumbles in hands*

Marta Zgierska

February 15 - March 23, 2024

Opening reception: February 15 from 5pm to 8pm, in the presence of the artist



Courtesy of the Artist and GOWEN, Geneva © Marta Zgierska

Marta Zgierska  
*From all angles I*, 2023  
Pigment print, Hahnemühle Photo Rag Pearl  
150 x 107,2 cm



Courtesy of the Artist and GOWEN, Geneva © Marta Zgierska

Marta Zgierska  
*The Vanishing*, 2021  
Pigment print, Hahnemühle Photo Rag Pearl  
70 x 50 cm

*Tomorrow crumbles in hands* is the second solo show by Polish visual artist and photographer **Marta Zgierska** (b. 1987, Lublin) with GOWEN. The exhibition unites selected pieces from the artist's wider body of work including elements from her different series entitled *Short Circuit*, *Overblossoms* and *From All Angles* presented at the Zachęta Project Space in Warsaw. Many works from her most recent series *Flame* are shown here for the first time. Through her practice of performance and photography, Zgierska - whose own body is the only one represented in her work as a whole - composes somewhat unconventional self-portraits. As the artist's practice takes a new direction towards sculptural objects, the show includes photography, sculpture as well as a site-specific installation in wood.

Zgierska investigates the predicament of the world. By abstracting scenes and symbols from their natural context, she creates her own lexicon of oppression and dependency, trauma and survival. Using wood, flesh, or metal, Zgierska combines images of the concurrence and mutual influence of elements of the orders of nature and civilisation, reflecting on the increasingly defenceless individual in a system full of threats. Focusing on weakness and withdrawal, the artist explores reality, inverting key gestures and selecting essential aspects of current crises and applies them to herself. As dominant new issues arise in the media and in society, Zgierska retains past concerns which persistently fester: the continuing erosion of women's rights, election campaigns based on hatred of minorities, the refugee, climate, and economic crises, and war. At the same time, Zgierska's response is positive, even beautiful: her practice is contemplative, sharing empathy with those who experience human vulnerability, struggles and emotion, both physical and spiritual. It is these unique states, efforts, and expressions that the artist pursues as routes to survival.



Marta Zgierska  
*Pepper Spray*, 2021  
Video

Courtesy of the Artist and GOWEN, Geneva © Marta Zgierska

Through their formally sophisticated compositions, Zgierska's photographic works taken from her *From all angles* series evoke abstract, natural elements – espaliered trees, bare and convoluted stems, woody segments, no longer self-supported but sustained by metal props. In other images, notably in her *Overbloom* series, shades are brown and grey, deep umber and ochre, of plants collected after winter. Or partial bodily elements such as hands or arms which connect with external objects, reliant on these manufactured aids. *Tomorrow crumbles in hands* further explores notions of damage reflected in the body, its fragility, including the illusory compulsion of physical perfection, as well as the sense of insecurity and threat caused by this unsettling contemporary reality.

In the words of Zgierska, "the recurring theme in my photographs is the status of women - both as subjects and objects of representation - but also the human condition today. In my artistic practice I explore the themes of trauma, extreme experiences and the tensions associated with them. I add a personal dimension to these, often using myself as the object in performative actions. I work with my own body, objects, and space."

Around 30 works are included into the presentation.

Courtesy of the Artist and GOWEN, Geneva © Marta Zgierska



Marta Zgierska  
*Overblooms V*, 2022  
Pigment print, Hahnemühle Photo Rag Pearl  
50 x 40 cm



Marta Zgierska  
*Overblooms IV*, 2022  
Pigment print, Hahnemühle Photo Rag Pearl  
50 x 40 cm



Marta Zgierska  
*Overblooms II*, 2022  
Pigment print, Hahnemühle Photo Rag Pearl  
50 x 40 cm

**Marta Zgierska (b. 1987 Lublin, Poland) is a PhD candidate in the field of Intermedia. She holds a MFA in Photography (Polish National Film School in Lodz), a MA in Theatrology and a MA in Social Communication and Journalism. Marta is the recipient of a number of scholarships and the author of award-winning works and books on art. In 2016 she was awarded the *Prix HSBC pour la Photographie*, in 2018 she was nominated for the *Foam Paul Huf Award* and the *DZ BANK Art Collection Fellowship* in 2019. Marta is also Editor-in-chief of *Postmedium*, a magazine dedicated to the presentation of texts by visual artists. Her works have been exhibited in numerous museums, galleries, and festivals and can be viewed in her current solo show at the Municipal BWA Gallery, Bydgoszcz, Poland. She will be a participating artist in this year's Fotofestival Lenzburg, Switzerland. Zgierska lives and works in Warsaw, Poland. She is represented by GOWEN, Geneva.**