

PRUSKI



#thisispruski 2011-2017

Album dedykuję Lawrence Carroll w podziękowaniu
za twórczą inspirację i pochylenie się nad moją sztukę
JAN PRUSKI

To Lawrence Carroll, to express my profound gratitude for creative inspiration and attention for my art.

Jan Pruski

THE IMPOSSIBILITY OF KNOWING

Where are we when we paint? Where are we when we sit and look back at the painting?
These of course are two different moments.
When some are painting I think the best painters cannot answer this, they are somewhere else.
They do not even know where they are.
When they later sit before the painting meaning starts to slowly emerge, make sense, start to be more clear but this takes time, perhaps years. And perhaps things become clear between the paintings.
One painting helps understand the next and the next. Things start to add up over time, become more clear and understood as the fog lifts.
Jan knows this, he understand this, he lives this.

Painting is a beautifully private affair, for some it has to be. For the best I believe it is. It has nothing to do with fashion of the moment and in chasing a belief that can never be sustained, it has to do with the urgent necessity of trying to understand a life while at the same time you see it passing you by, like trying to hold water in ones hand. The impossibility of holding ones breath so as not to sink, a painter has to always risk sinking, failing, there is no other way to be free.

Jan paints to understand a life that is not understandable, it is impossible to pin down. The closer you think you get to understanding a thousand more questions arrive. This is the beauty in what he paints, the impossibility of knowing.
What freedom this is, to know there are always more questions than answers, and always more paintings to come. For the possibility of painting in Jan's world is inexhaustible.

There is almost no blue or green or yellow in his paintings, there is white but it is a winter white, a blanket of white that covers the black and gray and soot and dust of a history so many are running from or trying to bury. This is an internal landscape. A landscape of memory that Jan is not letting us forget, whether it be a personal one or not. How can one move through life without facing life, how can one close the window or the door of memory and truth to smother the noise that we still can hear. I not only see and feel things deeply in the paintings of Jan, but I also, hear them. Even if I close my eyes to forget what I saw it is impossible to quiet the noise of knowing what I saw and felt. These paintings stretch between many worlds and this in one of there many strengths: They are private and at the same time public, they are seen and heard and they are most importantly felt.

In looking at Jan's painting I try to understand where I am in the painting. Am I looking in or am I inside looking out, or could it be both. Am I locked out or locked inside, is the light inside or outside. I ask this as I look at his painting ***Empty, Nobody In There***. Am I walking the stairs from the inside to the outside or the outside to the inside, this ambiguity amps up the tension of knowing where we are and most importantly which is better. Where are we more free? This is always the question of the painter, where are they more free.



LWC Front St. Studio Immersed in Blue, photo by Lucy Jones Carroll



*In looking at Jan's painting I try to understand where I am in the painting. Am I looking in or am I inside looking out, or could it be both. Am I locked out or locked inside, is the light inside or outside. I ask this as I look at his painting **Empty, Nobody In There**. Am I walking the stairs from the inside to the outside or the outside to the inside, this ambiguity amps up the tension of knowing where we are and most importantly which is better. Where are we more free? This is always the question of the painter, where are they more free.*

Lawrence Carroll



Jan Pruski
Empty. Nobody In There
74 x 70 x 13 cm
2017



MINIMUM MATERIALS

For me, creating art is almost a physiological activity, all of it builds up inside of me and my emotions have to be extracted outside. The key elements for me are discovering myself and searching for my own art language.

My specific paper techniques, scratching on old films, using offset paints, cloths, glues are all the result of poverty in the socialist Poland. My whole childhood was really poor and everything I saw was in gray or black and white, I did not know what a real colour is. I started painting in the 1970's, when I was 16 years old. I was not a privileged artist, therefore I had no access to frames and oil paints. My journey started with various paper techniques on chipboards, scratched out drawings on old films and wire sculptures, which later on became my trademark. My motto was: a minimum of materials and a maximum of art. Nowadays, when my studio has the opportunity to be filled up with infinite amount of jars and tubes of colourful paints, I still love to work with cardboard, concrete, glue and various raw materials. However, my motto remains the same and I live from one painting to the next one.

I grew up in Poland during post-war time, the echoes of war trauma are still deeply stuck in my head. I watch news from around the world and it frightens me that the human race tragedies may happen again. My head is filled up with memories, fears, anxiety and nightmares. I know what effect war can have, thus I do not want anyone to suffer and go through it again. I would like to escape and hide somewhere, where no one would find me, just like a little child.

By giving titles and naming my works, I was aiming to express in a simple way the spirit of what I think and what I create. These are not the real titles of my paintings, these are my emotions.

Jan Pruski

MAXIMUM ART

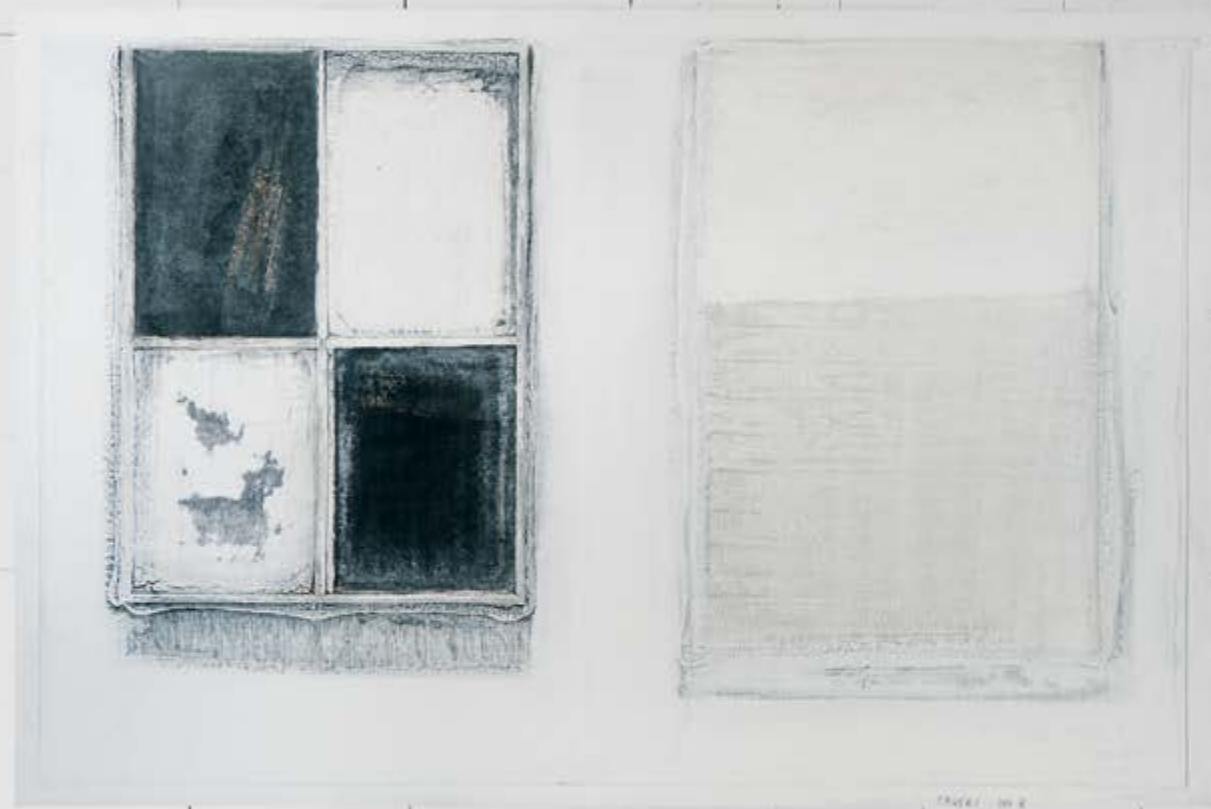
WINDOWS



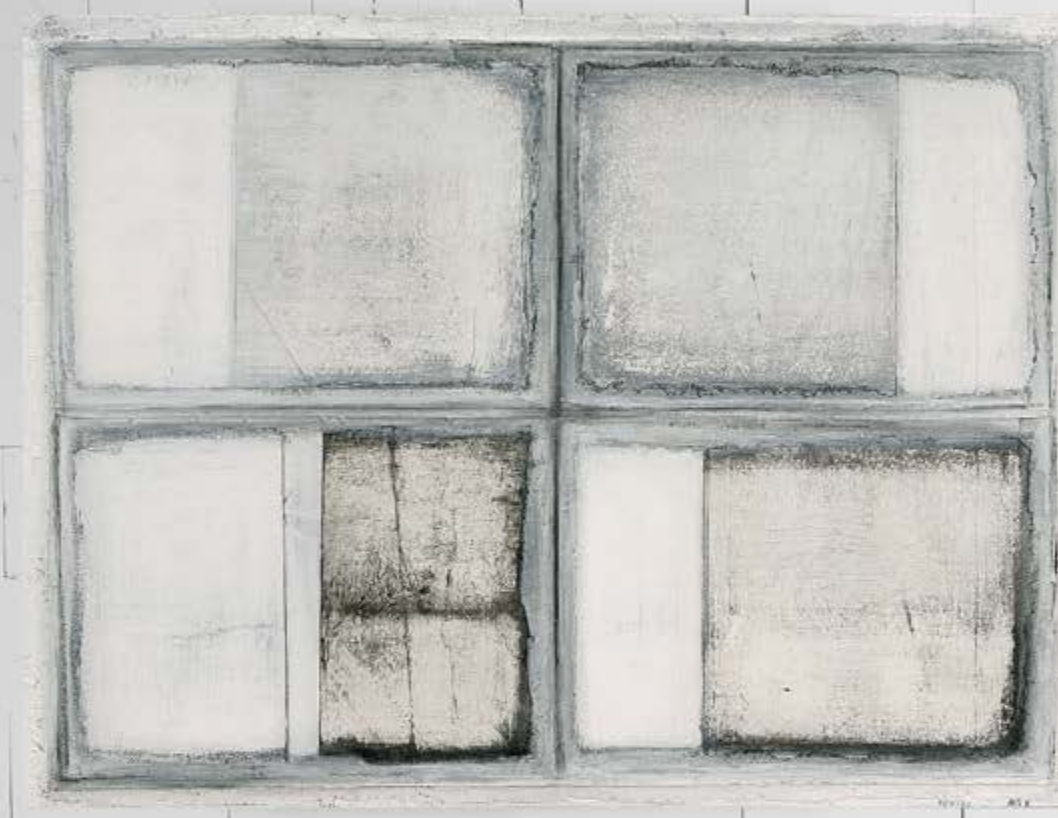
My Windows of Memories
Detail



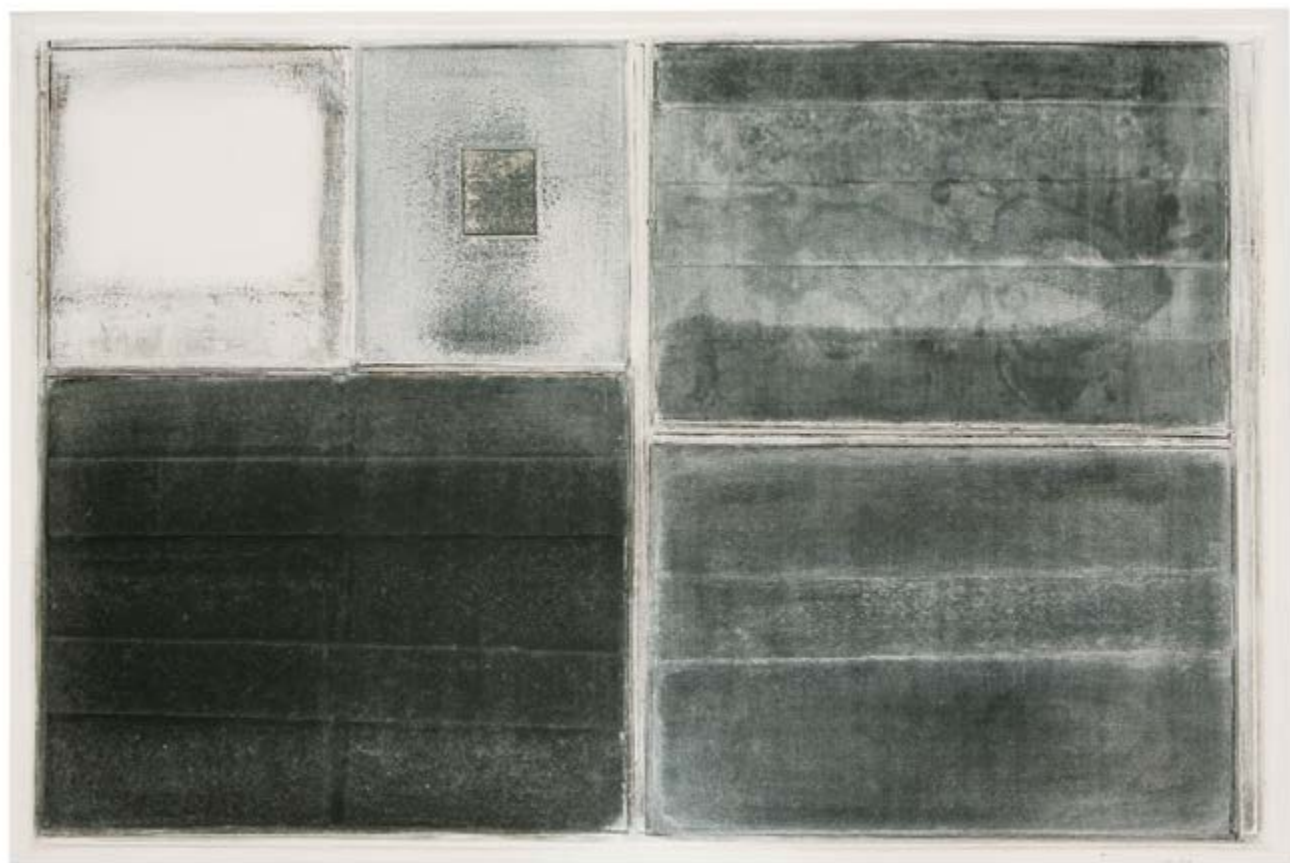
My Windows of Memories
148 x 170 x 3 cm
2012



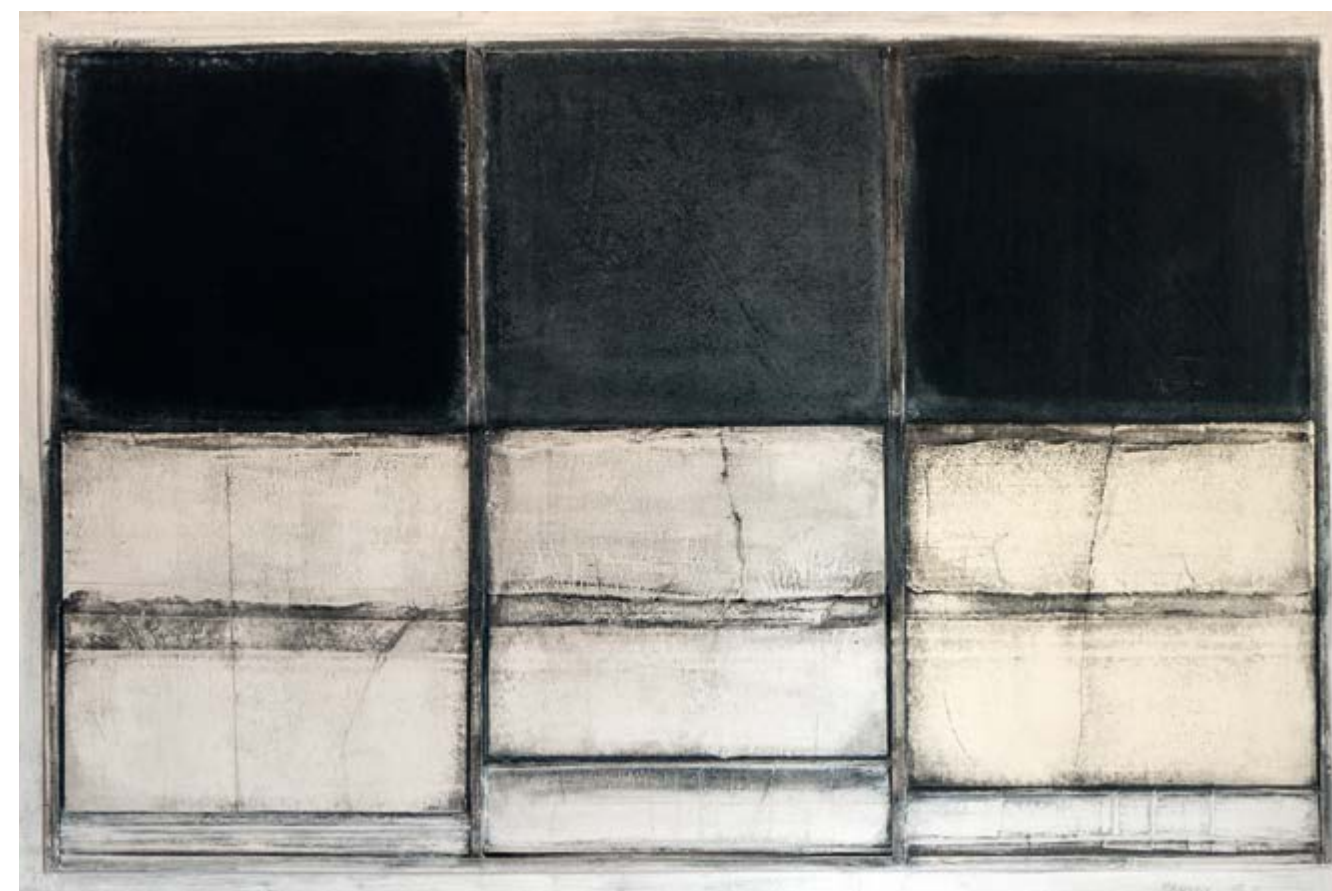
Empty Window
100 x 133.5 x 3 cm
2011



Hospital Window. Tribute to Henryk Czesnik
100 x 133.5 x 3 cm
2011



Carriages to the West
100 x 150 x 3.5 cm
2011



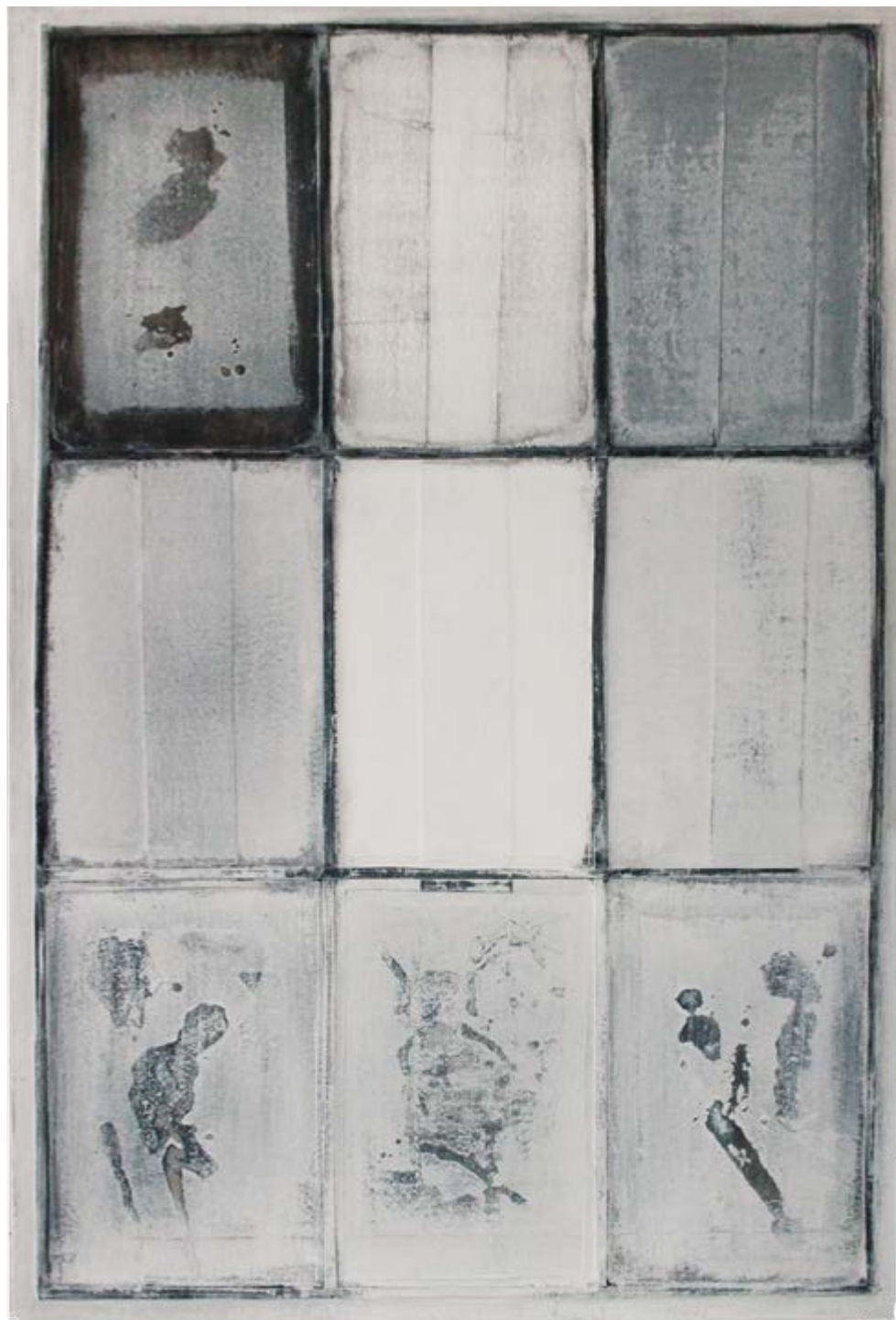
Train Window
148 x 170 x 3 cm
2011



Time Windows. Tribute to Roman Opatka
100 x 150 x 3.5 cm
2011



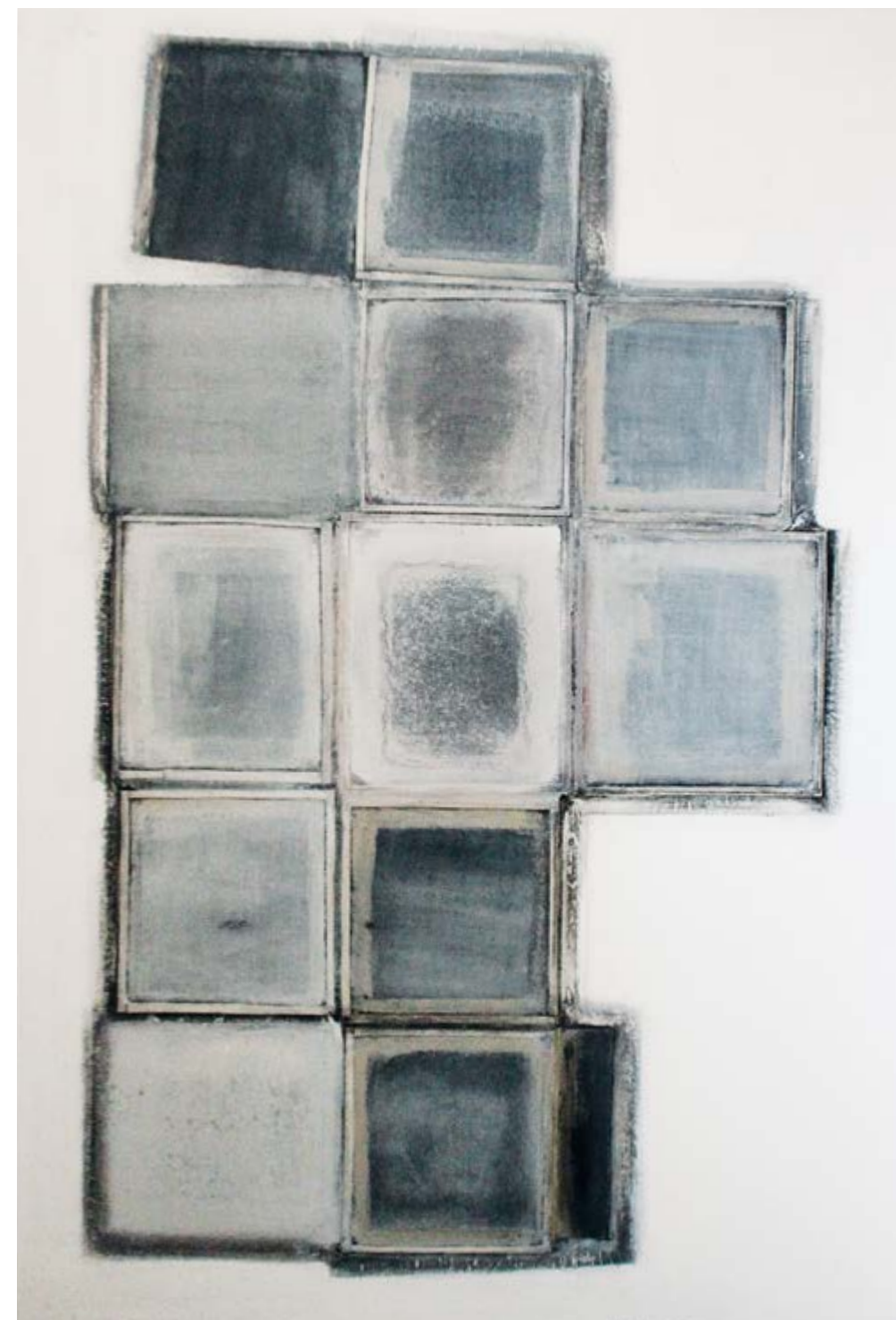
Factory Window
150 x 100 x 3.5 cm
2011



Window View into a Jam Session. Tribute to Miles Davis
150 x 100 x 3.5 cm
2011

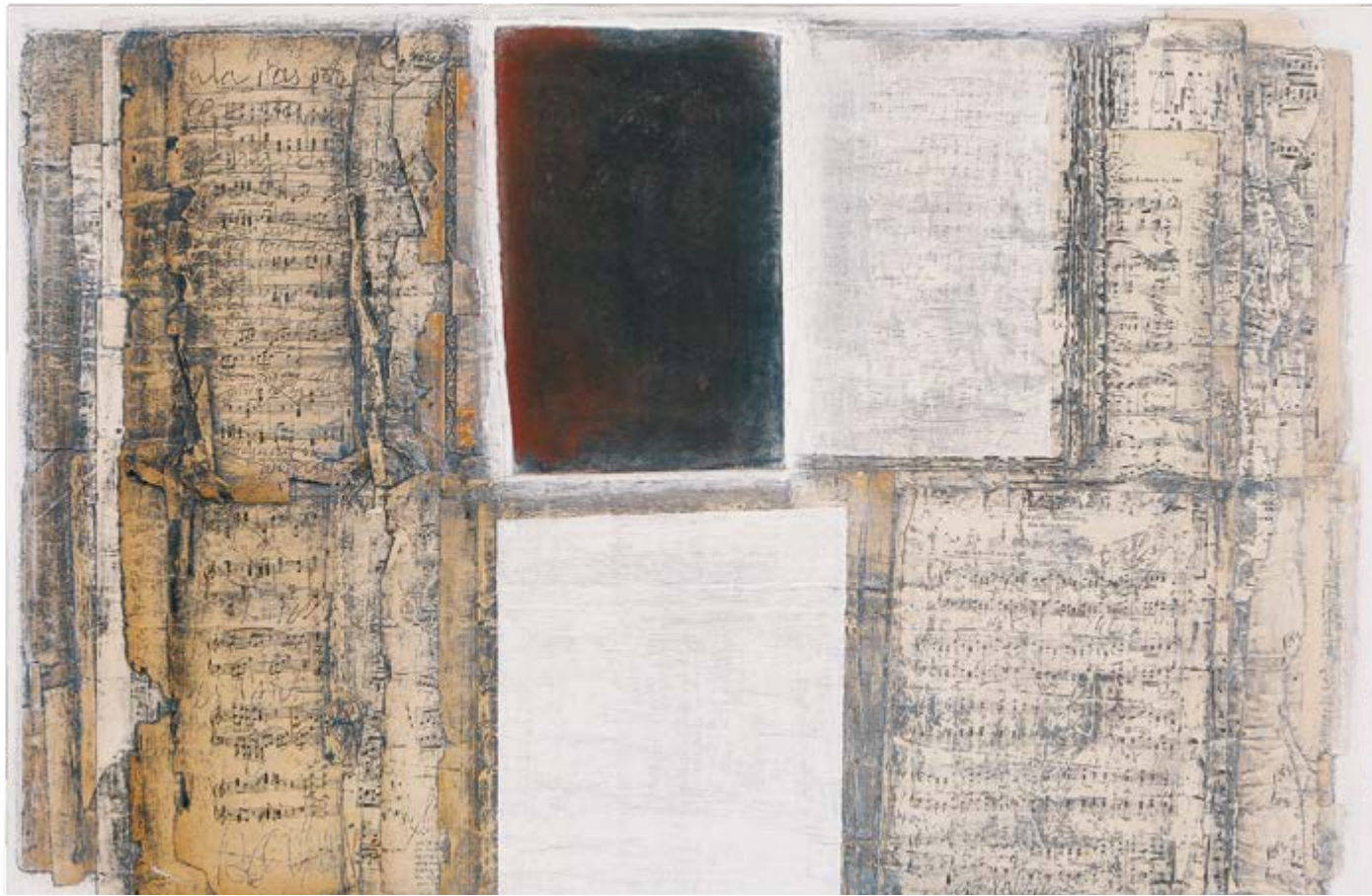


Frozen Window. Tribute to Jan Lebenstein
150 x 100 x 3.5 cm
2011



Windows-Cages
150 x 100 x 3.5 cm
2011

HOPE



Death Camp Orchestra 1/5
70 x 100 x 3 cm
2012

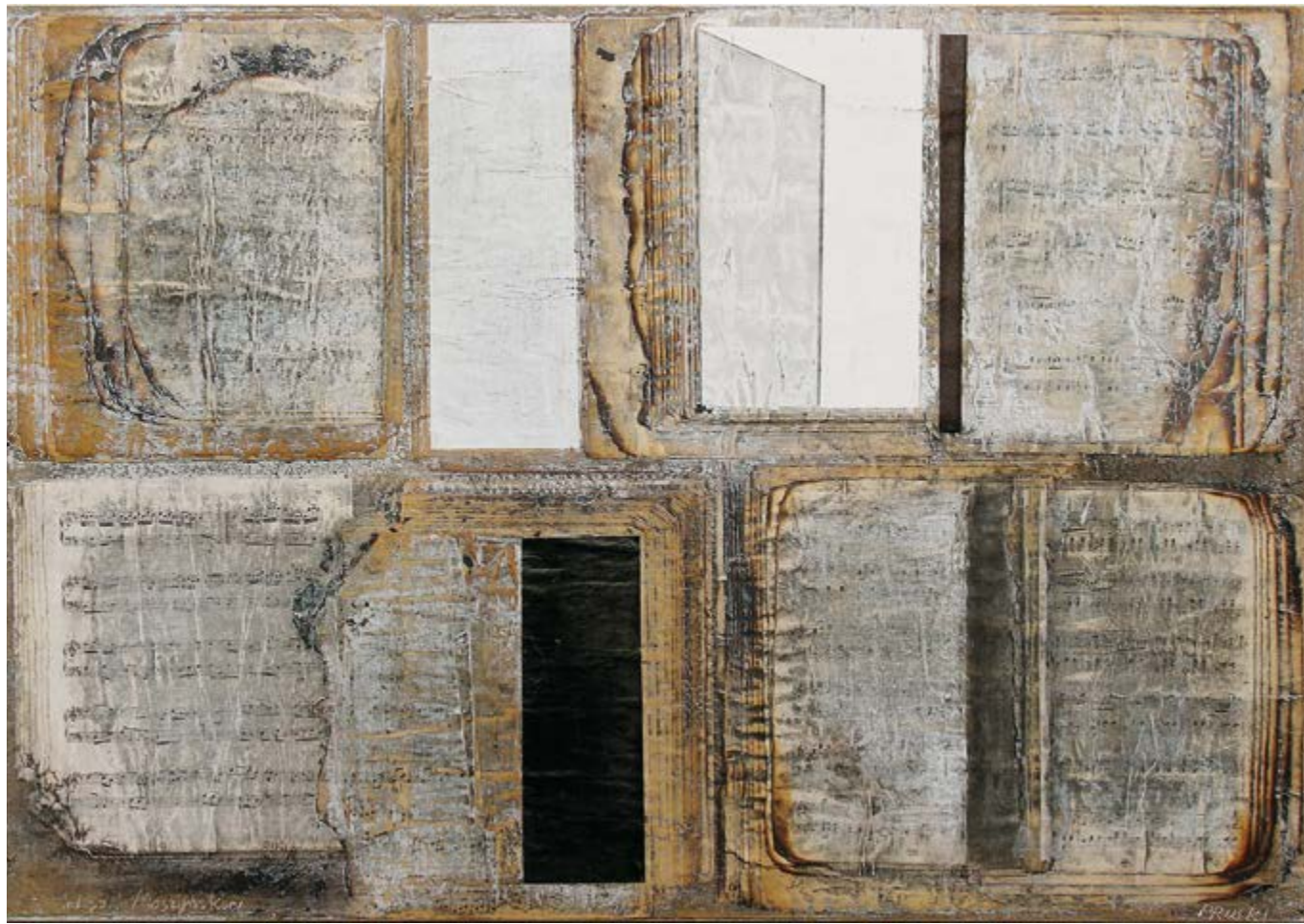




Death Camp Orchestra 2/5
100 x 65 x 6,5 cm
2016



Death Camp Orchestra 3/5
64,5 x 100 x 3 cm
2016



Death Camp Orchestra 4/5
70 x 100 x 3 cm
2017



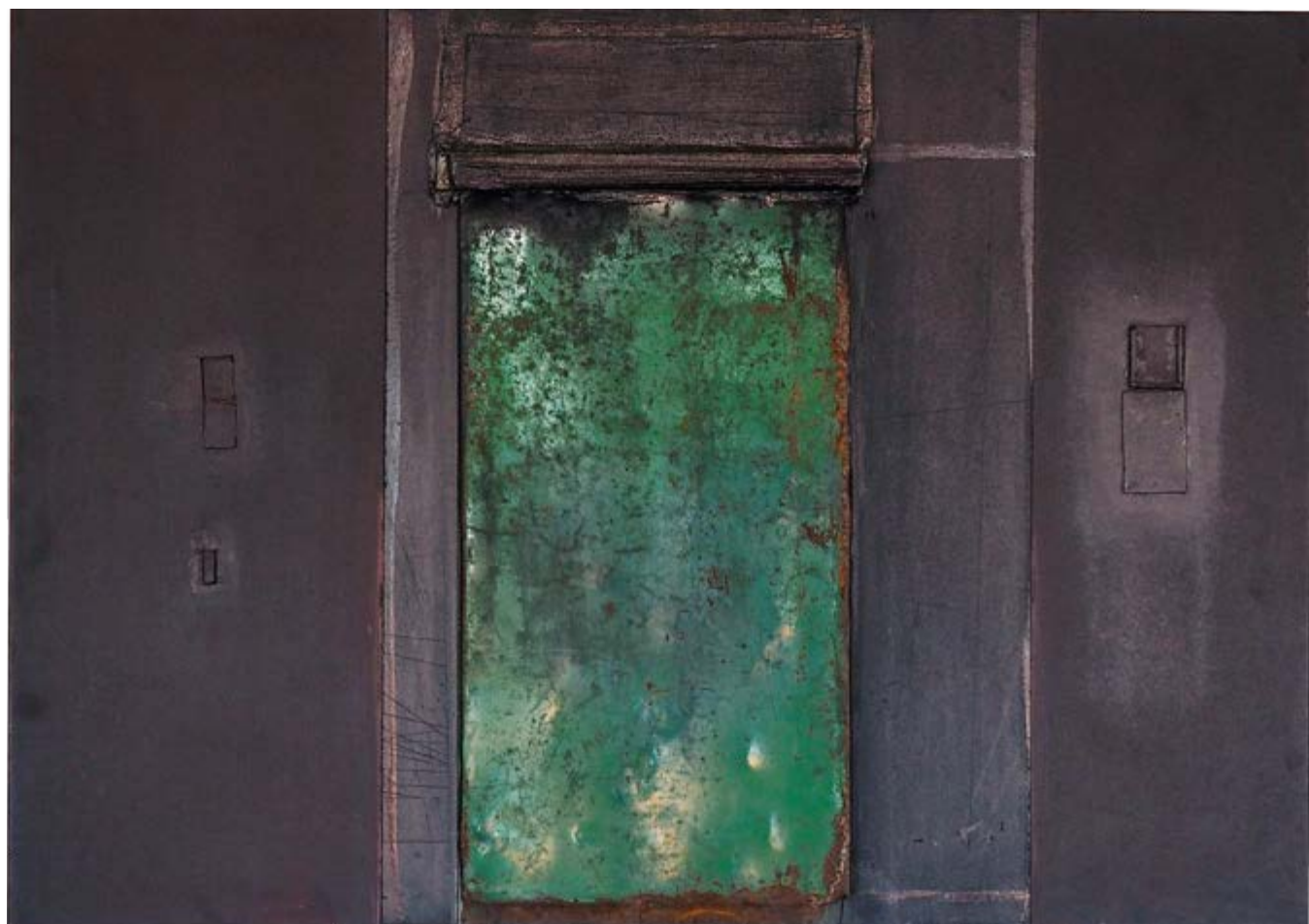
Death Camp Orchestra 5/5
70 x 74 x 6,5 cm
2017

ESCAPE



Everyone Is Gone
140 x 100 x 6 cm
2016





Escape and a Green Gate
100 x 140 x 6 cm
2016



Everything Is Closed
100 x 64,5 x 6 cm
2016



Shot Down on the Street. Tribute to Bruno Schulz
 100 x 65 x 3,5 cm
 2016



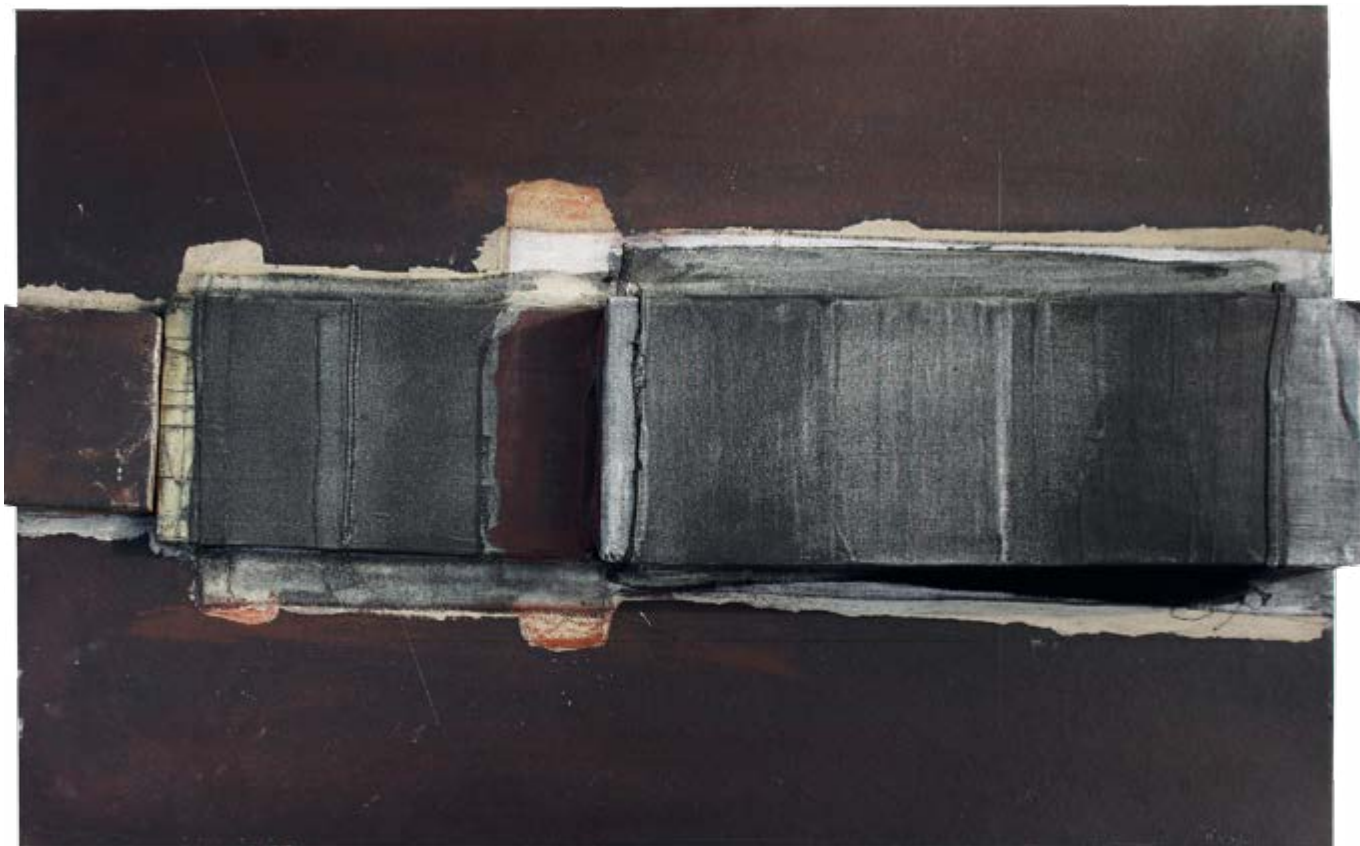
The Hidden One
 100 x 64,5 x 3,5 cm
 2016



My Blood
70 x 50 x 3 cm
2017



I Am Hidden
70 x 50 x 3 cm
2017



Reminiscence
70 x 100 x 10 cm
2016



Burnt-out Town
70 x 74 x 3 cm
2016



Mark Hlasko's The Wolf
56.6 x 120 x 7.5 cm
2014



Hunger And Cold
68.5 x 116 x 11 cm
2015



I Live in the Basement
100 x 70 x 12 cm
2016



I Am Running Away
140 x 100 x 3 cm
2016

FEARS



Buried Items
120 x 55 x 17 cm
2017





Hidden in the Basement
89 x 65 x 15 cm
2017



A Burning City
200 x 100 x 16 cm
2017



Portrait of the Artist
70 x 74 x 3 cm
2017



It Is Dark
70 x 74 x 9 cm
2017



The Dark Barrack
64,5 x 50 x 9,5 cm
2016



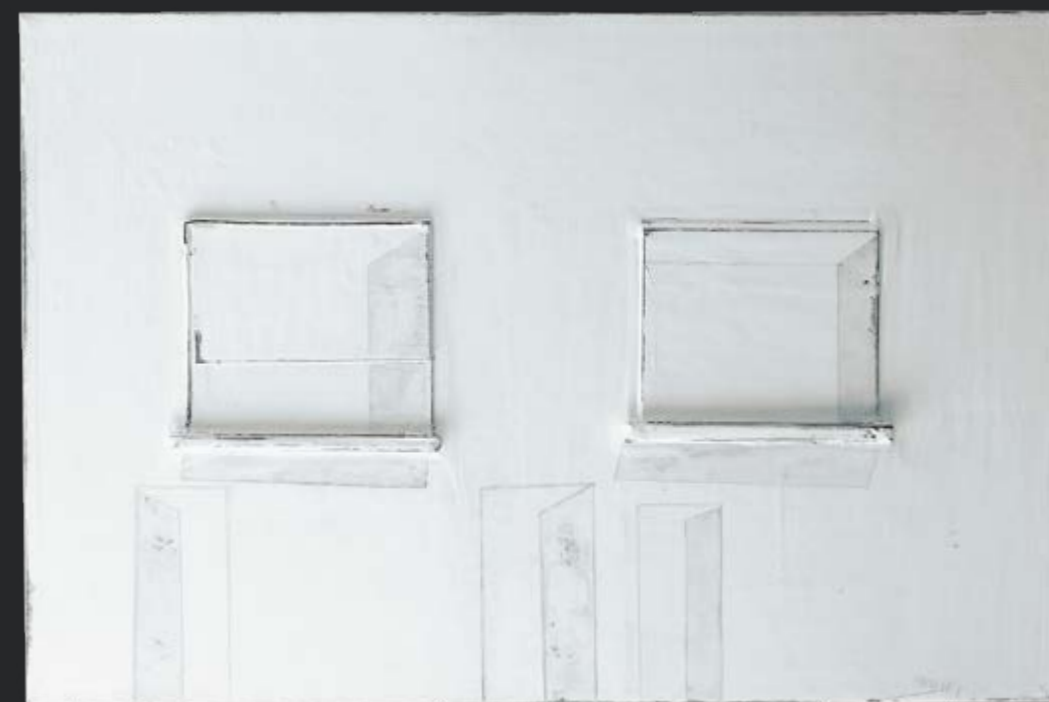
Message on the Glass
88 x 115,5 x 4 cm
2017

EXIT



For Maggie M. 486
119.5 x 90 x 9.2 cm
2013





Closed, Nobody In There
60 x 90 x 4.5 cm
2015



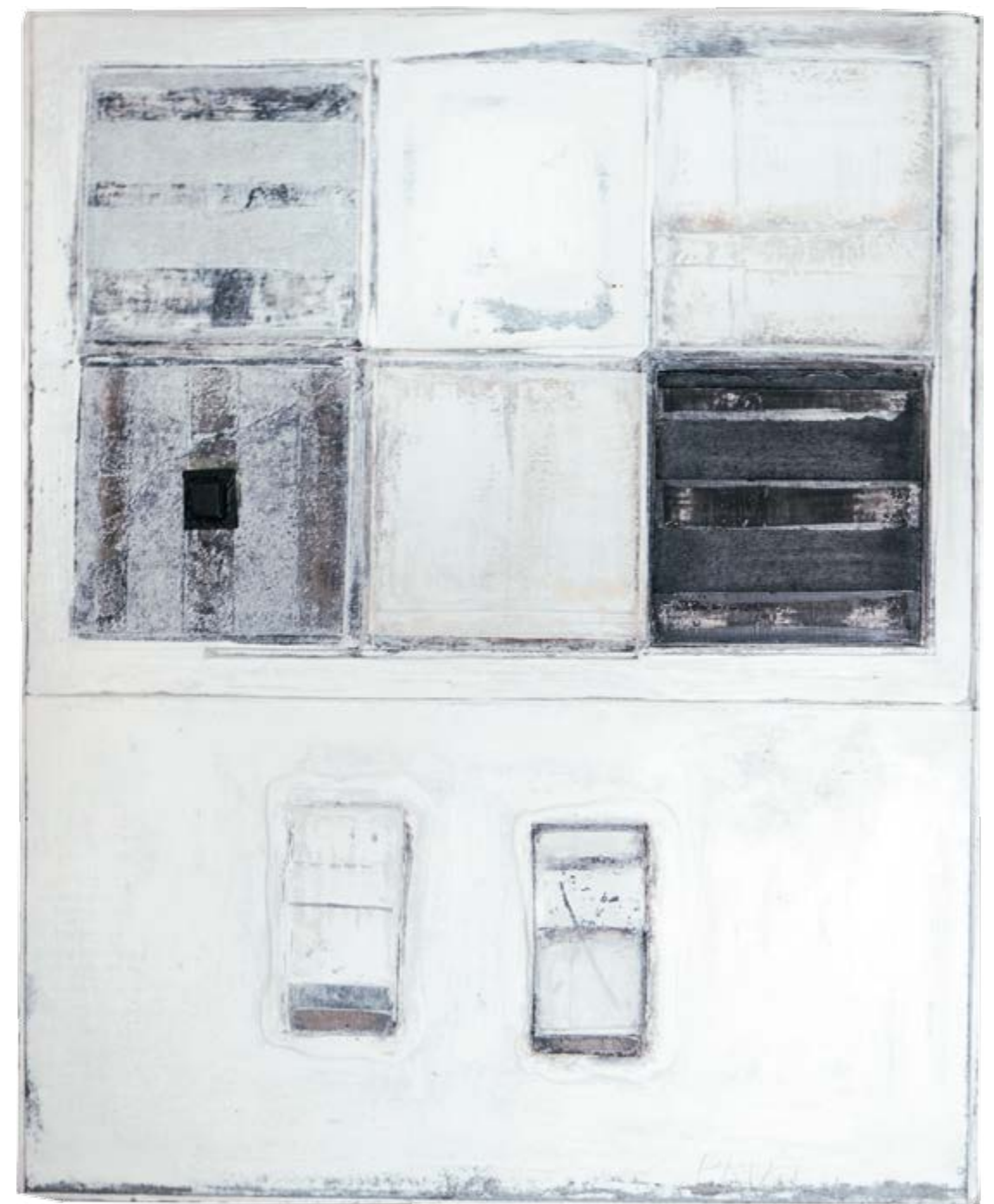
Dead of Hunger
90 x 146 x 11 cm
2016



Dead of Hunger
Detail



My Childhood
50 x 35 x 5,5 cm
2017



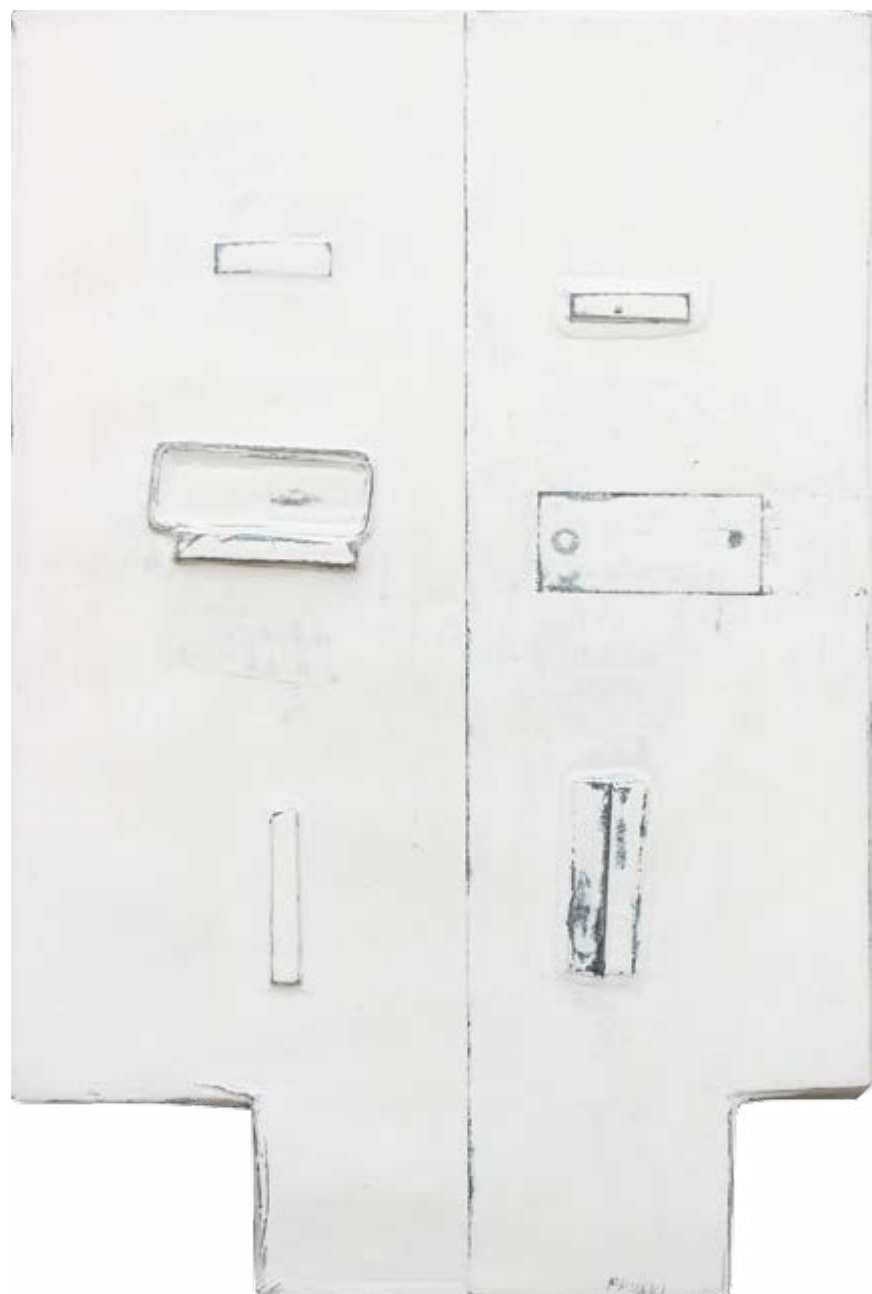
Shoah
104 x 85 x 9,5 cm
2013



Fear And Cold
70 x 100 x 3.5 cm
2017



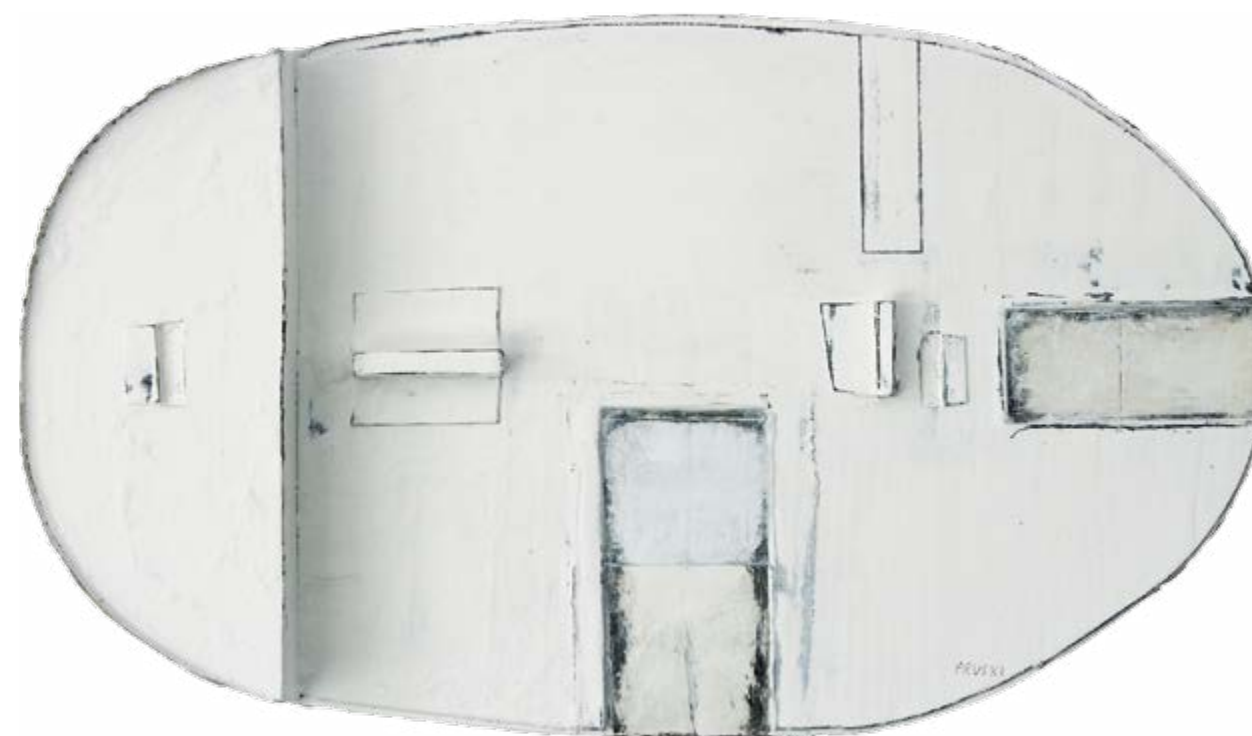
The Window in Tribute to the Artist Bruno Schulz
70.5 x 70.5 x 3.5 cm
2015



Grave Plate, For My Friend Andrzej Roguszka

63 x 42 x 4 cm

2015



Exit

85 x 96 x 10 cm

2017

NIGHTMARES



Detail





Minus 30 Degrees C Outside
140 x 100 x 8.5 cm
2017



The Burial Place of My Childhood
140 x 100 x 6.5 cm
2017



Broken Window
100 x 70 x 5 cm
2017



Loneliness of Growing Up
100 x 70 x 3.5 cm
2017



Cemetery
70 x 74 x 3 cm
2017



Where To Hide
70 x 74 x 3 cm
2017



Day in Ghetto
160 x 70 x 6 cm
2017

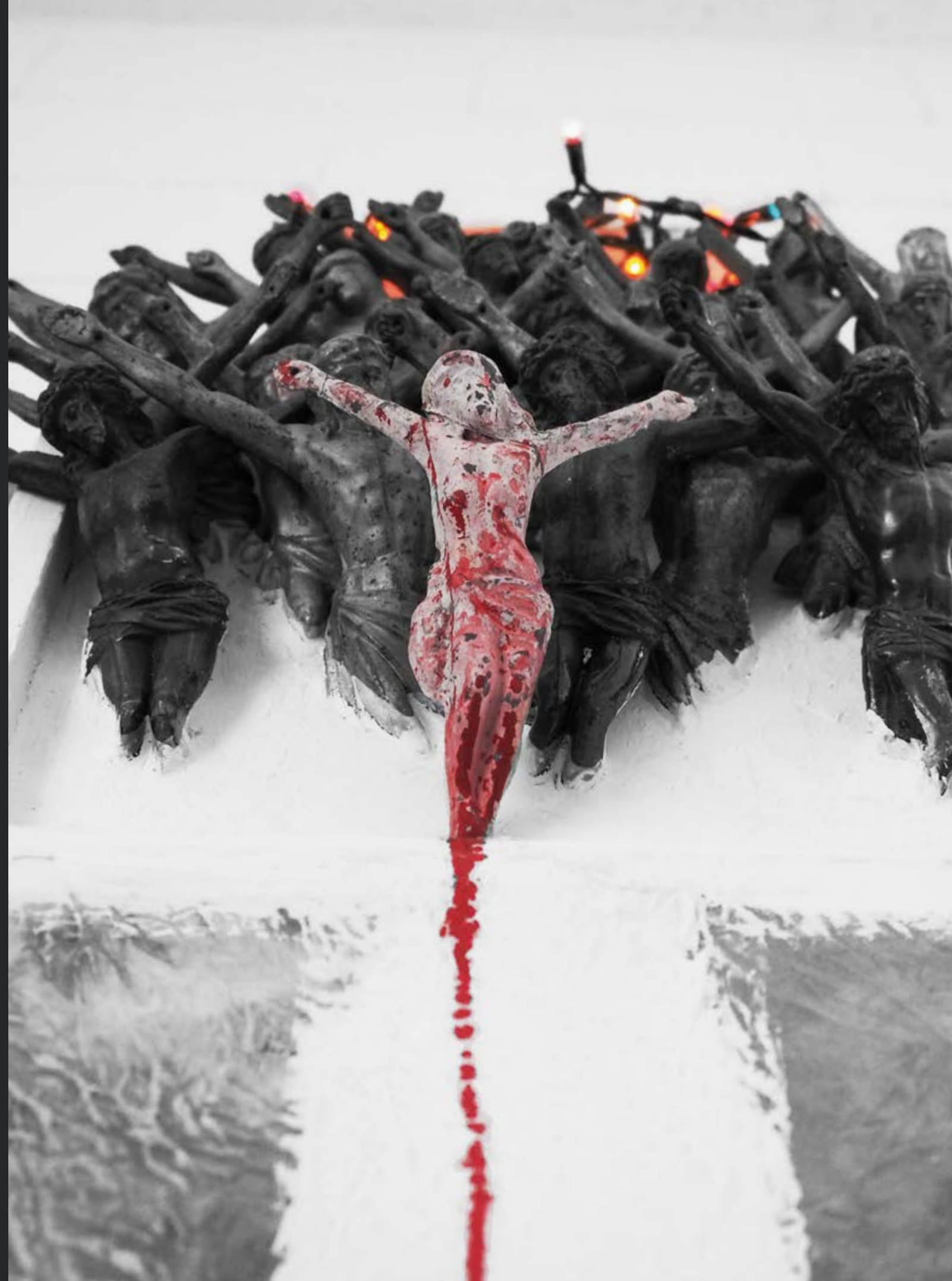


Night in Ghetto
160 x 70 x 6 cm
2017

WHERE WERE YOU?



Commercial Crucifix
90 x 92 x 14 cm



Concept: **Andrzej Kalitowicz**
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Tribute to the Youngest War Victims

JAN PRUSKI