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Curatorial Statement

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What does Anka Ptaszowska do in the art world? She is a critic, an author, a gallery owner and an exhibition organizer – but her work eschews categories defined by art history. Moreover, this *trouble agent* consciously refuses any form of professionalism. Anka, ceaselessly weaving networks based on friendship, has involved herself with great intensity at the sides of over twenty artists and created more or less temporary alternative venues, such as a gallery or a seminar.

1970 was a pivotal year for her. Since the early sixties – notably as co-founder of the Foksal Gallery –, she had been an active participant of avant-garde art in Poland – at that time, a communist country. Following profound theoretical conflicts, she crossed the Iron Curtain and befriended prominent figures of the French alternative scene. From Warsaw to Paris, there was no break – indeed, back-and-forth wanderings and “exchanges” have been a constant theme in a career she always conceived of as free.

In an interview, she explains: “Contradictions attract me so much that the logic of my life (if there is one) becomes legible only as a pathway towards a form of deconstruction.” Curating an exhibition about Anka has been a challenge for us, both as researchers and friends. Daniel Buren once advised Anka not to work *for* but *against* artists – as for us, we have made our way *right up against her*, and sometimes, *squarely against her*.

We have chosen, as a backbone, this thirty-two chapter scenario which was written in a literary and subjective style by Anka in 2016, in preparation for a yet undirected film. On the occasion of the exhibition, this text is published as an artist’s book and is meant to guide the public across the exhibition, and to elicit interpretation. In the Capc galleries, our extensive selection includes works personally important to Anka, pieces from her collection and documents culled from her archive. Sounds recordings provide anthropological and sensitive depth to the setting. Other elements of the exhibition bring to light critical nodes pertaining, for instance, to Anka’s relationship with politics, power, intimacy and womanhood.

Sara Martinetti and Maria Matuszkiewicz

Scenario	Anka Ptaszowska
Editors	Sara Martinetti and Maria Matuszkiewicz
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Research and curating	Sara Martinetti and Maria Matuszkiewicz
Production Capc	Emma Blanchard
Architecture	Olivier Goethals
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Editing of the images	Maciej Chodziński, Maciej Harland-Parzydło

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To Honorary Patron, Château Haut-Bailly

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