

# between the flats and the gardens **MIEDZY BLOKAMI** **A DZIAŁKAMI**

**The exhibition by Karolina Adamczak invites us on a journey through spaces where the stark geometry of prefabricated housing estates meets the lush greenery of allotment gardens.** It is precisely here, among concrete panels and wooden pergolas, that neighbourhood communities were shaped, enriching everyday life with rituals and customs – small gestures that gave meaning to the frames of concrete and vegetation. In her works, the artist carefully explores these zones of encounter – places where the architecture of housing estates intersects with the order of allotments – highlighting relationships, memories and shared histories.

Adamczak opens the modernist pavilion of the Museum of Housing Estates with a “green stained glass window”. The vivid colours of plants and summer images introduce us to the rhythm of the garden, set in contrast with the raw concrete of the estate. The interior is animated by vertical sliding panels: the artist gently moves them, revealing and concealing glimpses of both blocks of flats and allotments. This act becomes a performance – a gradual entry into family mosaics of memory: a bike ride with her mother, a sledging trip, a moment of joy at the garden gate. In these snapshots, everyday actions acquire an almost sacred dimension.

Portraits of three generations – grandparents, parents and the artist herself – are reduced to their essence. Stripped of superfluous props, the photographs radiate warmth and authenticity. Alongside them, multiplications of Adamczak’s own image emphasise her role as a mediator between past and present, building a bridge between personal history and the collective memory of place.

At the heart of the exhibition lies a “botanical atlas” – a set of photographs of allotment plants arranged in geometric rows. This precise order – an architecture of nature – evokes modernist urban grids, while also drawing attention to the beauty and cycles of the natural world. Yet within this static composition lies an echo of transience: each plant withers to give life to new shoots.

A two-channel video intertwines archival recordings from the artist’s childhood – with her mother behind the camera – and contemporary footage. Old and new images: on one side we see Adamczak’s parents in their youth, on the other – their recent visits to the same sites. Through parallel projection it becomes easy to notice how passing time transforms both people and places. The closed allotment gate becomes a symbol of what is lost, yet still accessible through memory.

The exhibition closes with four archival photographs from the first days of the allotment, placed on the wall of the market footbridge in Wileńska Street – a modernist gem now falling into ruin. This personal prologue juxtaposes private history with the condition of public space, raising questions about our responsibility for the places we create and surround ourselves with.

Situated within the modernist Słowacki housing estate designed by Oskar and Zofia Hansen, the exhibition draws upon their idea of architecture as a backdrop for events. In this spirit, Adamczak's work demonstrates that space is defined by the life unfolding within it. Daily rituals of co-existence, watering plants, nurturing and caring – these are what create the true fabric of a place, giving it meaning and identity.

The exhibition "Between the Flats and the Gardens" is a multi-layered essay on the everyday architecture of life. Each layer shapes a space that does not compete with human activity but instead accentuates and frames it. Adamczak does not build a concrete wall between block and garden but opens these spaces to each other, allowing in the light of memories, the smell of exhaust fumes and the taste of summer fruit. It is here, between blocks and gardens, that we find the true home – a place built collectively across generations, where architecture serves as backdrop and people with their everyday gestures become the most important work of art.

Karolina Adamczak – a Polish artist, born in Leszno, raised in Ireland, now based in Valencia. She specialises in video and performance art, exploring the full spectrum of human emotions – from sensitivity and loneliness, through the commodification of feelings, to reflections on death. Her projects expose the structures of contemporary society that lead to individual isolation, criticise neglect of the self, others and the environment, while simultaneously emphasising the value of authentic emotional experience. She views art as a form of activism: a tool for uncovering social problems, breaking taboos and healing communities through the building of genuine bonds. Her works are multi-layered narratives of love, unfulfilled dreams and ambitions, encouraging sincerity and openness to the fullness of human experience.

**Family photographs by:** Jan Płóciniczak, Eugenia Płóciniczak, Bernadeta Adamczak, Leszek Adamczak

**Curator:** Krystian Kamiński

**Exhibition design:** Michał Fronk

**Collaboration:** Paulina Tokarz-Mazurek

**Visual identity:** Krystian Kamiński

**karolina** **adamczak**  
21.08 — 21.09