



## Edward Krasieński's "Overhead Sculptures": A Manifestation of Modernity

Elżbieta Błotnicka-Mazur

Krasieński's composition was suspended in air, it was floating by a miracle of levitation—above the grass, on which it left its red splashes, initially it moved vertically upwards, then, turning suddenly in a horizontal direction, it visibly gained a force through a length, that faded from black to white; then, after losing its continuity, it imposed itself after an interval (full of the expectation of a stroke) with its sharp, more and more red spike piercing the horizon. The creation caused me to exclaim with surprise: that is an "aerial creation," newness. When I came closer, I understood the miracle of levitation: Krasieński stretched his "spear of the atomic age" . . . on the thin wires strung between the trees. But the wires were invisible, the speeding spear had, in the eyes of the viewer, its own gravitational field.

Julian Przyboś, "Overhead sculptures"<sup>1</sup>

Polish poet and art critic Julian Przyboś (1901–1970) drew upon interwar avant-garde ideas to apply the concept of "overhead sculptures" to the linear sculptural compositions entitled *Dzidy* (The Spears), by the artist Edward Krasieński (1925–2004), who presented his work at the second (1964) and third (1965) Koszalin Plein-air exhibitions in Osieki (Poland).<sup>2</sup> The epigraph, which refers to a significant moment in Krasieński's oeuvre, captures the purpose of this article: to present the cycle of the artist's "overhead sculptures" as a manifestation of modernity.

Polish modernism originated in the concepts of artists connected with the prewar group "a. r." from Łódź (Katarzyna Kobro, Władysław Strzemiński, Julian Przyboś). The political and artistic

MODERNISM / *modernity*  
VOLUME TWENTY NINE,  
NUMBER THREE,  
PP 653–671. © 2022  
JOHNS HOPKINS  
UNIVERSITY PRESS

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654 situation in the post-World War II Polish People's Republic in which Krasieński lived and worked serves as a background for discussing the commonalities between Krasieński's art and ideas of interwar avant-garde art and postwar theories, thus emphasizing the idea of modernity in the title "overhead sculptures."<sup>3</sup> There are heretofore unappreciated connections between interwar avant-garde experiments and Krasieński's works, especially his *Spears* compositions, which are based in the cultural reality of a postwar East European country.

Krasieński was born in 1925, in Lutsk in Volhynia (today's Ukraine), to an aristocratic family. During World War II, he studied interior design and graphics at the Staatliche Kunstgewerbeschule, established by the Germans in occupied Kraków (1940–1942). From 1945 to 1948, he studied painting at the Kraków Academy of Fine Arts. In 1954, Krasieński moved to Warsaw, where he began making press illustrations. From the start, Krasieński was involved with the "galerie autorskie" environment—the independent, to a limited extent, art galleries, like Warsaw's Krzywe Koło, founded by artists and critics during the communist era.<sup>4</sup> Following the gallery's closure in 1966, Krasieński teamed up with art critics (including Wiesław Borowski, Hanna Ptaszkowska, and Mariusz Tchorek), as well as the artists Zbigniew Gostomski, Tadeusz Kantor, and Henryk Stażewski to cofound the Foksal Gallery.<sup>5</sup> In the 1950s, his paintings could be seen as surrealistic poetics. In the early 1960s, Krasieński began making relief and spatial painting-objects out of slats, hinges, and wire. The next stage of his artistic activity was marked by "Spears"—sculptural compositions which, exposed in an open space thanks to almost invisible wire, gave the impression of movement. Line, a leading form of expression in Krasieński's spatial "interventions," was primarily shaped with rigid materials such as wire, plastic, or wood (which the artist exchanged for soft cable coil at the end of the decade).<sup>6</sup> At this time too, Krasieński began marking the space with blue strip—Scotch-Blue tape that appeared independently from surrounding objects. This technique gave unique conceptual form to his works and has become Krasieński's "trademark."<sup>7</sup> It also set him against the official art supported by Polish communist authorities, for whom Krasieński's work appeared to clash with the acceptable artistic landscape.

Although much has been published about culture and art in the Soviet satellite countries, important aspects regarding art in the Eastern bloc countries still bear emphasis. Krasieński debuted at a crucial historical moment, reaching maturity just as socialist realism was being imposed in Poland (1949–1955) and Stalinist repressions were surging.<sup>8</sup> Official communist doctrine at this time regarded abstract art and other such creative innovations as manifestations of suppressed formalism. For this reason, many artists welcomed the post-Stalinist political and artistic "thaw" from 1955 to 1960. In truth, however, artistic independence in this period was illusive and limited. Merely substituting the Stalinist strategy of direct artistic repression with a "supervisory" policy led many Polish artists to avoid criticism in order to safeguard their artistic autonomy.<sup>9</sup> The artists understood their antisocialist realist posturing as a modernist paradigm, since it lacked the kind of political engagement that would have offended the Polish communists.<sup>10</sup> Nevertheless, communist authorities soon undertook efforts to limit artistic freedom. One of the more notable, yet bizarre examples of this trend

was the official guidelines from 1960, which only allowed for up to fifteen percent of abstract artworks to be exhibited publicly (Piotrowski, *Znaczenia Modernizmu*, 70–79).

Polish artists who sought to protect their creative freedom from politicization and censorship were thus forced to present their works obliquely. Since their art, seemingly of autotelic character, lent itself to multiple interpretations, the artists played a subtle game with both authorities and an audience accustomed to looking for revisionist subtexts everywhere. Krasiński himself, however, maintained distance from official authorities. He expressed his attitude towards reality by “living in art.” He also used irony and humor to undermine subtly traditional forms of artistic sensibility. His friendship with the painter Henryk Stażewski (1894–1988) undoubtedly influenced Krasiński’s lifestyle. Since 1970, Stażewski and Krasiński shared a studio apartment on the eleventh floor in a block of flats on Solidarności Avenue (formerly Świerczewskiego Street) in Warsaw. Stażewski, a leftist during the interwar period, cofounded the international avant-garde group of artists known as Blok, Praesens, and a. r., was a member of Cercle et Carré, Abstraction-Création, and was closely connected with Kobro and Strzebiński. After World War II and the imposition of socialist realism, Stażewski lost interest in actively participating in social and political reality. Absorbed in his art, he took such an ironic stance toward the political situation that he turned the absurd into a joke. The atelier that Stażewski shared with Krasiński for nearly twenty years became a kind of artistic laboratory, filled with creative interventions after Stażewski’s death.<sup>11</sup>

Central to this atmosphere was the writer Julian Przyboś, who, together with Stażewski, transmitted the ideas of the interwar avant-garde tradition and became a catalyst of change for new art. His press commentaries, which aroused contemporary readers from the lethargy of political correctness, inspired me as a reference point for analyzing the artist’s work as a manifestation of modernity in the context of kinetism—in particular perceptual artwork in relation to its surrounding space, and the artist’s interest in the achievements of science and technology (Przyboś, “Rzeźba napowietrzna,” 75–81).<sup>12</sup> Thus this study not only examines *Spears*, as presented during the summer Koszalin Plein-air events, but also an artwork from the same series which, though never presented there, circulated as part of a series of photographs taken in Zalesie (near Warsaw) by Eustachy Kossakowski, and is now available in the digital collection of the Museum of Modern Art in Warsaw.<sup>13</sup>

Researchers to date have shown little interest in Krasiński’s participation in Koszalin Plein-air events, and we thus lack a detailed analysis of the artworks he presented there. This raises several issues. The first concerns the assumed participation of Krasiński in the Second Plein-air (1964). His name is not on the official participant list. Most likely it was Ptaszkowska, an invited art theoretician, who facilitated Krasiński’s entry. This suggests that Krasiński arrived in Osieki unofficially, as confirmed by the film documentation of artworks presented at the Plein-air, where his composition *Wielka Dzida* (Great Spear), can be spotted (Pawłowski et al., *Kolekcja Osiecka*, 471–72). In an almost twenty-second-long section of the archival film, an artist may be seen mounting his work.<sup>14</sup> We may thus assume that an artwork commented on by Julian Przyboś in his press review of the Second Koszalin Plein-air cited below was, in fact, the *Great Spear*:

656 Krasieński's creation had somehow the best interaction with the surrounding space . . . . A dynamic composition splashed on the ground with its red forms suddenly leapt up, strung on the wires in between two tree trunks, aiming with a red spike at the greenery. ("Plener," 6)<sup>15</sup>

It seems appropriate that this quote from 1964 is related to the aforementioned section of the article "Overhead sculptures," published two years later (Przyboś, "Rzeźba napowietrzna," 75). It is challenging, however, to associate this description with the realization of a specific artwork. At the Third Koszalin Plein-air (1965), in which Krasieński formally participated, he realized several versions of the *Spears*, as shown in the color photographs held from the collection of the Museum of Koszalin (fig. 1), as well as the surviving film record.<sup>16</sup> Regrettably, not all the activities at the Plein-air events were documented (Ziarkiewicz, *Awangarda w plenerze*, 182–83; "Osieki '64"; "Osieki '65"). Moreover, interpretations of the press commentaries by Przyboś are constrained by the fact that he was not only a critic, but above all a poet, rendering it pointless to try to interpret his texts literally. These questions would constitute good starting points for potential biographers of Krasieński.



▲  
Fig. 1. Edward Krasieński, *Dzida (Spear)*, 1965. Wood, nails, wire, 198 x 72 x 5 cm [left]; Edward Krasieński, *Obiekt w przestrzeni (Object in space)*, 1964/1965. Eight wooden bars painted black, white and red, metal wire, 260 x 100 x 11 cm [in the middle]. Photo taken in Osieki in 1965. © Museum of Koszalin.

The *Spears* were made from wooden and metal wire elements, presented in open space, and hung on thin, almost invisible wires strung between trees.<sup>17</sup> The text "Overhead sculptures," by Przyboś, was both a poetic analysis of Krasieński's works and a pioneering examination of their kinetic aspect as a continuation of the prewar constructivist ideas the critic promoted from the mid-1950s. According to this theory, an artist, like a scientist in a laboratory, should integrate art with science and industry, which would in turn break down the borders between artistic activities and other types of work.<sup>18</sup>

One aspect that particularly impressed Przyboś, given his excellent knowledge of the interwar avant-garde, as well as postwar art in Poland, was the relationship between the composition and its surrounding space, something akin to utopian integrity.<sup>19</sup> The critic thought highly of the artist's awareness and intentionality of these mutual dependencies. According to Marcin Lachowski, the Second and Third Koszalin Plein-air, as illustrated by the surviving archival documentation, became arenas to explore new venues for art exhibition. For other participants too, the natural scenery was not only integral to their post-Plein-air actions, but it provided a source of theoretical reflection to recognize the autonomic boundaries of a visual art creation.<sup>20</sup> While Przyboś's allusions may provoke polemical remarks (for example, with regard to Krasieński's realizations as a creative continuation of the sculptural conceptions of interwar Polish artist Kobro, the critic omits the differences between the artists in their perception of space), his poetic findings offer several noteworthy ideas. Following them would thus allow one not only to trace the specific "trajectory" of an imaginary flight of the *Spears*, but, in an inspirational fashion, it may also broaden the interpretation of such aspects as movement, the viewer's perceptive engagement, shape, or the meaning of color (Przyboś, "Rzeźba napowietrzna," 75, 78).

## The Movement

It does not fly by itself, something just happens to it. The spears hung on the wires [strung wires] from one tree to another gave an impression of motion. They were whisking . . . This was all about the preparation of the spear to perform its function. Later it would act on its own, but I had to prepare it in a way known to myself through specific actions, artistic actions.

Edward Krasieński, in *DROLE D'INTERWIEV*<sup>21</sup>

One clue for the interpretation of these compositions seems to be their simulated dynamics—the motion, in an open space, that exists only in the viewer's imagination. A particularly interesting way to broaden the scope of interpretation for Krasieński's *Spears* thus applies the scientific concept of dynamics, the branch of mechanics that deals with the motion of objects due to the forces acting upon them. The principal aim of this physical science is to describe this motion.<sup>22</sup> From this perspective, we may regard Krasieński's work as the artistic equivalent of a "rigid object," the material points of which cannot move in relation to one another—the *Spears's* construction is superseded by a steel rope.

658 Further analogies may be deduced on the basis of another characteristic—each point of the “rigid object” moves along the same path for the same time period. In the case of the *Spears*, this motion is simulated, and the laws of physics cease to apply. But this deviation is based on principles of mimesis utilized in art for centuries, just as with the application of perspective to imitate three-dimensional space on a plane. The lack of movement of the “rigid body” is the most inspiring feature here, but the issue of its quiescence and balance is no less significant.<sup>23</sup> The dynamics of Krasíński’s *Spears* may be observed not only in the actual motion of the objects, but also in the changeable relationships between matter and space. As Alexander Alberro notes, they create a tension and sense of instability in the viewer in relation to the three-dimensional creation.<sup>24</sup> The viewer may thus imagine that the view of the *Spear* “set in motion” by the artist, which is available to their perception, results from its temporary “stoppage” at a given point. This brings to mind Zeno of Elea’s arrow paradox, which, in accordance with the observations of this Greek philosopher, cannot be in motion and stasis simultaneously. Analogously, the apparent motion of the *Spear* becomes actual inactivity, and a simulated flight becomes passive floating above the ground.

The suspension of the elements on almost invisible strings or thin wires further destabilizes this relationship. There is an obvious analogy with Alexander Calder’s compositions. In the 1930s, Calder began constructing mobile installations suspended from thin wires, at the ends of which he mounted flat metal pieces painted with clear colors. Yet if it is difficult to deny the possibility for physical motion (from either wind or the observer’s intervention) in Krasíński and Calder’s compositions, the conceptualization and realization of mobility differs between them. By counterbalancing the thin arms of an appropriate weight and length attached to metal discs, the American artist successfully introduced natural movement into his sculptures. As for the spinning motion in Calder works like *Hanging Mobile* (1936), Rosalind E. Krauss has noted the potential of creating a virtual sculpture volume that exceeds Nahum Gabo’s *Kinetic Construction* (1920) with respect to the anthropomorphic nonuniform activity of the human body.<sup>25</sup> What is crucial in Krasíński’s *Spears* is not the potential for mobility of individual construction details per se, but rather the internal tension between the overall composition and the viewer’s experience.

What, then, is the causative power that sets Krasíński’s *Spears*—functioning as they do so seemingly independently in space—into motion? When facing the *Spear* known from Eustachy Kossakowski’s photos from Zalesie, the viewer encounters a form reduced to a pointy line, moving in parallel with the horizon, and from which something like the red splinters of a disorderly trajectory are snapped off (fig. 2). This effect is particularly well illustrated in the photos referenced below.<sup>26</sup> The energy of the *Spear* is intensified by the specific framing from the “frog perspective,” which exposes an installation suspended to the ground against the background of a bright though cloudy sky.<sup>27</sup> In most of the Zalesie pictures, the photographer immortalized the artist interacting with his composition. In this case, the artist is not only a creator, but also the first viewer of his artwork, putting it into real as well as virtual-imaginative motion at a specific time and place. While the *Spear* was initiated with a demiurgic gesture by the creator, he

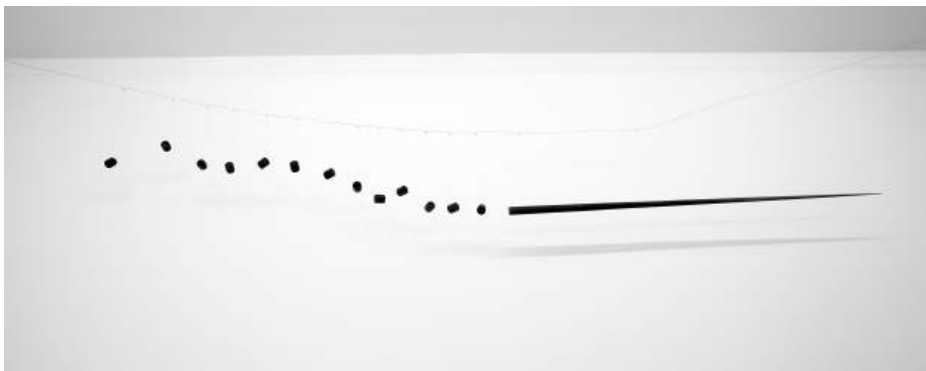


Fig. 2. Edward Krasieński, *Dzida (Spear)*, MoMA New York, 1963/1964. Painted wood, metal wire, 320 cm wide. © Paulina Krasieńska and Foksal Gallery Foundation.

also halted it by boosting the tension and potential originating from the contradiction between motion and stasis (Alberro, “Edward Krasieński’s Dynamic Line,” 372).

In Krasieński’s *Spears*, one sees the connection between the spatiality of a sculpture and time, which, according to Agnieszka Rejniak-Majewska’s analysis of the texts of Krauss, was a determining characteristic of modern sculpture and ensures a dynamic relationship between art and the viewer.<sup>28</sup> In fact, Krauss, in an article referred to by Rejniak-Majewska, developed her reflections in relation to American minimalism, though her conclusions include such phenomena as those which broaden the scope of sculpture. Krasieński’s interventions with the version of the *Spears* documented from a photographer’s viewpoint and analyzed above thus becomes an impermanent “marking of the place,” which was included by Krauss in her diagram.<sup>29</sup>

The space in which the creation and viewer are situated has a specific time and location. In *Die Kunst und der Raum* (Art and Space) (1968), German philosopher Martin Heidegger demonstrated that “sculptured structures are bodies” shaped by demarcation, a separation from space.<sup>30</sup> He thus wondered if “sculpture is an occupying of space,” or rather “the embodiment of places” (Heidegger, “Art and Space,” 3, 7). In the relationship between sculpture and space, Heidegger argued that the latter is superior. However, it is different in the case of Krasieński, whose view is closer to Kobra’s concept of sculptural Unism. First elaborated by Strzemiński in relation to painting, Unism was later extended to architecture and sculpture by Strzemiński and Kobra.<sup>31</sup> The key aspect of Unist sculpture was its complete integration with space. However, such unity had to be built in the image of space. According to Kobra, sculpture is by no means naturally limited. Indeed, this was the starting point for her postulate of sculptural unity with unlimited space.<sup>32</sup>

Like the Łódź sculptor, Krasieński carves space defined by Heidegger as a “homogeneous expanse, not distinguished at any of its possible places” (Heidegger, “Art and Space,” 4).<sup>33</sup> He then demarks it with a dynamic structural form. However, this obvious parallel, highlighted by Przyboś, excludes some important aspects of the understanding of the concept of space by Łódź artists (“Rzeźba napowietrzna,” 78). Piotr Juszkiewicz

660 interpreted the quintessence of space, as defined by Kobra and Strzemiński, as something “devoid of content, stripped of places and surroundings, lacking the meaning of closeness and distance, familiarity and strangeness, departing and arriving.”<sup>34</sup> In other words, space embraces features of “sitelessness” that Krauss noticed in the above mentioned essay in relation to modernist sculpture—that is, the fading logic of the monument (“Sculpture in the Expanded Field,” 34). In Unism, meaning of an abstract order is thus drawn in an indefinite, nonpersonalized space. This interpretative path is confirmed by Grzegorz Sztabiński, who highlights Kobra’s acceptance of the idea of a conceptual, geometric space that does not correspond to a sensual experience.<sup>35</sup>

Kraśiński’s reception of Kobra’s ideas is original and innovative. The Łódź artist was famous for sacrificing mass and random shape in sculpture, and for accentuating the connection between sculpture, space, and the shaping of space. Kraśiński, in his “overhead sculptures,” follows Kobra’s concepts and affirms space. His creations escape from mass and weight. They are ethereal, light, and—even in an illusory fashion—do not submit to the laws of gravity. However, he goes yet further in his famous *Blue scotch*. Here, the artist no longer interrupts space with linear, if material, creations. Rather, he gives up such spatial “invasion” by merely marking it with blue strip.

Kraśiński’s understanding of space resembled the theoretical concept of “Place” that the Foksal Gallery critics announced in 1966 in their program manifesto at the first Symposium of Artists and Scientists in Puławy. Published in 1967, this divergent, and in some respects internally contradictory, manifesto was signed by Borowski, Ptaszowska, and Tchorek.<sup>36</sup>

According to the Theory of Place, which defines the relationship between an artistic creation, its environment (i.e., the space), and the viewer, and emphasizes the viewer’s presence in the gallery, one may conceptualize an art display that situates the viewer in the same place as the artwork, thus denying autonomy to the work itself (“items to view”) (Lachowski, *Awangarda wobec instytucji*, 79). As the authors of the program manifesto state: “PLACE is about taking into possession any place in the world” (Borowski et al., *Wprowadzenie*, n. pag.). Although Kraśiński’s *Spears* are naturally connected to the surrounding space, it is only the perceptive viewer who can make them “one and indivisible” (n. pag.). This often happens when the viewer changes positions relative to the creation. By thus activating the viewer’s surroundings, the zones between both the individual elements of the composition and the art receiver (who is naturally included in the structure of a creation) will evolve in terms of the materials used—from stiff wire and wood through flexible coils of cable and a “touch” of flat Scotch-Blue tape.<sup>37</sup>

In the context of the kineticism of Kraśiński’s works, a final aspect noted by Alexander Alberro is important. Similar late 1960s artistic creations—with a light linear structure, made from wire or an electrical cable (e.g. *Kompozycja* [Composition], 1966), and displayed indoors—slightly lost their dynamics or quietly became quiescent in a space devoid of wind currents, leading to a more intensive clash between internal stasis and creative motion (Alberro, “Edward Kraśiński’s Dynamic Line,” 372). The *Spears*, by contrast, absorbed these dynamics from their plein-air surroundings.

## The Shape

Krasinski's Spears have a given thickness, so they may be regarded as sculptural shapes, especially as their thickness is variable, they become thin at the end before somehow turning into the shape of a blade, a spike, a point. . . We may observe not a shaft, not a spear, not a head, but more and more accelerating lines shot into the space. *Krasinski reduced sculpture to a linear form.*

Julian Przyboś, "Overhead sculptures"<sup>38</sup>

The form of the spear, like other spatial creations by Krasinski from the 1960s—his sculpture for the First Biennale of Spatial Forms in Elbląg (1965), for instance, or *Niebieski węże* (Blue snake) from the 1st Symposium of Artists and Scientists in Puławy (1966)—may be interpreted as a line in space. In contemporary art, the tradition of sculpture viewed as linear form leads to the cubist collages of Picasso and Braque, as well as to the Russian constructivists (Antoine Pevsner, Nahum Gabo, and Alexander Rodchenko). With the ideological continuation of such a concept, sculpture became the "drawing in space" trend in the second half of the 1920s, a concept successfully realized by Calder through figurative wire sculptures that preceded the aforementioned *Mobiles*, as well as with the soldered and welded works of Pablo Picasso and Julio González.<sup>39</sup> When writing in the postwar period about the potential of the "new" sculpture, Clement Greenberg admired how its pictorialism and two-dimensionality bring it closer to painting art. A modern sculpture was not supposed to be carved, but rather constructed with new materials such that space may be "shaped, divided, enclosed, but not to be filled or sealed in," and "the constructor-sculptor can, literally, draw in the air with a single strand of wire" that supports nothing but itself.<sup>40</sup> As the researchers noted, Greenberg's views, though conceived in light of accepting the supremacy of painting art over other visual art forms, accorded with the contemporary orientation of modernist sculpture and architectural development toward an open concept of space.<sup>41</sup> Clearly, his observations overlap with Kobra's prewar concepts of sculpture.

In Krasinski's art, linear structure and space are integral factors present at different levels, from wire sculptures and electrical cable installations to performative conceptual actions using Scotch-Blue tape.<sup>42</sup> His *Spears*, despite a substantially reduced mass, delineate a specific shape in space. Undeniably, the shape category was as important to the artist as it was to the American minimalists. For the latter, as Michael Fried highlighted in his critique of minimalist sculpture entitled *Art and Objecthood*, shape held the key to unity and indivisibility.<sup>43</sup> Another theoretician of minimalism, Robert Morris, stated that, in simple forms "that create strong gestalt sensations," he saw the potential for maintaining the unity of a perceived shape, even if a creation consisted of several elements.<sup>44</sup> Morris further argued that "the simpler regular and irregular ones maintain the maximum resistance to being confronted as objects with separate parts" ("Notes on Sculpture," 816). The opposite holds for Krasinski's creation: a shape undergoes virtual dematerialization, as part of the composition breaks into single "atoms," splashes, the traces of the structure's dynamic "flight." The viewer's eye itself outlines



▲ Fig. 3. Étienne-Jules Marey, *Hérons volant* (Flapping herons), 1886. Chronophotography. Source: wikimedia.org. Public domain.

the unstable and changeable shape of the *Spear*, which the artist constructed out of diverse elements. Ultimately, it is the gaze of the viewer which, ranging from scattered fragments to a tapering end, allows the composition to maintain its integrity (fig. 2). The process of perceiving this installation advances with time. Helpfully, a thoughtfully designed structure of discs simulates a physical “trace,” becoming increasingly compacted as they approach the principal part of the composition.<sup>45</sup>

Following the thread of simultaneity returns us to the artistic struggles of futurists who, interpreting from a painterly perspective the chronophotographs of Edward Muybridge and Étienne-Jules Marey (fig. 3), presented different phases of bodily movement in their paintings, an example of which is Giacomo Balla in his famous 1912 work *Dinamismo di un cane al guinzaglio* (Dynamism of a Dog on a Leash). The photographic experiments from the last quarter of the nineteenth century also inspired Marcel Duchamp, who in his work *Nu descendant un escalier no 2* (Nude Descending a Staircase, No. 2) from the same year, integrated the artistic exploration of cubists and futurists.

Przyboś interpreted the dashed line of the *Spear* as a slightly naive attempt to demonstrate an explosion, thus placing a higher value on the compositions to which the artist introduced curved lines (“Rzeźba napowietrzna,” 79). However, by setting his reflections about art in the “atomic age,” Przyboś, like many of this time, promoted a certain fascination with the achievements of technology (75). In this context, a “trace” marked by the Zalesie *Spear* may be a visual reference to the ice crystal condensation streak left behind by jet planes. Or perhaps it is a simultaneous image of the flight of a multistage rocket, which sequentially dumps expendable sections as it reaches higher altitudes?

Returning to Krasieński, it may be difficult to answer this question precisely, even if he was familiar with the visual documentation involved in launching such rockets. It may be that the atomic shape of the *Spears* is rather an outcome of the prophetic

vision of their author. However, one may assume that, in the mid-1960s, a citizen of a Soviet Bloc would be familiar with the popular slogans of “conquering space,” which the Soviet Union propagated through posters, stamps, and postcards as part of the Cold War space race with the United States.<sup>46</sup> For instance, a 1958 poster by Valentin Petrovich Viktorov depicts a series of artificial Sputnik earth satellites in the year Sputnik 3 was launched (fig. 4).<sup>47</sup> Above the visible part of the globe, with a synthetically marked red map entitled “СССР” and the Soviet star and ear of grain emblems, Sputniks 1, 2, and 3 move sequentially upwards, the momentum and trajectory of their flight paths highlighted by diagonally brighter smudges. The composition is supplemented by the slogan: “Отчизна! Прогресса и мира звезду ты первой зажгла над землею. Слава науке, слава труду! Слава советскому строю!” (Fatherland! You first lighted the star of progress and peace over the Earth. Glory to science, glory to labor! Glory to the Soviet regime!).



▲  
 Fig. 4. Valentin Petrovich Viktorov, poster “Отчизна! Прогресса и мира звезду ты первой зажгла над землею. Слава науке, слава труду! Слава советскому строю!”, 1958, published by ИЗОГИЗ in Moscow. Source: [russiatrek.org/blog/art/propaganda-posters-of-soviet-space-program-1958-1963/](http://russiatrek.org/blog/art/propaganda-posters-of-soviet-space-program-1958-1963/). Public domain.

664 Fascination with nuclear energy during the Cold War arms race gave rise to both feelings of insecurity and hope. The anxieties of the atomic age, especially severe in the 1950s, may have influenced the work of contemporary non-geometric abstractionists. This thread is explored critically by Andrzej Szczerski in “Awangarda w Atomicach” (Avant-garde in Atomicity).<sup>48</sup> Here, the Kraków researcher classifies the activities of a group *Zamek*, from Lublin, which connected contemporary art to the achievements of science and technology. Such connections were also made by art critics who published in *Struktury*, an art supplement of the Lublin magazine *Kamena*.<sup>49</sup> The use of color in Krasieński’s spatial compositions may also have been inspired by anxiety.

## The Color

It is their polychrome—Krasieński uses only one color to express the motion—red and the combination of black and white to mark the “gliding” movement towards the final momentum highlighted with more and more intensive red color—it is their polychrome, which determines that they are recorded by the eyes not as volumes, not as the mass of an extended rounded block.

Julian Przyboś, “Overhead sculptures”<sup>50</sup>

Red accents introduce a certain tension into the structure of the *Spears*, giving an almost physical glow to the individual details. A similar impression is given by the formally ascetic structure Krasieński constructed for the 1st Biennale of Spatial Forms in Elbląg in 1965 (fig. 5). This hand-drawn-like linear circular shape began as a materialized drawing described thus: “It creates variable energy concentration zones in the places of rupture, detachment, adjoining and closeness.”<sup>51</sup> The shape of a circle remains not fully closed, and dynamized by variable colors, especially owing to the white accents at the ends of the metal rod.

By thoughtfully introducing color to selected fragments of linear sculptures, Krasieński shows that he regarded them as fully legitimized parts of his sculptural work. This aspect of his spatial creations has been discussed marginally to date, since for years they were known only from black and white photographic documentation and were only recently discovered in the attic of the artist’s house in Zalesie. Rediscovered information about their coloring complements the scope of interpretation of the *Spears*. From one perspective, introducing color dematerializes this mass-lacking form by adding a pictorial element. But the main objective is to exploit its energy potential. Among the colors used, such as white, black, and red, the latter concentrates the most energy. As Kandinsky stated about his use of red: “In spite of all energy and intensity, it creates a strong note of almost tenacious but immense power. It glows in itself and does not radiate much vigor outwardly, [thereby] achieving a manly maturity.”<sup>52</sup> Krasieński also exploits the color red’s ability to accumulate power. His works, as well as Kandinsky’s remarks, intuitively anticipated later studies of color perception that included an aspect of the human biopsychic sphere.<sup>53</sup> The initially smooth transition between colors gives

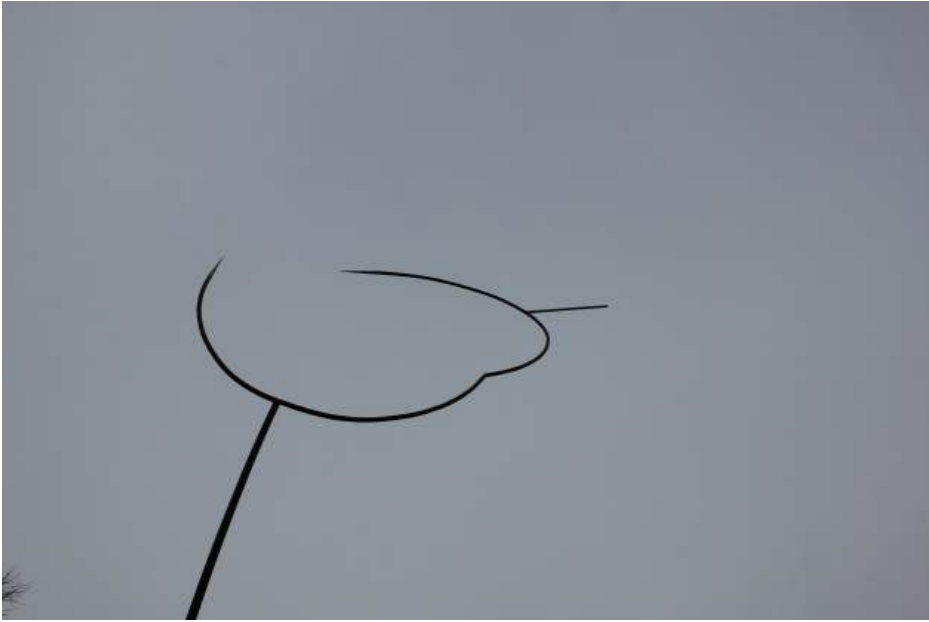


Fig. 5. Edward Krasiński, *Sculpture – spatial form*, 1st Biennale of Spatial Forms in Elbląg, 1965. Metal pipe and bent bars, 600 cm height. Photo and © by Anna Dzierżyc-Horniak.

the impression of a “glow” at the pointy end of the *Spear* from the Zalesie photographs, which accumulates all of the energy, suggesting the near cosmic velocity of this object’s movement. Red, symbolizing fire, prompts associations with dynamics and the rocket engine combustion process.

The reference point for the relationship between space and the color of the sculpture may be found in Kobra’s concept of Unist sculpture. The Polish sculptor observed the dependencies between color and space by highlighting the dominating role of the first aspect of this system. Confronting space, the color should recapture its own energy, first to control the space, and second to radiate its energy towards the space. The greater color tension was expected to generate greater action forces towards the space. Its energy smashed the form that, according to Kobra’s concept, is the main function of color, and is supposed to integrate the sculpture with space.<sup>54</sup> In her reflections, Kobra repeatedly refers to notions of tension and energy. In Krasiński’s creations, kinetic potential is supported by the energy of the red color. The artist was aware of “the dynamics of an inanimate object” also in the context of color: “as if static, but something always happens to it. . . . The wire can be bent, both of its ends can be painted red, joined together and between these there is . . . [a dynamic action]” (“DROLE D’INTERWIEV”).<sup>55</sup>

The intellectually conceptualized aspect of the *Spears* series, like Krasieński's oeuvre in general, dominates the visual-aesthetic perception of his work. In the flying *Spear*, the viewer follows a trajectory of the artist's concepts. As Krasieński himself puts it: "Both, a mystery and a kind of tension are present here. Something similar happens to the spear. It does not fly by itself, something just happens to it" ("DROLE D'INTERWIEV").<sup>56</sup> The tension, trapped in the form, is passed on to the viewer who, with his/her eye, initiates motion in time and space. Przyboś also interpreted the viewer's impressions of Krasieński's creations, writing that: "the sense . . . of vision or the musculomotor sense [is stimulated] with such striking suddenness, that it overrides, in this moment of time, our perception of items in space and the concept of space itself" ("Rzeźba napowietrzna," 77).<sup>57</sup> Przyboś had an impression of the relativity of space as "discontinuous, intermittent" (78).

My aim has been to analyze the cycle of Krasieński's works *Spears*, created in the 1960s, in the political and artistic context of a postwar East European country and to show their connections with artistic ideas in the prewar era. Przyboś emphasized the latter question in "Overhead sculptures," expressing admiration for the compositions he saw as both a revival and continuation of the prewar ideas of the unification of sculpture with space. He further sensed the organicism of an art object vis-à-vis Kbro's Unist sculptural concept, which eliminated the volume of the sculpture. Indeed, Przyboś perceived this concept as the most radical revolution in twentieth-century visual arts.<sup>58</sup> From his viewpoint, through the prism of analyzed artworks, Krasieński appears as the successor of these prewar ideas. However, the artist himself never identified Unism as the provenance of his work. Rather, he credited surrealism as being closer to his attitude towards life in general, not only in some aspects of his creations (particularly apparent in his works from the 1950s) ("DROLE D'INTERWIEV").<sup>59</sup> Furthermore, Krasieński advocated a dynamic art creation process that practically realized the Theory of Place, as proposed by critics of his fellow founders of the Foksal Gallery. The kinetic values of his multiaspect works also bear emphasis. Moreover, Krasieński's *Spears* corresponds to the civilizational breakthrough of the 1960s, with its widespread fascination with the achievements of science and technology, the atomic revolution, and the anxieties to which their threats gave rise.

## Notes

1. "Julian Przyboś, "Rzeźba napowietrzna" [Overhead sculptures], *Poezja*, no. 1 (1966): 75; Kompozycja Krasieńskiego zawieszona była w powietrzu; unosila się cudem jakiejś lewitacji—z trawy, w której zostawiła swoje czerwone rozpryski, początkowo pionowo w górę, nabierała, skręciwszy nagle w poziom, siły uwyraźnionej smukłej, z czerni w biel biegnącą długością, po czym przerwałszy swoją ciągłość—narzucała się po przerwie (pełnej oczekiwania ciosu) ostrym, coraz czerwiejszym końcem kłującym horyzont. Aż wykrzyknąłem—zdumiony: oto dzieło „aeryczne”, rzecz nowa. Zbliżywszy się, pojąłem cud lewitacji: Krasieński rozpiął swoją "dzidę epoki atomowej" . . . na cienkich drutach od drzewa do drzewa. Ale drutów się nie widziało, pędząca dzida miała w oczach oglądającego swoje własne pole grawitacyjne."

2. Julian Przyboś (1901–1970), Polish poet and art critic, was a prominent personality of the interwar avant-garde. He is famous for his innovations in Polish poetry. Closely associated with the Łódź Constructivist movement (Katarzyna Kobro and Władysław Strzemiński) in the 1920s and 1930s, Przyboś became an authority for postwar artists as an advocate of the ideas of modernity, not openly welcomed in communist Poland. Further reading: Frank Kujawinski, "Przyboś and the Second Avant-Garde," *The Polish Review* 38, no. 1 (1993): 25–39; Tadeusz Bujnicki and Krystyna Heska-Kwaśniewicz, eds., *O Julianie Przybośiu. wspomnienia, studia, szkice* [About Julian Przyboś: recollections, studies, drafts], (Katowice: Uniwersytet Śląski, 1983). In the 1960s, many plein-air meetings were held in Poland due to the decentralization of Polish cultural policy and the formation of new centers outside the hubs of Warsaw and Kraków. Such initiatives of symposial and *en plein air* character were organized mainly in Western and Northern Territories, which were annexed to Poland after 1945 as a result of the Yalta and Potsdam Conferences. To the most significant belong: Wystawy i Sympozja Złotego Grona [Exhibitions and Symposia of the Golden Bunch] in Zielona Góra (1963–1981), Biennale Form Przestrzennych w Elblągu [Elbląg Biennales of Spatial Forms] (1965–1973), Sympozjum Plastyczne Wrocław '70 [Visual Arts Symposium Wrocław '70] (1970) and Plenery Koszalińskie [Koszalin Plein-air], discussed in this text, organized in Osieki and Łazy at the Baltic Sea (1963–1981). There were some minor differences between the names of the Koszalin Plein-air events we address here: II Plener Koszaliński. Spotkanie Artystów i Naukowców [2nd Koszalin Plein-air Meeting of Artists and Scientists] (1964), III Plener Koszaliński. Międzynarodowe Spotkanie Artystów i Teoretyków Sztuki [3rd Koszalin Plein-air International Meeting of Artists and Theoreticians of Art] (1965); further reading: Ryszard Ziarkiewicz, ed., *Awangarda w plenerze. Osieki i Łazy 1963-1981* [Avant-garde in plein-air: Osieki and Łazy 1963–1981], (Koszalin: Muzeum w Koszalinie, 2008); Piotr Pawłowski and Ryszard Ziarkiewicz, eds., *Kolekcja Osiecka Muzeum w Koszalinie* [The Osieki Collection at the Museum of Koszalin], (Koszalin: Muzeum w Koszalinie, 2018).

3. I use the terms "modernism" and "avant-garde" in the same way that Piotr Piotrowski did in his books, i.e.: Piotr Piotrowski, *In the Shadow of Yalta: Art and the Avant-garde in Eastern Europe, 1945–1989*, trans. Anna Brzyski (London: Reaktion Books, 2009); Piotr Piotrowski, *W cieniu Duchampy. Notatki nowojorskie* [In the shadow of Duchamp: notes from New York], (Poznań: Obserwator, 1996), 27–48. The complexity of the multifaceted issue of artistic "isms" applied in the accounts of interwar, especially avant-garde art history, is addressed by Michał Wenderski, "The 'isms' of Modern Art: Belgium, the Netherlands, and Beyond," *Dutch Crossing* 44, no. 3 (2020): 305–13. Apart from discussing the use of different "isms" in modern art historiography, the author suggests looking beyond them for new cross-references and interrelationships (Wenderski, "The 'isms,'" 310–11).

4. For more on the Krzywe Koło Gallery, see Janusz Zagrodzki, ed., *Galeria Krzywe Koło. katalog wystawy retrospektywnej* [Krzywe Koło Gallery: catalogue of the retrospective exhibition] (Warszawa: Muzeum Narodowe w Warszawie, 1990); texts in English are also provided.

5. For an in-depth study of the Gallery, see Anna Dzierżyc-Horniak, *Początki są zawsze najważniejsze . . . : Geneza i działalność Galerii Foksal. Teksty programowe, wystawy, wydarzenia, artyści, 1955–1970* [The beginnings are always the most important. . . . The genesis and activity of the Foksal Gallery. Programmatic texts, exhibitions, events, artists, 1955–1970] (Warszawa–Toruń: Polski Instytut Studiów nad Sztuką świata-Wydawnictwo Tako, 2019). On the so-called independent galleries and their cultural policy activities in communist Poland, see Marcin Lachowski, *Awangarda wobec instytucji. O sposobach prezentacji sztuki w PRL-u* [Avant-garde vis-à-vis institutions: on the ways to present art in the Polish People's Republic] (Lublin: Towarzystwo Naukowe Katolickiego Uniwersytetu Lubelskiego Jana Pawła II, 2006).

6. The problem of line as a new form of expression is discussed by Elżbieta Błotnicka-Mazur, "Rzeźba—linia w przestrzeni" [Sculpture—line in space], in *Paragone. Rzeźba wobec awangardy* [Paragone: sculpture against the avant-garde], ed. Elżbieta Błotnicka-Mazur, Lechosław Lameński, and Marcin Pastwa (Lublin: Stowarzyszenie Historyków Sztuki—Wydawnictwo Katolickiego Uniwersytetu Lubelskiego Jana Pawła II, 2018), 273–92.

7. This short biography is based on studies of selected aspects of Edward Krasiński's art: Gabriela Świtek, ed., *Awangarda w bloku / Avant-garde in the Bloc* (Warszawa: Fundacja Galerii Foksal, 2009); Paweł Polit, ed., *Edward Krasiński Elementarz / ABC* (Kraków: Bunkier Sztuki, 2008); Kasia Redzisz

668 and Stephanie Straine, eds., *Edward Krasiński* [ex. cat.] (Liverpool: Tate Liverpool, 2016); Sabine Breitwieser, ed., *Edward Krasiński: les Mises en Scène* (Wien: Generali Foundation, 2006).

8. I.e., Klara Kemp-Welch, *Networking the Bloc: Experimental Art in Eastern Europe 1965–1981* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2019); Beáta Hock and Annu Allas, eds., *Globalizing East European Art Histories: Past and Present* (New York: Routledge, 2018); Jérôme Bazin, Pascal Dubourg Glatigny, and Piotr Piotrowski, eds., *Art beyond Borders: Artistic Exchange in Communist Europe [1945–1989]* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2016); Piotrowski, *In the Shadow of Yalta*. Polish art historian Piotr Piotrowski (1952–2015), a professor at Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, made a notable contribution to our understanding of twentieth-century Central-Eastern European art in a global context. Methodologically, Piotrowski advocated the theory of “horizontal art history,” which took a broad view of communist-era art in Central and Eastern Europe and critiqued historical-artistic narrative that privileged the center at the expense of the peripheries. See Piotr Piotrowski, “Toward a Horizontal History of the European Avant-Garde,” in *European Avant-Garde and Modernism Studies*, ed. Sascha Bru and Peter Nicholls (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2009), 49–58; Agata Jakubowska, “Piotr Piotrowski. Portret praktyka krytycznej historii sztuki” [Piotr Piotrowski: a practitioner of critical art history], *Artium Quaestiones* 26 (2015): 5–14.

9. The expression comes from Michel Foucault, *Surveiller et punir: Naissance de la prison* [Discipline and punish: the birth of the prison], (Paris: Gallimard, 1975).

10. It was mentioned many times by Piotr Piotrowski, *Znaczenia modernizmu. W stronę historii sztuki polskiej po 1945 roku* [Meanings of Modernism: towards the history of Polish art after 1945] (Poznań: Dom Wydawniczy Rebis, 2011), 125.

11. Thanks to the initiative of Paulina Krasińska, the artist’s daughter, as well as Foksal Gallery Foundation, the Avant-Garde Institute was founded in 2004 in the former atelier. Its main purpose is to preserve the studio and keep it open to public. In a glass pavilion built over the studio terrace, temporary exhibitions, workshops, and conferences are organized in order to widen the context for the tradition of art of Stażewski and Krasiński; see *Instytut Awangardy*, [instytutawangardy.org/en](http://instytutawangardy.org/en).

12. Julian Przyboś, “Plener” [En plein air], *Życie Warszawy*, no. 251 (1964): 6.

13. “Edward Krasiński, Dzida, 1964,” Muzeum Sztuki Nowoczesnej w Warszawie, [artmuseum.pl/archiwum/archiwum-polskiego-performansu/2555](http://artmuseum.pl/archiwum/archiwum-polskiego-performansu/2555). For more than forty years the *Spear* from Zalesie and other sculptures by Edward Krasiński from the first half of the 1960s, were only known from black and white images mainly taken by Eustachy Kossakowski. The sculptures were also publicized by the descriptions from artwork reviews and exhibition catalogues. This collection of artist’s works was discovered in 2012 in the attic of the former house/atelier of Edward Krasiński in Zalesie, near Warsaw. After performing the necessary conservation work, they were displayed in the exhibition *Edward Krasiński “B,”* organized by the Foksal Gallery Foundation in 2013 (April 16–May 31, 2013); see Konrad Schiller, “Dzieła odzyskane. Edward Krasiński w Fundacji Galerii Foksal” [Recovered works: Edward Krasiński at the Foksal Gallery Foundation], *Szum*, May 8, 2013. [magazynszum.pl/krytyka/edward-krasinski-w-fundacji-galerii-foksal/](http://magazynszum.pl/krytyka/edward-krasinski-w-fundacji-galerii-foksal/). This work now belongs to MoMA’s collection.

14. See “Osieki ‘64,” Muzeum Sztuki Nowoczesnej w Warszawie, [artmuseum.pl/pl/filmoteka/praca/plener-w-osiekach-osieki-and-03964](http://artmuseum.pl/pl/filmoteka/praca/plener-w-osiekach-osieki-and-03964).

15. “Najlepiej jednak związało się z przestrzenią dzieło Edwarda Krasińskiego. . . . Dynamiczna kompozycja rozprysnięta czerwonymi formami na ziemi wznosiła się nagle w górę, rozpięta na drutach między dwoma pniami, celując czerwonym szpicem w zieleń.”

16. “Osieki ‘65,” Muzeum Sztuki Nowoczesnej w Warszawie, [artmuseum.pl/pl/filmoteka/praca/plener-w-osiekach-osieki-and-03965](http://artmuseum.pl/pl/filmoteka/praca/plener-w-osiekach-osieki-and-03965).

17. “Przyboś pisał, że to ‘dzida ery atomowej’. A to tylko pocięte kije od miotły.” [Przyboś called it “a spear of the atomic age.” But these are only chopped broomsticks.] Karol Sienkiewicz, “Serce z kuchennej myjki” [A heart made out of kitchen sponge], *dwutygodnik.com*, no. 5 (2013), [dwutygodnik.com/artukul/4471-serce-z-kuchennej-myjki.html](http://dwutygodnik.com/artukul/4471-serce-z-kuchennej-myjki.html). The expression “a spear of the atomic age,” popularized by Przyboś, was supposedly used by Edward Krasiński to describe his own creation, as mentioned by Przyboś in the above-cited text; Przyboś, “Plener,” 6.

18. Julian Przyboś, “Maj malarski w Paryżu, czyli owies i ryż” [A Painting May in Paris, Oats and Rice], *Przegląd Kulturalny*, no. 27 (1957): 2. A domination of this aspect in the critical texts of Przyboś

from the second half of the 1950s, and his lonely attempt to revive constructivist avant-garde, was analyzed by Piotr Juskiewicz: *Od rozkoszy historiozofii do "gry w nic"*. *Polska krytyka artystyczna czasu odwilży* [From the Bliss of Historiosophy to the "Game of Nothing": Polish Art Criticism of the Post-Stalinist "Thaw"] (Poznań: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu im. Adama Mickiewicza, 2005), 256–59. Przyboś, on the other hand, spoke negatively about Tachism and related trends, an attitude further enhanced by his visit to Paris in 1957, as indicated by Magdalena Howorus-Czajka: *Przenikanie idei informelu a prasa polska lat czterdziestych i pięćdziesiątych XX wieku* [The penetration of the idea of *informel* and the Polish press of the 1940s and 1950s] (Gdańsk: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Gdańskiego, 2013), 137–38, 145–46. Przyboś with his text published in *Przegląd Kulturalny*, provoked a now famous polemic with Mieczysław Porębski: Julian Przyboś, "Sztuka abstrakcyjna. Jak z niej wyjść?" [Abstract art: how to get out from it?], *Przegląd Kulturalny*, no. 45 (1957): 5; Mieczysław Porębski, "Jak nie wychodzić? (Uwagi polemiczne)" [How not to get out? (polemic remarks)], *Przegląd Kulturalny*, no. 46 (1957): 6. For more information about this discussion triggered by the 2nd Exhibition of Modern Art in Warsaw Zachęta Gallery see: Piotrowski, *Znaczenia modernizmu*, 50–51; Howorus-Czajka, *Przenikanie idei informelu*, 151–52; Piotr Majewski, "Krytyka artystyczna wobec abstrakcji niegeometrycznej, lata 1945–1965" [Art criticism and ungeometrical abstraction, 1945–1965], *Studia i Materiały Lubelskie* 20, (2017): 41.

19. At the time, Przyboś was closely connected with artists from Łódź (Strzebiński and Kobro), and their oeuvre was a key reference source for constructivist traditions in Poland in his critical texts from the postwar period. Cf.: Juskiewicz, *Od rozkoszy historiozofii do "gry w nic"*, 256–57.

20. Marcin Lachowski, "Plenery w Osiekach i granice nowoczesnego obrazu" [The Osieki Plein-airs and the borders of modern image], in *Kolekcja Osiecka Muzeum w Koszalinie*, 66.

21. "DROLE D'INTERWIEW Z Edwardem Krasińskim rozmawiają: Eulalia Domanowska, Stanisław Cichowicz i Andrzej Mitan" [DROLE D'INTERVIEW The Talks with Edward Krasiński: Eulalia Domanowska, Stanisław Cichowicz and Andrzej Mitan], *Obieg*, January 8, 2007, [archiwum-obieg.u-jazdowski.pl/rozmowy/7957](http://archiwum-obieg.u-jazdowski.pl/rozmowy/7957); "Ona nie leci sama, tylko coś się z nią dzieje. Dzidy porozwieszane na drutach [rozciągniętych] od drzewa do drzewa stwarzały złudzenie ruchu. One śmigaly. . . . To wszystko polegało na przygotowaniu dzidy do jej funkcji. Później działała sama, ale musiałem ją przygotować w sobie wiadomy sposób poprzez pewne działania, działania artystyczne."

22. "Dynamics (Physics)," *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, [britannica.com/science/dynamics-physics](http://britannica.com/science/dynamics-physics).

23. For further reading: Andy Ruina and Rudra Pratap, *Introduction to Statics and Dynamics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).

24. Alexander Alberro, "Edward Krasiński's Dynamic Line," in *Awangarda w bloku / Avant-garde in the Bloc*, ed. Gabriela Świttek (Warszawa: Fundacja Galerii Foksal, 2009), 372.

25. Rosalind E. Krauss, *Passages in Modern Sculpture* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1977), 216. See photograph of Alexander Calder's *Hanging Mobile*: Herbert Matter, *Hanging Mobile*, 1936, 1936, gelatin silver print, 53.5 x 48.5 cm (21 1/10 x 19 1/10 in), *Cahiers d'Art*, [artsy.net/artwork/herbert-matter-hanging-mobile-1936](http://artsy.net/artwork/herbert-matter-hanging-mobile-1936).

26. Eustachy Kossakowski (1925–2001) undoubtedly belonged to the group of photographers who crossed the borders of ordinary photographic documentation. The artistic synergy of Krasiński and Kossakowski was presented at the exhibition in New York: *Edward Krasiński and Eustachy Kossakowski. J'ai perdu la fin!!!*, January 15–March 5, 2011, Broadway 1602, New York. For more information about the links between these artists, see Patrick Komorowski, "Affinities by Choice in the Work of Edward Krasiński and Eustachy Kossakowski," in *Edward Krasiński. Elementarz / ABC*, ed. Paweł Polit (Kraków: Bunkier Sztuki, 2008), 81–85.

27. See photographs from the collection of the Museum of Modern Art in Warsaw: "Archiwum Eustachego Kossakowskiego" [Archive of Eustachy Kossakowski], Muzeum Sztuki Nowoczesnej w Warszawie, [artmuseum.pl/pl/archiwum/archiwum-eustachego-kossakowskiego/30](http://artmuseum.pl/pl/archiwum/archiwum-eustachego-kossakowskiego/30). Such perspective can be seen in photos nos. 1–2, 4–6, and 10 in this collection.

28. Agnieszka Rejniak-Majewska, "Kondycja postmedialna i wynajdywanie medium według Rosalind Krauss" ["Postmedium condition" and inventing the medium according to Rosalind Krauss], in *Sztuki w przestrzeni transmedialnej* [Arts in Transmedial Space], ed. Tomasz Załuski (Łódź: Akademia Sztuk Pięknych im. Władysława Strzebińskiego w Łodzi, 2010), 48.

- 670 29. Rosalind E. Krauss, "Sense and sensibility: Reflections on post '60s sculpture," *Artforum* 12, no. 3 (1973): 43–53; Rosalind E. Krauss, "Sculpture in the Expanded Field," *October* 8, (1979): 36–41.
30. Martin Heidegger, "Art and Space," trans. Charles H. Seibert, *Man and World* 6, no. 1 (1973): 3–8, 3.
31. Władysław Strzemiński, *Unizm w malarstwie* (Warszawa: Zakł. Druk. F. Wyszyński i S-ka, 1928); for the English version, see Władysław Strzemiński, "Unism in Painting (1928)," trans. Wanda Kemp-Welch, in *Between Worlds: A Sourcebook of Central European Avant-Gardes 1910–1930*, ed. Timothy O. Benson and Éva Forgács (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2002), 649–57. Strzemiński announced the initial formulation of Unism theory no later than 1924; see Strzemiński, "B=2," *Blok*, November-December 1924; for the English version, see Strzemiński, "B=2," trans. Wanda Kemp-Welch, in *Between Worlds*, 497–502. These theoretical considerations were published in Kobro and Strzemiński, *Kompozycja przestrzeni. Obliczenia rytmu czasoprzestrzennego* [Composition of Space: Calculations of Space-Time Rhythm] (Łódź: Zakłady Graficzne "Drukarnia Polska" Ludomir Mazurkiewicz i S-ka, 1931); for the English version, see Kobro and Strzemiński, "Excerpts from *Composition of Space: Calculations of Space-Time Rhythm*," trans. Wanda Kemp-Welch, in *Between Worlds*, 661–63.
32. For further reading on the topic of the artistic concepts of Kobro and Strzemiński, see Iris Müller-Westermann and Linnéa Jahn, eds., *Kobro & Strzemiński: New Art in Turbulent Times* [ex. cat.] (Stockholm: Moderna Museet Stockholm, 2019); *Kobro and Strzemiński: Avant-Garde Prototypes* [ex. cat.], eds. MNCARS Editorial Activities Department in co-edition with Muzeum Sztuki, Łódź (Madrid: Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía–Muzeum Sztuki, 2017); Janina Ładnawska, "Katarzyna Kobro: A Sculptor of Space," *Artibus et Historiae* 22, no. 43 (2001): 161–85.
33. The differences between Kobro's and Martin Heidegger's views on the relationship between sculpture and space were engagingly presented by Agnieszka Skalska, "Gest estetyczny Katarzyny Kobro" [The Aesthetic Gesture of Katarzyna Kobro], *Rocznik Historii Sztuki* 38, (2013): 89–102.
34. Piotr Juszkiewicz, *Cień modernizmu* [The Shadow of Modernism] (Poznań: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu im. Adama Mickiewicza w Poznaniu, 2013), 78; "pozbawionego treści, wyzutego z miejsc i okolic, pozbawionego znaczeń bliskości i oddalenia, swojskości i obcości, wyruszania i przybywania."
35. Grzegorz Sztabiński, "Nieskończoność i granice. Koncepcja przestrzeni w twórczości Katarzyny Kobro" [Infinity and Borders: The Concept of Space in the Oeuvre of Katarzyna Kobro], in idem, *Dlaczego geometria? Problemy współczesnej sztuki geometrycznej* [Why Geometry? The Aspects of Contemporary Geometric Art] (Łódź: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Łódzkiego, 2004), 105–18.
36. Wiesław Borowski, Hanna Ptaszkowska, and Mariusz Tchorek, "Wprowadzenie do Ogólnej Teorii Miejsca" [An Introduction to the General Theory of Place], in *Program Galerii Foksal PSP* [Program of the Foksal Gallery PSP], (Warszawa: Muzeum Sztuki Nowoczesnej w Warszawie, 1966) 9–10. English version in: *Edward Krasinski: les Mises en Scène*, 108–9. Lachowski gave an excellent analysis of this text in *Awangarda wobec instytucji* (68–83).
37. The tensions present in the "betwixt" zones activating and organizing the space of the exhibition of the *Linear Sculptures* by Krasinski in Foksal Gallery (1966) were underlined by Hanna Ptaszkowska. Hanna Ptaszkowska, "Program i realizacje galerii Foksal" [A Program and Realizations of Foksal Gallery], *Projekt*, no. 6 (1967): 48–55.
38. Przyboś, "Rzeźba napowietrzna," 77; "Dzidy Krasieńskiego posiadają określoną grubość, można by je więc traktować jako bryły rzeźbiarskie, zwłaszcza że ta ich grubość jest zmienna, że cienieją na końcu jakby w ostrze, w szpic, w punkt. . . . Widzimy nie drzewca, nie dzidy, nie ostrza, ale coraz spiesniejsze linie wystrzelone w przestrzeń. *Krasieński sprowadził rzeźbę do linii.*"
39. This phrase popularized by Rosalind E. Krauss, "This New Art: To Draw in Space," in *The Originality of the Avant-Garde and Other Modernist Myths* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1986), 119–29 was originally from a text by González entitled "Picasso sculpteur et les cathedrales," the English translation of which was published by the researcher Josephine Withers, *Julio González: Sculpture in Iron* (New York: New York University Press), 1978.
40. Clement Greenberg, "Sculpture in Our Time," in *Clement Greenberg: The Collected Essays and Criticism, Volume 4: Modernism with a Vengeance, 1957–1969*, ed. John O'Brian (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 58, 61.

41. See Agnieszka Rejniał-Majewska, *Polityka doświadczenia. Clement Greenberg i tradycja formalistycznej krytyki sztuki* [The Politics of Experience. Clement Greenberg and the Tradition of Formalist Art Criticism] (Toruń: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika, 2017), 131.

42. Scotch-Blue tape became a distinctive feature of Krasieński's "interventions."

43. Michael Fried, "Art and Objecthood," in *Art and Objecthood: Essays and Reviews* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 150.

44. Robert Morris, "Notes on Sculpture 1–3," in *Art in Theory 1900–1990: An Anthology of Changing Ideas*, ed. Charles Harrison and Paul Wood (Oxford: Blackwell, 1999), 815.

45. These remarks refer to the *Spear*, from Eustachy Kossakowski's photos from Zalesie.

46. Umberto Cavallaro, *The Race to the Moon Chronicled in Stamps, Postcards and Postmarks: A Story of Puffery vs. the Pragmatic* (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2018), 5; more reading in: James T. Andrews and Asif A. Siddiqi, eds., *Into the Cosmos: Space Exploration and Soviet Culture* (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2011).

47. Valentin Petrovich Viktorov [Валентин Петрович Викторов], 1909–1981, a poster published by Moscow-based publishing house Izogiz (ИЗОГИЗ) in 1958.

48. Andrzej Szczerski, "Awangarda w Atomicach" [Avant-garde in Atomice], in idem, *Cztery nowoczesności. Teksty o sztuce i architekturze polskiej XX wieku* [Four modernities. Texts about Polish Art and Architecture in the 20th century] (Kraków: DodoEditor, 2015), 125–42. "Atomice" refers to imaginary name of the city from Sławomir Mrożek's story (1959, *Wesele w Atomicach*, eng. The Wedding in Atomice), created in the shadow of the threat of nuclear war.

49. Janusz Bogucki, "Jakie znaczenie dla sztuki mogą mieć loty kosmiczne?" [What is an Importance of Flights into Space for Art?], *Struktury*, no. 11 (1961) [supplement of *Kamena* magazine 22, (1961)]: 9; Jerzy Ludwiński, "A jaka powinna być sztuka epoki lotów kosmicznych?" [What should Art of the Space-Flight Era be Like?], *Struktury*, no. 11 (1961): 10.

50. Przyboś, "Rzeźba napowietrzna," 77; "Ale ich polichromia—Krasieński używa tylko jednego koloru jako znaku ruchu: czerwieni oraz bieli—czerni dla oznaczenia "poślizgu" ku ostatecznemu pędowi zaznaczonemu coraz intensywniejszą czerwinią—ale ta ich polichromia sprawia, że nie utrwalają się w oczach jako objętości, jako masa wydłużonej okrągło bryły."

51. Wiesław Borowski, "Krasieński nie komponuje . . ." [Krasieński does not Compose . . .] in *Edward Krasieński* [ex. cat.] (Kraków: Galeria Krzysztofory, November 1965).

52. Hilla Rebay, ed. and trans., *On the Spiritual in Art by Wassily Kandinsky: First Complete English Translation with Full Colour Page Reproductions, Woodcuts and Half Tones* (New York: Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation, 1946), 69.

53. Maria Rzepińska, *Historia koloru w dziejach malarstwa europejskiego* [The History of Color in the Development of European Painting], vol. 2 (Warszawa: Arkady, 1989), 552.

54. Katarzyna Kobro and Władysław Strzemiński, *Kompozycja przestrzeni: obliczenia rytmu czasoprzestrzennego* (fragments) [Composition of Space. Calculations of Space-Time Rhythm], *Sztuka i Filozofia* 13 (1997): 93. In her compositions, Kobro used colors applied in the neoplasticist paintings by Mondrian, these were primary colors as well as white and grey.

55. "niby statyczny, ale przecież zawsze coś się w nim dzieje. . . . Drut można zgąć, pomalować na czerwono dwa jego końce, przytknąć do siebie i między jednym a drugim jest . . . [dynamiczna akcja]."

56. "Jest tu tajemnica i jakieś 'spięcie.' Podobnie dzieje się z dżdż. Ona nie leci sama, tylko coś się z nią dzieje."

57. "zmysł [...] wzrokowy czy mięśniowo-ruchowy [jest poruszony] z taką uderzającą nagłością, że odwraca na tę chwilę nasze pojmowanie rzeczy w przestrzeni i pojęcie samej przestrzeni."

58. Julian Przyboś, "Nowa przestrzeń" [New space], *Przegląd Kulturalny*, no. 17 (1958): 9.

59. This obviously separate aspect is analyzed in the inspiring text by Jean-François Chevrier, "The Sphere of Survival," in *Edward Krasieński* [ex. cat.], ed. Kasia Redzisz and Stephanie Straine (Liverpool: Tate Liverpool, 2016), 8–23.