

Marta Romankiv |
portfolio

Marta Romankiv – was born in 1995 in Lviv, Ukraine. She is an interdisciplinary artist who created art installations, video works and social situations. She graduated a field of artistic ceramics at the Lviv State Institute of Decorative and Applied Arts. She studied at the Pedagogical University of Cracow, majoring in Arts and Media (BA). Master studies she graduated at the Academy of Arts in Szczecin. Currently she is working on her PhD project at the Academy of Fine Arts in Gdansk.

As an artist, she is interested in various types of minorities. Particularly, her attention focuses on the issues of nationality, citizenship, and related social inequalities, as well as formal and identity problems. Her projects are usually participatory in nature and are situated on the border of areas of social activity, science, and art. She lives and works in Poland.

I DREAMT OF EUROPE (2022)

video 5.00 min

The video-performance consists of reading a text composed of excerpts from Ukrainian articles from 2012-2015 that relate to the idea of Europe, as well as to the understanding of Europeanness. The piece deals with perceptions of Europe in Ukraine – country that is geographically part of it, but not part of the European Union.

As part of the Eurasian continent, Europe has clear borders in the west, north and south, but the eastern border is imprecise and fluid. Europe functioning as a mental construct rather than a geographical or social entity, in the case of countries referred to as Eastern Europe, often becomes synonymous with a desirable future. Born in Lviv, Ukraine, the artist emphasizes the cognitive dissonance in which she was raised - living in a country whose territory she finds geographically in the middle east of Europe, Europeanness has always been for her synonymous with another „better world”.

video link: https://youtu.be/Qms-r06_WQo



I DREAMT OF EUROPE. PART II

(2013–2022)

life events documentation cycle

The series *Śniła mi się Europa* is an autobiographical work and refers to the artist's personal experience of migration from Ukraine to Poland, and draws attention to the constant effort made by migrants from outside the European Union to become part of the European community - both in terms of identity and legal rights. The series is a documentation of the actions the artist undertakes in the process of obtaining Polish citizenship in order to become a full-fledged member of the society in which she lives.

Wedding, 2021, photo documentation
photo by D. Stanisławski 79x123x6 cm





Polish language notes, 2013 – 2020, installation 100x330 cm
photo by T. Szabelski

geographic coordinates:
49°44'48.5"N 19°29'30.6"E

My Land is a documentation of the formally difficult process of acquiring Polish land by a foreigner. Polish law stipulates the need to prove ties to the Republic of Poland and to obtain many permits from the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Border Guard, the Ministry of National Defense, the Ministry of Climate Change, among others. A slice of land which was acquired as a result of more than a year of formal procedures, is the embodiment of the absurdity behind the formal procedures that apply to foreigners.

My Land, 2022, installation



EUROWORKSHOP (2022 – 2023)

installation, open project

The Euroworkshop project is a platform for migrants. Together with the artist, those previously deprived of political decision-making reflect on the future of Europe.

People with migration experience face numerous inequalities and lack of political agency on a daily basis. Those from so-called third countries, despite the fact that they actively participate in the life of their communities, work, pay taxes or do unpaid work for their communities, cannot make political decisions. The Euroworkshop project, however, is aimed at breaking the stereotype of migrants exclusively as victims. In the recorded footage, invited participants talk about their own visions of the future and propose social changes they believe are necessary. The photographs and recordings are made in the convention of glamour: a professional make-up artist gives the heroes and heroines delicate makeup, each person has smooth black clothes and a crown of gold stars. The aesthetics of the photographs and footage are reminiscent of fashion shoots from luxury magazines. With these treatments, they symbolically restore their rightful, equal place in the structure of the European community. In her work, Marta Romankiv asks about the legitimacy of the current divisions between citizens and non-citizens. Can we change them to make them more relevant to the contemporary shape of the world? Can we adapt the policies of countries to the needs of the people living in them? The Euroworkshop project addresses ideas about Europe, idealizing it beyond the borders of the European Union. It is a space for thinking about Europe noticing and adapting to the changing reality, the shape of which can be decided by all its inhabitants.

*text by Zofia Rojek
photo by M. Lipinski*





Documentation of the installation at the Pavilion in Poznań.
photo by T. Koszewnik



Documentation of the installation at the Pavilion in Poznań.
photo by T. Koszewnik



Intervention in the portrait Cabinet of the Museum of Warsaw.
photo by T. Kaczor

EXERCISE ROOM (2023)

installation, video 6.33; video 10.06

The installation *Exercise Room* is developing a vision in which migrants have political and social agency. The installation offers a space to create visions for the future of the country and proposed solutions to the problems faced by people who do not have the right to vote and cannot be elected by their communities. There are tools for writing, practicing, voicing and recording one's own prefaces. Among other things, there are recordings of the workshops which were led for migrants and took place in the Portrait Cabinet of the Museum of Warsaw honouring Polish politicians. The workshop was led by Dorota Warakomska, a Polish journalist who also educates Polish politicians. The work seeks to change the perception of migrant people – from an 'economic solution' to new inhabitants.

View of the exhibition *The First Impression Is the Most Important* at the Arsenal Gallery in Bialystok
photo by T. Szabelski.

video link: <https://youtu.be/AsA2LAynduc>
<https://youtu.be/h01S3F1I6EU>





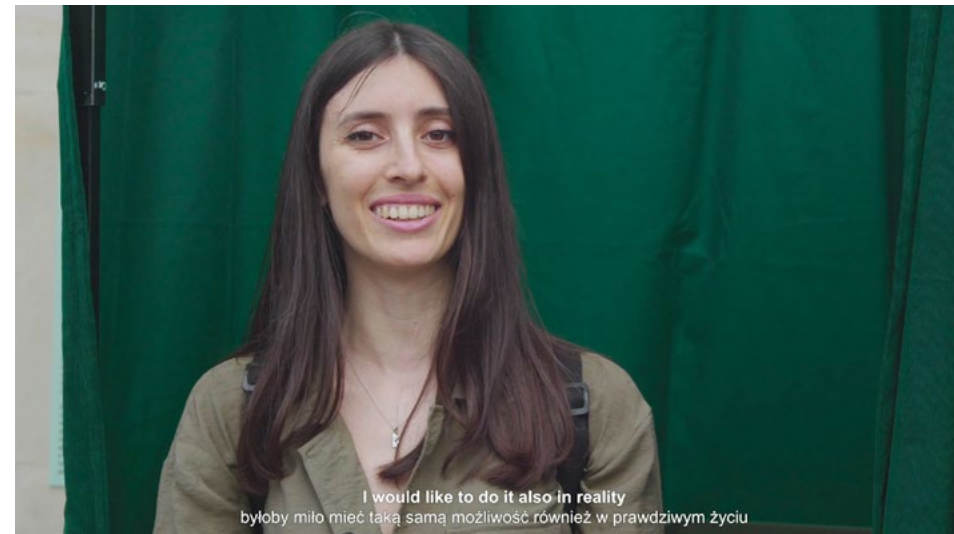
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IMMIGRANT, TAKE A VOTE! (2020)

video 16.53 min, ballot box and curtain for voting

In the recent years, Poland has become one of the world leaders in accepting migrant workers. However, this group does not have a proportional voice in the political and media space, and the current political narrative still relies on archaic, often stigmatising categories that divide residents of Poland: into citizens and non-citizens. Such a dissonance in the enforced immigration policy results in complicating the integration processes, or even discrimination and exclusion. In the project titled *Immigrant, Take a Vote!* I referred to the issue of exclusion of new residents from making political decisions. The initiating of impossible events, aimed to raise the question of an immigrant's role in a national state, and attempts to challenge the established norms and definitions. Who is a citizen? Are the accepted forms of democracy suited to the needs of today's globalised society? Why in the light of rapid changes, outdated divisions still define the perception of the "other"?



video link: <https://youtu.be/Y1KGUKzSLG8>

An intervention happening which was carried out from 22 to 28 June –before the first round of presidential elections in Poland, was supposed to symbolically collect the votes of immigrants. Under the project, residents of Poland who do not hold the Polish citizenship could “vote” for the president of this country. The action was organised in six cities: Białystok, Gdańsk, Lublin, Poznań, Szczecin and Warsaw. The action took place in the public space of cities, as well as in art institutions (Biennale Warszawa, Centre for Contemporary Art Laznia in Gdańsk, Labyrinth Gallery in Lublin, Municipal gallery Arsenal in Białystok, Municipal gallery Arsenal in Poznań, Trafos Gallery in Szczecin). The project was part of the Master’s degree carried out at the Academy of Art in Szczecin.



photo by T. Szabelski.

SOLIDARITY KIOSK (2022)

happening in public space, video documentation

authors: Yulia Krivich, Marta Romankiv, Weronika Zalewska

Solidarity Kiosk is an artistic intervention in the Gdynia Market Halls. The project is a reaction to the war that has been ongoing in Europe (Ukraine) since 24 February 2022. We focus on the theme of solidarity and the social and political changes triggered by the Russian invasion of Ukraine, as well as the stories of both dependence and support that grow out of a fertile, colonised land, connected through veins to both the local inhabitants and with the rest of the world.

The project is a reflection on the food crisis caused by war and on food as a grassroots support system in difficult times. The *Solidarity Kiosk* is a two-day action in which food was prepared and distributed, with ingredients linking to the current export blockade in Ukraine. The food was distributed as an exchange for survival and solidarity recipes. It was also important to share information about Ukraine, its grain exports and the global food crisis caused by Russia's invasion of Ukraine. The war in Europe is still ongoing and it is also a struggle for resources.

photo by Ł. Surowiec



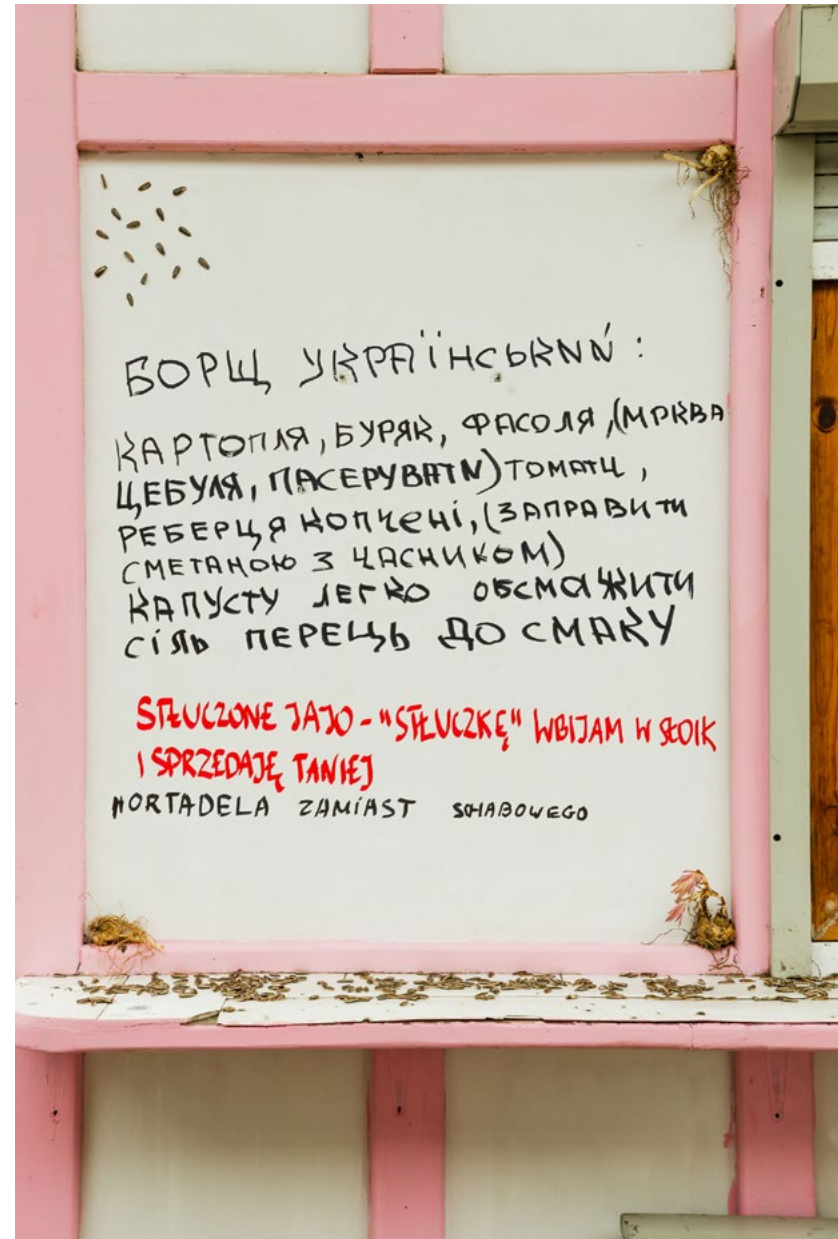


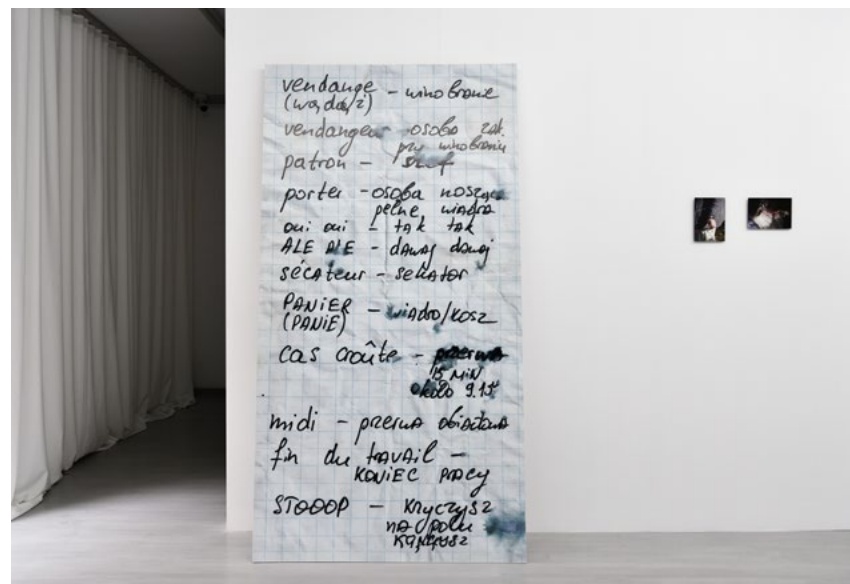
photo by Y. Krivich

VACATIONS (2023)

object 90x125x65 cm, photo documentation

The context for the project is the tradition of the sculptural representation of the figure of the winegrower in the space of Zielona Gora. The juxtaposition of the mythical image of the resting virgin with the hardship of physical exertion invites reflection on contemporary conditions of seasonal labor during the grape harvest. The project is in collaboration with Oleksandra Ovsyannikova, who worked on a French vineyard in September 2023. The artist's friend documents the moments of rest from the grape harvest, and in her free time, together with her colleagues from Poland, she creates a dictionary of the phrases most needed during the harvest.

photo by K. Spiak
View of the exhibition *Vacations* (2023)
at the BWA in Zielona Gora



EXIT FROM WORK (2021)

factory bell, loop video

The factory bell was rung at 06.00, 14.00, and 22.00, informing of the end of the shifts of the workers at the Gorzów plant of TPV Displays Polska. The second component of the work is a video documenting the workers' exit from the factory – the moment they left the role of worker and momentarily regained their freedom.



THE ORDER OF THE WHITE EAGLE CASTING MOULDS (2023)

3 objects, 8x8x3 cm

The Order of the White Eagle Casting is a decoration reserved for outstanding individuals. The forms are designed for its free reproduction to honor those doing essential work at all levels of society.



photo by T. Szabelski.

ALLEGORY OF HOUSEHOLD WORK (PROTOTYPE) (2023)

sculpture 134x50x34 cm, printing matrix 60x25 cm

A sculptural object placed by the artist within the historical Gdańsk Printing House building serves as a prototype of an allegorical representation of domestic and care work. Household chores, confined to private spaces – often heroic, albeit not spectacular, both paid and unpaid – remain invisible in the public space and debate. Historically and culturally, they were assigned to housemaids, babysitters, mothers and grandmothers – women whose efforts remain overlooked in narratives about the past.

Domestic tasks are similarly non-existent as allegorical representations in art history. Since antiquity, personifications of the most important notions in art have not just represented these very ideas, but also reflected the socially important values they conveyed. The prototype designed by Marta Romankiv, based on workshops with people performing paid household work, strives to bridge this gap, visualise these efforts and secure a place for these workers in our shared history, in the scale of a district, a city and the entire world. The object is complemented by a printing matrix with a quote from *Memories from the Young Years of a Poor Housemaid*, where Marie Sansgêne described the reality of a housemaid from Gdańsk in the late 19th century and the story of her own emancipation: “I find it hard to embrace Christian humility and forgive insults; what I feel much more strongly is pride and awareness of my self-worth.”

text by Jakub Gawkowski



WHERE IS THE STATUE OF THE HOUSEMAIDE?

(2022)

photo documentation 60x90 cm each

The action was carried out on Labour Day, 1 May, in co-operation with migrant women from Ukraine who work as caregivers for the elderly and children (the Committee of Domestic Workers, founded within the trade union Workers Initiative). The women took to the square in front of the Adam Mickiewicz monument in Krakow to raise the issue of commemorating the housemaids.

In the pre-war period, 30 % of the working population in Kraków were domestic servants. Thanks to their work, the upper classes were able to focus on art, literature and architecture, creating the city's current image as a cultural centre to this day. „As domestic workers, we are one of the most invisible and least protected social groups in contemporary Poland. We believe that we cannot fight for a real improvement in the conditions of our work without commemorating the forgotten history of those who „serve”, argues the Committee of Domestic Workers and Workers in a letter sent to the Mayor of Krakow Prof. Jacek Majchrowski.

documentation of the action: M. Lipinski, M. Romankiv





THE LUNCHEON ON THE GRASS (2021)

video 12.00 min

The video is a documentation of a meeting of migrant women, caregivers of the elderly and children, which took place in September 2021 in the sculpture garden at the Xawery Dunikowski Museum of Sculpture in Królikarnia.

Performed by

Olga Bedlinska, Oleksandra Borysiuk, Nadia Dubanych, Galyna Fedorychak, Olga Frenchenko, Galyna Goi, Olha Haponiuk, Natalia Hladysh, Oksana Horlenko, Tania Yavir, Alla Nadashkevich, Anna Omelianska, Ruslana Poberezhnyk, Oksana Pryhoda, Nadia Shapowal, Maria Shvorak, Tetyana Smolyar, Vira Tymchyi, Lubov Zhuk, Nelia Zhuraw.

photos: Łukasz Surowiec



video link: <https://youtu.be/SsBEHMCb1nA>



YOU CAN COUNT ON ME

(beginning with 2021)

social situation

Care work in Poland is needed, and, due to the ageing population, is becoming increasingly desirable. Unfortunately, it is often seen as low prestige and largely remains in the grey area. Care work for the elderly is often round-the-clock and days off are the much more exception rather than the rule. For these reasons immigrant women from across the eastern border are most often found in this sector – they are described by employers as being completely available. The women's enormous efforts do not translate into wages - the rates for a month's work often do not even reach the lowest national salary. Due to the grey labour market domestic workers are most often not subject to social insurance, they are not protected by labour laws.

As part of the action *You Can Count On Me*, has been created a place for caregivers to meet, rest and talk at Open Jazdów (Warsaw). During the meetings every Sunday, activities at the intersection of artistic and social practices were mainly aimed at creating a space for rest - which was most lacking. As a result of building a space for the development of dreams and imaginings of a better future, in September 2021 the group created the first trade union for domestic workers (Domestic Workers Committee). This is the first union in Poland, which was created by immigrant women.

The project started as part of a residency at the Education Department of the Museum of Modern Art in Warsaw, and continued as part of the Gaude Polonia scholarship.

logo project: Marta Romankiv





FADED FLAGS.
FLAG OF POLAND (2019)

object 80x120 cm

The Faded Flags series is an attempt to imagine a future in which the concept of nationality, which is common and taken for granted today, loses its meaning and becomes only a historical element. Within its framework, the artist de-dyes fabrics and then sews national flags from them. The act of depriving flags of their national colors is an attempt to make them a „neutral element,” devoid of the power of easy labeling of „their own” and „foreign.” Poland’s flag was sewn from bleached fabrics, which were originally in white and red.



FADED FLAGS. THE NATIONAL COLOURS OF GERMANY (2020)

instalation

When the Swedish parent company Electrolux announced the closure of AEG's main plant in Nuremberg at the end of 2005, workers strikes began. Electrolux cited the sharp fall in household appliance prices as the reason. 1700 workers were laid off, and the production of washing machines and dishwashers was moved mainly to Poland, employing, apart from local workers, also Ukrainians.

Putting fabrics of national german colours (yellow, red and black) in the washing machine and subjecting them to repeated washing and rinsing is an attempt to deprive the flag of the national context. In this piece, Marta Romankiv considers the problems that flow from the ruthlessness of the free labor market, social inequality and the relationship between national ideas and global capitalism.

The work was created as part of a residence at the Kreis gallery in Nuremberg.

text by Aleksandra Grzonkowska



I GOT FROM HELL TO PARADISE (2019)

video 2.14 min

The video recalls excerpts from the memories of Polish war refugees from World War II, who, as children, were evacuated from Siberia to Iran after the German attack, and from there partially to New Zealand. Read statements by Irena Coates, Ryszard Gołębiewski, Józefa Wrotniak and Maria Campbell are optimistic stories of the warm reception of starved and emaciated children. The gesture of the then Prime Minister of New Zealand was not part of a planned immigration policy, which did not exist at the time, but the result of an individual, empathetic decision dictated by a sense of social duty. Recalling these events, Marta Romankiv draws attention to the need to rework historical memory as a tool for building new solutions and addressing contemporary issues. Is it possible to fight for a „new normalcy” without deep social reevaluations and listening to the needs of the excluded.

Excerpts are read by a refugee from Chechnya Luisa Kurbanova - currently living in a center for foreigners in Warsaw, where she is raising her children....

text by Eliza Urbanowicz and Katarzyna Różniak



video link: <https://youtu.be/fNTh9Dhqv58>

ARCHITECTS (2019)

video 9.16 min

Homeless people try being architects, engineers and urban space designers. They create maps of places that are most important to them, point out problems as well as propose changes and seek solutions. The film is a documentation of the actual discussion.



video link: <https://youtu.be/eNEkdJ70G2Y>



OSIEDLE ALBERTYŃSKIE

OSIEDLE PRZY ARCE

OSIEDLE KRAKOWIAKÓW

OSIEDLE SPORTOWE

OSIEDLE NIEPODLEGŁOŚCI

Rondo Kocmyrzowskie

OSIEDLE GÓRALI

OSIEDLE TEATRALNE

OSIEDLE ZIELONE

OSIEDLE SPÓŁDZIELCZE

OSIEDLE ZGODY

OSIEDLE SŁONECZNE

OSIEDLE SZKOLNE

OSIEDLE KOLOROWE

OSIEDLE CENTRUM C

OSIEDLE SZKLANE DOMY

PARK ZALEW NOWOHUCKI

OSIEDLE HANDLOWE

Plac Centralny im. Ronalda Reagana

OSIEDLE HUTNICZE

OSIEDLE WILLOWE

OSIEDLE CENTRUM E

OSIEDLE OGRODOWE

OSIEDLE WANDY

OSIEDLE NA SKARPIE

OSIEDLE MŁODOŚCI

O - BARY DLA BEZDOMNYCH
obojcieplej posiedle
+ suchy prąd

O - TOI TOI

Noclegowisko



ONE TWO-HOUR LECTURE

(2016)

video 5.56 min, 60 objects 7x5x2 cm each

The project was aimed at addressing the problem of paid study conditions for Ukrainian students, who, wanting to study in Poland, have to pay huge costs. The artist played the role of an “ant” - a person who, despite the stress and risks, sells smuggled cigarettes and alcohol in an attempt to earn relatively little money. The video presented juxtaposes two worlds: illegal work with huge risks and paid education. By taking illegal work, the author wanted to see how long she would have to work this way to earn money for one two-hour lecture. The income from selling sixty packs of cigarettes is the approximate equivalent of one two-hour lecture at the Academy of Fine Arts in Cracow.

text by Bartosz Nowak



video link: <https://youtu.be/ARGdJISl6-c>



photo by T. Szabelski.
view of the exhibition *The First Impression Is the Most Important* (2023)
at the Arsenal Gallery in Bialystok

Individual exhibitions

- 2023 Vacations, BWA in Zielona Góra, Poland
- 2023 The First Impression Is the Most Important, Arenal Gallery in Białystok, Poland
- 2023 Eurowarsztat, Museum of Warsaw, Warsaw, Poland
- 2022 *Eurowarsztat. Migrants, lets create Europe together*, Pawilon, Poznań, Poland
- 2022 *I Dreamt About Europe*, Art Agenda Nova, Kraków, Poland
- 2021 *You Can Count On Me*, Association of Theatre Educators, Warsaw, Poland
- 2021 *Rights Are Not Given, Rights Are Taken*, Municipal Art Center, Gorzów Wielkopolski, Poland
- 2020 *Show Me Your Hands*, KREIS Galerie, Nuremberg, Germany
- 2020 *Immigrant, Take a Vote!*, Biennale Warszawa, Warsaw, Poland
- 2018 *Newcomers*, Cooperative Ogniw, Krakow, Poland.

Awards

- 2023 Maria Anto & Elsa von Freytag Art Prize
- 2020 Third Prize winner, international Allegro Prize competition
- 2020 Award in Category Person of the Year, Kraków Art Salon, Poland
- 2020 Award of the Marshal of the West Pomeranian Voivodeship.
The Best Diplomas of the Academy of Art in Szczecin 2019/2020.

Scholarships

- 2022 Creative Scholarship of the City of Krakow
- 2021 Scholarship of the Minister of Culture "Gaude Polonia".

Actions in public spaces

- 2023 *Crisis Kiosk*, Kalvarija Market Halls, Vilnius.
- 2022 *Solidaruty Kiosk*, Gdynia Market Halls, Halo Kultura, Gdynia
- 2020 *Immigrant, Take a Vote!*, Warszaw, Poznań, Szczecin, Gdańsk, Lublin, Białystok
- 2017 *Kordon*, public space Stryjski Park, Lviv, Ukraine.

Selected Collective Exhibitions

- 2023 REVIEW BALTIC SEA BIENNALE - The Democratic Space, Rostock, Germany
- 2023 Narracje #14 Festival, City Culture Institute, public space in Gdansk, Poland
- 2023 Dear Future vol. II, BWA Bielsko-Biała, Poland
- 2023 Vilnius Art Performance Biennale, Vilnius, Lithuania
- 2023 Between Words, Between Movements, The 'Manggha' Centre Of Japanese Art And Technology, Kraków, Poland
- 2023 *Reinterpretation*, Osaka Kansai International Arts Festival 2023, Osaka, Japan
- 2022 *Sekundarna arhiva*, Center for Cultural Decontamination, Belgrade, Serbia
- 2022 *Zielona Gora Biennale 2022 Renewal*, BWA Zielona Gora gallery, Poland
- 2022 Signal of Good, Rondo Sztuki, Katowice, Poland
- 2022 *Material Fatigue*, Central Museum of Textiles, Lodz, Poland
- 2022 *My Home*, National Museum of Fine Arts of Moldova, Chisinau, Moldova
- 2022 *Secondary Archive*, Manifesta Biennial 14, National Gallery in Kosovo
- 2022 *The Discomfort Of Evening*, Zachęta National Gallery, Warsaw, Poland
- 2022 *Solidarity, Protest, Care*, Photofestival, Łódź, Poland
- 2022 *Wasn't Built in a Day*, Bunkier Sztuki, Krakow, Poland
- 2022 (UN)WELCOME, Photomonth, Academy of Fine Arts Gallery, Krakow, Poland
- 2022 *Sister Earth*, BBBKultPont, Budapest, Hungary
- 2022 *Today the dreams smell of heat*, Pałac Czapskich-Krasińskich, Warsaw, Poland
- 2021 *Best Diplomas of the Academy of Fine Arts*, Wielka Zbrojownia, Academy of Fine Arts in Gdańsk, Poland
- 2021 *Projects. Undone Art Histories 2010–2020*, Cricoteka, Krakow, Poland
- 2021 *New Femininity*, Gallery Dim, Warsaw, Poland
- 2021 *Adaptacje*, Municipal Art Center, Gorzow Wielkopolski, Poland

- 2020 *You Will Never Walk Alone*, Gallery Labirynt, Lublin, Poland
- 2020 *Solidarity and Agency*, Municipal gallery Arsenal in Białystok
- 2019 From the Land to the Air, Krakow City Hall, Poland
- 2019 NH 2.0, ARTzona gallery, Krakow, Poland
- 2019 State of Focus, KRAKERS Art Week, Krakow, Poland
- 2018 *Warsaw Under Construction*, Museum of Modern Art in Warsaw,
- 2018 *O meu Portugal*, Galeria Aqui Base Tango, Coimbra, Portugal.
- 2017 *Institute of Sensual Memory*, Skład Długa, Krakow, Poland
- 2016 *K/NO/W Future*, Tobacco Products Factory in Krakow.

Curatorial projects

- 2023 Gold Standard. Siatka vol. II, group exhibition, Gdynia Market Halls, Poland
- 2022 *If it's no war today, it doesn't mean there is no war*, wystawa, Institut Goethe in Krakow, Poland
- 2022 cooperation on the annual program *Euroremont*, Pawilon, Poznań, Poland
- 2021 *Projects. Undone Art Histories*, cooperation on publication concept, , Imago Mundi Foundation, Krakow, Poland.

Marta Romankiv
marta.romankiv@gmail.com

2023