

JOANNA PIOTROWSKA
at Art Basel Miami | Booth N16



MADRAGO

FROWST (2014-TODAY)

For Art Basel Miami, Madragoa is delighted to present a solo presentation of Joanna Piotrowska (1985, Warsaw), composed by new photographs that continue her research on familial relationships through the staging of gestures of closeness. The presentation is punctuated by a textile installation specially designed by the artist.

Joanna Piotrowska explores the complexities of human relationships through analogue photography, performance, and film. Her work challenges conventional narratives of family and domesticity, revealing power dynamics and psychological tensions within this sphere. Through stylized imagery and a performative approach, Piotrowska prompts viewers to reassess ingrained assumptions about family, home, and societal structures, inviting contemplation on the intricate interplay between human behavior and its socio-political context.

The series “FROWST” (2014-today) emerges as a Proustian exploration of memory and familial dynamics, encapsulating the essence of a Polish winter’s room— “frowst” meaning suffocation, mustiness, brings to mind the dense air of an unaired apartment, saturated with complicated family relationships. Thus, it takes on dual roles, embodying both adjective and noun, symbolizing not only physical stuffiness but also emotional claustrophobia. Within this conceptual framework, Piotrowska orchestrates staged scenarios, reminiscent of childhood coziness intertwined with visual and emotional confinement, whose social coding the viewer cannot clearly decode.

Drawing inspiration from Bert Hellinger’s theories on family constellations, Piotrowska meticulously reconstructs interpersonal dynamics within domestic environments. Informed by therapeutic methods, her photographs capture moments of warmth, closeness, and support, yet imbue them with a subtle undercurrent of anxiety and ambiguity. The images oscillate between closeness and threat, freedom and oppression, protection and danger. They examine gestures and behavior, question social norms, and explore interpersonal relationships. However, the purpose of this is not to create a real representation

of concretely delineated psychosocial states, but instead to evoke fragments of associations of human states that oscillate in an intermediate space of contradiction.

The presentation of Piotrowska’s works invites viewers into an immersive exploration of familial dynamics and domesticity. A selection of photographs adorn the walls, each capturing moments of intimacy and ambiguity within staged domestic environments, echoing the series’ thematic exploration of familial relationships. Her reenactments of gestures in the family space function here as a mirror of society: potentially a site of tenderness but also of control, of emancipation but also oppression. A host of systems of domination come together to the point of shaping body movements and relationships. Captured on photographs, each of the gestures in her works are deliberately staged and directed, acting as documents of an intimate performance for the camera rather than documentary images. And while to describe her works as documentation of performances seems inaccurate – inasmuch as this suggests public acts resulting in documents that would be mere traces after the fact –, a performance of sorts is arguably at the heart of most of them.

Positioned at the heart of the booth is a double-sided printed textile, reminiscent of a curtain, opaque and evocative of the series’ themes of domesticity, suffocation and emotional confinement. This installation serves not only as a physical division within the space but also as a symbolic representation of the boundaries that shape familial spaces. As viewers navigate between the photographs and the curtain, they are invited to contemplate the nuances of human connection, oscillating between warmth and discomfort, affection and constraint.



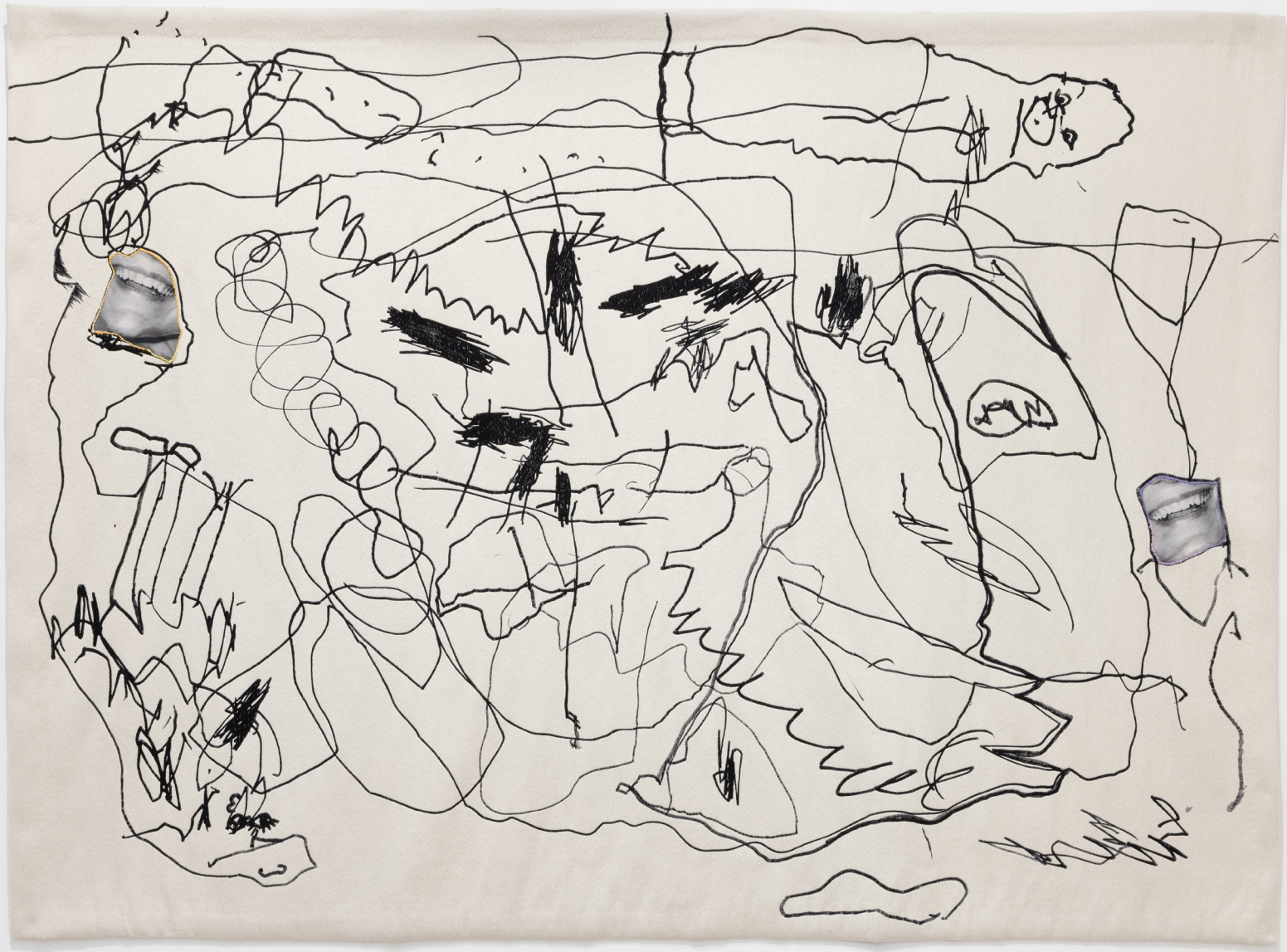
Untitled
2022
130 × 160 cm
silver gelatin hand print
Edition 1 of 3 + 2 AP





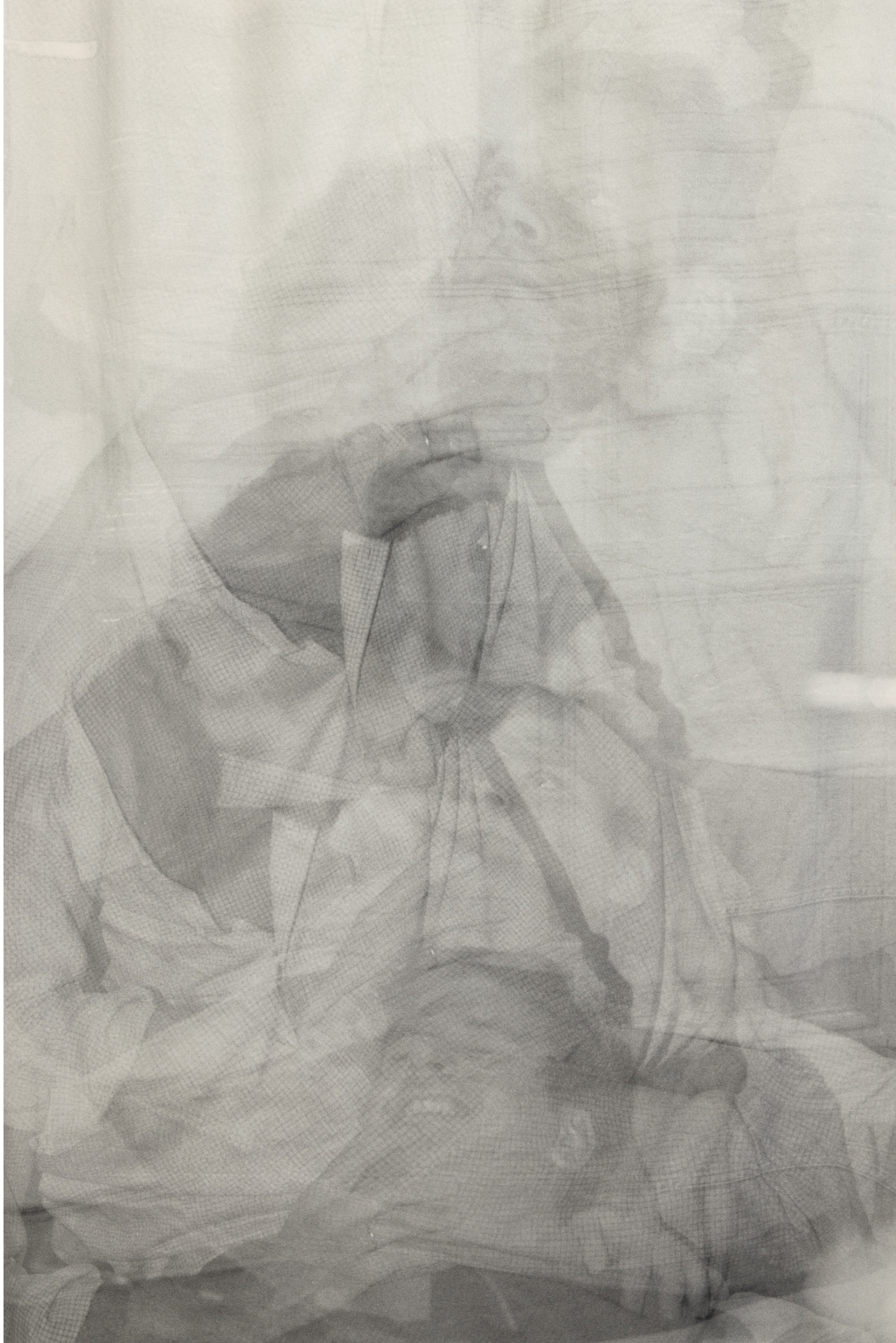
Untitled
2022
130 × 160 cm
silver gelatin hand print
Edition 3 of 3 + 2 AP



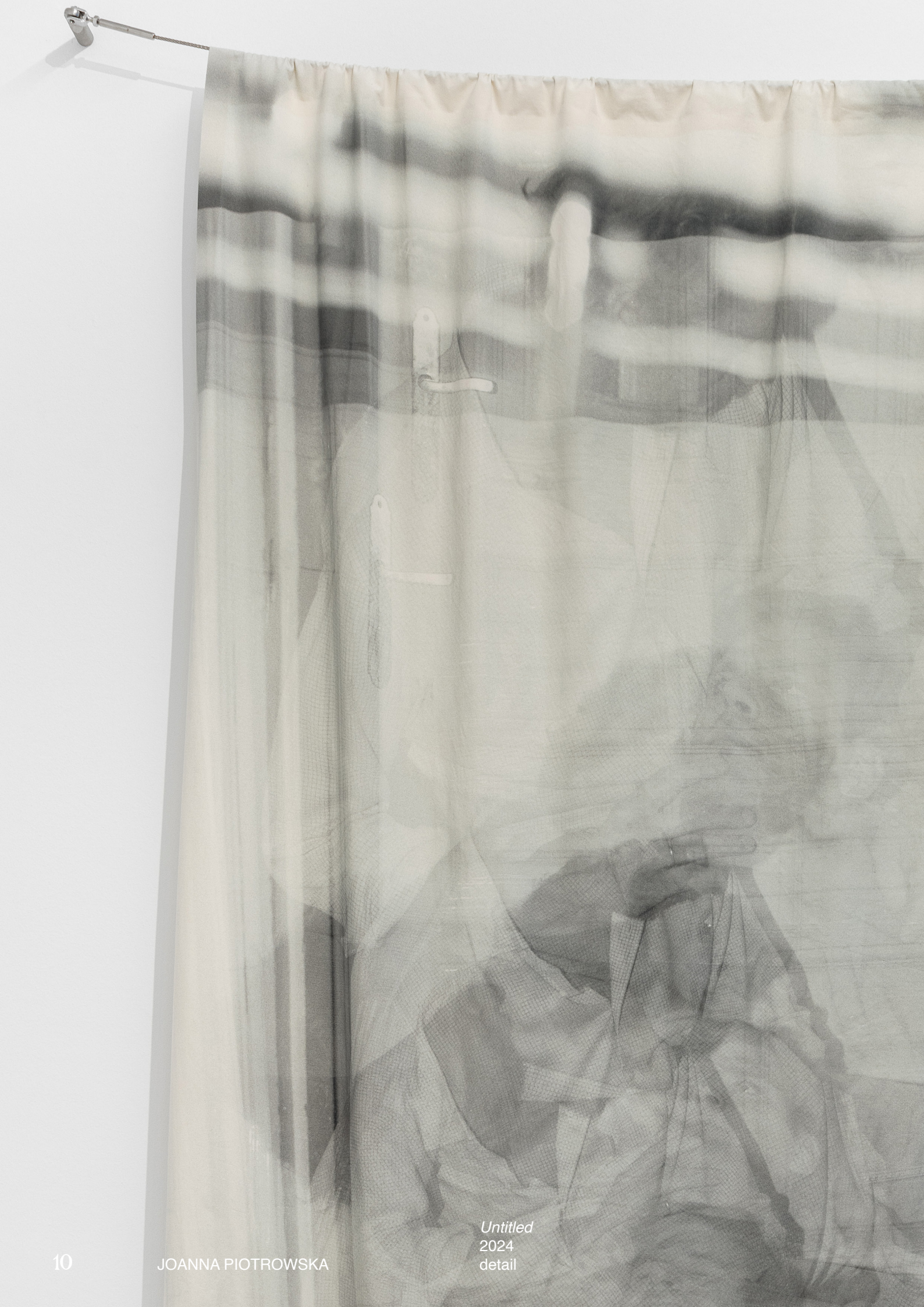


Untitled
2024
152 x 208 cm
wool and cotton jacquard tapestry, print on silk, colored
cotton thread
Edition 1 of 2 + 1 AP





Untitled
2024
197 × 172 × 10 cm
print on cotton, stainless steel, aluminium
Edition 1 of 2 + 1AP



Untitled
2024
detail



Untitled
2024
59 × 80 × 2.5 cm
silver gelatin hand print, veneer wood, brass
Edition 1 of 3 + 1 AP





Untitled
2024
59 x 80 x 2.5 cm
silver gelatin hand print, veneer wood
Edition 1 of 3 + 1 AP





Stainless Steel, Double Sided Mirror V
2022
60 x 50 cm
silver gelatin hand print
Edition 3 of 3 + 2 AP





Strokes
2022
62 x 52 cm
silver gelatin hand print
Edition 2 of 5 + 2 AP





Untitled
2022
60 x 50 cm
silver gelatin hand print
Edition 2 of 3 + 2 AP





Untitled
2022
38.5 x 30 cm
silver gelatin hand print
Edition 6 of 7 + 3 AP





Untitled
2024
63 × 36 cm
silver gelatin hand print, wool
Unique



JOANNA PIOTROWSKA



Joanna Piotrowska (Warsaw, 1985) lives and works in London, UK.

In 2013, she obtained the MA in Photography at the Royal College of Art in London, and in 2009 completed the BA in Photography at the Academy of Fine Arts in Krakow, Poland.

In 2022 she was included in “The Milk Of Dreams”, the 59th International Venice Biennial, curated by Cecilia Alemani.

Joanna Piotrowska has taken part in numerous solo and group exhibitions at: Entre nous LE BAL, Paris, FR (2022); ARCH, Athens, GR (2022); Kestner Gesellschaft, Hannover, DE (2022); Museum Insel Hombroich, Neuss, DE (2021); Zacheta – National Gallery of Art, Warsaw, PL (2020); Kunsthalle Basel, Basel, CH (2019); Leeds Gallery, Leeds (2019); Tate Britain, London, UK (2019); ZAC Centrale, Cantieri Culturali alla Zisa, Palermo, IT (2023); FRAC Île-de-France, Le Plateau, Paris, FR (2023); National Museum, of Norway, Oslo, NO (2023); 59th International Art Exhibition of Venice Biennale, Venice, IT (2022); 16th Lyon Biennale of Contemporary Art, Lyon, FR (2022); FRAC, Champagne-Ardenne, Reims, FR (2022); Göteborgs Konsthall, Göteborg, SE (2021); Museum of Contemporary Art of Rome, Rome, IT (2020); Bienal Ano Zero, Coimbra, PT (2019); Sala de Arte Santander, Madrid, ES (2019); Fondazione MIA,

Bergamo, IT (2019); NS-Dokumentationszentrum München, Munich, DE (2019); Kunsthalle Wien, Vienna, AT (2018); MoMA, New York, US (2018), 10th Berlin Biennale, Berlin, DE (2018) and Fondazione Prada, Milano, IT (2016).

Her photographs are part of several public and private collections, such as: Centre Pompidou, Paris (FR), FRAC Bretagne, Rennes (FR), FRAC Champagne-Ardenne (FR), KADIST, Paris (FR) and San Francisco (USA), Arts Council Collection (UK), British National Photography Collection, Bradford (UK), Leeds City Art Gallery, Leeds (UK), Northern Gallery of Contemporary Art, Sunderland (UK), MOMA - Museum of Modern Art, New York (USA), Sammlung Hoffmann (CH), Tate, London (UK), Zacheta National Gallery of Art (PL).

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