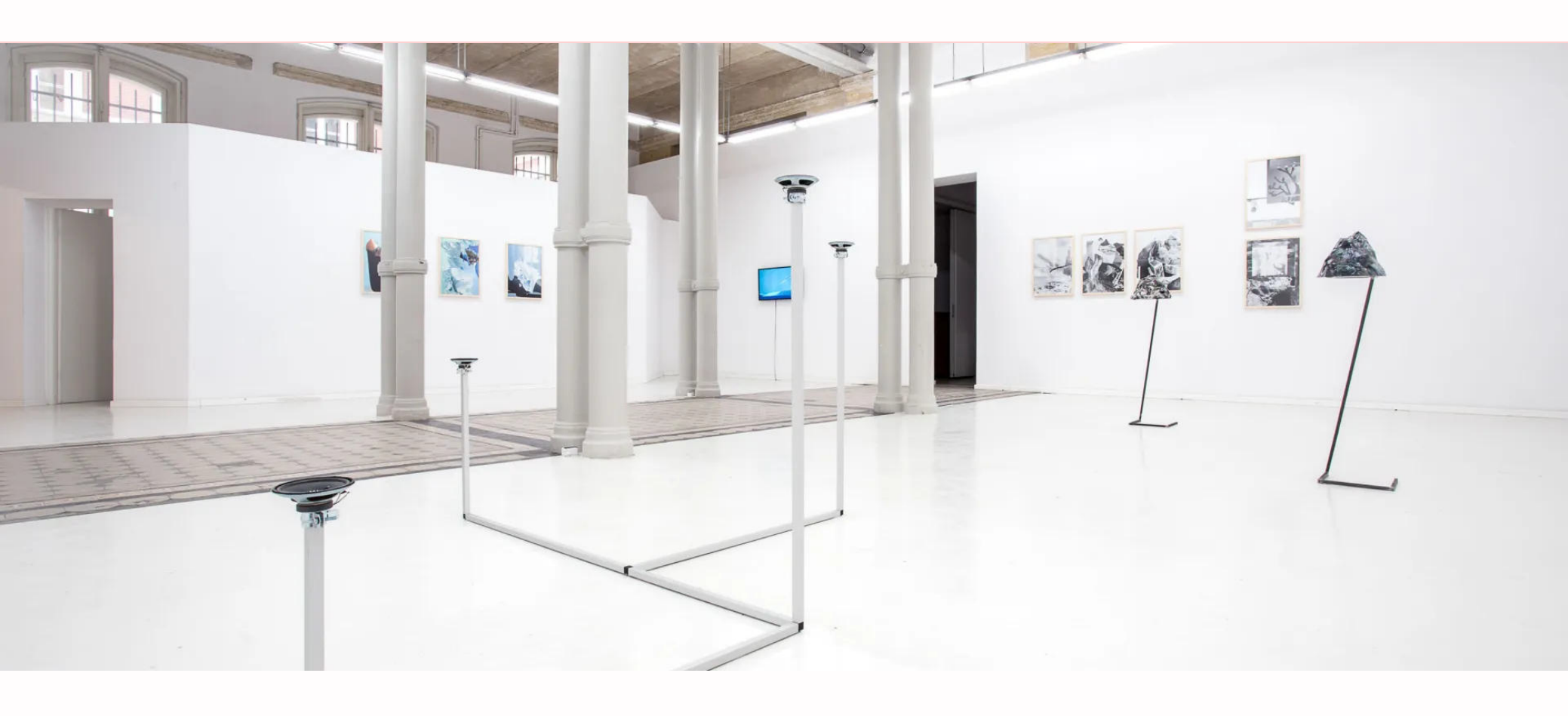
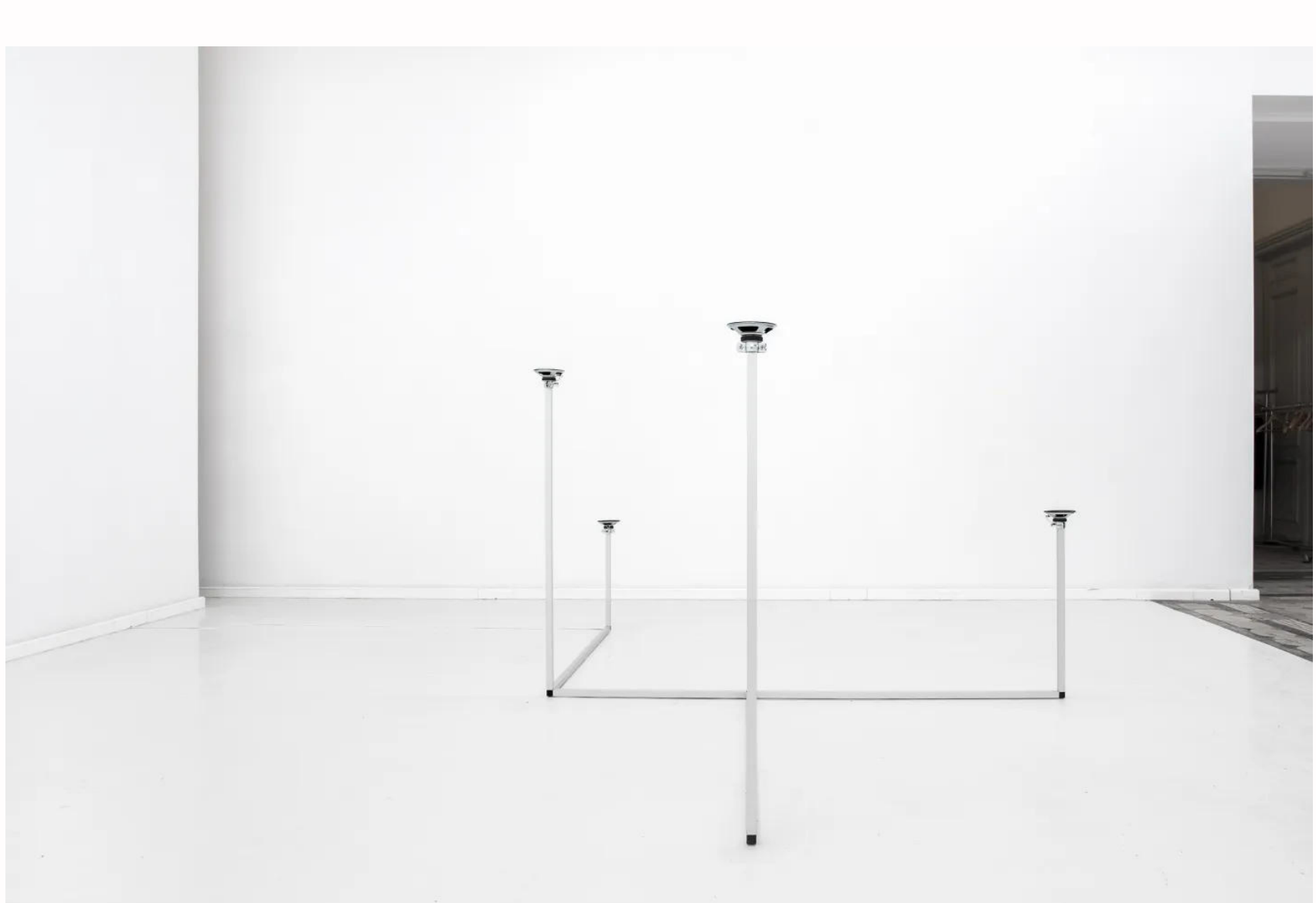


Ewa & Jacek Doroszenko: How To Travel

Ewa & Jacek Doroszenko

Artwork's Title: AMSR machine / How To Travel

Studio Based: Warsaw, Poland



Jacek Doroszenko, ASMR machine, 2019, sound installation (aluminum construction, custom audio speakers, wires, sound source), 108 x 208 x 160 cm

Can you tell us about the process of making your work?

Ewa Doroszenko: We are a very creative couple, always working on several projects in parallel. The process of making our work is a multistage and quite long one. We are both professionally trained visual artists, to be more precise, painters, but each of us deals with a full spectrum of contemporary media. Generally, when working on an art project, we intuitively choose the roles to be played -Jacek Doroszenko those that relate to sound and I with the image. However, it is not a rigid division, we spontaneously share our tasks. What we have in common is a shared interest in modern technological reality and a similar aesthetic sensitivity, precision, and attention to formal details of each project.

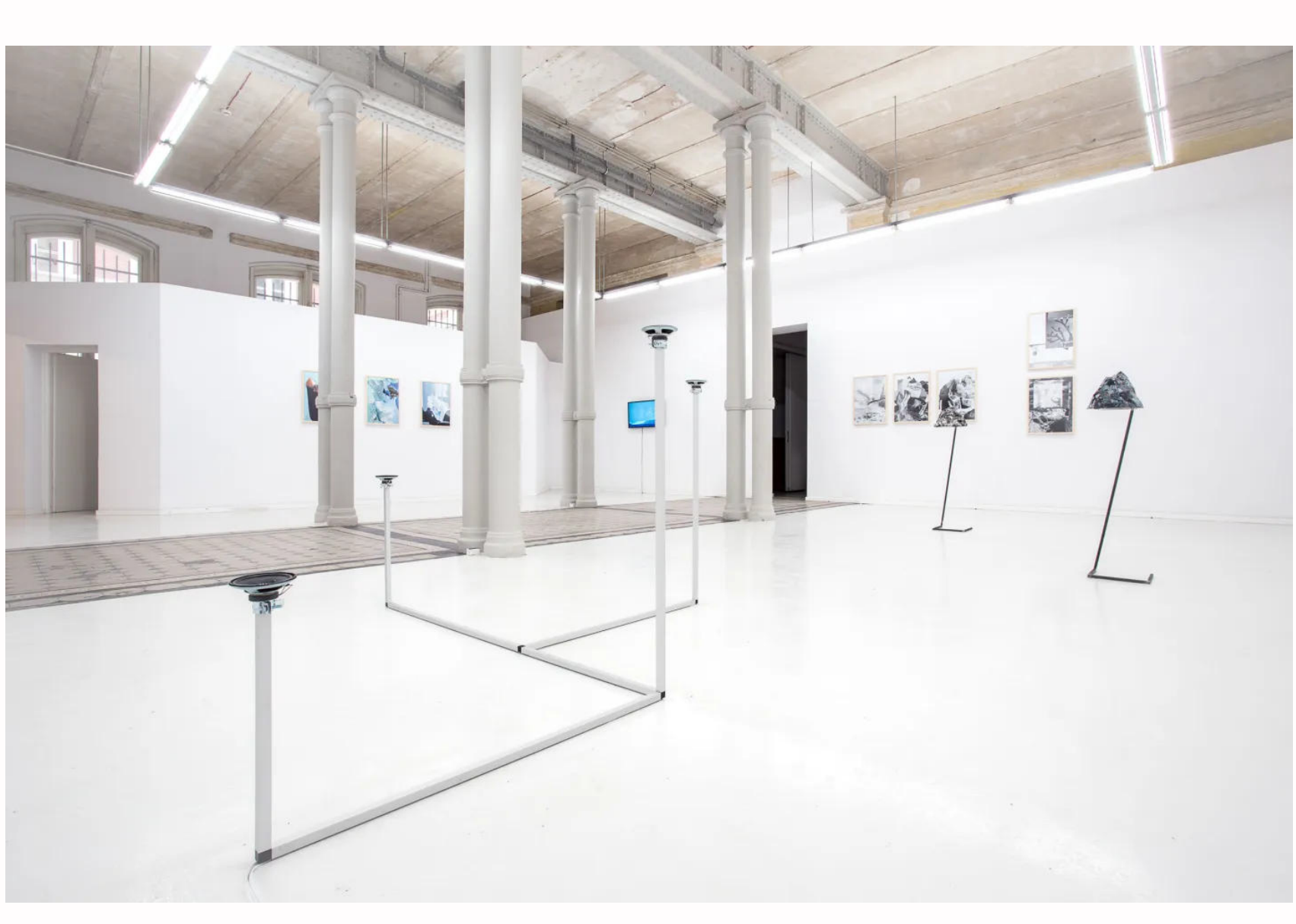
Jacek Doroszenko: Our artistic explorations are not limited by any medium, traditional, or digital. We experiment with different methods and technologies to express our thoughts. Whenever we start creating a new series of works, we think about the structure of the whole, about the many layers of meaning of the work. What is perhaps the most characteristic in our work is the deliberate creation of projects and exhibitions in which the visible and audible spheres interact.

How would you define your work in a few words (ideally in 3 words)?

Jacek Doroszenko: An audiovisual study of the contemporaneity.

'*How to Travel*' is your art project's title. How is this name related to your body of work in this multidisciplinary project?

Ewa Doroszenko: The 'How to Travel' project is the result of our observations and research, which led to the production of a set of works oscillating around the theme of online travels. The project consists of works made in different techniques, including series of photographs, video work and photographic objects. An important element of the project is sound – Jacek Doroszenko prepared minimalistic spatial sound installations that bound the whole arrangement of the project's exhibition at the Propaganda Gallery in Warsaw. All the work was created long before the outbreak of the pandemic, when online travelling seemed to be only an interesting form of entertainment, and not the last completely safe way to travel. Using Google Street View, popular computer games, travel guides, and other online sources, we sought to explore how digital culture is changing our perception of the natural landscape. Fascinated by modern information technologies and their incredible potential to shape lifestyles, we attempted to answer the question of how to authentically capture the rich duality of physical and virtual life.



Ewa Doroszenko, Jacek Doroszenko, How to Travel – exhibition view, Propaganda Gallery, Warsaw, 2019

Could you share with us some insights on your sculpture named 'ASMR machine'? Is there any particular story or meaning behind this sculptural artwork?

Jacek Doroszenko: The work you ask about, called 'AMSR machine', is a sound installation built with aluminum construction, custom audio prepared speakers, wires, sound sources. The title of the work and the way it works directly refers to the phenomenon of ASMR (Autonomous Sensory Meridian Response). The spontaneous sensory meridian response is a sensory phenomenon in which individuals experience a tingling sensation in the neck region and, in some cases, in other areas of the body because of stimulation by specific auditory or visual stimuli. The experience is accompanied by a feeling of well-being and relaxation. ASMR recordings extremely popular on the YouTube channel, attract thousands of people willing to listen to the sounds of slow, repetitive actions. Although the scientific community remains skeptical of the ASMR phenomenon, it can be said that the pleasure derived from ASMR signature recordings is a meditation-like phenomenon. In my sound installation, I focused on the process of entering a state of relaxation through specific sounds using a specific preparation of the sound speakers. Apart of the drones and signals, speakers emit also 'real' high frequencies by affecting the wires that are simply placed on top of the speakers. Moreover, the speakers are mounted on various heights of the installation and the construction allows to enter inside of the sonic emission area. Some may find this pleasant, some maybe awkward.

How do you believe this sculptural installation develops a broader dialogue with the rest of your art mediums involved in this project?

Ewa Doroszenko: First, the installation 'AMSR machine' emits sound, which creates a specific atmosphere for the whole exhibition of the 'How to Travel' project. Relaxing, subtle sounds can influence the visitors of the exhibition by sharpening their perception. The work 'AMSR machine' strongly corresponds with my video work entitled '**Imagine yourself on an island in the middle of the ocean**'. The video is based on reflections accompanying artistic residencies on the Greek island of Lefkada and the Portuguese Azores. The video is based on virtual landscapes from computer games. In my video, I use a meditation text written by myself, that refers to guided meditations popular on the YouTube channel, which when listened to, are supposed to help you calm down, relax, and achieve your dream outcomes in various aspects of life.

Both the installation 'AMSR machine' and the video 'Imagine yourself on an island in the middle of the ocean' are an attempt to draw attention to the prevailing contemporary lack of peace, the longing for relaxation in beautiful natural scenery.

Has this corona virus pandemic offered you any inspiration somehow during all these long lockdowns?

Ewa Doroszenko: Trying not to talk about the pandemic, I could say that this is a strange moment in my professional life, many things which I have been working on for a long time have finished and I'm looking forward to new projects, which I hope will be something completely different. Certainly, the pandemic has made me even more aware that creativity is extremely important in my life.

Do you think that more and more people, nowadays, are getting more interested in innovative and interactive exhibitions related to new media and technology-based artworks?

Jacek Doroszenko: Technology is an inseparable part of modern everyday life and whether we want it or not it affects our relationships, work, leisure time, so also cultural activities. Especially now, the ongoing pandemic and simultaneous digital transformation have a huge impact on economic and social development, and in the area of culture and art, there are also great changes. As reality is more and more often questioned by the virtual world and technologies are evolving so rapidly, I think that in the future artistic productions will become more engaging and interactive. These new approaches and tools will perhaps allow even more artistic freedom, offering completely new possibilities of creation, including the possibility of connecting elements that previously probably could not be combined. I do think that in the future the physical experience of the exhibition will continue to be powerful and strong. But galleries will expand significantly in ways that are not just physical, but also digital.

Is there any particular theme that utterly triggers you to engage your art with?

Ewa Doroszenko: I am interested in a variety of contemporary issues, especially the meaning of the image in technological reality, the fluidity of standards of female beauty, and the perception of the natural environment. It usually starts with becoming intrigued by a specific topic or subject. I then make some research about it, to figure out what's already out there, both in theoretical and factual terms. Then I try to understand what really hits me about it. And eventually try to translate that into photographs, videos, and installation. I tend to think in series. As soon as the first idea comes in, I start strategically planning the steps that will go into the exhibition.

Can you mention any artists you, lately or generally, take inspiration from?

Ewa Doroszenko: I am obsessed with the work of Polish iconic visual artists, especially the work of Zofia Stryjeńska, Katarzyna Kobro, Maria Pinińska-Bereś, Ewa Partum. I also highly recommend the book "Solaris" by Polish writer Stanisław Lem, it is better than the movie adaptation.

I also look with curiosity at Daniel Gordon, Matt Lipps, Mario Santamaría, Nico Krijno, just to name a bunch.

Jacek Doroszenko: Always hard to narrow it down to a single name… To briefly reveal my spectrum of inspiration, I could give you a range of composers from the sonic area: Iannis Xenakis, Morton Fieldman, Taylor Deupree, Ben Frost, Ryuichi Sakamoto, Kali Malone. I also greatly appreciate classical pianists such as András Schiff, Evgeny Kissin, Hélène Grimaud, Murray Perahia and many others.

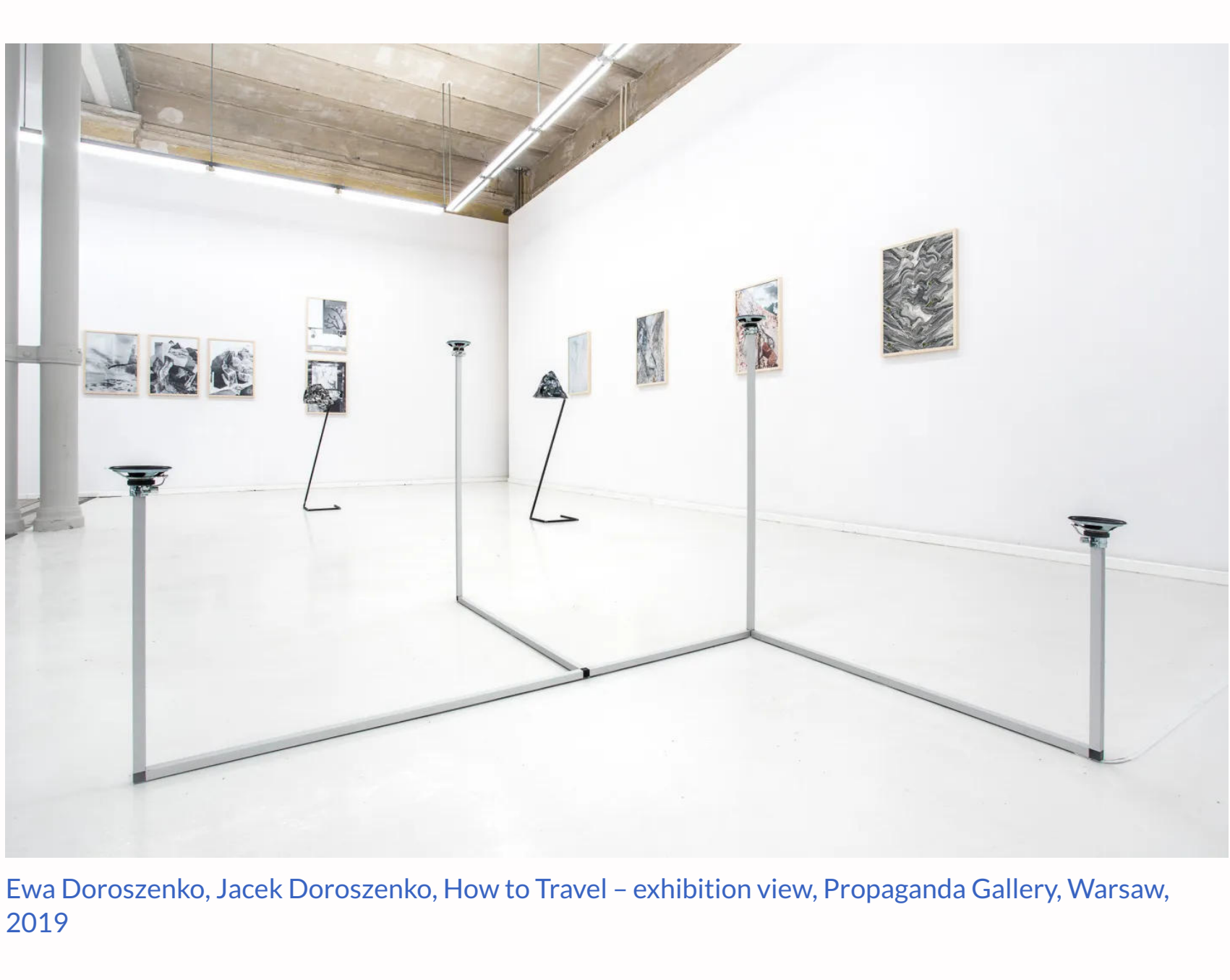
What about the place where you work? What's your studio space look like?

Jacek Doroszenko: Currently, we have a beautiful, bright studio in Warsaw, but we often change studios, we have not yet found the ideal space for creative work. The experiences we gather in other countries, to which we move from time to time as part of Artist-in-Residence programs, are very important in our work. The permanent studio is not the privileged place of our creative practice, our point of reference. The very idea of a physical studio is increasingly abandoned by us in favor of a 'mental atelier'. We act as travelers changing temporary studios, residents of spaces entrusted to us. Our private life and artistic activity are to a large extent conditioned, dependent on concrete circumstances over which we often have no influence, moving only between points that mark our limited autonomy. We try to interfere, to change, to temporarily reorganize places given to us for temporary disposal. Within the framework of artist residencies, we worked very well, among others, in Kunstnarhuset Messen in Ålvik (Norway), Hangar in Barcelona (Spain), Atelierhaus Salzamt in Linz (Austria).

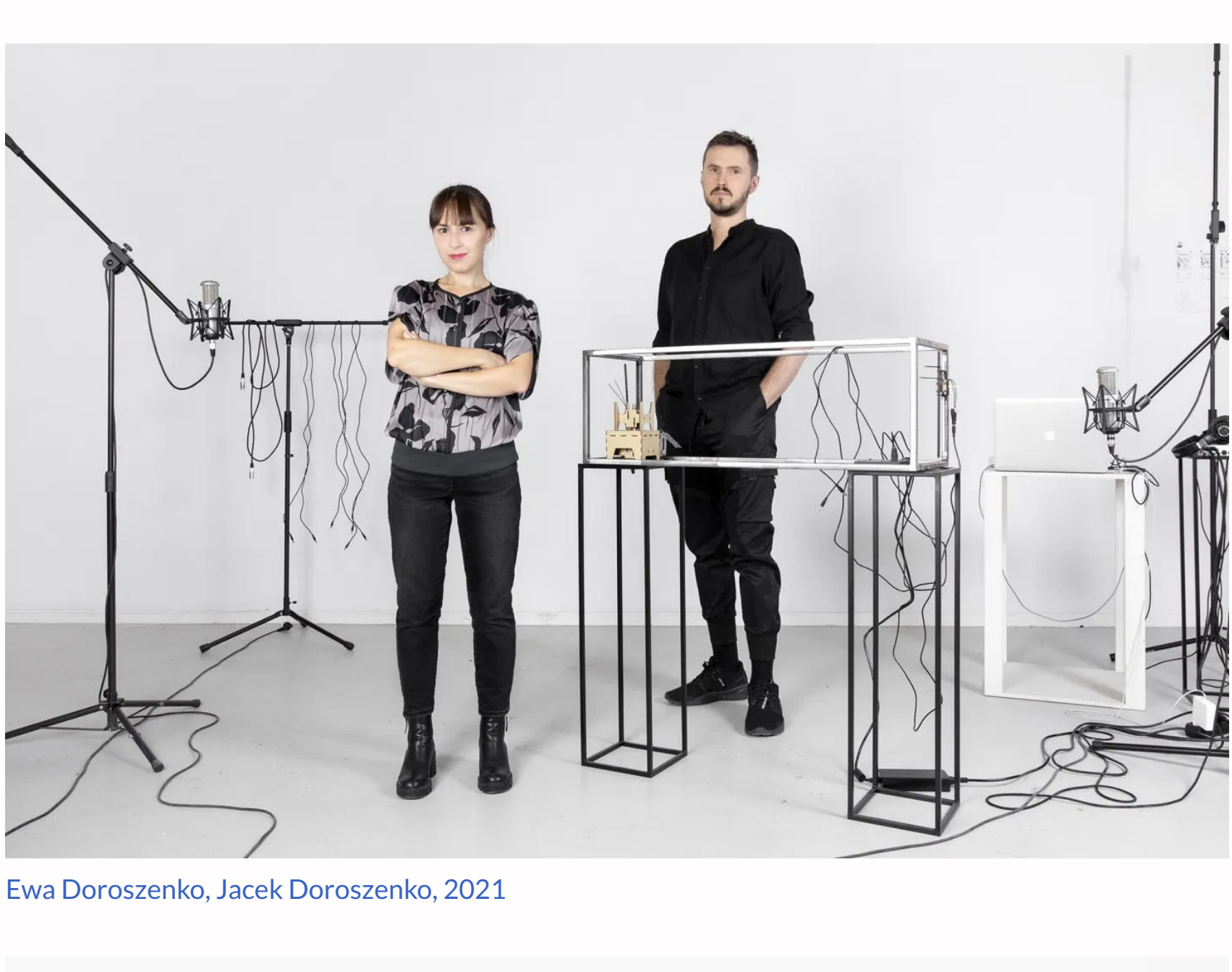
Which are your plans for the near future?

Jacek Doroszenko: Recently we are working on a new project entitled 'Bodyfulness', which, like our previous activities, is a creative experiment combining sound and visual art. This year we are going to release the project in a form of unique music album and present an exhibition which is an audiovisual study of how modern technology and culture change our intimate relationships.

Additional Images



Ewa Doroszenko, Jacek Doroszenko, How to Travel – exhibition view, Propaganda Gallery, Warsaw, 2019



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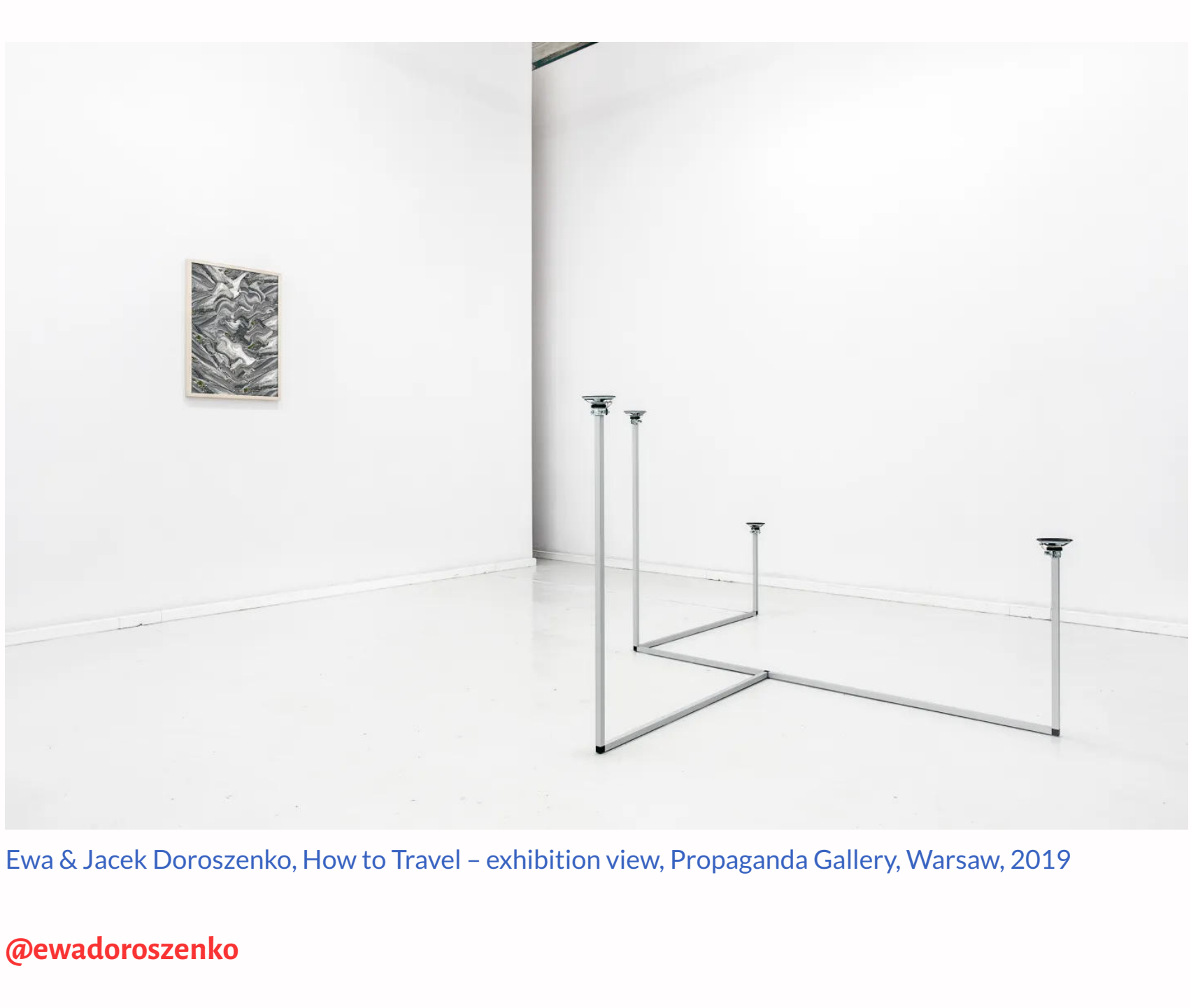
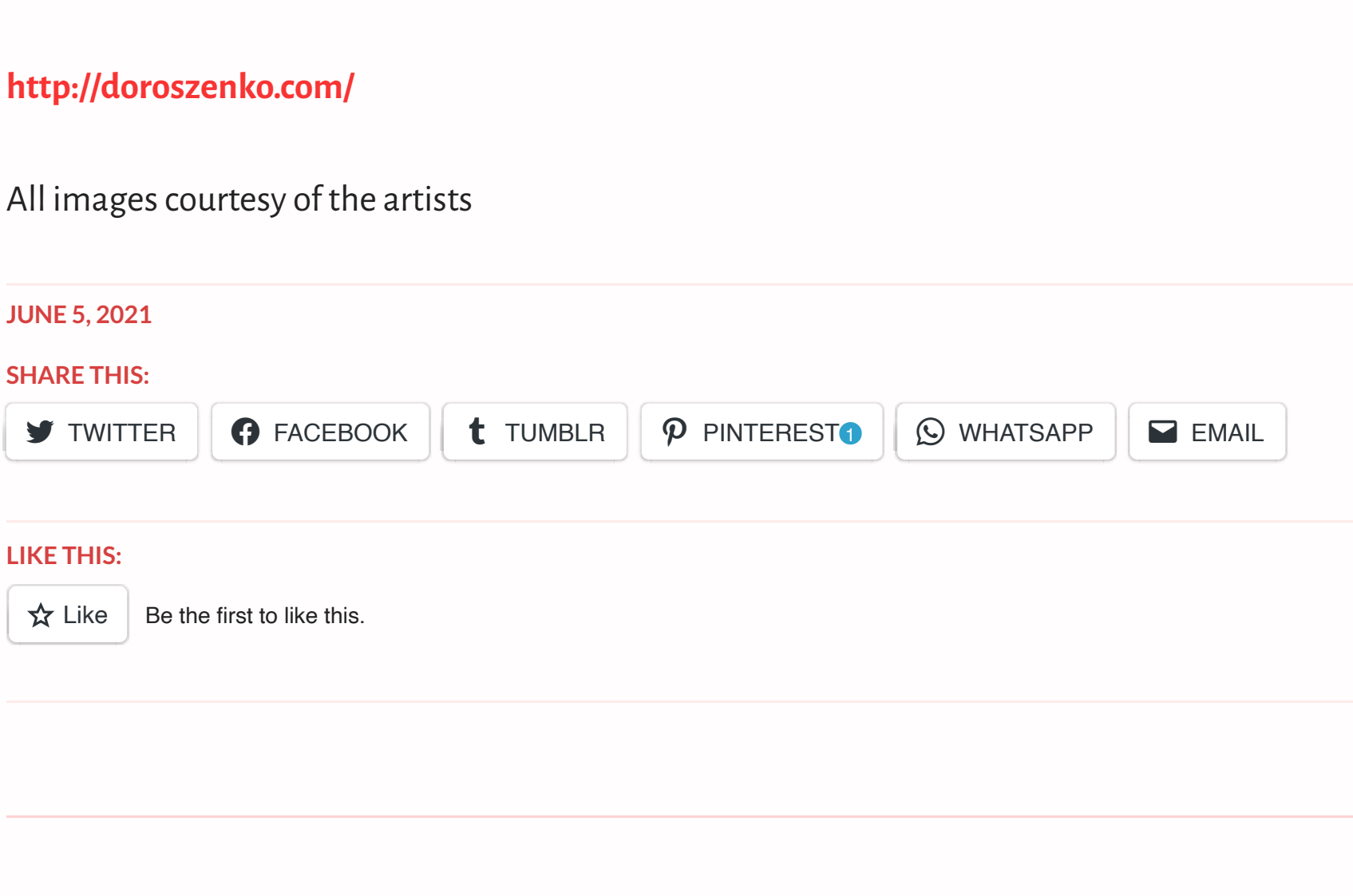
Ewa Doroszenko, Jacek Doroszenko, 2021



Ewa Doroszenko, Impossible Territory, 2019, prints on photographic paper, 70 x 50 cm each



Ewa & Jacek Doroszenko, How to Travel – exhibition view, Propaganda Gallery, Warsaw, 2019

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All images courtesy of the artists

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