

The New York Times

TURNING POINTS

The Year 2019, as Seen by Five Artists

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[...]



“ParaPivot” (detail, 2019) by Alicja Kwade, at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. Courtesy of the artist; 303 Gallery, New York; König Galerie, Berlin/London; and Kamel Mennour, Paris/London. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, photo by Hyla Skopitz.

Alicja Kwade

“ParaPivot” (2019)

This year, numerous exhibitions worldwide addressed the moon landing on its 50th anniversary. I’ve participated in some of them and have been glad to highlight this human achievement. But the more I consider it, landing on the moon doesn’t seem to have lived up to people’s expectations. The questions we had back then are still with us today: What is reality? Is there life on other planets? Can humans inhabit another world?

Since I was a child, New York has been the place of my dreams and desires. I grew up in a communist system until I was 8 years old. Seeing my installation “ParaPivot” on the roof of the Metropolitan Museum of Art this year, framed by New York’s iconic skyline, has been very special for me.

But now this view also brings forth a sense of nostalgia. From the vantage point of the museum’s roof, the surrounding skyscrapers act like a theatrical backdrop, appearing to support the “worlds” of “ParaPivot,” as if each stone were delicately balanced atop a tower. It creates a fantastic and somewhat anxious illusion of instability, echoing the ways in which these buildings, and the vast sums of money they represent, precariously uphold the global economy. As with the moon landing 50 years ago, I look back on my childhood expectations of the Western world and think we still have much progress to make.

Alicja Kwade was born in Poland in 1979 and currently lives and works in Berlin. Her work can be seen in solo exhibitions at Dallas Contemporary and M.I.T.’s List Visual Arts Center in Cambridge, Mass.

Please find the full article here:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/12/03/opinion/the-year-2019-as-seen-by-five-artists.html>