# Care | Warsaw – transcript of the recording

I am standing in Muranów in Warsaw.

I am standing by the Monument to the Ghetto Heroes.

I am standing by the Museum of the History of Polish Jews on Anielewicza Street, formerly Gęsia Street.

The city surrounds me, the streets beneath me, covered with earth and rubble. Old addresses, backyards and hiding places, bunkers. Under the houses, squares, sidewalks - cellars and foundations. No need to go deep. One city on top of another. So long ago, but so shallow.

I am standing in Muranów in Warsaw on May 16, the 80th anniversary of the destruction of the Great Synagogue.

We are standing.

I’m recreating fragments of the choreography by Noa Eshkol, an Israeli artist born in the 1920s in Degania Bet Kibbutz. Her father was born in Oratowo near Kyiv. Before he emigrated to Palestine in 1914, he received his education at a university in Vilnius.

In the years 1943-45 - in the same years when the war and the Holocaust were raging in Europe - Noa Eshkol studied dance and body culture in Tel Aviv.

Ten years later, in 1953, Noa Eshkol prepared a choreography for the celebration of the 10th anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, which was presented at the Ghetto Fighters kibbutz in Israel. Only a short video recording of that piece has survived, just several minutes long, which I received from the Israeli performer Omer Krieger.

I repeat those gestures here, 70 years after they were shown in Israel, I recall them in Warsaw, commemorating the events from 80 years ago. I set myself in relation, I repeat, I organize attention, I choreograph, I compose, I embody the topography of the city, I re-organize it, I emphasize it, I activate myself.

Noa Eshkol learned to play an instrument as a child. Her teacher stressed the importance of the role of notation in music. Years later, Eshkol, in collaboration with Abraham Wachman, developed her own dance recording system. She drew lines, circles, segments, arcs. She tried to capture the movement and save it in a form that would allow it to last and pass it on. Just like you do with stories, memories, stories. Movement, just like memory - when not passed on, disappears.

Barbara Engelking, Polish Holocaust scholar, confessed in one of her interviews that “she opts for stopping to speak about Memory and starting to speak about Care. Care for the past.”

“Memory – she said – has been on everyone’s lips – this word doesn’t mean anything anymore. It has been worn out.”

What about Care?

What does Care mean?

“According to one of the disctionaries: ‘troska’ (care) tells us today about concern, worry, to care, care for, caring etc, but yet in the 15th century ‘troski’ (care in plural) meant raspings, filings. Leftovers.

In Czech ‘trosky’ means ruins, debris.

Old Slavic ‘troskot’ meant all plants that were easily rustling, cracking.”

The meaning of the Polish word ‘troska’ – like the English word ‘care’ – consists of ‘worry’ as well as ‘custody’.

The act of caring combines both emotional and ethical approaches.

It combines being concerned and being affected and also taking responsibility for Others’ well-being:

‘Taking care of Sb/Sth’ and the fact that we care about Sb/Sth.

An act of caring often brings action.

If movement can be an act of caring, how can I move around here?

Movement can be a monument, a living sculpture created in relation to a place.

I move around Warsaw's Muranów.

I move, I watch, I allow myself to act.

The final act of destruction of that city under our feet took place exactly 80 years ago, on May 16, 1943, at 8:15 pm. That evening, the man responsible for the brutal suppression of the uprising in the Warsaw ghetto, which lasted from April 19, was handed an electric device that, through electric wires, caused the simultaneous detonation of explosives in the walls of the synagogue - the Great Synagogue, the most impressive in all of Warsaw.

Its construction also began on May 14, 147 years ago. The ceremonial opening of the synagogue took place in 1878 on Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year. The synagogue was 64 meters long and had exactly 2,200 seats, 1,150 seats in the main hall and 1,050 seats in the women's gallery. The main entrance was from the north. The main prayer hall was 29 by 33 meters. There was a choir that sang to the accompaniment of organs and other musical instruments. Still in 1941, the synagogue choir performed on the occasion of Children's Month.

Today, the Blue Skyscraper stands in its place, moved slightly to the north and closer to Plac Bankowy. It also covers the site of the former square in front of the synagogue.

I am standing in Warsaw, where there is no Great Synagogue. I wonder what it was like to get inside it.

[Music]

I don't focus on emptiness, I pay attention to what's material -- leftovers. Something worth noticing in the space of places where seemingly “there are no traces.”

On the terrace above the Muranów Cinema, I evoke the topographies of the Great Synagogue, I move along its outline.

I evoke historical choreographic material. I present, I speculate, I record, I act, I remember.

I am in Muranów in Warsaw.

I'm standing in a place-after-the-ghetto.

I look towards the place-after-the-synagogue.

I'm standing. I'm still standing.

We are standing.