

“Walls” in the Bersohn and Bauman Children’s Hospital

The second part of the new online project of the WGM Exhibition Department – “MUR/Ściany” (“The Wall/Walls”) – consists of a film based on Yitzhak Berenstein’s poem of the same title, written and directed by Rafał Kosewski, the curator of the project

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“We were inspired to make the film by the verses of Yitzhak Berenstein’s poem, which depicts the experience of confinement and isolation in an exceptional way” – says Rafał Kosewski.

“From the very beginning we felt that the interiors of the Bersohn and Bauman Children’s Hospital – a place so important for the history of Warsaw and Warsaw Jews – were a natural setting for the depiction of the spiritual landscape of the ghetto drawn by Berenstein. The enclosed world of corridors and abandoned rooms is the setting for a tragic tale of rejection and realisation of impending Holocaust, received – as the author of the poem wrote – without “a protest and without resignation”.

Yitzhak Berenstein was a literary critic, essayist and psychologist, who cooperated with the underground organisation Oneg Shabbat which under the leadership of Emanuel Ringelblum was collecting materials and building an archive to document the everyday life of the Warsaw Ghetto. His poem “Ściany” (“Walls”) presents two overlapping realities. On the one hand, it is a record of the inner state of a particular individual, struggling with the claustrophobic universe of the Ghetto – a dying world suffering from famine and diseases. On the other hand, the closing of the Jews behind the wall is interpreted as another exile from paradise that in the awareness of the author assumes the shape of the Vistula River nature.

“Walls” were written and directed by Rafał Kosewski from the WGM Exhibitions Department. Berenstein’s words are recited by Jakub Kotyński. The film was shot by Krzysztof Kiziewicz, Radovan Lee and Bartek Warzecha and edited by Artur ‘franc’ Broniszewski. The sound was recorded by Mateusz Rychlicki.

Project website: <https://mur.1943.pl/>

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Photo: Bartek Warzecha