

A factual report of our performance / intervention in Warsaw Uprising Museum and Frontex office.

By Ehsan Fardjadniya, a member of the performance group.

On August 3rd, 2016 our performance took place at around 14:00 hours in the Warsaw Uprising Museum, Grzybowska 79, Wola district, Warsaw, Poland and moved to Frontex headquarters.

14:15 p.m.

Our performance and intervention starts. Dorian Batycka and Ehsan Fardjadniya place flyers, a contemporary call for uprising with a similar large header saying POLACY! Refugees and Citizens, in flyer and text holders in the museum. By now they have done about two or three flyer holders. The guards and museum invigilators immediately recognize the new flyers. One of them looks at it and loudly says: "Rosa Luxemburg, kurwa" and walks quickly towards the office. The other invigilators start going through the flyer holders, looking for our flyers and take them out. They also look at the flyers that the member of public have in their hand and ask them to give it back.



Warsaw Uprising Museum invigilators and staff finding and taking away our flyers. Video still. Video by EhsanFardjadniya

We go to the printing workshop, where they print the original call for uprising 1944, and place our contemporary version in between the originals.



Ehsan Fardjadniya replacing the flyers . Video still. Video by Dorian Batycka.

POLACY!

REFUGEE OR CITIZEN

The fight for the liberation of our capital has begun!

The inhabitants of Warsaw, both newcomers and those who have lived here for a while already, are all fed up with the wild waves of fascism coming back to this country, currently not from outside, but from the inside of the very core of this country - its citizens.

If the victims of the antifascist fights from the past are to be respected, resistance to fascism today is essential. The voices of the refugees, the antifascists, the citizens and those who come here for long or short time, need to unite and oppose the intolerant, repressive and racist voices of the contemporary authorities and Poles seduced by the fake promises leading to exclusion and marginalization of the Europe's Others.

Rosa Luxemburg, the "unwanted" theorist and activist both in her lifetime and after her death, used to say that disappointment is a sentiment unavailable for those truly oppressed. We - the refugees, precarious workers, queers and women are not to be misguided by the fake logic of "success." We are not here to win, but to change: the social structure, the political ideas and their articulation, the production and redistribution of goods, the imagination.

We need to de-petrify our imagination. Our dreams and political visions have for too long been adjusted to the Fortress Europe narrative with its racist and exclusive politics.

If there is - as Walter Benjamin suggested - a pact between the past and contemporary generations, today it consists on such a transformation of the social, in which art and politics should be working for the new assemblies, de-fascisation of society. The experiences of today's oppressed - refugees, queers, women and workers — are much better guidelines for such a transformation, than the bureaucratic labels of incomes and costs, applied to all sectors of our lives.

The masses of workers - peasants, proletarians, intelligentsia who fought in 1944 against the fascism, are the precarious workers, activists, marginalized artists, refugees, migrants and all those who are continually excluded on the margins. This is a call for all of oppressed to come together and form a UNION. A UNION for EQUALITY and SOCIAL JUSTICE! A UNION of marginalized, oppressed citizens and REFUGEES!

LONG LIVE EMANCIPATION FROM NATIONALISM

Anonymous Stateless Immigrants Collective
Warsaw, date 3 August 2016

Refugee Uprising Manifesto

14:40 p.m.

On the third floor of the museum there is a big collection of guns. One of the guns on display can be touched. The members of public can engage it and push the trigger and it would release and make a noise.

Here the first performance happens. Dorian Batycka is the first to perform, enacting movement emphasizing feelings of trauma and PTSD, he goes down on his knees, and puts his forehead on the ground, gyrating as if he was in intense pain. This performative intervention is meant to criticize the themes of violence encountered in the installation. He seems sick and traumatized but he doesn't make any noise or doesn't say anything.



Top: Children watching guns on display. Photos by E. Fardajadniya

Bottom: Dorian Batucka's performance. Video still. Video by E. Farjdaniya

Members of the public show concerns. A security guard approaches him, bends over and asks him what is going on and how he feels.



Dorian Batucka's performance. Video still. Video by E. Farjdaniya

Several more museum vacillators gather around him. He is still on the ground feeling sick and traumatized with his head on the ground. They bring him glass of water. He slowly stands up. They asked him if he wanted to go out and get some fresh air. He agrees and they walked with him to the garden of the museum.

In the garden he explains that the display of violence and the guns made him sick and traumatized. His knees fell weak, he couldn't stand on his legs anymore and he fainted.

The curator of the museum is present right now. He asks her to talk to the director. She says he is at a TV interview. He asks her why such an overwhelming violence is present at the museum? He says although he understands that the uprising was crushed violently, he still doesn't understand why the contemporary wars in Iraq, Afghanistan and NATO trainings are on display at the museum. He asks why there is no room for peace in the museum. The curator gives him her email address for further correspondence.

15:00 p.m.

On the second floor of the museum, Łukasz Wójcicki dramatically bends over on the ground, holding one of his hands on the brick wall, he starts crying. Again the members of the public show concern. Few bent over to talk to him. Few invigilators and the guards start running towards him. This time, they forcefully make him stand up. They hold him firmly under his shoulders and make him walk quickly towards the emergency exit of the museum.



Łukasz Wójcicki's performance. Video still. Video by E. Fardjadniya



Łukasz Wójcicki's performance. Video still. Video by E. Farjadniya



Images of soldiers on display on the left wall of Łukasz performance location. Photo by Ehsan Farjadniya

15:15 p.m.

Ehsan Farjadniya goes back to the printing room. The members of printing workshop aren't there and the print machines standing still. There are still few members of the public in the room. He starts mixing our flyers with the original one. Exactly at the moment, when he is done, a person that seems like one of the printing assistances approaches him and starts talking in polish to him and shows the flyers. He keeps talking with an angry and panicking voice and takes our flyers out. Ehsan denies having done anything and walks out of the room. About a minute later a guy is running to him and in polish asks him something. He is holding in his hands many flyers. He switches to English and asks if the flyers are his and if he was putting them around. Ehsan denies his involvement and keeps looking at his mobile. The museum staff is not wearing any museum card batch or security uniform. Ehsan still acts normally; he says he doesn't know the flyer. He keeps looking at his mobile and walks his way. After few meter Ehsan realizes that the guy is following him. He keeps walking through the museum and the other guy is still following him. He goes to the floor with the contemporary version of war and NATO trainings. He enters a dark room with three videos of contemporary war with solders and helicopters shooting. He starts filming with his mobile and knows that the other guy is outside the room waiting for him. He comes out of the room, with his recording video still on, and start filming the guy that follows him. Ehsan asks him: 'Are you following me?' He, who suddenly starts talking to the phone, shakes his hand and says no and starts walking away with collection of our flyers in his hands. At this moment Ehsan is following him with his camera still on. After few minutes he stops following him, while other museum invigilators and guards walking panicky around him. He decides to walk towards the exit of the museum and in a minute he is out.

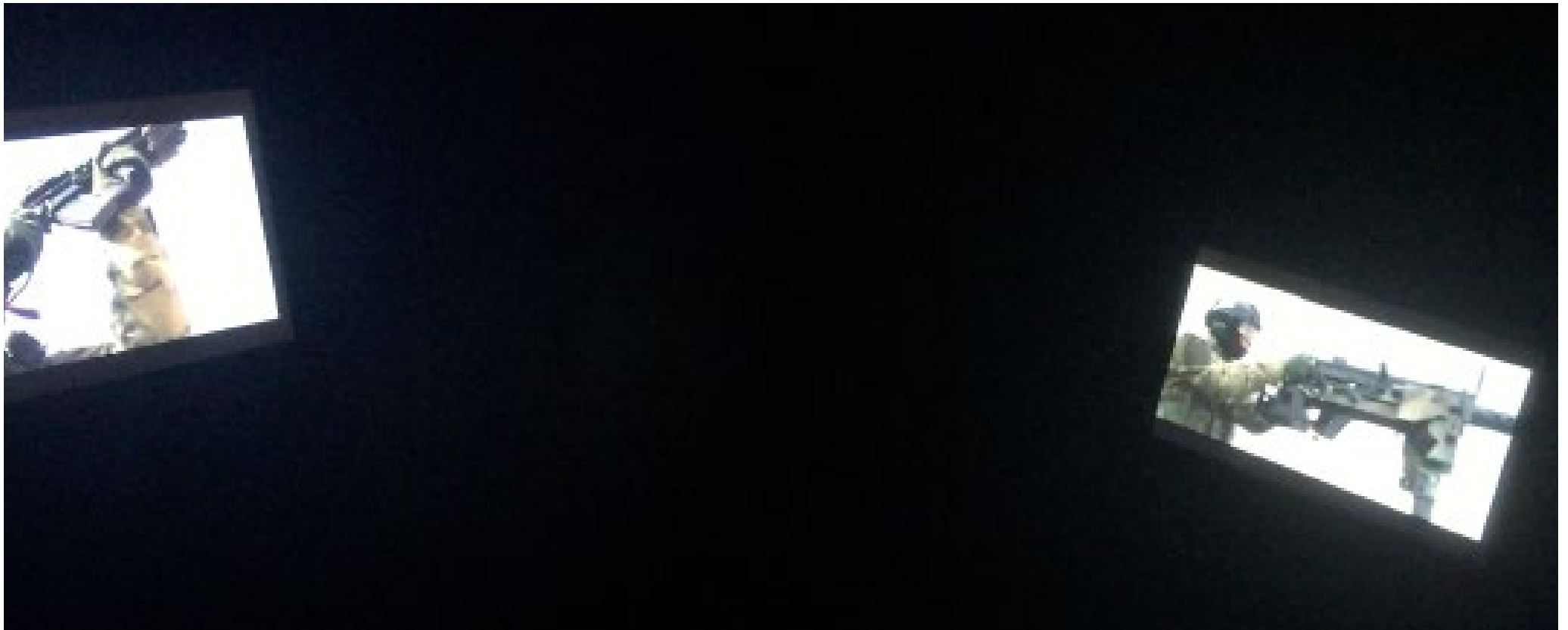
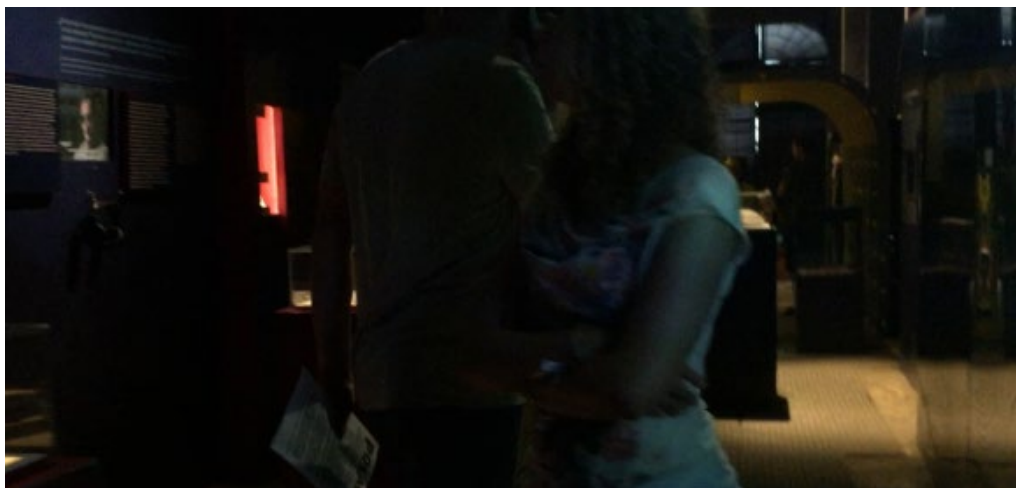


Image by E. Fardjadniya

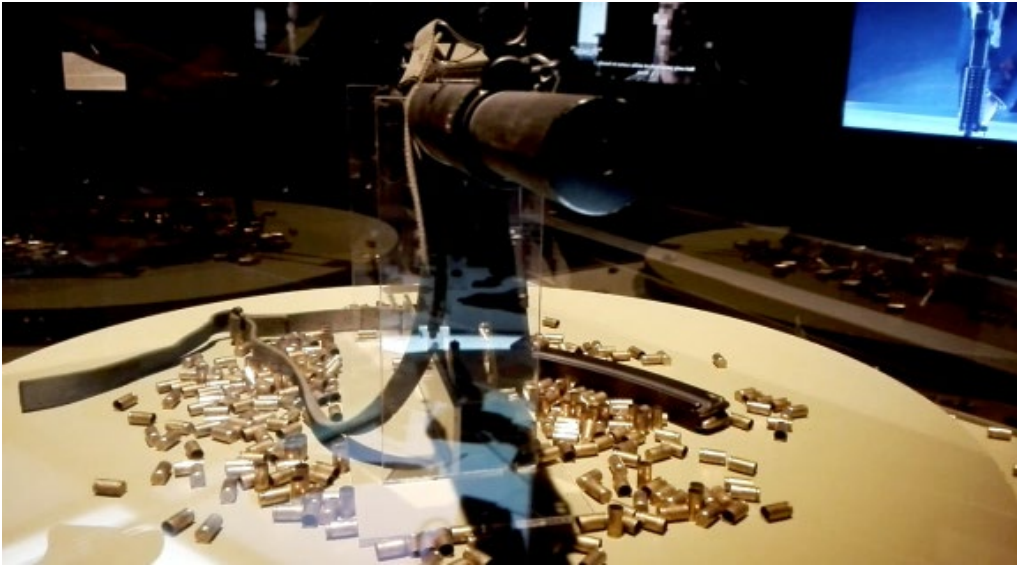


Video still. Video by E. Fardjadniya

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Around 15:30 p.m.

Aleka Polis falls on the ground with a panic in a dark room on the second floor with displays of gun shuts and flashing lights. She is taken immediately up from the ground by guards and walked quickly outside the museum.

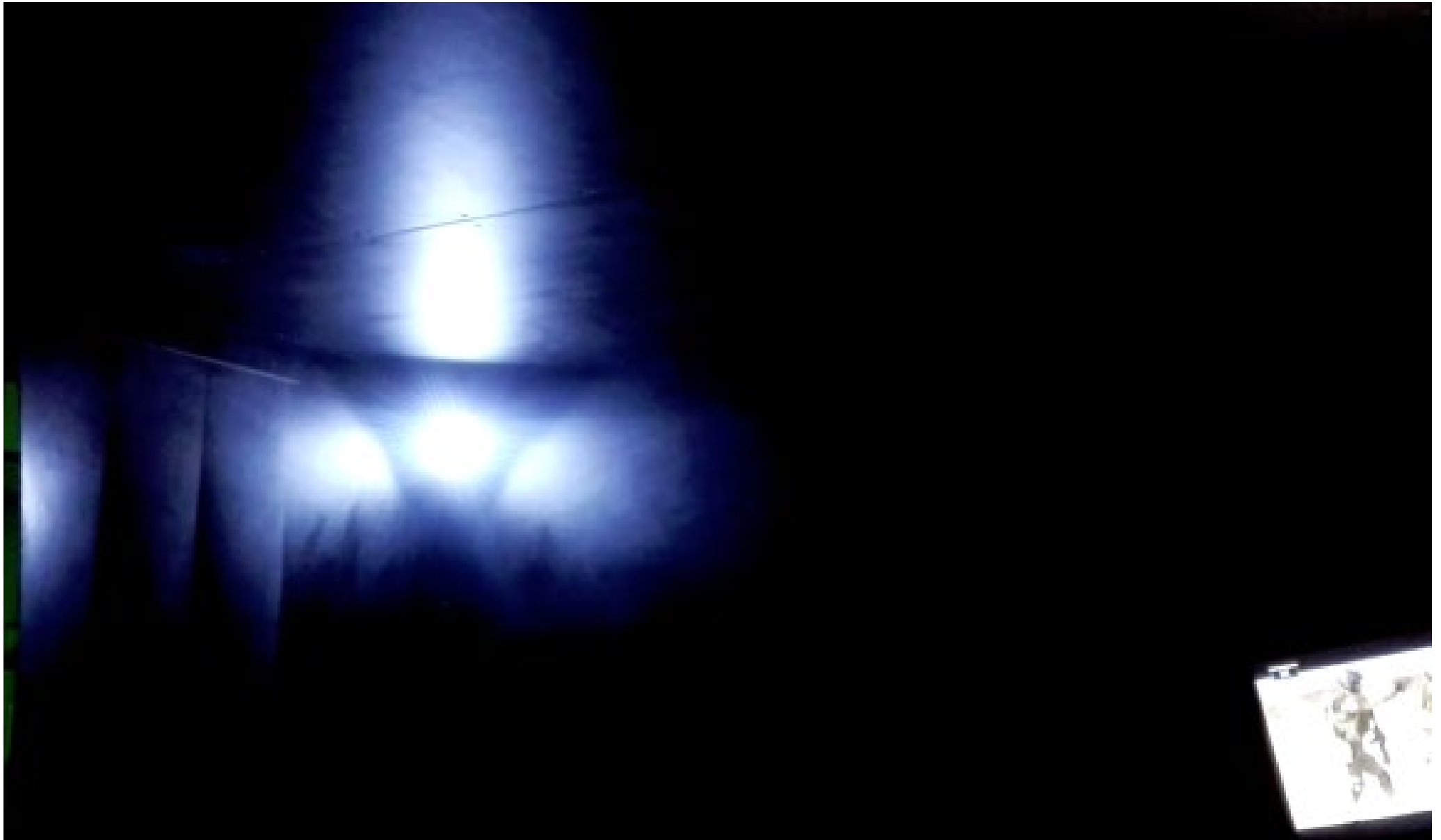


Video stills. Video by Styrmir Örn Guðmundsson

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Around 15:40 p.m.

Edka Jarzab plays a sound recording from a Bluetooth speaker device that she brought with her. The audio is a text by her, describing her repetitive childhood nightmare of being shot on the head from the back during the uprising. Right now she, by herself already feels truly sick and decides to walk out of the museum.



Video stills. Video by Styrmir Örn Guðmundsson

15:50 p.m.

All of our members exit the museum of Warsaw Uprising. Next to our car we are hugging and talking about what happened.

15:55 p.m.

We take a child size coffin outside our car and start the march to Frontex office, a few hundred meters away from the Warsaw Uprising Museum. We are humming a Jewish mourning song. Our two females members are walking in front and we, four males, are following them.



Photo by Sebastian Cichocki

Performance in front of Frontex Office

14:10 p.m.

Our group crosses the street and approach the high buildings and Frontex and BNP PARIBAS security service office. About 6 to 7 security guards with two different uniforms start mobilizing with some of them on Segways and others on foot. We're approximately in 400 meters distance to the entrance gate of the Frontex office. We're humming and singing the song and holding the coffin on our shoulders.



Photo by Sebastian Cichocki

The security guards confront us physically and try to break up the line. They grab the coffin and try to take it away. We then put the coffin down and form a circle around the coffin. In that few seconds, the security and performers form a circle around the coffin while the performers keep singing. One of the security guards takes the coffin violently from its side handle and walks out of the circle. His colleague takes the other side-handle and they walk quickly couple of hundred meters away and put the coffin on few concrete blocks. During this time, the performers continue to peacefully sing and hum, following the coffin as it is pulled away by security. Several of the performers then pull phones to start filming the security guards. The security guards try to physically stop them, even going so far as to attempt to take several of their phones physically from their hands. The security guards are mounted on Segues and mobilize around the group. One of the security firms was called: WARSAW SPIRE.



Photo by Sebastian Cichocki

At this moment they are about 6 to 7 or maybe more. They look quite angry and trying to block us physically. By now we almost reach the coffin. One of the guards snatches the coffin from its side-handle and gives it over to his colleague on a Segway. He, holding the coffin from the side-handle goes fast on his Segway towards the back of the office building.



Photo by Sebastian Cichocki



Photos by Sebastian Cichocki

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The performers again follow the coffin, peacefully marching and moving towards where the guards have hidden it. They march slowly, humming and singing songs. They turn around and encounter the building and find out that the coffin is situated behind a pillar next to the garage gate of the office on the address PL. EUROPEJSKI 1,2,6. The performers continue to march towards the coffin. At this moment the security guards exercise more violence and physically stop them from walking any further towards the coffin and begin physically accosting the performers. Again, they attempt to stop the filming of their actions by the performers. Ehsan shout's out: " leave my mobile. Leave my mobile alone." The security then becomes more physically aggressive pushing the performers back and shouting: "We are calling the police, they are coming." The performers respond: "let's call it off. We're leaving," and begin to walk away.



Video still. Video by E. Fardjadiay



Photo by Sebastian Cichocki

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Next, the security guards prevent the group from leaving. Two of them start surrounding Ehsan as he tries to walk away, making it impossible. They prevent him by physically pulling his arms and pushing against his chest. Ehsan tries to continue walking but is blocked. He says: "let me go, I'm leaving, I'm done with my performance. I need to leave now." But they keep him tight.



Photo by Sebastian Cichocki

Now the group has stopped singing and is moving further away from the security. The two guards then grab Ehsan by the shoulders and start pushing him towards a door next to the garage gates. They open the door and push him inside, forcibly confining him against his will.



Photo by Sebastian Cichocki

Ehsan is now inside the building behind the close door. One of the security guards is sweating a lot and seems very panicked. He talks in very fast Polish to Ehsan, who is unable to understand or communicate with him. Ehsan tells the guard he cannot speak Polish. He repeats: "Let me go", "You can't hold me inside", "I need to go." Ehsan tries to walk away but the security continues to push him back. He decides to stay and not use any physical contact. After a couple of minutes, one of them leaves and the other one stay between the door and Ehsan, again preventing him from leaving. He repeatedly tells the other security guard: "Let me go. You can't keep me inside. Open the door. I need fresh air."

He continues this for couple of minutes then Ehsan starts becoming afraid of what can happen at this moment. His fear was mostly because at that moment anything could happen and no one will be there to witness. Several people pass in the corridor, which makes Fardjadniya even more nervous. These people have no uniforms and don't make eye contact with him. This continues for approximately 10 minutes.

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The panicked security guy comes back talking in Polish with the other guard and Ehsan keeps repeating: "let me go out" and makes one-step forwards. They push him back with their hands against his chest and talk in Polish. The panicked security guard leaves again and Fardjadniya is alone again with the same security guard, the whole time he keeps repeating that he needs to go out: "Ok, at least open the door I really need fresh air," and the guard ignores him.

Ehsan takes out his mobile and the security again tries to snatch it out of his hand.

Ehsan says: "What is the problem? I didn't do anything illegal, I was singing a song and I'm peaceful." He says: "We are fighting for this country but you are messing it up" to which Ehsan replies: "Why are you fighting? With who are you fighting? I'm not fighting. I'm peaceful, just singing a song. Is that illegal?" Ehsan keeps repeating to please let him out.

Next, another guard comes in together with the panicked one and Ehsan keeps repeatedly asking if he can exit. Now they let him stand in front of the door. A few of them are surrounding him. Ehsan says: "Can I smoke?" "Yes, ok".

The police enter and start talking with the others in the performance. The situation calms down. One of the undercover security members from the museum suddenly appears and charges Dorian with calling the ambulance. Dorian denies calling the ambulance.

The police officers, about 4 or 5 of them, seem calmed and relaxed. They are checking the ID cards of the performers on their devices. They ask Ehsan if he has an ID card. Ehsan does not.

They instruct him to go to the police station, whilst Dorian and Lukas go back to retrieve his documents. Together with Ewa Majewska, Ehsan goes to the police station to await the delivery of his documents.

The police officers says: "let him know that we aren't taking him to the office because of his skin colour but because he doesn't have any ID card with him."

Ehsan arrives at the police office and smokes a cigarette with Ewa outside before entering. After entering they ask him to scan both his index fingers on a device. He complies, asking that this fingerprint will not be kept in their database. The police comply and inform Ehsan that these fingerprints will not be kept in their database. In a few minutes the device say that he has not outstanding warrants or convictions or terrorist associations.

There is a conversation happening between Ewa and the police officer and she tries to translate it to Ehsan. It is mostly about the rights of European citizens in regards with holding ID cards and about him being at the police office and the reasons why. Ehsan says: "Please translate for me that the police behaviour seems respectful and following the laws, however controversial those might be, but the security guards had no right to detain me behind a closed door. Why didn't they hold other members of our group and only me? Is it because of how I look like?" The police officers, in sum, say that he understands "that in democratic state everyone has the right to fight for his or her cause but due to the global war on 'terror' and current emergencies the security held me due to certain assumptions."

The other police officer comes by with a copy of the flyer distributed in the Museum of Uprising and begins to question Ehsan about it. He says he checked online and on a website there is a call for repetition of the same actions. They ask Ehsan if this is accurate. He denies this, stating he knows nothing about a call for a repeated actions of this supposed website. Ehsan ads that there is no intention of repeating the actions.



Photo by E. Fardjadiya

Ehsan then asks to sit down due to cramping in his legs. The officers show Ewa and Ehsan the door next to us. This room contains jail cells and there is a little space in front of the bars with a few chairs. The officer suggests we can sit there. Ehsan declines to sit in this area.

The officers are calm and professional. Ehsan and Ewa ask for water, none is provided, they instead go out for a noter cigarette. Dorian arrives with Lukas with Ehsan's passport a few minutes later and he is released from custody.

Below is Ehsan's personal statement about his detainment:

Here I like to declare my complaint about the extreme and what I claim, the racist behaviour of security guards toward me. I think they had no right to stop me using physical forces, especially when I decided to leave the location of performance; this is while the rest of my group is leaving. I also think that they have no right to forcefully detain me behind a close door. The fact that they only select, separate and detained me, is due to their presumption that I belong to certain radical middle-east groups only due to my skin colour and the way I look. I did not do anything more or different than the rest of my group who were not detained. Therefore I only can conclude the racist behaviour of the security guards and find it necessary to declare an official complaint to anti-racists organizations in Poland or/and in Europe.

Ehsan Fardjadniya, 4th August 4, 2016, Warsaw.



Photo by Ehsan Fardjadniya.
From left to right:
Ewa Alicja Majewska, Aleka Polis,
Damian Cholewiński, Dorian Batycka,
Edka Jarzab, Ehsan Fardjadniya and
Łukasz Wójcicki.