

## **First row:**

### **1. Henryk Walezy, engraving, 1836**

Henryk Walezy (1551-1589) was the son of Henry II of France and Catherine de' Medici who sat on the Polish throne at the age of 22, after the Jagiellonian dynasty expired. He was the first ruler not to inherit the throne, but to be elected by the Polish nobility. He arrived in Kraców, the then capital of the kingdom, at the start of 1574. His coronation in Kraców's cathedral took place in February. However, in June of that very year and after spending no more than a couple of months in Poland, the king secretly fled Kraców and, travelling through Vienna and Venice he arrived in France to take the throne vacated after the death of his brother, Charles IX of France. He never returned to Poland, leaving behind a disillusioned kingdom in turmoil. Ultimately, he was deposed from his throne but never formally renounced his title as the King of Poland and the Great Prince of Lithuania. Allegedly bisexual, de Valois was a victim of many widely distributed homophobic and transphobic slanders manufactured in his native France. In Polish culture, he became a symbol of infidelity and betrayal. Taunting both his foreign clothes and effeminacy, homophobic allusions towards his non-masculine traits of character and conduct, emerged as soon as in the 16th century, just after his flight from Poland. The last traces of this contempt are still to be found in 20th century texts and paintings.

### **2. Władysław III Warneńczyk, bronze medal, XX century**

Władysław III Warneńczyk (1424-1444) was a 15th century king of Poland, Hungary and the nominal Prince of Lithuania. He died too young to play a significant political role and to leave a significant impact on his era. He met his untimely death on the battlefield in Varna, in today's Bulgaria. The ruler, barely a 20-year-old, found himself there as a consequence of a war he had been waging against Turkey. Successful at the beginning, the conflict resulted in a long-term armistice in favour of the Christian armies. However, persuaded by Giuliani Cesarini, the papal legate to Hungary, king Władysław broke the armistice with Turkey and stood in the front lines of an anti-Turkish crusade. Consisting mostly of Polish and Hungarian knights, the army was surrounded by Turkish troops that have been led by Sultan Murad II in the vicinity of Varna. The Turks won the battle and king Władysław died in its course. The young and unmarried king had no single descendant, effectively vacating two thrones. Of course, the lack of a spouse and scion is not reason enough to include this king's portrait in the gallery of non-heteronormative personalities from Polish history. Nevertheless, Władysław of Varna, similar to Bolesław the Bold, was the victim of Jan Długosz's clerical homophobia. According to the chronicler, the reason for the Christian army's decline was the king himself supposedly committed an act of sodomy with another man during the night before the battle. In this interpretation, the death of the king was a righteous punishment for his homosexual practices.

### **3. Narcyza Żmichowska, lithography, XIX century**

Narcyza Żmichowska (1819-1876) was author of prose and poetry from the Romantic period. She is not only considered one of Poland's

predecessors of feminism but also the first woman whose writings include traces of explicitly expressed lesbian love and intimacy between women. This is especially the case in Żmichowska's letters addressed to other women that are still a valuable source for analysis of non-heteronormative relations between women in the 19th century. Żmichowska's private letters were subject to two kinds of censorship: an external one (the mail in Poland, back then partitioned by Russia, Prussia and Austria, often travelled beyond borders and was examined by inquisitive clerks), and an internal one, deriving from the writer's caution and fear. This explains the allusiveness of these fragments of the plot which concerned love and intimacy. The acts of "hiding" and "concealing" take place in the most popular of Żmichowska's novels called "The Heathen" (1846) which can be read as a fictionalized autobiography of the author herself, masked as the male lover of the main female protagonist.

#### **4. Maria Rodziewiczówna, postcard, 1933**

Maria Rodziewiczówna (1863-1944) was a Polish writer and was among the most famous of the interwar years. Her works often addressed patriotism, idealized rural life, and praised the countryside and peasantry. Never married, cut her hair short and wore dark frocks, she shared a life with another woman, two women to be exact. Her life partners were, first: Helena Weychert with whom she lived from the 1890s, and then: from 1919 on, until the writer's death, Jadwiga Skirmunttówna. Rodziewiczówna is frequently referred to as "the butch of Polish literature". She is also noted for advocating women's rights.

#### **5. Polish AIDS flyer, 1980s.**

#### **6. Ryszard Kisiel, 1985/1986**

Slides documenting a queer artistic event at the home of a friend of Ryszard Kisiel on the turn of 1985 and 1986 in Gdansk, Poland. These pictures were taken at the time of the state police crackdown on homosexuals, known as "Operation Hyacinth". The snapshots from Kisiel's archive are also testimony to the early AIDS years, the memory of which is limited and still remains in the "intimate public sphere".

#### **7. Advertisement of Roza Disco club in Slovenian queer magazine "Pandora" (issue No 3, 1993)**

## **Second row:**

### **1. Karol Radziszewski's interview with Leonida Kovač about Nasta Rojc. "DIK Fagazine" issue No. 10 "Zagreb - Queering the Museum", 2016**

Nasta Rojc (1883–1964) was one of the most important Croatian female artists from the beginning of the 20th century. She mostly painted portraits, self-portraits, landscapes and seascapes. With Lina Crnčić-Vivant she founded the Club of Female Fine Artists in Zagreb and advocated in equality of male and female painting. She was married to the painter Branko Šenoa but she divorced him and spent the rest of her life with her partner British army officer Alexandrina Maria Onslow. Alexandrine was an exceptional woman, famous for testing the boundaries of femininity, thus opening Nasta up to her true nature. Rojc and Onslow were imprisoned together by Croatian fascists in 1943. She ended up dying in poverty in the 60s.

**2. Taras Shevchenko (1814–1861)** was a Ukrainian poet, writer, visual artist, public and political figure, as well as a folklorist and ethnographer. His literary heritage is considered to be the very foundation of modern Ukrainian literature and language. There are traces that allow one to speculate that the biggest Ukrainian national hero was either homosexual or bisexual. The speaker of most of his well-known verse is either a woman or a girl. Also, some historical evidence suggests his love affair with the American actor Ira Aldridge. While he was in exile, Shevchenko produced many images of half-dressed comrades, as well as a large number of drawings which depicted Kazakh boys, also not overburdened with clothes.

**3. Karol Radziszewski, entrance to the "Androgyn" gay club, Kiev, 2006.**

**4. Karol Radziszewski, cruising park in Novi Sad, Serbia, 2008.**

### **5. Ryszard Kisiel's "Polish Gay Guide on the Europeans Socialist Countries.", 1980s**

This "atlas book" is a unique object, it's designed as a notebook with more than 300 pages that Kisiel gradually compiled while traveling. The text and notes, were often accompanied by photos. It not only provides a map of Kisiel's itineraries, but also documents the life and culture of a community, overlooked by sociological and historical studies.

**6. Book summarizing queer archival research in Romania.**

**7. Lachezar Marinopolski, photos of the Bulgarian nude beach, 1980s.**