

The interwar period was a time of important changes in culture and art, as well as changes on the world map. Following 1918 new countries such as Poland, Czechoslovakia, the Weimar Republic, Hungary, Romania, and Yugoslavia were created and a host of new avant-garde trends and new political, modernizing, and cultural projects were emerging there. Young artists, eager to take part in shaping a new, independent state, also craved changes and often drew inspiration from popular culture, including the increasingly prominent sports. After all, the interwar period was a time of development of professional sports and the emergence of many new disciplines. It was also a time of organising, for the first time on such a large scale, of the Olympic Games – from the 7th edition in Antwerp (1922), to the 11th edition in Berlin (1936), the Winter Olympics (from 1924 in Chamonix) – or the inauguration of the FIFA World Cup (1930). The promotion of physical culture and participation in sports rivalries on both local and international arena formed part of a strategy for establishing these countries' national identities in the interwar period. The creation of new public spaces: building sports grounds and stadiums, new recreational grounds, promoting wellbeing and healthy lifestyles, the setting up of – what seems progressive, from today's perspective - football fan clubs, new relationship between sportsmen, clubs, and the masses; the new role of a professional football player as a celebrity all lead to significant changes in everyday life of the newly emerging nation states of post-WWI Europe. Sport equalled the optimism of a young, strong society and tied in with modernization plans in Central and Eastern Europe. Sport also reflected some important aspects of the growing role of popular culture.

The aim of the project is to identify issues related to the presence of sports motifs in visual arts (painting, sculpture, film, photography) and to investigate how did the artists of the interwar period respond to the phenomenon of sports. What characterized their work? What was the significance of the sports-themed artwork in its social reception? In what ways did sports propaganda change art? In what ways did art influence the sport? Why did so many female painters and sculptors create sports-motifs? Which disciplines did left-wing artists favour? Which were important for artists from the higher social classes? The multiplicity of issues addressed in this project will lead to new perspectives in the study of sport and the arts. This project is therefore a work of original research undertaken in order to gain knowledge about the origins of sports in the arts of the interwar period.

The initial phase of research will take 2 years/ 24 months over 2016 (12 months) and 2017 (12 months). In 2016, I will collect source material – factual and iconographical – with research trips already planned to the archives, libraries, as well as art and sport museums in Poland (Warsaw and Karpacz, as above) and abroad: in the Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania, Germany, Serbia, Croatia, and Switzerland. In 2017, I will work on analysing and interpreting the collected source material. I will attempt to identify cultural processes taking place in the interwar period. In order to do this, I will study magazines, catalogues and books concerning the theme of sports in the art of this period, as well as literary source material and writings by artists of the period relating to these issues. An important part of the research material will be magazines and newspapers self-published by various artistic groups. This source material will be confronted with the relevant academic literature, and individual works of art will be analysed with the use of the methodological tools described here.

The initial research findings will be presented at various conferences dealing with modernism, avant-garde and the history of sport. I intend to present and discuss the research findings on an international forum. To this end, I will chair a panel on sport in the art of the interwar period at the Association of Art Historians conference, 2018, and I will host a seminar at the biannual conference European Network for Avant-garde and Modernist Studies, also 2018. The research findings will allow for an intensified international discussion around the problems of visual arts and sports and deepen new perspectives in the field, recently set by Routledge's pioneering collection, *The Visual in Sport* (2012).

The project will also make a significant impact on the little known sports museums in the Czech Republic, Romania, Poland, Yugoslavia, Germany, as well as the Museum of Sport and Tourism in Warsaw (and a similar institution in Karpacz) that are, to this day, wrongly marginalised by historians, sociologists, and cultural studies scholars alike.