**Polish Focus at Santarcangelo Festival – one of Europe’s leading performing arts festivals**

**From July 4 to 13, 2025, the 55th edition of the Santarcangelo Festival will take place in Santarcangelo di Romagna (Rimini), Italy, under the theme “not yet.” This oldest Italian performing arts festival features a special Polish Focus programme, showcasing leading artists of the young generation from Poland. The programme is presented in partnership with the Adam Mickiewicz Institute, an organization that has been consistently supporting the international promotion of Polish culture for many years.**

**For over half a century, Santarcangelo Festival has been shaping the direction of theatre and dance in Europe, inviting artists and audiences from around the world into a shared dialogue. It is a space for bold experimentation, exchange of ideas, and reflection on the role of art in the contemporary world. For the fourth time, the festival’s artistic direction is led by Polish playwright, critic, and curator Tomasz Kireńczuk.**

This year’s **Polish Focus** presents performances by some of the most compelling voices on the Polish performing arts scene: **Hana Umeda**, **Ewa Dziarnowska**, **Wojciech Grudziński**, **Alex Baczyński-Jenkins**, and the **KEM collective**. The programme invites audiences to explore the richness and complexity of Polish art – its social engagement, sensitivity, and diverse forms of expression.

“*Supporting these artists is a testament to our commitment to promoting bold, diverse, and thought-provoking contemporary culture. Each of these works contributes an essential voice to the artistic discourse* *– both in Poland and on the international stage*,” says Olga Brzezińska, Deputy Director of the Adam Mickiewicz Institute, which is supporting the presentation of Polish artists at the Italian festival for the third time. “*In today’s world, art has become a universal language – it builds bridges of understanding, fosters empathy, and invites co-creation across borders. Our collaboration with Santarcangelo Festival is not only a strategic partnership but an ongoing dialogue – alive for three years now – between artists, audiences, and the very idea of art. This is a place that boldly explores new forms, supports creative risk-taking, and nurtures openness – values we deeply cherish*,” she adds.

The 2025 edition’s theme – “not yet” – raises questions about a space of suspension, a moment of pause in a world full of tension and uncertainty. From this perspective, the performances by Polish artists address themes of corporeality, trauma, memory, queerness, and community – always with sensitivity, courage, and fresh scenic language.

“*Contemporary political and social systems are built around a sentiment of fear, which justifies control, segregation, and exclusion, forms social boundaries, and defines identities. In this context, uncertainty is no longer an exception but a rule – a position that determines how we experience reality. The present is thus not a neutral and transitional state but rather a battleground where narratives are defined and subjectivities recognized as possible and valid. In this light, as Chantal Mouffe suggests, uncertainty – instead of being seen as a threat – should be understood as a space for confrontation between different visions of social organization. Uncertainty is at the very heart of the 55th edition of Santarcangelo Festival: ‘not yet’ is a transitional moment, a suspended posture where the future is not yet defined, and the past remains alive in the disputes over its interpretation*,” says Tomasz Kireńczuk, Artistic Director of the Festival ([interview with Tomasz is available on Culture.pl](https://culture.pl/pl/artykul/tomasz-kirenczuk-programowanie-festiwalu-to-przywilej-wywiad)).

At the core of this year’s program is the **body** – as a site of resistance, a source of expression, and a battleground for freedom, identity, and subjectivity. Themes of racism, colonialism, and decolonization intersect with work on personal and collective memory and efforts to create alternative narratives for forgotten histories. The festival also addresses control and violence against women’s and queer bodies, treating art as a form of resistance and emancipation. Practices of care, understood as both political and artistic gestures, as well as feminist and queer actions, are especially highlighted. The program supports young and experimental creators and fosters connection with the audience, including local youth engagement.

**Polish Focus at Santarcangelo Festival 2025 includes the following performances:**

### Hana Umeda – RAPEFLOWER

This piece combines dance with a striking narrative on personal and societal experiences of bodily violence. Hana Umeda explores trauma and rebirth through classical Japanese jiutamai dance forms and contemporary choreography. She investigates her own body as a site of trauma interwoven with survival strategies. Like Artemisia Gentileschi, who transformed trauma into painting, Umeda brings her violated body to the stage in search of liberation through dance.

More information: [RAPEFLOWER | Santarcangelo Festival](https://www.santarcangelofestival.com/show/rapeflower/)

### Ewa Dziarnowska – This resting, patience

This performance moves away from traditional notions of dance as a spectacle, instead emphasizing its inherent social dimension. It is both an ethereal archive of unfulfilled sensuality and a kinetic installation of fading movement – a corporeal striptease addressing themes of attraction, voluntary objectification, intimacy, and the aesthetics of nudity. This resting, patience embraces sensuality and dance as timeless, democratically accessible tools for disarming reality and envisioning a present that endures – tender, loving, attentive.

More information: [This resting, patience | Santarcangelo Festival](https://www.santarcangelofestival.com/show/this-resting-patience/)

### Wojciech Grudziński – Threesome/Trzy

Grudziński recalls three legends of Polish dance: Stanisław Szymański, Wojciech Wiesiołowski, and Gerard Wilk. These dancers, once subject to bodily and gendered regimes, reclaim agency through Grudziński’s choreographic queer archive. Threesome/Trzy aims to dismantle myths and rediscover the individual experiences of these artists in a world from which they were excluded. It is a misty, posthumous ballet – a disavowed heritage, a reconstruction, a somatic act of possession and transformation.

More information: [THREESOME | Santarcangelo Festival](https://www.santarcangelofestival.com/show/threesome/)

### Alex Baczyński-Jenkins – Malign Junction (Goodbye, Berlin)

In this work, Baczyński-Jenkins draws from a pivotal moment in queer counterculture – the final days of Berlin nightlife and the rise of early 1930s fascism. The piece embodies the tension between ecstasy and violence, freedom and limitation. It focuses on endings, captivity, broken promises, loss, and movement in relation to power during a time of historical upheaval. The stage becomes a theatre, a strange apparatus of confinement, a fragmented inner landscape, a club, a waiting room. Inside: mute actors, heartbreak, resistance, grief, despair, and imprisonment.

More information: [Malign Junction (Goodbye, Berlin) | Santarcangelo Festival](https://www.santarcangelofestival.com/show/malign-junction-goodbye-berlin/)

### KEM – Dragana Bar

Dragana Bar is a queer club night merging clubbing with art gallery space, exploring the political dimensions of dance and community on the dance floor. Created by KEM – a Warsaw-based queer feminist collective exploring intersections of choreography, sound, and performance with social practices – the first edition of Dragana Bar took place during their residency at the Ujazdowski Castle Centre for Contemporary Art, featuring an alternative entry to the venue – through a window. KEM thus created an autonomous space for expression and a safer place for queer and feminine pleasure. Each Dragana Bar entrance is marked with a pink triangle in a green circle – a safe space symbol referencing queer resistance and ACT-UP’s transformation of the pink triangle from stigma to a symbol of self-determination and protest.

More information: [Dragana Bar | Santarcangelo Festival](https://www.santarcangelofestival.com/show/dragana-bar/)

**The full program of the 55th Santarcangelo Festival is available** [**here**](https://www.santarcangelofestival.com)**.**  
**Press photos can be downloaded** [**here**](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1GxXXsnMxLHL_Q0qjIW97qfiGtWS8-Ive)**.**

**The Adam Mickiewicz Institute** (IAM) brings Polish culture to people around the world. As a state institution, we create lasting interest in Polish culture and art through strengthening the presence of Polish artists on the global stage. We initiate innovative projects, support international cooperation and cultural exchange. We promote the work of both established and emerging artists, showcasing the diversity and richness of our culture. We also run the Culture.pl portal, a comprehensive source of knowledge about Polish culture. More information: [www.iam.pl/en](http://www.iam.pl/en)

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