

Nowy Port No Man's Land



We have landed on an isolated island, it is somewhat desolate and surrounded by no-man's land.

Twentieth century residential high-rise form the heart of the place. Other dwellings, that have survived the challenges of history, are dotted along adjoining streets. The streets too reveal centuries of change - the ancient cobbles; the poured concrete; the more contemporary geometry of bricks or tiles. The residents walk these streets to catch their trams, walk their dogs and buy their groceries, booze or cakes. For the rest they remain behind closed doors. At least during this cold gray month of November.

For the outsider, it is the no-man's land that compels, that draws one in.

Most obvious and aesthetically appealing is the canal. About half of the district borders this space between Nowy Port and the world and, although technically not part of Nowy Port, there is no denying its relevance. But the canal is relatively inaccessible outside of the possibility to stand or sit on the dock and watch as the ships go by, or fish, which is an often seen activity. We have not found a way to get onto the canal from Nowy Port or to cross to the other side. Much of the canal is blocked by the light industry - another no-man's land - the lies on the edge of Nowy Port between the canal and the rest of the district. It isn't the sexy industrial romance performed on the heart shaped industrial island which is the Gdansk Shipyard. In the distance, along the canal, this bellowing industrious activity taunts us, they are like city lights calling out to the country side.

One of the largest fenced off terrains can be walked around almost completely. It means that there is access to the sea, which too borders a small part of Nowy Port. But to reach this promenade takes a long walk and I can't imagine that many residents often make their way to the harbor head and its pretty little green beacon.

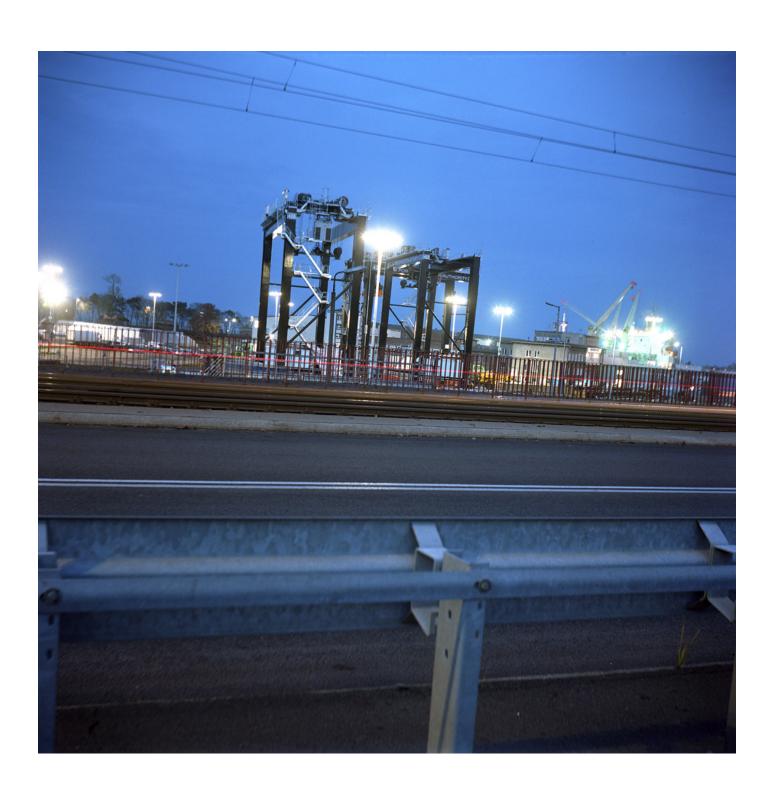
Also along the canal is a stretch of wood. The canal can be seen from here but a fence keeps one from getting anywhere near the edge. Across the water the ancient fortress can be seen from this point and the birch trees seem a pleasant escape. But this too is no-man's land. The soil underneath this wood is toxic

from chemical dumping and not a space you would want to spend a great deal of time in. This is unfortunate because there is not so much green in Nowy Port. Some have said that it is forbidden to come here but there is no great effort being made to keep people out.

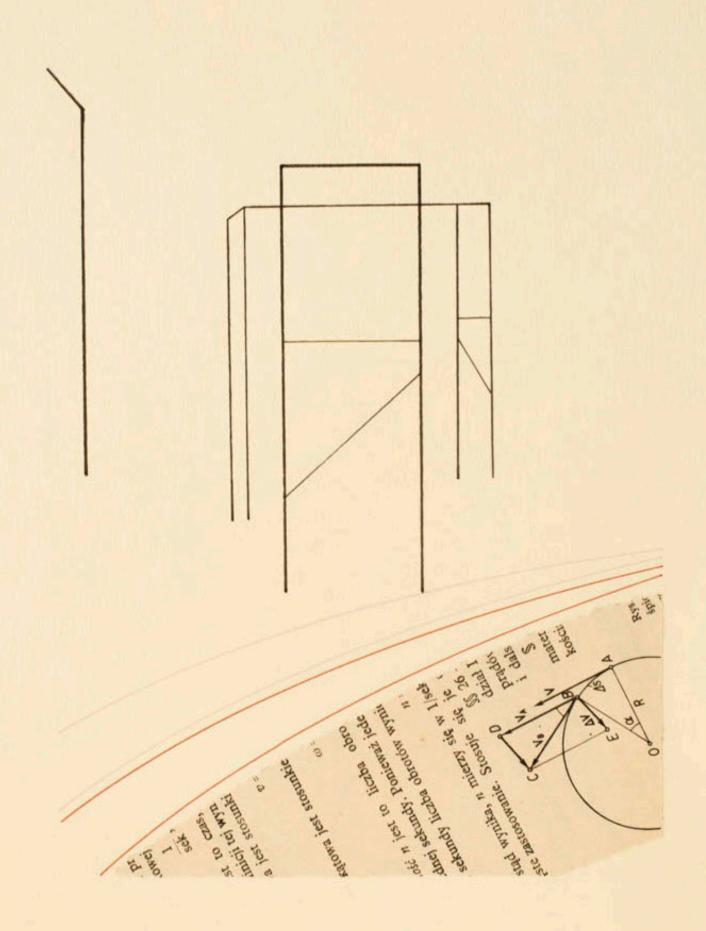
It is harder to access the other green no-man's land that lies on the opposite edge of the district border. This dried up lake is a large expanse of green shrubbery and grass. But again, it lies above a former dumping site and is not safe for people to use. It is an eerie no go zone which is desolate and has a sense of abandonment. A makeshift road, that was probably used by heavy work traffic once - forms the border between this green vastness and a spread of no-man's land that makes up at least a quarter of the district - its garden plots.

The garden plots border on both sides the endless road that stretches from the center of Gdansk and Nowy Port. This road is, in essence, the only way in and out save for the road that leads to the neighboring district of Breżno. The garden plots can be bought but cannot be owned and the plots are accessible only to those who have one. Apparently there is a lot of plundering of the sheds and houses, as well as of the vegetables and fruits that are grown there. So the owners are suspicious and there are gates, fences and even walls. The reason that the plots cannot be owned is that the municipality wants to have the power to reallocate their use, something that happened to the former garden plots just beyond Nowy Port where the stadium is now.

So Nowy Port lies there, difficult and with little reason to access, shielded by surrounding no-man's land. Perhaps this is the greatest asset of the place, that it has been untouched by the gentrification that has arguably ailed the center of Gdansk. Where monstrous edifices house millions of tourists and slowly push any local identity. Nowy Port functions beautifully as a tucked away residential space. It needs some help with the problems of poverty and addiction, there is definitely a need to clean up the toxic spaces and some more access to the canal might be welcome. But in essence, it is exactly what it needs to be - its own kind of no-man's land, safely tucked away from the ravages of gentrification.



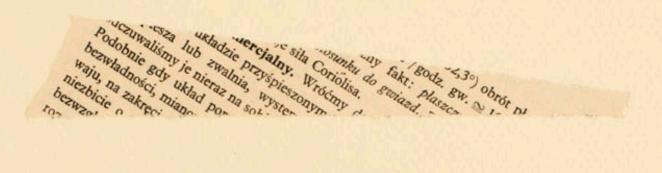


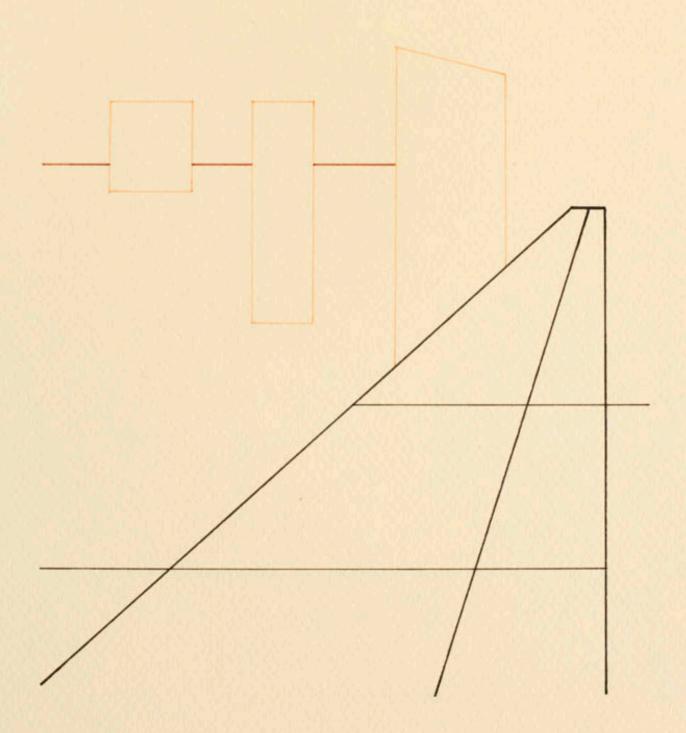


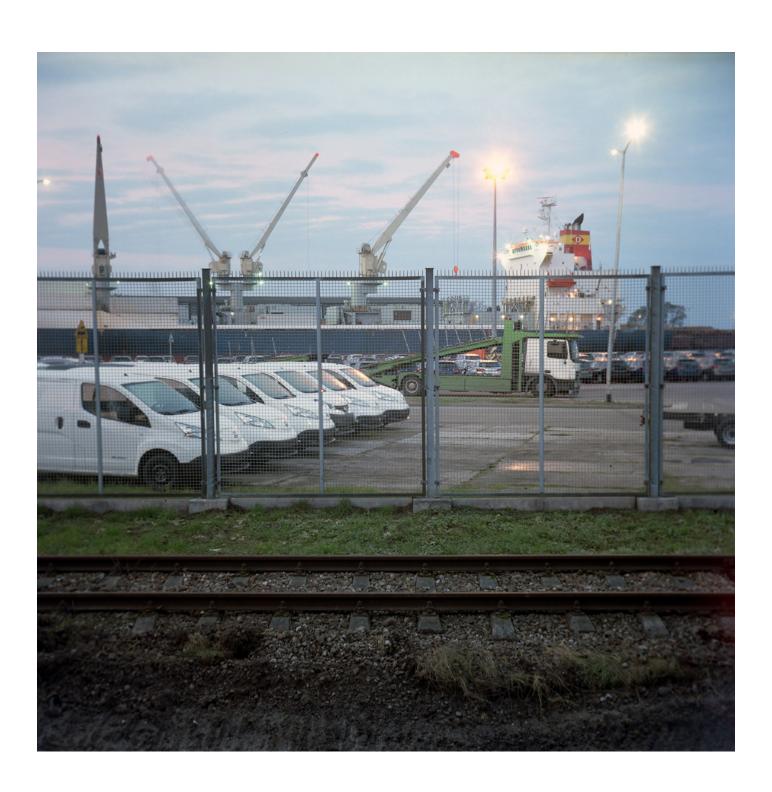














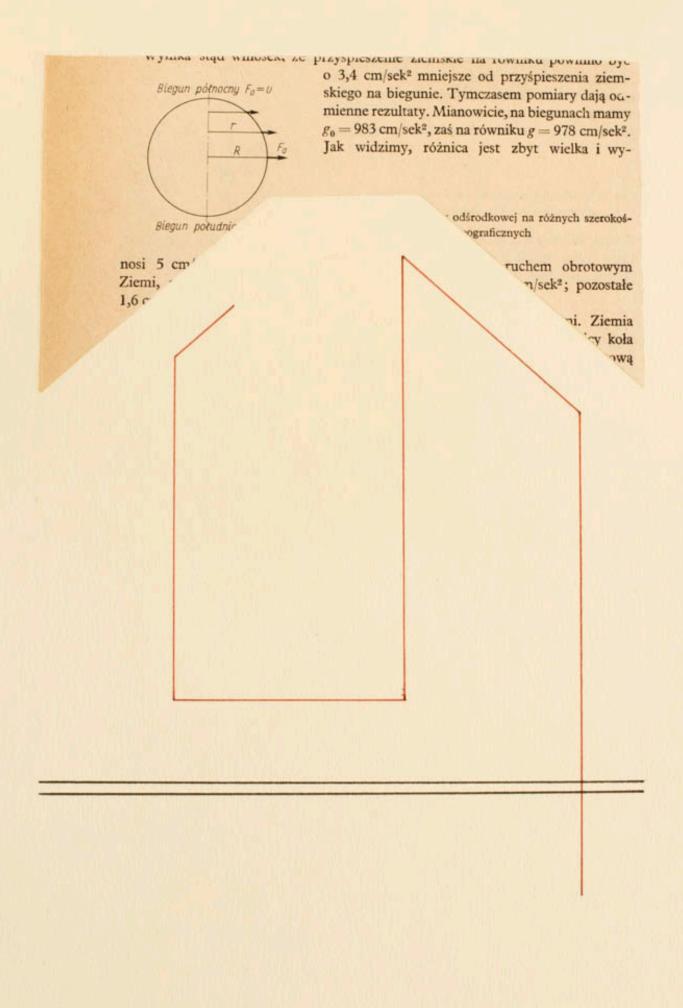
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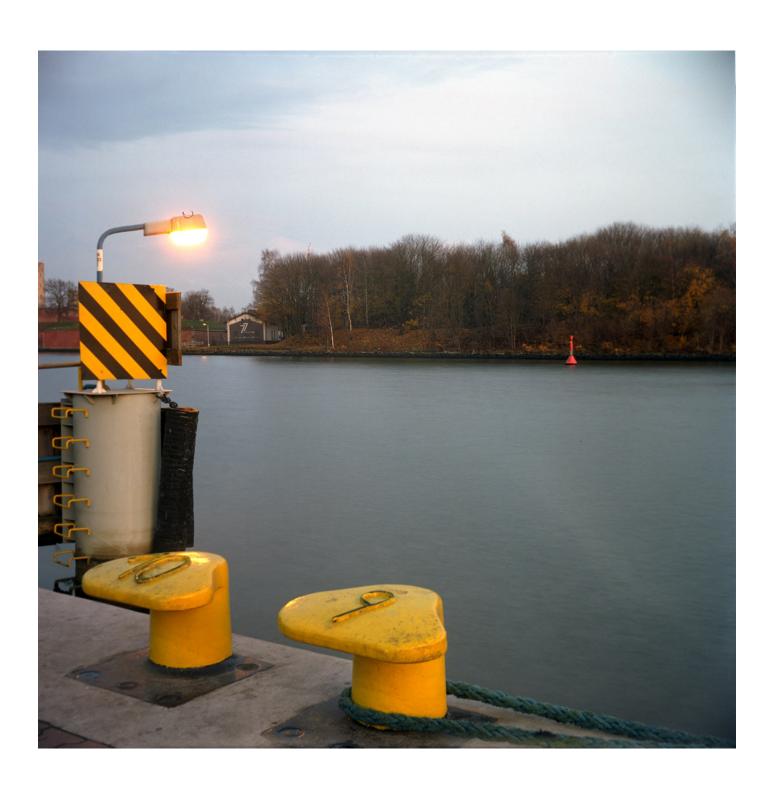






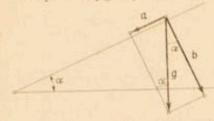






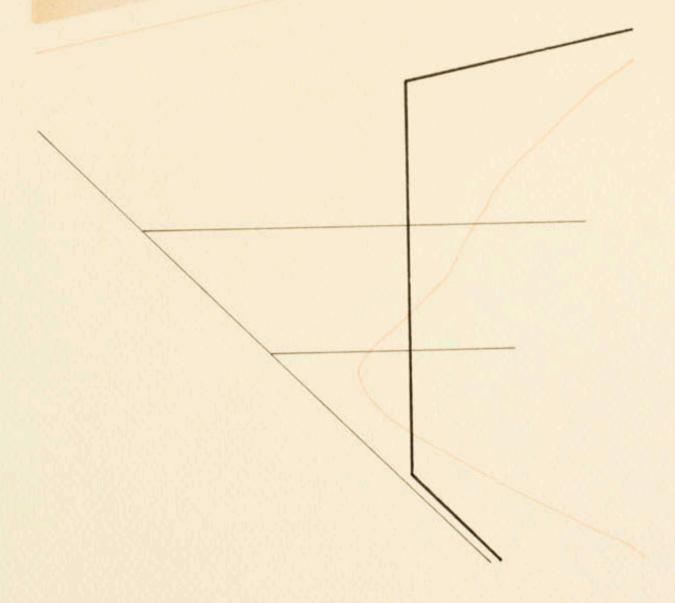


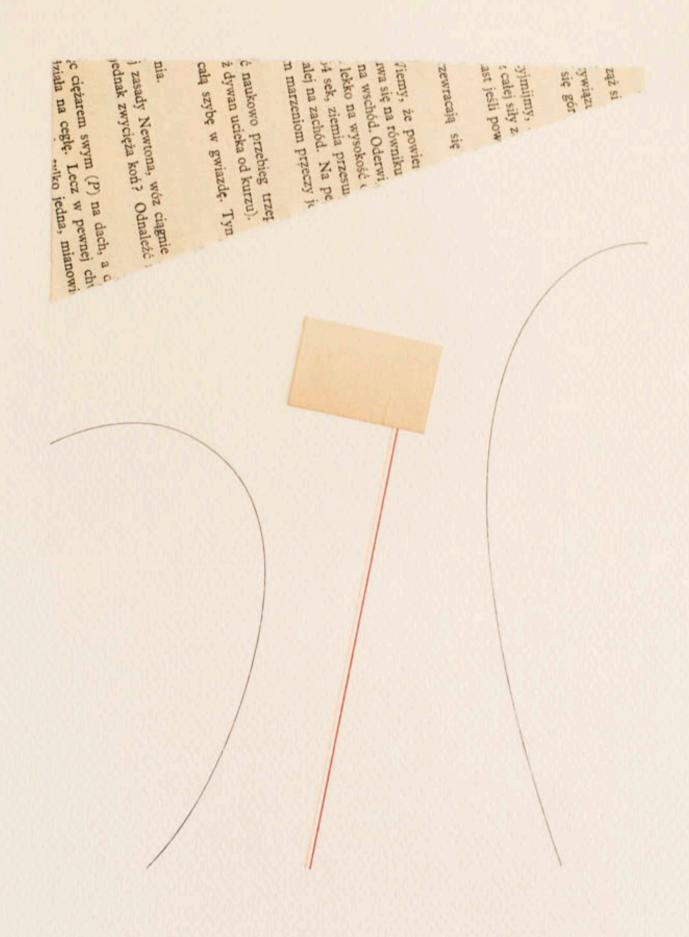
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Rys. 27. Przyśpieszenie ciała w ***

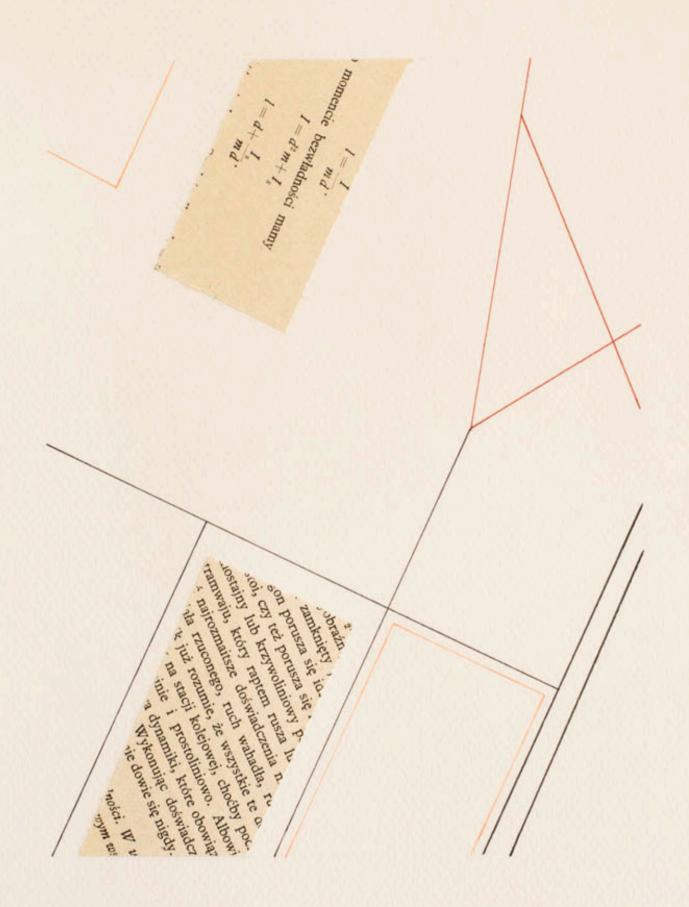
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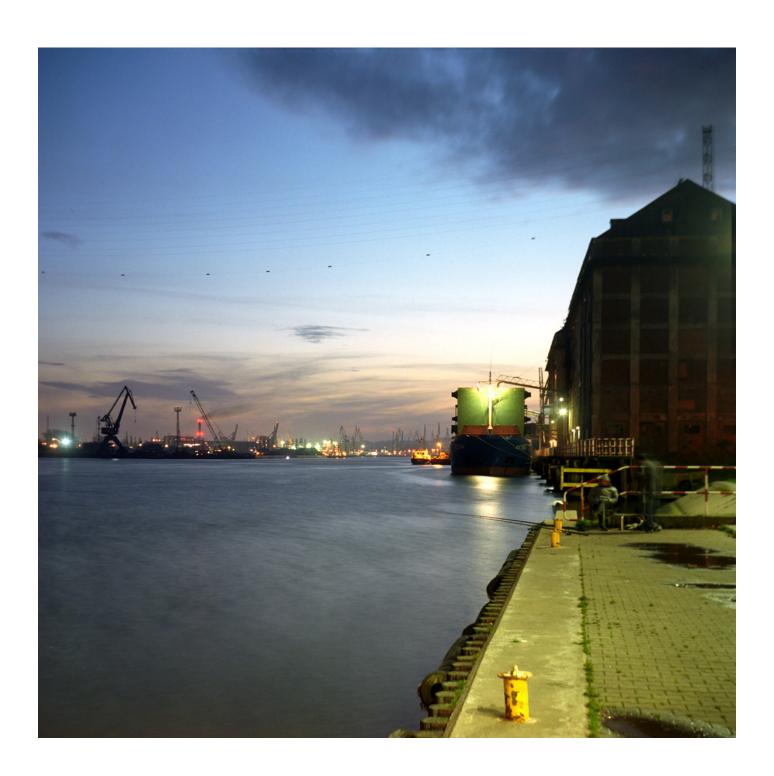


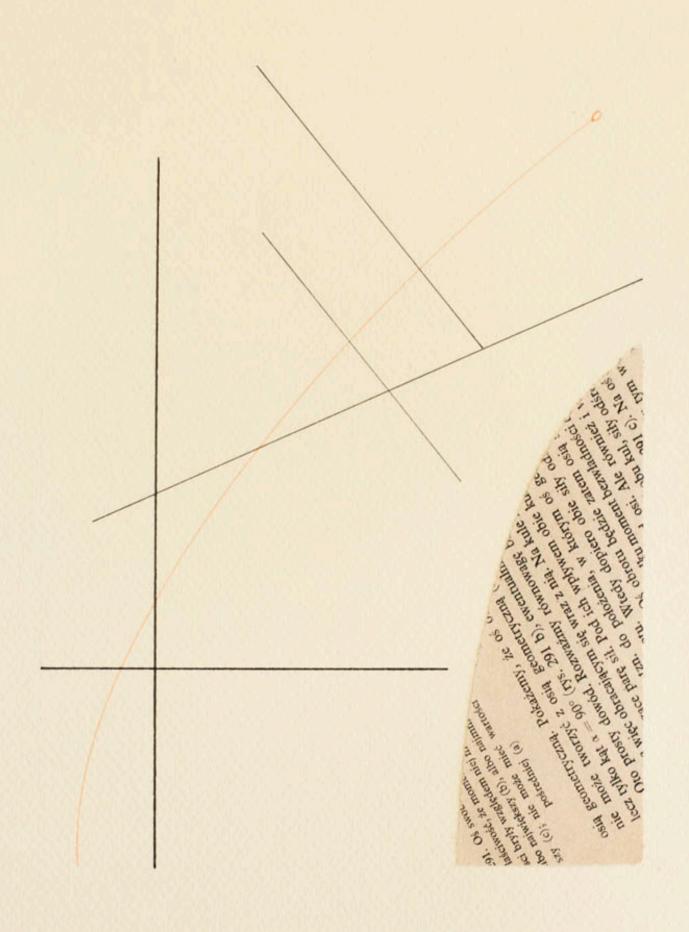
















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