

Mirosław Bałka

189 x 214 x 17 / Shaar Ha-Rahamim

2017

object, steel

189 cm x 214 cm x 17 cm

Collection of Galeria Labirynt

Bałka's work refers to the Golden Gate – one of the eight gates of the Old City of Jerusalem. This multicultural place is a point of clash between conflicting religions (Islam, Christianity, Judaism) and nations (Israel, Palestine), a meeting point between East and West. Drawing on the history of Jerusalem, the artist created a multi-layered work that deals with the theme of openness to what is inaccessible to human cognition. For Christians, the Golden Gate is the place of Christ's entry into the city before the Passion celebrated during Palm Sunday, and the meeting place of Mary's parents: Joachim and Anne. Jewish tradition says that it is through the Golden Gate that the Messiah will enter the city.

Entangled in historical feuds, the gate in Hebrew is called *Shaar Ha-Rahamim* (Gate of Mercy), in Arabic its name is *Bab al-Dhahabi* (Gate of Sorrow). The work with a Jewish name in the collection of Galeria Labirynt is the right wing of the gate from Bałka's family house and studio. The left part is in the collection of the Arsenał Gallery in Białystok and is named after the Arabic language. Placed in galleries more than 300 km apart, the parts will probably never meet – just as the quarrelling nations will probably never reach an agreement. The gate parts which are an inseparable whole, cannot function independently. Thus, they symbolise that it is impossible for an Arab part of Jerusalem to function without a Jewish one, and vice versa.

Bałka's work was created in 2017 for the exhibition "Attention! Border", which was presented simultaneously in Galeria Labirynt in Lublin and Arsenał Gallery in Białystok.

description: Krystian Kamiński

translation: Krystian Kamiński

tactile diagram: Ksenia Kasperska

**[KULTURA
DOSTĘPNA**



**Ministerstwo
Kultury
i Dziedzictwa
Narodowego**

*Co-financed by the Polish Minister of Culture, National Heritage and Sport from the Culture Promotion fund
– a state earmarked fund.*