

## REVIEW: Jerzy "Jurry" Zielinski at Luxembourg & Dayan, London

by Scott Indrisek, Modern Painters 28/11/13 5:51 AM EST

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Jerzy "Jurry" Zielinski's *Ostatnia (The Last One)*, 1969  
(Jerzy 'Jurry' Zielinski/ Reproduced courtesy of Galerie Zderzak, Krakow)

Resurrecting a group of works that, with a few key exceptions, haven't been seen much at all outside Poland, this exhibition makes the case for the late Zielinski's (1943–80) relevancy in the 21st century. The suite of oil paintings, made between 1968 and 1977, are simple, strange things: boldly graphic, populated by demons, hummingbirds, and human lips. While press materials stress the influence of communist political aesthetics on Zielinski's output, the canvases also recall the oddball surrealism of Eastern European film posters from the same era.

Nothing is quite right in Zielinski's world: Highways lead straight into the mouths of goblins, a man burns in hellfire, and tongues are pierced by nails—quite literally, in the case of *Bez Bentu (Without Rebellion)*, 1970, which features a stuffed pillow dangling from the canvas's surface and onto the floor. The paintings' large scale is surprising given the subject matter, and there's a case to be made that Zielinski's vision has more impact when executed in a smaller field, as it is in *Cena Cywilizacji (The Price of Civilization)*, 1971—notable as well for breaking with the artist's fairly strict red/green/blue/white range and allowing a mustard tint to take over the background.

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Like dreams,  
Zielinski's paintings—  
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and often tinged with lusty innuendo—are hard to crack. (In *Smak Namietnosci [Taste of Passion]*, 1971, a red hummingbird dips its beak into the crevice of an intensely vaginal fruit-or-flower, which happens to be dripping blood.)

While most of these works are figurative, Zielinski steps into interesting territory with *Dłatego Wciqz Zyiq (This Is Why They Are Still Alive)*, 1969, in which raw pink shapes stand in for bodies. This convocation of fleshy nothings proves the artist's capacity to conjure complex images with the barest of tools.

*"Jerzy 'Jurry' Zielinski: Paintings 1968-1977"* is on view at at Luxembourg & Dayan, London, from October 15-December 14.

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