



## Alex Brzóska disturbing faces

installation, 6 photographs on hand-dyed organic paper, Piñatex, wood, rope, video (8 minutes)

The artistic work “Disturbing Faces” is a personal attempt to explore the human face not only as a means of communication but also as a space filled with tension and unease. It consists of six portraits depicting individuals caught in moments of expression that go beyond what is typically considered a friendly facial gesture. The photographs feature stern gazes, looks full of judgment, at times malicious, amused, or charged with anger. I wanted the viewer—upon entering this space—to feel watched, uncertain, and perhaps even embarrassed.

I created the portraits based on photographs, which I then manually distorted: crumpling the paper, layering, shifting, and reforming them. Each image was hand-dyed using natural extracts from oak bark, horse chestnut, and saffron. The goal was not classical aesthetics, but rather the impression of something impermanent, disturbed—almost decaying over time.

The prints were transferred onto Piñatex—a leather-like material made from pineapple fibers. This resulted in a soft, uneven surface that gives the portraits a certain corporeality, making them feel like something between an image and a body. The entire installation will be stretched over a wooden frame inspired by traditional tanning racks. The individual elements will be connected with ropes, intensifying associations with ritual or even symbolic violence inflicted upon the human form.

I aimed for the project to shake the viewer out of indifference. In an age of constantly scrolling through faces on screens, my work becomes an attempt to make us stop. Let this deformed, lifeless face look the viewer straight in the eyes and evoke something difficult. It is a form intended to transcend its medium, edging closer to an object or an artifact. It is a record of emotion, a trace of presence, and of what remains. I am interested in whether a gaze—even distorted and half-lost—still has the power to move, to touch, and to linger in memory.

