



Until the very last moment we believed we would meet in spite of all the odds. To immerse ourselves in a river of common experience. To experience the community of telling stories and listening to them directly. Sadly, we must acknowledge that this year it is not possible.

We are moving the festival online, hoping that you will follow us. Does storytelling have a chance to happen online? According to Jacek Dukaj, the author of the book "Po piśmie" [Post Literate] as a culture, civilization or historical period we are inevitably heading toward post literacy. Instead of telling stories we want to experience things without the intermediary of the written language and symbols. It is the social media with their flood of hashtags and trends which are to provide this experience (and they already are). Instead of listening we prefer to look, if possible through electronic devices, because it is there that images and sounds are sharper and more primal than the person itself. Technology provides us with direct experiences – why should you go to the forest or to a storytelling performance if you can see it and experience it as if you were really there?

Despite the fact that during the pandemics many storytellers fell into the seductive trap of digital recordings (for eternity!) we missed (how ever old fashioned that may sound) experiencing the transience, ephemerality and the uniqueness of a live and direct meeting. What about the fact that this will not happen this time? Our longing will survive the pandemics.

Perhaps out of spite to the writer Jacek Dukaj or, on the contrary, in congruence with his metaphor of overlapping of different artistic practices i.e. "the cultural Matryoshka", we have invited storytellers who combine the practice of oral art with writing and research. All the artists, despite the fact that their situation is becoming more and more difficult and that they have to go down to the Internet underground, still want to be with us in any way it is possible. Perhaps the time we are experiencing shall never repeat itself again? Perhaps because it is storytelling that comes to our rescue right now?

After 14 years since the second edition of the festival, we will host (this time also in our homes) Mats Rehnman, the generous father of storytelling from Sweden who is a writer and illustrator of his own books. Mats is going to tell us stories from his studio in Stockholm and he will be accompanied by Olena Yeremenko from Warsaw. Muriel Bloch will visit us from France with a suitcase full of books and literary contexts. She will be accompanied by the select company of the fools of Chełm who are rooted in the oral tradition but are also submerged in the culture of writing. (Who knows, perhaps the whole world is one big Chełm?) Her Polish echo on stage will be Magdalena Górka who will invite the Noble prize winner- foreigner, seeker of radium or perhaps of the fern flower. Among the Polish writers and improve artists are Grzegorz Uzdanski and Witold Vargas.

We will be crossing the fluid intersection of worlds and identities: genres and genders (following the "Metamorphs"), sign language and words (the audible and visible "Snapshots" project), folk history – the illiterate one, nevertheless one which has been written down, from the masculine and feminine point of view (the legendary leader of peasants Jakub Szela has not only captured the imagination of the winner of the major Polish literary prize "Nike" but also of Małgorzata Litwinowicz), India and Great Britain – the two motherlands of Peter Chand who will make us have a good laugh in Punjabi. We will not only tell stories but also talk (on Zoom). So let us meet. We have things to talk about.

*Beata Frankowska/Studnia O.*

We greatly appreciate your online donation to the festival on [patronite.pl](https://patronite.pl)



# ONLINE PROGRAMME



## 19 THURSDAY ■ NOVEMBER

- 7.00p.m. ■ Blues of Two Minstrels 2020  
– JACEK HAŁAS, JAREK KACZMAREK
- 9.00p.m. ■ Jacob's Story. A Folk Tale of Peasant Men and Women  
– MAŁGORZATA LITWINOWICZ, JOLANTA KOSSAKOWSKA, BART PAŁYGA

## 20 FRIDAY ■ NOVEMBER

- 7.00p.m. ■ Queen Jadwiga Takes the Plunge or Made up Stories about Famous People  
– GRZEGORZ UZDAŃSKI
- 9.00p.m. ■ Fools from Chełm and Other Jewish Stories from There and Nowhere  
– MURIEL BLOCH (France)

## 21 SATURDAY ■ NOVEMBER

- 12.00a.m. ■ Stories from Motherland  
– PETER CHAND (India/Great Britain)
- 5.00p.m. ■ The Foreigner. The Story of Maria Skłodowska-Curie  
– MAGDA LENA GÓRSKA (Poland/France)
- 7.00p.m. ■ Metamorph. Legends of Gender  
– MATS REHNMAN (Sweden), OLENA YEREMENKO (Ukraine/Poland)  
STREAMING FROM SWEDEN
- 10.00 - 12.00p.m. ■ Story Night with the participation of the festival guests

## 22 SUNDAY ■ NOVEMBER

- 12.00a.m. ■ Snapshots. Stories of Two Worlds  
– KATARZYNA JACKOWSKA-ENEMUO, MADI ROSTKOWSKA
- 5.00p.m. ■ Backstreet of the Blind Indian Woman  
– WITOLD VARGAS (Poland/Bolivia)
- 7.00p.m. ■ Strange Stories from the Bonne-Nouvelle Metro Station  
– MURIEL BLOCH (France), BART PAŁYGA
- 9.00p.m. ■ Dark Stories from India  
– PETER CHAND (India/Great Britain)

## SIDE EVENTS

20<sup>th</sup> November, Friday, 11.00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. (Zoom)

“The Battle of words” Storytelling Workshop – Mats Rehnman

20<sup>th</sup> November, Friday, 2:00-3:30 p.m., moderator: Paweł Rodak (Zoom)

Meeting with Dr Agnieszka Kaim around her book “Turkish One Actor Theatre. Oral Literature Meets Performing Culture” (Polish edition: “Communicare series”, Warsaw University Press, 2020)

22<sup>th</sup> November, Sunday, 2:00-3:30 p.m.,  
moderators: Beata Frankowska, Jarek Kaczmarek, (Zoom)

Post literacy discussion panel with the participation of festival guests

## Jacek Hałas, Jarek Kaczmarek Blues of Two Minstrels 2020

7:00 p.m.

Music, singing,  
storytelling:  
Jacek Hałas  
– hurdy-gurdy,  
Jarek Kaczmarek –  
guitar

A meeting, a merging, a confrontation, a consonance of traditional ballads for the hurdy-gurdy and the voice of Jacek Hałas accompanied by a blues guitar. Musical stories about life and death, about love and betrayal, journey through the country wilderness and the backstreets of the city. Contemporary variations around the “Ballads and Romances” of the nineteenth century poet and bard Adam Mickiewicz. Twardowski and Robert Johnson on the streets of Warsaw. The new robes of the maiden from the Świtez river on the boulevards of the Vistula river. The soul left the body and took the tram...  
*It was yesterday that I still had so much – the more I had, the more I wanted...  
I considered no none, I did not fill a bottomless well...*



Photography: Marta Garbacz/Filip Zylak

v Przemek Piłaciński



## Małgorzata Litwinowicz, Jolanta Kossakowska, Bart Pałyga

### Jacob's Story. A Folk Tale of Peasant Men and Women

7:00 p.m.

Storytelling, text:  
Małgorzata Litwinowicz  
Music – overtone  
singing, instruments  
(violin, vielle,  
morin khuur, daf,  
jew's harp):  
Jolanta Kossakowska  
and Bart Pałyga

*Great men's favours are uncertain*

The story of peasants in Poland seems to be both ignored and celebrated. Try telling it and you never know what you will stumble upon. It could be seen as the coolest trend in the city, a state ideology or the most intimate of family stories. It could be seen as a source of pride or ignored. You might come upon a concert or get slapped in the face.

“Here I am at the bottom of the river, the quiet voice responded”- the current of this story flows like an underground river, hidden, yet always present. It echoes with the ballads of peasant revolts and strikes at the turns of the 19th and 20th centuries. It has the imprint of a horseshoe left by a horse pulling a nobleman's carriage: imprint of history, of the deeds and events which merit to have a chronology as for example the Peasant Uprising of the year 1846. So this is exactly what we sing about. In our show we also talk about the transactions with peasants: Marianna who sold her son to save his life so that the mister and mistress could raise him and provide him with medical care. We tell about motorways and shrines. About my grandfather who walked 50 kilometres from his cottage to Vilnius so he could get a medicine to save his son. Such was their journey and such was their fate.

We will talk about aching legs and the ache of the whole body. And that generally #NoYouCan't. Well you simply cannot. The performance revolves around the poem of Bruno Jasiński “Word about Jakub Szela”. The author was a Jew from Klimontów and an enthusiastic communist. He was murdered in Russia in 1938 and that is about it as far as his enthusiasm goes. There is also a piece of our own story. That weaker one but which sometimes does rise. We will ring the bell.

## Grzegorz Uzdański

### Queen Jadwiga Takes the Plunge or Made up Stories about Famous People

Grzegorz Uzdański (born in 1979) is the author of the novel "Wakacje" [Vacation] nominated for the Conrad Award and "Zaraz będzie po wszystkim" [It will be all over soon] and the creator of the fanpage "Nowe wiersze sławnych poetów" [New Poems of Famous poets]. He worked in the Literary Team at the Munk Film Studio and as a philosophy teacher (he defended a PhD on Heidegger), teacher of ethics and educator at the school "Raszyńska" Community Middle School no 20. He is an improv comedian, performing on a regular basis with the Komedia Resort, Dobrze, Cinema Disco, The Musicals and others. He is a singer in the Ryby band. A regular contributor to the "Przekrój" quarterly. His work has been published in "Dwutygodnik" and "Gazeta Wyborcza". He contributed to the "Nadzieja" [Hope] anthology (Agora Publishing House, 2020).

Grzesiek Uzdański will improvise stories about famous historical figures chosen by the public. These will be made up stories and if there are any real elements, this will be completely by chance. Members of the public will propose a character, object or activity (e.g. queen Jadwiga and diving) which will prompt the improv artist to create a story based on this character and the thing (here: the queen and her diving adventures). The artist might tell some real personal stories for a change, for example how in his childhood he took part in blueberry races.



Photography: Jakub Celej

Photography: Aurore Claverie



## Muriel Bloch (Francja)

### Fools from Chełm and Other Jewish Stories from There and From Nowhere – Muriel Bloch

The writer, storyteller and translator, Muriel Bloch is one of the most important figures of the revival of the art of storytelling in France. Since 1979 she has been travelling through the Francophone world, telling stories in museums, theatres, libraries, schools, prisons, on ships, in castles and gardens...

She has facilitated storytelling and repertoire development workshops. She coordinated the program "Paris sur Paroles" at the Quartier d'été Festival. She did the "Stories for awakening" show at the France Culture Radio. She recorded a dozen albums with stories from all over the world. She has published over thirty books, stories and anthologies of traditional stories which became a source of repertoire for many storytellers.

Jewish stories are among her favourite. They are at the intersection of distant latitudes and time frames, from the legendary king Salomon, through the wise fools of Chełm to the images of contemporary Paris. Stories which are as beautiful as a dream or as terrible as a nightmare, in which humour and despair, quick temper and affection meet.

7:00 p.m.

9:00 p.m.

Performance  
in French.  
Stage interpreting –  
Magda Lena Górka

20<sup>th</sup> November  
FRIDAY

## Studnia O. Fools in Time of Plague

THE  
PERFORMANCE  
HAS BEEN  
CANCELLED

Storytellers:  
Studnia O.:

Beata Frankowska,  
Magda Lena Górska,  
Agnieszka Aysen Kaim,  
Jarek Kaczmarek  
Music:  
Mateusz Szemraj

In a time of plague or other disasters official structures fall apart. New one rise, transient and shaky. We will fall into these narrative wholes, looking for discontinuity, forgetfulness, changes of identity, a carnival-like overturn of the outdated structures. We will crouch at the border of the cemetery where the fool Jecheskiele Wiocz keeps on marrying the deaf and mute Mate because only fools can save us. We will continue believing in conspiracies, looking for formulas for miraculous cures and together we will sing a song which will chase away the time of plague. We will test our voice – just like the superior cantor of the synagogue at Tłomackie who at the rail tracks in Otwock confronted the engine of the train coming from the opposite direction to see whose tone would be higher.

We will read “A Headless Rabbi and Other Stories from Chełm” which were collected and edited by Menachem Kipnis and translated from Yiddish into Polish by Bella Szwarzman Czarnota (Polish edition: Austeria 2013). We will look at the photographs he took from our window and ask what these stories mean today and how they could be continued.



Photography: Aleksandra Rózga

21 November  
SATURDAY

## Peter Chand (India/Great Britain) Tales from my Motherland

12:00 a.m.

The performance is open to children, from ten years of age to adults. It will be performed in English with elements of the Panjabi.

Stage interpreting –  
Agnieszka Aysen Kaim

Peter Chand is an award-winning international Storyteller, constantly in demand for his unique retelling of tales from his motherland, India.

Peter grew up with Punjabi as his first language, and still visits family in the Punjab to collect folk tales, which he translates and shares with keen listeners worldwide.

Peter is also part of the organising team of Festival at the Edge; the oldest storytelling festival in England, which has a fine reputation for showcasing some of the best storytellers from around the world.

He is currently Storyteller in Residence at The Story Museum in Oxford.

With lively stories from various parts of India, Peter will be sharing some of his favourite tales with families at the festival. Expect to encounter brave girls, generous boys, horned demons and flying mice! All bought together before your very eyes by one of Europe's renowned and skilful Storytellers. Open your eyes, focus your ears, and expect to be whisked away for an hour of fun, vibrant stories from the land of kings, peacocks, and dance.

[www.peterchand.com](http://www.peterchand.com)



Photography: Elise Gherlan

## Magda Lena Górska (Poland/France)

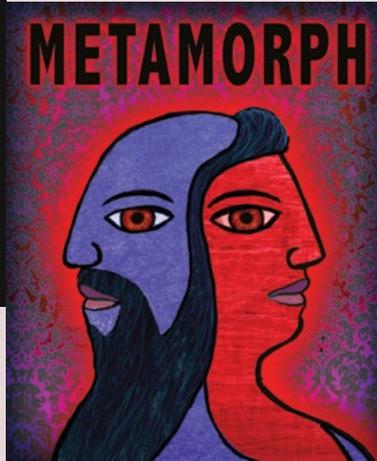
### The Foreigner. Story about Maria Skłodowska-Curie

Magda Lena Górska is sketching a bold yet consistent parallel between the discovery of radium and finding the mythical fern flower as in the folk tale with a dramatic ending and a hopeless moral message. Is there a more Polish story in its fatality? Can this story in which victory leads to failure be revised? What kind of magic parable comes full circle in the story of life of Maria Skłodowska-Curie? The genius scientist, who had an extremely rich inner life and an iron will, who due to her great effort freed herself from the limitations of the gender, class, and nation? Who managed to transform a dull story into a universal epic poem? Being a foreigner, a Polish woman in France, a woman-scientist among men, idealist in the period of merciless capitalism. Story about linguistic twists, changing names and freeing oneself from bonds and limitations. As the philosopher Simone Weil says, it is a great crime to eradicate others but to uproot oneself is the highest form of freedom.

Magda Lena Górska – storyteller, singer and musician at the border of arts, cultures and languages. Foreigner in Poland and France. She navigates between Polish and French, narration and singing, tradition and modernity. Co-founder of Grupa Studnia O. and SlaviCarib association promoting intercultural dialogue based on art. Co-initiator of the Warsaw International Storytelling Festival as well as the Une Autre Histoire festival in Orléans in France. She has taken part in international storytelling festivals. She is a connection between the worlds of Polish and Francophone storytellers. For years she has developed the fine and rare art of interpreting stories told on stage.



Photography: Aleksandra Różga



Autor plakatu: Mats Rehnman

## Mats Rehnman (Sweden)

### Metamorph - Legends of Gender

What happens when two village girls marry each other? Can a man become mother? What about being both man and woman? These and other queer questions will be answered in "Metamorph – Legends of Gender". Mats Rehnman has found hidden and forgotten stories from the Arab and Indian tradition and Greek mythology, that says it all.

Mats Rehnman is internationally respected for his 'investigative storytelling'. He searches for ancient, traditional stories all around the globe and reworks them into contemporary tales that touch the hearts and ravish the minds of his audiences. As a writer and illustrator he has published children's books, collections of stories and non-fiction books in the field of storytelling. A nestor in the storytelling renaissance in Sweden.

The musical score for the performance was created specially for the festival, thanks to online cooperation between Poland and Sweden. It will be played by the well known virtuoso known to the Publish public, violinist and player of nyckelharpa Olena Yeremenko.

5:00 p.m.

7:00 p.m.

Storytelling:  
Mats Rehnman  
Music:  
Olena Yeremenko  
Performance  
in English

21<sup>th</sup> November  
SATURDAY

## Storytelling Night with the participation of the guests of the festival

10:00 pm  
– 12 p.m.

What do we need from the Storytelling Night in a time of physical distancing, non-stage masks and sanitary regime? A momentary experience that we are together (even though in front of computer screens) through common singing, telling what is hurting us and what makes us happy, spontaneous laughter and silence once a story which has touched us is over. A deep immersion (in the river of experiences although not necessarily hashtags and trends), and at the same time free improvisation, developing interactions between storytellers and listeners? There will be a bit of everything and even more. Agnieszka Kaim and Jarek Kaczmarek, together with the improv artist Grzegorz Uzdański will make sure that we do not fall asleep and Katarzyna Jackowska-Enemuo and Olena Yeremenko will lead the fabulous Festival orchestra.

22<sup>th</sup> November  
SUNDAY

Photography: Migawki



## Katarzyna Jackowska-Enemuo, Madi Rostkowska Snapshots. Stories from Two Worlds

12:00 a.m.

Performance for  
children from the ages  
of six up to adults

Real stories, fairy tales and parables as old as time are combined into a performance woven of words and silence, music and gestures. We will walk through the Great Flood, through the steppe where the Wind sings, through the world in which it is difficult to prevent happiness, and ask the world and ourselves the question what is understanding, why we need diversity and why we do, what we do. We will ask in Polish and in the Polish Sign Language, and the responses well... you never know in what form they will appear. The "Snapshots" Project is a pioneering initiative through which we connect the two worlds: the world of the Deaf and of the Hearing, stories, music, movement and theatre. This project was created in 2018 by Madi Rostkowska – choreographer who has been active in the Polish Sign Language and Katarzyna Jackowska-Enemuo – musician and storyteller. Together with the theatre director Grzegorz Grecas we have been creating narrative performances in which the two languages – Polish and the Polish Sign Language are equal, they permeate each other and they complement each other, creating the fabric of the story. We have been working on fairytales as well as real stories, collected from the Deaf and the hearing people in various places in Poland for two years. Not only is The Snapshots an attempt to create a world for the Deaf or a world of the Deaf for those who can hear – although those two things are important. It is a way to find a narration which shows the world of silence and the world of spoken word as elements of the same, rich and diverse Polish culture. Our performances and stories were presented in Wrocław, ("Snapshots from Wrocław" in the scope of The Very Young Culture, 2018; "Snapshots from the Capital of Dwarves" in the scope of the Wrocław Festival of Dwarves, 2019) in Łódź, ("Snapshots from Łódź", carried out in the scope of the Touch the Theatre Project 2019), and currently online: "Snapshots – Stories of Two Worlds" (carried out in the framework of the Culture Online Programme).

## Witold Vargas (Poland/Bolivia) The Backstreet of the Blind Indian Woman

Witold Vargas, the co-author and illustrator of the books "Legendarz" [Legendarium], including "Bestiariusz słowiński" [The Slavic Bestiary], musician, traveller, educator and storyteller will present a story, which is one of those "you simply have to tell". The Backstreet of the Blind Indian Girl has strong autobiographical traits. Born in Bolivia, in a family of mixed class and race, in his childhood he was a witness to bloody upheavals, political storms and incredible fortunes of his family. His imagination of a child transformed it into a fantastic story. Laughter, horror, love and simple reflections on the human condition are intertwined together. The blind Indian woman is the grandmother of the author, a local storyteller who, as Gabriel Garcia Marquez would say, would tell unbelievable things with a stony face as if it were the absolute truth. This is not magical realism, this is the South American reality.

The story just as the book by Witek Vargas "Dwa królestwa i wielkie morze" [Two Kingdoms and the Great Sea] (Poławiacke pereł 2020) is based on his own personal experiences as the author and one of his friends – who uprooted from their land – managed to grow new roots in Poland. The book as well as the story show how our wounds heal, new sprouts grow and after many years you can read memories from a replanted tree – at times joyful, at times traumatic. The book is addressed to children, but the lively story is meant primarily for an adult public (and older children) who is able to carry the intensity of difficult emotions and truth.

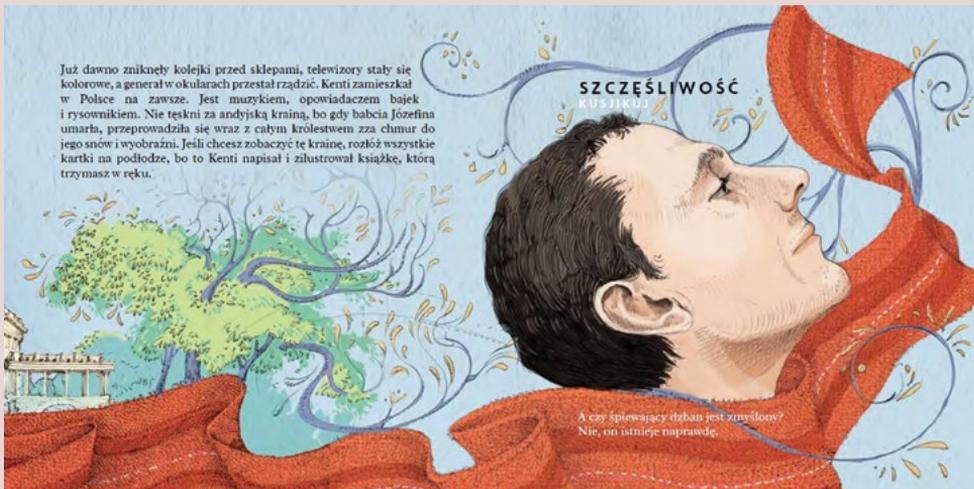


Fig. Witold Vargas, „Dwa królestwa i wielkie morze” (Poławiacke pereł, 2020)



Photography: Valérie Broué Ripon

## Muriel Bloch (France) Strange Stories from the Bonne-Nouvelle Metro Station

Muriel Bloch is a storyteller for every occasion and every weather. Her repertoire is abundant and eclectic: from traditional stories which she transforms in her own way to facts from newspapers and tall-tales. She has been gathering stories and all kind of trinkets for forty years: sardine cans, buttons, fabric, all kind of packing paper, capsules, cigarette packets... She lives in Paris on the embankments near the Bonne-

5:00 p.m.

Performance  
for teenagers  
and adults

7:00 p.m.

Performance in French.  
Stage interpreting  
– Magda Lena Górńska

Performance  
in French.  
Stage interpreting –  
Magda Lena Górska

-Nouvelle [Good News] metro station. As she says herself, she is not a storyteller of terroir but of trottoir. She enjoys travelling and afterwards tell stories, sometimes in far away cities, most often on the streets of her beloved Paris. A city of History where so many distant and present stories lurk around the corner and which the narrator likes to mix according to her imagination and taste. She is inspired by such writers as Julio Cortazar, Italo Calvino or Franz Kafka. To be lost in the city as if in the forest – that is the chance to come across treasures and curiosities. Perhaps at the festival a walk around Warsaw in November will inspire Muriel Bloch to tell a new story?

The amazing Bart Pałyga will be improvising musically to her story (on the cello and other instruments).  
<https://www.murielb.com/>



Photography: Elise Gherlan

## Peter Chand (India/Great Britain) Dark Stories from India

9:00 p.m.

Performance  
in English for adults

From shape-shifters to cunning seducers, and sadistic mother in laws to sensual spirits; British Indian storyteller Peter Chand has bought together a collection of truly dark and disturbing stories from India, several being told here for the first time. Discover what destructive secret lies in the Tamarind Grove... the vilest curse inflicted upon the mighty Lord Indra...and how a poor daughter in laws' savage hunger changes the Goddess Kali herself...

A mixture of beautiful folktales and mythology aimed at adults.

"It was a riveting evening full of surprise and magic and gasps of horror!"

Storynight at Torriano London



## SIDE EVENTS (zoom)

### Master class “The Battle of Words: Mats Rehnman

In this workshop we will search for a bridge over the deep ravine between written and oral language. What is it to be a storyteller in a culture where text is the norm? What is it to be a writer trying to understand orality? Mats Rehnman shares thoughts and experiences from 35 years of being both performance storyteller and author of books.

*Workshop in English. Linguistic support: Magdalena Macińska*



*Photography: Johan Söderberg*



### Meeting with dr. Agnieszka Kaim around the book “Meddah, Turkish One Actor Theatre. Oral Literature Meets Performing Culture” (Polish edition: “Communicare” series of the Warsaw University Press)

In the Islamic world where theatre has not developed as an independent art form, its orality has helped to redress this imbalance by finding room for itself among the performing arts. The Turkish meddah evolved from the storyteller to epic one-man theatre. This phenomenon reflects the complex interrelations between the 'oral' and 'written' culture models. During the meeting the author will share her personal experience as an academic researcher and storyteller of Polish Storytellers Association 'Grupa Studnia O', practitioner at the intercultural border between Occident and Orient.

*Moderator: Paweł Rodak, (Zoom)*

### “Post literacy” discussion panel with the participation of the guests of the festival

“This no longer just about telling a story – the story is a tool, the plot is a trick, it is about living the other person – warns gloomily Jacek Dukaj in his book “Po piśmie” [Post Literate]. Is it really? How does contemporary storytelling place itself in relation to the culture of orality, writing and the predicted post literacy? Is the figure of the Matrioshka doll, suggested by Dukaj, useful to describe the phenomenon of the storytellers who are simultaneously readers/writers or researchers? Join us in a conversation with the festival guests.

*Moderator: Beata Frankowska, Jarek Kaczmarek (Zoom)*

20<sup>th</sup>

November/Friday

11:00-  
12:30 p.m.

20

November/Friday

3:00 p.m.

22

November/Sunday

2:00-3:30 p.m.

Festival's Programme Board:  
Agnieszka Aysen Kaim, Magda Lena Górka  
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS  
Beata Frankowska  
PROGRAMME COORDINATOR  
Jarek Kaczmarek  
PROMOTION

Graphic design:  
Czarli Bajka

Editing of the Festival texts:  
Beata Frankowska

Translation of Festival texts into English:  
Magdalena Macińska

Proofreading of the English version:  
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Magdalena Bronikowska-Perka

Stage manager:  
Anna Gołębiowska



Organizator:



Partnerzy strategiczni:



Miejsca partnerskie:



Partnerzy merytoryczni:



Partnerzy medialni:



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