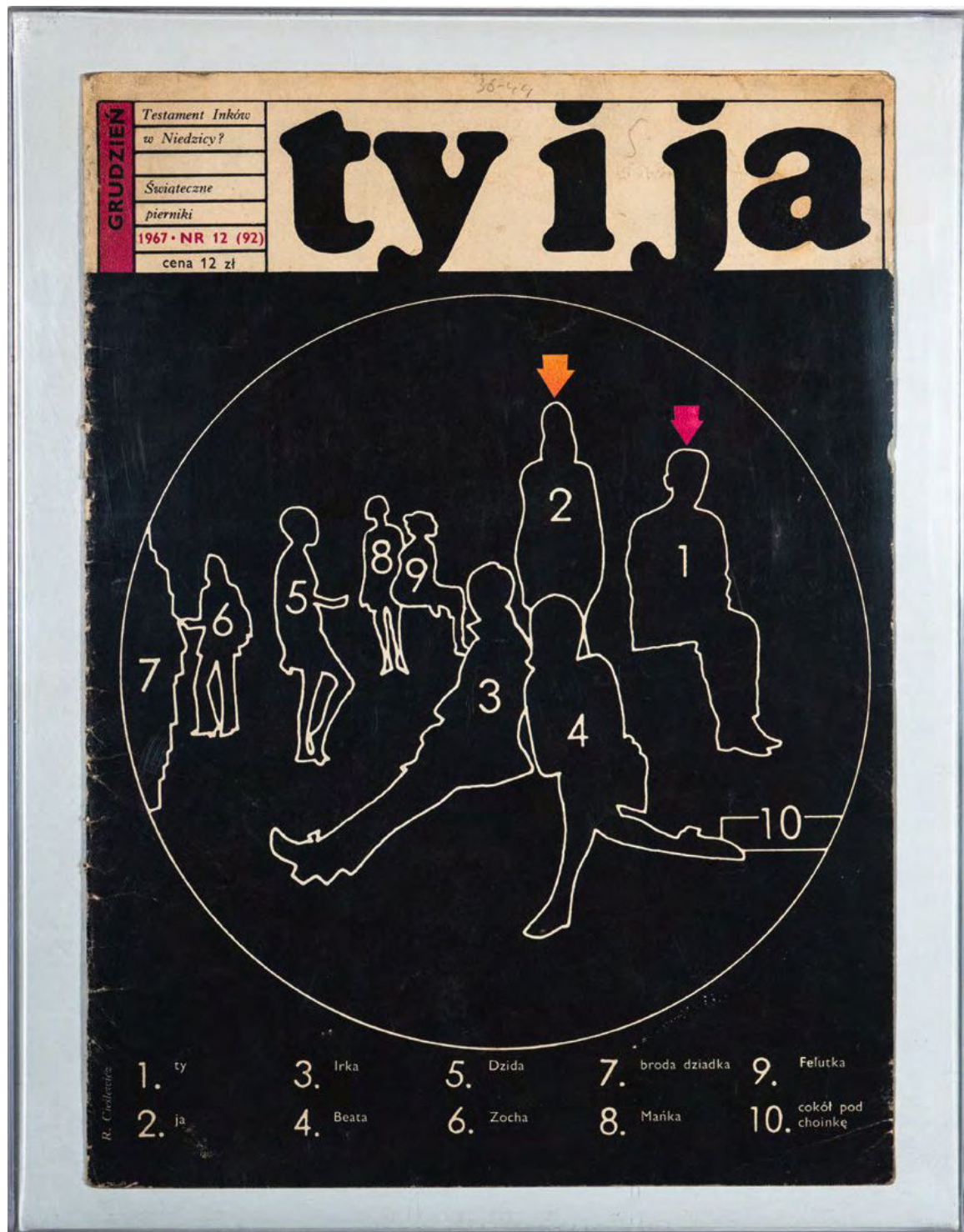


10 - RANDOM PAGE FROM A MILLION RANDOM DIGITS
(WITH 100,000 NORMAL DEVIATES)



10 – TY I JA MAGAZINE

Ty i Ja was first published in 1959 by the Women's League, an offshoot of the official Polish United Workers' Party run by helmet-haired party harridans. Early on, however, it was hijacked by a group of young writers and designers. This was not as strange as it sounds. In the command economy — where a central planning office determined the amounts of buildings, books and spoons required by society - quantity always prevailed over quality. What mattered - at least at first — was how many magazines were available, not what was being said on their pages. After all, Ty i Ja was “just” a women's magazine.

In the hands of editor Roman Jurys, the magazine was turned into a remarkable vehicle for the popular discussion of modern life in all its dimensions. In the early 1960s, an issue might contain an earnest discussion by a psychologist on the unhappy state of marriage side-by-side with a photo-spread on erotic sculpture ornamenting Indian temples. [...]

Ty i Ja's contributors struck a strange balance between fascination with the spectacle of the consumer society and its critique. This was in fact the position of many Polish intellectuals in the 1960s: left wing by inclination and by intellectual formation, they were, nevertheless, attracted to the forbidden pleasures of the consumer society. [...]

Ty i Ja — with its serious minded rhetoric and its fantasy — might be characterized as incoherent. Yet it was not. Perhaps Foucault's idea of the heterotopia can explain why. In heterotopia, unusual and heterogeneous things can exist side-by-side without one claiming special status over the others. On the pages of Ty i Ja, hierarchy gave way to lateral relations. This order of things can, according to Foucault, produce “an almost magical uncertain space” and “monstrous combinations that unsettle the flow of discourse.” Whilst this concept is usually understood in spatial terms, he suggested it could also be applied to describe writing that makes “impossible” discursive statements or challenges.

What was “possible” in socialist Poland was, of course, predetermined by a historical script written by the Party. Viewed from this context, a magazine which eschewed inscribed social hierarchies and embraced uncertainty could, it seems, be “an almost magical space.” Not explicitly political, Ty i Ja took an interest in what had been rendered other or illicit by peevish minds in the Central Committee.

– “Applied Fantastic,” David Crowley, Dot Dot Dot 49, 200%

No. 12 (92),
Ty i ja magazine, 1967, 35.8 x 28.5 cm