Stanford



Izabela Morska

Vscp Visiting Scholar, H & S Programs

Bio

BIO

Izabela Morska is a Polish scholar and writer, Professor of English and American Studies at the University of Gdańsk. Her research examines civic ethics, pluralism, and the cultural imaginaries of democracy, with particular attention to borderlands, migration, and the narrative forms through which political communities understand themselves. Her current work on Paweł Adamowicz—long serving mayor of Gdańsk and a prominent advocate of urban solidarity—situates his assassination in January 2019 within broader questions of civic responsibility, humanitarianism, and democratic resilience in contemporary Europe. She holds an MA from the University of Gdańsk, a PhD from the Polish Academy of Sciences, and an MFA from Mills College.

Morska has held research appointments at Humanities Institute University College Dublin, the Open Society Archives at Central European University Budapest, the Russian Institute for Advanced Study in Moscow, and the Beatrice Bain Research Group at UC Berkeley. She is the author of fifteen books across fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and criticism, including Glorious Outlaws: Debt as a Tool in Contemporary Postcolonial Fiction (2016), and her work has been recognized with the Julian Tuwim Literary Award for lifetime achievement (2019). Her teaching and writing engage American political imaginaries, embodiment narratives, postcolonial and subaltern studies, LGBTQ+ literature and culture, and creative nonfiction.

Her recent projects include a Polish Ministry of Culture grant for The Legacy of Paweł Adamowicz and a multi year research initiative on violence in the media.

At CREEES Stanford she is going to explore civic ethics, border imaginaries, and the cultural narratives that frame staged and performative violence, examining how extremist discourses in Eastern Europe contribute to stochastic forms of political hostility and how these dynamics resonate with the narrative patterns she has identified in the Adamowicz case, including tensions between Hanseatic urban revival and nationalistic backlash.