

Institute of National Remembrance

<https://ipn.gov.pl/en/digital-resources/articles/7820,Alpine-artists-from-Gliwice.html>

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Alpine artists from Gliwice

On the night from July 23rd to July 24th 1982, three men appeared on the roof of a residential block at the May Alley in Gliwice. They had safety belts, paints, brushes, a bucket, a rope and a small plank with them. One of them attached the rope to a chimney, another dropped down a twine, and the third stood on the edge of the roof.



Equipped with a climbing harness with a small bench he looked down and – carefully lowered by his friends – started painting something on the huge wall. This way, the letter “S” appeared at the height of the 10th floor. The bold man jerked the twine hanging next to him, which served as a signal line, and after a few seconds he was lowered to a metre and a half below. Two, three strokes of brush later and the letter “O” was added. At the next level, it was the letter “L”. The alpine descent continued and, after around ten minutes, the painter stood on the ground where his two friends awaited him. The result of this extraordinary work was impressive – enormous phrase “Solidarity lives” appeared vertically across ten floors. The young men, unbothered by anyone, left the scene with a sense of a job well done. Their satisfaction was even greater the next day when the Communist authorities discovered the “hostile” slogan and attempted to remove it. Since the local services didn’t have alpine climbing equipment they only got rid of the last two letters. By noon, they reached the fourth floor – that’s as high as the ladder reached. However, they had to wait all day for special equipment with a very long arm, and in the end the phrase only disappeared in the evening after having been seen by hundreds, if not thousands of people who walked near the May Alley during the several dozen hours the slogan was up.

Academic Resistance Group

The main creator of the mural was Jarosław Cyrankiewicz, at the time a first-year student of the Electric Faculty of the Śląsk University of Science and a fresh member of the Alpine Club. He was secured at the

top by his friends from college - Henryk Metz and Piotr Jankowski.
Krzysztof Cegielski and Piotr Trybus awaited him on the ground.

Read the [full text](#) on the IPN's NextStopHistory website.

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