

UNDERWATER ROTUNDA

ĒRIKS BOŽIS

Proposal for the installation of public art for the competition BALTIC HORIZONS

UNDERWATER ROTUNDA DESCRIPTION

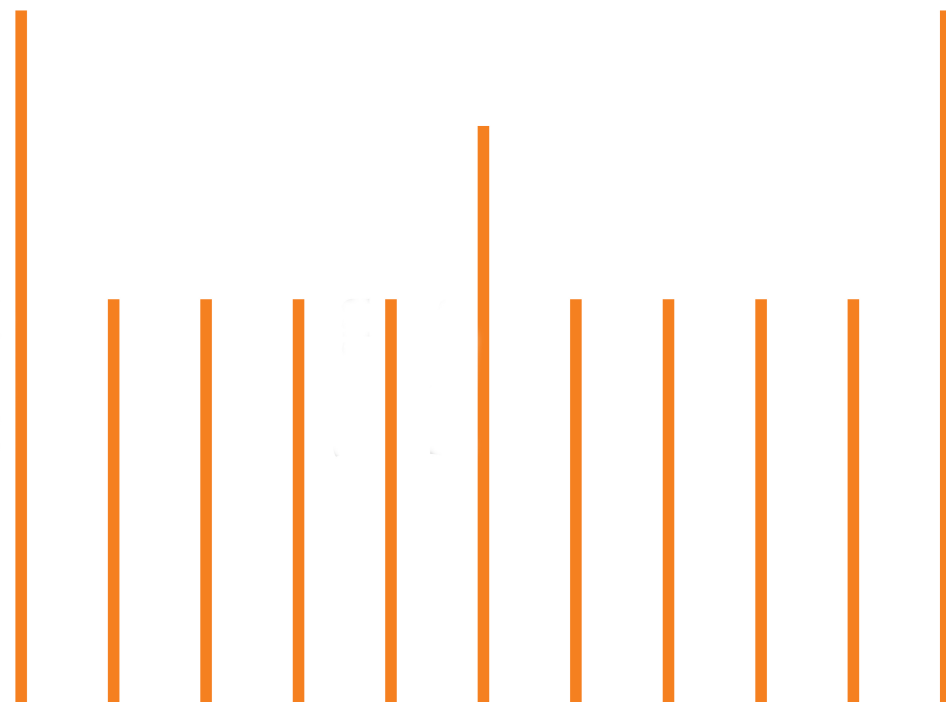
What is UNDERWATER ROTUNDA?

A **rotunda** (from Latin *rotundus*) is any building with a circular ground plan.

This artwork consists of metal pipes of different lengths arranged in a circle, forming a rotunda shape.

40 pipes, each 15 cm in diameter, are assembled in a circle with a diameter of 10 m. **The distances between the pipes allow anyone to enter inside this circle. The inside of the installation circle can be used for different activities.** The location of the installation is planned in the Sopot park.

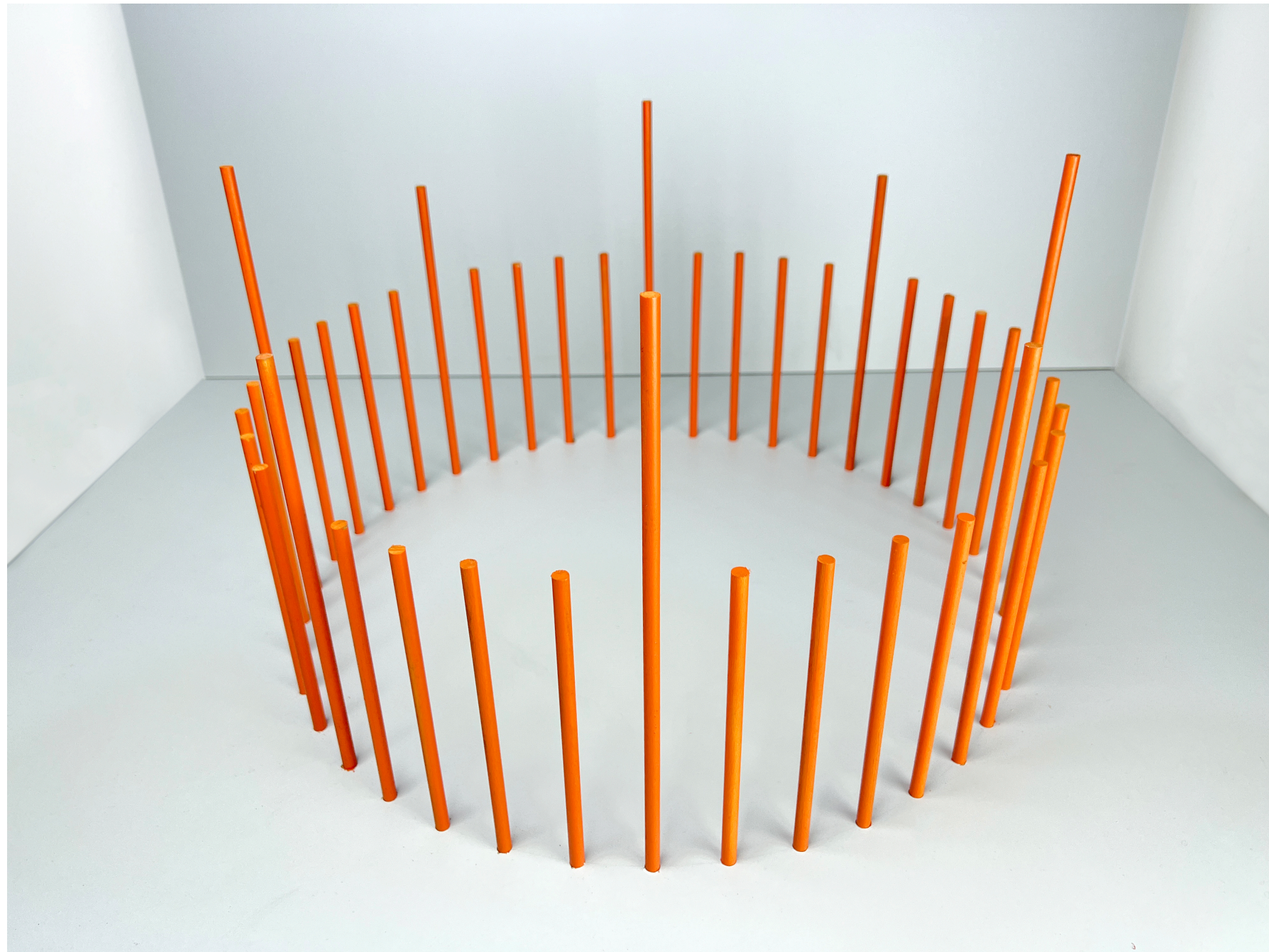
The rhythm of the pipes creates a visual reference to the **division of the lines in the ruler**. A whole centimeter is marked by the longest lines, half a centimeter by slightly shorter lines, and the shortest ones mark every millimeter.



UNDERWATER ROTUNDA VISUALISATION

How UNDERWATER ROTUNDA will look?

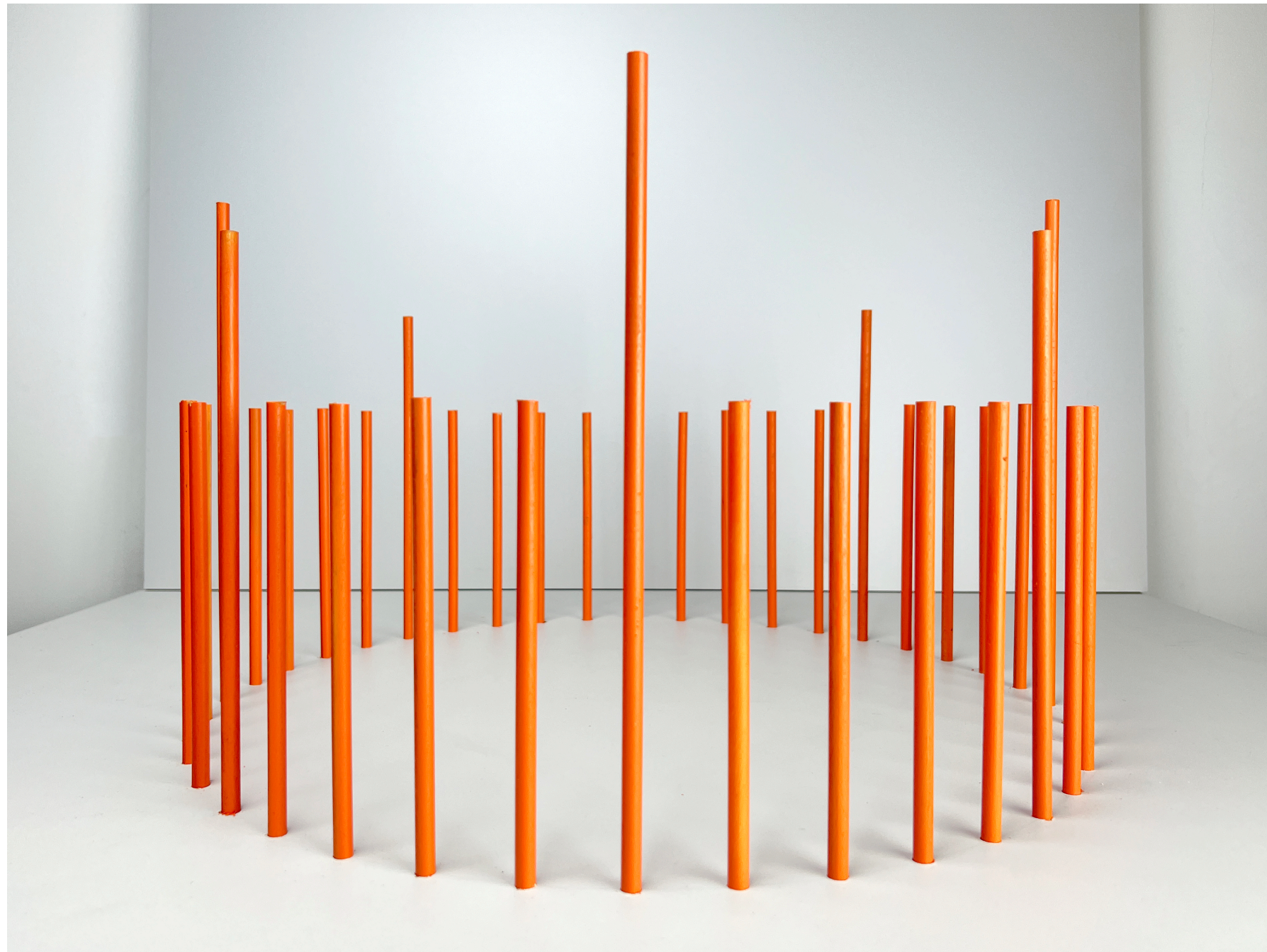
A scale model of **1 : 20** for exhibition purposes has been made. Diameter of the circle of the model is **50cm**.



UNDERWATER ROTUNDA VISUALISATION

How UNDERWATER ROTUNDA will look?

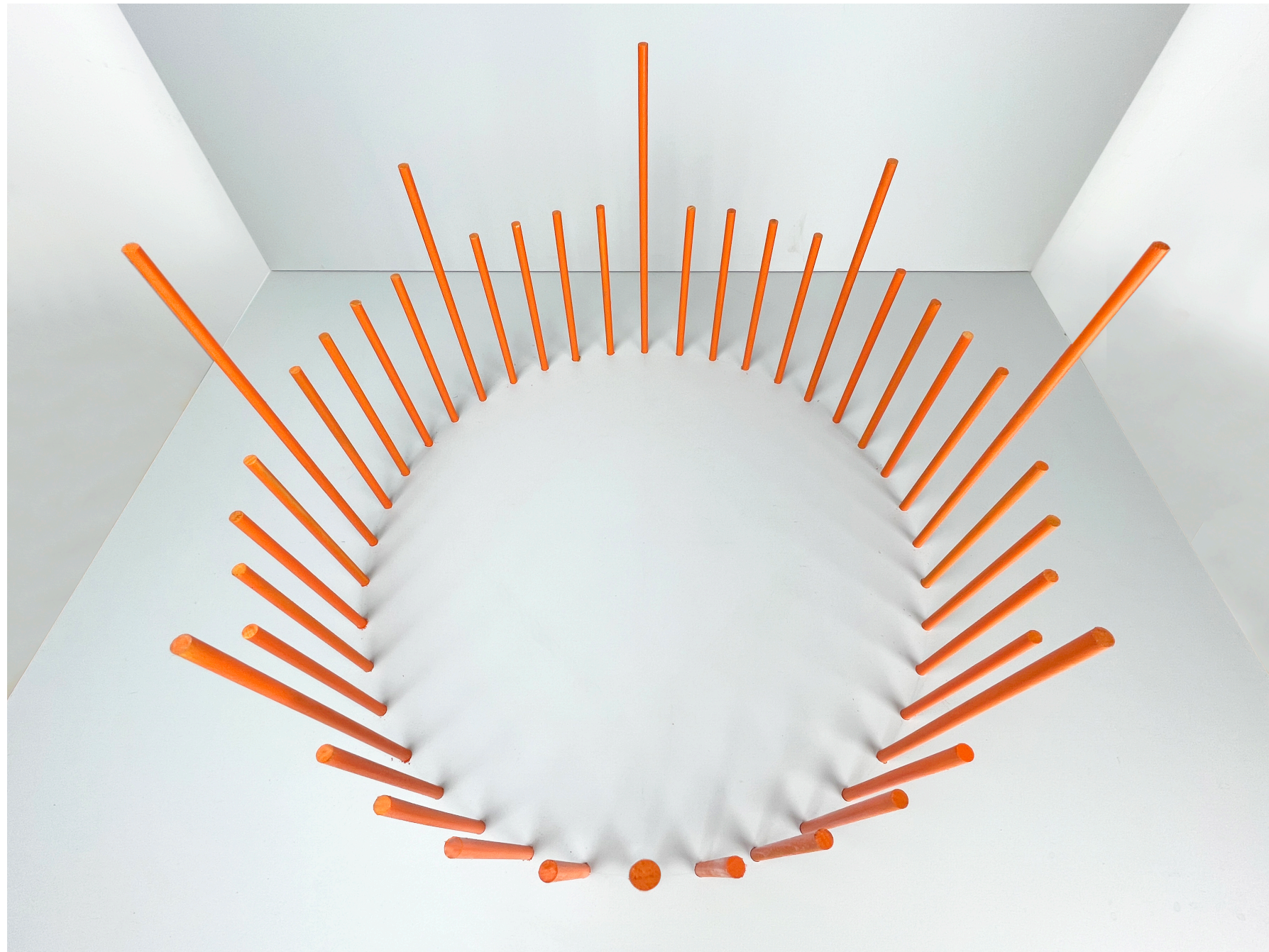
A scale model of **1 : 20** for exhibition purposes has been made. Diameter of the circle of the model is **50cm**.



UNDERWATER ROTUNDA VISUALISATION

How UNDERWATER ROTUNDA will look?

A scale model of **1 : 20** for exhibition purposes has been made. Diameter of the circle of the model is **50cm**.



UNDERWATER ROTUNDA SIZE

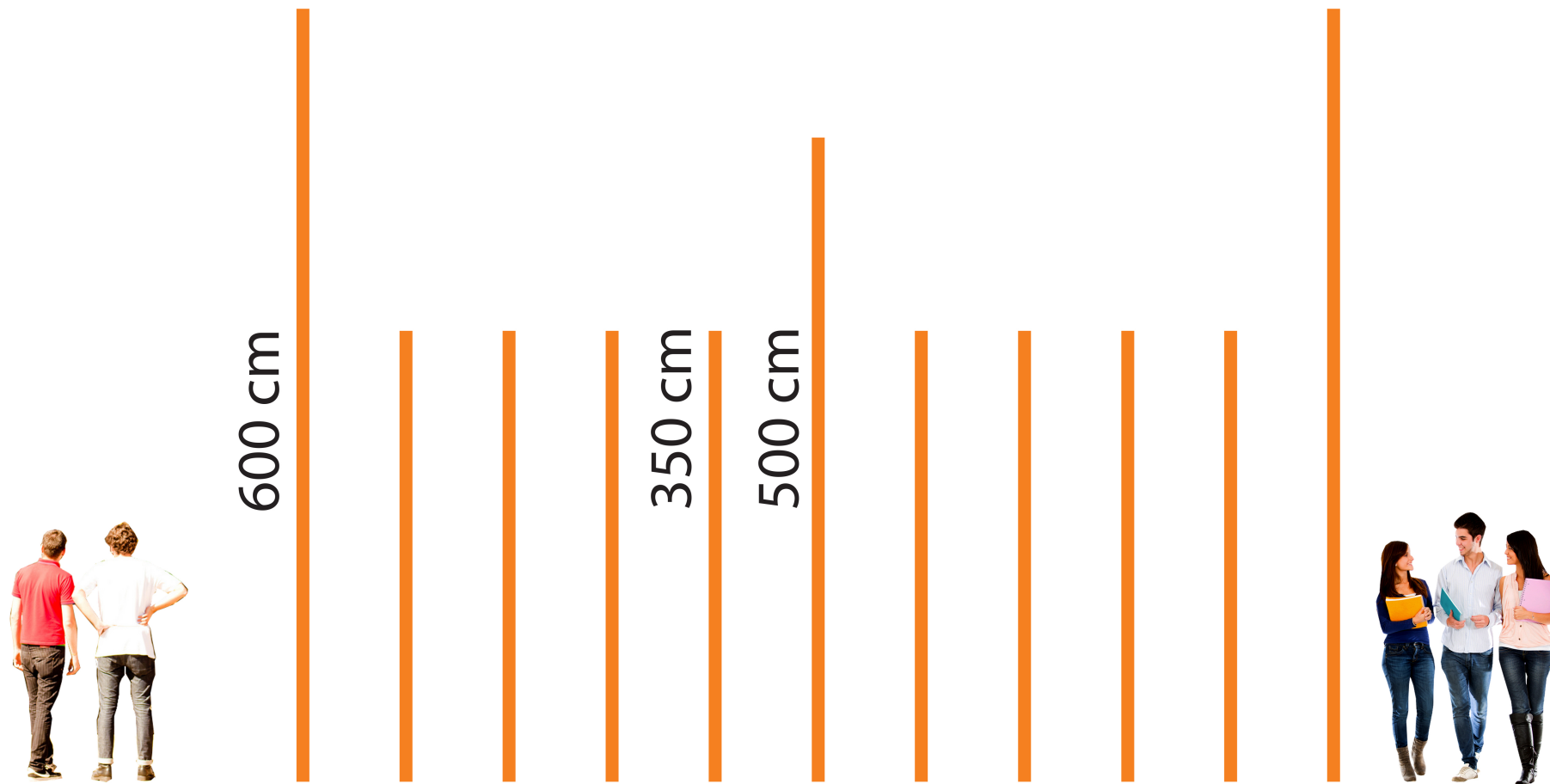
What are the main measures?

Diameter of rotunda is 1000cm (10m)

Diameter of the pipe is 15cm

Heights of the pipes are 350, 500 and 600cm.

Dimensions are approximate and may be adjusted for specific location.



UNDERWATER ROTUNDA ORIGINS OF THE CONCEPT

Why “UNDERWATER”?

In October, while visiting Sopot, one of the most interesting events was a visit to the Institute of Oceanography and a presentation by its director, **Jan Marcin Węśławski**. Several theses appealed to me in this presentation:

- 1) The coast of the Baltic Sea is changing regardless of global warming. On the coast of Poland, the **sea coast goes down** (but rises, for example, in Finland).
- 2) Sea level will rise for another **2 - 5m in the next 200 years**, forming the Wisła river estuary, which will be home to a large number of beautiful birds, animals and fish. So there is possibility that the place where Sopot park is now **will be covered by the sea**.
- 3) Changes in nature do not necessarily mean the apocalypse, they just as well lead to an opportunity for **nature to play its rightful role**.
- 4) Nature is a huge and very powerful system. Our role as humans is not to pretend to be masters of nature, we cannot be like that at all. We must forget our anthropocene arrogance and understand our place in the nature. **We need to understand the scale**.

Taking these theses into account, the **UNDERWATER ROTUNDA** concept has been created. It will be a place dedicated to reflection on nature. **It will be a place that together with Sopot park will once be underwater.**



UNDERWATER ROTUNDA CONCEPT

What are the key words for this installation?

Dynamic system. The old-fashioned approach required parks to be set up like an exhibition hall with collection of sculptures or like a theater: each has its own place. In this system the artist's place is on the stage, being out of reach. Others are just spectators.

The contemporary approach to the park requires it to be a **dynamic system that develops in cooperation with its visitors.** So is the UNDERWATER ROTUNDA, which is not just an installation that can be viewed from the outside, it is a piece of art that everyone can use inside as well.

Future. This installation is designed to last.

How can UNDERWATER ROTUNDA be used?

First of all, it is a place to **think and reflect on nature.** Looking at a circle shaped like a giant ruler, we can try to feel our true scale in relation to nature. It is a place for individual meditations as well as study sessions for students. Secondly, it is a place for various **creative activities.** Here you can draw or film videos, do yoga or watch the birds perched on the ends of the orange pipes. Third, it is a **place to meet.** A circular room always encourages communication.

How about art?

This installation is a dynamic system, dynamic artwork also in the context of time. Therefore, this installation is best called not a **piece of art, but a situation.** You have to let your imagination run wild, and that's the magical moment when art happens. It invites you to look at yourself in the perspective of the future, **encouraging you to imagine a time when the water level will have risen. And instead of passers-by, fish or scuba divers will swim into the installation. And the circle inside of the rotunda will no longer be formed by sitting students with a teacher in the middle, but by birds on the ends of the 40 pipes.** Or just on 8 of them, if water will rise higher. Or just on the 4 tallest pipes if water will rise even more. Therefore, the division of the rotunda in centimeter lines encourages us to think about the possible height of the future water level. We don't know what it will look like. We don't have an answer. But perhaps this is exactly the task of art: not to give ready answers, but to ask questions.

UNDERWATER ROTUNDA LOCATION

Where the location of the installation will be?

There are **several locations suitable** for the installation in the Sopot park, so it would be best to decide the right place together with the institutions of the city authority, taking into account future plans in the context of park improvement.

It might also be worth considering a location in the North Park, where larger trees could be located in the middle of the circle, of the installation which would further allow **the installation to merge with nature** and increase the meditative mood.

In a sense, this is a **future-oriented work of art**. The Institute of Oceanography should also be consulted when considering location changes in the context of future sea level rise.

UNDERWATER ROTUNDA TECHNICAL NOTES

What is important?

An installation dedicated to nature must also be nature-friendly itself. Therefore, it is important to interfere with the soil as little as possible, reducing the number of points where concrete will be poured as much as possible. Although the installation consists of 40 pipes, **there will be only 8 support points**. All other pipes will rest on a shallow metal crown placed in the ground.

Painting will be done by powder coating. **Powder coatings** contain no solvents and release little or no amount of volatile (VOC) organic compounds into the atmosphere and it is very durable and long-lasting.

Installation must be treated with an **anti-graffiti coating**.