

SUMMARY
OF PROFESSIONAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

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The Strzemiński Academy of Fine Arts Łódź

Łódź 2015

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PERSONAL DATA

1. Name and Surname: **Alicja Habisiak-Matczak**
2. Diplomas, scientific/artistic degrees

2009

Doctor of Arts degree

awarded by the Faculty Board of the Faculty of Graphic Arts and Painting of the Strzemiński Academy of Fine Arts in Lodz on 20th May 2009, based on the doctoral thesis: "Perspectives – a cycle of graphics and drawings on urban space".

Promotor: Assistant Professor Danuta Wieczorek (D.A.); Peer reviewers: Professor Włodzimierz Kotkowski, the Academy of Fine Arts in Cracow, Professor Krzysztof Wawrzyniak, the Academy of Fine Arts in Lodz

2002

Master of Arts degree

The Faculty of Graphic Arts and Painting of the Strzemiński Academy of Fine Arts in Lodz; 6th December 2002 – a diploma with distinction. Works realised in the Studio of Intaglio Techniques run by Professor Krzysztof Wawrzyniak (promotor), the Studio of Drawing run by Professor Zbigniew Purczyński and the Studio of Applied Photography run by Professor Grzegorz Przyborek

3. Information concerning the employment in scientific/artistic units

Since 1st October 2004 she was employed in a position of a teaching assistant at the Faculty of Graphic Arts and Painting of the Strzemiński Academy of Fine Arts in Lodz; since 1st October 2010 she has been assigned to the position of an Assistant Professor.

4. Selected artistic accomplishments:

Following the formal requirements I select a **collection of prints and drawings from 2009 -2014 with a common title „Il Furore del segno” (A Frenzy of Signs) presented at individual exhibitions in Urbino, Fano, Rome and Vercelli in 2013 and 2014** – as aspiring to fulfil the requirements defined in article 16 section 2 of the Act of 14th March 2003 concerning academic degrees and academic titles as well as degrees and titles in the field of art (Dz.U. nr 65, poz. 595 ze zm.).

INTRODUCTION

The present paper is an attempt to present the whole of my artistic-scientific accomplishments, with particular regard to the period after I obtained the degree of Doctor of Arts. To make the text clear and put order into my varied activity, I divided the paper into chapters in which I present the particular stages and aspects. In the first chapter I briefly outlined my artistic and didactic part before the doctorate because the artistic path I took at that time has been continued by me up to the present day. In the second chapter I select and discuss the cycle of graphics and drawings presented at four exhibitions in Italian cities: Urbino, Fano, Rome and Vercelli, as aspiring to fulfil the requirements of the habilitation procedure. The next chapter is dedicated to my didactic and scientific activity and the one that promotes art. In the fourth chapter I discuss my organisational activity, including the organisation of exhibitions, symposia and my collaboration with scientific and cultural institutions in the country and abroad. Although, in order to clarify the structure of that paper, I present my artistic, didactic, scientific and organisational activity separately, in practice all these areas are combined together and influence one another. Organisation of students' exhibitions and symposia has a great impact on didactics, participation in conferences and the research I do has positive influence on my artistic creation, which in turn is the background of all other areas of my involvement. I take up the organisational work in order to create, teach and promote art.

Bibliography includes the list of my publications (texts) and the list of books which for me are invaluable sources of knowledge and which I referred to when writing this paper.

CHAPTER I

A description of the artistic-scientific activity with particular regard to the period before I obtained the Doctor of Arts degree – graphic and drawing artwork made in 2002-2009

„Światło przestrzeni” (“Space Light”) is the subject of my master thesis realised under the guidance of Professor Krzysztof Wawrzyniak in the Studio of Intaglio Techniques of the Academy of Fine Arts in Lodz. The main part of the diploma was a cycle of aquatints inspired by the industrial architecture in Lodz. They were works of painterly nature, realised in the format 100 x 70 cm. Considering the technical aspect, they were aquatints dusted by hand, so that the differentiated grain of rosin could give a granular effect, intensifying the feeling of depth of the image. The diploma exhibition also comprised charcoal drawings on paper in the same format, realised in the Studio of Drawing run by Professor Zbigniew Purczyński, which depicted spaces constructed by light in a manner different from graphic works, as well as staged photographs made by a manually constructed camera – a monocle, realised under the guidance of Professor Grzegorz Przyborek. In the theoretical work titled „Szkic o świetle i cieniu w grafice na przykładzie twórczości wybranych artystów” („An outline on light and shade in graphic arts on the basis of work of selected artists”, written under the guidance of Professor Andrzej M. Bartczak, I tried to analyse formal means of expression and technical solutions whose purpose was to present light phenomena in graphic works by Ugo da Carpi, Rembrandt and Picasso.

At the turn of 2003 and 2004 I obtained a scholarship from the Italian government and Polish Ministry of Culture and National Heritage to take part in a 6-month postgraduate graphic placement at Accademia di Belle Arti di Urbino. Out of numerous Italian Academies I chose the one in Urbino, following a recommendation of the Italian graphic artist Getulio Alviani, who recommended this reputable centre of graphic arts. When in Urbino, it turned out that the graphic tradition is also cultivated in the International Centre of Graphic Arts KAUS run by Giuliano Santini. The friendship and collaboration set up

at that time has lasted to date, bringing fruitful effects¹. My stay in that Renaissance city was a very inspiring stage of my creative search which focused on the past and contemporary vision of an ideal city. From the very beginning Urbino was an ideal scenery for drawing sketches – the first matter of all kind of my graphic activity. The labyrinth of medieval walls, in combination with the majestic and full of harmonious charm architecture of the 15th century, offered me a perfect field for my research into methods of transfer of the 3-dimensional reality into the plane of a drawing, and later a graphic work. The result of this intensive drawing and transforming sketches into graphics was a portfolio of aquatints and etchings titled: „*W innym świetle*” (“*In Other Light*”), released by the Academy of Fine Arts in Urbino, published in the edition of 25 signed copies. Realised with the invaluable help of Professor Rossano Guerry, it consisted of 8 original graphics and fragments of poetry by Paolo Volponi. Along with other graphics made in Urbino and numerous drawings, the portfolio was presented at my individual exhibition in the prestigious *Casa Natale di Raffaello* (House of Raphael’s Birth). The Centre KAUS organised the next exhibition of my works titled *W 145 metrach kwadratowych i poza nimi* („*In 145 square metres and beyond them*”). Drawings and graphics presented there portrayed Urbino, seen by a “foreigner”, as it was described by Giuliano Santini in the text that accompanied the exhibition. Both exhibitions had a warm welcome of Italian visitors and for me it was an extremely encouraging and successful beginning of my independent artistic career.

Urbino, with its centuries-old graphic tradition, offers a perfect background to develop craftsmanship in graphic arts. In this place, for many years in the summer, they held a series of one of a kind courses, which were dedicated to improve the theoretical knowledge and to put this graphic „secret knowledge” into practice. The international character of these courses provided a great opportunity to confront the artistic experience and cultural exchange between artists from many countries.

These summer courses of graphic arts greatly contributed to my graphic education in the years 2004-2006, when I was honoured to work as a teaching assistant with such artists as: the prominent etcher Professor Vincenzo Gatti from the Academy in Torino, Professor Egidius Rudinskas from the Academy in Kaunas, Professor Kestutis Vasiliunas

¹ Giuliano Santini wrote about the beginning of our collaboration in the text to the catalogue of the first joint exhibition in Lodz titled „*Drogi grafiki współczesnej z Łodzi do Urbino*” (“*A Road of the Contemporary Graphic Arts from Lodz to Urbino*”)

from the Academy in Vilnius, Professor Antonio Battistini from Scuola del Libro in Urbino, and finally Professor Andrzej Marian Bartczak, who in 2005 ran a course of relief print titled "*From a simple cut to chiaroscuro*" in Urbino. For me it was a significant school of craftsmanship and a chance to get familiar with methods used by artists from all over the world. The job of an assistant in a two-week course, with a group of 15-20 artists with different graphic experience is very demanding and intense. It is didactics in a nutshell – what is important here is the craftsmanship efficiency, commitment, fast pace of work, flexibility and the knowledge of foreign languages - in Urbino I had to talk with the participants and translate professors' guidelines in a few languages – in Polish, Italian and English, but I happened to talk in French and Spanish. My passion for learning foreign languages since my early childhood had its practical use there. The summer courses in Urbino offered me a unique opportunity to get familiar with various ways of understanding graphic arts: starting from the Lithuanian school of graphic arts through the specific Urbino school of book illustration originating from the local Scuola del Libro (School of a Book), up to the noble though vanishing in other parts of the world art of copperplate engraving. It was interesting to meet artists from Syria, Egypt, Switzerland or Norway.

For me studies in Italy were a kind of specific *grand tour*, a renewable source of inspiration, which is still vital to me². After my return from Urbino my dream was to show this city to students and teachers of my alma mater. Believing that a direct contact with works of the Italian Quattrocento is an excellent way to use tradition in order to reach new, original art solutions, both in drawing and in graphic arts, I started to work on the organization of a graphic workshop in Urbino. The first trip could be organized in 2006, with a great support from the Academy and sponsors, when for the first time students from the Department of Graphic Arts along with Professor Krzysztof Wawrzyniak, who ran the workshop, and me as an teaching assistant, spent two weeks in Urbino, drawing, painting and making graphics. It was a period of very intensive work – in a short time each student managed to realise two graphics in edition of 6 prints. We, teachers made one work each, too. At the end, together we the students we created an artistic book

²In my text *Giro tondo urbinato* I discuss this issue in detail. Alicja Habisiak Matczak *Giro Tondo Urbinato [in] Kaus è incisione – Il decennale 2001-2011, Urbino – a monograph of Kaus on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of their activity*, edited by Giuliano Santini, KAUS Urbino 2012

in edition of 6 copies, composed of 16 graphic works, under the title *Urbino from Hanging Gardens*. Then, in the City Art Gallery in Lodz we held an exhibition under the same title, and our book was presented at many exhibitions in Italy. The opening graphic workshop in Urbino was continued with great success by other academic teachers, which I discuss in detail in my text titled *Identity and Graphic Arts – between Lodz and Urbino*³.

Just after my diploma, except for my drawing and graphics in intaglio techniques, I continued my experience with the woodcut technique of *chiaroscuro* type, whose method I worked out during my studies in the Studio of Woodcut Techniques run by Professor Andrzej Bartczak. At the beginning I combined the impression of two or three soft matrices, giving an effect of a few shades of grey, with a key-matrix of woodcut. In the following graphic works I gradually eliminated *chiaroscuro* matrices, which increased the synthesis of the image. In graphic works which were included in the doctoral thesis, I achieved value gradation by means of various textures cut out from one wood block. I tried to invent graphic signs in order to imply space. Resistant nature of the hard wooden matrix was a challenge to invent other cuts and textures, in order to show different space zones on the plane. The woodcut technique, based on the principle of removing the material, demanded a great discipline. The woodcut lets me more radically transform images, when compared with my preliminary drawings, than in case of intaglio works. A stronger contrast of black and white, shade and light, as well as the expressive character of cuts make the graphic work have an austere yet at the same time synthetic expression. The single woodcuts from 2004-2009 were presented at the exhibitions *Furore del segno* – I enclose their reproductions in the documentation as an illustration of an important trend in my artwork, which I am bound to come back to in the future.

Simultaneously with the drawing and graphic activity, since the beginning of my studies I have kept a specific painting sketchbook deriving from the creative need and the belief that painting is an indispensable complement of my artistic work, even if I did not usually show the results of my strife with colour at my individual exhibitions.⁴ After my studies, at open air painting events organized together with the members

³Alicja Habisiak Matczak, *Tożsamość i grafika – pomiędzy Łodzią a Urbino* [in] *Wielość w jedności. Techniki Wkłęśłodruku w Polsce po 1900 roku. Materiały z sesji naukowej 18-19 października 2012 roku* edited by Barbara Chojnacka and Michał F. Woźniak, Muzeum Okręgowe im. Leona Wyczółkowskiego w Bydgoszczy, p. 164

⁴ In 2011-2014 I presented my paintings at the Auction of Young Art, which was a certain test and the confrontation of my work with the art market. However, this trend does not belong to the main area of my artistic interest, thus, to make this paper clear, I omit that part of my activity.

of the Association of Artists "Concept", I often painted a rural landscape from nature, spontaneously sketching with watercolours on paper. There were also some oil paintings, as well as some attempts in the acrylic technique on canvas. The activity of the Association of Artists "Concept", established still during my studies, was based on organising joint open air events, workshops and graphic, painting and photographic exhibitions – in the years 2002-2006 our exhibitions were presented in Poland, Norway and the USA.

The period of work from the diploma till the end of 2008 was completed by the doctoral thesis titled *Perspectives – a cycle of graphics and drawings on urban space*, realised under the guidance of Assistant Professor Danuta Wieczorek.

The text concerning my collection of drawings and graphics at the doctoral exhibition can be also applied to the works created later and presented at the exhibitions in Italy: *"I intuitively combine different types of perspectives. Placing more remote elements in the upper parts of the image, I use vertical perspective already known in the Paleolithic. Covering some elements by others is the principle of the overlapping perspective. Blurring the distant horizon is the aerial perspective. I take lessons from the Renaissance masters, using different types of geometric perspective. The starting point to portray space in a reliable manner is for me the linear perspective, but similarly to the Venetian masters of vedute, I use it freely, often deforming and distorting the image.⁵ In one image I show a few vanishing points and a few views of the same scenery. However, I try to unite them into one coherent image. The space that is created is complex, multi-layered, extended in different directions. Nevertheless, it is still homogenous. I do not break space prismatically, like Cubists or Futurists, though I accept their method to depict a motive from many different points of view and at different time"⁶.*

The subject of my work at the Academy in the period mentioned here is discussed in detail in the part dedicated to my didactic work.

⁵ For example, Bernardo Belotto, knowing perfectly well the principles of perspective, broke them quite often consciously; in the view he painted he added some extra buildings, which could not be observed from a given point of view. He removed the building that obliterated the proper subject of the painting.

⁶ Alicja Habisiak Matczak, A description of the doctoral thesis, 2009, ASP Łódź

Chapter II

An analysis of artwork submitted as aspiring to meet the requirements of the habilitation procedure – a collection of prints and drawings from 2009 -2014 with a common title „*Il Furore del segno*” (A Frenzy of Signs) presented at individual exhibitions in Urbino, Fano, Rome and Vercelli in 2013 and 2014

„*Il Furore del segno*”⁷, the title of the cycle of my individual exhibitions in Italy, signals the expressive character of graphics and drawings, foreshadows a variety and multitude of signs on paper, realised in many different techniques. It refers both to my artistic temper and to the expression of works, which are filled with movement, energy of light and dynamism of urban spaces.

The Italian word “*furore*” literally means “frenzy”, it brings to our mind the Platonic creative *furor*, which dictionaries define as “a state of thrill that allows for artistic creativity without the knowledge of the rules of art”⁸. Moreover, *furor* might be associated with the fervour of work. The Polish word „szal” (frenzy) means among other things “keen, unrestrained dedication to a kind of activity”. It is certainly a reference to creative passion without which no sign or trace would be left on paper. Although the title of the exhibitions stresses the spontaneous and emotional aspect of the creative process, for me the part which is equally essential is tranquil reflection, a rational analysis of form and its deliberate formation. After the creative frenzy, it is time to reflect on the work, to search for the best configuration of the elements on the plane. I intuitively use the knowledge that I have acquired for years, concerning the laws that rule our perception and the principles of construction of deliberately interrelated entities.

⁷ All exhibitions were accompanied by a poster and folder with a critical text written by Giuliano Santini, whose fragment I would like to quote: “Her artwork has a particular characteristic feature – a frenzy of signs. The artist’s ability of observation materialises in signs, creating lights, shades, rhythms, which become somehow incorporated in the whirl, mingling real and fantastic landscapes in such a way so that the viewer could see them as if during a flight, as vibrating natural and architectonic scenographies. In the process of drawing, the charcoal runs fast, covering the whole sheet of paper, which from time to time is liberated from the dark, exposing places of everyday life to the real and imagined light. In her works a human figure is never presented directly; staying invisible, it is clearly perceived in the architectural spaces whose profound spirit the artist tries to understand, inspired by the artist’s great curiosity and internal energy. In graphic art, the technology which encourages for deeper reflection through a time-consuming process, the artist chose the difficult technique of aquatint, which she attacks with greasy pastels and a burnisher in such a way that she can compose the existing architecture anew, transforming it into the architecture of signs (...) No matter if it is Lodz or Urbino, or any other landscape, the power, gestures of signs and lights stay the same in Alicja Habisiak Matczak’s works, so we can risk saying that her works fully reflect her personality. To confirm it I would like to quote the words by Cesare Pavese, who in his “Dialogues with Leuke” makes Nube talking to Ission say “You are all in gestures that you make”.

⁸ Słownik Języka Polskiego, PWN

The title "frenzy" might be associated with speed, hectic pace of life in the city, which is the source of inspiration for many works. *"For me the city is joyful, full of light, movement and energy. In my graphics I transform this impression into the dynamic space which is ordered by light. Although in my images I use selected perspectives to build the construction of space, it is accompanied by shade and light. Once it is the quiet dispersed light of the day, another time they are almost baroque, dramatic shade-and-light contrasts, or nocturne interiors saturated with black. My works show contrast between majestic fragments of architecture, lasting still in space, and the element of movement suggested by circulation areas, roads, passages, crossed suspension bridges. I am interested in the concept of simultaneity of states of the soul described by Boccioni and the role of recollection in the image creation. I make an attempt to show what cannot be perceived simultaneously. Durability of forms in space, "the struggle of planes" which makes an impression of movement, the subjective imagery of nature, creative distortions of space and „the beauty of speed”⁹ are some of the postulates preached by futurists which are important to me.”¹⁰*

The second part of the Italian title – *segno* – means *a sign*. Being aware of a variety of meanings of this word, having in mind the existence of numerous still evolving theories of sign, I would like to mention only a few interpretations which best relate to my artwork. Still during my studies I studied structuralists' works. I learned about the theory of trigeminal sign structure, which consists of what is signifying (*signifiant*) and what is signified (*signifie*) and the relations between them; I cherished the belief that the whole is something else than the simple synthesis of parts. Having in mind de Saussure's discoveries, Levi Strauss's research and Barthe's "Mythologies" (in Polish edition "Mit i znak" [Myth and Sign]), as well as the profound scientific research of semiotics, I would like to focus on a selected, narrow range of the word „sign" – on the graphic meaning of a trace on paper and what this trace refers to.

Dictionary definitions define a sign as *a shape to which specific meaning is assigned*¹¹ – shapes on the plane of a picture bring to our mind fragments of architecture, roads,

⁹ Giovanni Lista, *Futuryzm*, Arkady 2002

¹⁰ Alicja Habisiak Matczak, a description of the doctor's thesis titled „Perspektywy – cykl grafik i rysunków na temat przestrzeni miejskiej" („Perspectives – a cycle of graphics and drawings on urban space"), Akademia Sztuk Pięknych im Wł. Strzemińskiego w Łodzi, 2009

¹¹ Słownik Języka Polskiego PWN

passages, etc. Lines, textures and points drawn by me are not abstract, but they create a specific landscape, its *representation or projection*¹². These graphic elements refer the viewer to a drawn landscape; however, I do hope that they also refer them to more profound and universal ideas which cannot be expressed by words. The goal of every artist is to realise "an open work" in the sense which Umberto Eco writes about¹³ – the one that has numerous meanings and which allows for many interpretations and associations. The tendency to achieve this goal is a constant struggle with unambiguity, with illustrative literality, with limitations. In an ideal situation, an insight into such a work – a graphic work or drawing – should bring its new interpretation, from another perspective, with the perception of a new message. I realise that I am still going to make a lot of drawings and graphics, and getting closer to that ideal is both my path and my objective, which will probably fulfil all my artistic life. Still developing my perception and my manner of drawing, I would like to create my own language of graphic signs.

The Italian *segno* also means *a print*, which can literally be associated with a deep print of metal plates – graphic matrices – in thick handmade paper. The title *Segni* also means *traces* – ephemeral, requiring the use of fixative to preserve traces of charcoal on paper. They are also permanently printed lines and textures of a graphic work, first drawn on a zinc plate as traces of a needle or scraper on varnish, later deepened by biting in nitric acid, and then printed by means of thick ink into some fleshy paper, under great pressure of the printing press.

The sign is *a trace left by something*, and also *a gesture or a look meant to convey a message*¹⁴. These two last meanings are closest to me – the title *a frenzy of signs* is the frenzy of gestures, looks and traces on paper, which refer the viewer to the reality which I create.

Since the time of post-graduate placement in Urbino, Italian cities have been a constant source of inspiration and the theme of many of my works, both graphics and drawings. For that reason the idea of organising a cycle of exhibitions in Italy seemed

¹² They are two other synonyms of the word *sign* according to Słownik Język Polskiego (A Dictionary of Polish Language)

¹³ Umberto Eco, *Dzieło otwarte: forma i nieokreśloność w poetykach współczesnych*, Wydawnictwo Czytelnik, 1973

¹⁴ Słownik Język Polskiego, Wydawnictwo PWN; the thing that is interesting here is etymology of the word *sign* in Polish. As Mirosław Bańko explains on the Internet portal of Słownik Język Polskiego (www.sjp.pwn.pl): *The word is of Slavic origin, it derives from the supposedly pre-Slavic znati 'know' and it originally meant 'the thing that is known'*.

greatly fortunate¹⁵. Inhabitants of Rome, Urbino, Fano and Vercelli could find in my graphic works and drawings some fragments of the well-known spaces, though transformed, seen anew by "a foreigner". For me it was a return to the source – after the exhibition in the House of Raphael's Birth and in KAUS Urbino, after 9 years I was able to present my new works in the heart of the city.

The presented collection consisted of graphics in intaglio techniques – mainly aquatints with etchings, charcoal drawings on paper as well as a few formerly realised woodcuts. Graphic works were dominated by formats 70 x 100 cm and 50 x 70 cm, a separate group included graphic miniatures in the format 10 x 15 cm. Apart from the studio drawings in the format 70 x 100 cm, I also presented numerous drawing sketches in the format 7 x 10 cm to 30 x 42cm. They were the works from 2009-2014 and a few examples of earlier works, enclosed in the documentation so that my complete artwork could be presented. The dominating type are landscapes inspired by such cities as Urbino, Rome, Mondavio, Sassocorvaro or San Leo, and some industrial spaces in Lodz.

The first exhibition was inaugurated on 17th September, 2013 – at the exhibition hall of Coleggio Raffaello. The visitors to the vernisage were the inhabitants of Urbino, but also my former lecturers from the Urbino Academy of Fine Arts – among others Professor Rossano Guerra, and from Scuola del Libro, (Professor Alfredo Bartolomeoli, Adriano Calavalle), from Istituto Superiore per le Industrie Artistiche (Professor Siro Cangiotti) and some peer artists. On 18th September 2013 there was a vernisage of the exhibition in Rome – at the Gallery "Arte e Pensieri" – just near Colosseum. There were a lot of artists, art collectors, owners of galleries and connoisseurs of graphic arts. On 21st September 2013 the collection of graphics and drawings was presented in the baroque interior of the former Saint Leonard's Church, at present transformed into a gallery, in the historical town Fano. Three exhibitions, organised in a fortnight, were held under the title FLASH GRAPHIC TOUR – a swift travelling exhibition of graphic arts. Although the title of this exhibition suggest a rapid pace, each of these expositions was a unique stop in time. At each stage another set of works was presented, though some graphics were exhibited in all three events. A different character of the galleries had an impact on a different expression and atmosphere of the particular exhibitions. It was great to arrange each exhibition with regard to a given

¹⁵ The project of the *tour* of exhibitions in Italy written by me was accepted by Adam Mickiewicz Institute in Warsaw, which within the programme "Polish Culture in the World" partly financed this project, enabling me its realisation.

space. In Urbino the classical interiors of Colleggio Raffaello, whose windows from one side show a picturesque mountain view of Urbino and from the other – the central square of the city, created an interesting background for black and white drawings and graphics – my personal windows. In Rome, a small gallery was filled with big drawings and miniatures exhibited in showcases, and the vernisage took place in the interior and outside the gallery. Colosseum could be seen in two variants – the real one – at the end of the next street – and the fantastic one, transformed by my imagination, in graphic works seen behind a glass pane. Whereas in Fano, the spatial baroque interior of a former church endowed the exhibition with a monumental character. Graphics and drawings interrelated with its niches and recesses, taking up an intriguing discourse with the architecture. During the day the dispersed light filled the space, evenly lighting the works, at dusk the artificial light changed accents in the interior, creating an exceptional, a bit dramatic and mysterious mood.

In Fano, an artist connected with the STUDIO DIECI Gallery – Roberto Gianinetti offered me to organise my individual exhibition in Vercelli in May 2014 and this exhibition became the fourth stage of the Italian *tour*. The exhibition was completed with graphic works and drawings made in 2014.

The thing that was interesting for Italian viewers was to see works of a Polish artist fascinated by their native landscape. For me a nice surprise was to read enthusiastic entries in the visitors' book and positive press reviews¹⁶. A chance to meet in person some prominent specialists in graphic arts, listening to some interesting opinions about my own artwork, all of that was an invaluable experience which confirms me in the creative path I chose and motivates me for further work.

My graphic works were inspired by really existing places, though they were modified by my imagination, memories and my "perception of perspective", which I described in detail in my doctor's thesis. As Kazimierz Bartel states, works of artists of different periods

¹⁶ After the exhibition in Vercelli an article by Gian Piero Prassi came out titled "Architecture between the reality and the spirit", where he wrote: *Rigorously black and white, they are graphics and charcoal drawings where urban spaces and volumes are endowed with life. Some of them convey representational signals, which means real views, in others suggested, idealised architecture appears, which seems to be a bit futuristic, yet with another kind of dizziness, with subtle anxiety. "A Frenzy of Signs" is a common denominator. This is Alicja Habisiak Matczak's world of expression, a Polish artist whose works are being exhibited at Studio Dieci from 30th May 2014.(...) The exhibition studies the relation between the physical and internal space, which is perfectly visible here.*

are dominated by *close perspectives, going away to a smaller or larger extent from the strict laws of geometry. These perspectives are improvised, intuitive, their source is "the perception of perspective"*¹⁷. That perception of perspective offers artists an opportunity to create more or less consciously the so-called *individual perspective*, standing out of any geometric system, yet being a reflection of "*a subjective visual object, the artist's psychic creation*".

Under the influence of these transformations, I would like my graphic works to become more universal urban scenes, which every viewer can interpret in their own way. My enchantment by the urban environment connotes "*Invisible Cities*" by Italo Calvino¹⁸ with his visionary concepts, such as "*a hanging city*" or "*a city of light*".

My works reveal my fascination by nature of light and shade, which through changes of direction, intensity and character, create infinite, mysterious spaces. The urban architecture is often the scenery of their mutual interactions – it is often distorted, put synthetically, it sometimes brings to our mind the atmosphere of a dream, where repetition, exaggeration, connection of seemingly strange elements into new wholes is a natural way of perception of the world.

I try to show the monumental character of space, which is sometimes constructed or somewhere else deconstructed by shade and light. One of the ways to express this impression is to use a dynamic contrast between the elements which seem to be "close" to the viewer and those which are hardly seen. I invite the viewer to enter my space, to feel the infatuating motion towards the horizon, which sometimes is blurred in the harmonious encounter of the sky and the ground, and sometimes it stays beyond the frame. I take advantage of the Impressionists' experience, who were keen on the use of the so-called *close-up framing*¹⁹, following the photographic framing. I also often apply receding framing to intensify the impression of depth. My works are dominated by open compositions. They suggest the depth of the landscape that extends beyond the boundaries of the graphic work or drawing.

¹⁷ Kazimierz Bartel, *Perspektywa malarska*, vol. 2, Warszawa 1958, Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, p. 217

¹⁸ Italo Calvino, *Niewidzialne miasta*, Wydawnictwo W.A.B, 2013

¹⁹ As Aleksander Wojciechowski put it in *Dzieje malarstwa pejzażowego (The History of Landscape Painting)*, that kind of framing, presenting a fragment of reality in a close-up, is an expression of the relation between the "impressionistic" painting and the system of three types of receding – the way of space representation in the art of Far East.

Graphic works *Urbino - crescendo*²⁰ (Fig. 2) and *Urbino - scendendo*²¹ (Fig.3) were made on the basis of drawings, presented at the doctorate exhibition, with the same titles, relating to musical terms. I was inspired *ascending* and *descending* majestic stairs in Urbino. Here again a few views combine into one synthetic picture of space, ordered by the light and rhythm of sharp architectonic forms.

The graphic work titled *Manufacture – beneath and above*²² is an aquatint combined with etching, depicting a view from the bottom and an imagined view from the top of some characteristic circulation areas of the Lodz post-industrial complex.

The work titled *Tagliare*²³ (Fig. 25c) was realised during the Symposium for the 10th Anniversary of KAUS and published in the collective artistic book, created in collaboration with artists from Italy, Switzerland and Luxembourg²⁴. The artists invited to participate in this project were asked to provide a graphic interpretation of words connected with the process of graphic production, yet with a double semantic meaning, such as an engraving, printing, etc. I chose the word *Tagliare*, which means *to cut*. As far as I am concerned, it relates to the dynamic cut of space by lights and shades, it is also the cut of the plane of a rectangle by lines, and finally the physical cut of the matrix with tools, or cropping paper before the process of printing starts. The main theme was the space around the Academy in Lodz, at that time "crisscrossed" by the construction elements of some newly built objects. The specific chaos of the building "blocks", contrary to the standing still "old" architecture, a constant movement of cranes and the strong summer sunlight inspired a few sketches and later graphic works in the technique of aquatint combined with etching.

Graphics *In giro*²⁵ (*In a Circle*) (Fig. 32) and *In Giro II*²⁶(Fig. 33) were inspired by urban spaces of Italian cities. The format of these works was dictated by the invitation to take part in the international exhibition titled 50 x 50, organised by the society *Empreinte* in Luxembourg in collaboration with KAUS Urbino. The invited artists were to create graphic works in the square format with measures defined by the title of the exhibition. Arches,

²⁰ *Urbino – crescendo*, aquatint with etching, 49x56cm, 2009

²¹ *Urbino- scendendo*, aquatint with etching, 49x56cm, 2009-2011

²² *Manufattura pod i nad (Manufacture beneath and above)*, aquatint with etching, 70x100cm, 2009

²³ *Tagliare*, aquatint with etching, 35 x 50cm, 2011

²⁴ The artistic book titled. *SYMPOSIUM DEL DECENNALE -Il doppio senso dell'incisione*, (10th Anniversary Symposium – a double sense of graphic art) vol. 3, authors: Nadia Galbiati, Flavia Bognuda, Elena Molena, Raffaella Ravelli, Anna Szpakowicz, Alicja Habisiak - Matczak, Isabelle Lutz, Danielle Grosbusch 2011, the intaglio technique, intaglio print, typography, the format of a closed book 350 x 250 mm, edition 13 copies, paper Magnani Pescia, 400 g, white

²⁵ *In giro*, 49x49 cm, aquatint with etching, 2013

²⁶ *In giro II*, 49x49 cm, aquatint with etching, 2013

which seemed to match the square plane, can be interpreted as a reference to the Roman arena, or the dynamic whirl of light.

Graphics *The Links*²⁷ (Fig. 30) and *Movimenti*²⁸ (*Movements*)²⁹ (Fig. 31) show in a slightly different way movement and dynamism of the landscape. In the first work the abstract arches cross the boundaries of the enigmatic scenery. In the creative frenzy, deeply bitten lines seem to deny the impression of the 3-dimensional space, attracting the viewer's attention to the image plane and to dynamism of the geometric forms. Similarly in the other work, the etching lines somehow form a separate order of another type. I think that the attempt to build the relation between the image of the landscape and the abstract geometric construction in another way than previously, initiated in these works, will be the theme of my following graphic search in the future.

My artwork is deeply rooted in the European graphic and painting tradition. The Renaissance need to build harmony based on mathematical proportions interchanges in my works with baroque contrasts of shade and light. I have in mind the monumental character of Rembrandt's etching landscapes, the poetic visions of Venice created by Guardi are also close to me. Distortions of space which I use and architectonic fantasies might resemble phantasmagorical visions by Piranesi, whereas the chiaroscuro effects of aquatints lead our thoughts to *Caprices* by Goya. My imagination is also stimulated by landscapes made by Giorgio de Chirico, filled with metaphysical light. The aforementioned cherish for the urban architecture, the desire to present movement and dynamism associate my works with the Futurists' oeuvre. Depiction of the same view from different perspectives in one picture is an impact of the Cubistic approach. I appreciate the great role of Paul Cezanne in the change of the way of space construction in the image³⁰. What I really admire

²⁷ *The Links*, aquatint with etching, 70x100cm, 2013

²⁸ *I movimenti*, aquatint with etching, 70x100cm, 2014

²⁹ Foreign titles of my works are not a cosmopolitan attempt to amaze with my foreign language skills, but they result from my warm affection for the source of my inspiration – mostly the Italian landscape. Italian is an extremely melodic language, in my opinion the very sound of words suggests the unusual atmosphere of sunny Italy. Italian is also a language of music, and many terms which were adapted to Polish come from music, such as: *crescendo*, *scendendo*, *piano* or *allegro vivace*. Giving titles originating from the world of music I wish to emphasise some subjective moods which these works evoke. The reason why I gave an English title to the graphic work *The Links* is the fact that it was made for the international exhibition *The Rape of Europe*.

³⁰ „Analysing Cezanne's works from his dark period – I. Guerry writes – we can characterise them in the following way: a vision of painters, who are at the same time intuitive and imaginative artists, relies on the spheroidal mobile field. Space spinning is evoked by curvatures, by circles spreading centrifugally, by swinging around one axis, or by the motion of lines and rewinding them through the composition – lines which indicate the direction of forces. The lighted sphere is the most frequent generator of movement...” quoted after A. Wojciechowski, *Dzieje...*, p.152

is his aspiration to achieve lightness and transparency of form in the landscape, to obtain "the reality free from veristic schemes, the reality substituted by imagination and accompanying abstraction".³¹

As a graduate and lecturer of the Academy of Fine Arts named after Władysław Strzemiński, I made an attempt to analyse my approach to the theory and artistic concepts of our patron on the occasion of the exhibition titled: "*We Inheritors?*"³². The essence of what Strzemiński taught us is being aware of the significance of every square centimetre of the image plane³³ and the necessity to take responsibility for creating the whole – "organic visual essence"³⁴. Composing my own drawings and graphic works I take into consideration "inherent data of the image" – "a quadrangle of boundaries" and "flatness of surface", I tend to achieve "harmony" of all elements. The issue of afterimage studied by Strzemiński is inspiring for me. When I create my works I juxtapose fragments of spaces seen in different places and at different time, I use permeation and overlap of elements which in reality are far away from one another. On the other hand, in graphics and drawings I engage in a discourse on the unistic concept. I create the illusion of space, based on strong contrasts of shapes and directions, which means I introduce the elements of dualism rejected by that artist. From Strzemiński's point of view, most of my works are examples of "Baroque tendencies" and "painting of forces". Strong tensions of form observed here, in the unistic conception break homogeneity of the image plane. Whereas in my opinion it is possible to preserve the plane of the image and simultaneously build the depth. I try to keep the dynamic relation between the flatness of drawing, relation to the proportions of the rectangle which I work on and the created illusion of the physical space of the conceived landscape. I look for the best mutual relation between elements, linking geometric divisions of the plane with intuitive sense of the most interesting visual relations. The statement that appeals to me is: "calculation should go together with intuition. The image is created by mutual support of the former by the latter"³⁵

³¹ Aleksander Wojciechowski, *Dzieje...* p. 70

³² *My, spadkobiercy? Władysław Strzemiński jako punkt odniesienia w teorii i praktyce artystycznej PWSSP I ASP W Łodzi*, Galeria Kobro, ASP w Łodzi, 2011

³³ „Každy cm² obrazu jest tak samo wartościowy i w takim samym stopniu bierze udział w budowie obrazu” („Each cm² of the image is equally valuable and to the same extent it takes part in the image construction”), Władysław Strzemiński, *Unizm w malarstwie*, p. 11

³⁴ This issue is analysed in detail by Paulina Kurc-Maj in her article *Stworzyć dzieło sztuki jako organiczną istotę plastyczną* [in] *Powidoki życia. Władysław Strzemiński i prawa dla sztuki*, p. 123

³⁵ *Unizm w malarstwie*, p. 14

Drawing as *materia prima*

Drawing is an essential part of my artwork. My interests in this area were already revealed during my studies – first in the Studio run by Professor Krzysztof Wawrzyniak, who became my most important teacher. At the time of my studies I got to know the basics of drawing under the supervision of this really demanding pedagogue, who noticed my potential abilities and put greater and greater demands on me. However, he also praised me for my progress and encouraged me to work more. In the first year of my studies in his studio I was enthusiastic about my work on the study of a human figure, both at school and working on my assignments – I continued the habit of keeping my sketchbook started during the preparatory course for the entrance exam. There were dozens of sketches on different themes made in a variety of techniques – objects, human figures, anatomic details, animals. That drawing *furor* has continued to date.

Drawing is the first record of emotions on paper, is a way to directly jot down the impressions coming from nature. These first impressions are later transformed, separately from the observed landscape or architecture – they become an autonomous search for the best form, the best intriguing composition. It happens to me that I am persistently fascinated by one motive until I feel I used the whole scope of potential features that it offers. Choosing a fragment of a real landscape, I treat it as a source which I feel compelled to use until the ideas finish, until I make so many drawings that I cannot draw any longer. I check proportion of elements, configuration of space rhythms, direction and power of lines, types of textures, in order to obtain interesting, astonishing images. I enlarge some elements of the observed landscape, I omit others. I combine elements which in reality are not connected, I am keen to find a synthetic and full of expression vision of the landscape. I consider the place from different points of view, I dynamically frame, distort with various perspectives, sometimes crossing the boundaries of similarity. There is a lot of heat in my activity, my intuition and reason work together with my eye and my drawing hand, and my work is as intensive as trance. The drawings that appear are in a way like numerous mirrors of the same motive, though none of them is the real simple reflection, merely my own view and my spontaneous emotions and gestures. The first form of record is always a great amount of sketches which have a character of "caprices", free visions linking real

and imagined elements. These drawings are often the beginning for a drawing study in the format 70 x 100 cm, which is a combination of former drawing attempts. Some drawings are a starting point for graphic works – miniatures and large-format graphics. Graphic works are always a creative transformation of drawings, and not their facsimiles. Drawings are still autonomous works of art.

At exhibitions, apart from graphics and drawings inspired by the Italian landscape and architecture, I also presented examples of drawings concerning the urban space of Lodz, whose post-industrial development has been my significant source of inspiration for years. The cycle of drawings presented here, with motives of Lodz factories, titled *Scheibler's Perspectives*, (Fig. 4-12), was made during the International Symposium of Graphic Arts *I Here and Now*, which I participated in just after my doctorate in 2009. For me, it was a really interesting and original experience: a chance to enter the interior of an old factory and its surroundings, which are not normally accessible, direct sketching from nature for many hours to use the drawings later in order to create a kind of installation, annexing a fragment of the factory, together with other Polish and Italian artists participating in this action. It was a challenge to arrange the drawings in space in such a way to create a new whole, blending in with the surroundings – even by contrast. My technically classical drawings were placed next to sculptures, installations or performers' actions, and the factor that consolidated the whole exhibition was the reference to the existing space of that magic location.

The drawing inspired by a former Art Nouveau power plant³⁶ (Fig. 12) had a relatively big format so that it could go well with the monumental architecture of the factory – the size 100x140cm seemed to be quite small when compared with the scale of those walls. Like in many drawings, I distort the observed perspective in order to obtain a surprising view: the floor is sloping down critically, the balcony and the dais seem to soar, whereas stairs become the infinite *Jacob's ladder*. The rhythm of the luminous white vertical windows endows the architecture with majestic appearance. Small sketches have an aforementioned character of caprices, architectonic fantasies focused around the space of the Lodz quarter Księży Młyn.

Natural elements, movement, light, energy coming from behind or from above the observed fragment of the landscape, they are the themes of my drawings, which are never

³⁶ *Perspektywy Scheiblera 10 (Scheibler's Perspectives 10)*, charcoal on paper, 100 x 140cm, 2009

just portraits of places. Capturing the spirit of a place, a relevant reflection of its character is an extra advantage of the works, though it is not my main objective. My goal is to create new realities, even if they are deeply rooted in my "here and now".

The drawing technique I chose – charcoal on paper – is extremely transient – the image should be specially fixed and sometimes even one blow or a careless movement of our hand can damage it irretrievably. On the other hand, the slightest gesture or touch of a palm, which is black from the charcoal, leaves a trace on paper. The technique allows you to draw fast and spontaneously. To achieve varied textural effects I use different types of charcoal and dry pastels; an eraser is an indispensable tool in my work. Like a gouge in the woodcut technique, it brings out whites even out of the deepest black. In this way, apart from drawing with black on the white surface, I also draw with white on black and grey, using interchangeably the principle of adding and subtracting. I choose paper with coarse surface which provides a variety of textural possibilities. Its warm tone intensifies the chiaroscuro impact of the depicted landscape.

Grain in graphic arts

In my graphic artwork I pay much attention to a search for different ways to obtain grainy textures – both in the technique of aquatint dusted by hand, in the technique of roulette or sand aquatint³⁷. Each of these techniques allows to obtain a varied and rich structure built of points – white and black. The result of my experiments is a combination of all these techniques on one plate, which can be seen in graphic works *The Links* and *I Movimenti*, in which I combined all these methods with the technique of deeply bitten etching. My goal is to obtain a complex rich graphic matter which is to have a sensual impact on the viewer. From this point of view the thing that is insignificant is just to call and distinguish an individual technique – in practice I apply all these methods at the same time, intuitively, choosing the best method, sequence and moment of their application. To meet didactic needs, I ran workshops examining in detail particular techniques, offering students an opportunity to test various tools and traces which are left on the plate or varnish. Roulettes, moulettes, students' inventions: tattoo needles and cut up blades – all these tools

³⁷ Sand aquatint – is based on a print of sandpaper made on a varnished plate to obtain a grainy texture, which later is bitten in nitric acid like in the etching technique.

can serve to obtain interesting graphic traces, drawing directly on the plate or indirectly – drawing on varnish which later is bitten in nitric acid. The work on the matrix in the intaglio etching techniques, which requires a certain premeditation, planning the sequence of activities, controlling the time of biting – in my case all of these steps are associated with a specific creative frenzy. I work dynamically, preparation of the matrix consists in many decisive painting gestures: adding the following layers of varnish, oil paint applied by a brush or directly from a stick, drawing on varnish, more often by means of a sharp scraper than a needle. On the one hand, it is a process full of concentration, isolation from the world. On the other hand, it is an extremely dynamic, even violent activity. I try to finish aquatint biting within one day – in one *giornata*. The introduction of salt aquatint with its longer time of biting prolonged that period to two or even three days. My latest graphics were realised starting with long hours' biting of salt aquatint in combination with etching, and later, to add light halftones and more subtle textures, I added aquatint dusted by rosin. Of course, after the first series of biting and after sample prints the process is repeated. Graphics *Links* and *Movimenti* were first made as aquatints dusted by hand, and then the layer of deeply bitten etching and a roulette were added.

Sprinkling rosin by hand is quite difficult, it requires experience and a lot of trials, yet it results in full control over the type of grain, which for me in graphic arts is the same as grain in photography or coarseness of the painting canvas. The type of grain gives a specific ground for what happens later, when the gestures of a brush and a scraper appear. For me rosin sprinkling is the same as grounding the canvas in painting, or weaving the warp in fibre art; it is an introduction which can be done mechanically. However, it can also be a prelude to further creative action. Sometimes a neutral background is necessary, or an active structure, a gradient that will strengthen the final effect of the whole multi-layered image. Sprinkling salt on the hot varnish in the technique of salt aquatint has a similar meaning – it is also a conscious graphic prelude.

Experiments with salt aquatint and my attempts to combine it with other intaglio techniques helped me work out a method which I would call salt etching. The method lets me obtain the line that has irregular, grainy character, more painterly than in the usual etching³⁸. It is also a different effect from the one that can be obtained in the aquatint itself – here also

³⁸ It is illustrated by photos presenting enlarged fragments of a matrix and print, enclosed in the documentation

the lines can have a painterly nature, yet deep biting is impossible, which consequently makes it impossible to obtain a relief effect in a print. Moreover, an essential difference between the salt and traditional aquatint is that the former can achieve a deeply bitten black point, whereas the aquatint with the use of rosin or asphaltum allows to obtain a white point.

Small graphic forms

In my view, small graphic forms are a kind of graphic test on a smaller scale. It often happens that before I realise a graphic work in a large format, drawing sketches appear and then one or a few miniatures. The small scale works according to completely different rules, it requires even greater concentration and precision, responsibility for every square centimetre of the rectangular surface. On the one hand, every detail has an important meaning, but on the other hand, the small size lets the artist act freely, without any fear that they will "waste" a lot of graphic materials. Thus, it is a field for experiments, a test of technical solutions, though certainly the final goal is to create independent works.

Two miniatures presented at the exhibition in Vercelli in 2014, *In the Circle of Colosseum*³⁹ (Fig.44) and *In the Circle of Colosseum II*⁴⁰ (Fig.45) – are the result of my technical experiments with salt aquatint. These graphics reveal mutual relations between salt aquatint and salt etching and the traditional aquatint. We can see grainy lines on the flat black of aquatint and the contrastive coarse structure of deeply bitten textures.

The examples of small forms of graphic arts in the technique of aquatint and etching are the works titled: *Riflessi (Reflections)* (Fig. 36), *Passaggi (Passages)* (Fig. 35), *Luci (Lights)* (Fig. 37), *Movimenti (Movements)* (Fig. 34), *Torri di Urbino (Towers of Urbino)* (Fig. 29). They are inspired by the modern zone of architecture in Urbino and the landscape of the town Senigaglia, though certainly the inhabitants of the latter would not recognise the familiar medieval fortress in my linear impressions. The theme of the works relates to the title mirror reflections of the surface of glass walls in the intensive Italian light, passages, lights and finally the towers of Urbino, covered with construction scaffolding.

³⁹ *In the Circle of Colosseum I*, salt aquatint, 10 x 15 cm, 2014

⁴⁰ *In the Circle of Colosseum II*, salt aquatint, 10 x 15 cm, 2014



Chapter III

DIDACTIC AND SCIENTIFIC / RESEARCH ACTIVITY

Basics of composition

At the end of 2002, still before the diploma, I started working as a voluntary teaching assistant in the Studio of Basics of Composition run by Associate Professor Danuta Wieczorek. Studies in this excellent Studio, run earlier by Professor Andrzej Łobodziński along with the former teaching assistant Danuta Wieczorek, gave me an invaluable lesson how to build the painting and drawing form. This is where I learned a lot about the impact of colour, the role of intuition and rational element in works of art. With enthusiasm I realised succeeding tasks, first on the plane and then in space to finally create a book and a collection of single objects under the guidance of Professor. I felt sorry to leave such a stimulating studio after two years of studies, and probably that yearning was the reason why, shortly after my graduation, I returned to it with no hesitation, following the suggestion of the then Dean, Professor Zbigniew Purczyński, as a voluntary assistant in order to enthusiastically develop my knowledge.

On October 1, 2004 I was employed as a teaching assistant in the Studio and it took me nine years altogether to get familiar with the profoundly unique (as far as Europe goes) curriculum of teaching composition created by Professor Andrzej Łobodziński, and later excellently continued and expanded by Professor Danuta Wieczorek⁴¹. I also learned to be independent in teaching composition, when I took up the course in basics of composition in my part-time studies of the first and second degree in "Graphic Design" and "Graphic Arts" in 2006-2011. Together with extramural students I had the opportunity to practice such basic and yet so important issues as the division of the plane, the problem of colour or the role of elements in the system.

Since 2012 I have taken pleasure in teaching composition in post-graduate studies – in three areas: drawing and painting, graphic design and the interior design. Teaching the principles of building a work of art, on the plane or in space, demands a great

⁴¹ I dealt with photographic and film documentation of students' works, I took care of the studio archives, and last but not least I participated in organisation of exhibitions of the Studio of Composition. It was a challenge for me to realise colour exercises on my own. The painting practice and continuous development of sensitivity to colour was an important element of my work. I participated in organisation of entrance exams in composition. I gradually started to run more and more classes on my own, concerning the issues of colour, closed composition, rhythmical composition, space composition as well as the works with book structure or a set of single objects.

concentration from the teacher, precision of the language, consistent analysis of form, so that they could pass the knowledge concerning the principles of composition in a reliable way. This job, in spite of the effort it takes, is very rewarding. At the beginning students have a rather sceptical attitude towards these practical classes, expecting easy, universal tips, whereas the essence of this method of teaching relies on experiencing the rules of composition on specific own examples, based on a precisely defined task. It is a common search for the best drawing or painting solution, that often involves numerous experiments, errors, rejecting previous solutions and building from scratch. Learning self-discipline in the critical self-assessment of your own progress, the ability to return to previous solutions, as long as the following ones are not their development, being aware of the principles governing our perception, seeing the important role of both the rational element, as well as intuition in the creative process is a valuable experience for every artist. I am very pleased to observe the development of visual awareness of the students, who in my classes often for the first time face the issues of building the visual form, or take part in a painting or drawing workshop. I am glad to see that at the end of the term they enthusiastically talk about the acquired knowledge and experience.

Graphic Arts

Apart from my work in the Studio of Composition, since 2006, I was an assistant of Professor Krzysztof Wawrzyniak in classes of graphic arts for students of extramural second degree studies at the Faculty of Textile and Fashion. The programme of the course, which I am continuing on my own at the moment, encompasses a two-year course in graphic arts, of which the first semester is dedicated to the issues of the relief print, the second to the foundations of the intaglio technique, and the remaining two terms are intended to carry out the author's collection of prints of each student, which may be an artistic part of master thesis.

To meet the needs of the classes with students, who often had nothing in common with graphic arts before, I worked out a set of precise descriptions of graphic techniques – "recipes" of particular techniques which are now useful in my work with students in the Studio of Intaglio Techniques. It gives me a guarantee that I bequeathed my students

all essential guidelines concerning the manner of work in a given technique, which they will be able to use after studies too.

In the academic year 2013/14 I managed to prepare together with my three diploma students collections of graphics in intaglio techniques which became parts of their master theses and were positively assessed by the commission. At present I am working on two subsequent diplomas. Each of the sets of prints had a completely different character and reflected the personality, sensitivity and interests of the author; the techniques were also different (etching, aquatint, soft-ground). In addition to these three diplomas, since 2009, I have been the author of 12 reviews of theoretical master theses and one licentiate (a detailed list attached).

Intaglio techniques

Since 1st November 2011 I have been an assistant to Professor Krzysztof Wawrzyniak in the Studio of Intaglio Techniques in full-time studies at my faculty. My task is to teach students the secrets of craftsmanship of the intaglio print and to encourage them to take up an individual search for their own technical and formal solution, and to inspire adepts of graphic arts to work out their own original graphic language. Having a lot of respect for the tradition of education in this field, which has been worked out by the Department of Graphic Arts of our school since the 1970s, I try to continue solid principles of teaching but also to develop and enrich the program with new elements, keeping with the times.

As Professor Krzysztof Wawrzyniak's former student and a graduate from the Studio of Intaglio Techniques, in accordance with its program, I put emphasis on drawing as a starting point for graphic arts. The stage of drawing, sketching, working on the preliminary graphic form is an important and often time-consuming preparatory stage to make graphics for students of our Studio. Under my guidance there are also foreign students from the Erasmus programme, whom I try to encourage to try this method of creative work, that in other European countries is becoming less common, which we observe, with some anxiety, as the lower level of drawing skills among students who come to study in Poland. The greater satisfaction I feel when I observe the development of their skills. The work with foreign students is a chance to get to know various concepts of art and artistic education. On the one hand, the teacher is expected to be open to new ideas and different artistic points

of view. On the other hand, they must be consistent in overcoming schemes and encouraging to go beyond some patterns, often imitated from the art of comics and street art.

I also work hard on enhancing and enriching the graphic craftsmanship, by modernizing the equipment, but also providing students with the highest quality paints and varnishes. In order to encourage students to draw from the roots, not only on the occasion of writing a master thesis, but every day, using the available graphic knowledge compendia, I made a detailed list of books to read. In the Studio we also show that the graphic arts can have the utility aspect – for example, every year one of the assignments for students is a task to make a Christmas graphic work. The aforementioned set of descriptions of particular techniques also turned out to be the effective means of teaching. I give students an example and then encourage them to pursue with their own "cookery book" with some recipes for various techniques and effects. We run together graphic notebooks, where students keep record of editions of their works.

Another element of the program of the Studio of Intaglio Techniques was initiated by my realisation of technological samples, which had always been an element of the didactic process, however, I gave them a bit different meaning. Although students come to a specialised studio after a two-year course of basics in graphic arts, it seems to be a good idea to revise but also extend their knowledge by practical experiments. Workshops run me are intended to practise the technique, but most of all to try and test various formal effects possible to achieve. I worked out different variants of one-day classes – on a large common plate a group of students, following my instructions, carries out technical tests, and then this sample is described and hung in the studio as a handy picture dictionary – with a detailed legend of graphic effects and the ways to achieve them. This simple method brings very good didactic results – the students do not feel restrained and are open to technical experiments, obtaining interesting and original solutions, which later can be consciously used in their own graphic works. In this way we created samples of traditional techniques, such as sugar-lift aquatint, soft-ground or aquatint dusted by hand and by means of a dusting box, but also less popular techniques such as sand aquatint⁴², roulette, salt ground aquatint or *craclee* – a method that results in texture of cracks on the etching varnish. In these experiments what can be useful is my experience from my studies at the Academy in Urbino

⁴² The technique which consists in making an impression of sand paper on a varnished plate.

under the guidance of Professor Rossano Guerra, as well as at the University of Wolverhampton, where, having a scholarship in 2000 I could use their Studio of Graphic Arts. Another concept that worked well was an idea of one-day enclosure workshops of the technique of engraving in plexi. It yielded interesting works in the field of drypoint, surprising even for the students themselves. It was a way to encourage them to start a difficult technique of copper engraving in a simplified form.

The work with diploma students, artists at the threshold of their independent creative career, is a challenge to do my best to prepare them to take their own path. In the course of their studies I teach them to make a systematic record of their exhibitions, I help them prepare their artistic curriculum, I forward to them information concerning exhibitions and competitions for graphic artists. I encourage them to take part in competitions for a students' graphic work. Organising workshops, exhibitions and symposia for students, I hope that I simultaneously fill their curriculum with experience that will bring effects in their independent artistic work in the future.

The work in the Department of Graphic Arts made me set an objective to promote and popularise graphic arts among students. Except for my purely didactic work, I also try to realise this goal by numerous organisational activities.

Gallery of Students' Graphic Arts "Between"

The first example of the organisational activity mentioned above is the Gallery of Students' Graphic Arts "Between"⁴³ at the Studio of Intaglio Techniques, the Faculty of Graphic Arts and Painting, initiated by me in November 2011, where graphic works of students of the Department of Graphic Arts are exhibited. It is an inconspicuous part of the hall between graphic studios, however, it is frequented by almost all students. Thus, the presentation of graphics just in this place has become an effective way to promote widely understood graphic arts. Since the beginning of its existence the students of our Studio have been involved in the work of the Gallery. I try to inspire and coordinate the following exhibitions, encouraging extra involvement in joint ventures. In my opinion students obtain a good organisational experience and get prepared to arrange their own exhibitions

⁴³ The Gallery of Students' Graphic Arts "Between" is located in the hall on the 2nd floor of Pavilion B in the main building of the Academy of Fine Arts, 121, Wojska Polskiego Street in Lodz.

in the future. Students frame graphics, they participate in exhibitions' arrangement, they often design a poster and invitation to the exhibition themselves, promoting it on social networks. In the period from November 2011 to February 2015 we held the following exhibitions: the Exhibition of works of the Department of Graphic Arts, where students showed graphics from all graphic studios and the Exhibition of the Studio of Intaglio Techniques – Selected Works from the years 2010-2012, organized in November 2012 in collaboration with the Gallery "Nasza Ściana". Every year students participating in the Strzeminski Competition can present their works here (i.a. Anna Sęp, Oskar Gorzkiewicz, Aleksandra Błaszczuk). It has become a tradition to hold an exhibition after the competition for small forms of graphic arts of the students of the Strzeminski Academy of Fine Arts in Lodz organized by the Gallery Amcor. There were also two exhibitions of the Studio of Lithographic Techniques – presenting students' works completed before a diploma, as well as selected works from the diploma collections. The Gallery is also used to publish achievements of the members of the Scientific Society "Experimentarium". These shows are very popular with the academic community and the visiting guests – supporters of the Academy. They show a variety of creative attitudes and technical capabilities, encouraging students to visit our graphic studios, where they often stay for a longer period of time.

The Scientific Society "Experimentarium"

Another example of the organizational-didactic activity aimed at popularizing graphic arts among students and the audience and at encouraging them to study their potential, is the Scientific Society "Experimentarium" established in March 2013, organising students of the Studios of Intaglio Techniques and Lithographic Techniques at the Faculty of Graphic Arts and Painting, the Strzeminski Academy of Fine Arts in Lodz. The members of the Society can be recruited from Polish and foreign students of both studios, from all years and faculties of the Academy. The main objectives of the Society "Experimentarium" are: creating conditions for the development of creative passion in the field of graphic arts, a search for new technical solutions, and hence, new means of artistic expression, promotion of graphic arts and organization of various artistic and educational projects within the Academy and beyond it. I cooperate with D.A. Tomasz Matczak, an assistant in the Studio of Lithographic Techniques run by Professor Witold Warzywoda. The foundation of the Society shared

by students of two studios was a result of a desire to conduct a joint research into techniques combining elements of intaglio and planographic (surface) print. The example of the Society's activities in 2013-2014 are numerous graphic workshops (I enclose the list of those which were organised by me and related to the intaglio print). When conducting regular workshops for the members of the Society, I try to demonstrate to young people, accustomed to the pace of work on the computer, the more popular and more accessible side of graphic arts. I show that graphic arts do not always mean spending long hours on biting in the fumes of nitric acid, but it can be a creative experiment with the use of ready-made materials as graphic matrices, an opportunity for free creative expression. Let me give an example of workshops with the use of aluminium cans or packages of TETRA PACK type. We also conducted experiments using the iron plate as a matrix in the intaglio print and we tested various ways to combine the intaglio and planographic print. Students also participated in workshops teaching salt aquatint, as well as in classes run by invited foreign artists: the artist from Stuttgart Anja Klafka and Professor Zbynka Janacka from Ostrava. In addition, as a part of the Society's activity we organised a trip to the Leon Wyczółkowski Regional Museum in Bydgoszcz to visit the exhibition "Intaglio Techniques in Poland after 1900" as well as the exhibition of graphic works by Karol Mondral. The members of the Society also participated in the Symposium Graphic Arts Flash Drawing Tour - Urbino-Fano-Lodz at the International Centre of Graphic Arts KAUS Urbino in 2014. The essential part of the Society's activity is the presentation of the research and the resulting artwork at exhibitions. The exhibition of the Society at the Gallery Lektorium organised in October 2014 in the Center of Science and Art of our Academy showed the alternative techniques implemented in graphic arts, matrices and graphic tools made by students from unconventional materials, such as saw blades, tattoo needles or caps.

I take every opportunity to promote graphic arts – not only in the field of Scientific Society. In April 2014 I organized a special graphic workshop for coordinators of the program Erasmus within the Staff Training Week, while in October 2014 for Erasmus students of our Academy, and another one for the general public during the Open Days of the Academy of Fine Arts.

Graphic symposia in Urbino

Another example of my activity for promotion of education and graphic arts is organization of graphic symposia in Urbino, which I have already participated in four times. Bearing in mind my personal extremely creative and artistically fruitful experience from my stay in Urbino, since I returned to my diploma studio in 2011 in a completely different role, I have tried to restore the forgotten tradition of symposia. Despite many obstacles, especially financial ones, I took up a challenge to organise another visit with students to Urbino. In September 2012 there was the second graphic symposium led by Professor Krzysztof Wawrzyniak with my participation. It resulted in creation of an artistic book composed of original graphics made in the hospitable studio of the Centre of Graphic Arts KAUS in Urbino. We titled the book *Urbino dal Giardino Pensile II (Urbino from Hanging Gardens II)* to emphasize the continuation of the experience of 2006, and after our return, under the same title, we held an exhibition at the City Art Gallery in Lodz. In 2013, the Graphic Symposium held under the name of FLASH DRAWING TOUR-URBINO - FANO-ROMA took place, where students realized a rich collection of drawings inspired by Italian cities. At the end of our stay in Italy we presented it at the prestigious Gallery Colleggio Raffaello in Urbino. Drawings, regarded as an introduction to the graphic work, were a starting point for graphics in intaglio techniques made later in the Studio. The same formula was repeated with Professor Wawrzyniak in 2014, when another symposium was held under the title FLASH DRAWING TOUR- Urbino-Fano-Lodz. The work on the symposium actually took the whole year - it is associated with the development of the program and identifying the financial sources. Coordination consists in the arrangement of all organizational details, from booking accommodation and transport up to the development of the route. I found my experience as a tour guide very useful here. During the Tour, it is important to decide on the proper rhythm of work from the very beginning, to plan visits to museums and meetings with artists and lecturers of the local universities, such as Professor Alfredo Bartolomeoli or the excellent copper engraver Bruno Cerboni Bajardi. In case of our students the symposia in Urbino are an extraordinary opportunity to get into contact with the rich Italian culture, particularly the graphic arts, which has exceptional patrons in Urbino, such as Scuola del Libro, Accademia di Belle Arti

di Urbino, ot Istituto Superiore per le Industrie Artistiche, and to draw inspiration from the unique beauty of the landscape and architecture of the place.

The element of education was to realise two international projects with students under the title “Rape of Europe” and “Rhinos” in the years 2013 and 2014, which I will discuss in more detail in the section on organizational activities.

My work with students is also a source of inspiration to me – firstly, their fresh, enthusiastic approach brings interesting results in the form of innovative technical solutions, on other occasions it is the resistance and technical problems that become a starting point for a search for new solutions. I use graphic manuals, also in Italian and English, to confront different ways to accomplish the same activities – I explore which solutions work best in the Studio. I try to instil into my students a passion for seeking their own solutions and efficient use of what has already been developed. As far as the form of graphics is concerned, it is essential to capture each student's individual trait and to lead them to develop their own drawing and graphic language. Knowing well the program of the Studio of Composition, which all students of our faculty had contact with, I know pretty well which issues and experience I can refer to, what rules I should recall, pointing to the examples of practiced exercises, e.g. the issues of the plane division, the issues of open and closed composition, etc.

Summer Courses of Graphic Arts in Lodz

An important part of my development as a teacher of graphic arts is my work with the participants of the Summer Courses of Graphic and Fibre Art at the Academy. They are dialectic in nature – an exchange of mutual experiences. It is a very inspiring meeting of artists from different parts of the world, where everyone presents their own artistic achievements, so teachers are not the only source of knowledge. Organization of summer courses has become an opportunity to get familiar with craftsmanship of foreign masters invited to our Academy. Thanks to a grant from the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage, obtained after submitting an application which I also prepared, they could attend courses free of charge, some of them also gained some experience as assistants. Owing to sponsors,

graphic studios were equipped with high-quality graphic materials and accessories. In addition to the coordination of courses, which takes a long time before the deadline, and after them, I also had much pleasure in attending classes as a teaching assistant: twice during the course "Intaglio Techniques" led by Professor Krzysztof Wawrzyniak in 2013 and 2014, and during the course run by Professor Jose Manuel Guillen Ramona from the Technical University of Valencia within the framework of PATA 2014 and by Professor Yuji Kobayashi of Tama University in Tokyo in 2013. It was an opportunity to get to know different ways of teaching graphic arts and exciting technological solutions that both foreign masters brought to Lodz.

Research into salt-ground aquatint

In the years 2013-14 I was doing a research into the salt-ground aquatint. It was a way to enhance my own graphic skills as well as to enrich the program of the Studio with that technique, less popular in Poland. The salt-ground aquatint technique relies on sprinkling salt on a zinc plate coated with the etching varnish, which is then heated and then flushed with water after cooling. Points exposed in this way are bitten in nitric acid. The impression shows the opposite effect than when using the traditional aquatint dusted with rosin, namely, dark points on a light background. The technique allows to obtain a diversified, granular texture in the full scale of grey, from white to black. The goal of the study was to test the applicability of this technique in available existing conditions and with the application of available materials, and the increase of knowledge of alternative methods to prepare a matrix in the intaglio print. The results of this research are numerous technical samples and a tried and tested recipe that I can now share with my students, as well as new graphic works. The graphic effects are an interesting extension of the potential of the intaglio print. The long time of biting in salt-ground aquatint allows the graphic artist to use it simultaneously with etching. It is also possible to combine this technique with other etching techniques of the intaglio print. The original, deep black and varied grainy texture is the benefit of the salt-ground aquatint, which I believe, greatly enriched my graphic language of expression and will bring further effects in the following works. The documentation includes two graphics made in the salt-ground aquatint technique, combined with etching and traditional aquatint, which I enclose in the documentation.

"Antichita Romane" (Roman Antiquities)⁴⁴ (Fig. 46) and "Antichita Romane II"⁴⁵ (Fig. 47) relate to the ancient Roman architecture, which I reconstruct in my own dynamic way.

"The grained image" (Ziarnisty obraz) – is a title of my lecture and the cycle of workshops which I am running in April 2015 at the Faculty of Fine Arts, University in Porto within the framework of the project *Pure print*, in order to present the effects of my studies on the international front. The participation in Polish and international graphic conferences is an essential element of my work. I enclose their list and publications in the documentation.

„Laboratory of the visual form” and ”Visual structures”

It was an interesting challenge for me to take up a cooperation with the Grażyna and Kiejstut Bacewicz Academy of Music in Lodz, where I was offered to run art classes on the basis of my own original program. Since October 2013, as a part of the humanistic extracurricular classes, students of the 1st degree studies have been able to study in my classes titled "Laboratory Visual form". The program I developed covers the fundamental operations on the plane and in space, basics of drawing, painting and graphic skills. Apart from classes in the studio, I also organize open air activities – in the Lodz Botanical Garden and the Zoo, to encourage students to paint directly from nature, and to capture in the drawings the movement and character of native and exotic animals. The classes are very popular with students, which is confirmed by the increasing number of participants each semester, and the fact that, following their request, the school organised another edition of extracurricular humanistic classes titled "Visual structures", which I have been running for students of graduate studies since October 2014. It is a rewarding job because among musicians there are also genuine talents in visual arts and it is my job to inspire their creativity and provide them with the basis of construction of a work of art and the artistic craftsmanship over a short period of time. My experience in teaching composition is certainly invaluable here. In April 2014 we are planning an exhibition of my students at the Academy of Music, and it is going to be included in the Program of the Festival of Science and Art in Lodz.

⁴⁴ *Antichita romane*, salt aquatint, aquatint and etching, 70x100cm, 2014

⁴⁵ *Antichita romane II*, salt aquatint, aquatint and etching, 70x100cm, 2014

Chapter IV

THE ORGANISATIONAL ACTIVITY

My organisational activity, as confirmed by the list enclosed, is based among other things on organisation of many exhibitions of students, pedagogues, visiting foreign artists on the premises of the Academy and in the cultural institutions in Poland and abroad.

„The Rape of Europe” and „Rhinos are coming” – international simultaneous exhibitions of graphic arts and installations as well as graphic conferences

A particular example of activity which combines the didactic, organisation and exhibition efforts is the realization together with Professor Krzysztof Wawrzyniak two international projects, coordinated by Professor Jose Quaresma from the Faculty of Fine Arts at the University of Lisbon in 2013-2014. The former was called "The Rape of Europe". It was a joint cooperation of our Academy and the Academy of Barcelona, the Higher School in Utrecht and the Faculty of Fine Arts at the University of Porto Allegre. The task of each party invited to participate in the project involving teachers and students was the realization of a graphic work or video installation inspired by the myth of the Rape of Europe. On the one hand, our work consisted in the coordination and cooperation at the international level, on the other hand, we had to guide the group of students to find interesting and original graphic solutions concerning the subject mentioned above. The final result of the project was a simultaneous exhibition of graphic arts and installation, which was opened in all five centres at the same time in 8th November 2013. The collection of graphic arts which is left after the exhibition will be a property of each of the five academic centres in Barcelona, Lisbon, Porto Allegre, Utrecht and Lodz and it is a valuable way to promote all the artists and institutions. On the basis of the same project we were invited to take part in the international conference under the same title, which took place at the University of Lisbon in October 2013. It was a great occasion to present the oeuvre of our Academy, the Department and the Studio on the international front. A catalogue

was published with reproductions of graphics and the text which was presented at the conference, in Polish and in English⁴⁶.

Similarly, in 2014 we participated with the students of the Studio of Intaglio Techniques in the project "Rhinos are coming", which was based on the combined effort of four artistic universities (in Brazil, Poland, Portugal, and the Republic of South Africa), which again resulted in the opening of four exhibitions in each of the cities at on the same day (in Porto Alegre, in Lodz, Lisbon and Cape Town). Each exhibition presented graphic works and installations realized for this occasion by 40 invited teachers and students. This time the graphics related to the well-known graphic work by Durer, depicting a rhinoceros⁴⁷. In addition to exhibitions, the final effect of the project was participation in a scientific conference, organized by the University of Porto Alegre in Brazil.⁴⁸

Collaboration with the International Centre of Art KAUS Urbino

Since 2004 my organisational activity for the Academy has focused on the collaboration with the International Centre of Art KAUS Urbino, which over the years resulted in joint exhibitions of graphic arts, the exchange of students and pedagogues, organisation of graphic symposia in Urbino, our students' placements and awards in the Strzeminski Competition.⁴⁹

Summer International Courses – Graphic and Fibre Art at the Academy of Fine Arts in Lodz

The final culmination of cooperation with KAUS Urbino is setting up the International Summer Courses of Graphic Arts in 2013. The idea of organizing summer courses in Lodz was actually born after my first stay in Urbino when I took part in the local courses as an assistant. In 2007, in my application for the scholarship "Young Poland" I wrote, among other things,

⁴⁶ The documentation of the exhibition, the conference and the published paper enclosed.

⁴⁷ The represented institutions and places of exhibitions: Instituto de Artes da Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul, Porto Alegre: Sala de exposições do Centro Cultural CEEE Erico Verissimo; the Strzemiński Academy of Fine Arts in Lodz: the Gallery Kobro, Faculdade de Belas Artes Universidade de Lisboa: Direção Geral do Património Cultural –Torre de Belém, Goethe Institut, FBAUL Gallery, Michaelis School of Fine Art, University of Cape Town: Centre for African Studies Gallery

⁴⁸ The documentation of the exhibition, the conference and the published paper enclosed.

⁴⁹ I discussed the details of this collaboration in my text titled *Tożsamość i grafika – pomiędzy Łodzią a Urbino* [in] *Wielość w jedności. Techniki Wkłęśłodruku w Polsce po 1900 roku. Materiały z sesji naukowej 18-19 października 2012 roku* edited by Barbara Chojnacka and Michał F. Woźniak, Muzeum Okręgowe im. Leona Wyczółkowskiego w Bydgoszczy, Bydgoszcz 2013

that my intention is to organize a summer workshop at my alma mater.⁵⁰ However, it took many years to put the concept into practice. In October 2012 the preliminary concept of organizing the courses in Lodz, created in collaboration with Giuliano Santini, was approved by the authorities of the Academy and it was the beginning of my intensive work on a detailed program, the rulebook of the courses and their promotion strategy and funding. It involved numerous consultations with professors from the Department of Graphic Arts, with the academy authorities, with the Bursary and legal advisors. My daily job was to translate texts of programs from Italian into English and Polish, to coordinate the design of the project website, posters, brochures, to search for sponsors, funding sources, and finally to promote the project by mail, which took all year long. KAUS Urbino supported the Academy with their contact base and the twelve-year experience in conducting the Summer Courses in Urbino. We gained the patronage of important offices and institutions and media sponsorship.

The greatest satisfaction came with the participants from such remote countries as Cuba, Japan or China who signed up for the course – our efforts brought results, the dream came true ... There were artists with different background – from a high school pupil up to retired artists. The first edition of courses was run by professors: Dariusz Kaca (relief printing), Krzysztof Wawrzyniak (intaglio techniques), Witold Warzywoda (lithographic techniques), Professor Sławomir Ćwiek (mixed techniques) and the invited Professor Yuji Kobayashi from Tama University in Tokyo.

Encouraged by the success of the first edition, in 2014 we extended the program including courses in fibre art, in order to emphasise the essential heritage of our Academy and our city in this field – this time we managed to obtain funds from the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage and there were 8 courses altogether, out of which 6 were run by teachers from Lodz, and the invited guests were Professor Wendy Weiss from Nebraska University in Lincoln and Jose Manuel Guillen Ramon from the Technical University in Valencia. In 2015 edition 10 courses are scheduled, and the tried and tested courses of graphic and fibre art are to be complemented by a course of sand paper and the composition of time

⁵⁰ A fragment of the application for the scholarship submitted by me to the National Centre of Culture in 2007: *A real idea might also be the collaboration of the Academy of Fine Arts in Lodz and Centro Internazionale per L'Incisione Artistica in Urbino to organise collective exhibitions of Polish and Italian artists, as well as to transfer to the Polish ground summer practical graphic workshops.*

and space in the artistic book. The invited guests are Michael Brennan Wood from Great Britain and Kestutis Vasiliunas from the Academy in Vilnius⁵¹. It is my great satisfaction to say the first participants signed up in January.

For two years the courses have gained the international prestige, attracting to Lodz artists of different nationalities – from Albania, Belgium, Denmark, Canada, China, Colombia, Cuba, Japan, Italy, Lithuania, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland, the Republic of South Africa, the USA. The courses have become a great promotion of the Lodz graphic and weaving tradition in the world and a valuable event for our cultural environment. In 2013 and 2014 in the summer, art lovers from Lodz could see the international exhibition of graphic and fibre art created by the course participants and the exhibitions of foreign masters – Yuji Kobayashi, Wendy Weiss and Jose Guillen Ramona.

The organizational, educational and promotional success of the Academy in Lodz is confirmed by numerous reports from the Summer Courses in the press, on the radio and TV, but above all the satisfaction of the artists who promised to become ambassadors for the Summer Courses in their home countries and cities, declaring a desire to participate in the next edition. This positive reception is confirmed by the survey summarizing the courses expressing opinions of the participants, who enthusiastically talked about this project, emphasizing the high training and artistic level of the courses, praising well-equipped studios of the Department of Graphic Arts, the Department of Fibre Art and the Department of Textile Print. They appreciated the Academy's organisational capability and wonderful atmosphere, kindness and hospitality of lecturers and the Academy's authorities, who did their best to make their stay in Lodz the experience of a lifetime⁵². Another positive aspect was to establish numerous new contacts, both private and the most essential between the schools, just to mention the University of Alberta in Canada or the Society *Empreinte* in Luxembourg. With regard to the potential of the courses, in 2014 I made an effort to establish a network of institutions cooperating with our Academy, called PATA NETWORK.⁵³

⁵¹ See more about the summer courses on the website www.pata.asp.lodz.pl

⁵² The documentation concerning the courses can be found on the internet website www.pata.asp.lodz.pl and the lively Facebook website: Summer-Courses-PATA

⁵³ The goal of PATA NETWORK is to promote graphic and fibre art on the international front through the exchange of pedagogues, promotion of Summer Courses PATA and organisation of joint exhibitions. At present the members of PATA Network together with the Academy of Fine Arts in Lodz are: the Society *Empreinte* in Luxembourg, *Stamperia del Tevere* in Rome, the Society *Arte e Pensieri* in Rome and The Comprehensive College of Akureyri in Island

CONCLUSION

In the summary I focused on the most important features of my artwork, analysing selected examples. I omitted the part of my activities related to painting, which has accompanied me since the time of my studies, but is a separate area and it is not directly connected with the main subject of my artistic pursuit. For the same reasons I did not mention the colour experiments in graphic arts.

I hope that the attachments and documentation complement in a comprehensive way the image of my activity. Although I divided by accomplishments into separate sectors, I am involved in all of them with my usual commitment and energy, so that I am able to accomplish my assumed goals.

At the time when I am writing this paper, I have already started my work on new graphics and exhibitions, we published the program of Summer Courses PATA 2015, which gained the patronage and co-financing of the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage. I am planning to organise the following students' workshops and exhibitions as well as to participate in an international conference at the University of Porto and to organise another graphic Symposium in Urbino.

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