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**The expression of colour in painting and graphics - a collection of portraits.**

Doctoral dissertation

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## **Introduction**

The subject of this dissertation is the study of the relationship between the technique and materials and the way in which colour interacts. I am interested in the relationship between painting and graphics, the influence of one way of depicting on the other and the permeation of certain means of expression between different fields. Through my own creative experiments, I would like to show and analyse the issue of colour expression in various techniques.

The principal aim of both painting and graphic works was to reflect the character of the portrayed models and the emotions accompanying them. The main intention of the paintings was to show the figure and its unique, sometimes caricatured character, developed over time. An important aspect was the study of the influence of the colours on the mood and expressive power of the portrait.

In the analysis of works I refer to examples from the history of art, including expressionism, and such masters as Vincent van Gogh, Egon Schiele, Edward Munch, Oskar Kokoschka, Pablo Picasso and Francis Bacon. I am also fascinated by the work of the post-impressionist Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec and Stanisław Ignacy Witkiewicz.

My intention was to make full use of the knowledge I had gained during my previous research into intaglio techniques and to conduct further graphic experiments to enrich the form of the works and to compare different ways of obtaining colour prints.

## Chapter I

### **Portrait - between imitation, projection of emotions and caricature. The role of colour.**

Portrait is an extremely sensitive sphere of painting. When creating the image of the portrayed, we cannot rely only on the execution of a commonly understood likeness. Paradoxically, in our eagerness to capture the likeness, we often lose the character of the person portrayed, his or her particular advantages and features. One cannot put too much pressure on oneself, the artist, during the act of creation. Analysing the similarity at every stage of work sometimes abashes us, puts us under enormous pressure, exerts a sense of responsibility and unfortunately this does not always work in favour of the image that is being evoked. The artist's cautious moves can spoil his intentions. Many artists admit that in trying hard to portray a likeness, they lose the characteristic individuality of the person. A great deal of information is given to us on this subject in a publication entitled "Portret w malarstwie" where we can find guidance and quotations from famous artists who freely juggle with words to make us curious and convince us of what really constitutes the highest value in an artist's work. We read there: *"...we learn from Ingres why he considers the face to be "impossible to realise" - because it is supposed to be "true", while art expects to go much further. With portraits, reality does not cause problems because it is difficult to capture, but because it struggles to fit into a certain 'style'- what is realistic on canvas is not art."*<sup>1</sup>

In my view, it is impossible to define a clear-cut method of conveying knowledge about the character. Traits of personality are closely related to physical traits. The face and body of the portrayed must form a complete whole, they must be synchronized with each other. In addition, the model's personality must be portrayed in a non-intrusive way, consistent with the body, with the environment, and the image itself should captivate the viewer. In portraits, reliability in expressing feelings and respect for the model are needed. When posing for a painting, the model must not be tense or assume unnatural, tiring poses. When painting, I take the suitable colour from the palette spontaneously, not thinking excessively about the choice, so as not to lose authenticity and freedom of expression. Sometimes a single brushstroke is enough - it "dresses" the portrait in a "cloak" characteristic of the person. Women's portraits are very different from men's, which overflow with strength and inner energy, while a woman's face must retain the delicacy of her features. The whole act of creation must be like a magical machination, setting the matter in motion, bringing to life a coherent image from one minute to the next. The resemblance of the drawing to the model will appear in the least expected moment. It is a well-known fact that the act

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<sup>1</sup>Muntsa Calbo Angrill, *Portret w malarstwie*, translation from German, Barbara Muller - Ostrowska, Stanisław Ostrowski, Wydawnictwa Szkolne i Pedagogiczne, Warsaw 1996, p. 11

of creation is extremely exciting. The words of Vincent van Gogh fit in well with the subject I am addressing and are extremely close to my heart: *"Instead of reproducing exactly what is before my eyes, I choose something for myself, using colours freely to express myself more powerfully"*<sup>2</sup>. The artist's emotional state and thoughts are inseparable from creation. *"Feelings and thoughts trapped in a painting will no longer disappear because they are an integral part, even if their presence is imperceptible."*<sup>3</sup>

The words of Edgar Degas are indisputable, could be a catchphrase for the subject above and, in my opinion, reflect the state of affairs to the core: *"Drawing is not what one sees, but what man has created and what others can see"*.<sup>4</sup>

Creation is a captivating, thrilling and impressive phenomenon, and for the artist himself it is a personal experience that comes with the thorny path of art. We crave self-realisation, we want to be noticed and appreciated. Many artists express themselves in this way, they compare their aspirations and experiences with something sophisticated and unique. In spite of everything, we believe that it is worth being ready to make sacrifices, even if it is only a fraction of a life. Degas confides in us as if he were revealing his greatest secrets, entrusting us with his innermost secrets, like a recipe for success paid for by the most painful experience. He shows us the alphabet of his sacrifices, extreme values, inner dilemmas and hard choices, bordering on desperation: *"Image requires so much strategy, malice and meanness that it can be put on a par with crime. One creates untruths and adds a piece of nature..."*<sup>5</sup>

My works are based on conscious deformation, resulting from the desire to show emotions, and at the same time to create under their influence. The achievements of artists connected with the expressionist movement are important to me. The author of the book "Ekspresjonizm", John Willet, worded this theme very clearly: *"...Expressionism is not merely a colourful primitivism, which may rather be attributed to Fauvism, but is above all a problem of deformation; but deformation is not expressionistic unless it is driven, consciously or not, by the desire to convey an intense feeling."*<sup>6</sup>

One of my graphic works depicts a seated female figure: "Złudzenie" ('*Delusion*'). It is a print in the collagraph technique, measuring 70 x 50 cm, made with *Charbonnel* ink, printed on white watercolour paper. The figure shown is magnetic in perception, seemingly vain yet innocent. The

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<sup>2</sup>Ibid, p. 129

<sup>3</sup>Cesareo Rodriguez - Aquilera, *Picasso*, Wydawnictwa Artystyczne i Filmowe, Warsaw, 1987, pp. 81-82

<sup>4</sup>Muntsa Calbo Angrill, *Portret w malarstwie*, translation from German, Barbara Muller - Ostrowska, Stanisław Ostrowski, Wydawnictwa Szkolne i Pedagogiczne, Warsaw 1996, p. 63

<sup>5</sup>Ibid, p. 173

<sup>6</sup>Ibid, p. 273

pose assumed by the model may suggest certain ambiguities, bordering on the grotesque. We notice a certain inconstancy, yet stability in the positioning of the body. The girl seems to have quite an expressive face, eyes staring at the viewer, waiting for an answer. The deliberate grotesque exaggeration of the figure may evoke hidden meanings. The large disproportion between the head and the hips draws attention, possibly suggesting some emotional and physical instability. It may suggest apparent limitations, as the girl seemingly has no arms and her legs end at knee level. This brings to mind the limitations imposed on us by the environment in which we live, or the association with the barrier we also face in matters of creation. The colours here are not without meaning, they are partly complementary, the blue in the background may suggest a certain coldness, and the dark red may suggest traces of blood, injury, pain; the yellow tone may signify jealousy. In a broader context, they may illustrate all aspects which the artist encounters on his artistic path. The figure surrounded by a streak of light seems to be looking for a way out of a difficult situation.

As Muntsa Calbo Abril points out, " *...an additional distinction must also be made between expressionism and pure grotesque, which partly overlap as, in the case of the Prague circle. The art of the grotesque is not about expressing the emotional, inner tensions of the artist, nor the tensions between the artist and the environment, but about making the spectator shudder, or more often tickling him; achieving this aim does not require new formal means of expression, but can rely on a long tradition of conventional incredulity.* <sup>7</sup>



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<sup>7</sup>. Muntsa Calbo Angrill, *Portret w malarstwie*, translation from German, Barbara Muller – Ostrowska, Stanisław Ostrowski, Wydawnictwa Szkolne i Pedagogiczne, Warsaw 1996, s. 36



1, 2. *Złudzenie (Delusion)*, 70 x 50 cm, collography, 2021

Graphic matrix in collography technique

There is often an element of caricature in my work. An example of this is the expressive work entitled “*Roztargnienie*” (“*Distraction*”), which shows a figure in a hat. It is 100 x 70 cm, made in the technique of collagraph and printed with oil paints on white watercolour paper. The female figure is distorted, with certain exaggerations and unnaturally proportioned body parts, such as a huge mouth, small hands and, in addition, a hat worn backwards. The resulting graphic is executed in mint green and turquoise tones, providing solace to the eye. The rich texture of the work influences the perception of colour. I made the hat on the matrix using a paste with the addition of

carborundum, thanks to which I obtained the structure of finely scattered grains, similar to poppy seeds, joining into several fields. I used a doctor blade and a rubber roller to apply the paint on the figure, while the background was filled in only with a roller. In the course of work on my dissertation I managed to develop my own technique of combining intaglio and relief printing, which enriches the colour relations. Part of the elements are printed with the intaglio printing method, causing a deep imprint of textures on paper, while the part printed with the relief printing technique has a plane character. The layer of paint is thinner and more even.



3. *Roztargnienie (Distraction)*, (detail), collography 100x70 cm, 2021

The woman appears as if she were in motion, her body seems to wobble, thanks to the arrangement of the lines. She is somehow clumsy, ugly and violent, giving the impression that she risks being ridiculed by those around her. Here too, as in the previously discussed work, psychological meanings can be found. They are not unambiguous, each viewer may associate the image differently, that is why caricature has such a great communicative power. Sometimes it is possible to cross its borders and come closer to capturing the deeper essence of the portrayed person. The work is not complicated, but I hope that it will make the viewer reflect.

Stanisław Ignacy Witkiewicz was an artist close to me whose works often transcended the climate of the grotesque or even caricature. *"The tendency to deform, mock and monsterize the human figure is all too visible. In many drawings Witkacy exceeds even the accepted limits of caricature. In his drawings, he is or tries to be "insanely wild", irritates with aggressiveness, nonchalance,*



*almost ineptitude. One could call this drawing clumsy or ugly, and it is disgusting on purpose, as if to prove that, as Bungo says, there is no right to what a good drawing is".*<sup>8</sup>

Sometimes my works also have a character typical for caricature. They ridicule, amuse and interest the viewer. This was also the case with the painting sketch of a character entitled *Komiczność* (*Comicality*). It is a painting in acrylic technique on paper in the format 100 x 70 cm. Strong exaggerations of certain parts of the face are typical for caricature. The work differs from realism because its form is close to a humorous drawing. The figure is painted in a narrow range of colours: greys, browns and harmonising yellows. The large number of strokes of expressive lines in various directions, i.e. verticals, horizontals and slants, gives it a dynamic character. I used brushes of different widths, which guarantees a certain liveliness and differentiation of gestures. The figure of the model built in this way seems to seduce the viewer with a wide smile, decorated with a crown of non-ideal, large teeth. It also adds to the model's originality and playfulness - evoking a sense of amusement. The viewers perceive, and the man's face seems to mock the observers.



4. *Komiczność* (*Comicality*), acrylic on cardboard, 100 x 70 cm, 2021

This was also the form of communication in Witkacy's works, the aim of which was to reach the viewer: *"The form of Witkacy's drawings has yet another aspect. The disintegration of the realistic*

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<sup>8</sup>Wojciech Sztaba, *Stanisław Ignacy Witkiewicz, Zaginione rysunki i obrazy*, Auriga, Oficyna Wydawnicza Wydawnictwa Artystyczne i Filmowe, Warsaw 1985, p. 8

*convention by means of an 'ugly drawing' evokes laughter, and this effect was probably what Witkacy wanted."*<sup>9</sup>

Witkacy was a versatile artist, which is why he reached his audience through various channels. He also used poetry to communicate how close he was to art. He did it in a unique way, because boredom and banality were the worst things for him. However, he was able to emphasise this in an ironic way, like a caricature of a word:

*"The value of these lines, so despised today*

*To be judged by a future expert*

*Nothing in them, ah, no modern pretence*

*The dilettantismus of a shoemaker or a tailor"*<sup>10</sup>

When creating a portrait, knowledge about human experience is very useful - the experience of the model himself, but also awareness of one's own emotions, the projection of which, to some extent, is every art. From the point of view of aesthetics, as Mieczysław Wallis points out,<sup>11</sup> experiences can be divided into harmonious and partly disharmonious ones. Considering the latter, there is an element of the grotesque, comedy, monstrosity and tragedy present in them. We have a chance to have a more intense experience through the initial unpleasantness. Taking the portrait of the old man as an example, we can initially feel disgust, dislike, fear, depression, as well as confusion. Only after overcoming unpleasant feelings, as Wallis explains, can we fully savour the reception and experience of the work. We realize that the person has had a string of many sufferings, worries, as well as joys, it becomes revealing for us, full of expression and then it gains aesthetic value. We gain full aesthetic satisfaction and the work becomes an aesthetic work. *"When I look at an old face, full of folds and wrinkles, this face may seem ugly to me at first; but when I realise that these folds and wrinkles speak of joys and worries of a whole life, when I see the peculiar shape of this face as an expression of experiences and life passages of a given person, then this face becomes meaningful, expressive, it acquires aesthetic value"*<sup>12</sup>.

The words of Mieczysław Wallis inspired me to portray mature people. Two male portraits of the same person can serve as an example. One is made up of warm colours, the other more subdued. The first is entitled "Panika" ("Panic"). It is a piece of work saturated with emotion, visible in the facial expression of the figure, its strong physiognomy. This effect was created by a dark sketch of certain elements of the face: the outline of narrowed eyes, nose and mouth, or rather the set of teeth. Warm, though somewhat muted, colours such as lemon yellow and bright red form the

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid, p. 8

<sup>10</sup> Anna Micińska, Urszula Kenar, *Witkacy, wiersze i rysunki*, Wydawnictwo Literackie, Krakow, 1977, p. 151

<sup>11</sup> Mieczysław Wallis, *Przeżycie i wartość* Wydawnictwo Literackie Kraków, 1968 p. 261

<sup>12</sup> Ibid p. 261

background to the eloquent and downright aggressive sketch. The entire face is delicately washed with muted pink. Despite the juxtaposition of calm and pleasant warm colours with the stern black of the violent grimace, we have the impression that they complement each other. The painting has a format of 96 x 62 cm, painted with acrylic paints, on cardboard 1 mm thick.



5. *Panika (Panic)*, acrylic on cardboard, 100 x 70 cm, 2020

The second work, “Obojętność” (‘Indifference’), is of the same dimensions and made in the same technique, but the colours are completely different. The colours I took from the palette are cold, but with a hint of earthiness, enlivened only by noble colours, emerald and ruby. As in the previously mentioned work, there is a dark "drawing" sketch that builds the expression of the face, adding to its emotionality.



6. *Obojętność (Indifference)*, acrylic, cardboard, 100 x 70 cm, 2020

The works have a similar composition. We feel the kinship of the model in them. The only divergence is the dissonance in the expression of feelings. A conscious choice of colour and its temperature determine the climate of the different works. They can be presented as a diptych.

John Willet, analysing the achievements of the Expressionists, points out that *"The emotional value of the work took two forms. First, there was deliberate deformation, often as a result of exploiting the visual discoveries of the cubists and futurists. Their angularity, simultaneity and breakdown or movement were exploited for expressive purposes. Sometimes to enhance and sometimes instead (since there can be no question of deformation of non-representational art), the real violence and*

*passion is manifested in the record made by the artist's hand, in the force of his attack on the material."* <sup>13</sup>

The words related to the artist's struggle with matter under the influence of strong emotions seem particularly apt to me.

### **Deformations**

I also use various kinds of deformation in my graphics. Images of babies are a good example of this. They are not entirely legible, which happens through certain deformations partially moved thanks to the fact that the same motif is printed several times from one matrix and successive colours are introduced.

Children are a theme that can be found in the works of Egon Schiele. There were not many works of this type and if they appeared, the subject was a topic of conversation, especially if it was a portrait of a naked child, which was not fully understood at the time when the artist was creating. I present here a portrait of a child with all the eloquence of lines and expressiveness of patches of colour.



7. Egon. Schiele, portrait of an infant, watercolour, 46 x 32 cm, 1910

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<sup>13</sup>John Willett, *Ekspresjonizm*, Wydawnictwo Artystyczne i Filmowe Warsaw 1976, p. 272





8. *Znudzenie (Boredom)*, collograph, 19, 5 x 25 cm,



9. *Kapryśność (Caprice)*, collograph, 19, 5 x 25 cm, 2021



10. *Nieśmiałość (Shyness)*, collograph, 25 x 19, 8 cm, 2021



11. Matrix for printmaking in collograph technique

Another example of this experience are the portraits of a woman in red and a man in blue, ‘‘Scalenie’’ (‘‘*Fusion*’’) and ‘‘Scalenie II’’ (‘‘*Fusion II*’’). The works were made in the technique of collagraph. The female figure in warm tones seems to enter into a dialogue with us. This happens thanks to the randomness of various forms of action, repetition and intuitiveness. Their faces are shown with a certain emotional tension. Each time I decide to have these prints printed several times, they undergo a transformation particular to them. I can see in them a similarity to the portraits and biomorphic works of Francis Bacon. Of course, this may be my subjective feeling and everyone is entitled to their own thoughts.



12. *Scalenie II (Fusion II)*, calography, 50 x 39,5 cm, 2021 / photo by the author





13. *Scalenie (Fusion)*, (detail), collograph, 50 x 39,5 cm, 2021 / photo by the author

Francis Bacon was one of the most outstanding artists working after the Second World War, he made extraordinary changes in art, including a return to representational painting, figurativeness, as well as portraiture. In "Interviews with Bacon", David Sylvester records their dialogue in a precise and casual manner. The artist candidly confesses what has strongly influenced and moved him so deeply...

*I felt the need to do so while painting three studies based on the Crucifixion. I was influenced by Picasso's paintings from the late 1920s. I think Picasso there suggested a whole area of organic forms related to the distorted image of man, an area that has not yet been penetrated."*<sup>14</sup>

Filip Pręgowski also writes about Bacon, an artist who is difficult and for some incomprehensible, he wants to outline for us his eloquent style. He becomes for us a

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<sup>14</sup>David Sylvester, *Rozmowy z Francisem Baconem, Brutalność faktu*, Zysk i S-ka Wydawnictwo s.c., 1997, p. 8

transmitter of knowledge on such an unusual phenomenon and original canon in art. Thanks to the courtesy of the author of the book, we become richer in knowledge of the genius of this exceptional artist. *'While the semantics of Bacon's paintings is deeply rooted in the tradition of European painting, the stylisation of the figures, deformed, unformed, dehumanised by accentuating their animal qualities, is the effect of the enchantment Bacon experienced at the sight of Picasso's biomorphs'*.<sup>15</sup>



14. Francis Bacon, *Three studies of Muriel Bacon*, oil on canvas 1966, Paris

In my graphic work I often experiment with colour, which is now at the centre of my interests, and the expressive line has been with me for a long time. The graphics I have managed to make recently

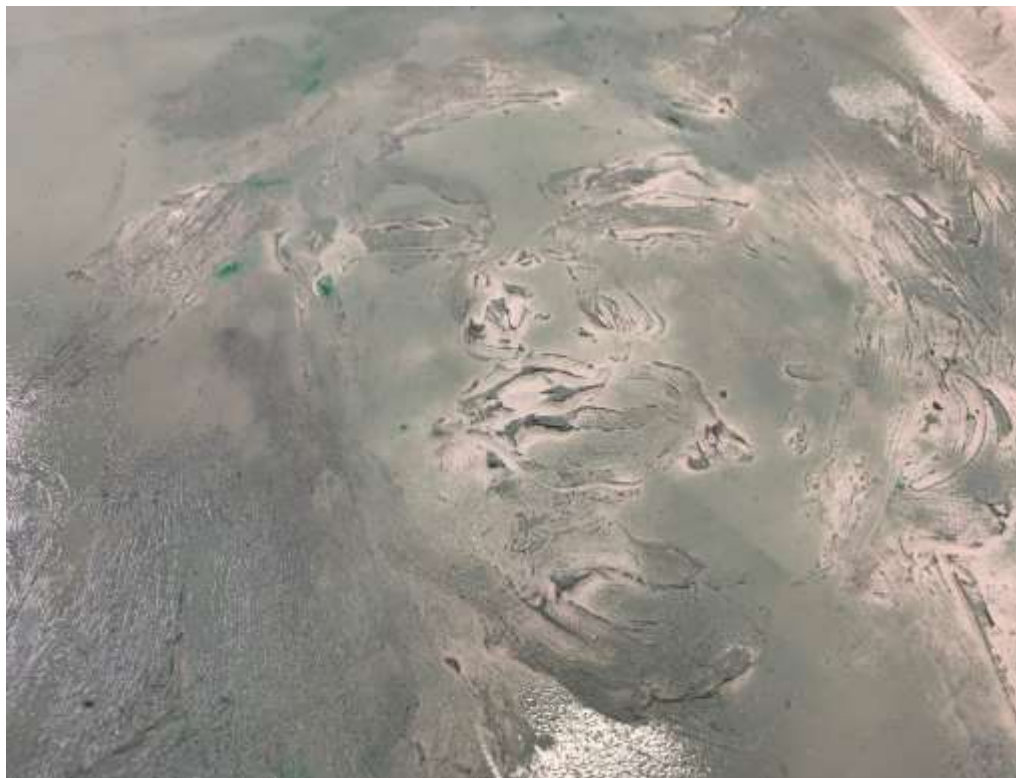
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<sup>15</sup>Filip Pręgowski, *Francis Bacon, Metamorfozy obrazu*, DiG, Warsaw, 2011, p. 12

are very different from my earlier works. They have become bolder and more determined, they have acquired a strong character.



15. Different methods of applying paint to a collograph matrix



16. Collograph matrix / photo by the author





17. Collograph matrix covered with paint



18. Collograph matrix covered with paint



19. *Zatracenie (Perdition)*, collograph, 70 x 50 cm, 2021

The graphic work *Zatracenie (Perdition)*, thanks to the use of a different background colour and the deep position of the paint in this place, achieves the impression of contrast, the emergence of a figure. Filip Pręgowski in ‘Metamorfozy Obrazu’ describes Bacon's process of creation, transformation and changeability.

*"...to get to the sources of an image which is a surface on which the accumulation of paint and the organisation of rhythms and colours show the processes of a figure emerging from the background, permeating between planes, submitting to invisible forces of gravity, expansion and compression. These forces mean that the form in the paintings is not defined once and for all, but is in a state of constant transformation."* <sup>16</sup>

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<sup>16</sup>Ibid, p. 14

## Chapter II

### Expression of colour in portraits

Colour is an extremely complex phenomenon. It affects our mood, influences us almost subliminally. In painting, many factors influence the perception of colour: the light in which we view an image, the type of surface and finally, the viewer's individual predispositions and mood. It is impossible to mention all the aspects of colour perception. From the point of view of painting practice, the final effect of a painted picture is influenced by, among other things, the types of textures, the density of paints, their degree of dilution, the amount of pigment in the paints themselves, the order in which the layers are applied, their thickness and degree of transparency or the immanent activity of a given colour. What is also important is the distance from which one looks at the painting or graphic work, the angle, the time of day... The way the paints are mixed is also crucial - it can be a physical mixing of colours on the palette or obtaining the target colour through superposition - applying successive semi-transparent layers, the so-called glazing, or finally spatial colour mixing used by pointillists, who assumed that the "resultant" colour impression will be created in the eye viewing works composed of small dots of contrasting colours from a distance.

The perception of colour is subjective, dependent on each individual, a process that is difficult to objectify. Its perception is influenced by its juxtaposition with other colours, the scale of the elements, and their role in the arrangement of the whole.

The unique painting experience is the result of many trials and errors, many painted compositions, tried and tested colour combinations. Each painting is a separate phenomenon, it is unique, an individual event. It is impossible to give a ready recipe for a successful combination of colours, although many artists, art theoreticians and scientists have tried to create colour systems and give a recipe for harmonious and disharmonious combinations of colours.

Maria Rzepińska, author of "Historia koloru w dziejach malarstwa europejskiego", cites the development of colour concepts since antiquity. The topic is extremely broad, so I would like to cite some subjectively selected issues, such as the change in colour impressions with distance from the viewer:

*"...in Aristotle we find the thesis of the darkening of colours as they move away from the eye: our vision weakens and becomes less effective as we move away[...] a dark colour is a kind of negation*

*of vision; the impression of darkness is due to the weakening of our sight, so that things seen at a distance appear darker because our sight is unable to reach them.*<sup>17</sup>

Leonardo rejects this thesis on the grounds that he accurately observes the reaction of colours to distance and their absorption by a mass of whitening and bluing air<sup>18</sup>.

Each era developed its own technique and used its own means of expression. For centuries, artists have studied and analysed the principles of the operation, expression and reception of colour. Historians of painting techniques unanimously claim that the most limited number of colours was used by artists of the 16th and 17th centuries. At that time black, umber, lacquer, light red, white were willingly used, while blue and green pigments were avoided and violet was eliminated. In the 19th century the number of colours reached thirty and more. Blue was used already in the 14th century. Leonardo da Vinci used it to paint backgrounds. This principle is still in use today. Rembrandt used mostly warm colours and cool ones only for contrast, while Vermeer and El Greco appreciated cool tones. Rubens, on the other hand, used a full colour palette while being careful with black and white. He had a rule to use white in the darkest places, applied with thick impastos, and black with glazing. The Dutch painters of the 15th century practiced the opposite. The Impressionists were careful with black, although they did not give it up completely, because Degas, Renoir and Manet used it. The Impressionists were not concerned with doctrines or learning the principles of painting through scientific research, but with a fresh look at nature. They were fascinated by light. Only the relations between light and colour mattered and the contour simply did not exist.<sup>19</sup>

Maria Rzepinska writes about the principles of perception that the Impressionists recognised and about the influence of light on colour:

*Light changes constantly, and with it - the colour. The time of day, the weather, the air - each of these factors influences the perception of colour, its quality, the change of colour values and the relationship between them.*<sup>20</sup>

The Impressionists attached great importance to chromatic contrast, which for them was as important as value contrast. As it was in the 19th century for Delacroix, who modelled himself on the old masters, especially Rubens.

*The principle of contrast has been known to painters for centuries and we can find examples of it in all paintings of the great colourists of past eras. Old treatises, mainly from Venice, explicitly*

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<sup>17</sup>Maria Rzepińska, *Historia koloru, w dziejach malarstwa europejskiego*, new complete edition, Wydawnictwo Kraków, 1983

<sup>18</sup>Ibid, p.156

<sup>19</sup>Maria Rzepińska, *Historia koloru, w dziejach malarstwa europejskiego*, new complete edition, Wydawnictwo Kraków, 1983, pp. 313 -322

<sup>20</sup>Maria Rzepińska, *Historia koloru, w dziejach malarstwa europejskiego*, new complete edition, Wydawnictwo Kraków, 1983, p. 486

*state that colour in itself is nothing, it acquires value only when juxtaposed with other colours, therefore it is not the beautiful paints that are important in the colourist's art, but the skill of using them, combining them into ensembles.* <sup>21</sup>

*Four main issues are considered here: the local colour of the object, the colour of light, the colour of illuminated parts, the colour of the reflex* <sup>22</sup>

While working on my dissertation, I became acquainted with various colour systems, including Goethe's theory, Kandinsky's concept, and the own colour systems of various artists such as Matisse, Gauguin, Munch, Van Gogh and Witkacy.

A versatile artist who was involved in the study of colour was Goethe. It was 1810, when the famous writer in "Theory of Colour" bluntly criticised Newton and his observations in "Opticks", concerning white light.<sup>23</sup> Goethe believed that there were only six beams of visible light, not seven as Newton had proved. "In the science of colour" we will also read that colours are created by combining brightness with darkness. Thus, when white is darkened, yellow appears first and blue first as black fades. He also noticed that sunlight gives a purple shadow. Goethe created a colour wheel where he placed complementary colours opposite each other. He noticed that green caused the phenomenon of the afterimage of red. In the created colour triangle, Goethe divided the colours into strong, cheerful and melancholic.<sup>24</sup> Many artists and theoreticians followed his perception of colours and were inspired by and benefited from his knowledge.

Wassily Kandynski created his own concept, he was against figurativeness. He believed that the purpose of art was to unleash the spiritual forces inherent in the artist. In his view, art begins where the creator is able to act under the influence of 'inner necessity'.<sup>25</sup> This allows mystical forces to operate and the inner charge of emotion to have an outlet. He went on to say that in order to approach abstraction, one must get rid of what is external and be able to act under the influence of feelings. By conducting an analysis of internal forms and contents. He works from the world of geometry, using a multitude of geometric forms: square, circle, triangle, trapezium, rhombus and other forms that have nothing to do with this nomenclature. The world of music had a great

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<sup>21</sup>Maria Rzepińska, *Historia koloru, w dziejach malarstwa europejskiego*, new complete edition, Wydawnictwo Kraków, 1983, p. 487

<sup>22</sup>Maria Rzepińska, *Historia koloru, w dziejach malarstwa europejskiego*, new complete edition, Wydawnictwo Kraków, 1983, p. 487

<sup>23</sup> Alison Cole, *Kolor, Świadcstwa Sztuki*, Wydawnictwo Dolnośląskie, 1994, s 36

<sup>24</sup> Ibid, p.46

<sup>25</sup>Tomasz Kolak, *Kandinsky i sztuka abstrakcyjna*, *Nieźła sztuka*, 17 May 2014



influence on his work. He looked for common relations between music and art, especially in colours.

*Music was of great importance to him. He searched for relations between music and painting, comparing the effect of colours to the sound of musical instruments, at the same time defining the psychological meaning of individual colours. For example, cinnabar, according to Kandinsky, expresses passion and sounds like a tuba, blue has a calming effect and, depending on its intensity, suggests the sound of a flute, cello, organ, etc.*<sup>26</sup>

As Alison Cole writes, Kandinsky believed that colours were the most effective way of conveying feelings, and created his own pie chart, which included 'White and black - two great symbols of the silence of death and birth' and pairs of warm and cold colours.<sup>27</sup> According to the artist, yellow, "a typically earthy colour" is to be contrasted with blue, "a heavenly colour"; "sombre purple" is paired with "strong" orange, while "decisive" red is paired with "complacent" green.



20. Wassily Kandinsky - Composition VIII, oil on canvass, 1923

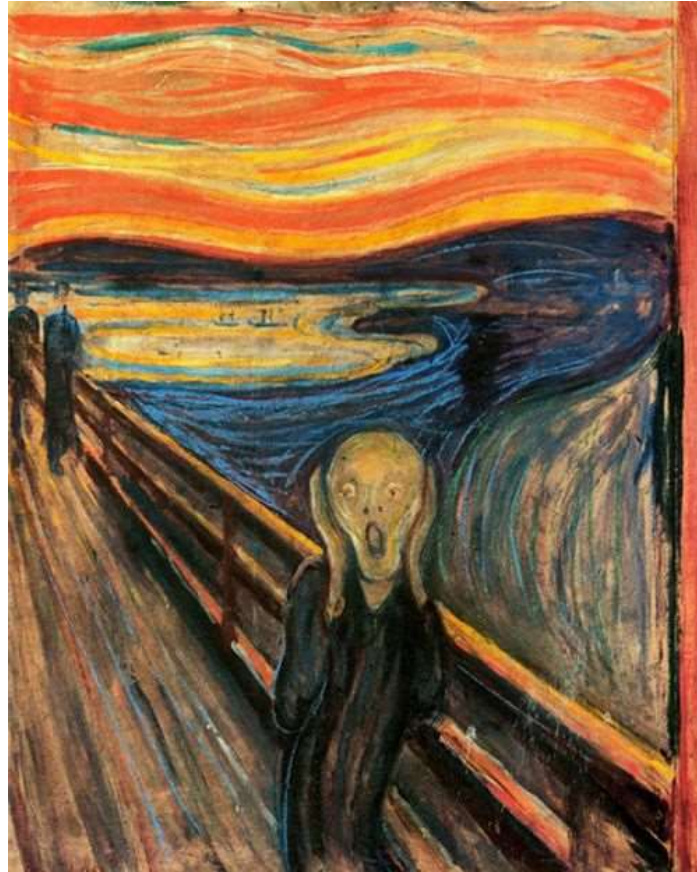
Edward Munch also analysed the influence of colour on mood and conducted a kind of research - over a period of 30 years he created a series of prints depicting women on the banks of a river. You can see exactly how he evolved, developing a style that is extremely harmonious and at the same time endowed with a strong expression of colour and form. A remarkable example of the

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<sup>26</sup>www.Niezła sztuka, Tomasz Holak, *Kandynski i sztuka abstrakcyjna, O roli muzyki w kreacji Kandynskiego*, 17 May 2014

<sup>27</sup>Alison Cole, *Kolor, Świadcstwa Sztuki*, Wydawnictwo Dolnośląskie, 1994, s 46

impact of colour is his famous painting "Scream". This painting is, in my opinion, the most eloquent painting created over the centuries. The fiery colours add to the demonic nature of this work. The greenish colours and dark blue complement the red of the sky. It also has an unusual composition that enhances its expressive power. *"I sensed a scream tearing nature apart. I painted...the clouds like real blood. The colour screamed..."* This is how the author himself commented on his work.<sup>28</sup>



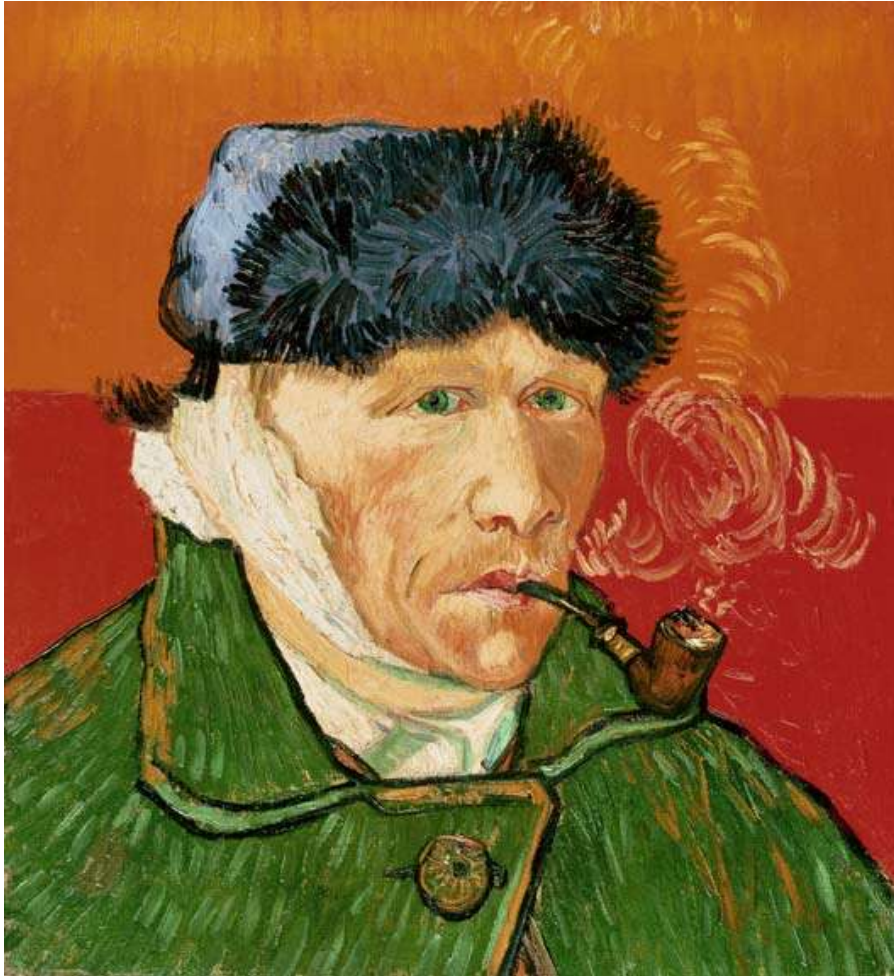
21. Edward Munch, *The Scream*, oil, tempera, pastel on cardboard, 1893

When analysing the expression of colour, it is impossible not to mention Vincent van Gogh. His paintings, unnaturalistic in form and with a kind of "exaggeration", expressed the feelings the artist had inside him. He did not want to reproduce nature, but to use colour as he saw fit, according to his emotions and for the expressive power of the painting. By using, for example, "the conflict and contrast of the most alien reds and greens",<sup>29</sup> as Van Gogh explained, he expressed the heaviest human passions and a sense of alienation.

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<sup>28</sup>Ibid, p. 47

<sup>29</sup>Ibid, p.46



22. Vincent van Gogh, *Self-portrait*, oil on canvass, 45 x 51 cm, 1881

Already mentioned Witkacy also created his own theory about painting and the role of colours. Piotr Piotrowski refers to his colour experiments:

*"...Witkacy writes about the laws of contrast and colour mixing. The law of contrast determines the behaviour of colour on a coloured background and indicates that a patch of pigment tends towards the colour which complements the background. For example, a yellow stain on a red background gives the impression of yellow-green, as the green is complementary to the red. The law of mixing, on the other hand, identifies complementary colour pairs, i.e. those colours whose mixing produces white (e.g. red and gray-green, orange and green-blue, lemon yellow and violet, green and purple, yellow and blue)."*<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>30</sup>Piotr Piotrowski, *Stanisław Ignacy Witkiewicz*, Piotr Piotrowski and Krajowa Agencja Wydawnicza, Warsaw, 1989





23. Stanisław Ignacy Witkiewicz, *Portrait of Nena Stachurska*, pastel on paper, 65 x 50 cm, 1929

I found some of the ideas of the artists mentioned to be very on point, however, I realise that it is impossible to follow a single doctrine in painting, it is rather necessary to create new, own colour combinations each time, in order to keep the originality and authenticity of one's expression.

As far as painting techniques are concerned, I have realised a series of portraits in acrylic on paper, as well as painting sketches in ink, ecoline and watercolour on paper. The paintings are made in various formats - from 23 x 24 cm to 100 x 70 cm. The colour was obtained in various ways, by glazing and impasto methods, using different tools. The first example is a series of paintings on paper in the format 100 x 70 cm. I made those portraits with large flat brushes of different widths, and there were also very fine traces of small brushes. I also use rags, disposable tissues. The works are mainly about expression, deformation and showing the emotionality of the models. I didn't make any preliminary sketches, but at times I might have used photographs of people I know or don't know.

*"D.S. Of course, when painting people, you often helped yourself with their photographs."*

*F.B. Yes, but they were always people I knew very well, the photographs were just to refresh my memory, I used them like one uses a dictionary."* <sup>31</sup>

I also work live with the model, trying to capture a characteristic element in the face, something that catches my attention the most, a small gesture, a facial expression. I try to preserve them on paper. Too many spots and lines can cause such a build-up that is sometimes difficult to control and this is not the point here. Lightness, spontaneity and truthfulness can only be achieved in the moment. Sometimes one moment can decide the whole picture.

These effective methods are used by many artists who feel confident with their hand, are already formed in terms of style, are stable and poised. Above all, it requires a quick, irrevocable decision, because in most cases the line marks that are made cannot be corrected. And, of course, this consistency gives great liveliness and uniqueness. The method is briefly described in an artist's manual:

*"This direct painting method requires self-confidence and gives a lot of freedom. The artist works quickly, using the brush to express his reaction to the motif he sees. The ability to apply paint quickly and confidently is the key to success in this technique. Of course, it is always possible to scrape the paint off unsuccessful fragments, but in this there is already a danger of losing freshness and spontaneity. It is important to have a clear idea of the realisation of the painting when starting work, to dispense with all unnecessary, unimportant elements."* <sup>32</sup>

I make my paintings on thin cardboard, 1 mm, I do not prime it beforehand. I work intuitively. I start with an outline using diluted acrylic paint, and sometimes a definite, specific image of a face. The whole work is determined by my mood, intuition and coincidence... It creates my whole picture. The colours I take from my palette with a brush also depend mainly on my mood. The whole work may consist of two, five or more colours. I often use complementary colours, but I also like subdued, subtle colours. I may accent these delicate drawings with a contrasting colour.

Francis Bacon was a master of intuitive action. He shared his insights with David Sylvester, and the latter describes it in "Interviews with Francis Bacon": *"...makes it possible to distinguish in the creative process both the intuitiveness and the randomness of action, but also the procedures aimed at taming accidental forms, giving them a kind of flexible frame in the form of sophisticated colouring, differentiation of texture, or the use of gentle tonal transitions. It is here that the*

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<sup>31</sup>David Sylvester, *Rozmowy z Francisem Baconem, Brutalność faktu*, Zysk i S-ka Wydawnictwo s.c., 1997, p.73

<sup>32</sup>Simon Jennings, *Podręcznik artysty*, MUZA SA, Warsaw 2006, p. 168

*reflection arises that it is precisely these anaesthetising procedures, soothing, as it were, the effect of a brutal brushstroke on the canvas...".*<sup>33</sup>

For me, a sponge and a rag are painting tools in their own right. I soak the rag in water. I can use it to gently wipe the paper and if I am using chalk paper, the rag can act as an eraser. It rubs off the paint, of course only partially. Then, I can apply more paint and keep creating.

The advantages of these painting tools were appreciated by Bacon: *"...I often help myself with a sponge or a rag, thus obtaining completely different forms. You see, I would like a painting to evoke a feeling of a certain inevitability..."*<sup>34</sup>

My paintings are mainly about influencing the viewer, about emotions and crossing certain boundaries, what matters is freedom of action. This is not easy to achieve. It's about crossing a boundary at some point in the work that separates you from the future painting, about coming across a blank page. The essence of things is the right moment. This decisive moment is not always possible, although when it makes itself felt, then a concrete authorial decision is needed. Quick spontaneous brushstrokes build the picture. A contact, a confrontation with another world, our imagination, a future piece of work. This is accompanied by a strong inner tension, a force pulling me towards creation. I feel the presence of many emotions: joy, excitement, but also doubt. This is very moving for me as an artist. My emotions, feelings, but also clashing with the portrayed person, with his/her inner self, the awareness that a human being is not only a bodily shell, but also its likeness, and a whole conglomeration of human emotions, feelings and moods. I try to capture some aspect of the model's character. It is a form of struggle. The works are a form of my personal reflections and a way of conveying life experiences. Stanisław Ignacy Witkiewicz, a versatile artist, in a seemingly humorous poem takes up a subject close to his own heart, in which self-irony and doubt resound...

*"The poor pseudo o! an artist,  
Who, having fallen into a trance, drew innumerable drawings,  
Quickly, badly, but exuberantly  
Almost 'til the morning cock-a-doodle-doo"*<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>33</sup>Filip Pręgowski, *Francis Bacon, Metamorfozy obrazu*, DiG, Warsaw, 2011, p.11

<sup>34</sup>David Sylvester, *Rozmowy z Francisem Baconem, Brutalność faktu*, Zysk i S-ka Wydawnictwo s.c., 1997, p.92

<sup>35</sup>Anna Micińska, Urszula Kenar *Witkacy, wiersze i rysunki*, Wydawnictwo Literackie, Kraków, 1977, p.151

Francis Bacon claimed that: *"Everything you talk about matters. When you paint someone, you have to realise that you're trying to find not only the external likeness, but also what moves you in that person. Every brushstroke has its source"*<sup>36</sup>

When portraying, I am not entirely guided by capturing a likeness, if there is one. I act spontaneously, without unnecessary restrictions, then I feel the freedom of decision and gesture. It is important to experience the feeling of relief when looking at the newly created work, to come closer to the idea.

Bacon's words are worth mentioning here:

*"D.S. Does it sometimes happen to you while working on a portrait that the image is very vivid and good, but you feel that you lose the likeness of a certain person?"*

*F.B. More often than not, that is exactly what happens."*<sup>37</sup>

I create works with varying degrees of synthesis. Sometimes a few lines are enough to accurately depict someone's face. I create compositions intuitively. I juxtapose shapes and colours in order to best utilise the surface of the paper. The chaos and mess created around me during my work is sometimes inspiring. I want a dynamic, varied composition. I try to draw the viewer into a dialogue. I allow them to enter my world.

The individual has different perceptions of the nature of things. Reality can change shape depending on feelings and predispositions, awareness, knowledge.

The image becomes an intentional object, so the emotional states of the viewer can take different forms, and the senses can be flawed and sometimes fail. It reveals certain frailties. I do not mean only physicality, but also intellectual weaknesses that often accompany people and to which they find it difficult to admit.

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<sup>36</sup>David Sylvester, *Rozmowy z Francisem Baconem, Brutalność faktu*, Zysk i S-ka Wydawnictwo s.c., 1997, p. 130

<sup>37</sup>Ibid, p. 128



24. *Droczenie (Repartee)*, acrylic on paper, 100 x70 cm, 2020

Sometimes people I see on the bus or in the street leave a permanent mark on my imagination. Then I feel an imperative to make a quick sketch of them. I keep daily notes and my sketchbook is always with me. On the basis of quick drawing and painting notes, I later make larger studio compositions. I try to keep the spontaneity and freshness of the first impression. At other times I create portraits while experiencing strong emotions. The first touch of the brush is decisive. I do not identify with any one artist. For me, creating is a peculiar and intimate artistic and



psychological analysis. Creative invention is more important to me than imitation. I try to capture the character of the portrayed person in an innovative way and show his and her emotions. I follow my inner voice. For me, the creative process is a determined expression of experience, and the first touch of the sacred is such an incredibly personal, emotional experience that touches me deeply. I create in seclusion, it allows me to pour out my inner, strong desires. It is a manifesto of my creative attitude, my independence as a painter. My works convey ideas in a kind of spontaneous gesture. The elements of the actions are not subjected to control. By manoeuvring the gesture, I only arrange unreal, unmannered, sometimes unpleasant images. In such a context, the works absorb dilemmas, the problems of values being subjected to an insightful analysis. Death and illness of my loved ones intensified my inner anxiety, full of tensions and dilemmas. They are an intervention and a silent pressure into the depths of my self. They induce self-observation. These experiences have influenced the artistic language I use.

My works are not easy "aesthetic" or cheap loftiness according to taste, but my artistic autonomy, not subject to seasonal trends. They are created as a free adoption of certain external stimuli to develop and enrich my style, workshop and concept. I do not impose limitations on myself, I feel free to make creative choices, I do not stick to rigid verifications or rational constructions.

In creation it is important to distinguish an important aspect, namely, the psychological observation and analysis of the model, as well as the inner consciousness of the portrayed and his own mental image. Certainly, one can look for the resemblance of the model to the author of the work. It may be carefully hidden, unnoticed by the artist.

The eminent artist, founder of Dadaism, Marcel Duchamp gave us his psychological picture in his work *'Nude (Study), Sad Young Man on a Train'*<sup>38</sup>. He himself admitted that it was very personal and related to a journey he had taken. It is, as he himself admitted, an autobiographical work.

Matilde Batistini describes the life and work of Modigliani, and gives one of the portraits painted by the master as an example, testifying to his sensitivity, his skilful analysis, his cleverness, his awareness of the importance of the portrayed person's interiority and the correct reception of the work by himself. How much the creator becomes similar to the model and the model to the creator. Then the author of the book quotes Modigliani's words:

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<sup>38</sup>Jon Thompson, *Jak czytać malarstwo Współczesne, Od Courbeta do Warhola*, Universitas, Kraków 2006, p. 116

*"The portrait was painted off-hand after careful reflection on the painter's character traits. When Survage demanded an explanation for the presence of one blind eye, Amadeo answered him: "Because with one eye you look at the world, with the other you look inside yourself" <sup>39</sup>.*

When I create, I feel an inner strength to act consistently in order to finish the work on the first try. Maybe it's dictated by certain motives, the fear of losing my nerve or being unable to complete a painting, the inner restlessness that tells me to complete a task. Or maybe just the obsessive need to start a new piece of work. Either way, I have much to analyse for myself. Amadeo Modigliani, sincerely involved in art, in the creative process, obsessed with it, was conscientious about his work. This was beautifully described by Matilde Batistini, the author of a book about Modigliani, and translated into Polish by Jadwiga Walkowska:

*Modigliani was always deeply fascinated by the humanity of his models. Before he began to paint, he would get close to the soul of the person posing, observing it with respect - processed, recognized, filtered through his image of it. Then, with quick and sure movements, he would translate this kind of psychological introspection onto the canvas. He rarely interrupted, gripped by an obsessive anxiety to finish the work at the first attempt." <sup>40</sup>*



25. Amadeo Modigliani, *Madame Kisling*, oil on canvass, 46,2 x 33, 2 cm, 1917

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<sup>39</sup>Klasycy sztuki, Modigliani, Rzeczpospolita, 2006, p. 71

<sup>40</sup>Ibid, p. 77

The question that arises in my mind is whether my work is understandable for the viewer, to what extent it has an impact on the viewer, what impressions accompany it, whether the message of my work is strong enough for the viewer to want to enter into a dialogue with the image. In my considerations, I focus on the distinction between real and unreal sensations. Leading to a complex, personal vision of simplification and distortion. I strive to go beyond the framework of the inner self, I create art not only for art's sake, but I aim to show the emotions of a higher world, the spirituality.

Sometimes the effects of our work surprise us, sometimes we are not satisfied. Dissatisfaction induces us to search in the right intriguing direction. Sometimes a small painting suggestion, like using a bigger brush, is enough to change the whole convention in one particular stroke in order to achieve a more accurate composition. Sometimes I replace one colour with another. And in this way I gain harmony of shape, colour and composition. By experimenting I gain efficiency and proficiency in my work. Let me quote the words of an eminent Polish painter Olga Boznanska, who speaks about her feelings supported by experience:

*"It sometimes happens that in the course of painting I notice the insufficiency of harmony and the necessity of change, as is the case, for example, in this portrait of Miss Thomasson. You will remember that I painted her in a grey coat, which did not please me. I changed it, and here, better in this white dress, with the great black check, comes out this lion's*

*head with the white hair".* <sup>41</sup>



26. Olga Boznańska, *Portret of Francis Thomasson*, oil on cardboard, 75, 5 x 52,3 cm, 1925

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<sup>41</sup>Anna Król, *Olga Boznańska Malarstwo*, Muzeum Miedzi in Legnica, Legnica 2001, p. 81

It can be said with some exaggeration that every portrait painted by the artist is at the same time his self-portrait, sometimes only an internal one, and sometimes also an external one, when the model acquires physical resemblance to the author of the painting. Andrzej Osęka recalls that *"when Munch paints love and death, loneliness and illness, silent despair and a spasm of terror, he paints what happened to himself or his loved ones"*<sup>42</sup>. In a similar vein, Witkacy wrote, *"A tool of introspection that emerges and reveals from the darkness of the subconscious one's own obsessions, anxieties and fears, one's own 'incompletions' and knots of impairment."*<sup>43</sup>

Artists may be haunted by the obsession to create all their lives, they cannot live any other way, they pour what they feel onto their canvases, it is their nature, they suffer and create, sometimes these are sad stories, but in spite of everything they want at all costs to stick to their resolutions, to something which is the sense of their lives. We learn what kind of person Witkacy really was. Anna Micińska writes beautifully about this exceptional artist and leads us into a moving atmosphere:

*"Endowed with an outstanding sense of humour, this humour masked his personality to a large extent. [...] This mask covered the distance that separated him from his surroundings [...]. When this mask occasionally fell, a lonely, gloomy, internally shattered man appeared for a moment, shaken by powerful passions, tossed about by a whirlwind of metaphysical feelings unknown to the average person, a wonderful, creative and thoroughly tragic man. [...]. This was to a large extent the reason why the enormous creativity of this man, in terms of quality as well as versatility and even quantity, was partly ignored and partly underestimated by his contemporaries. Of course, this was combined with the fact that it was a new, difficult and disturbing oeuvre".*<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>42</sup>Mała Encyklopedia Sztuki, edited by Andrzej Osęka, *Munch I*, Arkady, Warsaw 1978, p.3

<sup>43</sup>Anna Micińska, Urszula Kenar, *Witkacy, wiersze i rysunki*, Wydawnictwo Literackie, Kraków, 1977, pp. 150-151

<sup>44</sup>Ibid , p. 149

## **Chapter III**

### **Colour in graphics - technological experiments**

Colour in printmaking is of a different nature. Through my research, I have tried to find my own way of obtaining interesting colour effects, preserving the spontaneity of gestures and the liveliness of painting in a technique which, by definition, requires a complex creative process and more "deliberate" planning of the created image.

My aim was to make a set of portraits in various intaglio and relief printing techniques. I continued to work in aquatint and lift-ground etching techniques. Several years of experience allowed me to make prints in a detailed way. I also decided to develop certain components as well as introduce new, additional factors that could bring my research together.

### **Techniques - searching for one's own method of creating colour graphics**

Within the scope of my graphic design work was:

- printmaking in the lift-ground etching and aquatint technique
- implementation of multi-matrix graphics using resultant colour;
- making single-matrix prints using the pad printing method, a la poupee
- development of collagraph techniques using different plastic grounds and paint pastes
- combination of intaglio and relief printing methods on a single matrix
- development of the author's technique of relief colour printing by the "jigsaw puzzle" method using "soft" car carpet matrices

#### **III. 1. Etched graphics**

The first to be created were four etched prints entitled: "Emocje – cztery pory roku" (*'Emotions - four seasons'*).

On the basis of earlier painting sketches I made prints in the technique of lift-ground etching. I meticulously prepared the ground. I polished and degreased a zinc-titanium sheet and painted on it with a solution of ink, sugar and gum arabic. This technique allowed for a spontaneous gesture. I was inspired by an earlier sketch, trying to preserve the proportions and character of the portrait, but the element of chance and the transformations caused by the successive stages of developing the matrix are important. Painted on a sheet, in a mirror image, the portrait was then covered with varnish. After it had dried, the sheet was immersed in hot water to dissolve the ink with sugar and to reveal the sheet in the previously painted areas.

I then poured rosin over the matrix prepared in this way to ensure that the etchings would be controlled, not "open". The print was etched in nitric acid. After washing off the varnish and rosin, I made test prints. I first made monochrome versions, using a single colour. Then I enriched the prints with more shades of paint, rubbing them into different areas of the print using a pad (a la poupee) method. In the lift-ground etching, the lines are also deformed unconsciously and accidentally. This gives the whole work an extra edge, it gains in liveliness. Subsequent etching allows clear lines to be achieved, and thus ultimately the impression of depth on the print. These certain imperfections lead the viewer to a sentimental reception. It gives the possibility to see transformations and contemplation, to see the real world versus the unreal.



27. *‘Oczekiwanie, Jesień’ (Expectation, Autumn’)*, (detail), aquatint, lift-ground etching, 70x50 cm, 2020





28. *“Oczekiwanie, Jesień” (Expectation, Autumn’)*, aquatint, lift-ground etching, 70x50 cm, 2020



29. *“Zaufanie, Wiosna”* (*“Trust, Spring”*), aquatint, lift-ground etching, 70x50 cm, 2020





30. *'Irytacja, Lato'* (*'Irritation, Summer'*) aquatint, lift-ground etching, 70x50 cm, 2020

They are distinguished from each other by their colours. The women's faces are expressive, with a peculiar character. They turn in different directions with meaningful forms, different variations and positions. These deformations, parts of the face, nose, eye, mouth, were a conscious intention. In my opinion, this makes them more convincing, more real. A conscious choice of colour, its temperature, determines the climate of these different wo



30. *''Zaduma, Zima''* (*''Pensieve, Winter''*), aquatint, lift-ground etching, 70x50 cm, 2020

*''Zaufanie, Wiosna''* (*''Trust, Spring''*) is kept in the atmosphere of green, *''Irytacja, Lato''* (*''Irritation, Summer''*) in reds, in *''Oczekiwanie, Jesień''* (*''Expectation, Autumn''*) reds prevail



and ''Zaduma, Zima'' (''Pensieve, Winter'') I gave a cool tone of blue. "...Blue colour frees the mind....This colour symbolizes freedom, gives a sense of completeness and harmony with the environment that surrounds us...."<sup>45</sup>



32. Graphic matrix in aquatint and lift-ground etching

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<sup>45</sup> Jean Gabriel Causse, *Niesamowita moc kolorów*, Wydawnictwo Sonia Draga Sp. z o.o., pp. 163

## II 2. Colography. Combination of intaglio and relief-printing techniques

I used plexiglass to create my works in the collagraph technique. This material is extremely graceful, flexible, allowing for several printings from one matrix. It is a durable ground. I used acrylic paste as a medium. It is usually white or transparent. I also added a small amount of colour to the paste to make the drawing more visible. The drawings on the matrix were made directly from nature or from my own photographs.

The first to be created were two graphics with a vivid colour palette. The first is ‘‘Scalenie’’ (‘‘*Fusion*’’) and the second ‘‘Scalenie II’’ (‘‘*Fusion II*’’). In the previous chapter (Deformations, pp. 13-14) I associate these prints with the work of Francis Bacon. The works have a format of 50 x 39,5 cm. The first one shows a portrait of a woman, in a colour range of red and navy blue. This is its advantage, because the vivid colours, where orange stands out the most, catch the eye of the viewer. I used a roller to create the background. Experimenting with the roller worked well, but I think it's good to use it on selected parts only. It works best on smooth surfaces because textural elements, and even more so raised ones, require rubbing the paint in with a starchy gauze pad. The face of the woman has quite a meaningful expression. The figure is gently turning her head upwards. The second engraving shows a man's face, portrayed in pleasant cool shades of green, turquoise and navy blue. The face of the portrait is turned upwards and sideways and together with this arrangement it forms a diagonal composition. The graphic is made in a dynamic way. I used a rubber roller for the background, the colours are muted and do not interfere with the foreground, which is the face of the model. The background is assigned to the image and makes it whole. In some parts I tried to make the background smooth, the rest was covered with an expressive stroke of the roller and it determines its expression. The portrait has been made textural, planar and sketchy. Thanks to the firm drawing with acrylic paste on the matrix, I was able to achieve a strong expression of the work. The colours I used are subdued, although some parts of the face are emphasised with emerald, vivid green. The colours permeate and add more impact.

I made three small format prints in the collagraph technique at the beginning of my research. They are distinctive because they have very raised textures. The effect is a result of using a lot of acrylic paste. The paste I used was made by *Winsor & Newton* called *Sand Texture Gel*. After the paste dried, i.e. after 3 hours, I repeated the process and corrected the drawing. The amount of paste I used to make the matrix was quite large, so the total drying time for the matrix is about a week. The sketch on the matrix is expressive, vibrant and has the character of a relief. This is also what I have achieved with the prints. They are reflected in one colour, but the rich texture makes the impression multicoloured, the play of light and shadow changing the expression of the work. Their formats range from 19,5 x 25 cm to 34,8 x 22 cm.

The first print is entitled ‘Wyobcowanie’ (*“Alienation”*) The paste I used for the matrix is *Strukturigel Sand* by Winsor & Newton. It depicts a portrait in profile. The figure has her head raised and her tongue sticking out. It may be associated with the works of Bacon. It is a monochromatic work in beige tones.



33. *Wyobcowanie (Alienation)*, collograph, 23 x 24 cm, 2021

The second print of the cycle is ‘Otwartość’ (*“Openness”*). I made the matrix with two types of quick drying Winsor & Newton acrylic pastes, *Strukturigel Sand* and *Large Grain Gel*. The parts covered with the quick drying paste (the face), were dry after about 3 hours, I left the matrix for another day and then made sure it was ready. However, *Large Grain Gel* paste is a long drying paste, about a week and unfortunately I had to wait. It has crystals in it similar to the texture of coarse salt. I used it to cover parts of hair and redraw the face, but this time sketchily. The amount of paste I used to make the matrix was significant, so the total drying time was about a week. The colours of this print are as subdued as the previous one. The image of the woman is shown with her face straight ahead. She has a meaningful and clear expression on her face, her eyes are wide



open. The third print in the series, “Zsynchronizowanie” (*Synchronization*), is a figure of a woman wearing glasses in pink and navy blue. The format of the work is 24 x 23,8 cm, it is made from one matrix, but the final effect is obtained by printing it twice. The first time I covered the matrix only with pink paint, then I filled selected parts with navy blue. Therefore, I managed to get the effect of the pink shining through from under the navy blue on some areas, as well as the resultant colour.



34. *Otwartość (Openness)*, collograph, 24 x 23,5 cm, 2021



35. *Zsynchronizowanie (Synchronization)*, collograph, 24 x 23,8 cm, 2021





36. Matrices used in collography



37 Matrices used in collography



### 38. Matrices used in collography

The pastes offer great possibilities, they are thick, so I could use brushes of different thicknesses, tools of different origin (pen, wooden brush holder, graphic needles), to enrich the textures and the lines. Out of curiosity I added some elements of natural origin, e.g. dried seeds, wood bark. This has given me unusual effects, as in the graphic ‘‘Rozedrganie’’ (*“Shaking”*).

I also covered selected parts of the matrix with thick impastos.... They make an interesting play of textures, like compositions from nature. For this print I used *Textur Gel Medium* paste. It is a fast drying paste. When dry, it forms hard lines, which creates a matrix. Pastes of different consistencies can be combined on one matrix, which is already a challenge for an interesting, diverse final work. An additional enrichment option is the use of relief printing and combining it with intaglio. The relief elements were made of thick cardboard, applied and printed several times. Covered with several related colours for intaglio printing with contrasting colours. The resulting prints range in size from 30x40 cm to 100x70 cm printed on watercolor 300g cotton paper, white, and Hahnemühle 120g paper. The works were created in series, but all are portraits.





39. *Rozedrganie "Shaking"*, collograph, oil, 50x70 cm, 2021



40. Matrix for *Rozedrganie "Shaking"*





41. During work on *Rozedrganie "Shaking"*

Very characteristic of the collagraph technique are the images of babies that I have created, the series consists of 5 graphics. They are made in small formats. The intention was to give them vivid, positive, cheerful colours. Some of them are mysterious. I achieved this by printing and applying the same matrix several times to the same paper, two or three times. In addition, I have also used a doctor blade. The works in this series are not light and banal, yet they do not lose their innocence. They are, in my opinion, harmonious and coherent.

The drawing on the matrix is done with a paste from *Winsor & Newton* called *Textil Gel Medium* and *Textil Gel Large*. The colours I applied were often complementary, they complemented each other and thus worked more strongly, for example purple with yellow. The colours also have an expressive effect. In addition, I make a drawing with a doctor blade covered in paint, placing it on a pre-existing motif of acrylic paste. This procedure further enhances the expressive power. For some of the graphics, I have used an additional amount of a thinner (oil) for offset inks as well as for *Charbonnel* intaglio inks. As an experiment, I added oil directly onto the paint applied to the matrix, and then mixed with a doctor blade. The paint has a life of its own... If, on the other hand, you want the process to run naturally, uncontrollably, you can let the paint flow over the matrix. The effects may vary, and it is difficult to predict the final result. It happens that the paint spills

over the margin. I treat it as a new experience, to which I give full freedom. In some cases it does not disturb me, it simply adds expression, becomes a part of the painting. It lives with it, it does not limit us. In the graphic work ‘Zatracenie’ (“Perdition”) you can see it best. The cobalt lava flows from the top of the head to the end of the bottom margin



42. *Zatracenie (Perdition)*, collograph, 70 x 50 cm, 2021

My experience in graphics is close to the words of Francis Bacon, who referred to painting:

*" You never know with paint. It's such an unusual material, it's impossible to predict how it will behave. The thing is, you don't know what's going to happen to it, even if you apply it in a controlled way, even if you do it with a brush, you can't have any idea what you're going to achieve. I think a lot more is known about acrylic paint, which all new painters use."* <sup>46</sup>

I use a rubber roller for spreading. In some cases I mix the paint on a glass surface and then apply the finished mixture. It is also beneficial to use the technique *a la poupee* on some selected pieces, which involves rubbing the paint in with a gauze pad. The gauze has been previously prepared by starching, which makes the paint stay on the surface of the material. Thus prepared "swabs" can be used to rub different shades of paint into different areas of the matrix, obtaining a complex colour effect.

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<sup>46</sup>David Sylvester, *Rozmowy z Francisem Baconem, Brutalność faktu*, Zysk i S-ka Wydawnictwo s.c., 1997, p. 92

### III.3 Relief printing using “jigsaw” method

The inspiration for the series of 4 prints was the relief printing technique used by Edward Munch. The technique of printing from several separate wooden blocks is described by Jordi Katafal in his handbook "*Techniki graficzne*" and points out potential problems with matching matrices.



43. and 44. the author at work on the relief printing technique using the "puzzle" method and colour palette for relief printing technique

*"The cut parts of the plate, when put together, are never perfectly aligned; on the print the boundaries of the individual pieces are visible as small white lines. For materials such as wood or cardboard, the lines are frayed."* <sup>47</sup>

My method is to use a soft matrix, which is easier to fit, and its frayed edges enrich the end result, in my opinion. The material for my work is carpet (it could equally well be felt). It is relatively thin, about 3-5 mm. It is flexible but at the same time compact, allowing a group of elements to be permanently arranged. This material is extremely absorbent, which is beneficial due to the saturation of the paint. On the other hand, however, this technique suffers from high material consumption. Initially, I made a draft drawing, which was cut into the form of a jigsaw puzzle. Later, white lines are visible on the print where the pieces meet. "Puzzles" that I prepared for printing have between 12 and 15 pieces. This allowed me to cover each piece in a different colour. It was also important to have an overall idea of the project, of the final effect. To make the graphics, I used *Charbonnel* oil paint. Because of its density, I had to mix it with linseed oil. I applied the mixture in different ways, mostly with a rubber roller, especially on large pieces. I stamped the small moulds so that they absorbed as much paint as possible, which then results in a better density of the print. The paper used for the print is Watercolor 300g, which was previously soaked in water and drained. Adequate moisture enables better execution of the print, the paint penetrates the paper more thoroughly. I treated this technique experimentally. Textures from the carpet can be associated with the aquatint technique. The paint penetrates the print just as thoroughly, giving the effect in question, because the resulting patches of colour are made up of densely arranged lines and dots - the carpet textures create planes of colour.

The resulting works may be associated with Matisse's cut-outs. They are different in character from the other portraits, more decorative. Colour has a surface effect. I considered this stage as the beginning of a path that I could develop in the future and a stage in my research, however these works will not form part of a doctoral exhibition due to their distinct style.

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<sup>47</sup>Jordi Katafal, Clara Oliva, *Techniki graficzne*, Arkady 2002, p. 107





45. The author at work on " method relief printing technique using the "puzzle



46. Palette for colour graphics





47. Preparation of the relief printing matrix by the puzzle method





48. *Duma (Pride)*, relief print using the 'puzzle' method, 70 x 50 cm, 2020





49. *Podziw (Admiration)*, ‘puzzle’ relief print, 70 x 50 cm, 2020

## Chapter IV. Expression of colour in graphics and paintings

Much has been written about the symbolism of colour in different cultures and historical periods, <sup>48</sup>psychologists study the influence of colour on human well-being, interior decorators publish manuals on how to use colour effectively in offices and homes. On the Internet you can find a lot of advice on how to dress to make a particular impression, which colour range is the most beneficial in make-up for a given type of complexion, every year new colours become the most fashionable... In my deliberations I will focus on subjectively selected symbols and meanings of colour in the context of specific graphics and paintings, which constituted my own field of study of the broadly understood expression of colour.

### 4.1. The power of blue

The colour blue often appears in my works, it is one of my favourite colours. Its use in multiple works is not a form of overuse, but simply the result of my inner need. Blue, in my opinion, is a magical colour and can express a lot of emotions, attributes and symbols.

In the graphic entitled "Nostalgia" (*"Nostalgia"*) is a portrait of a woman. The dominant colour is blue. This colour, although present in isolation, has a strong influence. Delicately highlighted lights build a woman's face. The work is executed in collagraph technique, on cream Hahnemuhle paper, 120g, in 70 x 50 cm format. The visible expressive brushstrokes were created by painting with acrylic paste on a plexiglass matrix. The colour is quite telling in my opinion, the blue adds to the impressionability in the viewer. The work is not pushy, it doesn't act aggressively, it doesn't put pressure on the viewer. It is subtle with a touch of mystery. The delicate female silhouette gives the impression of observing the viewer, emanating a desire to enter into dialogue. It is a portrait with a metaphysical message.

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<sup>48</sup> Ciekawym źródłem informacji na ten temat jest książka pt. „Dlaczego czerwień jest barwą miłości” autorstwa Rudolfa Grossa





50. *Nostalgia (Nostalgia)*, 70 x 50 cm, collograph, 2021

The next graphic in blue tones is entitled “Spełnienie” (“Fulfillment”). The size of this work is similar to the previous one, it is made in a similar technique, with a predominance of blue tones. It is a condensed group of spots in blue tones, forming the whole image. Spots of indigo, blue, turquoise and navy blue merge into a whole. The bright dots blend together and become light. The bright spots are due to an experiment I made using thinner. This can be turpentine or *Hydro Wash*. I spray it on the surface of a chosen area of work (usually the background). Then, if necessary, I gently blot the surface with thin paper or blotting paper and wait from 10 to 30 minutes for the thinner to evaporate. In addition, I attempt to control the whole experience and add paint to selected



areas or gently spray turpentine. It is an extremely fascinating experience for me to watch the whole spectrum of complexity of the research of this technique emerge, evolve and transform before my eyes. I must point out, however, that the use of thinners destroys the matrix made of acrylic pastes. If we already have such an idea, we must be careful about the amount used, and the long contact time of the solution with the matrix. In this composition, in small fragments, the colour of wine appears, which helps in the reception, makes it more attractive, and makes the graphic not monotonous. In a small zone a resultant grey and lavender shade appears. The work is extremely energetic, with clear brushstrokes, which also enhances the expression of the work and the power of the message. The portrait emphasises the clear autonomous features of the model. This technique gives me a certain freedom and possibilities in exploring new ways following the development of my workshop.

The master of portraiture for me is Olga Boznańska. *"Like Whistler, the painter was concerned to limit the palette of colours used and to achieve an effect not through an abundance of colour, but through an appropriate choice of tones which were to make up a perfect colour chord"*.<sup>49</sup>



52. *Spelnienie (Fulfilment)*, 70 x 50 cm, collograph, 2021

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<sup>49</sup>Piotr Kopszak, *Ludzie Czasy Dzieła*, „Boznańska”, Edipresse Polska S.A., 2006, p. 27

Among the works that stand out for their predominance of blue tones is the graphic entitled „Zawstydzienie” (*“Embarrassment”*). It is a continuation of the technique mentioned above, with a twin format. It also opens a triptych of female images. This work is nostalgic, featuring the face of a young, innocent girl wearing a bonnet, her characteristic downcast eyes fixed in stillness, her lips marked with a point of vivid red. The girl fills the viewer with peace and puts him in a good mood, evokes melancholy. The portrait has an intimate character. By applying paint to the matrix and then spraying it with thinner, I achieve bright points that can visually enrich the print. I supplement the strong patterns on the matrix with a drawing of doctor blade, which gives me the possibility of creating additional textural effects of a different character. As a result, the work gives the impression of harmony.



53. *Zawstydzienie* (Embarrassment), collograph, 70 x50 cm, 2021

The artists valued blue, although it probably came out of an inner need to express themselves with this colour. The blue period had a special place in Picasso, it marked itself deeply in his work and that is why it bore fruit so abundantly. Of course, it was connected to his life, to the beginning of his career, to his difficult life situation and, just like in the case of Vincent van Gogh, who also went through a Blue Period, when the models were poor people, it marked his career significantly.



54. Pablo Picasso, *Celestine*, 46. 81 x 60 cm, 1904

*Among the paintings in cold blues, the portrait of "Celestine", the owner of a rendezvous house located in a notorious district of Barcelona, attracts attention. In the Blue Period, Picasso most often depicted the world of the margins, the motifs of misery and poverty were closest to him. Prostitutes, paupers and alcoholics populated his canvases, which were not popular with buyers at the time. Sunk in a severe depression, the painter did not, however, care about the favour of collectors, continuing his work in blue, immersed in darkness.* <sup>50</sup>

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<sup>50</sup>www. Minerva, Patronka Dobrej sztuki *Odziani w niebieski smutek. O okresie błękitnym w malarstwie Picassa*, 1 May 2017



## 4.2 The liveliness of green

Green is the colour of nature, it brings to mind pleasant moments and associations, it calms the mind, releases thoughts and is the colour of communication. Green calms us down and gives us a sense of comfort. It brings cheerfulness and renews vitality. It opens up to others and encourages communication.

The print I would like to present in this context is a portrait of a woman in a turban entitled ‘‘Oślepienie’’ (*‘‘Unseen’’*). The first work is literally an outline consisting of two colours, green and ochre, it is very synthetic, it is almost impossible to determine the features of the figure depicted. The second print from the triptych is a more legible face with strongly outlined, expressive lips and an additional red colour. To create it I used a different matrix. When making the third print I used a second matrix and added navy blue. This gave an extraordinary power to the message. The woman in the headgear with her eyes hidden from the world has a certain communicative power, an allegory is inscribed in it. She closes her eyes and sees much more.



Made in an interesting shade of green and red, it can be an example of complementing colours, which results in the phenomenon of simultaneous contrast.





55. *Oślepienie (Un sighted) I*, collograph, 70 x 50 cm, 2021

55. *Oślepienie (Un sighted) II*, collograph, 70 x 50 cm, 2021





56. *Oślepienie (Un sighted) III*, collograph, 70 x 50 cm, 2021

The second graphic in green tones is the work entitled “Czujułość” (“*Vigilance*”). It is a portrait of a woman with a cigarette. The graphic was made in the collagraph technique, with a format of

70 x 50 cm. The matrix is made of plexiglass, the drawing is made of acrylic mass applied with a brush. While printing, the paint was pressed in with a pad and the background was covered evenly with a roller. The work is an expressive synthesis of the model's image. The spontaneous lines may bring to mind Egon Schiele's women, whom he painted for most of his life, their bold colours. Most of his works are nudes with his masterly sublime lines, but "Czujność" ("Vigilance") resembles them to a certain degree, alludes to them, perhaps because the figure depicted is somehow absent. Moved away from the viewer, preoccupied with herself. The colours are vivid



and contrasting. The captured moment makes us concentrate so as not to miss it.

57. *Czujność (Vigilance)*, collograph, 70 x 50 cm, 2021

### **4.3. The expression of red**

Red is the strongest of all colours. In the right proportions, red is advisable, because it mobilises to action, stimulates and warms interiors and our minds, sensitises. It has a motivating and ...stimulating effect. It is the colour of determined people, it attracts attention and allows us to focus on something specific, but it can also be irritating.

Red is a colour with an extraordinary power of expression, which is why I use it when I want to signal or mark something. This was also the case in the graphic „Zatracenie” (*"Perdition"*), where a figure emerged from a cool greenish background. Composed of a blue and red colour composition, the figure attracts the most attention with its bright red dress in the form of a cross, placed on the model's back. One could be looking for sexual aspects, or it is simply about catching the viewer's attention. „Zatracenie” (*"Perdition"*) was already a previously described work. It is a print in colographic technique, measuring 70 x50 cm.

Red is also predominant in the portrait of an old man, executed in acrylic on cardboard, measuring 100 x 70 cm. It features red in various shades, first pale, obtained with glazing, constituting the background to the whole face. Then a stronger one, though subdued, marking the outline of the chin and jaw turning into a grimace. Finally, the strongest red appears on the line of the nose. The red is accompanied by lime yellow; although there are two vivid colours, one does not harm the other, they simply complement each other. The only addition is the black outline of squinted eyes and the expression of the mouth. The work is sketchy, describing the face in an expressive way. It works strongly and eloquently because the depicted face is in pain.

### **4.4. The magic of violet**

Purple is a magical and hypnotic colour. In its presence, it is not difficult to reflect and it also helps us to concentrate and to fall asleep. It is definitely a mystical and meaningful colour because it helps us to overcome our fears and to look deep within ourselves. It is a formal colour that inspires respect. Purple is often associated with sadness and mourning.

A painting with a predominance of purple is the work entitled ‘‘Rozpacz’’ (*"Despair"*). It is made in acrylic technique on cardboard with a thickness of 1 mm. Very moving and personal, its creation coincided with difficult events in my life. It may reflect my emotional states, painful experiences. The creation of this image was a side effect and not intentional. The figure in the work is one deformed figure, like in the works of Francis Bacon, but what is most clear is its emotional state,



its physiognomy, the suffering clearly painted on its face. It is a kind of study because it is an extremely synthetic form of painting. It ends at this moment. However, my inner voice clearly told me to finish the painting at this stage. The painting is kept in colours with a predominance of purple, brown, red and intermediate tones. It is, in a way, a wash, given that the colours are at



times delicate, in some places translucent, where I was able to glaze and thus acquire the resultant colours on paper.

58. *Rozpacz* (Despair), acrylic on cardboard, 100 x 70 cm, 2021

Another work similar in colour is ‘Upojenie’ (‘*Intoxication*’) is a female portrait in the same technique as the previous one. It may be considered a complementary work. Nevertheless, it is not as tragically depicted. The raised head uncovers the neck of the model. The decisive lines run along the chin, shaping the whole outline and form of the model.



59. *Upojenie* (Intoxication), acrylic on cardboard, 100 x 70 cm, 2021

#### **4.5. The positivity of orange**

The extraordinary orange is a source of warmth, stimulation, and communication. It is able to give encouragement and stimulate attention. It makes us want to speak out and to listen to others. It is a colour that stimulates the heart.

The work, already discussed earlier, of the characters of the lovers, entitled “Czułość” (“Tenderness”) is a great example of this. The male figure in blue and the female figure in complementary dark orange. They harmonise and connect with each other. It is a collograph on



paper of 70 x 100 cm format. This theme brings to mind Picasso's *The Kiss*.



60. *Czułość* (Tenderness), collograph, 70 x 100 cm, 2021



61. Pablo Picasso, *The Kiss*, oil on canvass, 1931

The work in orange colours is a print ‘‘Oczekiwanie - Jesień’’ (‘‘*Expectation - Autumn*’’) in the technique of lift-ground etching and aquatint. It is a portrait of a woman with clear physiognomy,



expressive eyes. Using the lift-ground etching technique I have achieved rich textures of fine and jagged lines and clusters of dots of various sizes. The work is 70 x 50 cm, printed on watercolour paper.

62. Detail of the matrix used to print *Czulość* (*Tenderness*), collograph, 70 x 100 cm, 2021







63. Detail of the matrix used to print *Czulość* (Tenderness), collograph, 70 x 100 cm, 2021

64. Working on *Czulość* (Tenderness), collograph, 70 x 100 cm, 2021

#### 4.6. The neutrality of grey

Grey is a neutral, muted, unsaturated colour with an intermediate tonal transition. There are warmer and colder shades. They do not tend to stimulate, but neither do they overly soothe. They do not particularly stand out and do not have the same impact as red, but they can be a great base for other colours. Subdued and elegant, neat or subtle. Grey likes to stay in the shadows, it is simply unnoticeable. It is difficult for it to evoke emotions, neither positive nor negative. In the world of design it plays a significant role, it is clean, balanced and extremely modern. ‘Kontemplacja’ (‘*Contemplation*’) and ‘Krzyk’ (‘*Scream*’) are two male portraits painted in acrylic paint on sketch paper, in 63,5 x 45 cm format, they are definitely vibrant portraits. The portrait is done in a colour scheme of warm and cool dove grey. I added black as a third, complementary colour. This small range of colours was enough to convey the emotions of these two portraits, even though the portraits represent extreme emotions, an outcry as well as calm and contemplation. There are several similar works from the same series, in the same technique, with the same dimensions, such as ‘Konsternacja’ (‘*Consternation*’), where the eloquence of the work is based mainly on conjecture, as the face is not fully visible. Obscured by hands, it can suggest a lot to us. This is an extremely expressive and sketchy work, where I used a great variety of lines. The tones are grey, steel cold grey, as well as cool blue falling into dove gray. The outline of the hand is in black, where an important role is played by bright pink points, which are the nails, they unite the image into a whole, also in terms of composition. The work can be interesting to

look at.



65. *Kontemplacja* (Contemplation), acrylic on paper, 63,5 x 45 cm, 2020



66. *Krzyk (Scream)*, acrylic on paper, 63,5 x 45 cm, 20





67. *Konsternacja (Consternation)*, acrylic on paper, 63,5 x 45 cm, 2020



#### 4.7. The eloquence of black

Black is associated with a dark abyss, impurity. It inspires respect, is associated with mourning and death. A symbol of elegance and class in clothing and interiors. It can evoke states of sadness and contemplation. Black can also represent negative characters, people with bad associations. That is why I chose the portrait “Wściekłość” (“Wrath”) as an example. It is a work on cardboard 100 x 70 cm, painted with acrylic paints.

The dominant colour is of course black, with the addition of deep turquoise, and grey. The advantage of this work is mainly expressive drawing, expressing emotions. These are negative emotions and this is clearly stated. Some places in the painting contain black mixed with another colour, thus obtaining interesting combinations of this colour. The lines vary in thickness and are made with different brush widths, gaining different expressions under varying pressure.



68. *Wściekłość* (Wrath), acrylic on paper, 100 x 70cm, 2020

#### 4.8. The seriousness of bronze

Brown is the colour of nostalgia, we don't feel like making any changes, we want to be true to tradition and authenticity, but we stare at the past. We do not pursue happiness, but try to minimise unhappiness. It is the colour of the earth. In ancient and medieval times it was associated with the death of young people<sup>51</sup>. It is also associated with professionalism.

A print in which the colour brown is prevalent is ‘Zawstydzienie’ (*‘Embarrassment’*). The work presents a portrait of a young girl wearing a headdress. Its atmosphere is reminiscent of the image of a 19th century maid. The girl emanates innocence and freshness. The print is spontaneous thanks to the irregularity of spots and lines. It pleases the eye in an unforced and natural way. The strongest red spot turns into a mouth that harmonizes with the bronze sketch, which at the same time holds the whole image in check in terms of composition, tone and colour. The print size of the graphic is 70 x 50 cm, the paper I used to make the graphic is watercolour paper. Other accompanying colours are orange, vivid red, blue.



69. *Zawstydzienie* (Embarrassment) (detail), collograph, 70 x 50 cm, 2021

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<sup>51</sup>Rudolf Gross, *Dlaczego czerwień jest barwą miłości*, Wydawnictwa Artystyczne i Filmowe. Warsaw 1990, p. 187

Brown features heavily in my painting sketches. I also like to mix brown with black. Then I get an interesting broken shade, it's less harsh. It works in an interesting way. The same can be the case with navy blue mixed with brown. It becomes an interesting combination of colours, and in this case it increases the depth. The two colours combined gain expressiveness. They can be used together for the deepest tones. At the same time, this combination does not act as obliging as brown alone or as intense as navy blue.

#### **4.9. The innocence of pink**

Pink is a symbol of innocence, gentleness, we feel safe with it. It has a soothing effect, is good for combating stress, inspires hope and is associated with tenderness. It has a calming and soothing effect.

In my sketches I quite often use pink, usually as an addition or to symbolize something. One of the painting sketches entitled ‘‘Szyderczość’’ (‘‘*Derision*’’), on cream sketch paper in 70 x 50 cm, format. This work is nothing more than an image of a person who aims to communicate with the viewer. He wants to convey a certain message and this colour works very well. It is clearly visible to the viewer's eye. Pink is present in the elements that clearly tell what is important in the context of this work. Such an intense colour is rarely used in prevalence or excess as it could be tiring. Although I admit that this can be a subjective feeling, as people have different needs. It depends on many factors. Sometimes we cannot explain why we need a particular colour. It can simply stimulate or soothe us, it also depends on the temperature of the colour. In the case of pink, its perception and readability ranges from a subtle pastel colour to an active fuchsia or magenta.



70. *Szyderczość (Derision)*, (detail), acrylic on paper, 70 x 50 cm, 2021



#### 4.0. The warmth of yellow

Yellow is warm and stimulating. It has a positive effect on our emotions, helps to maintain good mood and joy. It is good for physically and mentally tired people. It also helps us to concentrate. A very characteristic graphic with a predominance of yellow is a graphic in the technique of collograph, from the series of portraits of babies, entitled “Ufność” (“Trust”), made in 34.8 x 22 cm format, on Hahnemühle paper, 120 g thick.

A portrait of a tiny baby cannot be executed other than with full sensitivity, joy and warmth. Yellow is one of the most suitable colours the palette offers to fit such a theme. In itself it is full of optimism and sunshine. It brings joy to living beings and stimulates them to live. When I create, I follow my inner intuition and often choose the right colour. I had no problem with creating this series. It's natural that we want to show the portrait of a child in a gentle manner. In addition, I did not want to give up my artistic asset, which is the authorial expression. This can be seen in the character of the lines as well as the colour. In the work I am describing, I used complementary colours, yellow and purple, rubbing them in with starchy gauze. When applying the paint to the matrix, I added a small amount of linseed oil to help spread the paint. I completed the colour palette of the print with a warm brown, which harmonises with the other tones. Finally, I used a doctor blade to make a sketch of the face with purple paint, which makes the graphic more expressive. If you look closely at the work, you can see the resultant colour. The yellow and its shades, as well as the brown and cool purple, were used to create the resultant colours: beige, grey and olive.



71. *Ufność (Trust)*, collograph, 34,8 x 22 cm, 2021

## Conclusion

Imperfection, ineptitude in what I do, in creating - I find the answer to my dilemmas in David Sylvester's book "Interviews with Francis Bacon". Nobody is perfect... The analysis of Bacon's creative attitude helps me to understand myself and my works. I am not alone with my doubts, with the battles going on inside between the medium, the process of creation and the final result - the work I want, real, spontaneous, uncontrolled, full of emotion. My works oscillate between memories, reality and fantasy, and are often an expression of my personal experiences. Sometimes inspiration comes from dreams.

Working on my dissertation allowed me to develop techniques that were new to me and to transfer my painting experience into the world of printmaking. I found myself most at home in the technique of collagraph with the use of painter's pastes - I could paint on a matrix with a thick layer of the medium, just like on canvas. It was surprising to me that it was possible to achieve painterly gestures, spots and textures on a graphic matrix. Coincidence often played a positive role in the creative frenzy, which was then consciously exploited or even repeated. Such spontaneous actions included, for example, spraying the matrices with a thinner, mixing pastes with various organic elements such as tree bark or seeds.

In the creation of colourful images, intuition is important to me, but after the spontaneous selection of colours and their juxtaposition on the surface of the painting or the graphic matrix, there comes a moment of analysis, reflection. I begin to wonder if the appointed combination is right, if it has the right power. I consciously transform the resulting colours, reinforcing some and weakening others, until an interesting harmony emerges. Sometimes I use contrasting juxtapositions, other times I aim for subtle, subdued combinations. I try to express with colour the mood and character of the portrayed person, but also my own emotions.

To sum up, the technique we choose significantly affects the way in which colour interacts. Every small technological detail can change the appearance of the whole painting. The texture to be created, the order in which the matrices are reflected in graphics, the order in which layers are applied in painting, the degree of transparency of paints, their consistency, the content of pigment, and finally the painting, graphic and experimental tools used, those adopted *ad hoc* to creative work, the effects planned and those created as if by chance - all these aspects are of key importance to the final expression of the colour composition called for - in this case, a collection of portraits. Although intuition and coincidence play their part in the creative process, it is always the author who consciously decides about the whole, about the end of the work, about putting the elements

together into a coherent whole. The present work aimed to investigate selected working methods and analyse their influence on the expression of colour in graphic and painting images.

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