

SUMMARY  
OF PROFESSIONAL  
ACHIEVEMENTS

1. MAGDALENA HANYSZ – STEFAŃSKA

2. On the basis of my general artistic output and submission of a doctor's thesis titled "Jedność z wielości" (Unity of plurality) after passing the required exams I earned the academic degree of Doctor of Art in the field of Fine Arts awarded by the decision of the Board of Faculty of Graphics in the Academy of Fine Arts in Gdańsk of 28.01.2010.

Reviewers in doctoral conferment procedure:

associate professor Alina Jackiewicz – Kaczmarek

professor Chris Nowicki

supervisor:

assistant professor Waldemar Marszałek

3. Information on previous and present employment in scientific/artistic institutions:

– since 01.01.2006 – assistant in the Faculty of Painting and Graphics in Linocut Studio in the Academy of Fine Arts in Gdańsk

– since 01.09.2007 – assistant in the Faculty of Graphics in the Basics of Graphic Arts Studio and Linocut Studio for the Academy of Fine Arts in Gdańsk

– since 01.09.2009 – present – leading the Basics of Graphic Arts Studio for the part-time studies in the Faculty of Graphics in the Academy of Fine Arts in Gdańsk

– since 01.10.2013 – adjunct in the Faculty of Graphics in the Basics of Graphic Arts and Linocut Studios for the Academy of Fine Arts in Gdańsk

4. According to a formal requirement I designate a set of graphics titled „Bestiariusz linorytnika” (Linocut artist's Bestiary) as aspiring to fulfil requirements of art. 16 ust.2 z dnia 14 marca 2003 r. o stopniach naukowych i tytule naukowym oraz o stopniach i tytule w zakresie sztuki (Dz. U. nr 65, poz. 595 ze zm. / Act of scientific degrees and scientific title ( art. 16 ust.2 z dnia 14 marca 2003 r.) and title in the field of Art (Dz. U. nr 65, poz. 595 ze zm. /

The set includes following graphics created with chromatic linocut technique, algraphy, intaglio, etching, aquatint and drypoint: "Smok" (Dragon), "Robak" (Worm), "Sowa" (Owl), "Gdańskie opowieści" (Tales of Gdańsk), "Rowerzysta" (Cyclist), "Francuz" (French man), "Dom dusz" (House of Souls), "Rowerowe szachy" (Bicycle chess), "Męski raj-d" (Men's rally, men's paradise) "Jeździec bez głowy" (Headless rider), "Jabłkowity nosorożec" (Dappled rhinoceros), "Kogut w różanym ogrodzie" (Rooster in a rose garden), "Stadnina koni" (Horse stable), "Polowanie" (Hunt), "Zielony/żółty koń" (Green/yellow horse), "Okapi", "Leonardo", "Ręczne tortury" (Hand torture), "W kołnierzykach" (Collared), "Tort rybny" (Fish cake), "Konik" (Small horse), "Na mieliźnie" (Run aground), "Wiatrak" (Windmill), "Tajlandzki słowik" (Thai nightingale), "Hazard" (Gambling).a

## **Summary of realised artistic achievements, information about lines of action, interests and methods of artistic, creative, didactic and organisational work.**

### **Biographical note**

I was born on the 11<sup>th</sup> of October 1970 in Gdynia, where I have lived ever since. My parents: Father Piotr – Master Mariner and mother Krystyna – forwarding agent, presently retired. I graduated from Sport Primary School No 14 and high school No 6 in Gdynia.

In 1989 at my first attempt I started studies at the Faculty of Painting and Graphics, master degree course in Painting. I graduated with a diploma distinction on the 24<sup>th</sup> of October 1994 in the studio of professor Maciej Świeszewski and appendix of the Workshop of professor Czesław Tumielewicz, theoretical dissertation titled “Kilka słów o natchnieniu” (A few words about inspiration).

In 1999 I got married to Robert Stefański, we have been together since then. In 2001 my daughter Kinga was born. Presently she is a student of the first class Junior High school No24 at High school No3 in Gdynia.

The title of PhD of Art I obtained in January 2010, the subject of my doctoral thesis was: “Jedność z wielości” (Unity of plurality).

I have a driving licence. I also have basic skill at using computer programmes such as Microsoft Excel, AutoCAD. I know English well. My interests are as follows: books, films, cynology, walks.

If I had to describe my artistic creation in one word only I would use *optimism*. I have made graphics, sometimes paintings for 20 years. For that long have I been a titular visual artist and trying to see the world in rosy colours.

My creations may easily be categorized as optimistic ones “Irrespective of those who make the world a sad place, I smile through the tears”. The subjects I present in my works are quite serious and varied. I am an observer, I comment events around me, sometimes I travel inside myself and pull out to daylight my personal guts, at other times I point out the mistakes of politicians in far away lands. I am inspired by human behaviour, stupidity, bureaucracy, universalism, my own experiences and sensations. Overheard pieces of news, shape of somebody’s face, colour of fabric in skirt - this chunked reality I memorise and process in the deepest parts of my brain cells. My artistic creation is fully intuitive. I do not plan cycles, formats or colours. Suddenly my inner voice tells me everything, I feel an indefinite force, pushing me to action and “chipping” on a new piece of work. I am afraid that too detailed analysis of my work, dividing it into smaller and smaller pieces may lead to losing my lightness and freedom of creation together with my honesty. I am always real in what I do. I am not looking for applause, I do not follow any fad or fashion, I do not want to shock with modernity or cheap provocation.

At the very beginning of artistic journey my creations allowed me to get rid of emotions, get the burden of experiences of my chest. It was a kind of remedy for all the evilness; a salvation for myself. I had moments of hedonism – it was simply luck to present my dreams, emotions on paper, to be able to shout and become anonymous at the same time – at least this was what I thought. I did not consider the intended recipient, who it was, who it could be? I acted fast and without any reflection, because all the momentous emotions could have faded away and disappeared. I was amazed by my newly learned ability to make linocut, trying to achieve proficiency and follow the paragon. Here I am coming back to my student’s times and freshly after graduation (years 1991- 2000).

A perfect depiction of my feelings then, are the words of M. C. Escher, who said:

“Only those, who from their earliest days work on the graphic techniques, achieve a level where the workshop itself becomes the highest value. All the time is consumed on mastering the arts and crafts, that absorb all their thoughts to such extent that even the choice of topic is subordinate to a technical study. One must admit, that huge satisfaction arouses from accomplishing proficiency, deep understanding of the material features and hand, acquiring skills how to use available tools and own hands! I have spent many years being enchanted in such a way. But a moment has come when I opened my eyes and understood that my workshop skill is not my only aim...”

Please forgive me comparing myself to such a great artist, but just as he did, I started enjoying my creation with time, I have put in my works symbolic motifs e.g. chromatic linocut - “Petra w džungli” (Petra in the Jungle) [p. 278],

very personal elements for instance “Tyle mam na głowie” (I have so much on my head) [p. 228]. I became interested in creating illusion of space like in “Tajemniczy ogród” (Secret garden) [p. 269] in my graphics I have acquired a taste in colour. The recipient has become more important. My goal has become to present a bit of beauty to the others, offer them little moments of happiness. I have got the feeling that humanity is marked with special kind of perception, something between magical thinking and modern way of understanding art, they subconsciously look for positive aesthetic sensations and it is true not only for children. I love when the viewers enter my world and search for a place for them, known topics, telling me something about them. Although my intention was different, I have noticed that not they, but I uncover myself for them, speak through my works about the state of my body and mind, open my inner side. A kind of unexpected exhibitionism.

I have slowly realised that one of the crucial elements for me is the individualism characterising my works, cuts, texture, structures specific just for me. I want my works to be distinguishable. Now it is the time to understand me as an artist, the time of doctorate, when formal requirements enforce self-reflection, meticulous analysis of own artistic creation. I used to think, that because I always work simultaneously on two or three works and have a few more ideas in my head defending my Ph.D. will not be so significant for me as an artist. On the contrary, thanks to all the effort put in the doctoral procedure, preparing doctoral exhibition made me aware that I feel I have become a Creator. I made my own World, where only I rule I share my control with nobody. This may sound egoistic and egocentric. “Doctorate” made me realise that exactly the same time, students who I taught on my first year of work in the Academy graduated. I am a teacher and educator. Because of that, and the fact I am an artist I have the right and am obliged to pass THIS on to the others, to my students. I am not only thinking here about the obvious knowledge, passing which is my job.

When preparing projects of linocuts I started looking through Medieval Panorama by Robert Bartlett – beautifully illustrated book, that moment Medieval ages magnetised me. There is no other period in history so full of insinuations, contradictions, contrast, and most of all fantasy. I became fascinated with medieval basilisk, griffins, unicorns and manticores described for moral instruction in bestiaries as animals that really existed.

For some time I have been a lucky owner of an English Whippet or a Snap Dog. I would not call him a regular dog, but a beast. How else can you describe an animal that according to cynological textbooks can run up to 60 km/h, jump over obstacles such as ditches, scarps etc. His fitness, suppleness, agility and vivaciousness are absolutely amazing and make the owner believe to have contact with a creature with supernatural powers not an ordinary dog. This impression is magnified by his physical appearance. My Whippet is really skin,

bones and muscles. Ribs that stick out, three visible vertebrae, skinny midsection. When at direct sunshine some parts of him are almost transparent.

A beast may also signal something dangerous, something we are afraid of, but not in this case. This is the “friendliest and mildest dog one can imagine” (Book of Dogs David Taylor). Elvis-that is my whippet’s name is a complete pacifist, connected to his family, his pack, protecting us in his own dog manner. Always loyal, leading a simple, uncomplicated life, free of hurry, cheating, gossip or intrigues, with clear aims. He has no doubts, always knows how to act. He loves us endlessly, regardless the time of the day or our appearance. He is always happy to see us, never moody nor has a bad day. I have got the feeling that despite his supernatural powers he is more humane than some people. I understand of course that it is the instinct that motivates his behaviour, he has no soul or mind, but...? As I read in a magazine article (“Mój pies”, marzec 2012, art. „Ona i on czego oczekują od psa?”) according to „Newspoll Australia Institute research women when choosing a dog, use the same criteria as when choosing a partner...they believe that dogs are more sensitive, loyal and reliable than men”.

Others “who seek a friend and a co-worker in a dog await personality similar to their own”. For some reasons we give dogs more human attributes, they feel pain, sadness, happiness and love just like we do. Who knows, maybe they do have a soul?

My artistic output is linear, there are not any sudden cuts, or radical changes, it is rather a kind of slow evaluation, with momentary digressions, fascinations, but the main road is clear. It is hard for me to divide my artistic life into particular periods, everything is connected to everything else, everything comes out from everything else, and there is also connection to my personal life, which also has a strong influence on my creation. I think that it was the doctorate, together with bestiaries, medieval ages and my dog that gave me the inspiration for a graphic bestiary. A linocut morality with my own beasts, in my world, where people turn to beasts from time to time. “Bestiariusz linorytnika” (Linocut Artist’s Bestiary) is designed to moralize, but not in a stiff, boring, preaching manner. One may edify for long, with tirades, but I believe it should be an impulse, as short as a blink of an eye, touching our subconscious. It is a bright attempt to make us verify our behaviour towards the others. Maybe use less violence or cold calculation?

Since I was a little girl, drawing and painting have been my favourite activities. Nothing special about it, this is what the people who do drawing or painting professionally say about their childhood. A little unusual was maybe the fact that only horses were my fascination, later also the dogs. Surprisingly, my interest was not stopped by a visit in the Palace of Culture in Gdynia where my task was to draw “A pipeline of friendship” (\*you might have heard about not easy relations between Poland and USSR) all in all, that was the first and



only class I attended there. I have been dealing with various creatures ever since I can remember, but the first consciously chosen elements of habilitation (second level doctorate) set are: “Sowa” (Owl) [p. 281], “Robak” (Worm) [p. 282], “Smok” (Dragon) [p. 283]. These graphics represent the technique of chromatic linocut. I would call them drawings, while tangled lines create particular shapes, colours in the form of small dots merge with one another creating a homogeneous background. They were presented on the 9<sup>th</sup> Lessendra World Art Print Annual „Mini Print 2010” in Bulgaria. These works were the first ones created without a project. I came to a conclusion that working without a project does not necessarily give more freedom in decision making what to cut away what to leave. In linocut decisions like that are irreversible. Making a project allows you to make corrections on the spot, which helps in cutting. Building an illusion of space also becomes easier. By bringing colour or linear confusion not only by the use of contour, a linocut becomes more untamed, unpredictable and crazy. It emerges, rather than is created. Making a graphic is a process. First everything comes into being in your head, it takes a while, inspiration comes in different moments on a walk, on a train, concert of T. Stańko (“Jazz” [p. 259]), then you transfer the ideas on paper, make a drawing, sketch, or collage. Only after that all technological process begins and the hands do their magic. Without the project this process shortens and speeds up. This fact was so tempting that I created two more works with projects straight on matrix. I was worried that such a course of action may lead to a kind of automatism, and using worn out, old ideas, that is why I promised myself that projects will exist in my work. Despite my concerns two graphics “Męski raj-d” (Men’s rally, men’s paradise) [p. 285] and “Jeździec bez głowy” (Headless rider) [p. 284] received on the 12<sup>th</sup> Graphic Competition of Józef Gielniak an equal prize.

The venue on our Academy allowed me to have frequent contact with intaglio techniques. My work “Jabłkowy nosorożec” (Dappled rhinoceros) [p. 299], was pioneering for me, because I used a mixed technique of chromatic linocut and matrix from ordinary lino. Intaglio print from lino requires a very diluted ink, otherwise it would be impossible to wipe it off the matrix, what might lead to sticking the matrix to the paper and destroying it. To obtain a print we use damp paper. Moisture causes changes in size. Paper shrinks after drying up. To make a chromatic linocut by the use of the same matrix one needs to damp the paper to ensure the colours cover the already printed shapes. Unfortunately etching paper resistance to water is not unlimited and after putting the fifth colour it delaminates. All these obstacles cooled a little my interest in intaglio. But I am planning to come back to the subject of rhinoceros, topic borrowed from a real master. Albrecht Durer is said to have used scientific texts available in his times together with travellers records. He also had access to medieval bestiaries. It is indicated by the fact that he put a horn on the rhinoceros head, making it a unicorn. Interesting is the fact, that such

an image illustrated scientific works for over 200 years, and in 1956 inspired Salvador Dali to create a sculpture *Rinoceronte vestido con puntillas* (FOCUS “Róg niezgody” Konrad Bielecki).

In my work “Dom dusz” (House of Souls) [p. 291] I decided to combine linocut with algraphy, I had used such a combination before, but this is an example of very few of my graphics without people or creatures. Their role is played by the pieces of furniture, arranged by a crazy designer, animated and full of life. The work was divided and printed in four colour parts, central part is an old window printed in algraphic technique from my photograph. I used Arches printing paper. I underline this fact, because not only what I print, but what surface I use became important to me. I felt enchanted by this paper, normally it is used in intaglio. It looks thick and solid, but at the slightest hit it breaks, it cannot be freely rolled. One must be careful not to break it, which requires certain discipline while printing. After damping it becomes more absorptive and soaks ink better than ordinary paper. It makes prints look nobly. Graphic “Dom dusz” (House of Souls) was presented on the 8<sup>th</sup> International Triennial Exhibition of Prints in Japan.

When I am in high school, I and my grandma have a ritual: when she cooks, fries or bakes I read her books aloud. Together we have a lot of reading. She loves biographies, and knows that I am into painting so she gives me: Irving Stone’s “The Agony and the ecstasy”, David Weiss’ “Naked came I”, Joanna Guze’s “Impressionists”. I decide to enter PWWSSP, I get there at the first attempt, which I consider to be one of my successes. I consider myself to be a calm person, but according to my drawing tutor I am spontaneous and expressive – I like this, a vision of “a crazy artist” attracts me, calm on the outside, and boiling with emotions inside, drawing everywhere and on everything, as Amadeo Modigliani used to do. I do not see it coming, that instead of brushes I will be walking around with linoleum and become a kind of artistic bookkeeper. I have the impression and accept the fact that printing process of any technique is strictly calculated, one needs discipline to get the image right (unless you want to play against the rules to achieve the other effect). Work must be well organised, ergonomics is useful too. One needs: press, rollers, spatulas – nothing typical for “a real artist”. Despite the fact, that when making my first graphics I was unaware that it would be my artistic life, I feel overjoyed. I discovered linocut by accident, but still consider it fascinating. With its technical simplicity it creates unlimited ways of expression. Maybe, as the Japanese believe, since the discovery of ukiyo-e magic is in the process. Matrix is a crucial element, its changing colours amaze me. Engraving, and chipping itself have become automatic, I am able to think about my next works doing that. Everything was decided earlier. Final effect is really important for me. Matrixes lie around, linoleum scratches I never collect. At the beginning



of my work with lino I strictly followed the project, now I often change the initial plan, when I see possibility of linocut expansion. Thanks to my experience I act maybe more airily, but also spontaneously, which is crucial to avoid routine. I am under the impression that after putting the last colour, my body produces dopamine, a happy hormone like in runners after finishing marathon. Linocut freed me. Although I was unaware I was a prisoner of painting more and more cups, matters, chest and legs, never with the right proportion. Linocut helped me discover my imagination. I have this "gift from God, element of thought, searching process, creativity and genius...this mind activity and mental skill" ("Sztuka wyobraźni" The Art of Imagination-Walter Schurian). Fantasy has become important for me as an artist, it makes me unique, it is crucial. I love using it, thanks to it I build my own world of my works.

"Kogut w różanym ogrodzie" (Rooster in a rose garden) [p. 292], "Zielony koń" (Green horse) [p. 298], "Polowanie" (Hunt) [p. 301], „Okapi” [p. 302] – all these graphics represent chromatic reduce block linocut technique by Picasso. Size 70 x 100 cm that used to be a challenge, has become a basic format, I aim high in technology ("Komu bije dzwon?" For whom the bell tolls? [p. 277], "Kobiety" Women [p. 246]). Format of 135 x 95 cm is a discovery for me, a dream come true about a big, powerful graphic. I think that small chromatic linocuts do not have so much power of expression, but I used do make them quite often (for instance the series of works, size 10 x 10 cm: "Anioł się bawi" (An Angel is playing) [p. 227], "Anioł odpoczywa" (An Angel is resting) [p. 226], "Anioł płacze" (An Angel is crying) [p. 226], "Pszczelarz" (Bee-keeper) [p. 285], "Ogrodnik" (Gardener) [p. 284], "Rycerz" (Knight) [p. 284]). Miniatures seem to be a kind of stepping stone, I do not like routine. I am sure I will try again to make a big format experiment. These four graphics are the core of my habilitation (second level doctoral) thesis. The creatures symbolise for me the surrounding nature. They are an important breakthrough. I am proud of my beasts.

My father wanted to be a forester. He used to take me for long walks with tales about animals. We always had a dog at home, nature films used to be my cartoons. When it comes to animals I not only tried to reproduce them on paper, but another of my great passions has always been horseriding. It is rather unrequited love. Horses equate Nature. All its beauty, mystery and wildness, but also calmness, dignity it exudes. We are surrounded by nature, whether we like it or not. Landscapes, flora, galloping horse, my beloved beach and sea where I find amber. World available without any special cost. We just need to notice it, admire and think of what we can do to preserve it.

Three works were presented on the 1<sup>st</sup> Triennial of Pomeranian Art in National Art Gallery in Sopot. "Kogut w różanym ogrodzie" (Rooster in a rose garden) [p. 292] was shown on the Main Exhibition of International Triennial of Graphics in Bunkier Sztuki in Cracow. Linocut "Polowanie" (Hunt) [p. 301] received 1<sup>st</sup> Prize in the competition for a Pomeranian Graphic of the Year 2013.

I graduated from painting, but I must confess that the first paintings I value were created only several years ago. Linocut has become my painting. Gouge is my brush, matrix is my canvas. Colours of the ink are pure and homogeneous, one has no problem in mixing them to obtain new ones. When I paint I work similarly like in graphics – I put layers of paint one by one, I always treat the painting as a whole. Painting is much quicker, and less technically complex than linocut, effects can be seen immediately, but the general rule is the same. There is however an important difference, when making a graphic everything must be controlled technically from the very beginning to the final stage, the paintings are a little unpredictable and I am under the impression that they emerge as if a little beyond my influence. It feels like I am the brush holder and uncover the image on the canvas, and it is hiding there somewhere, laughing quietly, and deciding whether to appear or not yet. I do not know what influence, if any, painting will have on my graphic. Recently graphics has given me the pleasure to discover paintings on canvas.

Every graphic technique, painting as well, has some characteristic features, something that makes it unique. In case of lithography, it is a possibility of drawing, washing technique like on paper. The author tries either make it more visible, or by the use of certain tools mislead the recipient. Like Marta Gertchen creates a linocut, that looks like a mezzotint, or even a photography. It all depends on the artist, his or her imagination, intentions and skills. To show the unevenness of a linocut print, its rough surface full of deep colour I like to combine linocut with other graphic techniques for instance algraphy with light, even surface. It is a technical challenge, what to print first? How to prepare matrixes? How to fit them together? It is a kind of riddle, mixture of two technologies must have a deeper meaning in subject. Lithography, algraphy, drypoint are tempting because of various uses of drawing, lines. They offer new solutions, enrich my experience. Many works resulted from such experiments. One example is “Ręczne tortury” (Hand torture) [p. 311] landscape creates a background for a complex configuration of lines making a trapped hand, the other one is graphic “Leonardo” [p. 310]. The latter was distinguished on the 42<sup>nd</sup> Premio Internazionale di Grafica del Pomero in Italy. I believe that nowadays, where graphic competitions show a lot mixed techniques works, we should encourage students to this kind of combinations.

As I mentioned before, I have had frequent contact with Intaglio Studio in our Academy. It gave me opportunity to get to know that technique. Result was a series of small sized etchings, aquatints: “Konik” (Small horse) [p. 305], “Tort rybny” (Fish cake) [p. 303], “W kołnierzykach” (Collared) [p. 304] – one of them will be presented on the 15<sup>th</sup> International Biennial of Small Graphic Forms and Ex-libris in Ostrów Wielkopolski. A little bigger intaglio prints are as follows: “Wiatrak” (Windmill) [p. 308], “Na mieliźnie” (Run aground) [p. 307] “Krajobraz rolniczy” (Rural landscape) [p. 306]. They are all atypical for me,

while they were printed in black and white. Putting tint is a substitute for colour. The effects of working on tinsplate are unpredictable too, many factors influence the final success, for example acid for biting. It is hard for me to accept the fact that my finely drawn matrix can be corrected over and over again. I would prefer to see the end right away. Without proof prints I want to see final prints now, not to wait in suspense, it is against my artistic nature, built mostly by chromatic linocut. So after experiments I always return to pure chromatic linocut to ensure I will not forget the technique. At those moments the works: "Stadnina koni" (Horse stable) [p. 300], "Tajlandzki słowik" (Thai nightingale) [p. 312], "Hazard" (Gambling) [p. 309] were created.

I consider myself to be lucky to have met wise people on my student's way - my assistants lecturers from Graphic Techniques Workshop: Zbigniew Gorlak and Waldemar Marszałek. Always willing to help the students and offering advice. We used a lot the situation when our lecturers worked in our presence. We could observe their work and learn. We knew that graphics was their passion. Their lithographies were the exemplars to follow. When I became a lecturer myself, my aim was to continue work as my role models. I also work with my students around. I feel a special bond, not only teacher-student contact, but a kind of race with graphics, where we are in one team and get to know each other better. Professor Czesław Tumielewicz from being my lecturer became my superior, my mentor, he applauded my actions. I value his, to some extent childish enthusiasm for learning new techniques and hard work, he has been showing for years. It was the Professor, who taught me how to deal with a big group of students when I started my work in the Academy, he showed me the ropes. Basics of Graphic Arts Studio, where I had opportunity to work as assistant, was not only a place where students started their adventure with graphics, it was also a training ground for me, because before giving a task to students, I first tested it on myself. A goldmine of ideas were the competition catalogues. They were classes for the first year students, an introduction to graphics, where students had a chance to try unconventional work, learned a little about kinds of graphics before entering specialised studios. Thanks to that also I found monotyping, very close to painting. I made several works in drypoint on plexiglass and copper. To make engraving in copper I even prepared a kind of pillow or pad which I saw at a friend's workshop. After professor Paweł Frąckiewicz's classes we taught our students algraphy, which they successfully combined with drypoint. They also made plaster prints, using Professor Ryszard Otręba works as models, on the matrixes I had prepared for them. After purchasing multifunctional Dremel tool our students' task was a linocut size 70 x 100 cm. Printing such a big matrix was a challenge both for the students and us. Using our friend Dominik's knowledge, who had shown us intaglio with corundum and drypoint, our students made several marvellous works, and many colographies.

I think that all the unsuccessful attempts not only enriched my technological knowledge, but I also developed myself as an artist and lecturer, I can help my students more and be better at my job. The longer I work, the more I understand that the motto of working with students is “Do not disturb!”. I have a graphic experimentator’s spirit, therefore all the new experiences, entering new graphic lands have not made me tired. Thanks to them I have visited different graphic worlds. After the journeys, my inner globetrotter could go home with head full of ideas for linocut.

Chromatic reduce block linocut is also one of the yearly tasks for the first year students. I always think about possible effects, and how far can I go in giving advice? Where is the line between teaching and interfering. How not to destroy one’s artistic individuality? More details on that I presented on the Symposium/Conference “Linoryt w XXI wieku i co dalej?” (Linocut of XXI century-what next?), in January 2014 in our Academy on the lecture “Skok w linoryt kolorowy” (Jump into chromatic linocut). Text of the lecture is presented below.

## „SKOK W LINORYT KOLOROWY” (JUMP INTO CHROMATIC LINOCUT)

Since 2007 I have been an assistant in the Basics of Graphic Arts Studio led by professor Czesław Tumielewicz.

Our students are very young, at the start of their life, artistic and student path. Usually they do not have any experience in the field of graphic arts. We must familiarise them with basic terms such as matrix, and more complex like roller. We told them that those mysterious cans on the shelf contain graphic inks and we apply them with spatulas, and remove with thinners. In our studio it is easy to get oneself dirty, that is why working clothes are useful. It was the introduction.

One of the tasks within the Studio was a reduce block linocut by Picasso.

I know from experience that explaining to a novice stages of making a chromatic linocut will never work. Instead we asked our students to prepare projects, and offered them a jump straight into the deep end - a chromatic linocut -without explaining too much – we did not know their abilities or aims-they were unsure of them as well.

Subjects were always determined. First of them was “Don Kichot”, others: “Raj” (Paradise), “Arka Noego” (Noah’s Ark), “Adam i Ewa w raju” (Adam and Eve in paradise), “Sąd Ostateczny” (The Last Judgement) . Format of works was 45 x 65 cm – enough to feel the work, and not too hard for the novice – it is an optimal size.

I have always thought that for an inexperienced linocut artist, working without a detailed project has no sense, while it is impossible to make a fine, rich, colourful linocut with four or five colours which was our intention. One cannot

drive the gouge by an impulse, one needs to predict where and when desired forms should appear. That is why a project is necessary.

Our project was to be very complex, with different textures and shapes. When it was accepted, linoleum should be cut. That moment I felt like a wizard, imagine the surprise, a delicate cut on the lino and it divides just like paper and becomes a matrix, that you need to take care of, like a pet who will return the kindness one day. Project was transferred by ordinary graphic tracing paper then the drawing was underlined by a permanent marker.

Cutting the linoleum sometimes cost several minor injuries and bandaids. We have never presented cutting methods, hoping for student's creativity, not to limit him or her. They might have invented their own, unique and ergonomic method.

This is the second reason why I call my story a "jump", it is impossible to enter the linocut, steadily, enjoying every single step, right away one must make important decisions, what to cut out, what to leave, which fragments should be kept white on paper, what will be cut away next. Cutting is irreversible, that is why one must be very precise. One cannot go back, or uncut. It is like working on a living organism-on the matrix, no possibility to reboot. You must make the first move-the first jump and start chipping.

I do not want to be misunderstood, students were never left alone with their doubts, with lecturers offering them only technical advice where to buy gouges, how to sharpen them, remind to keep the work clean, how to put next colour and keep it in lines. That would be wrong. Together with Professor Tumielewicz we agreed that own practice and own discovery is the best teacher, somebody who never smeared by the press, put the next colour by himself, saw the effects of own work would not gain experience. Practice makes perfect. Learning by doing.

And then, when every student is aware of what we are talking about, because he or she used the next ink and is amazed or maybe not by this fact-only then we explain, show examples and offer ideas. The creator having even minimum experience slowly recognises his or her abilities.

The real ones however you can see when working with older students. It truly gives satisfaction. Watching their creations, especially diploma works makes our inner teacher feel proud that their first linocut had been made in the Basics of the Graphic Arts Studio.

The process of linocut printing is not very complex itself. Problems usually start when moving to the second colour. Where you need to place everything right to hit the first one. The second colour however is usually also a relief for students – their typical reaction is: Wow! It is so easy. Explaining how to make a reduce block linocut takes a little longer.

As a general rule we printed colours in order starting from the lightest to the darkest, however not in every case. People sensitive to colours stirred the



ink for long, always dissatisfied with the shade, the others, on the contrary, used the ink straight from cans (to my horror)

Students often find it hard to accept the marks of tools, gouges, which can make work more dynamical, define the form or matter. The most difficult was to persuade them that the marks, those dots and dashes they were so eager to remove in fact create the value of linocut, its individual character.

I did not want my students to become proficient right from the beginning, it is not easy to achieve it with the first work. Mistakes of course occurred: shifts, dirt, folded paper, too strong pressure and so on. My aim was that they would gain experience learn the graphic language, working methods, to feel the need to go deeper into the world of graphics, to play with lino and colours. I wanted the designing process to be fun for them, learning through play like children in a nursery school. In fact the first year is a little like that.

I tried to make students believe that something created manually can give a fascinating effect. Not only computers, which are so common today, but using their mind and hands. One can amaze with texture, with layer of ink. Although it is not easy to attain perfection, it is worth to try.

Worth mentioning is the fact, that since 2009 I have directed authorial Basics of the Graphic Arts Studio for the first year of part time studies.

My group of first year students consisted of 22 people. I consider this as my personal success, because managing them was for me physically exhausting. At the start unwilling, later more and more eager to print, using our three studios, and five presses. Classes sometimes took place in the corridor, every place was good to prepare ink. Students of part time studies often have much life experience, some set rules, habits.

Part time studies also include reviews and credit for the course. Identical ups and downs with working on linocut. Because of the limit of hours I had to change the format of tasks to 28 x 38 cm.

A little digression, when I see my new students for the first time, and their fight with the press they resemble myself, at the beginning of my first student steps, first linocut, the first chromatic linocut I had ever seen, as I realized only recently. I was happy, that I succeeded in completing the task, but the linocut itself did not arouse any special exaltation. What seemed difficult at start, later changed into delicate fascination, finally turning into genuine attraction to linocut. Every finished chromatic linocut, first distinction in a competition, all of that has become my passion, my way of life.

In our studio I have had 250 students so far. I wanted them to share my passion, to make them experience adventure with linoleum and colours.

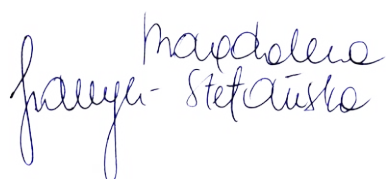
THE END



The Academy is a huge, living organism. To make it work properly one needs many people doing all sorts of things. Job of an academic teacher most of all means effectiveness in teaching, but also ability to communicate, being open towards the others, punctuality, personal culture and various organisational tasks. In my case it is not only preparing term exhibitions, vernissages. For the past six years I have been the entry exam secretary. Every year it is a great challenge and stress because of the responsibility. My slightest mistake, could affect a person's life. Every September, it started four years ago and has become a tradition I organise and lead plein-air for our students in a beautifully situated horse stable. I assume that for the first-year students of our Faculty it is the first, but may also be the last contact with open air painting. I encourage, and try to motivate them to face this difficult task. Effects are often surprising. For the last five years I have prepared Christmas Meetings with singing carols and refreshments. I have organised the intraacademic competition for a Student's Graphic of the Year, and reviewed master theses. I am a member of Academic Scholarship Commission and Academic Election Committee, recorder of professor, doctoral and habilitation procedures (first and second level doctorate). In 2011 and 2012 I was the commissioner of our academy competition "The Best Diplomas of Academy of Fine Arts". In 2007 and 2008 I participated in all-Poland Academia Conference in Luboradów, in 2012 in Dłużew. In 2011 I gave a lecture in County Museum in Bydgoszcz titled "Jedność z wielości" (Unity of plurality). Last year I organised a "farewell" exhibition for professor Czesław Tumielewicz retirement and exhibition for our friend, one year after his death "Krzysztof Cybulski- po".

From time to time I feel not only as an artist, but also a clerk, I cannot forget here about my private life. I have a daughter, a husband, they are my family. I am involved in various constellations, family correlations, business relations and other connected assignments. I always do my best in completing all given tasks reliably, with dedication, but sometimes I get trapped, complaining about the lack of time or willingness, and stand helplessly. Only Graphics gives me the freedom of creation and power to cope with everything and build my own world, where everyone is invited.

As Fernando Botero said "The Art is not to present reality, it is to create own worlds."

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Magdalena Hanysz - Stefańska". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dr Magdalena Hanysz - Stefańska  
Translated: mgr. Katarzyna Truskolawska