

Summary of scientific accomplishments

Olga Podfilipska-Krysińska, Phd

Diplomas and scientific/artistic degrees:

PhD - Awarded in Visual Art in the field of Applied Art on the 10th October 2011 by a resolution of the Faculty of Textile and Fashion Council in the Strzeminski Academy of Fine Arts in Łódź. The title of the dissertation: *Light as a leaven of art, inexpressible pulsation and vibrations of contemporary jewellery*. Supervisor: prof. Andrzej Boss, reviewers: prof. Andrzej Szadkowski, prof. Jerzy Ginalski

Master of Arts, 1999, The Faculty of Textile and Fashion, The Strzeminski Academy of Fine Arts in Lodz, diploma in Jewellery Studio, promoter: prof. Andrzej Szadkowski
The title of the master's collection: *"One likes those that are similar to fire, without being it" (Pliny the Elder "Natural History") - the amber jewellery collection*, a diploma with distinction

History of employment:

From 2016 head of the Department of Jewellery at the Strzeminski Academy of Fine Arts in Lodz

From 2013 until now employed as an Assistant Professor at the Strzeminski Academy of Fine Arts in Łódź, at the Faculty of Textiles and Fashion, at the Department of Jewellery and as the head of the Enamel Studio.

From 2004 employed as a teaching assistant at the Strzeminski Academy of Fine Arts in Łódź, at the Faculty of Textiles and Fashion, at the Department of Jewellery and as the head of the Enamel Studio.

From 2002 until 2004 worked on a commissioned contract as an academic teacher at the Department of Jewellery at the Strzeminski Academy of Fine Arts

Other professional experience:

2003 - 2005 - design internship at the Design Office "Wzornik" in Milanówek

2002 - design internship at the Torrini jewellery company in Florence, Italy. The duties included: designing a part of the Torrini collection for the spring / summer 2003 season

2000 - 2004 - work at Medical Magnus in Łódź. The duties included: designing interior furnishings, supervising the stylistic and historical compatibility of interior renovations, projects regarding the company's image

Selected artistic achievement:

In accordance with formal requirements, I indicate a collection of jewellery presented during:

1. Individual exhibition "Jasna strona. Biżuteria "at the Artur Rubinstein Philharmonic in Lodz, Narutowicza St. 20/22, February 12th - February 28th, 2016
2. Individual exhibition "Jasna strona. Biżuteria "at the Open Gallery in Sandomierz, Rynek St. 2, March 12th - April 10th, 2016
3. Individual exhibition "Światło-Cienie" at the Yes Gallery in Poznan, Paderewskiego St. 7, March 8th - April 5th, 2018

as aspiring to fulfill the requirements defined in Art. 16 Paragraph on the Act of 14th March 2003 concerning academic degrees and academic titles as well as academic degrees and academic titles in the field of art (Dz. U. nr 65, poz. 595 ze zm).

'Whiteness is the usual colour of light' - Isaac Newton (1643-1727)

Artistic jewellery items, while referring to, dialoguing and confronting with the human figure, not only have a profound impact on the sight of the wearer and the observers, but also affect their other senses. The touch of the material from which the jewellery is made stimulates tactile senses, and the sound made by some adornments affects the hearing. Very often, jewellery provokes some sort of repetitive movements - turning a ring or a bracelet around helps to relieve the stress; stroking a pendant involuntarily with one's fingers becomes an almost imperceptible movement to the person performing it; sometimes, squeezing an amulet gives a sense of security. My jewellery encourages another kind of behaviour. Made using various electronic components, it gives a possibility to 'play' with light by directing it to different parts of the surrounding, emphasizing the cut of one's clothes, or illuminating one's skin and hair with light reflections. At the same time, it is the fulfilment of my life-long passion of observing the world; I love materials which can be illuminated or even overexposed. The white light that I use in most of the presented works becomes a fleeting ephemeral component in their structure, contrasting with even the most delicate woven silk threads used in the elements that conceal and cover it. In contrast, the delicate fibres acquire immensely physical, sturdy features, due to the fact that the viewer views them as dark shadows highlighted from below. The illumination of transparent crystals shows their imperfections, which for me are the most interesting elements in their internal structure: cracks and inclusions, which, again, are almost invisible in normal lighting conditions, here become extremely pronounced, tantalising with unusual shapes suspended inside the crystal or breaking the light, splitting it into many colourful flares. The variety of materials used for illumination encourages to compare their temperature; the cold surface of the crystal invites us to compare its feel with the 'other coldness' of the glass or metal element. The soft silkworm cocoons encourage touching and shaking of the hidden and partially illuminated fragments of dried larvae, while the spheres created with my own hands, made of different fibres, not only effectively hide the luminous elements in the objects, but also become a story about the fineness of connections, about the translucency of the irregular mesh and about the soft fabric-like structure. The exclusive use of white LED lights in the collection was a conscious decision, on the one hand spurred by the desire to limit the incentives already so incredibly diverse thanks to the variety of backlit elements, while on the other, by an intention to order the whole collection by providing a frame of juxtaposed lights and shadows. However, as Kandinsky so movingly said: 'White acts on our soul like absolute silence. Its inner resonance is the absence of sound [...] It is not a dead silence, but pregnant with possibilities. White is like silence that can be suddenly understood. It is a 'nothing' full youthful joy, or rather 'nothing' that precedes the great birth, the very beginning of things.'¹ It is this 'silence full of understanding' that I needed to analyse all kinds of structures, sometimes as subtle as the cracks in the crystal.

My collection of luminous jewellery presented at three expositions is a set which lives, changes over time, adapts to the needs of the exhibition space, and expands with new works. Up to

¹ M. Rzepińska, *Historia koloru w dziejach malarstwa europejskiego*, Warszawa 1989, p.557

a certain point, I stuck to the idea that all the works should be luminous using electronic components to achieve this effect. However, the latest experimentation prompted me to use new materials, which, though not obviously shiny, thanks to their transparency have become a continuation of the artistic story of light that has been a part of my artistic career since my PhD that kept developing, changing and encouraging me to seek for new challenges and fascinations with its extremely diverse nature.

In my career as jewellery designer, my interests in specific materials have come and gone like waves. I began, while still being a university student, by including applications of translucent paper into my goldsmith projects: Japanese tissue paper with silk fibres. This material made its appearance in the pendants inspired by the structure of Chinese kites exhibited at the 2016 Legnica Silver Festival. Silk fibre was also featured in the works shown at three exhibitions of glowing jewellery. The colour, present throughout my work both as an artist and educator, has been appearing in my jewellery repeatedly thanks to my favourite goldsmith technology: stoving enamel. Amber, similarly, has been the theme of my dissertation collection made in 1999 at the Jewellery Workshop of the Academy of Fine Arts in Łódź, and then kept returning as a constant theme in my works. All these materials have one feature that is probably most closely bound to my artistic work: to some extent they represent my fascination with light. The transparency of the Japanese tissue paper, delicate forms woven out of combined silk fibres, the possibility to backlight the transparent enamel surfaces, or the 'fire' smouldering with the colours of amber elements tickle my creativity, stimulate imagination, and does not let me stay indifferent. This is in some way connected with my favourite, perhaps a little childlike and surprised and curious, attitude towards the world that is most inspiring: an attempt to illuminate each material which makes it possible to gaze into the depth of it.

Most of the works exhibited at three individual exhibitions: in the Łódź Philharmonic in February 2016, in the Galeria Otwarta in Sandomierz in March 2016, and in the Galeria Yes in Poznań in March 2018 were unusual for the traditional goldsmithery, since it needs electric power in order to fully present its aesthetic qualities; either by connecting it directly to the power supply when at an exhibition, or supplied with battery power. All of these works, however, may be worn until the battery is discharged. Thus, they are not purely exhibition jewellery.

In order to introduce light to my projects, I used modern technologies that are already present in my works as part of my dissertation collection. LEDs, fibre optics and fibre mats are used here to emphasize the exceptionally beautiful complex structures of my spheric-like elements, made from different types of natural fibres and yarns, which exist thanks to the cocoons of the silkworm larvae or the nets of cracks and natural inclusions within the crystals. The role of the light, shaded and covered to varying degrees, here is different from my previous works; there, it was a substance in most cases - the material from which the works were created (especially in case of my dissertation collection), while here it brings out from the materials their original properties, which for me are of particular aesthetic value. This is also another attempt of mine to study the peculiarities of that special property of light which Paolo Targetti wrote about in the preface to the album 'Light Art': 'This long search for the dimensions of poetry and innovation, which started many years ago, has led me to imagine a light that contaminates art, as a palette for expressing sentiments and resentments, impulses and vibrations that cannot be expressed in traditional pictorial

expressions.² It is my great wish to be able use the light present in the collection to give every work and every project the values otherwise impossible to be discovered. For me, light is a substance whose materiality is often underestimated. One of the outstanding creators working within the circle of light art claimed that his main role is to restore the materiality of light, a feature so often neglected.³ In my works, I try to treat the light with a similar attitude.

Created for the needs of my PhD dissertation exhibitions, the collection can be divided into several groups of objects according to the type of materials used. The first, perhaps the most basic, is a group of large, scaled seven brooches made of various fibres formed by means of glue into groups of spherical or partly spherical shapes. Thanks to adding small white LEDs, they were highlighted from the inside. Some of the shapes forming the brooches remained dark. To create the spheres, I used natural unpainted silk fibres of white and cream colours, soy fibres, ramie (or China grass) and incredibly subtle threads woven from multi-coloured fibres that leave a shimmering rainbow glow. Groups of solids are placed on primers of transparent Plexiglas, since I wanted to avoid a visual increase in the brooch weight. The first choice of the material used to create these forms was silk. The fragile fibres, in fact translucent due to their subtlety, not treated with any colouring substance, beautifully unfolded on the spheres formed by the adhesive medium, creating structures that, thanks to their organic appearance, brought into mind the tissues of living organisms, with their complex system of blood vessels, nerves and membranes forming internal organs. At the same time, their tenderness caused the forms to unfold gently, while slightly deforming, which made them reflect living tissue even more. These associations, obviously, are only purely sensational; it was not my intention to copy any structures of living organisms. Rather, I'm more inclined to some impressions or suggestions, as Jacqueline Ryan, a prominent designer, once said: 'My pieces are intended to narrate impressions from the natural world'⁴. In the collection of the Targetti Foundation there is a work by Vittorio Messina, in which he backlights thin plates of alabaster. The resultant interesting structure, which here also seems to be organic, is quite similar.

I used silk in the form of natural combed fibres called raw silk and schappe. My work featured mulberry silk, otherwise called the Bombyx silk and the tussah silk, or wild silk. These fibres differ from each other both in colour and softness. The mulberry fibres are lighter, and their colour is greenish with a gentle jade-coloured cast. While being darker, wild silk is often even dark grey, so it must be bleached before any staining. It is also much coarser than the extremely soft and smooth mulberry silk. The Chinese often compare the silk of the silkworm to the skin of a child, and the tussah silk to the skin of an old man. These differences in colour and elasticity of the fibres used influenced both the colour of the obtained spheres as well as the method for the fibre arrangement in the coating structure. The soft mulberry silk is quite difficult to paste accurately, since its thin fibres tend to slip away, creating a thin shell around the sphere. At the same time, the resulting tissue is soft enough so that the changes in the shape of the mulberry silk spheres are larger and more pronounced.

My experience with silk fibres inspired me to look for other plant fibres, whose worsted yarn can be used to create similar thin and partially transparent structures. During the experiments,

² A. Barzel, *LightArt. Targetti Light Art Collection*, Mediolan 2005, p. 34

³ *Ibidem*, p. 40

⁴ R. Bernabei, *Contemporary Jewellers. Interviews with European Artists*, Oxford New York, 2011, p. 186

soy and ramie fibres worked best for me. Both materials were thin and flexible enough, and easily weavable in the glue structure, although the differences in softness, thickness and length of individual fibres caused them to unfold quite differently over the net created on the spherical shells. The colours of these materials were an interesting complement to the range of colours of my objects: soy gave the brooch a slightly golden shine, while the warm white of ramie fitted perfectly into the palette of natural tones. In my search for the finest natural fibres, I encountered a yarn called the 'sari silk' which consists of remnants of already painted natural silks that remain after weaving the decorative fabrics for sari costumes. Although I did not manage to create out of them structures that would be transparent enough, the effect of multi-coloured fibres inspired me to use rainbow-coloured cotton and polyester threads which are also suitable as an element of luminous jewellery thanks to their shining effect. What distinguishes them from the natural fibres is, however, their complex structure and constant thickness. Hence, the brooch may resemble 'Cotton balls' lamp cords popular some time ago, although the resulting spheres are certainly more transparent and delicate.

These brooches are often interpreted as objects located on the border of jewellery and weaving items, although it is only the material used that links them to a fabric. It was a fascinating creative experience for me to observe how the tenderness, softness and thickness of the fibres affect the way the light shines through the structures that they form.

This group of objects is linked to the two other groups. The first is a group of three brooches whose shape resembles flower calyces. Here, I also used silk and soy fibre, though giving them an open shape and weaving thin flexible fibre-optic cables into their structure. Thanks to the small diameter of the optic fibres, I was able to combine these two materials. Simultaneously, the addition of optic fibres hardened the glue and fibre surfaces so that they were less likely than the previous ones to deform. The soft shapes were embedded in silver frames resembling fragments of stalks. Thanks to the use of white LEDs, they have the ability to shine, but here the light is channelled by means of the optical fibres, focusing the viewer's attention on most luminous points at their ends. The resulting effect resembles flowers growing in an imaginary magical garden. For the purposes of exposition, each of them was placed on a black stand, which provides contrast and emphasizes the light emitted by the diode. However, each of the brooches is fit for wearing on the human body - all of them are equipped with a clasp made of silver and steel and can be powered by 1.5 V batteries. Such a portable power source is enough for several hours of lighting and allows to use the luminous brooch as an extravagant addition to a dinner outfit. It follows from my own experience that this 'addition' becomes an essential element of the human figure and effectively attracts the attention of the audience, especially during events held in darkened spaces. Certainly, these projects are not intended to be worn every day due to their large size, but, according to one of the biggest creators of modern jewellery, 'there is this crazy thing about jewellery that in a traditional sense it has to be a small thing that you can easily wear it, but I make a distinction between something that you want to wear as a nothing, and a kind of daily thing that you have more of an emotional connection with, and then you have a piece that you wear because you really want to communicate something. [...] The latter is the kind of jewellery that you feel and maybe you wear once in your lifetime, or twice,

and you have a fantastic moment.⁵ I always hope that the design of my jewellery is for the wearer such a 'fantastic moment', even if it is associated with impaired comfort.

My interest in natural silk fibres prompted me to use silkworm cocoons as jewellery components. Minute, oval, visually soft, although in fact quite hard, the shapes give an impression of fluffiness thanks to the fibres' ends which, if not held back, surround them with a subtle halo. The silkworm cocoons I use are works of *Bombyx mori* -their clean, although warm whiteness is beautifully highlighted by the white light of LEDs. Unfortunately, the use of this material is linked with the lack of comfort in terms of the ethics of design. In the closed cocoons that I used, the dried larvae of the dead insects were still present. To be honest, every act of cutting through these oval shapes caused concern and some remorse because each time cocoons were shaken, I could clearly feel there was something inside. For thousands of years, rearing these animals intended to produce valuable fibre is unfortunately morally ambiguous. To obtain a thin and long (often 1.6 km long) silk fibres, cocoons along with their content, that is, almost mature moths, undergo a softening process consisting in alternating hot and cold baths used to dissolve the adhesive substance that maintains the cocoon shape and hardness: sericin. Unfortunately, this process cannot be skipped because if the larvae are hatched, the fibre will become much shorter and weaker. My moral confusion that I experienced when using these elements led me to an interest in the possibility of employing cocoons of already hatched moths in my works, that is, without the pupae inside. I hope my next projects using silkworm shells will be more environmentally friendly.

The installation of LEDs in the cocoons made it possible to obtain softly glowing shapes that contrast with the solid structure of the metal. Undoubtedly, the design of the two brooches and the necklace was inspired by the story behind obtaining the silk; the silver forms were meant to resemble parts of branches from which the insect shelters are hanging. Thus, it was my intention to leave some surfaces with a matte metal structure - without polishing, they better resemble organic forms. The brooches and necklace obtained this way are enclosed in white frames, so that, apart from adorning or interacting with the human silhouette, they can manifest their beauty and the autonomy of their shape. These works have been featured in many collective exhibitions because their form and method of display are so attractive that they often encourage discussions about the autonomy of jewellery forms and their universality as works of art.

Another group of works consists of two necklaces and four brooches, in which I used fibre-optic mats to illuminate mountain crystals in the form of cracked corals: small, slightly deformed cubes, large cubes of unmodified internal structure, large and smaller balls and oval shapes (this time not only from a completely colourless crystal, but also from a slightly darker smoky quartz). The last object of this group is a necklace in which optical fibres braided into mats illuminated baguettes of transparent colourless plastic and elements of light-reflecting plastic used in conspicuity markings of bicycles and other tourist equipment. Although this group of works mostly alludes to the way the light was featured in my PhD dissertation collection (even then, I used fibre-optic mats to highlight jewellery elements), the different effects obtained thanks to the light refracting in different structures keeps encouraging me to further research and artistic attempts.

⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 59

Focusing only on the white light and, in fact, the lack of colour in the illuminated materials demonstrates that even a monochrome approach can impress with the multitude of solutions and reveal the hidden beauty. Putting electronic components, silver, and stones side by side in one piece was the reason for an unconventional approach that is deemed far from the traditional jewellery approach to some of the materials. Fixing the longitudinal crystal shapes by binding them to a soft transparent elastic band (beautifully shining in the light radiated by the brooch), and using the material from which safety reflectors are usually made, was intended to be a nod and a wink to the viewer to show that the illumination of stones and materials is a kind of play, a continuation of the childhood fascination with the world.

At the same time, this group of objects in the collection is linked to the other groups by means of references to weaving techniques and to fibres, yet in a slightly different manner. Thin flexible optic fibres of plastic braided in mats form pieces of flat, shiny fabrics. On closer examination, in some of them the weft and warp fibres can be seen; sometimes these elements are multiplied and the fibre optic fabric consists of several layers - then, the whole structure is more rigid. Previously, I have been using different versions of these mats, for example in the works presented at 'The Eye' exhibition in Telsh, Lithuania. Then, I presented brooches made of extremely thin mats consisting in fact only of the warp fibres fixed by gluing them to a thin base of soft plastic. Thanks to the flexibility resulting from the thinness of mats, I was able to shape them into more spatial forms. However, in the collection of luminous jewellery described here, the mats became the basis, or the background and the canvas, on which the subsequent scenes of the story of light and transparency are played out.

Each of the exhibitions of the jewellery collection which I would like to examine as the main postdoctoral work was a little different, although most of the objects were exhibited at all expositions. The first, the exhibition at the Łódź Philharmonic in February 2016, made references to my previous works by the presence of photos from my PhD dissertation collection. Exhibiting the photographs seemed to match the nature of the interior of the Philharmonic building in which the works were displayed. The presence of high glass display units for concert posters inspired me to use the memories of my past and to make a symbolic 'farewell' to my doctoral collection. Located in a high spacious hall, the glass showcases multiplied the light reflections emitted by the exhibited works, while the possibility to view the objects from different sides helped the overlapping lightscapes to create additional effects, joining individual items in groups and revealing their relationship to each other. By radiating the light, the inconspicuous small items filled the monumental, elegant interior surprisingly well. For me, coming from a family with a musical background, the awareness of the presence of yet another art behind the wall - the sounds of instruments - exceptionally complemented the artistic space of the works. While arranging the exhibition, I kept repeating to myself a mysterious answer of one of my favourite jewellery designers Giampaolo Babetto, who, when asked whether there was a connection between his work and music, said that he was sure there was, but he could not tell exactly what kind of connection.⁶

At the same time, I had problems with the appropriate arrangement of the works in the quite large and spacious lobby of the Philharmonic. My works are more impressive when presented in

⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 51

dark rooms where the light they emit does not have to compete with the lights illuminating the exhibition space. In addition, there was the problem of using the power supply not to illuminate the showcases themselves (which I wanted to keep dark for obvious reasons), but one or more works inside them. Unfortunately, in a room where lots of people move around - not necessarily to see my collection, but also, for example, to go to a concert - it was difficult to arrange the network of cables and connections. Thus, the entire exhibition was a combined result of content-related, aesthetic and also technical solutions (finding the best way to exhibit the works in this particular environment). To solve the technical problems I was facing, I had to rely on the support of specialists, while all the decisions concerning the design and structure of the exhibition belonged to me. Looking at my works now, I have a conviction that it is not only the collection that is my artistic work, but also the way it is exhibited, which in this as in other cases, should be well-thought-out because of the special circumstances that surround the exhibited objects. I am proud of a few exposition ideas and, above all, the decision to make the exhibition at the Łódź Philharmonic as simple as possible. Thanks to a well-planned arrangement of the showcases with the largest brooches which were facing the stairs used by the viewers to enter the hall, the effect of multiplication of luminous spheres intrigued and suggested a unity of this part of the collection. The use of simple but lockable showcases (indispensable in an unmonitored space) did not prevent from emphasizing the exceptional luminous effect of my works; what is more, by arranging them properly, it was possible to make use of the light enclosed in their shadow to attract and intrigue the audience.

The next exhibition was a presentation in a completely different, although a very special place for jewellers and designers: the cosy Galeria Otwarta, located in Sandomierz, which is a true goldsmiths' temple. Supervised by Mariusz Pajęczkowski, a master goldsmith of an elder generation, the gallery has become a place of a lively discussion over my projects. Contrary to popular belief, it did not only touch upon the question 'is it possible to wear?' since even sceptics believed, after a relevant demonstration, that the small battery normally used in watches is enough to power my works for a few or even a dozen hours. The supporters of the traditional approach to art jewellery discussed the essence of light as the material for creating works of art. The discourse, started by myself within my PhD dissertation collection, has kept continuing throughout recent years in case of most of my exhibitions. And while the light was not the only material used to create the jewellery objects, unlike in my doctoral collection, yet it coexisted with materials widely recognized as 'goldsmithery materials', always raising doubts and provoking questions.

In 2016, the Galeria Otwarta in Sandomierz was a place very crowded by objects associated with handicraft and commercial jewellery as well as different kinds of 'peculiarities'. Its atmosphere reminded me of extraordinary museums, where the shoe of Jadwiga, Queen of Poland and examples of fossils lay next to some elk antlers and a dry crocodile skin. This seems to be, however, the specific characteristic of this charming city - anyone who visited the House of Długosz (the Diocesan Museum in Sandomierz) has remembered it as an old-fashioned but charming cabinet of curiosities. Thus, organising the exhibition required not only arranging the power supply and coping with the small size of the exhibition section of the gallery, but also became a peculiar possibility to study how modern lighting technologies work in the context of the charming crowded Sandomierz atmosphere. Here, the light also did the trick during the vernissage: with the gallery lights turned off, the objects glowing in the dark became engaged in interplay with the outlines of wicker baskets and elk antlers. It was only during the post-vernissage banquet that the lights were turned on and the

differences between commercial jewellery and the one presented at the exhibition were visible. Then, I was showered with questions.

While laying no claims to be a rebel or a stereotype-breaker who rejects conventions, the atmosphere of a small-town traditional gallery prompted me to defend the idea of using light in jewellery, though illumination and sparkling has been ever-present, important and necessary in jewellery. Moreover, I was not the first to use electric light in jewellery art. Nevertheless, the cosy atmosphere, the charm of the evening at the Sandomierz market square, and the group of real enthusiasts around me (who had a different view on art and jewellery from mine) left me with warm memories of the exhibition and the vernissage night.

The experience gained in the creation of these two exhibitions was used while working on a major project as part of my work as curator and creator of the exhibition entitled 'Lena. Helena Kowalewicz-Wegner i łódzka szkoła projektowania biżuterii'. Here, together with the other curator - Sergiusz Kuchczyński - I had to create a presentation based on jewellery created throughout the 60s, 70s and later and confront it with the interior in the Art Nouveau style, where the main role is played by antique decorative stained glass windows, stairs with an organic wooden railing and abundant textile window decorations. According to audience, we have coped quite well with this difficult challenge.

The need for power supply rather complicated the problem of my jewellery exposition and was for me a source of concern, spurring the need for implementing additional creative and space-arrangement procedures, which resulted in a longing for jewellery closer to traditional forms. Hence, the introduction of new objects into the latest exhibition. Being the artistic result of my scientific research, the works combine a variety of transparent and reflective mediums, ranging from noble materials to plastic, and seem to be a harbinger of the next creative turn in my oeuvre. At the same time, they inscribe into the discourse of light and shadow: their varied degrees of transparency along with their reflective surfaces bend and multiply it, making them perfectly complement the collection during the last of the exhibitions discussed. The exhibition included a cycle of three brooches made of thermally moulded transparent plastic decorated with gold flakes and elements of polished brass and silver, a cycle of three necklaces made of transparent plastic and silver, rock crystal and white glass and a necklace made of plastic, brass and stone. I made all of these works as a result of my research project entitled 'Creation of unique model forms of clothing, shoe and jewellery accessories', carried out since 2016.

The exhibition at the Yes Gallery in Poznań had a special atmosphere, because of the specific mood of this place. The works presented in the basement room entered into play with the existing lighting decoration. The brick vaults of the room dimmed all the remaining lighting (which was very limited for my exhibition). The exposition created a new, mysterious reality of lightness in the atmospheric gallery. The photos from the exhibition also demonstrate that the varied shades of white light (warm and cold ones) can interact with and complement each other in intriguing ways. My works shine with a cool white tone, while the decorations containing the gallery logo (a symbolic image of a crystal and gallery name) are rendered in almost yellow, warm light shades. Nonetheless, each and every element coexisted with one another perfectly well during the event. The exhibition in the Yes Gallery was entitled 'Światło-Cienie' ('Light and Shadows' or

'Chiaroscuro') - hence the third element of this luminous puzzle: the shadow, which, hiding in the nooks of the room, contrasted with the presented objects. On the Yes Gallery's blog, Alicja Wilczak wrote: 'This is not an art designed to shock. A kind of calm, softness and contemplation emanates from it. Each of the objects can exist in the context of not only being a body decoration, but also the interior. Some of the artist's works are exhibited in frames so as to emphasize their universality. Their essence is light which requires a contrast: darkness. Thus, their environment is their integral part. All this makes up a unique mood of mystery, elusiveness and understatement.' While looking at the exhibited photos, I thought of their resemblance in terms of the mood to the paintings of George de La Tour who also used light to add some theatrical mystery to the mood of his works.

The Yes Gallery is principally a place designed for the presentation of jewellery, art and currently perhaps the most prestigious place for its display in Poland. Closely linked to a company that not only sells commercial jewellery in many showrooms around the country, the gallery also supports Polish designers by using their projects and including them into its collection under their names. It is also a place created under the supervision of Magdalena Kwiatkiewicz, one of the few patrons of artistic jewellery in Poland and the owner of the biggest collection of this type of jewellery in the country. Last year, I had the honour to participate in the collective exhibition that celebrated the 25th anniversary of the Gallery, and I feel honoured by the fact that my work also belongs to the mentioned collection.

During my doctoral defence, one of the members of the Faculty Council said that it seemed to her that I only touched upon the problem of light in jewellery. And I have no doubt she was right back then - although I thoroughly analysed the topics of reflective jewellery and jewellery made solely from light, trying even to incorporate electrical and chemical light into my methods of making jewellery, the theme is so incredibly vast and fascinating that I still have a sense of my research being insufficient. In the collection that I would like to present now, the light helped me to demonstrate my passion about the transparency of different materials, to expose their originality and uniqueness as well as the changes in the meaning of errors and imperfections, which, if properly illuminated, become advantages. Its creation and exhibition is a great adventure, with each of the stages being a challenge for me and an opportunity to learn new techniques, but also to take up the intellectual and creative effort. I believe that apart from the objects themselves, their three highly original presentations also made parts of these works. All in all, I am not entirely certain if I am still attracted to using electric light in my works; as I mentioned, I feel tired of having to change the projects for long-term exposition in galleries, adopting the battery connection system to the main power supply, and, above all, tired of the need to spend much time on installing the presentation due to the need to provide a power connection. However, I am captivated by colour and its diversity; I am sure that my next research will be connected to colours. However, my work is also associated with light, therefore, I do not think I will be able to avoid any references to this topic.

I also have a feeling that the time spent on the creation of this collection and on its exhibition has been a special period in the development of my career. Since 2016, I hold for the position of Head of the Department of Jewellery at the Academy of Fine Arts in Łódź, and, in addition to some mundane duties related to it, it has brought me a sense of responsibility for the

education of young creators and their proper development. Although this role does not leave too much time for my own creativity, I am aware that all my project activities should be combined with the observance of the traditions that the Department represents, but also with efforts to maintain them at the highest possible level.

Description of the remaining artworks

Previous solo exhibitions that have taken place since I earned the degree of Doctor were presentations of works that were parts of my doctoral collection. Especially important for me was the exhibition accompanying the Festiwal Światła (Festival of Light) in Łódź which took place in 2012 in 'Irish Pub', 77 Piotrkowska Street. The event, although crowded and of commercial character, but revolving around the theme that was my basis of creativity already back then, gave me a sense of community with artists who create works related to light. A rather illusory community, however, given the fact that the other artists tackled much larger and more monumental forms - among them were performers, sculptors and street artists for whom jewellery, as a small form closely related to the human figure, is quite far from their interests. This encounter with street art gave me an impulse to act in two different organizational areas related to my scientific activities, which I will describe further.

White and coloured light also finds its place in some of my works shown in many collective exhibitions which took part in the period from 2011 to 2019. In 2018, I had the honour to take part in an exhibition organized to celebrate the 100th anniversary of Poland's Independence by the Art Gallery in Legnica. Among the exhibited objects was a necklace of my collection illuminated by coloured LEDs. The necklace, inspired by street art 'No art no life', was exhibited during the Legnica Silver Festival in 2014. A year later, brooches glowing with white light were exhibited as part of the exhibition accompanying the International Jewellery Symposium 'The Eye' organized by the Vilnius Academy of Fine Arts in Telshi, Lithuania. During the workshops held there, I created another luminous brooch later exhibited in the galleries of Vilnius, Klaipeda and Kaunas. Works from my PhD dissertation collection were presented during a 2012 solo exhibition 'Woman in the Big City' in Łódź, and later the same year in the collective exhibition 'Integrations. Jewellery Department & Guests' at the Municipal Library in Tomaszów Mazowiecki. It was also a great pleasure for me to exhibit several of my works at the second edition of the exhibition 'Common Point of View' in the Galeria Otwarta in Sandomierz in 2013, among works by other graduates of our Academy's Jewellery Design Department. I have a special fondness for this exhibition, as I was tasked with authoring its graphic exposition - I designed the poster, invitations and a small information folder about the exhibition.

Immediately after my doctoral programme, I had the opportunity to present works from the collection created for this event during two international exhibitions that were important events for our Department. In 2011, the photo shoot documenting a session during which I created light

jewellery on a human model, along with some of my reflective objects, became part of the exhibition at the Vilnius Gallery AV17, and a month later, of a beautiful exhibition at the Waidpeicher im Kulturhof Krönbacken Gallery in Erfurt, the last of the exhibitions organized to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Jewellery Design Department at the Łódź Academy of Fine Arts.

Another material that has inspired me in the last few years in my creative explorations was amber. Thanks to the initiative of the Museum of Amber in Gdańsk (a part of the Gdańsk Historical Museum) which in 2016 acquired two of my works: one of my Master's thesis object made from amber and 'Pierogi z Bursztynem' ('Amber Dumplings'), created for the 2004 Amberif competition, and thanks to extensive cooperation with the International Amber Association of Poland, I reached for this material once again, after some years. In 2018, I created another version of 'Amber Dumplings' for the 'Trendbook 2018' exhibition and publication and exhibited a necklace made of amber and a chain of laser-cut leather elements as part of the 'Exhibition of the Teachers of Jewellery Department of the Łódź Academy of Fine Arts', organized at the Amberif 2018 International Fair of Amber, Jewellery and Gemstones. Over the years, my fascination with the uniqueness of amber led me to create amber objects that are opposed in character to the usual 'amber souvenirs' sold in gift shops while also differing from the objects found at commercial seaside art galleries. What is more, working with this raw material is a pleasure for my senses: polished amber gives off a pleasant fragrance, while its warm touch, so different from many other stones, gives a sense of contact with an exceptional kind of material. For me, an element of surprise is also important; I tend to process amber blocks on my own, which often enables me to discover its beautiful insides or inclusions, often unexpectedly. I am also fascinated by the diversity of amber: the possibility of using its many colours and levels of transparency.

In 2012, I was invited to participate in the exhibition 'Amber: Not at the Baltic Sea Exclusively' organized by the Museum of The Earth in Warsaw and the Polish Academy of Sciences. The works exhibited there were from my PhD collection, and since the exhibition was refined to the smallest detail, enriched with brilliant scientific studies and demonstrating works of unique past and contemporary artists, the participation was for me a privilege and an honour. The fascinating materials accompanying the exhibition showed the history of amber and its use in design and art throughout centuries. My amber works also took part in a series of exhibitions 'Designed in Poland' organized by the Polish Chamber of Commerce and exhibited in Barcelona and Brussels in the years 2011 and 2013.

Apart from the light itself, and, in fact, as the consequence of its use, what is extremely important for me is the aspect of colour. I am fascinated by the old-fashioned techniques for its inclusion into the works of jewellery; especially dear to me is an old traditional method of stoving goldsmith's enamel. Thanks to the Enamel Studio led by myself at the Jewellery Department, I was able to revive the forgotten goldsmith techniques and popularise it among the young Polish jewellery design artists. Each time I can demonstrate a work made with this technique, I am always very pleased; last year, the invitation to participate in the 8th exhibition of the 'Miniatures' series held under the title 'vertical layout/diagonal layout' enabled me to show two of my works made using stoving enamel. This is especially an interesting task for those who, being familiar with the

history of this technique, know that stoving enamel, although considered an exclusively jewellery method, in the past often served to decorate altars and paintings.

Organization of exhibitions

As a teacher at the Academy of Fine Arts in Łódź, I am obliged to organize exhibitions of both student works and achievements of the Department's academic personnel. This duty is particularly relevant now, as I have been the head of the Department for two and a half years. Therefore, it is with enthusiasm and, I must say, with pride and pleasure, that I try to promote the achievements of all designers of the Department, at the same time presenting its history and past.

The largest and perhaps the most time-consuming event that I have organised in recent years was an exhibition at the 'Willa' City Art Gallery in Łódź entitled 2016 'Lena. Helena Kowalewicz-Wegner i łódzka szkoła projektowania biżuterii'. Together with Sergiusz Kuchczyński PhD, I was a commissioner for this exhibition, for which Mariusz Andrysiak designed an exceptionally beautiful catalogue. The exhibition was aimed to present the figure of Helena Kowalewicz-Wegner, who was the creator and the first teacher of jewellery design at the State Higher School of Fine Arts in Łódź, which later became the Academy of Fine Arts. Thanks to a detailed analysis of the collections of the Central Textile Museum in Łódź, the archives of the Academy of Fine Arts in Łódź and the City Historical Museum of Łódź, we were able to create an extremely rich presentation of the works by Lena Kowalewicz-Wegner, by her colleagues and assistants, and by her students of jewellery design. The archives provided us with great numbers of photos concerning the beginnings of the Studio: diplomas and works of the first students, first employees and the studio's modest equipment. It took us long hours to browse through the documents found in the archives of educational institutions and museums describing the stages of the artistic and educational activity of Professor Kowalewicz-Wegner, as well as the constant transformations that her studio was undergoing. Thanks to our effort, the exhibition very accurately documented the Professor's development throughout the 60s and 70s of the 20th century, while the richly featured exposition showed the achievements of her earliest students. The exhibition, presented in an exceptional art Nouveau style interior of the 'Willa' Gallery, enjoyed great popularity, and the accompanying catalogue gained very favourable reviews. With passion for history and, however modest, expertise in terms of the theory and history of art, I was tasked with writing a biography of the artist to be included in the catalogue, which I did with great pleasure.

All the research work that preceded the exhibition left me with several conclusions which I often share with my students and fellow researchers: the assumptions that accompanied the creation of Small Art Forms Design Studio in 1959, which is 60 years ago, are still extremely relevant. In spite of the time passed, we still think about jewellery design in similar terms, presenting similar conclusions to our modern audience. The great difficulties faced by the Professor, both in terms of material availability and scarcity of tools and machines, had hardly any impact on her the works created fifty or sixty years ago: they are still extremely relevant, not to say... modern. Lena Kowalewicz-Wegner's beautiful sketches, though impossible to demonstrate to a wide audience due to the fragility of paper and the medium used, have enchanted us with their ingenuity and, again, a

distinctly contemporary design. For me, discovering the fact that it was a woman artist that originated the jewellery design specialization at the University was a rewarding experience. This fact was very uplifting during the challenging beginnings of my work as the Head of the Department.

The exhibition was accompanied by even more interesting events. Soon after the opening, as part of the 'City Jewellery' Scientific Symposium there was an extremely interesting lecture by Professor Andrzej Jocz, who was one of the first assistants to Professor Kowalewicz-Wegner. The following year, the Yes Gallery in Poznań invited us to organize the exhibition 'PokoLenie' ('Generation of Idlers') which also made references to the origins of the Studio. The opening day was also honoured by the interesting lectures by Professor Andrzej Jocz, and longtime head of the jewellery Design Studio and creator of the Jewellery Department, Professor Andrzej Szadkowski.

Another exhibition which I organized, entitled 'Wystawa prac pedagogów Katedry Bizuterii ASP w Łodzi', was held in March 2018 to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Amberif Exhibition in Gdańsk and was accompanied by a small but interestingly decorated catalogue by Mariusz Andryszczyk.

Presentations of student works are also an extremely important part in the development and promotion of the Jewellery Design Department. As lecturers and educators, we try to show their achievements in all of the renowned art galleries in Poland, as well as at international events, if a possibility arises. Every year, we present student thesis collections designed at the Department's design studios in the Yes Gallery in Poznań as part of the cycle of exhibitions entitled 'Dyplomy' ('Theses'). Often, the expositions are presented once again in other galleries: the Gallery of the International Amber Association in Poland, and occasionally, in the Galeria Otwarta in Sandomierz and the Art Gallery in Legnica. At the Academy of Fine Arts in Łódź, the theses and other works of students are presented during the Łódź Young Fashion - a cyclical international event organized by the Department of Textile and Clothing Design. For many years we have been exhibiting the works of our students during the Amberif International Fair of Amber, Jewellery and Gemstones in Gdańsk. Such a presentation is not only a great reward for the young artists, but also an opportunity to be introduced to potential employers as well as the artistic environment. Each of our students has an opportunity to show their works and learn how and where to exhibit their jewellery.

The study of work presentation often begins with student exhibitions in The Galeria Złota located at the Department. These small exhibitions are usually accompanied by great emotions, as the fact of the first exhibition of student works tends to be a breakthrough experience for the young designers. In 2015, I held an extensive exhibition of the works of students of the Enamel Studio at the Galeria Złota. Its innovative component was the simultaneous exhibition of projects and inspiration boards created by the master programme students. Thanks to this form, other students could trace the design path that their colleagues took and compare it to their own working methods. The exhibition presented a fraction of the works created in the Studio during just one semester, since I wanted all the students working with me to be able to present their achievements. I also wanted to give them an opportunity to compare their projects with the works of their colleagues.

As a long-standing curator of the 'DyploMy' exhibition, I organised the 2018 edition in the Yes Gallery in Poznań, a presentation of the thesis collections in the Vocational Handicrafts School in Katowice, the 2017 edition of 'DyploMy' in the Gallery of the International Amber Association in Gdańsk and the 2016 edition in Poznań. The long-term cooperation with the Yes Gallery also resulted in an interesting exhibition, which I had the pleasure to create together with Sergiusz Kuchczyński, concerning the childhood memories of our students: (Dzieciństwo' ['Childhood'] held in 2017). The works presented at the exhibition were later sold for charity to help sick children.

For me, as the curator, the most interesting thing are exhibitions presenting the works of Jewellery Design faculties of different schools. At this point in time, I was the curator of two particularly interesting exhibitions: in November 2014 I organized a presentation 'Bijuteria wczoraj i dziś. Technologie tradycyjne w spotkaniu z nowoczesnymi' ('Jewellery yesterday and today. Tradition meets the present') in the OdNowa Gallery of the ASP in Łódź. In addition to the works of students of the Jewellery Department, the exhibition featured projects of students of the Telshi branch of the Faculty of Jewellery Design at the Vilnius Academy of Arts, and in 2017, as part of the Łódź Young Fashion, I co-organised the 'Differences/analogies' exhibition, during which we presented Polish works together with the works of students from Bulgaria, Lithuania and Israel. Such exhibitions are not only an opportunity to compare achievements, but also an opportunity to discuss the future of jewellery design, the methods of knowledge transfer and of the perception of modern design in different places on earth and through different cultures. Meetings with educators and designers from different countries allow seeing and comparing the different cultural contexts in which we create, but also open up for new challenges. The fruit of such meetings are also frequent co-organized events: symposia, discussion panels and conferences.

Symposia and conferences

In years 2011-2019, I participated as a speaker in two scientific symposia on modern jewellery and co-organized one of them. The first event was the 'The Eye 2015 Telsiai' International Symposium organized by the Telshi branch of the Academy of Fine Arts in Vilnius, in which I participated in the scientific conference entitled 'The Eye: We See and Cherish', the exhibition 'The Eye 2015' and the conference workshop 'The Eye: the Determinant from Image and Thought'. At the conference, I made a presentation on 'Tricky pleasures - Eye-Deceiving Jewellery' and participated in the presentation of the Jewellery Department of the Academy of Fine Arts in Łódź. The result of this inspiring meeting with designers and educators not only from Lithuania, but also from different European countries, was a series of exhibitions presented in many cities of Lithuania, Poland and the UK that provoked animated and long-standing discussion while maintaining the creative spirit of the symposium.

In 2016, the Jewellery Department hosted the next Symposium, this time dedicated to 'urban jewellery'. I co-organized the event together with Professor Andrzej Boss and worked on its creation with other Department employees. Next to a number of presentations, the Scientific Symposium 'Urban Jewellery' also featured some related events: an exhibition of MA theses

collections of students of the Jewellery Department of ASP in Łódź in the OdNowa Gallery, and the exhibition 'Bizuteria Miejska. Wystawa Katedry Bizuterii i Wydziału Rzeźby i Działań Interaktywnych Akademii Sztuk Pięknych w Łodzi' in the hall of the Łódź Philharmonic, a discussion panel dedicated to the status of modern art jewellery, and an interesting curator-guided tour of the exhibition 'Lena. Helena Kowalewicz-Wegner i łódzka szkoła projektowania bizuterii' at the Łódź City Art Gallery preceded by a lecture of Professor Andrzej Jocz. The Symposium was attended not only by many representatives of European design, but also by owners of galleries or popularisers of knowledge about modern design. I am convinced that the lively discussion held and the resulting conclusions will be remembered for a long time not only by its participants, but also by the observers. At the Symposium, in the presentation part, I gave a lecture on 'Location and identification - street art and jewellery's common problems'

Research activities

The last eight years have also been a time of my intense research. In 2013, as team leader, I carried out a 'Study the differences in textures and openwork designed in the Matrix program depending on the type of object surface made using a 4-axis milling machine and a 3D printer'. With the study completed in 2015, a year later I began working on 'the Formation of unique model forms in accessories, clothing, shoes and jewellery'. The artistic effects of this study were presented during the exhibition 'Światło-Cienie' ('Chiaroscuro') in the Yes Gallery in March 2018. Very technological and innovative, the first study employed the latest technologies and equipment, thanks to which we were able to develop various methods of finishing objects created in 3D design programmes. In case of the second study, being conducted by myself only, in addition to using unusual technological solutions, I could pay more attention to artistic effects. In 2018, in collaboration with the University of Medicine (Faculty of Pharmacy) in Łódź, together with Marcin Nowak, also a lecturer at the ASP in Łódź, I participated in a study conducted to create jewellery that protects against mosquitoes and ticks. The project was intended to study the possibility of introducing an insect repellent into the jewellery objects designed by us. The study was completed in January 2019.

Educational activity

The role of educator in art education is a very special role. On the one hand, an opportunity to share the passion that stimulates your own development is a great privilege. On the other, such educational activity requires sharing your own creativity, sensitivity, and perception of art - in my case, it is jewellery. Having been involved in art education for several years now, not only at the higher education level, I find these activities greatly rewarding, while sometimes being plagued by

questions about the extent to which I should dedicate myself to teaching. The second driving force of my pedagogical activity is the desire to help sensitive young designers. I myself have often been the victim of my oversensitivity and have faced problems due to the lack of guidance from my teachers, lack of support or incentives to act. It is crucial for me to use this experience in my teaching methods. I would like to encourage the timid and oversensitive students; I believe in the power of praising and words of support. I try to support students, teenagers and children I meet in many of my classes in the search for their individual ways, in gaining a bolder look at their own design methods and at the art itself. When educating them about rules and principles, I point to the sources and roots of our view of art, and while requiring familiarity of these topics, I always add that the most important thing is to find one's own way of designing jewellery, even if it demands crossing the borders and breaking the rules. I encourage to try and experiment, even if it involves a risk of failure. I believe that without such explorations it is difficult to create something fresh and really captivating.

The last few years and months of my teaching career at the Academy is associated with students belonging to three different studios. The first and the most important is the Enamel Studio which I have been heading since 2004 and which functions according to my original programme. The technique of stoving enamel fascinated me during my studies at the Academy of Fine Arts, when, as part of a student exchange in 1999, I had the opportunity to study at the Faculty of Jewellery Design of the Technical University of Lahti, Finland. Compared to the rather poor technological reality of the Polish educational institutions at that time, the well-equipped Design Department made a great impression on me, and the number of methods and techniques related to jewellery design possible to study there was quite intimidating. I was struck by the Enamel Studio led by Professor Esko Kopponen, in which the infinitely patient and gentle Professor showed and explained how to include colours into jewellery using this technique. Unfortunately, a month-long stay was too short for this rather complex jewellery technique. After defending my thesis at the ASP in Łódź, thanks to a scholarship from the Italian government, I went to study in Florence, where I spent six months improving my skills in the field of stoving enamel technique under the supervision of an experienced jeweller and educator, Giuseppe Mirulla, at the Metallo Nobile School of Jewellery Design and Technology. The experiences I gained there, often mentioned by me to my students, have encouraged me to believe that openness to new stimuli and curiosity about the world do bring new opportunities that may often change one's artistic and life plans. I am also a supporter of travelling by young designers, of changing the places of study, even for a short time and taking advantage of the experiences of different teachers. Each educational trip demonstrates new opportunities and opens up new perspectives for art.

Since its inception, the Enamel Studio in the Jewellery Department at the ASP in Łódź has greatly favoured the technology and project-related aspects of design. In addition to knowing the technical details of the enamel craft, which are indispensable due to the sheer complexity of the technique and the need to use complex machines and tools (stoves in which the enamel is fired to 800 degrees Celsius), I tried to showcase the possibilities that this technique offers which are very attractive especially in the context of modern design. The colour appearing in jewellery along with the introduction of enamel into projects grants new means of expression, new compositional and design possibilities. The training programme in the Enamel Studio, until recently available from the second-term students up to the first year students of the master's programme, was based on a

general introduction (lasting about one semester) into the technology, and after that, a presentation of increasingly complex design challenges aiming at enriching jewellery with different aspects of colour and a discussion over the individual tastes of the project participants. The initial design tasks were usually simple inspirational exercises that gained in terms of complexity, which demanded experience and engagement from the designer. In the master's degree programme, students worked on three artistic and design problems, while the main focus was on the design path - collecting inspirations, sketches, exploring the material possibilities and analysing the technical aspects of the projects. Only after these steps had been taken, we jointly decided on which the proposed projects would be realised, and the students created the objects by themselves. The subject of the assessment was not only the completed object itself, but also the inspiration boards and sketches collected throughout the semester. During an exhibition of student works of the Enamel Studio at the Galeria Żłota in the Academy of Fine Arts in Łódź, together with a group of first-year MA programme students we presented these boards in the form of an exposition. Since the issue of documenting the design path and the problem of presenting projects to potential customers was the first contact of the students with such problems, the exhibition constituted the first attempt to show this part of the work of a jewellery designer in the Department.

In case of the undergraduate programme students, they received several design topics to choose from during each semester. All of them were revolving around the topic of colour, emphasising its role in the design. Thus, I wanted to attract the future designers' attention to colour in jewellery, to interest them with current changes and trends in the world art (hence, the frequent references in the study topics to other artistic areas), but also to encourage to reach for various source texts relating not only to jewellery, but also to art history, psychology, philosophy or sociology. It seems to me that the discussions with my students, concerning common problems in the field of aesthetics, or even touching upon design ethics, left traces in their works. In my opinion, it is impossible to be a conscious designer without an interest in the problems of the modern world.

The sensitivity of my students to colour, which is so necessary in painting or printing on fabric, has repeatedly led to the emergence of extremely complex colour designs. Works by Patrycja Włoch, with their subtle and refined colour palettes, are proof to her extremely mature perspective on the world of colours around her. The strong-coloured brooches of Sandra Bejm originated as the result of her experiments to combine enamel with glass beads used in the cosmetic industry. A collection of brooches entitled 'Czerń' ('Blackness') by Magdalena Lamch is the effect of her reflection about the nature of black and its perception. Often the works of my students are classified by professional jewellers as 'not entirely connected to jewellery'. Sometimes, they are placed at the border of painting, installation and jewellery.

At the same time, in my academic work, I pay a lot of attention to the accuracy of the student project realisations and a careful finishing of the exhibited objects. While understanding that not all of my students will work on such individual projects in the future, I think that paying attention to quality should become a standard in their professional practice.

Despite my passion for enamel techniques, I have always tried to present each of them to students only as a means to achieve their own design goals. Enamel is just a technique that allows introducing colour (in a peculiar and attractive form) into a design, but not a goal in itself. Often, enamel content in the final realisations of students is rather low; sometimes it is one powerful colour accent, attracting the attention of viewer with its shiny surface or transparent depth,

sometimes it is covered by other materials, with only a flash of light on the shiny surface to reveal its presence (e.g., rings designed by Małgorzata Terka).

In 2018, by the decision of the Council of the Faculty of Textiles and Clothing at the ASP in Łódź, the Studio became fully project-oriented. Thanks to this decision, BA programme students have the opportunity to realise their thesis collections there. According to the assumptions of the curriculum, all technological inputs and outputs will now be presented to them during separate lectures, while the Enamel Studio will offer them opportunities to design interesting colour jewellery.

The ultimate objective of my efforts when it comes to changes within the Studio is to create an opportunity to learn about different ways of including colour to jewellery projects. Colour can appear in projects through the introduction of a variety of materials, traditional goldsmithing technologies, modern methods of metal painting, but also unconventional use of randomly found elements.

The works that tackle the topic of colour and technology in a way that represents well my attitude towards it are objects by Patrycja Zalejska, a first-year MA programme student. In 2018, she produced a set of small form jewellery, using peeled-off fragments of enamel coating of industrial pipes, which features multi-layered colour overlays. The material used by the student resembles a multi-coloured stone, an unknown mineral that is extremely intriguing not only for amateurs but also for professional jewellers.

The works created in the Enamel Studio were awarded at the annual Władysław Strzemiński competition entitled 'Project'. The winner of the main award of the 2017 edition was Wojciech Wałęsa who was awarded for a brooch created in my Studio. Previously, main awards were given to, among others, Magdalena Lamch and to Michalina Owczarek in 2010.

Given the long absence of one of the teachers of our Department, I was offered to replace him and, for a year and a half, I conducted classes as part of the Goldsmith's Design Studio with BA programme students. What this demanded of me was to work effectively in a strictly defined reality that was previously created by someone else. I challenged myself not to lose all the good and interesting propositions which the previous teacher adopted while trying to enrich the programme with a little different approach to design. What is more, I wanted to show the students how capacious the concept of 'goldsmithery forms' is and that it can be a new start for the young artists of today accustomed to use the English words 'design' or 'set' instead. For three semesters, we followed a programme that required a slightly broader view of the traditional goldsmith's design. We looked for references to the roots of jewellery; we built objects that, in addition to typical jewellery functions, could still perform other tasks; we carried out task-oriented designs - created works intended to respond to the challenges created by external institutions outside the Department. Thus, interesting series of objects were created that used scattered amber beads; acclaimed award-winning works published in a catalogue promoting the latest trends in jewellery; interesting projects participating in competitions for the best product packaging for a high-profile cosmetics company. We have also developed projects that deal with some disturbing and controversial topics. I was surprised to see how much influence my approach to design had on the students' perspective, and I am glad of this, because I am convinced that I have familiarised for them a somewhat old-fashioned but extremely capacious and widely-disputed concept. At the same time I am sure that I managed to

maintain the basic assumptions this studio followed along with the rules and good practices of design and an excellent level of technical performance.

While being proud of the popularity of the Academy of Fine Arts in Łódź and the Faculty of Textiles and Clothing among foreign students coming to Poland thanks to the Erasmus programme, their time at our Department was somewhat problematic. The attractiveness of a new subject and the ability to learn to process metals during a short scholarship period (usually a semester, rarely two) encouraged students who did not have any experiences with the technology to come to us and try to perform technologically complex projects. Since it was dangerous for them, as well as for the machines and tools used in the Department, a few years ago, the then head of the Department requested me to launch a course intended specifically for Erasmus students. For four years now, the 'Introduction to Jewellery Design' teaches international students at our Department about the fundamentals of jewellery design and gilding techniques. I teach this subject in English. During one semester, I carry out a few simple projects with students to introduce them to the world of jewellery techniques, and in addition, I carry out one really design-oriented project that uses their skills from other fields and technologies and most often draws on their impressions of Poland and Łódź. The results of these students are very different. Some do not go beyond simple attempts to create traditional decorations and schematic designs. This is probably due to problems with coping with a whole range of new skills and knowledge, or the (sadly frequent) lack of language skills (not everyone speaks English to the extent that would allow them to communicate freely). However, over the past few years there have been a few persons really worth distinguishing whose works I presented at many exhibitions, as well as those whose adventure with jewellery design continues even after they return home. Working with them is a pleasure and, I must say, a benefit for me. In recent years, I have expanded my skills not only in terms of language, but also by means of daily contact with people who look at design from a completely different perspective due to cultural and ethnic differences.

In the period 2011 - 2019 was the main supervisor of one MA thesis, the scientific director of one theoretical part of another MA thesis, the supervisor of two BA students' theses, and also a scientific director of another BA thesis. This accumulation of functions is due to the fact that I was acting as a replacement for partially finished thesis collections. I've also written dozens of BA and MA thesis reviews. I believe that one of my successes is the fact that the ASP graduates whom I encountered after a few years claimed that my review of their thesis gave them support in moments of doubt and was a driving force for their activities. Among the most interesting works that I helped to promote as the supervisor are the collections of Izabela Kędzior, Weronika Skalska and the dissertation of Małgorzata Geisler.

In addition to teaching at the higher education level, I also have experience with two other types of popularization activities: at the level of school children and adult beginners. For several years, I have been cooperating with the Children's University of the Arts which is a common initiative of the ASP and the Łódź Philharmonic. Previously, I conducted similar seminars as part of the 'Young Artist Academy' at the ASP in Łódź. My classes 'Not only gold glitters', 'Discovered treasures', 'Indian jewellery' or 'Baroque' resulted not only in beautiful projects made by underage authors, but, above all, in smiles on the faces of children and their belief that jewellery design is

'cool'. I hope that after a few years, some of these very young artists will study at the Academy. However, even if their interest stays only at a hobby level, I will feel happy and satisfied. I try to show the children that art, design, and galleries are things and places worth their interest. Working with kindergartens and schools, I often show children and teenagers around the exhibitions at the ASP while discussing interesting issues in the field of art and jewellery design. I am a supporter of early age education and I believe that in this way we can effectively influence the level of interest in culture for the society. Such activities give me great satisfaction and joy.

I have also conducted a number of enamel technique workshops for adults as part of the open courses held at the ASP in Łódź during the open days, the festival of Science and Art in Łódź and the Łódź Young Fashion event. Each of these events was very popular, as evidenced by the persons reappearing as participants in my workshops.

Recent years have been extremely active for me both professionally and educationally, which also required a huge organizational effort from my part. Evaluating this period from a (still rather short) perspective, it seems to me that I was much more involved in creativity and education than before my doctoral studies. I am convinced that this period is also the next step for me to become a more conscious and responsible designer and a period of many discoveries and creative challenges.

Olga Rulpińska-Kryńska

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