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ONE HUNDRED YEARS OF TEACHING ARTISTIC  
DISCIPLINES AT THE FACULTY OF ARCHITECTURE  
AT THE WARSAW UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY –  
THE WARSAW SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURAL DRAWING

STO LAT NAUCZANIA DYSZYPLIN ARTYSTYCZNYCH  
NA WYDZIALE ARCHITEKTURY POLITECHNIKI  
WARSZAWSKIEJ – WARSZAWSKA SZKOŁA  
RYSUNKU ARCHITEKTONICZNEGO

Abstract

This year we celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Faculty of Architecture at the Warsaw University of Technology. We would like to have a look at the term of the Warsaw School of Architectural Drawing that has been known for many years. It is present in the environment of the Warsaw architects and the graduate architects from the Warsaw university, however, does anyone use that term outside this group of people? Is the uniqueness experienced by us during plain air sessions, drawing exhibitions and celebrations at the Faculty of Architecture of the Warsaw University of Technology a fact or only our wish? How the Workshop of Drawing, Painting and Sculpture at WAPW was created and developed? These and other questions, after a hundred years of existence of the Faculty of Architecture at the Warsaw University of Technology need an attempt at answering.

*Keywords: architecture, drawing, painting, sculpture, school*

Streszczenie

W tym roku obchodzimy 100-lecie Wydziału Architektury Politechniki Warszawskiej. Pragniemy zmierzyć się z funkcjonującym od szeregu lat pojęciem Warszawskiej Szkoły Rysunku Architektonicznego. Funkcjonuje ono w środowisku warszawskich architektów i architektów, absolwentów warszawskiej uczelni, ale czy ktoś nim się posługuje poza tym gronem? Czy wyjątkowość, którą z pewnością przeżywamy podczas plenerów, wystaw rysunkowych i uroczystości na Wydziale Architektury Politechniki Warszawskiej jest faktem czy tylko naszym życzeniem? Jak powstała i rozwijała się Pracownia Rysunku, Malarstwa i Rzeźby na WAPW? Te i inne pytania po stu latach istnienia Wydziału Architektury na Politechnice Warszawskiej wymagają podjęcia próby odpowiedzi.

*Słowa kluczowe: architektura, rysunek, malarstwo, rzeźba, szkoła*

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## 1. The Genesis of the School

This year we celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Faculty of Architecture of the Warsaw University of Technology (WA PW). We would like to have a look at the term of the Warsaw School of Architectural Drawing used in the environment of Warsaw architects for many years now. Is the uniqueness experienced surely by us during plain air sessions, drawing exhibitions and celebrations at the Faculty of Architecture of the Warsaw University of Technology a fact or just our wish? In what way the Workshop of Drawing, Painting and Sculpture at WAPW was created and developed? These and other questions, after the one hundred years of existence of the Faculty of Architecture of the Warsaw University of Technology need an attempt at answering. They need answers that require discussion and over which we should stop for a moment.

In 1914 the painter Zygmunt Kamiński presented at the exhibition of the “Young Art” association in the rooms of “Zachęta” a cycle of drawing and aquarelle studies from Rome, Venice and Kazimierz. He earned interest of the environment of Warsaw architects. In autumn 1914, at the initiative of the university students of architecture who were not able to return to their universities due to the outbreak of World War, architecture course at the academic level were created. Teaching of drawing at those courses was entrusted to Zygmunt Kamiński in recognition of his artistic achievements. In the same year, the Society of Higher Scientific Courses and Association of Technicians (Towarzystwo Wyższych Kursów Naukowych i Stowarzyszenia Techników) appointed committees whose aim was to create Polish higher schools in Warsaw: the University of Technology and the University.

In 1915 Zygmunt Kamiński received, with the mediation of Rudolf Świerczyński, an order to develop a curriculum for teaching drawing at the planned Faculty of Architecture. Following consultations with Rudolf Świerczyński and Tadeusz Tołwiński, the program presented by Zygmunt Kamiński to the committee of the Circle of Architects, was approved. In the autumn it was introduced to instruction at the Faculty of Architecture and its author started to run drawing classes at the newly created university.

## 2. Warsaw School Of Architectural Drawing – Creative Personalities

In the middle of the 50's of the XX century, at the Combined Faculty of Drawing, Painting and Sculpture (Katedra Zespołowa Rysunku, Malarstwa i Rzeźby) under the direction of prof. Zygmunt Kamiński, lectures on descriptive geometry and perspective were conducted by the Assistant Professor Zbigniew Chwalibóg, Ph.D., classes in perspective drawing were conducted by the Assistant Professor Eugeniusz Szparkowski, M.Sc. Also at that time the Faculty, apart from the professors named above, included assistant academic workers, senior assistants: Edmund John, Henryk Dąbrowski, Jan Szymański, Karol Żarski, Barbara Rzepkówna and assistant deputies: Andrzej Kaliszewski, Tadeusz Linkowski and the faculty lab assistant Z. Baniecka.

This period of the School's history brought fundamental changes in the program and led to the appearance, in the consciousness of the environment architects, of the style identity of a drawing created at the Warsaw Faculty, the term of the Warsaw School of Drawing

was created. From the beginning of the Faculty's existence numerous students, who later became assistants and lecturers, went through. A specific relay of generations has been one of the basic features of the school in which teacher finds the most talented students who substitute him after some time and become teachers themselves. At this point we should name Jan Zachwatowicz, the assistant in the years 1925–1931, Stefan Sienicki (at the Faculty from 1930 till the war years), architects: Kazimierz Marczewski, Leon Marek Suzin, Jan Knothe, Marian Walentynowicz, the illustrator of „Przygody Koziołka Matołka” (*The Adventures of Koziołek Matołek*) by Kornel Makuszyński, the artist-graphic designer Edmund John, and also the architects already mentioned above: Eugeniusz Szparkowski and Zbigniew Chwalibóg; and finally, another generation of architects – the above mentioned students: Henryk Dąbrowski, Andrzej Kaliszewski, Barbara Rzepka Orzeszek, Ludomir Słupcański, Jan Szymański, Karol Źarski. From the beginning of the School's existence one more characteristic feature of that School appeared. The learning instructions were developed uninterruptedly, built on consecutive creative individualities, masters and students of the School. So, the term of the school should be basically associated with concrete persons who have formed it independently from the structural changes of the school or forms of employment of the WA PW academic teachers.

### **3. Strengthening Of The Term Of The Warsaw School In The WAPW Environment – The Features Of The Drawing Created In The School**

In 1974 Henryk Dąbrowski, Ph.D. became the manager of the Department of Drawing, Painting and Sculpture. The new manager immediately started to develop the School's structures. The teaching was strengthened – the team of teachers conducting classes in perspective was joined by the architect Adam Sufliński. In 1974 Henryk Dąbrowski, Ph.D. led to engagement of a sculptor Bronisław Kubica and a young painter Franciszek Maśluszczak and architect Andrzej Nodzykowski, and simultaneously introduced separate classes in sculpture and painting. During that time the Department staff included: Jan Szymański, Ludomir Słupcański, Andrzej Pańkowski, Adam Sufliński, Andrzej Nodzykowski, Janusz Towpik, Franciszek Maśluszczak, Bronisław Kubica.

The end of 70's and the 80's is the period of strengthening of the School with a stable composition of the team. Students' drawing excursions which were organized from the time of establishment of the Faculty of Architecture, in the beginning of the 70's gained the status of obligatory student plain air sessions after the first year of studies. For over twenty years drawing and painting plain air sessions were organized in Białystok, Supraśl, Tykocin, Białowieża, Toruń and Lublin as the obligatory element of the learning process included in the curriculum, and associated with the development of the ability to understand the real space and the complex context of architecture. Also at that time, as a result of activation of the student's environment, various initiatives appeared, among others a group of students was formed who established the scientific circle. A lot of independent plain air trips, beside the obligatory ones, were organized. Students traveled to Tykocin, Malbork and to the Mazury, to Napiwodzko-Ramucka Forests. Although the obligatory plain air sessions were stopped, a spontaneous students' plain air movement continued. The tradition of plain

air sessions was born in 1915, in the first days of existence of the Faculty of Architecture of the Warsaw University of Technology and has continued in that form till the present time. We owe it particularly to the activity and devotion to organization of plain air trips to many places in Poland and Europe by our colleague, the architect Ryszard Rogala.

In 1990, after the amendment of the law on higher schools due to the possibility to preserve independence by the School, the Department of Drawing, Painting and Sculpture was renamed to the Workshop of Drawing, Painting and Sculpture, an independent teaching and research unit. At that time the Workshop, apart from prof. Dąbrowski, included: Ludomir Ślupeczański, Andrzej Pańkowski, Włodzimierz Karczmarzyk, Adam Sufliński, Ryszard Rogala, Władysław Fuchs, Mirosław Orzechowski, Franciszek Maśluszczak and Bronisław Kubica. In 1992 based on his creative achievements, prof. Dąbrowski was granted the full professor title. In 1994 a team of the Workshop architects under the direction of prof. Dąbrowski started studies collecting the teaching and research accomplishments of the Warsaw School of Drawing.

From the mid 90's structural and curriculum changes of the School have continued reaching so far that as a result of a drastic limitation of the number of classes the School starts to look for new forms of teaching preserving, however, the best work methods and topics.

In 2000 prof. Dąbrowski retired. However, he continued to conduct seminars for senior students. Architect Adam Sufliński, a student of Karol Żarski and a long term associate of prof. Dąbrowski, became the manager. The workshop at that time was composed of: Adam Sufliński, Henryk Dąbrowski, Ludomir Ślupeczański, Andrzej Pańkowski i Włodzimierz Karczmarzyk oraz Ryszard Rogala, Mirosław Orzechowski, Michał Suffczyński, Franciszek Maśluszczak and Bronisław Kubica.

Transformation of the organizational structure of the Faculty of Architecture was not without effect on the place of the faculty in the hierarchy of teaching units. In the beginning of the 2000's the Workshop of Drawing, Painting and Sculpture was merged with the Institute of Modern Architecture (Zakład Architektury Współczesnej) forming the Department of Architecture and Modern Art (Zakład Architektury i Sztuki Współczesnej) under the direction of Professor architect Lech Kłosiewicz.

More changes in 2006 have led to the establishment of an Independent Workshop of Drawing, Painting and Sculpture (Samodzielna Pracownia Rysunku, Malarstwa i Rzeźby). After the sculptor, professor Bronisław Kubica and the painter Franciszek Maśluszczak retired, the sculptor Marcin Nowicki and graphic designer, painter Radosław Jan Balcerzak and architect Joanna Pełkowska were transferred to the teaching team of the Workshop.

In 2013, as a result of another organizational reform, a new unit was established, the Department of Architectural Heritage and Art (Zakład Dziedzictwa Architektonicznego i Sztuki) with an autonomous Workshop of Drawing, Painting and Sculpture, whose manager, following the retirement of arch. Adam Sufliński in 2014, became architect Mirosław Orzechowski, Ph.D. The inevitable process of total organizational improvement of the school and implementation of digital techniques of record, made it necessary to modify the teaching program of artistic disciplines first of all towards finding a man as the subject of architecture.

The teaching team of the Workshop, due to the multithreading of the goals of teaching and the teaching needs at present is composed of persons employed by the Faculty full-time

and on the basis of freelance assignments. The team includes: the team manager Mirosław Orzechowski, Ph.D. in Architecture, Michał Suffczyński, Ph.D. in Architecture, Joanna Pętkowska, M.Sc. in Architecture, Ryszard Rogala, M.Sc. in Architecture, the sculptor Marcin Nowicki, the graphic designer, painter Radosław Jan Balcerzak, and also retired prof. arch. Lech Kłosiewicz, Włodzimierz Karczmarzyk, M.Sc. in Architecture, and Adam Suffliński, M.Sc. in Architecture.

The School preserved its classical method of drawing formed in the 60's of the previous century consisting of building of the drawing structure showing all edges, both the visible and invisible ones, and the lines, axial, cross-sectional, etc., emphasizing the space of the drawing through graphic contrasts and line saturation.

#### **4. Reflections On The School Character**

The continuous changes which have been characteristic for the last twenty years, have led to the appearance of doubts relating the validity of teaching drawing. More and more frequently we encounter lack of understanding for the essence of drawing in the profession of an architect. Strangely enough such doubts are mentioned by some of our colleagues architects. Such opinions are surely formed under the ongoing expansion of new media and the new formula of entrance examinations to our Faculty of Architecture. Availability of the tool which is the computer, easy operation, no necessity to make effort and the effect of aesthetic printout attract and create a magic attitude towards that tool. Whereas, the formula of the entrance examination which requires only a drawing based on imagination following reading of a specific text shapes the market of schools preparing the candidates for studies. Young people are taught on the basis of copying the instructions and re-drawing of photographs. In this way they only learn some graphic tricks allowing to obtain effective works without understanding the essence of the drawing which should be a record of creative thought. As a result, in majority of cases we enroll persons who are skilled at using the computer and an aesthetic prosthesis of manual drawing. Taking into account the scarce number of hours devoted to teaching drawing we face a dilemma whether we should put forward academic requirements or just work with the most talented persons and in this way shut out 99% of students, try to teach from the foundations or maybe just try to root out bad habits originating from the time of preparation for studies? The answer is not obvious. Our present programs and activities most probably need to be reconstructed thoroughly and adapted to the requirements of the modern times.

Our school has a grand future and through its representatives and a small group of talented students fights for the survival. The active operation of the students' research circle, development of the art of plain air aquarelle, the efforts associated with the modification of the teaching program form the present character of the School. Preserving professionalism of architectural drawing, treated as the language expressing the idea of the project comprehensible both in the environment and outside it is one of the basic tasks faced by the School representatives. It is an obligation to defend painting and sculpture classes, giving an opportunity to the future architects to meet other disciples of visual arts and to have an insight into other ways of creative vision and thinking; the aim of it is to care for

the preservation of the minimum level of culture of our students. The School at present faces these, and many other tasks. We can say that we undergo a specific period of *storm and stress*, we consider this time to be a non-dangerous and transitory administrative changes and civilization generation changes which are a real challenge. Exchange of opinions, views and methods can be an enlivening stimulus for the School's operation. Sometimes putting forward difficult questions and making attempts at answering them can be very helpful in finding proper formulas of activity, both within the school and on the level of inter-university, plain air contacts in Poland and all over the world. The question relating the existence of the School is justified. The answer can be provided only from the outside. Therefore, the question should be made on the occasion of a meeting of various Schools.

### 5. Conclusions

Zygmunt Kamiński was 26 years old when he organized teaching of drawing for architects and he cooperated with his peers, his students on the program and formula of classes. It is the key for the reconstruction of the proper formula of teaching the discipline of drawing for architects. This, maybe, concerns not only our School but also many other teaching units in this part of Europe. We should hope that similarly like in the case of making a project in a difficult location due to particularly difficult conditions of the modern times it will be possible to build a new good and durable *architecture* of the Warsaw School of Architectural Drawing.