

Lodz, April 2019
Dr Joanna Jaśńska-Koronkiewicz, Lecutrer
Państwowa Wyższa Szkoła Filmowa, Telewizyjna i Teatralna
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SUMMARY_OF PROFESSIONAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Information on directions of activities,
interests and intentions in artistic and didactic work

Master of Arts degree
At Director of Photography & Television Production Department
Animation Films And Film Special Effects Specialisation
PWSFTviT im. Leona Schillera In Lodz
Lodz, 18th of December 2003.

Doctor of Arts degree
Conferred by resolution of Department Board of Photography & Television Production
PWSFTviT im. Leona Schillera In Lodz
Lodz, 21st of January 2011.
Doctoral thesis - *Dies irae i Ballade – my search for a motion picture in music*

Employed by PWSFTviT im. Leona Schillera In Lodz
At Director of Photography & Television Production Department
Specialisation on Animation Films And Film Special Effects Faculty
Animation Films And Film Special Effects

- Assistant Lecturer 2004 - 2011
- Adjunct since 2011

Polish-Japanese Academy of Information Technology
86 Koszykowa street, 02-008 Warsaw
w latach 2012-2015 employed on a contract for a didactic work
with the transfer of proprietary copyrights
for conducting a series of lectures and workshops on the Basics of Animation
for the second year of full-time undergraduate studies at the New Media Art
Department including artistic supervision of diploma films.

Since 2004 in continuous cooperation with TV STUDIO OF ANIMATION FILMS Ltd. In Poznan.

According to the formal requirement as a work aspiring to meet the requirements of art. 16 sec. 2 of the Act of 14 March 2003 on academic degrees and the academic titles, and on degrees and title in the field of art (Journal of Laws 2017 item 1789), I submit an animated film for children from the original series "Paint me a fairy tale ..." entitled:

It's Quite True

based on the fable of Hans Christian Andersen technique of painting animation directly under the camera 13:00 minutes, prod. TV STUDIO OF ANIMATION FILMS Ltd. In Poznan In 2014.

My adventure with film art and especially with animated film began with my studies at the Leon Schiller National Higher School of Film, Television and Theatre in Lodz. In the field of art and workshop I was self-taught, I was admitted to study at the age of 17 directly after the secondary school-leaving exam in the Adam Asnyk 8th High School in Lodz. Studies at the Film School were for me a revelation of the new world of artistic expression, and although the beginnings for me as "naturish" were very difficult, I immediately felt that I was finally on the right track.

Each year we finished with a promotional etude realized under the supervision of various, wonderful educators. How important for the development of students - future artists - are closed film forms, I realize now, especially when I myself become a supervisor of student films. Taking responsibility for the whole creative process, from the idea through the animation and art rehearsals, the implementation to the last assembly cuts and sound-editing are the perfect learning of the profession. And also humbleness ... Each movie allows you to face new challenges in the audiovisual field of arts. Sometimes it is more an artistic experiment, sometimes a narrative one, sometimes another exploration of various techniques or materials. Each time, however, the work concerns the whole film, everything matters. The year of work crowned with the premiere in the full projection room on the day of the exam is the moment when our student vision hidden in a celluloid tape clashed for the first time with the reaction of the audience. A moment of excitement and at the same time filled with fears. Have our assumptions worked? Will viewers laugh and move in the moments we anticipate? Will our narrative get them in? Will the film stay in memory for longer than the time of the screening?

All these questions born in the school's projection room have been with me so far and I suspect that they will not leave me until the premiere of the last movie in my life. Despite the fact that I think that one should be honest with oneself in creativity and not be guided by the perceived tastes of viewers, the implementation and directing of animated films for children, which I took up after graduation, taught me a special respect for the audience. Children are not able to pretend that they like something, they catch every mistake and every failed attempt of deception in this one big spectacle of the illusion that a movie is. Only pulling them deeply into the story and evoking the emotions can make the success being guaranteed.

After the Masters of Arts diploma, I started a continuous cooperation with TV STUDIO OF ANIMATION FILMS Ltd. in Poznań where I got to know more about the team work. I directed episodes of the series *Polish Fairy Tales* and *Fantasy the Bear*, made animated miniatures for classical music and also found my favorite niche in the form

of animated art movies for children.

A special place in my heart is taken by my own author's series *Paint me a fairy tale...*. As you can guess from the title of the series, the films are made in the technique of painting (oil paint on canvas or board) and in its assumption, the cycle is to consist of at least five adaptations of less-known fairy tales of Hans Christian Andersen. The first of them, although still unintentional, was my debut *The Flax* (2005). The success of *The Flax* led us, together with Producer Ewa Sobolewska four years later, to apply to the Polish Film Institute for the development of four more tales - *It's Quite True!*, *Ole Lukøje*, *What the Old Man Does is Always Right* and *Ida's Little Flowers*.

Currently, I have been working on *Ole Lukøje* for over two years, the premiere of which is scheduled for the beginning of 2020. Completing the third movie will finally make *Paint me a fairy tale...* function in circulation as a series, not a duet. This will be a very important moment.

In September, we plan to submit an application for the production of the fourth film, *What the Old Man Does is Always Right*. Unfortunately, this is „the beauty” of animation, that every major enterprise extends over years or decades of work. This, however, does not bother me at all, I am patient by nature and I do not set myself on quick results. As I mentioned at the beginning, each of the films, even if it is a film adaptation of literary works of the same author and is carried out in the same technique, is a completely separate story and a new challenges arise - in all aspects.

Due to the fact that my creative path, starting from my studies, consists almost exclusively of film productions, I have no choice but to come back to my beginnings, bend over each of my films, describe what I learned thanks to them and how this experience influenced my current concept of didactic work artistically and Professionally.

1. STUDENT FILMS

1.1. **EB Rams** (wordplay) - drawing on celluloid, 30 sec. Kodak color, 35 mm, production of Leon Schiller PWSFTviT in Lodz, 1999

The film was made for the KODAKA Advertising Contest for the EB beer product. A simple idea, simple art, cartoon animation with a black marker on celluloid. The set was made of creased gray paper painted with watercolors aimed at giving the film image an interesting texture and contrast to a flat drawing. The synopsis of these 30 seconds would look like this:

On top of the mountains, a goat with a ram is calling. The goat asks: „Eeee?” The ram replies: „Beeee !!!” Beer EB. "Not only for eagles" - as an advertising slogan. There was not much animation here. The whole idea was based on the simplest word play. An additional difficulty was a well-defined area - no more than 30 seconds. It was therefore necessary to think carefully about the duration of each shot to fit in time and keep the rhythm of the film.

It was my first animated film and immediately brought me the main prize in the competition in the animation category. Perhaps the beer was „not only for eagles” but this award surely gave me wings.

1.2. **Herd** - animation in loose materials, 2 min. , Kodak B&W 200 35 mm, promotional etude after the first year of studies, production of Leon Schiller PWSFTviT in Lodz, 1999

The person who exerted the most influence on my work was late Kazimierz Urbański. A great, uncompromising artist, wonderful teacher, founder of the Cracow school, father of many of the greatest creators of the Polish animation school, among others Jerzy Kucia, Ryszard Czekala, Julian Antoniszczak. He was our supervisor in the first year. For the Professor, jumping dogs, goats and lambs was definitely not what the art of animation is all about. One can risk the statement that he despised classical, depicting animation, rejecting an anecdote as the film narrative. He threw us into the deep waters of abstract, formal and simplified animation, encouraging us to cooperate with matter and listen to it. We animated salt, stripped or cut with thick cardboard shears, we drew on the so-called "prints" from breakfast paper. The theme of the exercise and the promotional film were The Elements and the thought that I have in the back of my head every time I animate is what The Professor told us - "it is not important what we see in a single frame - what counts is what is between the frames". The Professor believed that single frames from the animated film are meaningless and gain value only in sequence. He also taught us how much you can tell in the movie using sound and urge us to experiment on the soundtrack.

In the studio of The Professor Urbański, my first year of promotional animation was created and was titled *Herd*. Inspired by the movement of the horses I adore, with mangled manes and the rhythm of a gallop. I made it in black and white 35 mm tape, in salt. The horse's heads and wind-blown manes were very simplistic, but the animation and sound left no doubt that we were dealing with a raging herd. In the school sound studio, Marek Knaga recorded synchrones for me using two halves of coconut using different substrates, thanks to which the horses in the film galloped across the dirt, gravel and water.

Herd was the first film in which I began to think about the rhythm and synchronization of motion in the image with sound in a special way. The pace of the gallop imposed specific bars in the horse's animation, along with the rhythm of the whole film resulting from the editing of the shots. This first experience prompted me to make more attempts and explore the secrets of the marriage of sound with animation and rhythm and the kind of musicality of the entire film narrative.

Herd received an excellent note on the exam, thus setting me a very high bar for the subsequent years of study.

1.3. **Cello** - animation in loose materials, 3 minutes, Kodak color 35 mm tape, a study etude after the second year of study, production of Leon Schiller PWSFTviT in Lodz, 2000

The supervision over the second year was taken over by late professor Henryk Ryszka. As a Cinematographer, he presented us with a completely different approach to the narration in the animated film. While The Professor Urbański rejected the anecdote, Professor Ryszka believed that each film narration should have its punch line. In terms of technique, however, I remained faithful to salt, which fascinated me in the first year, I wanted to continue to explore its secrets.

The theme of my second year movie was musical passion. The heroine plays the cello with such enthusiasm that eventually she becomes in flames and transforms with the cello into a butterfly that flies to the "other side" of the moors. I was inspired

by the photography of Mana Ray's *Le Violon d'Ingres*. In the film, I treated the body and the instrument as one.

I started cooperation with Małgorzata Sęk, a student at the Academy of Music in Lodz, and we chose Andante with variations for cello from Max Reger's suite No. 3. It was my first attempt to synchronize the animation to the music. The implementation regime and the necessity to write a precise animation recipe became a very important foundation for me in later work with music.

At the promotional exam "Cello" also received an excellent note.

1.4. **Milenka**, cut-out + drawing on celluloid, 4 min. Kodak color 35 mm tape, a promotional etude after the third year of studies, the production of Leon Schiller PWSFTviT in Lodz, 2001

From under the supervision of Professor Henryk Ryszka I went under the wings of profesor Piotr Dumala. However, the idea for the film, as already mentioned, was born in the second year classes during the exercise of telling the story by means of a sequence of frames from the selected image. Unfortunately, I misunderstood the exercise and instead of using the details contained in *Over the city* by Chagall, I treated him as an inspiration and drew a fictional tale in the storyboard about what led to the moment when a couple in lovers glides across the sky ... As every cloud has a silver lining, history drew me into so much that I worked on it further, expanding the threads. Music has become an additional inspiration for me once again - this time the song "Oi, Divchino" by the folk rock band "The Ukrainians". Here, the Jewish atmosphere, here a Ukrainian song ... I had an inner sense that it must coexist together and I will certainly be able to realize something interesting.

I wanted to try a cut-out technique combined with drawing animation copied onto watercolor paper and stuck to celluloid. Thanks to this, the film was artistically coherent - elements of the classical cut-out watercolor painted well corresponded with fragments in which the phases of movement were animated drawings. Experiences from the synchronization of animation to the music in *Cello* came in handy in a much more complicated song to which I made a precise recipe by planning every single frame of the film. An additional challenge in the field of animation and synchronization was dancing. Following my choreography of Ukrainian folk dances, I created my own arrangements for animated characters. In addition to an excellent note at the promotional exam, *Milenka* received a lot of awards at festivals and is still very well received by children's audience.

1.5. **Dunia - There and back again** - painting on canvas, Kodak color 35 mm, 6 min., A study etude after the fourth year of study - diploma film, production of Leon Schiller PWSFTviT in Lodz, 2003

Inspired by the painting animation of Alexander Petrov, and especially metamorphic and animal shots from *Rusalka*¹, and the beautiful etude *Night* of my senior friend Danusia Mirosław, I decided to experiment in the technique of oil painting on canvas. It was very risky as I had never painted oil paints before. I perceived the diploma film as perhaps the last chance to try myself in the field of a

¹ *Rusalka* (oryg. *Русалка*), reż. Alexandr Petrov, 1997

new technique and the realization of a dream movie. The school still had a protective umbrella over me, offering funds, support for the supervisors and the opportunity to learn by experimenting and making mistakes.

Of all the techniques, I liked salt the most to that day. Moving her crystals with various types of cut goose feathers, the techniques of which Professor Urbański taught me, playing with the created forms and movement was an extremely pleasant experience. But the salt "does not like" certain things. It does not like portraits, details. It prefers freedom, abstraction, and conventionality. Not every story could be told with it. Painting offered more. More nuances of color and the possibility of creating a more realistic and fairy-tale world.

The script for *Dunia* - the dark story of a girl following the hallucination of a white horse and her faithful friend, Cat, was based on a very personal experience related to heroin addiction and schizophrenia, a person very close to me. The awareness of the contrast between people from the social Rowlands and my life on the foot of the so-called lower middle class, which only thanks to the Film School rubbed against the big world, the world of film, made a lot of confusion in my young head. At the time I was twenty-one and I had the irresistible feeling that I reached the clouds with one hand while I was submerging myself in the darkest of the abyss. Natural empathy caused that my Friend's schizophrenia became a part of myself. A disease that so perfectly combined fiction with reality that it was impossible to see the border after a while. All this condensed in me in the form of a story, referring to the oldest and the most classic patterns: Andersen and Carolla. How easy is it to escape into an illusion of promising happiness? How simple is the road leading to oblivion of any problems? Is not it that each of us sometimes wants to turn into the oblivion?

Dunia had many faces, but after many years I think that she was my most personal but unintentional self-portrait. I was tempted and dragged into dangerous and unknown realms of consciousness of life on different planes, and my fiance then and my current husband, accompanying me steadfastly on all trips to my friend, drug rehabilitation centers, hospitals and homes of isolation, was my faithful, loving Cat. And he is to this day.

2. WHERE DID I GO FROM THERE? CURRICULUM AFTER STUDIES.

After graduation, I had no doubt that in my professional life I want to continue my development as a director of animated films, screenwriter and animator. However, the moment has come to ask yourself a very important question: who exactly do I want to create films for?

When I was doing the first and second year studies, I knew that apart from the fact that I want to be in harmony with myself and present what I feel, my recipients will be professors from the university and colleagues from the course. At that time I did not think about the so-called "target audience", the target age group to which the film is addressed. It did not matter at all in college, and this issue was never really touched. Our films mixed various forms and conventions in a very free way, but more often towards artistic, "festival" and adult animation.

The third year *Milenka* was already realized in the convention of a fairy tale, which could be watched both by adults and the youngest viewers. There was pure intuition on my part - during the implementation I did not focus on the target audience. I had a piece of music, an idea for a story, adapted to it light, joyful art and only after a few years I realized that *Milenka* is the only one of my student films that I can present at the show to children.

Dunia also referred to fairy tales, both in terms of narration and general comprehension of arts, but the dark and hypnotic atmosphere meant that the film was definitely not suitable for viewers under 14 years of age.

The target audience issue I neglected so far, appeared when I started working in the profession of moviemaking.

Thanks to the fact that the form of a fairy tale was always very close to me, I easily found myself as an animated film director for children. However, I found the first experience of the editorial „censorship” of the screenplay very disappointing. Animations for children appeared then as the famous *Wieczorynka* (bedtime cartoon) broadcasted on TVP1 at 19:00 and such "bedtime cartoon" had to meet certain criteria. Its task was to mute the child before going to sleep, so there was no question of arousing excessive emotions. Both in children's literature and films, emotions were a primary matter for me, therefore, I took every attempt to mitigate the content of my scripts as almost an attack on their quintessence. Then Andersen's stories came in handy - thanks to him I started to learn how to talk about difficult things in a poetic way and more "between words" and how to counter the excess of emotion-induced sense of humor. Like Andersen, I am now trying to make the narration in my movies multi-layered, and it depends on the viewer's maturity which level will be noticed and understood. This discovery caused that my problems with editorial censorship came to an end and I did not have to give up emotional sensitivity. In the meantime, the era of "Bedtime Cartoons" ended and animated films moved to dedicated stations, thus freeing the creators from the obligation to make children asleep in front of the TV ...

Classification for a given age group, appearing in cinemas and obligatory in TV stations or on platforms like HBO or Netflix, is a phenomenon full of absurdities and a fight for as many spectators as possible. Targeting, that is the pre-production assumption for which age group we are making a movie, is something completely different to me. It is directly related to the topic and the way of presenting the problem in a way that it can be understood by children of a given age. It is more a question of approach than the lack of scenes of violence, sex or profanity, more often encountered in the cinema of actors. I believe that filmmakers for younger viewers should also be aware that they play an educational role in the broadest sense of the word. The way in which the protagonists are presented, the language they use, the relationships they enter into among themselves, is a pattern of behavior for children.

Therefore, should animated films for children be moralizing, naive and shallow? I think absolutely not. As a die-hard reader of H.C.Andersen or Neil Geiman, whose fantastic stories often balance on the border between young people and adults, I believe that films for young audiences can bring up a subjects that are difficult or uncomfortable. It all depends on how they are presented. Together with respect for the young viewer, the awareness of the stages of development of his emotionality and understanding of the world and the subtle way of parallel narration for older audiences, the chances of making the film "for children but not only" are growing.

Directing movies has something of cold calculation and intuition at the same time. We brew a mixture of our own emotions but in such a way that it has a certain impact on the viewers. We must keep both, sensitivity and distance. As filmmakers, we must also realize that the film really is generated in the mind of the viewer. All his associations, thoughts, complete the picture and our entire statement. Watching films, we automatically search in them the links with your own life and experiences. At the same time, we let the artist lead us through the "path of bread crumbs" he has designated. The final taste of the film depends on the way these crumbs are spread,

how to build the mood and lead the narrative using the deliberately chosen means of artistic expression. But what is the difference between film craft and art? I think that our Rector, professor Mariusz Grzegorzek very aptly pointed during one of the inauguration of the academic year, saying that "art does not give an answer, art asks questions".

2.1. ***Ice Mountain*** from the series Polish Fairy Tales, directed by Robert Turło, drawing technique, prod. TvSFA Poznań 2003 (work as an animator)

Thanks to *Milenka* and the award at the Alekino! festival I met Ewa Sobolewska, the head of TV Studio of Animation Films in Poznan, who invited me to cooperate with the team. During the production of diploma movie - *Dunia* - I was eager to get a small job as an additional animator on the film *Ice Mountain* from the series *Polish Fairy Tales* directed by Robert Turło. And then it turned out how little I know about professional production and classical animation. I left Poznan with no character designs and the first whole shot which I animated at home and sent to the studio, needed to be improved. The princess I animated turned out to be not holding the character design template, with completely original dentition and other joyous elements that did not match the rest of the film. I remember this time as a great lesson and I am grateful for the patience to Ewa, the team and especially Robert, who - as I learned later - corrected during night time the shots which I already improved several times. Meanwhile, I promised myself that if the fate would ever touch me with the Film School, I would try my best to give the students that knowledge, which The School did not give me.

I was an educated creator of art movies, a "human orchestra", I was able to make a movie using a piece of paper or a handful of salt. But I was completely unprepared to cooperate with the team, both as an animator and director. On the one hand, I perceived this fact as an obvious "hole in the educational program" of the School, but on the other hand, it also had a huge gap on the Film Studios side, which due to the low production level did not employ any interns, assistant directors and did not organize courses for animators. Nevertheless, I thought how it is possible that our colleagues from the Cinematography Department enter the profession without difficulty and we, the Animation graduates, are scattered somewhere and hardly anyone after studies really stays with the animation. A difficult production situation is one thing and preparation for the profession, even to a minimum extent, is a completely different problem.

According to The Professor, Kazimierz Urbański, an artistic school should educate artists and his vision of the Animation Program at the School focused primarily on an extended program of art education - with which I absolutely agree. My personal experiences have shown me, however, that learning the craft of classical, puppet and team work is equally important. Both our visions differed so much from the actual state that I dare to say that they would be reconcilable - for the benefit of students. The education program on Animation has undergone many changes over the next years, which was also influenced by technological revolutions, and its level, both in terms of art and workshop, is constantly growing year by year. I am very pleased with this fact, as well as the fact that I had a modest share in this transformation.

2.2. **The Flax** from the series ... me a fairy tale, painting technique, 13:00 min. color, prod. TvSFA Poznan 2005

Despite some realizing shortcomings, *Dunia* made a very good impression in terms of painting and animation. Professor Witold Giersz with whom I had the pleasure of meetings from time to time in Poznań, was glad that someone finally took up painting animation and often praised my work. His films such as *The Horse* or *Fire* delighted me and were an additional inspiration. Aleksandr Petrov painted on glass, professor Giersz on celluloid, I painted on canvas but apart from the visual differences resulting from the substrate and the so-called gesture and painting style, the medium which we worked with and which we animated was paint. As in the case of salt after the first year of studies, the finished painted film left me unsatisfied with newly discovered and untapped possibilities.

Luckily, Frances Osterfelt from Copenhagen came to Poznan at that time. She was looking for a creator, director and production company that would allow her to make an animated adaptation of the little-known fairy tale of Hans Christian Andersen titled *The Flax*. She brought with her the screenplay and storyboard, which she introduced to Ewa Sobolewska, and she called me asking if I would like to make a debut. And so we have started cooperation. The script was very faithful to the fairy tale, but the storybord was not very suitable for my painting technique and I drew it all over again leaving only a few shots from the previous version.

This beautiful metaphor of human life has made a great impression on me at the level of a fairytale and script but with the passage of time, I appreciate it even more and more. Andersen's fairytales are imbued with spirituality, religion and faith, but in such a universal and natural way that they escape being pigeonholed skilfully, even in the circle of Christianity. Andersen chooses both human and magical characters as well as plants and ... concepts. In this respect, it can be said that with film adaptations it is a real problem. I have had the opportunity to deal with it many times.

In the story of *The Flax*, we have a hero - a narrator who undergoes numerous transformations throughout his life. How to show in the movie that the field of plants, a handful of dry stalks, yarn, fabric, underwear, paper and flaming scary beings are one and the same person?

I decided to rely on the simplest intuition. If I was a child, who would I like to see? Who would be my hero? After asking myself these questions, I had a ready answer. I wanted my hero to be a field of flax and not one flower. It's enough. A flower that does not necessarily have to speak but definitely should be able to look at the world. I was perfectly aware that the addition of eye objects was the most popular in commercial animation and at the same time the most despised in art way of personalization. I began to design flax in all the scenes in a childish and intuitive way and it turned out that it was the right way. Characteristic eyes perfectly combined both flower and canvas or paper. Sparks were already a spiritual form and did not need such personification, their identity resulted from animation and narrative throughout the film.

An additional challenge for me was the predetermined length of the movie and narrative. 12 minutes and 30 seconds of image plus 30 seconds for final credits. I had already made films for music before, so the exact time was not so difficult. The biggest problem turned out to be a breakdown of the narrative so as to keep the balance between the image and the word throughout the film and between the blocks of the narrative itself. The story of *The Flax*, co-written with Ewa Sobolew, quoted

directly from the new, direct translation from Danish to Polish by Bogumiła Sochańska, was read by Jerzy Stuhr. In the year of the premiere of *The Falx*, combined with the 200 year anniversary of the birth of the writer, he was the Ambassador of Andersen in Poland and agreed to record the monologue of *The Falx* specially for the film. We tried to keep the balance between the descriptions of individual stages of growth of flax, but not wanting to add any lines, we had to accept the fact that some descriptions are longer and others shorter. Planning to spread the narrative of Jerzy Stuhr relative to the image in order to preserve the natural rhythm of the film was one of the most difficult tasks at the pre-production and post-production stages.

The author of the music and soundtrack was Michał Makulski. For the purposes of the film, he composed the piece for the whole picture and along with his band specializing in Irish folk music, recorded the tracks of live instruments.

During production, I was afraid that the painting technique in the animation would prove to be too difficult and tiring for children. Fortunately, my fears were vain.

Interestingly, and extremely rewarding to me, this film is does not grow old but it acquires new style and new values over time. Techniques of manual animation, directly under the camera (in this case already digitally recorded), in contrast to 2D computer animation techniques, and especially 3D, are very reliant on time.

The metaphorical form of the narrative also seems to be timeless.

Despite the very positive reception of children's viewers, I understand that only for a few children *The Flax* will be in the top ten of favorite productions. As for one, I have no doubts: as a completely different artistically and narrative, carrying different content and values - it will be remembered.

2.3. ***Dies irae*** from the series *Animated Films to Classical Music*, painting animation, 02:15 min., prod. TvSFA Poznań 2006.

In this short miniature I managed to "return to the source", to the beginning of my studies at the Film School in Lodz, to the teachings of Professor Urbański, to the theme of horses and elements. I felt an inner need to face them again - this time in a different moment of life and with new experience. For the inspiration I used part of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's Requiem, *Dies Irae*. It was a wonderful job and a great return. I could focus on visual arts, animation and not have to tell any story or put an anecdote on the film. Music gave me extraordinary freedom of expression and at the same time imposed the rhythm of the narrative. Four horses carried the symbolism of the Riders of the Apocalypse according to St. John's *Book of Revelation* and at the same time represented four elements. The first white horse was woven from the air and wind and carried the victory of the Gospel with it. Another emerged from the flames and he was a fire himself, he carried the war to the world. The third symbolized hunger, his mane and tail were water and the body was a black cloud. The fourth of them emerged from the ground like buried bones and represented Death. At the end of the song, all the horses galloped side by side straight to the viewer and then dissolved to form on the staff a fragment of the notation of the *Dies Irae*. In terms of animation, it was a very interesting challenge consisting of combining the movement of horses with the movement and dynamics of each element. In addition, the specificity of painting animation has allowed me to boldly work with the color and texture of the paint. This movie was the subject of my doctoral

thesis², in which it is described much more broadly.

2.4. ***Riddle's Dice***, ep. 11 from the *Fantasy the Bear* series, 13:00 min., prod. TvSFA Poznan 2007,

The first experience in teamwork as an animator, I had already behind me, thanks to the above-mentioned *Ice Mountain* directed by Robert Turło. This work gave me a solid technical base in classic cartoon animation. Animation of characters by someone else's projects, composition of the approach based on prepared layouts, movement planning on the animation recipe, cooperation with the director and efforts to make the shot animated according to his expectations and to mount the neighboring shots as best as possible - all these were new and difficult challenges for a newly graduated student. Finally, after a few years, it was time for the next stage of professional initiation, namely directing the episode of the series. I highly appreciate the experience of directing "under the wings" of the main director, because it greatly facilitated my directing of films from the series *Polish Fairy Tales* and fully independent cooperation with the team in the following years. In addition, the role of the director of the episode required a lot of discipline in terms of the character's compatibility with other movies in the series. The work based on the script by Ewa and Marek Karwan-Jastrzębski brought with it a new kind of difficulty - reconciling one's own vision and interpretation of the described adventures with the visions of the scriptwriters and the main director. The same was true for the set design - most of the locations were already shown in previous episodes and could not be changed. I must admit that, as a young artist accustomed to considerable freedom in the field of art and narrative, these restrictions and the need to adapt to so many requirements have also become a source of considerable frustration. I tried to make *Riddle's Dice* interesting and efficiently told, but I felt that my role was too handicraft and it was hard for me to accept it. Nevertheless, this film has become for me an excellent "school of life". I went for the first time throughout the entire production stage of the film realized as a team. From the interpretation of the script through the storyboard, not drawn for your needs only but above all for the team for which it was like the Bible. Through the layouts for each shot, created according to my directing guidelines. Contacting the animators, providing them with the purpose and vision of the shot, watching the project compliance and approving the animation - probably one of the most responsible and painful stages, especially when you had to ask for corrections or corrections of corrections... Copying and painting the animations during which they revealed sometimes serious deficiencies. Finally, the compositing stage in professional software, editing, recording dialogues and sound. I gained too much awareness of what kind of problems will be waiting for me in the next films realized in a team. Every and even smallest mistake, carried enormous consequences. Watching, for example, that props from the previous shot did not disappear so that the animator does not "forget" about any of the characters in the general plan ... Work with people, with animators each of whom had different predispositions and levels of commitment to work while also aware of own experiences from the work as animator was very uncomfortable for me at first. I missed the art movies, in which I could rule over each and every frame in person, in which there was not such a wide field for possible misunderstandings. With time,

² *Dies irae i Ballada - my search for a motion picture in music* - Joanna Jasińska Koronkiewicz, doctoral thesis under supervision of prof. Mirosław Ledwosiński, Lodz, 2010.

however, I learned proper communication and mindfulness at every stage, so that working with the team has become a pleasure for all of us. I have implemented the elements of teamwork in my courses of "Fundamentals of Animation" and "Flat Animation" so that my students have the opportunity to encounter the hardships awaiting them while still studying in the Film School.

2.5. **The Golden Apple Tree** from the series *Polish Fairy Tales*, 13:00 min, cartoon animation, prod. TvSFA Poznan 2008

The Golden Apple Tree is my next team production, but this time independent. I could choose a fairy tale for adaptation³, write a script, develop visual designs. Knowing the team and specializations of the individual animators, with the support of experienced artists from the studio, we managed to pass through the entire production stage in a smooth and good atmosphere. Tale about good Dorothy and the enchanted Cock was presented at many Polish and foreign festivals, including at the 25th Polish Film Festival in America 2013 in Chicago and gained recognition in the first place in the competition for children's artists at the 2nd National Film Animation Festival BORUTAFEST'2010.

2.6. **Ballade** from the series *Animated Films to Classical Music* 03:30 min., oil paint on canvas prod. TvSFA Poznań 2010

Ballade no. 4 in F-minor op.52 by Fryderyk Chopin became the inspiration for my next film from the Poznan's series of musical miniatures. Fascinated by Maurits Cornelis Escher's graphics and the concept of yin and yang, I decided to tell about love in black and white. A woman and a man whose worlds were their own negative, like day and night, could never meet. The next stages of their relationship consisted of mutual passing. This idea became for me a field for various artistic and animation experiments oscillating around the separateness and limits of the world's interpenetration. In the narrative layer, the film showed the relationship from the moment of knowing, discovering each other, through waiting for the next meeting in the rhyming of the following nights and days, establishing closeness to the rejection. The end reveals the possibility of the unity of a woman and a man when they become their own background and their own world.

I chose the Ballade no.4 in F-minor in a rather controversial and unusual interpretation of the band Novi Singers, because the human voice seemed to me the most suitable for the musical illustration of the story. As in the case of *Cello*, *Milenka* or *Dies Irae*, here also the musical layer determined the film narrative and its rhythm. More on the design process of *Ballade* I wrote in my doctoral thesis⁴.

3. OEUVRE AFTER THE DOCTOR OF ARTS DEGREE

3.1. **Apolejka and Her Donkey** from the series *Polish Fairy Tales*, season 3, 2D animation, prod. TvSFA Poznań 2016

3 Based on the story *The Golden Apple Tree* by Hanna Januszewska, 1955.

4 *Dies irae i Ballada - my search for a motion picture in music* - Joanna Jasińska Koronkiewicz, doctoral thesis under supervision of prof. Mirosław Ledwosiński, Lodz, 2010.

Apolejka and Her Donkey by Maria Kruger was one my son's favorite good night stories, who was in preschool age at the time. So when Ewa Sobolewska asked about ideas for a new film for the *Polish Fairy Tales* series, I had no doubts.

My film adaptation differs from the literary original in only a small extent. Because in the fairy tale we have a situation, where we meet "the princess in the tower" and there is no word about the her life, parents or the reasons for which lives there, I decided to stay true to this captivating simplicity. I only expanded a bit of the loneliness of Princess and, with a few shots, I presented her character, interests and dreams about the wide world. The scene in which Apolejka observes an itinerant Chimneysweeper, who after drinking the water from the well changes into a donkey and then - like a donkey - he takes on eating apples from a nearby orchard and is disenchanted, remained almost unchanged. Thanks to this, both Apolejka and Readers and Viewers will get acquainted with the laws of spells. Film Apolejka, however, takes the initiative - she does not wait for the prince with folded hands but draws her own portrait and the tower on the piece of paper, folds the paper in a form of a plane and lets it out through the window. The prince appears under the tower holding the card and singing the song:

I keep knocking on everyone's door,
Apolejko!
I'm going through the world looking for you,
Apolejko!
I walked the world around,
Apolejko!
Only you I keep calling
Apolejko!
It's hard to believe how lucky am I,
Apolejko!
That I found you in this tower,
Apolejko!

I liked the theme song in the movie very much. For the purposes of the script, in order to be able to repeat the song in the final scene, I wrote the following verses to Maria Kruger's text:

Who would guess my love,
Apolejko!
That You have released me
Apolejko!
I owe my happiness to you,
Apolejko!
I lose my head for you,
Apolejko!

In this way, the song and its melody became the leitmotif of the film, and the Prince, as the only dialogue, received its words. The line "I lose my head" line, thanks to the fact that it was placed immediately after the scene of total disenchantment of the Prince, gained a funny, double meaning. The composer of the music and sound effects for the whole movie was Michał Makulski, with whom I have already collaborated on *The Flax*, *The Golden Apple Tree* and *It's Quite True!*. Thanks to

many years of acquaintance and excellent education of Michał as a composer, he always got to the point of my imagination about the nature of music. In this case, we have determined that the soundtrack is to be very contemporary and the melody of a pop-rock song is easy to remember and repeat by children. I must admit that I had plans to create a video clip and release this song separately as an addition to the movie or its trailer on the internet. Unfortunately, amid the multitude of work and responsibilities, we did not have enough time for this fun project. It is possible, however, that we will come back to this idea because the song came out really great and really enjoyed by the youngest viewers.

In the art layer, I wanted to subtly refer to the style of the icon of Polish illustrators for children, Mr. Zdzisław Witwicki, and to pay him a kind of tribute. It's hard to imagine Apolejka other than in the illustrations of this great artist. However, my director's vision of the princess was definitely more modernized. In addition to the obligatory crown and beads, she wore a school uniform, a striped bathing suit, a straw hat and sunglasses. She also drew with crayons, read books and slid down the railing of the stairs. The prince also looked like a typical teenager: short pants, sneakers and a short-sleeved shirt (T-shirt with a sports number 8 above which was a crown) worn on top of a long sleeve.

The color scheme in the film is clean and lively, but I tried to divide the world into two colorful, cold and warm zones. The tower and orchard of Apolejka are kept in blue tones, with only the red contrast of apples. She wears a navy blue uniform or a blue dress with white polka dots. The world outside the tower zone - that is, the fields and forests surrounding them, and the town are definitely heading towards warm greenery, yellows, oranges and beiges. The prince, thanks to his lush blond hair, also represents the second zone. The only exception is the market scene in which the prince eats all the apples from the wagon - there the shots are divided into warm and cold, two zones are fighting for their influence.

The film was made in the computer cut-out technique in the Toon Boom Animate program with the participation of the Poznan team, unfortunately as a director and creator of projects and scenography, I did not have time to do with the animation and work with the software.

Why am I writing about it? Toon Boom (Harmony) is currently one of the most popular animation programs for animated series and the ability to use it seems to be more and more indispensable to take on the role of an animator. A few years ago, I managed to organize animation and technology workshops for students of animation with Mikołaj Pilchowski, which met with great interest and during which I also learned something. Several students took advantage of the knowledge gained from the workshops and implemented their promotional videos or out-of-school works using this program. I plan to repeat the workshops also in the future.

Animation students within the didactic program at the Film School learn such programs as Adobe After Effects, Photoshop or 3D, but it is Toon Boom that gives the greatest chance of getting a job. And here comes the dilemma of the extent to which artistic school should prepare for the profession and who should organize such courses: university, production studios, the software publishing company itself? Maybe people who tie their future more with an animator than a director should themselves seek for such a training?

Another problem is the fact that if you do not work constantly with software, knowledge quickly flies off. The course itself will not contribute much if it is not supported by the right amount of practice. Toon Boom's problem has been bothering me for a long time and I hope that I will be able to find a sensible solution and go to

the university authorities with a substantive proposal on how to integrate Toon Boom's teaching into the didactic program.

Coming back to Apolejka for a moment in the film version, it has received a special distinction. With her name the smallest, specially adapted for children's audience cinema hall was baptized in the Theatre *Za Rogiem* in Cieplewo. The walls of the corridor surrounding the room have been painted in the form of a scenography from the film, thanks to which it immediately gives the impression of being child-friendly. During the opening ceremony, the youngest viewers could meet Apolejka in person! Dominika Nietupska played great in her character. There couldn't also be missing a Stallman and a cart full of healthy apples, which everyone could try, regardless of whether they felt the need to disenchant or not. In all this fairytale atmosphere only the donkey was missing ... However, the children could meet with him during the screening of this fairy tale.

3.2. ***Of Dogs and Cats*** from the series *Polish Fairy Tales*, season 3, cartoon animation, prod. TvSFA Poznan 2017.

For a long time I was looking for an idea for a new fairy tale for the series. In the third season, most of the more interesting, well-known Polish folk tales or classic tales by Polish writers have already been filmed. In my hand I got the interpretation of the story *About Krakow's dogs and Klepar's cats* by Maria Niklewiczówna.

Synopsis of the literary original:

The tale tells a story about the beginnings of a conflict between dogs and cats, who moved to their lovers. The beginning of the dispute was an episode in which the dogs became so bold that they began to take food from the stalls. Then the merchants from the Krakow market prepared a document confirming that dogs can only help themselves with what will fall to the ground. The dogs asked the cats to store the document, which in turn the cats gave to the mice. For many years, this principle has been respected and the contract passed among animals and people from generation to generation. One day, one of the merchants regretted the dog's roll, which fell to the ground. Then the dogs began to demand their rights and the search for a document began. Unfortunately, it turned out that he was eaten by mice ... Since then, a real war has been fought, dogs have been complaining to cats, cats to mice and people are divided into fractions of dog and cat lovers.

I liked the topic very much, but I was hurt by some inaccuracy. What would the cats eat if they lived with mice in friendship? Wouldn't be better to treat all animals as one? How would the content of the document look like then? All these questions were the beginning of a bumpy way of constructing a logical scenario. I knew that extremely alerted child's consciousness was able to catch any shortcomings. On the other hand, the above subject seemed to me to be a metaphor for adult viewers - a law that does not work in practice due to the impossibility of its interpretation. I thought that the document would allow all animals to eat products that fell from stall to the ground, Dogs would eat big chunks, cats small and mice what was left to eat. The dramatic axis of the film was the attempts to interpret this strange law. Dogs and cats are not solve which chunks could be called large and which small. But most of all the mice that were disadvantaged - no wonder they driven by hunger ate the document entrusted to them.

To emphasize the emotional layer, I created two main heroes, joyful and innocent, eager to play with each other friends – Brys the puppy and Ptys the pussycat. They become victims of a malfunctioning system and senseless division. In the finale of the film, when the animal quarrels escalate, people also join them. Cat

lovers, along with their little ones, move to Kleparz while the St. Florian's Gate, which separates them from Krakow and other dog lovers, is closed. Under the gate, sad Brys, who does not understand why he was separated from his friend.

I realized that such a scene can make children very sad, which is why I treated the whole story about the conflict of dogs and cats as a story embedded in unspecified historical times and provided a film with a prologue and an epilogue from modern times, when dogs and cats are again friendly.

In the prologue, an Editor and Camera Operator conduct interviews in the park and in apartments among dog and cat lovers. In one of the scenes, we meet the descendants of future antagonists - the cat Gryzelda and the dog Opryszka. After the transfer of the action into the historical part, both of them steal fish from the barrel, thus making the merchants lose their patience with animal freaks and call on the Mayor to solve the conflict with the help of law. The humorous element of the story is introduced by the duet of the representatives of mice, Bula and Stefan, who thanks to their different characters, give fun to different situations.

In the epilogue immediately after the closing of St. Florian's Gate and the puppy Brys' despair, we move to the Girls' room in modern times. The editor cries moved by the story but the girl comforts him that friendship always wins and divisions and quarrels do not serve anyone. Ptys, Brys and Buła with Stefan jump on her knees. On the credits, Ptys and Brys play together again.

The scenario, and more specifically the logical execution of the whole conflict, was definitely one of the most difficult challenges in the film. Another was the multitude of characters. The scenes on the Market required filling with some minimal amount of merchants and booths, and the animal community demanded a diversity of characters. I managed to treat the mice most sparingly, apart from Bula and Stefan, they act as an entourage of anonymous rodents, appearing in the right moments or manifesting their silent presence in the form of eyes glistening in the shadows.

In the artistic layer, I bet on retro-style. *Of Dogs and Cats* was supposed to be the last film made with TvSFA Studio in the classic drawing technique on the prints. So I decided to make the whole movie look like it was made without a computer. Although the set was made in Adobe Photoshop and compositing with animation in After Effects, all the backgrounds and elements were made by hand, painted with watercolors on paper. The number of computer effects was limited to a minimum and consisted mainly of delicate color correction, shading or cover-up of joints.

Before I started designing the set, I made decent documentation of Krakow and Kleparz, so that despite the obvious simplifications in the animated film, one could recognize the Cloth Hall, St. Florian's Gate or St Mary's Basilica. I also reached for archival photographs in search of stall designs and the former Market climate.

The same was true of the character's designs. I wanted the projects and animation of dogs, cats and mice to be modeled on nature. As a lover of animals and a caregiver of a large group, I have constant access to observation of their behavior, which in turn I tried to transfer to the film. Examples include catching the flies by the cat, the dog hiding so that the entire rear part of the body protrudes and the tail that informs about the dog's mood or cat pushing into far too small boxes (in the movie the cats hide into pots and jars).

The music by Michal Makulski gently referred to historical times, but above all, it emphasized the emotional nature of the scenes. The theme of the soundtrack was waltz, which melodic line was repeated in various arrangements.

4. AROUND DISNEY AND ANDERSEN. FOR CHILDREN OR ADULTS?

Hans Christian Andersen is undoubtedly one of the most recognizable writers whose works, not quite rightly, are classified as children only literature. If we think about fairy tales, we think - Andersen. If about animated films - Disney. What unites them and what divides them? While realizing the original film adaptations of Andersen's fairy tale, I have a few thoughts on this topic.

When after the production of *The Flax* I decided to refresh the fairy tales known in childhood in the new translation by Bogumila Sochanska, completely new spaces of poetry and joy in his stories opened up for me.

(...) Jarosław Iwaszkiewicz, on which all Polish researchers of Andersen refer, wrote: "Andersen's writing method is almost untranslatable and in its style lies one of the greatest spells of these stories"

(...) The strength of Andersen's work is so great that it defended itself despite the shortcomings of most translations - but it did defend itself in full. The anecdote speaks to the Polish reader, that is, the true tale, which was addressed to children, and the philosophical reflection addressed to the adult reader was also defended by the anecdote. However, we did not have the chance to get to know Andersen fully as Andersen the scoffer. Tragic and serious in Polish reception, the real Andersen also had a second face: he loved a good fun and he also wanted the adults to have fun when reading fairy tales for children. Irritated by the design of the monument on which he was to be presented surrounded by children, he wrote to a friend: "My fairytales are as much for adults as for children ... children only understand an anecdote, and only adults see and understand the rest." {...} naivety is only a part of my fables {...} in fact, humor gives them taste ". (...)⁵

Andersen's specific sense of humor is often lost in earlier translations. Thanks to *The Journals 1825-1875*⁶ and *The book with pictures without pictures*⁷ I was very much helped in cognition and a better understanding of the writer's style and spirit, Those works were the first books released as opening of the *Andersen for Adults* series. I was also pleased to read the unpublished, working translation of the story *Dryad*. This digressive, poetic stream of consciousness, embellished with unforced and gentle humor, significantly influenced my current work on *Ole Lukøje*. I try to make the film narration flow in a similar, light stream, and to bring out the natural poetics from the visual layer, the idea of words to include in the art and composition of the frame. It is significant for Andersen that he corrected his texts many times after reading them aloud. He wanted the language of the story to be free, as close as possible to the natural style of telling stories by a storyteller.

Another element that is interesting and characteristic for Andersen's fairy tale are its heroes and themes. Andersen was able to come up with a story about everything. The inspiration could be a toad with wise eyes, a high thistle or even a darning needle. Reality has always mixed with imagination, poetry, extraordinary

5 *Baśnie*, Hans Christian Andersen/ tłum. Bogusława Sochańska, str. 223 wydawnictwo Media Rodzina 2005 r., ISBN 83-7278-138-9

6 *Dzienniki 1825- 1875*, Hans Christian Andersen / wybór, przekład i opracowanie Bogusława Sochańska, wydawnictwo Media Rodzina 2014 r. ISBN: 9788372789426

7 *Książka z obrazkami bez obrazków*, Hans Christian Andersen, tłum. Bogusława Sochańska, wydawnictwo Driada 2018 r. ISBN 978-83-9459-904-1

empathy and spirituality.

In each of my previous film adaptations of Andersen, I try to go a step further and try new ways of adaptation loyalty. *The Flax*, as the first one, was based mainly on fidelity to the word. *It's Quite True* kept the original narrative only partially, but I had the impression that I managed to capture the atmosphere to a significant degree. In *Ole Lukøje* I am almost entirely devoid of the fairy tale, replacing it with natural dialogues between boy Hjalmar and "older, magical colleague" Ole.

Andersen's sorrow for infantilization and the hasty classification of his work as typically childish, bring to mind the very art of animation. She also struggles with a similar label. What is a cause of it?

How badly hurt Hans Christian Andersen was by filming the *Little Mermaid* by Walt Disney Pictures, I knew a long time ago. As a child, however, I loved the *Little Mermaid* and other great Disney film productions. I discovered the dark pages of this Hollywood indoctrination a bit later. According to Paweł Sitkiewicz, "Uncle Walt" became, through his expansion, the first educator of the youngest, and from his movies that children learn the patterns of social behavior.

The problem is that it is uncertain whether Disney has made his films for the children's audience. There are many indications that he hasn't. "Disney movies," wrote Jack Zipes, "were never intended solely for children, they were designed to captivate a child in each viewer. Therefore, they referred to nostalgia for childhood or simply infantilized the public to match the expectations of different age groups."⁸

This interesting analogy with Andersen, which also did not create only for children, loses ground when we realize the intentions of both artists. While Andersen hid deep reflection on life in the casket of his fairy tales and asked difficult questions, Disney emptied the casket of all wise content and focused on decorating the lid.

Paweł Sitkiewicz quoting Jacek Zipes, comes to the conclusion that Disney has cast a charm on fairy tales. With full awareness appropriating the rich tradition of European literature and taking advantage of its popularity, he used it for his own purposes. Focused mostly on technology, its almost unlimited possibilities and building a film empire of animation, it flattened the message or even rejected the ideas and wisdom flowing from the originals of fairy tales and fables.

Indeed, in the case of Andersen's *Little Mermaid*, there remained only a vague outline of the main thread of the story, neither the true message of fairy tale nor the author's spirit unfortunately would not fit into the film,.

"When children or adults think today of great classic fairy tales, they think with Walt Disney, their first and probably last impression from [...] these stories [...] will come from Disney movies, books and artifacts. Zipes, who is one of the consistent critics of Disney, accuses his company of disregarding the child. The most important thing for Disney and other producers of movie tales was the way they could catch the consumers and not because they believed in the artistic advantages of films that could contribute to the child's cultural development, but because they wanted to control children's aesthetic interests and consumer tastes. As a consequence, the child was to like everything signed the characteristic signature of Walt Disney, and at the same time to approach with a distance to whatever is not Disney's."⁹

⁸ *Małe wielkie kino*, Paweł Sitkiewicz, str.108, Publisher by słowo/obraz/terytoria 2009, ISBN 978-83-7453-934-0

⁹ *Małe wielkie kino*, Paweł Sitkiewicz, str.109, Publisher by słowo/obraz/terytoria 2009, ISBN 978-83-7453-934-0

As you can see, this problem does not only affect the screen adaptation of the *Little Mermaid* mentioned by me, and is not limited only to the adaptation of classic fairy tales. The problem is much wider and more complex and, moreover, extremely current. I must admit that Walt Disney has achieved great success in the field of commercialization and nowadays it has many worthy followers. In the animation professional environment you can hear voices that for a long time no money is made on the screenings of the movies but on the sale of gadgets and games or merchandise in general that are connected with them. This is caused by huge expansion of the broadly understood movie industry and all the new ways of promotion. Now everything is for sale. I do not want to develop this thread too much, I'm not that strict in the assessment of commercial animations. However, it hurts me that in the children's and youth cinematography, the more ambitious productions constitute an almost imperceptible minority. Children should learn different film and artistic perspectives, just as we adults should be able to make choices. I am sad to note that young people brought up on thematic channels have a very limited idea of what animation is and what animation could be, and their imagination seems to be trapped in a cage of what is easy, fashionable and momentary.

5. WITH BASKET OF EGGS

I had the chance to get to know Andersen's incredibly humorous face once again during great cooperation with Bogusława Sochańska, who asked me to illustrate the hitherto unknown in Poland poem *With a basket of eggs*.¹⁰

Wanting to use the potential of my animator profession as well as the technique of painting animation, together with the publisher we decided to put 26 lines of text on separate pages in order to create a sequence of movements from illustrations. This is not a typical flip-book because in order to make the animation in the flow of paper really smooth, we would need at least 50 pages. The illustrations had to fulfill their function while reading the poem and correspond to the text accordingly. What was needed was a compromise between the fluidity of moving one illustration into another and their content and individual composition.

When reading a poem, I immediately came up with the idea of an hourglass. Changes in the illustrations consisted in moving this hourglass up and discovering the next one. Thanks to such a solution, I had a ready-made compositional key and at the same time a wide space to maneuver when it comes to playing with items referring to the text. Because the work on the final version of the translation was still ongoing and I was painting and animating the illustrations in parallel, it was not without fun situations. When, for example, I was already far behind the illustration of the "two sheep and goose" line, and Mrs. Bogusia suddenly changed the concept and number of sheep, what caused a small consternation. Children are very smart and if there is a specific number in the text, we can be sure that our young readers will definitely look at the illustration and count ... So we had to watch out for all the animals and keep in touch to make no mistakes.

Another curiosity in the book is the way the text is arranged on each page from top to bottom and highlighting certain words by enlarging and bolding the font. My proposition was purely intuitive, as was the choice of words, but it was enthusiastically received by the translator and publisher. This treatment gave the

¹⁰ *Miała jaja gospodyni* Hans Christian Andersen/ tłum. Bogusława Sochańska, published by Driada 2018 r. ISBN 978-83-945990-9-6

rhyme a peculiar rhythm and, in addition, raised the visual appeal of the pages. The changing position of the verses on each page, from top to bottom, was interestingly corresponding with the illustrations reflecting the direction of the animation.

To make it even more interesting, pages with text slightly change the color throughout the book. This idea alluded to the colorful, Chinese notebooks and memoirs I remembered from my childhood. Ah, what a madness it was then! I sincerely hope that the effect of gradually changing colors will appeal to children nowadays.

The last icing on the cake of page composition with text was the placement of traces of chicken paws in the margins. This time, nothing limited us and the feet could be animated smoothly, as befits a real flip-book. "Tests on children" showed great joy in this simple procedure. On the sheets, from the bottom of the page, an invisible chicken marched, made a small loop and left at the top. The youngest readers reacted with a screech and a desire to repeat the fun.

The downside of the edition, however, seems to be a rectangular format - at the beginning I suggested a square, use of specific type of paper and a shiny, slightly stiffened cover. After talking with the Publishing House we came to the conclusion that if the print resumes, it will be necessary to change the materials.

With a basket of eggs is my debut as an illustrator. The Driada Publishing House, however, plans to publish another Andersen's poems, unknown until now in Poland, and if the flip-book will work on the publishing market, we will continue to work in this form. We also have timid plans for the release of the tales I have realized with the frames and sequences of film animations. These are all plans for the future but I am very happy that Andersen is slowly becoming my personal specialty.

6. DESCRIPTION OF ARTISTIC ACHIEVEMENT

It's Quite True! from the cycle *Paint me a fairy tale*, painting on canvas, prod. TvSFA Poznań 2014

*A terrible story! - said a hen in this part of the city,
in which this story did not happen.*¹¹

The action of humorous fairy tales H.C. Andersen *It's Quite True!* takes place in a small town in the community of hens and other birds, not only domestic. However, the main character is really ... a rumor. After a startling introduction, we move to the shed, where the whole story began and we follow it chronologically. The rumor originates from the innocent plucking of feathers by a certain White-feathered hen, then transferred from "the beak to the beak" to become a tragedy which was eventually described in a national newspaper.

*Five hens - it was said - plucked feathers to show which one lost the most to the love of a rooster, and then pecked each other to blood and fell dead, bringing shame to the family and a great loss to the owner.*¹²

I admit that I had a bit of doubt whether the original form of this message will not be too drastic for children. However, I came to the conclusion that nothing really

¹¹ *It's quite True!*, *Baśnie* Hans Christian Andersen, tłum. Bogusława Sochańska, published by Media Rodzina 2005, ISBN 83-7278-138-9

¹² Ibidem

happened and the whole story just comes to this. The exaggeration of tragedy serves a just purpose here.

Rumor is as old as the world and is like playing Chinese Whispers - the final version of the message usually has little to do with the actual event. It always been that way and always will. Today, in the era of network communication, the concept of "fake news" has already entered the dialect of Internet users permanently, and all sorts of untrue information spreads with the speed of light.

According to my current knowledge (as well as Bogusława Sochańska herself, who made the choice of translating letters and diaries), Andersen did not mention what led him to write *It's Quite True!* fairy tale. We know, however, how much he suffered by the most diverse rumors about him. Trying to straighten them at every opportunity, however, he felt powerless in the face of their expansion.

The gossip environment has been presented in the fairy tale as a flock of hens living in various hen houses and the title rumor comes out from one of those henhouses.

Couriers of this gossip become wild birds - owls, sparrows and doves. Thanks to them, the message eventually returns to the henhouse from which it all started. However, its content is so changed that the same White-feathered hen does not recognize her own story and as a moral matron reacts with just indignation. To make it more fun, it is she who decides to convey a terrifying story about the unhappy and tragic consequences of love, to the newspaper. The finale shows us the absurdity of gossiping in all its glory.

Interestingly, the information in the newspaper in the last sentences of the fairy tale, mentions the owner of the house, which suffered a great loss. Nowhere else did the human figures appear and the action took place as if the hens and other domestic fowl were the proper inhabitants of the city. When writing the script, I followed this lead and introduced the action as a small, "chicken town". At the scene design stage I was inspired by American housing estates in the suburbs, which are associated in our culture on the one hand as an exemplary life of a well-placed middle class and on the other, in contrast to the climate of breakfast cereal advertisements, have a rich story in the cinema as sources of dark and dirty secrets. This false morality under the mask of a smiling family living in a perfect home with a perfect garden immediately associated me with a specific double standards of the characters in the fairy tale of Andersen. So I designed a small town with bright henhouses in the shape of such a housing estate.

Inspired by *Blue velvet*¹³, *American Beauty*¹⁴ and *Forrest Gump*¹⁵ I also thought about music and the sequence of shots opening and ending the film. The aerial panorama at the beginning corresponds with the last shot, in which the camera follows the flying feather. I could not forgive myself the reference to red roses and impeccable white fences - a wonderful symbol of the ideal bourgeoisie shown both in the pictures of David Lynch and Sam Mendez. Bobby Vinton's hit *Blue Velvet* and the soundtrack from *American Beauty*, which I laid under the animatics, later became a reference for the composer, Michal Makulski.

After taking care of the climate and scenography, it's time for heroes. In the original fairy tale none of the characters is particularly distinguished and described,

13 *Blue Velvet*, 1996, directed by David Lynch

14 *American Beauty*, 1999, directed by Sam Mendez

15 *Forrest Gump*, 1994 directed by Robert Zemeckis

the exception is the white-feathered hen from which the rumor takes its origin and to which it returns. In the film, however, I decided to emphasize the role of a antagonist hen who is the first to circulate the calumny. Black-feathered hen was presented by me as widely disliked and in opposition to the popular and respected White-feathered hen. The scene of the queue to the henhouse reflects the levels of the hierarchy in the herd - when the white matron appears, all the chickens willingly pass it. Everyone wants to be as close to her as possible, which is why Black-feathered hen is gradually pushed to the end of the queue. When the hens are already sitting on their perches, White-feathered combing the feathers loses one of them and comments on it jokingly that the more she will pluck up, the more beautiful she will be. All chickens laugh and then fall asleep. Jealousy Black-feathered hen raises one of the companions and shares the opinion that it is unworthy to pluck up to look nice. Her opinion, however, does not arouse interest and probably nothing would come out of it but the fact that right next to the shed, Mrs. Owl sat on the branch and heard everything ... Of course, adding her two cents, she flies to her friend to tell her how in a nearby chicken coop there is one immoral hen who plucks the feathers in front of the cock! To make the information more attractive, it presents the plucking of feathers on your own example. Both owls are going to share this information with pigeons, then the sparrow captures it and the rumor flies into the town each time changing the content slightly. When the gossip finally returns to the shed it came out of, only Black-feathered hen has some strange premonitions ... She begins to realize that her interpretation of the words of White-feathered hen may have some strange relationship with the information about the tragedy of the plucked five hens and discreetly removed into the shadows. Nobody pays attention to her, however, and the heroine of the day is White-feathered hen again. Outraged by the immoral behavior of strangers, she decides to do everything to let this story go to the newspaper and be published as a warning! The whole herd runs to accompany her and Black-feathered hen is left alone again. When she accidentally loses her feather, she begins to look terrified and let nobody see it. She already knows what strength rumor has. Will this teach her something? It seems so.

Although Andersen did not focus on building characters' characters, he talks about them in passing through the whole course of history. Each character has the best intentions and no one notices his mistakes. The quintessence here is White-feathered hen, which at first was described as moral and respected, in fact, the most important of all contributes to the spread of false information. Black-feathered hen as a bad character, paradoxically she benefits the most reflections from this experience.

Fortunately, in both the fairy tale and my film adaptation, the object of the gossip remains anonymous and nobody really suffers. Unfortunately, it is different in our world.

I consider my adaptive fidelity to the literary prototype quite high. In contrast to *The Flax*, in which all issues are read by one narrator, Jerzy Stuhr, in *It's Quite True!* I went a step further by mixing the original text with the written dialogues. It would seem that using the literary text of the fairytale is to follow the line of the least resistance and that's not what adaptation is all about. My decision, however, was thought over and was intended primarily to preserve the richness of Andersen's language and its characteristic style, especially beautifully resonant in new translations. I just felt sorry for giving up this miracle. I find Jerzy Stuhr's interpretations of the text as absolutely ingenious. By creating the figure of Black-feathered hen and showing a little more relations between all birds, I had an inner sense that I was expanding the message, while at the same time not changing

anything from the content of fairytale and preserving the specific Andersen's sense of humor.

The artistic layer of the film results directly from the applied two-frame painting technique, which seemed to me almost perfect for the free animation of the flapping wings. The only exception is a drawing sequence stylized for an old movie from the projector, on which we can see a short vision of gossip development. The colors in the film are vivid and clean, as I like it and what children usually like. At the same time, the way of painting - with a slightly wider gesture, avoiding details, using the stain - allowed for a general impression of lightness and freedom. Both thanks to the color palette and affordable fairy-tale character designs, I was hoping to "buy" the youngest audience and open their minds to animations that are slightly different from the ones they watch on the thematic channels of digital television every day.

7. A FEW WORDS ABOUT OLE LUKØJE AND THE SERIES *PAINT ME A FAIRY TALE*

As I mentioned at the beginning of this work, for over two years I have been working on the adaptation of one of the most beautiful fairy tales of Andersen *Ole Lukøje*. This is probably the biggest challenge I have had so far to face - both in terms of interpretation of the fairy tale and the technique of its implementation. The very character Ole it is modeled on the mythological gods of sleep and death (Hypnos, Morpheus, Tanatos) and is a kind of equivalent of Der Sandmann present in German folklore, with the difference that Der Sandmann, to lull children, throws sand into their eyes and Ole, it smears them slightly with warm milk.

In the original literary Ole for seven days he comes to a boy named Hjalmar and takes him on sleepy journeys. On the last day he presents his brother, Death, and convinces him that he should not be afraid of him.

The goal of Andersen's fairy tales is therefore the solace of children's fears of death and, by the way, from darkness and sleep itself. This is what I followed when writing the script - because both the number of adventures and the degree of their complexity (Andersen treated subsequent dreams as mini fairy tales) are impossible to present within the time limit of 13 minutes - I decided to choose a few motifs and based on them to create my own dream visions. Above all, however, I focused on the consistent pursuit of the narrative to the goal: meeting with the other Ole, for whom the longing for the late Grandma was the pretext in the film.

The essence of Hjalmar's dream adventures with Andersen is, first and foremost, having fun together and unlimited child's imagination, which is why I did not have the feeling that by modifying their adventures I split myself in any way with the writer's idea. In an interesting presentation of the friendly relations between Ole and Hjalmar helped me the actors - Marcin Sosiński and my son Franek Koronkiewicz, who had great contact on the set and they just had a good time with each other. Dialogues I wrote especially for them, leaving a small margin for improvisation on the set. In order to achieve a contrast between the created and the real world, I decided to use rotoscoping. Thanks to the previously recorded references on the set, I can freely combine the elements of free animation with the movement of the characters and embed everything in the world created to my will with paint. This is my first attempt at rotoscopic animation, which I always approached with a great distance. However, I am happy with this experience and while approaching to the middle of the animation work on the film, I do not regret this decision. However, the work on the set was difficult, in particular due to the time regime. I planned the duration of the

shots in the storyboard in terms of animation, the reality showed how much it was divergent with the acting interpretation. For this reason, I approached the animatics several times, making difficult decisions on removing some of the scenes in favor of longer, best-played shots, and leaving room for my own painter's impressions without actors. A significant inspiration in translating Hjalmar's dream adventures into the language of painting was for me surrealist works, in particular Rene Magritte.

Animation is painted on boards, on large 120 x 70 cm formats, with wide brushes, staying with a vivid, clean palette of colors.

On the occasion of the inauguration of the collective exhibition *ANIMATED PAINTING - paintings as films* at the Technical Museum in Dresden (Technische Sammlungen Dresden) April 11, 2019, I assembled a short film trailer "Ole Lukøje", which you can see on the DVD along with the film *It's Quite True!*.

8. DIDACTIC WORK

My didactic work is divided into two closely cooperating areas: teaching the basics of animation and making an animated movies. In both of these areas, I try to provide my students with my own experience in the field of directing, author's animation and team work.

8.1 FUNDAMENTALS OF ANIMATION

I teach classes on the *Fundamentals of Animation* at the Film School in Lodz since 2012. In my program I use both classic animation exercises such as a ball, soap bubble, lead ball, people and animals walk, gait with a character, speech synchronization and the students own ideas. My goal is that students after a year of participation in the course know the basic principles and different techniques of flat animation: drawing, cut-out, loose materials. Exercises registered using digital cameras processed with Dragonframe software.

In the exercises of human and animal movement I pay close attention to the anatomy and mechanics of movement. Characters can be simplified, but they should remain correct in terms of location and movement of joints. In this exercise, I encourage students to observe each other, I often show myself on what they should pay attention to, what is the motor of movement at a given moment, whether it goes from the knee or thigh, how the rest of the body behaves. I must admit that I am often an experimental rabbit on my own classes. In the case of animal movement, I also refer to nature. I happen to bring some of my own cats to classes, "borrow" a dog from one of the students, and in the end we analyze movies from the Internet. Because I am interested in horse riding and in particular in the biomechanics of rider and horse movement, I have the feeling that I can present this topic quite exhaustively. Often, as a curiosity, I show students *Horses Inside Out* movies and *Dog's Inside Out* from Gilian Higgins¹⁶ training clinics. Painted with non-toxic paint and in a calm atmosphere horses, dogs and people in a great way discover what is happening inside the body, how the joints work and how the whole movement is going. I try to make students use the available online instructional video as little as possible because each animation is a degree of processing and even the big animators sometimes do not shy away from anatomical mistakes that should not be

¹⁶ <https://www.horseinsideout.com/>

duplicated. Of course, such materials can be very helpful at some stage and, thanks to the breakdown into phases, allow students to understand the pattern. However, I always consider observation of nature as the best basis.

One of the exercises that I adopted after The Professor, Kaziemirz Urbański, is the theme of the elements in salt and a raw cutout of a cardboard or cut with thick scissors. The contact of students with powdery materials is always very exciting and ends in two possible ways. Some students fall in love with this technique, others do not want to deal with it anymore. Nevertheless, I consider exercises in elemental animation very instructive, opening new possibilities, developing creativity and the sense of observation.

As my specialty is animals, one of the original exercises that I offer to students is the "animal riddle". The task is to capture the essence of the animal's movement in the cut-out using the smallest number of elements and the least suggestion by shape. I have observed many benefits of this exercise. Learning observation, the need to simplify the form, acquiring the ability to animate in the most suggestive way, control of fluency, pace and movement. After a single frame we have to have a problem with knowing what kind of animal it is, the solution to the riddle is to appear in animation. Simplifying the form, I consider one of the most important benefits, practically impossible to achieve in other, classic exercises. Because the classes lasts only a year, I am forced to set exercises for several goals at the same time. For example, when learning to synchronize speech (lip sync), the students have the task to demonstrate the idea and the ability to present emotions on the face of the animated character and to use the body movement in the middle plan.

Keeping in mind my own problems during the debut in the profession of animator, I prepared an exercise for students. "dance" based on mutual communication and cooperation of the character's designer, main animator and the animator. An essential element of this cooperation is the skill of synchronizing music and planning animations on the recipe along with precise guidelines for the animator. Animation of other artists' designs and the strict compliance to their guidelines is an ungrateful task for young creators, but it is full freedom for the main animator to come up with a choreography of the main figure promoter, that to a large extent compensates for these difficulties and develops creativity. Each student is asked to fit in all these three functions.

In order to develop the imagination in parallel with the craftsmanship, I propose to the students an original exercise in visualization of sound. We choose the most often strange, unobvious sounds and the goal of the exercise is to find an equivalent in the image in the form of texture, color and rhythm. This is a typically abstract task and encourages creativity.

I remember with nostalgia the optional activities of Flat Animation which I had the pleasure to teach for two years. They were a great continuation of the *Fundamentals of Animation* courses and it was possible to spend time for honing student's skills and focus on selected issues and formal experiments.

8.2. REALISATION OF ANIMATED FILM

The realisation of an animated film is a leading subject in our faculty. I had the privilege to work as an assistant and learn from professor Piotr Dumala. After defending the doctorate, since 2015 we have been conducting classes in Realisation of animated movies in a duet with D.A. Mariusz Wilczynski. Cooperation with such

great artist is a great experience for me. Each project is a challenge for both the student and us, in each film we learn something together and also from each other.

Taking care of a promotional etude is a great responsibility and a very delicate task. Most of the young people are very sensitive people, which on one hand must be kept in line with school requirements and on the other hand help them develop themselves and let them spread their wings. It happens that in their films they touch very personal topics and then the cooperation is particularly demanding. Over the years I'm still learning what it means to be a good teacher and a film supervisor. Although it might seem that giving students different directions and solutions is a good idea, in reality the effect is sometimes counterproductive. There are students who are eager to use a common brainstorming, but some of them feel - quite unnecessarily - that they should not use someone's idea to make their own movie. At the time of the creative blockade, I try to explain to the students that a good director does not get into all the ideas himself but only uses the opinions of others and makes a conscious choice of what he wants to use and what not. It does not take away in any way the right to authorship of the whole work. Accepting this fact to someone comes easier, to others is harder and you cannot help it. Sometimes I propose to do additional storyboard exercises or animation attempts, which are designed to unblock the student and discover new solutions by him.

An interesting example of the wonderful finale of this "brainstorming" was our joint work on the project by Renata Gąsiorowska entitled "Pussy". Renata knew exactly what she wanted to do and why, the whole scenario was consistent, only minor details remained to be worked out. The first stage was an attempt to cut the unnecessary elements of the narrative. During the conversation, we exchanged opinions about what we think is needed and what is not. Another, most fun step was coming up with various adventures for the title character. Renata made all the final decisions herself, but seemed to be very happy about switching ideas and used a few of them successfully in the film. "Pussy" has won dozens of awards around the world and the entire film can be viewed on the vimeo website.

In my opinion both, the choice of subject and the way it is presented, should always depend on the student and the tutor should not interfere too much with the project. There is no such thing as a bad topic - it can only be presented in interesting or uninteresting way. We always try to persuade students to discover new paths, narrative or formal experiments. School is the best time to develop and leave the comfort zone. Therefore, I see the role of a supervisor as a support at every stage - from the idea, through the search for the right form and means of expressing the language of film animation, artistic expression, to typical workshop corrections, regarding the principles of good craftsmanship.

9. CONCLUSION

Work on the above summary of professional accomplishments was a great opportunity for me to think deeply about myself and my own creative path. I do not like to write about myself, but I must admit that the necessity of analyzing my own work and didactic methods, which I live on everyday basis and do not think about them so minutely, made my goals to be even more clarified.

For sure I'm going to finish the series "Paint me a fairy tale ..." and maybe even extend it to more films. I have the feeling that I still have a lot to discover in Andersen's painting animation and fairytales.

In order to stay sane and for my own artistic development I intend to find some

time for my own creative experiments and films "for myself" in completely different techniques. I have many ideas, there are more and more notes in the journal and unfortunately I still do not have time to implement them ... A very good escape was for me an occasional work as an animator on the movie *Kill it and leave this city* by Mariusz Wilczyński (premiere 2019). Although my contribution was very modest due to the parallel production of *Ole Lukøje* direct contact with the animated film "not for children" and a return to cartoon animation gave me great pleasure and relief. I like diversity and willingly undertake minor works, also operator and assembly, so as not to drown completely in the paint and do something - for a change - quickly.

I also liked the work of the illustrator and I hope to continue working in this area, especially if it were to be another, new Andersen's poems.

I also intend to make some changes in the *Fundamentals of Animation* program and despite the small number of hours, more time to spend on typical workshop classes where students will work together under my supervision. I already have such a format in a smaller dimension than I would have liked it. Students often avoid working during classes, arguing that they are better at home ... However, forced by the imposed formula of workshops, they leave the studio extremely happy with the effects of their own actions.

I also count on the possibility of resuming the *Flat Animation* faculty at which students could continue to learn the craftsmanship. Every year in the evaluation questionnaires this issue arises, students are pushing for classes that are exclusively devoted to animation. In addition, there would also be an "experimental club" on which I could work with my students, develop their creativity as well as my own, without the burden of the need to create a "great work". Animation for pleasure, joy of animation – is the factor that many students lack in later years.

I would also like to introduce Toon Boom Harmony classes to the curriculum. As I mentioned a few days of workshops are not enough to know this software, a lot of practice is necessary. After discussions with my colleagues from the university, I am considering taking part in a training course and developing a set of a few basic animation exercises that students could do during the school year as part of the Main courses or elective classes. Thanks to such a solution, they could learn at the same time animation and software operation.

Animated movies and work in Lodz Film School are my life and passion at the same time. I am very lucky that I can do what I like in my life and the place where I am today, I owe to many wonderful people who I have met on my path. I hope that both my creative path and the didactic goals described in this work will become for me a small inspiration in my own artistic or pedagogical work.

D.A. Joanna Jasińska Koronkiewicz



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