

SUMMARY OF ARTICLES

**Henryk Zwolakiewicz — IGNACY DOBRZYŃSKI —
THE PAPER-CUTTER**

Ignacy Dobrzański is a notable artist of our days in the paper-cutting craft. Dobrzański was born in 1882, in the village of Grabowa, Lublin region.

Drawing inspiration from old traditions, Dobrzański's work reflects his own concept and style, full of creative inventiveness.

Paper-cutting (openwork compositions cut out of coloured paper) began to develop in the Lublin region in the middle of the 19th century and paper cuts were used as interior decoration in cottages during holidays and family celebrations. The custom survived up to the outbreak of the first world war.

In the past the work was chiefly done by young girls, as it was not customary for elderly women to perform the tiresome work of cutting ingenious compositions of coloured glossy paper; men performed the work very seldom.

The paper-cuts were made in a rich variety of forms, roundish, polygonal, in the form of stripes and trees placed in a flower-pot. Geometric ornamentation prevailed in the past, floral (stylized) ornamentation appeared later.

Two distinct stages can be discerned in Dobrzański's creative development: a close following of Lublin traditions in paper-cutting, and the finding of his own style.

In his first and earlier stage, Dobrzański cut small-sized open-work compositions of various designs. The technological approach was also traditional: the paper and the tools were used very economically. At that period geometric ornamentation, circles in particular, prevailed in the Lublin paper-cutting craft. Figures of horses and birds appeared later.

The second stage in Dobrzański's art is linked with the change in the very function of the paper cuts, when they no more were made for personal use, but for sale purposes, when popular traditions began to vanish and the fashion for „popular” interior decoration reached the homes of intellectuals in towns. It was at that time that Dobrzański began to make serial paper-cuts destined for sale, without however, abandoning his search for new forms. These two tendencies, i.e. serial productions and the search for new creative solutions are intermittent in his work, with either one or the other tendency prevailing, depending on circumstances.

In yielding to the tastes of the urban customers, Dobrzański shows a tendency to overburden his

compositions with naturalistic ornamentation, showing, on the other hand, ambitious new designs, a good sense of rhythm and much inventiveness in his non-serial compositions.

As time marches on, abstract geometric ornamentation is ousted by floral compositions and symbolic figures as well as insignia. The size of the work is being enlarged and the paper-cut becomes a technical display of the virtuoso paper-cutter, who very often shows neglect for the basic principle of popular art, according to which there must be consistency between the character of the material and the implements used to perform the object.

Before proceeding with the cutting proper, Dobrzański very often draws his designs in pencil. Leaving behind him popular traditions, Dobrzański's works reflect ever more distinctly his own specific style. And is it good or bad? Without going into details, it should be said that this is a general trend characterising the transformations going on in the development of popular art. Finding no support in the artistic criteria of the rural population, divorced from his traditional background, the popular artist must reckon on himself, experiencing the joy of success and the bitterness of failures. The source of his creative power — the artist's imagination, the richness of his creative inventiveness, the variety of themes — is at the same time the very source of the greatest peril, impelling the artist to overburden his works with ornamentation, thus violating the entity of the composition. In Dobrzański's case, he uses his paper-cuts as an illustration of his inventiveness, hence the narrative character of his work, particularly that of the latest period, expressed by means of silhouettes, almost naturalistic in their outlines. It may happen that an artist finds proper decorative means to express his „literary” ideas, without violating the principles of ornamental composition, more often, however, the ornamentation elements do not harmonize with the very concept of the composition and with the very character of a paper-cut. There is nothing strange, therefore, in it that those artists who respect the character of the paper-cuts art achieve the best results from the artistic point of view.

There is yet another question which should be answered: can Dobrzański's creative work be classified as folk art? In the traditional sense — certainly not, but traditional popular art cannot nowadays be identified with creative work in contemporary rural areas. Dobrzański is not estranged from

his native village and the general trend of development in popular art. And exactly these ties are linking him with the people and the modern character of our countryside.

Maria Przeździecka — MARCIN GĄSIOR, THE RELIGIOUS SCULPTOR

Born in 1865 in the village of Łapajówka, Marcin Gąsior spent there 84 years of his life, except for a short period during the first world war when he was mobilised as a coachman to serve in the army.

The classic Jack-of-all-trades, Gąsior was the village shoemaker and carpenter, the watchmaker and the chimney-sweeper and he also fiddled in the village band. He showed a pronounced dislike for field work.

He carved religious figures for home altars on orders from farmers in his native village and neighbouring villages. Using a pen-knife and chisels of his own make, Gąsior carved exclusively in linden-trees. He used to coat his sculptures with oil varnishes and sometimes also gilded them. While he carved crosses from memory, he drew inspiration from the illustrations in his prayer book when he worked on groups of figures (Christ the Crucified, St. Anthony, St. Joseph), but he never simply copied from illustrations, all his sculptures are carved in Gąsior's own specific style.

Guided by one general canon, he produced his works in series, as it were, introducing only slight changes in the individual figures and precisely this uniform style which is characteristic of all his works, makes a classification according to dates very difficult, if not altogether impossible.

A cohesive roundish shape of the basic lump, bow-like curved arms and the rhythm of the toes, brought out in sharp relief by the folds in the straight cut garments, are the characteristic traits in all his sculptures. No other sculptor in this region had ever showed any resemblance to Gąsior's style.

In the conclusive part of the article, the authoress makes a detailed formal analysis of Gąsior's works.

Barbara Bazielich — STARY SĄCZ POTTERY

Archival information on Stary Sącz pottery dates back to 1581, when, as the records show, among the 35 local artisans, there also was one potter. A guild affiliating 4 earthenware masters was founded somewhere in the middle of the 17th century. Their wares were evidently not in grand demand, as according to public records, the potters were just eking out a miserable existence.

No data on the development of Stary Sącz pottery in the 18th century is available as all records pertaining to that century were destroyed during the hostilities of the last war. From what has been preserved it is known that the 19th century was the golden age

in the development of the Stary Sącz pottery, and this leads to the conclusion that already the last decade of the 18th century must have been a blooming period in the development of pottery art in the Stary Sącz region. According the Guild's records for the years 1834—1844, 16 potters were registered in Stary Sącz at that period, the figure is, however, incomplete as members of the Guild's Board and commissions were not being registered.

The end of the 19th century which marked a culminating point in the development of Stary Sącz pottery (17 earthenware masters) was followed by a gradual decline.

There are 3 potters at present in Stary Sącz: Józef Biliński, Ludwik Wilusz and Paweł Płaziak, the two latter being new comers from the Jasło district.

The authoress of this article succeeded in ascertaining the names and the numbers of potters who worked in Stary Sącz in the previous centuries, she did not succeed, unfortunately, in establishing authoritative information on the artistic value of their products. Much more information is available on the developments in the 19th century, when Stary Sącz potters supplied with their earthenwares the whole area of the Stary Sącz district. Merchants from Cracow and Krynica used to travel regularly to Stary Sącz to buy from Michał Starczewski (died in 1910) his painted pots, dishes and mugs ornamented with flowers or stripes. Starczewski also made toys for children (riders on horseback), twins and various ware for pastry baking. His vessels are remarkable for their particularly fine gloss which Starczewski could achieve by using litherage imported from Hungary, together with the clay he used for his ware. Some of Starczewski's products have been preserved and are on display in the Stary Sącz museum.

Wincenty Kalisz, whose wares were known for their exquisite shape and fine glossing, was considered the most remarkable potter of the end the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century. Unfortunately, not one of his products has been preserved.

Another celebrity among the Stary Sącz potters of that period was Józef Nowak. The traditions of his workshop have been preserved by his pupil and grandson Józef Biliński, who lives and works in Stary Sącz at present.

Biliński began his apprenticeship at the age of 12, under the guidance of his grandfather. He then worked with a number of potters when ultimately in 1927 he opened a workshop of his own. Following a serious illness in 1937, which undermined his health, he saw himself compelled to take an apprentice, and this was how Ludwik Wilusz from the village of Kołaczyce, near Jasło, began to work with Biliński. They worked together till the outbreak of the war.

In addition to everyday-use wares, such as pots, dishes, mugs and twins, Biliński's workshop also produced so-called fancy pottery, including figurines, bowls, ash-trays and flower-pots. Though Biliński seemed to be particularly proud of his heavily ornamented flower-pots, which he adorned with the fi-

gures of animals and people, they do not represent any greater artistic value. All Biliński's wares are remarkable for their extra-fine burnish and the variety of the ornamental themes.

Ludwik Wilusz, Biliński's former apprentice, began to learn the pottery trade in his native village of Kołaczyce. He has at present a workshop of his own in Stary Sącz. His wares are very accurately glossed and are notable for their rich ornamentation.

In 1946, Wilusz invited Paweł Płaziak, a younger friend from his native village, to come and work with him in Stary Sącz. At present, alike the other potters, Płaziak has a workshop of his own.

The Stary Sącz potters have to bring the clay out which they make their wares, from Podgórze, not far from the town. The preparation process of the clay, before it is ready for production, takes not less than a year's time. A disk, a knife and a small wire are the usual implements used by a potter. The knife is a small, thin, rectangular wooden plate with a roundish loophole in the centre of it. It serves to smooth the vessels and to remove the remainders of the clay while the vessels are in the process of moulding. The wire serves to unfasten the vessel from the disk after the moulding process has been finished.

The Stary Sącz pottery of the 19th century was produced in a rich variety of forms. In addition to pots and dishes, the potters made all kinds of flat-bellied shepherds' mugs, star-like forms for pastry baking, flower-pots, special roof "ballons" and children's toys. Though also present-day pottery is varied, articles of fancy-pottery, purchased mainly by holiday-makers, is the chief product of the Stary Sącz workshops.

Painted earthenware is made of liquid clay, coloured by means of iron ore, yellow loam and the green residue on such metals as copper. Ordinary paint which cannot resist high temperature is not being used for colouring pottery.

In all probability, non-ornamented, glazed earthenware was characteristic of traditional Stary Sącz pottery in the past. Painting apparently was brought along by the potters who came from Jasło.

Present-day pottery is painted and the hand-painting is more often than not done by the potter's wife. The decoration themes on the pottery made in all the three Stary Sącz workshops are very similar in design (See tables I, II and III). Ornamented and dried up vessels are being glazed and then burnt in ovens. Burning is the very last stage in a potter's work. The ovens, of which there are various types, are either placed in the workshop or in a separate place.

The work of Stary Sącz potters is seasonal. They start early in May and finish at the end of September. Winter time is used for relaxation and also for the preparation process of the clay. It is also during winter time that the potters sometimes make very

ingenious and richly ornamented specimens of pottery.

The market in Stary Sącz is the chief place where local potters sell their products.

Barbara Bazielich — TRADITIONAL AND MODERN CREATIVE ART IN THE KATOWICE VOIVODSHIP

An exhibition of popular art, both old and modern, was organised by the Upper-Silesian Museum in co-operation with the Cultural Department of the Katowice People's Council. The exhibition was on show from December 1957 up to April 1958.

The Katowice Voivodship embraces at present Cieszyn and Upper Silesia, as well as the Dąbrowa and Częstochowa basins, which means a number of ethnographic regions, all of which were represented at the exhibition, showing the cultural links between Silesia and the other regions of this country.

The opening of the exhibition was preceded by a thorough research into the various regions, during which a number of creative folk art centres in these regions was discovered and information on popular artists was collected.

The exhibition was housed in the Bytom Museum and was divided into two sections: the traditional part of the exhibition illustrated the various types of creative art in the past. Old Silesian chests for clothing, ingeniously carved and painted, arrested the attention of the visitors. The modern section was arranged according to regions, displaying the work of the modern popular artist and also his workshop. Decorative weaves, regional costumes, embroidery and lace were on display. Among the interesting exhibits were also painted uprongs which are part of Silesian women's garments.

Objects of religious rite, such as Easter eggs from the Gliwice and Świętochłowice regions and masks from the Rybnik regions were also on show.

A separate section housed sculptures carved in wood by modern artists.

Ewa Fryś — EASTER PALMS COMPETITION IN RABKA

The religious custom of consecrating palms is still very much alive in Poland. The blessing ceremony is performed on Palm Sundays. The Rabka district is renowned for its finest palms in the country. Made of blossoming willow branches and adorned with multi-coloured tissue-paper, the palms are sometimes 4 metres high.

The National Museum in Cracow organised this year a competition for the finest palms in Rabka district. The palms which won the competition were purchased by the Museum and are now among the Museum's collections.

CZASOPISMA PAŃSTWOWEGO INSTYTUTU SZTUKI
WARSZAWA, UL. DŁUGA 26.

BIULETYN HISTORII SZTUKI, kwartalnik ponad 100 str. dużego formatu, około 100 ilustracji. Cena 24 zł prenumerata półroczna 48 zł roczna — 96 zł.

POLSKA SZTUKA LUDOWA, kwartalnik, 64 str. dużego formatu, bogaty materiał ilustracyjny. Cena 18 zł prenumerata półroczna 36 zł roczna — 72 zł.

PRZEGŁĄD ARTYSTYCZNY, kwartalnik poświęcony nowoczesnej twórczości plastycznej, 64 str. dużego formatu, bogata szata ilustracyjna w technice rotogravurowej. Cena 18 zł prenumerata półroczna 36 zł roczna — 72 zł.

PAMIĘTNIK TEATRALNY, kwartalnik, ponad 160 str. druku, około 100 ilustracji. Cena 18 zł prenumerata półroczna 36 zł roczna — 72 zł.

KWARTALNIK FILMOWY, ponad 90 str. druku, kilkanaście ilustracji. Cena 10 zł prenumerata półroczna 20 zł roczna — 40 zł.

MUZYKA, kwartalnik, około 130 str. druku, liczne przykłady nutowe. Cena 18 zł prenumerata półroczna 36 zł roczna — 72 zł.

PRENUMERATA

Czasopisma PIS jako małonakładowe są rozpowszechniane głównie w drodze prenumeraty.

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Cena prenumeraty za granicę jest o 40% droższa od ceny podanej wyżej. Przedpłaty na tę prenumeratę przyjmuje na okresy półroczne i roczne Przedsiębiorstwo Kolportażu Wydawnictw Zagranicznych „Ruch” w Warszawie, Wilcza 46, za pośrednictwem PKO Warszawa konto Nr 1-6-100024.

SPRZEDAŻ

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 w większych kioskach „Ruchu”,
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