POLAND



INTERVIEW WITH DANUTA KARSTEN





Source: Danuta Karsten's private collection

1. Hello! How are you?

In general, I am a very positive person with a positive attitude to the world, people and challenges, however, the last two years of pandemics and the ongoing terrible war in Ukraine has completely paralysed me, I am in shock!

2. Tell us a few words about yourself

I was born in a small village near Tczew, as the 6th child of my Polish-Ukrainian parents. I am a mother of two daughters, a visual artist and an art teacher. I have been living and working in Germany since 1985.

3. Why did you choose an art school?

Ever since I can remember I have always been drawing. It was always my warm, good world on a piece of paper. In primary school I had a wonderful art teacher, Mr J. Tomczyk, who noticed my sensitivity and supported me a lot in my creative activities. I also had a great teacher, Mrs. R. Kołodziejczyk, who advised me to think about continuing my education at High School of Fine Arts in Gdynia Orłowo. And it was a great happiness for me that I passed the entrance exam and went that way.

4. What did you do after you graduated high school?

Already before my Matura exam, with the support of Professor Maria Zabrocki, I was preparing myself for the entrance exams to the Sculpture Academy in Gdansk. After three semesters of sculpture I stopped studying in Gdansk for personal reasons and moved to Germany permanently. After another entrance exam I started my studies at the Academy of Fine Arts in Düsseldorf, which I finished with a diploma with honours.

5. So now how has graduating art school/academy helped you to achieve your goals?

The High School of Fine Arts in Gdynia Orłowo is located in a wonderful place, almost on the beach. In the studios, under the supervision of professors, I could learn many useful artistic techniques and develop my knowledge of everything that is important in the creative process. I absorbed everything that I still nourish today, and what I needed to develop further. After class, I could sit by the sea and relish its usually flat expanse. These observations were my ultimate school of colour cognition, I became aware of the relationship between the colours in a scene and how much moisture there was in the air.

It was also a terrific school of light, of its infinite nuances. I was given the wonderful opportunity to look very far without having to see anything. The secondary art school itself had already equipped me with such a huge workshop base that I still draw on it today, and the studies in both countries have rounded this off. The art education at the Academy of Fine Arts in Düsseldoerf was characterized by a great deal of independence, critical but also constructive discussions about our work and the work of other students. All this contributed to the realisation of my goals.

6. Why did you become a teacher? Was it in the list of your dream jobs?

No, I did not really have such a plan. I became a teacher by accident. My older daughter had started an art club with a friend at Marie Curie Gymnasium. The teacher who supported the project went on maternity leave and I took over. And so my adventure in education began. Before that, I ran a lot of projects and art classes in schools in social hotspots.

7. What do you think makes a good teacher?

I guess this is a question for the students to answer, not me.

I, myself, often forget that I teach, I love what I do, and I simply exude my passion for the arts to these young people. And I try to repay the same kindness and support that I myself have experienced from some educators.

8. What do you love most in your job?

As I see the sparkles in the eyes of those who have not believed in themselves so far.

9. And what part of your job is most difficult?

If I am dealing with children whose situation at home is very difficult. If they are lonely, unloved, sad, mistreated or abused by adults. I try to help these children in particular.

10. Have you ever regretted being a teacher?

No. I am rather grateful for this opportunity that life has given me.

11. Who is the person or visual artist who inspired you most?

Christo and Jeanne-Claude represent a unique position in contemporary art that has been inspiring me since I was a student in Gdańsk. I was in awe of the magnitude of their projects. Little Bay Coast (Wrapped Coast, Sydney, Australia) is the first image of their work to be recorded in my memory. This was followed by Surrounded Islands in Biscayne Bay, Greater Miami, Florida, 1980-1983 and I was able to see their magnificent barrel installation, at the Gasometer in Oberhausen (1999), with my own eyes.

12. And who is the one who supported you most?

My husband, my daughters, my brother and numerous friends.

13. If you could turn the time back would you choose another path?

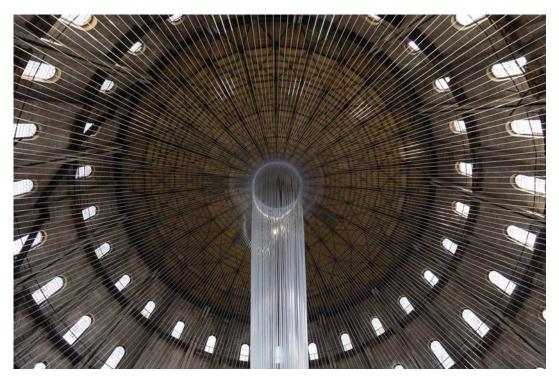
I would not change a thing. I know that it is a huge privilige and happiness to do as I do, what I love. It is not uncommon when introducing myself to new classes to say that I am an artist and that teaching at the school is my hobby.

14. Apart from school, what professional accomplishments have you achieved?

I have been working as an artist since 1991. I have taken part in a large number of exhibitions and projects at home and abroad. I am often curator and organizer of art projects, such as the Debut Prize of the students of the Academy of Fine Arts in Münster and Düsseldorf: "Junge Positionnen Künstlerzeche Unser Fritz 2/3". I have a very large artistic output. I have realised many large-scale but at the same time subtle installations. In the year 2020-21 I did my doctorate at the Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw on the topic "Constancy in transience". The work of my PhD, was an installation in the Wolski Rotunda of the old gasworks in Warsaw. I defended myself on 22 November 2021.

15. Would you show us your best piece of art?

The most spectacular and greatest challenge, by far, is the installation "Constancy in transience" from the year 2020.



Source: Rainer Schlautmann



Source: Danuta Karsten.

16. Tell us more about it.

Architecture:

- monumental post-industrial architecture from 1888,52 m high, 52 m cross-section,
- wonderful light, emanating the history of the place,
- sleeves made of transparent foil with a cross-section of 4 cm filled with human exhalation,
 mine and that of the inhabitants of Warsaw.

Work:

The beautiful light outlined the delicate lines of the two cones inscribed in this monumental architecture. Through this spatial drawing, the qualities of the building became apparent in a specific way. Its lacy, delicate structure - despite its large size – was achieved thanks to the large number of windows and the daylight streaming through them. Every moment of observation is unique. The Rotunda has transformed into a cathedral, a temple, a kind of sacred place. Silence, magical light, delicate sounds of foils hitting each other moved by the gust of wind additionally emphasize the unique atmosphere of its interior. A place where you can stop for a moment, calm down, move into another dimension. A place to contemplate the senses. I could sit there for hours. Like in my childhood, when lying on sacks of crops, while my dad was sowing grain on horseback, I would watch the clouds and listen to the larks. Just watching the light change, listening to the rustling of the foil - it is comparable to sitting by the sea and gazing serenely into the distance at the changing nuances of colour, listening to the gentle sound of the waves. It is an experience of years spent at the seaside during my studies at the High School of Fine Arts in Gdynia Orłowo. Experience of stopping time for a moment, slowing down the rush we usually experience.

17. What about your future art projects?

I am currently working on the installation of TIME S1 in the current Imperial Shipyard, formerly the Gdansk Shipyard. I can only tell you that I have 1600 square meters of the former Mould Shop at my disposal. The installation is planned for April or May 2022.

18. And your advice to nowadays students?

Do what you love and love what you do.

INTERVIEW WITH IGOR DUSZYŃSKI



Source: Aleksandra Wajs.

1. Hello! How are you?

Hello, I am very pleased that we can talk.

2. Tell us a few words about yourself.

I am a graduate of High School of Fine Arts in Gdynia Orłowo. I was in the metalwork class. I learned a lot here. Of course, I was particularly happy with the practical classes, but I am happy with the high level of general education, because it gave me a lot of freedom in choosing my further path. While studying in high school, I was interested in a lot of different things. I attended many extracurricular activities to try as many different languages as possible for artistic expression. In the end, I've joined extra-curricular activities with Mrs. Irena Zabrocka, who infected me with love for sculpture, and it was with this field that I connected my future

activities. Since the professor is retired, today I run the Saturday sculpture faculties initiated by Zabrocka.

Art and manual activities have always been important to me. I loved drawing, constructing, creating crazy installations. Apparently, I played with plasticine from an early age. I was attending to various art classes.

3. Why did you choose an art school?

The choice of High School of Fine Arts in Gdynia Orłowo seemed obvious to me. In addition, my older sister paved the way for me, because she also studied in art school.

4. What did you do after you graduated high school?

After high school, I continued to develop my passions instilled in me, I've started studying at the Academy of Fine Arts in Gdańsk. I have been graduated in sculpture in the studio of prof. Katarzyna Józefowicz and from intermedia under the supervision of prof. Grzegorz Klaman.

5. So now how has graduating art school/academy helped you to achieve your goals?

I think that the schools I have finished and what I have learned is very difficult to clearly list and summarize. Projects that I've carried out while studying allowed me to face even skills that were seemingly distant from art; I tried, among others: blacksmithing, welding, electronics, mechanics, Digital painting and film processing, construction work, sewing, I attended extremely developing anatomy classes in the dissecting room, one of the works was carried out in cooperation with the microbiology laboratory of the University of Gdańsk, where I was breeding with the support of scientists glowing bacteria and much more. All this comprehensive knowledge and skills allow me to fulfill myself in various activities and in many areas, also professionally. As I am thinking about it under the influence of your question, I do not think that a different choice of educational path could equip me with such a variety of competences.

6. Why did you become a teacher? Was it in the list of your dream jobs?

Teaching was not my dream job. My dad was a teacher and I knew it was not an easy job. During my studies, I earned money in various ways: I worked in a grocery store, in a medical equipment factory, in a theater, in a blacksmith's workshop, handing out leaflets, washing windows, tending

gardens ... I even worked in a bank right after graduation. I have proven myself there. I even got promoted, but I found that office work does not suit me very much. That is why I applied to the Art High School. It turned out that this job is demanding, but it also gives a lot of satisfaction. I've been working here for the twelfth year and I don't plan leaving.

7. What do you think makes a good teacher?

I am a demanding teacher. I am also very involved in conducting classes. I want my students to feel satisfied with the knowledge they acquire. I try very hard to be fair in judging. I know this is especially important. Sometimes, unfortunately, it is difficult to balance the requirements with the capabilities and enthusiasm of students. If you go too far, it is easy to discourage young people from engaging in activities.

8. What do you love most in your job?

I really enjoy working with students who are deeply involved in sculpture. Developing advanced skills and supporting a very mature quest is exciting. When discussing various solutions and points of view, I also develop myself. It is also extremely satisfying to assist less advanced students in their development jumps. The moment when the student suddenly makes great progress and understands how to change the future approach to working on sculptures brings joy to both the student and the teacher. This joy is the best driving force for further development.

9. And what part of your job is most difficult?

Evaluating students' work is difficult and entails great responsibility. Students treat their artistic realizations very personally and it is often difficult for them to remember that we judge their works and achievements, not themselves. That is why I try to discuss each assessment very precisely with my students, so that they always leave classes with a sense of justice, although sometimes regret or disappointment cannot be avoided.

Currently, the Covid pandemic is taking quite a difficult time for students and teachers, especially in practical subjects. Remote learning and organizational changes make it impossible to carry out some tasks, especially technological projects. This is very discouraging. However, I firmly believe that these are temporary problems and we will soon return to normal functioning for good.

Once, inspired by the series of works by Katarzyna Kozyra In Art Dreams Come True, I asked students to do whatever works under the same title. Most of the students were extremely creative. I was simply surprised by many. One of them, as part of this task, made sculptures of the hairstyles of her friends. She modelled their hair in unusual three-dimensional forms, and then asked a friend from the photographic class to document them effectively. She published these photos on the Internet and gained quite a lot of popularity. This prompted her to deal with similar activities professionally. She's done it. She finished school a few years ago. I observe her activities and see that she is still working as a stylist for photo sessions.

10. Who is the person or visual artist who inspired you most?

It is difficult to choose one artist that is most inspiring. I value contemporary art very much, because it touches upon problems that are dear to me, it tells about the times in which I live. Critical art is especially important to me; I believe that disagreement with certain elements of reality, resistance, rebellion can be a valuable impulse to change the world for the better.

However, I will mention two former artists who occupy a special place in my life. They are Alina Szapocznikow and Xawery Dunikowski. Their work is extremely inspiring, varied and important from the point of view of art history, but I admire them for another reason as well; both of them were very prolific artists who achieved their intended goals despite radical adversities. I am sure that many would not find the strength to practice art in the face of even lesser difficulties. Dunikowski worked on sculptures in very changeable political times. He survived the war and was in a concentration camp, and also worked after the war. He created works that were his personal artistic expressions, but he also sculpted portraits of saints, politicians from various factions, the most outstanding artists, proletarians, and monarchs of the Church. In order to create, he had to adapt to very different political and social times. Nevertheless, all of his works are brilliant. His work developed and evolved regardless of the subject matter often determined by circumstances.

Szapocznikow, on the other hand, struggled with a serious illness for most of her adult life. In sculptures and installations, she dealt with the weaknesses of her body and her own passing. I admire her because she continued her work, considering it a priority, even when she already knew that the materials she used worsened her health.

I really admire the determination and self-denial that Szapocznikow and Dunikowski displayed. It seems to me that they could also become idols for the youngest generation of today's artists to give strength when crisis and discouragement come.

11. And who is the one who supported you most?

Fortunately, being a teacher is teamwork. Together with other teachers of art, we create a really effective team that supports each other. I think too many people are showing me support to name just one.

12. If you could turn the time back would you choose another path?

I would rather choose a different educational or professional path, but if I could try an alternative life, I would like to become an architect there. Architecture - buildings are really huge, functional sculptures. This field seems to offer truly fantastic creative possibilities with a momentum unattainable in the visual arts.

13. Apart from school, what professional accomplishments have you achieved?

I was able to do some sculptural works which I like, participated in several exhibitions and festivals. Sometimes I am involved in the restoration of sculptural elements on historic buildings. I was responsible for the reconstruction of some really beautiful tenement houses.

I take part in competitions for sculptural and architectural projects on my own or in cooperation with architectural offices. I have already mentioned that the world of architecture attracts me a lot.

14. Would you show us your best piece of art?

I hope that the best implementation is still ahead of me. The project with the greatest momentum that I have done so far is the statue of General Anders, which will be erected in the Italian city of Cassino at the foot of the famous hill.

15. Tell us more about it.

My sculpture is to be part of a large architectural and sculptural project that will occupy a square in the very center of the city. Every visitor to Cassino will be able to mention the brave Poles who, under the leadership of General Anders, resisted the Nazis in this place and contributed to their retreat from occupied Europe. The surroundings of the sculpture were designed by the

Italian architect Giacomo Bianchi. There will be elements informing about the achievements of Anders' army and the memory of all those who died in the fight for Monte Cassino. The surface of the square will be covered with pebbles collected for several years, coming from many places related to the history and path of the Anders Army through the world.

My work is a bronze figure slightly larger than his natural size, showing the commander in full reflection while walking on the battlefield the day after its completion.

16. What about your future art projects?

I'm already working on my next projects. I hope to find more time soon for works that will be more independent artistic messages than those that I do on the topics assigned by the clients. It is really fun and rewarding to carve. Thanks to carving and communing with sculptures, everyone's life can really be more interesting and exciting

17. And your advice to nowadays students?

A saying that I often repeat to students: Remember that whatever you dream of, it can be carved!



Source: Igor Duszyński's private collection

BULGARIA



Plamen Veltchev – ex-student now teacher



Antoniya Fingarova – ex-student now teacher



Magardich Kassapian – ex-student now teacher in the Academy

INTERVIEW WITH PLAMEN VELCHEV



(Plamen Velchev – Graphic teacher in National High school of Arts Tsanko Lavrenov)

1. Hello! How are you?

Good how are you?

2. Tell me/us about yourself?

Well I was born in Plovdiv, Bulgaria. I graduated this high school in 1999 and after that I was accepted in the US for my undergrad and have been an artist ever since.



3. Why did you choose an art school?

As you guys know every kid is very interested in drawing, dancing, singing and as for me my love grew more and more towards drawing and the visual arts. That pushed me in that direction then I applied to school and was accepted.

4. What did you do after you graduated high school?

Well I applied to US where I was accepted to Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, which is the oldest art Academy in the United States. I studied there for 4 years and have a degree in Printmaking. I also did drawings, experimented, did a lot of mixed media works, as well as installations.



(Plamen Velchev in high school)

5. So now how has graduating art school/Academy helped you to achieve your goals?

Well, I was fortunate enough to find a very positive artistic open minded art environment. I was lucky in that way. I met great teachers, made amazing friends that pushed my confidence to make my own style and create my being as an artist.







6. Why did you become a teacher? Was it on the list of your dream jobs?

Yes, it was. Well I became a teacher because I remember when I was a student how my teachers showed me stuff and ideas that nobody showed me before so that pushed me to always give the spark back to my students. To show them an incredible sense of ideas that nobody can give them. So that is really important to me as a teacher and that is why I chose this profession.

7. What do you think makes a good teacher?

Good teacher is a one who gives a constructive criticism, a positive feedback, the one who believes in their students, a one who extracts the best from them, a one who doesn't think about their ego which is very important. A good teacher is someone who really pushes their students to a direction in order to get the best from them.





8. What do you love most about your job?

Interacting with my students, working on different projects and drawings.

9. And what part of your job is most difficult?

Probably the paperwork.

10. Have you ever regretted being a teacher?

No, never, I have never regretted that!

11. Tell us a nice memory in your teaching career?

Well, last year I was given a chance to make a big mural with some of my students. That was part of a program which is different from our curriculum. We were given a wall which is on the side of our school. It was about 36 feet wide by maybe 12 feet high. So I took that opportunity and got my team to help me and really turned out to be a very unique mural which I was very excited about. That was so far one of the highest points in my career.







12. Who is the person or visual artist who inspired you the most?

Well there are many, there is no just one person there are many, many artists. Probably some of them are my first teachers at the Academy in the US. They gave me some directions and ideas that I thought that I would never achieve in my life. As far as artists I look up artists all the time. I recommend this to all of my students to look up artists all the time. The world is full of interesting people and everyone has a different brain. Everyone has a different imagination so I get inspired as by that too.

13. Who is the person who supported you most?

Well I guess my family who always stood by me. Also my friends in the US, they gave me a tremendous amount of support which I am always grateful for.



(Plamen Velchev with his family to his exhibition)

14. If you could turn back, would you choose another path?

No, no definitely not.

15. Apart from school, what professional accomplishments have you achieved?

Well I have collaborated with international artists on different projects, I have done murals in the US and Bulgaria. I have 9 solo exhibitions and maybe more than 40 group exhibitions. Last year I won an award for a young artist in Plovdiv. My piece was bought to be in a private collection in a local gallery. A couple of my pieces were in a movie by M. Night Shyamalan, that happened maybe 15 years ago, I have about 3 lithographs and 5 monotypes in the movie so yes it has been interesting.



16. Would you show us your best piece of art?

Well I wouldn't say the best piece, maybe I have a couple. One of them is a mural which I did in the US and it was about a friend of mine whom unfortunately passed away from cancer. I was given the opportunity with another friend of mine to make a tribute to my friend. That was one of the biggest works that I have ever done. It was second to third floor and did it with a friend of mine whom is a street artist and also a very close friend. That has done a tremendous impact on me, first of all because it was about a friend of mine so I had to put an extra energy, and also it was very emotional experience but in the end I felt very happy when it was all done. So I would consider this to be one of my best pieces so far.





17. What about your future art projects?

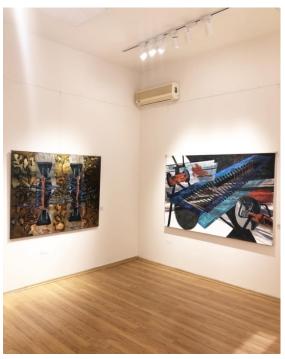
Well I am thinking about couple of things, we will see. I keep drawing and thinking but have couple ideas. When the time comes I will show you guys.

18. And your advice to nowadays students?

To be open to the world, to be open minded, to be themselves, that is very important, to follow their own path to make their own mark. To find their voice, our communication is through art after all and people will see that. Even though sometimes somebody might say "well nobody is going to care" or "why are you doing this", well people will care trust me, so my advice is to be themselves to make things which are important to them. Look around and ask what is important to me and say "I am going to make it because I want to". That is what I would say. Thank you.











 ${\it If you want to watch the whole video you may follow the link: \underline{https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KE38aH_a9pM}}$

INTERVIEW WITH ANTONIYA FINGAROVA

MOTO: "I strive to motivate and build my students as a whole as individuals and as artists. My aim is to develop in them an attitude towards art, good visual culture, aesthetic taste, work habits and perseverance. They have to be equal to their counterparts in European countries and to present themselves to the world with dignity."

-Antoniya Fingarova



(Antoniya Fingarova – Graphic teacher in National High school of Arts Tsanko Lavrenov)

1. Hello! How are you?

Hello... I'm fine, thank you! How are you?

2. Tell us a few words about yourself?

Well... I can introduce myself like a teacher as well as like an artist. Because at first in our school we are artists, that's why we can share our skills with students. Personally, I can say that I'm a happy, positive, and growing up person.



3. Why did you choose an art school?

Hahah... in fact I started my experience working in a high school with languages. But I couldn't find myself there in high potential... so the art school is the only one good option for me because I teach directly what I have studied... like you know I am a printmaker so everything that I learned in academy I can share with you like a teacher, so this is may be the best way to give something to someone, because you already know what we are giving. You know my tinny specialization is printmaking and I love what I'm doing.





(Antoniya Fingarova with her diploma works in National High school of Arts Tsanko Lavrenov)

4. What did you do after you graduated high school?

I'm blessed, because I didn't waste my time and I directly went in an Art Academy, here in my hometown Plovdiv, and I spent really great time there. For me this was life changing time, because after that the door was opened. In my masterclass, I will share this story of my life with you, because it was like a really life-changing point. I went abroad while I was in Academy in Sardinia. I was the first student that they sent in Sardinia. I took a part in an Erasmus project, so I took part in this project and it was really amazing time. I spent really unforgettable time full with a lot of strange, interesting and really beautiful moments, with a lot of new friends that are made there. And when I came back, I won one concours for young artist, because I had already idea what I want to present after my visit in Sardinia and this was my opportunity to create my first exhibition.



(Antoniya Fingarova with her diploma works in Academy)



5. So now how has graduating art academy helped you to achieve your goals?

Well, I really learned a lot and I catch different point of views, different techniques, different ways to present or to crate your art, also I had many projects and many practices like a teacher and there were a lot of opportunities like European projects that I took a part.

6. Why did you become a teacher? Was it in the list of your dream jobs?

Haha, good question. This was my 'dream job'. I want to be honest with you, there isn't more logical thing if you are good enough in something just to want to share or to teach someone else in this. Also, in art process you still can learn new things, the students are creative and they can give you a lot of energy and inspiration. Because you know everyone has different kind of fire inside. So when you start to think together we can produce more interesting ideas or projects.



7. What do you think makes a good teacher?

Hm... I will give you a quick and short answer because for me the most important thing is just to have a HEART. And maybe, I will put it in second place, that you need to have passion in what

you do because you can touch another heart only if you have a heart. And if you have passion in the thing that you create or do maybe it is the best way to make thing happen before others.



8. What do you love most in your job?

Maybe the feeling that you make something for the future and the satisfaction of good results. You know every time when we finish something you feel your heart full, like you have done something important, something special and you can present to the others.



9. And what part of your job is most difficult?

I lot of things are difficult now in our job because you need to be a good leader at first, after that a good manager, to be a psychologist... and in the end every time you are between a few things — you have no time, you have a lot of things to do, you are like multitasking all the time. For example, to be strictly close to the law or to give a second chance and you need to be understandable all the time, like there is no time to think about yourself, about how you feel, to think about how the students are feeling or how they understand that you present and you need all the time to be not a judge, no judging. Everyone is like, how to say it, like the beginning of one big journey, so you need to be more patient. And maybe always to make a way, to find the good part in every situation and to teach every single one in their language. It is maybe more difficult thing to learn different kind of languages, like not English, Italian, Russian, just you have a way to understand better. So you need to find this way and to keep your attention and to improve your skills. So it is very difficult.



10. Have you ever regretted being a teacher?

Regretted, no, maybe I just felt exhausted. I'm a normal human being! It's normal sometimes to feel yourself down when you don't have rest, or if you have problems with your health or family, you know. You just need to have good rest and to restart everything and maybe if you have an option just to turn your brain, like "Okey, now I am working. Stop!" After that I just want to clear everything and just refresh it. Tomorrow morning I will be again a happy person. So I think it is good.



11. Tell us a nice memory in your teaching career?

Ooo.. I had a really cool one! It was some time before East, some years ago. Our headmaster gave us a challenge to paint one really huge egg! So, we had no time to lose and started to prepare projects and materials, you know, step by step to prepare everything. The students were so excited, they thought a lot of new things about the story that we celebrate, about the symbols that we use, about the different techniques. And maybe one of the most important things was how they can work as a team. They made me proud! Because in the end we presented our big painted eggs in one big event in the city center, and my students had a chance to give an interview, like today we are trying to give an interview. So, they clearly present our work, our conception and I see how good they learn everything! You know, at the end maybe the better ways just to see how students can do everything by themselves, like they can be alone in what

they present and work. It is not like "I will be always with you and catch your hand and draw with you". You can do it by yourself. So they started to feel free, to express themselves, to share to speak.









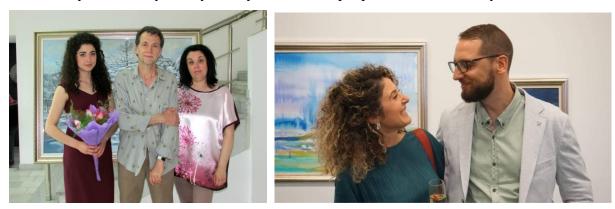


12. Who is the person or visual artist who inspired you most?

Hahhah, hmmm I didn't have a favorite one. Maybe someone may say "Oh, such a shame! How it is possible?". It is possible, because I get my inspiration of many artists, many art works, I just have eyes to see beauty everywhere and maybe this is something different in my point of view. It is like I can take different things and mix it in my mind and present something new. I can say that I'm really impressed of life, works, philosophy, I am impressed of everything, when I see for example Rembrandt's painting, because I think his life is really deep, he learned a lot through his life, a lot of sense of life.

13. And who is the one who supported you most?

Of course my friends, my family. Everytime it is the people that are close to you.



(Antoniya Fingarova with her family and boydfriend)



(Antoniya Fingarova's grandparents visiting her exhibition)

14. If you could turn the time back, would you choose another path?

No... I'm happy in that way!



15. Apart from school, what professional accomplishments have you achieved?

I have three personal exhibitions, here in Plovdiv and I accepted an invitation to present one of them in Varna, this is a big city on Black Sea. I have taken part in many projects and group exhibitions. I won in a few concours for young artists, I won some awards. You can find my works in one of the biggest hospitals here in Plovdiv. Also, I'm a part of an Art community in Plovdiv. And I have same published scientific articles, for one of them I won a price. Because you know in our Academy there are another options that you can be part of so I just get what I can get from there.













16. Would you show us your best piece of art?

I haven't created it yet.

I will show you some. I had some periods, but I am always searching a new way to present my art so I can share a few projects, because you know here in High school I always do print making, like linocut, dry-point, monotypes, serigraphy and so on but when I get back home I work with colors like aquarelle, water colors, oil canvas and I am like an artist in every kind of aspect. I just want to express myself. It is not about the tools, I can take a brush, a pen, I can take a camera and present something new.



17. Tell us more about it.

I found my deep inspiration by traveling, by collecting beautiful views from the nature. I keep the feeling and I use more abstractive way to express everything that put a print in my mind. I paint landscapes, without human presence, just free places, where you can lose yourself.

18. What about your future art projects?

I will take a part in one photography exhibition, it's a new step for me... also I will get same place in new art project connected with watercolor techniques... Unfortunately, I refuse an invitation and I missed project with print making, but next time I will do my best to be a part of it.

19. And your advice to nowadays students?

I am honest, everyone knows that all the time I say again and again the same things – the most important thing is to do everyday routine, fast sketches and if something is close to you, don't be lazy to catch it. If someone invites you to make some project or be a part of concours or exhibition just go ahead and to this. Don't be like "Oh, I am exhausted, I am tired...I don't know what to share or to do." Just catch the opportunity. And maybe it is important every time to do your best, it's not about what others will say, it is about how you feel the taste of great done work and to be proud of it. Maybe that makes you full enough.

Thanks for your questions.

Works:

















 ${\it If you want to watch the whole video you may follow the link: {\tt https://youtu.be/75pkiGe4c-I}}$

INTERVIEW WITH MAGARDICH KASSAPIAN



1. Hello! How are you?

Hello! I feel amazing.

2. Tell me/us a few words about yourself?

I was born in 1963, I am still young. I work in the sphere of classic graphics. I have graduated the art high school of Plovdiv and after that my bachelor and master degree in the art academy in Sofia with specialty graphics.



3. Why did you choose an art school?

To me drawing is destiny. I don't remember when I started but my whole life I have been drawing and I have never imagined my life in another way. It is important for a person to choose their own path and to follow it.

4. What did you do after you graduated high school?

Immediately after I graduated high school I applied to the art academy in Sofia and I was accepted but I had to do my military service for two years. So after that I started studying in the academy for 6 years.

5. So now how has graduating art school/academy helped you to achieve your goals?

Academy gives you very much in professional deal. You meet not just teachers and professors there but artists. From the very beginning all teachers and professors looked at us not like students but like colleagues. And although at that time students were not allowed to participate in exhibitions, that was the system, what we did was really good accepted by the professors. I participated in some competitions in the academy and I won some prices.



6. Why did you become a teacher? Was it in the list of your dream jobs?

I don't think that was my dream job. The first 5-6 years after I graduated the academy I worked as a freelancer but after that they opened the academy here in Plovdiv and I decided that I am able to give my professional experience to the students. I was actually invited to be a professor in the academy in Sofia but I preferred to stay here in Plovdiv

7. What do you think makes a good teacher?

I think the good teacher has to be able to communicate well. Apart from applying the professional experience and skills, the good teacher has to be able to work individually with each student because every student is a different person. Meanwhile they have to be able to keep the group together.



8. What do you love most in your job?

The contact with young people and mostly with those who are willing to learn something new because it is not a secret that some of them are here accidently.



9. And what part of your job is most difficult?

In every job there are difficulties but for me in my job the most difficult thing is when some students are not interested in their work, but thankfully there are a few, most of them are motivated.

10. Have you ever regretted being a teacher?

No, I think a person should not be sorry for anything in their life because they decide what to do for themselves because every path gives different opportunities, unexpected sometimes, but this is a way to be able to adapt.



11. Tell us a nice memory in your teaching career?

The things that I do here usually need a lot of time, I had to go to a competition for a teacher of graphics and the time for the preparation was only 30 hours. But the things I do are made for 30 days. You will see them in a few minutes. That was a real challenge to me to be able to come with this for 30 hours and thankfully I did it.



12. Who is the person or visual artist who inspired you most?

Albrecht Durer.

13. And who is the one who supported you most?

Apart from my parents, my teachers. I remember my first teacher of art, Ivan Popovski. He behaved very well towards kids and at the same time he inspired me with his professional experience. Also the teachers from high school and the academy. I respected them a lot.



(Magardich Kassapian's twin brother)





(Family)

14. If you could turn the time back would you choose another path?

I cannot turn the time back.

15. Apart from school, what professional accomplishments have you achieved?

As I said I worked as a freelancer and I have participated in my international exhibitions and I have a few prices. I can say that I am famous not only in Bulgaria but also in some professional print clubs in America and also in England.



16. Would you show us your best piece of art?

I brought some of my things but to me my all works are my favorite because I experience them. This is like you can say which one of your 5 or 10 children is your favorite.

17. What about your future art projects?

Participating in exhibitions, our work is dynamic, whatever comes as an oppoptunity we participate. I am trying to go through all challenges.

18. And your advice to nowadays students?

You should know what you really want and to follow your aims. If this is the path of art there will be some moments when you won't be appreciated but all of you have some cause and you have to follow it whatever that costs you.



(A photo from the interview from Mobility C3 in Bulgaria)

Works:











 $\textit{If you want to watch the whole video you may follow the link: } \underline{\text{https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4uOxZmraWEM}}$

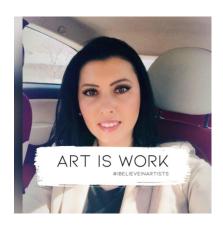
ROMANIA







INTERVIEW WITH MRS SIMONA SAFTA AND MR DORIN TICU





A: Hello! I am Stegarescu Andreea, student in the 11th grade at the Art High School "Gh. Tattarescu" and I have the honor to interview two former students of this high school who, in fact, are now teachers in this institution and I kindly ask them to introduce themselves.

S: Hello! I am Simona Safta. I am a teacher of music theory and I also conduct the choir of the art high school, called Jeunesse, with which I have won many awards in the recent years.

D: Hello! My name is Ticu Dorin. I am a teacher of musical shapes and harmony at the art high school.

1. Why did you choose an art high school?

S: I chose an arts high school because since I was a child I wanted to be a teacher and I also wanted to be a singer and I combined them in this way.

D: And you became a teacher.

S: Yes!

D: I can't necessarily say that I chose art school, in fact the art school he chose me. I'm a big believer in this idea of destiny and predestined paths and that's how it was, I ended up here.

A: How nice.



2. What did you do after you had graduated this high school of arts?

S: I followed the path of music at the National University of Music in Bucharest and after graduation I gave my tenure and went back to the school where I had been trained.

D: Just like my colleague, I also graduated the University of Arts, only on the opposite side of the country, in Iasi.





3. How did graduating from the Art High School and the University of Arts help you achieve your goals?

S: Well, in the University of Music I learned how to teach. I attended courses in psychopedagogy, I practiced with my colleagues in various schools in Bucharest.

D: Exactly! I have a very good position in this interview, which is my second answer and I am inspired by my colleague. Yes, indeed the University helped us at least theoretically to know what to do. We learned the practical part much better in the field of work, which means at school.



4. Why did you choose to become a teacher? Was it on your list of professions?

S: Yes, indeed, I had model teachers at the High School of Arts in Focsani and they somehow traced my path to this world of teaching.

D: I have wanted to be a teacher since I was a child for a simple reason: holidays. We have the opportunity to work with children and I have always enjoyed that.

5. What do you like most about this job?

S: I like most the interaction with the students. I really enjoy working with older students, teenagers, we can get along as equals and even be friends. Well, within limits.

D: Yes, I think by far the biggest advantage of this job is this socialization. I'm a social person and I practically make new friends every generation, every 4 years I manage to make new friends.





6. I guess there's a more difficult part, isn't it?

S: Yes, there is a difficult part because teenagers have this period of transformation, but because we are music teachers, we communicate very well through sounds and we manage to open their souls more than an exact science would do.

D: Difficult parts...there are difficult parts but we basically don't let them show. At least from my point of view the difficult parts are the ones related to bureaucracy, paperwork and so on. Regarding the difficult parts that have to do with the interaction with the students we solve then without any problems.

7. Have you ever regretted this job?

S: No, I haven't regretted it and I'm glad I'm part of the art high school staff, but, since you asked us, let's ask you if you would like to become a teacher at your high school of arts.

A: Honestly, I really like what you do, I admire you and your teacher but no, it's not for me, I have no patience with children.

S: I understand!

D: There can be no regrets. We think we are one of those ideal cases. You do what you like and you get paid for it and then you have no regrets.

8. Can you tell us a nice memory from your career?

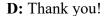
S: I don't know which one to pick. There are so many good memories with the students and with our colleagues. I think the greatest joy is when all the children come to hug you and they do it with all their love and sincerity.

D: I'm going to be a bit more specific, I'll tell you a funny memory of one of our former teachers, a piano teacher. At one time it was a child's birthday and I was served with a cookie. Of course I didn't eat it during the class, but, it also happened during that class that this lady teacher needed something from my class and seeing the cookie on the desk she ate it. And that is a funny memory for you, painful for me at the time.

S: Traumatically indeed.

A: I'll get you a cookie for that.







9. Who is the person or the artist who inspired you the most to become a teacher?

S: Well, I think the person who inspired me in the beginning was my mother who wanted to be a teacher but she didn't succeed instead she implemented this idea of being a teacher. Then in high

school, Mrs. Doina Rentea, was one of the teachers who gave me an impulse to continue on this path.

D: Yes, I think that, now that I think about it, I have never thought about it, but now that I think about it, I think that my inspiration is quite old. Since primary school I had a teacher, a gentleman teacher who was about to retire, he was quite old and he played the accordion and he was a role model for every teacher a very good example of balance, of kindness, of whatever you want. It was a thing for me, an affinity.





10. What about a person who sustained you? Who was there for you when you needed it?

S: The one who sustained me unconditionally was my brother because he is also a graduate of this institution and whenever I needed anything, including money, books, emotional support he was there and still is and I wish him many years of health from now on.

D: Yes, like everyone, I think that goes for everyone, family first of all is there to sustain you, then friends, but family first.



11. If we could turn back time do you think you would choose another profession?

S: No, definitely not. If I gave time back I think I would get involved in more projects and have more fun. I would try to be a bit more cheerful and free.

D: If I gave time back... that's a tough question! I'd probably still choose teaching but there are more rewarding jobs.



12. Besides this job, what other professional achievements do you have?

S: I'm also a choir member in the Pastorala choir, it's a choir of the municipality. I have been singing for many years in a church choir and there are a lot of extracurricular achievements that I can also mark.

D: Besides my job as a teacher in the music high school, I also have a part time job as an accordion teacher in a cultural centre and I have another activity in an event band.

13. Do you have any advice for today's students?

S: Yes, I would have some advice. To be creative, to let their talent express itself and to study hard for their dream. Don't let the talent that God has given you go to waste. It is very important to polish this diamond that we have been given.

D: Yes, I have a more serious piece of advice. Don't treat things superficially as unfortunately happens quite often lately and whatever task you have to do, take it seriously.

A: Thank you very much!

S&D: Thank you, too!



INTERVIEW WITH MRS DIANA TĂICUŢU AND MRS CLAUDIA LASCAN

A: Hello! My name is Stegarescu Andreea, I am a student in the 11th grade at the Art High School and I have the honor to interview two former students, two graduates of this high school that I ask them to introduce themselves.



D: Diana Ticutu, class of 2001, the painting class at the Art High School "Gheorghe Tattarescu" Highschool of Arts.

C: And Lascan Claudia, class of 2000, majoring in sculpture.

1. Why did you choose the Arts High School?

C: Firstly we felt that we had inclinations, at least I don't have people in my family who have done that.

D: I think the same thing happened to me.

C: No, you had influence.

D: I also had influences, yes, my father is a sculpture teacher at this high school, but he started his career a few years ago, or even in the same year with me, I don't remember exactly.

C: I think in the 10th grade he was also the person who instilled in us a love for the arts.

D: Yes, it happened in 1997.

2. What did you do after graduating the Arts High School?

D: Well, I went further, I went on the same specialization to the University of Arts in Bucharest.

C: I instead went in Iasi.

D. And then we said we would try to instill in our students the joy of arts.



C: And I think we've succeeded in that. We have had enough students who have followed a career in arts.



3. How did graduating the Arts High School and the Arts College help you achieve your goals?

D: Graduating an Arts high school certainly helped us because a vocational education gives you some basic knowledge in this area, in this field, and graduating the Arts university was an advantage because we have folded all this knowledge gained in the years of high school, but I can say that by specialty something else happens at university. In the pre-university part we are talking about the whole basis: the basis of drawing, the basis of painting, the basis of modelling, the basis of each specific object.

4. Why did you choose to become a teacher? Was it on your list of careers?

C: It was an opportunity. When I saw the ISJ (County School Inspectorate) post for sculpture advertised the very year I finished, I said I would return to my hometown.

D: And that's definitely for me.



5. What do you think make a teacher truly special?

C: The student - teacher relationship

D: Yes, the way they shape the students' relationship.

C: And they are attracted by their students' way of being. You have to be as close to them as possible.

6. What do you like most about your job?

D: I am doing what I love and the results I get in class with the students, the love they show for the subject I am teaching makes me think it is the best part.



7. So, you have never regretted being a teacher.

D: No, the choice in no way.

8. A dear memory from your high school days or when you were a teacher?

D: There are a lot of memories. We had a hard start because it was a new high school, a high

school of Arts at the beginning of the road, we were even among the first generations of the high school in this format. The highschool was called "Gh. Tattarescu" after a great Romanian painter and there were some difficult periods at that time and the building was inadequate, the rooms were

uninhabitable, there were some problems but the beautiful memories are those that we made with our colleagues, with the teachers who did their best so that the environment in which we developed and got educated to be as beautiful, as comfortable. There are many memories, I couldn't say one. It was as much fun as it is now.



C: The participation in the Arts Olympics competitions, because we were the first to pave the way to the Arts Olympics.

D: There are many.

9. Do you have a person or a visual artist who has inspired you the most?

D: Gabriel Ticutu! Besides being my father, he has been also my role-model because he is a very well -known sculptor.



10. What about a person who sustained you?

D: Him again!

C: And he is still encouraging us.

11. Let's say we could turn back time, would you suggest another way?

C: Absolutely not

D: All the attempts proved that the choice we have made was the right one. I would be wrong if I said dentist or doctor or I don't know, anything else because there are many beautiful things in this profession that have to do with the inside, the spirit, things that we could not regret.

12. Besides school, what other professional achievements have you had?

D: Visual artists. In addition to teaching, we also have a side that we develop through our participation in exhibitions organized by the Union of the Fine Artists, symposiums, camps. On the sculpture side, there are many events, as well as the picture. There are also activities that are carried out together so we have this extracurricular side that we really use.



13. What artistic projects do you have for the future?

D: Well, we now have an international biennial taking place in Buzau in autumn, the "Ion Andreescu" Biennial, where we are participating together. We have remained in a very beautiful relationship over time. Since high school and until now we have been very close.

C: We have grown up and matured together.

D: And we encourage each other, both in school and out of it. So we also have projects together.

A: So high school bonds friendships, it's true.

D: Sure!

14. What advice do you have for today's students?

C. To listen to their soul and follow what they want to do and what they like, not to think about material gains. What Art brings, nourishes the soul.





D: Yes, that's true. The area of arts without a little effort and perseverance is not successful.

A: Thank you!

D. With love! Thank you.

ITALY





INTERVIEW WITH MR CORRADO CIULLI



1. Tell us a few words about yourself?

I'm Corrado Ciulli, graduated in Architecture and teacher of Drawing and History of Art.

2. Why did you choose an art school?

This choice can be traced back to my childhood; as a child I have always had a passion for artistic disciplines because I liked creative activity and design; when I had to enroll in high school my father forced me to choose something else, so I graduated as an electrical.

3. What did you do after you graduated high school?

After having obtained the diploma of electrical technician, in the choice of the university faculty I had some hesitation; I was undecided between banking, mathematics and architecture; in the end I chose architecture



4. So now how has graduating art school/academy helped you to achieve your goals?

The degree in architecture helped me a lot because my childhood passion for art was joined by the acquisition of techniques that gave me the opportunity to realize myself and to accomplish important things.

5. Why did you become a teacher? Was it in the list of your dream jobs?

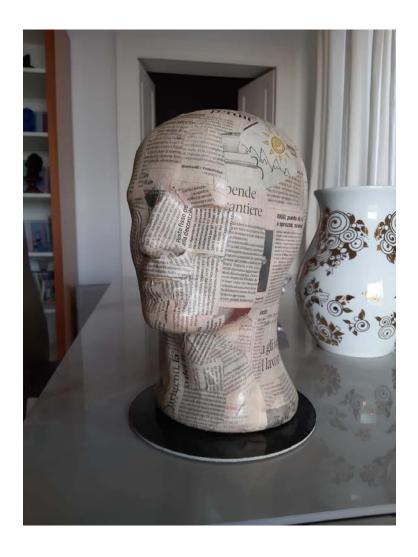
Becoming a teacher had never been on my wish list; after graduation I submitted the application for the competition to become a teacher, almost as a joke, not being very convinced; in reality then I was the winner and I started my career as a teacher; I was immediately passionate about my work, which has given me great satisfaction.



6. What do you think makes a good teacher?

I think that a good teacher should strive to find all the teaching methods to transfer the fruit of his/her experience to the pupils. In my opinion, it is not enough just to know, but it is necessary to establish an excellent relationship with them and make yourself understood through effective communication.

Art is a discipline that always makes me discover new things, I always undertake to study and deepen and every year I never propose the same program again, but I adapt it to the classes that are assigned to me.



7. What do you love most in your job?

It is difficult to say ... probably the adoption of new textbooks, which I need to read to adapt the content of my explanations to that of the textual references and thus help / facilitate the study of the students.

8. Have you ever regretted being a teacher?

Absolutely not, I have never regretted it because it is a job that continues to give me great satisfaction.



9. Tell us a nice memory in your teaching career?

Sometimes students tell me they are not inclined to my discipline, so I encourage them not to give up and to apply themselves more and more to get better results; a great joy for me is when students send me messages, in which they write that they have followed historical-cultural documentaries and are happy to find the notions studied with me.

10. Who is the person or visual artist who inspired you most?

Of the three artistic fields (architecture, painting and sculpture) I really like sculpture, in particular Gian Lorenzo Bernini, who has created exceptional works; in painting I prefer Salvador Dalì.

Caravaggio has also always interested me because he was a great artist, but above all a man, with his weaknesses.

11. And who is the one who supported you most My family.

12. If you could turn the time back would you choose another path?

Absolutely not.

13. Apart from school, what professional accomplishments have you achieved?

I was highly appreciated as an architect, my works have been published in international magazines, I won an ideas competition for the construction of a square, etc. etc.

14. Would you show us your best piece of art?

Yes, you can see it through the pages.

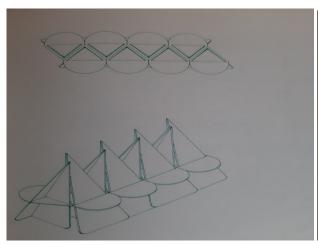


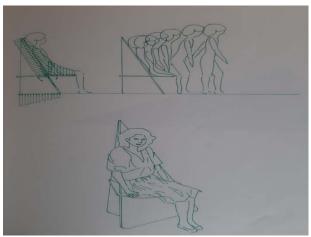
15. What about your future art projects?

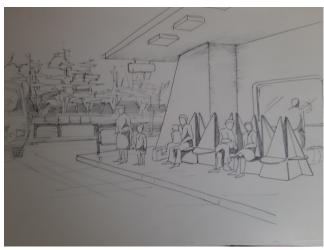
As soon as I retire I will devote myself to painting and photography.

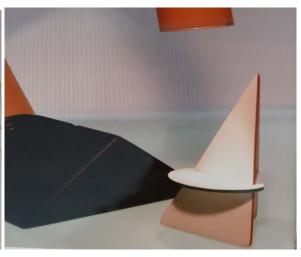
16. Would you like to give some advice to students who would like to take on the artistic career as a choice of life?

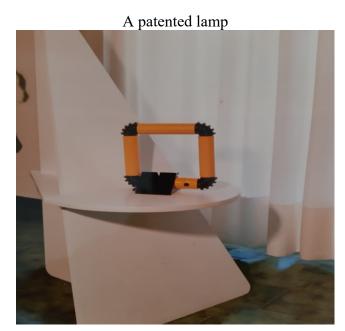
For young people who are about to undertake a university career, I recommend choosing based on their passions, so that studying is also pleasure and fun; moreover, it is also important that the city where the studies are held is a vital and dynamic city in order to fulfill one's aspirations. Design of a chair:



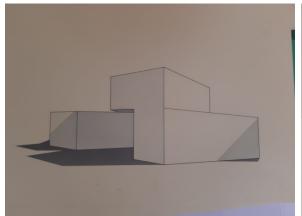




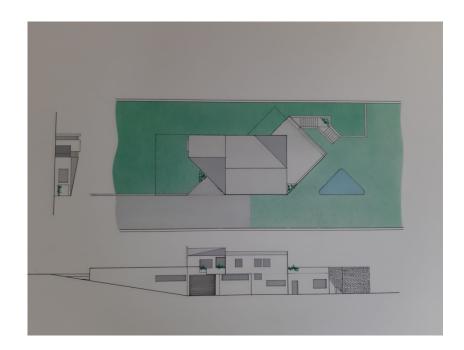




Design of rural housing:







A vase printed with a 3D printer



INTERVIEW WITH MR LEONARDO SPINELLI



1. Tell us a few words about yourself?

I am Leonardo Spinelli, I have been teaching at the "Vico" high school for six years, after a long period of a short-term period around Italy and also throughout Puglia and Basilicata.

2. Why did you choose an art school?

This choice can be traced back to my childhood; as a child I was often sent by my mother, who worked as a seamstress, to buy fashion magazines; I spent my free time leafing through the magazines, which featured comic pages, which were exciting for me as I enjoyed reproducing and coloring them; as a boy it was natural for me to choose art school, which allowed me to cultivate the passions of childhood.

3. What did you do after you graduated high school?

After the art high school, I stopped for a year because I wanted to enroll in a restoration school, which however, being private in Italy, provided for a very high tuition; later I attended the Academy of Fine Arts in Urbino for two years; I had to complete the other two years in Bari, because my father got sick and I needed to study in a city near Laterza.

4. So now how has graduating art school/academy helped you to achieve your goals?

I graduated from the Academy of Fine Arts, following the Decoration course, which was the most recent one in the 1990s. For my thesis I made a very particular choice: Historical costume techniques.



5. Why did you become a teacher? Was it in the list of your dream jobs?

Becoming a teacher has always been on my wish list; when I had to take the competition to become such, I inquired about the places destined for Art History teachers in Puglia and I was disheartened because there was none; so it was necessary for me to take the competition in Piemonte; I arrived in Turin in October 2005 and, despite having many participants in the selection tests, I managed to be among the fifteen winners of the competition.

6. What do you think makes a good teacher?

First of all, effective communication to enter the world of teenagers and transmit knowledge and skills; then also the ability to link the artistic aspects of the national territory to those of the local territory, in order to stimulate the interest of the students.

7. What do you love most in your job?

Of my job, I love the possibility of making art known and appreciated not only through books, but also live within my territory.



8. And what part of your job is most difficult?

To make it clear that my discipline is not recreational; very often in the past some colleagues have considered art history as a recreational pastime; I had to make it clear that this is wrong because in this way the link with the past is severed.



9. Have you ever regretted being a teacher?

Absolutely not, also because I am never satisfied, I always study and deepen what I propose to my students

10. Tell us a nice memory in your teaching career?

It is a recent memory; the other day in a classroom of the "Vico", with the kids of 13th grade I gave life to conceptual and abstract art: I reconstructed with them what is at the basis of the artistic process; I talked about how an Italian artist, Maurizio Cattelan, provoked the viewer by applying adhesive tape to a banana on the wall where an exhibition was set up.

The next day my pupils repeated the same thing and this pleased me particularly because I understood that the seed thrown by me has taken root.



11. Who is the person or visual artist who inspired you most?

I really like ancient art, especially the Greek one and the art of the sixteenth century; I am very fascinated by the creativity of Caravaggio, the talent of Van Gogh, Burri, the artists of the Sixties.

I understand the history of art not as a monument, but as the mirror of a society in progress; that's why the whole history of art is very interesting.

12. And who is the one who supported you most?

Surely my parents who have always supported me, comforted me in hard times and rejoiced in my successes.



13. If you could turn the time back would you choose another path?

Absolutely not, even if it was very tiring and demanding to attend the artistic high school.

14. Apart from school, what professional accomplishments have you achieved?

I am appreciated as a historical consultant, as happened recently having collaborated in the writing of a book on the sacred Ginosa; I am often asked to interpret the sacred images of the local area; all this makes me aware that my study is worth a lot.



15. Would you show us your best piece of art?

I have two: one is the product of my thesis, represented by watercolors documenting historical research on a particular pilgrimage that took place in the past ... this for example is the dress worn by the Polish ambassador visiting Bari; the other work is of my artistic maturity: I experienced Byzantine painting on wood in a work that represents a sacred image, that of St. Gabriel; I also tried to mix the pigments, which are all natural, such as the saint's blue cloak was painted after crushing the lapis lazuli, or the gold leaf made with the burin technique.

16. What about your future art projects?

I don't know ... I'm just saying that I would like to make a manual on art teaching.

17. Would you like to give some advice to students who would like to take on the artistic career as a choice of life?

I would like to dispel a cliché according to which those who choose an artistic career cannot live in dignity; this is absolutely not true because if today there are so many artistic manifestations it means that there are still admirers; this happens because art needs people and the world needs art; the advice I would like to give to students is to learn how to look at things and then turn them into art through the use of certain techniques; each of us is an original artist, therefore free to choose the most suitable technique to express the art.



