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dr hab. Magdalena Uchman Professor of the University of Rzeszów  
University of Rzeszów  
College of the Humanities  
Institute of Fine Arts

- **Evaluation of the artistic achievements and the doctoral dissertation of Ms Magdalena Parfieniuk drawn up in connection with the doctoral degree conferment procedure in the field of art, in the discipline of fine art and art conservation, initiated by the Artistic Discipline Council of the Eugeniusz Geppert Academy of Art and Design in Wrocław**

#### **LEGAL BASIS**

1. The regulation of the Minister of Science and Higher Education of 19 January 2018 on the detailed procedure and conditions for conducting activities in the doctoral degree conferment procedure, the habilitation procedure and the procedure for the conferment of the title of professor (Journal of Laws of 2018, item 261).
2. The Higher Education and Science Act of 3 July 2018, the regulations introducing the Act (Journal of Laws of 30.08.2018, item 1669, as amended).

## TOPIC OF THE DISSERTATION

The topic of the dissertation of Ms Magdalena Parfieniuk: *Chroma Haze – subiektywna percepcja koloru [Chroma Haze - subjective perception of colour]*. The academic supervisor of the dissertation is Professor Łukasz Huculak.

## THE CANDIDATE'S PROFILE

Ms Magdalena Parfieniuk graduated from the Academy of Art and Design in Wrocław, majoring in Painting, in 2018. She completed her Master of Fine Arts degree in the Painting Studio supervised by Professor Krzysztof Skarbek. After graduation, Ms Magdalena Parfieniuk passed the entrance exam for the first year of the Interdepartmental Doctoral Studies at the Academy of Art and Design in Wrocław in the field of Painting. Pursuant to the decision of the Council of the Faculty of Painting, the artistic supervisor of the doctoral dissertation of Ms Magdalena Parfieniuk was Professor Łukasz Huculak. In June 2021 the Faculty Council accepted and approved the topic of the doctoral dissertation.

### Artistic activity

Ms Magdalena Parfieniuk actively participated in numerous painting and drawing exhibitions and competitions in Poland and other countries, such as Germany, Malta, Spain, Greece, Estonia, Macedonia, the United States of America. During her doctoral studies she also organised her individual exhibitions, e.g.: *Cabaret of one artist* at AG Gallery in Kraków and *Edgy Conundrums* at Ori Gallery in Berlin. She participated in workshops, lectures and art fairs. Moreover, she was a curator and animator of several art projects. Ms Magdalena Parfieniuk received the second award in the IMPET painting competition in Wrocław and a scholarship for the best doctoral students of the Academy of Art and Design in Wrocław (twice). A detailed list of her exhibitions and competitions in which she participated as well as other artistic activities can be found in the documentation of the doctoral student.

### Popularisation and organisational activities of the candidate:

1. ZENITHS curator project, 21.06-2.09.2019, Museum of Contemporary Art, Wrocław
2. Hearts Monkeys Altars, 16.10 - 16.11.2020, Browar Mieszczański, Wrocław

3. Lecture: "Chroma Haze" during the Lanzarote Art Festival, 3.08.2019, Casa de la Cultura in Arrecife, Lanzarote, Canary Islands, Spain
4. Illustration workshop – Creative Summer 2020, Wrocław, Poland
5. Organisation and conduct of the "city landscape" workshop during the Painting Festival organised by the Academy of Art and Design in Wrocław, May 2019, Wrocław

## **EVALUATION OF THE DOCTORAL DISSERTATION**

The evaluation includes an analysis of the theoretical and artistic parts. The doctoral dissertation of Ms Magdalena Parfieniuk entitled *Chroma Haze - subjective perception of colour* is 70 pages long, including illustrations. It consists of 5 chapters: I - *Introduction*, II - *Inspirations*, III - *Humdrum*, IV - *Painting*, V - *Summary* as well as Bibliography and List of Illustrations. In addition, the chapters have a total of 8 subchapters.

### **The theoretical part**

In the descriptive part of her doctoral dissertation *Chroma Haze - subjective perception of colour*, the author reveals her fascination with the phenomenon of colour. Already in the *Introduction*, she articulates her considerations through her own, extremely personal experience of colour, which she confronts with scientific knowledge concerning the issue. She mentions her own feelings not without reason, because due to health-related problems, they have a strong influence on her work and perception of the visible world.

In *Inspirations*, she points to the paths she follows in her work. She writes about her inspiration by artists who, for her, are an interpretation of the essence of painting. Her subjective impressions resulting from the fascination with the works of Frida Kahlo, Jean Michele Basquiat and Henri Rousseau cannot be overestimated. They can be clearly traced in Magdalena Parfieniuk's works (attached to the documentation).

The author devoted the following subchapters to the perception of colour in different cultural areas and the psychophysiology of colour vision. A dictionary of her favourite colours – Chrome Yellow, Verdigris, Violet, Indigo/ultramarine – constitutes the next part of the dissertation. The issue is analysed both historically and from a contemporary perspective, with modern theories of colour perception presented as

examples. Obviously, at the end of this chapter there are theories developed by such artists as Philipp Otto von Runge, Wassily Kandinsky and Johannes Itten.

Chapter III, *Humdrum*, is a description of a drawing cycle that includes the motifs of Dance Macabre, Santa Muerte and those associated with the occult, which concepts are another inspiration for the doctoral candidate. This is followed by an analysis of selected works from the Humdrum series I-III, VII and her (favourite) colours of paints and markers. Chapter V is a detailed description of three selected paintings from the doctoral dissertation: *Cover the Mirrors*, *Monkey Waiting to be Devoured by a Tiger* and *Red & Lonesome*. For Ms Magdalena Parfieniuk, canvas and oil constitute the form of expression to which she devotes herself most fully.

In the *Conclusion*, the PhD student states, "I definitely prefer to paint and speak with images rather than words. Writing this dissertation was a challenge for me, as I did not know how I could talk about all my inspirations and interests in a coherent and clear way. On a daily basis, my life and artistic choices are ruled by chaos. I try to bring order to this chaos. Although I highly value the intuitive nature of creation, I notice relations, draw conclusions and make plans for future cycles." I think that Ms Magdalena Parfieniuk emerged from this challenge unscathed!

### **The artistic part**

Painting is the field of art in which Ms Magdalena Parfieniuk realises her artistic visions. A painting is a kind of message that appeals to human feelings and intellect through the senses. However, for a dialogue to exist between the artist and the viewer, art had to create its own language, consisting of individual visual elements, such as lines, shapes, colour, planes and tensions between these elements. For Ms Magdalena Parfieniuk, colour is the most important element which, filtered through the eye and mind, allows her to build her own world. As she claims in her dissertation, *colour is the engine that drives her creativity*.

Another equally important element is imagination, which gives a stamp of authenticity to her art. It is imagination that allows the artist to soar towards infinity, to transcend the common boundaries and to expand the area of expression in her art. It seems that the author absorbs the aura of art with all her senses: "The smell of art is unique, it is the smell of raw wood, turpentine and paint; although slightly suffocating, this smell is

one that I recall with exceptional sentiment and tenderness. Often when I enter the studio, I am struck by the musty cloud of studio air – I love it, it is the smell of art and work, which is life at the same time," she writes in her doctoral dissertation. It is a sincere and beautiful statement, which confirms the fact that for Magdalena Parfieniuk, art is everyday life.

The artist is between two states: the one that passes and the one that is to come. Her work confirms that she is constantly moving towards new inspirations and themes. She puts it in her text: "My MA thesis was entitled *Colour as a driving force for creative thinking. Chroma Haze – the subjective perception of colour* is therefore a continuation of my exploration of colour inspirations. *Chroma Haze* is the vision that gives rise to the new, it is behind a particular colour impression that pushes me into the act of creation."

The set of works entitled *Chroma Haze* proves that the author is a fine and mature painter, but it also indicates some inclinations towards drawing, which she feels equally comfortable in – the *Humdrum* series or the 2019 painting entitled *A Yellow Parrot*. The same can be said about the series of perfect black and white linocuts. However, it is primarily painting, as I mentioned at the beginning, that defines Ms Magdalena Parfieniuk. This feast of colours in her paintings, often set in the Mexican convention of excess, causes the viewer to be almost dominated by the stylistics imposed by the author. The doctoral student juggles with themes, moving freely from *Dance Macabre* to *Santa Muerte* and vice versa, only to end up in the fumes of the occult.

Animal motifs mix with flora, creating a colourful mosaic of forms, lines and spots, and the imaging hierarchy is constantly changing. In these works of art, the question of the subjectivity or subjection of forms becomes a key interpretative issue: does the animal or bird remain what it is, or is it part of the poetic presentation of *Homo sapiens*? Already Aristotle, in his *Zoology*, fundamental for the ancient science, pointed to the close links between the human and the animal nature. *Where do we come from? Who are we? Where are we going?* – it is Gauguin's garden, full of animals and plants, that shows the ephemeral human condition – just like in some of her paintings, for example *Humdrum I*.

This specific way of perceiving the world is expressed in Ms Magdalena Parfieniuk's works in an original style, composition and metaphorical expression – one would like to say: literary – because the narration of her works involuntarily evokes such an assessment, which is probably inherent in this convention. The author does not hide these convergences, claiming that "the crystallisation of the style is the result of a clash of many inspirations and stimuli". When she combines them with her own forms, with her own vision, we get extremely personal, original works characterised by privacy and uniqueness. I get the impression that the author perfectly finds herself in this world in which colour "deals the cards" and is allowed everything. What is more, Ms Parfieniuk's awareness and workshop skills allow her to play freely with the formal and ideological aspects of her images.

Finally, it is worth emphasising that the artist is an excellent illustrator! This is perfectly evident in the aforementioned *Humdrum* series or in works such as *Black Eye, Body, Passive Aggressive III*, to mention only the most characteristic ones, of course, not forgetting the linocuts!

## **SUMMARY**

Ms Magdalena Parfieniuk's doctoral thesis entitled *Chroma Haze - subjective perception of colour* is an intuition for building artistic narration, and each element of the set results from sensitivity and maturity of the author's artistic practice. Having become familiar with the provided material and its description, I am convinced that the application to initiate doctoral proceedings for Ms M. Parfieniuk has been a completely justified decision.

## **CONCLUSION**

After a detailed review of the artistic output, the doctoral dissertation and the documentation provided, considering the qualifications of the candidate, I state unequivocally that, in accordance with the Act on Academic Degrees and Academic Title in Art (Journal of Laws of 2018, item 261), it is fully justified that Ms Magdalena Parfieniuk be awarded the degree of Doctor of Arts in the discipline of fine art and conservation of art. I address this request to the Artistic Discipline Council of the Eugeniusz Geppert Academy of Art and Design in Wrocław.

dr hab. Magdalena Uchman Professor of  
University of Rzeszów

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