

Urszula Makowska: “Strange Aversion”. About Schulz’s Exhibitions

“There is no artist without exhibitions”, a gallery owner repeats when preparing for almost every opening. Today, participation in exhibitions is an integral part of a painter’s or drawer’s biography, the framework of their professional biography, and often a criterion for professional assessment. It was similar in the 19th century, especially in the second half of it, and then in the 20th century, too. Exhibition catalogues and press reviews of individual exhibitions constitute a significant part of art documentation from that period. This is evidenced by the contents of name files kept in the Polish Artists Dictionary Studio at the Institute of Art of the Polish Academy of Sciences.

The materials in the file signed “Bruno Schulz” are no exception in this respect. It includes (apart from clippings from post-war newspapers) extracts about four exhibitions in Lviv and one in Cracow. Basic publications, usually considered when developing entries for *Słownik artystów polskich i obcych w Polsce działających* [Dictionary of Polish and foreign artists active in Poland], presents information about exhibitions in Drohobych, Vilnius, and Truskavets, as well as Schulz’s debut in Lviv¹. At the beginning of my work on his biography², I knew about nine events. I kept searching, but to no avail. By compiling and comparing data, I managed to only slightly supplement and confirm (more often) or question (much less often) the current findings of scholars regarding Schulz’s exhibitions. Later, after the publication of a dictionary with an entry about Schulz, I learned

1 See *Polska bibliografia sztuki 1801–1944*, t. II: *Rysunek. Grafika. Sztuka książki i druku*, oprac. J. Wiercińska, M. Liczbińska, Wrocław 1979; J. Malinowski, *Malarstwo i rzeźba Żydów Polskich w XIX i XX wieku*, Warszawa 2000. The extent of material covered by research constituting the basis for these publications allows us to assume that researchers found information about the exhibitions regardless of the findings on this subject in the reconstructions of Schulz’s biography, initiated by Jerzy Ficowski (e.g. “Słowo o Xiędze bałwochwalczej, [in:] B. Schulz, *Xięga bałwochwalcza*, przygotował do druku i słowem wstępnym opatrzył J. Ficowski, Warszawa 1988, p. 7–15; (mkł) [M. Kitowska-Łysiak], “Wystawy”, [in:] *Słownik schulzowski*, oprac. W. Bolecki, J. Jarzębski, S. Rosiek, Gdańsk 2003.

2 U. Makowska, “Schulz Bruno”, [in:] *Słownik artystów polskich i obcych w Polsce działających (zmarłych przed 1966 r.). Malarze, rzeźbiarze, graficy*, t. 10: Sa–Sie, pod red. U. Makowskiej, Warszawa 2016, p. 285–299; see also eadem, “Schulz Bruno”, [in:] *Allgemeines Künstlerlexikon. Die Bildenden Künstler aller Zeiten und Völker*, Band 102: Schleime–Seiffert, Berlin 2019, p. 272–273.

from a book by Ukrainian authors about another exhibition he had in Boryslav³. However, there is no certainty that the register of public presentations of his works can be considered complete. Thus, our knowledge about the circumstances and repercussions of recorded exhibitions also remains partial.

Ghost exhibitions

The exhibition in Truskavets, protested by senator Maksymilian Thulli as pornographic, is dated in Ficowski's first publications (and others after him) to 1928 or 1929 (at some point, the earlier date was commonly accepted). It should be identified with the joint exhibition of Schulz and Joachim Kahane in the summer of 1930; Ficowski knew about the near-miss scandal from a letter by Juliusz Flaszen, who probably got the year wrong⁴.

Ignacy Witz's memory must have failed him when he wrote about "two or three" individual exhibitions of Schulz "in Lviv at the premises of the Artists Trade Union", when Witz was "about eighteen years old"⁵. Ficowski adds the number eighteen to Witz's year of birth (although "about eighteen" does not mean exactly that) and gets the year 1937, the date of the exhibition. He admits that there are "no mentions in the press" of the exhibition, but he does not explicitly question it, so the date enters scholarly discourse⁶. Meanwhile, the lack of mentions in the press (even in "Głos Plastyków", the organ of the Cracow Association that recorded artistic events throughout the country) means that there simply was no such exhibition. We are not dealing here with an event organized in the provinces or in a community centre of a local organization that could have escaped the attention of journalists. Besides, Schulz was not a member of ZZPAP⁷ and the invitation to take part in the December exhibition in 1935 (see below) was probably a one-time event. Most likely, this particular exhibition must have tripled

3 B. Łazorak et al., L. Tymoshenko, Ł. Chomycz, I. Czawa, *Widomyj i niewidomyj Bruno Schulz (socjokulturny portret Drohobycza)*, Drohobych 2016 (Б. Лазорак, Л. Тимошенко, Л. Хомич, І. Чава, *Відомий і невідомий Бруно Шульц (соціокультурний портрет Дрогобича)*, Дрогобич 2016), hereinafter: B. Łazorak et al. et al.

4 In *Regiony wielkiej herezji* (1967, 1975), Ficowski indicates 1928 as the date of the exhibition, and in the introduction to *Xięga bałwochwalcza* (1988) he writes that the event took place "in 1928 or 1929" (p. 10); in the *Polski Słownik Biograficzny* (1995–1996) he mentions the exhibition with the correct year 1930.

5 I. Witz, "Bruno Schulz", in: idem, *Obszary malarskiej wyobraźni*, Kraków 1967, p. 40.

6 J. Ficowski, "Słowo o Xiędze bałwochwalczej", p. 14. In *Słownik schulzowski* (p. 417) the date 1937 is provided with a question mark.

7 His name is not on the list of members of the Lviv ZZPAP (*Salon Plastyków Związków Zawodowych Polskich Artystów Plastyków. Kraków, Lwów, Łódź, Poznań, Warszawa*. Styczeń 1936, IPS, Warszawa, p. 77–78). However, the names and addresses of Fryc Kleinman, Jarosława Muzykowa and Andrzej Pronaszka, who exhibited together with Schulz in 1935, are listed there.

in Witz's memory, as he was almost seventeen (or "about eighteen") years old when he saw it.

The information about Schulz's works presented at the Society of the Friends of Fine Arts (TPSP) in Cracow in 1931, published in *Polskie życie artystyczne*, also requires correction⁸ (especially because it was repeated in other studies). Schulz's works were perhaps to be presented at this institution, as evidenced by a note in the eighth issue of "Głos Plastyków" from that year. However, the next issue of the magazine only mentions group exhibitions by Tadeusz Cybulski and Stanisław Podgórski, and a collection of works by Hanna Krzetuska; the names of these authors were included in the TPSP⁹ catalogue (by the way, it is worth explaining that "collective exhibition" meant an individual one, while today it is understood as an exhibition with the participation of many artists, each of whom presents one or several works). One can also add to this list the exhibition in Lviv in 1929, which is mentioned by Jerzy Malinowski in the monograph *Malarstwo i rzeźba Żydów Polskich* [Painting and sculpture of Polish Jews]¹⁰. In this case, the source of the mistake was probably Artur Lauterbach's supposition in an article printed in "Chwila" in August 1929; the critic wrote about Schulz's expected appearance "soon" before the audience¹¹, even though this did not happen until the spring of the following year.

While crossing out the years: 1928, 1929, 1931 and 1937 from chronology of exhibitions in which Schulz participated can be accepted without any major reservations, doing so with the exhibition at Warsaw's Zachęta in 1922 is not so easy. Schulz himself wrote about it in an application from August 9, 1924 to the Ministry of Religious Denominations and Public Enlightenment: "I have exhibited my works several times in capitals, with some success, as the press reports, and so in March 1922 I presented several works at the Society for the Encouragement of Fine Arts in Warsaw; in June 1922, I had a small collective exhibition at the Society for the Encouragement of Fine Arts in Lviv"¹². However,

⁸ *Polskie życie artystyczne*, ed. A. Wojciechowski, Wrocław 1974, p. 243 (noted in the text: "B. Schulc"; in the index there is a reference to: "Schulz Bruno").

⁹ "Głos Plastyków" 1931, no. 8, p. 6; with 9, p. 5. In the catalogue (*Wystawa akwarel i grafiki francuskiej. Wystawy zbiorowe Tadeusza Cybulskiego i Stan. Podgórskiego. Kolekcja prac Hanny Krzetuskiej*, marzec-kwiecień 1931 roku, Towarzystwo Przyjaciół Sztuk Pięknych w Krakowie) Schulz is never mentioned by name. Reviewers never mention him either, including Henryk Weber (*Wystawy w Pałacu Sztuki*, "Nowy Dziennik" 1931, no. 105 (20 April), p. 8–9), who less than a year earlier wrote kindly about Schulz's works presented at the Jewish Academic House in Cracow.

¹⁰ J. Malinowski, op. cit., p. 327.

¹¹ "Undoubtedly, however, the artist will soon again present himself in front of a wide audience" – A. Lauterbach, *Talent w ukryciu. O grafikach Brunona Schulca* [!], "Chwila" 1929, no. 3740, August 21, p. 5.

¹² B. Schulz, *Księga listów*, zebrał i przygotował do druku J. Ficowski, wyd. 3, Gdańsk 2008, p. 211 (hereinafter: KL).

the writer's name does not appear in the catalogues and reports of the Society for the Encouragement of Fine Arts. Even if he had exhibited "outside the catalogue" – as was the case with the Jewish exhibition in Lviv in 1920 – some trace would have remained in the press. Such an event could not, in fact, have gone unnoticed. If they did not appear in reviews, the names of artists exhibiting at Zachęta, the capital's most respectable gallery, were generally mentioned in short information notes¹³.

However, research I have conducted on Warsaw magazines, also covering the spring of 1921 and 1923 (assuming Schulz's mistake in the yearly date), did not produce any conclusive results¹⁴. If Schulz had participated in a so-called current exhibition, changing every three weeks, which usually accompanied the main individual, group or thematic presentations, and if for some reason he had not been included in the catalogue, it is difficult to believe that his work – if only because on the topic – would not attract the attention of journalists¹⁵. Especially since, as he himself states, he put several works on exhibition, not just one small sketch. It was possible not to notice a still life with an apple in the rooms of Zachęta, but it was impossible to remain indifferent to the dark and grotesque sexuality, multiplied in many, even small, pictures. So did Schulz get the place and month of the exhibition wrong? (In the same application, he made a mistake in the name of the Lviv institution). Perhaps further search, extended to other months, will solve the mystery. However, it is worth remembering that Zachęta's exhibitions, despite the destruction of its archives during World War II, are quite well documented and researched¹⁶. Therefore, it cannot be ruled out that the Warsaw exhibition was added by Schulz in the official letter to strengthen the argument, and the phrase about the press votes regarding the Lviv exhibition was also extended to it. For now, in the absence of any other evidence apart from the entry in the application – a crowning piece of evidence, but, in my opinion, still

¹³ A (probably incomplete) list of 25 artists who submitted works for the "current exhibition" was published by, among others, "Gazeta Warszawska" 1922, no. 64 (March 5), p. 6.

¹⁴ In addition to the Zachęta catalogues, the following magazines were included in the research in the collections of the Library of the Institute of Art of the Polish Academy of Sciences and the National Museum in Warsaw (the most complete in this respect): "Kurier Warszawski", "Gazeta Warszawska", "Gazeta Poranna", "Rzeczpospolita", "Świat", "Tygodnik Ilustrowany", "Ivy". In the Vilnius "Południe" (1921–1925), which meticulously recorded not only local art exhibitions and their participants, Schulz's name is also absent.

¹⁵ Władysław Wankie wrote in "Świat" (1922, no. 8, February 25, p. 6): "The current exhibition at Zachęta does not deserve to be considered", and Jerzy Centnerszwer in "Nasz Kurier" (1922, no. 54, February 24, p. 2) described the current exhibition as "barren". Similar formulations are present in other reviews from Zachęta from the spring of 1922.

¹⁶ On this subject, see J. Wiercińska, *Towarzystwo Zachęty Sztuk Pięknych w Warszawie. Zarys działalności*, Wrocław 1960; eadem, *Katalog prac wystawionych w Towarzystwie Zachęty Sztuk Pięknych w Warszawie w latach 1860–1914*, Wrocław 1969; *Towarzystwo Zachęty Sztuk Pięknych. Materiały z sesji*, red. J. Sosnowska, Warszawa 1993.

insufficient – I am moving Schulz's participation in the Warsaw exhibition from the register of facts to that of assumptions.

Facts on exhibitions

Currently, this register of facts includes ten exhibitions in which Schulz certainly participated. On the timeline, they form two distinct series. The first includes the Exhibition of Jewish Art in Lviv in January 1920, the following year an individual show in Boryslav (March) and a collective presentation of artists in the auditorium of the King Władysław Jagiełło Junior High School in Drohobych (May), as well as the Spring Salon of the Society of Friends of Fine Arts in Lviv in May, June and July 1922, and an exhibition of Jewish painters in Vilnius, opened less than a year later. The second series takes place in 1930, after a seven-year break; Schulz then shows his achievements at the Jewish Academic Home in Cracow (February), again in TPSP in Lviv (from May to June, a separate room at the Spring Salon) and at the above-mentioned exhibition in Truskavets in the Social Club. After more than five years, in December 1935, the artist took part in a joint show (with Fryc Kleinman, Jarosława Muzyka and Andrzej Pronaszko) at the premises of the Lviv Trade Union of Polish Artists. His last public appearance took place at an illustration exhibition organized in Lviv in May and June 1940 by the local organizing committee of the Union of Soviet Artists of Ukraine, apparently later moved to Kiev.

Year of projects – 1938

An event from May 1938 can also be added to the exhibition register. Some of Schulz's drawings (or their reproductions) were presented – in connection with Emil Breiter's article about *Sanatorium Under the Sign of the Hourglass* – at the showcase of the administration office of "Wiadomości Literackie"¹⁷. The showcase was designed by Marian Eile, who – as in other exhibitions known for his photography¹⁸ – probably used some simple and effective visual and mental concept. Schulz was interested in how the showcase was received; he asked Romana Halpern for her opinion¹⁹. Perhaps for the first time, he did not have a direct influence on the selection and arrangement of the works shown, which,

¹⁷ The premises were located at ul. Królewska 13, where on October 1, 1932, the magazine's administration was moved from ul. Świętokrzyska. Breiter's text "*Sanatorium pod Klepsydrą*" Schulza was published in "Wiadomości Literackie" 1938, no. 23 (29 May), p. 4.

¹⁸ See "Wiadomości Literackie" 1938, no. 9, p. 8 (four photos).

¹⁹ KL, p. 166–168; Schulz received a photograph of the showcase from Kazimiera Rychterówna, *ibidem*, p. 170.

moreover, were made available not to a narrow circle of art lovers, but, in the full sense of the word, exposed to public view. Questions about the effects of Eile's work are one of the very few references to exhibitions in Schulz's statements. The rest are also from that year. In an interview from the beginning of January, there is talk about projects to organize shows, together with Egga van Haardt, in galleries in London and Paris²⁰. Perhaps these ideas influenced Schulz's trip to Paris and the plan to organize his exhibition in one of the galleries there, which did not come to fruition due to an unfortunate combination of events (resulting in the postponement of the trip until August) and financial barriers²¹. Meeting with Natan Szpigiel ("he was delighted with my drawings and advised me to go to Paris to organize an exhibition"²²) probably did not so much set the goal of the Paris expedition as it confirmed Schulz's decision. The word "exhibition" was mentioned again three months later in correspondence with Romana Halpern: "M. Eile intervenes at Zodiac to organize an exhibition of drawings and prints for me, so that I can sell something for the trip. Menashe Seidenbeutel is here, and he says that such an exhibition can be a financial success"²³.

Although none of these exhibitions (apart from the showcase designed by Eile) came to fruition, one can get the impression that the first half of 1938 was the period when Schulz began to seriously think about organizing shows of his works. Whether this is really a special stage in his biography in this respect – it is difficult to say, since we only have part of the correspondence, and most of it from the second half of the 1930s. But it is probably no coincidence that all references to exhibitions are accompanied by notes about contacts with other artists (Egga van Haardt, Natan Szpigiel, Marian Eile, Menasze Seidenbeutel, Ludwik Lille²⁴). With them, Schulz probably found confirmation of the value

20 P. Sitkiewicz, *Bruno Schulz w Poznaniu*, "Schulz/Forum" 5, 2015, p. 133–146. It is hard to resist the impression that in the interview quoted here for the Poznań "Nowy Kurier" (1938, no. 7, p. 4–5), Egga van Haardt answers the journalist's questions – as if speaking on Schulz's behalf or supplementing his answers. The two Lviv exhibitions mentioned in the same interview were shows at TPSP in 1930 and at LZPAP in 1935, which had the character of individual exhibitions and were undoubtedly the most important in Schulz's career. The events he took part in in Boryslav and Truskawiec were provincial, and he probably did not take them seriously.

21 *KL*, p. 170–172, 276–279, 292; (jj) [J. Jarzębski], "Paryż", [in:] *Słownik schulzowski*, p. 258–259; Ł. Chomycz, *Wyjazd Brunona Schulza do Francji*, "Schulz/Forum" 11, 2018, p. 179–188.

22 Letter to Romana Halpern, March 3, 1938, *KL*, p. 160. In the same letter, a few lines above, Schulz states; "Nothing has come out of my trip to Paris yet". This probably means that the trip plans were made independently of the conversation with Szpigiel.

23 Letter to Romana Halpern, after June 12, 1938, *KL*, p. 170. Undoubtedly, Seidenbeutel was right – the Zodiac café, favoured by artists and writers, was in close proximity to the Society, the Institute of Art Propaganda, the headquarters of "Wiadomości Literackie" and other Warsaw cafés and restaurants that were fashionable in the late 1930s.

24 The name of Zofia Leśmianowa can be added to this list, whose opinion is referred to by Kazimiera Rychterówna in a letter to Schulz of July 28, 1938 – *KL*, p. 283.

of his works and practical advice on organizing exhibitions. This connection – between exhibition plans and contact (or the need for it) with artists – probably existed from the beginning of Schulz's artistic activity. The proof can be found in the words of Edmund Löwenthal, who met him in 1921: "In the time before he was appointed a drawing teacher, there was talk of attempts to send drawings to exhibitions in Paris, of seeking contacts with people from Drohobych painters – L[eopold] Gottlieb and Lilien"²⁵. Of course, this relationship went deeper – drawing, just like literary work (and any other), is nourished by contact with other works, an exchange of thoughts with people related professionally and spiritually. It is just that these needs are much more difficult to satisfy in correspondence; letters will not replace conversation engaged in while looking at paintings or drawings together.

Schulz's trips to Lviv, Warsaw and Zakopane, where he could meet painters, as well as their visits (or longer stays) in Drohobych, did not mean establishing any permanent, close relationships with the artistic community. At least nothing is known about that being the case. In Lviv, Schulz visited the studio of photographer Wanda Diamand (and "there was not one Lviv artist who did not come across this atelier"²⁶) as well as residence of Izabella Hermanowa (Czermakowa). However, Witz's opinion about his belonging to the "Artes" circle seems to be greatly exaggerated²⁷. What brought them together was a joint exhibition in Lviv in 1930 (in which other artists took part) and his acquaintance with Debora Vogel. He was friends (or maybe just colleagues) with Jerzy Janisch, whose name appears most often in his letters; he met Henryk Streng, the illustrator of a volume of poems (*Toge-figuren*, 1930) and a volume of short stories (*Akacje kwitną*, 1936) by Debora Vogel, but he saw others – Ludwik Lille and Tadeusz Wojciechowski – rather sporadically²⁸. The brother of Ludwik Tyrowicz, one of the members of "Artes", a friend of the entire group, wrote the following: "I did not have the opportunity to meet Schulz in person, because he rarely came from Drohobych to Lviv"²⁹. In turn, in contacts with artists closely related to his biography, such as Feliks Lachowicz or Zenon Waśniewski, Schulz, as has already been written several times, did not reach either an agreement on artistic issues

²⁵ *Wspomnienie Edmunda Löwenthala*, [in:] B. Schulz, *Listy, fragmenty, wspomnienia o pisarzu*, zebrał i oprac. J. Ficowski, Kraków 1984.

²⁶ I. Witz, "Wspomnienia lwowskie", [in:] *Księga wspomnień 1919–1939*, red. M. Berman, Warszawa 1960, p. 365–366.

²⁷ Idem, *Bruno Schulz*, p. 40.

²⁸ Despite these fleeting contacts, there could have been a real understanding between them (as evidenced by Lille's text about Schulz, see A. Kato, *Schulz i Lille*, "Schulz/Forum" 3, 2013, p. 126–134), which, still, did not perhaps translate, as one might assume, into a permanent incentive to work.

²⁹ M. Tyrowicz, *Wspomnienia o życiu kulturalnym i obyczajowym Lwowa 1918–1939*, przedm. J. Maślanka, Wrocław 1991, p. 53.

or an intellectual partnership. Witkiewicz, in many respects an ideal partner, took care of his provincial colleague during his stay in Warsaw³⁰ and probably in Zakopane, but he was not very good as an advisor or helper, which Schulz confirmed at some point: "He cannot do anything practically good for anyone. I don't blame him"³¹.

The intensity (relative, anyway) of all confirmed contacts between Schulz and visual artists could mainly be observed in the 1930s, i.e. after both series of exhibitions. The reconstruction of what came before must, of course, be built largely on assumptions and ideas based on flimsy premises. Therefore, it is impossible to avoid the tedious qualification of most statements with the formulaic "perhaps", "probably", "possibly", "apparently", etc.

1920–1923 Lviv, Boryslav, Drohobych, Vilnius

Therefore, it is possible that in the period preceding his artistic debut, Schulz maintained a relationship, which provided the opportunity for professional conversations about art and creation, with Adolf Bienenstock, who taught drawings at the Władysław Jagiełło Junior High School in Drohobycz from 1918–1922³². In Schulz studies, Bienenstock is present as the author of the review of the Spring Salon in Lviv TPSP, titled *Prace graficzne Brunona Schulza*, which appeared in "Chwila" in 1922³³. Did the (supposed) contact between the two artists end only when Bienenstock moved to Przemyśl in December of that year, or did it happen a few months earlier? The mentioned review, despite the subtitle "Z wystawy wiosennej" [From the Spring Exhibition], was devoted entirely to Schulz and was undoubtedly of a promotional nature; his name written in bold in the headline was more eye-catching (and memorable) than placed in a grey column of the text. The characteristics of the exhibited works demonstrated the professionalism of the author of the article, and their overall assessment should be generally considered favourable. But it is possible that Schulz may have felt offended by the unbearably patronizing tone of the review. Bienenstock was right

30 S. I. Witkiewicz, *Listy*, oprac. i przypisami opatrzyli T. Pawlak, S. Okołowicz, J. Degler, t. 2/1, Warszawa 2014, p. 291 (letter of December 28, 1934).

31 Letter to Romana Halpern, around mid-February 1938, *KL*, p. 157.

32 *Sprawozdanie Dyrekcji Państwowego Gimnazjum im. Króla Władysława Jagiełły w Drohobyczku za rok szkolny 1928/29 z uwzględnieniem dziesięciolecia 1918–1928*, Drohobycz [1929], p. 12, 14, 17, 20, 23, 27, 32.

33 A. Bienenstock, *Z wystawy wiosennej. Prace graficzne Brunona Schulza*, "Chwila" 1922, no. 1213 (8 July), p. 5. Presumably, the article about Schulz is the only review that Adolf Bienenstock published. Jerzy Malinowski (op. cit., p. 325, 346) attributes its authorship (without any commentary) to Maksymilian Bienenstock, who wrote a lot for "Chwila" (and other magazines), also about art. However, in the book by B. Łazorak et al. (op. cit., p. 165, footnote 34), Maksymilian Bienenstock's texts are given as examples of Adolf's journalism.

to suggest that his colleague from Drohobych resist “the temptations to exploit one’s natural abilities”, but the phrases repeated several times – about a young artist (or a young talent) and the attractiveness of his works to a naive viewer – revealed the reviewer’s sense of superiority towards the artist who was only four years younger than him and enjoyed no worse prospects³⁴. It is difficult to draw any far-reaching conclusions about the relationship between the two artists or about Bienenstock’s personality from this fact. Besides, very little is known about him, even the date of his death is uncertain³⁵. Of his considerable achievements, only one painting has survived (*Portrait of a Jewish Woman*, also known as *Inta*, 1925, National Museum of the Przemyśl Land) and the memory of polychromes and stained-glass windows in the Przemyśl synagogue³⁶. Based on articles about Bienenstock’s work published in the press, it can be assumed that his artistic assumptions, if not convergent, were certainly not in contradiction with Schulz’s views on art³⁷. We also managed to find a few small facts from the painter’s life, which may be traces on the map of the affinities of both artists: as a student of one of the older classes of the real school in Tarnów, Bienenstock discussed the activities of Efraim Mosze Lilien at a meeting of young Zionists³⁸; in 1919, he recited “The Raven” by Edgar Allan Poe in the reading room in Przemyśl³⁹; in February and March 1921 in Drohobych, at the meetings of the local Circle of the Society of Teachers of Secondary and Higher Schools, he presented a paper on Einstein’s theory of relativity⁴⁰; in 1937 at the Marshal Edward Śmigły-Rydz Junior High School in Brzeżany he served as the guardian of the School Club of

34 This aspect of Bienenstock’s statement was also noticed by Piotr Sitkiewicz (idem, *Bruno Schulz i krytycy. Recepcja twórczości Brunona Schulza w latach 1921–1939*, Gdańsk 2018, p. 20–21).

35 According to Józef Sandel, author of Bienenstock’s biography in *Słownik artystów polskich* (vol. 1: A–C Wrocław 1971, p. 160), the painter died in 1937 in Przemyśl. This was questioned by Tomasz Pudłocki (*Podwójne życie rozdarte traumą*, “Nasz Przemyśl” 2007, no. 8, p. 41); he obtained access to documents that allowed him to establish valuable details concerning the artist’s biography, as well as to witnesses whose accounts indicate that Bienenstock survived the war and, under a changed name, as Władysław Strzelecki, became a professor at the State Maritime School in Gdynia in 1945; he died in 1962. The date of the painter’s death given by Sandel is not supported by any sources and may indeed be a mistake (although not a “hoax” that someone “cared about”, as Pudłocki writes), but the hypothesis about the change of identity also raises doubts.

36 A photograph of a fragment of the interior of the New Synagogue in Przemyśl is reproduced at <http://przemysl.blogspot.com/2008/11/scheinbach-synagogue.html> (date of access: February 1, 2019). A photograph of the stained-glass window (and mention of the author) in the book: M. Goldstein, K. Dresdner, *Kultura i sztuka ludu żydowskiego na ziemiach polskich. Zbiory Maksymiliana Goldsteina*, przedm. M. Bałaban, Lwów 1935, p. 86.

37 Most reviews note and quote in fragments J. Malinowski, op. cit., p. 322–323.

38 Y. Feig, “Memories”, translated by Y. Klausner, in: *Tarnow: The Life and Decline of a Jewish City*, Tel Aviv 1954–1968, p. 766, https://www.jewishgen.org/yizkor/tarnow/tar1_764.html Accessed: February 1, 2019.

39 T. Pudłocki, *W rywalizacji z Atenami Galicyjskimi – Czytelnia Naukowa w Przemyślu*, “Studia Historyczne”, 2011, no. 3–4, p. 305 (note 76).

40 “Przegląd Pedagogiczny” 1921, no. 2–3, p. 44.

the Air and Gas Defence League⁴¹. Finally, it is no longer a random parallel but an informative testimony: at the individual exhibition at the TPSP in Lviv in 1923, Bienenstock showed, among other things, "a piece of work made in a new technique (engraving on a suitably prepared photographic plate)"⁴². I guess it could not have been anything else than a cliché-verre, an obvious loan from Schulz.

Regardless of how the intellectual and artistic relations really developed (and how the alleged animosities arose) between the two Drohobych teachers, Adolf Bienenstock could be credited with the role of the promoter of Schulz's first public appearance. It took place during the 1st Exhibition of Jewish Art in the Hall Kahal (Jewish commune) at ul. Bernsteina 12 in Lviv in 1920. The exhibition was organized by the Jewish Art Lovers Circle, represented by Maks Bienenstock – an outstanding teacher, translator of belles-lettres, literary critic, and finally senator of the Republic of Poland – with the participation of architect and graphic artist Zygmunt Sperber⁴³. It seems possible that Maks (Maksymilian Jakub) Bienenstock was Adolf's older brother⁴⁴. It is believed to be his likeness (*Portrait of Dr. B.*, charcoal drawing) that the painter showed, together with two oil paintings, at this very exhibition. And maybe he was the one who encouraged and supported Schulz as one of the late participants of the event, whose works were accepted after the catalogue was published⁴⁵.

This outline of facts is only hypothetical, but there is no doubt that Adolf Bienenstock and Bruno Schulz appeared together among Jewish artists in the Kahal hall in Lviv, and it was probably a debut for both of them. There are many indications that on this occasion Schulz met Maksymilian Goldstein, the founder of the Jewish Art Lovers Circle and a famous collector. In the same year, he designed two bookplates for him and, perhaps also then, sold (or gave) him some works from the exhibition⁴⁶. He showed several or a dozen of them; they were probably drawings, as can be seen from the cursory description contained in

⁴¹ *Jednodniówka młodzieży Gimnazjum Państwowego im. Marszałka Edwarda Śmigłego-Rydza w Brzeżanach*, Brzeżany 1937, p. 66.

⁴² E. Byk, *Ku ewolucjonizmowi w ekspresjonizmie. (Z powodu wystawy A. Bienenstocka w Tow. Sztuk Pięknych)*, "Wiek Nowy" 1923, no. 6508 (March 1), p. 3–4.

⁴³ J. Malinowski, op. cit., p. 315–317.

⁴⁴ Both were born in Tarnów – Maks in 1881, Adolf in 1888; Adam Bienenstock, mentioned as Maks' brother in the memoirs of Yeshayahu Feig (op. cit.) must have been the same person as Adolf.

⁴⁵ *Wystawa Sztuki Żydowskiej w sali Kahału. Katalog. Koło Miłośników Sztuki Żydowskiej we Lwowie, Lwów 1920*, wstęp Maks Bienenstock; the catalogue had at least two different editions – its larger version recorded 244 exhibits. During the exhibition, "a lot of new paintings arrived, both private and for sale" – *Kronika, "Chwila"* 1920, no. 360 (January 15), p. 6.

⁴⁶ Goldstein had in his collection "a number of boards made with Schulz's specific technique (cliché-verre)" and "six compositional drawings" – M. Goldstein, K. Dresdner, op. cit., p. 98, see also p. 107, 110–111.

Henryk Hescheles' review: "Great achievements could be expected from Bruno Schulz, whose newly exhibited drawings herald extraordinary talents in the field of the grotesque, all the more significant because he had previously only been trained on the available book reproductions of Rops, Lautrec, and Goya"⁴⁷.

The second exhibition in which Schulz and Bienenstock took part was organized a year later, in May, in the auditorium of the Drohobych high school, where works by the Przemyśl painter Marian Stroński and three slightly older artists – Ludwik Misky, Kazimierz Łotocki and Antoni Markowski – were also presented. In addition, paintings made using the appliqué technique by Ernestyna Bienenstock, Adolf Bienenstock's wife, could also be observed⁴⁸. Bienenstock himself spoke at the opening of the exhibition, so it can be assumed that must have been its organiser and invited Schulz to participate in the show.

An event dividing these two occasions chronologically – an individual presentation of the Schulz's works in March 1921 in Boryslav, at the headquarters of the Association of Polish Drilling Technicians (at ul. Kościuszki 82) – was probably the outcome of Stanisław Weingarten's initiative. As an employee of the Galician Oil Company "Galicja", he may have had connections in the Association of Oil Officials, whose Educational Section became the official organizer of the project. Weingarten presented a paper at the opening. Before him, Michał Friedländer, later an outstanding teacher and publicist, who worked as an official in Boryslav and ran educational activities there, spoke on behalf of the Association⁴⁹. He probably knew Schulz from the time when he attended the Drohobych high school (matriculation exam in 1912); it is possible that they also met in Vienna, where Friedländer studied and worked briefly after obtaining his doctorate. After his return – what is most important here – he was a member of the Department (board) of the Drohobych Association "Kalleia", established in 1919 and registered the following year⁵⁰. (The Schulz exhibition could be included among the events

⁴⁷ H. Trejwart [H. Hescheles], Jewish painters, "Chwila" 1920, no. 366 (January 21), p. 5. It is possible that another reviewer of the same exhibition, Gabriel Kenan, had Schulz in mind when he wrote about "the illustrative works of several of the youngest, who unnecessarily waste their energy in pursuit of an impressive theme of literary ideas that do not replace the deeper content of artistic experiences" – idem, *Wystawa sztuki żydowskiej we Lwowie*, "Chwila" 1920, no. 353 (8 January), p. 4.

⁴⁸ *Zbiorowa wystawa obrazów*, "Świt. Organ urzędników naftowych w Boryslawiu" 1921, no. 9 (1 May), p. 7; Al. Stewe [M. Friedländer], *Z wystawy obrazów*, "Świt" 1921, no. 11, p. 6–7 (after: B. Łazorak et al., op. cit.). p. 231). See also: (x), *Wystawa obrazów w Drohobyczu (w dziale Kronika)*, "Chwila" 1921, no. 849 (29 May), p. 10. Adolf Bienenstock's wife, Esther née Weingarten, supposedly came from Drohobych (T. Pudłocki, *Podwójne życie*; B. Łazorak et al., op. cit., p. 165).

⁴⁹ I. Michalska, *Nauczyciel dla nauczycieli i wychowawców. Michał Friedländer jako popularyzator wiedzy o wychowaniu w latach międzywojennych*, "Studia Edukacyjne" 2018, no. 48, p. 133–149.

⁵⁰ B. Łazorak et al., op. cit., p. 240, 259; the authors of this book established, based on the documents found, the circumstances of the creation of "Kalleia", which differ from those accepted in previous Schulz studies. Maybe "Kalleia" described by Maria Budracka-Tempele was the first, informal incarnation of the association?

implementing the program of this association). It was probably Friedländer who was the author of extensive and extremely enthusiastic reviews in "Świt" (the organ of oil officials in Boryslav) of both exhibitions mentioned in 1921, in Boryslav and Drohobych, the latter of which was signed with his permanent pseudonym Al. Stewe⁵¹. We find there a passage ("On the occasion of the exhibition of Schulz's works in Boryslav, we discussed in more detail the nature of his work") suggesting the identity of the author of both texts⁵². Thanks to Friedländer's article, it is known that Schulz showed "several dozen paintings" in Boryslav; most of them depicted a woman "imbued with the desire to tame male bodies" lying at her feet, but in addition to them, the reviewer mentioned portraits with a "talking" background, the composition *Spring Awakening* ("Art Nouveau school. Several boy figures") and the watercolour *Circe*⁵³. In the auditorium in Drohobycz, there was the same set supplemented with a "pencil drawing *Omphale*" and "colourful picture called *Girl* with characters of knights and clouds from fairy tales" in the background⁵⁴.

It is impossible to guess who seconded Schulz in his application for the next Jewish exhibition, opened in Vilnius at the beginning of April 1923⁵⁵. It is possible that his works were sent from Berlin. The author of the exhibition review mentions at the beginning "the Berlin etcher, Mr. Bruno", and further characterizes the works of Bruno Schulz, who "created a series of etchings with a theme that was not very original (and that is what it is all about) and traced its lineage to Goya, Rops and many others, but made tastefully and good in drawing"⁵⁶. It is possible that in a hurry (and this is how reviews were often written) the critic

51 I know the pseudonym of the author of the review only from the publication: B. Łazorak et al., op. cit.; the authors of the book consistently use this form, although Leopold Held (*A Tyśmienica nad alpylnie*, [b.m.w.] 1993, p. 59), mentioning Friedländer not only as a German teacher from Boryslav, but also as the author of the brochure Romain Rolland and his "Jean Christophe" (Drohobycz 1921), provides the entry: Al. Steve (brochure also noted in B. Łazorak et al., op. cit., p. 302). This form (with "v") is also found in *Słownik pseudonimów pisarzy polskich XV w. – 1970 r.*, oprac. zespół pod red. E. Jankowskiego, t. IV: A–Ż. Nazwiska, Wrocław 1996, p. 168.

52 Al. Stewe [M. Friedländer], op. cit. B. Łazorak et al. assume that the authors writing under the pseudonyms "Al. Stewe" and "S. N-owa" are the same person. The pseudonym S. N-owa is not included in *Słownik pseudonimów pisarzy polskich*.

53 S. N-owa, *Wrażenia z wystawy. (Wystawa obrazów Schulza)*, "Świt" 1921, no. 6 (March 15), p. 2–3; quoted after: B. Łazorak et al., op. cit., p. 226–227. See also: S. N-owa, *Wystawa prac graficznych młodego artysty p. Brunona Schulza*, "Świt" 1921, no. 5 (March 1), p. 7, after: B. Łazorak et al., op. cit., p. 156.

54 Al. Stewe [M. Friedländer], op. cit., p. 229.

55 Mieczysław Goldstein mentions the opening of the exhibition "in these days" in his correspondence from Vilnius dated April 10 (idem, *Żydowskie życie kulturalne w Wilnie. Korespondencja własna "Naszego Przeglądu"*, "Nasz Przegląd" 1923, no. 27 (22 April), p. 4.

56 da., *Wystawa obrazów żydowskich art.-malarzy*, "Przegląd Wileński" 1923, no. 8 (April 29), p. 7. The assumption that Schulz was called a "Berlin etcher" is supported by the similarity in defining the technique of the works shown.

gave the artist's name instead of his surname in the first mention. This is all the more likely because the other participants in the event represented the local community and, without exception, were all painters. However, none of them were famous. Maybe that is why the exhibition did not generate much press coverage. Its recipients – as in the case of the Lviv exhibition three years earlier, promoted by Maks Bienenstock – were quite a narrow circle of Jews interested in artistic culture, which was not as popular as literature and music. Since the event in Lviv gathered artists of international renown (Efraim Mosze Lilien, Borys Schatz, the Hirszenberg brothers, Jerzy Merkel, Zygmunt Menkes, Roman Kramsztyk), much more has been written about it than about the Vilnius show, but all the articles and notes taken come exclusively from Jewish “Chwila”. Therefore, if Schulz became known outside Drohobych thanks to these exhibitions, his fame was local and even in this locality very limited. Moreover, the “Drohobych fame” turned out to be weak and unstable. In none of the published statements of the writer's students or friends, there is a single word about the exhibition at Władysław Jagiełło Junior High School. Many of them did not even know that Schulz was a painter (i.e. a visual artist)⁵⁷. The event in Boryslav, although individual (which usually translates into a high-profile event, at least in the artist's biography) and well publicized in the local press, did not seem to attract crowds either. However, it could bring some profits if we assume that the local intelligentsia (and visitors from nearby Truskavets) bought Schulz's works.

Of this earliest series of exhibitions, only the Lviv Spring Salon TPSP, organized in 1922 in the Palace of Art in Plac Targów Wschodnich, found a wider resonance. This was determined by the importance of the institution, which for several decades has been organizing the most frequently visited exhibitions in Lviv, preceded (at least formally) by a selection of exhibits carried out by a professional jury. In addition to the above-mentioned article by Adolf Bienenstock in “Chwila”, reviews and mentions of the Spring Salon were published by “Gazeta Lwowska”, “Lwowska Gazeta Poranna”, “Kurier Lwowski”, “Słowo” and “Wiek Nowy”⁵⁸. The exhibition was accompanied by a printed catalogue⁵⁹. Thanks to

⁵⁷ See video: *Bruno Schulz jako malarz – Wilhelm Fleischer – fragment relacji świadka historii* (Beer Sheva, November 29, 2006), <http://biblioteka.teatrnn.pl/dlibra/dlibra/doccontent?id=106605> Accessed on August 19, 2019.

⁵⁸ Reviews including Schulz's participation: A. Bienenstock, op. cit.; W. Kozicki, *Ze sztuki*, “Słowo Polskie” 1922, no. 117 (29 May), p. 5; idem, *Życie sztuki we Lwowie. Wystawa wiosenna. III*, “Słowo Polskie” 1922, no. 138 (June 24), p. 5; KS, *Salon wiosenny w Pałacu Sztuki*, “Chwila Poniedziałkowa” 1922, no. 16 (June 12), p. 3; W. Moraczewski, *Wystawa sztuki na placu powystawowym*, “Wiek Nowy” 1922, no. 6295, p. 3; W. J. Terlecki, *Sztuki plastyczne. Salon wiosenny 1922 r.*, “Kurier Lwowski” 1922, no. 152 (July 9), p. 3.

⁵⁹ *Katalog Salonu Wiosennego połączonego z wystawą art. malarza Marcellego Harasimowicza i wystawą zbiorową art. malarza Kazimierza Sichulskiego w Pałacu Sztuki na Placu Targów Wschodnich maj – czerwiec 1922*, Towarzystwo [Przyjaciół] Sztuk Pięknych we Lwowie, [Lviv 1922], item 258–

it, it is known that a total of 333 works were exhibited, and Schulz was the author of twenty. He showed ten plates from *The Booke of Idolatry* and ten other works, eight of which had been borrowed from private collections (maybe those of Maksymilian Goldstein and Stanisław Weingarten), and apart from the graphic series, only two – the watercolour *Pilgrims*, and *Circus* (made in an unknown technique, probably a drawing) – could be bought.

1930 Lviv, Cracow, Truskavets

The Spring Salon held at the same facility in 1930 had a similar prestige. In addition to the "general exhibition", it included the posthumous exhibition of Anna Harland-Zajączkowska, an event by Związek X Artystów Plastyków we Lwowie, and an exhibition of folk art⁶⁰. Attention was paid to it in the Lviv press; the event was also recorded in the chronicle section of the monthly "Sztuki Piękne"⁶¹, published in Warsaw since 1924. This time, Schulz's success was more noticeable because his works were exhibited as part of the "general exhibition" made up of a "collective exhibition" (as defined in the catalogue), located in a separate room. The artist showed almost twice as many of them as before – seventeen cliché-verre images, twenty pencil drawings (or pencil and ink), one watercolour and one tempera. Apart from some illustrations, only eight works did not come from a private collection. Two of them (which will be discussed later) were placed in the National Gallery of the City of Lviv, which was an official expression of appreciation for Schulz's work. The inclusion of a reproduction of the *Pilgrims* graphic (with the caption "The Infanta and Her Dwarfs" and misleading information about its presentation at the exhibition in Łódź) in an illustrated supplement to "Chwila" should also be treated as a kind of distinction⁶². However, not all reviews were overwhelmingly favourable; for example, Janina Kilian-Stanisławska called the artist "non-contemporary in form", although she considered the *Fantasmagoria* sketch "great" and expressed hope that it heralds a positive change in style⁶³. Thanks to this exhibition, Schulz established contacts with

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⁶⁰ *Salon Wiosenny, maj – 1930, Towarzystwo Przyjaciół Sztuk Pięknych we Lwowie, Pałac Sztuki – Plac Targów Wschodnich*, item 640–678.

⁶¹ The following reviewers wrote about Schulz: J. Kilian-Stanisławska, *Salon wiosenny 1930*, "Gazeta Poranna" 1930, no. 9223 (21 May), p. 11; W. Kozicki, Z "Salonu Wiosennego" (Wystawa ogólna: grafika i rzeźba: Lewe skrzydło), "Słowo Polskie" 1930, no. 141, p. 7; *Kronika artystyczna*, "Sztuki Piękne" 1930, no. 5, p. 201; A. Lauterbach, *Ze sztuki. Salon wiosenny*, "Chwila" 1930, no. 4005 (21 May), p. 7; K. Majewski, *Towarzystwo Przyjaciół Sztuk Pięknych. Salon wiosenny 1930. III*, "Gazeta Lwowska" 1930, no. 119 (22 May), p. 3; MK, *Ze sztuki, „Salon Wiosenny” – Maj 1930. Wystawa ogólna*, "Wiek Nowy" 1930, no. 8675 (21 May), p. 4.

⁶² *Obrazy z salonu wiosennego w Łodzi*, "Chwila. Dodatek Ilustrowany" 1930, no. 18 (25 May), p. 3.

⁶³ J. Kilian-Stanisławska, op. cit.

members of the ARTES group (exhibiting as “Left Wing”) and became better known in the artistic community of Lviv⁶⁴. But not anywhere else. Ludwik Lille lamented a few years later: “When every art exhibition in Cracow or Warsaw is reported by magazines throughout Poland, [the] organization of the exhibition in Lviv, for an individual who only shows his achievements here, often had merely local significance”⁶⁵.

Schulz presented several (perhaps even a dozen works) the same year – three months earlier, at an exhibition of Jewish painters in Cracow, which was to become “a serious attempt to bring a Jewish artist closer to Jewish society”⁶⁶. The assumptions, nature and effect of this project can be compared with the analogous exhibition in Lviv from ten years ago, although the works of any internationally renowned artist were not shown in Cracow⁶⁷. Among the Cracow magazines, probably only the Jewish “Nowy Dziennik” published more extensive comments and reviews⁶⁸; there were mentions in other newspapers (without the names of the exhibiting artists)⁶⁹; a larger passage also appeared in “Sztuki Piękne”, but – despite the magazine’s nationwide reach – it did not fundamentally change the apparent importance of the event⁷⁰. Although Schulz could probably subscribe to the slogans of cultural consolidation of the Jewish community, they certainly did not dominate his individual artistic program⁷¹. However, crossing

⁶⁴ M. Tyrowicz, op. cit., p. 165

⁶⁵ L. Lille, *Lwów jako ośrodek współczesnej plastyki*, “Gazeta Artystów” 1935, no. 22, p. 6. The article also presents the difficulties artists from outside Warsaw and Cracow had “breaking through” to local exhibitions, which also sheds light on the mystery of Schulz’s Warsaw exhibition in 1922.

⁶⁶ H. Weber, *I Wystawa malarzy żydowskich w Krakowie (Na marginesie wystawy)*, “Nowy Dziennik” 1930, no. 47 (February 27), p. 7. The exhibition, held in the Jewish Academic House in ul. Przemyska, inaugurated the activities of the Jewish Society for the Promotion of Fine Arts in Cracow, see: N. Styrna, *Zrzeszenie Żydowskich Artystów Malarzy w Krakowie (1931–1939)*, Warszawa 2009, p. 40–43. Schulz exhibited, among others, *The Booke of Idolatry*, of which he sold six plates, which was noted in the press, with short information about their author, “known in eastern Małopolska”. *Z teatru, literatury i sztuki*, “Nowy Dziennik” 1930, no. 61 (March 7), p. 8.

⁶⁷ Both exhibitions were opened with great pomp, many guests were invited, and several speeches were given; they were accompanied by readings.

⁶⁸ H. Weber, *Wystawa malarzy żydowskich w Krakowie (Na marginesie wystawy) II*, “Nowy Dziennik” 1930, no. 48 (February 22), p. 6.

⁶⁹ See “Ilustrowany Kurier Codzienny” 1930, no. 46 (February 20), p. 9.

⁷⁰ *Kronika artystyczna*, “Sztuki Piękne” 1930, no. 5, p. 110.

⁷¹ Schulz’s position on this issue (and his attitude towards the Zionist movement) was defined explicitly in the article by E. M. Lilien, “Przegląd Podkarpacia” 1937, “Schulz/Forum” 6, 2015, p. 83–96. Stefan Chwin, writing about Schulz’s participation in Jewish exhibitions and the design of his parents’ tombstone referring to the Judaic tradition, states: “All this allows us to assume that as a graphic designer and painter he did not mind being considered a Jewish artist” (idem, *Why Bruno Schulz Did Not Want to Be a Jewish Writer: On the “Erasing” of Jewishness in Sanatorium Under the Sign of the Hourglass and The Cinnamon Shops*, “Schulz/Forum”, special issue 2023, p. 35). It did not bother him, but it perhaps limited his audience. Most Jewish artists active in Poland in the interwar period took part in exhibitions organized by both Jewish associations and Polish institutions, and accepted commissions from both Poles and Jews. Many lived for a long time in France,

the boundaries of Jewishness was not his goal either. When seeking communication with people with similar sensitivity and a similar perception of the world, their ethnic identity did not matter much. (Making friends with Jewish artists was – for various reasons – simply easier. In this respect, the chain of people mediating Schulz's contact with Zofia Nałkowska is quite telling – Schulz got to Nałkowska through Debora Vogel and the sculptor Magdalena Gross, who knew the writer through her sister and her colleague, Hanna Nałkowska-Bickowa).

Another exhibition in 1930 is mentioned (with an incorrect date) in Schulz studies because of an incident described in the aforementioned letter by Juliusz Flaszen to Jerzy Ficowski. However, only Schulz's close friends knew about Senator Thulli's protest. Maybe not all of them, since no one apart from Flaszen talked about the case. The scandal did not actually break out; on the contrary, it was quickly resolved. No traces of the controversy could be found in the press, although showing Schulz as scandalous could have contributed, as Flaszen noted, to the commercial success of the exhibition⁷². Or maybe it would also be the beginning of popularity? However, this did not happen, and the exhibition opened in July at the local Social Club (Dom Zdrojowy), including two presentations of individual work – by Schulz and Joachim Kahane. It enjoyed perhaps a bit more publicity than the exhibition in Boryslav from 1921. It was held in a famous health resort, in the middle of the season, and could attract much more viewers (and buyers) than the previous one, especially since the note announcing it in the local weekly presented Schulz in superlatives only (great talent, outstanding artist, extraordinary talent, isolated phenomenon, demonic creation)⁷³. Among the vacationers and tourists was the famous Warsaw critic, Jan Kleczyński, who in his report on his stay in Truskavets, published in "Kurier Warszawski", gave a short description of the exhibition, mentioning ink drawings, etchings and paintings by Schulz, but without indicating even an estimated number of them⁷⁴.

for example, without breaking ties with Poland or denying their Jewishness.

⁷² Juliusz Flaszen's letter, [in:] B. Schulz, *Księga listów*, opracował, wstępem, przypisami i aneksem opatrzył J. Ficowski, Kraków 1972, p. 159–160; J. Ficowski, *Regiony wielkiej herezji. Szkice o życiu i twórczości Brunona Schulza*, wyd. 2, Kraków 1975, s. 102–103; idem, *Słowo o "Xieździe bałwochwalczej"*, p. 10–11; see J. Kandziora, "Przestrzenie pamięci, przestrzenie rozproszenia (Jerzego Ficowskiego składowanie biografii Brunona Schulza)", [in:] *Przestrzenie geo(bio)graficzne w literaturze*, red. E. Konończuk, E. Sidoruk, Białystok 2005, p. 250–251. In "Głos Drohobycko-Borysławsko-Samborsko-Stryjski" of July 28, 1930 (no. 19, p. 5) the guest list only recorded the arrival of Dr. Maksymilian Thulli, a professor at the University of Technology, who came with his wife from Lviv and stayed in the Jadwinówka villa.

⁷³ *Niezwykła impreza artystyczna w Truskawcu*, "Głos Drohobycko-Borysławsko-Samborsko-Stryjski" 1930, no. 15, p. 5; see also *Z wystawy Schulza i Kahanego*, "Głos Drohobycko-Borysławsko-Samborsko-Stryjski" 1930, no. 22, p. 6.

⁷⁴ J. Kleczyński, *Wrażenia artystyczne z Truskawca. Widok na Borysław. – Muzeum w Pomiarkach. – Wystawa dzieł J. Kahanego i B. Schulza w Klubie*, "Kurier Warszawski" 1930, no. 235 (August 28), evening ed., p. 8–9. The exhibition was also mentioned in "Chwila" 1930, no. 4056 (July 11), p. 13 and no.

The appearance of Schulz's name in a capital daily and a favourable opinion about his work did not mean, however, any breakthrough in the artist's career. Compared to Kahane, who was presented in Kleczyński's article as "already known [...] in Warsaw for his reliefs carved in metal", the presentation of Schulz was very modest.

There is no evidence of the relationship between the exhibiting artists. Schulz might have met Kahane earlier. The latter was a co-founder of the Circle of Jewish Art Lovers in Lviv and – like Schulz – took part in the exhibition organized by this association in 1920. From the early 1920s, he lived in Łódź, but he visited Lviv to participate in exhibitions at TPSP in 1929 and 1932⁷⁵. It is possible that he did not want to transport the unsold works from this earlier exhibition to Łódź and therefore organized a show at the Truskavets Social Club⁷⁶. Or maybe he commissioned it to someone, and he was not even there at the time? Kahane himself or his assistant were certainly better versed than Schulz in matters related to arranging exhibitions (renting premises, transporting and hanging exhibits). But, on the other hand, who knew the summer in Truskavets and its solstice better than Schulz, who knew more about this season in this specific place? Although the knowledge contained in the story "Autumn" was not very useful when organizing the exhibition, it resulted from the maximum familiarity or creative appropriation of the space of the spa, where Schulz felt confident, where he was at home. The most mundane matters in this territory were arranged in a network that was understandable, easily accessible, and mastered by multiple visitors. (As we know, Schulz practiced this role not only in Truskavets, but also in Kudowa and Marienbad, and maybe somewhere else⁷⁷). Some good friend from the Truskavets Spa Management Board or from the management of the Social Club could have helped him with completing the formalities and arranging the work in the interior. Schulz did not have to rely on Joachim Kahane or his colleagues from Lviv⁷⁸.

4072 (27 July), p. 15.

75 J. Malinowski, op. cit., p. 322. In the illustrated supplement of "Chwila" ("Dodatek Ilustrowany") of 1932, no.20 (15 May), p. 3 two works by Kahane from the exhibition in Lviv were reproduced; see also no. 23 (5 June), p. 4, and no. 27 (8 July) from 1934 (photograph of works prepared for the next exhibition in Truskavets).

76 "Chwila" 1930, no. 4072 (July 27) states that numerous works by Kahane were purchased (p. 15).

77 How well-versed Schulz was in health resort matters is shown, for example, in his letters to Romana Halpern, in which he gives her professional advice and suggests a specific resort (*KL*, p. 161–165).

78 J. Ficowski (*Słowo o "Xiądze bałwochwalczej"*, p. 10) writes that Schulz was "persuaded by friends" to participate in the exhibition. Press notes suggest that Kahane's works were included in the exhibition a little later than Schulz's (*Z wystawy Schulza i Kahanego*).

1935 Lviv

Only after five years did Schulz take part in another exhibition. It was organized in December 1935 in the newly opened premises of the Trade Union of Polish Artists, in the building of the Industrial Museum on Dzieduszyckich Street in Lviv. This time, they were separate solo exhibitions; in addition to Schulz, who was the only non-affiliated participant, the first president of the Lviv branch of the union, Andrzej Pronaszko, and its members – Fryc Kleinman and Jarosława Muzyka also took part⁷⁹. Who invited Schulz to a joint show? That was probably the only way he could be co-opted into the trade unions. It is possible that it was Ludwik Lille, who was head of the Lviv ZZPAP that year. But the exhibition's co-participants were also suitable for the role of introducers, especially that by then Schulz – as the author of *The Street of Crocodiles* – had become a popular persona. His name improved the chances of bringing in representatives of the world of literature or even readers to the gallery. Therefore, apart from Kleinman, who – like Bienenstock and Kahane – took part in the Lviv Exhibition of Jewish Art in 1920, Andrzej Pronaszko, probably the best-versed among the other participants in the theatrical, artistic and literary events in Poland⁸⁰.

The exhibition strengthened Schulz's position in the artistic community, but it was probably not very well attended. Although it did not present the most avant-garde tendencies, it did require some preparation and knowledge of current trends in art. For less experienced viewers, lectures by Artur Lauterbach on the exhibited works were organized in the exhibition halls⁸¹. Lauterbach also wrote an extensive review, in which he concentrated on Schulz. Like other critics,

79 *Wystawa prac Fryca Kleinmana, Jarosławy Muzyki, Andrzeja Pronaszki, Brunona Szulca [!], Lwowski Za-wodowy Związek Artystów Plastyków*, Lviv, December 1935; I have been unable to find this catalogue, I know it from extracts found in the research lab of *Słownik artystów polskich* at the Institute of Art of the Polish Academy of Sciences.

80 Emil Górski, Schulz's student and friend, was in Cracow in the summer of 1947 and turned to "Prof. Pronaszko" regarding the exhibition of works entrusted to him by a teacher from Drohobych (B. Schulz, *Listy, fragmenty*, p. 76; Górski's letter to Jerzy Ficowski of June 20, 1948, Muzeum Literatury, inventory no. 5964, a fragment of it was kindly provided to me by Jerzy Kandziora). It is impossible to clearly determine whether he was in contact with Zbigniew Pronaszko (professor at the Academy of Fine Arts in Cracow since 1945) or with his younger brother, Andrzej, who may have been better known to him as a participant in a joint show with Schulz in 1935 and other exhibitions in Lviv (where he lived in 1932–1937), as a set designer of local theatres and a cultural activist. After the war, Andrzej Pronaszko lived and worked in Cracow (until 1956), and his position as a lecturer at the Theater Studio at the Stary Theater could have given rise to the informal, customary title of professor.

81 *Kronika*, "Chwila" 1935, no. 6011 (December 15), p. 13; no. 6018 (December 22), p. 13; *Wiadomości bieżące*, "Gazeta Lwowska" 1935, no. 294 (December 22), p. 2.

he referred to his literary works⁸². The exhibited drawings were interpreted as a complement to the *The Street of Crocodiles*, which was supposed to justify their “supremacy of content over form”⁸³. Janina Kilian-Stanisławska, who knew Schulz’s artistic work from the Lviv Spring Salon in 1930, noted that despite the continuing tendency to be illustrative, “the artist revised his earlier technique, and his drawings exhibited are in a new, cubist form”⁸⁴.

1940 Lviv

Participation in a graphic exhibition in Lviv in 1940, organized by the Office for Art of the Council of People’s Commissars of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic and the Lviv organizing committee of the Union of Soviet Artists of Ukraine⁸⁵, was probably not entirely a matter of choice, nor was union membership⁸⁶. The published catalogue contains a list of three hundred and forty works by seventy-two authors, most of whom were artists who had previously participated in Polish exhibitions in Lviv or were refugees from other cities (such as Bronisław Wojciech Linke, who came from Warsaw). Almost all works presented ideologically neutral topics – landscapes and city views (also from France and Italy!), portrait studies, still lifes, and drawings. Schulz contributed three pencil and three pen drawings to the exhibition, all entitled “Illustration”, with subsequent numbers. Ignacy Witz, also taking part in the event, does not say what the drawings depicted: “As far as I remember, they were ‘illustrations’ for something that had not been written yet and probably never was”⁸⁷.

⁸² A. Lauterbach, *Wystawa u Artystów. Bruno Schulc. Andrzej Pronaszko, Jarosława Muzyka*, “Chwila” 1935, no. 6011 (December 15), p. 10.

⁸³ J. K[iilian] Stanisławska, *Wystawa prac lwowskiego Zaw. Związku Plastyków*, “Kurier Lwowski” 1935, no. 345 (December 14), p. 7. See also: AM Mars, *Nowa wystawa Związku Plastyków. Pronaszko – Schulc – Muzyka – Kleinman*, “Nowe Czasy” 1935, no. 33 (December 24), p. 7; *Kronika. Lwów*, “Głos Plastyków” 1935, no. 1–6 (December), p. 97; *Wiadomości bieżące. Komunikaty*, “Gazeta Lwowska” 1935, no. 285 (December 12), p. 2. Schulz’s literary work is not mentioned in: K. Kuryluk, *Życie kulturalne we Lwowie*, “Tygodnik Ilustrowany” 1936, no. 5 (2 February), p. 96; J.G. [J. Gamska-Lempicka?], *Ze sztuki. Wystawa w Zw. Plastyków*, “Gazeta Lwowska” 1935, no. 295 (December 21), p. 2.

⁸⁴ J. K[iilian] Stanisławska, op. cit.

⁸⁵ “Wystawka grafiki, trawień – czerwień 1940”, *Uprawnienia w Sprawach Mystectw przy RNK URSR ta Spilka Radjańskich Chudożnykiw Ukrainy, Orgkomitet Mista Lwowa*, [Lwiv] (Виставка графіки, травень – червень 1940, Управління в справах мистецтв при РНК УРСР та Спілка Радянських Художників України, Оргкомітет Міста Львова, [Львів]). See also B. Łazorak et al., p. 315–316.

⁸⁶ Its vice-president was Henryk Streng. See “Ważniejsze fakty z życia Marka Włodarskiego”, [in:] *Marek Włodarski (Henryk Streng) 1903–1960. Wystawa monograficzna grudzień 1981 – styczeń 1982*, Muzeum Narodowe w Warszawie, Warszawa 1981, p. 45. For a synthetic description of the situation, see J. Sosnowska, “Życie artystyczne we Lwowie w czasie pierwszej okupacji sowieckiej 22 IX 1939 – 22 VI 1941”, [in:] *Między Polską a światem. Od średniowiecza po lata II wojny światowej*, pod red. M. Morki, P. Paszkiewicz, Warszawa 1993, p. 415–426.

⁸⁷ I. Witz, *Bruno Schulz*, p. 40.

Afraid to decide

The circumstances of this last exhibition make it impossible to answer the question of who invited or persuaded Schulz to show his works. Listing all the previous ones, I was looking for a person (people) without whose help an exhibition of the works of the Drohobych loner would have been impossible. Not because Schulz was exceptionally helpless, but because he did not live in the environment of artists close to him on a daily basis. "Artists, regardless of whether they work individually or in teams", notes Marian Golka, "are connected with the most important reference group for them – that is, with other artists creating the artistic environment [...]. Of course, you can imagine an artist living in isolation, deprived of contact with any artistic environment (which does not mean that he is not connected with any other social environment). This is probably a significant hindrance to the artist's life and work and is rarely conducive to the development of their career"⁸⁸. Would Józef Gielniak – cut off from the world even more than Schulz in the sanatorium solitude of Bukowiec – would he have created and exhibited if it were not for the frequent visits (and frequent letters) of Jerzy Panek, Henryk Plóciennik, Stanisław Dawski and other artists, as well as critics, poets, and art historians? Even such an experienced artist as Henryk Streng, preparing his exhibition as Marek Włodarski after the war, asked his younger colleague for advice: "Choose, please, on your own. I don't know which one is better and which one is worse. When I look at another painter's works, I immediately know which are good and which are bad, but I don't know anything about my own paintings"⁸⁹. Jerzy Tchórzewski, who quotes the above words, knew that "this helplessness in the face of one's paintings is a completely different matter, having little in common with the knowledge of things, especially in artists like Marek"⁹⁰. And like Bruno Schulz, sometimes recalled – due to his similar sensitivity and imagination – by Włodarski's friends⁹¹. We do not know if Schulz hesitated in a similar manner in assessing his own drawings or etchings, but we do about his relation to his literary works; he was not concerned about the selection of works, but

⁸⁸ M. Golka, *Socjologia sztuki*, Warszawa 2008, p. 85; see also: idem, *Socjologia artysty*, Poznań 1995, p. 133.

⁸⁹ "Wspomnienie Jerzego Tchórzewskiego o Marku Włodarskim", [in:] *Marek Włodarski*, p. 25.

⁹⁰ Ibidem.

⁹¹ Aleksander Wojciechowski emphasizes the affinity of Schulz's literary works with Streng's visual art (*Marek Włodarski*, p. 17–18, 37, 43); see also I. Witz, "Marek Włodarski", [in:] idem, *Obszary malarzkiej wyobraźni*, p. 57, 67. So far, I have not found any clear traces of close intimacy between the two artists – apart from the mention of Streng in Schulz's letter to Rudolf Ottenbreit and his mention twice in letters from Debora Vogel, who undoubtedly, as a friend of both, could have brought them together. Didn't Ficowski turn to Włodarski (who died on May 23, 1960)? Or maybe he did not respond to his appeal?

about the possibility of having them published at all. “I cannot decide to publish a volume of short stories – I am afraid to make the decision. Is this some form of disease?”⁹², he asked in a letter. Even after publishing the story, he needed support: “Have you read my ‘Spring’? I’m dissatisfied with it myself, so I’m looking for external confirmation”⁹³. Sketches, paintings, and cliché-verre images also required such confirmation before they were sent for presentation. The opinion of friends, even those who knew art – such as Debora Vogel or, in a different dimension, Stanisław Weingarten – but were not practitioners, was not fully sufficient. Besides, Schulz would have to go to Debora Vogel (with his works?) to Lviv; Weingarten was also transferred there, and then even further, to Łódź.

Aversion?

In the only longer article about Schulz’s artistic work, published in Polish during his lifetime and not a review of the exhibition, Artur Lauterbach wrote: “He is almost completely unknown to this day [...]. The fault here lies partly with the artist himself, or rather with his disposition [fear? – U. M.] before the official exhibition. This strange aversion has deeper causes that flow directly from the artist’s own psyche and work”⁹⁴. Lauterbach’s diagnosis seems very likely in the light of the hints scattered (not very densely) in Schulz’s preserved letters, indicating low, or at least labile, self-esteem. However, the group of friends from Drohobych had to provide not only spiritual support, but also organizational (and perhaps financial) help, without which the first round of exhibitions (1920–1923) might not have taken place at all.

Schulz was aware of the role that public presentation of work plays in building artistic autobiography. He knew that participation in an exhibition, especially one organized by a respectable and famous institution, legitimizes belonging to the world of art and becomes a guarantee of the position of an artist⁹⁵. That is why,

⁹² Letter to Andrzej Pleśniewicz, November 29, 1936, *KL*, p. 115.

⁹³ Letter to Andrzej Pleśniewicz, December 1, 1936, *KL*, p. 116.

⁹⁴ A. Lauterbach, *Talent w ukryciu*, op. cit.; the remaining two monographic articles were written by Debora Vogel and were published in Jewish magazines: Lviv’s “Cusztajer” 1930, no. 2, p. 57–58 and Stockholm’s “Judisk Tidskrift” 1930, no. 7, p. 224–226.

⁹⁵ Pia Górka recalls that her professor, Tadeusz Pruszkowski, convinced her to have a solo exhibition, saying that: “anyone can exhibit at the society if the committee of this institution recognizes them as a painter” (eadem, *Paleta i pióro*, Kraków 1956, p. 263). Many artists from Schulz’s generation (or slightly older) write about participation in the exhibition as the first success in the artist’s career, for example: S. Sheybal, *Wspomnienia 1891–1970*, Kraków 1984, p. 142; A. Słonimski, *Wspomnienia warszawskie*, Warszawa 1957, p. 73; J. Zamoyski, *Łukaszowcy. Malarze i malarstwo Bractwa św. Łukasza*, posłowie Z. Florczak, Warszawa 1989, p. 79; A. Rafałowski, *I spoza palety. Wspomnienia*, Warszawa 1970, p. 7; M. Trzebiński, *Pamiętnik malarza*, oprac., wstępem i komenta-

when applying for a job as a teacher of drawing, he tried to compensate for his lack of artistic education by participating in exhibitions "in capitals" in his application to the ministry⁹⁶. Also, both of his texts dedicated to Feliks Lachowicz (especially the one from 1937) prove that he was convinced of the strategic influence of public shows on the shaping of the artist's biography⁹⁷.

The practical dimension of participating in the exhibition, especially if it was properly publicized, was – apart from growing popularity, leading to a further career – the possibility of profit from the sold works. The announcement about the upcoming closure of the exhibition in Truskavets ended with an encouragement to visit it, supplemented with information about the "relatively low prices of the exhibits"⁹⁸. The Truskavets event apparently brought Schulz some income. What is certain, however, is that – as I mentioned – two of his works were purchased from the exhibition in Lviv two months earlier, via TPSP, for the National Gallery of the City of Lviv (which was reported by "Głos Drohobycko-Boryslawsko-Samborsko-Stryjski" advertising the exhibition in Truskawiec⁹⁹), which are currently in the collection of the Lviv Art Gallery. These were pencil and ink drawings: *Meeting* (no. 649 in the catalogue) and *Self-portrait with an easel against the background of Drohobych* (no. 650), both included in the price list attached to the catalogue with the price of PLN 300¹⁰⁰. Four other drawings were priced the same way, and this was the maximum price for Schulz's works at this exhibition; the plates from *The Booke of Idolatry* cost from PLN 15 to PLN 25, and a set of twenty pieces in a separate portfolio could be purchased for PLN 200). Price lists in the catalogues of both exhibitions of the Lviv TPSP show that Schulz's works did not fetch him high income, but they did not differ in quality from others – for example, Henryk Streng's gouaches (probably smaller in size than Schulz's plates) cost PLN 180 and 150, and Ivan Trusz's oil landscapes were sold for PLN 2,000. Taking into account that for one drawing Schulz could get

rzem opatrzył M. Masłowski, Wrocław 1958, p. 71.

⁹⁶ Letter to the Ministry of WR and OP, August 2, 1924, *KL*, p. 211. Ignacy Witz, probably basing more on his own imagination than on facts, wrote that Schulz "exhibited his works publicly whenever he could, e.g. thereby tarnishing his 'professorial' reputation", which was nevertheless "forgiven as a kind of eccentricity or whim" (Witz, *Bruno Schulz*, p. 40).

⁹⁷ This problem, in a historical context and in a slightly different light, is discussed in Oskar Bätschmann's work *Ausstellungskünstler. Kult und Karriere im modernen Kunstsystem*, Köln 1997 (see especially chapter IV: *Strategien und Karrieren*).

⁹⁸ *Z wystawy Schulza i Kahanego*, op. cit.

⁹⁹ *Niezwykła impreza*, op. cit.

¹⁰⁰ Natalia Filewicz states that both works were purchased in June 1930, and the payment for *Meeting* itself was PLN 550 (eadem, *Lwowska Galeria Sztuki 1907–1944*, "Rocznik Lwowski" 2012/2013, <http://www.home.pl/galeria/lw-gal-sztuki.html> Accessed on September 20, 2019). I would like to thank Professor Jerzy Kandziora for drawing attention to this detail. It is possible that the National Gallery offered a higher amount than indicated in the price list, competing with some other buyer.

roughly the equivalent of his teacher's salary¹⁰¹, it seems strange that of the thirty-nine works he exhibited in 1930, twenty were private property and therefore not subject to sale. These proportions looked similar in 1922.

Therefore, either Schulz sold everything at once (or gave it away generously) and did not have many new works to show, or he subjected his output to a very strict selection and only chose a small part of it for the exhibition. It does not seem that the uneven, interrupted rhythm of his exhibitions corresponds strictly to the chronology of his creative cycles, which are difficult to recreate, knowing that sometimes hundreds of sketches result in one final work¹⁰². It is difficult to understand why, at the exhibition in 1930, he showed at least two works (those purchased for public collections) from ten years before that were not at the exhibition in 1922¹⁰³. Their previous dating – around 1920–1921 (*Self-portrait*) and 1920–1922 (*Meeting*) – has not raised any objections so far¹⁰⁴. Maybe wrongly? Why didn't Schulz exhibit these drawings earlier? Did he perhaps stop creating for eight years? Or did he not accept what he had done before?

Backstage

Undoubtedly, Schulz did not draw “all the time”, as if creativity were a kind of production (although, of course, there are known artists who impose the discipline of regular work on themselves). Writing about Jerzy Janisch's arrival in Drohobych at the end of 1934, he confesses: “I regret that I met him so late”¹⁰⁵, and elsewhere: “He encouraged me to draw, which I haven't done for several years”¹⁰⁶. For several years – that is, since the exhibitions in 1930? Maybe it was

101 In January 1934, Schulz received a teacher's salary of PLN 285.25 (KL, p. 217).

102 Much has been written about the superiority of sketches over finished works in Schulz's surviving oeuvre, see: (mkl) [M. Kitowska-Łysiak], “Rysunek”, [in:] *Słownik schulzowski*.

103 In the exhibition catalogue *Євреї Східної Галичини (сер. XIX ст. – перша третина XX ст.)*, Львів 2013, p. 91, it is reported that *Self-Portrait* from the Lviv Art Gallery was exhibited at TPSP in 1922; this seems unlikely, because in the exhibition catalogue the work with this title bore the annotation: “private collections”. It could have been another self-portrait, for example the one with an easel, with a procession in the background (given to Józefina Szelińska), or the one from the collection of the Central Judaic Library (at the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw), with a drawing desk with the author's date written on it 1919 or another year. In the Warsaw self-portrait, Schulz seems much younger (more than two years younger?) than in the image from Lviv, which, however, does not differ from the self-portraits in *The Booke of Idolatry*. All in all, there is no sufficient basis to radically change the position of the Lviv portrait on the timeline.

104 In the materials of the Dictionary of Polish Artists studio at the Institute of Art of the Polish Academy of Sciences, there is a note stating that in the inventories of the Lviv Art Gallery from the 1970s, works purchased in 1930 were initially dated “around 1929” (probably automatically generated).

105 Letter to Rudolf Ottenbreit, December 18 [1934], KL, p. 59.

106 Letter to Zenon Waśniewski, December 19, 1934, KL, p. 76. Janisch did not come to visit Schulz; his presence in Drohobych was related to his work on the restoration of frescoes in the local church.

only the works selected from a series of drawings created with the encouragement of a friend that made up a set suitable for hanging in the ZPAP premises in December 1935?¹⁰⁷

Schulz's letter to Romana Halpern contains a penetrating analysis of the mode and conditions of his own creative process:

I also have my drawings next to me and sometimes I think that they are really good and that I could make even better ones. My great enemy is lack of self-confidence, lack of self-love. Long months pass and nothing I do gains my approval, no idea that emerges satisfies me, nothing appeals to me. This state of dissatisfaction condemns me to inaction. But sometimes I think that this severity is justified and that I am right to condemn to destruction the underweight and imperfect things. There is only this drawback to things, you have to accept imperfect things at the beginning, gain momentum, get excited and bewildered, and find perfect things somewhere near the limit of your capacities.¹⁰⁸

Without the mental and emotional "background" described here, it is impossible to speculate on the causes of the frequency or rhythm of Schulz's exhibitions, even though the letter does not mention appearances in front of the public. There is no trace of opportunistic thinking here – about building fame or at least popularity, about the possibility of programming financial success. Although the correspondence with Romana Halpern dates back to the second half of the 1930s, it seems that even earlier, from the very beginning, Schulz found it difficult to treat his own works as commodities and creativity as a way to earn a living¹⁰⁹. He preferred to donate them, with the comment: "I only take money from rich bourgeoisie"¹¹⁰. This may be why he had to give up the idea of making a living by selling drawings or graphics (and not necessarily due to the lack of buyers and amateurs) and decided to take up work as a teacher. Due to this attitude, the possibility of selling works at an exhibition was far from among the reasons that influenced the decision to participate in it. This can explain the small number

Although – as Schulz writes (*KL*, p. 59) – they did not have much time for meetings, but it can be assumed that there were several of them, within a short period of time, which is not without significance for the creation of an impulse for creative work.

107 A. M. Mars writes that at the exhibition in 1935, Schulz showed drawings "from the period of over a dozen years", which contradicts the opinion of J. Killian-Stanisławska, who noticed a change in style compared to 1930 (*Wystawa prac*).

108 Letter to Romana Halpern, September 30, 1936, p. 129.

109 Irena Kejlin-Mitelman describes the scene of paying for the portrait: "I know that in the end Schulz accepted the money so as not to upset Father" (B. Schulz, *Listy, fragmenty*, p. 49).

110 Letter to Kazimierz Truchanowski, October 6, 1935, *KL*, p. 104.

of exhibits from outside private collections at the TPSP Spring Salons in Lviv in 1922 and 1930. Only years later, in 1938, when the exhibitions take on real dimensions in a life project, Schulz is perhaps ready to agree to a purely profitable show at the Zodiak café, proposed by Eile.

The borders of worlds

Previously, he was interested in exhibitions for other reasons. It is known that the model of an artist “being out in the world” was alien to him¹¹¹. “He lived on the sidelines. [...] Separately, on the margins, rationing social contacts and giving them ritualized forms. One may get the impression that he locked himself up of his own free will (if we make such fundamental decisions consciously and arbitrarily) in the bricked-up room, so pedantically and precisely described in the story *Solitude*. [...] From a bricked-up room you go out to others, to the world, thanks to art”¹¹². But art must be taken one step further from it. The condition for its existence, its vitality and meaning is the resonance it arouses, which Schulz so often mentioned in his correspondence. In contacts with friends and trusted acquaintances to whom he entrusted his unprinted texts and drawings, he wanted to feel that his world “borders, touches other worlds, that on these borders these worlds interpenetrate and intersect, that they exchange currents and chills”¹¹³. And then it became necessary to extend these antennae, to widen the channel through which it communicated with the environment. Art turned out to be a method of capturing kindred spirits and spreading traces over increasingly vast spaces, a way of finding a recipient who would “understand” the glow in the author’s eyes. “In this short but powerful look, in a fleeting squeeze of the hand, he will grasp, take over, recognize – and close his eyes in delight at this profound reception. Because under the table that divides us, don’t we all secretly hold hands?”¹¹⁴. Therefore, exhibitions provided an opportunity to reach those who would sit at that table. In this respect – but also in many others (debut, gaining popularity, reviews) – they can be compared to the publication of a literary work by a writer: a book in the case of an individual exhibition, and a story in a

¹¹¹ Schulz protested against Gombrowicz’s understanding of the criterion of a “complete writer”, which – as he wrote – “does not [...] concern the essence of the artist at all, it concerns his life or social achievements, or similar things” (letter to Andrzej Pleśniewicz, December 1, 1936, *KL*, p. 116).

¹¹² S. Rosiek, *Schulz poza czasem*, “Schulz/Forum” 10, 2017, p. 5–6. See also F. Szałasek, *Gra w światy*, “Schulz/Forum” 1, 2012, p. 64–82.

¹¹³ Letter to Stefan Schuman, July 24, 1932, *KL*, p. 33. Jerzy Ficowski wrote several times about Schulz’s search for a “congenial partner”. See *Katalog-Pamiętnik Wystawy „Bruno Schulz. Ad memoriam” w Muzeum Literatury im. Adama Mickiewicza w Warszawie*, red. W. Chmurzyński, Warszawa 1995, p. 176–181.

¹¹⁴ B. Schulz, “Księga”, [in:] idem, *Proza*, przedm. A. Sandauer, oprac. listów J. Ficowski, Kraków 1964, p. 161. See also the beginning of a letter to Romana Halpern, December 5, 1936, *KL*, p. 138.

magazine in the case of participation in a collective exhibition. The fundamental difference is of a purely formal nature – the number of readers of a book always significantly exceeds the number of viewers visiting even the most advertised show in a renowned gallery. The same will apply to the total number of reviews in the press. But the difference between both types of messages is also visible on a different level. The translation into print (in a multi-stage technical process) of an intimate document, such as a manuscript, depersonalizes the author, erasing the traces of his work and his corporeality¹¹⁵. However, at an exhibition, every recipient, not only the selected one, can see such traces on a painting or drawing; especially in drawings, perhaps, because in painting they sometimes disappear when embedded in the matter of paint. Regardless of what the painting depicts, the exhibition visitor experiences in a more direct, visual way – compared to the reader while reading – with that umbilical cord (which Schulz writes about in a slightly different context) connecting the work “with the whole of our problems, blood still circulates there mystery, the ends of the vessels escape into the surrounding night and return from there full of dark fluid”¹¹⁶. In the gallery space, not only the artist's works are exposed to public view, but also the artist himself. Schulz was aware of this, because he did not mean that Lachowicz was present at the opening of his exhibition when he wrote about him: “He stood before the Drohobych audience with his work”¹¹⁷. Even if we see it as a rhetorical trick, it is not accidental in some sense. A similar formulation was used in relation to Schulz several years earlier by a reviewer of a collective exhibition in Drohobycz: “He stands alone both in this exhibition and among contemporary painters”¹¹⁸. Friedländer did not write about any other artist in this way in his text.

Exposure

Of course, baring yourself in front of viewers can give you satisfaction, even purely artistic one. However, not everyone is able to write it down without hesitation as advantage or disadvantage. If Schulz could, he would either take part in all possible exhibitions (or at least try to do so) or he would never exhibit at all. In an interview he said: “I always dreamed that my drawings would reach the

115 On the presence of the “I” in Schulz's autograph, see S. Rosiek, *Jak pisał Bruno Schulz? Domysły na podstawie sześciu stron jednego opowiadania*, “Schulz/Forum” 4, 2015, p. 52–74.

116 Letter to Stanisław Ignacy Witkiewicz, [1934/1935], *KL*, p. 101.

117 B. Schulz, *Wystawa Lachowicza*, “Przegląd Podkarpacia” 1937, no. 70, p. 2. Schulz does not refer to the opening of the exhibition at all, because he writes about it as having been going on for weeks. This is probably the only text by Schulz in which the concept of “the success of an exhibition among the public” appears.

118 Al. Stewe, op. cit., p. 229.

hands of people who would feel their content”¹¹⁹. And he had in mind drawings “in which – unlike in prose – his hidden sexual desires come to the fore with full force”¹²⁰. He is not ashamed to talk about it in his drawings, just as he would be ashamed to write a masochistic novel, as he mentions in another fragment of the quoted interview. Participating in exhibitions could therefore, at least in some respect, become a source of “painful pleasure”. So why did he show a “strange aversion” to exhibitions?

The obvious and trivial reason was problems with mastering ordinary life procedures – binding and packing works, corresponding with organizers or intermediaries, etc.¹²¹ Participating in gallery events is also inevitably connected with “attending”, for example, vernissages, where you are forced to listen to speeches full of long-winded argumentation and then empty chatter from the audience, where you make accidental and not necessarily desirable acquaintances with the doctor’s wife from Wilcza and her doppelgangers. For someone who defines the dominant feature of their fate as “cutting themselves off from everyday life”¹²², all this meant having to cross the boundaries of this cut-off and submitting to the torment of everyday life.

But it is also about a different kind of Schulz’s cut-off – “from one’s own (and other people’s) corporeality”¹²³. It is one thing to show images in which one’s own sinful desires are demonstrated in full unambiguity, but also in the disciplined quotation marks of a visual form, firmly rooted in the iconographic tradition. However, exposing the trace of a hand, a body controlled by the will or escaping this control in random movements and vibrations – is a completely different thing. Schulz probably did not exhibit his sketched images (maybe except for the exhibition in 1935, but there is no evidence for this), only finished drawings, signed and dated, with a completely different status (this difference was noticed

119 J. Nacht, *Wywiad drastyczny. (Rozmowa z Brunonem Schulzem)*, “Nasza Opinia” 1937, no. 77, p. 5, quoted after *Czytanie Schulza. Materiały międzynarodowej sesji naukowej „Bruno Schulz – w stulecie urodzin i pięćdziesięciolecie śmierci”*, Instytut Filologii Polskiej Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, Kraków, 8–10 czerwca 1992, pod red. Jerzego Jarzębskiego, Kraków 1994, p. 106.

120 S. Rosiek, *Odcięcie. Siedem fragmentów*, “Schulz/Forum” 7, 2016, p. 31. English translation by Miłosz Wojtyła is available in “Schulz/Forum”, special issue 2023, p. 67–105.

121 Jerzy Ficowski explains the break in exhibitions between 1923 and 1930 as follows: “Probably, starting his permanent teaching job in 1924, which was arduous and absorbing, forced the artist to postpone such initiatives until later. Perhaps the fear of losing his job as a drawing teacher was also responsible for this delay [...] Regardless of these circumstances, there were probably deeper reasons, too” – Ficowski, *O “Xiędze Bałwochwalczej”*, p. 12. One would have to agree with the last sentence; Schulz’s situation as a teacher was not much different in, for example, 1926 and 1930, and there is no information that his participation in exhibitions in 1930 and 1935 caused any repercussions in the school environment.

122 Letter to Stanisław Ignacy Witkiewicz, [1934/1935], *KL*, p. 103.

123 S. Rosiek, *Odcięcie. Siedem fragmentów*, p. 63.

by Małgorzata Kitowska-Łysiak¹²⁴) and related to the author's body in a more controlled way. Cliché-verres ensured an even greater and more lasting distance between the work and its creator. What distinguishes cliché-verres is, apart from the possibility of reproduction, the two-stage work: the matrix shaped by the artist's hand (using tools) receives and retains all its physicality; the print is the visual effect of this work, pure, untainted by corporeality – it is often created without the involvement of the artist at all. Could it be that Schulz sent fragments of *The Booke of Idolatry* to exhibitions so often (he showed them twice at the TPSP in Lviv, in Vilnius, Cracow and Truskavets, and perhaps also in other places) not only because by exposing new prints he was able to obtain large sets of works most quickly? Maybe this technique served as a shield or barrier that prevented the viewer from getting to the body he was creating. Schulz wrote a lot about his graphics in the article devoted to Lilien, although the argument did not require it. He was enthusiastic about Italian woodcuts he saw at an exhibition, which he reported to Waśniewski, whom he asked on another occasion for help in mastering relief printing techniques. In his correspondence with Lille, he thanked him for his advice on lithography. This insatiable desire to practice graphics is most clearly evidenced by Schulz's drawings, which imitate or even pretend to be woodcuts – such as some of the illustrations for *Sanatorium pod Klepsydrą*, the cover of the junior high school magazine "Młodzież" from 1934 with a synthetic panorama of Drohobych, or even sketches in the newspaper "Bolszewicka Prawda". ("Більшовицька правда") from 1941. If somebody specialising in drawing (and occasionally dealing with painting) turned towards graphics, would he exhibit more often?

Territory of exhibitions on the biography map

More questions like this one (and others posed here) could be asked by identifying the circumstances of Schulz's exhibitions. Yet this is not a blank spot on the map of the writer's biography, but an area largely observed by the first explorers. Its boundaries have been pushed in some places but remain faded in others. I have deleted some of the previously marked points marking individual exposures, drawn a circle of uncertainty around some of them and added a few new points. However, the correction process is incomplete. It is also impossible to write down signs from which it would be possible to clearly read whether Schulz genuinely had an aversion to exhibitions or, on the contrary, he felt a desire for them (and the distance between the two is, as we know, neither as great as it

¹²⁴ See M. Kitowska-Łysiak, *Uwagi w sprawie kanonu. Brunona Schulza szkicownik młodzieżowy i freski w willi Landaua*, "Schulz/Forum" 2, 2013, p. 63–65. English translation is available in this special issue.

might seem, nor as durable). Did the intention to master graphics actually result from the need (conscious or unconscious) to hide the traces of biological existence from the eyes of gallery viewers (voyeurs), or did it stem from purely aesthetic preferences (if any preferences can be purified). This territory called “Schulz and exhibitions”, in which already marked paths and established safe places lie between wilderness and tempting byways, remains – like many regions of the writer’s biography – a field for imaginative exercises. And sometimes, with a bit of luck, it reaches the limits of what facts can offer. But it rarely exceeds it.

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