

On the 7th of August, 2007 one of the most beautiful chapters in the history of Polish painting was forever closed. This chapter, painted by Ludwik Maciąg, which He called „A Painted Diary”, is traditionally patriotic, based on Polish national art. It is the continuation of the great maestros: the Kossaks. Matejko, Brandt, Gierymski and Bylina. It was created not only by a great artist, but by a fair, true to His principles, man of a strong character.

The works of Ludwik Maciąg, in which He was true to tradition and the realistic portraying of nature and wildlife, not succumbing to the modern trends, remaining „loyal to the senses”, were long disregarded and treated as an anachronism. The trend of this creativeness was shaped already during early childhood.

Ludwig Maciąg was born in 1920 in Cracow in a family of military traditions. His father fought in the battle of Verdun and returned to Poland with the army of General Haller. He became an officer in the 9th Light Artillery Regiment in Biala Podlaska.

Two of Ludwik's brothers were officers in the Polish Army; the oldest - **Józef**, born in Bosnia - after 1939 made his way to the Middle East and from there to England. As a „cichociemny” („silent dark ones” - a secret unit of the Polish Army in exile) he was dropped from England over Serbia onto the territories controlled by General **Michajłowicz**. There he organized a Polish unit and was killed in battle by the Germans. The second brother Otton was interned to Romania, made his way through Beirut to France and after the country's fall - to Great Britain. As an officer

of the 1st Armored Division of General **Maczek** he took part in battles in France, Belgium and Holland. After the war he settled in England, where he got to be known as a talented artist in painting, drawing and pottery. Otton's daughter Anna, just like her father and uncle, loves and paints horses. Her subtle-colored works characterize themselves with lightness, softness and a scrupulous finish.

The Maciąg family nursed the military traditions, creating a family saga, which combines their common interest and passion for the painted buildings and objects in Poland and the country of settlement - Great Britain.

The life of the barracks, in which the family lived before the war, as well as observing the every day training and parades had a colossal influence on the imagination and shaping of interests of the young boy and stirred the first fascination with the horse.

As the greatest experience from those times the artist considered the contact with oriental horses from the stud of Janów Podlaski. The beauty and wonderful movement of these horses made a huge impression on Him.

After the outbreak of the war Ludwik Maciąg graduated from the clandestine officer's training center of the Home Army and in 1944 received an allocation with the 34th Infantry Regiment, under the command of Major Stefan Wyżykowski, nickname „Zenon”. In the horse unit of this regiment He took part in the famous covering campaign of redeploying fragments from the village of Jeziorna to England of the V-2 missile pulled out from the swamps of the Bug river by 16 partisan horses. He participated in the take-



The Inspection of a Stud

over of seven American pilots from the B-17 bomber, shot down by the Germans, flying from Great Britain to Odessa after the bombing of armament buildings near Berlin. These pilots participated in the battles conducted by „Zenon’s” unit until its dissolution, when they were handed over to a Russian military unit. The Professor maintained contact with them for a long time by mail. In „Zenon’s” unit Ludwik learned not only the meanings of the terms honor, homeland and patriotism, but also preserved the insurgent moments, creating a forest epic of the partisans. In appreciation of His merits, „Zenon” gave Ludwik his mare Iskra and military saddle, which was donated to the museum in Siedlce.



Ludwik Maciąg with his beloved stallion Eos 1984 (Banat - Elektorkapo Andrut), Kurozwęki

Maciąg began serious painting after the end of the war and demobilization. He took up work at Janów Podlaski Stud, as a forester and groom, hiding there from the NKWD (People’s Commissariat for Internal Affairs) and deportation to Siberia, which was the fate of many of the Home Army members. When it became possible, Ludwik Maciąg took up studies at the Academy of Fine Arts in Cracow and continued them at the Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw. He was the assistant of Professor **Tadeusz Kulisiewicz**, and after graduating became a lecturer at the Painting Faculty with Professor **Michał Bylina**, who He always reminisced very warmly- Professor Bylina also had a partisan past and was one of the few painters who in those times had the courage to take up the „equine” theme. Ludwik Maciąg was for many years a professor of the Warsaw Academy and received the title of Professor Ordinarius. He held the office of dean; was a keen educator and tutor of numerous painters. In His atelier the superb artists **Stanisław Baj** i **Andrej Novak-Zempliński** obtained their diplomas.

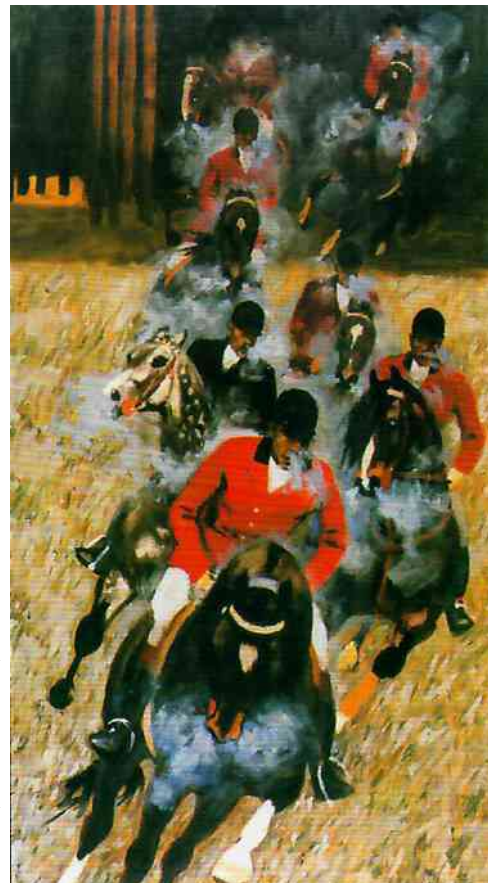
Professor Ludwik Maciąg lived in Gul-czewo in a house designed by Himself and built from enormous logs. Beside the main house stand thatched farm buildings: a stable and bam with a wagon shed and

paddocks for His favorite horses. All this is built in a fores; surrounded by picturesque fields and meadows with the majestically flowing Bug river close by. The property is built with a style of its own and gives the impression of a small heritage park. These colorful woods and fields of the Podlasie region, among which the Professor spent the majority of His life pretty much suggested the content and color of His works. It was there that the sceneries full of the spirit of the Polish villages, harsh greyness of the snow or the woods painted at various time of year, were brought to life.

The theme range of the Professor's works is huge. It includes sculpture, applied art, posters, book illustrations, tapestry designs, post stamp designs -sets: „Polish horses". „Polish cavalry". „150 years of Sieraków Stud". However the leitmotiv of His works are the world's most beautiful creatures - horses. All these works are preceded by thorough studies of the horses, tack and clothing Horses of various breeds and usage are presented in striking movement, free, in battle scenes, hunting, pulling wagons, royal carriages, sleighs, during exhausting work in the fields.

All these works are very realistic perfectly presenting the precision of the horse's movement.

The Professor lived closer to the world of horsemen than the environment of artists from the Academy. He took active part in rides and hunts, physically hard for both horse and rider, participated in the production of battle scenes for **Andrzej Wajda's** film „Popioły". Angles done „from the saddle" were an interesting feature of the paintings Ludwik Maciąg. Riding in line with other riders He had the chance to see a charge through the raised hands, holding sabres, of the chevau-légers of the guard. This further enhanced the authenticity and impression of being in the presented scene.



The Steaming Horses

Spirit emanates from the Professor's paintings. It is easy to pick up the most characteristic traits connected with the presented

formation - the strength and militancy of a medieval knight the dignity and pride of a winged hussar the speed and unrestrained rash of a chevau-léger or the elegance and charm of an uhlan of Pre-war Poland.

The Professor always stated that the closest to His works were **Michałowski** and **Chelmoński**. hile the greatest horse painter of all time was **Juliusz Kossak**.

His work was very much alike to the patriotic, romantic writing of **Henryk Sienkiewicz**, the author of my favorite literary work - the Trilogy.

Together with my wife we had the opportunity to witness the principals, views and likings which guided the Professor in His work, during the months that we spent with **Ewa** and Ludwik under one roof at our farm in Arizona and during the common travels across Poland and the US. From that period come the rarely seen among the artist's works Western paintings presenting a group of cowboys taking part in a rodeo and an Indian scout atop a horse. Enchanted by the Professor's works we began collecting them systematically. At this moment our Arizona collection is one of the greatest of His works. It has enjoyed a lot of interest for many years from our Polish and American friends, art conneisseurs, horsemen, breeders from both Americas and Europe, participating in Arabian horse shows. Our collection has been presented at a few exhibitions organized in Arizona. Its reproductions have been published in Polish and American magazines.



The Attack of Hussars



The Arabian Stallions



The Slades

Being among the Professor's paintings everyday and having had personal contact with Him gives great satisfaction, forces to stop and think and recalls the wonderful times spent with Him. I and my wife **Jolanta** are extremely happy to have personally known the Professor and His lovely wife Ewa and that we had earned their friendship.

Outside of the US Professor Maciąg had a number of individual exhibitions in England, West Germany, Holland, Denmark and Canada. He participated in international exhibitions of Polish art in China, the Soviet Union, India, Iran, Hungary, Romania, Austria, Italy, Liban, Germany, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, France, Spain, Finland, Japan, Bulgaria and Mongolia.

His works can be found in the Polish Military Museum, the National Museum and Museum of Hunting and Horsemanship in the royal Łazienki Gardens in Warsaw; among the collection of the Castle in Golub-Dobrzyń, in the monastery in Leśna Podlaska, in the Biblioteque Nationale in Paris, in galleries in Folkestone and Cassel in England and many private collections across the world. Certainly no museum would be ashamed of the collection accumulated in Arizona.

The collection of **Tom Chauncey**, owner of one of the greatest Arabian horse farms in the world, holds a portrait of the famous stallion Nabor, imported from Poland.

The huge collection of the Polish Diaspora activists **Elżbieta and Bogumił Horchem** is adorned with oil paintings and an enormous tapestry presenting the hero of two nations - **Kazimierz Pulaski** - atop a horse, saluting over a partisan grave.



The Going Back Home

The Professor received numerous awards and distinctions. He received the Gold Cross of Merit, Silver Cross of Merit with Swords, the Order of the Decade, a Bronze and Silver Order of Defense, the Gold Order of the Millennium of the Republic of Poland. For His merits in the field of Polish fine arts and achievements in His artistic work He was honored posthumously by the President of Poland with the Order of Polonia Restituta.

He was laid to rest next to His wife Ewa, at the cemetery in Wesola. Numerous people, including representatives of the government and church authorities, friends, artists, horsemen, Academy of Fine Arts staff, pupils of the Professor, delegations from the State Studs and Stallion Depots, Home Army soldiers and the Honor Guard of the Polish Army gathered to say their final farewell. Two Arabian horses followed the coffin - His Eos and Metropolis NA, a stallion from the stud in Janów Podlaski.