

## **Tatyana Selivanova**

artist, teacher, Ph.D, the editor of the electronic scientific edition «Art Education» (magazine) by the Institute of Art Education of the Russian State Academy of Education (<http://www.art-education.ru/AE-magazine/>).

## **Nikolay Selivanov**

Artist, curator, theorist, teacher, Ph.D, nonprofit organization of culture and education «Studio of art designing» (Moscow), director, the annual Russian Museum Computer Festival "Culture heritage in digital technologies", curator.

## **I.**

# **Workshops of the Future. Creating educational frameworks on the basis of contemporary art in Moscow.**

## **Tatyana Selivanova**

Over the last twenty years Moscow has seen the periodic uprise of various new educational projects and studios of contemporary art. But in spite of all the economic and institutional support of these projects there is still no reason to speak about the existence of art education in modern Russia. From time to time we can see some innovative ideas in the cultural sector, but there is no development of those ideas. The new economic elite that associates itself with the Western culture and its ideals supports the new forms of art and education, but this support often turns into a form of political opposition to the orthodox isolationist ideas. In order to reach this goal managers and political technologists develop special marketing strategies for the distribution of the cultural “product”, but the problem is that those managers and technologists don’t have anything to do with the philosophical discourse or pedagogical motivation. As a result, edutainment – or getting the consumer category - is the only social achievement of the Russian contemporary art in the field of education. However, even the most mosaic description of some completed projects and working studios shows how important it is to use contemporary art ideas in the process of children’s and young people’s artistic development.

First of all, we would like to suggest a classification of some Moscow contemporary art and education studios.

### **1. Creative workshop for kids, the State Tretyakov gallery on Krymsky val.**

There are two main areas of activity that the Creative workshop in the Tretyakov Gallery on Krymsky val performs under the leadership of Elena Gerasimova. The first area is the aesthetic development of all museum visitors. The classes are held by professional teachers in the workshop or in the museum halls. As for the second area of

activity, it is closely connected with modern creative ideas and could be defined as innovative. It involves special theme-based creative media-related lecture programs, meetings and classes held by contemporary artists, and also big innovative projects. The Art\_Elka New Year contest that is both an exhibition and a one-time event is one of those projects. Art\_Elka is actually the only regular innovative project of the Tretyakov Gallery. It became possible due to its skillful presentation in the form of a children's New Year party where everybody can have fun in any way they want. The absence of this project in the museum plans doesn't let us set the budget and arrange a more intensive and better-thought-out educational program. The driving force of the whole project is the will and energy of just one person. But in spite of that, due to the enthusiasm of its leader the Creative workshop has become the basic module mated by all the biennale of modern art, youth projects, programs of "homeless" Moscow Cinema Museum, culture studies seminars of young theorists etc. The Creative STG (State Tretyakov Gallery) workshop is a pace for carrying out big projects directly connected with contemporary art and art education. After the general overview we will return to our joint projects carried out on the basis of the Creative STG workshop.

## **2. Winzavod and Garage contemporary art centers.**

Citizens of many countries in the world know how children's rooms in large stores (like IKEA) work. Animators entertain children while the parents are free to do their shopping. It was there that people discovered the fact that in order to keep a child busy all they need to do is suggest an interesting and creative task and provide the necessary tools. It turned out to be a lot cheaper than filling the room with all kinds of expensive toys and then trying to attract the kids' attention to them. Of course, a lot depends on the skills and capabilities of the animator who is supposed to come up with creative ideas. Contemporary art turned to be really helpful here. Andrey Erofeev, a museum curator from Moscow, shared with me once that "contemporary art is very attractive". So they are trying to use this attractiveness in children's studios located in Winzavod and Garage contemporary art centers.

Open weekend workshops in Garage centers are offering such kinds of activities as "<...>creating graphic works, watercolor and gouache paintings, color and monochrome collages, modeling, making installations and extraordinary objects from different materials, like inventing clothes for trees or building model cities from computer parts<...>."

Of course it's hard to think of any other approach to art education when people don't attend art studios on a regular basis or do that only once in a lifetime. But we believe that this approach in the context of contemporary art discredits the art in public mind. Children can't comprehend the intellectual complexity of most contemporary art strategies, their cultural and technical mediation. Their parents, being just as unprepared, can't comprehend it either. So instead of looking for ways to solve this problem we are suggesting this edutainment the main message of which is that "contemporary art is easy, fun and cool... ."

Contemporary art needs deep and well thought-through interpretations for children and untrained audience, especially in those places where it is demonstrated in its most challenging forms. This task is so complex that only a few contemporary art centers in the whole world have made it their goal and are working to achieve it.

### **3. DEZ #5 Studio**

DEZ #5 Studio was founded by an architect Mikhail Labazov. The aesthetics and experience of ART-BLYA architectural bureau also founded by M. Labazov became the basis for the future cooperation with young authors. DEZ#5 Studio was a place where the principles of “one-time architecture” were developed, i.e. creating art-objects from garbage, newspapers and colored duck tape. M. Labazov plays with his students and suggests that they should try to make absolutely unthought-of objects like “clothing for extreme weather conditions” or “a chair for meditations about the atomic essence of the Universe”, or “transformers – big and small, extremely useful and absolutely useless”.

Children make models from the materials that they have at hand – newspapers, duck tape, paper, plastic garbage. The opinion of DEZ #5 director about the problem of involving the grown-ups in the creative process is very important. M. Labazov believes that the main thing is “to show that any idea can be brought to life here and now, we don’t need to wait till the kids grow up”. Actually, all that the young authors do is come up with an idea, make a model and write their comments regarding the project, and then the whole workshop including the parents and the director gets engaged in making big objects.

In his interviews M. Labazov points out the closed character of his studio and the fact that it’s impossible to get there as there’s already a long waiting list of people willing to attend the classes. And one of the reasons is lack of space of course. But it’s also connected with the positioning of the studio as an elite gallery of children’s art. They publish catalogues and make auction sales of unique decorative sculpture and functional objects made by adults from the kids’ sketches. There are different opinions on this matter in the society.

DEZ #5 doesn’t pay attention to the problems of children’s creative thinking development and manifold experience that they get, although they definitely are a part of contemporary art movement. The students of DEZ #5 experience one of the central strategies of contemporary art where the original idea plays the main role, but it is brought to life by other specialists. An architect is not supposed to know which component parts will be used to build a water supply system in a house that he designed. It’s an engineer’s job. But it can be traumatic for a young artist to be disconnected from the final manifestation of his ideas. It is particularly obvious now, in the post-industrial world, when the consequences of this separation fostered by the industrial epoch have become clearly visible. So contemporary art education is a chance to overcome these consequences.

### **4. Children’s workshops in the State contemporary art center.**

Some years ago an art studio for children was founded in the State contemporary art center by Andrey Suzdalev, an artist and one of the leaders of synthetic contemporary art trend called “artists book”. Working as a curator of big projects in the same genre, A. Suzdalev also studies theoretical problems of contemporary art and education. Artists book genre concentrates its attention on the problem of the author universality that goes beyond the limits of traditional art genres using any means and forms of artwork combined with technical creativity.

Based on his experience, A. Suzdalev chose synthetic forms of classes connected with the experimental animation. Storytelling, comics, creating and feeling the movement,

working with sound are inseparable parts of the educational process in the studio. All of them are taught in the context of media history. The most current position of art education is clearly demonstrated here as the main attention is paid to the technical means, integrative approach and the context of culture studies. But when we speak about the work management of the studio we have to deal with the same stereotypical attitude of the State contemporary art center to the training and education as to something necessary and yet optional. The studio doesn't have a set budget, only recently has the art center finally changed its attitude to the studio and accepted it as part of the general work that the Art Center does. The reason for that has been the active attendance of those classes that actually exceeds the overall attendance of its main exhibitions and programs.

## **5. The "START" Art school**

The "START" art school is a state art school that was reorganized from a former architectural studio in the early 1990-s.

The art school "START" focuses its activities on the architectural and building arts and introducing the children to the history of modernism that now shapes the aesthetics of modern architecture.

We think that the well-thought-out and clearly stated educational architecture activities is the main achievement of the START art school. Their approach is particularly well developed, which can be proven by the fact that their methods are easy to implement in other educational institutions. Here we speak about creating a truly replicable pedagogical technology.

The main goal of the school activities is the development of children's architectural thinking in the framework of architectural tradition "... which is the most ancient, best established and one of the most professional spheres of project activities <...> that has become a way of exploring the world."

The school concentrates its attention mainly on the presentation of the architectural idea using graphical architectural means, thus developing the students' creative and metaphorical thinking. The concepts and active vocabulary used during the classes show that the school is involved in the context of modern culture. Some examples are "recombination", "association", "paraphrase", "interpretation", "alternative", "transformation", "paradox", and "divergent thinking". While speaking about their work, the school teachers use such key words as constructiveness, erudition, creative and logical thinking, constructive world view, seeing the technical side of creative process, design, synthesis of arts, spiritual and emotional nature of art, art literacy, spatial intelligence, knowledge of architectural composition language, knowledge of the materials and technologies.

On the whole, teaching principles and methods of the "START" school serve as an example of the effective development of art education activities based on teaching architectural arts as a foundation of modern art and culture.

## **6. Izopark gallery and a network of studios in a residential district of the large metropolitan city**

All Moscow art studios located in the residential districts are classified as clubs. The whole network of clubs reports to the Youth Policy department which in turn shapes the work of those studios as creative art centers. This turned to be the best environment for integrating new creative ideas and practices into the sphere of education. But there's a whole range of factors that hinder this development. First of all, there's a serious issue called "artistic value of children's art". It's a huge problem for the whole sector of art education. We know the general public opinion about this issue – children make "drawings" and do "crafts" that have value only for their parents. How then can we aim towards creating intellectual projects, installations, developing concepts and creating other contemporary art objects? It is no mere chance that Alexander Orlovsky, Izopark gallery director, asks the question, "Can children's creative works be viewed as true works of art? And if so, what is the meaning of this art?" The curriculum of the studio really depends on the answer to this question, because children can either "do crafts" or create real works of art.

### **7. Online scientific journal "Pedagogika iskusstva" ("Art Education")**

"Pedagogika iskusstva" is an online publication of the Institute of Art Education of the Russian Academy of Education.

The journal publishes scientific articles on the theory and history of art education, the issues of integrating art into education, predicting the future of the aesthetic development of children in such fields as literature, theater, screen arts, music, graphic arts, applied and decorative arts, architecture and design, as well as methods of teaching art at school.

The journal is interesting for art teachers, psychologists and culture experts who want to bring reforms into the liberal and art education and integrate modern art practices in various spheres of education. The variety of topics related to modern ideas and problems of art and culture has recently been rapidly expanding. For instance, the latest issue has an article translated into Italian and English called "About liberal arts and educational dead end. Archeology of concepts, proclamation and Italian experience".

## **II.**

# **The experience of the Studio of Art Designing in integrating contemporary art strategies and practices into the education process.**

## **Nikolay Selivanov**

In 1998 I organized a workshop in Moscow children's art school "Krasnopresnenskaya". In 1993 there used to be a computer studio there. In 2003 the workshop was reorganized and there appeared an independent nonprofit organization called "Studio of Art Designing". In 2008 a huge anniversary exhibition of the Workshop took place in Na Solyanke Art Gallery, one of Moscow central exhibition halls. The exhibition was called "Contemporary art. From easel to computer." The exhibition took all 3 floors of the gallery.

## **Incorporated Art Workshops (IAW)**

Incorporated Art Workshops (IAW) were founded in 1994-1995 on the basis of Moscow Contemporary art center (CAC). The main purpose of IAM was to shape a new model of art education for teenagers and young people, work out new methods of creative development of future artists, musicians and stage directors. For this purpose CAC had three partner educational institutions: Contemporary Art Institute (under the leadership of V. Dazhin), nonprofit organizations "Workshop of the Future" (that's what our organization was called then) and "Art Technologies Institute" (under the direction of S. Shutov). A little later we were joined by "Theremin Center" at the Moscow Conservatory (under the direction of A. Smirnov). Well-known Moscow artists were invited to take the leadership positions in the workshops (D. Prigov, A. Ponomarev, B. Orlov, D. Gutov, Y. Leiderman, B. Yukhananov and others).

Students of IAW were teenagers and young adults of 14 – 25 years of age. The education process was project-based. The leader of each workshop suggested making a theme project, showed the methods and techniques and provided the tools for the idea implementation. Common exhibition projects, lectures and disputes linked all workshops together.

The first common project of IAW called "Pinocchio" was carried out in 1994 (V. Miziano was the originator and the curator of the project). The humorous installation of our workshop was called "Pinocchio wants to become a real boy" (the originator was E. Satarova). We made a glaive thrower with a guiding groove, equipped with a powerful binder. We would put the figure of Pinocchio (a wooden cylinder with a triangular "nose" on one end) into the guiding groove. The glaive thrower was directed against the TV-set where on the screen one could see the images of antique children gods which I had taken in the Hermitage. Between the glaive thrower and the TV-set there was a big and

thick plexiglass sheet. Students would strike the shutter with a stick, and another "Pinocchio" (we prepared quite a few of them) would fly out and break its "nose" against the transparent screen. This interpretation of the fairy tale was kind of rough, but it was funny and it expressed our feelings after the meeting with contemporary art.

The next more interesting and in-depth project carried out in our workshop was called "Game" ("Igra", 1995). The "Game" was based on using various photography technologies and techniques. The process of making photos was perceived as a multistage orderly activity where each stage was declared an environment for the artistic experiment.

A special so-called "game territory" was formed to serve as a communicative and expositional platform. It was divided into three parts: "Atelier" (special territory for the staged photography), "Pavilion" (a platform with installations, objects, technical experiments), and "Performances" (the territory where we held performances, discussions, and meetings that were a part of the shooting process).

The most important part of the project was providing the necessary technical facilities for the shooting process and their seamless integration into the teaching process. The photo lab of one of the galleries served as our technical facilities, and the laboratory assistant acted as a teacher. He prepared the necessary didactic literature that allowed the students to carry out their independent work and experiment with different materials.

The "Game" exposition formation started from the very beginning of the project. I divided the walls of the CAC main exposition hall into several equal segments 1 meter wide each. Every participant was responsible for their part of the wall and filled the space with whatever deemed necessary. All kinds of films, shooting objects, project texts, enlarged photos and photo collages were on display. Some segments of the walls were left empty, some had only text displayed, and some were literally swamped in films, phototests, objects etc. The exposition turned very impressive as it reflected the real state of things in life and in art.

## **next.tretyakovgallery.ru**

The purpose of the "next.tretyakovgallery.ru" event was making a creative educational program in the museum which resulted in independent media works of young authors with the interpretation of the works in the Russian avant-garde style present in the museum. The participants were supposed to work with different media, including photo and video, but computer technologies were in the center of our attention.

Over 70 young authors took part in the "next.tretyakovgallery.ru" event.

First there was a special course of lectures and practical workshops.

A unique lecture course on the media history was developed specially for the "next.tretyakovgallery.ru" event. It was based on the course called "Media. Brief history of representative technologies". It included four topics: "Illusions", "Sound", "Show", and "Info Architecture". The "Illusions" part was about the history of technical means of creating optical illusions which serve as a basis for modern media technologies. The "Sound" part dealt with the history of technical means of sound recording and reproduction. The "Show" part was related to the history of popular

“representation technologies”, the “Info Architecture” part was about developing a new informational project.

The personality of the inventor who created this special means of representation served as the ideological core for the lecture course. This approach was supposed to help each participant feel as if they were designing some new idiomatic ways of expression.

Comparing the history of the XX century avant-garde art and the history of technical representation means helped us discover a common platform for both cultural phenomena.

The next stage had to do with creative designing. The task was to create a complicated cognitive information object, not just “make something on the suggested topic”. This information object was supposed to be easy for young people to grasp and to help the visitors see the contents of the museum in the new light.

The creative process started with two classes where two different artworks were analyzed: “Lemon light” by Joseph Beuys and polychrome relief “Board #1. Staro Basmannaya” by Vladimir Tatlin. The second class had two parts. The first part was an analytical discussion in the museum hall beside “Board #1” and the second part was project work in the workshop. The artwork was analyzed in the museum hall, its context was revealed and possible interpretation ways were proposed. And then in the workshop the students found the necessary metaphors, defined the representation form, and thus the project was formulated.

In the process of individual designing each participant had to come up with reasons for making a choice of some specific technology depending on the nature of the project. As a result, the whole diversity of computer realizations of the “next.tretyakvgallery.ru” event can be divided into several groups:

- Virtual construction kit
- Puzzle
- Video made with the help of computer technologies
- Computer-animated film
- Computer film with static images
- Animated object
- Website
- Tele-presentation
- Presentation for the automatic demonstration
- 3D virtual exhibition
- Computer desktop – hypertext catalogue
- Website interface design
- Interactive audio object

Virtual construction sets occupy a very special place among all the other works. Virtual construction sets are small computer applications that help the users create their own artworks using suggested technical means. So the user gets acquainted with the artistic phenomenon “from the inside”. This new type of instruments for art education developed in our workshop was tried out in the framework of “next.tretyakvgallery.ru” event. The participants designed such virtual construction sets as “Vladimir Tatlin”, “Alexander Rodchenko”, “Yakov Chernikhov”, “Ilya Chashnik”, “Agitplakat”.

The artworks created during the event were shown at the final exhibition. An electronic catalogue of the project was published, and its simplified version can be seen on our website.

## **“Steel Style”. Creative educational event for kids and young people**

The event was organized by OAO "Severostal" and the State Tretyakov Gallery. "Creative design workshop" was the implementator of the program. The event was timed to coincide with the 55-year anniversary of the Cherepovets iron-and-steel works (OAO "Severostal") and 125-year anniversary of Vladimir Tatlin, the founder of constructivism.

The "Steel style" event included a contest, a summer creative workshop for the contest winners, making an electronic creative game console for children and young people.

The event took place in a children's recreation camp not far from Cherepovets city.

The creative team of contest winners (25 people) made three types of projects: "Cherepovets time" reliefs, the "Dance" kinetic sculpture and the sound object "Steel sound".

The main work was the creative project called "Cherepovets time". They were supposed to make a relief (or "selection" as V. Tatlin calls it) from steel parts on several surfaces of different shapes. The view on Cherepovets iron-and-steel works from space served as the type for the whole composition. The composition had to include a triangular gnomon with a 59° angle which coincides with the latitude of Cherepovets. This element also allowed the whole object to function as a sundial.

The metal parts were held together by welding. The children made compositions and the grown-ups welded them to the foundation.

Every student had to create a cinquain as an addition to the hollow relief. Cinquain is a poetic form that employs a 5-line pattern. The kids needed to express their personal attitude to the time phenomenon and choose a metaphor that would go with their understanding of time best of all.

The result of the activities in the workshop was a large exhibition. We displayed the objects in the same camp, in the building of an old canteen where due to the diagonal footprint and grassy green walls the exposition looked truly constructionist.

After that we planned to transport the artworks to the Tretyakov Gallery. But not only weren't those works brought to the exhibition, but they were utilized, i.e. remelted!

We still made an exhibition in the Tretyakov Gallery hanging the white "standards" with the pictures of the lost works from the balcony around Tatlin's Tower.

## **“Robots. Optimistic diselpunk” program**

The "Robots. Optimistic diselpunk" program was based on the utopian ideas of changing the world with science and technology. We believe that design is the basis for our educational and art activities. The concept of utopia unites the manifold history of architectural ideas and experiments that the humanity has been working on throughout

its history. The antonym for utopia is anti-utopia, and diselpunk trend is one of its forms. It deals with the history of the industrial society. Diselpunk with its ironic attitude overcomes the negative attitude to technology. The word “optimistic” as an addition to “diselpunk” is vitally important for the right understanding our work. That’s how the title “optimistic diselpunk” appeared. In order to carry out innovative activities one needs to be confident in the exceptional meaning of his/her efforts. Otherwise you won’t achieve anything!

The program consists of several independent parts. The first task for children is to invent a helpful robot and to present an advertising poster with a title and a slogan. This poster was later turned into a brochure cover with the robot user guide. We needed to describe the technical features of the robot in the guide, and then work out the graphic design, add illustrations and diagrams.

The next task. For several weeks the children kept gathering different parts of electric household appliances, computer boards, and parts of toys in the center of the workshop. This big pile of garbage turned to be a great playground and a good exerciser for the imagination. The children had to shape their own “first man” based on their own constructive logic, aesthetic taste and imagination. Thus the sculptural robotic objects were assembled.

The next task was done by the younger children. They made a fold out book that united the figure of a robot with its description. The book construction allows it to unfold thus turning into a silhouette image. We can say that robot books are cardboard marionettes that have some text, illustrations, small technical details and include little brochures with the description of robots.

The next stage of the program was making a virtual construction set, i.e. a computer program that allows making robots from different parts and everyday things. These robots can move, shine, make different sounds. A robot’s image can be printed in two versions – as a brochure for instructions and as a simple poster. But the most interesting thing is that you can automatically send your robot to a virtual online exhibition.

The next project in the program was making comics under the title “Inventors and their inventions”. The project task was to invent two things – your own special graphic language and a story about the inventor. The comics were supposed to be a result of the both components being put together.

The latest project was called “Measurers not for measurements”. The purpose of the project was creating objects that fully engaged the viewers’ perception. Thus we needed to create absurd and absolutely useless research instruments. We called them “measurers” because most of the exhibited objects were designed for “numerical” measurements. But some of the things that we tried to measure were the states of the soul, such as laughter, smile, and sadness. There were also objects that are hard for us to comprehend, like the Center of Universe or the Interrelation of Everything in Nature, or the Whiteness of the First Snow. These tools stir the viewer’s imagination by putting him into a situation that’s hard to understand. The observer’s brain tries to cope with the situation and starts working intensively, thus coming up with explanations and speculations on the matter. The imagination starts working. That’s what our devices are meant for.

## **“Artists book” trend**

The “artist’s book” is one of the architectural trends inseparably connected with the attempts to make a system out of different bits and pieces of information. For us the “artist’s book” is not just a unique project, but a “multifunctional” form that integrates the most current trends in modern culture into the art education. The examples are semiology issues, idiomatic ways of expression, and the theory of information and communication.

“Artist’s book” trend is represented by unusual books that either have an unusual form, or are made of unique materials, or architectural books, books that are part of art projects or represent such projects. The “artist’s book” genre is connected with a new understanding of the creative process, with the information carrier being in the center of attention. Books have become one of the possible types of those carriers. Our workshop has held various projects and exhibitions in the “artist’s book” genre. Many architectural ideas are brought to life in this form. We have also developed and published an electronic teaching system called "Artist's book" that was later complemented with an elective course consisting of methodological guidelines and secondary school curriculum.

## **“Kamushki” (“Little rocks”) Project**

One of our favourite projects took place in Palanga in 2005. It dealt with the philosophy of design. I set the task not just to produce, but to create something. We substituted the traditional materials with elements of nature. In order to create something, I suggested using a Touch, a Song, Crepe, and Incantation. A Touch is a gesture or an action, the trace of which expresses the characteristics of a given nature element. A Song is a rhythmic recurring action or rhythmic organization of objects. The elements and objects are bound together by Crepe (by its nature, state and characteristics). Incantation is a sequence creating the whole with the help of signs and symbols. I turned to the ancient times when human beings first started differentiating themselves from the world of wild nature by using some products of their intellectual activity. In this project we considered actions like a foot touching the sand, or throwing a rock into the water to be the acts of creation. We lined up on the shore and each of us threw a rock into the water. Each time a rock would touch the water it would make a different sound, but all together they made a wonderful polyphonic “song”. Little sticks tied to the rope that marked the surf line demonstrated economy and planning, the fundamental characteristics of human thinking that were put into action in the geometry of Egyptian pyramids. Looking at the wonders of nature set us in the philosophical mood, so the children’s ideas sounded like philosophical parables. For example, the ram made of logs required a lot of effort from us in order to just touch the wave. One of the most paradoxical projects in Palanga was called “Wings/Crutches”. In order to make wings to show the element of air the author automatically folded the crutches. This amazing transformation was rethought and made into a wonderful metaphor of “wings/crutches”.

An artist’s book was the end result of the project where each experience was turned into one of the “little rocks” found on the Baltic coast.

## **“Interference”**

“Interference” is a project that took place in Provence last summer. The topic of the project was related to the optical art since our partner was the Museum of optical art of Victor Vasarely in Aix-en-Provence. Interference is a competition with a purpose to receive light waves, information etc. Experiments with light, color and kinetic interference shaped the career of Victor Vasarely and became the context for the activities of our Workshop.

The creative task of the project was to create a graphical composition in a circle, so that the whole composition would be best perceived in the rotation process. We took electric motors with us just for this purpose. Kinetic compositions were created by the students on different topics. There were 18 rotating disks ( $d = 40 \text{ cm}$ ) made on each topic. The compositions on the disks were meant to be perceived in rotation.

The “Middle ages” theme. The images of dragons and chimeras, angels and demons were built into the polygonal structures. The images were created on the basis of sketches made in different cities of Provence. An accidental discovery of round plastic pads for kitchenware with the image of a football thrown away into the fountain on the central square of Aix-city became an impetus for the whole creation process. The fountain was later cleaned and the hexagons with a football, or cells, were associated with the plan of Vasarely museum where the workshop students went to work one day. This accidental coincidence turned to be really useful for the design creation.

“Archangel Gabriel is stretching his wings at night”. It’s a city legend that a resident of Aix shared with us. The thing is that the figure of Archangel Gabriel that it situated on the very top of the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour is dynamic, it looks as if there’s some spiral movement there, so the next step in that movement would be the stretching of wings. This “continued” dynamics of the sculptural image and its supposed movement served as a reason for the birth of the legend itself. The students made abstract compositions from the spiral elements that represented the phenomenon of chromatic interference.