

Mezzotint Engravers in the Commonwealth of Poland and Lithuania (17th–18th Centuries): A Forgotten Chapter in European Studies*

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ABSTRACT Mezzotint is one of the intaglio printing techniques that has been practised in various European countries since the second half of the 17th century. Scholarly literature has traditionally focused on the development of this technique in Western Europe, often overlooking the activity of artists working in mezzotint in Central and Eastern Europe, including those active in the Commonwealth of Poland and Lithuania and in Russia. This study offers a comprehensive overview of mezzotint artists who produced and published their works in the Commonwealth during the 17th and 18th centuries. Particular attention is given to previously unknown mezzotints by Nathanael Schröder, Matthäus Deisch, and Kunegunda Czacka of the Sanguszkos family.

KEYWORDS mezzotint, 18th-century graphic art, Commonwealth of Poland and Lithuania, Nathanael Schröder, Matthäus Deisch, Josef Anton Kappeller, Kunegunda Czacka, née Sanguszkos, Catherine II the Great

ABSTRAKT Rytownicy mezzotinty w Rzeczypospolitej Obojga Narodów (XVII–XVIII wiek). Zapomniany rozdział w badaniach europejskich. Jedną z technik graficznych druku wklęsłego jest mezzotinta, która od drugiej połowy XVII w. wykonywana była w wielu krajach europejskich. W literaturze przedmiotu akcentuje się przede wszystkim rozwój tej techniki w Europie Zachodniej, pomijając często fakt, że rytownicy posługujący się techniką mezzotinty działali również w Europie Środkowo-Wschodniej – zarówno w Rzeczypospolitej Obojga Narodów, jak i w Rosji. Przedmiotem niniejszego opracowania jest syntetyczne przedstawienie informacji o rytownikach mezzotinty, którzy wykonywali i wydawali swoje sztuki na terenie Rzeczypospolitej w XVII i XVIII w., ze szczególnym uwzględnieniem dotychczas nieznanych mezzotint Nathanaela Schrödera, Matthäusa Deischa oraz Kunegundy z Sanguszków Czackiej.

SŁOWA-KLUCZE mezzotinta, historia grafiki XVIII w., Rzeczpospolita Obojga Narodów, Nathanael Schröder, Matthäus Deisch, Josef Anton Kappeller, Kunegunda z Sanguszków Czacka, Katarzyna II Wielka

ALTHOUGH mezzotint was recognised as an innovative graphic technique as early as the middle of 17th century, the first study devoted to engravers who worked in this technique was not published until 1786. James Chelsum identified five countries where mezzotint engravings were believed to have been executed: Germany, France, the Netherlands, Flanders and England.¹ Even though he listed only a few engravers who were active in these countries, this was the first study in which an attempt was made to divide engravers into groups based on geographical location. The next attempt of this kind did not appear until the 1839 study by the Frenchman Léon de Laborde, who expanded the list of engravers compiled by Chelsum and arranged it in alphabetical order. An appendix was added to illustrate the monograms used by engravers at the time. The author identified seven countries in which mezzotint engravers were active. The most detailed descriptions are those of the engravers from the Netherlands, Germany, England and France.² Much less attention was given to artists from other countries. For instance, de Laborde listed five mezzotint engravers working in Italy, but only one in Spain and one in Russia.³ Arthur Mayger Hind, in *Short History of Engraving and Etching* (1908), supplemented de Laborde's findings and continued the classification of engravers according to geographical area. His table included several mezzotint engravers from Germany, the Netherlands, Italy, France, England and America, as well as from Sweden, Norway, Russia and Finland.⁴ The fourth endeavour to explore this subject was undertaken in 1913 by the Austrian art historian Julius Leisching. In *Schabkunst*, in addition to discussing engravers from well-established centres such as the Netherlands,

Germany, England, France and Italy, Leisching was the first to offer detailed descriptions of mezzotint engravers' practices in countries that had previously received little scholarly attention, including Russia and Spain.⁵ Furthermore, the author contributed significantly to the existing literature on the development of mezzotint by revealing that engravers using this technique were also active in Austria.⁶ One of the most recent efforts to systematise knowledge about mezzotint engravers is the monograph by Carol Wax, an American artist and the author of the excellent study *The Mezzotint. History and Technique* (1990). While Wax focuses primarily on English and Irish engravers, she also dedicates a chapter to the work of foreign artists. In *Mezzotints abroad*, she highlights the presence of mezzotint engravers in countries such as France, Austria, Germany, Russia and the United States of America.⁷ This remains the most recent academic study devoted entirely to the history and development of mezzotint between c. 1642 and 1900, yet it does not exhaust the subject. There is still no single comprehensive monograph covering all the circles in which printmakers using this technique were active in the 17th and 18th centuries.

Mezzotint engravers were also worked in Central and Eastern Europe, both in the Commonwealth of Poland and Lithuania and in Russia. Several artists in the Russian Empire in the 18th century are mentioned in foreign literature on the subject, but the issue of mezzotint engravers active in the Commonwealth is completely omitted by each of the studies cited. Among the publications, a very short paragraph from 1999 by Hanna Widacka must not be forgotten, in which it was mentioned that mezzotint was practised in pre-partition Poland.⁸ This

* This research project was financed by the De Brzezie Lanckoroński Foundation Scholarship and Scholarship of the Minister of Science and Higher Education for Young Scientists, no. SMN/18/0140/2022.

1. James Chelsum, *A History of the Art of Engraving in Mezzotinto from It's Origin to the Present Times, Including an Account of the Works of the Earliest Artists* (Winchester: Printed by J. Robbins and sold by J. and T. Egerton, London, 1786), Appendix I.

2. Léon de Laborde, *Histoire de la gravure en manière noire* (Paris: Imprimerie de Jules Didot L'Ainé, 1839), 116–327.

3. Ibid., 328–332.

4. Arthur M. Hind, *A Short History of Engraving & Etching: For the Use of Collectors and Students; With Full Bibliography Classified List and Index of Engravers* (London: Archibald Constable & Co., 1908), 347, 349, 351, 357–58, 364, 369, 375, 378, 380–86, 388–90.

5. Julius Leisching, *Schabkunst. Ihre Technik und Geschichte in Ihren Hauptwerken vom XVII. bis zum XX. Jahrhundert* (Wien: Verlag Artur Wolf, 1913), 74–75, 77–79.

6. Ibid., 55–71.

7. Carol Wax, *The Mezzotint. History and Technique* (London: Thames and Hudson; New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1990), 87–96.

8. Hanna Widacka, "Mezzotinta i jej mistrzowie", *Gazeta Antykwaryczna*, no. 6 (1999), 22.

article aims to show that mezzotint was also present in Poland and has been written in English in order to fill this glaring gap in foreign-language literature.

MEZZOTINTS ABROAD

Throughout the 17th and 18th centuries, portraits of notable figures from the Commonwealth of Poland and Lithuania were produced in both the country itself and in foreign engraving centres. Portraits executed outside the Commonwealth included etchings, engravings and mezzotints. One of the earliest mezzotints of this kind is the portrait of King Michael Korybut Wiśniowiecki, dating to 1670, by Jan van Somer (c. 1645–1699) published by Frederik de Wit (c. 1630–1706) in Amsterdam.⁹ As early as the 17th

century, a significant number of mezzotint portraits of John III Sobieski were created outside the borders of the Commonwealth, including notable prints by Paul van Somer II (c. 1649–1714),¹⁰ Jacob Gole (c. 1660–1724),¹¹ and Peter Schenk I (1660–c. 1718), who was court medallist and engraver to Augustus II the Strong.¹² He produced several portraits of the king,¹³ as well as other figures associated with the court, such as the king's wife, Christiane Eberhardine of Brandenburg-Bayreuth,¹⁴ and Adjutant General Franciszek Zygmunt Gałęcki.¹⁵ The following king, Stanislaus Leszczyński, was portrayed by the Gdańsk painter Daniel Klein (1672–1744), among others, and his work was almost replicated by Johann Stenglin (1710/15–1776) in Augsburg around 1740.¹⁶ Furthermore, there is a well-known mezzotint

9. Widacka distinguished between two versions of this portrait: a smaller one with several variants of the inscription and coat of arms, and a larger one resulting from trimming the impression to reduce its height from 322 mm to 302 mm. The location of individual prints, see Hanna Widacka, *Piast na elekcyjnym tronie. Michał Korybut Wiśniowiecki w grafice XVII i XVIII wieku ze zbiorów polskich i francuskich* (Warszawa: Biblioteka Narodowa, 2009), 70–73.

10. Mezzotint, c. 1680–1690, London, British Museum, Department of Prints and Drawings (hereafter: BM), inv. no. 1902,1011.6046; John Chaloner Smith, *British Mezzotinto Portraits: Being a Descriptive Catalogue of These Engravings from the Introduction of the Art to the Early Part of the Present Century*, vol. 3 (London: Harry Sotheran & Co., 1884), 1415, 1420, no. 13; Hanna Widacka, *Jan III Sobieski w grafice XVII i XVIII wieku* (Warszawa: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1987), 119, no. 112.

11. Mezzotint, c. 1683, Cracow, The National Museum (hereafter: MNK), inv. no. III-ryc.-2598; Widacka, *Jan III Sobieski w grafice XVII i XVIII wieku*, 75, no. 45.

12. Schenk's two portrait mezzotints of the king, c. 1680–1690, see: BM, inv. no. 1902,1011.7736 and Warsaw, The National Museum (hereafter: MNW), inv. no. Gr. Pol. 4163, *Hollstein's Dutch and Flemish Etchings, Engravings and Woodcuts c. 1450–1700*, vol. 25: *Petrus (Pieter) Schenk*, eds. George S. Keyes and K.G. Boon (Amsterdam: Van Gendt & Co, 1981), 172, nos. 676–677; Widacka, *Jan III Sobieski w grafice XVII i XVIII wieku*, 60, no. 22; 82–83, no. 58.

13. For instance, see mezzotint, c. 1700, Warsaw, The Royal Castle (hereafter: ZKW), inv. no. ZKW/1003/ab, Ewa Łomnicka-Żakowska, *Graficzne portrety Augusta II i Augusta III Wettynów w zbiorach Muzeum Narodowego w Warszawie* (Warszawa: Muzeum Narodowe w Warszawie, 1997), 90–91, no. 28. Other engravings by Schenk: mezzotint, c. 1700, Warsaw, The National Library (hereafter: BN), inv. no. G. 45503 and G. 8, *Katalog portretów osobistości polskich i obcych w Polsce działających*, vol. 1, ed. Hanna Widacka (Warszawa: Biblioteka Narodowa, 1990), 42, no. 107; 62, no. 198.

14. Mezzotint, c. 1700, ZKW, inv. no. ZKW/4136, *Hollstein's Dutch and Flemish Etchings, Engravings and Woodcuts c. 1450–1700*, vol. 25, 132, no. 546; *Katalog portretów osobistości polskich i obcych w Polsce działających*, vol. 2, ed. Hanna Widacka (Warszawa: Biblioteka Narodowa, 1992), 369, no. 2747. The second Schenk's mezzotint, see *ibid.*, 369, no. 2746.

15. Mezzotint, c. 1700, BN, inv. no. G.155/Sz, *Hollstein's Dutch and Flemish Etchings, Engravings and Woodcuts c. 1450–1700*, vol. 25, 147, no. 594; *Katalog portretów osobistości polskich i obcych w Polsce działających*, vol. 2, 16, no. 1243. See Michał Walicki, *Lubienieccy* (Warszawa: Arkady, 1961), 14, 22, ill. 42.

16. Mezzotint, c. 1740, published by Johann Jacob Haid, BM, inv. no. 1937,0710.3. As asserted by Widacka (*Z króla książę*) and Michalczyk (*Zapomniane konteksty*), this engraving was created in two states. The first state was produced by Stenglin and signed *Daniel Klein pinxit – Iohann Stenglen Sculps. Aug. Vind.*, while the second state was published by Johann Jacob Haid (1704–1767) and was created by removing Stenglin's signature, visible on the copper plate, and replacing it with the inscription *Ioh: Iacob Haid excud. Aug. Vind.*, see Hanna Widacka,

of King Augustus III of Saxony, attributed to several prints reproducing a painting by Ádám Mátyóki (1673–1757), including works by the Italian Lorenzo Zucchi (1704–1779)¹⁷ and the German Gabriel Bodenehr II (1705–1792).¹⁸ It is evident that among the most common mezzotints associated with Polish portraiture were also prints made by Austrians. The first of those was Clemens Kohl (1754–1807), author of the portrait of Konstancja Poniatowska, née Czartoryska, after Marcello Bacciarelli (1731–1818).¹⁹ The second, to whom more general recognition is attributed, was Johann Peter Pichler (1765–1807), who was known for mezzotint portraits of Stanislaus Augustus Poniatowski,²⁰ Prince Józef Poniatowski²¹ and Zofia Zamoyska, née Czartoryska,²² from the late 18th century.

In the context of mezzotints produced outside the Commonwealth and connected to Poles in the 17th and 18th centuries, a particularly intriguing issue that warrants attention pertains to the commissioning and importation of large-format graphic theses (Thesen, Thesenblätter). As Zbigniew Michalczyk accurately observed, “large-format occasional engravings, most often commissioned by universities and monasteries

during periods of discord or doctoral promotions, were created in various centres (primarily in Rome, Paris, Antwerp, but also within the Commonwealth of Poland and Lithuania). However, during the latter half of the 17th and the 18th century, the production of such works became a distinctive feature of Augsburg”.²³ Mezzotints of this genre were commissioned by numerous Poles on various occasions, including doctoral promotions. For instance, the theses of Bartholomäus Kilian (1630–1696) were executed for Sigismund Xaver Holló de Krompach with a dedication to Michael Korybut Wiśniowiecki (1672) and another for the canon of Sandomierz, Andrzej Kuropatnicki, dedicated to John III Sobieski (1682).²⁴ The execution of theses was conducted by a number of distinguished Augsburg engravers, including Johann Andreas Pfeffel I (1674–1748; thesis of Józef Sandurski dedicated to Michał Łoś, 1745) or Georg Christoph Kilian (1709–1781; thesis dedicated to Jan Dębiński, 1747).²⁵ The present article focuses exclusively on the work of engravers who used mezzotint technique and produced and published prints in the Commonwealth of Poland and Lithuania during the 17th and 18th centuries.

Z króla książę: Stanisław Leszczyński w grafice XVIII wieku ze zbiorów polskich i francuskich (Warszawa: Biblioteka Narodowa, 2006), 62–63, no. 21; *Katalog portretów osobistości polskich i obcych w Polsce działających*, vol. 4, ed. Hanna Widacka (Warszawa: Biblioteka Narodowa, 1994), 361, no. 5120; Zbigniew Michalczyk, *Zapomniane konteksty. Augsburg jako ośrodek rytownictwa wobec Rzeczypospolitej w XVII–XVIII wieku* (Warszawa: Narodowy Instytut Polskiego Dziedzictwa Kulturowego za Granicą “Polonika”, 2020), 102.

17. Mezzotint, 1736, BN, inv. no. G.6677; *Katalog portretów osobistości polskich i obcych w Polsce działających*, vol. 1, 65, no. 207.

18. Łomnicka-Żakowska, *Graficzne portrety Augusta II i Augusta III Wettynów w zbiorach Muzeum Narodowego w Warszawie*, 353, no. 32; 356–358, no. 34, 35.

19. Mezzotint, 1793, Nieborów, The Museum in Nieborów and Arkadia, inv. no. NB 4203 MNW, Angela Sołtys, “Graficzny portret królewskiej matki z 1793 roku”, *Kronika Zamkowa*, no. 1–2 (2006), 123–130.

20. Mezzotint, c. 1791, MNK, inv. no. III-ryc.-50478, *Katalog portretów osobistości polskich i obcych w Polsce działających*, vol. 4, 339, no. 5942; Georg Kaspar Nagler, *Neues allgemeines Künstler-Lexicon oder Nachrichten vom dem Leben und den Werken der Maler, Bildhauer, Baumeister, Kupferstecher, Formschneider, Lithographen, Zeichner, Medailleure, Elfenbeinarbeiter, etc.*, vol. 11 (München: Verlag von E.A. Fleischmann, 1841), 277, no. 12.

21. Mezzotint, c. 1790–95, Cracow, The Scientific Library of the PAAS and the PAS (hereafter: Gab. Ryc. Bibl. Nauk. PAU i PAN), Cabinet of Prints, inv. no. BGR.025095, Nagler, *Neues Allgemeines Künstler-Lexicon*, vol. 11, 277, no. 19.

22. Mezzotint, c. 1790, BN, inv. no. G.10705/III, *Katalog portretów osobistości polskich i obcych w Polsce działających*, vol. 1, 205–206, no. 6205.

23. Michalczyk, *Zapomniane konteksty*, 143. Michalczyk provided a comprehensive overview of graphic works pertaining to the personalities of the Commonwealth of Poland and Lithuania that were commissioned abroad during the latter half of the 17th and 18th centuries, Michalczyk, *Zapomniane konteksty*, 143–249.

24. *Ibid.*, 147, 181, ill. 123.

25. *Ibid.*, 143–249.

The image of each of the Polish kings from Michael Korybut Wiśniowiecki to Stanislaus Augustus Poniatowski was also executed using the mezzotint technique, but primarily outside the country. Michael Korybut Wiśniowiecki is known for being one of a small number of rulers depicted in mezzotints created in the Commonwealth. The successor of John II Casimir Vasa did not hold dominion for a significant period, as the length of his reign was only four years (1669–1673). Nevertheless, Korybut Wiśniowiecki was depicted in numerous portraits, as well as in allegorical scenes, executed in graphic techniques.

A series of prints produced with the participation of the Gdańsk patrician Nathanael Schröder (1638–1674) ranks among the most notable works related to this king. He was the co-author of a series of six impressions related to the election of Korybut Wiśniowiecki in 1668–1671, entitled *Emblematische Entwürffe Sonderbahren hohen veränderungen des Polnischen Adlers von Ao: c. 1668 bis 1671 vorgestellt in Dantzig*.²⁶

Many of the prints in the series were executed through a combination of techniques, including engraving and etching, as well as etching and mezzotint. Four of these were undoubtedly by Schröder, while the drawings for the remaining two, the allegory of the coronation and the allegory of the king's wedding, were designed by Andrzej Stech (1635–1697) based on Schröder's concept, and engraved by Hans Michael Gockheller and Johann Bensheimer, respectively. Schröder was an adept practitioner of copperplate engraving and etching, as well as mezzotint. It is evident that he was the author of the title page for the series, associated with Korybut Wiśniowiecki.²⁷ This impression represents a combination of two graphic techniques, etching and mezzotint, and may have been created between 1668 and 1671 (Fig. 1). Another print by Schröder, hitherto not referenced in Polish literature on the subject, was identified in the Dresden collection. The composition reveals the same title page for the series *Emblematische Entwürffe Sonderbahren hohen veränderungen des Polnischen Adlers von Ao: c. 1668 bis 1671 vorgestellt in*

26. The series is comprised of the following engravings: the title page is adorned with portraits of King Michael Korybut Wiśniowiecki and Queen Eleonora; an allegory depicting the abdication of John Casimir and the subsequent election of Michael Korybut Wiśniowiecki; allegory that alludes to the contentious circumstances surrounding the election; the coronation of Michael Korybut Wiśniowiecki in Cracow on 29 September 1669; an allegory that symbolises the royal wedding of King Michael Korybut Wiśniowiecki, and finally, an allegory that represents the conclusion of internal electoral disputes. Friedrich Schwarz, *Danzig im Bilde. Verzeichnis der in der Danziger Stadtbibliothek vorhandenen bildlichen Darstellungen zur Geschichte und Topographie von Danzig und Umgegend* (Danzig: Kommissions-Verlag von A.W. Kafemann G.m.b.H, 1913), 145, no. 2985; Hanna Widacka, *Piast na elekcyjnym tronie*, 39, no. 10; 116, no. 46; 118, no. 47; 122, no. 49; Anna Grochala, "I. 91.–94. Cykl czterech ilustracji Emblematische Entwürffe Sonderbahren hohen veränderungen des Polnischen Adlers von Ao: c. 1668 bis 1671 vorgestellt in Dantzig", in: *Gdańsk dla Rzeczypospolitej. W służbie Króla i Kościoła. Katalog wystawy*, ed. Jolanta Talbierska (Warszawa: Muzeum Historyczne Miasta Gdańska, 2004), 186–189; Agnieszka Skrodzka, *Udręki majestatu. Polscy „królowie nieszczęśliwi” w ikonografii nowożytnej* (Warszawa: Instytut Sztuki PAN, 2018), 122–125; Grochala, "Elekcja Michała Korybuta Wiśniowieckiego w ikonografii z epoki", in: *Żył królem, umarł człowiekiem. Michał Korybut Wiśniowiecki i jego czasy 1669–1673*, eds. Zbigniew Hundert and Paweł Tyszka (Warszawa: Zamek Królewski w Warszawie – Muzeum, 2023), 94–98.

27. Mezzotint, etching, c. 1668–1671, MNW, inv. no. 144087/1, and Kupferstich-Kabinett – Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden (hereafter: SKD), inv. no. A 21052. Inscription at the top right corner: *Emblematische Entwürffe / Sonderbahren hohen veränderungen / des / Polnischen Adlers / von Ao. C: 1668. bis. 1671 / vordestellt in Dantzig / Durch*. Below the portraits: *ELEONORA / REGINA – MICHAEL / REX / POLONIAE*. Below the portraits on the ribbon: *Nathanael Schröder Rittern Des Heiligen Marci*. At the bottom in a cartouche: *Der Eurer Maiestät hat Cron und Reich ergeben / Der Gott verleih auch glück zum Königlichen Leben / Er Segne diesen Stam mit Edlen Zweigelem / In welchen Euer Thron verewigt könne sein*. At the bottom, in the lower right corner, a faint signature?: *D.M....f.*, Schwarz, *Danzig im Bilde*, 145, no. 2985 (1); Edward Rastawiecki, *Słownik malarzów polskich tudzież obcych w Polsce osiadłych lub czasowo w niej przebywających*, t. 2 (Warszawa: Nakładem autora, 1851), 156–157; Grochala, "I. 91.–94. Cykl czterech ilustracji Emblematische Entwürffe Sonderbahren hohen veränderungen des Polnischen Adlers von Ao: c. 1668 bis 1671 vorgestellt in Dantzig", 186.



1 Nathanael Schröder, title page with portraits of Michał Korybut Wiśniowiecki and Queen Eleonora from the series *Emblematische Entwürffe Sonderbahren hohen Veränderungen des Polnischen Adlers von Ao: c. 1668 bis 1671 vorgestellt in Dantzic*, ca. 1668–1671, The National Museum in Warsaw. Photo by Marcin Karczewski

2 Nathanael Schröder, title page with portraits of Michał Korybut Wiśniowiecki and Queen Eleonora from the series *Emblematische Entwürffe Sonderbahnen hohen veränderungen des Polnischen Adlers von Ao: c. 1668 bis 1671 vorgestellt in Dantzig*, ca. 1668–1671, Kupferstich-Kabinett – Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden. Photo by Herbert Boswank



Dantzig, yet it has been executed exclusively using the mezzotint technique (Fig. 2).²⁸

Schröder's self-portrait was also produced in two versions. The initial portrait, comparable to the title page, was executed through a combination of etching

and mezzotint. The bust portrays the engraver with the cross of the Order of Saint Mark on his chest, which he received from the doge of Venice during his studies in Padua (Fig. 3).²⁹ The second version, with the same composition was produced entirely using the mezzotint

28. Mezzotint, c. 1668–1671, SKD, inv. no. A 21053. De Laborde listed Schröder among the German engravers and appears to have described this very mezzotint, see Laborde, *Histoire de la gravure en manière noire*, 227–228.

29. Mezzotint, etching, c. 1662–1674, Wolfenbüttel, Herzog August Bibliothek, Graphische Sammlung, inv. no. A 28005. Inscription below the portrait: *Nil. Sine. Deo. / Nathanael. Schröder: Dantiscanus. / Eques. Divi. Marci.*, Walther Seidel, "Nachrichten über Danziger Kupferstecher", in: *Neue Preussische Provinzial-Blätter*, vol. 3, ed. A. Hagen and Dr. Mackelburg (Königsberg: Theile, 1847), 173; v. Sz. [Ignaz von Szwykowski], "Liebhaber-Radierungen aus dem 17. Jahrhundert. Nathanael von Schröder", in *Archiv für die zeichnenden Künste mit Besonderer Beziehung auf Kupferstecher- und Holzschneidekunst und Ihre Geschichte*, ed. Robert Naumann (Leipzig: Rudolph Weidel, 1855), 148–149, no. 1.



3 Nathanael Schröder, *Self-portrait*, 1662–1674, Wolfenbüttel, Herzog August Bibliothek. Photo © Herzog August Bibliothek Wolfenbüttel

technique (Fig. 4).³⁰ This impression was included in Nathanael Dilger's (1604–1679) epicedium *Christliche Leich=Predigt [...]* Hn. Nathanael Schröders Equitis D. Marci in der Sanct Johannes Kirchen Anno 1674 den 19 April gehalten, published in Gdańsk in honour of Schröder, who died on 5 April 1674.³¹ The Yale Centre for British Art in New Haven is in possession of an additional self-portrait by the artist from Gdańsk (Fig. 5).³² This print, which was also executed using only mezzotint technique, depicts a bust of the person portrayed. There are no inscriptions, only a handwritten signature in brown ink stating that it was executed by Schröder himself: *Nathanael Schröder Ged. Eques. D. Marci – von Ihm selbst gemache*.³³ An additional mezzotint depicting an allegorical funeral scene has been identified in the collections of the Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden; it could be also attributed to Schröder, although the print clearly warrants further study.³⁴

It is worth noting that Georg Kaspar Nagler has stated that Schröder made various mezzotints, which are of particular interest as they date back to the invention of this technique.³⁵ The authors of the catalogue for the 1976 exhibition at the Yale Centre for British Art concluded that Schröder must have been familiar with the prints of the first engravers who knew this technique, Ludwig von Siegen (c. 1609–1680) or Prince Rupert of the Rhine (1619–1682).³⁶ Laborde subsequently observed that prints by the Gdańsk artist were very similar to the work of another mezzotint artist,

30. Mezzotint, 1674, Gdańsk Library of the Polish Academy of Sciences (hereafter: BGPAN), inv. no. Oe 121 8° adl. 20, Jolanta Talbierska, *Grafika XVII wieku w Polsce. Funkcje, ośrodki, artyści, dzieła* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Neriton, 2011), 79–80, ill. 143.

31. Ibid., 79; Magdalena Mielnik, "Schröder Nathanael", in: *Słownik artystów polskich i obcych w Polsce działających (zmarłych przed 1966 r.). Malarze, rzeźbiarze, graficy*, vol. 10, ed. Urszula Makowska (Warszawa: Instytut Sztuki PAN, 2016), 259.

32. Mezzotint, c. 1662–1674, New Haven, Yale Center for British Art, Prints and Drawing Collection (hereafter: YCBA), inv. no. B1970.3.33. The print bears the collector's mark of Junius Spencer Morgan, as documented in Frits Lugt, *Les Marques de collections de dessins & d'estampes*, no. L. 4791, Fondation Custodia, accessed May 5, 2026, <https://www.marques-decollections.fr/FtDetail/d8ec68c6-2541-aa4e-9038-03c17744b742>. This engraving formed part of the exhibition entitled *Darkness into Light: The Early Mezzotint* exhibition was held at the Yale University Art Gallery in 1976. See *Darkness into Light: The Early Mezzotint. Exhibition Catalogue*, eds. Jane Bayard and Ellen d'Oench ([s.l.]: Yale University Art Gallery, 1976), 9–10; 20, no. 14.

33. v. Sz. [Ignaz von Szwykowski], "Liebhaber-Radierungen aus dem 17. Jahrhundert", 148–149, no. 1.

34. Mezzotint, c. 1674, SKD, inv. no. A 21051. Inscription in the upper centre of composition: *Spectator / En Mor tem/ ProRectoris Civis Equitis / Padua, Dantiscum, Venetia / Luget, Plangit, Stupit*. Inscription on an open book: *De / us – proxi / mo*.

35. Nagler, *Neues allgemeines Künstler-Lexicon*, vol. 16, 24.

36. *Darkness into Light*, 20.



4 Nathanael Schröder, *Self-portrait*, epicedium of Nathanael Dilger *Christliche Leich=Predigt* [...] *Hn. Nathanael Schröders Equitis D. Marci in der Sanct Johannes Kirchen Anno 1674 den 19 April gehalten* (Dantzig 1674), Gdańsk Library of the Polish Academy of Sciences. Photo by Bartosz Pacyński © Gdańsk Library of the Polish Academy of Sciences



5 Nathanael Schröder, *Self-portrait*, 1662–1674, New Haven, Yale Center for British Art. Photo <https://collections.britishart.yale.edu>, CC0 1.0 Universal

Theodore Caspar von Fürstenberg (1615–1675).³⁷ It is not possible to determine definitively whether the patrician learnt the mezzotint technique from one of the aforementioned engravers. His extant diary, however, provides evidence of numerous international journeys, including visits to Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands,

England, France and Italy. Schröder's diary is divided into six parts, the titles of which are described in detail by Paulina Nortowska.³⁸ In this context, the fourth part is arguably the most intriguing, as it definitively establishes that Schröder was in England in May 1661. This is supported by evidence of his visit to London

37. Laborde, *Histoire de la gravure en manière noire*, 228.

38. BGPAN, inv. no. Ms 925a. First part: *Kurtze Beschreibung Einer Volnbrachten Reise durch Deutschland Franckreich, Italien und Niederland biß nach Dantzig*, BGPAN, inv. no. Ms 925a, fol. 5–95; second part: *Kurtze Vorstellung Was in Rohm Merckwürdiges Zu besehen*, *ibid.*, fol. 100–110; third part: *Le sejour de Rome oder Richtige Anleitung Wie man die Stadt Rohm ordentlich besichtigen konne*, *ibid.*, fol. 118–195; fourth part: *Nath. Schroederi Dantiscani, Reise Beschreibung von Dantzig Nach Holland und Engelland und durch die spanischen und vereinigte Niederlanden den Reinstrom hinauff nach Elßas Nath. Schroederi Dantiscani*, *ibid.*, fol. 200–225; fifth part: *Reise von Dantzig nach Hollandt Anno 1660 den. 5. Juli von Dantzig nach der gefahren [...]*, *ibid.*, fol. 226–258; sixth part: *Nath. Schroederi Dantiscani Reise Beschreibung durch Franckreich und Italien*, *ibid.*, fol. 259–336, Paulina Nortowska, "XVII-wieczna Anglia w relacji gdańszczanina Nathana Schrödera", *Studia Historyczne* 62, vol. 4 (2019), 20; Talbierska, *Grafika XVII wieku w Polsce*, 79.

and other places during this period.³⁹ London holds significant importance in the history of mezzotint technique, as Prince Rupert, a pioneering proponent of the method, lived there during the Gdańsk engraver's residence in the city. At that time, Rupert was in contact with the English writer John Evelyn (1620–1706). On 21 February 1661, Evelyn wrote in his diary: "Prince Rupert first showed me how to grave in *mezzo tinto*," and on 13 March of that year: "This afternoon, Prince Rupert showed me, with his own hands, the new way of graving, called *mezzo tinto*."⁴⁰ Evelyn was the first to describe the new technique, calling it "a new manner of Engraving, or *Mezzo Tinto*" in his work *Sculptura*, which was published in 1662.⁴¹ Although the lives of Prince Rupert, John Evelyn and Schröder converged in London at the same year, there is no definitive evidence that it was there that Schröder learnt the mezzotint technique. His diary has been identified as a primary source for confirming his artistic connections; however, it should be noted that it primarily comprises a series of impressions, reflections, and descriptions of the places and sites he had visited, both in England and in various other countries.

The early mezzotint prints are distinguished by an uneven distribution of light and shadow, with a lack of smooth transitions, and the images themselves do not reveal a high level of detail. These are precisely the characteristics of the only mezzotints executed in the Commonwealth of Poland and Lithuania in the 17th century. It is challenging to provide an unequivocal conclusion regarding the degree to which Schröder's mezzotints bear a resemblance to the mezzotints attributed to Fürstenberg, Siegen, or Rupert. Schröder certainly using a rocker, as did Prince Rupert and his collaborator, Vaillant. Fürstenberg, on the other hand,

as a pupil of Siegen, mainly used a roulette.⁴² All the evidence points to Schröder being the only person in the Commonwealth who undertook amateur mezzotint engraving at that time, and it is reasonable to assume that he learnt how to use the rocker outside Gdańsk. Notwithstanding the fact that his prints are not of the highest artistic quality, they are among the earliest mezzotints executed shortly after its invention between around 1662, i.e. Schröder's return to Gdańsk, and the date of his death in 1674.

GDAŃSK: MATTHÄUS DEISCH

Mezzotint prints dating from the period from the conclusion of the 17th century to the second quarter of the 18th century, spanning the reigns of kings John III Sobieski and Augustus II the Strong, the latter alternating with Stanislaus Leszczyński, are characterised by the description above. The majority of mezzotints were created outside the Commonwealth, a circumstance largely attributable to Augustus II originating from the Wettin dynasty. The largest number of mezzotints was executed by Schenk, the king's court engraver. In the context of the evolution of mezzotint in the Commonwealth, a notable shift occurred during the reign of Augustus III of Saxony, which commenced in 1733 and concluded in 1763. During the latter half of the 18th century, Augsburg experienced a notable increase in its importance as a major centre for engraving, from which a significant number of large-format graphic theses were imported to the Commonwealth. The engraving and publishing activities of multi-generational families such as Kilian, Bodenehr, Haid, Hertl, Leopold, Ridinger and Rugendas are credited with Augsburg becoming the third European centre of engraving production in the 18th century, alongside Venice, Paris and London.

39. BGPAN, inv. no. Ms 925a, fol. 214.

40. William Bray, *The Diary of John Evelyn*, vol. 1 (New York–London: M. Walter Dunne Publisher, 1901), 341–342.

41. John Evelyn, *Sculptura, or the History and Art of Chalcography and Engraving in Copper, With an Example Enumeration of the Most renowned Masters, And Their Works, To Which Is Annexed a New Manner of Engraving, or Mezzo Tinto, Communicated by His Highness Prince Rupert, to the Authour of this Treatise* (London: Printed by J. C. for G. Beedle, 1662). A copy is located in the Yale Centre for British Art, Rare Books and Manuscripts, NE1760, E9. Evelyn then stated that Prince Rupert was the inventor of mezzotint, which became a subject of debate in the literature on the subject. After research conducted by Orovida C. Pissarro, it is certain that the new method of developing plates was invented by von Siegen, who used a roulette, and Prince Rupert only improved the process by inventing the rocker, Orovida C. Pissarro, "Prince Rupert and the Invention of Mezzotint", *The Volume of the Walpole Society*, vol. 36 (1956–1958), 2.

42. *Darkness into Light*, 20–21, no. 17.

Some mezzotint artists migrated from Augsburg, seeking alternative employment opportunities in Eastern Europe. In 1741, Johann Stenglin departed from the city upon receiving an invitation to join the Engraving Chamber of the Russian Academy of Sciences in St. Petersburg.⁴³ Another engraver of particular significance to this research is Matthäus Deisch (1724–1789), a pupil of Georg Philipp Rugendas I (1666–1742) and G.Ch. Kilian. It is estimated that around 1740, Deisch undertook extensive travels and sporadically engaged in work at fairs.⁴⁴ In 1744, he made his first appearance in a city in the northern part of the Commonwealth, namely Gdańsk, where Schröder had been active almost sixty years earlier.⁴⁵ Deisch settled permanently in Gdańsk in 1749, as confirmed by an announcement in the “Danziger Nachrichten” newspaper on 20 September 1749, which stated: “The public is hereby informed of the arrival of Matthäus Deisch, a copper engraver, who is offering his services in portrait engraving and the production

of theses for monasteries. Furthermore, he is willing to provide instruction to the children of distinguished individuals in the art of drawing. He is currently residing with Master Lorenz Schneider in Poggenpfehl”.⁴⁶ There exists a substantial corpus of literature on Deisch, addressing the subjects of both his life and his oeuvre.⁴⁷ It is important to draw attention to articles that provide a more detailed study of Deisch’s prints are those by Friedrich Schwarz and Hanna Widacka.⁴⁸ The present article has the aim of focusing on mezzotints by the artist which are hitherto unknown or presumed to be lost. Widacka noted that Deisch was the author of lost mezzotints depicting George III, King of England, two portraits of Empress Catherine II the Great after Pietro Antonio Rotari (1763) and Vigilius Eriksen (c. 1766), and two portraits of Prince Paul I of Russia after Vigilius Eriksen (1767) and Jacob Wessel (1776).⁴⁹ During a thorough search of Russian collections, four of the five mezzotints by Deisch mentioned above were found.

43. Letter from Jacob Stählin sent from St. Petersburg to engraver Johann Stenglin in Augsburg, 8/19 July 1741, Archive of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Branch of the Archive of the Russian Academy of Sciences in St. Petersburg, ф. 3, оп. 1, л. 66, л. 55–56; *Материалы для истории Императорской Академии Наук*, vol. 4: 1739–1741 (Санкт Петербург: Тип. Императорской Акад. Наук, 1887), 707–708, no. 882. See Dominika Cora, “New Facts about Russia’s Imperial Portrait Series, 1745–77”, *Print Quarterly* 43, no. 1 (2026), 36.

44. Anna Gosieniecka, “Deisch (Deutsch) Mateusz”, in: *Słownik artystów polskich i obcych w Polsce działających (zmarłych przed 1966 r.). Malarze, rzeźbiarze, graficy*, vol. 2, ed. Jolanta Maurin-Białostocka (Wrocław–Warszawa–Kraków: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich – Wydawnictwo PAN, 1975), 32.

45. The fact that he appeared in Gdańsk in 1744 is evidenced by an mezzotint signed by him with a portrait of Hieronim Florian Radziwiłł, see 1744, MNK, inv. no. III-ryc.-33534. Widacka noted that this print was created in two versions, a smaller and a larger one, Hanna Widacka, “Grafika portretowa Mateusza Deischa”, *Rocznik Gdański* 48, no. 2 (1988), 8–9. See Jolanta Talbierska, “Rytownicy gdańscy dla królów i dostojników polskich”, in: *Gdańsk dla Rzeczypospolitej*, 100–101.

46. “Dem Publico wird hiermit wissend gemacht, daß allhier ein Kupferstecher angekommen ist namens Matthäus Deisch, welcher seine Dienste offerieret im Porträtstechen wie auch Theses für Klöster. Im gleichen ist er erbötig, vornehmer Herren Kinder im Zeichnen zu informieren. Er logiert bei Meister Lorenz Schneider in Poggenpfehl”, *Danziger Nachrichten*, 20 September 1749; Friedrich Schwarz, “Matthäus Deisch”, *Mitteilungen des Westpreussischen Geschichtsvereins* 23, no. 4 (1924), 55.

47. For a complete bibliography on the engraver, see Kalina Zabuska, “Deisch (Deutsch) Matthaeus”, in: *Allgemeines Künstlerlexikon: die bildenden Künstler aller Zeiten und Völker*, vol. 25, eds. Eberhard Kasten, Andrea Nabert and Michael Steppes (München–Leipzig: K.G. Saur, 2000), 283–284; Anna Gosieniecka, “Deisch (Deutsch) Mateusz”, in: *Słownik biograficzny Pomorza Nadwiślańskiego*, vol. 1, ed. Stanisław Gierszewski (Gdańsk: Wydawnictwo Gdańskie, 1992), 307–308.

48. Schwarz, “Matthäus Deisch”, 54–62; Widacka, “Grafika portretowa Mateusza Deischa”, 7–59; ead., “Augsburczyk w Gdańsku. O sztuce rytowniczej Matthäusa Deischa”, in: *Gdańszczanin w Berlinie. Daniel Chodowiecki i kultura 2. połowy XVIII wieku w Europie Północnej*, eds. Edmund Kizik, Ewa Baryłewska-Szymańska and Wojciech Szymański (Gdańsk: Muzeum Historyczne Miasta Gdańska, 2002), 75–82.

49. Widacka, “Grafika portretowa Mateusza Deischa”, 12.

The first of the identified prints is *Portrait of Catherine II* after a work by Italian painter Rotari (1707–1762). Two impressions of this mezzotint by Deisch are evidently held in the collection of the Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts in Moscow.⁵⁰ In reference to the findings of Widacka, it can be posited that the print was created in 1763, as on 11 June of that year, an advertisement appeared in the newspaper “*Wöchentliche Danziger Anzeigen und Dienliche Nachrichten*” announcing the sale of a small print run.⁵¹ It is known that the Italian painter stayed at the court of St. Petersburg between 1756 and 1762, and that the portrait of the empress may have been painted by him in 1758.⁵² It is worth noting that a very similar portrait of Tsarina Catherine was created by the Russian engraver Yevgraf Chemesov (1737–1765) in the Engraving Chamber in 1762 (Fig. 6).⁵³ Rotari’s painting is still unknown, so the impressions cannot be compared with the original and it is impossible to determine whether Deisch reproduced Rotari’s work of art or whether he created his portrait of Catherine II after Chemesov’s print. The portrait produced by Deisch is strikingly similar to that engraved by Chemesov, which suggests that the original for the mezzotint published in Gdańsk may have been the portrait by the Russian artist. The same advertisement offered the sale of a portrait of Catherine II alongside a portrait of King Frederick II of Prussia.⁵⁴ The original artwork that Deisch used to make the portrait of the king of Prussia was previously unknown, but it seems that the mezzotint may have been an adaptation of paintings by the French artist



6 Yevgraf Chemesov after Pietro Antonio Rotari, *Portrait of Catherine II*, 1762, engraving. Source Дмитрий А. Ровинский, *Материалы для русской иконографии* (С.-Петербург 1884), vol. 3, no. 105

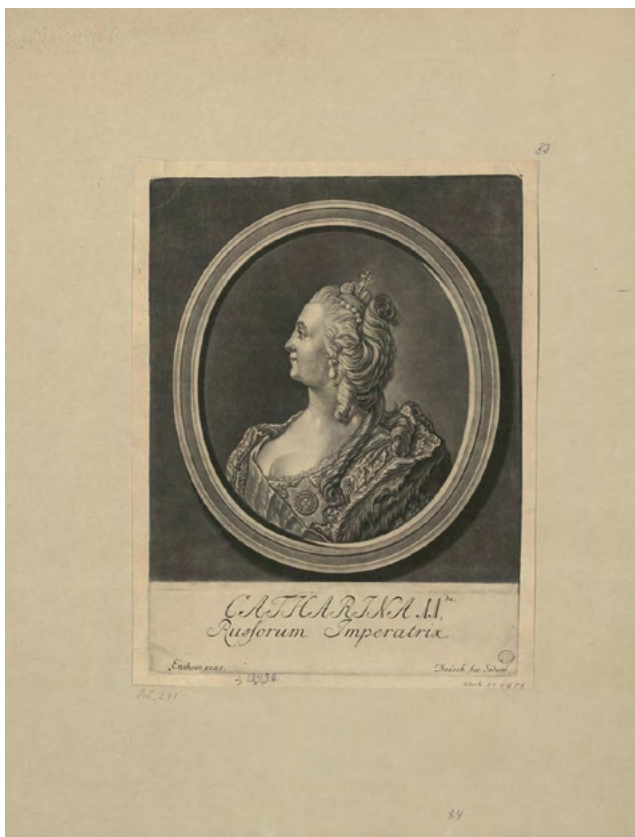
50. Mezzotint, 1763, 272 x 202 mm, Moscow, The Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts (hereafter: GMI), inv. no. ГР-3192 and inv. no. ГР-23861. Inscriptions below the portrait: *Catharina II da Russorum Imperatrix / Rothari pinx. – Deisch fec. Gedani*, Дмитрий А. Ровинский, *Подробный словарь русских гравированных портретов*, vol. 2 (Санкт-Петербург: Типография Императорской Академии наук, 1889), 824, no. 185.

51. *Wöchentliche Danziger Anzeigen und dienliche Nachrichten*, no. 23 (11 June 1763), 113, Widacka, “Grafika portretowa Mateusza Deischa”, 12. Widacka also pointed to an announcement from 5 August 1763 in the second newspaper, see *Thöörnische Wöchentliche Nachrichten und Anzeigen*, no. 31 (5 August 1763), 216, Widacka, “Grafika portretowa Mateusza Deischa”, 12.

52. Widacka, “Grafika portretowa Mateusza Deischa”, 12. The Musée Ingres in Montauban, France, has a painting that may have been painted by Rotari, but this has not been confirmed. It may be a painting based on the work of an Italian painter, oil on canvas, 1758, Montauban, Le Musée Ingres Bourdelle, inv. no. MI.881,12, Musée Ingres Bourdelle, *Catalogue du Musée de Montauban. Peintures* (Montauban: Musée Ingres Bourdelle, 1885), 46.

53. In 1870 Dmitry A. Rovinsky compiled a list of engravings stored at the Russian Academy of Sciences in Saint Petersburg that were created by Jacob von Stählin. This list includes a portrait of Chemesov, Дмитрий А. Ровинский, *Русские граверы и их произведения с 1564 года до основания Академии художеств* (Москва: Издание графа Уварова, 1870), 101, no. 15.

54. Mezzotint, 1763, BN, inv. no. G.151/Sz, Widacka, “Grafika portretowa Mateusza Deischa”, 12.



7 Matthäus Deisch after Louis Marin Bonnet, *Portrait of Catherine II*, c. 1766, St. Petersburg, The State Hermitage Museum. Photo © The State Hermitage Museum



8 Louis Marin Bonnet after Jean Louis de Velly, *Portrait of Catherine II*, 1765, University of Warsaw Library. Photo © University of Warsaw Library

Antoine Pesne (1683–1757), which were also reproduced by Johann Jakob Haid and Johann George Wille (1715–1808).⁵⁵

The second mezzotint that depicts the tsarina is after Vigilius Eriksen painting, as confirmed by the inscription (Fig. 7).⁵⁶ This inscription, however, raises doubts, as Eriksen's portrait of Catherine II differs significantly from Deisch's.⁵⁷ This composition that can be seen on the Gdańsk mezzotint was created at the Academy of Fine Arts in St. Petersburg by the French painter and draughtsman Jean Louis de Velly (1730–1804). De Velly arrived at St. Petersburg in 1754 and began working

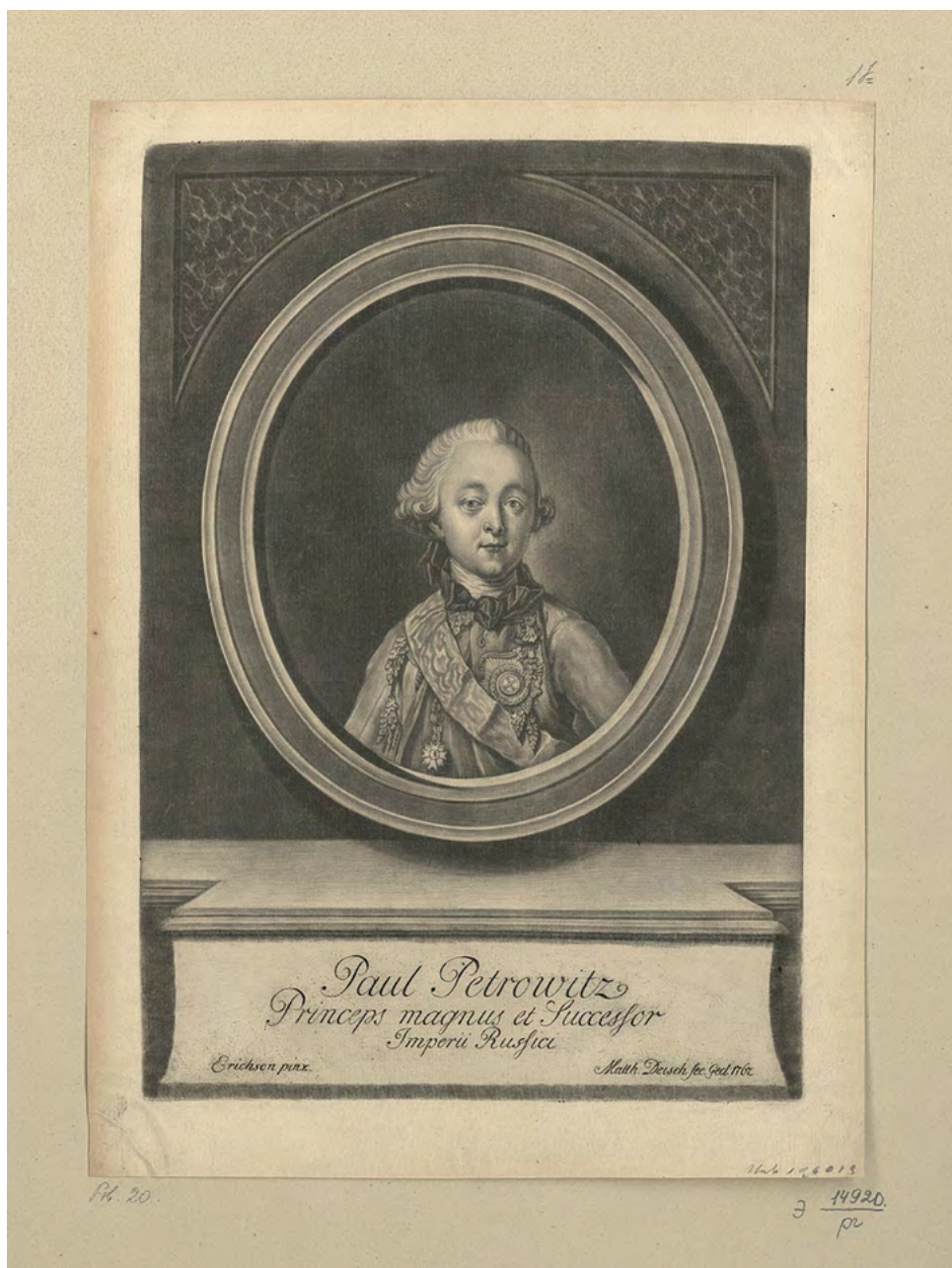
with Ivan I. Shuvalov a year later. Shuvalov contributed to the establishment of the academy. Initially known as the Academy of the Three Most Noble Arts, the Academy was housed at the count's residence, the Shuvalov Palace. Around 1755, de Velly created drawings depicting Catherine II in profile. These drawings were used as the basis for several crayon-manner engravings by Louis Marin Bonnet (1736–1793), who lived in Saint Petersburg from 1765 to 1767. One of them is the *Portrait of Catherine the Great*, created in 1765 to celebrate the Academy's grand opening (Fig. 8).⁵⁸ An inscription beneath the image of the tsarina (Рус:

55. See BM, inv. no. Bb,1.372 and R,7.158.

56. Mezzotint, 1767, Petersburg, The State Hermitage Museum (hereafter: GE), inv. no. ЭРГ-13479. Inscriptions below the portraits: *Catharina Iida Russorum Imperatrix / Rothari pinx. – Erichson pinx. – Deisch fec. Gedani.*, Ровинский, *Подробный словарь русских гравированных портретов*, vol. 2, 835, no. 241.

57. Oil on canvas, c. 1750–1760, GE, inv. no. ГЭ-9908.

58. Ровинский, *Подробный словарь русских гравированных портретов*, vol. 2, 834–835, no. 239; id., *Подробный словарь русских гравированных портретов XVI–XIX вв.*, vol. 1 (Санкт-Петербург: Тип. Имп. Акад. Наук, 1895), 101, no. 1; Алексей В. Морозов, *Каталог моего собрания русских гравированных и литографированных портретов*, vol. 1 (Москва: Т-во скоропечатни А. А. Левенсон, 1912–1913), 463, no. 214.



9 Matthäus Deisch after Louis Marin Bonnet, *Portrait of Grand Duke Pavel Petrovich*, 1767, St. Petersburg, The State Hermitage Museum. Photo © The State Hermitage Museum

И. Дювиллии Придворной – выртызаль Людовикъ Боне.) reveals that it was based on a drawing by de Velly (also known as Develly). The presented analysis allows us to conclude that there is an error in the inscription on Deisch's mezzotint;⁵⁹ the author of the discussed

portrait of Catherine II was not Eriksen, but de Velly, and Deisch's impression reproduces the design of Bonnet's crayon-manner print.

The same may have been true of another original painting, from which Deisch produced a previously

59. A similar error in the inscription can be found on the portrait of Augustus III of Saxony. According to the inscription on Deisch's mezzotint, the portrait was based on a painting by Louis de Silvestre (1675–1760). Considering other prints depicting the same composition by J.J. Haid, Bodenehr II and Zucchi, the painting was not created by de Silvestre as indicated by Deisch, but by Ádám Mányoki. See Łomnicka-Żakowska, *Graficzne portrety Augusta II i Augusta III Wettynów w zbiorach Muzeum Narodowego w Warszawie*, 360, no. 36; ead., *Grafika polska XVIII wieku* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo DiG, 2008), 47, no. 10.



10 Louis Marin Bonnet after Jean Louis de Velly, *Portrait of Pavel Petrovich*, c. 1765, University of Warsaw Library. Photo © University of Warsaw Library

unknown mezzotint portrait of Catherine's son Pavel (Fig. 9).⁶⁰ In this case, the inscription on the mezzotint is accurate, as the portrait in question was painted by Eriksen in 1766.⁶¹ It should be noted that the pattern shown in Deisch's mezzotint differs significantly from

Eriksen's painting. It appears that Deisch's mezzotint published in Gdańsk in 1767 is an adaptation with a deformation of Bonnet's second crayon-manner print (Fig. 10) rather than modelled on Eriksen's painting.⁶² The collection of the State Historical Museum in Moscow also includes a fourth unknown mezzotint by Deisch, *Portrait of Pavel Petrovich* after Wessel, which was published in Gdańsk in 1776.⁶³

Unfortunately, the last print highlighted by Widacka remains unidentified. It is a portrait of George III, King of England. As Widacka noted, it is highly likely that this engraving was intended as a companion piece to the portrait of Queen Charlotte, wife of George III, which was published in 1767 (Fig. 11).⁶⁴ Widacka observed that the portrait of the queen may have been based on a print by Charles Spooner (c. 1720–1767; Fig. 12) after a drawing by James McArdeall (1728–1765).⁶⁵ However, the English collection contains a mezzotint by McArdeall (Fig. 13) to which Deisch's engraving seems to be significantly closer than to Spooner's one. The repetition of the queen's face and profile, as well as the shape of the pendant at the bottom of the necklace – round in Spooner's version, but diamond-shaped in both McArdeall's and Deisch's – suggests that Deisch's mezzotint was modelled on McArdeall's print. Widacka pointed out that the unknown portrait of George III may also have been based on Spooner's impression. It is worth noting that McArdeall too executed the same depiction, which was most likely based on a miniature by Jeremiah Meyer (1735–1789). It is also possible that Deisch used McArdeall's impressions to produce his own prints.⁶⁶

60. Mezzotint, 1767, GMII, inv. no. ГР-21920, ГР-5484 and The State Historical Museum in Moscow (hereafter: GIM), inv. no. И III 10174. Inscriptions below the portrait: *Paul Piotrowitz Princeps Magnus et Successor / Imperii Russici / Erichson pinxit. Matth. Deisch fec. Ged. 1767*, Ровинский, *Подробный словарь русских гравированных портретов*, vol. 3, 1427–1428, no. 19; *ibid.*, vol. 1, 101, no. 3; Морозов, *Каталог моего собрания русских гравированных и литографированных портретов*, vol. 2, 802–803, no. 20.

61. Oil on canvas, 1766, GE, inv. no. ГЭ-9909.

62. Thanks to the newspaper announcement, this print can be dated to 1767, *Wöchentliche Danziger Anzeigen und dienliche Nachrichten*, no. 32 (15 August 1767), 274; Widacka, "Grafika portretowa Mateusza Deischa", 14.

63. Mezzotint, 1776, 233 × 165 mm, GIM, inv. no. И III 10133: *Paul Piotrowitz / Princeps Magnus et Successor / Russici / Imperii / Jac. Wessel ad vivum pinx 1776. Matth Deisch fec. Ged.*, Ровинский, *Подробный словарь русских гравированных портретов*, vol. 3, 1432, no. 40. According to the museum inventory, this impression is stored under the number, but it is not possible to obtain a reproduction.

64. *Wöchentliche Danziger Anzeigen und dienliche Nachrichten*, no. 43 (31 October 1767), 365; no. 44 (7 November 1767), 374; Widacka, "Grafika portretowa Mateusza Deischa", 14.

65. Widacka, "Grafika portretowa Mateusza Deischa", 14, 34, ill. 10.

66. *Portrait of George III* by James McArdeall, mezzotint, 1761, BM, inv. no. 1873,0809.563.



11 Matthäus Deisch after James McArdell, *Portrait of Queen Charlotte*, c. 1767, The National Library in Warsaw. Photo <https://polona2.pl>, CC0 1.0 Universal

Two previously unknown mezzotints by Deisch were discovered in the Roman collection at the Istituto Centrale per la Grafica. The first depicts a woman holding a candle and is inscribed with the German title *Ungenehme Ruhe* (Fig. 14).⁶⁷ The mezzotint was certainly executed in Gdańsk, as evidenced by the inscription. The print's creation date is thought to be around 1760–1770, as evidenced by the Gothic script

also present on other Gdańsk portraits by Deisch, Heinrich Keltz (c. 1761) and Gottlieb Bormann (1767) after Wessel, as well as Gottfried Lengnich after Johann Jakob Fabricius (c. 1770). This mezzotint appears to be a reproduction print. The English engraver James Watson (c. 1740–1790) created an almost identical composition entitled *The Lover Undress'd*.⁶⁸ The inscription on Watson's impression reveals that composition was modelled

67. Mezzotint, c. 1760–1770, Rome, Istituto Centrale per la Grafica (hereafter: ICG), inv. no. S-FC85383: *Ungenehme Ruhe*. / *Matth. Deisch fecit Ged:*

68. Mezzotint, hand-coloured, c. 1760?, BM, inv. no. 2010,7081.3787, Gordon Goodwin, *British Mezzotinters. Thomas Watson, James Watson, Elizabeth Judkins* (London: A.H. Bullen, 1906), 206, no. 195.



12 Charles Spooner after James McArdell, *Portrait of Queen Charlotte*, c. 1760, London, Royal Collection Trust. Photo © Royal Collection Enterprises Limited, 2025



13 James McArdell after Jeremiah Meyer, *Portrait of Queen Charlotte*, c. 1760, London, Royal Collection Trust. Photo © Royal Collection Enterprises Limited, 2025

on a painting by Godfried Schalcken (1643–1706). Nicole Elisabeth Cook, a researcher of Schalcken's life and work, noted: "Later in the eighteenth century, the print reproductions of Schalcken's paintings were often pastiches of his imagery, rather than direct copies".⁶⁹ For example, she pointed to Watson's print, which she believed represented a significant departure from the original,⁷⁰ and to the impression that supposedly inspired Watson to create a work that was almost an exact copy of a print by Nicolaas Verkolje (1673–1746) after Schalcken's work.⁷¹ Undoubtedly, the prints by Watson and Deisch bear no resemblance to Schalcken's painting or its engraved reproduction by Verkolje. In addition, Watson was a pupil of McArdell, whose works Deisch most likely used as a model for the aforementioned

portraits. Once more, it is not possible to dismiss the possibility that also in this instance Deisch adapted Watson's print.

Widacka mentioned the second mezzotint in this collection, writing that a "*Night Scene* in the English manner (most likely a mezzotint) was created in 1767. This piece is believed to be an atypical nocturne in the artist's *oeuvre* and has not survived to this day."⁷² The night scene identified by Widacka was entitled *Der Verliebte Hollander* by Deisch, as can be seen on the impression (Fig. 15), and was certainly published in Gdańsk.⁷³ The mezzotint was intended to reproduce a painting by Adriaen van Ostade (c. 1610–1685). The English engraver Richard Purcell (act. 1746–1766) executed an almost identical composition, entitled *The*

69. Nicole E. Cook, "Godefridus Schalcken (1643–1706): Desire and Intimate Display" (PhD diss., University of Delaware, 2016), ProQuest (10192313), 243–244.

70. Oil on canvas, 1690–1715, Rome, Le Gallerie degli Uffizi, Palazzo Pitti, inv. no. 1890, 1118.

71. Mezzotint, c. 1740, New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, inv. no. 68.753.1.

72. Widacka, "Augsburczyk w Gdańsku", 80.

73. Mezzotint, 1767, ICG, inv. no. S-FC85383: *Der verliebte Hollander / Ostade pinx. – Matth. Deisch fec. Gedani*.



14 Matthäus Deisch after James Watson, *Unpleasant Quiet*, 1760–1770, Rome, Istituto centrale per la grafica, Fondo Corsini, proprietà Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei. Photo © Istituto centrale per la grafica, per gentile concessione del Ministero della cultura



15 Matthäus Deisch after Richard Purcell, *The Amorous Hollander*, 1767, Rome, Istituto centrale per la grafica, Fondo Corsini, proprietà Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei. Photo © Istituto centrale per la grafica, per gentile concessione del Ministero della cultura

Amorous Hollander, which is the English version of Deisch's inscription.⁷⁴ Deisch's mezzotint can be called a mirror-image adaptation of Purcell's composition, as the noticeable differences mainly consist of changes to the background elements rather than the van Ostade pattern. Deisch intended to present this print to Daniel Chodowiecki (1726–1801) in Gdańsk on 15 June 1773, and it appears that it was this very mezzotint.⁷⁵

The Augsburg native, Deisch published around two hundred prints in Gdańsk, including over fifty mezzotints.

Notably, almost half of these were after paintings by Wessel, and as Widacka emphasised, most of Wessel's works are only known thanks to Deisch's prints. The analysis of previously unknown impressions indicates that the mezzotints depicting Catherine II or Paul I, as well as genre scenes including *Unpleasant Quiet* and *The Amorous Hollander*, were executed after other prints. Deisch died on 20 January 1789 in Gdańsk, and his posthumous inventory has been preserved, the contents of which were reported by Edmund Kizik.⁷⁶

74. Mezzotint, c. 1760, YCBA, inv. no. B1970.3.1111. The impression bears the artist's signature: *Phillip Corbutt fecit*; this was one of the pseudonyms used by Purcell. See Timothy Clayton, "A Spurious Charlotte Exposed", *Print Quarterly* 25, no. 3 (2008), 265; Walter G. Strickland, *A Dictionary of Irish Artists*, vol. 2 (New York: Hacker Art Books, 1969), 526–527.

75. Widacka, "Augsburczyk w Gdańsku", 80; ead., "Gdańsk w rycinach Mateusza Deischa", *Rocznik Gdański* 50 (1990), 213–218.

76. Edmund Kizik, "Inwentarz pośmiertny gdańskiego rytownika Matthaëusa Deischa", in: *Portret ponad wszystko. Jacob Wessel i jego wiek. Sztuka gdańska XVIII wieku. Katalog wystawy w Muzeum Narodowym w Gdańsku 15.12.2005 – 26.02.2006*, eds. Anna Mosingiewicz and Dariusz Kaczor (Gdańsk: Muzeum Narodowe w Gdańsku, 2005), 25–31.

Deisch's only student was Kunegunda Czacka (1746–1810), a Polish woman from the Sanguszkowski family. While Widacka wrote a detailed article about Czacka, attention must be drawn to a print of hers that was previously unknown.⁷⁷ It is possible that Czacka resided in Gdańsk between approximately 1767 and 1773 and begun her studies under Deisch.⁷⁸ Widacka pointed to a very interesting issue concerning Czacka's collaboration with Deisch, which obliged her not to reveal the professional secret of mezzotint technique in which she had been trained.⁷⁹ To date, only five mezzotints by Czacka are known to survive. Two of these are portraits after unknown paintings: one depicts Grand Marshal of the Crown Franciszek Bieliński (1742–1809), Czacka's brother-in-law,⁸⁰ the other, Barbara Sanguszkowa, her

mother.⁸¹ The third mezzotint is a portrait of Bishop Kajetan Sołtyk, which is probably after Franciszek Smuglewicz (1745–1807) painting.⁸² The last two prints remained unknown; they are still the undiscovered portrait of her master, Deisch after Jakob Wessel, and the portrait of Count Albert Joseph Hoditz.

As for the last mezzotint mentioned, Widacka stated that "the print depicting Count Albert Joseph Hoditz (1706–1778), based on a drawing or painting by the little-known Suhler, has not survived in Polish collections to this day".⁸³ This mezzotint has been located (Fig. 16).⁸⁴ It depicts a profile portrait of Hoditz, an "eccentric theatre lover and mason", and bears an inscription around the circular frame *ALBERTUS ATTICUS COMES AB HODITZ. – Inv. p. Sahler. Gravé p. Cunegonde Comtesse Czacka née*

77. Hanna Widacka, "Kunegunda Czacka uczennica Deischa", *Biuletyn Historii Sztuki* 49, no. 3–4 (1987), 299–308.

78. Lija Skalska, "Czacka Kunegunda", in: *Słownik artystów polskich i obcych w Polsce działających (zmarłych przed 1966 r.). Malarze, rzeźbiarze, graficy*, vol. 1, ed. Jolanta Maurin-Białostocka (Wrocław–Warszawa–Kraków: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich – Wydawnictwo PAN, 1971), 384. Jolanta Marszałska noted that Kunegunda Czacka's mother, Barbara Sanguszkowa (née Dunin), lived in Gdańsk with her daughters, Krystyna and Kunegunda, between 1769 and 1773. It is possible that Czacka was in the city as early as 1767, Jolanta M. Marszałska, "Księżne Sanguszkowe w środowisku kulturowym i społecznym Gdańska w drugiej połowie XVIII w.", in: *Kobiety w Prusach Królewskich*, ed. Wojciech Zawadzki (Pelplin: Wydawnictwo Bernardinum, 2020), 277, 279, 281.

79. „Initiated into the secrets of the craft by her teacher, she was also bound by him to maintain professional secrecy, which she scrupulously observed. When in July 1773 Daniel Michał Chodowiecki skilfully questioned her about the technique she used, she initially hesitated to answer, then provided incomplete information, and finally confessed that she had promised Deisch not to reveal any workshop secrets”, Widacka, "Kunegunda Czacka uczennica Deischa", 300; Marszałska, "Księżne Sanguszkowe w środowisku kulturowym i społecznym Gdańska w drugiej połowie XVIII w.", 283. See *Daniela Chodowieckiego dziennik z podróży do Gdańska z 1773 r.*, ed. Małgorzata Paszylka (Gdańsk: Oficyna Wydawnicza Finna, Muzeum Narodowe w Gdańsku, 2002), 39.

80. Mezzotint, c. 1770?, MNK, inv. no. R 60, Łomnicka-Żakowska, *Grafika polska XVIII wieku*, 40, no. 1. Reflections on the original painting, see Widacka, "Kunegunda Czacka uczennica Deischa", 306, note 20. Franciszek Bieliński was the husband of Kunegunda Czacka's sister, Krystyna Sanguszkowa (1741–1778), Marszałska, "Księżne Sanguszkowe w środowisku kulturowym i społecznym Gdańska w drugiej połowie XVIII w.", 279; Jakub Rogulski, *Insignia ducalis splendoris. Splendor rodziny książąt Sanguszków i środki jego manifestacji od XV do XVIII wieku* (Kraków: Towarzystwo Naukowe Societas Vistulana, 2022), 80.

81. Mezzotint, c. 1770?, MNK, inv. no. R 1413, Widacka, "Kunegunda Czacka uczennica Deischa", 301.

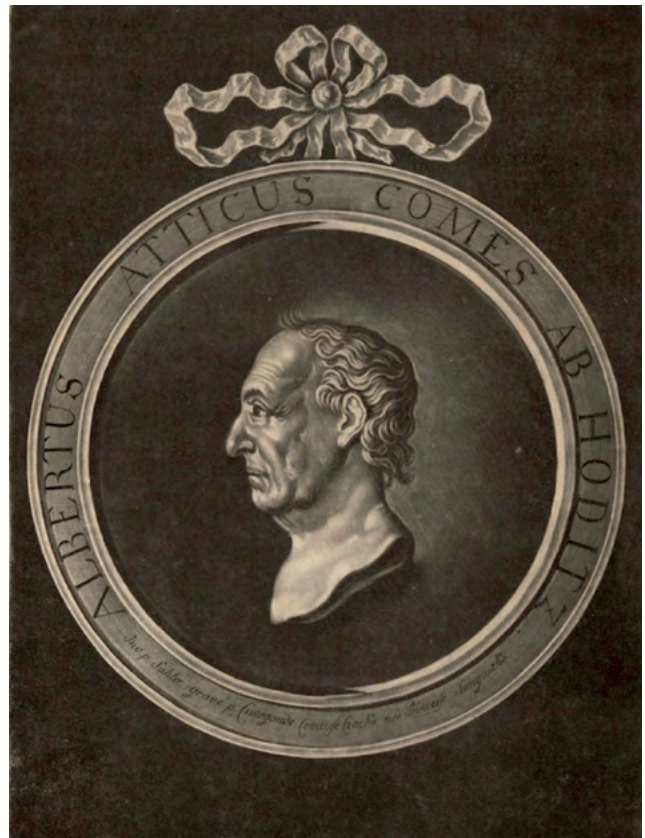
82. Łomnicka-Żakowska, *Grafika polska XVIII wieku*, 47, no. 8. Reflections on the original painting, see Widacka, "Kunegunda Czacka uczennica Deischa", 302.

83. Ibid.

84. Mezzotint, c. 1770, 312 × 216 mm, Moscow, Russian State Library, inv. no. IZO ГИ24H; Edward Rastawiecki, *Słownik rytowników polskich tudzież obcych w Polsce osiadłych lub czasowo w niej pracujących* (Poznań: Wydany staraniem Towarzystwa Przyjaciół Nauk Poznańskiego z funduszu śp. Norberta Bredkrajca, 1886), 25, no. 3.

Princesse Sanguszkó.⁸⁵ Edward Rastawiecki mentioned this print, incorrectly describing the technique used as aquatint.⁸⁶ He also provided an inscription which he claimed indicated the name “Suhler”. Widacka, probably following Rastawiecki, observed that “Suhler himself, the author of the original painting or drawing, is not mentioned in any art history dictionary”.⁸⁷ After the print was examined, it was concluded that the inscription states *Inv p. Sahler*, not “Suhler”.⁸⁸ It may refer to Johann Otto Christian Sahler (c. 1720–1811), a German artist associated with the Berlin Academy of Fine Arts.⁸⁹ Unfortunately, no drawings or sketches by Sahler depicting Hoditz have been found. The inscription, however, suggests that Sahler may have merely invented this composition.⁹⁰

Inspiration from her master’s prints is clearly shown in Czacka’s impressions. This is evident in both the portrait of Bishop Sołtyk and the composition of the portrait of her mother, Barbara Sanguszkowa. The latter’s portrait, framed in an oval, rests on a pedestal similar to those produced by Deisch. The portrait of Hoditz is one of the finest mezzotints produced in the Commonwealth of Poland and Lithuania during the 18th century, and the located print appears to be one of the earliest, characterised as it is by deep black colour. It is worth noting that Czacka’s mezzotints are extremely rare, as she only worked as an amateur engraver. Furthermore, apart from Schröder, she was the only person from Poland to have produced mezzotints. Importantly, Czacka belongs to a small group of women involved in engraving, particularly in the mezzotint technique.⁹¹



16 Kunegunda Czacka, *Portrait of Albert Joseph Hoditz*, c. 1770, Moscow, The Russian State Library. Photo <https://kp.rusneb.ru>, CC0 1.0 Universal

WARSAW

In the context of 18th-century Commonwealth, Deisch’s death in 1789 coincided with Josef Anton Kappeller’s (1761–1806) arrival in the country. Kappeller was an Austrian painter and engraver who arrived in Warsaw around 1788, when he was employed as a private tutor by Antoni Barnaba and Tekla Jabłonowski and

85. Marszalska, “Księżne Sanguszkowe w środowisku kulturowym i społecznym Gdańska w drugiej połowie XVIII w.”, 284–285.

86. Rastawiecki, *Słownik rytowników polskich tudzież obcych w Polsce osiadłych lub czasowo w niej pracujących*, 25, no. 3.

87. Widacka, “Kunegunda Czacka uczennica Deischa”, 302.

88. Czacka’s mezzotint portrait of Albert Hoditz once formed part of the collection of Stanislaus Augustus Poniatowski, as reported by Nikolai I. Utkin (1780–1868). The copy of the typescript, based on his manuscript, correctly identifies the inventor of the composition as “Sahler”, *Catalogue raisonné des Estampes composant la Collection du Cabinet d’Alexandre de Varsovie, rédigé par Nicolas Outkin, St. Petersburg 1843–1853*, The Print Room of the University of Warsaw Library (hereafter: Gab. Ryc. BUW), inv. no. ArchBUW VIII/858., T. 1–51, vol. 4, 18, no. 45.

89. Nagler, *Neues Allgemeines Künstler-Lexicon*, vol. 14, 195–196.

90. Ad Stijnman, *Terms in Print Addresses: Abbreviations and Phrases on Printed Images 1500–1900*. Version of 1 January 2026, 12, 55, accessed May 5, 2026, https://9ea6427a-9293-483f-80d4-9523d4ed999b.filesusr.com/ugd/6b3a67_759759d01d7e4dedb5aa2c19581e4d47.pdf.

91. See Andaleeb B. Banta, “Female Printmakers, Printsellers and Print Publishers in the Eighteenth Century”, *Print Quarterly* 42, no. 4 (2025), 445–447.

remained in the capital until 1794.⁹² He had trained at the Vienna Academy under Heinrich Friedrich Füger (1751–1818) and Hubert Maurer (1738–1818). Of his two masters, only Füger produced several mezzotints, and it was probably he who introduced Kappeller to the technique.⁹³

Only six prints executed by Kappeller in Poland are known (four mezzotints and two engravings) and Widacka described them in detail.⁹⁴ Of Kappeller's mezzotints, one was an unknown portrait of Stanislaus Augustus Poniatowski;⁹⁵ the other three are held in collections in Cracow and Warsaw. The *Portrait of an Elderly Man* of 1792 is probably a depiction of Rafał Rogoziński, who was related to the Warsaw painter Antoni Wincenty (1801–1835).⁹⁶ It seems that Kappeller's mezzotint portrait of Rogoziński was after a miniature by Karol Bechon (1732–1812) commissioned by Stanislaus Augustus Poniatowski c. 1790.⁹⁷

The two remaining mezzotints are portraits after paintings by Josef Grassi (1757–1838), apparently

commissioned from Kappeller by the painter himself.⁹⁸ The *Portrait of Adam Kazimierz Czartoryski* (Fig. 17) dates from 1792.⁹⁹ Grassi's painting is believed to have been in the Tarnowski collection in Dzików and is now considered lost.¹⁰⁰ Notably, the collection of the Smolensk State Museum-Reserve includes an oil painting depicting Adam Kazimierz Czartoryski that closely resembles this mezzotint (Fig. 18).¹⁰¹ On the reverse of the painting there is a handwritten inscription in Polish which reads: *Ks. Adam Czartoryski ur. 1 Grudnia 1734*, and the Potocki coat of arms.¹⁰² The 2025 restoration of the painting revealed the artist's signature, *J. Grassy*, located in the lower section of the composition, on the cannon wheel upon which the sitter rests his hand.¹⁰³ The painting, whose attribution to Grassi has been confirmed by the museum, may represent the original oil portrait of Adam Kazimierz Czartoryski, formerly believed to be lost; further research would be required to substantiate this identification, however. Moreover, the mezzotint appears to exist in two states. The

92. Andrzej Ryszkiewicz, "Kappeller Josef Anton", in: *Słownik artystów polskich i obcych w Polsce działających (zmarłych przed 1966 r.). Malarze, rzeźbiarze, graficy*, vol. 3, eds. Jolanta Maurin-Białostocka and Janusz Derwojed (Wrocław–Warszawa–Kraków: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich – Wydawnictwo PAN, 1979), 358.

93. Leisching, *Schabkunst*, 65.

94. Hanna Widacka, "Ryciny polskie Josefa Antona Kappellera", *Roczniki Humanistyczne* 35, no. 4 (1987), 191–201.

95. Ibid., 198; Hanna Widacka, "Ikonografia króla Stanisława Augusta Poniatowskiego w grafice XVIII wieku", *Rocznik Historii Sztuki* 15 (1985), 218.

96. Mezzotint, Cracow, Jagiellonian Library, inv. no. 1719: *Dedié à Son Altesse Madame la Princesse Jablonowska Cas = de Vrac = par Son très – humble Serviteur Kappeller 1792*. An impression features a handwritten signature: *w Warszawie*, Widacka, "Ryciny polskie Josefa Antona Kappellera", 195.

97. Watercolour, gouache on ivory, MNW, inv. no. Min.1002, Janina Obidzińska-Waniewska, "Antoni Wincenty Rogoziński malarz warszawski", *Rocznik Muzeum Narodowego w Warszawie* 15 (1971), 182–183. On the similarities between miniature and mezzotint, see Widacka, "Ryciny polskie Josefa Antona Kappellera", 195.

98. Widacka, "Ryciny polskie Josefa Antona Kappellera", 193, 198.

99. Mezzotint, 1792, BN, inv. no. G.9737: *Grassi pinxt – Kappeller Sculpt / Varsovie. / Dedié à Sa Majesté le Roi / & aux Etats de la Republique de Pologne / de leur très humble Serviteur Kappeller*, *Katalog portretów osobistości polskich i obcych w Polsce działających*, vol. 1, 211, no. 848. The mezzotint was published on 2 May 1792, as confirmed by an announcement in *Gazeta Narodowa i Obca*, no. 35 (2 May 1792), supplement. See Widacka, "Ryciny polskie Josefa Antona Kappellera", 193.

100. Halina Kamińska-Krassowska, "Wincenty de Lesseur: życie i działalność", *Rocznik Muzeum Narodowego w Warszawie* 13 (1969), 188, no. 21.

101. Oil on panel, c. 1790, 28,8 × 24,2 cm, Smolensk, Smolensk State Museum-Reserve, inv. no. COM 1062 Ж 40.

102. Елена И. Власова, "Живопись кабинетного формата из имения Высокое-Литовское. Попытка определения источника поступления экспонатов в музей", *Музейный вестник* 11 (2020), 25–26.

103. I would like to thank the State Museum in Smolensk for the information regarding the restoration of the painting.



17 Josef Anton Kappeller after Josef Grassi, *Portrait of Adam Kazimierz Czartoryski*, 1792, The National Library in Warsaw. Photo <https://polona2.pl>, CC0 1.0 Universal

Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts holds a cut strip of inscription, probably belonging to the second state of the *Portrait of Adam Kazimierz Czartoryski*. At the centre of the strip is the coat of arms of the Czartoryski family, depicting a horseman and inscribed *Le Prince Adam Czartoryski*. The upper part of the inscription may help to confirm the provenance of this section

of the print, as indicated by the signature: *Jos. Grassy pinxt. – Kappeller sculpt Varsovie.*¹⁰⁴

The second print, *Portrait of Tadeusz Kościuszko*, dating from 1794, is a mezzotint after a painting commissioned from Grassi by Adam Kazimierz Czartoryski, mentioned above.¹⁰⁵ This work is known solely through Kappeller's mezzotint, as the painting remains

104. See GMII, inv. no. Э-9698.

105. Mezzotint, 1794, ICG, inv. no. S-FC85397 and MNW, inv. nos. Gr. Pol. 4036, Gr. Pol. 12461 (stained print): *Jos. Grassy pinxt. – Jos. Kappeller Sculpt. Varsoviae / Le General Kosciuszko.*, *Katalog portretów osobistości polskich i obcych w Polsce działających*, vol. 2, 326, no. 2543; Widacka, "Ryciny polskie Josefa Antona Kappellera", 198; ead., *Portrety Tadeusza Kościuszki w grafice XVIII wieku* (Warszawa: Biblioteka Narodowa, 1994), 5, tabl. 1; Łomnicka-Żakowska, *Grafika polska XVIII wieku*, 102, no. 3.



18 Josef Grassi, *Portrait of Adam Kazimierz Czartoryski*, c. 1790–1792, Smolensk, Smolensk State Museum-Reserve. Photo © Смоленский государственный музей-заповедник

unidentified; it was formerly believed to have belonged to the collection held in Sieniawa.¹⁰⁶ The fact that the final two bear the signatures *Kappeller Sculpt. Varsovie* and *Jos. Kappeller Sculpt. Varsoviae*, confirming that they were produced in Warsaw, is particularly intriguing. These very rare and unique prints by Kappeller executed in the Commonwealth of Poland and Lithuania are characterised primarily by their stylistic

similarity to the mezzotints by Pichler, a pupil of the prominent engraver Johann Jakobé (1733–1797). The composition of the portraits, based on an oval field, together with the style of execution and placement of the inscription at the bottom of Kappeller's engravings, bears a striking resemblance to two portrait mezzotints of Charles-Joseph de Ligne produced by Pichler in Vienna around 1789.¹⁰⁷

Within Polish literature on the subject, two prints attributed to Karol Michał Gröll (1770–1857) are similarly classified as mezzotints.¹⁰⁸ Gröll, a Polish artist of German descent and a pupil of Chodowiecki, was active in Warsaw. He returned to the capital around 1790 and began work in his father's printing house. The engraver's oeuvre primarily comprises prints executed in techniques such as etching, aquatint and stipple. According to Widacka, Gröll's lesser-known works are four unique undated portraits of unknown sitters, among which she mentioned two prints – which she termed “Rembrandt-esque engravings” – that are central to the present discussion.¹⁰⁹

The first impression attributed to Gröll is a relatively small print (31 × 33 mm) known as *The Head of the Laughing Man* or *The Laughing Fat Man*.¹¹⁰ The second is *A Man Wearing a Hat with a Turned-up Brim* (70 × 65 mm) after a painting by Kappeller.¹¹¹ According to Widacka, the first engraving was executed entirely in the mezzotint technique, whereas the second employed a combination of stipple and mezzotint.¹¹² Upon examination, it should be noted that these prints were produced from a metal plate that shows no evidence of the characteristic incisions made with a rocker or roulette, as would be expected in a mezzotint. It can therefore be stated with confidence that both *The Head*

106. Widacka, “Ryciny polskie Josefa Antona Kappellera”, 195–198. Although the clothing of the subject differs significantly, the manner in which Tadeusz Kościuszko's face is depicted is very similar to another painting by Grassi, which is in the collection of the National Museum in Kielce, inv. no. MNKi/M/334.

107. Mezzotint, c. 1789, Gab. Ryc. BUW, inv. no. Inw.zb.d. 16512, and BM, inv. no. 1902,1011.7673, *Der Bote für Tirol*, no. 8 (19 Oktober 1823), 324, no. 53.

108. Łomnicka-Żakowska, *Grafika polska XVIII wieku*, 90, no. 11, 313, ill. XXV.11; Janina Jaworska, “Gröll (Groell, Grell) Karol Michał”, in: *Słownik artystów polskich i obcych w Polsce działających (zmarłych przed 1966 r.)*, vol. 2, 478; Maria Suchodolska, “Gröll (Groell, Grell) Karol Michał (1770–1857)”, in: *Polski słownik biograficzny*, vol. 9, ed. Kazimierz Lepszy (Wrocław–Warszawa–Kraków: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich – Wydawnictwo PAN, 1960–1961), 34; Hanna Widacka, “O sztuce rytowniczej Karola Michała Gröll’a”, *Rocznik Warszawski* 25 (1995), 87, ill. 9; 88, ill. 10; 90.

109. Widacka, “O sztuce rytowniczej Karola Michała Gröll’a”, 90.

110. Mezzotint, c. 1800?, MNW, inv. no. Gr. Pol. 5064.

111. Mezzotint, c. 1800?, MNW, inv. no. Gr. Pol. 5065.

112. Widacka, “O sztuce rytowniczej Karola Michała Gröll’a”, 90.

of the *Laughing Man* and *A Man Wearing a Hat with a Turned-up Brim* are not mezzotints. These impressions may have been experimental, as no other works in Gröll's oeuvre employ this technique, and they warrant further study.¹¹³

CONCLUSION

Although the mezzotint technique was not as important in the Commonwealth of Poland and Lithuania as it was in other countries, the presence of mezzotint engravers in this region provides valuable insight into the development of the technique in Central and Eastern Europe. In the context of the Commonwealth, it is difficult to speak of distinct phases in the development of the technique. Mezzotint production appears to have been the result of various circumstances, including amateur

experimentation (Schröder, Czacka) and migratory phenomena related to permanent (Deisch in Gdańsk) or temporary (Kappeller in Warsaw) settlement.

As with most foreign centres, the common mezzotint subjects were portraits of rulers, patricians, clergymen and artists. Genre scenes were also produced in the the Commonwealth, with impressions being used for commemorative prints. Finally, it is worth noting that, in his advertisement of 1749, Deisch indicated that he made "theses for monasteries". Having come from Augsburg, he must have been well acquainted with this type of work and probably assumed that there might also be a demand for such prints in Gdańsk. Unfortunately, his graphic theses remain unknown. Nevertheless, given the advertisement, it cannot be ruled out that they were executed.

113. I would like to thank Antony Griffiths for his consultation regarding these impressions. He noted that the prints fall outside the conventional categories of printmaking techniques. The presence of a platemark confirms that they are indeed impressions taken from a metal plate, while a grain or emulsion appears to have been applied over the plate. According to Griffiths, these interventions may be reminiscent of experimental practices similar to aquatint, though mezzotint was certainly not employed.

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