

# Handmade paper: A mixture of handcraft, art and fun

Grażyna Jackowska

PSOUU, Poland

grazynajackowska (at) wp dot pl

## Abstract

The idea of a paper making workshop was devised to counterbalance the serious technical discussions. It turned out that many were interested: both adults and “conference children” wanted to participate in this adventure (fig. 1).



**Figure 1:** Participants waited patiently in a queue; children, youngsters and grown-ups were interested in touching the *in statu nascendi* paper.

First: thanks to Jacek Kmiecik for the photographs!

## 1 How we did it

The aim was to walk through almost all stages of the technological process—from making the pulp,



**Figure 2:** Helping hands: the pulp was scooped with a wire screen or sieve.

scoping it with with a sieve, removing excess water with a press (figs. 2 and 3), drying the paper sheets, up to putting the product to use.

The work was accompanied by stories about the history of paper—its way from China through the Arabic empire to Europe and about the improvements in fabrication technology.

## 2 How we used it

One person wrote a letter (fig. 4), another a solemn memorial—a sheet of such paper was used to prepare a diploma for Sam Guravage as an award for the best presentation (fig. 5).

## 3 Why we did it

Also important was coming to grips with the creative process, i.e., composing a decorated paper sheet with such additions as dyes, grass leaves, flowers and even ... banknotes (fig. 6). On one of the sheets a four-leaf clover grows—will it bring luck to somebody?

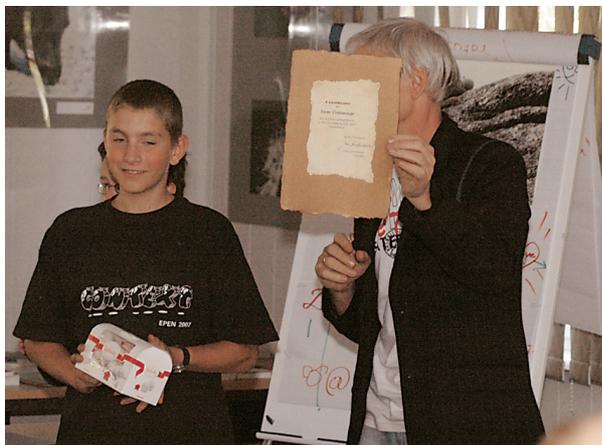
The unaided composing of the paper-picture seems to have been the greatest attraction of the workshop—all the time new students were turning up—“I will yet do this so... or perhaps so...”



**Figure 3:** Strong hands: excess water was removed using a hand press.



**Figure 4:** Nice paper needs thorough concentration to write a nice letter...



**Figure 5:** Sam Guravage receives his handmade diploma from Jerzy Ludwichowski.

The results were presented at a post-workshop exhibition (fig. 7)—it can be seen that amazingly varied ideas emerged despite the simple means, and the number of works created in such a short time bespeaks that we are much in need of such “amusements”—of such creativity written even with the



**Figure 6:** “Here are the colors of nature so that you see what I see” reads the text in the Arabic script by Hossam A.H. Fahmy. Hossam explained further that: “The blue/green background represents the lake and the trees. The flowers and the leaves are for the blooming spring around us and for a hope for a fruitful T<sub>E</sub>X/METAFONT future”—perfect touch!



**Figure 7:** The variety of the ideas was impressive, indeed...

smallest “c”, even if our everyday occupation is a so-called serious one. Or, perhaps, besides for a playful moment, something will remain in one of the type-setting souls? A broader, different view of the mysterious charm of paper as a medium not only for history, tradition, information, but also beauty?