



## Our masters

### *Witold Lipiński – architect, author of the famous “dishes” on the Śnieżka mountain*

Witold Lipiński was born on the 14<sup>th</sup> of November 1923 in Kosaki, near Łomża.

In 1939 he attended a middle school in Łomża. His education was disrupted as a result of the outbreak of the Second World War. In autumn he joined the ranks of Fighting Poland (Polska Walcząca) and afterwards, due to organisational changes in the underground, he became a soldier of the Home Army (Armia Krajowa) (1939–1946).

He served under the command of Jan Taborowski – Bruzda, under the pseudonym of Szczedroń. He was a liaison officer of the Inspector of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Inspectorate of the Home Army.

He was distinguished in numerous operations organised by Bruzda. Among the most difficult ones we can name “Tempest” – an unsuccessful rescue of Lieutenant Józef Ramontowski, who had been arrested by the Gestapo and the rescue of Franciszka Ramontowska from a hospital in Białystok, she was wounded by the NKVD during an attempted escape. For his service in the underground he was decorated with the Cross of Merit with Swords and the Cross of Valour. He was promoted to the rank of Officer Cadet.

After the war he completed a secondary school of general education in Łomża.

In 1946 he came to Wrocław with a group of friends to continue his education at the university at Bruzda’s prompting, partly to avoid persecutions connected with his service in the Home Army.

In 1950 he graduated from the Faculty of Architecture, Wrocław University of Technology. Before graduation, as a fourth-year student he started working as an academic teacher, and in 1951 he was employed as an assistant lecturer.

In 1956 he became a lecturer following the defence of his doctoral dissertation entitled: *Application of*

*Flame Spraying of Ceramic Glazes for Colour Coatings in Architecture* and in 1979 a reader, having obtained the post-doctoral degree. He wrote a monograph on



Fig. 1. Witold Lipiński

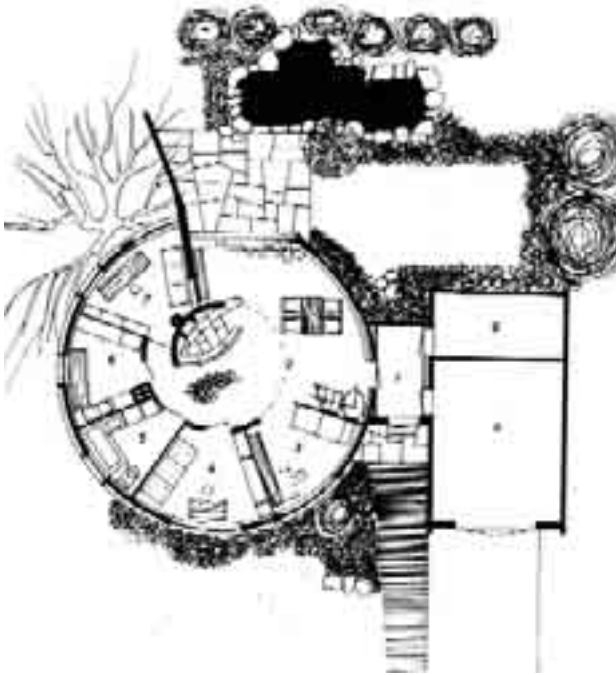


Fig. 2. Own house – plan

vaulted covering forms. In 1990 he was appointed professor and was awarded the title of Professor of Science.

Parallel with his academic work, he worked professionally as a designer. During his studies he worked in “Arkady” the Student Production Association, then in the Wrocław Town-project, in the Architectural Documentation Unit of the Wrocław University of Technology and in the Auxiliary Enterprise Unit, Institute of Architecture and Town Planning.

During the years 1973–1983, he was employed part-time at the State School of Fine Arts in Wrocław.

Witold Lipiński supervised 13 successful registrations and conferment procedures for a doctoral degree, a few of which were distinguished with a Vice-Chancellor’s Award.

In the mid-1970s, he formed a school of bioclimatic architecture. Students of the school produced designs of houses with innovative perspective on housing environment competing with the most outstanding world achievements in those years.



Fig. 3. Own house

During his active work at the university, he performed many important functions, among others he was the Director of the Institute of Architecture and Town Planning and the Head of the Housing Department. At the same time he was the Chairman of the Association of Polish Architects (SARP), a member of the city and voivodship architectural commissions, a SARP expert, a member of the Wrocław Branch of the Polish Academy of Sciences. From the very beginning up to retirement in 1993 he also was the Chairman of NSSZ “Solidarność” at the Wrocław Faculty of Architecture. For work he had performed, Lipiński obtained numerous distinctions and awards. The Golden Cross of Merit, the Knight’s Cross of the Order of Polonia Restituta, the Golden Badge of the Wrocław University of Technology and the Medal of the Commission of National Education.

Professor Lipiński conducted numerous research and development works. They included designs, experiments, structural works as well as numerous research studies. He was a co-author of a patent dated 1974 called: “Method of erecting multi-storey buildings”.

Many designs produced by him were carried out. The most important ones include an urban planning and architectural design of Kościuszki Square in Wrocław (1956), remodelling and conversion of the Orlinek Hotel (1958), a holiday centre of the Wrocław University of Technology in Ustka (1964), a holiday centre in



Fig. 4. A scale model of the meteorological observatory on Śnieżka



Fig. 5. The observatory on Śnieżka – present condition

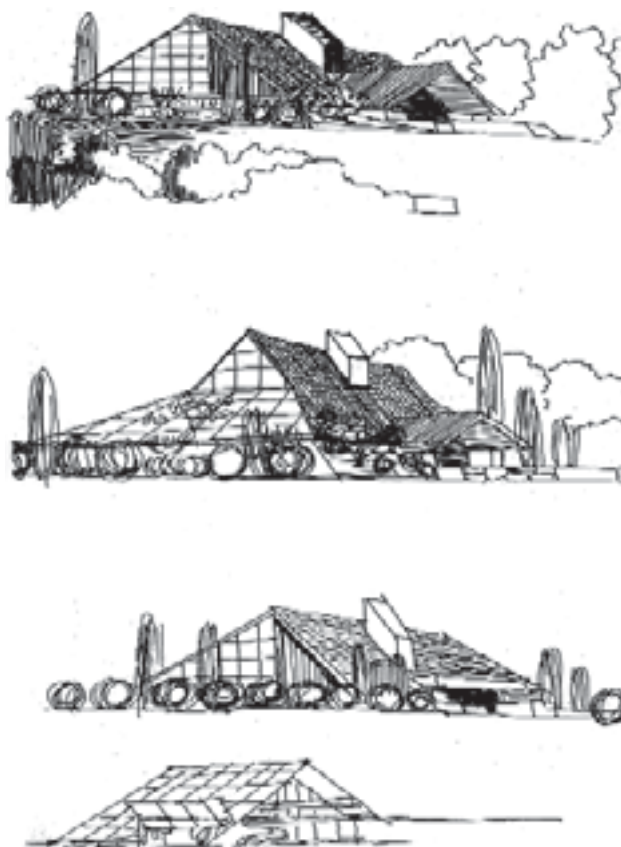


Fig. 6. Houses with a green room – sketches

Rokitki (1968), conversion and reconstruction of architectural monuments in Wrocław in Kazimierza Wielkiego Street (1969).

The most famous works created by Professor Lipiński, which earned him a place in the history of Polish Architecture, are: a hostel and observatory of the State Hydrological and Meteorological Institute in the Karkonosze, on Śnieżka (1959–1964) as well as his own house in Wrocław (1963). For the design and a scale model of the observatory he was distinguished with the 1<sup>st</sup> award at the World Exhibition of Architecture in Mexico.

Both facilities have been widely discussed in numerous articles and publications. Two very interesting opinions given by persons who knew Professor Lipiński well are worth mentioning. Professor Witold Molicki, a well-known architect and a friend of Lipiński commented on

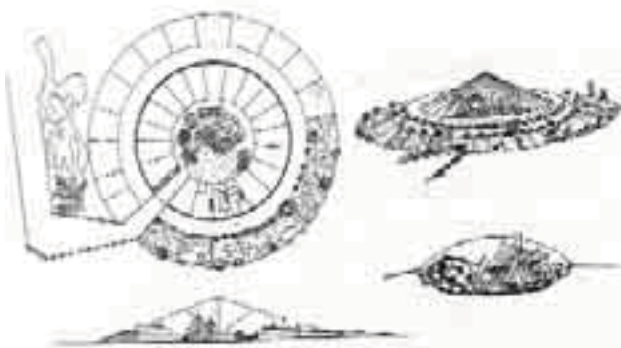


Fig. 8. Air-supported structures – sketches

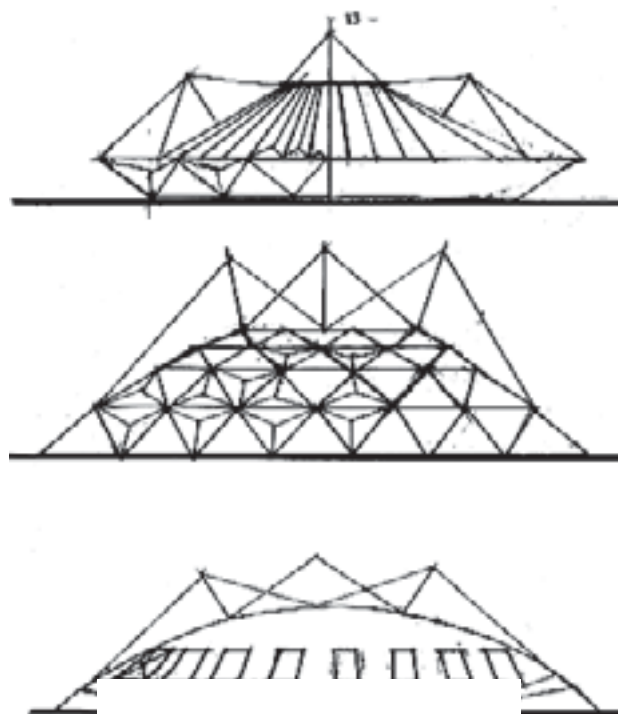


Fig. 7. Tent structures – sketches

the observatory in the following way: “It was a hit that moved the world. Nowhere else anything like that had been created” and next, about the genesis of the discs “they are connected with the arising myth of discs in which aliens will visit our globe. They remind us about it. There is some kind of sign in them. 60 years after the return of the Karkonosze within the borders of Poland this is our symbol at the top of Śnieżka. Let it last.

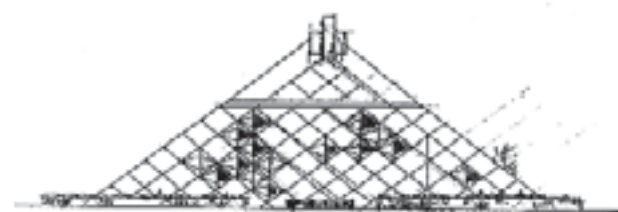


Fig. 9. Pyramidal structures – sketches



Fig. 10. Witold Lipiński

In the context of the above and the next opinion, it is worth mentioning that Witold Lipiński was a glider pilot. He flew in the Karkonosze many times where he was awarded aviation decorations. He underwent training in a gliding school in Jeżów Sudecki. There was a crash and great emotions connected with it. Two gliders crashed and the pilots had to rescue themselves jumping with parachutes. The whole situation was described in a book entitled *Między startem a lądowaniem* (*Between Take-off and Landing*) by the other crash participant Mieczysław Kozdra. He also presented his perspective on the observatory on Śnieżka. “A disc-shaped structure unambiguously associates with aviation, cosmos and outer space. If Witek had not experienced the air adventure, he probably would not have

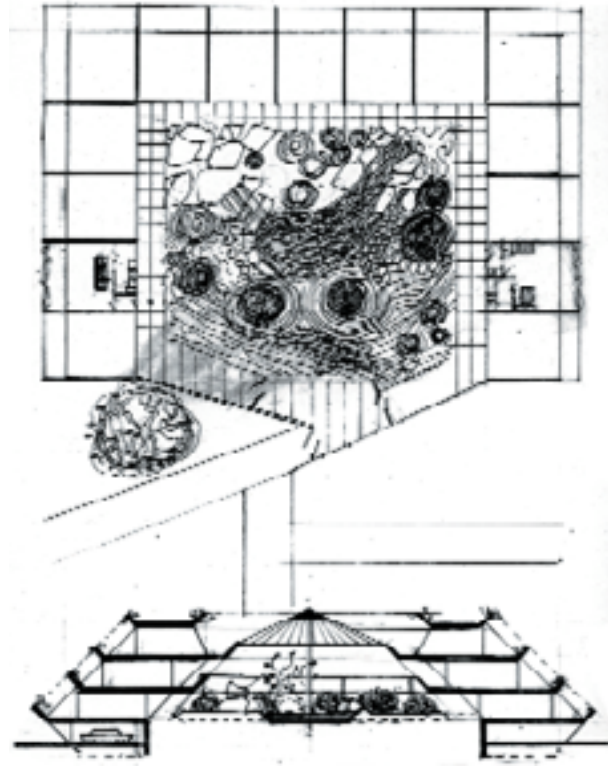


Fig. 11. Systems with a patio – sketches

created such a splendid facility. For me this structure is a specific monument to an aviator looking for great experiences in the infinity”.

Miłosz Lipiński  
Translated by “Lector”