

LODZ CREATES INNOVATION

NEWS MAGAZINE OF THE CITY OF LODZ

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A BOOST FOR INVENTORS

WINTER SLEEP NOT FOR THE BENEFICIARIES

OPTIMISED PRODUCTION

FROM PRESIDENT TO PATRON

AGENCIES WITH POTENTIAL



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ANNA KRAWCZYK,
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Today my dreams come true – such were the words on the banner of Kylie Minogue's fan, who was invited by the singer on stage. It all happened in Lodz Atlas Arena during the star's concert.

There is another EU perspective before us. In response, we have decided to check how many entrepreneurs fulfill their dreams. Maciej Kokotek, Head of the Entrepreneur Service Centre, is already encouraging beneficiaries to be active and get acquainted with the objectives of the regional programme. About 370 million euros is to be spent – which is much more than just in the passing EU perspective. Upcoming contests will be announced in the first half of 2015.

In the first place, the entrepreneurs operating in regional areas of specialisation of the Lodz region can count on the support. They include: pharmacy, cosmetics, medicine, advanced building materials, agroindustry, IT technology, communication, textiles, design and fashion. The last three industries were the subject of our interest in this issue of 'Lodz Creates Innovation'. We make sure whether erstwhile dream of Lodz as a 'promised land' has a chance to come true again. According to Prof. Józef Masajtis, Dean of the Faculty of Material Technologies and Textile Design at the Lodz University of Technology – it is certainly possible. Europe lacks at least 500 textile engineers. Following these needs, the Lodz University of Technology has launched a design specialisation. This field of study includes: textile architecture, clothing architecture, and – increasingly developed and appreciated in the world – visual communication.

There is also commercialisation of research, resulting in an innovative project involving natural colouring with extracts prepared from herbs. It is implemented by the Lodz University of Technology, Institute of Natural Fibres and Medicinal Plants in Poznan and Lodz Marko-Kolor company. The latter, facing the increasing competition and the influx of cheap materials from Asian countries, is forced to constantly look for niche markets. Let us return to Lodz history for a moment. At the turn of the twentieth century, dozens of chimneys of textile factories towered in the city. Today, some of them have been transformed into cultural centers. One of them is Widzewska Manufaktura. Wi-Ma is a zone of alternative actions in the former factory space. At Al. Piłsudskiego 135, artists and entrepreneurs have their establishments. Among them are Aleksandra Kmiecik, fashion designer and painter, and Pan Tu Nie Stał cult brand.

Photo: Paweł Lawreszuk

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REGIONAL PROGRAMME
NATIONAL COHESION STRATEGY



EUROPEAN UNION
EUROPEAN REGIONAL
DEVELOPMENT FUND



A project co-financed by the European Union from the European Regional Development Fund
European Funds for development of the Lodzkie Region



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What is changing in the new financial perspective of the European Union? Who can count on the support and why not to sleep through the winter? Anna Krawczyk talks with Maciej Kokotek, Director of the Entrepreneur Service Centre in Lodz.

Winter sleep not for the beneficiaries

There is a new perspective of budgeting of the European Union funds before us. What are the biggest challenges for you?

Everything associated with this perspective poses a big challenge. There will be more funds controlled by the Entrepreneur Service Centre than before. Approximately 370 million euros have been allocated for the thematic objectives that are planned to be implemented by us. This is a huge piece of cake, i.e. the whole EU support for 2014–2020, and a great responsibility. There are many challenges and we are not able to fully understand them. It is important to draw lessons from the experience from previous perspective.

What is now, also in the context of these experiments, the most important task of the Entrepreneur Service Centre? What have you been working on now?

The main goal of our activity is to create a proposal for future applicants. It should be profiled in such a way as to simultaneously form the expectations and requirements of the European Commission and – more importantly – respond to identified needs in the region. The works on preparing the regional programme have lasted for several

months. The latest version of the programme, which is still subject to negotiations with the European Commission, is available on the Internet (www.rpo.lodzkie.pl). I think we are just approaching the expected objective, i.e. to construct such a programme where funds I mentioned could be consumed properly and most efficiently.

What will change in the financial perspective for 2014–2020 from the perspective of entrepreneurs?

We strive to meet the expectations of the entrepreneurs who are struggling with the omnipresent bureaucracy and in the places where ‘ropes can be loosened’. We would like the application requirements to be least formalised. However, the entrepreneurs need to be aware that, in the case of the EU funds, i.e. public support, the application will never be one-page ‘application for a grant’. It will involve more complicated process and more extensive documentation. Still, we try to make the applications for the support we offer as easy as possible.

What facilitation measures will be introduced?

We are going to give more extensive description of the spheres in which it was difficult for the entrepreneurs to

assemble their knowledge. It should be searched for in all kinds of programming documents, regulations and procedures. I think that gathering this in one place, whether it is in the regulations of the competition, in the guidelines or principles on a horizontal and regional level, will be a good solution.

What is changing in the activities of the Centre?

As part of the activities of the Centre and in the new financial perspective, there are plans for implementation of not one but two priority axes, i.e. the directional support for enterprises will be broken into two priorities. These priorities will be compatible with two thematic objectives.

Could you tell what priorities are planned?

The first priority will be linked to the research, development and commercialization of knowledge. To a large extent, these will be funds for R&D infrastructure, i.e. support for research institutions, higher education institutions as well as promotion of business investments in research and innovation, cooperation between science and business, investment in pro-innovative investments, technology transfer as well as increase of innovative culture of the enterprises. These elements will be expected to be in the application forms submitted to us. A very strong emphasis will be placed on the functioning of industries diagnosed in regional specialisations, resulting from the LORIS 2030 Regional Innovation Strategy. These include: pharmaceuticals, cosmetics, medicine, advanced building materials, IT and communication technology, textiles, design, fashion and agro-industry food.

Will the purchase of equipment and modernisation of plants that had previously attracted a lot of interest be assisted?

The second thematic objective is an innovative and competitive economy. It is aimed at facilitating the entrepreneurs' access to the market knowledge and innovation. It will be a close part of the support that we have offered to date and associated with direct investments in companies. It is the most anticipated direction. The entrepreneurs in the previous programming period obtained assistance for the purchase of equipment, modernisation of enterprises, reconstruction of production facilities as well as introduction of product, process and organisational innovation. Such an element will also be present in the new programme.

There will be more funds controlled by the Entrepreneur Service Centre than before. Approximately 370 million euros have been allocated for the thematic objectives that are planned to be implemented by us

What can young companies and institutions operating in favour of the entrepreneurs expect?

There will be support for start-ups, business support institutions, business incubators, as well as for

those who come from academic circles. However, in the case of those entities, there will be less funds for buying equipment and appliances, and more for specialised advice and services to businesses: in order to create new enterprises and develop pro-innovation and pro-development strategies. This area also includes the internationalisation of economic activity, presentation of new business models for entrepreneurs, development of the plans for expansion into foreign markets and support for local governments to facilitate management of the investment areas and attract investors.

When can we expect the first competitions?

I am very wary of giving a specific date. The Regional Operational Programme has not yet been signed. Operational documents, the rules for selection of projects, eligibility of expenditures, procedures and many more documents need to be created. At the beginning of the next year. I will be able to determine with greater certainty whether we will announce competitions in the first quarter of 2015. We all strive to speed this process up as much as possible.

Therefore, we have the conclusion that future beneficiaries cannot sleep throughout the winter. How should we prepare for the absorption of EU funds?

All the entrepreneurs and other potential beneficiaries of the Regional Operation Programme for Lodz Voivodeship for 2014–2020 should analyse the opportunities presented to them in the programme, yet in unapproved version. I do not suspect that the final form will strongly deviate from what is already 'on the table'. Next, I would thoroughly analyse own investment and pro-development needs. It can be seen when the application is well thought-out, based on actual and diagnosed needs – then the whole idea connected with justification and argumentation of a given design process is consistent. Such an application poses fewer problems in the implementation phase after obtaining financing. Our experience shows that projects were overestimated in many cases in the past. The whole series of changes followed and doubts often appeared as to whether they were actually thought out.

Thank you for the interview.

BY JAROSŁAW ZARADKIEWICZ

Fibres and biopolymers

Biopolymers and chemical fibres are the face of the future for many disciplines. They can be implemented in a range of sectors – from the chemical industry and biotechnology to the textile, pulp and paper industries. Last but not least, they are also applied in the food industry and the medical sector.

The Institute of Biopolymers and Chemical Fibres has been operating for more than 60 years. The scientists in the Institute carry out research straddling the field of science and industry. The last 20 years have seen scientists pursuing a myriad of projects financed by the European Union. The number of both current and completed research projects totals nearly 150.

FUTURE FOUNDED ON HERITAGE

The history of the Institute of Biopolymers and Chemical Fibres dates back to the 1950s. Its current name was coined in 2006, and a year later they joined forces with the Pulp and Paper Institute. Both had been research centres operating in Lodz, and both had more than 40 years of experience in working at the junction of

science and industry in Poland. They specialised in chemical fibres and pulp and paper industries. These two sectors relied on the two Institutes for developing new technologies and products.

With the advent of the 90s came the storm of changes. The Polish centralised economy shifted to a market economy. This meant a radical change for the Institutes as well, but they emerged victoriously out of the turmoil of a new reality. Today, the Institute of Biopolymers and Chemical Fibres enjoys a stable position in the field of science being perceived to be at the forefront of latest scientific trends.

The current R&D activities include, e.g. the synthesis of polymers for the chemical industry, developing functional dressings, resorbable implants and products sealing blood vessels – all developed for producers of medical devices. Moreover, the



Technology of spun-bonded

Institute addresses the needs of the agricultural sector (developing bioproducts for plant care and protection as well as biodegradable nonwovens) and textile industry (fibres and special and composite nonwovens). They also process polymer materials and develop environmental protection products.

Participating in a number of international R&D projects, the Institute's position in the European Research Area goes from strength to strength every year. It is a member and a founder of EPNOE, a research institution based in Paris. EPNOE's scope of interest includes technologies relevant for polysaccharides and associated disciplines.

On home soil, the Institute actively participates in strategic projects (conducted under the Innovative Economy programme) that aim to develop a range of technological products for businesses in Poland.

The Institute and two other research entities (The Institute of Heavy Organic Synthesis and Industrial Chemistry Research Institute) are also responsible for bringing to life POLINTEGRA, a centre whose objective is to foster cooperation between science and industry.

EU RESEARCH

Under Operational Programme 'Innovative Economy', the Institute is conducting a project titled 'BIOGRATEX – Biodegradable Fibrous Materials'. It is expected that the research will lead to the development of new technological solutions and a wide range of textiles made of biodegradable polymers. In effect, it is hoped, the society's quality of life will be boosted in terms of health, hygiene and safety at work. Another intended result is to produce advanced products, which would

stay environmentally friendly throughout their entire life, thus fostering sustainable agriculture.

The Institute was also a leader in a Foresight Project called: 'Modern Technologies for the Textile Industry. A chance for Poland'. The mission statement of the project was to create a vision and a strategy for a technological development of the textile industry until 2020. The scientists accordingly came up with the vision and wrote blueprints for technological changes in the Polish textile industry. They also verified and expanded a strategic research programme. Other aims the scientists pursued were: determining factors which encourage the use of cutting edge solutions and establishing areas where Polish textile industry should be supported.

As if that was not enough, the Institute completed also two strategic EU projects titled: 'Technology for Obtaining Biodegradable Polyesters Using Renewable Raw Materials' and 'The Use of Biomass in the Preparation of Environment-friendly Materials'.

TECHNOLOGIES OF THE FUTURE

The Institute of Biopolymers and Chemical Fibres boasts a number of research teams and laboratories, five of which have been accredited by Polish Centre for Accreditation. The Laboratory of Biodegradation evaluates the biodegradability of polymer materials, biomass and textiles by naturally occurring microorganisms. The Laboratory of Metrology tests fibres, yarn, textiles and medical devices. Investigating microbiological activity of fibres and textiles is something that only the Institute's Laboratory of Microbiology can do. The Laboratory of Paper Quality analyses paper, cardboard, pulp and additives used in the paper and pulp industries. Finally, the Laboratory of Environment Protection carries out research and renders measuring and analytical services concerning the protection of the environment (monitoring emissions of pollutants). The Institute also offers expertise and consulting services and organizes seminars and trainings.

Apart from the laboratories, Polish Centre for Accreditation accredited the Team of Certification for Paper Products, an impartial and independent body certifying paper products. The Team is supervised by an executive board consisting of all interested parties, i.e. producers, clients, certifiers.

Other units in the Institute include a laboratory (the Physical and Chemical Laboratory), research teams (Fibres from Natural Polymers, Spinning of Synthetic Fibres, Speciality Fibres, Synthesis of Polymers, Polymer and Fibre Biotechnology, Biomaterials, Keratin, Cellulose Pulp) and the Pilot Plant.

This is indeed a solid foundation, which makes research on polymer modification, processing and applicability possible in Lodz. The investigations are not just restricted to that. They include using biomaterials in medicine, veterinary science, hygiene and agriculture. The wealth of experience that the Institute of Pulp and Paper brought in, made it possible to extend the scope of research to analysing new techniques and technologies applied by the pulp and paper industry as well as technologies used in this industry to protect the environment.



The reactor for production of natural polymers

A boost for inventors

We are talking to Prof. Józef Masajtis Ph.D., Eng., the Dean of the Faculty of Material Technologies and Textile Design at Lodz University of Technology.



Lodz is perceived as the cradle of the textile industry. How would you describe the industry's condition nowadays?

The Lodz Region is associated with Andrzej Wajda's film 'The Promised Land', which goes to show that artists influence our lives and emotions to a great extent.

Reymont popularised the textile subject, which Wajda later explored even more. He showed a noisy textile city: factories half-veiled by the smoke and fumes depicted the textile industry as it once was. Once, it indeed was such, but before that it had been a form of art. Carpets and tapestries used to adorn kings' chambers. Artists were asked to create images imitating Paradise for the most prominent members of society, which resulted in the creation of stunning ornaments on textiles. The Industrial Revolution stepped up the pace of production lowering, at the same time, the value of the produce itself since it became available on a massive scale. So, is the modern textile industry the promised land that serves the people in our region? As an insider in this industry, I'd say that we're now watching the sequel to 'The Promised Land'.

Can we speak of a renaissance, then?

Yes. Reymont described beautiful times for the industry. The heydays came later though – from the end of World War II until the late 1980s. But when the large eastern markets were closed for us, the industry collapsed. Today, however, people working in textiles are yet again

standing on their own two feet and define the new face of the industry (i.e. innovative textiles performing new functions, which make our lives more comfortable). Their value is being recognized and keeps increasing. Thus, it's a modern version of the promised land.

The faculty you are now heading is over 50 years old. What has changed and what future does this faculty have?

My story in the faculty started in 1963 when I was sitting my entrance exams. At the time, around 350 students were admitted. These were good days for the textile industry, which was constantly on the rise. New units were opened: in 1992 – Architecture of Textiles, which later incorporated artistic elements and became Pattern Designing, where students can obtain Bachelor and Master of Fine Arts degrees. This field of studies is very popular with students and keeps developing. Currently, Pattern Designing has three specializations: Architecture of Textiles, Fashion Design and Visual Communication. The last one is a newcomer and is gaining popularity and recognition around the world. Pattern Designing offers also a range of technical subjects, which exceeds what the Academy of Fine Arts has to offer. Three, entirely new branches have also been introduced: Material Engineering, Education of Technology and Information

Engineering as well as Health and Safety at Work. This move broadened our potential.

As far as the future is concerned, we pay attention to ongoing

The Lodz Region is associated with Andrzej Wajda's film 'The Promised Land', which goes to show that artists influence our lives and emotions to a great extent

changes and emerging needs. The branch we are currently developing is Industrial Design, which combines artistic and technical studies. Modern times require from you sensitivity and perceptiveness to be able to understand new generations and offer fields of studies that answer their needs.

How would you describe your cooperation with the world of business? You have already had some success. How did this commercialization start?

Experts say there are three epochs in human civilization: agrarian – an epoch that lasted thousands of years and ended in the 18th century, an epoch rooted in the 18th century that came with the advent of the Industrial Revolution, which lasted two centuries and finally, a score or so years ago an epoch of creators and inventors has begun. We gradually came to understand that you cannot leave inventors all to themselves, since they know little about the economy and management. It is a widely held view that innovators are the biggest asset of each country and they need to be helped. They are open-minded and full of ideas. Commercialization is one of the ways to help innovators. In the textile industry of 30 years ago, it was factories that had money, which they were supposed

**New units were opened: in 1992
– Architecture of Textiles, which later
incorporated artistic elements and became
Pattern Designing**

to spend on research, so they were in touch with universities and academies. Money was supposed to fuel industry, but when the whole thing collapsed, a problem appeared. Today, times are

different. Money is obtained from selling research. The current attitude is to carry out research which will lead to attractive, surprising and useful results. In other words, it is specialized designing.

What does it look like in practice? Are you searching for companies that will buy out the licence to use your research?

It is managed by our Technology Transfer Centre (CTT). We were the first university in Poland to introduce this kind of solution. It is how innovation spreads. CTT is a company targeted at helping inventors and creators. The three faculties most involved in the transfer of technology at Lodz University of Technology are: the Faculty of Chemistry, Faculty of Electrical, Electronic, Computer and Control Engineering and my own faculty. If an inventor comes up with some solution, it may be commercialized in three ways. You can sell everything, sell just a licence or use it as an apportionment to spin-offs. It would be risky to say which is the leading method because you choose them depending on the situation.



Art techniques at the Department of Architecture of Textiles



Prof. Izabella Krucińska, Ph.D., Eng.

Associate Dean for Research and the head of
the Department of Material and Commodity
Sciences and Textile Metrology

It happens time and again that during MA exams our students tell us that they have already started their professional careers. One of the students surprised me by saying that she had been employed in a Holland-based company. Recently, I have participated in a meeting organised by PLUSTEX – it's an EU project that focuses on good practices in the textile industry. At the meeting, it was emphasised that skills and knowledge of textile engineering were disappearing. Pattern Designing doesn't face this problem because it is popular with the students. But as far as technical aspects are concerned, we can say that there's a shortage of engineers in Europe, and this is the

main obstacle hampering the development of highly specialised textiles. I don't mean mass production because it emigrated abroad. I'm thinking about highly specialized products where textile fibres are used, such as protective clothing, medical equipment, products designed for transport and environment protection purposes. Currently, an association of technical universities called AUTEX is opening a Pan-European Master's programme in textiles. Each semester is organized in a different country and professors from all over Europe are lecturing there. This only partially answers the needs, but we still have too few students and engineers specializing in textile technologies.



The study of the performance of protective clothing for firefighters using mannequin

It is a long-standing tradition in your Faculty to cooperate with the business world. Are you approached by business representatives or is it the other way round? Is CTT the only medium via which this communication happens?

It takes on different forms. At one point, there was a need for evaluations and assessments in order to develop production. Then, e.g. we introduced services answering these needs. Businessmen used to come to us with their queries, like in the case of technology to be used for the production of bathing towels made of bamboo rayon. But in the meantime, we formed consortia and we got to know each other better. It is, therefore, difficult to establish who approaches whom because decisions are frequently the result of backstage talks. If you come up with a brilliant idea, you must know who to talk to about it.

**Europe is short of about 500 textile engineers.
That is why it is easy for our alumni to find
a job. Many of them started to work while still
at university**

Krystyna Pietrucha, Assistant Professor at Lodz University of Technology in the Department of Material and Commodity Sciences and Textile Metrology, is carrying out groundbreaking interdisciplinary research. She focuses on tissue engineering of biomaterials, especially in order to boost the regeneration of the central nervous system (CNS), i.e. the spinal cord and the brain. This fundamental part of the human anatomy is subject to injuries, in particular among young people. These injuries frequently cause serious and irreversible disabilities (partial or complete paralysis, epilepsy, speech impediment, hearing impairment and other physiological disabilities). So far, there are no infallible methods of hospital treatment of CNS injuries.

Complex and multifaceted, the research is part of two scientific projects: the first is financed by the National Science Centre in Cracow (Grant No. DEC-2011/03/B/ST8/05867), the second by Wrocław Research Centre EIT +; project 'Biotechnologies and Advanced Medical Technologies BioMed', task 5.4 (Operational Programme – Innovative Economy). Scientists from Poland and abroad specialising in different fields collaborate in this venture (Mossakowski Medical Research Centre of Polish Academy of Sciences from Warsaw [IMDiK], Medical University of Lodz [UM], Polish Mother Memorial Hospital Research Institute in Lodz [ICZMP] and the Aachen Institute of Neuropathology from Germany [INUA]).

Pietrucha's research led her to investigate the mechanism and kinetics of chemical synthesis and to build up multi-component collagen-based 3D scaffolds and scaffolds made of collagen and other natural polymer composites. They create a suitable environment and architecture for stem

cell propagation and enable the cells' differentiation into nervous tissue. Neuroscientific research, led by Prof. Leonora Bużańska [IMDiK] and Jacek Drobniak, PhD [UM], confirmed that such biomimetic scaffolds have beneficial properties and enable the growth and differentiation of neural stem cells from human umbilical cord blood and the neural tube of rodents. Unique hybrid systems (organotypic systems) are assessed in vitro by Prof. Gary Brook [INUA] and in vivo by Prof. Lech Polis [ICZMP] and Jacek Drobniak, PhD (implantations into the CNS of laboratory animals).

It must be stressed that this research is at the forefront of investigations carried out also in renowned laboratories worldwide. The results will lead to the development of new therapies supporting the treatment of spinal cord and brain injuries. They will also help prevent further CNS degradation.



Representation of radiation-sterilized 3D collagen modified scaffolds for neurobiological studies and evaluation of their physicochemical properties

So, having connections is crucial.

Yes. Companies' biggest assets lie in their connections – not buildings or machines.

Are there any trends among students and alumni that you have noticed?

Pattern Designing is a field of study cultivating students' artistic imagination, which is helpful in building their assertiveness. They are self-confident, more independent and more willing to set up companies.

My faculty is part of AUTEX, an association of educational units from different parts of the world concerned with textiles. Europe is short of about 500

textile engineers. That is why it is easy for our alumni to find a job. Many of them started to work while still at university.

Apart from Erasmus, we are participating in many other exchange programmes. As I have said before, our task is to help inventors and that is precisely what we are doing.

The alumni will find the offer of the faculty as well as the whole university interesting. This year the university admitted only 70 students fewer than a year ago. In the context of a falling population, this is a success, which proves that our offer is definitely attractive.

Thank you.

Finding a niche

Jarosław Zaradkiewicz talks to Longin Frączkiewicz and Wiesław Gajda, co-owners of the Marko-Kolor company.



From left: W. Gajda, A. Katryński, L. Frączkiewicz; Noseda dyeing machine in the background

What does the Marko-Kolor company do?

Longin Frączkiewicz: There are three of us: mechanic, knitter and finisher. We have been working for 22 years since 1992. We deal with knitwear and fabrics finishing (mainly staining, and finishing technologies such as raising, shearing, tumbling, and, more recently, printing). We offer a wide range of technological finishes. A current difficult market situation makes that we need to search for the projects with a note of innovation and fulfil the market needs, which have recently moved in the direction of uniqueness. If we excelled in big productions (e.g. in Bangladesh or

India, where there are huge monothematic plants with own raw materials), we would not be able to support ourselves because we are not able to compete with the Asian markets. At the moment, we are starting to deal with niche projects. Therefore, we have become interested in the innovative project offered by the Lodz University of Technology and the Institute of Natural Fibres and Medicinal Plants in Poznań. This project involves natural colouring with extracts obtained from herbs. Earlier, we conducted a lot of projects related to temporary market demands for certain effects, such as spotting, marbling, abrasion and stonewashing. Those

were the ideas that the market was waiting for and we followed them because they drove our production and development.

Who is your customer?

L.F.: Mainly knitting and tailoring plants of Lodz and the surrounding areas, as well as from all over Poland. 20-25 per cent of our services are made for export. We are currently preparing a major contract for the Danes. These are finishing services. The providers supply knitwear to our factory. In turn, we colour and finish them up as needed and ordered.

To what extent do you benefit from the EU programmes?

Wiesław Gajda: We have implemented a number of EU programmes. First of all, we have implemented investment modernisation, water treatment plant and the station of precise dosing of chemicals. The main objective of the project implemented under Measure 3.2 Improvement of innovation and competitiveness of the enterprises – Priority Axis III: Economy, innovation, entrepreneurship of the Regional Operational Programme of Lodz Voivodeship for 2007-2013 was to raise the quality of services. We have completed another project under Measure 3.3 Development of R&D in enterprises. The purpose of the project was to raise the quality of innovative fleece products. The idea was to improve the user's quality and comfort. These two projects have already been completed. Currently, we are on the third stage of implementation of the project introducing the best technical solutions, allowing to apply ecological, economical and low energy measures. As part of this programme, the washer and dyeing machine have been purchased. Earlier, in the 90s, we used the programmes that supported us in the development of structure. The profitability of textile industry is very low. Therefore, the EU means have really been profitable for us. If we had to finance the investments realized by us with the financial support from the Union, we would fail to reach the level of technology that we currently have. Owing to these investments, our company is quite modern. A lot remains to be done. Still, the current level gives us great opportunities. There is a lot of automation, and we have advanced computerisation of technological processes. We have received ISO 9001 certification. It has encouraged us to introduce new organisational mechanisms.

How do you see the future of the industry?

L.F.: We have some concerns. At the moment, the Polish market is flooded with a large number of textiles

produced in Asia or Turkey. The warehouses are full of knitted viscose materials, which, from the point of view of economic calculation, are sold below their cost of production. It worries us, but, at the same time, motivates us to seek and apply new and more economical technologies. When we see even these viscose materials, we come to the conclusion that we are not able to compete with the Asian production. Therefore, we are looking for other projects acceptable by the market.

W.G.: A serious problem is relatively high energy prices and the most expensive gas in Europe. We have contacts with the Slovaks and Germans. We know that the energy or gas for the industry there is cheaper than on our market. The situation is difficult because energy costs represent a major segment of the costly puzzle. There are also significant labour costs. It is said that Poland uses cheap labour force. In fact, what employees receive may be unsatisfactory, but non-wage costs – taxes, social insurance contributions – are significant. When setting our directions of development, we have to look through the prism of the problems discussed. Cheap imports and products from Bangladesh pose a problem. This motivates us to deal with niche projects. When we learned that the project involving colouring with extracts from natural plants is developed, we applied for it.

We are talking about the project run jointly with the University of Technology. Is such a model of cooperation suitable for you?

L.F.: Currently, we can observe a strong need for the support in what we do from the scientific background. In these niche projects that interest us, we must be supported by the research units, which will perfect our technology and help us. We do what we can, but sometimes we need a more thorough study. We have missed that so far and we are still missing it. We want such a cooperation to develop.

At this time, we notice the market's interest in coloured products with unusual dye effects. This requires to create and develop new dying technologies. It would be helpful to have scientific technological support of the research units in this field. Knowledge of textile crafts from scratch declines. At the same time, Asia is growing. First, spinning plants moved there, and now all dying factories are there. Therefore, it would be useful to have the market protected by the government and the European Union, because the Asian competition is uncontrolled and it often operates in the grey market.

Thank you for the talk.

BY JACEK BRYLSKI

Optimised production

Each production process may result in losses. They are particularly troublesome on the production line. Overproduction of one element generates the stocks that must be transported and stored. It can also cause a delay associated with the lack of preparation of different parts. Modern production management consists in minimising losses and optimising time and costs.

Such a system has been implemented in Lodz Indesit production plant.

Indesit Manufacturing Excellence (IME) is a management system based on standards of optimisation of manufacturing processes and the principles of lean management. This system allows to produce faster, better, cheaper and safer. The main objectives of the system implemented for three years are to improve product quality, reduce time and costs as well as increase efficiency and productivity. A new and more effective management of the manufacturing processes involves all people employed in the company: from managers to regular employees.

IME RULES

The basic changes implemented in Indesit factories have included four principles regarded as milestones in the process. These principles are: Flow, Takt, Pull and Zero Defect. Their objective was to provide a foundation built on safety and ergonomics. Another milestone was focusing on human development and innovation. The company does not save on workers. Instead it invests in them, because innovative employees can bring benefits just by eliminating unnecessary processes or downtimes. The general principle stimulating changes involved striving for excellence in



IME infopoint in Lodz Indesit plant

Lean ideology

Lean manufacturing, lean enterprise, lean production or simply lean – a production system first used in the Japanese Toyota company. It consists primarily in the elimination of redundant activities performed during the product development process, which do not add value to the product or service. Such operations are wasteful. They include: overproduction (producing more than needed or too early); unnecessary operation (e.g. poor organisation of work); waiting time (long periods of inactivity of employees or machines); unnecessary transport; excess stocks; shortcomings – regarding products and documentation; excessive treatment of the materials.

manufacturing, continuous quality improvement and optimisation of costs and supplies.

The implementation of IME principles has led to the improvement of working conditions and the development of employees' skills. The approach to quality policy has been clearly defined as 'zero defects'. The flow time of components has been reduced owing to a strong focus on a flexible manufacturing process. It has led to increased productivity and better utilisation of production capacity. This approach has allowed to reduce net working capital,

which means that less money is involved in the elements used for production.

IDENTIFICATION OF PROBLEMS

In order to achieve pursued objectives, it was necessary to identify the problems and implement appropriate solutions.

The main problem in the manufacturing process is overproduction. It arises, for example, from too large orders and the capacity exceeding the customers' projected needs. Overproduction can cause further losses, because it leads to the formation of high stocks of semi-finished and finished products. Additional space is needed for their storage. As a result, every available space is occupied, and this generates additional costs. Another problem is the issues related to internal movement and transport. In the first case, the losses result from non-optimised system of the production plant and lack of connections between various stages of production (materials and semi-finished products are stored away from the place of their use). Losses in transport may arise because of unnecessary loadings and unloadings as well as transport of the surpluses produced earlier.

Losses in the production plant – before its optimisation – also resulted from stoppages caused by retooling, machine start-up or the supply of intermediate products.

Full production capacity utilisation was reduced by defects and required repairs. The effort to detect as well as solve the problems and deficiencies was disproportionate to the benefits gained. Repair costs involved material losses and waste of human labour.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SOLUTIONS

Implementation of the IME system in Indesit company has brought tangible results. The flow time of intermediary products on the production line has been shortened by as many as 30 percent. The introduction of 'just in time' or 'all in good time' vision has been of great importance. Its principle is that the corresponding part with the right quality should be at the right time and in the right quantity on the production line.

The assumption of IME is to create value through elimination of losses, improvement of quality, reduction of time and production cost. The ultimate goal is to make the customer satisfied. Three years after the implementation of the IME system in Lodz Indesit factories, the productivity has increased by 15 percent. The number of repairs has decreased by the same number. The amount of waste has decreased by 20 percent. The effective use of working time of machines has significantly increased, i.e. by 20 percent, and the time spent on retooling jobs has decreased by as many as 30 percent.



Michele Fabbrocile (second from the left) and IME Team



Mikomax Smart Office, Stand Up system

BY NATALIA KOWALSKA

Office becomes smart

Gone are the days when the interior office space was a marginal issue for companies or was considered only in terms of aesthetics. Mikomax Smart Office shows that office space should be thought of as one of the strategic areas of management across the enterprise. Properly decorated office does not only shape the image of organisation, but also supports the efficiency and productivity of the team. In addition, the creation of an optimal working environment affects the employees' motivation and loyalty.

Since its inception, Mikomax Smart Office Company has been associated with Lodz. Like many Polish family businesses, it was founded in harsh economic transformation conditions in the early 90s.

– The decision to establish our company was taken... on Friday the 13th, when my and my wife's carpenter's

shop burned. It was the beginning of the 90s when we and our two small children were suddenly without a source of income. Then the idea for a new kind of business was conceived – Janusz Mikołajczyk, President of the Management Board of Mikomax Smart Office, says.

Today, Mikomax Smart Office has 16 stores in Poland and 15 partners abroad. The company has won

the title of Business Gazelle three times. It is awarded to small and medium-sized enterprises, which, owing to the dynamic development, cope very well among larger competitors. Anna and Janusz Mikołajczyk, as well as their children Zuzanna and Maciej, are the members of the company's management board. The fact that it is a family business translates into flexibility in the company's management and decision making.

– At first, I did not plan to work in the family business. I studied and lived in Warsaw, so I was convinced that I would stay and build my career there, i.e. in a large corporation. It turned out, however, that I did not fully realise my potential in such work environments. I like deciding on what is happening around me, and it is not easy to determine the direction of development of such large and organised organizations. Therefore, after two years, I decided to return to Lodz, where I wanted to work with my family. I realised how valuable my parents and brother's input into their business was and I wanted to continue the development of our company together – Zuzanna Mikołajczyk, the member of the management board, Director of Mikomax Smart Office brand, says.

OFFICE IS IMPORTANT

Mikomax Smart Office combines experience in the production of office furniture with an original idea of its use in the workplace. It supports organisation at every stage of implementation of changes in office space and advises on how to improve the productivity and efficiency of the company.

– Arrangement of office space is one of the important factors for the optimum management of the organisation. Properly designed office supports users in performing tasks and is tailored to their style of work. In contrast, poorly furnished space translates into a decrease in the efficiency and motivation of the team. Consequently, there are real losses for the company. According to research, improperly designed office causes that employees can waste up to 17 working days per year. Therefore, it is important that the workplace is exactly tailored to the needs of a given organisation – Zuzanna Mikołajczyk says.

Mikomax Smart Office supports its customers at all stages of changes in the organisation of the workplace. For this purpose, it develops a unique expertise on how office space influences the functioning of the company. The company has prepared a report based on a survey of office workers. It investigates the style of their work, as well as the needs and factors that influence the decrease of their creativity. The research

of Mikomax Smart Office was conducted among the companies in the modern sector of business services in Poland and Romania. Nearly 1,000 employees of SSC, R&D, BPO, ITO and KPO participated in the survey. According to the report, only 26 pc of employees in Poland and 37.1 pc of employees in Romania believe that the office supports them in their tasks.

Mikomax Smart Office is the only company on the Polish market that has implemented a research tool for assessing the efficiency of the office. This method is used by leading brands on a worldwide market. As early as in 2012, LinkedIn company applied this method, initially seeking business reasons for the development of their offices in London. Ultimately, the research covered all LinkedIn offices in the world (31 buildings in 17 countries). A similar evaluation was conducted in the offices of, among others, KPMG, Merck, BBC, Vodafone and Volvo.

SPECIFIC SOLUTIONS

Mikomax Smart Office uses its expertise in the optimisation of office space, creating product lines. For example, in common areas, the Chillout system allows to create space for relaxation or various forms of work .i.e. individual or team work. One of the innovations in the company's offer is the Stand Up system which, through manual height adjustment of the table top, allows for easy transition from sitting to standing work. This solution improves the ergonomics of workplace and prevents discomfort associated with prolonged sitting in front of the computer. In addition, it allows for quick conversion of workplace into the meeting place. The technology used to adjust the table height was applied for a patent by Mikomax Smart Office. The company is also planning to implement a jointless new technology allowing to eliminate a visible connection with a side panel (periphery) in the production process. Table tops of office furniture will form uniform surface free of cracks, which will reduce the spread of microorganisms and create jobs more conducive to health. The furniture with this new solution will be introduced to the market early next year.

The company also cooperates with young talented designers, including Tomasz Augustyniak (winner of the title of Designer of the Year 2010, awarded by the President of the Institute of Industrial Design in Warsaw) and designers of Beza Project: Anna Łoskiewicz-Zakrzewska and Zofia Strumiłło-Sukiennik. Mikomax Smart Office received the must have award for a series of Balance furniture, granted as part of the Lodz Design Festival in 2014.



Interview with Krzysztof Apostolidis,
President of Fabryka Biznesu and
investor in Sukcesja Centre in Lodz.

Lodz – friendly for investments

Mr. President, is it easy to cooperate with Lodz Voivodeship self-government in the scope of planning and implementing investments?

The decision about the start of investment is usually governed by many conditions. One of them is so-called investment climate in the city, where the location of the capital is planned. Such a climate includes: size of the market, availability of qualified personnel, political stability, administrative efficiency, possibility of obtaining financial resources and other factors. In this case, it is very important to win local government's favours.

Recent years have shown that the relationships on the line of investors – Lodz Voivodeship self-government have improved significantly. Today, it is much easier for the authorities to focus on a given investment, especially if specific and business-justified arguments are presented, and the benefits of investment to the city or region are clearly described. In this relationship, it is often emphasised that favouring investors and ensuring good business climate are reflected in the development of Lodz.

What do you think about the existing regulations in the field of planning and zoning? Do they favour the emergence of new investments in Lodz and facilitate the revival of the city center?

The city serves its inhabitants, and the area development plan should be intended for them. This is the most important obligation to the residents. What does it mean? The inhabitants of Lodz need to know what the idea is for the place where they live, what functions specific urban areas have and how the roles of these areas will change in response to the investments that are planned in the city. The transparency of development plan provides the necessary stability. I have observed the trend bringing positive changes, which translates into a higher quality of cooperation between investors and the government.

Is it easier to obtain an investment property from a private owner or self-government unit in our city? How does it look like in practice?

The process of acquiring property for investment is quite complex and involves a number of factors. However, it is worth starting talks with the city. In the city hall, there is the Investor Service Office, which has valuable information. Certainly, this institution should not be underestimated. When deciding on a project, it is worth considering all the possibilities, advantages and disadvantages of co-operation with the city and private owners of land.

Is Lodz friendly for investments?

I think so. I notice the investment potential of this place, implemented infrastructure plans, and see that Lodz is a friendly place to do business. 1.1 million people live in Lodz metropolitan area. Therefore, Lodz ranks third among the most densely populated metropolitan areas in Poland. Intensive development, multiple academic centres and access to qualified personnel in conjunction with natural determinants create a good climate for investments.

We want Sukcesja to become a part of smart city, creating the place where the citizens of Lodz will be happy to hang out.

The role of our investment has been noticed by the Marshal's Office of Lodz and evaluated as important for the development and revitalisation of the urban area. For this reason, it was included on the list of key projects for the voivodeship and financed from the funds of the Regional Operational Programme of Lodz Voivodeship. As a local investor, we will pay taxes in Lodz and employ thousands of people. Owing to this, the city budget will receive funds that can be spent on additional investments.

Thank you for the interview.

BY EWA KLEPACKA-GRYZ, JACEK SOBOL

Spine under stress

Imagine you are a tree. Your roots are the basis (your family, genotype, childhood experiences). The trunk is your spine (the attitude towards yourself and the world). Branches are your arms and legs (your relation to the world). Strong trees make light of the gusting wind, storms and blizzards. If there is harmony between the key points in your body: the head, neck, shoulder girdle, torso, pelvis, knees and feet, you are healthy, self-confident and happy.

You had a heck of a day at work. You come back home, sit comfortably in your armchair and, not even knowing it, rub your neck. Then you straighten up and bend back or, perhaps, you attempt to massage your loins. But the ache in your spine is still, unmistakably, there. The pain in your neck suggests you have been fiercely defending your point of view today; or, maybe, that your views are too rigid, you can see things only from your own perspective, and you want to have the last word on every subject. If the thoracic spine is problematic, you possibly feel hurt, disregarded or forgotten. And if your lumbar spine hurts, it may point to financial concerns. The spine is the best barometer of how we relate to the world. A strong spine indicates courage, resilience, independence and firmness but not rigidity. Quite the opposite: flexibility and adaptation to changes, which are much sought after in business, are characteristic of a healthy spine. A healthy spine supports you physically, helps you read your desires, makes it easier for you to defend your point of view and cope with stress.

The way we look and the way we walk reflect our inner nature. Your posture (whether you stand/sit straight, or whether you slouch), neck (is it tense or relaxed?), confidence in your moves or lack of it reveal what is going on in your life. Your spine is a weathervane reacting strongly to the gusts of emotional problems caused by your relation to the world – problems which you cannot cope with. People living in harmony with themselves and others maintain balance easily; when changing body position they tense their body as little as possible. The neck is relaxed and their moves are graceful.

Most of us focus on the front part of our bodies perceiving our spine as a thin tube outside our bodies, whereas in fact it is the centre of the body. The way you move and how often you change your body position are crucial for your spine's health. If you move only your hips, knees and ankles while sitting down or standing up from a chair (neck relaxed, head forward, torso straight), this will require minimal effort leaving you feeling rested and comfortable. If you sit on the ischia, feet placed firmly on the ground, without supporting yourself with your hands and crossing your legs, you will be more stable physically and mentally; you



A healthy spine supports you physically, helps you read your desires, makes it easier for you to defend your point of view and cope with stress

are going to feel secure in your own body. Because you will not waste your energy on needless movements, you will have more to spare doing business, for instance. It will be easier now to defend your views and more difficult to make you angry. The spine is like a scaffolding.

Exercise:

If, for example, you are going to have a difficult meeting at work, first sit comfortably opposite your interlocutor. Cautiously, put one of your hands and then the other under your buttocks as if you wanted to draw them apart. You will thus be able to sit on the ischia and your body will be stable. Fix your feet on the floor so that you fully touch the ground. Put your hands on the armrest or your knees (fingers touching). In your mind, order your body: 'neck relaxed, head forward and up.' Take a couple of deep breaths, and now you are ready to start the conversation.

BY JAROSŁAW ZARADKIEWICZ

From President to Patron

Widzewska Manufaktura is a zone of alternative actions in the former factory space. Once the spinning and weaving machines boomed there. Today, Wi-Ma catches a second wind. In the empty halls at Al. Piłsudskiego 135, we can hear music and see art projects created.

Since the nineteenth century, cotton spinning and weaving developed there. In the heyday, it employed up to eight thousand employees and produced nearly 70 tons of yarn per day. In 1905, a barricade was erected under the main gate of Widzewska Manufaktura. Those were the beginnings of workers' revolution, which later swept across Europe. Written records mention that among the participants was Aleksy Rzewski, who later became the first president of Łódź in the Second Polish Republic.

In the 20s of the last century, a new spinning plant was built there, then one of the largest and most modern in Europe. Before World War II, the factory was owned by Oskar Kon, a Jewish resident of Łódź. After the Germans entered Łódź, the factory was occupied by them, and Kon became a caretaker in his villa. One day he and his family were deported to Switzerland, where he signed an agreement to sell factories to the company belonging to Hermann Goering. Thanks to this, Wi-Ma survived the war intact, because the Germans did not bombard the plants belonging to one of the leaders of the Third Reich.

After the war, 1 May Cotton Plant, WiFaMa Textile Machinery Factory and Anilana Fibres Industry Plant were created from Widzewska Manufaktura. In 2009, the cotton plant ceased production because the company did not survive competition with cheap yarn from Asia. At the end of its activities, the indebted company employed 300 people. Today, it employs only seven workers: four conservators and three people in the office – including President Stanisław Zaręba.

Zaręba decided to save the post-industrial space. The company sold out machines to India, Thailand, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan. Former factory halls have slowly become a place full of culture. None of the former factory buildings will be demolished. Wi-Ma President plans to restore even already demolished buildings i.e. the spinning plant's tower, dismantled in the 70s of the last century.

SPACE AND PEOPLE

Currently, Wi-Ma has more than 60 thousand m² of postindustrial area. Nothing happens in the building of the spinning plant, but the halls of the plant are starting to live. The President sees in them the potential for artists creating music, film and visual arts. Rehearsal rooms, workshops and studios can be developed there. Wi-Ma is open to artistic foundations, social cooperatives and companies.

Stanisław Zaręba would like to revitalize the plant. He would like to see the shopping center or apartment in the building of the former spinning plant. However, he thinks that it will not be easy to meet the zoning plans he has received. The company is also considering the sale of parts of the buildings.

– We visited President Zaręba and he liked the idea – I hear those words like a mantra in talks with the new people who have found their place at al. Piłsudskiego. – The elderly have supported me throughout my life. I am almost 70 years old and have awareness that has developed inside me during this time. That is why I support others, trying to pay off my debt to those who have helped me, and many of them are no longer alive – the President says. Shortly after, he

Social Cooperative – BLOT screen printing workshop

Screen printing laboratory and BLOT workshop were founded at the turn of 2012 and 2013. BLOT is represented by Dorota Elza Maroń, Magda Saba Samborska and Agnieszka Natasza Splewińska. – We have created a place that gives unlimited creative activities and experiments – the foundresses emphasize.

They have nice workshop facilities, through which they can realize their ideas. Screen printing is a very interesting technique, which is used in mass production as well as in creating unique items and works of art. The palette of possibilities is enormous. Graphics, colour, structure, texture and surface are the elements from which a silkscreen is

created. Experimenting and finding new solutions during the printing process are very important for the foundresses.

– During the execution of the projects, we have a direct impact on each stage of production – they add.

They cooperate with designers of clothes, designers, interior designers, advertising agencies and PR specialists. The complexity of the services enables realisation of the commissioned orders.

Screen printing workshops are also organised in the workshop. Everyone interested in this technique may attend the workshops. During the sessions, own original overprint can be made.



Social Cooperative – BLOT screen printing workshop

adds that he was satisfied and motivated to work by the fact that young people have found their place in Wi-Ma.

Stanisław Zaręba can talk for hours about the events that have taken place in Wi-Ma. He eagerly shows further projects taken up by the residents. He has good contact with them. – President, will you visit us? – What's going on, guys? – Nothing, you will drop in to have a coffee. We'll talk.

EVENTS AND PLANS

Commercial plans are not effective at this time. However, there is a vibrant cultural life, e.g. concerts, exhibitions,

performances and films are shot. Stanisław Zaręba stresses, however, that it is necessary to launch commercial mechanisms for this business to subsidise culture.

– Combination of commercial culture would make this space alive day and night. Studios, cafes, concerts would liven up the area in the afternoon and evening – the President dreams.

However, Wi-Ma is engaged in cultural activity. A number of non-commercial films have been shot in the buildings and on the site. Most of them are operators and director's etudes of the students of Lodz Film School, who

Bajkonur

When Artur Urbański and Paweł Olszewski sold AMG.net IT company to the French, they decided to spend part of the money obtained for a musical project, as part of which young people and bands will be able to develop their interests at preferential rates. There, Marek Kądziela School of Music have also found its place.

It is the most modern private music school in Łódź. It proposes a two-year curriculum in the field of popular music, addressed to young people and adults, beginners and experts – people who have already dealt with music and feel the need for development. School education includes theory ('anatomy' of music) and instrumental activities during guitar, bass, drums, saxophone, keyboard and vocal classes. It also offers a band-coaching.

Marek Kądziela is the author of the curricula and the main lecturer – avant-garde jazz guitarist who gained knowledge in Carl Nielsen Conservatory in Odense, Denmark, and used it as part of stage and composing experience.



Marek Kądziela, Bajkonur

The aim of the school is to open up to a new valuable knowledge about the anatomy of music through proprietary curriculum based largely on the practice in which improvisation and playing with others play a key role. The participants work on auditory perception, composition and communication. They develop their intellectual and emotional sides.

The school cooperates with Stanisław Moniuszko School of Music in Łódź.

WI-MA FILM

At the end of 2013, we were shooting a video of one of the students of our school, from the directing department. During the shooting, we realized how many people were interested in creating their ideas and projects in the areas of the old, abandoned factory, and it was quite a surprise for us. A lot of time is needed to discover all the nooks and crannies, so we came up with the idea of someone like us – someone who will be able to efficiently find the space best suited to the script or the creator's vision. In addition, we want to make sure that working conditions are as good as possible and the terms are convenient. We want this place to be associated with a friendly atmosphere and efficient operation – Jakub Kopania and Mateusz Seweryński, founders of the WI-MA FILM, tell. They are the students of the Faculty of Film Arts Organisation at Łódź Film School.

WI-MA FILM is a film studio located in the former industrial plants of Widzewska Manufaktura. It has interiors and outdoor locations for performing any audiovisual, video and filmmaking forms as well as music videos, commercials



WI-MA FILM, from the left: Jakub Kopania, Mateusz Seweryński

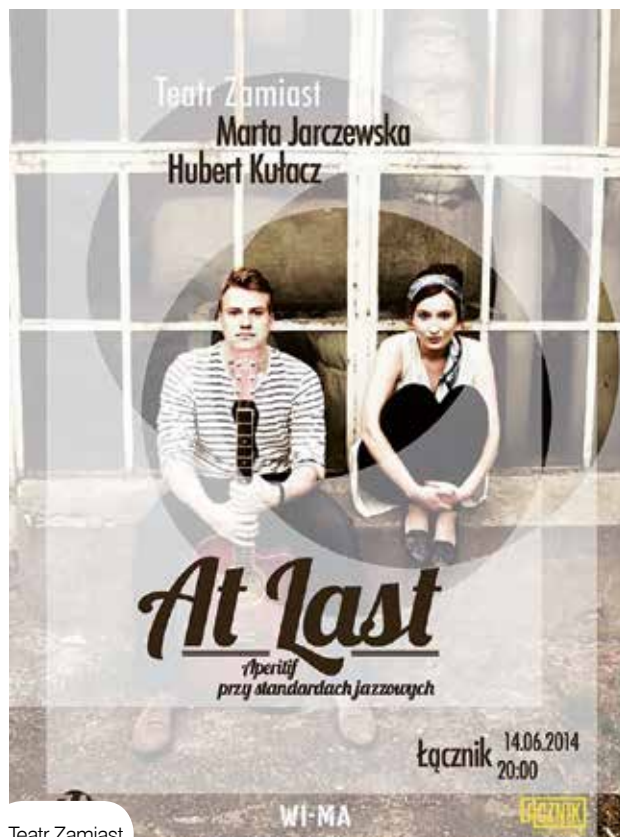
and exhibitions. It offers wide scenographic facilities and the possibility of arrangement of available interiors.

To date, WI-MA FILM has been visited by many designers – Film School students, who created the photos for their etudes. Also, photographic sessions, music videos, visualisations and feature films have been produced at Widzewska Manufaktura. They include 'City 44' (directed by Jan Komasa) or 'The Sailor's Stories' (directed by Marcin Łatań). Nearly 20 projects have been implemented in WI-MA FILM for the last half a year.

Teatr Zamiast

We, young graduates of the theatre school, group members that have dreamt all their life and never stop dreaming. These dreams are commonly targeted – create the theatre – our Theatre. Our whisper and our cry, our tears and our laughter. Teatr Zamiast is not just a theatre, it is also a workshop where, through improvisation, acting tasks and different types of training, the participants can develop their passion for theatre and acting, but also get to know themselves – this is a manifesto of Teatr Zamiast located in Wi-Ma.

The project includes 19 graduates of Lodz Film School, as well as their families and relatives. – Everyone told us that we were the perfect group to start own theatre. Finally Konrad Korkosiński, after meeting with Wojciech Malajkat, sat down and wrote down all the arguments against setting up the theatre. After many discussions, we decided to take up the challenge – Marta Jarczewska says. The decision was made at the turn of May and June 2013. Four months later, they already registered the foundation in the National Court Register. The theater started its activities in November and February that year. At Wi-Ma, there was the first premiere. It was 'Targowisko, czyli historia rozkładu pana H', based on the play by Magdalena Drab. The script was created from observations of Bałucki Market traders. The performance is maintained in grotesque and absurd conventions, but grows out of a deep and sad realism.



Teatr Zamiast

Now the team stages 'Miasto Ł.', based on Tomasz Piątko's novel. The performance tells the story of T., who lives in the city of Ł. in the largest local *famula*, a red brick house where workers lived. Now it is inhabited by the unemployed. It is a humorous and sad story about fighting with each other, administration and addiction. It is expanded by authentic stories seen on the streets of Ł. city.

are exceptionally inspired by the interior. Only in 2013, seven of them were completed, and this year – already 12. Last year, the facilities of Wi-Ma aroused interest of the professional filmmakers who shot many scenes there, especially for the 'City 44' film, directed by Jan Komasa, where the halls and grounds were used as a film background for the events from the Warsaw Uprising times. The interiors also inspire many photographers who use them to pursue their artistic vision. Many bands and individual artists (including dancers) have chosen this place for their music video scenes or promotional materials.

At the turn of August and September last year, the European Festival of Alternative Architecture and 'Do it yourself Festival' were held at Wi-Ma for five days. They aroused great interest among domestic and

foreign enthusiasts of ecology in architecture. The big event was also Lodz Fairs of the Creative, where 80 exhibitors, fashion designers and jewellery, lovers of healthy food and toy makers exhibited their products. Apart from shopping, the time was filled with interesting music and live performances. The event was great and aroused huge interest. It was visited by about 1 thousand people. Recently, a big Musica Privata festival was held there. During the festival, among others, Mariusz Stańczyk, Artur Zagajewski and Mikołaj Trzaska performed.

Stanisław Zaręba, who co-organized *juwenalia* student festivals in his youth, dreams of the next-year event that would gather all academic circles in Lodz. The talks are already on an advanced level. The President believes that they will end with success.

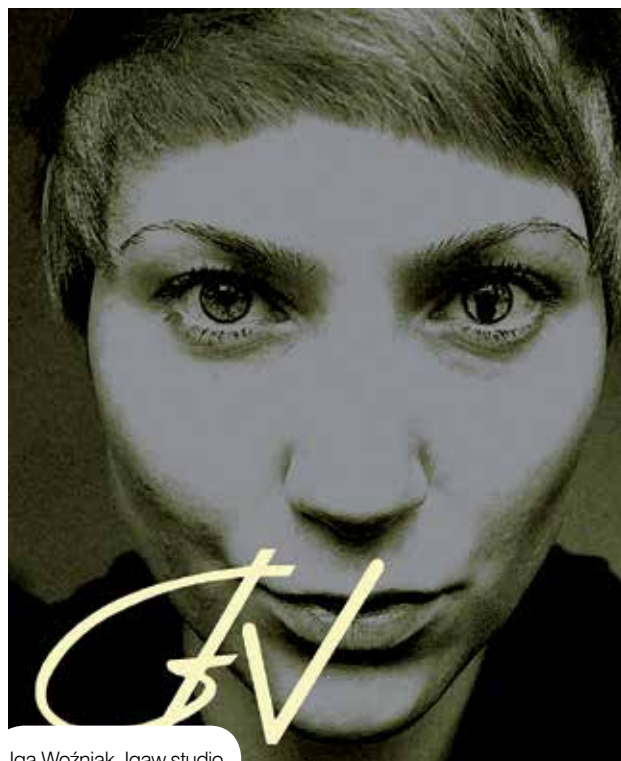
Igaw studio

Iga Woźniak's studio specialises in photography, graphic and applied arts. Each project is carried out individually, in accordance with the recipient's needs.

The current offer of the studio includes works in the field of photography, such as individual photo sessions, as well as self-images in the field of street photography, reportage, portraits and pictures of nature. The photos can be printed in classic form on photographic paper, glass or plexiglass.

Iga Woźniak is also engaged in the arrangement and décor in the field of compositions printed on fabric, glass, plexiglass, ceramic, metal and wood. The designs are unique, created with the use of modern printing technology, often in combination with handmade crafts.

– I create the products for mature and demanding recipients (Fototekstylia project) as well as young and open people (Modny Pixel design) – the founder of the studio explains. In the next spring-summer season, the third project associated with fashion will start. The



Iga Woźniak, Igaw studio

preparations include: clothes, bags, jewellery and small accessories.

In addition to the listed companies, among others, the following companies operate at Wi-Ma:

3D Event creates high-end 3D spectacles, during which viewers are immersed in the generated reality actually broadcast on large scale, immersion screens. Owing to stereoscopic 3D technology (it gives the impression of greater depth than is known from IMAX cinemas), they delight, amuse and intrigue the audience, who repays with spontaneous reactions.

Atelier Nawrot designs public, industrial, multi-family and single-family building. It undertakes the project activities covering, in a wide range, all stages of preparation and implementation of investment. It provides high quality services, provides advice and is available at each stage of the investment.

Eventy Diamenty specialises in planning, creation, promotion and production of complex events. The company deals with, among others, building business client relationships with its environment (customers, employees) through events. For this purpose, it creates comprehensive scenarios for business meetings, conferences and other forms of integration. It also organises other events, e.g. trade shows, meetings as well as stag and hen parties.

FabLab Łódź is a space, people and tools, owing to which a design or construction can be made real. Open technology workshop allows the processing of wood, metal or polymer materials. Do not you know

how to build something? Do not you know how to run a project? Visit us, and you will get support.

FlowLight offers services in the field of photographing and studio rental. It is distinguished by a creative treatment of photographic art, search for expression and forms of expression. The founders aim to achieve high artistic quality even when executing the simplest orders. They create a friendly atmosphere in the studio and in the open air. Every customer is treated individually.

Indygo is a place where everyone can find a way to express own personality. The company's goal is to stimulate creativity and imagination as well as the enjoyment of creation. It invites to participate in activities in the field of: drawing and painting, hand-made, textile art and thematic workshops.

Kanał13 – the motto of the company is: if you have a cool idea, play in a band, paint, write poems, or do anything else and want to share it with other – write to us and we will provide you a place for free and ensure the promotion of event. Kanał13 is a place open to ideas. Now, the rehearsals of three bands are taking place. There is a scene, a place for the audience and the white, neutral room suitable, for example, for exhibitions.

Klubokawiarnia Łącznik is located in the architectural connector between the two buildings of the spinning plant. It wants to combine what is good in the kitchen with what our culture gives to us. It is supposed to be a space which, around the culinary 'backbone', will produce space for cultural activities such as concerts, workshops and film screenings coupled with cooking suggestions. The specialty dishes are meat and fish cooked with sous vide method.

Nieladaco a bindery, which offers a good paper product. This company does not rush. All the things are made by hand. This requires time, skill, but gives a taste of sound well-done job. The company relies on good materials. Without cheap stuff. There are enough products produced on a mass scale on the market.

Packshotme is a brand that specialises in the photography of the product. It has developed its style, quality and prestige. Now they are opening up to other fields of photography: studio rental, organization of vernissages and running photographic workshops for children.

Pevt includes a team of enthusiasts of classic automotive industry as well as enthusiasts of electric drives and renewable energy. They decided to combine passion with knowledge, responding to the needs of people looking for their dream car. Instead of scrapping old cars, they want them to be in good hands and then restore them to life as if they were electric cars with a soul. They try to develop new products for the electrical transport in order to overcome further barriers.

Polka ma talent – Paulina Tralewska, who runs the studio, collects advertising banners and brings them to life. She sews urban bags from banners and advertising materials. Bags made of banners are an ecological manifestation against the one-off products. and they identify the user with his city.

Marek Wagner's Sculpture Workshop. He combines the found old items with new plastics and, with the use of a modern technology, he builds symbolic objects and constructs multi-part installations. His works are a commentary on the historical and contemporary analyzed process of massification of participation in culture, leading to its general recourse.

Punkt Widzenia is an independent graphic design studio. It specialises in the creation of a coherent visual identification of brands, businesses, places, people, events, products and organisations. Punkt Widzenia represents a broad spectrum of design having regard to the social communication and creative work.

'Spóła Działa' Social Cooperative is a place open for active people looking for aesthetics that are close to them. It is a photographic studio and artistic workshop in which design services, wall painting, illustrations, renovation of furniture and interior design are offered. It also manufactures own furniture, clothes and toys for children. In the workshop, sessions and courses in painting, as well as cultural and artistic events are organised.

WJT animacja. The company's profile is associated with film and television production in a broad sense. It brings artists together and works with developers and implementers associated with animated film and acting. It has experience in making short-, medium- and full-length films. It skillfully handles commercials, music videos, building scenery and props, as well as the organisation of images.

Aleksandra Kmieciak's business ventures at Wi-Ma and Pan Tu Nie Stał studio are presented on further pages of our magazine.

BY JAROSŁAW ZARADKIEWICZ

Pan Tu Nie Stał



Stationary company store

It started with a blog. Eight years ago, the owners of PPHU Pan Tu Nie Stał Justyna Burzyńska and Maciek Lebedowicz began to describe their collection of articles from past decades. It soon turned out that there are more amateurs of good Polish design.

This is how the idea for a shop with T-shirts referring to the aesthetics of past years was conceived. The founders of the blog have made every effort to create a product tailored to the needs of readers – good quality, reminiscent of the coarse aesthetics popular not so long time ago. The taste of milk powder, Assam tea, drunk from a glass with a basket, the charm of gray cardboard and faded colours. The unique humor in a modern slightly mocking edition, memories transferred to clothing and accessories manufactured locally.

Pan Tu Nie Stał is a family business. Once it had a professional name: conjugal company. Justyna (1979) graduated in sociology. She says that she remembers little of it. Maciek (1982) also completed studies, but not the ones he should. He specializes in applied graphics.

IDEA

– In our childhood, we were engaged in specific visual culture, to which we now go back, and serve it to our customers with a modern twist. The first visual stimuli, toys, books, clothing, items from the immediate surroundings had a great influence on our aesthetic preferences – they recall.

Since 2006, the founders of the shop have run a blog aimed at promoting good Polish design. They have a large collection of all papers created from the 60s to the 80s. Posters, illustrations for books, magazine covers, packaging and labels – the pictures from these collections were posted on the blog. It was their additional job, a hobby for a long time. Over time, they began to run a shop where they sold only T-shirts with prints referring to the times of their youth.

– We wanted to have a shop similar to house interiors taken straight from the 70s, with a wall unit, a Turkish

carpet and a homely atmosphere. Everything was done gradually, through a blog, i.e. the first productions of T-shirts at home, their printing in the garage until the foundation of online store and the production commissioned to professional contractors – they recall.

Where does the name come from? – There were many proposals. The name was supposed to evoke specific associations with the era when we were little and watched Tik-Tak TV programme. Pan Tu Nie Stał won our private plebiscite. It was catchy, offensive and a little cheeky – the owners tell.

CUSTOMERS

Justyna and Maciek emphasise that they are inspired by the Polish design, before and after communist times in Poland. They do not miss these times, but rather the designs from their youth. The communist period in Poland inspires them. The words that they use in their products – ‘Hi’, ‘Trash’, ‘John Smith’, ‘Food Articles’ are not reserved for the Polish communist times. They were present in Polish language before and after this period. The owners of businesses point out that they admire the achievements of streetwear Western brands, but Pan Tu Nie Stał is to have a ‘local colour’ primarily. Local as it is Polish, and local as it comes from Lodz. Almost the entire range is manufactured in Lodz, and it does not go beyond the boundaries of the county. The owners cooperate with many people from Lodz creative industry: graphics, illustrators and photographers.

Customers are mainly in their twenties (18–34 years, from big cities). Therefore, they are not necessarily those who remember Teleranek TV programme.

Stationary company store is located in Lodz at Piotrkowska 138/140 (OFF Piotrkowska).

Photo: Paweł Ławreszuk

A symmetric woman

Simplicity, geometry and comfort – these are the features of Aleksandra Kmieciak's collections. This young fashion designer from Lodz applies various tailoring techniques that define the unique character of her collections.



I have dreamt of studying fashion design at the Academy of Fine Arts in Lodz since I was a child. To become a fashion designer was always my dream, although I have learnt rather late how this whole thing worked in reality. My graduation collection titled 'Kobieta symetryczna' turned out to be a turning point. It was developed and presented on Designer Avenue show during FashionPhilosophy Fashion Week Poland – says Aleksandra Kmieciak. She made her debut in 2010. Since then, she has gradually and patiently strengthened the position of her brand in the world of Polish fashion.

INSPIRATIONS

The designer emphasises that on her way she met many people who helped, advised and guided her. – After my first show, I received a huge support from the staff at FashionPhilosophy Fashion Week Poland – she remembers and points out that this event offers a great deal of help to young designers. – The key thing is to use it well – she adds.



Anna Wendzikowska in a dress 'Mała słodka'

What is she inspired by? – Inspiration comes when least expected; there are no rules. It might be a film, book, picture, sometimes a song or simply a vision – she explains.

One of the dresses that people remember best is 'Mała słodka' inspired by sweet white wine called Moscato. It was ornamented by thousands of petals taken from a rare orchid variety called Vanda; the overall effect was strengthened by additional decoration with sugar crystals and Swarovski crystals. Kmieciak was engaged to collaborate on this dress with Carlo Rossi. The project was carried out by Sekunda&Sieradzan, two floral designers. – The cooperation with florists during this project was inspirational; after all, we use different materials in our everyday work. In this case, we were supposed to unite our experience and skills in one project. I believe the effect was spectacular – Kmieciak says smiling.

CHALLENGES

Aleksandra Kmieciak's studio is located in Widzewska Manufaktura. There you can see and try on clothes from her collection and, of course, purchase them. The designer would like, however, to see her sales network develop.

In the nearest future, she will be planning the next season's collection. – I will have to face the hectic pre-Christmas time, I will be preparing the autumn/winter collection for 2015/2016, searching for new sales options and completing orders that people placed – she says.

Aleksandra Kmieciak is also a painter whose work was appreciated in France and exhibited in a number of galleries (e.g. Chambéry and Grenoble). Her passions for painting and design are married in unique silk dresses she designs and hand-paints for her regular customers.

BY JAROSŁAW ZARADKIEWICZ

Agencies with potential

The companies of nationwide and global reach are present in many ways in Lodz. Some locate their factories and development centres there, some entrust Lodz service agencies their advertising campaigns. Lodz creation spreads throughout Poland and beyond quietly and without fanfare.

The key to the success of any business is to stick consistently to simple and clear solutions. However, the templates should not be used in a creative activity. Lodz creative agencies emphasize that they constantly develop and improve the quality of their services. The activity in the industry where each day can bring a big or huge change is a challenge faced by Lodz creators every day.

MANAGERS ARE WELCOME

MOSQI.TO is a creative agency founded nine years ago. The team has been associated with Lodz from the beginning. Its portfolio includes big campaigns for such clients as: ING Bank, ING Życie, IKEA, Unity Line, Euronet, eBay, mBank, Bayer and Unilever. Specialty: bloody good ideas – projects accompanied by ideas and mind.



MOSQI.TO



6 Szpilek

The company specializes in custom projects. It implements campaigns 360, designs interactive applications and platforms as well as invents interesting outdoor events. The first big client was mBank, with which MOSQI.TO had worked for several years. After mBank, it was just only better. It expanded its portfolio to include international projects and further large campaigns. From the beginning, they were asked whether or not they wanted to move their business to Warsaw, where it would be easier to work with clients. They chose to stay in Lodz and point out that the times when the distance from the capital was a barrier is a thing of the past. Perhaps it is because the world is shrinking, the market is changing, and the distance from Lodz to Warsaw is not lots of miles away – Magdalena Szmidt, Managing Director of the agency, says.

They are relatively small team if compared with their competition, but they manage to implement effective campaigns and work quickly in a close-knit team. As pointed out by Maciej Wiśniewski, Account Director, a great idea should not only impress but also sell.

– We try not to elaborate. We have a simple idea:

instead of expanding, we put a lot more emphasis on the development of own competence. In addition, we are as thick as thieves and our work just goes very well – Magdalena Szmidt emphasizes. – We are marathon runners. I mean relationships with customers and in the team. The companies we work with have been with us for years. Of similar importance to us are our relationships within MOSQI.TO. Tomek and Maciek have been the team members for seven and six years. The tenure of other seniors is more than five years. Those who join us, stay with us for a longer period. We develop organically, and this mode suits us very well – it makes that we have kept a high level at work for years.

According MOSQI.TO team, what also counts when working with large players is that the customer can rely on the team. Reliability, pace of work and mutual understanding make it easier to develop good relationships. – If we did not keep our word and were unethical, then large companies like Euronet or ING Życie would not want to cooperate with us. The opposite is true – we have been working with them for years – Maciej Wiśniewski says.

MOSQI.TO team members are distinguished by their large diligence and skill of a strategic approach to each project. It was not different from the image campaign for Lodz they worked on this year. They considered the city as a brand and fitted their campaign into a long-term strategy for Lodz. MOSQI.TO worked on the campaign called 'Lodz welcomes', which lasted from May to October 2014, for almost a year. The team produced hundreds of creations, invented spots, cooperated with local artists, the local press and industry.

– We walked around Lodz, talked to people and very often heard that the city is a good place for doing business. We are a proof of this. We used our experience in cooperating with big brands when working on 'Lodz welcomes' project. We knew that a good idea was not enough. We just need to sell Lodz well and reach out to people – Tomasz Soluch, Art Director at MOSQI.TO, emphasizes.

'Lodz welcomes' is the biggest campaign that Lodz has realised so far. It seems to be even more important when considering the fact that the author is Lodz agency. It also proves that it does not have to be a big corporation from Warsaw to implement successful campaigns and work with large customers.

WOMEN'S TASTE IN DESIGN

6 Szpilek is the name seemingly enigmatic. The thought brings to our mind a new collection of shoes. If indeed it meant shoes, then they would be top class. Several years ago, three girls from Lodz: Katarzyna Łukowska, Ilona Robert and Ola Musiałek dreamt of their company and conceived the idea on how to run their business. They came up with the assumption that if one has a dream, then it should be great. They have fulfilled their dreams. They had great experience – they worked in Lodz agencies and the media for many years.

They managed to create a friendly, warm and feminine company that focuses on quality. It is appreciated by anyone who decides to trust 6 Szpilek. The girls know what counts in dealing with customers: trust, reliability, professional and individual approach to each task, creativity, fresh look, speed and excellent communication skills... The customer who crosses the threshold of the agency will feel taken care of by the employees. The interior is cozy, flowery, and with great attention to aesthetic detail. Although it is not a palace, it can be seen that girls have a taste.

It can be said that they started the business because of their feminine intuition. The employees carry out the most difficult and demanding tasks. Sensitive approach to the world and other people makes

6 Szpilek understand and prompt the customers to think on how to run a campaign to reach success. They implement their projects in a way that their final result is their flagship project – the best letter of recommendation.

Such a letter are the words of one of the clients: 6 Szpilek is the best example of how to do an independent business. The motto is – without great effort, with concerns, but supporting one another and believing that the foundation of good business is relationships with people. Creating is their passion, but their true talent is revealed when clients are allowed to talk about expectations, get to know their philosophy and experience, and then mix all the elements and create a stunning design out of small pieces taken from a crucible.

6 Szpilek advertising agency is not afraid of confronting its skills and ingenuity with other companies with similar profiles. It enthusiastically participates in a variety of competitions, in which it often wins. 6 Szpilek offers comprehensive services. The agency develops visual identifications, as well as refreshes the existing ones. It creates promotional materials (brochures, catalogues), websites, exhibition stands, external and internal branding, as well as organises photo shoots.

Among the clients are local authorities and companies, as well as foreign brands. 6 Szpilek implements projects for Lodz, among others, for the City of Lodz Office – the campaign 'Lodz as the city of women', 'Youth in Lodz – I have an idea for a business'. The girls created a logo and visual identity for the Regional Fund for Environmental Protection and Water Management in Lodz, the campaign called 'Be creative, stay in Lodz' promoting the city at Lublinek Airport. They designed promotional materials and branding for the Cultural Information Centre in Lodz. They are also the authors of a new logo and identification for Radio Lodz. Their clients are also, among others, Medcover Group, Procter & Gamble, ING, Ichem, Apteki Kwiaty Polskie and Grot.

A woman's taste and style in design – are the quintessence of 6 Szpilek. At every stage of cooperation, they seek the most attractive and satisfying solutions for the customer. The hallmark of the company and a distinguishing feature of Lodz advertising agency are that the girls are guided by their heart in their projects and daily activities.

Currently, the company is the team consisting of six people. They together take toughest challenges as well as take orders from single companies and large corporations with equal robustness and fervour.

‘Lodz welcomes’ urban campaign

In October, the last edition of ‘Lodz welcomes’ campaign ended. At this time, it promotes Lodz festivals and, accompanied by the inhabitants of Lodz, it welcomes in another spot. It turns out that it is also worth visiting Lodz in the autumn.

The author of the campaign lasting sixth months is a creative MOSQI.TO agency. ‘Lodz welcomes’ is addressed to four groups of recipients. These are:

- secondary school graduates from Lodz and its region (‘The Youth in Lodz’);
- tourists and people interested in the world (‘Lodz for a weekend’ with two separate versions: spring and autumn);
- those who work in a creative business (‘Creative Lodz’);
- potential investors as well as the middle and upper managerial staff (‘Economic Lodz’).

The leitmotif was optimistic greeting. Greetings could be sent from the TV screen in a TV campaign, with billboards in major Polish cities, from newspapers, radio and even Facebook. It was optimistic and indulgent.

Lodz artists were invited to cooperate: spots, according to MOSQI.TO scenario, were directed by the resident of Lodz and produced by the Lodz company. The author of the music was L.Stadt from Lodz. Furthermore, only the citizens of Lodz, who came in droves to the audition, acted in the spots. The oldest acting person was 94. The criterion was simple: real people with real emotions as candy characters do not fit the image of the city. The commitment of real characters (up to 260 people

present during the audition!) is the main binding element of the campaign.

Most importantly, a commitment to the promotion of Lodz and to this particular campaign was well received by the Internet users – MOSQI.TO launched an application on Facebook, where everyone could create their billboards. Everyone had a chance to find a billboard in the October version as part of the competition for a password. The application was admired by the inhabitants of Lodz – they massively exploited and shared it with others. With the launch of the application, the concerns of some commentators that there would be a massive amount of offensive comments also ceased – only one out of 337 billboards was removed two weeks after the start of the application. Until the end of the competition, the inhabitants of Lodz created more than 430 posters and gave almost 14 thousand votes. The application works without an advertising support.

It is too early to speak about the effects of the campaign. On 1 October, the fourth edition of the campaign – autumn ‘Lodz for a weekend’ was launched. In Poland, almost 400 creations have appeared on billboards and city lights. Among the slogans are: ‘Light Festival from Lodz welcomes long autumn evenings’, ‘Design Festival from Lodz welcomes creative people from all over Poland’ and ‘Fashion Week Poland from Lodz welcomes Poznan Fashion Week’.

Basia Jagoda
MOSQI.TO PR manager



Photo: Paweł Lawreszuk, 6 Szpilek

BY JAROSŁAW ZARADKIEWICZ

Art in the cemetery

Midnight Show

– We, designers from Lodz, have decided to create a new and better reality in this city. The first places of our interest were the area neglected and forgotten by the design environment: cemeteries – the founders of Kontrastowo.pl, i.e. Tomasz Skorupa, Urszula Tuszyńska and Jakub ‘Hakobo’ Stępień, a cooperating person, say.

We all know what contemporary cemeteries in Poland look like. The solutions for gravestones are usually very typical and often stamp. The differences between them can be captured only in their details. Is it because of lack of ideas for this space? Perhaps, it is caused by the lack of courage and timidity to use a form different than the existing one. Such a gray place with lack of space filled with greenery does not create a friendly place for memories of our loved ones, who have passed away. Polish cemeteries are usually jungles of gray and black gravestones. It is hard to find the moment of silence, peace and reflection there. We are also often faced with a dilemma when trying to find gravestones, because they blend with adjacent surroundings. Or perhaps, it would be just enough to create a kind of landmarks, dominants in space that would form a trail.

MOVING AWAY FROM CLICHÉ

– We believe that people accept ugliness, because they do not know anything better. The structure of

our gravestones gives the possibility of choice – Lodz designers explain.

Their project attempts at recalling the beauty of crafts and confronting with modern technology of production. Simple, elegant and dignified shape. Their gravestone forms one consistent element. Developed by designers, a profile pattern refers to the medieval Gothic stained glasses in a modern style.

The idea of other nicer gravestone had existed in the designers' minds for a few years. Whenever the designers visited the cemeteries, they asked themselves: does it all have to be so heavy and stamp? Can we design gravestones in a better, different way?

In the spring of 2013, the concept of designer gravestone was mature enough. Over the next few months, they visited more than one hundred cemeteries in Europe. – We found more or less successful attempts to liberate from schemes. Some solutions were inspiring, but we had never found the monument corresponding to our assumptions – they recall.

FUNCTIONAL DESIGN

The prototypes of gravestones were created in the autumn of 2013. The designers worked as is their wont, i.e. from general to specific. In the first place, the general outline of shape was created.

Apart from traditional material such as stone, they focused on experimenting with modern materials (such as architectural concrete reinforced with glass fiber and granite with concrete, or concrete with epoxy resin). As a result, the monuments with consistent uniform shape, resistant to weathering and dirt, convenient to clean and durable had been created. Drainage of rainwater was also provided.

Functionality and durability are not enough. Therefore, the designers especially took care of the details – glass or basalt tombstone, colour palette and texture. The largest contributor to the final look of gravestones was Jakub ‘Hakobo’ Stępień, Lodz world-class poster artist, who treated the body as an artistic challenge. Jakub designed the theme of the profile, which introduces the narrative and gives the meaning to the form.

The combination of horizontal and vertical plates is rounded, and high vertical part obstructs the view of the rear part of adjacent gravestone. The design is made in a universal size and can be applied to a double grave. In comparison with analogous lump of stone, the design is characterised by low weight and integrated with storage compartment.

The customers choosing gravestones from Kontrastowo.pl have a wide range of colours and materials available. The gravestone made of genuine stone may also be available in an exclusive version. Epitaph table is made of tempered glass. This gives the opportunity to put a graphic design. The table can also be made of stone.



Urszula Tuszyńska and Tomasz Skorupa

TEAM

Tomasz Skorupa is a graduate of architecture, the originator of Kontrastowo.pl and the new form of gravestone. For many years, he has been running his own G3 Architekci architectural studio, which has performed dozens of artistic creations.

Urszula Tuszyńska is a graduate of the Lodz University of Technology (faculty of architecture and urban planning). She has been working as an architect for seven years. She finds in the design unobvious and surprising solutions, which are functional and tailored to individual customers' needs.

Jakub Stępień aka Hakobo belongs to the 50 most important poster artists in the world today (according to John Foster, author of the book 'New Masters of Poster Design'). He feels perfectly in visual identity, operations on the border of art and design, fashion and general graphic design.

BUILDING BLOCKS REPRESENTING MODERNITY

The designers' work has been appreciated by the galleries presenting the gravestone as an independent work. In July and August 2014, it was exhibited in BWA gallery in Wrocław at the Midnight Show exhibition during T-Mobile New Horizons Festival. The gravestone will be exhibited permanently as modern sculpture in the center of Old Town in Wrocław.

More and more customers are looking for news. Many of them would willingly risk placing a bolder gravestone, provided that it does not create chaotic and negative confrontation with the environment. The gravestone could present itself aesthetically and functionally. It is possible to create such projects, which become very real. If that helped to introduce a bit of freshness into typical Polish monotony, it is worth applauding.

– We think that our innovative gravestone will be sold mainly in large cities. Meanwhile, we are surprised to notice a lot of interest in them in small towns and villages, known for their conservative approach – the designers tell.

Owing to the first model gravestone, the designers were found by the customers for whom they create individual projects and other original monuments. It is the beginning of the road towards a better reality. The designers have more ideas for new products in other quite surprising industries. – Our country is still changing for the better. We want to add to these changes our creative Lodz building blocks – they add.



The city of chimneys

Steam machine (ca. 1910), interactive museum 'Kotłownia'

At the turn of the twentieth century, Lodz was overshadowed by chimneys belonging to textile industry factories. Dubbed 'the city of chimneys', this is the image of Lodz depicted in Andrzej Wajda's film 'The Promised Land'.

Visiting the exhibition titled 'Former Ludwig Geyer's Factory 1828-2002', you will be swept back in time. The show is in The White Factory, one of industrial plants owned by Geyer and is organised by the Central Museum of Textiles in Lodz (the History of Textiles and Industrial Textiles Departments) and the Regional Museum in Brzeziny.

FACTORIES

The exhibition is devoted to the oldest and longest running factory of cotton products. Ludwik Geyer, an immigrant from Saxony, established it in 1828 and, at first, operated on a small scale. As time passed, Geyer's efforts led to the development of the company. It was the first centralised, full-scale textile factory in Lodz. Up till then, no one had all stages of textile production housed under one roof. It was the biggest industrial company in the city for many years and was also the first to introduce modern, steam-driven spinning frames and looms. The power of the first steam engine, which propelled 300 machines, was 60 hp. But new engines were soon to arrive. In the 1920s, there were as many as seven steam-driven machines and a couple of electrical engines.

In its heydays, on the eve of World War I, the factories employed about 4.7 thousand people and returned 8.7 million roubles worth of textiles annually. Moreover, the factories were among the pioneers introducing social benefits for their workers. There were also educational, cultural and sports centres to go along. A school for children of factory workers was an ancillary to the factories, and so were: a library, medical clinic and a bath house. Between the Wars, the place accommodated a theatre and a sports club Geyer, which became KS Tęcza after World War II.

The post-war period saw the nationalisation of the plants, which were renamed F. Dzierżyński Cotton Industry Factories and were called so for years to come. In 1963 the company's logo was changed to incorporate an adorable penguin, and the name was enriched in the word 'Eskimo'. In the times of the Polish People's Republic, the company was among the biggest in the cotton industry. It specialised in the textiles produced for clothes (mainly cretonne and flannel), special purposes (drill for soldiers' battledress) and bookbinding. The factory lived to see the 1990s, but with political changes came the downfall of the company. Although it had employed as many as 6 thousand workers back in 1970, there were only



Revolving loom (ca. 1930), the exhibition 'Former Ludwik Geyer's Factory 1828–2002'

The Central Museum of Textiles in Lodz is one of the main tourist attractions in the city. It was appreciated in 2013 poll Seven New Wonders of Poland conducted by 'National Geographic Traveler' magazine, where it was a runner-up.

The Central Museum of Textiles entices with its regular cultural events, not least the International Triennial of Tapestry – world's oldest and biggest part-exhibition and part-contest promoting unique fabric. Geyer Music Factory – concerts staged in The White Factory's courtyard – is another regular event. Snuggling against the Central Museum of Textiles is an Open Air Museum of Lodz Wooden Architecture opened for visitors in autumn 2008. Standing along cobblestone streets, the museum presents buildings characteristic for Lodz from the turn of the twentieth century: a church, holiday villa, two-storey building for working classes and craftsmen houses. In building No. 6, you will find an exhibition titled 'In Mrs. Goldberg's Kitchen', and the remainder are arts and crafts studios.

500 people employed there in 2000, and in 2002 it was declared bankrupt.

EXHIBITION

Of all former Eskimo plants, the so called White Factory was chosen in the 60s to become the Central Museum of Textiles. The factory was started to be called White because it was the only one covered with plaster. Other factory buildings had red brick façades. One of the permanent exhibitions in the museum is devoted to the founder of the factory.

Entering the exhibition, you are welcomed by Ludwik Geyer's portrait. The show itself consists of two parts. The first takes a historical perspective presenting documents that testify to the scale of production and the size of employment; it shows images, maps of interiors and photographs featuring employees – men and women who had to work for nearly half a day, six days a week at that time. Ten-year-olds and older children are present in these pictures as well (it was prohibited to employ younger children). The prints and maps depict the extent of Ludwik Geyer's company.

The exhibition also holds a model of a steam-driven machine. Those interested in how the machine worked can learn this by visiting the exhibition's interactive part. If you are not interested in models but in the real thing, you can go and see an authentic, real size table used for printing patterns on the fabric. After some time, Geyer brought to Lodz a roller machine that could replace a hundred printing tables.

The second part of the exhibition is devoted to the process of production. It showcases a broad scope of textile products and designs. Since the first items produced in Geyer's factory did not survive to modern times, the oldest fabrics on show date back to the 1870s.

You will also see trade catalogues, catalogues of factory ware, specimens of fabric and finished products there. They illustrate the changes in methods, technology and designs from the early twentieth century until 2002.

It is but a fragment of a broader collection. Developing throughout decades, this collection came to be unique and most comprehensive in the way it documents the oldest and one of the biggest factories in Lodz and the way it presents changes shaking up the textile industry.

– Thinking about Ludwik Geyer, a question arises. Was Lodz a promised or a cursed land for him? Throughout his life, Geyer toiled away to build an empire, yet he died bankrupt – says Michał Sierba from the Central Museum of Textiles.

Photo: Paweł Lawreszuk

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LODZ PHILHARMONIC, PWSFTVIT CINEMA, MUSEUM OF THE CITY OF LODZ, POLESKI ART CENTRE AND GRAND THEATRE
WWW.TANSMAN.LODZ.PL

24TH 'MAN IN DANGER' MEDIA FESTIVAL IN LODZ

19–22 NOVEMBER

FILM MUSEUM, PL. ZWYCIĘSTWA 1
WWW.FESTIWALMEDIOW.ART.PL

16TH EXPLORERS FESTIVAL

19–23 NOVEMBER

UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY AUDITORIUM, AL. POLITECHNIKI 3A
WWW.EXPLORERSFESTIVAL.PL

8TH PULSE OF LITERATURE FESTIVAL

28 NOVEMBER – 8 DECEMBER

CENTRAL MUSEUM OF TEXTILES, UL. PIOTRKOWSKA 282
HOUSE OF LITERATURE, UL. ROOSEVELTA 17
WWW.PULSLITERATURY.PL

4TH INTERESTING BOOK EXHIBITION

28–30 NOVEMBER

LODZ INTERNATIONAL FAIR, UL. KS. SKORUPKI 21
WWW.TARGI.LODZ.PL

GLENN MILLER ORCHESTRA CONCERT

2 DECEMBER, 7.00 PM

GRAND THEATRE, PL. DĄBROWSKIEGO 1
WWW.OPERALODZ.COM

LAO CHE BAND CONCERT

5 DECEMBER, 8.00 PM

WYTWÓRNIĄ CLUB, UL. ŁĄKOWA 29
WWW.WYTWORNIA.PL

URBAN CHRISTMAS FESTIVAL

6 DECEMBER

ART FACTORY, UL. TYMIENIECKIEGO 3
WWW.URBAN-FESTIVAL.PL

CHRISTMAS FAIR AT PIOTRKOWSKA STREET

12–23 DECEMBER

UL. PIOTRKOWSKA
WWW.LODZ.PL

LENNY KRAVITZ'S CONCERT

15 DECEMBER

ATLAS ARENA, AL. BANDURSKIEGO 7
WWW.ATLASARENA.PL

PRESENTATION OF 'SNOW WHITE ON ICE'

18 DECEMBER

ATLAS ARENA, AL. BANDURSKIEGO 7
WWW.ATLASARENA.PL

MOSCOW CITY BALLET – 'NUTCRACKER'

18 DECEMBER, 7.00 PM

GRAND THEATRE, PL. DĄBROWSKIEGO 1
WWW.OPERALODZ.COM

'ALE KINO Z ALLA VIENNA' CONCERT

29 DECEMBER

MUSEUM OF THE CITY OF LODZ, POZNAŃSKI'S PALACE,
UL. OGRODOWA 15
WWW.MUZEUM-LODZ.PL

THE GRAND FINALE OF THE GREAT ORCHESTRA OF CHRISTMAS CHARITY

11 JANUARY

RYNEK MANUFAKTURY
WWW.WOSP.ORG.PL

GREAT MUSIC GALA OF JOHANN STRAUSS

19 JANUARY, 7.00 PM

ARTUR RUBINSTEIN LODZ PHILHARMONIC, UL. NARUTOWICZA 20/22
WWW.FILHARMONIA.LODZ.PL

STORYTELLING MACHINE – GRANDPARENTS' DAY

22 JANUARY, 6.00 PM

PINOCCHIO THEATRE, UL. KOPERNIKA 16
WWW.TEATRPINOKIO.PL

BOLSHOI MINSK BALLET

22 FEBRUARY, 3.00 PM

ARTUR RUBINSTEIN LODZ PHILHARMONIC, UL. NARUTOWICZA 20/22
WWW.FILHARMONIA.LODZ.PL

INTERBUD CONSTRUCTION FAIR, ROOFING EXHIBITION

27 FEBRUARY – 1 MARCH

EXPO-LODZ
WWW.INTERBUD.INTERNETSERVIS.PL,
WWW.EXPO-LODZ.PL