

Łódź

European Capital of Culture 2016

candidate



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PROJECT**

**SPECIAL ISSUE OF THE PERIODIC
FINANCE BY THE BUREAU OF PROMOTION,
TOURISM AND INTERNATIONAL
COOPERATION, CITY OF ŁÓDŹ OFFICE**

From the Editors

And so, already we have the second issue of Purpose – Entrepreneurship in Culture, dedicated to the endeavours of Łódź to win the European Capital of Culture 2016. A 'lot' has been happening over the past year, but has that 'lot' been significant and substantive enough to help us not only in the competition against other Polish cities for the title, but also in convincing the people of Łódź that our candidacy is a legitimate one?

The symbol of Łódź as a candidate for the title of European Capital of Culture 2016 has featured on the promotional material for the city's major culture events. The event organisers themselves made a point of this, which suggests that they are, indeed, not indifferent to the initiative to seek the title. The city of Łódź has organised a range of events directly promoting our candidacy; these were not, in themselves, spectacular, but they were noted by the regional media and, as a result, by the city's residents. As our editorial office sees it, the initiative to win the title has definitely passed from the hands of the project's instigators to those of the people of Łódź, including animateurs and artists. Thanks to them, the fire and enthusiasm to work toward winning the honour of the title has continued to blaze. Was this an intentional and planned-for effect, or simply a side effect of the forceful promotional campaign which has hit us over the previous year? We leave it to you, our readers and, primarily, to everyone responsible for the progress of the Łódź candidacy, to supply the answer to that question.

2009 has also abounded with events occurring under the auspices of the European Year of Creativity and Innovation 2009, launched by the European Parliament and managed in Poland by the Ministry of Education and the Educational System Development Foundation. Łódź was represented by such events as two conferences, Łódź – City of Innovation, organised by the City of Łódź Office, and Creative Industries – Culture, Business and Innovation, organised by Łódź Art Centre, and the Creative Self-Employment project, which was launched by our editorial office. Thematically speaking, all these projects hovered around the economic significance of culture, including, indirectly, the Łódź European Capital of Culture initiative. These events formed a substantive input to the process of trying to win the title, lending, as they did, not only a cultural, but also an economic and business dimension to our candidacy.

The issue of Purpose – Enterprise in Culture which you have before you now is an attempt to verify our city's preparations for the race to the title of European Capital of Culture 2016. The fever which has been stirred up around the process of going for the title has mobilised artists and animateurs to take a wider view of the events they organise, as instrumental in building the Łódź image. In the opinion of our editorial office, one thing that cannot be underestimated is the fact that our candidacy has generated the goodwill and acceptance of the people of Łódź. They have begun to identify with the vision of the city as the European Capital of Culture and it has also begun to matter to them that Łódź win this competition. And that is the great challenge which now faces the stewards of our city.

MACIEJ MAZERANT – EDITOR

The Honorary Committee

INTERVIEW: Artur Zagula

PHOTOS: Purpose

This edition carries interviews with members of the Honorary Committee, which supports the endeavours of Łódź to win the nomination for European Capital of Culture. Distinguished representatives of the cultural and political worlds number among the committee's membership. We can rejoice in the fact that it is not only great individuals from Poland who are lending their weight to the initiative, but also remarkable figures from beyond our country's borders, people like Richard Demarco and Daniel Libeskind. In the main, they are people with strong ties to our city, people who identify with it and genuinely have its fortunes at heart. Their emotional bonds with Łódź are also evident in the nature of what they have to say, now published here. A number of them do not, in fact, display an 'officially' optimistic face, but lay out specific problems which have emerged in connection with the city's candidacy. Not that this results in a pessimistic view of the possibility of winning the nomination. On the contrary, what seems to emerge is a deep engagement with the potential, coupled with a sense of the responsibility which goes hand in hand with it. We have taken these answers as genuinely 'promoting' the city, while not shirking the duty of indicating the challenges which lie before it. Publishing what they have to say here is proof that the city is approaching the competition without masking its image simply for the sake of Piarist propaganda. We hope that this will help Łódź prepare an even better candidacy and that our joint efforts will take us onward to the title.

Jacek Saryusz-Wolski

“ Łódź is a very good candidacy. We have a rich tradition, a wealth of culture on offer and superb artists.

JACEK SARYUSZ-WOLSKI, POLITICIAN

What are the ties which link you to Łódź? How would you define your attitude to the city?

I'm a man of Łódź, born and bred. I went to primary school here, and to the Nicolaus Copernicus High School, I studied in Łódź and I defended my Ph.D. at the Faculty of Economics and Sociology of the University of Łódź. I founded the European Institute here and I support countless initiatives that promote Łódź. My children were born in Łódź and grew up here. Łódź is my city and my home.

Looking at the issue from the viewpoint of the European Parliament, how is participation in culture of significance to the integration process? And, with reference to that, what significance would you ascribe to an incentive like the European Capital of Culture?

The EU is a cultural melting-pot, as is Łódź, as events like the Dialogue of Four Cultures Festival remind us.

Contrary to the stereotype, being in the EU means asserting one's national and local identity, and identity, to put it in simpler terms, is culture. It's actually this wide-ranging rationale behind cultural exchange which permits a better understanding of other societies' cultures, and that, in turn, makes collaboration in other fields easier. First and foremost, the European City of Culture nomination would make it possible to promote the culture of both Poland and Łódź; it would make it possible to emerge on the map of Europe, and not only as a multiple motorway junction, but also as a city with its own identity and culture.

What do you think of the Łódź candidacy for the European Capital of Culture? What are our city's strengths?

Is a very good candidacy. We have a rich tradition, a wealth of culture on offer and superb artists. Łódź has a very lively creative milieu, the Logos Theatre being one example. There's a young generation of avant garde

artists, for example, Łódź Kaliska, which is an excellent arts academy. When it comes to the world of film and so on, Łódź is a Mecca. And our multi-cultural roots also work in favour of our candidacy.

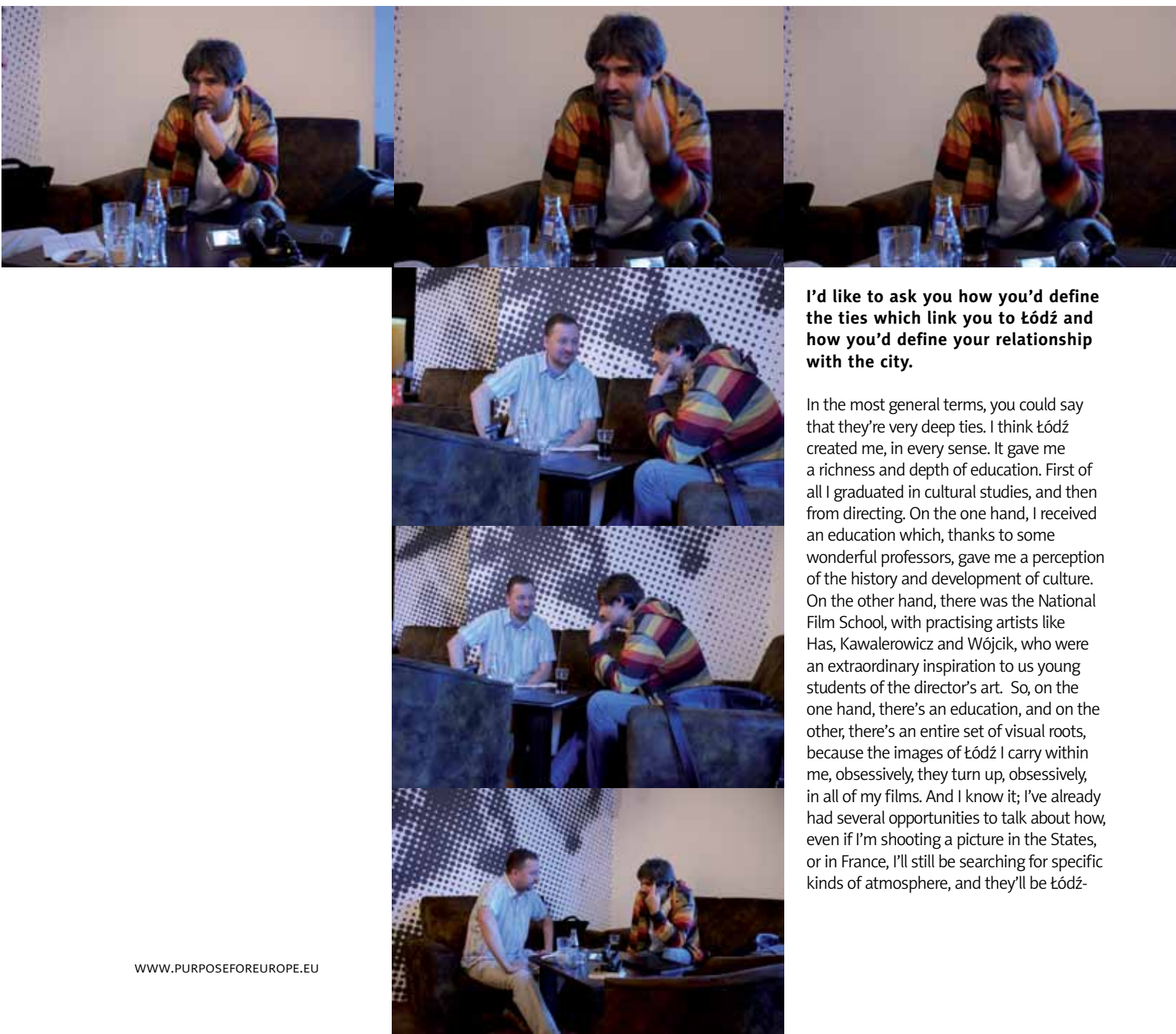
As a member of the Honorary Committee, how can you support the activities aimed at winning the nomination?

I've been actively supporting things on a variety of fora for a long time. In April 2009, in conjunction with the Łódź EC1 Foundation, I organised an exhibition entitled Parliamentary Street, which was held at the European Parliament in Brussels with the aim of promoting our culture and our city. There's an enormous amount of work ahead of us. And not only in terms of promoting Łódź within the European Union, which I'm engaged with as the Łódź MEP but also as regards the development of our city's cultural initiatives and its cultural infrastructure.

Piotr Trzaskalski

“ I believe that Łódź has strengths in the form of its cultural background, on account of such artists as Kobro, and Strzemiński, and the outstanding film artists.

PIOTR TRZASKALSKI, DIRECTOR



I'd like to ask you how you'd define the ties which link you to Łódź and how you'd define your relationship with the city.

In the most general terms, you could say that they're very deep ties. I think Łódź created me, in every sense. It gave me a richness and depth of education. First of all I graduated in cultural studies, and then from directing. On the one hand, I received an education which, thanks to some wonderful professors, gave me a perception of the history and development of culture. On the other hand, there was the National Film School, with practising artists like Has, Kawalerowicz and Wójcik, who were an extraordinary inspiration to us young students of the director's art. So, on the one hand, there's an education, and on the other, there's an entire set of visual roots, because the images of Łódź I carry within me, obsessively, they turn up, obsessively, in all of my films. And I know it; I've already had several opportunities to talk about how, even if I'm shooting a picture in the States, or in France, I'll still be searching for specific kinds of atmosphere, and they'll be Łódź-

type atmospheres, or for some particular gateways, or courtyards, or those expansive flats, with their connecting rooms, which are so typical of the old apartment buildings of Łódź. Łódź is engraved very deeply on my being, primarily in a visual sense – very much so – but also in terms of people; it may be that there's a specific type of actor I'll be looking for, an actor whose look, whose face, is typical of the people of Łódź, of the textile industry which is the town's heritage. I look for definite facial types, and the fact that I don't go for all of them results from having lived and functioned so close to these streets and these tram lines. I rode those trams with the first, second and third shifts, in the days when the pulse of life in Łódź was the textile industry, and the faces to be seen then weren't the faces you see now. Our community has grown better-looking, which doesn't mean it's got wiser, but it's better-looking. Those faces were faces with the story of a life behind them, while the faces I see now, from behind the car windscreen, because between times, I've changed my means of transport, they're not such good faces. Nonetheless, Łódź will always be my alma mater, and my starting point.

In that regard, what do you think of the Łódź candidacy for the European Capital of Culture? Which of the city's strengths might bring us closer to the title?

Of course, I'm really delighted that Łódź is going for the title and I'd really like it if it could find its place on the European map in this, or in any other, form. I think that Łódź deserves to be a European city. The question is whether we'll manage to do something so that Łódź becomes the European Capital in the bit of time left to us. There's very little time, it's like creating a national football team six months before the next match and after playing the previous one incredibly badly. The trainer's getting it together, poor bloke, whether he's called Beenhakker or whatever, and he has to do something with the boys, but there are, quite simply, no boys. To extend the metaphor, we have very little time to do something with this base, this material that is Łódź. I'd really like to, because I believe that Łódź has strengths in the form of its cultural background, on account of such artists as Kobro, and Strzemiński, and the outstanding film artists, who've created

the history of Polish cinematography over the past 50 years. For a city in this part of the world, we have a lot going for us. We have this gorgeous architecture, which is completely faded, has been let to go to rack and ruin, and which someone is slowly and timidly beginning to address; I think that if we were as shrewd as the Austrians, and if we had their money, we'd have another Vienna in Łódź, because we have the Secession, we have Neoclassicism and we have a very similar thinking on the way a town is laid out. Sadly, Łódź has always been unlucky. First there was Warsaw and the post-war reconstruction of the city, and then there were other initiatives, and that grey Łódź sort of stayed, like the song says. I hope that can change. I don't know which generation of Łódź's inhabitants will change it, I don't know if it'll be this one, but I do hope that something's beginning to stir.

Perhaps then, this is the context for me to ask about film-related issues? What's your perception of the changes which have occurred in the Łódź film industry? Is there any possible hope that, thanks to some kind of new initiative, we can regain the position which Łódź has, to an extent, lost?

In losing the film studios, Wytwórnice Filmów Fabularnych, Łódź lost a great deal. Because the film school wasn't lost, luckily, though it was touch and go, since there have been some wild ideas there. The school keeps the City going, pulls it onward, and isn't it the last such historical 'steam engine' giving the city its world and European citizenship papers from the word go? However, it's difficult to say whether the Łódź Philharmonic, or the Łódź music and visual arts scenes make the European grade that the film school does, despite their enormous efforts. Right now, we have the Łódź film school and we have the Camerimage festival, to an extent, and, from what I've heard, that's supposed to be relocating, which is also a huge misunderstanding. Nevertheless, it's a pity that there was no concept for Wytwórnice Filmów Fabularnych, because they provided an industrial base. The Barnadov studio managed brilliantly, the Czechs came up with superb ideas about how to sell themselves in Europe's so-called west. The Americans, the French, the Italians, they all go to Barandov to make films, lay down the sound tracks,

and do the special effects, because it's cheap. That never occurred to us in the midst of the heated argument so typical of us, of the Poles. We missed a chance. Sometimes it happens that, just like a person, a city has to make its moment. If it stops being focussed and misses its chance, that can spell the end. I'm frightened that we, as a city, might have missed our moment.

You're a member of the honorary committee supporting the city's efforts to win the title. How to you see the potential for further support? Do you envisage working on projects which are connected with Łódź and which could contribute toward strengthening our candidacy?

Returning to the topic of film, I'm really delighted by the existence of the Łódź Film Fund. That's a wonderful thing, the fact that it's possible to finance feature films and documentaries. There aren't many cities which have decided to create such a fund, but Łódź has one.

To sum up. In my fleeting experience, events like the Dialogue of Four Cultures Festival give rise to the sad perception that here in Łódź, we are brilliant at quarrelling and divisiveness, brilliant. The way one Łódź citizen manages to fall out with the next is exceptional. If the standard of cantankerous contentiousness we hold in our Łódź hearts were an assessment criterion for this competition, then I reckon our victory would be signed, sealed and delivered. The contentiousness factor is so amazingly advanced here that it could quite happily serve as a strength. But, as we know, it isn't. I think that, if an 'ecumenical' initiative were to be launched, uniting all those public bodies that are so at odds with each other, and if the municipal officials and the officials of the regional Chief Executive's office were to open their hearts to such a 'Close all the gaps' initiative, then that would be a wonderful thing. If it weren't necessary to wait for the decision, if it were to come straight away and not after some period of whole months, then I reckon that Łódź would be faster off the mark and would make it to the tape, and far more successfully, at that. I think that, in spite of everything, some spark of hope does exist and at least if we lose then, as Wojciech Jerzy Has says, it's as well to fall from a great height, and if we fall, at least it'll be from the European heights. That's if we fall, of course. Touch wood...

Józef Robakowski

“ There are a couple of strong characters in this city and they build the prestige of the city in their own way, i.e. privately.

JÓZEF ROBAKOWSKI, ARTIST



What are your ties to Łódź? How would you define your relationship to the city?

My relationship has lasted quite long, I have lived here since 1947. I lived in 1st of May Street and went to elementary school in Gdańsk Street. I came here from Gdynia, so Łódź seemed very interesting through the eyes of a child. There were more cinemas here than anywhere else in Poland, and I liked the movies very much; there was the wonderfully constructed steel parachute tower, which my older brother jumped from, and of course ŁKS football club. School was also interesting, although it was in a squalid tenement with a tiny yard. Also *Wicka and Wacka*, was published here, a wonderful story, which I bought on the corner of Gdańsk Street and 1 May Street. I had a colleague named Kozłowski, and we built a complex projection apparatus. My second meeting with Łódź was the year 1966, when I got into the Film School. Earlier I applied here in 1958, but then I dropped out after the second stage in the selection. After my higher education studies in Toruń I got into the Operator Faculty and from that moment began a new era in my life. I wanted to get into the school very much because it was international in nature, because there was already a focus on new media, in which I realised myself artistically in Toruń. At the University we had a strong grouping of the photographic art group Zero-61 and "Pętla" [Loop] – film club. I suspect that these amateur actions in Toruń were the inspiration for the creation of the independent artistic agreement PWSFTv and T, or Workshop of Film Form. In Łódź, during the very first year of studies we knew that something like that must be set up in the School, because in the late '60s there was a political and programmatic crisis at that school. It's only today that we can see the key role played by the Workshop of Film Form in Polish contemporary art. So I have sunk very deep roots here, I decided to live here and tied myself with this city for good.

What do you think about the candidacy of Łódź as European Capital of Culture? What are the advantages of our city?

In my opinion, there are not many advantages. The advantage is still the most famous establishment, the Museum of Art, maybe also the Film School which, however, in my opinion is losing its international

prestige a little. Although the school itself is in good shape, it is developing, it has created a lot of new departments, it is economically strong, and its myth still works. But this is no longer the myth of the elite school which raised so many outstanding directors and operators. That would be the two places. There also exists a fairly strong theatrical and musical movement, but it's worse now with the literary and artistic community. This fragile artistic environment can meet at some opening such as Atlas of Art and it turns out that it is some 60-70 people. I tried to somehow extend it, animating such situations associated with the Jewish community. I made a website for Jung Idysz, but it made no difference. There is a website, it is very nice, well-functioning, but when I tried to establish closer contact with this environment, once again it turned out that it is small.

Do you think there is a visible policy of changing the image of the city from an industrial centre to one of new technologies and cultural industries? How do the visual arts participate in this?

I can't see it happening. All the time in our city we have misunderstandings within the government. These are not good "rows", everything affects Poland, and we are all waiting and hoping that this will change. These "actions" are extremely detrimental to the whole artistic community. The other day they took away from us the house of the Association of Creators of Culture, the popular SPATIF where we used to meet. The city gave us nothing in return. This caused the irreversible breakdown of a community active in the 1970s and 1980s. At this moment it is extremely difficult to create such an environment, because it requires its own sense of independence from the domineering administration. It's this bad aura, despite the fact that there are new places, that causes immobility and nostalgia. It could seem that thanks to the new facility MS2 it will be better, but these changes take place too sluggishly because the characteristic energy and unselfishness of the community have evaporated away somewhere. If one looks carefully at the functioning of the so-called Łódź culture, these "administrative" gestures are in my opinion just going through the motions, they do not bring genuine satisfaction to people of culture who work here. It seems to me

that it is difficult for the new director to build a creative environment because it is a long complicated process. I look at these weak changes with little optimism. So I prefer to be a resident of Łódź in my own way. There are a couple of strong characters in this city and they build the prestige of the city in their own way, i.e. privately. And these private gestures are strong and authentic, which is why sometimes people talk about Łódź.

Do you believe that Łódź has lost somewhat its strength in the field of art in relation to the former times, e.g. the time of Ryszard Stanisławski in the Museum of Art?

At this time, as I said, there is no integrated community, it broke up, it has been alienated. It has lost the momentum which it had in the 1970s. At that time we took pride in the fact that it was a multimedia city, that only here an event such as the international exhibition "Construction in Process" could take place. Now in these nostalgic moods it is hard to build something of value, which is why I think that the Biennale organised by command of the Łódź authorities also has a small chance of success. There are no longer people here who willingly do something for free, will organise major artistic events, lose their precious private time.

In what way as an honorary member do you support activities in order to obtain the title? Do you expect to see projects in the near future connected with Łódź as a city of culture.

Actually I'm really a dummy member. After two years since I agreed to it, we are now speaking for the first time. This explains a certain indifference on my part, which now manifests itself in this matter. There is a lack of close communication, a lack of willingness to mobilise the members of the honorary committee to carry out activities on behalf of Łódź as a European Capital of Culture.

Thank you very much.

Michał Urbaniak

“ In spite of the fact that I was born in Warszawa, I’m a Łódź man through and through, because I was brought up in Łódź and my home was here for virtually the whole of my youthful life.

MICHAŁ URBANIAK, MUSICIAN



I'd like to ask you how you'd define the ties which link you to Łódź and how you'd define your attitude to the city.

In spite of the fact that I was born in Warszawa, I'm a Łódź man through and through, because I was brought up in Łódź and my home was here for virtually the whole of my youthful life. But it was also here that I realised it's a small world and that I wouldn't be here for long. The truth is that I find it difficult to stay put in one place. And if I have to take a break somewhere, then for me, Manhattan's the place. Some people go for the Riviera, or Southern Italy, both nice places; Switzerland – it's worse there than in Poland under communism – and I speak from experience, because I've lived everywhere there. So yes, Łódź is more my home town.

Do you think we have a chance, as Łódź, to win the European Capital of Culture nomination? What's your perception of the city's strengths?

The strengths are great ones, it's a wonderful city, a vibrant city, and one tragedy, possibly the greatest, is the fact that it's either too close to Warsaw, or too far away. Communications mean that the two are drawing closer to each other, for better and for worse. I'm afraid that, in these circumstances, it'll be Warszawa which will usurp the right to be the capital of culture, even if only because it's the capital. There are certain areas where Warszawa has a monopoly. Łódź has great potential, particularly in terms of culture, bearing in mind, for example, Oscars, Grammys and other such awards which a terrific number of people from Łódź have won. The only thing is, their journeys to collect them, well, they left from Austria, Germany, New York and even from Warszawa, and not from the Łódź that shaped them.

How do you feel about the policy of changing the city's image from that of an industrial centre to that of a centre of new technology and creative industries? Do you think it can succeed?

I know nothing about economics, and actually, considerations of that issue are probably the most crucial. But given that it was so easy to get rid of all the industrial and manufacturing centres and transform them into shops and culture centres, it's a good thing, perhaps. I'm not aware of how those calculations were made, but someone must have made the calculations and made the plans. It would have been sheer puerility if nobody had done so.

You're a member of the honorary committee supporting the city's endeavours to win the nomination for European Capital of Culture. Do you plan to work on any projects connected with Łódź which could help us in the attempt?

Yes. I have a foundation here (www.urbaniak.com), where we do work in the areas of developing new music technology and musical education; we also work on education in terms of the culture of rhythmic music, which is very low among both students and performers in Poland. It looks a lot healthier in other European countries and purely excellent in the States.

What's your take on the development of the Łódź music scene? And what do you think of the Łódź Philharmonic, where you played the culminating concert of the Kolory Polski [Polish Colours] festival, not long after the Kronos Quartet's concert? Is the Philharmonic opening itself up to new trends...?

The Philharmonic which everyone awaited... The Philharmonic has been open to new trends for a long time. In Częstochowa, in 1995, I was one of the artists who opened the door on the fashion for various types of musicians to appear in conjunction with a philharmonic orchestra. It was then that a rapper performed together with a symphony orchestra for the first time in history. It was a tremendous moment, but, with hindsight, it was also a tremendous event, one which gave countless others the courage to undertake similar experiments. We toured the world in a variety of

set-ups, with the rapper and without, with the string section, and we educated... it was like it used to be in the depths of communism, when I was very young and, for ten months a year, there were performances for schools, rehearsed by ten philharmonic orchestras, and one week per month was devoted to Jazz and we had the pleasure of touring the villages and small towns with musical lectures and examples of what Jazz is. It was a brilliant thing and it's a pity that it doesn't still happen today. On the one hand, Jazz has expanded to incorporate hip hop and some contemporary trends which swing just like Jazz swings; in other words, they have the same culture of rhythm, the same kind of lead, the same kick, and the same kind of sway. But there's also a lot of pseudo music; like the Ministry of Culture asked me if I could do a project with Jazz and Chopin. I said "No." Chopin and Jazz, that's an excess of abuse, it makes it impossible to receive either the one or the other. Hip Hop and Chopin, now that might be an idea; it'd give a concrete audience the chance to find out who Chopin is, particularly abroad, where a generation of young people think he's a French composer.

Thank you very much.

Łódź

**PHOTOS: PIOTRKOWSKA STREET (JACEK KUSIŃSKI P. 15, ARCHIVE UMŁ P. 16-17,
MANUFATURA GATE CLOCK (MACIEJ KAWCZYŃSKI P. 18); PALACE OF IZRAEL
POZNANSKI (MACIEJ KAWCZYŃSKI P. 19)**







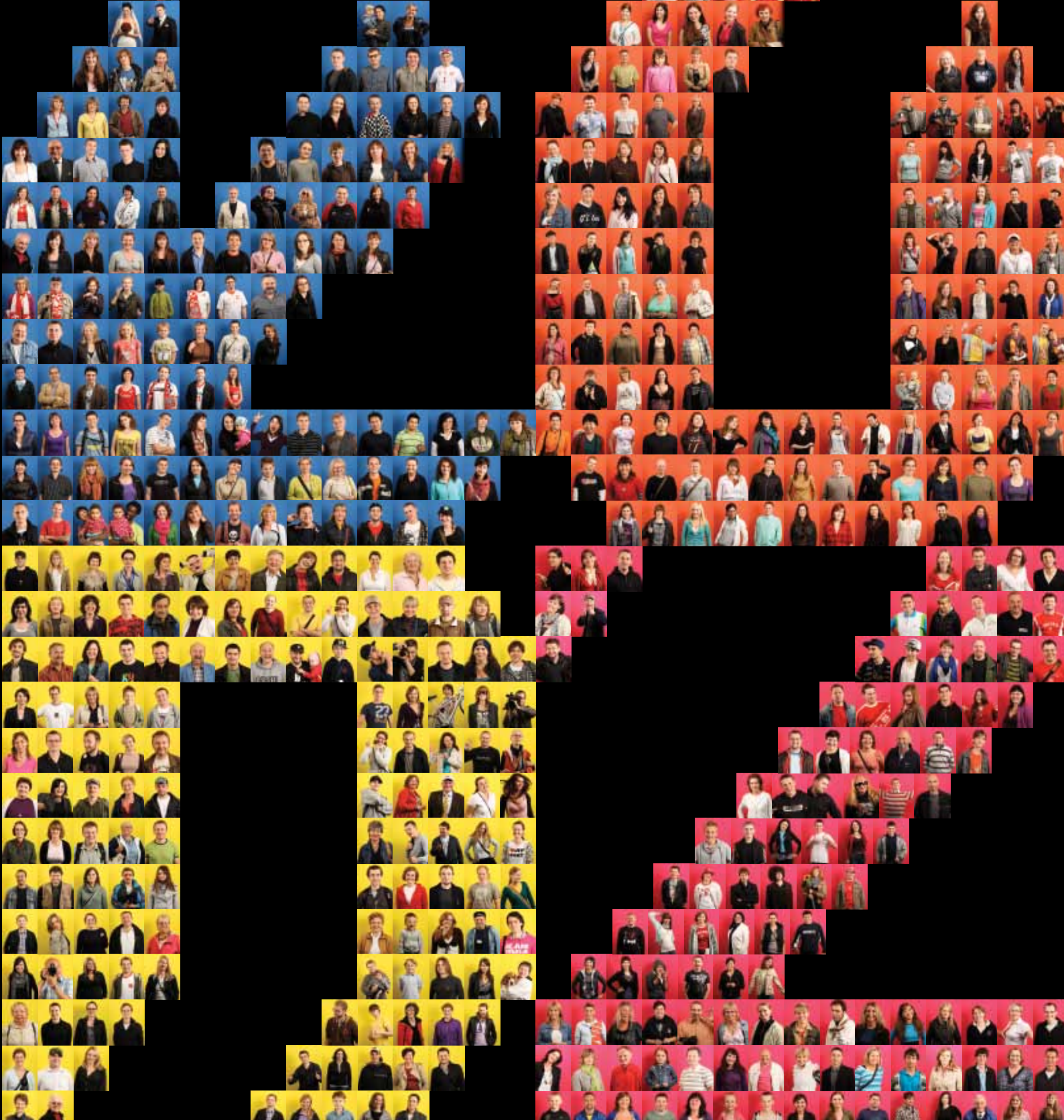




2016

European Capital of Culture – candidate

PHOTOS: CANAL MUSEUM TUBE (MACIEJ KAWCZYŃSKI P. 22-23); BOOKSTORE LOWERCASE MS2 MUSEUM (P. TOMCZYK P. 24); STAIRCASE MS2 MUSEUM (P. TOMCZYK P. 25); ŁÓDŹ DESIGN 2009 – INTERNATIONAL DESIGN FESTIVAL (ŁUKASZ PIERNIKOWSKI P. 26-27); ROGER DEAKINS WORKSHOP – PLUS CAMERIMAGE 2008 (GRZEGORZ PIEKARSKI, FESTIVAL ARCHIVE P. 28-29); WHITE FACTORY BY NIGHT (MACIEJ KAWCZYŃSKI P. 30-31)























The European Capital of Culture – Objectives, Facts and Procedures

TEXT: Artur Zagula

Europejska
Stolica
Kultury



The European Capital of Culture initiative appears to be the most recognised common cultural project of the member states. There is a number of events which are internationally renowned including film festivals (Cannes, Berlin, Venice), music festivals (Glastonbury, Eurovision, Roskilde), theatre festivals (Avignon, Edinburgh) or other artistic events (biennale or art fairs). However, none of these events are strictly an EU project. The European Capital of Culture project initiated by Melina Mercouri, Greek Minister of Culture, from its origins in 1985, was aimed at cultural exchange and support for cultural events within the European Union.

The initiative was destined to succeed as its objectives bring benefits to all participants. In a way it was a natural step on the road to European integration, which started with economic collaboration (European Coal and Steel Community) and today integrates states and nations on every level. Nowadays culture shapes a European's awareness to the same extent as the economy or politics. Facilitating cultural understanding and exchange became as inevitable as getting to know each other and

becoming familiar with the culture. The cultural diversity of European states and nations may come to the surface through the project thereby contributing to a deeper understanding of each other. Citizens of the EU member states have a chance to learn about what typifies a given country and Capital that hosts the events. This develops a feeling of belonging to the same community. European added value is a topical issue nowadays which should be recognised by all events in the European Capital of Culture. This type of cooperation goes beyond local, regional or national interests and is possible only on condition that all the projects are based on the exchange of experience

recommendations were finally applied in the year 2006 when the actions of the European Capital of Culture projects for the years 2007-2019 were determined. Since then, national competitions are being organised and the applications from candidate cities are assessed by a panel of experts consisting of both EU-appointed professionals and those selected by the member state in question.

Let us now present the stages in the competition procedure for the European Capital of Culture 2016. The initial stages were already completed. On 26th and 27th of January 2009 Information Day and workshops for candidate cities took place

will meet these deadlines. Applications need to be made in two languages – English and Polish and then sent to the Polish Ministry of Culture and National Heritage, which organises the competition. The Ministry sends copies of the applications to the experts who assess them. In addition, the cities have an opportunity to make a 30 minute presentation during the first meeting of the panel of experts. If the city passes the initial selection phase, it then has nine months to prepare a detailed programme of events for the year 2016. And again, like in the first stage, the cities send the detailed applications and make a presentation during the meeting. The experts visit the candidate countries before making the final decision.

The initiative was destined to succeed as its objectives bring benefits to all participants.

and ideas on a European level. This is why the objectives the candidate cities face transcend the physical borders of a single country. What is particularly significant is to retain one's own character and yet show their European membership at the same time.

As mentioned before, the European Capital of Culture initiative dates back to the 80s. It had a cross-governmental character initially and the choice of the European City of Culture, as the title was then called, was made unanimously by the representatives of the member states, i.e. Ministers of Culture. After 1999, the procedure was changed and the Council of the European Union, European Parliament, European Commission and the Committee of the Regions became involved. Together with the Culture 2000 program, the European City of Culture was renamed to the European Capital of Culture. After EU enlargement, it was decided that two Capitals would be chosen – one from the “new” and one from the “old” member states. The new situation brought about a reform of the project and a change in the nomination procedure. A special report prepared by the Committee on Culture, Youth, Education, the Media and Sport presented by Michel Rocard helped to implement the reform. Its

in Kraków and on 5th of May, a similar Information Day was organised in the European Commission in Brussels. The Ministry of Culture and National Heritage will formally announce the competition for the title of the European Capital of Culture in the fourth quarter of this year. The deadline for applications is the third quarter of 2010. Next, a meeting of experts will take place, where an initial selection will be made and a shortlist of the best candidates created. At this point a report will be prepared indicating possible changes in the plans proposed by the candidates. To conclude, the final selection will take place in the third quarter of 2011. Having made their applications more detailed and after amendments, the cities will present their candidature to a panel of specialists and await the decision. After the choice has been made, Poland will inform the European institutions and the European Parliament will release a statement on the nominated city. After the entire procedure, in the second quarter of 2012, the Ministers of Culture of the member states, having read the recommendation of the European Commission based on the report of the panel of experts and the opinion of the European Parliament, will make the final decision.

As can be seen from the above, not much time is left to prepare the applications and it is now a priority to ensure our work

Finally, let us talk about funding matters. Past experience shows that the project is funded not only by the city itself, but also by regional and central authorities. The only direct subsidy from the European Union is the Melina Mercouri award given to the winning city. The award amounts to 1.5 million euro. Clearly, other funding opportunities from EU programmes are available, including The Culture Programme 2007-13, Media 2007, Youth in Action and Europe for Citizens. Optimal utilisation of this funding will undoubtedly be one of the crucial elements in the competition procedure. It seems the business side of the project is nearly as important as the content of the applications. Even the most ambitious artistic projects cannot materialise if proper funding is not secured.

Information based on the publication by Polish Ministry of Culture and National Heritage “Europejska Stolica Kultury Polska 2016. Krok po kroku” (European Capital of Culture Poland 2016. Step by step) prepared by Joanna Sanetra-Szeliga and Agata Etmanowicz.

Responsibility with Profit in Mind...

INTERVIEW: Maja Ruszkowska-Mazerant

Paintings, sculptures, musical works, virtual sightseeing, films, adverts... what is it that links creative industry with these products and creative services from within the culture sector? The fact that they are being introduced on to the market by commercial companies. Is this, in its own way, a kind of social responsibility on the part of the companies? Or does it represent operations conducted on a calculated, for-profit basis? Or, perhaps, both the one and the other? Our interviews with the people managing the Atlas Sztuki Gallery of Contemporary Art, Grupa Fabricum Travel and Events, and Portal MegaTotal.pl (SFeRa) provide some answers to these questions.

For over a year now, Łódź has been campaigning to promote the city's endeavours to win the title of European City of Culture 2016. Could your gallery's work serve as an element in promoting the Łódź City of Culture 2016 project?

Jacek Michalak (The Atlas Sztuki): Of course it could. The life of Łódź, as a city, is made up of myriad elements and culture is one of them. The work of Atlas Sztuki is intended to have an impact on the city's image. It's obvious that the gallery's activity can be utilised as an element promoting the Łódź City of Culture 2016 project, just like the activities of other set-ups working in the cultural sphere. Diversity is a crucial factor in our lives.

Aleksander Pawlak (The MegaTotal.pl website): The MegaTotal.pl website is a nationwide venture, though, in fact, it's even managed to

spread beyond Poland's borders and gain recognition abroad. The users are mainly young people, open to new ideas and actively engaged in one of the aspects of culture which is the music scene. They're either artists looking to break into the market, or they're fans who want to help young, and often completely unknown, people to be successful. So they play an active part in cultural life like that, or in some other way.

Even though MegaTotal.pl is open in terms of what we cover, still, we often emphasise that it's located in Łódź, because the site's founders have very close ties to the city; they were working musicians, music and radio journalists and university-type lecturers. So we try to support local initiatives, give the community a wake-up call and promote local artists. Thanks to MegaTotal.pl, Łódź artists like wariacje.pl, Tosteer, Samokhin Band, Evenement, and Catarsis will

all be releasing albums in the very near future. Some of them have already made a name for themselves, for others that's still to come. But with all of them, the fans will associate them with Łódź and MegaTotal.pl. So an active, culture-focused community, like our website's users, can make an excellent medium for helping to promote the concept of Łódź as European Capital of Culture.

Anna Mokrosińska-Fudała (The Museum of the Factory): The Museum of the Factory represents an integral part of the material heritage of Łódź and is firmly connected with its cultural identity. Many tasks we undertake such as temporary exhibitions, meetings among various circles, workshops for children, promotion of artists-designers can safely encompass a wider strategy of promoting the culture of Łódź – this is also true in the context of efforts to secure the title.

Responsibility with Profit in Mind...



Museum of the Factory
PHOTO: Marcin Romański
Grupa Fabricum



Exhibition (Wojciech Fangor)

PHOTO: The Atlas Sztuki

Exhibition (Wojciech Fangor)

PHOTO: The Atlas Sztuki

Is it possible to create one's own individual programme within the context of Łódź City of Culture, a programme which might support the endeavour? To what extent is the private investor interested in seeing his or her own policy through, and to what extent does he or she wish to become involved with community cultural activities? It's a given that municipal cultural institutions have to commit themselves to a programme like this. But your gallery doesn't have to, so the question is, do you want to? What's your collaboration with the city like?

Jacek Michalak: In terms of culture, the relationship between the public and private spheres isn't a simple one. It's my belief that it's very much easier for public institutions. That's a statement which, to many, may well seem not to be true. But that's how it is. And the money floating around in the public sphere isn't exactly trifling. The problem is spending it rationally. Łódź being nominated European City of Culture will be a great success. I can't imagine not having contributed to the achievement. Anyone who thinks rationally will want to participate in it. So far, there's been no collaboration between the institution I run and the city. Attempts on our part to establish something have had no effect whatsoever.

Aleksander Pawlak: Private investors' involvement in community cultural activities may come about as a result of a love of the arts, an eye to profit. Best of all is a mix of both those motives! In our case, it's more a matter of the first one. The MegaTotal.pl project itself was more about making a dream come true than the result of precise business calculation. Confirmation that this was the right road to choose in a commercial sense only came later! Our website was created within the framework of SFeRa modern media solutions, which is a group of people who've always operated in areas related to culture and the arts – music, theatre and film. This is also why MegaTotal.pl isn't the only example of our involvement in creative cultural

activities. We've supported the Charlie Cinema and the Stefan Jaracz Theatre in Łódź for years, we're founding members of the Łódź Film Association and the concept behind the establishment of Media Klaster was our incentive. We work closely with the National Film School here in Łódź and run the Łódź Film Commission website. We act as partners in bringing smaller and larger events, like the Łódź Alternative Festival and the Pepsi Vena Music Festival, to life. And, from the other side of the coin, we're winners of the Łódź Proposes – Creative and Innovative competition. So collaboration with the city and with its cultural institutions is a singularly important facet of the company's overall profile.

Anna Mokrosińska-Fudała: As far as we are concerned, the range of activities we pursue is defined by the character of the place and the mission statement of our organisation. The organisation is managed by us but owned by a private investor. Manufaktura, the owner of the Museum, had and still does express an interest in social and cultural activities. This results from the historic character of the site it utilises. This interest is manifested not only by patronage over the Museum of the Factory but also by participation in organising cultural events, e.g. Friends of the Nowy Theatre Go Outside. Our company consists of a few people and serves just an organisational and executive role. Nevertheless, we have our own creative input in the programme of events. However, the ultimate decision always rests with the owner. The town hall acknowledged some of our initiatives – e.g. The Textile Worker Days – and includes information about our organisation in their promotional material as a professionally run institution. This means a lot. Public museums identify opportunities for cooperating with us. However, a more strategic vision of cooperation is what is missing I think. Decisions in these matters fall outside our remit.

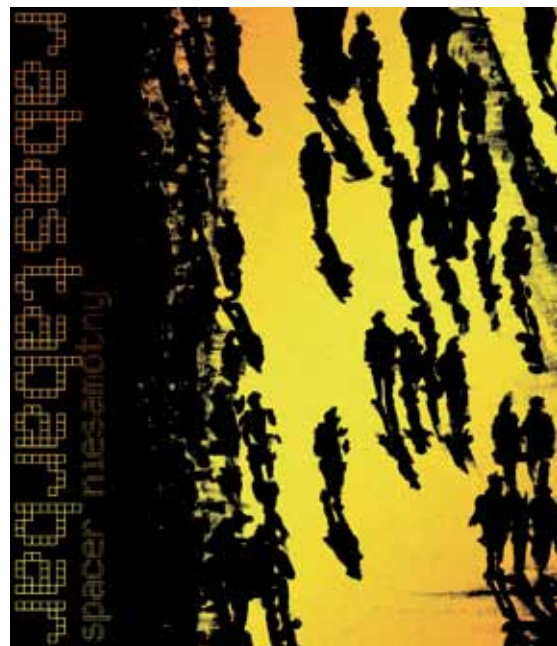
To that end, can you tell us about any events planned for the coming year

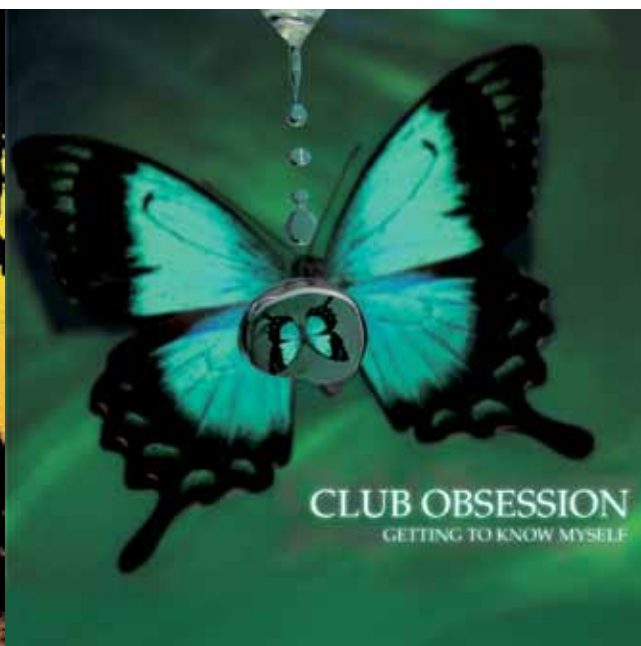
which will be closely connected with Łódź? Or about any which, in your opinion, will have a positive impact on the city's image as a home of culture?

Jacek Michalak: During the 2009/2010 season, Atlas Sztuki will be showing the work of Wojciech Fangor, Sławek Belina, Krzysztof Wodiczko, Stanisław Fijałkowski, Andres Serrano and Anka Leśniak. It's a good offer. Stanisław Fijałkowski and Anka Leśniak are residents of Łódź.

Aleksander Pawlak: Over the next eighteen or so months, apart from our purely Internet-related operations, MegaTotal.pl plans to turn up the heat on activities connected with music. We want to get seriously involved in organising and co-organising small, medium and large-scale events. While we tend to be patrons of events like that in more distant regions of the country, being located in Łódź makes this the place where we'll be directly involved, and on a larger scale.

Anna Mokrosińska-Fudała: We are planning to consolidate the relationship with those groups for which the existence of The Museum of the Factory offers a chance to integrate and promote their achievements. We also maintain social awareness of some of the values represented by these groups. I have in mind a large number of former employees of the big textile factories, which do not exist anymore, artists-designers, historians, students of fashion or NGOs dealing with regional education. Each of these groups has an opportunity to cooperate with us during various educational ventures and exhibitions. We treat internal promotion as a crucial aspect of the preparatory stage in securing the European Capital of Culture title to Łódź in 2016. Without a long term plan of awareness-raising events for the people of Łódź and the preparation of various groups to participate in the creation and utilisation of culture – all the above efforts are futile.





The Institute – Invisible Walls of Sound
 Rabastabarbar – Unlonely Walk
 Club Obsession – Getting to Know Myself
 NuSoulCity – White Chocolate pt.1

Creative Alternative

TEXT: Maciej Mazerant

Łódź reviews its potential. Undoubtedly, the stimulus that made us sit up and pay attention to the issues of creativity and innovation was the European Year of Creativity and Innovation established by the European Parliament. An important factor for the credibility of activities related to the creative sector pursued in Łódź is the setup of the magazine Purpose – Entrepreneurship in Culture, which has been in circulation for nearly 5 years.



Liberty Square
PHOTO: Paweł Wojtyczka

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The conclusions from the Congress of Polish Culture that took place in Kraków are crucial for the Polish economy and the creative sectors in Poland. Personalities from the world of culture and the economy discussed the economic significance of creative activity, including the significance of the culture and creative sectors in giving Poland an advantage internationally. The main demands of the Congress of Polish Culture included an increase in funding for culture, a change in the resource distribution system as well as the possibility of utilisation of public resources by private entities.

In the last two years artists and culture managers became increasingly aware of the fact that the culture needs to become more market-oriented. However, this new awareness does not equate to an increased acceptance of it. Market orientation treated not as commercialisation but as a phenomenon which necessitates an entrepreneurial approach to the process of distribution of cultural products and services (including both works of art and cultural events). Decision makers at a central and regional level started to notice the need to increase the economic independence of cultural bodies. Currently, EU funding stimulates their development, but once all the EU funding has been allocated, cultural entities may fall into financial difficulty in order to maintain the infrastructure and human resources needed for the creative process at the stage they are currently at. Clearly, that “care” results primarily from the concern that once the stream of EU funding dries up, there will be no money for cultural events in the budgets of the cities, districts or municipalities. The market

orientation of the cultural sector and the increased entrepreneurship of artists will result in a more dynamic development of the creative sector in Poland. It is encouraging news that studies have been carried out which will form a basis for that process.

It must pool the forces and resources responsible for culture, entrepreneurship and promotion in the form of, for instance, the regional brand Creative Łódź.

The Ministry of Culture and National Heritage commissioned “Reports on the Condition of Culture” regarding the management of cultural institutions, cinema, the protection of national heritage, museums, design and education. The reports were published as part of the Congress of Polish Culture and directly and indirectly deal with the economic significance of culture and the development of the creative sector.

“Needs analysis and the development of creative industries” – a study commissioned by the Ministry of Economy with the aim of conducting an assessment and needs analysis of creative industries in Poland.

The “Poland 2030 – Development Challenges” report indicates the key role of creativity, common in the sphere of culture, in the development of Poland prepared by a team of experts led by Michał Boni – a culture sociologist and Head of the Board of Strategic Advisors to the Prime Minister of Poland.

Once a comprehensive report has been prepared about the potential of human resources in the creative sector, we will then be able to announce that we are fully prepared to begin the transformation of the image of the Polish economy – from an economy based on cheap labour to a knowledge based economy.

Polish companies create innovative solutions – not only on a European scale but internationally. A good example would be Łódź-originated enterprises: MegaTotal.pl music portal. Sfera, the

company which owns the portal, brings together amateur producers, musicians and their fans thereby creating mutual benefits – releasing an album and bringing in profits (music industry). Decode Łódź project (operated by MobileMS) makes it possible to do

sightseeing tours of the city with your own guide at all times of the day and night thanks to the application of photocodes and mobile phones (cultural tourism industry). Such studies indicate potential activities and present good practices and by making them available, we stimulate the release of creativity of a larger number of Poles.

The European Year of Creativity and Innovation plays a merely promotional role and is utilised by many institutions, companies and cities. Besides, the project allows many interesting business enterprises from the creative sector to come into being. It is important that Łódź maintains its decision to support the creative sector in the future. It must pool the forces and resources responsible for culture, entrepreneurship and promotion in the form of, for instance, the regional brand Creative Łódź. It is the last chance to transform our city into a capital of creativity and at the same time underpin the candidature of Łódź to the title of the European Capital of Culture in the year 2016.

The text was based on information from the following websites:

<http://www.kongreskultury.pl/title,pid,136,oid,787.html>

<http://www.kreatywnisamozatrudnieni.pl/przewodnik.html?artid=21>

<http://www.mg.gov.pl/O+ministerstwie/Zamowienia+publiczne/Przetargi+MG/creative+industries.htm>

<http://www.miastoinnowacji.Lodz.pl/Dobre-praktyki/Strona-2.html>

<http://www.innowacje2009.pl/galeria-projektow>

<http://www.purpose.com.pl/>

<http://www.polska2030.pl/>

Magnetic Force

TEXT: Monika Ptańska

The principle of the European Capital of Culture 2016 is the promotion of the city, region and country. Its objective is to create integration processes and bring countries together by presenting the most characteristic cultural aspects of each city. Łódź was one of the first cities in Poland which began efforts to obtain the title in the year 2016. 2009 is a year that intensive promotion of the project begins.



Monika Ptańska
PHOTO: Hanna Zubrzycka

1. www.lodz2016.com website

In 2009, the Internet portal promoting Łódź as the European Capital of Culture 2016 was significantly extended. The new website is more audiovisual and dynamic. A new feature is that each article or event can be commented on by visitors and discussion on a given topic is also possible. A user can subscribe to RSS, i.e. new information updates appearing on the website. Additionally, the portal has a "Top 10" list where the most interesting places in Łódź are chosen. The header and background changes every time you refresh the page: you can see an artist from Łódź or a Łódź festival.

The new website includes information about the European Capital of Culture project, a short history of Łódź and cultural news. Portal users can download electronic icons and desktop wallpapers, screen savers, films and maps, view a movie or listen to music. The layout of the website has been changed as well. The colours resemble the Łódź as the European Capital of Culture 2016 logo: a black background and vivid colours. Each section of the homepage is dynamic, which allows the user to change its position, depending on his or her preferences. The Internet portal Łódź as the European Capital of Culture 2016, was nominated for an award for the best Internet website in the Złote Formaty (Golden Fonts) competition during The Festival of Promotion of the Cities and Regions.

2. Promotion of Łódź as the European Capital of Culture 2016 during key tourist fairs

Łódź has exhibited its project at tourist fairs. In its efforts to obtain the title of the European Capital of Culture in 2016, Łódź makes its cultural aspirations the main promotional draw. This year we focused on promotion in German speaking countries. This is the decision of the Polish Tourism Organisation – every year one area is chosen where intense marketing and promotional campaigns are carried out. The promotion of Łódź as the European Capital of Culture 2016 took place during travel fairs in Chemnitz (Chemnitzer Reisemarkt), Vienna (Ferienmesse), Stuttgart (CMT), Zurich (FESPO), Prague

(Holiday World), Brussels as part of Salon de vacances, Milan and Berlin (ITB). The guiding theme of our stand was the European Capital of Culture competition in 2016. The visitors could also get folders, guidebooks, CDs and gadgets promoting Łódź as the European Capital of Culture in 2016. Multimedia presentations were displayed on screen, which showcased the cultural values of Łódź.

3. Łódź as the European Capital of Culture – listen and see

In an effort to secure the title of European Capital of Culture in 2016, the city wants to engage with the people of Łódź and journalists. As part of cooperation with the Promotion, Tourism & International Cooperation Office, the most important cultural events are announced on TV and radio. For a year now, we have received media support from Toya TV station in the city's quest to obtain the title. Each Friday at 10.35pm (repeats on Saturdays at 4.45pm and Sundays at 10.30pm) 5-minute long reports present the must-see cultural and artistic events in Łódź. On Mondays, the artistic activities of Łódź on the road to the European Capital of Culture can be followed on Radio Łódź, where a 10 minute programme presents the institutions and personalities of Łódź artistic circles. The programme entitled "Kulturalnie do celu" (Culturally and to the point) is broadcast every Monday at 3.40pm.

4. Art District – first edition

This is a series of activities relating to the responsibility for public space of the city realised within the Łódź as the European Capital of Culture 2016 framework. The objective of the project is to transform the landscape of Łódź by artistic intervention into the city space. Each time a "forgotten" spot is chosen, which has been "architecturally and intimately abandoned". They are often located right in the middle of the city and through activities from the imaginary workshop they are given a new dimension. Each artistic intervention has a signature with a logo of Łódź as the European Capital of Culture 2016. The event's first act took place on 27th June between 12-8pm in

Pasaż Schillera (Schiller's Passageway).

The main attractions were street art and guerrilla gardening activities. On the derelict wall of a building at 114 Piotrkowska Street, the Etam Cru group painted a promotional mural representing the unique architecture of Łódź. With the help of Grupa Pewnych Osób (A Group of Certain People), we have tidied up the lawn on Pasaż Schillera. There were many attractions for the people of Łódź – in Pasaż Schillera, where, in a harmonious and chilled out atmosphere people could browse through publications of Łódź as the European Capital of Culture 2016 project, listen to Le Visage, which is a solo project of one of the members of Kamp! (a band from Łódź). The fitness-conscious also have a chance to participate in surprise events promoting Łódź as the European Capital of Culture 2016.

The next event, planned for 21st October, will include an artistic intervention in public space by moomoo architects. The pavements of Łódź will be embellished with the "invisible" logos of the projects, that only become visible to the public in particular weather conditions.

5. Faces that promote Łódź

The European Capital of Culture project facilitates shared endeavours in efforts to obtain the title, not only from culture and art institutions but also by involving the people in the creation of promotional activities. As part of the EU project entitled "Europe for Citizens", an event to become the face of the poster promoting the efforts of Łódź to obtain the European Capital of Culture 2016 title was initiated. On 27th June a special open-air photography studio was organised on Pasaż Schillera. The results of that event went well beyond our expectations. Due to a World League volleyball game between Poland and Brazil, a lot of tourists and volleyball fans were visiting the city that day. The photography studio was full of people from all over Poland and the world, who spontaneously supported the candidature of Łódź for the European Capital of Culture 2016 title. The photographs were taken by artists from "Manufaktura fotografii" (Photography Manufacture) in Łódź. All the

photographed people will be able to find their faces in the new poster promoting the candidature of Łódź for the European Capital of Culture title. Their faces will be arranged to form the Łódź as the European Capital of Culture 2016 logo. The promotional campaign with the new poster will start in October 2009.

6. Outdoor campaign: Łódź outlines creative routes

The campaign project was prepared by the Warsaw advertising agency Media Point Group. The objective was to promote Łódź in Poland's largest cities: Gdańsk, Gdynia, Lublin, Poznań, Szczecin, Toruń, Wrocław and Łódź, some of which are fellow candidature cities, who would be competing for the same title. "Łódź outlines creative routes" billboards promoting Łódź as the European Capital of Culture 2016 advertised the most interesting cultural events, among others: The International Film Festival of Art of Cinematography Plus Camerimage, The Festival of Dialogue of Four Cultures, The Explorer Festival, XX Łódź International Comic Festival, The Pepsi Vena Music Festival and Łódź Design. Additionally, the campaign included a 10-second-long advertisement shown on information screens in the Warsaw underground. The campaign was funded from the prize awarded during The Festival of Promotion of the Cities and Regions. In the opinion of the jury panel, City Stories, a comic about Łódź, was the most effective Polish promotional publication.

7. "European Capital of Culture – why us?"

The aim of this campaign was the promotion of Łódź and its region around Europe. For two weeks, the students of the University of Łódź promoted Łódź as the candidate city for the European Capital of Culture title in the largest European cities: Brussels, Bruges, Antwerp, Luxemburg and Linz. These are cities with extensive experience in organising cultural events and were the holders of the title in the past. A "Day of Łódź" was organised in each of the aforementioned cities during which people from the city and tourists could learn about the myriad cultural

and tourist attractions of Łódź and its region. An integral part of the project was a survey conducted among the residents and tourists visiting a given city about the role of the European Capital of Culture title in the creation and development of the current fabric of the city. The results of the survey will be published by the City of Łódź Office at the end of 2009.

8. Łódź is a magnet – second edition

Łódź has exceptional charm. Everyone who shares this view and wanted to show it in other cities had an opportunity to participate in an event promoting Łódź as the best candidate for the European Capital of Culture 2016. Every person from Łódź, who, during their foreign travels, took a picture wearing a Łódź as the European Capital of Culture 2016 T-shirt, photographed a promotional magnet of Łódź attached to a well-known landmark or building or took a picture of the logo of Łódź as the European Capital of Culture 2016 by some interesting holiday scenery, could enter the competition. A year on from last year's "Łódź is a magnet" event, on 15th of July at 1pm at Władysław Reymont airport in Łódź, holidaymakers were given special gadgets and stickers with the logo of Łódź as the European Capital of Culture 2016. The point was to promote the city when on holiday. The author of the most interesting picture will get a prize – two return plane tickets to a destination of their choice: Łódź-Copenhagen or Łódź-Vienna. Authors of ten additional photos will be awarded gadgets promoting Łódź as the European Capital of Culture 2016. The most interesting pictures will be presented in the municipal gallery in front of the City of Łódź Office between 20th October and 8th November. It is the second edition of this "magnetic" promotional campaign. Last year, Łódź residents took to the streets attaching magnets to cars.

9. Production of three promotional movies made by BBC World

For the purpose of presenting Łódź as a candidate city for the European Capital of Culture 2016, a TV and Internet campaign was produced by the British TV channel BBC World. The campaign will be broadcast in 32 countries and

will include a presentation of three promotional advertisements. The first commercial will show Łódź as a city of art, design and unique architecture, the second will refer to the multicultural history of Łódź and the final one to Łódź's tradition of film. The promotional campaign has been divided into two broadcasting periods: 8 weeks between September and November 2009 and 6 weeks in spring (April-May 2010). The commercial will be shown at peak viewing times, i.e. before or during the main news programme. Each of the ads will be 30 seconds long and will be broadcast 483 times.

The main focus of the promotional campaign is to get the viewer curious about Łódź, to show the multidimensional character of the city which is a buoyant cultural centre and a candidate town for the European Capital of Culture 2016 title.

10. Promotion of Łódź as the European Capital of Culture 2016 during summer festivals

One of the enduring elements of the promotional campaign is the presence of Łódź at summer music festivals, i.e. Selector Festival in Kraków and The Heineken Open'er Festival in Gdynia in 2009. It is an excellent opportunity to gain extra votes for Łódź among the festival's audience. This year the participants were taking part in a virtual rowing competition. Each of the "boats" was connected to a computer screen. The rowers were paddling in their virtual boats along Piotrkowska Street. The participants of the race could win tickets for events such as The Design Festival, The Comic Festival, The Festival of Dialogue of Four Cultures or Fotofestiwal. The success of this campaign is confirmed by the large number of people involved in the project, as well as the positive feedback received from the participants. Łódź stands were extremely popular and such an original promotional campaign for Łódź as the European Capital of Culture 2016 reaches not only the residents of our city but achieves social backing all around Poland.

11. Presentation of Łódź as the European Capital of Culture 2016 project in Brussels

Regular presentations of Łódź as the European Capital of Culture 2016 project are being held in Brussels. During our visits to Brussels we present the cultural programme of the city, develop a permanent lobby for the candidature of Łódź to the title and acquire priceless information needed to undertake an effective promotional strategy.

12. Promotional campaign on Polish TV

This is a series of 11 mini-programmes broadcast on the Polish channel TVP1 during the morning show “Kawa czy herbata” (“Coffee or Tea”). The objective of the programme is to showcase the avant-garde history of the city and its buoyant centre of contemporary visual art. The programmes will announce key events and festivals taking place in Łódź. Each episode is preceded by a specially produced 8 second promotional animated movie created by Semafor animation studio in a stop motion technique.



**Become a face on the
campaign posters
ŁECC 2016
Guerrilla Gardening Action
Painting Mural Action**
Photos: Michał Leszczyński

The City – Spatial Experiments

INTERVIEW: Maja Ruszkowska-Mazerant

The city, with its buildings, its structures and facilities, creates spaces among which an ever-increasing number of young artists and cultural amateurs are consciously active. They are coming out of their studios and workshops to take their place in the city's spaces, changing the image of the places where they live and work and winning culture a new public. The city is the testing ground upon which these young people are exercising their organisational skills and flexing the muscles of their talent and knowledge. And how, exactly, are they going about this? Our interviews with the people behind the Artichoke, Etam Cru, Topografie, Fabryka Sztuki (Factory of Art), MOOMOO, and Łódzkie Zakłady Przemysłu Twórczego (The Łódź Factory of Creative Industry) 'projects' offer some insights.



MOOMOO

Artichoke

PHOTO: Artichoke

Jan Vormann "Dream of flying"

PHOTO: Artichoke

Wiktor Polak "In a display case"

“ The city has to live! It needs to have its own character, we need unconventional solutions and actions! We are not going to be another Wrocław or Kraków, like some people would wish. We are indeed striving for unconventional solutions.

EMILIA KURYŁOWICZ



Artichoke means activities that extend from closed spaces into public space. What is Łódź's role in this?

Łódź plays an integral role. All the organisers of myspace.ldz, i.e. Emilia, Ania and Agnieszka, live in Łódź and know what this city is like, what one can expect from it, what values it has and what it lacks. For the moment, there is still a lot missing despite the amazing potential everyone talks about. The principle artichoke follows has its origin in the concept of wasted opportunities. On the one hand, it is about space – wild, untamed, fascinating. One can say that it is neglected and dirty and that is true as well. But the point is not to clean everything up – this is impossible or at least it is a lengthy process. The point is not to refurbish the space either so that it looks like a perfect wedding cake, which is common practice. We live in a special city and we need to take advantage of what we have, kind of like... turning lemons into lemonade. On the other hand we wanted to tap into a niche market, unrelated to any institutions, to act spontaneously, on a different level than the social one. Thanks to the fact that we took a step outside of the galleries, we transformed the image of the city – you can notice that people living here are creative, that they care about the space that surrounds them, they are trying to understand what this space tells them and to communicate with it, as well as with the other people who live in it. Communication is of the utmost importance and placing works of art in galleries is restricting. Visiting galleries I meet the exact same set of people – mainly artists, students of art and related disciplines, journalists, etc. Other people are not even aware that an event of this kind is taking place because it is very far removed from their world. They are not interested in it because they cannot relate it to their everyday life and they are not used to such forms of expression. In all honesty, where would they get used to such activities – on TV? In the shopping mall? The event with showcases is an incredible experience. It creates a platform of communication between artists, space and the people who own that space. Each of the parties – regardless of whether it is

a Łódź local or a visiting artist from Poland or abroad, must become immersed in the space of Łódź and view it from a different perspective than before. Łódź is an inspiration for us, but we want it to change and evolve too.

Like you say yourself, you give every person in Łódź an opportunity to get in touch with art. Can you tell us how the people of Łódź reacted to last year's edition of myspace.ldz? And the artists?

I was bit too eager answering the previous question and went as far as to the next one. Not every person living in Łódź will be able to see the showcases on display. We do not have the marketing capability of big festivals, but this is not even the point. During the organisation of myspace.ldz we meet many people for whom we and our project, as well as art in general, were some sort of a curiosity. But they unconsciously took part and spread the word to other people in their circles. Our openings are attended by people from the area, their friends and passers-by. The projects attract the interest of people involved in street art, as well as artists from abroad who always arrive with a bunch of friends who are curious of what Łódź and the event are like. The audience is an eclectic mix of people. Moreover, people come across the showcases on display by chance, casually walking down the street. I think it is incredible to suddenly come upon something that transcends our everyday vision of what constitutes public space. This is particularly true in Łódź where art in public spaces, street art, etc. is rare. Last year's meeting was an incredible experience! It was the best day of 2008 for me! A lot of people came, some of them could have been attracted by the free wine and candy floss, but it seems they found the exhibition engaging as well. Everyone was helpful, nice and smiley. As far as artists are concerned, do you think they like this form of expression? Everyone's art is different and whether it's liked or not depends on personal taste. For some of the artists it was their first trip to Łódź, especially for this event

and some of them returned... Besides, each year we receive applications from people we haven't met before, who've heard about myspace.ldz and would like to take part (usually we invite the participants ourselves). Generally, myspace.ldz received a positive reaction. Sometimes we meet a new person who says: "Oh! You are the girls from the showcase event! This is truly amazing!" Or we see people hanging our maps on their walls. It is a wonderful feeling, which gives a sense of satisfaction, a feeling that what we do makes sense. It is no secret that not everyone understands why we waste our time on such "nonsense".

Łódź is a candidate city for the title of European Capital of Culture in the year 2016, how significant is that for you? Does your work enhance the image of the city?

There is no doubt about that. A positive image of the city is created not only by beautiful fountains and brass monuments, painted tenements and numerous festivals. The city has to live! It needs to have its own character, we need unconventional solutions and actions! We are not going to be another Wrocław or Kraków, like some people would wish. We are indeed striving for unconventional solutions. I think that the European Capital of Culture competition gives Łódź a great chance because suddenly funding becomes available. At the start we did not believe we would be able to organise anything. But we did! The title is not that significant, in a way it is an artificially created situation, but taking part in the competition speeds certain processes up and this is what is important. Our work can undoubtedly improve the image of Łódź. Not everyone wants to see the above mentioned aesthetically questionable monuments, fountains, beer gardens or tenements that resemble plastic cakes.

Etam Cru

PHOTO: Mateusz Gapski
Lion – Mateusz Gapski Łódź

“ Being nominated as European Capital would be a huge plus, for sure, and not only for the city, but also for the residents, because more and more foreign tourists would certainly start coming to Łódź, with fresh ideas for diversifying the lifestyle, the culture and so on.

PRZEMEK BLEJZYK “SAINER”

What is EtamCru? How can you best be described – as street artists?

Etam cru is the name of a group made up of two people, Mateusz 'Bezt' Gapski, and me, Przemek 'Sainer' Blejzyk. The truth is that we ourselves make no attempt to compartmentalise either what we do or who we are. We both started out with graffiti, but right now that form has become so tightly intertwined with street art that in the end, no one quite knows how to define all these various works. We want to show paintings and different types of illustrations on walls; for us, the most important thing is that our work hits a certain standard, and how it's described is secondary.

What you do is accessible to everyone; every day, as we travel the streets of the town, we can see your work. In that respect, do you choose the sites for your work with the notion of its being universal, timeless... or do you follow the principle of, for example, adding to, changing, or painting over a work after a time?

We don't have any principles as a basis for creating our next work. What emerges on any given wall is dependent on a huge variety of factors. Sometimes it's that we have an idea which comes up during a conversation and then we'll start to consider what form of wall it'll work on and if we manage to find a wall like that and get permission to go ahead, then we start painting. Sometimes, it happens that people who have a wall they'd like to give over to our work come to see us and it often turns out that it's a wall which suits a project we'd come up with earlier and, if our vision works for the site and for the person giving us the commission, then we'll paint what we've proposed to them. But it often happens that the customer already has their own idea and asks us to present it in our style, which is also makes for an interesting design game. It also happens that, as we're going about town, at a given moment we might spot a wall which, in its very construction, suggests a kind of thematic solution, or is cracked and, in its sullied state, so to say, is already creating a concept

which is interesting enough that all that's needed for an intriguing work to emerge is a delicate enhancement. So the choice of what emerges on a wall comes about in a variety of ways, but the best moment happens when we have a wall and we can paint what we like, and then we try to make the work fit the surroundings and be intriguing enough for every passer-by to stop briefly in front of it and forget their everyday lives and be transported for just a moment into the world we've created on the wall. That's what happened in the instance of the tower block in Bydgoszcz, the one that stands by the entrance to one of the city parks. That's why we've created illustrations depicting kids who've created their own, autonomous world in the woods, a world dependent on nothing, where they felt free and secure. And when it comes to adding changes and painting over, well, on the whole we don't go for that kind of intervention. The works we create are a type of documentation of our view of a given theme at a given time. The wall also documents the standard of painting we've attained, which is why it's great, later on, to see how you were painting earlier and how you perceived a theme and there are enough walls to mean that, instead of painting over old works, you can tackle the same theme again, in a better style and on a fresh wall if need be.

Łódź is going after the title of European Capital of Culture 2016. What does that mean to you? Could your work lead to a better image of the city?

To me, the fact that Łódź is going for the European Capital of Culture 2016 title is really quite significant, because I grew up in Łódź. But as far as Mateusz is concerned, he comes from Turek, so the truth is that his ties to the city come more from his studies and friends. But we both feel the same about helping Łódź go for it. Being nominated as European Capital would be a huge plus, for sure, and not only for the city, but also for the residents, because more and more foreign tourists would certainly start coming to Łódź, with fresh ideas for diversifying the lifestyle, the culture

and so on. Łódź is an interesting city and, in my opinion, involving the right people, with interesting ideas, in its promotion would fast track it to the level of European cities. And when it comes to our work, it seems to me that it could most certainly bring about a better image. There are so many walls around the city which could be given over to our work that we wouldn't actually have the time to paint them all. We've got friends, in Poland and abroad, who are involved in painting on walls and it would be possible to create an international gallery on the city's walls, which would most certainly be powerful publicity. It'd certainly bring to life the flat expanses of the walls that are springing up all over the city and just oppressing the passers-by with their grey, humdrum drabness. It seems to me that there's too little going on in the city, going on in terms of a comparison with other cities, where several huge walls are raised each year and, as the occasion arises, a plethora of smaller ones. Introducing colours and pictures to the city would certainly be attractive for the people who travel the same routes from home to work, day in and day out, and perhaps there'd be a splash of something colourful in the monotony of life, something which would bring a small smile to someone's face.

Factory of Art

PHOTO: Factory of Art
"Drugi Pokój", production of Chorea
Theatre, directed by Paweł Passini

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Obviously, the European Capital of Culture project is significant not only for every cultural institution or person involved with cultural promotion in this town, but most of all it is significant for the people of Łódź.

MACIEJ TRZEBEŃSKI

Currently, Art_Inkubator is unquestionably one of the most significant projects of yours. Could you tell me more about this long term venture?

The project has been in progress for more than a year. Its commencement was marked by signing the letter of intent whose parties included the City of Łódź Office, Office of the Province Governor in Łódź, Factory of Art, Łódź Art Center, The University of Łódź, Narodowe Centrum Kultury (National Centre for Culture), who all expressed the will to start collaborating and create Inkubator Kultury (Incubator of Culture) in Łódź. It was then that the project was transformed from being a mere idea into something tangible. Art_Inkubator (AI) was created with two objectives in mind. Together they form a consistent whole.

The first objective and the basis of the project is regeneration. As a result of regeneration of space, the material part of the incubator will be created, i.e. offices, art studios/ateliers and multifaceted artistic space which can be utilised by future beneficiaries of the incubator. The second objective is centred on the management of the incubator as a not-for-profit supporting organisation, which will help future entrepreneurs, NGOs and artists enter the market. Art_Inkubator will be a platform facilitating business and artistic ideas. AI will be the first incubator in Poland focused on the support and promotion of the creative sector. To put it simply, its activity and support will be directed at institutions and companies from the field of culture and art. This could include institutions organising artistic events, companies supporting artistic events with their services or products (e.g. technical equipment, software, consultancy services) and entrepreneurs from the so-called culture industries.

Art_Inkubator provides space and premises, as well as administrative support. It provides an address for the business and ensures security in this most demanding of moments when starting up a business. Art_Inkubator supports innovative ideas from an early stage right through to maturity, when the company is ready to leave the incubator.

AI aspires to be an institution which

nurtures the culture of running an organisation, the culture of entrepreneurship. It will help companies develop the skill of identifying, assessing and harnessing an opportunity to prepare an artistic and cultural project, which will prove rewarding both as artistic and business venture. It is here that future entrepreneurs will learn the rules of cost calculation, business plan preparation, suitable techniques of running a business, marketing, etc.

AI will also play an integrative role for people from cultural, art and business environments. It will promote people and companies, who contribute to creating an image of Łódź and its region as an environment which fosters culture and art, as well as stimulates the entrepreneurship of artistic circles.

Eventually, AI will circulate information about significant achievements in the area of culture, art, education and entrepreneurship.

To sum up, AI equals support for the cultural and social development of Łódź and its region, it promotes innovation in business and gives an opportunity to create permanent jobs in the field of cultural events and cultural tourism.

Factory of Art is located in Łódź Art Center (ŁAC), but you are a separate institution focused primarily on educational projects related to theatre and contemporary art. What does it mean?

To be more precise, Factory of Art is the first cultural institution in Łódź, whose operations are the result of public and private cooperation. It was created and is sponsored by three institutions: The Łódź City office, Łódź Art Center Foundation and Theatre Association Chorea. The programme actions are created based on the experiences and competences of private partners. Łódź Art Center deals with contemporary art in its most general sense and Chorea focuses on theatrical events and related activities. Most of the projects of the Factory of Art are realised with these two sectors in mind. As mentioned before, Factory of Art is centred around educational events, cognitive ones. It is our aim to reach a very specific audience with our repertoire. These include secondary school and university students, who are looking for underground, alternative

presentations of artistic activity. To educate we need to organise a series of events and show an intuitive understanding of the audience's needs. It was clear from the very beginning that Factory of Art operates in a slightly different area of cultural activity than ŁAC or Chorea. Therefore, the main programme actions focus on educational and artistic activity, mainly involving the participation of young people, theatrical and musical groups, artists from outside mainstream performance, visual and stage arts.

Factory of Art's objective is to create a platform for new, innovative art and artists, which would facilitate the development of their artistic identity and a creative discovery of the surrounding world. Fulfilling our programme actions, we organise Tuesday and Thursday meetings in Factory of Art with free film showings, visual art, dance, singing or theatre workshops, as well as meetings and discussions with renowned artists who are authorities in their field. Undoubtedly, education plays a significant role in every project carried out by Factory of Art.

Łódź is a candidate town for European Capital of Culture in the year 2016, what is the significance of this candidature for you? Can your work contribute to the creation of a better image of the city?

Obviously, the European Capital of Culture project is significant not only for every cultural institution or person involved with cultural promotion in this town, but most of all it is significant for the people of Łódź. Unlike any other city in Poland, Łódź has great potential due to its material tradition (post-industrial space) reinforced by a long history of avant-garde art.

I am convinced that our projects are changing the image of Łódź for the better. That refers both to artistic projects and those related to the AI programme actions.

Art_Inkubator will be a significant contributor in positively reinforcing the image of Łódź as the best candidate for the title of European Capital of Culture in 2016.

Now is the time to clearly and succinctly say that we invest in culture and creative activities. I am more than sure that Factory of Art will be integral in our quest to ensure Łódź is awarded this title.

The Łódź Factory of Creative Industry

PHOTO: The Łódź Factory
of Creative Industry
Bazaar 2009

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We are delighted that Łódź stands a good chance of becoming the European Capital of Culture in 2016 and hope that our activities will contribute towards achieving this goal.

BASIA ROMANOWSKA



You have recently created The Łódź Factory of Creative Industry. As part of the project, you organise a regular market, where handicraft made by artists and non-artists can be bought. The last market took place in one of the courtyards on ul. Piotrkowska in Łódź. Could you tell me what sparked your interest in such a venture?

The idea of organising these sort of markets came to our minds in a very casual way – we were sitting one morning with Kasia, drinking coffee and we thought that something like this is badly needed in Łódź. I've heard numerous times from my friends living in Łódź that there is nowhere to sell items they create themselves but don't use. Handicraft has been my hobby for years now. I am also interested in clothes alterations and rummaging around Łódź's second hand shops looking for unusual and original vintage clothing at bargain prices. We are also keen on clothes recycling and injecting new life into used things. From what we could see, there is plenty of people in Łódź who share these same interests. We wanted to create an opportunity both for artists and regular people who are interested in creating new things as a hobby. Every meeting attracts more and more interested sellers. We wanted people who create things and those interested in buying or exchanging them to have a place to meet, integrate and make connections, in an informal atmosphere with good music. Kasia has been DJ-ing for many years now and we wanted to combine her passion for music with the interest in clothes. It worked! This is what our markets look like, regardless of the venue which a given meeting takes place in. Our focus was to highlight the character of our city because being from Łódź we love this town and think it is one of a kind. We wanted to offer yet another attraction for people spending time here – the more that happens, the better! Our name is very much Łódź specific too – The Łódź Factory of Creative Industry refers to the manufacturing tradition and industrial character of the city.

You have been planning to open a foundation. What type of foundation will it be, can you tell us more about your plans?

Yes, the plan is to set up our own foundation, which would firstly attract young people with a shared passion. There are many ideas that come into play, some of them I would rather not disclose at this stage. We will continue organising the markets. So far they have been happening every month and it looks like this is the way we will proceed. Each market will take place in Łódź, in a place that typifies our city. We've been thinking about workshops and street art projects combined with music. I am a psychologist, fashion and handicraft lover and I have my plans about the projects. Kasia has her love of music and other creative pursuits and we want to fuse both of our interests. In a nutshell we want to promote the designing and recycling of clothes, as well as other functional items – we want to breathe new life into old discarded items. Our interests revolve around handicraft, music, photography, painting, art in public spaces, visualisations, artistic gatherings and varied cultural events.

Łódź is a candidate for the title of European Capital of Culture in the year 2016, how significant is that for you? Does your work accentuate the cultural image of the city?

We are delighted that Łódź stands a good chance of becoming the European Capital of Culture in 2016 and hope that our activities will contribute towards achieving this goal. We want to promote Łódź and the people from Łódź, as well as the unique character of the city. We want to reach other cities with our promotional activities and Wrocław is first on our list. Our plan is to organise a taster of what The Factory of Creative Industry offers by bringing Łódź artists to Wrocław to showcase our city and encourage people to visit Łódź. The objective is to highlight interesting places that are typical of Łódź, sites of past factories and quirky, off the beaten track corners, etc. This is also the rationale behind choosing the venues for our markets, e.g. the courtyard at the Affogato restaurant is an ideal spot – a distinctive inner row house courtyard in Łódź located on ul. Piotrkowska. We have a few ideas of other places well worth a visit too. Moreover, we think our initiative is a fascinating one as it integrates people of various ages and disparate interests

who come from different districts of the city and from all walks of life. It introduces an element of variety, fun and colour to the city. We want to see the number of participants grow from month to month.

MOOMOO

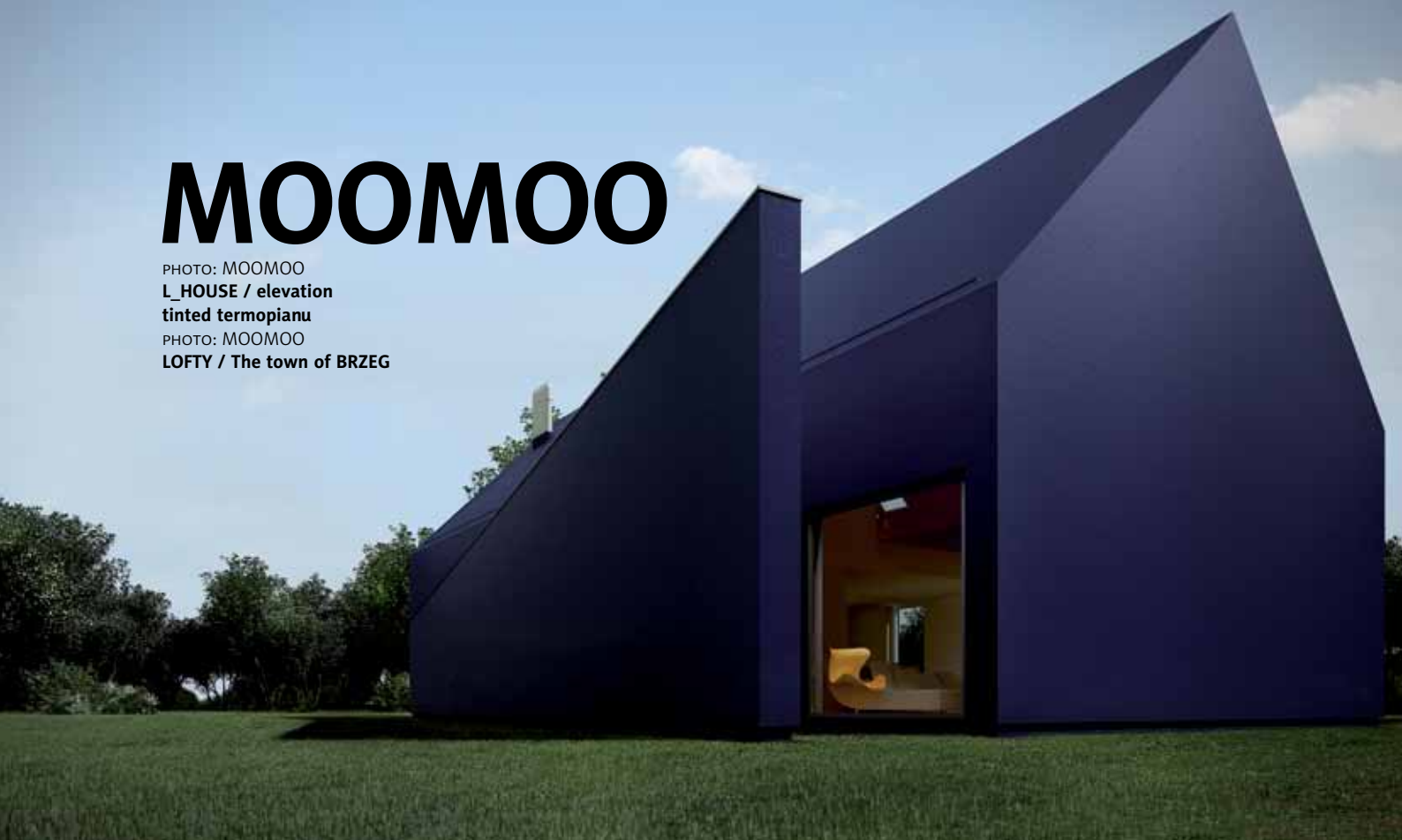
PHOTO: MOOMOO

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PHOTO: MOOMOO

LOFTY / The town of BRZEG



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We equate the city with the people who live in it.
It is we, the people of Łódź, who create the atmosphere
of the place.

JAKUB MAJEWSKI



You're the owners of MOOMOO ARCHITECTS. What does the city mean to you, as designers? You work in Łódź and your studio is based here, in a post-industrial building not far from Łódź Fabryczna railway station. Did you specifically choose that location?

There are people who say that Łódź isn't an excessively beautiful city, but that comes as wonderful news to us. There's a great deal of room for change and, possibly, for improvement. We're delighted that we can play a part in the oncoming changes and, at one and the same time, have an impact on creating the space we live in. It's not everyone who has such an opportunity. We've encountered the opinion of our Dutch colleagues, whose designs we like tremendously, and they say that we have enormous potential in our city because there's so much to be done here.

In the main, our developers come from Mazovia, and it's there that the majority of our designs come to life. Of course, from the viewpoint of people who run studios, it'd be better to move to Warsaw. However, distance presents no particular problem to us and it often happens that we start the day in Łódź and end it at the other end of Poland. But it's here that we're based and we design well here. What to one person is a dingily shabby, deserted factory is our city's wonderful history to us, which is actually why we set up our practice in just such a place. We're in the very heart of the city, we have everything within spitting distance. The fascination of our space is something perceived by tourists from abroad; two guides to Łódź have come out which list our studio as a place of interest in terms of the city's old, industrial atmosphere.

We're immensely pleased about that and we hope other residents will also begin to perceive that what we have in this city is something unique.

You're not only engaged in designing homes and interiors. You also work on community campaigns. Could you tell us something more about that?

Yes, that's right. From the moment of MOOMOO's very inception, we established the fact that we want to do something more than just architecture. After all, it

seems to us that the designer's profession demands certain of the social observer's skills. We create for people and for their surroundings and it's often the case that the extent to which we've got to know the person dictates the nature of our architecture. When we close the door to the studio behind us, it's impossible that we should say our work's done. We're constantly observing, watching and looking around us. This complexity of human factors is something that absorbs us and we're only too willing to be included in not-for-profit social initiatives. Recently, we collaborated with Grupa Pewnych Osób (A Certain Group of People) on a campaign to make the city's lawns greener, and we were joined by local residents. Truth to tell, the few plants we planted and the few lawns we dug don't really count for much, because they're nothing in comparison with the city at large. What delighted us much more was the fact that we managed to stimulate people's awareness that I, John Smith, also have an influence on what this bit of the city looks like. After all, our observation has shown us that a person definitely takes more care of a space when they've had an input of their own, when they've played a part in its birth. Whether or not a street is clean and well-cared-for depends, to a large extent, upon us ourselves. We now know that we can consider that campaign a success, since it's being emulated in other towns and cities.

Łódź is going after the title of European Capital of Culture 2016. What does that mean to you? Could your work lead to a better image of the city?

Of course, it would be a very great pleasure if we could boast that prestigious title. However, from where we stand, the city hasn't won it yet, though it's changing from one day to the next, and for the better, at that. In particular, it may seem that, from the viewpoint of people involved in architecture, we'll look at the city through the prism of cubic capacity, space and the tangible. But we equate the city with the people who live in it. It is we, the people of Łódź, who create the atmosphere of the place. When we used to come back to Łódź after a trip, we'd

undergo a shock that lasted several days. It was so different; you could even say that it was strange... We'd lightly point out every imperfection; there were so many things which bothered us. It was as if we were missing something, we'd be thinking that we were inferior. But the truth is that we're just different. Nowadays, we perceive this as something original, we can see how our otherness is capable of being interesting for itself alone. There are a multitude of things which can be fixed, improved, or changed. And actually, it's here where we can see the greatest potential, there's a great deal to be done. It seems as if the most significant of these transformations is coming to pass in the city; people's standpoint is changing. Recently, it's proved possible to arouse an awareness among the residents that together we can do something. We have a shared goal which unites us. As regards the second part of your question, it gives us great pleasure to announce that MOOMOO ARCHITECTS has made it onto the WALLPAPER DIRECTORY 2009 list of the 30 best emerging practices in the world. We're the only studio in Poland and, indeed, in this part of Europe, to have received that distinction. It gives us even more pleasure, in as much as, having attained such a distinction as citizens of Łódź, we can provide yet another pretext for talking about our city in a positive context. We hope that, in the near future, we'll be able to design something special for Łódź, and in the context of this, our city.

TOPOGRAFIE

PHOTO: Karolina Szczepocka

Urban Olympic Games

PHOTO: Agnieszka Gajewska

Lomo-wall

“ We believe that the Łódź candidacy for the title is a very good thing in terms of promoting the city and, as far as we can, we’re supporting events connected with the initiative.

AGATA ZYSIAK

What is it that you do?

Michał Grelewski: Speaking in the most general terms, the city is what we do. We try to approach it as an entirety and stimulate a variety of different kinds of activity related to it. What lies at the heart of our interest is the unique city to which we’re all connected. Łódź. Getting down to details, our work can be divided into several branches: – research into the city’s culture, popularising it and stimulating it; awareness building of protection of the city’s architectural heritage.

Our longest lasting project is the Miastograf (Citygraph) Festival of City Events. This is an interdisciplinary event, presenting work inspired by, or connected with, the city. The film screenings, artistic projects, discussions, concerts and outdoor events all aim to demonstrate just how fascinating and complex a creature the city is. Although the festival is engaged with notion of the city in general, the starting point is Łódź. The second major facet of this aspect of our work is the portal topografie.pl – Łódź miejscami opisana

(Łódź described in places), a website combining historical information and subjective viewpoints and visions of the city. Based on a map, the website will form a platform for gathering together a diversity of information about the city and will be open to anyone who’s interested in Łódź. Apart from the festival, we also organise projects, lectures, debates and other events devoted to city-related themes. Experiencing the city isn’t simply a question of debating its representation in culture, or of dry discussions centred around Łódź. First and foremost, for us, the city is a living organism, one we can strike up a friendship with by acting directly within its spaces. On that basis, we set out to organise some city-based fantasy games; Łap Złodzieja (To Catch a Thief), Zmotaj Fabrykę (Your Own Factory – Industry, Intrigue and Reels Within Reels), Krok w niepodległości (Step Out Into Independence), and Przestudiuj Łódź (Study Łódź). The same aim was our lodestar during Łódźenatio and Po(w)łódź, an event that hovered somewhere between a game and a happening, inspired by Krzysztof

‘Sempa’ Bielecki’s Warsaw events. In June, we organised an historic get-together of Poland’s greatest city game creators, and in October, we’re planning a City Sports Olympiad, as part of the Miastograf Festival.

I have already mentioned that our objectives include protection of the Łódź heritage. Łódź is a town which developed in the 19th century at a pace to rival New York and Manchester. But for all its fascinating history, it’s a city steadily decaying, going to rack and ruin. Today, it gives the appearance of being a city with no memory. Old apartment buildings and factories, those witnesses of past might, which form a facet of the city’s identity, are being replaced by faceless, neutered buildings that could have been erected anywhere. Along with other Łódź associations and groups, we’re working on a community movement, Respect for Łódź, which endeavours to intervene in situations that pose a threat to the city’s heritage, and to awaken awareness among the people of Łódź as to the true value of their city. Together with the local branch of the National Society of Architects we organised a series of debates about architecture.

Your main project is Miastograf. How is it received, here in Łódź? What sort of interest is there on the part of the residents? What about people involved in the city’s culture (artists, architects...)? And what about the city’s officials?

Łukasz Biskupski: Last year’s Miastograf, (May-June 2008), was supposed to start with a knowledge-of-Łódź competition. The idea behind it was to encourage the young people of the city to observe their own home town. But there turned out to be so much interest in the city’s history and its representation in culture among the residents that the venture expanded to become the entire festival. We organised city workshops, lectures, including the talk given by Marek Janiak that broke the YouTube record for popularity, and *zŁODZlejskie*, a series of screenings of films about Łódź. In conjunction with the Se-Ma-For Studio, we arranged the premiere of Balbina Brzuszeńska’s film,

Miasto płynie, which itself went on to take numerous awards. The popularity of last year’s festival spurred us on to organise the next edition.

Miastograf 2009 (www.maistograf.pl) presents a rather more artistic face, but it’s still Łódź first and foremost. We’ve been working on an international arts project geared toward public space and we’ve decided to hold a retrospective of documentaries about Łódź, made by the renowned writer, Andrzej Bart. Throughout the 10-day festival, there will be an opportunity to discover the art of Lomography, in other words, photography as it happens with cameras by LOMO, as well as the chance to take part in the City Sports Olympiad. Eventually, “Jazz against machines” film music concert at the EC1 plant hall was attended by the audience of six hundred people.

Just like every small and little-known organisation, we’ve had trouble with raising the financing. The University of Łódź extended us a helping hand. Thanks to that, we were able to put together our own funding contribution, without which it’s impossible to apply to the Department of Culture at the Łódź City Office for a grant. Our project met with a favourable reception. Previously, we’d also received support from the EU and the Promotions Office at the Łódź City Office. We’ve also met with interest on the part of the artistic milieu. Last year, Balbina Brzuszeńska gave us her support, as did Marek Janiak and Józef Robakowski, who screened his film about the artistic bohemia in Łódź. This year, we’ll also be hosting a number of esteemed artists and architects, including Andrzej Bart, Borys Lankosz and Włodzimerz Adamiak. It may seem paradoxical, but we’re under the impression that the hardest thing for us to win is favour with the media.

Łódź is going after the title of European Capital of Culture 2016. What does that mean to you? Could your work lead to a better image of the city?

Agata Zysiak: We believe that the Łódź candidacy for the title is a very good thing in terms of promoting the city and, as far as we can, we’re supporting events connected with the initiative.

In conjunction with Grupa Pewnych Osób (Group of Certain People), we’ve promoted the candidacy on a number of occasions, such as the Łódź – magnetically attractive campaign, thanks to which, the Łódź candidacy logo is becoming more and more widely known amongst the city’s residents.

Being nominated to the title would go hand in hand with a great deal of investment in culture, and that seems to us to be something vital. It’s also important to change the negative image that Łódź has, not only in Poland as a whole, but also among the very residents themselves, who still neither value nor respect their own city. They don’t put down roots in Łódź, there’s an impermanence, they bide their time, stumbling over the cracked pavements with eyes tight shut and holding their noses.

When we’re thinking about culture, it’s also worth considering its urban and architectural dimension. It’s there that Łódź has the most to lose.

A town with a unique history, Poland’s only tangible witness to the industrial revolution and the growth of capitalism, its heritage is being ruined. We have the sense that our work could all be for nothing if the politicians governing Łódź fail to understand that they are doing enormous damage by permitting factories, old apartment houses and other tangible cultural elements to be destroyed and razed to the ground. When the bulldozers are levelling the ground beneath the Geyer Factory, when the Biedermann manufacturing plants lies in rubble, and when the next building, and the next, ‘accidentally’ burn down, then handing out magnets in order to promote Łódź isn’t going to get us very far. It’s hard for us to believe that we could be the Capital of Culture when, on an almost weekly basis, we learn of yet another historical building that has been earmarked for demolition and what emerges in its place each time is either a run of the mill building, devoid of any architectural value, or, quite simply, an empty plot. If that process is going to continue, then the ‘European Capital of Culture’ motto will remain nothing more than a slogan.

Let it Be Clearer!

TEXT: Kuba Wandachowicz

PHOTO: Kuba Wandachowicz

The title of European Capital of Culture means enormous prestige and big money. Everyone knows this, both those directly involved in culture and people who are unconnected to it. It would be hard not to perceive the tremendous potential inherent in the European Commission funding programmes, which finance as much as 60% of the expenditure related to the cultural events and ventures organised by individual cities in the running.

The title of European Capital of Culture means enormous prestige and big money. Everyone knows this, both those directly involved in culture and people who are unconnected to it. It would be hard not to perceive the tremendous potential inherent in the European Commission funding programmes, which finance as much as 60% of the expenditure related to the cultural events and ventures organised by individual cities in the running. This is, indeed, big money. It is worth keeping a careful watch on whether it is being spent sensibly, rather than simply becoming an item in the economic statistics bearing witness to the desire to invest in an all-embracing notion of culture, with no accompanying sense of value and substance as regards what is really a rather delicate fabric. In other words, as well as actually spending money on the cultural life of the city, we have to have a concrete knowledge of where we want to allocate that money. It has to be an investment which has been thought through, and not only in economic, but also, and primarily, in artistic terms.

As a working artist, many is the time that I have come across public money being spent 'on culture' by people who have not the foggiest clue about culture itself. The end result has always been wretched; what we then underwent were lumpen festivities garnished with performances by stars of dubious artistic renown. And yet, everything apparently tied up nicely, because there, under 'Expenditures', the entry 'on culture' duly appeared, though it would be something of a challenge to state that the result of this kind of carry on was actually the cultural enrichment of the town and its residents. Activities of this kind are fakes and invariably end in nothing. Art is something rather more than simply an item of municipal expenditure; it is born of passion, the passion of the artists and the passion of the organisers and it is only this kind of activity which has the slightest hope of enduring to become the embers from which something new will spring. If we want our city to become a place capable of drawing the world's greatest names, then we have to focus attention on authentic space for artistic dialogue. The Plus Camerimage Festival, the Comics Festival and the Soundedit Festival for music producers, which was

launched this year to great effect, are excellent examples of this type of event and it is projects like these which have the potential to win renown for our city in the international arena. Moreover, and in my book, incomparably more important, is the fact that it is events like these which will help our native artists to shake off their complexes and enter into a worldwide dialogue with the cultural world's greatest authorities. When we believe in ourselves, setting ourselves the most serious and substantial of goals, then we will have the chance of growth.

I am perfectly well aware that the European Capital of Culture title is bound up with the presentation of cultural tradition, the tradition of city, region and state. Nonetheless, tradition alone is not everything. Art is not a heritage museum, but a living and transgressive space, permanently updated and teeming with references to past, present and future. It is this walk of life which helps us to see things in a new light, and name them with new names, by building a new language abounding with new words. Let us remember this! Of course we can focus on the city's traditions and emphasise its outworn multi-culturalism; after all, there is no hiding the fact that Łódź is currently one of the most xenophobic cities in Poland! Nonetheless, we simply cannot forget about what is immediate and tangible. We have to lavish care on the artistic hic et nunc, rather than incessantly taking refuge behind all that was so glorious in our city's past and which is now no more than a historical monument, a memory. In so doing, we need to remember something about both ways of approaching the cultural life of Łódź, the one based on an aesthetic celebration of its multi-cultural genesis, and the other, staking on what is immediate and fresh in the arts in Łódź in order to enter into a dialogue with the contemporary works of artists from across the world; we need to remember that these two ways are not necessarily mutually exclusive! Do we, perhaps, have it in us to manage the one and the other?!

What do I find missing on this artistic road map which is to take us to the nomination of European Capital of Culture? I find it lacks clear rules and readable plans. As an

artist, I dearly wish to be involved in the organisation, to try and give something of myself, and yet I am not sure how to do this. Who is overseeing the preparatory planning? What facilities can I, as a Łódź artist, count upon? To whom should I present my personal initiative? I am not saying that there is no such person or institution; all I am saying is that information regarding the plans is over-scanty and under-available. We cannot allow ourselves any half-measures if we want to attain that eminent title. If what is needed is joint endeavour, and it most assuredly is needed, for the energy of a few enthusiasts will certainly not suffice, then a suitable artistic Kampfplatz has to be set up, where everyone can add their two pennies' worth. An artist needs no so-called 'activation'; an artist needs clear rules and clear information about potential facilities for bringing his or her project to fruition.

A Few Words about the ECC 2016

INTERVIEW: Artur Zaguła

PHOTO: Danuta Motloch



“ We need to remember that the European Capital of Culture is one of the most visible initiatives in the EU.

DR MONIKA SMOLEŃ
UNDERSECRETARY OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CULTURE
AND NATIONAL HERITAGE

In the early days, the European Capital of Culture title was always won by large urban centres, such as Athens, Amsterdam, Berlin, and Paris; nowadays, it's more and more frequently a smaller city, but one of great cultural potential, like Weimar, Lille, Sibiu, and Stavanger. So what's the strategy underlying the selection of the Polish candidate to be European Capital of Culture?

It's hard for me to agree with the claim that it's the size of the city which is the key to winning the title of European Capital of Culture. In both the earlier and more recent history of this initiative, we have examples of not only large agglomerations, such as Paris, which you mentioned in your question, but also of smaller urban centres; this year, it's an Austrian town with a population of less than two hundred thousand, Linz. We're all also well aware of the transformation of Glasgow, which went from working class city to European Capital of Culture in 1990. This was a city that had to build its cultural potential and it did so with great success. Then, in 2007, we had Luxembourg as European Capital of Culture, a non-too-large urban centre which extended its project concept to embrace not only the city, but the grande région as well and, by doing so, set up the conditions for launching an ambitious programme of festivities. In some cases, cities which want to offer a cultural programme on an appropriate scale involve their regional neighbours in collaborative

work. Next year, the group consisting of Hungary's Pécs and Turkey's Istanbul will be joined in the European Capital of Culture title by Essen, with a programme entitled Essen for the Ruhr.

I'd like to emphasise, and I hope that the examples I've given will have made this very clear, that it isn't the size of the city, but the programme prepared by the team of people concerned which is the deciding factor in who wins. It has to be ambitious, intriguing, inventive, innovative and European. A good cultural infrastructure is important, as is the city's and the tourist infrastructure in general terms; without this, it isn't possible to create a winning programme. The collaborative process between the actors from numerous areas of the city's life, and the gathering together of public and private financial resources also play their part in eventual success. However, it's an interesting and innovative programme, one that meets the regulations and requirements, which is the primary foundation from which to launch an attempt at the title.

What do you think about the work put in by Polish cities to date on winning the title? Do their commitment and efforts make the grade you'd wish to see?

It's still too early to evaluate the state of readiness in which Polish cities find themselves, because the competition hasn't even been announced yet, and the cultural projects, where work is still in progress, are

still an unknown quantity to us. We know that the cities that have declared their desire to become candidates have been preparing for several months now, which is very positive. In many of them, special offices have been established, experts have been employed and plans for various development projects have been launched and prepared. A large number of these have been financed from the EU structural funds, thanks to which we can now talk about a real boom in investment in culture. In Poland, over 300 development projects, worth in excess of 1.7 billion zloty in total, were carried out on the basis of EU funding between 2004 and 2006. A further 5.5 billion zloty will be spent between 2007 and 2013. The numbers speak for themselves.

However, when going for the title, as I've already said, the most crucial thing is the quality of the programme which the cities present in their applications. It's essential that the cultural offer has been created especially for that particular environment, meeting the criteria stipulated by the European Commission. The two most significant of these are the European dimension and the social element. The cultural programme prepared by the winning city must thus not only lead to a strengthening of cultural cooperation in Europe, but also throw the diversity of European culture into relief and, at one and the same time, reflect the features that run as a common thread through that diversity. In this context, the EU's motto, Unity in

diversity, has a very specific dimension. Then there is the major role which the European Commission ascribes to the fact that the European Capital of Culture programme will involve the participation of the people who live in a given town, enhance identification, and form a lasting and sustainable aspect of the city's long-term cultural, economic and social development strategy. The word 'strategy' is highly significant; the European Capital of Culture programme may not simply be a collection of a few dozen cultural events, but must consist of a strategy which has been thought through and within which the vision, aims and goals are identified, along with the instruments for bringing them to fruition.

The true test for the cities will be the assessment made by the Selection Panel's 13 experts, who will determine the winning city and, at the same time, the most interesting, most ambitious and best-prepared programme on a European scale. As I said, I'm delighted that the cities are tackling the fight for the title of European Capital of Culture 2016 with such enormous fervour, since this demonstrates that the perception of culture changes during the process of development. We need to remember that nowadays, the culture sector is a system comprising not only public institutions, but also non-governmental organisations and the creative industries. The work of each and every one of these links is closely connected, a complementary offer, and it is impossible to speak of the development of any of them separately; neither can a cultural policy be created which would overlook any one of these spheres. This kind of perception of culture gives us an incontestable argument as to the fact that culture is one of the factors fundamental to socio-economic development. It not only has an impact on creativity, innovation, and the openness of society; it also has a real, and growing, role to play in creating jobs, in the GDP, and in increasing the appeal a country has for its inhabitants, tourists and investors. It also fulfils an integrative and promotional function. Anyway, the contest for the European Capital of Culture title demonstrates this admirably.

The deadline for submitting applications is getting closer, and then comes the pre-selection, which will take place in 2010. Do you anticipate that all the cities which have so far entered will submit

an application? What's the initial pre-selection going to be like? How many cities will be chosen as finalists? Is anything known yet about who's going to be among the 13 experts assessing the applications?

Judging by the growing interest in participating in the competition for European Capital of Culture 2016, we reckon that the majority of the cities who were present at the European City of Culture Information and Workshops Day conference, organised in Kraków on 26th -27th January 2009 by the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage, will be submitting applications in response to the Minister's call to do so. The more cities intending to contest the title, the more competitive the driving force behind building attractive cultural projects will be. It is not only the victorious city which will profit from participating in the competition; the very act of entering represents an enormous challenge for Polish cities, and not winning doesn't equate with losing out. Initiative counts, as does the involvement of the regional authorities, cultural institutions, the business sector, and the inhabitants themselves; in effect, the whole long and arduous process of preparation brings tangible benefits in terms of the socio-economic development of Poland's cities and their environs. The very act of entering the competition is an excellent opportunity to promote the city and the shared goal acts as a focal point, integrating residents, cultural institutions, non-governmental organisations and authorities alike.

We plan to open the official competition for the title of European Capital of Culture 2016 in late October/early November this year. The opening of the competition demarcates the course of the subsequent stages, including the pre-selection; in accordance with Decision No. 1622/2006/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of Europe of 24 October 2006 establishing a Community action for the European Capital of Culture event for the years 2007 to 2019, this should take place 10 months after the publication of the call for applications. So I'd hazard a guess that, by next October, we'll know which cities have gone through to the final.

Once again, I'd like to mention the fact that the recommendation of the city to which the title of European Capital of Culture should be awarded is made by a specially-appointed

panel of experts, and not by the Polish government. The panel is made up of 13 members, of whom seven are appointed by EU institutions; two being put forward by the Council of the European Union, the European Commission and the European Parliament, respectively, and one by the Committee of the Regions. In the case of Polish towns, the remainder are nominated by the Minister of Culture and National Heritage, in consultation with the European Commission. The members of the panel are independent experts and have no connections to the candidate cities. They have to have a wide experience in the culture sphere and in the work of stimulating cultural life. I believe that a panel made up in this way will guarantee an objective selection and a balance between national interest and the European character of the project. The members of the Selection Panel to be appointed by the Minister of Culture and National Heritage will be known before the pre-selection deadline. The final two members of the panel, the representatives of the Council of the European Union, will be confirmed by the Ministers of Culture for the EU Member States at the Council's November sitting. They will be experts from Romania and Luxembourg, respectively, because it is, in fact, those two countries which were chosen by lot and thus authorised to nominate experts. The competition consists of two stages. There is the pre-selection, where the Selection Panel chooses between two and four of the best projects; these then qualify for the next stage of the competition, the final. The result of this second stage is the Selection Panel's recommendation as to the one city to be nominated European City of Culture 2016. The final nomination is made by the Council of Europe. I think we'll discover who the winner is in late 2011/early 2012.

We need to remember that the European Capital of Culture is one of the most visible initiatives in the EU. A city holding the title becomes the cultural capital of Europe for a year, a city standing firmly centre stage and in the limelight. It's an opportunity to promote the city, the region and the country; it's an opportunity to present cultural and human potential. I'm looking forward with interest to seeing how the cities of Poland rise to that opportunity.

Talk about ŁECC 2016

INTERVIEW: Artur Zaguła



“ Łódź was the first Polish city to launch its attempt and announce its desire to become a candidate. Łódź is a hard-working city and one that never ceases to change. Together, this city and its residents have bundles of positive energy!

DOMINIKA OSTROWSKA-AUGUSTYNIAK

THE DIRECTOR OF BUREAU OF PROMOTION, TOURISM AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION, CITY OF ŁÓDŹ OFFICE

PHOTO: Andrzej Janecki

A year ago, the first discussion about Łódź European Capital, published in Purpose magazine, took place. I'd like to ask what's changed since then. What stage are we at currently?

Dominika Ostrowska-Augustyniak: In the opinion of external observers, Łódź is leading the pack. In a ranking published in the weekly magazine, Polityka, our city even overtook Warsaw in the Dynamism of Cultural Life category. We were given points for our investment in developing the buildings housing the Łódź Philharmonic and the Museum of Art. Among the festivals, Łódź Design, the International Design Festival was deemed to be most promising. Łódź also stood out in the Capability of Meeting EU Stipulations and the Cultural Infrastructure categories, and we were decidedly ahead of the others in the Websites category. As Piotr Sarzyński wrote, in summing up, “At the moment, the most interesting candidate seems

to be Łódź. It was the first to launch its endeavours to win the nomination and it has forged the furthest ahead.” Opinions like this are very gratifying, and they also act as both a boost and an incentive to keep up the hard work. Łódź is consistent in underscoring its will to fight and in displaying not only its strengths in the visual arts, in the form of film, comics, graffiti, painting, fashion and design, but also its multicultural roots and industrial heritage. Łódź is Festival City, it's a city of youthful culture, a city of creative industries, and a city of creativity, be it avant-garde, youth or 'off'. The pace of economic development and new infrastructural development projects also provide opportunities for culture to expand.

Krzysztof Candrowicz: We're entering a crucial phase of the project. The Minister of Culture has already announced the competition for the cities that want to try for the title of European Capital of

Culture. Time's running out, which is why the City of Łódź Office has announced the competition for the official project operator who'll be coordinating preparations for the Łódź candidacy.

What steps has your institution taken over the year as regards the competition? Have you managed to put your plans to effect?

Dominika Ostrowska-Augustyniak:

We've been promoting the Łódź European Capital of Culture project in Łódź itself, in Poland and Europe-wide. In our own city, we've run a range of promotional events and activities aimed at increasing both awareness and the expression of support for the attempt by the people of Łódź, and visitors to the city, whether they've come in the course of artistic events, for business reasons, or as tourists. The events included Zostań twarzą ŁESK (Become the face of Łódź European Capital of Culture),

and Łódź – magnetically attractive – on holiday, which were announced on the www.lodz2016.com website. At all the major trade fairs across Europe, the Łódź stands and promotional materials have been, and are, promoting our attempt at becoming European Capital of Culture 2016. Both the city's own abundant programme of festivals, and promotional campaigns run at Poland's largest music festivals, have been, and are, presenting Łódź as the best candidate for the title. There hasn't been a single major cultural event where the official logo of our attempt hasn't been employed. We've also involved the academic milieu. Students from Łódź have already been on two trips around former European Capitals of Culture; during the more recent one, they visited Brussels, Bruges, Antwerp, Luxembourg and Linz, the European Capital of Culture 2009, in order to meet the teams who worked on the candidacies and then, after receiving the nomination, on implementing the programme. They also conducted questionnaire-based surveys among residents and tourists visiting those cities, enquiring as to the significance of the European Capital of Culture title to the development of both the cultural life and the economy of the urban centres in question.

Barbara Woźniak: The Marshal of the Łódź Voivodship has supported from the very beginning the idea and efforts aimed at the City of Łódź to obtaining the title European Capital of Culture in 2016. The dynamic activities and interesting range of offers of cultural institutions subordinate to the regional self-government, including the Arthur Rubinstein Łódź Philharmonic, the Teatr Wielki [Opera] in Łódź, the Jaracz Theatre with regional stages, the Museum of Art in Łódź, and the Łódź House of Culture significantly influence the image of the region's capital and enrich its cultural offer. The most important event of the past year showing the position of Łódź on the cultural map of Europe was undoubtedly the concert of the world-famous tenor, Maestro Plácido Domingo, who graced the celebration of the 90th anniversary of the Łódź Voivodship.

Krzysztof Candrowicz: Currently, the competition to appoint the project

operator is in progress, so while that proceeds, the Łódź Arts Center Foundation, as one of the institutions competing for the position, has suspended its activities to date. We hope that if we win the competition, then by January 2010, we'll already have resumed our work in connection with Łódź European Capital of Culture. In the meantime, the Promotions Office at the City of Łódź Office has put numerous projects in place connected with bringing us closer to the European Capital of Culture title.

There's less and less time, it's ceased to be the ally it still was one year ago. Is there any chance of making a fast and suitable decision and bringing it into force, so that we, as residents of Łódź, will be able to say that we did everything we could about the European Capital of Culture?

Dominika Ostrowska-Augustyniak: We're at a good moment in time. I reckon that the project operator will shortly be appointed, coinciding with the Minister of Culture and National Heritage's call for applications. The entity concerned will have to look sharp in terms of completing the application and presenting a concept for organisational and promotional efforts which accords with both the course set for the city's development and its efforts to obtain the nomination for European Capital of Culture 2016. The first, general application will have to be submitted halfway through 2010; this will set out the main directions that the 2016 programme will take and the goals and requirements which the city intends to achieve and fulfil as a result of winning the title. There is sufficient time to prepare good material, especially in view of the fact that the city and its partners have identified some 'obvious' directions for the cultural and economic development of Łódź. And a touch of adrenaline, brought on by the awareness that time's passing, can only be a motivating force...

Barbara Woźniak: The success of projects such as gaining the title of European Capital of Culture requires the cooperation and involvement of

many communities, including the city's inhabitants, who have to believe in the potential of the city and province. For our part, in the past year we have focused on educating the region's residents and building the identity of Łódź around the ECC 2016 project. Special educational workshops were held in several cities of our province for the very idea of the ECC, as well as opportunities to support the projects of Łódź and ideas flowing from the region. In this respect, Łódź's potential is impressive.

Krzysztof Candrowicz: When it comes to the critical work and the culminating stage, that's all only now ahead of us. 2010 is the year which will show whether Łódź will become one of the three or four cities to go through to the finals. Everything rests in the hands of the City of Łódź Office and the operator appointed to oversee our endeavours. Let me emphasise that, if Łódź Arts Center wins, we'll do everything possible to win that title. It's a big responsibility, but we're not afraid of the challenge. Even if Łódź Arts Center doesn't win the competition, we'll join the project as a supporting partner, because we feel that it's crucial to our city's future.

During the previous discussion, we heard a promise to appoint a Łódź European City of Culture project management group. As far as I know, not only has no such group been established, but a dedicated institution hasn't been appointed either. So who's actually planning and initiating the tasks connected with the project?

Dominika Ostrowska-Augustyniak: Work with a view to winning the title is going on all the time. Every organisational unit within the Łódź City Office, as well as the region's Chief Executive's Office and a substantial group of cultural institutions, associations, community groups and councillors, are all working together toward that end. At the moment, a small team is working on the project within the Promotional, Tourism and Foreign Cooperation Office of the Łódź City Office; its brief is to coordinate the promotional work, obtain information and ensure that the attempt at the title

has full exposure during the myriad events receiving financial support from the city. The current priority is the completion of the repeat public procurement proceedings for the selection of a Łódź European Capital of Culture 2016 project operator, whose task will be to draw up and carry through the strategy for the attempt. After this entity has been appointed, a wider group of people will undoubtedly be included on the part of the city, with a view to supervision, joint action and coordination of the work, but primarily, the entity appointed by competition will, in fact, be granted the funding and organisational capabilities necessary to institute the policy for programming, promoting and seeing the attempt at the title through to the end.

In April you took over the duties related to the coordination of the project entitled Łódź as the European Capital of Culture. How did the takeover come about and what do you think of the tasks ahead of you?

Monika Ptasńska: The handover of the duties of the coordinator of the project Łódź as the European Capital of Culture 2016 happened very smoothly. In a period of 6 months we managed to carry out numerous ventures in order to secure strong community support and the backing of people in the field for the idea of Łódź's candidature for the European Capital of Culture 2016. The title creates great opportunities both for the city and for the region, not only as far as culture is concerned, but also for culture perceived as a driving force behind the promotion of the city.



“ During my visit to Brussels I had an opportunity to meet Jaqueline Pacauld, the coordinator of the entire European Capital of Culture project and sir Robert Scott, who is responsible for selecting the capitals. Their guidelines and hints are invaluable.

MONIKA PTASIŃSKA
COORDINATOR OF ŁECC PROJECT FROM THE CITY OF ŁÓDŹ OFFICE

PHOTO: Hanna Zubrzycka

How is the cooperation with the municipal authorities in the ŁECC project? Can you confirm, like a year ago, that there is a single programme and satisfaction with the joint action taken?

Barbara Woźniak: Let us remember that the Council of the Province of Łódź fulfils a supporting role to the activities conducted by the City of Łódź in the ECC 2016 project. We evaluate the cooperation in the past year positively and are trying to dynamically integrate the activities both through the suggestions of our cultural institutions aimed at animating the cultural life of Łódź, as well as educating and activating municipal and county governments as well as residents of the region and tying them with the idea of the European Capital of Culture.

How can the region as a whole strengthen the position of its capital as the best candidate for the ECC? Can you see awareness that the victory of Łódź will not only be beneficial for the city, but also for the region?

Barbara Woźniak: We do not doubt in the least that the benefits of obtaining the title Łódź European Capital of Culture in 2016 for the capital of our province will translate directly into the image and development opportunities of the whole region. The experience of our foreign partners, including the partner of Łódź – the Nord Department in France, whose capital city Lille was European Capital of Culture for 2004 – shows strong aspects of integration and economic benefits flowing from good use of the title for the promotion and development of the whole region. We believe that joint action – between the City of Łódź and Łódź Voivodship – will influence the creation of our image as the cultural heart of Poland, but also contribute to building a strong regional identity.

How do you, as one of the Łódź European City of Culture project instigators, view the activities of the city and regional public bodies during the last year? Have they been satisfactory?

Krzysztof Candrowicz: I reckon that there should be no resting on laurels. For a year now, we've been hearing that Łódź is in the lead of the European Capital of Culture project in Poland. This success, which is purely a media success at present, is just as much the result of our local authorities' activities. Nevertheless, it's always possible to do more, to do it better and to do it more thoroughly. When it comes to the joint efforts of the local and regional self-governing authorities during the European Capital of Culture, I'm counting on closer collaboration in the nearest future. This will be the critical year for the project.

Are you personally still fully involved with the Łódź European Capital of Culture project? Can you still state, with utter conviction, that you believe in the possibility of victory? And if so, how do you see the forthcoming work in this area?

Krzysztof Candrowicz: If we hadn't believed in the success of the project, we'd never have entered the competition for the official operator. Of course we stand a good chance. If I had to write a summary of what's most crucial at this moment, then I'd obviously start with launching work on the substance of the project. Just as soon as the City of Łódź Office appoints the operator, an artistic programme, and it has to be unique, must be drawn up, along with a detailed strategy for developing the city via culture. Promotion and PR are important issues, but they're secondary.

Could the establishment of a Culture Incubator at Fabryka Sztuki (Factory of Art) in the Łódź Art Center complex support the work in connection with Łódź European Capital of Culture? If so, what kind of events, ventures and projects might there be?

Krzysztof Candrowicz: We're placing a lot of hope in the Culture Incubator project. I'm counting on the fact that the moment of its birth will be a significant one for the entire Łódź European Capital of Culture project. The Incubator will guarantee the space and facilities for several dozen new cultural projects to be born every year!

“ The success of projects such as gaining the title of European Capital of Culture requires the cooperation and involvement of many communities, including the city's inhabitants, who have to believe in the potential of the city and province.

BARBARA WOŹNIAK

THE DIRECTOR OF MARSHAL'S OFFICE OF THE ŁÓDŹ VOIVODSHIP DEPARTMENT OF PROMOTION AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

PHOTO: Archive Barbara Woźniak

On 26th and 27th of January 2009 an Information Day and workshops took place in Kraków and on 5th of May, there was a similar Information Day organised in the European Commission in Brussels. Both events were directed at all the cities interested in being awarded the title. Do you, as a coordinator of the project, participate in these training sessions, workshops or meetings in preparation for the efforts to secure the European Capital of Culture title?

Monika Ptasńska: Our participation in workshops and information days is vital for the smooth running of the promotional campaign and lobbying support for the candidature of Łódź. Such meetings do not involve theoretical lectures but specific, practical guidelines from people who managed to obtain the title for their cities in previous years and, more importantly, who managed to successfully undertake the project. This involves information about setting a budget, securing funds, as well as the overall management of such a large-scale project. It is an opportunity to learn from the experience of other cities, who have proven to be most successful throughout the history of the project, i.e. Liverpool or Marseilles, the latter having prepared the best application. During my visit to Brussels I had an opportunity to meet Jaqueline Pacauld, the coordinator of the entire European Capital of Culture project and sir Robert Scott, who is responsible for selecting the capitals. Their guidelines and hints are invaluable.

How do you see your future role as a coordinator? Will your position still be viable after the appointment of



a team of people directly responsible for the task of obtaining the title?

Monika Ptasńska: The role of the coordinator will undoubtedly change once we select a team managing the Łódź as the European Capital of Culture 2016 project. One needs to remember that the title is a priority for Łódź and a key stage in the long term development programme of the city. The requisite funds for the appropriate promotional strategy will be allocated from the city budget. A special team will be appointed to supervise the implementation of a given project strategy. It will be a matter for the budget of The Łódź Promotion, Tourism & International Cooperation Office to fund the ventures following the given strategy guidelines. After the selection of a body, which will present the strategy for obtaining the European Capital of Culture 2016 title and the means used to achieve it, a coordinator will be assigned as a point of contact within the body and will also act as strategy supervisor, controlling the budget outlay.

The current impression that one might have as regards the Łódź European Capital of Culture project is that the city authorities have somewhat forgotten about it. We heard more about the Łódź candidacy and its promotion at the start of the competitive process. What's happened to the positive energy that was the driving force behind the action?

Dominika Ostrowska-Augustyniak: Łódź was the first Polish city to launch its attempt and announce its desire to become a candidate. The call for applications still hasn't been announced, yet we're continually making our presence felt by means of ambitious cultural events and new development projects. Łódź is a hard-working city and one that never ceases to change. Together, this city and its residents have bundles of positive energy! Then there's the very fact that Łódź is coping extremely well economically, even in a time of crisis, and that myriad infrastructural, cultural and industrial development projects are being undertaken. The commissioning into

use of ATLAS ARENA ŁÓDŹ warrants mention here, as does the signing of the next agreement regarding the Festival Centre at the EC-1 heat and power station, to say nothing of plans for collaboration with Frank Gehry, the emergence of new and promising cultural events that are unique not only in Polish terms, but also on a European scale, events like Fashion Week Poland and Sound Edit, and concerts involving such world-famous names as the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Plácido Domingo, Krzysztof Penderecki, Daniel Lanois, a-ha and Depeche Mode.



“ I reckon that there should be no resting on laurels. For a year now, we've been hearing that Łódź is in the lead of the European Capital of Culture project in Poland. This success, which is purely a media success at present, is just as much the result of our local authorities' activities.

KRZYSZTOF CANDROWICZ
THE DIRECTOR OF ŁÓDŹ ART CENTER (ŁAC)

PHOTO: Adam Słowikowski



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