

# LODZ CREATES INNOVATION

NEWS MAGAZINE OF THE CITY OF LODZ

NO. 5 (26)/2019

## RESPONSIBLE FASHION

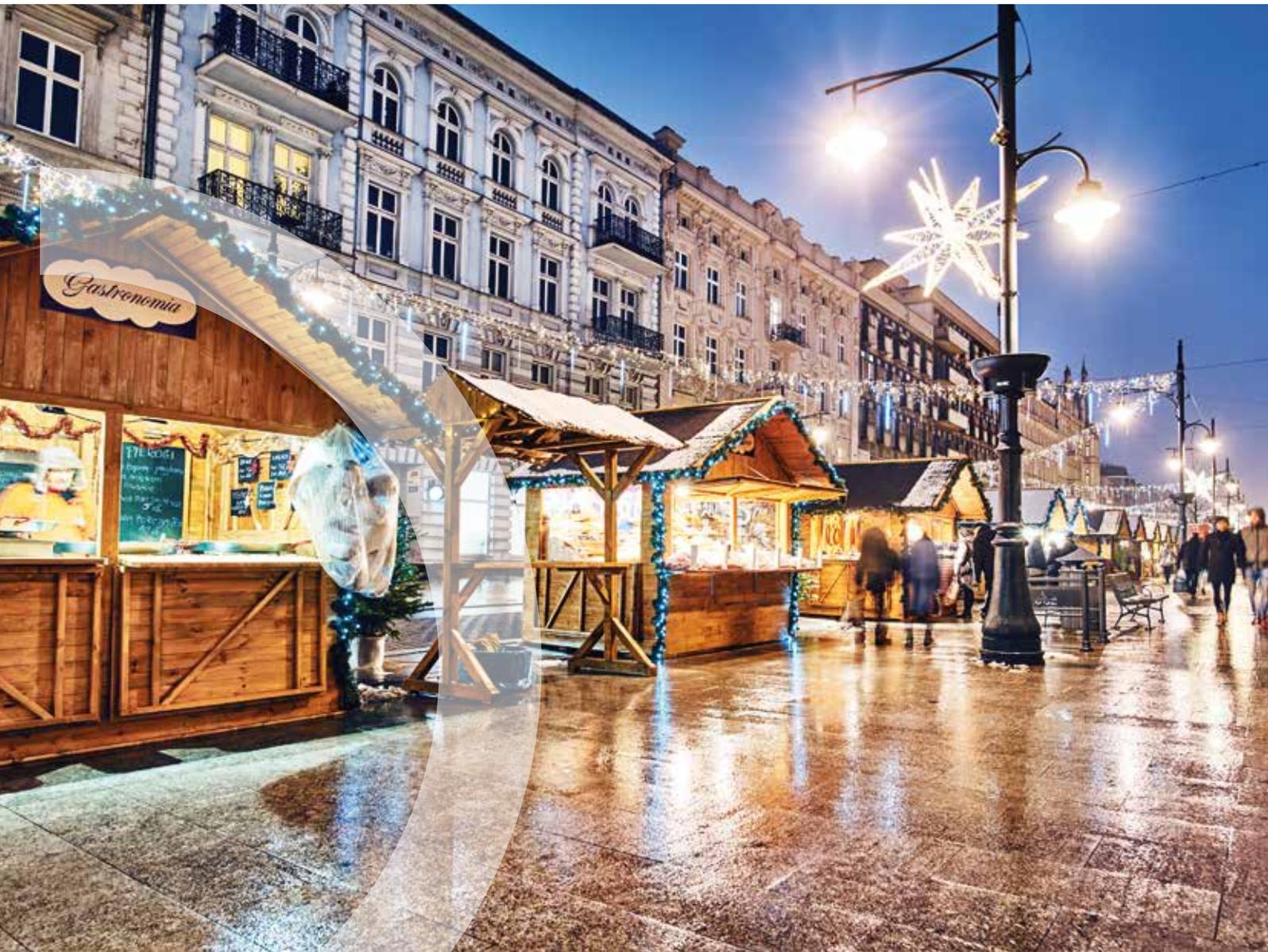
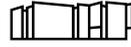
RUNNING, EXERCISING?  
YOU'RE CHARGING  
YOUR PHONE!

YOUNG PEOPLE  
TO THE STARTING LINE

TEXTILE INDUSTRY GAZELLE

REPUBLIC OF PATTERNS





As every year, with the onset of winter, Piotrkowska Street will be in the center of Christmas atmosphere. All thanks to the Christmas Fair that will be located at Schiller Passage. The official start: 1st of December. The organizers encourage Łódź inhabitants to take part in the fair with a rich offer of Christmas products and attractive events schedule: concerts, activities for children, artistic showcases and workshops among others.

- the opening of the Fair will be preceded by a festive procession that You cannot miss!
- you will spend a great time and have an opportunity to buy Christmas presents for your loved ones
- exhibitors will present the variety of Christmas products in the beautiful wooden houses along Piotrkowska Street
- Christmas activities will be happening throughout the whole time of the Christmas Fair - choir performances, singing carols, ice carving shows
- there's the only place where you can buy the regional delicacies for the Christmas table - honey and variety of pastries
- this year, we are more than happy to invite you to the opening live concert in Schiller Passage
- Santa Claus and his holiday helpers are waiting for the children!

*Let's celebrate Christmas together on Piotrkowska Street!*



**ANNA KRAWCZYK**  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Entrepreneurship triumphs again in Lodz! Were someone to have any doubts, even for a moment, they could see for themselves on 11 October, during the final of the 11th edition of the “Youth in Lodz – I’ve Got a Start-Up Idea” competition. The competition featured 35 projects from the medical, biotechnology, IT, artistic and creative industries. In addition to the main prize of PLN 40 thousand from the President of Lodz, the winners received financial support from sponsors of the event, as well as marketing and accounting assistance, and even incubation in scientific and creative centres in Lodz.

The competition wouldn't have been successful were it not for the synergy of local government, science and business. According to Prof. Hani Asfour from the Dubai Institute of Design and Innovation, a special guest of the event, it's a prerequisite for introducing innovation. The co-operation may cross continental borders, because the academic's visit was so productive that it might lead to a Lodz–Dubai student exchange.

Autumn was also full of fashion-related events. The 2nd edition of the Polish Fashion Forum – Modopolis was held on 4 October. According to Pola Stępień, who runs the Modapolka brand

and is on the programme council, the event not only fosters a feeling of community, but also gives a chance to expand knowledge, exchange experiences, as well as establish and strengthen contacts. Just like during the previous edition, designers had the opportunity to present their collections in the showroom. This year, 40 brands were selected, including clothing, jewellery manufacturers, accessory designers. The organisers ensured that it was also visited by stylists creating fashion editorials or cover sessions for most lifestyle titles in the country, including: Karolina Limbach, Andrzej Sobolewski, Michał Koszek and Paweł Kędzierski. Debates, workshops and training sessions were also held. That's why this issue of our newsletter is bursting at the seams with fashion-related topics.

Staying on the topic of creative industries, another event will be held in Lodz and this one you just have to see! Dysonanse ŁDZ is a conference unlike any other. From the very first edition, it surprises with its unusual format confronting various views and opinions. The organisers are announcing an unlimited range of subjects and the recipients should be ready for a huge dose of creative controversy. See for yourselves on 13 November! ●

Photo: Magdalena Lawreszuk



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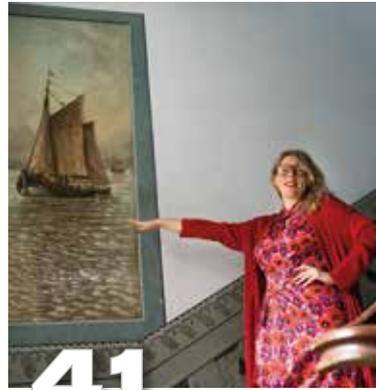
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 1.3 thousand projects, nearly 320 professional business models and over 250 operating companies – these are the statistics of the previous editions of the “Youth in Lodz – I've Got a Start-Up Idea” competition

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The LDZ Dissonances conference is a new idea in the calendar of Lodz's creative events. Since its first edition, it has been surprising us with its unique structure

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Five years ago **Maria Nowakowska** fell in love with the architectural detail. Since that time, she guided 77 tours through the city's nooks and crannies, carried out over 60 lectures, wrote two books

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BILIŃSKI Textile company – a dye-making robot  
Photo: Paweł Ławreszuk

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BY MALWINA WADAS

# Responsible fashion

Pola Stępień has been managing the Modapolka brand since 2010. Her clothes come from the hands of bona fide clothing industry specialists. Their interesting and modern design straddle fashion, art and good design work. The designer loves the idea of sustainable fashion, as she cares for high quality designs, but also about the environment – she always strives to ensure that clothes don't build up as trash on Earth, give long-lasting satisfaction and, if possible, get a second life. She uses 100 percent natural and biodegradable fabrics and dyes. Her collections are created in Lodz, but reach customers in almost all corners of Europe. They can be seen online on the brand's website and in co-operating boutiques. Pola Stępień is also on the Modopolis programme board.

**How did you join the Modopolis programme board? What convinced you to participate in this initiative and devote your time and work?**

I came to Modopolis because the organisers invited me to this project. I'm very happy about this and consider it a great honour to play a role in the event's creation. Few industry events are aimed at supporting designers and this one is exactly like that. It's not simply another fashion week, but the building of a community – an opportunity to expand knowledge, exchange experiences, establish and strengthen contacts. What gives me the most satisfaction is that Modopolis has definitely focused on designers who are starting their

voyage and waiting for their success. I feel that such events are very necessary.

**What do you think is the biggest asset that Modopolis gives young designers?**

Knowledge, knowledge, knowledge! For someone without experience, such a basis allows them to make the least mistakes, learn as much as possible in a short time and gain as many contacts as possible. Someone might be the best designer, do everything perfectly at the design and production stage, but the products need to be seen by a lot of people, of which only a small group will make a purchase.

## DESCRIPTION OF THE URBAN NOMAD COLLECTION

I suffer from climate anxiety. I'm depressed by the irreversible devastation of the environment, mass extinction of species and the impending ecological disaster.

It scares me and I feel completely powerless. My collection is a direct reflection of this mood. Does fashion matter in the face of the apocalypse?

I'm sure that we need a new fashion system more than new trends.

In my search for such a system, I designed the Urban Nomad collection, which is based on capsules, or actually MINI-CAPSULES. You can put everything on at once and... go!

Go like modern nomads looking for their place in a crowded civilisation, which is starting to be defined by overpopulation, conflicts and migration crises resulting from climate change. Naive? Maybe, but I tame my fears by working this way...

A blanket will also be useful, because we're as defenceless as Linus: "That old blanket soaks up all my fears and frustrations."

I didn't buy any new fabrics for this collection, so I used the ones that have piled up over the years or were left over from previous projects. I also received denim fabric rolls from friends. The denim was produced in 1989 at the Harnam state-owned plant in my city of Lodz. I used it to make trousers and skirts. My goal was for individual items to be as universal as possible: one size, unisex and multitasking. No raincoats are included, but you can look at my previous collections and simply order one. Who said that you have to make new?

### The Urban Nomad consists of:

- blue denim trousers, skirts and shirts made of fabric produced at the Harnam factory in 1989,
- Off-white t-shirts from fabrics from previous collections,
- various designs of jackets with pleated oversize sleeves, in different colours, also made from fabrics from previous collections,
- shawls made of certified cotton yarn from the factory in Białystok. Black, white and magenta are the primary colours. The collection's graphic design is the work of Jakub Stepień aka Hakobo.

### What other new challenges await the fashion industry and those who create it?

We're talking at an interesting moment, because the fashion world is facing new challenges stemming from a move away from mass production, sewing and buying cheap. Modopolis consciously, by design, one might say, focuses on sustainable and responsible production. This is a very important direction! At the same time, it's a big challenge for the industry. We can't run away from this,



Urban Nomad – The latest collection of Pola Stepień, which premiered in autumn this year

it's a moment of great changes. Quality is extremely important and even more so in the context of these changes.

**You underline this aspect not only in the communication for the xxx brand, but also through every outfit that you create as xxx.**

I've always taken this approach. I learned it at home. Top quality, honesty, not only in fashion, but also eating or spending time, are the values that guide me at work and in everything I do. I create a brand that focuses on high quality and originality.

### What else does designing mean for you?

Designing is the way I express myself. I see fashion as a part of our culture and the easiest way to define who we are and how we perceive ourselves. I'd like for my customers to dare to decide themselves what trends are current, what should be worn and what not, not necessarily follow what's imposed by large corporations. I focus on courage and awareness.

**Other members of the Modopolis programme council and the idea for the event itself are rather courageous...**

True, it's no accident that people associated with the fashion industry are on the council, ones who are brave, go forward without a compass or only

(or maybe especially) with an internal compass. Everyone has their own strong character, style, but also very individual experiences. This means that we know who we want to invite to the event as speakers and experts, but also as participants.

**The Modopolis Programme Council plays a dual role. On the one hand, you're mentors and moderators of the programme, while on the other hand, you're its participants and content recipients.**

Yes, this is another significant Modopolis asset – it is for us and about us.

**You share experience you've gained in the fashion industry. What do you think is not mentioned enough?**

There are a lot of things, but it's very important that you can't do it alone. This is probably one of my key experiences. For example, you can't be a designer and be responsible for finances or it's extremely difficult, at the very least. It's very important to have the support of someone else. Someone who takes a different perspective and helps us grow. You can't be both a creator and an accountant. These are completely different functions – both very responsible, but completely different. Combining them is detrimental to the project. This is the first conclusion from my experience in the industry. The second is that interpersonal contacts are extremely important. Sure, we have social media now. We can advertise, set up one online store after another, but analogue relations are the key. And one more thing to keep in mind - this is a tough business where you have to take financial risks, so be prepared. Find out how this unique industry works.

**You need to have knowledge and then...**

And then you have a job that, in my opinion, is much more demanding than going to work at 8.00 am. Here you have to think or act at all times. For me, designing is like another child. I feel that an event like Modopolis is also important because it deals with topics related to both fashion and business. The fashion industry is one-of-a-kind. Creation is intertwined with thinking about numbers, technologies, the ideals and ethics of what you do. I hope this event will enrich us all. We have different experiences and approaches to fashion. Meeting, talking and exchanging ideas are always crucial.

**In your opinion, what direction is fashion, as an industry, but also as an art discipline, taking?**

For me, fashion is a way of expressing myself every day, not just on catwalks. Managing Modapolka, I asked myself how often I am in places where I can dress up



Modopolis, 2019 edition

in heels and a long dress... That's why I make clothes in which I can get on a bike, meet with friends, wear every day. I create things for ordinary people and they're also for me, because I consider myself to be a person who lives a normal life. Of course, I value high fashion designers a lot – the value of their designs lies not only in the design work itself, because anything can be designed, but also, perhaps most importantly, in the execution.

**You often emphasise that you focus on the highest quality.**

Yes, I believe this is another crucial trend, to which fashion is coming back and it definitely should. Thousands of hours of work by many talented, hard-working, quality-conscious people, a lot of manual work, craftsmanship...

**You care about the conditions and where your collections are created, but also what they're made of. You often talk about the fashion industry's responsibility.**

I design from natural fabrics, consciously, in a sustainable way. This is really very important to me. I simply try to live and function this way and set an example for others. Maybe that's why I'm in Modopolis – to share this idea with others ... We produce more and more rubbish, we throw more and more away. In 2019, we've already bought more clothes than in 2015, even though only half the year has gone by, and 85 percent of them have already been thrown in the trash. We only recycle approx. 2 percent of clothing and this is a real problem. The industry must change, there's no way round that, no room to consider whether it'll happen or not – in this sense it's rather difficult to talk about a trend, it's more a road that we're already on! It's good, obviously, that responsible fashion is in fashion. Awareness is growing in the industry, but also among customers. Modopolis also supports this trend and the organisers themselves believe that responsible fashion is the only right way, as well as, and perhaps above all, for people and brands that are entering this world.

**Thank you for your time.**

Thank you. ●

BY AGATA DOMAŃSKA

# Green trends saving the world: can this work?

We are drowning in plastic; it's practically everywhere. It no longer just litters our planet – it outright poisons it. Can we do something about it?

Every day, people generate tonnes of waste. Literally tonnes! In Poland alone, a single household produces 12 million tonnes of waste every year!

According to the WWF, one sixth of this waste ends up in forests or household heating stoves. Less than 14 percent of waste is recycled. Plastic is the worst of all. We use a plastic bag for 12 minutes on average, and then its decomposition takes 400 years! A plastic bottle takes even longer. Apparently, the Japanese generate the most waste, while second place is held by the Americans. Europeans are slightly better, although the waste they generate is still counted in millions of tonnes. This results in plastic bags on shrubs, fluttering in the wind; whales stranded on shores, dead from hunger because their stomachs were so full of waste they couldn't eat any more; turtles that mistake bags floating in the water for jellyfish, so they eat them and then die in agony. According to the UN, nearly a million marine animals die each year because of waste! Finally, we have succumbed to plastic as well. According to the scientists at the 26th European Gastroenterology Week, its particles (microplastics) can be found in faeces of people around the world. We don't know, however, how harmful this could be, which is why people have finally decided to do something about it!

We can fight the plastic that floods us on three levels: institutional, organisational and individual.

The institutional level is all the top-down decisions made by the government or local governments of individual cities or communes. An example of such action is a decision on mandatory waste sorting or the introduction of a mandatory fee for plastic bags in stores. Plans include a plastic bottle deposit fee, and some cities (e.g. Kraków) have been experimenting with PET bottle reverse vending machines, while other cities (e.g. Warsaw) plan to do so in the nearest future.

The organisational level is when e.g. a supermarket chain takes a decision that vegetables will be packed in... leaves rather than in plastic. Such a decision was made by the Rimping chain in Thailand. Vegetables in

these stores are wrapped in banana leaves. Not only is this eco-friendly, it looks really nice, almost like a gift! In Poland, Tesco stores sell durable fabric bags for a dozen or so zloty, which they will always exchange for new ones for free if they wear out. Additionally, the organizers of the London Marathon provided participants with water not in plastic cups but in special capsules, whose film was made of seaweed. The organiser of the marathon in Wrocław next year has the same plans.

More and more people participate in the race for a clean planet every day. Reusable fabric bags are now common. Drinking tap water has become fashionable, and many bars serve it for free. Fans of sparkling water have been using soda siphons, which they can refill for a few zloty. The awareness that objects should be repaired and not thrown away to buy new ones has been rising as well. Initiatives such as repair cafés have been popping up, where we can ask for help in repairing a device instead of throwing it out and buying a new one. People have been also making their own beeswax wraps (materials infused with beeswax) to pack their lunch to work and avoid using single-use bags. The zero waste and foodsharing movements have been teaching people how not to waste anything, from packages to excess food. And increasingly more people understand that we don't need a few passionate people living in harmony with ecology but millions that perhaps don't do it perfectly, but do it anyway. •



Photo: Adobe stock

BY MARZENA ZBIERSKA

# Running, exercising? You're charging your phone!

Most smartphone and tablet users probably don't know what a "textile charger" is yet. This could change soon enough! Especially in the case of athletes and all fitness-lovers, because this invention could turn out to be a real technological revolution for them!

Millions of people use smartphones and tablets in Poland, with the number going into the billions worldwide. Mobile devices are only becoming more popular and among the apps available to them, those used for tracking fitness and planning exercise are booming. Running, walking or cycling with a smartphone in one's pocket no longer raises any eyebrows. Neither does the fact that a phone needs to be charged every day. Even if we manage to extend battery life, e.g. with the help of a battery saving mode, almost every smartphone or tablet user has found themselves in a situation in which their device unexpectedly ran out of juice.

## A FABRIC FOR PRODUCING POWER?

Scientists from the Faculty of Material Technology and Textile Design at the Lodz University of Technology have developed a technology that allows for the wireless charging of mobile devices during physical activity. Your phone can also be charged

while walking when it's in your pocket. How's that possible? An innovative hybrid fabric holds the answer. The author of this idea, Prof. Katarzyna Grabowska, is implementing it based on research conducted on the structure and properties of threads. The premise behind the textile charger is to provide users with constant access to electricity in order to keep mobile devices working, which will eliminate the problematic processes associated with frequent charging.

The development process of the textile charger started with the creation of a hybrid thread with a steel thread core, which is ferromagnetic and a thin copper thread used as the braid. Copper is one of the best electric conductors.

"Simply put, our charger continuously produces electricity to power a mobile electronic device. An element used for electromagnetic induction is sewn into a part of the clothing, e.g. a pocket at hip height. A permanent magnet is placed in another part of the clothing, e.g. a shirt sleeve. As the magnet and the thread move in

a swinging motion relative to each other during physical activity (e.g. when running or cycling), electrical induction occurs and, using a transducer, the mobile electronic device is powered,” explains Prof. Katarzyna Grabowska.

The innovative charger is lightweight and can successfully replace heavy and large batteries that often contain toxic substances. It's also resistant to impacts and weather conditions.

### **MORE ACTIVITY – MORE ENERGY IN YOUR PHONE**

The textile charger can be used to charge smartphones and tablets, but also feature phones, smartwatches, photo and video cameras. As Prof. Katarzyna Grabowska underlines, the nature of the textile charger means that it can have many other applications:

“The technology can be employed in electrically heated clothing, EMI shielded clothing for people working in the vicinity of radio stations, mobile phone base stations or operating medical diagnostic devices.”

The textile charger can be used at the stage of clothing production and be its integral part or made available as a separate product. It's an attractive solution for active smartphone users, as the amount of electricity generated depends on the intensity of their sports activities. This way, charging your smartphone can serve as additional motivation for intense exercise. The highest current the scientists from Lodz managed to obtain is 10 milliamperes. This is not enough to fully charge a phone, but it should prevent it from discharging and keep it working.

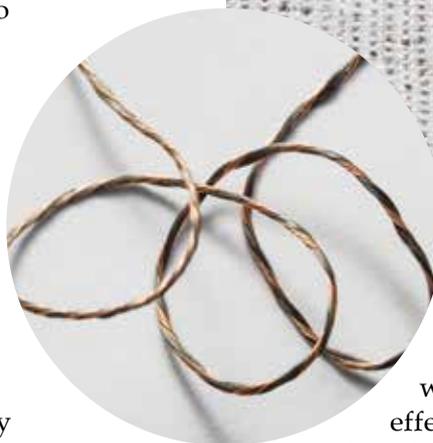
### **IMPLEMENTATION IS POSSIBLE NEXT YEAR**

At the moment, there are no products on the market that would be in direct competition with the invention of the Lodz University of Technology scientists.

“Neither power banks, nor solar chargers or wireless energy transmission systems, such as uBeam and WiTricity, have all the properties that our technology has,” says Prof. Katarzyna Grabowska.



**An innovative hybrid fabric**



The uBeam system allows for wireless charging using ultrasonic waves, but its weakness lies in the unknown effects of ultrasounds on human health. WiTricity (Wireless electricity)

was developed by scientists from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. It allows for wireless power transmission through the resonance of two objects. When they resonate at the same frequency, the energy exchange demonstrates high efficiency and is without significant losses. It's an environmentally safe method, but research is still ongoing and will probably finish in a few years.

The invention created by the team led by Prof. Katarzyna Grabowska has already been patented. A textile charger prototype was created as part of the “Inkubator Innowacyjności 2.0” (Innovation Incubator 2.0) program run by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education. Under this project, scientists also received support in managing research results in the form of promotion of their technological offer, as well as participation in selected exhibitions and fairs.

These activities are aimed at acquiring a business partner, allowing for research to be completed and the final form of the technology demonstrated as a finished, market-ready product. This, however, still requires some time. If an investor is found, the textile charger could be launched next year. Talks with companies interested in marketing the invention are already under way. According to preliminary estimates, the price of the textile charger shouldn't exceed that of an average power bank. ●

BY KATARZYNA JÓZWIK

# Textile second life

One of the leading sports footwear manufacturers has developed a model that is not only made of recycled plastics that pollute our oceans, but will also be recycled into new footwear. Textile recycling is a rather serious problem of the modern world. 2.5 million tonnes of this waste is generated every year in Poland alone.



Prof. Zbigniew Mikołajczyk, head of the Department of Knitting Technology and Textile Machinery at the Lodz University of Technology, has been searching for over a decade for new solutions enabling us to reuse textile waste. As a result of his research, he developed e.g. waste paper yarn and parts made of processed textiles for the reinforcement of artificial flood banks.

## SOLUTIONS FOR THE POLISH MARKET

The first studies conducted by Prof. Zbigniew Mikołajczyk involved a study of literature about textile waste recycling in the textile industry. These analyses have led the scientist to unequivocal conclusions concerning the Polish market.

“The issue of textile recycling in Poland is not only ignored but lies far away from the scientific, technological and industrial achievements of highly developed countries,” admits the Professor.

Their conclusions and observations of foreign methods of solving this issue have encouraged the scientists to search for solutions that would fit the domestic market. The research was also informed by data on the amounts of textile waste, which is 18–20 percent from just industrial clothing production alone.

“These ‘clean’ fragments of fabric, knitwear and fibres can be used successfully in other products because such waste is rich in raw materials that should be reused without the need of using complex technologies,” emphasizes Prof. Zbigniew Mikołajczyk.

The scientists primarily study clean textile waste that doesn’t require treatment before reuse. Furthermore, the Professor has received many proposals from clothing manufacturers wishing to hand their production waste over. This also proves that we still haven’t developed appropriate methods for handling such textile remains in Poland.

## YARNS MADE OF... PAPER

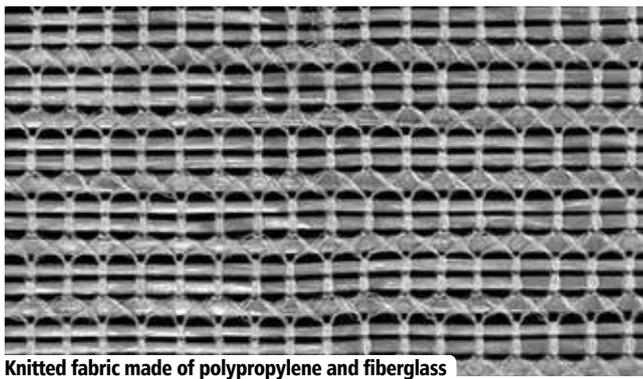
One of the research projects conducted by Prof. Zbigniew Mikołajczyk was the development of processed paper yarns. This research was inspired by the achievements of German scientists involving making textiles out of this material. Drawing experience from the technology for making textiles from polypropylene film, the Professor developed a knitting method using paper yarns. It uses several-millimetre paper strips of an appropriate durability which, in such form, can be processed into textile products. The beneficiation of paper for processing in textile machines enabled the scientists to knit paper bags.

“Bags made of this fibre have many uses,” emphasises Prof. Zbigniew Mikołajczyk. “One excellent example is using them in gardening to protect the roots of uprooted plants. After meeting its protective function, the paper covering is degraded in the soil within several months.”

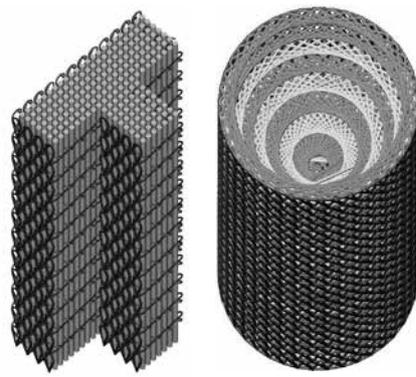
The manufactured technical textiles have been studied with respect to their applicability and durability. The main advantage of these yarns is the ability to arbitrarily transform them in textile techniques.

## TEXTILES AGAINST THE FLOOD

The scientist’s yet another project was the development of a textile-based reinforcement of artificial flood banks. The main disadvantage of the bank’s structure is soil sliding as a result of water saturation. The West handled this problem by drilling transverse channels in the flood banks and placing textile ropes within them. They are around 20-cm thick and are made of recycled textiles. They act as filters, i.e. they drain the bank. Thanks to this solution, it becomes more resistant to moisture.



Knitted fabric made of polypropylene and fiberglass



Examples of spatial knitted structures with a T-shaped base and in the form of a cylinder

“An important issue is to use textronics in the bank component system, i.e. electronics in textiles,” states Prof. Zbigniew Mikołajczyk. “The draining ropes contain soil saturation sensors that notify us when the bank strength is exceeded.”

According to the Professor, the technology of such textile drainages is very simple. This is confirmed e.g. by the fact of manufacturing this type of rope. The entire structure of the component is based on a delicate “sleeve” with a diameter of 20 cm, into which textile waste is introduced using a funnel and a transporter. When placed with appropriate density, it creates a highly absorptive filter that drains the moisture. This solution enables us to fully reuse clothing industry waste.

### POTENTIAL WAITING TO BE USED

Although, so far, the solutions developed by Prof. Zbigniew Mikołajczyk have not yet been commercialised, he sees a deep potential in them.

“In the context of paper yarns in Poland, there is a lot of waste paper. Textiles available on the market could be used to process it. Yarns obtained in this manner could be widely used in technical products.”

Paper recycled using this technique is used e.g. to produce eco-friendly packages that constitute an alternative for plastic bags that are being withdrawn from the market. On the other hand, filters made of processed textiles can be used in road construction and maintenance.

“Ropes with a smaller diameter are being used in the West in road and rail embankments, constituting both their reinforcement and a source of appropriate irrigation for plants planted on the roadside,” explains the Professor. “Naturally, the manufacturing technologies developed so far can be modified and modernised.”

### TEXTILES IN CONSTRUCTION?

Not many people know that textiles have been used in our environment not just as stylish clothes for many years. Technical textiles in the form of knitted, woven or non-woven fabric play a large role in modern construction. This includes geomaterials which,

thanks to their varied structure and properties, are often used in road construction and maintenance. On the other hand, modern fibre-based composites are popular in home construction, constituting an alternative to traditional construction reinforcements. Despite the current use of such materials, researchers from the Department of Knitting Technology and Textile Machinery are constantly looking for methods to improve the properties of textile composites. Katarzyna Piekłak, PhD (Eng.) who has pointed out innovative solutions in this field multiple times, is such a scientist. As part of their research works, the scientists have managed to create both a prototype machine for manufacturing solid knitted fabrics as well as three-dimensional composites themselves. Both solutions have been patented. The researcher has also developed diaphanous knitted structures reinforced with epoxy resin. Thanks to their diaphanous structure, they guarantee the light mass of reinforcement of construction structures, but they also play the role of service ducts.

“New technologies of knitted solids as strictly oriented structures can constitute elements of reinforcement of construction composites,” explains the scientist. “Such structures can replace commonly used metal or wooden beams used in framing construction. This concerns residential construction, large-scale construction and garden architecture.”

The use of mesh knitted structures to reinforce concrete structures was also the master thesis subject of Aleksandra Roszak, MSc (Eng.), graduate of the Faculty of Material Technologies and Textile Design of the Lodz University of Technology. The conducted studies have proven that knitted meshes can be used to reinforce construction composites. Introducing a fiberglass textile mesh into concrete increases its strength nearly three times more than if one were to use unreinforced concrete.

Certainly, the development of knitting technologies and modern construction solutions will enable the scientists to create advanced methods in the future that will enable us to reuse recycled textiles in construction. ●



BY PRZEMYSŁAW GRZYB

# Automatically = faster and better

Agnieszka Belowska-Gosławska, CEO of Robotics Center of Excellence

Banks have undergone a major transformation in the past several years, as the fast pace of changes in the world and the new needs of customers require fast actions and services available 24/7. This is facilitated by automation and digitisation of an increasing number of banking processes. Few people are aware, however, that programmers from Lodz specialising in RPA (Robotic Process Automation) stand behind those very transformations.

Nordea Bank, which opened a Robotics Center of Excellence (RCoE) in Lodz is at the forefront of this wave of change. The branch already employs 100 people, mainly developers working on Robotic Process Automation (RPA). They develop algorithms that allow an increasing number of banking activities to be handled in an automated manner. What benefits does this innovative approach bring?

## ROBOTICS CENTER OF EXCELLENCE

The introduction of modern technologies, such as artificial intelligence and Robotic Process Automation, is going to leave us with a labour market changed beyond recognition. Some international experts predict that within the next 15-25 years they might even replace 40 percent of existing professions. The more schematic a process is, the easier the automation of a process becomes. That's where the belief that robots will work only

on assembly lines or perform other repetitive activities comes from. However, what many people don't realise is that many tasks, ones seemingly complex and requiring extensive knowledge, are also based on procedures and process flows. This is the case in banking, which is one of the industries slated to be the most transformed by automation. The aforementioned Nordea bank from Scandinavia is taking charge in the introduction of changes.

"We believe that Lodz, with its huge number of experienced employees and universities cooperating to adapt the curriculum, gives us the best environment to grow this department," says Agnieszka Belowska-Gosławska, CEO of RCoE.

## IDENTIFY AND AUTOMATE

RCoE in Lodz presently employs nearly 100 people, but further specialists are sought thanks to its dynamic development.

“The task set before us is undoubtedly ambitious and demanding, but at the same time necessary in a dynamically changing world. The point is to automate as many banking processes as possible, which were performed by humans, but are ultimately expected to be performed by virtual robots,” explains Agata Taborek, junior RPA Developer.

Thanks to the work carried out in Lodz, 300 such processes have already been identified and automated, with further work ongoing.

“There's an entire range of processes that can be made robotic, be it in a bank or any other financial institution. This applies to both retail and corporate banking, as well as internal IT or HR processes,” Agnieszka Belowska-Gosławska clarifies.

Processes that are suited for automation are those that are repeatable, based on a procedure, have clear rules and require the processing of large amounts of data. However, in the case of tasks requiring interpretation, a comprehensive decision or direct contact with the customer, a human touch remains indispensable. In this respect, changes take much longer to be introduced, but they cannot be completely ruled out in the long run. This means that banking sector employees don't have to be afraid that a robot will do everything by itself.

### **A MACHINE IS NOT DISTRACTED**

The benefits of implementing process automation are obvious to the bank. It shortens the time needed to perform many tasks that people have been responsible for until that point. For employees, it means that they will be rid of many tedious and repetitive duties, which they mostly try to avoid at work. In many cases, a person will only be necessary to supervise the correct execution of the process. All this boils down to the key issue – reducing costs. But, will it matter in any way for corporate or individual customers?

“The financial aspect is the main factor influencing the decision to streamline or automate processes in companies. It's also worth mentioning other benefits, such as achieving 100 percent quality, as well as increased customer and employee satisfaction,” says Agnieszka Belowska-Gosławska.

This stems from the fact that an automated process is free from typical human errors resulting from distraction, oversight or fatigue.



**The branch in Lodz already employs 100 people, mainly developers working on Robotic Process Automation (RPA)**

In addition, processes can be performed much faster.

### **ROBOT: “HOW CAN I HELP YOU?”**

At present, automation allows, for example, a preliminary loan approval decision to be given very quickly. If the algorithm has insight into the customer's transaction history on their account, as well as information about revenues and liabilities available thanks to access to various databases, the loan decision is made much faster than when the data has to be analysed by a person. It's also crucial that the robot doesn't need to rest and a given process can be executed 24/7, year-round. Finally, one shouldn't forget about a rather surprising use of artificial intelligence, i.e. direct customer service. Even today, you can take advantage of chatbots which answer basic questions and help solve many problems through the bank's website. All because these most often relate to procedural issues and automation is best suited to dealing with them. However, the scope of help they can offer will only expand.

### **THE FUTURE OF ROBOTISATION**

It's difficult to predict today how far robotics will go in banking. According to Michał Kubiak, senior business analyst, a lot depends on how banking organisations cope with the challenges of automation. It's necessary to change the mentality of employees, perform a reorganisation and digitise some existing processes. However, even today, it's clear that banks see the way the wind is blowing and are trying to respond.

Nordea wants to lead this modernisation effort, with Lodz and some of the most talented RPA developers in Poland playing a great part in this. ●



# The future of the automotive industry

The growing popularity of electric and autonomous cars brings a huge design challenge for car body designers along with it. “The electrification of vehicles is a unique opportunity for us. It's, without any doubts, a completely new era in design. One which will have lots of space for talented designers,” underlines JACEK CHRZANOWSKI, founder of the international One One Lab Design Studio from Lodz, in an interview with Katarzyna Jóźwik.

**The automotive market is developing at a breathtaking pace. Are electric and autonomous cars still the future or maybe already the present?**

Autonomous vehicles are still not quite a fully developed topic, because full autonomy is not entirely here. Vehicles travelling along a pre-programmed route are a thing of the past. Large factories use robots that are autonomous vehicles, for example they transport packages from one place to another. I believe that their development will go more this way. Tesla has very good autonomy, but one problem persists – human unpredictability. Therefore, full autonomy requires refinement.

**What about electric cars? Will they replace internal combustion engine cars?**

Absolutely. You can see this, for example, in the actions of automotive companies that sell electric vehicles on the Chinese

market. They create completely new brands when working with local companies. In Europe, the real boom for electric vehicles will arrive when current internal combustion engine car brands are sold.

**So this is the inevitable future of the automotive industry?**

I think we have reached a turning point. This is the moment when the cheapest cars become electric vehicles. Toyota already offers hydrogen-electric cars. The only unknown is which solution works better. However, there's no question that within 15 years, electric vehicles will take over the automotive market.

**Still, such cars must be functional, first and foremost. So where is there room for a unique design?**

Contrary to appearances, this gives us a lot of opportunities for innovative solutions. Each new technology requires a new look. Electric

motors are actually much smaller and simpler than internal combustion engines, which means additional possibilities for using space. In autonomous cars the driver's attention is directed towards the vehicle's interior, which, in turn, leads to a complete reconstruction of the interior's structure. If we assume that technology will allow us to focus on something other than driving, the car's interior will start to resemble a room in which we can rest or work.

**Is that the style you're developing from the overall appearance to all the small details?**

At the very beginning, we created several dozen general sketches, but only a few of those are presented to the customer. We work on the details depending on the selected body. At the very end, we create a virtual model, which can be observed with special goggles.

**One of your recent projects is the body of the NIKOLA TRE autonomous electric-hydrogen truck. How does it work?**

I must admit that it's a very reasonable solution. The truck has hydrogen tanks and electric motors. And even though it's powered by the latter, it uses hydrogen as fuel. This solution is better than pure electric, because this solves the problem of charging the electric vehicle's battery. When given the opportunity to use hydrogen fuel, refuelling takes a quarter of an hour! The energy obtained as a result of a hydrogen-oxygen reaction powers the vehicle's electric motors.

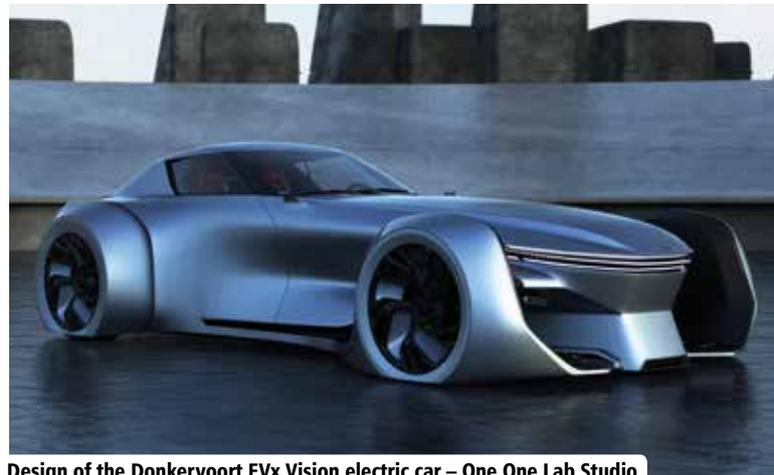
**You mentioned the autonomy of industrial vehicles. Is the aforementioned truck such a vehicle?**

The manufacturer has foreseen the implementation of systems that will ensure level 5 autonomy,

**ELECTRIC CARS ON THE EUROPEAN AND POLISH MARKET**

According to the ACEA (European Automobile Manufacturers' Association), 250,314 electric cars were registered in the European Union and the European Free Trade Association countries in the first half of 2019. When compared to the first half of 2018, the number of such vehicles increased by 35.2 percent

Electric cars are also increasingly popular in Poland. By June 2019, 1,357 such cars were registered in the country, of which 737 in the second quarter. Compared to the first half of 2018, the number of electric cars has almost doubled!



Design of the Donkervoort EVx Vision electric car – One One Lab Studio

which means they require no intervention from the driver. The vehicle decides how to reach the indicated point and chooses the right route. The production of this truck is slated to start in 2022. I don't know, however, whether technologies allowing such a high level of vehicle autonomy will be available by that time.

**Is European infrastructure ready for this? In Poland there are only 646 charging stations for such vehicles.**

Yes and no. Most petrol stations, knowing that the end of internal combustion engine vehicles is near, are opening restaurants. As we spend approx. 30 minutes in them now, in the future waiting for the electric car battery to charge won't be a problem. However, the dearth of charging stations in Poland stems from the high prices of electric vehicles. Another barrier is the capacity of their batteries, which assure a range of approx. 300–400 km. I believe that if performance were improved to at least 500 km with all of the car's features used (like air conditioning, radio), the attitude of drivers to such cars would definitely change. Considering that an electric car with an affordable price tag has already been launched on the market, I'm sure the market for these cars will grow in Europe.

**So, our mentality plays a big role?**

Yes. It's also important to know how comfortable an electric car is to use. Internal combustion engine vehicles require inspections, filter replacements, oils. The design of electric vehicles eliminates many of the problems present in traditional cars.

**Thank you for your time. ●**



ROLSKI

BY PRZEMYSŁAW GRZYB

# Polish electric car for the 21st century

The great challenges of humanity, i.e. fighting smog and global warming, mean that the development of a mass-produced zero-emissions electric car has become something more than just another demonstration of the capabilities of modern engineering. Big automotive companies, as well as visionaries and billionaires such as Elon Musk, have been working on creating such a car. Not many people know, however, that a prototype of such a car has been created in their neighbourhood, the results are more than promising and the car's shape is surprisingly familiar.

The Syrena Passenger Car Factory in Kutno has already presented the first prototype of the passenger car called the Vosco S106EV. Combined with the latest technology, does it have a chance of taking Polish and international roads by storm?

## CAR MADE OUT OF PASSION

Syrena, Polonez, Nysa and Warszawa are names that certainly evoke an emotional reaction among aficionados of Polish cars. For many, they are iconic symbols and evoke a feeling of longing for the Polish automotive industry. Today, this longing is expressed practically only in the production of components and the assembly of vehicles for large companies. Mieczysław Wośko, president of Polfarmex and a great enthusiast of the automotive industry, wants to reverse this trend and prove that you can also make cars in Poland. The Syrena Passenger Car Factory (FSO) in Kutno was founded in 2014 out of this great passion.

“We base the entire business of FSO Syrena on the enthusiasm and commitment of our employees. We are completing a team that understands the automotive industry and emotionally approaches the idea standing behind the company's creation,” explains the company's president.

## COMBUSTION GOAL AND ELECTRIC DREAM

The first goal of the company was to develop a combustion engine car with a body that draws upon the cult brands known from the history of the Polish automotive industry, but whose quality and equipment follows the big company standards we've grown accustomed to. Thus the Vosco S106 was created. Its first prototypes were finished in 2014 and four years later the car received its roadworthiness certificate, i.e. it was officially licensed for use on public roads; it could be registered, insured and used to travel anywhere. The last Polish car to receive this certificate was the Polonez. Simultaneously, works

began on another, much more difficult and ambitious enterprise, i.e. the creation of a fully electric car.

### CHALLENGES OF THE FUTURE

There are fully electric cars on the market right now. They have been mass-produced by such brands as: Peugeot, Renault and Toyota. Nonetheless, this doesn't mean that the technology is now well-developed and that customers are fully aware of its possibilities. To the contrary! Everyone who tackles the electric engine must expect numerous challenges. Some of them are wholly objective. Range has always been an issue with electric cars, depending not only on the size of fuel cells but also on temperature. During extremely low temperatures, it can drop by as much as 50 percent. Charging time is also an issue. We can fill a fuel tank in several minutes. Electric car batteries take several hours to charge. The lack of appropriate infrastructure is another problem. The number of charging stations is low, especially in Poland, although it has been rising. So far, the price is also higher. Non-objective challenges certainly include the reception of vehicles by customers who have grown accustomed over the years to the standard and capabilities of combustion engines. The strong lobby of countries and enterprises whose main source of income is the extraction of petroleum is also a significant factor in this context.

### ELECTRIFYING POSSIBILITIES

All of the aforementioned issues pale, however, in comparison to the possibilities created by the electric engine. When introduced on a mass scale, it will be a revolution at least as big as the replacement of horses with combustion engines over 100 years ago.

Most of all, electric cars are extremely eco-friendly; they don't generate greenhouse gases or smog. Additionally, if we obtain charging energy from green sources, it will be the cleanest and the least invasive method of travelling of all known to humans. Moreover, these vehicles don't generate noise; the only sound they make is that of tyres rolling on asphalt. As a result, city centres and bustling streets will change their nature completely. We also can't forget another important aspect to many consumers, i.e. costs. So far, electric cars are more expensive by approx. 20–40 percent compared to their combustion engine-based counterparts, but the travelling cost itself is much lower. At the moment, the cost of one litre of gas is approx. PLN 5–6. For this amount, an electric car can drive up to 100 km.



**Presentation of Vosco S106EV during 27th International Defence Industry Exhibition in Kielce**

### SUPPORT OF THE EUROPEAN UNION AND THE LODZ UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

Works on the electric car in Kutno began in 2017, while the first prototype was presented two years later. It was created as part of a project valued at PLN 11.5 million, executed with an EU grant of PLN 4.6 million. The Lodz University of Technology has also contributed to the development of the prototype, optimising the vehicle's structural elements in order to reduce its mass as much as possible. The aforementioned Vosco S106 was used as the basis to create the electric car.

“The goal of our collaboration with the Lodz University of Technology was to select such composite materials that would be usable in the car's production while maintaining the dimensions of its body from the combustion engine version. The collaboration with the university was of a strictly commercial nature,” explains Andrzej Stasiak, chief constructor of FSO Syrena.

### VOSCO S106 EV: ELECTRIC CAR FROM KUTNO

The prototype presented in March 2019 was designed by Damian Woliński, a 26-year-old Polish designer and graduate of the Academy of Fine Arts in Wrocław. The power of the car's engine is 88 HP and it generates 220 Nm of torque. With one charge, its range is 210 km, which means it will be perfect in cities. However, there are preliminary attempts to create a model with greater power and range. So far, the road to mass production or even larger batches is still long; the car has to pass tests, obtain necessary licences and a roadworthiness certificate. Nevertheless, the prototype certainly proves that, with the commitment of business, state universities and EU support, a product for the current century can be created in Poland.

“FSO Syrena has great potential. I'd like for the Polish automotive industry to return and fascinate us with design once more, and to let us rival the largest automotive companies,” summarises Damian Woliński. ●

BY MARZENA ZBIERSKA

# Do investments and innovations guarantee success? It's obvious!



BSH dishwasher factory in Lodz

BSH Sprzęt Gospodarstwa Domowego has recently completed the reorganization of its clothes dryer factory. Key projects of the company are also under way, including a new dishwasher factory and a modern research and development centre, because household appliances today have to constitute a connected system and provide users with surprising new capabilities.

An increase in production capacity by over 40 percent and 10 percent more jobs are the effects of recent changes at BSH's clothes dryer factory. The modernization has covered over 70 percent of the factory and the project involved nearly all employees, third parties and specialists from the central washing department in Berlin. The costs of this project reached PLN 100 million. Importantly, production has been performed practically non-stop so that clothes dryers of the highest quality could reach their recipients according to schedule. The Lodz dryer factory is the only such factory in the BSH group. Devices produced there are delivered to customers not just in Europe, but also in Asia, North America, Australia and New Zealand.

## INDUSTRY 4.0 IS NOW A FACT OF LIFE

"The key changes were primarily focused on the area of production," says Paweł Adamowicz, director of BSH's clothes dryer factory in Lodz. "As a result, the production cycle has been significantly shortened and the system for delivering materials has been appropriately adapted and optimized. The concept of quality tests has also changed. Devices are now tested directly on the assembly line. Thanks to

this change, we can react to potential errors faster. These are just some of the Industry 4.0 solutions we have introduced. Our future projects will also follow this direction."

Poland plays an important role in BSH's entire global structure because of the location of factories, among others. There are six of them in Poland: the washing machine, clothes dryer and dishwasher factories are located in Lodz, oven and cooler factories are located in Wrocław, and the small household appliances factory is located in Rogoźnica. Shared Services Centres, a complex IT division, and research and development centres are also housed in Poland. They operate for BSH in Poland as well as for branches in other locations around the world: in the United States, Asia and in the Middle East.

Furthermore, a logistics centre with the area of over 80 thousand square metres was launched in 2018 in Lodz, one of the largest facilities of its type in Poland.

## SOON, A NEW DISHWASHER FACTORY

In 2019, the construction of the new dishwasher factory in Lodz will conclude. This will be the largest household appliance factory in

Europe, as well as a research and development centre, one of the most state-of-the-art R&D centres in the entire BSH Group.

The new dishwasher factory in Lodz is expected to produce 3 million devices per year. The plans are ambitious and should translate into the company's success both domestically and abroad.

"We have to emphasize that the factory is one of the most state-of-the-art centres in the entire BSH Group, equipped with eco-friendly solutions and ready to implement the principles of Industry 4.0. The factory will produce, among others, dishwashers equipped with the Home Connect system, a digital platform for remote management of household appliances, offering an extended functionality of the devices, as well as 45-cm-wide dishwashers, produced for the first time in Poland," lists Marta Kujawa, BSH's PR specialist. "Moreover, having the logistics centre nearby will enable us to efficiently manage the transport of manufactured devices as well as component deliveries.

#### **STABLE EMPLOYMENT AND BENEFITS**

BSH's new project means the company needs employees. Recruitment is already under way, primarily concerning jobs related to production line handling. BSH is looking for production employees and forklift operators.

"BSH employees in Lodz receive a wide range of benefits," states Marta Kujawa. "The most important ones include: private medical care and a comprehensive social package covering a sports and cultural offer and meal financing. They can also take advantage of employee cafeterias serving fresh meals for very reasonable prices. Moreover, they are covered by group accident insurance and can optionally take out additional insurance. We also have to mention employee purchases, thanks to which one can buy BSH devices for preferential prices, and social benefits in the form of funds for renovation, vacation or set of textbooks and workbooks for children. Furthermore, we are conducting a series of campaigns encouraging people to recommend employment at BSH to their friends, with financial bonuses as part of these programmes.

In Poland, the company employs over 6 thousand people and this number is still growing. In late 2018, employment at all BSH centres around the world amounted to 61 thousand employees.



**Pawel Adamowicz, director of BSH's clothes dryer factory in Lodz**

#### **MODERN HOME, I.E. HOME CONNECT**

In 2014, BSH implemented the Home Connect system, the largest digital platform for household appliances operating online. It is currently available in 34 countries. In Poland, consumers can take advantage of this solution in their: washing machines, clothes dryers, dishwashers, ovens, hoods, hot plates, coffee machines and coolers. New countries and partners are planned to join in the following year. Consumers will be able to select a channel to connect to Home Connect; this can be an application, voice commands, Facebook Messenger or accessories such as the Fitbit smartwatch. Home Connect enables customers to efficiently enter the world of additional services. The capabilities of a "connected home" are surprising. Using the application, the customer can send a recipe straight to the oven, check whether the washing is finished or make the dishwasher order dishwashing tablets before the stock runs dry.

New technologies outline the further development of BSH. Last year, the company founded a special department responsible for digital technologies and spends significant amounts on research and development. In 2018, the company's expenses on research and development increased by 8.2 percent compared to 2017. Ultimately, their amount reached a recordbreaking EUR 673 million! Moreover, the company is developing its acceleration programme, Future Home, launched in collaboration with Techstars, and the BSH Start-up Kitchen initiative. The main purpose of the acceleration programme is to identify and develop innovative digital services for consumers along with selected start-ups. ●

BY ANNA KRAWCZYK, MALWINA WADAS

# Young people to the starting line



As many as 1.3 thousand projects, nearly 320 professional business models and over 250 operating companies – these are the statistics of the previous editions of the “Youth in Lodz – I've Got a Start-Up Idea” competition. The finale of the 11th edition, where the best Lodz start-ups were selected, took place on 11 October 2019.

35 innovative ideas from the medical, biotechnology, IT, art and creative industries took place in the competition. In addition to cash prizes, the participants competed for numerous in-kind and service prizes, including incubation, office space, advisory, accounting services and specialist training courses in conducting efficient start-up promotion campaigns. The competition's strategic partners include the Lodz University of Technology, the University of Lodz and the Academy of Fine Arts in Lodz, and the event's goal is to connect young entrepreneurs with potential counterparties and investors.

## A BILLION DOLLARS WITHIN ARM'S REACH

This year, for the second time in the event's history, teams could present their projects to Venture Capital fund representatives.

“Compared to the previous year, we could see a stronger commitment of the teams.

The projects are better refined and have a bigger development potential. Several teams who made presentations last year continued their incubation. We can see the progress and it's very important,” says Jan Bocian, RDS Fund Ltd, New Promised Land Seed Fund. “Furthermore, Lodz is a unique city in Europe that can attract active and entrepreneurial people just like during the peak of its growth.”

Individual talks with investors took place during the VC Speed Dating. The majority of funds aim their operation at specific branches of the economy. Life science, healthcare, biotechnology, low-carbon economy and new technology projects

are the most successful because they can be quickly calibrated to a global scale. 15 projects from various industries were presented in Lodz.

“We are a General List fund, so we look at all projects regardless of their industry and type of solution, e.g. software or hardware. We are interested in projects based on a unique technology that provides leverage in the market,” says Paweł Maj from the bValue VC fund.

So far, the fund has invested in software companies working for the B2B sector in the initial stages of development: prototype or product building, commercialization or acquiring clients.

“Participation in all such events is an opportunity for us to establish contacts and build relationships with start-up owners. Very diverse projects were presented, and their common thread was the initial stage of development,” adds Paweł Maj.

The success of an enterprise is determined not by the idea's ingenuity but by the team's determination. Even the best idea has no chance to succeed without its creators' commitment.

“When investing in life science projects, where the research and development phase is very important, we consider the level of innovation, the product's scalability, market potential and business model. However, in addition to technologies, we also assess the design team, which must have the necessary competences to run a company, be able to justify costs, present the implementation schedule and time assumptions,” says Ernest Wawryniuk of Infini.



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**Michał Śmiechowicz, Director of the Business Development and International Cooperation Bureau at the City of Lodz Office**

The “Youth in Lodz – I’ve Got a Start-Up Idea” competition is of great significance for the city’s development strategy and follows its assumptions. We work to make Lodz a modern, dynamic, creative city which is increasingly conscious of its high value. A place where residents feel good and companies operate in an environment that supports their development. Moreover, we want new residents to come to Lodz, which is why we stand by economic growth and want to offer the best possible conditions for the development of companies throughout the country, for both start-ups and international corporations.

Thanks to such initiatives, young entrepreneurs receive support in the development of business, not just in Poland, but they also have the opportunity to enter global markets. In addition to the competition, we organise international trips for entrepreneurs, e.g. to Israel and Finland, which are full of new business contacts. Furthermore, Lodz hosts international conferences, thanks to which investors visit the city in search of innovative ideas and establish cooperation with start-ups. This is why we activate ourselves in the areas where start-ups are developing, including: biotechnology, IT, robotics and automation, in order to create new development opportunities for them.

The “Youth in Lodz – I’ve Got a Start-Up Idea” competition has its permanent place in the calendar of Lodz events, and year after year we can see great progress in the quality of the submitted ideas. This event would certainly not exist without its partners. Over 70 partners participated in this year’s edition. An important place among them is taken by strategic partners: the University of Lodz and the Lodz University of Technology as well as sponsors of cash prizes who, in addition to financing development, offer winners mentoring support, accounting and acceleration assistance. It is this uncanny commitment of the partners that gives this competition meaning and reputation. Every year, we add new things to the programme in order to avoid falling into a routine. Next year’s edition will certainly surprise its participants.

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In order to increase the commercialization of research and development projects, the American National Science Foundations (NSF) developed and implemented the ICorbs model involving a very intense 9–12-week system of incubation for project teams. The methodology that has been successfully implemented since 2012, concerning projects at initial stages of development, has significantly accelerated the verification of business development capabilities by at least two-person teams.

“We want to translate American experiences to the Polish market, implement and develop the system. Entrepreneurship is a state of mind, it requires work and determination over a short period. It verifies whether co-workers – future partners in the enterprise being developed – want to work with each other and treat it not just as yet another task to perform. This identifies the most determined teams that later have a chance to acquire more investors. This is because capital is required in addition to determination to work hard and an innovative business idea,” adds Jan Bocian.

Over 2.5 million companies are registered in Poland but not many of them are start-ups. A start-up is a project that creates product, technology or process innovation, adapts and implements solutions in new sectors in an innovative manner, which no one has thought of before, while simultaneously building a company that is scalable and will quickly create a share in the market.

“When looking at the American definition, I’d say that a start-up is a company that can generate an income of around USD 1 billion within several years or a similar valuation until capitalization. Thus, taking this into account, the idea itself is as important as its implementation and whether we have a team that can build relationships with suppliers and clients from the industry, the ecosystem in which it operates,” summarizes Paweł Maj.

Will the talks conducted in Lodz bear fruit? Only time will tell. Certainly, additional meetings with all members of all teams will be necessary.

“We’re waiting for the reaction of individual start-ups to our first meeting, then we’ll verify how quickly they answer our questions. We have to be sure that we’re talking with an entrepreneurial team and a thought-out original project with potential in the global market,” summarizes Jan Bocian.

Several winners of the “Youth in Lodz – I’ve Got a Start-Up Idea” competition.



### Hani Asfour, Dean at Dubai Institute of Design and Innovation

In Dubai, we focus on searching for innovation in all areas of life, which is why our institute was founded in order to develop young talent. Innovation requires the cooperation of the governmental sector, universities and businesses. We have been venturing outside our country as well, which is why I accepted the kind invitation to Lodz. We want to find a platform for collaboration between universities and initiate student exchanges.

The “Youth in Lodz” competition organised by the City of Lodz Office with the support of scientific and business institutions intends to reinforce innovation among young people. It’s what we focus on in Dubai. This pleases me because I see opportunities for cooperation – for building a bridge connecting our activities.

From what I have seen in Poland, universities have become leaders and advocates of innovation. This is a good sign! Nonetheless, an even larger collaboration between science and industry, even the cooperation of faculties within a single university is needed, because connecting entities means innovation. I noticed this when I was a judge at an innovation competition organised by one of the leading car manufacturers. This is a kind of a philosophy for life and creation. What is it about? Since the Enlightenment, we have learned to think in a linear manner. Science and scientific thinking typically rejects anything that does not fit a certain logical understanding. Designers, through design thinking, can rise above these arbitrary boundaries. We act laterally – we combine things that, at first glance, do not have anything in common. For example, during the Enlightenment, we developed knowledge trees to represent the different fields of science. While individual branches are connected to the trunk, they do not connect to each other. Nonetheless, this connection, we know today, although not direct, does exist. This is what lateral thinking is about. We have to be able to combine things that do not seem to be connected within a logical framework. When we create, we should transcend logic and our comfort zone. This is exactly what innovation is about!

When creating start-ups, one should believe in their idea but also have the humility to accept criticism. We sometimes fear this because we want to protect the project. This is completely unnecessary because the more you share with others, the faster you improve the outcome. Through trust and empathy, especially if from the recipients of your product, the better the final result will be.

### STRONG IN SOUND

Soundsitive Studio is made up of nine people who say that sound is their passion and way of life. They are: Klaudia Stokowska, Filip Koszlaga, Maciej Sztąberek, Michał Grzelak, Hubert Tymiński, Małgorzata Kozak, Kornel Nocoń, Marek Pietrasik and Henryk Sirecki.

“We complement each other because each one of us has skills that enable him or her to perform tasks related to a given project. From making scripts and audio drama concepts, through voice acting, sound design and technical skills such as sound engineering and editing, to issues related to promotion and marketing,” Klaudia Stokowska introduces the team.

The start-up comprehensively produces traditional audio dramas recorded in a studio as well as those played live for audiences. The second aspect of its operation is commercial sound design.

Works on Soundsitive Studio began in 2016 as part of a university course assignment, while on 1 January 2017, a YouTube channel was created to host the studio’s first audio dramas. A year later, the project’s creators received a proposition from Mariusz Lewy, conductor of the Chorus (Not) for Dummies, to stage two live Lovecraft audio dramas together with his band at the Lodz Philharmonic. This performance was met with great media and audience interest. The studio also began recording columns for “Kalejdoskop”, a cultural magazine, read by such artists as: Grażyna Błęcka-Kolska, Andrzej Poniedziałki, Zbigniew Zamachowski, Bronisław Wrocławski and Kamil Maćkowiak. In early 2019, the start-up began working with the Lodz Hospice for Children Association – Łupkowa and created a voice-over for the campaign to transfer 1 percent of income tax to the organization. In September, it staged



Soundsitive Studio, from the left: Filip Koszlaga, Maciej Sztąberek, Klaudia Stokowska, Michał Grzelak, Hubert Tymiński



Akrimtech, from the left: Robert Adamski, Aleksandra Ziemińska-Stolarska, Maciej Jaskulski

“The Haunted Manor” by Stanisław Moniuszko as its next live audio drama at the philharmonic.

The company treats their “Youth in Lodz” award as an opportunity for growth.

“We are currently at the stage of implementing everything we learned during the competition, which will certainly help us spread our wings. We want to use our winnings to purchase the necessary equipment. On the other hand, the right to residence at the Art Factory will help us make a bigger name for ourselves in the world of Lodz culture and establish cooperation with many valuable projects tied to Art\_Inkubator,” says Maciej Sztąberek.

### ADVANCED BIOREACTOR

The Akrimtech team is made up of seven people: Aleksandra Ziemińska-Stolarska, Robert Adamski, Kamil Kamiński, Ireneusz Zbiciński, Ireneusz Majsterek, Michał Tylman and Maciej Jaskulski. They are not just scientists but also construction specialists and people responsible for the mathematical modelling process, whose aim is to improve the stem cell culturing process by conducting industrial research and development works, and the effect of these works will be the Steemore bioreactor – a product innovation on a global scale.

“A bioreactor is an automatically controlled closed circuit where stem cells are cultured in expendable vessels and the time for culturing a product of desired quality will shrink thanks to constant conditions (e.g. temperature, pH, CO<sub>2</sub> concentration, glucose and lactic acid concentration). The bioreactor will be equipped with expendable culturing surfaces made using 3D printing technology,” says Aleksandra Ziemińska-Stolarska.

The company was founded in February 2019 and it has been conducting its research for over a year. During this time, it has tested materials used to make the bioreactor’s vessels and conducted

mathematical modelling enabling the team to design its optimal shape. Akrimtech has also obtained money from the Polish Agency for Enterprise Development thanks to which three prototype Steemore devices will be created next year and tested by three independent science and research institutes in Poland.

“As part of the ‘Youth in Lodz’ competition, we received support from Proteon Pharmaceuticals’ Bruno Mainault, who helped us create our business model and showed us the next steps to reach our desired goal, i.e. common access to modern and completely safe methods of treating illnesses using stem cells. We’d like to use our prize to promote our company not just in Poland but also abroad. Thanks to our participation in the competition, we took part in valuable training courses and meetings with people with a lot of experience in start-up development. This was a great practical lesson thanks to which we obtained the knowledge necessary to build our brand,” says Aleksandra Ziemińska-Stolarska.

During this year’s 11th edition of the “Youth in Lodz” competition, Akrimtech received the main prize of the President of the City of Lodz.

### FIGHT CARBON MONOXIDE AND SMOG WITH INNOVATION

The aleCZAD noSMOK team is made up of Jagoda Lazarek, PhD (Eng.) and Mateusz Lazarek, PhD (Eng.). Siblings in their private life, co-workers in their professional life, creators of mobile devices that detect carbon monoxide, smog (PM1.0, PM2.5, PM10 particulates) and other substances (propane, butane, isobutane, methane, hydrogen, ethanol). They use wireless communication, including 5G, to integrate with a central monitoring and alarm system (an app),



aleCZAD noSMOK – PhD Eng. Jagoda Lazarek



using artificial intelligence algorithms to forecast threats. They plan to commercialize two devices with different sizes and detecting different substances within one year. LifeBand is the smaller version of the device in the form of an armband. LifeBox is a small box that can be attached to clothes, backpack, helmet, bike, car or placed on a shelf in a room. These devices can be used at homes, in factories, when travelling, on boats or in cars, as well as in public spaces and during mass events.

“The idea for the project was born in late January and early February. Numerous pieces of information about tragedies caused by carbon monoxide poisoning made us think and work... We began by developing the concept and design, then we selected appropriate components and sensors, designed and printed the housing. Then we began building the first prototype versions. Today, we have a working prototype that reacts to threats using light and audio signals,” says Jagoda Lazarek.

The following stages involve improving and testing the prototypes, building final commercial units and obtaining certificates for them. Simultaneously with the development of the devices, the company will work on the monitoring and alarm app.

“Participation in the ‘Youth in Lodz – I’ve Got a Start-Up Idea’ programme means a lot of work and learning. Contact with our mentor Adam Trojańczyk, as well as a series of interesting business workshops, were extraordinarily valuable to us. We’ve established many interesting contacts and it’s highly probable that we’ll begin working with several of the people we met. The cash prize will cover the cost of building prototypes, invested using our own funds, the consultation package from Moratex will help us promote and commercialize the project, and the workspace provided by CO\WALK will facilitate the team’s meetings,” says Jagoda Lazarek.

## ZERO-WASTE PACKAGES

The Corkoration team is made up by Ela Kosiorek, founder and main initiator of the project, and Paulina Kubicz, supporting her with her creativity and \non-stop commitment from the concept phase until now. The start-up intends to develop a biocomposite that will be actually degradable and compostable not just in industrial conditions. The company plans to produce innovative eco-friendly packages for the cosmetics industry using the obtained material. The project was made by combining fascination with sustainable development in the cosmetics industry according to the zero-waste philosophy and Ela Kosiorek’s travels through Portugal, the unquestionable capital of cork.



Corkoration, from the left: Paulina Kubicz, Ela Kosiorek

Although the plan was in the very early stage, it attracted attention and Corkoration found itself among the ten start-ups at the European finale of Sephora Stands. Today, the project’s creators have already completed such stages as identifying key issues concerning packages in the cosmetics industry, defining the business goal, creating a customer profile and sales model and determining the product distribution channel, review and analysis of packaging and package material solutions available and used in the cosmetics market. The first package prototypes were also created using the 3D printing technology and works on their ergonomics and functionality began.

“Applying to the competition was a great idea. Meetings with our invaluable mentor Wit Buraczyński and numerous training courses opened new horizons for us and significantly accelerated the works. The competition has also generated numerous opportunities for meetings with inspiring people, including other participants, and helped us complete our business knowledge and expand our contact network. New friendships were made and ideas for cooperation between start-ups appeared. I’m particularly partial to PitchLab’s series of training courses conducted by Ewa Strzyżewska, who professionally prepared us for public speaking, including the final presentation. The distinction, and thus becoming a laureate of the competition, gave us great satisfaction. Our work and the idea itself were noticed and appreciated by experienced specialists from various fields. We treat this award primarily as an obligation towards those who trust us and believe in our project,” says Ela Kosiorek.

Throughout 2019, Corkoration will focus on developing the technology precisely, producing the product’s trial batch, testing it with the participation of potential users, and on laboratory tests. ●



# Textile industry gazelle

A production area of approximately 44,000 m<sup>2</sup>, over 280 employees and laboratory facilities developing innovative solutions. This is a brief description of Zakład Włókienniczy BILIŃSKI (BILIŃSKI Textile Mill), which is one of the largest service companies in the European textile industry. Katarzyna Józwick talks to KAMIL BILIŃSKI, co-owner of the company, about its offer, the latest technologies, care for the environment and art.

## **How long has your plant been operating?**

The company dates back to 1991, when its first headquarters opened in Lodz. It was founded by my father, Waldemar Biliński. Over time, as the company developed and an additional dye house was purchased with foreign capital in 2009, manufacturing was moved to Konstancinów Łódzki, where our headquarters are now located.

## **Where did the idea for the business come from? Did your father have any experience in the textile industry?**

Like most Lodz residents, my parents worked in large textile mills and spent their entire lives in this industry. As a result of the changes in Poland's political system, most of the mills collapsed. Whoever had some capital and was willing, tried to start their own business to fill the gap that appeared on the labour market at the time.

## **What range of services do you offer? Is digital printing on fabrics one of the primary ones?**

Our main activity is related to finishing, dyeing, bleaching and washing of all types of textile materials. Digital printing is an ancillary service. Even so, it's quite important for our business. When we introduced it six years ago, we were the first company in Poland and one of the first in Eastern Europe to provide it. We are currently able to produce 90 tonnes of products per month, while the processing capacity of the entire plant is currently estimated at approx. 880 tonnes.

## **Do you work only on customer-supplied materials?**

That's correct. We don't produce knitwear or fabrics, but we do provide services related to their processing, i.e. dyeing, bleaching, printing or finishing.

**Who's your intended customer?**

We dedicate the service to companies from what can be broadly considered as the textile industry, but not only them. Our customers include both small sewing shops and large global corporations (e.g. Ikea, Boeing). Our customer could be a company designing children's clothing, but also a furniture powerhouse that makes upholstered armchairs. As a service company, we focus on quality and lead times. Tailoring our offer to a particular customer and their needs is also of crucial importance to us.

**Do you serve both domestic and foreign customers?**

Of course, approx. 60 percent of our customers are from various European countries. We provide services to companies from such countries as: Germany, Latvia, Estonia, Russia, Norway, Sweden and Denmark. A large number of our customers come to us, because someone recommended us as a proven, trusted company.

**In 2018 you were featured in the Gazele Puls Biznesu ranking, which means that you were among the most dynamically developing companies. In what area does this development occur?**

Our company's history is a history of people and ideas. The approach we take to environmental protection, quality of technology and lead times means that we see a large increase in productivity. Of course, this development is largely possible thanks to EU funds, which we've been using for years. They've allowed us to very quickly implement new technologies and services, expand our offer and adapt it to the needs of the global market.

**One of the investments carried out thanks to this mode of financing is eco-friendly dyeing based on automated brine circulation. What is that?**

Wastewater salinity is a great global problem. The textile industry is also struggling with this. That's why the most effective technological solutions need to be developed to overcome it. We were the first company to create a closed-loop textile wastewater system in the world. As a result, 50 percent of wastewater is used after treatment as fresh process water. The brine from the dyeing processes is treated by means of a highly efficient system based on the use of electro-coagulation processes. Subsequently, purification on membrane systems is performed and the water is used again. As a result, salt use in production can be reduced by approx. 30–40 percent, which translates into 30–40 tonnes per month. As for the organic dyeing

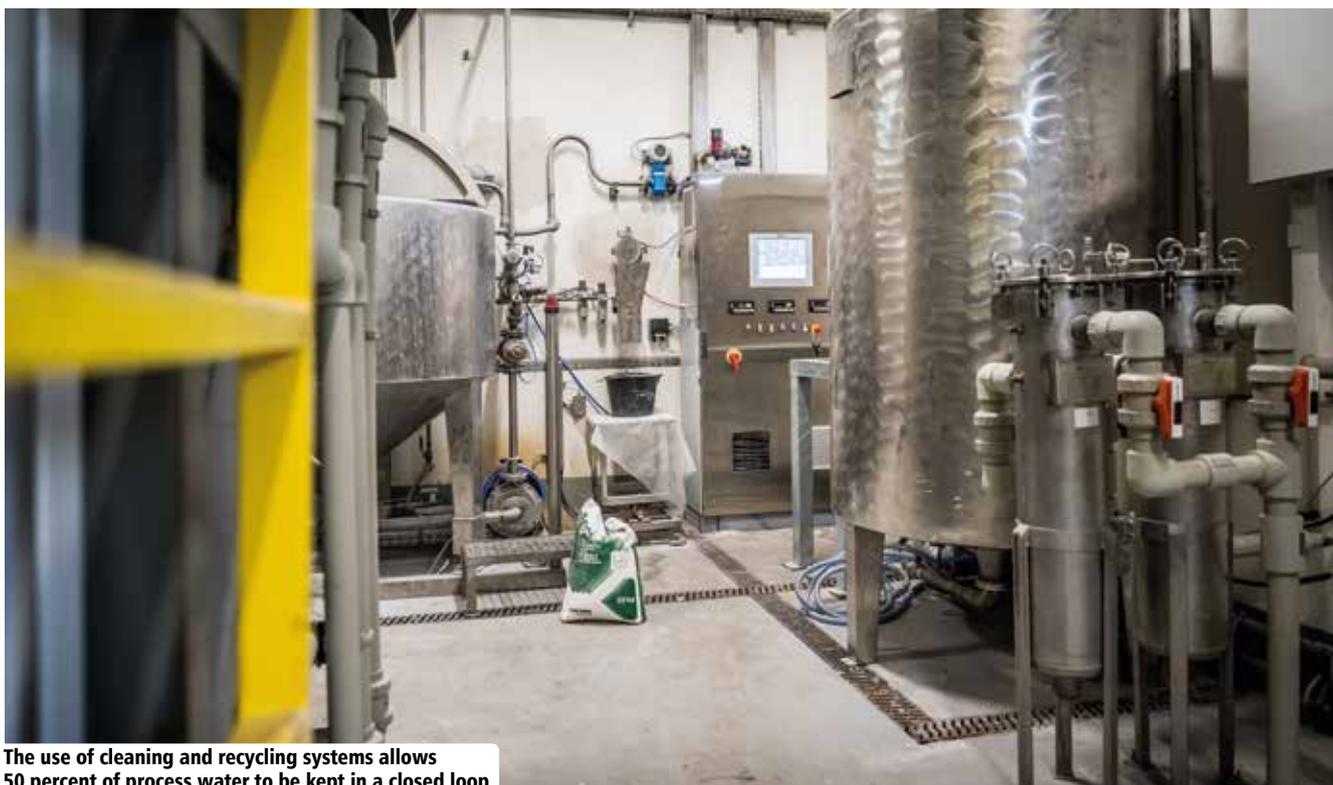


**A large number of our customers come to us, because someone recommended us as a proven, trusted company**

process itself, it consists in selecting chemicals that are as biodegradable as possible. The ecological dyeing process allows us to use up to 50 percent less water and salt, thus reducing the negative impact on the environment.

**Where did the idea for your own sewage treatment plant come from?**

It came about in 2009, after we moved the plant to Konstantynów Łódzki. We decided to try to reduce water consumption in our dyeing processes. No global science centre that created pilot wastewater treatment systems in the 1990s had been able to build an industrial scale closed-loop system. More so, no external company wanted to accept our order to develop the concept of such a system. That's why, in 2008 I started to study environmental engineering. After two years, our laboratories developed a completely innovative treatment plant concept. I think that the mistake made by scientists might have been to try and purify wastewater of all contaminating components simultaneously and to reuse purified water. Its parameters were good, but it still contained some inhibitors. I managed to separate relevant wastewater streams in the laboratory, ones that did not contain these compounds, which meant they didn't interfere with the biological treatment processes. Using our existing infrastructure, we created an innovative water treatment line based on a combination of biological treatment methods, membrane filtration and ozonation. The use of



**The use of cleaning and recycling systems allows 50 percent of process water to be kept in a closed loop**

cleaning and recycling systems with a capacity of approx. 40 m<sup>3</sup>/h allows 50 percent of process water to be kept in a closed loop.

**You mentioned labs. Does this mean that your plant has a real R&D centre?**

Yes, we have two laboratories: an R&D unit and a metrology lab. There, we employ approx. 16 highly qualified specialists, including two employees with a PhD in science. We can carry out over 50 various analyses on textiles.

**What's the purpose of such a wide range of activities of your plant?**

First of all, searching for innovative solutions within the field of environmental protection. This not only reduces the negative impact on nature; significant savings for the company are also obtained. Despite the rising prices of water, wastewater, electricity and gas, we're able to maintain their consumption at a constant level while increasing production. This translates into a stable price for our services, which is our competitive advantage in the industry. Everyone benefits – the environment, our customers and us.

**Some of the print designs offered by you are made by visual artists. Does this mean that you're opening up to art?**

As a textile company, we flew under the radar for 27 years in the clothing industry, because it's impossible to recognise our dyeing work on materials that are used in mass production. However, a pattern is already

a type of work of art with the author's signature. An individual and recognisable feature or style allows the recipient to associate the design with our printing house or designers. Since I'm also privately interested in art, the idea of transferring this into clothing arose. Until recently, subdued colours dominated in street fashion. It's high time for an artful approach to what appears on our streets. Working with artists in the field of pattern design makes this possible. Of course, this is niche manufacturing. However, we do have a group of customers who want to put something unusual on the market. It was for them that this offer was created, which not only promotes art, but also supports artists, because 100 percent of the fee for the pattern that ends up being used goes to its author.

**Your business combines new technologies, care for the environment and art. What direction do you want to pursue in the future? What are your plans?**

We're already employing over 280 people, so we don't want to be bigger. Our goal is to remain a family company, but one that's innovative and follows current trends. That's why we focus on investments in machinery and new technologies. Everything to keep up to date with what's on the market. Of course, we're also constantly working on developing the ecological aspect, ergonomics and improving the efficiency of the entire company. In addition, we plan to expand the marketing department sometime in the future.

**Thank you for your time. ●**



Tatiana Czekalska, By Tati



Aleksandra Ozimek, Odio Tees

BY MALWINA WADAS, PRZEMYSŁAW GRZYB

# Showroom full of fashion

The new face of the fashion industry promoted by the Polish Fashion Forum Modopolis fights the economically low but morally high costs of manufacturing clothing, the high-street fashion where quickly changing trends result in overproduction. . . Modopolis discusses and presents conscious and committed fashion that simultaneously draws from the best designer traditions and artisanal manufacturing methods.

An important item on the agenda of the second edition of the Polish Fashion Forum Modopolis was the presentation of brands selected by the Programme Committee in the showroom. We present several designers, owners of fashion brands and manufacturers, who presented their collections during the event. These brands are worth knowing!

## BY TATI

By Tati is an original single-person company where Tatiana Czekalska plays the role of a one-woman band. She has been professionally designing clothes since she graduated from the Department of Clothing Design at the Academy of Fine Arts in Lodz. All items sold under the brand are made by the designer manually, without hurry, using vegan, primarily plant-derived, raw materials. She uses unique knitted fabrics, made, dyed and painted by hand. She sews the majority of clothes and accessories personally, but a part of the collection – according to the upcycling idea – is made up of used things which she remakes anew.

“Under the By Tati brand, I experiment with form, texture and colour, creating unique products for designer item aficionados. I believe that patterns and colours express themselves, like submerging a brush in paint and making a sign on a white sheet. Quick action, clear and – at the same time – a new, instinctive sign... Tatiana Czekalska describes her creative style.

Balanced, ethical, vegan clothes is the best description of the collection the designer will present in the event’s showroom.

“My philosophy involves sustainable fashion, the creation of a brand that makes sense and whose purpose extends outside making money. Instead, I’m trying to improve the well-being of humanity and all life on our planet. This is my second time at Modopolis. Ideas promoted by this event are my ideas, which is why I’m happy that it’s so well-known now. This is also a great opportunity to meet people who think similarly, establish contacts and become a part of the world of smart, responsible fashion from the city with a great textile tradition, adds the owner of By Tati.

## ODIO TEES

The Odio Tees brand has been operating in the fashion industry since 2011. Since that time, its collections have fascinated audiences at both domestic and international shows, e.g. at the Fashion Philosophy Fashion Week Polska, Mercedes Fashion Weekend Warsaw, Fashionclash in Maastricht and Fashion Week Salone Della Moda Rotterdam.

“Odio Tees stands by products that do not succumb to trend changes. The no waste philosophy is our foundation; we use unnecessary materials such as cutting room scraps or fabrics with



**Agnieszka Sierpowska-Bartosik, Remediumbag**

manufacturing defects,” explains Aleksandra Ozimek, designer and founder of the brand. “The lifetime of our designs and patterns is unlimited because they are right at the edge of art and fashion.”

The brand’s collections are short series produced using natural and local materials, primarily cotton from Lodz knitting shops decorated with original handmade screen prints. This makes each product individual and unique. Due to this approach, the brand and its products have attracted the largest creators and well-known names of the world of fashion and show business as well as broadly defined media – both traditional and new. Odio Tees has been working with, among others, choreographer and director Waldek Szymkowiak, with whom it organises fashion shows, as well as with Ramona Rey, Komendarek, Sorry Boys and such personalities as Jaga Hupało and Michał Witkowski.

In the Modopolis showroom, in a cooperation Odio x Cincio x Szumski, it presented a clothing and visual installation titled Out to Lunch. Concealed accessories for the collection were made by Ila Mak.

## REMEDIUMBAG

This brand, established by Agnieszka Sierpowska-Bartosik, creates mainly urban bags. One important part of the collection are accessories used to arrange items in the bag – pouches of various sizes, key lanyards, small pouches for documents and a phone. The accessories are simple, which makes them universal, and they can be used individually, e.g. as a phone or tablet case or even as a fanny pack. There are also short series of other accessories – linen mufflers and scarves, popular sacks, pouches and bags for shopping made of linen or found materials, purses and notepad covers. All materials used to make Remediumbag accessories are vegan and Agnieszka Sierpowska-Bartosik

emphasises that she strives to follow the standards of the broadly defined responsible and sustainable fashion. Since the brand’s inception, she has been participating in the Fashion Revolution movement and in periodic Weganmania events organised by the Otwarte Klatki association, promoting the vegan lifestyle.

“Remediumbag bags and accessories are aimed at vegans, vegetarians and people interested in changes in fashion and the clothing industry. The brand is urban by design. I am an urban biker myself and I create products that are well suited to the urban eco-friendly lifestyle,” says Agnieszka Sierpowska-Bartosik.

Furthermore, by creating a local brand, the designer also strives to use the services of local companies.

“If I can’t find a product in Lodz, I begin searching in other cities, but I generally don’t import materials. I consciously use services of Polish distributors, and this concerns things manufactured in Europe, so as to influence the products’ carbon footprint,” she adds.

In the Modopolis showroom, Remediumbag presented the collection titled Origami City, inspired by the Japanese art of folding paper. It includes bags with simple yet unique geometric shapes, sewn using a special sewing paper that can be washed and ironed, linen canvas and other alternative non-leather and non-cotton materials.

## THE WRAP

Parts of outerwear that stand out with their simplicity, utility, naturalness and classical timeless nature made by The Wrap are designed by Marynia Konieczna. Since the company’s inception, i.e. 2015, she has been offering neat structures served in a slightly nonchalant minimalist style. All designs are made of high-quality wool fabrics, always finished by hand and available only in short limited series.



**Marynia Konieczna, The Wrap**



**Agnieszka Dębecka-Murzyniak, CH-UNITY**



**Aleksandra Jendryka**

“The brand’s philosophy is low-key development, not artificially stimulated, so that everything on offer is free of a temporary nature, honest, fair and compatible with The Wrap’s identity,” says Marynia Konieczna.

Individual collections, made by local artisans, embody the metropolitan street style mixed with the female cool look. Modern, universal and non-seasonal designs are an integral part of the company’s aesthetics. All items are aimed at women who value good tailoring interpreted in a slightly extravagant manner. The universal nature of coats attracts our attention – the brand’s propositions mix well with both elegant office uniforms and casual stylings for evenings and special occasions. Thanks to this, they permanently enrich wardrobes of the brand’s enthusiasts and limit the blind pursuit of trends – which we could find out by trying them on in the Modopolis showroom.

## CH-UNITY

CH-UNITY is a rather young brand, founded in 2017, but it has already made a name for itself in the Polish clothing market. Its conceptual clothes whose style lies between street and urban wear are made for conscious people who value high quality, unique design and timeless style, not temporary trends. CH-UNITY is a family company and its initiator and main designer is Agnieszka Dębecka-Murzyniak. This graduate of the Academy of Fine Arts in Lodz was a finalist of the Golden Thread competition in 2006 and a co-creator of the Cock’nbullstory brand.

“We sew locally but act globally. We want to make a name in the international market,” says the company’s boss.

This is why the company regularly participates in fairs in France and the United States and actively searches for international customers, mainly

in the American, French, Italian and British markets. Four collections have been created under the CH-UNITY brand so far. THE REASON is the first one and doubtlessly the most important, serving as the brand’s manifesto. Its aesthetics reflect the symbolism of searching for one’s own and social identities. Subsequent collections, described as next chapters, develop or complement the direction that the brand has chosen in the beginning. The latest autumn/winter 2020/2021 collection, which will be presented soon, owes its name, Bakhita (“lucky one” in Arabic), to the person and life of St. Josephine Bakhita. She was a Sudanese slave who, thanks to her great faith and determination, did not lose her humanity but nurtured it against all odds.

## ALEKSANDRA JENDRYKA

Aleksandra Jendryka is both a name of a fashion brand and the name of its designer. A graduate of the School of Art and Design in Lodz and the Beijing Institute of Fashion Technology in China, she wants her clothes to combine avant-garde design with wholly utilitarian values. When designing, she always chooses uniqueness and the accentuation of individuality – to fight the mass nature of everything around us. The designs included in the collection were made as single, manually made items, which means that each one is unique.

“When designing, I focus on textural actions on the fabric. I often prepare my fabrics manually by dyeing, painting, embroidering or printing patterns I designed myself,” explains Aleksandra Jendryka. “What’s important for me is to use various techniques, combine and modify them, enabling me to obtain new forms and structures.”

The designer is fascinated by the Asian approach to design. Her collection named REBUBBLE was



Mirka Dworak, Dvorus

inspired by the Chinese culture and the lifestyle of big Asian cities. The entire collection matches Jendryka's unique nature of work – all designs are made manually using many techniques that influence not just textures, colours or decorations, but also the spatiality, which is extremely important in Asian design. Everything was created pursuant to the philosophy of design for low waste – material waste was used to manufacture the collection, including fabric scraps and even used clothes. This project is an eco-friendly initiative of the designer, her friends and family as well as big sewing factories.

## DVORUS

Dvorus is a brand created by the initiative of two friends, Mirka Dworak and Magdalena Trzaskowska. Both had worked at a fashion corporation before. They decided to walk away from clichéd design, market pressure and commerce, i.e. the phenomena that, according to the designers, limit the creativity and the idea of design. For Dvorus, fashion is a lifestyle, which is why the brand approaches design in this manner. On the one hand, it wants to offer collections in accordance with the latest trends; on the other hand, it doesn't forget the classics, its own fascinations and roots.

“What we propose is often an inverted type of classical fashion with atypical designs and unique structures,” says Mirka Dworak. “For us, tailoring means having fun, mixing, building completely new clothing forms; it's a type of jigsaw puzzle.”

This philosophy has produced such designs as a skirt made of men's shirts or a shirt with four sleeves that can be worn in many ways – which makes it more universal and, at the same time, exceptional. Having fun with fashion doesn't run contrary to such values as functionality or high quality, which



ID/FOR/FUN – bracelets from the Circle Reflections collection, material: concrete, acrylic, magnesium

characterize Dvorus products. Since its inception, i.e. 2012, the company has been working with local artists and artisans. Together, they have been fighting the ubiquitous unification in design and many other areas of life. Currently, this translates to e.g. activities related to interior design, furniture design, and making other interior design items.

## ID/FOR/FUN

Partners in both private and professional lives, Magdalena Szadkowska and Jarosław Borek have created the ID/FOR/FUN brand. She is a jewellery and clothing designer, trend analyst and designer of interior art forms. He is a sculptor, graphic designer and lecturer at the Academy of Fine Arts in Lodz. Following the three foundations of good design – idea, form and function – they founded the ID/FOR/FUN brand in 2013. Initially, their activities were focused on jewellery; however, even back then, the markings of jewellery and sculpture were visible in their products. What the duo represents today is jewellery, sculpture and items intended for interiors.

“The brand's idea is the timeless minimalism of form and the introduction of art to our daily lives. The designs are addressed to the seekers of beauty in our modern world. ID/FOR/FUN designs constitute a response to the need for the aestheticization of the environment, creation of atmosphere and harmony in both interiors and bodies,” says Magdalena Szadkowska.

The brand's creators emphasize its strong Lodz roots.

“In addition to the fact that Modopolis constitutes a fantastic opportunity to remind the design and art market about our presence, it's also an opportunity to meet inspiring people and reach new interesting projects in the art arena and on the fashion map of Poland,” adds Jarosław Borek. ●

BY MALWINA WADAS

# Republic of Patterns

“In early 2018, a wave of unrest washed over Europe. Citizens were determined to object against the blandness and mediocrity that had taken hold of wardrobes of Europeans. Initial infrequent protests quickly transformed into a storm of discontent. This was the beginning of great changes – the beginning of the Revolution of Patterns.” This is how the President of the Republic of Patterns communicates with her customers and fans on social media.

Karolina Krajda, owner and initiator of the Republic of Patterns brand, recently – only a year and a half ago – created a clothing company whose signature elements are colours and patterns. It also stands out with its tone of communication – unlike any other in the clothing industry. All this resulted in the fact that clothes and accessories made in Lodz under the Republic of Patterns brand have been winning over the hearts of Polish and international customers. They can be bought online at the company’s website as well as in boutiques selling original fashion and at concept stores with designer collections in several European cities.

## NO MORE BASIC!

The Republic of Patterns’ assortment has no place for grey jerseys or basic collections. The brand’s name says it all, which is why colourful patterns are prevalent. The assortment includes: shirts, t-shirts, skirts, bags, hoodies and hats for children and adults.

“My first designs were patterned men’s and women’s shirts. Why shirts? The reason was quite simple! The shirts I thought of weren’t available anywhere. Available cuts and patterns left much to be desired. My first men’s shirt pattern depicted bicycles. My intuition was correct because it’s still



Mrs. President of the Republic surrounded by colorful and patterned clothes

a best seller. The women’s collection best seller is the strawberry shirt,” says Karolina Krajda.

In addition to these patterns, the Republic of Patterns’ clothes include almost anything, from everyday items, through animals and plants, to the cosmos. There are squirrels, foxes, bees, penguins, photo cameras, skiers on slopes, glasses of wine, cups of coffee, a colourful map of Poland, and many more. There are some abstract patterns as well and the designer assures us that it’s not the end.

“I’m happy when customers are open to try something new, that they prefer having fun with fashion to wearing dark expressionless clothes. They want to express themselves and I help them do it!” adds the brand’s owner.

## FIGHTING THE HIGH STREET

Karolina Krajda often emphasises that the Republic of Patterns was established in Lodz –the original items are designed here and the clothes and accessories are made here. The designer consciously chooses small Lodz sewing factories, dyeing plants and cutting rooms with traditions as business partners because they care for every minute production detail, taking advantage of the knowledge and experience in the clothing industry. On its website, the Republic of Patterns directly states that it doesn’t offer clothes



According to Mrs. President order, embroidery must appear on hats this season



Shirt designed for one of the ministers of the Republic

at high-street prices. The justification is that it uses the highest-quality materials and the work of human hands, and quality requires a decent pay and good conditions. For the brand's owner, respect for the work of another person is extremely important. She wants to be fair to people she works with as well as to her customers. Selling cheap and low-quality products would be unfair. What do her customers say?

"Fortunately, the awareness of the value of labour is increasing. I hope that I'm contributing to this with Republic of Patterns. All of our products are made of very high-quality fabrics, which translates to their durability and our customers are looking for durable clothes and accessories," adds the President of the Republic of Patterns.

### CITIZENS, MS PRESIDENT IS SPEAKING!

What sets the Republic of Patters apart are not just collections but also the style and manner of communication.

"I wanted to have an original, slightly humorous style. However, I knew that I had to think of something that would enable me to talk to my customers. One day, my husband asked me: 'Karolina, maybe you'd like to be Madam President?' And I thought - this is it! Let's build a country without a specified territory because it's everywhere its citizens are, so it can be all over the world. The Republic of Patterns has its president, that is me, a vice president, ministers, departments, consulates and offices. Everyone who makes a purchase at our store becomes our citizen..." says Karolina Krajda.

Her customers like this brand world and often use official language when asking for collections or commenting on social media posts. A perfected,

colourful corporate identity follows the style of communication in the brand's mailings, website texts and on Facebook and Instagram. The brand's logo is the Republic of Patterns' flag, and a thank you note resembling an official letter is attached to each purchase.

### POSTCARD FROM MS PRESIDENT

Each package sent by Republic of Patterns to online customers contains a postcard written by hand by Ms President of the Republic of Patterns.

"I always write a few words from myself and ask for a postcard back. Interestingly, my citizens send me these postcards from various parts of the world, not just from Poland! Each postcard brings me great joy and customers write various things on them. Sometimes it's just a thank you and sometimes there are many nice and constructive words. I can't forget a package I received last year at Christmas. I open it up and inside is a hand-painted postcard for me and chocolate! It was truly incredible! Such small and simultaneously great gestures give me energy to act. They immediately make me want to work more and work better," says the designer.

Karolina Krajda's collection includes postcards from Warsaw, Kraków, Wrocław, Gdańsk, Poznań, Leszno, Katowice, Gryfice as well as from Berlin and London. One postcard was even sent from Ethiopia. The girl who bought a hat for her friend lives in Warsaw, but she thought that Ms President could have many postcards from the capital, so she sent a postcard from her vacation in Africa. Is there another clothing brand which receives postcards from customers? It's difficult to say, but this one is certainly exceptional! ●



BY PRZEMYSŁAW GRZYB, MALWINA WADAS

# Rococo with a Lodz twist

Judyta Badowska

Rococo is one of the most eminent styles in the history of European art. It takes a lot of inspiration from baroque. On the one hand, it's decorative and refined; on the other, it's intimate, sensual and delicate in its own right. Many collectors search for furniture, decoration and trinkets from that era. It is, however, a very expensive hobby, and very few people can afford genuine 18th-century products. There are also many aficionados of stylish and fantastic furniture who dream about unique tailor-made interior products.

These dreams and fascinations have inspired Judyta Badowska to found Art and Craft Italian and French Antiques Design, currently situated in a private tenement house at ul. Tuwima 31. It is a one-person studio and a showroom with furniture taken straight out of past historical eras. The furniture from the studio decorates both palaces and stylish hotels, boutiques and modern lofts around the world.

## HISTORY OF FURNITURE MAKING

Judyta Badowska is an art historian by training. She received her doctoral degree from the University of Lodz. In her dissertation she discussed the issue of the architecture of the "Promised Land," but the second topic that absorbed her greatly during her scientific work was the history of furniture making. Therefore, she decided to present lectures about this topic, which garnered much attention.

"Art history studies pay little attention to the history of artistic handicraft, including furniture making, which certainly isn't enough," reminisces Judyta Badowska. "Since even art historians feel there's a deficiency in the matter, what can we say

about ordinary people for whom such knowledge is completely foreign?"

## DIFFERENT THAN THE MAJORITY

Opening one's own gallery is a dream and goal of many art historians, but Judyta Badowska wanted to approach this issue in a completely different manner than the majority of people from the very beginning.

"Everyone who opens their own gallery primarily plans to sell antiques or modern art. I decided to draw inspiration from art history because it's a great treasure trove; however, I approached it creatively," states the studio owner. "I've loved to create and do manual labour since my childhood. All of this made Art and Craft an artistic handicraft studio where exceptional furniture is made."

## BAROQUE WITH A MODERN VIBE

Furniture made and sold by Judyta Badowska is new, albeit inspired by pieces from the period: it is based on them, yet we certainly can't call it a faithful copy.

"I do my work so that no one could accuse me of straying too far from the style or original

pieces, but – at the same time – I’m always trying to inject a little bit of contemporary design and modern vibe into the furniture,” explains the designer. “I like when a classic piece of furniture contains a designer ‘mark.’”

Such an approach is not just the artist’s individual work style but also a method to draw the attention of a bigger audience, demonstrate how one can combine old and new design. According to the owner of the gallery, although her business operates within a very narrow niche, it has been attracting more and more customers.

### **FURNITURE IS NOT AN EGG!**

Who then could be interested in Louis XV or Louis XVI style furniture, albeit slightly modernized? Judyta Badowska believes that her products are intended for people who wish to experience artful items, a high level of artistry, and style that draws upon a historic period every day, but can’t afford original antiques due to their cost and availability. And even if they could purchase them, they wouldn’t fully enjoy the utility aspect of a given piece because they would be afraid of destroying it and having to pay for expensive restoration.

“You can use my furniture without fear, they are objects of everyday use and not pieces on exhibition,” explains the studio owner.

Art and Craft does not offer mass-produced items, each piece of furniture is singular and unique, while being comfortable, practical and functional.

### **IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE STYLE**

However, an individual approach to each piece of furniture and making it in accordance with the style is not a simple task, and the first difficulties begin with raw materials.

“The search for the traditional craft production workshops in Italy that deliver wooden furniture frames to my studio took me about 2–3 years. They have to be made by hand, and they’re often exquisitely carved,” explains Judyta Badowska.

It’s similar with fabrics, which must be made of an appropriate raw material and draw upon the good old classics. Silk Jacquard fabrics, tapestry and shantung fare particularly well in this role. Work methods used at the Art and Craft studio draw directly upon the works of ébénistes from past eras, in particular upon Venetian workshops of the 17th and 18th centuries.

“When making furniture, I use the methods of bygone Venetian artisans. I work alone and make everything by hand,” explains the artist.



**Showroom Art and Craft Italian and French Antiques Design**

All of this means that an order for a piece of furniture can take as long as 3–4 weeks. Nonetheless, there is no shortage of patient customers.

### **BIRTH OF FURNITURE**

Art and Craft has been visited by customers with diverse needs. Some come because they’re curious and don’t have any specific vision of a piece of furniture they’d like to have in their home. They can view products available in the showroom or read the catalogue. On the other hand, some people know perfectly well what they want, and they’re simply searching for a studio that will meet their expectations.

“It took me six months to make a Louis XVI style bed designed after furniture made for the Ritz in Paris. Another customer first ordered a table with matching chairs, and now we’re making her a red and gold, very exquisitely carved Venetian-style console. Many people begin with a single piece of furniture only to return later to complete an entire room using a single style, or to create their own collection.”

### **APPRECIATING GOOD ARTISANSHIP**

Currently, the inventory of Art and Craft is primarily made up of furniture. It also includes wallpapers that are definitely different from typical mass-produced wallpapers because the pattern is placed on canvas, and they are intended to create an impression of a large painting on the wall. Patterns are specific art pieces from bygone eras. The atelier has been preparing a collection of linen beddings decorated with monograms, and the preparation of a new catalogue is also under way.

The owner of the Art and Craft gallery believes that the future looks bright for good artisanship, especially the artistic one. More and more people have been paying attention to the unique design, manual work and uniqueness. Polish artisans have been increasingly often appreciated in the country and primarily abroad. The quality of their work matches that of western craft production workshops, however Polish products are still being sold at competitive prices. ●

BY MARZENA ZBIERSKA

# LDZ Dissonances, a creative hotchpotch

Different competences, views and opinions. Face-to-face confrontations, workshops, discussions and in the end... an explosion of creative schemes and new inventive ideas. LDZ Dissonances is a conference unlike any other. When? 13 November. Where? Art\_Inkubator. For whom? For everyone.

The LDZ Dissonances conference is a new idea in the calendar of Lodz's creative events. Since its first edition, it has been surprising us with its unique structure – unlimited topics, speakers resembling a mixture of personalities from a reality show and many recipients. This is an event for everyone, and its participants must prepare themselves for a large dose of creative controversy.

## RELEASE THE CREATIVITY...

“Dissonances mean clashes of various approaches to life, work and everything that surrounds us,” explains Szymon Sikorski, CEO of Publicon, the event's organiser. “They are something that largely constitutes a foundation of the development of enterprises and organisations. To produce creativity, one must engage various points of view and experiences. The best ideas appear when we gather different people, different preferences and allow them to confront each other in a certain area, e.g. at a company, organisation, in the city. This is how innovative projects are made.”

As an example of professions that can cooperate despite their differences, Szymon Sikorski lists two opposites: an engineer and a visual designer. New technologies and design are a peculiar and explosive mixture that can constitute a beginning of something interesting and ground-breaking.

“The dissonance is always the basis of the creative process, but it is also the beginning of mechanism that shapes the city. Our event is a proposition for all young talented people who like to be in a creative environment; who are open to diversity and new things. The conference presents Lodz as a place of diversity, open to new views, approaches and attitudes. These properties are also important for employers because they are very focused on searching for talents. On the other hand, talented people also look for something that enriches them, for contact with something new, alternative yet recognised

through their own experiences. Therefore, if creativity is an indicator of development of a city and business, then dissonances are the best accelerator of changes in this direction,” adds the event's organiser.



Paweł Tkaczyk

## ...IN THE MINDS OF PARTICIPANTS

The conference proves that contradictions create new values. According to Szymon Sikorski, this is a proposition aimed at high-school students, employees, employers and everyone who thinks of Lodz as a city where they want to study or live.

“The participants are all curious and open to the world. We want to show that one can implement very interesting projects in Lodz,” continues Szymon Sikorski. “The purpose of the event is to invent new ideas; however, this process must take place in the minds of participants. The clash of different personalities, views and attitudes will certainly result in creative ideas, e.g. for business, for the city, for personal development... It's about building communities and networks of relationships between people. About opening our minds to new people and cultures, business and the city.”

LDZ Dissonances is a conference that lasts an entire day. Speeches, workshops and meetings take place

simultaneously in seven rooms, on various stages that were named thematically.

### IDIÉE FIXE AND MEDIA OF THE FUTURE

The Art\_Inkubator space is divided into several zones and rooms where panel discussions, confrontations and workshops take place simultaneously.

The main stage is a place named Idée Fixe, where experts in marketing, media, copywriting and representatives of foundations reside. It's a combination of speeches by interesting people from Lodz and other regions of Poland, supported by the host, Paulina Mikuła, from the Mówiąc Inaczej channel.

The "YouTube as a medium of the future" room has become a place for discussing new forms of communication. Its participants include well-known YouTubers and influencers, people from the industry, who talk about the power of YouTube and podcasts, which



aren't just for fun and knowledge but also constitute a path of development and a way of life.

The 7on7 Dissonances stage hosts confrontations between people coming from vastly different worlds, e.g. a programmer and a designer, a start-up employee and a corporation employee, or representatives of rival sports clubs.

"Total opposites attract each other and confront their ideas, talk from two different perspectives about what can be changed in the city, design, technology, humankind or work," lists Szymon Sikorski.

According to the organisers' assumptions, the Lodz EXPO room is a place of professional development. Participants learn how to build a professional path, make choices, what professional self-development is about and how to invest in one's own company and what support is offered by Lodz to young people in this regard.

Other rooms include Design, supervised by a partner, Lodz Design (design thinking, functional

design) and Communication (workshops in self-presentation, branding, PR for young people, companies and non-governmental organisations).

Another attraction are workshops in, among others, creative writing, overseen by Loesje Polska. During online registration as well as on the day of the conference, each participant could register for a specific room with the ability to move through all the spaces.

### UPSIDE-DOWN MARKETING

Paweł Tkaczyk is one of the event's speakers. When asked about marketing-related dissonances, he answered: "When I began my adventure with marketing, the 1990s were in full swing. Steve Jobs returned to the collapsing Apple and the industry kept thinking whether this whole internet thing is going to catch on or maybe it's just a passing fad. A few individuals mentioned something called Web 2.0, websites that aren't just static advertising boards.



Economic models of the second half of the 20th century, based on the idea of homo economicus (a person who makes rational decisions trying to maximise their benefits), were crumbling down in the face of, for example, the Tamagotchi craze. Why are we so fascinated by raising a virtual creature on a chain? What do we get from it?"

Paweł Tkaczyk, as befits a strategist whose work involves telling stories, lists several other dates:

"In 2002, Daniel Kahneman received a Nobel Prize in economics. His prospect theory turned many established models upside down. Behavioural psychology proudly entered the economy and, so far, it seems it's there to stay. In 2007, Steve Jobs unveiled the first iPhone and forever changed the way we use the internet. The global network is no longer chained to a specific place, keyboard, screen... I remember when all these things were new. When they destroyed the established order. But did they, really? We have always behaved irrationally; one only needed to observe people long enough to

arrive at conclusions. Moreover, we have always discussed and exchanged knowledge – the internet chained to a desktop computer was just a hiccup, then everything returned to how things were. In my industry, people say that there is only one marketing, only tools change. They are new, but they interact with a very old brain with a quite solidified decision-making process. I'm happy that we have the opportunity to confront the new with the old in Lodz. I believe that, through these discussions, we will see that they have more in common than not."

## CONTRASTS ATTRACT TO LODZ

"I admit that I feel particularly connected to Lodz. Perhaps it's because of its beautiful tenement houses, which I always like to see when visiting. Or perhaps it's the rapper, O.S.T.R., whom I listened to as a teenager. It's always worth adding another reason to visit this city. LDZ Dissonances can become one of them, for instance, because of their name, which appeals to people while leaving them in a certain uncertainty. Uncertainty that we're resolving right now," says Rafał Masny, co-founder of Abstrachuje.TV and a guest of the conference.

Karol Paciorek, online creator, a YouTuber co-hosting Lekko Stronniczy and creator of the Imponderabilia podcast, holds similar views:

"I decided to participate in Dissonances because it's a great space for exchanging experiences and ideas not just with people from the industry in which I typically operate. This isn't just for show, so that we can take a selfie, upload it on Instagram and go home; it's a space where we learn from each other and share our knowledge with new generations. The process itself, involving mixing and stirring topics, ideas, different

industries and personalities, is exceptionally interesting. I host a channel, Imponderabilia. Its name means imponderables, things that are impossible to precisely estimate or assess but which can impact certain things, which is why Dissonances are a good place for me."

Karol Paciorek admits that he associates Lodz with a hotchpotch in which the city's industrial past combines with setting new paths for the culture, art, industry and technology:

"During the conference, I say a few words about what I do, that is long talks, the work of a journalist in a still new but quickly developing channel of communication, about why podcasts are popular and why their trend is growing. I answer questions of young people who search for ideas for themselves and their future."

People who confirmed their participation in Dissonances include: Michał Sadowski, owner of Brand24, Paweł Svinarski, host of Dla Pieniędzy, the only Polish YouTube channel combining knowledge about finances and economy with entertainment in an approachable manner, and Siostry ADiHD, residents of Lodz, businesswomen and bloggers.

"LDZ Dissonances is a unique organisational challenge for us but also an opportunity for its participants to meet well-known figures from many industries, operating both in the Lodz region and throughout the country. Our list of speakers is constantly growing, which can only mean one thing: Dissonances are so interesting that they attract famous people from the worlds of media, YouTube and business. We hope that the festival's programme met the expectations of highschool and university students as well as entrepreneurs," adds Katarzyna Bagińska, the event's coordinator. ●





BY MALWINA WADAS

# To touch a detail

Five years ago, when walking through Old Polesie, Maria Nowakowska fell in love with the architectural detail. Since that time, she guided 77 tours through the city's nooks and crannies, carried out over 60 lectures, performed several dozen workshops, wrote two books organised two editions of the only festival in Europe devoted to this concept.

## How did you become interested in architectural detail?

It was 2014, I was walking through the Legionów street – back then I was a student of Polish studies who also began Cultural studies – when I raised my head and saw Athena with her owl on her head on building No. 20. I wondered why no one ever shows the architectural detail. And then I thought that perhaps I'll do it. I got to work using a very laborious method. I grabbed a camera and went to take photos of details to learn how many there are, what they are, what we can do with them and how we can catalogue them. I began with animal motifs and the first route of a detail search trip, with which I still open each season, is the Animals of Old Polesie. It's not that I invented everything myself and put it into action, the support I received from the Socially Engaged Association and people working with Współ-dzielnia Staropoleska was very significant in the organisation of the first two trips.

## Then the first Facebook fanpage appeared. But its name was different than the one currently observed by several thousand people...

First, there was a fanpage called Detale Architektoniczne Starego Polesia (Old Polesie's Architectural Details), where I uploaded photos and descriptions of details. As the community grew, there were more and more photos and people began participating in its development. 20–30 people went on the first trip. When Old Polesie “ran out,” I went to Śródmieście. I arrived at the intersection of Jaracza and Wschodnia where I found unique ceramic Egyptian female heads; in fact, to this day, I haven't seen anything similar to this detail and I believe it's exceptional. I returned home and launched another fanpage: Detale Architektoniczne Śródmieścia (Śródmieście's Architectural Details). In the meantime, I went to Bałuty and it turned out that I should launch another one... which is where I stopped and decided to make a single one. And this is how Łódzki Detal (Lodz's Detail) came to be.



Decorative metalwork on the gate of Ludwik Geyer's White Factory at ul. Piotrkowska 282

## ● ŁÓDZKI DETAL EVENTS

### November

- 2.11 (Sat.), 1:00 PM** – Sculpture of the Old Town and Bałuty, areas of Park Staromiejski, Park Helenów and Manufaktura – we begin at the Old Town Square
- 7.11 (Thu.), 5:00 PM** – Lodz detail and why is it interesting – meeting – Municipal Library, ul. Breźna 10
- 9.11 (Sat.), 1:00 PM** – Sculptures in the area of ul. Piotrkowska – ul. Piotrkowska from Plac Wolności to Central – we begin at Plac Wolności 1
- 8.11 (Fri.), 5:30 PM** – Lodz secession – facets and contexts – meeting – Strefa Kultury Otwartej in Olechów
- 21.11 (Thu.), 5:00 PM** – Sculptural facets of Lodz – meeting – Municipal Library, ul. Narutowicza 8/10
- 23.11 (Sat.), 1:00 PM** – Surprise trip – we begin at Plac Dąbrowskiego, near the fountain
- 30.11 (Sat.), 1:00 PM** – In search of functional details – trip – we begin at the City Archives at Plac Wolności

### December

- 7.12 (Sat.), 1:00 PM** – Architectural sculptures that exist and those that don't – from Poznański's Palace at ul. Ogrodowa, through ul. Gdańska to ul. Tuwima – we begin at the square in front of Izrael Poznański's Palace
- 11.12 (Wed.), 11:00 AM** – Lodz secession – facets and contexts – meeting – Polesie Art Centre, office in Karolew, ul. Bratysławska 6a
- 12.12 (Thu.), 5:00 PM** – Lodz detail and why is it interesting – meeting – Municipal Library, ul. Sienkiewicza 67
- 14.12 (Sat.), 1:00 PM** – A trip in search of sculptures near ul. Piotrkowska – we begin at the City Archives at Plac Wolności

[www.facebook.com/lodzki detal](https://www.facebook.com/lodzki detal)

[www.lodzki detal.pl](http://www.lodzki detal.pl)

On the one hand, you treated this online space as a place to collect documentation, but the most important things still happened offline. And trips were primarily offline. Yes, trips from the “Walks in search of the architectural details in Lodz” series are extremely important to me. During them, I talk about details, they have something straight from a theatrical play, and they are also very valuable meetings with other people.

### You wrote two books as well.

In 2016, I applied for the art scholarship of the President of the City of Lodz. Winning it enabled me to move my actions to another level. The first Polish architectural detail city guide was also created. This 260-page book, published with the support of the Regio Development Initiative Centre and a crowdfunding campaign, contains photographic documentation and 8 detail routes in Lodz. Two years ago, thanks to the Regio Centre, my other book was published: Przewodnik po secesji Łodzi i województwa łódzkiego (Guide to the Secession of Lodz and the Lodz Voivodeship). Its promotional idea involved changing meetings with the author into a tale about detail and architecture... and thus my lectures were born. I love to speak, I've held over 60 lectures so far!

In 2016, I also participated in the Youth in Lodz competition. It was a good opportunity to organize my plans and ideas, to think how I want to develop my brand, as well as a strong impulse to fight in order to “live off the detail.” Participating in such projects also enables me to take a fresh look at what we do. I'm still taking advantage of the knowledge and observations from that time.

House of an artisan in the Open-air Museum of Wooden Architecture, ul. Piotrkowska 282



**The Architectural Detail Festival #detailfest took place in Lodz twice.**

I discovered, rather quickly, that there are more crazy people like myself in Poland... Two years ago, the first Architectural Detail Festival #detailfest took place. 14 people came to Lodz from 9 cities. The programme involved lectures, workshops and five exhibitions, including one collective exhibition. The guests – from Gdynia, Szczecin, Poznań, Warszawa, Włocławek and Radom – discussed detail-related events in their cities, their interests and daily activities. Thanks to Piwoteka Narodowa, we also had commemorative beer. The second festival attracted even more speakers than the previous one, and more attendees as well. Both editions included artisan workshops because I very much want people to have direct contact with details, to be able to cast something, make one out of clay, clean it... It's very important to touch the details.

**Interestingly, it's the only festival of its kind in Poland!**

Yes! There are no other similar events in Poland or in Europe! I'd like for the festival to grow into a serious brand, and for Lodz to become this detail capital of Poland. We have great potential, i.e. a very captivating architectural legacy. On the one hand, its objective is to popularise the architectural heritage of various regions and periods; on the other hand, it's to establish competences of recipients of architecture and their commitment to the protection of local landmarks.

**Who comes to listen about details?**

I've seen many people from tours; it's kind of my core audience. There are architects, construction engineers, students, conservators, pensioners. Various people



**A mascaron on a balcony support of a tenement house at ul. Piotrkowska 273**



**Construction date (1886) of one wing of Ludwik Geyer's White Factory, made of coloured bricks, ul. Piotrkowska 282**

who noticed – typically through their contact with details, trips, books or my board and card game published last year – that this topic is interesting. For me, it's very important that new detailists appeared between the first and the second festival, fascinated with the topic and committed to protect its objects.

**What does a detailist think about when she passes tenement houses in Lodz being revitalised or just recently renovated?**

There are numerous tenement houses that are undergoing renovation and there is no shortage of well-performed conservation renovations. On the other hand, there are situations in which renovation means the destruction of the landmark's tissue, e.g. gateway mouldings are cut out and wooden lining is removed in order to line the gate with what's on sale at the construction store. I understand that people want their place to be clean and nice and that it is 10 times cheaper for an owner to destroy than to conserve, but my detailist heart hurts. I want to know what the construction workers removed. Did someone even take a photo beforehand to document it? This is certainly a dream of mine for people to have this minimum package: if I have something and it's old, then I will take a photo of it before I throw it away or cut it out, I'll ask a specialist if it's worth anything because it can be a unique specimen. Unfortunately, this doesn't happen often and details are forever lost. I have this feeling that we demand too little of ourselves; what is left from the past, including architectural details, is a type of heritage that creates us and the place we live in, which is why we have the obligation to take care of it and save it from oblivion.

**Thank you for the interview. ●**

**16th INTERNATIONAL TRIENNIAL OF TAPESTRY**  
**5 OCTOBER–15 MARCH**  
 CENTRAL MUSEUM OF TEXTILES  
 WWW.CMWL.PL

**LDZ DISSONANCES CONFERENCE**  
**13 NOVEMBER**  
 ART\_INKUBATOR, UL. TYMIENIECKIEGO 3  
 WWW.DYSONANSE.PL

**CHINA SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA**  
**14 NOVEMBER, AT 9:00 AM, 7:00 PM**  
 LODZ PHILHARMONIC  
 WWW.FILHARMONIA.LODZ.PL

**THE DUMPLINGS – PRZYKRO MI TOUR**  
**15 NOVEMBER, AT 8:00 PM**  
 WYTWORNIA CLUB, UL. ŁĄKOWA 29  
 WWW.WYTWORNIA.PL

**7th AŻ FESTIVAL**  
**16 NOVEMBER–8 DECEMBER**  
 ACADEMY OF MUSIC IN LODZ  
 WWW.AMUZ.LODZ.PL

**29th MEDIA FESTIVAL “MAN IN DANGER”**  
**19–23 NOVEMBER**  
 FILM MUSEUM, PL. ZWYCIĘSTWA 1  
 WWW.FESTIWALMEDIOW.PL

**PLAY-ARENA BOARD GAMES AND CREATIVE ENTERTAINMENT EXHIBITION**  
**22–24 NOVEMBER**  
 EXPO-LODZ, AL. POLITECHNIKI 4  
 WWW.TARGI.LODZ.PL

**9th INTERESTING BOOK EXHIBITION**  
**22–24 NOVEMBER**  
 EXPO-LODZ, AL. POLITECHNIKI 4  
 WWW.TARGI.LODZ.PL

**24th FORUM OF EUROPEAN CINEMA “CINERGIA”**  
**22–30 NOVEMBER**  
 WWW.CINERGIAFESTIVAL.PL

**NATALIA PRZYBYSZ – JAK MALOWAĆ OGIEŃ [HOW TO PAINT FIRE]**  
**23 NOVEMBER, AT 8:00 PM**  
 WYTWORNIA CLUB, UL. ŁĄKOWA 29  
 WWW.WYTWORNIA.PL

**VIVA LA MAMMA!**  
**23, 24 NOVEMBER, AT 7:00 PM**  
 GRAND THEATRE, PL. DĄBROWSKIEGO 1  
 WWW.OPERALODZ.COM

**HARLEM GOSPEL CHOIR – TRIBUTE TO PRINCE!**  
**27 NOVEMBER, AT 7:00 PM**  
 LODZ PHILHARMONIC  
 WWW.FILHARMONIA.LODZ.PL

**2nd POLISH NATIONWIDE GARDENING CENTRE AND STORE STOCK UP EXHIBITION GARDENCONTRACTING AND MURAWA EXHIBITION**  
**28–29 NOVEMBER, AT 10:00 AM**  
 ATLAS ARENA, AL. BANDURSKIEGO 7  
 WWW.ATLASARENA.PL

**RUSSIAN NATIONAL BALLET – KOSTROMA**  
**1 DECEMBER, AT 5:00 PM**  
 GRAND THEATRE, PL. DĄBROWSKIEGO 1  
 WWW.OPERALODZ.COM

**10 TENORS**  
**5 DECEMBER, AT 7:00 PM**  
 LODZ PHILHARMONIC  
 WWW.FILHARMONIA.LODZ.PL

**MOSCOW CITY BALLET – SLEEPING BEAUTY**  
**10 DECEMBER, AT 7:00 PM**  
 GRAND THEATRE, PL. DĄBROWSKIEGO 1  
 WWW.OPERALODZ.COM

**MOSCOW CITY BALLET – SWAN LAKE**  
**11 DECEMBER, AT 4:00 PM, 8:00 PM**  
 GRAND THEATRE, PL. DĄBROWSKIEGO 1  
 WWW.OPERALODZ.COM

**SIGN OF THE TIMES 2019 CONCERT**  
**15 DECEMBER, AT 5:00 PM**  
 LODZ PHILHARMONIC  
 WWW.FILHARMONIA.LODZ.PL

**GLENN MILLER ORCHESTRA**  
**16 DECEMBER, AT 7:00 PM**  
 GRAND THEATRE, PL. DĄBROWSKIEGO 1  
 WWW.OPERALODZ.COM

**STANISŁAW SOYKA – MUZYKA I SŁOWA [MUSIC AND WORDS]**  
**17 DECEMBER, AT 8:00 PM**  
 LODZ PHILHARMONIC  
 WWW.FILHARMONIA.LODZ.PL

**WINTER CONCERT**  
**20 DECEMBER, AT 7:00 PM**  
 LODZ PHILHARMONIC  
 WWW.FILHARMONIA.LODZ.PL