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WROCLAW 2016 – ENTRANCE FROM THE COURTYARD**Abstract**

The project ‘Wrocław – Entrance from the courtyard’ was created in 2013 by the Department of Art Mediation of the Academy of Fine Arts in Wrocław. In 2015 and 2016 it was part of the visual arts program of the European Capital of Culture Wrocław 2016, which was curated by Michał Bieniek. From 2017, it will be implemented by the Public Art Studio of the Wrocław Academy of Fine Arts in cooperation with other institutions. The project involves performing artistic interventions in neglected areas of Wrocław, especially in the backyards.

Key words: *participation, revitalization, European Capital of Culture, backyard*

In the era of digital revolution, the creators of culture do not have to be professionals anymore. At the same time, all over the world, more and more individuals are taking responsibility for their city. The topic of social participation is on everyone’s lips. It is one of the priorities of the European Commission for the European Capital of Culture for the years 2005-2019. Involving citizens in the preparatory process constituted a valid element of Pécs’s and Wrocław’s applications for the European Capital of Culture. Long-term Goals of the European Capital of Culture Wrocław 2016 were EASY access to culture and participation:

1. Citizens will co-create culture and will benefit from it's variety without limits.
2. They will have easier access to both cultural and educational programmes.
3. Public space, friendly for social activities and shaping pro-social and civic attitudes, will be created, noticed, described or found.

Throughout the year 2016 in Wrocław carried out several projects, which assumed audience participation: Chór Komentujących Wrocławian, Rebel Babel Ensemble, project microGRANTY, project Cultural Pavilions and other.

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institutions and institutions. The project involves performing artistic interventions in neglected areas of Wrocław, especially in the backyards. Artists working in a given space worked with the inhabitants so that the solutions worked out were a common negotiated work. The aim of the project was to awaken awareness and responsibility for its surroundings. Simultaneously, residents of the area were stimulated to participate in activities. The organizers wanted to reach the audience directly and to meet the audience directly with the artists.

The prelude to the planned activities was deepened description of the situation created by the Wrocław sociologists cooperating with the Society for Creative Initiatives 'ę', Katarzyna Wala and Bartłomiej Lisa, who conducted a study on selected backyards Wrocław. Its effect was formulated in the form of a report, which tries to answer the question: how to prepare participatory action?

The project is based on the interaction and the joint action of artists and residents. The coordinators of the program selected and invited to Wrocław about 40 artists who create in different styles and techniques, using different poetics. Their actions were realized in the neglected, forgotten Wrocław backyards. Some projects had a temporary character, because they were focused on the cooperation process, which was recorded in film showing or video installation. Others were specific, durable installation (garden, tree house, mural). During the project, the artists worked for 30 yards. Below there are described selected projects.

The '**Urban gardens**' located between Ptasia and Kręta Streets arose in the course of negotiations with the residents of the backyards. Generally, the residents asked for more greenery – especially the kind that would climb building walls covering unsightly inscriptions and they also wanted to rearrange the yard. The parents also called for a clear separation between recreational and parking space, the introduction of better lighting at night, children's playgrounds sports fields. The process of public consultations resulted in the project of flower beds and installation which enables plants cultivation. Moreover, the backyards got cleaned up and refreshed thanks to the help of the locals. All chosen plants were resistant to extreme climate conditions and designed to look its best all-year round. The choice of colours in the backyard was also of great importance – It refers to the hues of Wrocław's football team (Śląsk Wrocław), as the majority of the inhabitants of the backyard were great fans. The authors of the project were architect Tomasz Bojęć, the landscape architect Agnieszka Bocheńska and artist Patryk Stolarz, who performed the mural.

Similar activities were conducted by Jacek Zachodny in his project '**The Townhouse**'. The artist suggested activation of the local community by involving the residents in the joint work on restoring the area around the building in Hubska Street 58. One of the last town houses in this area had been surrounded by a fenced estate and luxury hotel. Thanks to the commitment of the artist and the residents, it was finally possible to change the common space (planting around the building, painting the walls and selected architectural elements) (fig. 1).



Fig. 1. The Townhouse. Photo by Jacek Zachodny. Courtesy of Biuro Festiwalowe Impart 2016.

A similar project **'A Tree House on the Ash'** was organized by the artistic group „Niedzielni”. The group consists of artists: Piotr Dziurdzia, Bartolomeo Koczenasz, Cecylia Malik, Jakub Wesołowski. With the inhabitants of nearby flats children's tree house were constructed. During work boys finally got to know each other under the ash tree, although they had been living side by side for years. Someone put up stickers with smiles, swings were installed by dads, one mother brought a cake. This showed the people's engagement (fig. 2).



Fig. 2. A Tree House on the Ash. Photo by Alicja Kielan. Courtesy of Biuro Festiwalowe Impart 2016.

The most popular project aimed at children is **„The Hedgehog”** by Iza Rutkowska. The project consisted of a series of animation activities including an 8-foot inflatable hedgehog

made of durable, colourful fabric. The hedgehog made summer meetings pleasant – people could lie down on it, jump on it or even rest on his protruding spikes (fig. 3).



Fig. 3. The Hedgehog. Photo by Maciej Landsberg. Courtesy of Biuro Festiwalowe Impart 2016.

'**The Infinite Green**' is an example of a „green sculpture”, which is a combination of metal, wood, soil and vegetation. The sculpture refers to the graphical symbol of infinity. More than 2,500 plants that belong to roughly 100 different species of perennials have been planted on this structure which covers a total area of 110 m and consists of 7 levels. This construction was implemented according design system developed by Adam Kalinowski and was tested in the summer of 2014 at the Botanical Garden of Adam Mickiewicz University together with the Adam Mickiewicz University Department of Biology and Poznań University of Technology. The sculpture is designed to create specific microclimate, once inside, the viewer can experience a lower temperature and higher

humidity than outside. The project is located in the heart of Wrocław's Ołbin district, at number 40, Barlicki Street. The aim of this artistic action was to restore the backyard as a place of common ground for neighbour cooperation and commitment.

The installation designed by Dominika Sobolewska, was built on a rectangular lawn located between the two buildings belonging to housing communities. Undeveloped lawn is crossed by paths trodden down by the locals. The intention of the artist is a reaction to the lack of any functional elements, allowing for integration of passers-by and residents. At the intersection of paths '**Zigurat**' was built. A tower platform built with 24 benches refers to the shape of Mesopotamian sacred buildings, encouraging passers-by to spend some time in this backyard.

The project '**Lis-TY**' was implemented in suburb Oława. It was prepared by Dominika Borkowska. Her goal was to engage residents in writing letters to each other. With the letters a new local neighborly and interpersonal relations were established. She acted in the project as a postman – an intermediary. She wrote letters to residents, emptied an old box of Polish Post, responded to letters and distributed them back. It turned out that in the age of digitization the traditional ways of communication are still popular. Many people, including children and the elderly, who do not have access to modern messaging, trusted „listonoszka” ('postwoman') entrusting her their secrets and intimate confession.

The essence of '**The Collection**' project was to enable the process of communication and exchange between the Ethnographic Museum in Wrocław and the residents of the neighbourhood. The first stage of this process was to create an exhibition at the museum. It would display various physical objects borrowed from the residents of the neighbourhood as well as florists, local pharmacies, pastry shops owners. The collection presented a selection of archives, memorabilia, family photographs, etc. The centrepiece of the exhibition were coloured casts for gingerbread molds made during a workshop with local children. During the project Kamila Szejnoch refreshed the ground floors of buildings situated at Plac Zgody and prepared a series of small murals referring to the unique collection of wooden gingerbread molds located at the Ethnographic Museum in Wrocław.

A special type of actions were carried out in the '**Komuny Paryskiej 45 Workshop**', which was established, among others, thanks to the officials responsibility for the planned revitalisation of the Przedmieście Oławskie district. There is a need to penetrate the social tissue and offer some new proposals for the inhabitants. The organizers invited Kamila Wolszczak, Krzysztof Bryła and have adopted one of the destroyed buildings. In this way, they launched the studio with daily animation activities – from art workshops for children up to the meetings and lectures for adults. Interestingly, thanks to the series of Intergenerational Neighbours Meetings led by Damian Kalita and Jacek Sterczewski, more and more civil, bottom-up approach initiatives began to appear and perhaps in the future the residents will even organize them themselves and establish an association or foundation. '**Kozanów – In Search for the Miraculous**' is an interdisciplinary artistic event. Its main element is an international group exhibition situated in the Kozanów neighbourhood and its surroundings, which is accompanied by performances, film projections and discussions. In their site-specific works, as well as interactive activities with the inhabitants of the area, the invited artists from different European countries refer both to the history of this micro-region and to its everyday reality. In Poland Kozanów is best-known for the unsettling photos taken during the flood in 1997. Presently, apart from a senior's club and a local library, there is only one culture club in the neighbourhood that offer is directed basically to children. In the area out several events were carried out.

Formerly the backyards, were treated as usable spaces with gardens, small production facilities and local meeting places. Today, many of them remain areas of conflict between different stakeholders, between management of municipality and users. Social and cultural projects carried out in the backyard spaces can be a tool to formulate joint responsibility for the space and integrating and strengthening neighbourly bonds. 'Wrocław – Backyard Door' is one of the strongest socially involved programmes of the European Capital of Culture Wrocław 2016.

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LIST OF PROJECTS

Date	Location	Title	Author
V-XII 2015	Daszyńskiego, Jedności Narodowej, Żeromskiego	I Love and Adore	Elżbieta Jabłońska
XI-XII 2015	Gajowa 44	The Gateway to Everything	Nespoon
VII 2015	Miernicza, Łukasńskiego, Komuny Paryskiej, Prądzynskiego	The Hedgehog	Iza Rutkowska
VI-XI 2015	Hubska 58	The Townhouse	Jacek Zachodny
VIII-XI 2015	Pl. Zgody, Zgodna	The Collection	Kamila Szajnoch, Krzysztof Żwibris
IX-XI 2015	Średzka 28, Michała Płonkiego 19, Pl. Świętojański 1	Lissa. Stories from the Backyard	Daniel Brożek
VIII-XII 2015	Miernicza, Traugutta, Łukasńskiego	Lis-TY	Dominika Boikowska
VI-XII 2015	Ptasia, Kręta	The Urban Garden located between Ptasia and Kręta Streets	Fundacja Dom Pokoju: Maja Zabokrzycka, Agnieszka Bocheńska, Tomasz Bojęć
X-XI 2015	Krynicka 54-80	In Passing	Dominik Lejman
VIII 2015	Orzeszkowej, Bartlickiego, Żeromskiego, Nowowiejska	The Infinite Green	Adam Kalinowski
X 2015-XII 2016	Komuny Paryskiej 45	Komuny Paryskiej 45 Workshop	Kamila Wolszczak, Krzysztof Bryła, Natalia Gotubowska
IX 2015-XII 2016	Weigla, Ślężna	The Urban Ziggurat	Dominika Sobolewska
VI-XI 2016	Kozanów	Kozanów - In Search of the Miraculous	Hubert Czerepok, Jorg Herold, Jiri Kovanda, Katarzyna Krakowiak, Kristina Müntzing, Dietmar Schmale, Daniel Segerberg, Dorota Walenynowicz, Ludwig Kittinger, Sophie Thun, Fernando Messquita, Anade Almeida, Mercedes Sturm-Lie, Mikael Hansen, Andrzej Dudek-Dürer, Artur Żmijewski, Julita Wójcik
VII 2016	Żeromskiego, Nowowiejska, Jedności Narodowej, Daszyńskiego	A Tree House on the Ash	Niedzielni: Piotr Dziurdzia, Bartolomeo, Koczenasz, Cecylia Malik, Jakub Wesolowski
IX 2016	Przedmieście Oławskie	Jacob's Ladder	Jakub Szczepny

Date	Location	Title	Author
VII-XII 2016	Koreańska, Chińska, 3 Maja	Kaiscpanorama — audiovisual gallery	Robert Pludra, cooperation Katarzyna Moszczyńska
XI-XII 2016	Przy Kwietniku Square, Waryńskiego	Integrator	Agnieszka Bocheńska, Przemysław Chimeczak, Fundacja Dom Pokoju
VIII-XII 2016	Powstańców Śląskich, Szcześliwa, Gwiaździsta	Maze	Justyna Wencel, Marcin Chomicki
IX-X 2016	Kleczkowska 6, 17, 34, Kraszewskiego 26	Urban Mutations	Kamila Szezęsna
IV-XII 2016	Detention centre nr 1 in Wrocław Kleczkowska 35	Witkacego The Walls - Witkacy's Mugs	Marek Tybur, współpraca Elżbieta Golińska
XII 2016	Reja, Górnickiego, Nowowiejska, Sienkiewicza	Countdown	Karolina Freino
XI-XII 2016	The backyard between Miernieca, Łukasńskiego, Komuny Paryskiej, Prądzynskiego	The Backyard of All Residents	Iza Rutkowska
IX-XII 2016	The backyard between Komuny Paryskiej, Prądzynskiego, Zgodna, Traugutta	At the Common Table	Kosmos Project: Ewa Bochen, Maciej Jelski
VII-VIII 2016	Reja, Górnickiego, Nowowiejska, Sienkiewicza	Who is it – backyard tv series	Karolina Breguła
IX-XI 2016	Kościuszki 160	The Skylight	Joanna Piaścik
VII 2016	Brzeska, Chudoby, Kościuszki, Więckowskiego	Rainbow	Ewa Błaszczak, Zuzanna Wollny
VII 2016	Old transformer station's building Na Niskich Łąkach 2A	Trafostation	Joanna Rajkowska
IV-IX 2016	Gates and backyards on Roosevelta 13, 16, 18	From One Backyard to Another	Mariusz Mikołajek, Witold Liszkowski, Jan Mikołajek
VII 2016	Brzeska, Chudoby, Kościuszki, Więckowskiego	Agora unrealised project	Lila Kalinowska, Jadwiga Sawicka
XII 2016	Billboard	Arth Scroll	Alicja Jodko, Mariusz Jodko