

**Motto:**

From the long night, to turn toward the light -  
I know how hard the labor is, how harsh.  
For we must, like a flame, be cast  
Upwards with tremendous force, in scorn  
Of that smallness which would turn us back  
And strip from our brow the final proud thought,  
The thought once crowned with blazing light  
Above every great head - though later scorned.

*Maria Konopnicka*

## **LUX PRO MONUMENTIS FOUNDATION - MULTI-YEAR DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Liquid modernity<sup>1</sup> requires a new type of institution. The Lux Pro Monumentis Foundation is an organization responsible for delivering the most popular cultural event in Łódź and one of the largest such events in Poland. The Festival of Light, staged in urban public spaces, attracts audiences numbering in the hundreds of thousands. Its modern artistic form and use of cutting-edge technologies are defining characteristics. This mode of presentation is an excellent medium for valuable cultural content.

The Foundation's strategy builds on the achievements of past editions of the Festival of Light, while defining new priorities such as:

1. cultural education through raising the cultural competencies of mass audiences;
2. counteracting cultural exclusion by including all social groups in cultural events held in public space;
3. promotion of creative sectors, also in the context of economic development based on so-called soft skills (creativity);
4. creating space for cooperation between artists and representatives of business;
5. building social bonds based on cultural tools necessary for the creation of social capital founded on trust;
6. promotion of the city of Łódź and Poland in the context of tourism development;
7. historical education delivered in a modern form using IT-sector tools;

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<sup>1</sup> Zygmunt Bauman, *Liquid Modernity*. Cambridge 2000, polish release: *Płynna nowoczesność*. Krakow 2006

8. creating new mechanisms of functioning within the cultural circulation, based on networking of non-governmental organizations, public cultural institutions, creators and business entities;
9. popularization of “urbanity” understood as a cultural ecosystem based on city infrastructure;
10. aesthetic education i.e., increasing aesthetic awareness in both public and private space, particularly related to architecture;
11. ecological education - light, energy, renewable energy sources;
12. promotion of science and popularization projects aimed at increasing awareness of the importance of knowledge<sup>2</sup>;
13. creating a friendly cultural context for the development of artificial intelligence and robotics, also in relation to new phenomena at the intersection of human evolution - posthumanism, transhumanism, cosmism;
14. promotion of multiculturalism and building openness to diversity;
15. creation of a long-term IT education system enabling the inclusion of seniors in online-accessible culture.

## LONG-TERM GOALS

The long-term goals of the Foundation are:

- developing habits of cultural participation based on knowledge and cultural competence, including socially excluded groups in cultural circulation and improving statistical indicators of readership and active cultural participation;
- increasing the level of so-called “life satisfaction” as an economic indicator through conscious participation in culture;
- increasing economic prosperity through the development of professional competencies in cultural and creative sectors;
- building a “creative class” - a highly qualified professional workforce achieving the highest earnings and operating within cultural industries;
- counteracting the degradation of the individual by providing tools for personal development grounded in culture.

## DEVELOPMENT

The main narrative axis of the Foundation’s long-term activities will be the relationship with light, explored in various contexts - from energy and ecology to artistic reception, such as the history of the band Kraftwerk. Historical contexts and links to literature will also be important, for example *Heart of Darkness* by Joseph Conrad. Colored lights appear as a symbol of a free world and openness.

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<sup>2</sup> Steven Pinker, *Enlightenment Now: The Case for Reason, Science, Humanism, and Progress*, Poznań 2018

In the future, the Foundation will combine the functions of a cultural organizer with those of a research institute, promotional institution, futurology center, and hub for cultural and aesthetic education. It will promote the assets and values of Łódź, while also serving as a partner for investors wishing to implement cultural projects through public-private partnerships. It is an innovative organization, necessary in times of global pandemics and other known and emerging threats. Only holistic perspectives - not narrowly specialized ones - can confront the unknown.

The Lux Pro Monumentis Foundation is a distinctly urban institution promoting an urban lifestyle. Cities are centers where people meet and cooperate. Cities host major knowledge hubs and media and are engines of creativity. The Foundation intends to analyze these relationships, which are part of culture, because only culture can translate knowledge into forms accessible to the human mind. As Olga Tokarczuk noted in her Nobel lecture, culture is a kind of super-brain containing analyses of all possible scenarios.

Promoting scientific achievements and fulfilling humanity's need for knowledge will be one of our key challenges, supported through close cooperation with universities. One priority will therefore be referencing Enlightenment, particularly in the sense described by Steven Pinker in *Enlightenment Now*. The 21st century is marked by universal access to scientific achievements coexisting with extreme ignorance and conspiracy theories - hence the idea for the project "Cult for Science". The Festival of Light will become a platform for promoting scientific achievements and notable figures from the world of science.

Cities generate ecological problems but are also their greatest victims. At the same time, solutions to climate change, environmental pollution, and species extinction will be found in cities. Within debates around energy that produces light, we plan to invite Elizabeth Kolbert, author of the Pulitzer Prize-winning book *The Sixth Extinction: An Unnatural History*.

Paradox is one of the fundamental principles of human existence. As a modern institution, we will connect what appears incompatible: statistics with the history of anarchism and the avant-garde, art with a new generation of quantum computers. We will admire mathematical algorithms and painting alike - all united by culture and light.

We will consider what to do with time once longevity, or perhaps immortality, is achieved<sup>3</sup>; how we will coexist with robots and artificial intelligence; when "electronic persons" will acquire human rights; and what future motherhood will look like. These topics will form part of the Foundation's educational events, such as the futurology program "Into the Future at the Speed of Light".

We will be an unconventional institution, much like the human being itself and one of humanity's greatest creations - the illuminated city. Contradictions fascinate us, and we will explore paradox.

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<sup>3</sup> Yuval Noah Harari, *Homo deus. A brief history of tomorrow*, Krakow 2018

We will analyze the phenomenon of the most famous native of Łódź - *The Witcher* - in the context of global fascination with fantasy. We ask whether our compatriot would have succeeded in *Game of Thrones* by George R. R. Martin. This will also serve as a pretext for reflections on economic development based on creative industries. Why is the capitalized value of *The Witcher* franchise greater than that of many companies listed on the stock exchange?<sup>4</sup>

Why Łódź? Because we have proven that anything is possible here. It is the most urban of Polish cities - a place where global fortunes were built and avant-garde art was first presented. In the 19th century Łódź became a “machine for making wealth.” In the 21st century, we are searching for a new model of prosperity - perhaps one of Łódź’s startups will open new windows of opportunity.

We will tell stories about human civilization, past experiences, and visions of the future. Before humanity existed, there was light. Light was the first work created by God. In the symmetrical order of creation, light on the first day corresponds to the creation of the sun, moon, and stars. This tradition is also present in the Book of Isaiah: “I form the light and create darkness, I bring prosperity and create disaster.”<sup>5</sup>

Stories told around prehistoric campfires marked the beginning of culture. Shadows on cave walls were, in fact, the first Festival of Light.

## THE CITY

At the center of the Foundation’s activities will be the phenomenon of the city, like Light.Move.Festival. is the most urban of events. The Romans called the city “civitas”, meaning both city and community. The Foundation challenges the dogma of the city’s purely rational-economic origins and the notion that it is shaped only by impersonal forces. Cities are created by emotions and aspirations. Contrary to economic theory, cities do not develop according to quasi-natural laws but are works of human will - shaped by both conscious and unconscious factors. In the city, we are simultaneously subject and object.

We will recall that the center of the world has, since time immemorial, been in cities: Rome, to which all roads lead, or Jerusalem as the navel of the world. We will explore the myths of Atlantis and El Dorado and analyze urban utopias such as the Christian “New Jerusalem” and Thomas More’s city-utopia.

Vitruvius demonstrated how the structure of the human body can be translated into architecture. The body is a geometric system, and for the Romans geometric order had a calming dimension. Vitruvius emphasized links between architecture, urban planning, and other arts - including music. Acoustics, rhythm, harmony, composition,

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<sup>4</sup> Paweł Zielewski (2015) „Wiedźmin” jest wart więcej niż cała Jastrzębska Spółka Węglowa [on-line] <http://www.forbes.pl/przywodztwo/wiedzmin-jest-wart-wiecej-niz-cala-jsw/q4m2qkl> [20.12.2021]

<sup>5</sup> The Holy Scripture of the Old and New Testament translated from the original languages [Millennium Bible]. Isa 45:7

accent, and dominance are concepts originating in music that successfully apply to the creation of urban spaces.

For the Lux Pro Monumentis Foundation, the melody of the city is another essential element of organizational development. We intend to expand activities based on relationships and connections between different art forms so that they are present within the urban fabric, not confined to galleries or concert halls.