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## CREATIVE AND ARTISTIC RECREATION<sup>1</sup> AND A CREATIVE APPROACH TO RECREATION ORGANIZATION: A CASE STUDY OF WI-MA CREATIVE INDUSTRIES ESTABLISHMENTS

**Abstract:** Artistic recreation has been described in the literature for many years as one of its types. However, research into its meaning, or even motivation, is rarely undertaken. The author attempts to confront existing definitions of artistic recreation with changing trends in spending free time and types of recreational activity. She emphasizes the role of a creative approach to the organization of recreation as an opportunity for the better utilization of its potential to affect the development of the individual personality. To illustrate the values of artistic recreation and a creative approach to its organization, the author analyzes the case study of WI-MA Creative Industries Establishments.

**Keywords:** recreation, creativity, creative recreation, artistic recreation, creative leisure, city of Lodz.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The prevalence of academic publications about physical recreation in relation to those describing other forms is striking, especially in the Polish-language literature. The author, noticing this asymmetry, has decided to reach for sources that expose values other than physical development in recreational activity. Another encouragement to address such an issue is the growing popularity of so-called 'Leisure Studies' inspired by foreign publications. In the Polish-language literature, the humanistic understanding of recreation is particularly strongly emphasized by R. WINIARSKI (2011) where treating recreation as human activity serving to satisfy needs and aspirations is put forward, not only providing entertainment and opportunity to rest but also affects the personality. In the preface to his book, R. WINIARSKI emphasizes that *recreation, treated today as a creative, and not only regenerative and compensatory activity, is the link connecting the productive necessity of work and the consumption of leisure time* (2011, p. 11).

The author also faces the issue of defining creative recreation and confronts known classifications with a wider understanding of the term 'artistic', often used interchangeably with 'creative'. The creative approach to the organization of recreation is seen as a remedy

for threats related to the shortening of the time for recreation in the modern world, and at the same time growing creative needs. A multitude of initiatives observed by the author in the urban space of Łódź that encourage creative recreation, has become an incentive for exploration of the chosen subject. The aim of the article is to illustrate, using the example of the WI-MA Creative Industries Establishments, a creative approach to the organization of recreation as an opportunity to more fully utilize the potential of recreational activity to affect personality development.

### 2. THE CONCEPT OF RECREATION AND ARTISTIC RECREATION

In the Polish-language literature, the concept of recreation is most often described in the context of physical activity. Despite the wide definition of recreation, many publications focus on terminology related to physical recreation (DEMEL & HUMEN 1970, WOLAŃSKA 1971, KWILECKA & BROŻEK 2007, SIWIŃSKI & PLUTA 2010, NAPIERAŁA & MUSZKIETA 2011). In colloquial language,

the concept of recreation is associated primarily with physical activity (KUNICKI 1997). However, the term 'recreation' comes from the Latin *recreo*, which means to revive, renew, refine, recreate, and *recreatio* – recovery, regaining a healthy and strong condition (WINIARSKI 2011). Therefore, its character not only refers to physical activity. R. WINIARSKI (2011) emphasizes that in the humanities recreation is treated as a human activity serving to satisfy needs and aspirations, which not only provides entertainment and rest, but also affects personality. According to the typology adopted here, recreation can be divided into physical and mental. The second category can include hobbies, tourism, cultural and entertainment activities. Therefore, recreation is undertaken in leisure time, and if it is performed voluntarily, it fulfils the need for rest, entertainment, self-fulfilment and self-improvement. It can take the form of outdoor or indoor recreation. It can be organized individually or institutionally (WINIARSKI 2011). Sometimes the definitions of recreation are similar to classical definition of leisure time, covering aspects of human life such as leisure, entertainment or learning (e.g. self-education and amateur classes) (NAPIERAŁA & MUSZKIETA 2011). T. WOLAŃSKA (1971), however, claims that recreation cannot be realized without free time, recreation fills leisure time in a socially and constructively acceptable way for the purpose of self-development. A popular definition of recreation is the one according to which it is understood as all activities undertaken for the regeneration, and manifests itself in participation in cultural entertainment, sports or various forms of tourism – after business or school hours, in addition to ordinary social and household duties (WARSZYŃSKA & JAC-KOWSKI 1979).

The literature also lists basic, direct functions of recreation, which are at the same time criteria for its definition. M. KWILECKA & Z. BROŻEK (2007) list the following: leisure, free-time, health, play, socialization and compensatory-corrective activity. At the same time, it can fulfil a number of instrumental (indirect) functions: cultural, ideological, economic, social, selective, adaptive, integration or disintegration, systemic, creative, cathartic and stimulatory. The authors broadly describe recreation in terms of its benefits for humans but also determine what constrains recreational behaviour. Recreation takes place only during leisure time, it is an attractive, voluntary activity and can take any form depending on individual preferences. Recreation should serve relaxation and respect the individual and social good, it must also fulfil the principle of egalitarianism. The principle of positive involvement (pleasure) is also important. However, it should not interfere with work and readiness for it but should balance the effort connected with work instead. Objectives related to the implementation of a chosen form of recreational activity

should be achievable and real. The authors also mention the principle of socialization, understood as the need to fulfil, through recreation, educational and self-educational functions (KWILECKA & BROŻEK 2007). According to S. TOCZEK-WERNER (2005) the most important features of recreation are ease of reaching, chances to undertake in various places, flexibility in the application of rules and principles, accessibility for everyone, versatility and attractiveness.

A wide classification of forms includes descriptions and examples of artistic recreation. K. CZAJKOWSKI (1979) and I. KIELBASIEWICZ-DROZDOWSKA (2001) distinguished the following: physical (movement), artistic, cultural and entertainment, recreation through social activity. Physical recreation is focused around activities undertaken for the purpose of leisure, entertainment and self-development. Artistic recreation, on the other hand, takes the form of artistic expression in the form of, for example, art, music, photography, modelling or DIY. Thanks to such forms, a sense of beauty and aesthetics is shaped, and manual skills are developed. In turn, thanks to forms of cultural and entertainment recreation, cultural levels are raised, and they also serve the purpose of entertainment. Examples include all cultural and artistic events, intellectual games, participation in cultural life for instance going to the cinema or theatre. Recreation through social activity is used to liberate organizational skills and to share leisure time (CZAJKOWSKI 1979). In turn, M. KWILECKA & Z. BROŻEK (2007) describe the importance of artistic recreation which engages the creative side of the human personality, constituting a channel of emotional cleansing. According to M. NAPIERAŁA & R. MUSZKIETA (2011), thanks to a combination of artistic and physical recreation, one can speak of a more complete formation of the human personality.

In the Polish-language literature a deficit can be felt in research on artistic or creative recreation. Analysing the literature, the author was unable to find any contemporary work covering this issue. In addition, the author used the Google Trends service (<https://trends.google.pl/>, 13.11.2017) which provides information on quantity, origin, time, main regions and queries entered into the Google search engine. Thanks to this, it was possible to compare the frequency of artistic recreation, physical recreation and recreation, during the last five years in Poland. In Figure 1, a clear prevalence of queries for the term 'recreation' over its selected types can be seen. In turn, the number of artistic recreation searches was so low that it could not be displayed on the Google Trends site.

In the foreign literature, the phenomenon of recreation is more often referred to as leisure activity (En. *leisure*, Fr. *loisir*) and research in this area is called *leisure studies* or *leisure sciences* (BACHVAROV & DZIEGIEĆ

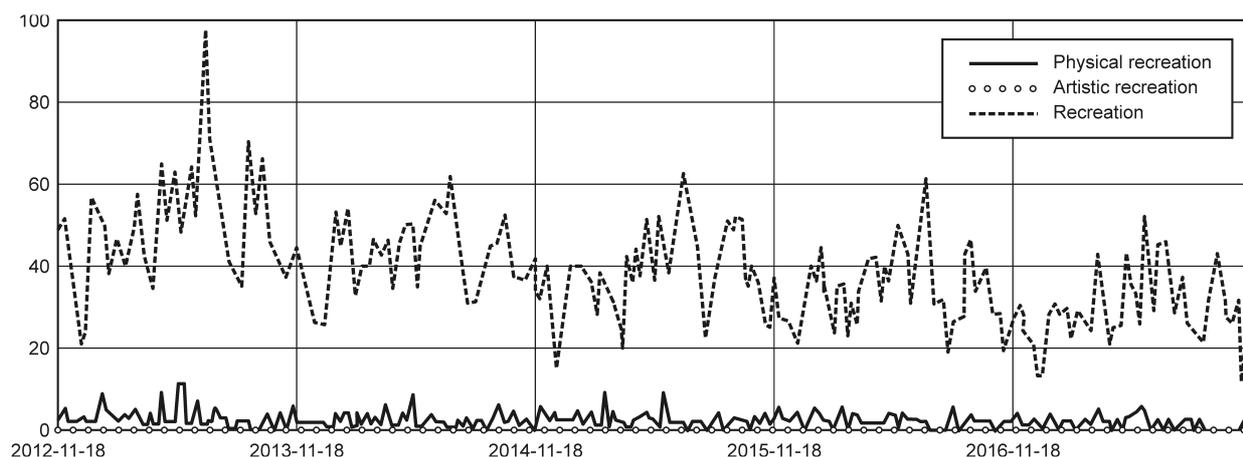


Fig. 1. Frequency of queries on the Google search engine for artistic recreation, physical recreation and recreation in Poland: 2012-2017

Source: author, based on Google Trends service

2005). Foreign researchers emphasize that there is a significant difference in the understanding of free time: first of all, it functions as a time category (En. *free time*, Fr. *le temps libre*), secondly free time is understood in a more complex manner than time, and the wealth of activity and experience associated with it (En. *leisure*, Fr. *loisir*) (KELLY 1996). An overview of the definitions of free time can be found in CH. ROJEK, S.M. SHAW & J. VEAL (2006), where this issue is also considered in relation to time, education, art and entertainment. In western countries, the term *leisure* has most often been treated in opposition to work, while a period of time was also distinguished which did not fit into either of these categories. Along with the changing way in which work is performed, leisure time is changing too (HUNNICUTT 2006). From the sociological point of view, it encompasses various forms of activity chosen voluntarily in order to fill the time remaining after all their duties have been completed (POEL 2006).

The above definition is similar to that in the Polish-language literature. However, from the point of view of this article, it is worth noting the formulations concerning artistic free time that appear in the textbook by CH. ROJEK, S.M. SHAW & J. VEAL (2006). Along with a growth in popularity of the so-called creative industries and their strong relationship with cultural ones, they take on the role of traditionally understood leisure industries. The necessity of debate over access to services of this type and the new concept of *creative leisure* is underlined (STEVENSON 2006). S.E. ISO-AHOLA, E. JACKSON & E. DUNN (1994) emphasize that there has been a significant increase in numbers taking up such activities as attending courses and volunteering, or creative activities at home (such as crafts, gardening, playing musical instruments). Participation in classes is a noteworthy element of spending free time, bring-

ing a sense of accomplishment to participants. Recreational activities can provide space for creative expression that may be lacking in other, more demanding, areas of life (CREEK 2008).

In foreign literature there are few descriptions of research on creative recreation. J. WHITING & K. HAN-NAM (2015) see a deficit of publications containing descriptions in relations between art, self-expression and the way of spending free time. In their article results of qualitative research are presented on the lives of users of *leisure space* in the 'provincial bohemia' in the Ouseburn valley, Newcastle, referred to as a centre of creative industries in post-industrial space. They observed an increase in the popularization of artistic forms of spending free time, and thus the rejection of mass and presumably passive forms. Thus, the participants of the study described free time as a sphere of artistic activity and a chance to develop self-expression. However, they emphasized the difficulty in distinguishing leisure and working time, due to the fact that professional and leisure-time activities permeated each other. The authors emphasize that creativity in leisure time can take many forms and does not necessarily have to be associated with the lifestyle of artists and the 'creative class'. D. STEVENSON (2006) has written about recreation or leisure time in the context of the concept of creative cities. She emphasizes that recreational activity is often organized in special, entertainment and creative zones, and its potential for development can translate into a better quality of everyday life for urban residents.

Interesting research on the role of motivation on participation in *creative leisure* activities has been conducted by A. SALERNO (2009), while stressing the necessity to broaden research on this issue. Other studies have been conducted by R. TRNKA, M. ZAHRADNIK & M. KUŠKA (2016) whose aim was to investigate how emotional creativity, measured with a special tool, is associated

with real involvement in various types of artistic forms of spending leisure time and with four fields of study. It is worth emphasizing the types of creative recreational activity that have been analyzed in this study: writing poems or prose (including blogs); composing music or musical improvisation; performing dramatic or dance improvisation; drawing, paintings or other artistic activities; sculpture or ceramics self-designed; all types of do-it-yourself activities. The described research may be an inspiration to design something similar in Poland and to compare with existing publications.

### 3. ART AND CREATIVITY WITH REGARD TO RECREATION

Being artistic or being creative - in the author's opinion these concepts are often perceived as synonymous. In the Polish-language literature, the definition of creativity (Pol. *kreatywność*), understood as a human characteristic, has been popularized by E. NĘCKA (2001, p. 19), according to whom *creativity is usually manifested in some form of observable behaviour, consisting in the production of new and valued products*. For K.J. SZMIDT (2013, p. 53) it is similar: *creativity is the ability of human beings* (emphasized by the author) *to generate new and valued products (e.g. things, ideas, methods of operation) rather frequently*. In turn, creativeness (Pol. *twórczość*) **concerns activity** (emphasized by the author) bringing work - both works of art and ways of perceiving the world - the characteristic feature of which is novelty and value (aesthetic, utilitarian, ethical, cognitive) even for the artistic entity itself, and human beings with developed creative attitudes, generate ideas and put them into practice. In addition, in contrast to creativity, creativeness can be considered in four aspects: as a feature of a product, as a mental process, as a feature of a person and as a set of external factors (SZMIDT 2013). For example, we can talk about a creative poster, creative process, creative man or creative school (understood as a working environment for students and employees). The above definitions show that the criteria for creativeness are the novelty and value of, for example, a newly created tourist product. E. NĘCKA (2001), however, distinguished five criteria for evaluation of a creative product. The first of them - validity - concerns the sense of existence of a created product and whether it meets the demand of recipients. Originality, as the second criterion, emphasizes the necessity of a lack of inspiration from already existing products. The third is uniqueness, i.e. it is important for a product to be rare in a given historical and social context. The inevitability of appearance of similar products is the fourth criterion and in

the fifth, the aesthetic value of a product is mentioned: it should be internally coherent, as well as characterized by simplicity and elegance (NĘCKA 2001).

Current publications on recreation emphasize the need to redefine this phenomenon. As Z. KRAWCZYK (2007) notes, it is necessary to reorient the recreation model towards meeting creative needs. Recreation in the contemporary world has been described in an interesting way by R. WINIARSKI (2011). In the post-industrial era humans have different needs and in free time pursue goals differently than in the past. Leisure time is characterized by fluidity, mobility and universality, which in turn has a decisive influence on the manner of understanding the essence and goals of recreation. Nowadays, recreation is becoming a source of pleasure, new impressions and emotions (WINIARSKI 2011). M. KWILECKA & Z. BROŻEK (2007) note, however, that the need for entertainment and play is becoming of utmost importance taking the place of individual interests, artistic, intellectual and cognitive activities. As J. MOKRAS-GRABOWSKA (2015) adds, it is more and more often observed that people follow fashion regarding the implementation of specific forms of recreational activity, which leads to shallow recreational functions. Thus, such approach may deny its voluntary nature. What is more, recreation can become a purchasing good - the ability to satisfy consumer needs instead of autotelic value.

A creative approach to the organization of recreation can be a remedy for these changes and threats. Considering the criteria for creative products, this kind of approach may, on the one hand, provide people with the opportunity to pursue interesting recreational undertakings, and on the other, ensure its valuable and developing character. The review of foreign literature and observable social phenomena seem to be sufficiently inspiring to undertake further discussion on updating and modernizing the concept of recreation and, above all, of artistic recreation. It seems necessary to broaden the forms of artistic recreation to those currently present in social reality. It is also worth noting the benefits of broadening the meaning of the concept. According to the dictionary definition, 'creative' relates to the process of creation, creators, it is associated with art as broadly understood. However, it also appears as a synonym with regard to human beings meaning constructive, creative, prolific; or an idea, a job, that is conceptual, creative (<https://sjp.pwn.pl/szukaj/tw%C3%B3rczy.html>; 23.12.2017). However, the second understanding is referred to in English, where artistic recreation is presented as *creative leisure/recreation*, which makes it difficult to compare foreign and Polish literature. The above linguistic incoherence is further emphasized by the necessity to update the definition of creative recreation in relation to changing social life.

#### 4. CASE STUDY METHOD

In order to illustrate the issues of the article, a case study has been analyzed. It is a research method the main purpose of which is to describe, usually some unique phenomenon (BABBIE 2007). Through the choice of this method, often related to an investigator's interests with a specific case, it was decided what research techniques she would use (STAKE 2009). Thanks to this, it is possible to implement the most important goal of the case study, i.e. the best possible understanding of a chosen phenomenon rather than creating generalizations (*ibid.*).

The author prepared a case study based on an analysis of websites describing the undertakings organized in WI-MA Creative Industries Establishments in Łódź and an interview with the president of its board. In order to get to know the specifics of chosen place in the best possible way, this kind of 'free' interviewing has been conducted using the method described by S. KVALE (2010). He distinguished seven stages in the full interview process: definition of subject, design, conducting the interview, transcription, analysis, verification and reporting (KVALE 2010). Qualitative field studies allow the researcher to adopt a holistic perspective (BABBIE 2007). Thanks to this, the researcher gains an opportunity for deeper and fuller understanding of the studied phenomenon. Sometimes free interviewing is compared with conversation in which the person conducting it gives a general direction and highlights certain subjects raised by the interlocutor (KONECKI & CHOMCZYŃSKI 2012). The attitude of the interlocutor to the research favoured the use of this kind of interview. Thanks to this, we managed to minimize the 'disproportions' between the researcher and the interlocutor. Before the interview, an interview outline was prepared. The interview was recorded, which allowed for a better analysis of the collected material. Then the interview was transcribed. As a result, the collected data was subjected to qualitative analysis.

#### 5. CASE STUDY OF WI-MA CREATIVE INDUSTRIES ESTABLISHMENTS IN ŁÓDŹ

To illustrate the potential of artistic recreation and a creative approach to the organization of recreation, the author analyzed the proposed events at WI-MA Creative Industries Establishments in Łódź. The choice results from the fact that in the author's opinion, there seems to be a growing importance of activating and developing creativity in Łódź. Observation of the

current situation emphasizes the trend of promoting Łódź as a creative city. In 2012, the Integrated Strategy for the Integrated Development of Łódź, 2020+ was adopted by the City Council. According to this document, the Vision of Łódź is as follows: *Friendly, creative and dynamic*. A city developing sustainably, with competitive living, working and investing conditions, making use of its historical, infrastructural and creative potential<sup>2</sup>. In addition, in the same year, the project called 'Łódź Brand Promotion - Creative Industries Centre' was launched<sup>3</sup>. It has contributed to the creation of, among other things, many advertising opportunities promoting Łódź as a centre for creative industries. Visual identification system with the logo 'Łódź Creates' was set up. More and more often, activities referring to creativity are noticed in urban space. Examples include a vote for the best creative cafés in Łódź, numerous workshops (for example, making furniture from recyclable materials or creative cooking). In addition, the number of enterprises from the creative industries sector is increasing. These initiatives most often also accumulate in one part of space - they often use the post-industrial interiors of factories and the specific fabric of the city, e.g. OFF Piotrkowska, 218 Piotrkowska, WI-MA - Creative Industries Establishments, Art Inkubator (MOKRAS-GRABOWSKA 2014). On the one hand, they become not only a kind of brand that attracts creative individuals, but also a space for the implementation and development of everyday life, including the organization of recreational activities.

##### 5.1. WI-MA IN THE PAST AND NOW

Currently WI-MA Creative Industries Establishments in Łódź is promoted as: *60,000 m<sup>2</sup> of post-industrial space. Music, film, photography, fine arts. Rehearsal rooms, working rooms, studios. Foundations, social cooperatives, companies. **People** (in bold in original). Mainly people and their Passions (<http://wi-ma.pl/miejsce/>, 8.11.2017)*. Historically, however, the WI-MA SA Widzew Cotton Industry Establishments, located at al. Piłsudskiego 135, functioning under this name until recently, was an enterprise created in the 1870's. Julius Kunitzer, later known as one of the kings of cotton, founded this textile factory by Rokicińska St. After 1922, this establishment, known as Widzew Manufacture, started to grow dynamically and became a multi-branch factory. After the World War II, WI-MA was taken over by the state, as a result of which in 1949 three independent enterprises were created: 1<sup>st</sup> May Widzew Cotton Industry Enterprise, Widzew Textile Machine Factory 'Wifama', and Anilana Industrial Fibre Enterprise (BONISŁAWSKI & PODOLSKA 2008). Due to intense competition with the Asian market, in 2009 the Cotton

Enterprises ceased production. Out of three hundred employees, only seven remained in the indebted company at the end of its operation, including its president, Stanisław Zaręba. Currently, the Widzew Manufacture is a zone of alternative activities, making use of post-industrial spaces, open to artistic foundations, social cooperatives and companies. Concerts, exhibitions and performances take place here, it is outdoor area for film and photographic activities (ZARADKIEWICZ 2014). On October 1, 2016, along with the change of the sign on the factory building, after five years officially the Cotton Industry Establishments turned into the Creative Industries Establishments (<http://www.dzienniklodzki.pl/kultura/a/wima-i-jej-perly-swietuja-od-doliny-kreatywnej-do-projektu-spolcznego-zdjecia,10693709/>, 8/11/2017).

Spaces at WI-MA are occupied by various types of enterprises, associations and their number and nature of activity change over time. Currently, at the WI-MA website ([http://wi-ma.pl/category/spis\\_firm/](http://wi-ma.pl/category/spis_firm/), access 7.11.2017), there is a list of companies renting premises for their activities, for example barrister's or accounting offices. However, special place is taken by companies from the so-called creative industries ([http://wi-ma.pl/category/branza\\_kreatywna/](http://wi-ma.pl/category/branza_kreatywna/), 9/11/2017). These companies often propose interesting recreational activity in post-industrial space, including:

- 3D Event - a company organizing 3D shows;
- Folk'n'Roll rhythm academy - a school teaching the playing of West African drums;
- Alfa Laser Game - organizing laser paintball in the WI-MA spaces as well as outdoors;
- Atelier Lunlun - art studio;
- Bajkonur - independent music incubator, with rehearsal rooms, recording studio, concert stage and cafe;
- FabLab Łódź - open technological workshop processing wood, metal and polymer materials;
- fARTownia - an applied art workshop;
- Indygo - an art studio;
- PackshotMe - a company specializing in the field of product photography, it also conducts photo workshops;
- Soap Opera - a soap workshop;
- Soyuz Studio - a recording studio using analogue and digital techniques;
- Kreska Drawing Studio - a drawing school conducting workshops and drawing lessons;
- Zamiast Theatre - organizing performances, workshops and actors' work laboratory.
- WJTeam - film production including stop-motion puppet animation, film, advertising, music videos.

The overview of events from 2017 presented on the WI-MA website looks quite modest and does not seem to reflect its atmosphere (<http://wi-ma.pl/category/aktualnosci/>, 8.11.2017). In the news tab there is a description of two shows: On 28.10.2017, the Zamiast Theatre proposed the monodrama 'Schron' according to the short story by Franz Kafka, and on 7.01 and 8.01.2017 - a winter dance performance for children 'Zawiorowanki'. On the WI-MA website on Facebook ([https://www.facebook.com/pg/wima.hq/events/?ref=page\\_internal](https://www.facebook.com/pg/wima.hq/events/?ref=page_internal), 8.11.2017) the last description of an event here was from 24.04.2015. More information can be found in the information posted by specific companies from the creative industry in WI-MA on their web or social networking sites. The events presented below (Table 1) fit into both the category of artistic recreation, in its classical sense, as well as a creative approach to the organization of recreation, where interesting projects are proposed in an original and valuable way.

Table 1. Selected events organized at WI-MA in 2017

No.	Date	Organizer	Event name	Creative aspect
[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]
1.	All year round	Folk'n'Roll rhythm academy	'Smyki Afryki'	Drum workshops for children in two age groups: from 3 to 5 and from 6 to 10.
2.	23-27.01.2017	Indigo art studio	Creative winter holidays with electricity and robotics	Combination of plastic activities with electricity and robotics.
3.	14.02.2017	'Zamiast' theatre	Premiere of the film '#LOVE'	Premiere screening of a short film, which is a continuation of the #DBRMPP show. The event combined with presentation of the film.
4.	5.03.2017	Off Wedding: Alternative Market Wedding Meetup	Off Wedding Alternative Wedding Fair	Wedding fair that promotes new trends, different approach to weddings, niche products and services.

[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]
5.	19.05.2017	FabLab Łódź	Night of Manufacturers	Evening shows of unusual projects and technologies of Łódź manufacturers, constructors and designers with passion.
6.	10-11.06.2017	Indygo art studio	Weekend open air in WI-MA	The use of post-industrial and green areas for open air painting.
7.	1.07.2017	FabLab Łódź	Upholstery and renovation workshops	Two-day workshop with a Master of Crafts. Master-student training with emphasis put on practice.
8.	8.09.2017	Marek Edelman Center for Dialogue	Events accompanying the Łódź Four Cultures' Festival: Open Day for Creative Studios, the 'Oplątane' performance by LineAct and 'Mokosh' - unveiling of the Nomad Clan mural	Cultural activity related to creative expression and the use of atypical post-industrial space.
9.	22-24.09.2017	FabLab Łódź	Robo Inspector Hackathon	Competition in the unusual hackathon formula for fans of robotics, Arduino, electronics and programming.
10.	5.10.2017	'Zamiast' theatre	Premiere of the spectacle 'Soma'	Cultural activity related to creative expression and the use of atypical post-industrial space.
11.	7-8.10.2017	In Search Of... foundation	L'tronica festival	A 24-hour event focused on electronic music and sound art
12.	2.11.2017	FabLab Łódź	The fourth run of a basic tailoring course	Practical course on the basics of tailoring.

Source: author based on the organizers' websites.

Most of the presented events were organized by companies from the creative industry, located in WI-MA, less often these were organizers from outside. The choice of proposed initiatives was made by the author based on the creativity criteria described above.

On the WI-MA website on Facebook, one can read reviews received from people who visited this place. The vast majority of evaluators awarded WI-MA with five stars (29), significantly fewer – with four stars (7). The lowest rating – one star, was given by 4. It is worth adding, however, that only reviews that best assess this place, are accompanied with description. Below are selected reviews from 2017 ([https://www.facebook.com/pg/wima.hq/reviews/?ref=page\\_internal](https://www.facebook.com/pg/wima.hq/reviews/?ref=page_internal), 9.11.2017):

January 23, 2017:

*WIMA is a place that attracts. Five years ago – when everything was slowly starting – I started to rent a room there. Unfortunately, we had to leave WIMA, but since then I have been regularly visiting various incredibly interesting meetings – also just to go and breathe in this creative atmosphere. 5+! Well done, WIMA – everyone creating this atmosphere and Mr. Zaręba, who systematically keeps on fulfilling his vision!*

Friday, September 15, 2017:

*The atmosphere is there! May more and more initiatives be organized in this location!*

Tuesday, August 1, 2017:

*I like this place so much.*

## 5.2. RESULTS OF THE 'FREE' INTERVIEW

The meeting with the president of WI-MA, Stanisław Zaręba, took place on April 14, 2016. On the basis of a prepared outline, the author of this article conducted a free interview. The purpose was to get to know the his opinion on the purpose and types of activity carried out at WI-MA Creative Industries Establishments, the cooperation network and recipients of the proposed events. For more than two hours, President Zaręba shared his vision of the Creative Industries Establishments, their history, as well as a description of current challenges and undertakings.

After being exposed to the risk of bankruptcy, finding a new investor and selling off the machines, the debts of the company have been repaid. Then the management began to wonder what to do next with such huge space. They managed to lease some of it, but President Zaręba, using his extensive experience as a youth movement activist and politician, decided to open this space for young people and give them the opportunity to pursue their own ideas. What is more, he is convinced that thereby he repays the debt through other people and that this is his civic duty. During various types of meetings (e.g. Regional Culture Congress or conferences), he appeals for serious treatment of young people:

*If someone gets more than they expect, later on they try to prove that they deserved it.*

The main mission that guides him, is the creation of an open space for young people and conducive to cooperation between generations – the young and elderly – could learn from each other. He also emphasizes the importance of shaping among young people tolerance, openness to others, without imposing one's own vision, so that they can strengthen their own views independently, could confront and defend them in contemporary reality. The sense of value of working together should also foster the creation of a civil society, all this in order to build a better Poland – he is not afraid to use such wording. His ambition is to gather at WI-MA a 'critical mass of the intellect of young Poles' who could change this world into the one in which they want to live. The president wants to open up to grassroots initiatives, accept them, combine the ideas and interests of young people with what is useful. As far as he himself is concerned, he offers his own time and experience.

*I want to ensure for our companies that they are not subject to pressure, make them feel free, feel the value of working together, of activities; so that they can learn tolerance for the work of others. I want a lot of these activities so that people can learn from each other.*

The main initiators and organizers of events at WI-MA are young and already existing creative groups in space. In the opinion of President Zaręba, young people come unsure and are afraid to fight for their freedom. He cited an interesting example of students of the III High School in Łódź, who wanted to organize a ball for the first class, and they did not manage to get support from their school, cultural centres or churches. He emphasizes that young people feel that only requirements and demands are imposed on them and that nobody actually listens to their voice. Pupils, students or those shortly after graduation are the ones who come with their ideas most often, with boldness in presenting their views. According to President Zaręba, these are people with different experiences – both artists and technicians meet here – making up creative groups. According to him, the most dynamic are *FabLab Łódź* and PEVT. He also wants to find people who would like to support the company in organising meaningful pro-social activities. In his opinion, it is important for ventures undertaken in this space to have social value. In addition to these event initiators, there are also one-time organizers such as the Marshal's Office, estate councils, academic circles, befriended creators of Łódź festivals.

In the belief of President Zaręba, a lot of events take place at WI-MA, however, since *Łącznik* ceased its activity, the activity of the entire company has been restrained. *Łącznik* was a restaurant that also served as a bar and cafe. In the evenings and on various occasions it turned into a center of cultural activities. In the

interviewee's opinion, the main axis of activities is focused on ventures organized by creative groups, for example, the *Łódź Gam Jam* or the *Musica Privata* festival. In addition, creative groups operating here organized summer activities for children from community 'day rooms'. WI-MA space was also used during the organization of the Festival of Design Thinking, Łódź Design Festival, *Foto Day* and *Fotofestiwal*. WI-MA was invited to join a partnership project as the city of Aarhus become the European Capital of Culture 2017, entitled 'Partnership with culture for the future of Aarhus and *HollyWoodge*'.

This place also favours the organization of alternative ventures. Fans of techno music have met here many times, there was also a kind of centre of Łódź hip-hop. Bands co-created an interesting mosaic in the pedestrian subway at the Piłsudskiego-Konstytucyjna crossing. WI-MA post-factory space is also used as a film outdoor area. 'Etudes' by students from the Łódź film school are shot here. Scenes for the films '*Miasto '44*', '*Powidoki*' and also for the TV series 'Commissioner Alex' were shot here too.

Zaręba claims that the reception of the events proposed at WI-MA is growing, he notes progress. However, it should be added that this is not simply a place to rent, organizers themselves must take care, renting toilets, providing garbage containers, cleaning up after their event. WI-MA only supports and provides space, but when transferring responsibility, it also wants to perform an educative function. WI-MA does not run any office of impresario.

The list of WI-MA associates is very long. It is worth mentioning here the signed letters of intent with the Academy of Fine Arts, the State Higher School of Film, Television and Theatre, the Social Academy of Sciences as well as the University of Information Technology. Frequent visitors are scouts (among others from the ZHP, Łódź-Widzew, Troop). Moreover, the president has established cooperation with the University of the Third Age and the 'Council of Seniors'. They have established permanent cooperation with the *Topografie* Association, *Postódź* Association and Film Commission. However, the relationship with the city's authorities is assessed negatively. According to him, such cooperation does not exist at all. He also adds that property taxes have increased by 300%. He complains that the city authorities are giving away premises for creative people, but according to him, truly creative people can be found at WI-MA.

*We are just a brooch on a jacket. Nobody talks to us (...). We are authentic and do not want to deceive anyone. We want to be a partner and to be treated as such.*

President Zaręba, however, hopes that the Łódź revitalization program can be an opportunity for the development of WI-MA. He puts emphasis on ensur-

ing that, regardless of the future functions of this space or possible investments, the existing creativity remains, despite the fact that their activities usually do not generate profits.

*Here people create their own workshops, for their own money, for their own ideas, this is the value (...). I want to show that in old walls with new ideas, ambition and diligence, stubbornness in pursuing the goals of the young generation, they can create something for themselves which is useful in social terms.*

In his vision of further development, WI-MA emphasizes the necessity of staying in European values, including the identity of a multinational Łódź. The president's dream is to organize an event in which the four choirs of Łódź's universities, standing in four parts of the WI-MA park, would sing 'Ode to Joy' in four languages referring to the identity of the nations that have formed Łódź in the past: Polish, German, Russian and Jewish.

*I would like it to be a message about understanding our identity and openness to Europe.*

## 6. CONCLUSIONS

WI-MA Creative Industries Establishments is, on the one hand, a difficult example. From the perspective of everyday life, the place appears to be only the seat of companies or a kind of industry incubator from the so-called creative sector. Information on recreational activities conducted there is rare in the media, and the place is not vibrant. WI-MA somehow 'becomes alive' from one event to another. As a privately managed space, it does not seem to be associated as a place of daily recreation for residents or tourists. In addition, its future is uncertain, in terms of planned investments, participation in the revitalization program or financial opportunities. The current condition of buildings without any renovation measures, may affect the ability to ensure safety in rented premises. The fear is also aroused by the ever-changing fashions for spending free time, perhaps soon WI-MA will be replaced by another place – more interesting and alternative – or perhaps the needs of recipients of the events proposed will change. WINIARSKI (2011) warned that leisure time is characterized by fluidity, mobility and universality, therefore the future of WI-MA is even more uncertain. The low quality of event promotion is noticeable, and the lack of a permanent meeting place in the form of club, restaurant or bar, may cause the slow disappearance of the 'creative atmosphere' invoked in reviews.

Nevertheless, on the other hand, the substantial value of WI-MA is the authenticity of groups function-

ing within it. The so-called creative groups are made up by enthusiasts who, out of their own will and passion, often propose original ventures financed from their own resources – which the interview emphasized. The accumulation of creative people and creative initiatives in WI-MA creates a place that invites you to non-standard forms of recreation such as tailoring, upholstery, drumming workshops or the presentation of niche films and theatrical performances. It is also interesting to combine various forms of activities, such as art classes combined with electrical or robotics classes. What is characteristic of WI-MA is the search for alternative cultural ventures – especially regarding the creation and promotion of techno or hip-hop music. The openness of the board to new initiatives encourages young people to face their own dreams. Therefore, it is not only the organizers of the proposed undertakings in the WI-MA, but also its management, who are an example of people approaching the organization of recreation creatively.

The presented results of the case study show the practical dimension of the creative potential of its approach to the organization and new forms of artistic recreation. WI-MA Creative Industries Establishments is a place where non-commercial activities are conducted, guided by the desire to accomplish a mission of sharing passion. It is worth paying attention to the nature of recreational events organized here. Their uniqueness is often in line with the criteria for a creative product described by K.J. SZMIDT (2013) or E. NEĆKA (2001). The sense of organized initiatives, emphasized especially in the interview, and even the educational nature of the joint work, refer to the criteria of creativity.

The unique atmosphere is the main attraction of this place, as evidenced by the visitors' comments. The intriguing use of post-industrial space, using the example of WI-MA, may be an incentive for further reflection on the importance of developing recreational spaces for creative activity. Elements of WI-MA post-factory space have become an important and inspiring motive for attracting creators, organizers and recipients of recreational activity. This confirms the thesis of D. STEVENSON (2006) that recreational enterprises are often organized in special, entertaining and creative zones, and thanks to this, the potential for individual development may translate into a better quality of everyday life for urban residents. As D. WANTUCH-MATLA (2016) adds, the attractiveness of creative spaces lies in the diversity of their functions and the stimuli that influence and attract people. Staying among them gives you a chance for new experiences and feelings. Inspired by the interviews described earlier which have been conducted by J. WHITING & K. HANNAM (2015), it would be worthwhile to carry out research on the functioning of users of the recreational space presented in the case study.

Theoretical conclusions:

- using the broader understanding of the adjective 'creative' in research on recreation,
- updating the definition of artistic recreation,
- analysis of creative recreation space,
- in-depth analysis of the educational function.

Practical conclusions:

- conducting research on other examples of creative recreation spaces,
- analysis of important variables for the formation and flowering of creative recreation space.

## 7. SUMMARY

Recreation has huge potential for shaping personality. Responsible and unconventional approaches to the organization of recreation is a challenge of the present, so as not to reduce it to easy entertainment and relaxation. Creative attitudes in the organization of recreation may be conducive to the development of all the types described in the literature, both physical and mental.

Along with the changing style of society, the need to update the definition of artistic recreation is also growing. The presented analysis of WI-MA in Łódź illustrates unusual and interesting forms and types of recreation that no longer fit into old definitions. The review of both Polish-language and foreign literature by the author emphasizes the potential of creative recreation that has not been yet explored by Polish academics. It would be worth carrying out an analysis of creative recreation, based on the criteria for a creative product.

The analysis also highlighted an essential plane for further analysis of contemporary forms of recreation, especially for artistic recreation. In the further course of research on the importance of recreational space, it would be worthwhile using the increasingly numerous studies on the development of urban spaces: public spaces and leisure time spaces. M. DEREK (2011) calls leisure space a new urban-creating force in culture and entertainment. The manner of consumption of free time becomes the source of self-realization of human beings. Leisure spaces play an increasingly important role in the urban landscape. Often, new spaces are also used for this purpose, for example, former industrial areas (DEREK 2014). It would be worth designing research on the role or importance of space and its organization and development for the development of various forms of recreational activity.

Currently, the quality of public space is an important ranking criterion in the race for the best conditions and quality of life for their residents (WANTUCH-MATLA 2016). Contemporary recreation should, in a responsible

way, serve human development, use valuable elements of the environment so that, in accordance with the message of a recognized architect and urban planner, take care of people and valuable life *between* buildings (GEHL 2013, p. 7).

## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> In Polish language term *creative* can be translated as *kreatywny* or *twórczy*. Usually they are used as synonyms, but in fact the word *twórczy* has two meanings: *creative* or *artistic*. Pol. *kreatywność* = Eng. *creativity*; Pol. *twórczość* = Eng. *creativity*.

<sup>2</sup> <http://uml.lodz.pl/dla-mieszkanow/o-miescie/strategia-lodzi-i-planowanie/strategia-zintegrowanego-rozwoju-lodzi-2020/>, access: 21.12.2017.

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.kreatywna.lodz.pl/page/161,2012-Lodz-kreuje.html>, access: 27.04.2016.

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