

Rebellion of the matter

We mistakenly attribute objects of weaving raw materials to art or artistic craftsmanship. Their significance is multilateral, their place in the world of modern art is the one they choose for themselves.

Magdalena Abakanowicz, 1971

For almost half a century the Łódź International Textile Triennale (ITT) has been an arena for presenting achievements in the field of unique textiles, giving new meaning to this medium and establishing the autonomy won in the 1960s and 1970s. There is no other area of art that has undergone such dynamic transformations, while consistently referring to the sources of its own identity. Postwar history of unique textiles is a fascinating process of forming a new language of artistic expression, drawing on immeasurable cultural resources of earlier centuries, and yet completely modern, astonishing with its diversity.

The appropriate moment for the renaissance of artistic textiles in the new form came in the second half of the 20th century. The forum for exchanging thoughts and experiences was famous in the world the Biennale in Lausanne, but soon found a complement in the form of an event that was born only a decade later in 1972 in Łódź. The Unique Textile Triennale (combined with the display of industrial textiles in the first three editions) is now the oldest event, showing the full range of formal solutions and a wide range of meanings.

The originator of Triennale was the legendary founder and director of the Central Museum of Textiles in Łódź, Krystyna Kondratiuk. Her vision was not limited to the creation of a stage for cyclical artistic textiles presentation, but went further. She wanted to create an image of Łódź as a city drawing on the local tradition, but open to the world and creating its modernity on its basis. She created an event that not only became a showcase for the city, but also the most important fiber art event in the world.

The „Rebellion of the matter” exhibition aims to show the results of discussions, meetings, presentations and exchanges of artistic experiences that have become the basis of subsequent ITT editions. The field of their influence has taken over the whole world, however, the exhibition is inevitably showing the achievements of Polish artists, who for years have been setting the direction of development of unique textiles. They kept reaching further, and prof. Irena Huml summed up so accurately their intentions: "In times of intensified expansion, Polish textiles brought a creative ferment to the global quest for ever-changing contemporary art."

The exhibition presents interesting, unique, yet mutually interactive and engaging each other in a dialogue in space. Thus we show that for years the artistic textile has grown, sometimes transformed in a revolutionary way, yet remained a domain expressed in a coherent language of forms and meanings, incorporated in the current of contemporary art.