**Designers versus excess / Announcing the 2018 slogan for Gdynia Design Days**

This summer, Gdynia will once again become our capital city of design. It will be the 11th edition of the Gdynia Design Days festival, aimed at professionals and enthusiasts alike. This year's slogan is ERROR, which represents a number of meanings. How should we understand them?

In Latin, “error” means “mistake”, and as a verb it relates to journeys and wanderings. The word has been used for centuries, while today it is mostly associated with problems involving operating systems. It can also refer to clashes with rules and legal frameworks, a lack of understanding between people, unclear messages entering the public and virtual spheres.

As a result, we find ourselves in a constant state of imbalance, leading to the collapse of all the operating methods at our disposal. We are forced to seek effective, though often unconventional, solutions.

Our ever-changing reality demands we develop new skills at reading and reinterpreting codes. Too many options lead to an increase in frustration and greater margin for error. We thus arrive at a point of overload and excess – a time of error. Too many options, involving too much wealth, information and impulses from external sources, lead to polarised societies and eroded notions of freedom. Consequences include the loosening of family and social ties and a reduced sense of belonging. Emotional needs are met with virtual relationships, while the human touch is replaced with attempts to connect with machines. Being “offline” has become a luxury inaccessible to many, as it becomes ever harder for us to avoid relentlessly personalised advertising. Every day, we are offered useless innovations and tech, the sort which imposes new needs rather than meeting those already in existence.

We are faced with the challenge of having to re-evaluate our needs and re-define shared priorities. The aim is then to achieve balanced progress, ensuring a sense of safety and purpose. The responsibility for the future is in everyone's hands, but it is designers who take on the role of pioneers. This task involves identifying, analysing and trying to solve a whole host of problems. Do we know where to go next?

Gdynia has for some time been recognised as an innovative city, capable of expanding economic and civic horizons. The Polish seafaring trade evolved here, and it was the Gdynia Sea Terminal which saw the launch of legendary transatlantic ocean liners, carrying thousands of Poles on to their new lives abroad.

In July, during Gdynia Design Days we will present our own vision of contemporary “errors”. Collectively, we will consider whether we are ready for potential “break downs” and if we have created a “backup copy” of our most valuable data.

The exhibitions which will be part of the festival will offer up accessible information and possible future scripts, while discussions and workshops will allow us to consider what shared paths can be taken next. Our festival is an opportunity to revise current operating methods and a chance to seek new strategies. It is high time we defined the sort of lives we want, or rather how we can define our limits.

Gdynia Design Days Programme Board