

# MEMORY OF WATER: **Shipyard Anew**

Report: A Dialogue in the Process, Gdańsk 2019-2020

PARTNERS

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[www.nck.org.pl/en](http://www.nck.org.pl/en)

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**“Report: A Dialogue in the process, Gdańsk 2019-2020”**

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## INTRODUCTION

At the end of 2018 the European artistic project, *Memory of Water* (MoW), was launched in cooperation with the Baltic Sea Cultural Centre in Gdańsk. **In the framework of the MoW project, artists, activists and experts discussed the potential of post-industrial waterfront heritage in the context of urban planning and local communities' development.** Over the next two years, **the BSCC from Gdańsk (Poland) with the partners from several European cities, namely: Fablevisions from Glasgow-Govan (Scotland), Ormston House from Limerick (Ireland), City of Levadia (Greece), City of Ostend (Belgium) and the project's leader – Itercult from Stockholm (Sweden) successfully carried out our co-operation.** Together we implemented art residencies, resulting in public space artistic interventions, as well as debates/workshops in the form of City Labs, a digital platform dedicated to artistic presentations, knowledge sharing and displaying the films documenting the project.

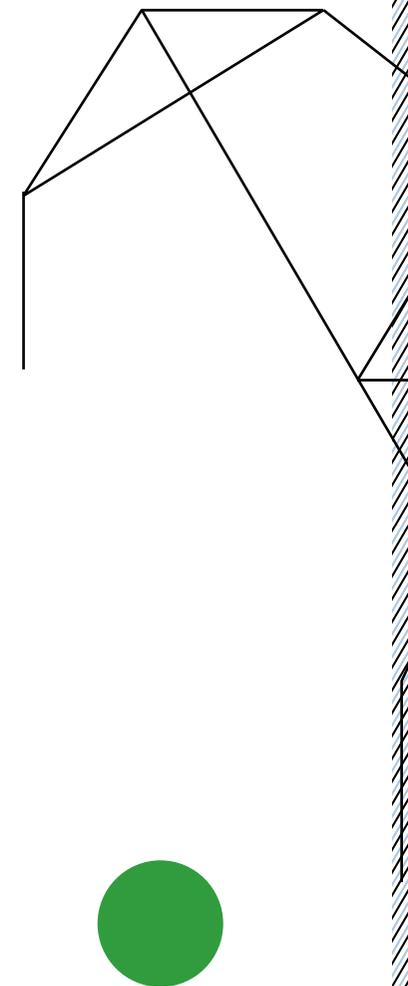
Summing up the Gdansk edition of the project in reference to the SHIPYARD ANEW dialogical process **we would like to express our gratitude to all artists, experts, partners as well as people and organisations who supported this project and actively participated in it.** We hope that we will continue working on themes initiated by *Memory of Water* both on the local and European levels.

**Lawrence Ugwu**

Director of the Baltic Sea Cultural Centre in Gdańsku

**Magdalena Zakrzewska-Duda**

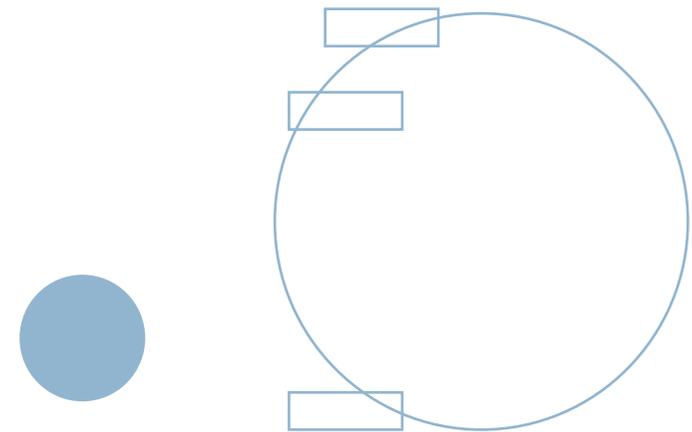
Coordinator of MoW Gdansk edition

Visit [www.memoryofwater.eu](http://www.memoryofwater.eu)

## CONTEXT

The Gdańsk part of *Memory of Water* was entirely dedicated to the waterfront area of the former Gdańsk Shipyard. Our activities were undertaken in the context of the vast historical potential of that place (now aspiring to enter the World Heritage List of UNESCO) which had been related to shipyard industry and to the birth of the Solidarity movement. Our activities were also focused on the prospects for the development of this area, in accordance with aspirations of Gdańsk citizens and global cultural and urban planning trends. The initiators and leaders of the open public discussion were the people related to culture, art and education (as recommended in the current Cultural-Planning method). It all came as a continuation of the long-standing tradition,

including activities undertaken by the *Colony of Artists and Activists of Gdańsk Shipyard*, which increased social awareness about the Shipyard's cultural heritage value, and consequently, its better legal protection. **In Gdańsk, such an innovative, dialogue-based and participatory approach toward planning the future of that exceptional place was reflected in the title of our local process: SHIPYARD ANEW.**

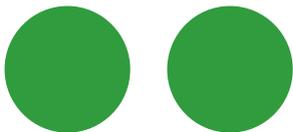


**METHODOLOGY  
AND PROCESS:  
INTRODUCTION**

In the SHIPYARD ANEW process, we assumed the method which involved revealing dreams in public in order to imagine and to design the future we commonly desired for the former Gdańsk Shipyard areas, with respect for its glorious history and traditions. The process was inaugurated in January 2019 by a group of 20 independent artists and cultural activists. **Various dreams presented by the participants were grouped by Roman Sebastyański into six main theme categories: MEMORY, ART, WATER AND PUBLIC SPACE, PRODUCTION, GREENERY AND ECOLOGY and DIALOGUE, which were then published on the STOCZNIA OD NOWA blog.** They were also sent to the participants invited to the project to initiate an open public discussion about forms of transformation implemented to the former Shipyard areas. In March 2019, the representatives of the present area owners, employees of higher education

and cultural institutions joined the visioning process at „What Young City? Visions Exchange Forum ,. Apart from the issues related to the history/memory of the place, the major methods to improve the quality of the future public space were discussed. It was assumed that the public areas should be connected with the attractive waterfront and enhanced by public art. **For the first time in the public debate about the future of the post-shipyard areas, the issues of greenery and sustainable development were discussed. The methods of dialogue and their efficiency were also very significant in reference to the memory and continuation of the Solidarity ideals which had stemmed from that place.** The discussions were continued online and their results were published on the blog which initiated an open public dialogue.

Visit [www.stoczniaodnowa.pl](http://www.stoczniaodnowa.pl)

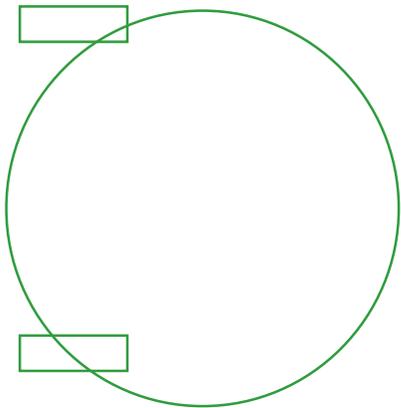


**METHODOLOGY  
AND PROCESS: LOCAL  
AND EUROPEAN  
NETWORKING**

Next, in June 2019 there was another meeting attended by several dozen participants, among them also Piotr Grzelak, Deputy Mayor of Gdańsk and Tomasz Jeleński, PhD, head of INTBAU (MoW local research partner). Roman Sebastyański, the process coordinator, briefed the participants on the results achieved so far and led the dialogical workshops in the form of a *charrette*. **They resulted in the list of the concrete ideas for the further transformations of the former Gdańsk Shipyard areas.** It was presented to foreign artists as an inspiration for their artistic intervention in that space. The list was also sent to all the process' participants for the acceptance and/or discussion. **To sum up this stage of the process, an international meeting was held in October 2019 under the title DREAMS TO FULFIL.** It was attended by all the project partners. The presentations were contributed by the Iwona

Preis, representing MoW Leader, Intercult from Stockholm as well as by two other experts: Professor Katarzyna Kosmala of the University of the West of Scotland (MoW research partner) and Trevor Davies, an architect and artistic director of the Metropolis Festival in Copenhagen, an expert in Cultural Planning. Next, MoW artists and our partners from Batumi representing "[Connecting Georgia](#)" (SI supported project, complimentary to MoW) appeared in the "Beyond Borders" session.

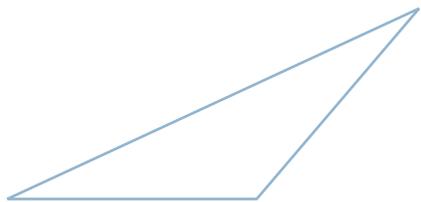
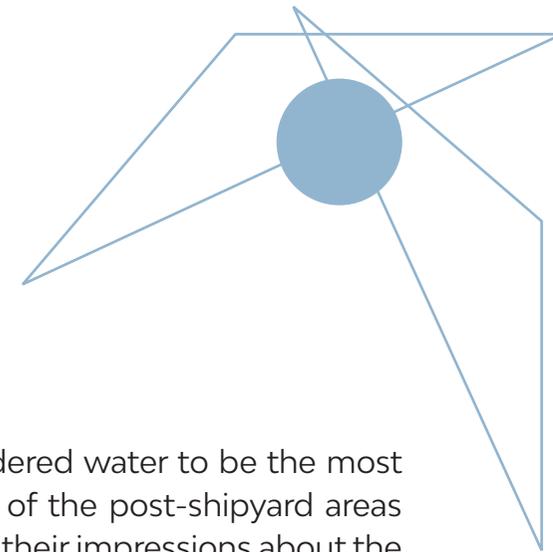
It is worth mentioning the synergy effect between MoW and [SOS CLIMATE WATERFRONT RISE PROJECT](#), within Horizon 2020 programme. MoW partners and artists participated in the latter project's conference and students' designs' presentations at the Architecture Department, Gdansk University of Technology. This liaison was achieved thanks to the [www.river-cities.net](http://www.river-cities.net).



**METHODOLOGY  
AND PROCESS 3:  
MENTAL MAPS**

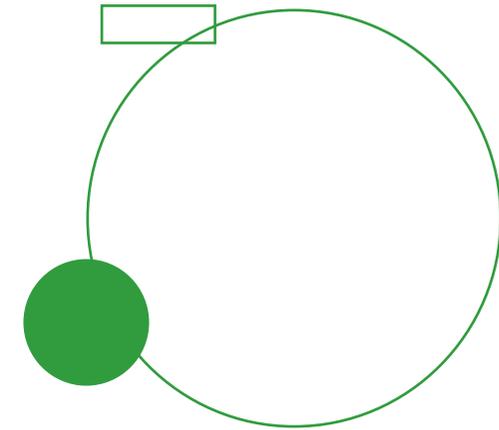
An important part of our dialogue during the process was a series of scientific research (May-June 2019) with the participation of the former Shipyard workers, students of Gdańsk University and foreign artists of the MoW. Their aim was to understand the ways in which the former Gdansk Shipyard areas were perceived and what impressions they evoked in those three different groups. **The research basen on the mental maps method was conducted by Klaudia Nowicka, PhD (the Department of Social and Economic Geography, University of Gdansk) in cooperation with Roman Sebastyański (University of the West of Scotland).** It indicated that the post-shipyard areas evoked various impressions and were perceived as a completely "different world" or a "city within a city". Most respondents saw water more as an edge of the post-shipyard areas, usually somewhere off the beaten track. Young

respondents considered water to be the most important element of the post-shipyard areas while talking about their impressions about the place; however it was poorly accessible and used. They pointed out that there was no communication continuity because Popiełuszki St. (the first stage of Nowa Wałowa St.) did not have enough pedestrian crossings and in that way a barrier was created to the free access to the water. Young people also expressed their great desire to participate in planning various elements of that space and to suggest changes, such as easier access and better development of the waterfront, including the location of various green areas.



On 3 -9 June 2019 **the first research residency took place in Gdańsk**, under the framework of the Memory of Water project. **The participants were the following artists: Mary Conroy (Ireland), Tara s. Beall (Great Britain), Siegfried Vynck (Belgium), Jonas Myrstrand (Sweden), Iwona Zając (Poland), Ira Brami (Greece). The MoW Artistic Director, Mary Conlon (Ireland)** also took part in the meetings. The artists acted as ethnographers, analysing the local specific character, past and current problems and current threads (Foster, 1995).

In the autumn, (13-19 October 2019) a **production residency** took place under the title **Memory of Water: Shipyard (redux)**. Within its framework the artists implemented their artistic interventions, based on the knowledge they had acquired beforehand and on the archival documents. The thematic threads of their activities reflected the topics discussed by the local stakeholders during the City Labs dedicated to the Shipyard's future. They were related to the Shipyard heritage, local specificity of work performed by shipyard workers, its problems and hazards but also to the question of memory about this unique place. **Most activities were**



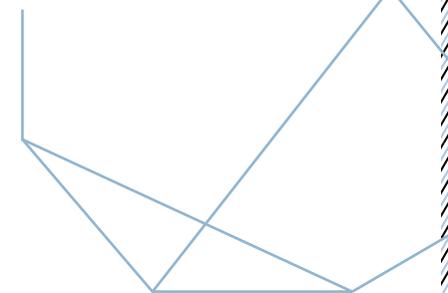
**of the participatory nature – they involved the local community into the cooperation.** As for the artistic outcomes of the process, the artistic interventions which followed the social desires/dreams were not intended as finished works for a single presentation to the audience. **Realised through ephemeral, transitory actions, they meant rather to initiate further events and debates, thus opening this process to the future and ensuring its sustainability.**

The artistic activities most inspiring for the discussion on the post-shipyard area's future were those focused on the nature at the Shipyard: the historic local greenhouse which was to meet the needs of the shipyard canteen, amateur flower gardening by shipyard workers who tried to enhance their industrial environment by themselves and the artistic postulate to make the area green again.

By Agnieszka Wołodźko

### WORKSHOPS OF THE NATIONAL HERITAGE BOARD

In August 2020 the National Heritage Board organised the participatory workshops. The aim of the workshops was to support preparing a new development strategy and a general, modified, concept of re-developing the former Gdańsk Shipyard areas. Both documents are going to become the elements of the Management Plan - an attachment to the application for placing Gdańsk Shipyard on the UNESCO World Heritage List. The meeting was attended by the representatives of almost 70 organisations, companies and institutions who were the stakeholders involved in the processes of transforming the former Gdańsk Shipyard areas. The coordinators of the Memory of Water project from the Baltic Sea Cultural Centre and Roman Sebastyański, the curator of the Shipyard Anew



process, were also invited to the workshops. **During the meeting the vision, the mission, strategic aims and the most important tasks listed in “The Dreams to Fulfill” document were presented in reference to the aspects of the cultural heritage of Gdańsk Shipyard, including – first of all – the tradition of shipbuilding production, social and dialogue-based Solidarity and “green” heritage.**

Read the article on: [the UNESCO World Heritage Nomination of the Gdansk Shipyard](#)



**NATURE  
OF THE SHIPYARD**

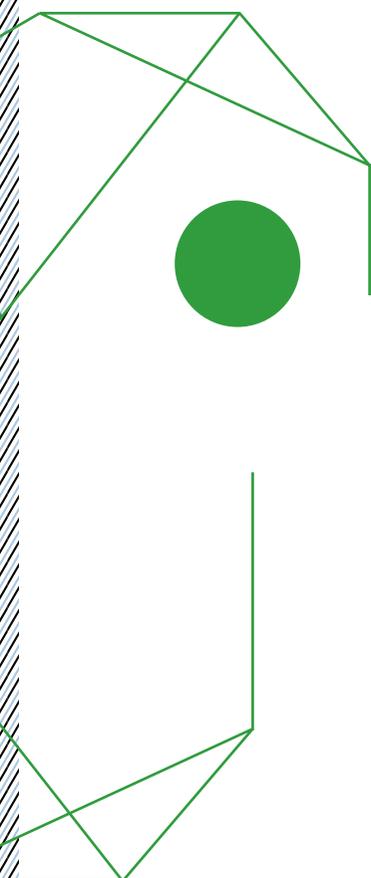
Public and visionary thinking about the future of the former Gdańsk Shipyard areas was largely of ecological character. It was strategically expressed in our common mission as **ecological understanding and including the history of the area into its (dreamed-of) future. We believe that this kind of thinking proves to be ground-breaking in the current philosophy and practice of planning the transformation of these areas. Before, ecological thinking was not included in the process of planning the future of the former Gdańsk Shipyard.**

The title of the SHIPYARD ANEW process reflects this change in a very accurate way. In the summer 2020 we organised a separate series of four open discussion meetings under a common title of "The City of Our Dreams: Nature of the Shipyard". The aim of these meetings was to understand the significance and values carried by the most important elements of the cultural heritage of Gdańsk Shipyard, namely: the idea of solidarity and shipbuilding production. The aim was also to use them as inspiration for

planning ecological life forms in the future waterfront district of Gdańsk.

The participants of the discussions expressed their opinions, stating that the idea of solidarity could be still alive and attractive, however, it must be filled with new and current content (in the contemporary contexts). **The idea of solidarity is related to freedom and freedom, in turn, is related to equality. Solidarity consists in equality (in treatment, access and participation), without excluding any living creatures – neither plants nor animals.** Hence, a postulate was put forward to create public, non-commercial, open spaces in the post-shipyard area, which would be friendly to all living creatures and to revitalise or to recreate elements of the "green" heritage of the Shipyard in their new forms.

Read the document: ["Nature of the Shipyard and Solidarity"](#)



## OUTCOMES OF THE SHIPYARD ANEW CITY LAB SERIES

During the meeting held to sum up the City Labs in December 2019, the most important outcomes of almost a one-year process were presented. **They included integration of over 50 individuals, groups, organisations, companies and institutions in joint dialogue-based activities. Before the process, all these participants had been engaged in the transformation of the discussed areas separately. Another important outcome was creation of the first common vision, mission and strategy for the development of that unique place in the history of development planning for the discussed areas. It was presented and published in a document entitled *Dreams to Fulfil. The Report: Dialogue in process, Gdansk 2019\**.** The document was sent to all the participants of the process and to all the offices, institutions, organisations and individuals interested in the future of the post-shipyard areas. We received many thanks and support for the outcomes developed during the dialogue-based process, including letters of appreciation written by Aleksandra Dulkiewicz, Mayor of Gdańsk and Piotr Grzelak, Deputy Mayor of Gdańsk. **In 2020, after the workshops organised by the National**

**Heritage Board and the *Nature of the Shipyard* series, the list of *Dreams to Fulfil* was modified and completed.** The current list presents a vision, a mission and a strategy for further development of the former Gdańsk Shipyard areas. Six initial categories of the issues discussed (cf. p. 6) were reduced to two main categories, namely: PAST, understood mainly as the cultural heritage of the Solidarity and shipbuilding production, and FUTURE, understood mainly in the categories of ecology and sustainable development. **In such a context, the most concise motto which summed up the outcomes of the SHIPYARD ANEW project is PAST FOR FUTURE. It contains a list of particular postulates based on the tradition of that place and the ecological and sustainable methods used for their implementation in the development of a new, waterfront district of Gdańsk.**

Gdańsk Webinar: [SHIPYARD ANEW: Sowing the Seeds of Change](#)

Pdf: [Dreams to Fulfil – Version .2020](#)

\* In Polish only. Read draft translation into English [here](#).

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on two years of experience within the SHIPYARD ANEW process, which is a part of the *Memory of Water* European project, it is possible to provide several fundamental recommendations of general and methodological nature. They can improve the efficiency of numerous similar enterprises in the future.

The most significant ones are:

- relying the participatory and dialogue-based search for optimal solutions on the public disclosure of individual dreams and desires;
- applying the significance and value of the cultural heritage to the vision of the future re-development
- including into this vision the principles of ecology and sustainable development.

**We also hope that the recommendations will be taken into consideration in the subsequent stages of post-shipyard transformations.**

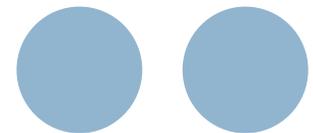


## PUBLIC DEBATE IN THE DIALOGIC DESIRES FORMAT

In accordance with the assumptions of the *Memory of Water* methodology, the activities within SHIPYARD ANEW process were based on the social participation which, in turn, consisted in a free public dialogue, initiated and run by the local cultural and artistic communities. Its aim was to generate social knowledge about the forms and principles for further transformation of the post-shipyard areas.

**An innovative solution, which proved to be efficient in the project, was the use of the method based on the public disclosure of the participants' dreams to create common, dreamed-of future for the former Gdańsk Shipyard with respect for its glorious history and**

**tradition.** The method also confirmed our previous assumption that freedom of human imagination is best fulfilled in dreams and desires. We observed that in the world which has been changing so fast through the high dynamics of technological changes, the limits set for the development of the city are often restricted only by the boundaries of our imagination – collective and jointly discussed. Creativity is a powerful transformation tool – released in dreams, it suggests new, non-obvious solutions, and forms new relations. In the SHIPYARD ANEW process, the commitment and common vision developed by about 50 people allowed us to create a particular set of knowledge and to develop an efficient cooperation network.



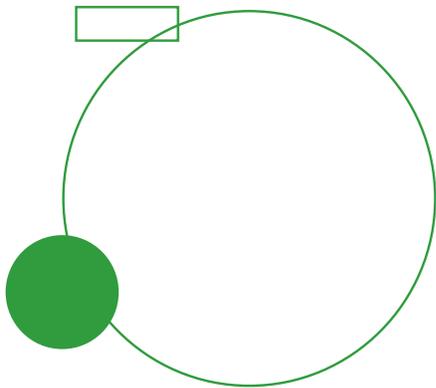
## HERITAGE AS THE BASIS FOR THE SOLIDARY DEVELOPMENT OF THE FUTURE

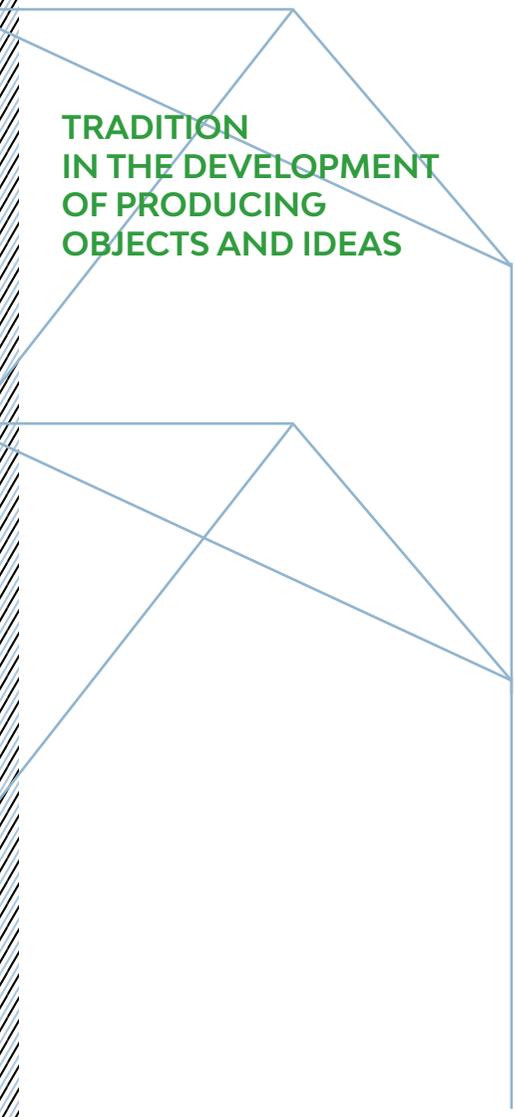
A very interesting and important fact discovered during the SHIPYARD ANEW process was a significant role of the cultural (tangible and intangible) heritage of this unique place, which was spontaneously revealed in the public presentation of the participants' dreams and desires.

They all agreed that **the specific and unique character of the newly-developed district of Gdańsk should be based on the local tradition and identity of that place.** However, it cannot be achieved by copying solutions from other cities. Unfortunately, the most important symbol of the Shipyard heritage – social solidarity – has largely become a historical notion, appropriated by politicians as the space for social divisions. For the young generations, its value has run dry in terms of its meaning. Still, the idea of solidarity may (and should) be alive and

attractive. It should be filled in with new current content (in the contemporary contexts) related to freedom and equality of treatment, access, participation etc.

**Considering the context of transformation of the former Gdańsk Shipyard area, we first of all provided the continuation of the idea of solidarity in the open and participatory formula of the entire process. Each party interested in the future of the place, including former Shipyard workers and their families, could join the discussion on the equal footing with the representatives of the property owners, city authorities and experts.** As a result of our solidary thinking, a postulate was put forward to provide access to high-quality living conditions to people of various material status through the balanced conditions presented in housing and service offers.

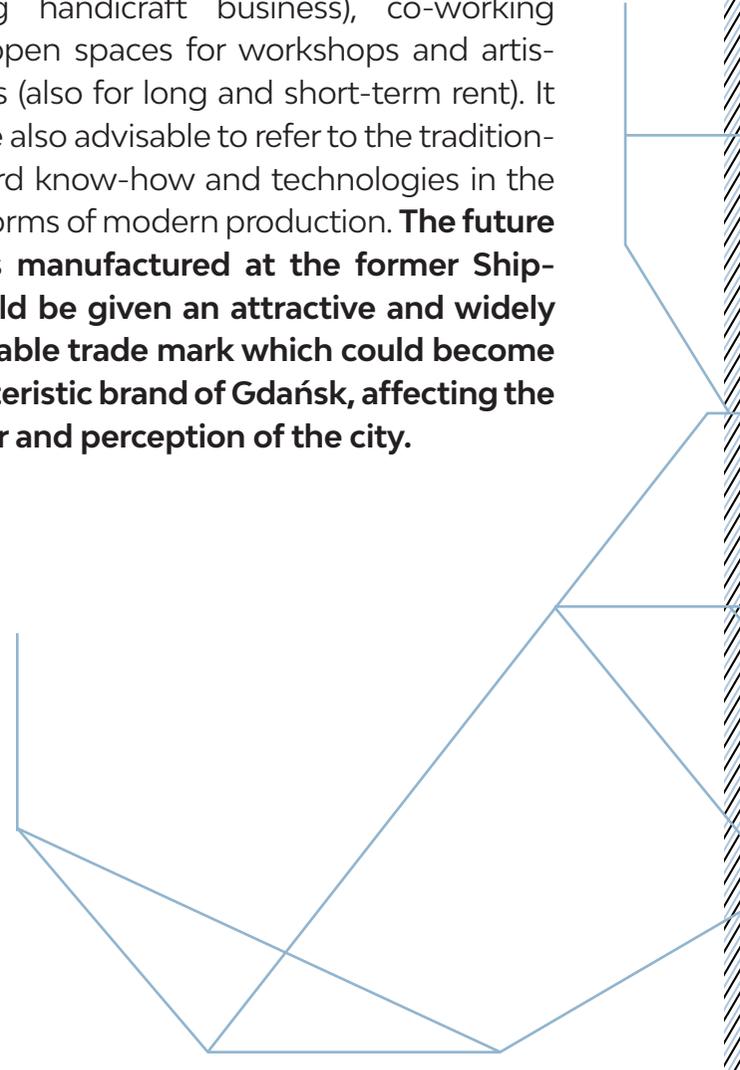




### TRADITION IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF PRODUCING OBJECTS AND IDEAS

Since 2000, the shipbuilding production has been disappearing from the area of the former Shipyard areas faster and faster. It has had to give way to the logic of transforming this place into a new, waterfront district of Gdańsk. Following that logic, the participants of the SHIPYARD ANEW process, put forward a postulate that **proper conditions for the continuation of various forms of (intellectual, artistic and cultural) production/creation should be provided in that place, apart from providing housing, recreation and a range of various services.** It would be recommendable

to establish entrepreneurship incubators, start-ups, etc.; non-disturbing production facilities (including handicraft business), co-working spaces, open spaces for workshops and artistic events (also for long and short-term rent). It would be also advisable to refer to the traditional shipyard know-how and technologies in the various forms of modern production. **The future products manufactured at the former Shipyard could be given an attractive and widely recognisable trade mark which could become a characteristic brand of Gdańsk, affecting the character and perception of the city.**



## ECOLOGICAL HARMONY OF THE FUTURE

The participants of the SHIPYARD ANEW project believe that **transferring the significance and values of the cultural heritage of this place, including the ideals of solidarity, should be implemented not only by (dead) museums or monuments, etc, but – first of all – by developing current (alive) and genuine situations, based on friendship, cooperation, mutual help etc. which involve ALL living creatures (including “non-human beings”** too, as Olga Tokarczuk, the Nobel Prize winner, has put it). Nature can be a symbolic carrier of these ideals. According to our solidary philosophy of thinking and acting, nature should not be excluded from revitalisation processes. On the contrary, it should become their equal participant to balance traditional values with modern aspirations in a harmonious way.

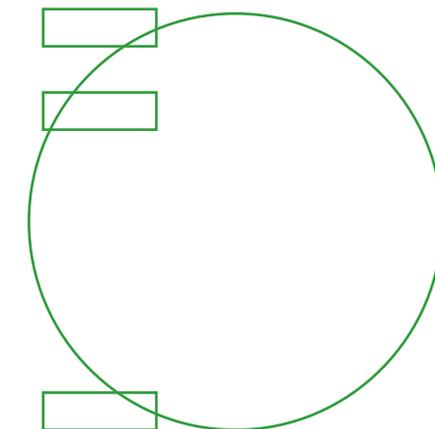
Stemming from the former channels, creeks, meadows, trees, squares and gardens, blue and green heritage of the Shipyard can become a vast potential in planning transformation of this place, which could prevent negative results of the climatic changes. For these reasons, Nature should receive a status of a stakeholder in the discussion on the future of the post-shipyard area.

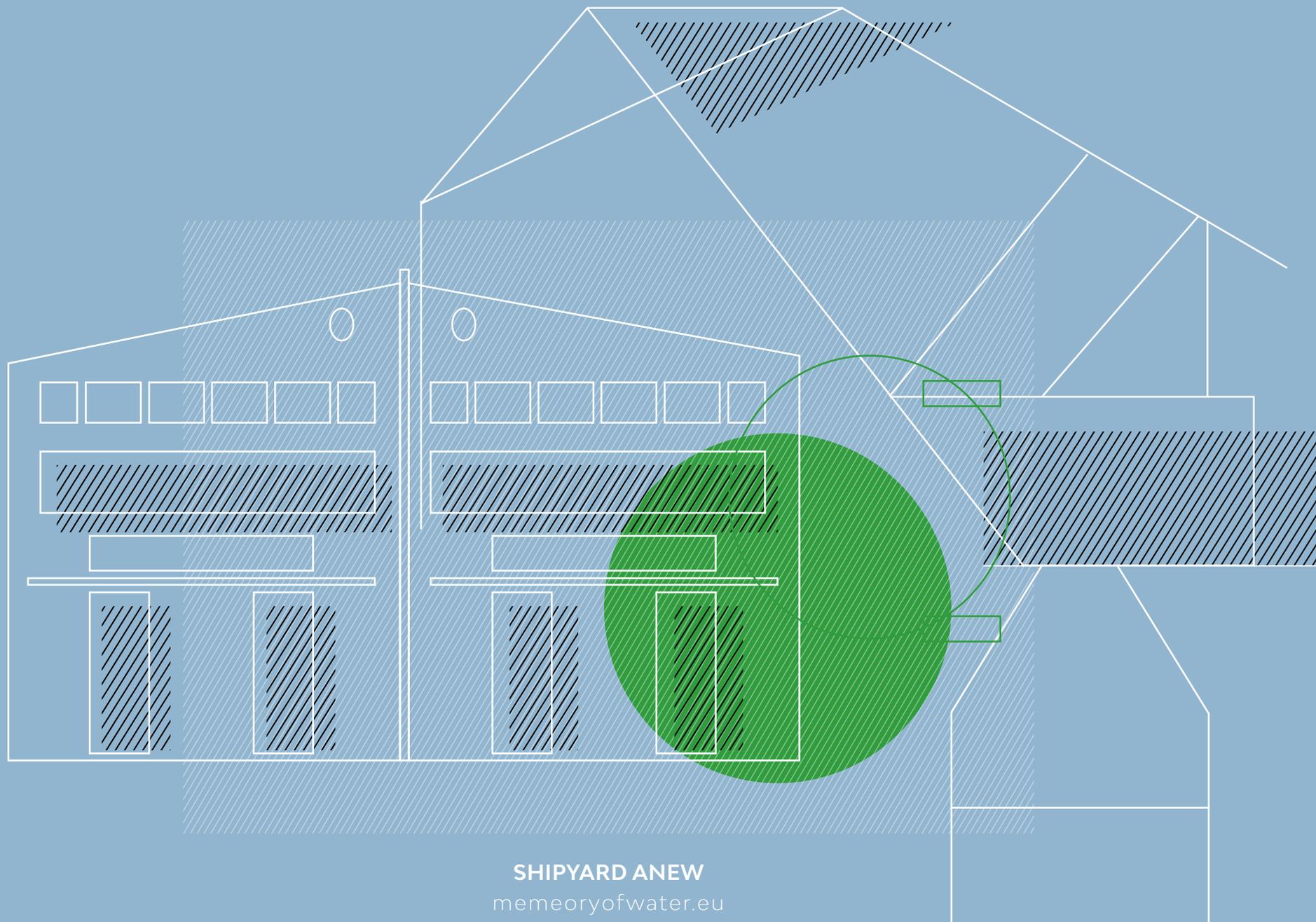
Considering the philosophy and practice of planning transformation of the former Gdańsk Shipyard areas assumed so far, we believe that this line of thinking is of ground-breaking character. So far the role of natural environment in the development of this place has been omitted. The name of our process – SHIPYARD ANEW – reflects this change in a very accurate way.

MISSION

The mission which has motivated our joint activities:

**We wish to develop an attractive urban district which will refer to the significance and values of the multi-layered cultural heritage of the former Shipyard, including - first of all - social and dialogue-based solidarity and industrial shipbuilding production, in a creative and sustainable way, and will also meet the challenges of the future, especially in the field of ecology.**





**SHIPYARD ANEW**  
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Gdańsk, 2020