

# We will be guided by the aesthetics of work and the portfolio's level

**We talk with Lena Mitkowa, strategist and board member of the Association of Applied Graphic Designers (STGU), co-manager of leniva studio, about the interest in the announcement of the WGM visual identity competition and the selection of studies and designers during the first stage**

The Warsaw Ghetto Museum in cooperation with your Association of Applied Graphic Designers is running an international, two-stage competition for visual identification. What is the STGU's experience in this field? Do you have many such competitions to your credit?

*The association has been operating since 2004 – we organise from several to even a dozen or so such competitions a year. So, I cannot say which, exactly in turn, is the one co-organised with you, but this is the fourth, carried out with the STGU's new management, after the changes were introduced to organise competitions, with new, stricter rules and guidelines.*

What do you think about the number of the works that have been received? Are there more or less than usual, compared to other competitions run by the STGU?

*To our surprise, this competition is more popular than the ones held before. Let me explain where this surprise has come from... For designers and the broadly understood industry, September and October are the most difficult months. We all have the greatest amount of work then. Apart from that, in this particular case, there were only three weeks to submit the portfolio, and not four. Taking into consideration these two variables, we received clearly more works than for the other competitions. The competition for identification of the Warsaw Ghetto Museum enjoyed great interest.*

How many works from abroad, percentage-wise, have been submitted?

*Approximately 25 percent of all submitted works – so I can say that the interest of foreign graphic designers was really high. We supported communication about the competition, informing other graphic associations worldwide and informing about it on Internet portals. In previous competitions, such great interest from foreign artists was incidental. We were surprised that the portfolios were sent to us not only from Europe.*

What were the most remote corners of the world from which artists sent their works?

*South America – we received a portfolio from Brazil.*

What will you be guided by when choosing the authors for the next stage?

*It is a multi-stage competition. In the first stage, we choose studios whose projects we will want to see in the future. The difference between one-stage and two-stage projects is that in the case of the latter we treat designers really fair and we do not expect them to work for free. When choosing the portfolio of artists with whom we want to cooperate within the second stage, we will be guided by the aesthetics of the work and the portfolio's level – as sometimes they contain, incidentally, good and bad works. When cooperating with not just one artist, but with a team, we want them to be on an equal, of course high, level. We must also remember that we choose not only the logo itself, but the whole visual identity, the entire system. We have to be sure that the one we choose will “bear” the entire system. Therefore, we will be guided mainly by aesthetics, but on top of that whether the selected designer will manage such a large undertaking, which has a lot of technical and artisanal elements, so that it does not turn out that it is like squeezing water from a stone.*

Interview by Anna Kilian

Photos: WGM