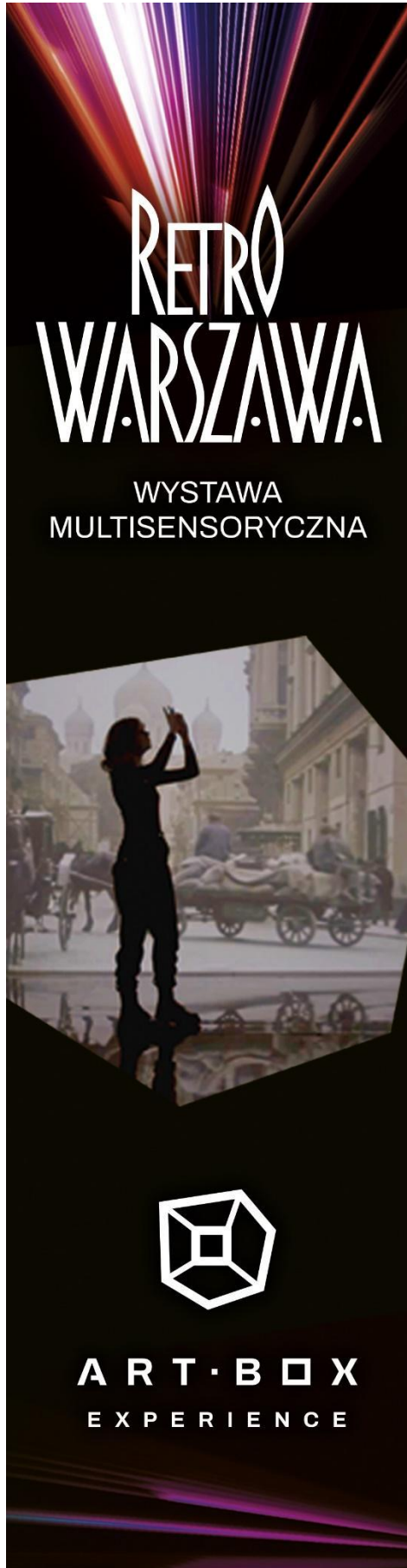


Press Release, Warsaw 24 March 2022  
Opening of Art Box Experience  
and the multisensory exhibition *Retro Warsaw*



## Retro Warsaw: A Tour of the Capital City from 100 Years Ago at the Art Box Experience

Imagine Warsaw in its heyday. Streets teeming with life, traffic and bustle. Who would not want, at least for a moment, to visit the capital city of the interwar period? And what if it were possible? The fully immersive ART BOX EXPERIENCE, the first in Poland and unique in Europe, will open on 25 March at Warsaw's Norblin Factory. It will feature unique multisensory shows at the intersection of digital technology, art, science and entertainment. The first show, *Retro Warsaw*, will transport the audience to the capital city full of bustle, music and colours from 100 years ago.

Warsaw before World War II was a fascinating, multidimensional and culturally diverse city, as attested by documents, literature, archival photographs, postcards, and films. That colourful, vibrant world with a unique character and beautiful architecture is gone forever. *Retro Warsaw* is an exciting immersive journey in time and space. Like a time machine, it transport visitors to the pre-war capital, immersing the audience in digitally animated images, vivid colours, music, and sounds of everyday life.

*"The multisensory exhibition at the Art Box Experience, the only space in Poland equipped for such shows, has been developed using archival materials carefully selected by Warsaw historians, museum workers, and education experts,"* said Joanna Kowalkowska, **Founder and President of Art Box Experience**, with reference to the laborious process of staging the show. *"Old photographs and films were cleaned up, reconstructed and coloured, and then edited to create a dynamic show using the latest technology and artificial intelligence,"* said Piotr Sikora, Founder of Art Box Experience and creator of the exhibition. The quality of the production was supervised by experts known for their

spectacular visual productions who co-operate among others with Platige Image. Thanks to an integrated system of screens offering the highest quality of images, visitors can witness the everyday life of Warsaw inhabitants in times when carriages drove in the streets, biplanes flew in the sky, songs were sung by Hanka Ordonówna and Mieczysław Fogg, and “Forgotten Melody” played in cinemas. The soundtrack of the exhibition was composed and recorded by Jan Emil Młynarski, who used such surprising instruments as a saw or the banjo. It features the sounds of the city, Warsaw dialect, Yiddish conversations, and Warsaw melodies.

The tour of the exhibition follows a pre-planned sequence leading through the rooms filled with series of photographs and films lasting several minutes each. Passing through successive spaces, the visitors get to know different facets of Warsaw from the interwar period. The authors of Retro Warsaw focus on everyday street life, show residents and visitors at work and leisure, during strolls in the parks, dancing on the Vistula River. They also present architectural plans: the Unia Lubelska Square, the Royal Castle, the Piłsudski Square, the demolition of the St. Alexander Nevsky Cathedral, the Great Synagogue which is no longer in existence. Warsaw characters appear: newspaper boys, Jewish merchants and Hasidic Jews, policemen patrolling the streets, hooligans, elegant ladies and gentlemen. We look at them up close, and they look at us with curiosity. There are poor neighbourhoods where life was not as elegant and worldly as in the centre. The street craftsmen and musicians, the shelters, the Kercelak market with its merchants and traders, all evoke the characteristic atmosphere of the capital with the workers who provided the labour force for the growing city. There is advertising on tenement houses and trams. Take a close look at the construction of the Prudential, the first skyscraper in Warsaw, and iconic buildings of the capital: Bank Gospodarstwa Krajowego and the National Museum. See the pre-war surroundings of the Norblin Factory: the factories and workshops now replaced by the technological hub of the Wola district and the new Warsaw City. **A room dedicated to the Norblin Factory is prominently displayed. This is where the workers come for their morning shift, and in a moment the machines will be running at full speed.** Finally, drop by at the famous Splendid cinema. The exhibition closes with a sequence of photographs and films featuring the hall of fame: the celebrities of the time, as well as posters, advertisements and postcards.

*“The Norblin Factory continues the cultural legacy of its original owners, the Norblin and Werner families, who were not only great lovers of art but also supporters of all cultural initiatives. This is an important heritage, which is why we are happy to cooperate with artists and make our spaces available to develop a sensitivity to art. Now the Norblin Factory is opening up to a completely new experience created by the enthusiasts at ART BOX EXPERIENCE, the creators of an extraordinary multi-sensory gallery that will change the cultural and entertainment life of Warsaw. The Norblin Factory is the first place in Poland to present incredible art shows at a world-class level, offering visual and audio impressions created by means of modern technology. The inaugural Retro Warsaw exhibition is based on archival films brought straight from Paris and New York, as well as memorabilia connected with the history of the Factory itself. The exhibition will feature a collection of photographs acquired from the Werner family, the pre-war owners of the factory. We are happy that the Norblin Factory can actively participate in this cultural event and contribute to it. The ART BOX EXPERIENCE gallery is a perfect fit for the climate of our location which is a unique place, full of culture, entertainment and openness to art, creating an irreplaceable value for present and future*

*generations,”* said **Kinga Nowakowska, Member of the Management Board and Chief Operating Officer of Capital Park Group**, speaking at the press conference inaugurating the gallery.

At the Art Box Experience, pre-war Warsaw comes to life on an area of 800 square metres using a system made up of dozens of state-of-the-art projectors and integrated moving screens. Visitors can experience a full body of sensations: visual sensations thanks to the high 4K resolution, as well as auditory sensations thanks to a precisely configured sound point system with a wide frequency spectrum.

The Art Box Experience is an institution with an educational mission: *“One of our key objectives is to ensure that the information presented is reliable; hence our partnerships with recognised cultural institutions and museums. Combining these competences with state-of-the-art technology, merging the world of cultural institutions, entertainment, visual effect experts from the world of film and advertising, the Art Box Experience is like a time and space machine which will transport you to any place in the universe. The educational programme accompanying Retro Warsaw is a fascinating history lesson delivered in a modern way. School lessons have been prepared by experienced educators in line with the school curriculum, while the programme for families offers lots of fun and attractions. Retro Warsaw will be an important part of the narrative about the city and its former inhabitants, its rich artistic culture, a point of interest for current residents and visitors from Poland and abroad, and one of the capital’s biggest tourist attractions,”* said **Mateusz Labuda, Co-founder and Vice-President of the Management Board of Art Box Experience**.

The location will open to the public on Friday 25 March. Tickets are on sale now at [Ticketmaster.pl](https://www.ticketmaster.pl).  
More details: [www.artboxexperience.pl](http://www.artboxexperience.pl)

The exhibition enjoys the Honorary Patronage of the Mayor of the Capital City of Warsaw Rafał Trzaskowski.

The partners of the Retro Warsaw exhibition are: History Meeting House, Norblin Factory, FINA, POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews, Museum of Warsaw.

The archive materials used to create the Retro Warsaw project come from Polish archives, including the resources of the History Meeting House, the POLIN Museum, the Museum of Warsaw, the Norblin Factory Museum, the Filmoteka Narodowa Audiovisual Institute, the National Digital Archive, and foreign archives, including the Holocaust Museum in Washington.

The organisers extend special acknowledgements to the Norblin Factory for its organisational and financial support of the project.

**More information:**

**ART BOX EXPERIENCE:**

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**Audio, image and video materials:** <https://artboxexperience.com/media/media>

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**ART BOX EXPERIENCE** is a multifunctional immersive space where unique multisensory shows are created at the intersection of art, science, digital technology and entertainment: exhibitions, performances, concerts and memorable events. We offer the experience of extraordinary encounters, exchange of ideas, a world of new impressions.

Dozens of state-of-the-art projectors and integrated moving screens bring digitised images to life on 800 square metres of space, accompanied by a spherically flowing soundtrack.

An ultra-modern immersive 360° projection system enables full immersion in an unlimited spectrum of experiences created using advanced technology. In the near future, visitors will descend into the depths of the oceans, find themselves in the heart of a vibrant tropical jungle or on a bustling street of pre-war Warsaw. It is up to the audience to decide which journey they will embark on.

[www.artboxexperience.com](http://www.artboxexperience.com)

The **Norblin Factory** is a multifunctional complex in the heart of Warsaw's Wola district. After a long-term revitalisation process of the former Norblin, Buch Brothers and T. Werner factories, it has reopened in the city, enchanting visitors with its historical buildings integrated with modern architecture. Visitors to the Norblin Factory can enjoy cultural, entertainment and food concepts, including the boutique cinema KinoGram, the BioBazar organic food market, the largest food court in the capital city Food Town, the Piano Bar with live music in one of the oldest buildings in the complex, the Norblin Factory Museum, as well as shops and other retail outlets.

[www.fabrykanorblina.pl](http://www.fabrykanorblina.pl)