

GINGERBREAD TRIVIA

The collection of the District Museum in Toruń includes over 250 wooden blocks - gingerbread forms. The oldest come from the 17th century, most - from the 18th and 19th centuries.

At the permanent exhibition of the Toruń Gingerbread Museum (Strumykowa 4) you can see over 100 historical forms and an equally impressive number of contemporary forms. The remainder of the great collection of antique gingerbread forms can be admired at permanent exhibitions in other branches of the District Museum in Toruń: in the Old Town Hall (Rynek Staromiejski 1), the Museum of the History of Toruń (Łazienna 16), and the House of Nicolaus Copernicus (Kopernika 15/17) as well as at the "World of Toruń Gingerbread" travelling exhibition which since 2008 regularly visits Polish museums and cultural centres.

Krzysztof Lewandowski
District Museum in Toruń
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GINGERBREAD FORMS

In addition to inlay, another specific feature of Toruń crafts is the gingerbread. The oldest forms come from the period of the greatest flourishing of this craft, i.e. from the beginning of the 17th century (...) The Museum's collection includes a large set of gingerbread forms. Toruń forms, cut from pear or apple trees, are particularly valuable. Their themes are very diverse and include: human figures, animals, coats of arms, genre scenes.

Museum in Toruń, Informator, Toruń 1964, p. 62

Development prospects

(...) the famous Toruń gingerbread forms are an unusual group, they usually come from the period of the greatest flourishing of crafts in Toruń, i.e. from the beginning of the 17th century; both the size of the ensemble (over 200 forms) as well as its significant artistic and technical value as well as diverse subjects (human figures, animals, coats of arms, genre scenes etc.) make them specific to Toruń's artistic craft.

Jerzy Remer, Perspektywy rozwoju Muzeum Okręgowego w Toruniu (Prospects for the development of the District Museum in Toruń) (in:) Rocznik Muzeum w Toruniu, v. 1, of 4, Toruń 1964, p. 69

Gingerbread decorations

Characteristic gingerbread shapes were created using wooden forms, usually made of fruit tree wood. These masterly sculpted works of woodcarving art, as much as the composition and taste of gingerbread dough, determined the quality and value of Toruń gingerbread.

Gingerbreads of sophisticated shape were often painted, and even decorated with gold. Small works of gingerbread art pleased the eyes and gained even greater value, being the only one of a kind refined and sophisticated ornament. Among the many forms of decoration hearts, floral motifs, animals, people - elegant ladies, fashionable burghers, knights, as well as carriages, musical instruments appear on gingerbread, other motifs especially characteristic for Toruń were the city's coat of arms and Catherine shape. Beautiful, subtle patterns and shapes not only in show the mastery of gingerbread wood-carving, but also are a testimony of the times during which they were created. They express the style, taste and preferences of given era.

The most popular and frequently used images included figures of men, fashionably and smartly dressed ladies and an equally impressive gentlemen. Outfits, especially women's, are often presented with meticulous accuracy, as opposed to less individualized facial features. Dresses of fashionable seventeenth and eighteenth century ladies were very precisely depicted, with intricate details and ornaments, which were to suggest the patterned fabrics, rich embroideries and laces, and style typical for the given era.

A lady with an umbrella is one of many popular gingerbread motifs. It presents a female figure dressed in a relatively short, light dress, type popular in the last decade of the 18th century. This dress, open at the front, with a fitting bra and skirt draped in so-called triple festoon, was the favourite outfit representing 18th century stylised "girl-shepherd" fashion. Patrician ladies were keen to transform into a common woman, especially a shepherd, for courtly events and festivities. The shepherd's outfit was complemented by an umbrella and a flat straw hat from under which a fashionable hairstyle emerged. Following the fashion from France - elegant women braided their hair using flowers and ribbons, until the mid-eighteenth century. Over time, the hairstyles became taller and more glamorous.

The coach is another popular motif in the iconography of gingerbread forms. This vehicle became popular among the Polish higher society in the seventeenth century. An ornate, roofed version was popular in the period from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century. Among the many gingerbread depictions of such vehicles we can find some drawn by one or more horses, coaches travelling both left and right, driven by a coachman sitting the bench and on horseback. Sometimes a servant appears in the back seat - a butler in a decorative dress. One, often two or even three passengers in the fancy robes are depicted in windows of the coach. Leaning through the gingerbread vehicle's windows they look curiously at the viewer. The coach as a motif of travel, expedition into the unknown, was often used for gingerbread gifted for significant life events - marriages, visits of important guests or departure - as a souvenir of Toruń.

Małgorzata Mikulska-Wernerowicz
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IT IS TASTEFUL TO HAVE GINGERBREAD

(...) Being "tasteful" in those past times required that after selling grain in Gdańsk, on the way back, a merchant should "drop by" Toruń and buy the beautiful and famous gingerbread as gifts for his loved ones. They were indeed very elaborate. This is evidenced to this day by the preserved forms, with handmade artistic engravings in wood.

(...) decorative Toruń gingerbreads were not for eating, but rather for looking at. They had beautiful motifs, which were covered with special polychrome varnishes. Such a gingerbread was a decoration of wedding tables, sometimes it was used as war ransom by the city and weighed tens of pounds.

S. Kazanowska, Toruńskie pierniki (Toruń gingerbread), Tygodnik Ilustrowany journal v. 35 (148), 27.08-2.09.1948, p. 12



A Masterpiece of Gingerbread Woodcarving

(...) The fame of Toruń gingerbread was strengthened by its highly artistic external form. Several hundred forms from the 17th and 18th centuries survived to our times and some of them are still used for baking gingerbread. The variety of shapes and motifs is really amazing here. There is a procession of historical figures headed by kings and queens; there are religious and moral scenes, mythology and zoology are also included.

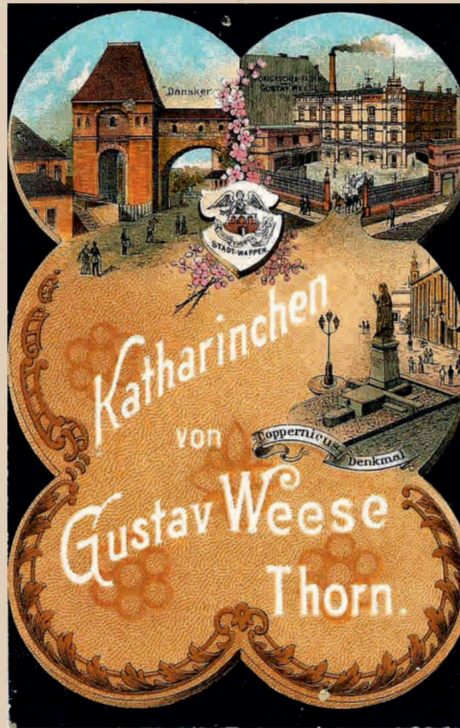
Marian Sydow, Toruńskie rzemiosło artystyczne. Złotnictwo - stolarstwo - piernikarstwo. 700-lecie m. Torunia 1233-1933 (Toruń artistic craft. Goldsmithery - carpentry - gingerbread making. 700th anniversary of the city of Toruń 1233-1933), in: Słowo Pomorskie, 1933.08.29



Gifts for the Pope

Like every guest in our city, the Holy Father could not leave without Toruń gingerbread. "Kopernik" Confectionery Factory prepared a special form for this occasion. Commemorative gingerbread for the Pope refers to Nicolaus Copernicus. A rectangle, slightly larger than an A4 sheet, shows the title of the astronomer's most famous work *On the Revolutions of the Heavenly Spheres* on top, in the centre there is a drawing of the heliocentric system, and at the bottom an autograph of Nicolaus Copernicus. The factory prepared two more copies of papal gingerbread. One will remain at the plant, while the other will go to the astronomer's museum at the House of Nicolaus Copernicus.

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PIERNIKOWA JEDNODNIÓWKA

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From the Catalogue to the Exhibition of Gingerbread Forms from the District Museum in Toruń. Research on the Toruń Gingerbread Making.

Two-year project (2019-2020) co-financed by the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage under the Folk and Traditional Culture programme

GENERAL CONCEPT OF THE PROJECT

The project includes research related to the expansion of knowledge about the tradition of gingerbread making and collections of wooden gingerbread forms gathered in the Polish museums (museum and library research), as well as educational activities (meetings, lectures, workshops conducted by highly qualified specialists). All these activities shall contribute to the creation of publications - a catalogue of gingerbread forms from the collection of the District Museum in Toruń, as well as an exhibition of the Toruń collection. However, one of the most important dimensions of this project will be the sharing of the accumulated knowledge with the inhabitants of Toruń, tourists, enthusiasts and gingerbread gourmets.

Several hundred years of Toruń's gingerbread tradition and the development of museum and research institutions in our region in the 19th and early 20th centuries contributed to the awakening of academic interest in Toruń gingerbread.

The first officially confirmed information on the purchase of gingerbread forms can be found in museum inventories. They report the purchase of 48 forms in 1908. From that moment on the collection of items connected to the production of, among others, historical decorative Toruń gingerbread is still developing and is one of the most valuable collections of the District Museum in Toruń. The oldest objects in this collection come from the 17th century.

In an article from 1926 included in the Annual of the Scientific Society in Toruń, Stanisław Dąbrowski gives a description of Toruń gingerbread collections gathered both by private persons and the then Town Museum in Toruń. The author estimates the collection at 772 pieces. The text also includes pictures of gingerbread made from selected gingerbread blocks. This is the first publication related to the Toruń gingerbread collection. The second is the book *Pierniki Toruńskie i inne* (Toruń and Other Gingerbread), a catalogue of gingerbread forms by Janina Kruszelnicka, published in 1956. This publication was combined with the first ever temporary exhibition devoted in whole to Toruń's gingerbread makers. The resources presented in both books have an inestimable documentary value, but also show that the diversity of iconographic motifs, referring to the socio-cultural role of gingerbread pastries. These products were created to convey non-verbal content in interpersonal dialogue.



Forms, documents and other objects related to the history of gingerbread trade and industry gathered in subsequent years at the District Museum in Toruń, their presentation at permanent and temporary exhibitions, promotion of the "gingerbread heritage of Toruń" at "The World of Toruń Gingerbread" permanent exhibition and its continuation at the Toruń Gingerbread Museum at Strumykowa 4, testify to the high awareness of the role of gingerbread in the culture and history of the town by the Vistula River. Toruń cultural institutions, social organizations, scientific societies, and private businesses, and most of all the city residents themselves are very consciously engaged in cultivating the tradition of gingerbread in our city, proudly emphasizing the role of Toruń in "gingerbread history of Europe."

Qualitative results of the project Research on the collection of gingerbread forms contributes to a better understanding of the significance of Toruń gingerbread as the material and immaterial heritage of Toruń. Educational activities and exhibition A measurable result of the implemented project will be an exhibition that, together with an educational offer, will bring closer the collections of the District Museum in Toruń. The Toruń Gingerbread Museum (branch of the District Museum in Toruń) will present gingerbread forms, which constitute one of the largest and most interesting collections in Poland. Publication A catalogue of gingerbread forms with a rich illustrative material will substantially enrich and organize the knowledge on the Toruń collection.

Krzysztof Lewandowski
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THE TEAM:
KRZYSZTOF LEWANDOWSKI, MA Project Coordinator. In the project: co-author of the gingerbread forms catalogue, conducting some of the activities. Assistant professor at the Toruń Gingerbread History Department of the District Museum in Toruń. Graduate of archaeology at the Faculty of Historical Sciences of the Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń and trainings in culture management. An educator and museologist with passion. Co-author of the temporary exhibition "Weź miotu prastego... Dawne i współczesne przepisy piernikarskie" (Take some good honey... Old and modern gingerbread recipes) and the book "Piernikowy przepisownik" (Gingerbread Recipes Book). Author of the "Piernikowe przygody Katarzynki" (Gingerbread adventures of Katarzyna) children's book published in 2017 and the exhibition "Od piernikarza do fabrykanta. Przemysł piernikarski w Toruniu na przełomie XIX i XX wieku" (From the gingerbread maker to the manufacturer. Gingerbread industry in Toruń at the turn of the 19th and 20th century). He is interested in cooking, recreating old recipes and the history of gingerbread. He takes an active part in the exhibition and educational activities of the District Museum in Toruń.

MALGORZATA MIKULSKA-WERNEROWICZ, MA In the project: co-author of the gingerbread forms catalogue, conducting part of the activities. Head of the History Department of Toruń Gingerbread at the District Museum in Toruń. Graduate of the Cultural Property Protection Master degree studies (with major in Museology) at the Monuments and Conservation Institute of the Faculty of Fine Art at the Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń and Postgraduate Museum Studies (Nicolaus Copernicus University), Museum educator, and the author of educational projects for permanent and temporary exhibitions and educational publications ("Tajemnice pod Gwiazdą ukryte!" (Secrets under the hidden star), "Tu byłem, Tony Halik" (Tony Halik was here), "Mikolaj Kopernik. Geniusz z Torunia" (Nicolaus Copernicus. The genius from Toruń). Co-author of the museum's children's book "The Gingerbread World", coordinator and editor of the first Polish edition of "Basnie o toruńskich piernikach" (Fairy Tales of Toruń Gingerbread). Organizer and coordinator of the Voivodeship Art and Culture Competition for Junior High School students at the District Museum in Toruń. Coordinator and person implementing museum educational, promotional, and exhibition projects (including: "Nie od razu Toruń zbudowano..." (It took time to build Toruń...), "IV Wojewódzkie Spotkanie Samorządów Uczniowskich - Głos należy do Ciebie" (4th Voivodeship Students' Councils' Meeting - The Floor is Yours), "Poszerzenie działalności edukacyjnej w Muzeum Toruńskiego Piernika - oddział Muzeum Okręgowego w Toruniu" (Expansion of educational activities at the Museum of Toruń Gingerbread - branch of the District Museum in Toruń). For 13 years a carer of the Young Lovers of Old Toruń Association operating at the District Museum in Toruń. Member of the Polish Museologists Association and the District Museum in Toruń Friends' Association.

ALEKSANDRA KLĘTA-NAWROCKA, PhD In the project: cooperation in the scope of project implementation and creation of the gingerbread forms catalogue. Assistant professor at the Toruń Gingerbread History Department at the District Museum in Toruń. Graduate of ethnology and history at the Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń. Doctoral thesis title: "Kucharz

doskonały. Historyczno-kulturowy fenomen kuchni staropolskiej" (The Perfect Cook. Historical and cultural phenomenon of Old Polish cuisine". Her professional area includes historical and contemporary contexts of Old Polish cuisine and regional cuisine. She is the author of several scientific and popular publications (among other in the *Kwartalnik Historii Kultury Materialnej*, *Przegląd Historyczny*, *Coloquia Ethnologica* and *Coloquia Humaniorum* journals. Co-author of critical edition of "Kucharza doskonałego" (The perfect cook) and the selection of recipes from the oldest cookbooks in the Kuyavian-Pomeranian region - "Półgęsek, czernina i karp w piernikach" (Goose, blood soup and carp in gingerbread). She cooperated with the Centre Badań nad Historią i Kulturą Wyzwolenia (Center for Research on the History and Culture of Food) and the Wilanów Palace Museum. She worked at the Chelmiński and Vistula Landscape Parks, and cooperated with the Festival of Taste in Gruczno - the largest culinary event of the Kujawsko-Pomorskie Voivodeship. She organized culinary tournaments and workshops in the Lower Vistula Valley. Author of the www.prentynaodkuchni.pl blog.

KRZYSZTOF DECZYŃSKI, MA In the project: the author of graphic design of the gingerbread forms catalogue and the photographic documentation of the above activities. Photographer, since 2007 an employee of the Promotion Department of the District Museum in Toruń. Since 2009 he has been running the Multimedia Workshop, where he deals with photographing museum exhibits for documentary and publishing purposes. Author of graphic designs implemented for the Museum (including posters, invitations, leaflets, publications and catalogues). Author of posters that won the 1st prize and distinction in the 26th National Museum and Monuments Protection Poster Review.

MICHAŁ KURKOWSKI, PhD In the project: project implementation and gingerbread forms catalogue consultant. Conducting part of the activities. Employee of the Department of Polish and European Art at the District Museum in Toruń. Graduate of the Cultural Property Protection studies at the Institute of Conservation of the Fine Arts Faculty at Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń. He completed doctoral studies at the Art and Culture History Department at the Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń. He is a member of the Toruń branch of the Art Historians Association and the Scientific Association in Toruń.

STANISŁAW KOŚMIŃSKI, PhD In the project: artist making forms, conducting meetings, author of one of the chapters in the catalogue on woodworking technology. Graduate of the A. Kenar Graphic Arts High School in Zakopane and Fine Arts Faculty at the Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń with major in Sculpture. In 2017 he was granted the doctoral degree in fine arts at his home university. He mainly creates small sculptural forms and large projects in wood. He uses various types of wood, combines them with other materials, exposes the natural values of the material. He also makes medals with the use of wood.

GRAŻYNA SZELAŁĄGOWSKA, MA In the project: author an article in the catalogue on the symbolism and meaning of folk gingerbread in culture and tradition. A graduate of ethnography at the University of Łódź and postgraduate studies in museology at the Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń. Senior curator in the Department of Husbandry and Craft of the Ethnographic Museum in Toruń. The author of interior exhibition design in the Ethnographic Park by the Ethnographic Museum and the Ołderski Ethnographic Park, as well as exhibitions and publications on traditional folk culture. Research interests: history of agriculture, history of animal breeding and veterinary medicine, history of traditional and regional cuisine, ethnobotany.

ZYGMUNT KĘDZIERSKI In the project - conducting some of the educational meetings and shows. President of the Stowarzyszenie Twórców Ludowych (Folk Artists Association) (Bydgoszcz-Toruń branch) and the member of the Lublin Folk Artists Association's board. He specializes in woodcarving and glass painting, but his work covers a variety of subjects and uses various materials. These include: traditional crafts, sculpture and painting, sacred sculpture, masks, carol stars, glass paintings, wooden figures, statues of saints (angels, saints, crosses, statues of Christ), etc. In his sculpting career he held about 20 exhibitions. He runs workshops for youth and teachers.

PETRUS KURPPA In the project: conducts workshops/meetings A chef, gingerbread maker, passionate about the history of European gingerbread, collector of gingerbread forms. He lives in Turku (Finland), where he holds gingerbread workshops and shares his passion.

JUSTYNA SKIBIŃSKA, MA In the project - responsible for the promotional side of the task. Clerk in the Promotion Department of the District Museum in Toruń. The Promotion Department handles attendance, cooperation in the organization of cultural events at the museum and assists in promoting them. She graduated from the Cultural Goods Protection (with major in conservation) at the Faculty of Fine Arts of the Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń.



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