

"I must have been inspired" Joseph Conrad

Kraków to launch 'Wawel Dragon' statue trail to rival Wrocław's Gnome trail

CULTURE | HISTORY

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STUART DOWELL NOVEMBER 16, 2023



City authorities have announced that in a few days, seven dragon figurines will be installed at points around the royal city, to be followed later by as many as 10 dragons, which will appear on and around Wawel Hill.

UM Kraków

While Wrocław has delighted visitors for several years with its charming trail of metal dwarves dotted around the city, Kraków is following hard on its heels but with its own signature creature: the Wawel Dragon.

City authorities have announced that in a few days, seven dragon figurines will be installed at points around the royal city, to be followed later by as many as 10 dragons, which will appear on and around Wawel Hill.



The sculptures, measuring approximately 35 to 50 cm, will be installed in the Podgórze and Krowodrza districts: at the Father Bernatek footbridge, near a primary school, on the colourful stairs at Bednarski Park, in Axentowicza Square, in Krakowski Park and in Jordana Park.

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Together, the diminutive dragons will form the Kraków Dragon Trail.

Each dragon has its own differentiating features, which allude to their location, including a photographer, a surveyor, a tourist, a painter, a fish, a dragon with a kite and one with a map.

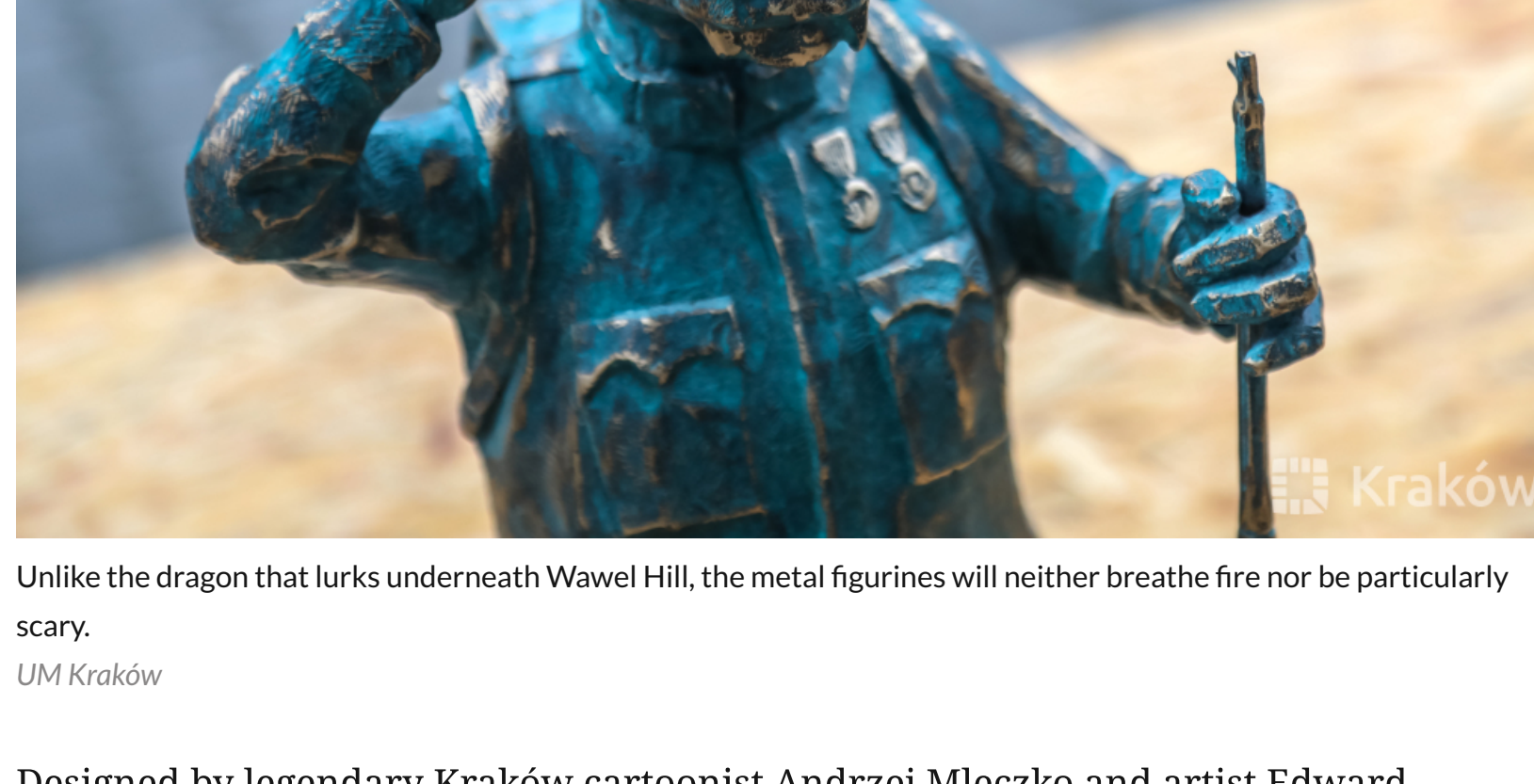


Designed by legendary Kraków cartoonist Andrzej Mleczo and artist Edward Lutczyn, ultimately, the dragon trail is to comprise a dozen or so statues and cover other districts of Kraków.

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But unlike the dragon that lurks underneath Wawel Hill, the metal figurines will neither breathe fire nor be particularly scary.

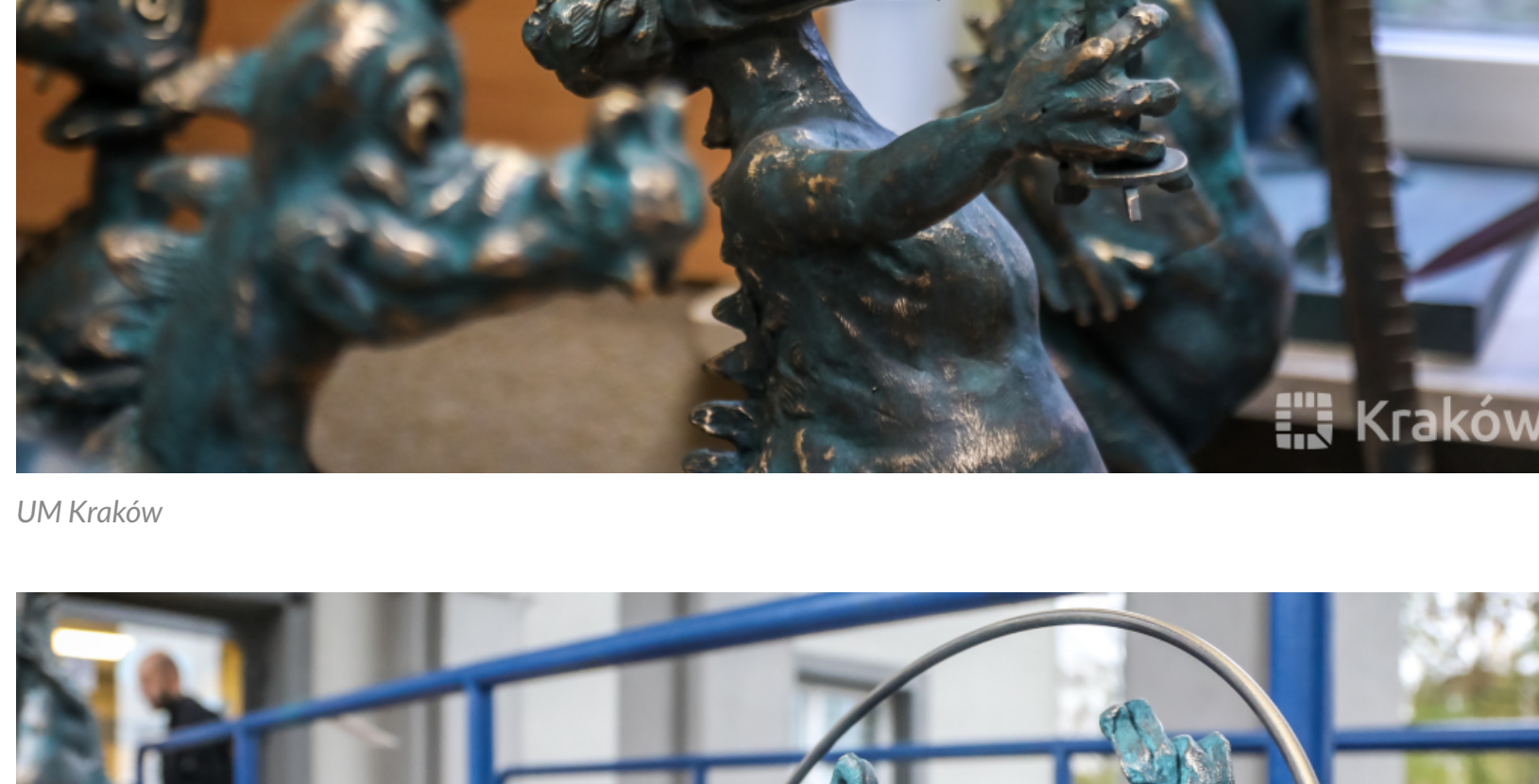


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This dragon trail has come into being after the project won a vote to secure funding as part of the City Civic Budget, in which ideas put forward by local residents have a chance of being implemented.



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"Everyone knows that the legendary dragon had a weakness for our city. It is also no secret that Cracovians also have a special fondness for various representations of this monster," city officials wrote on social media.

The new dragon trail has its roots in the enduring legend of the Wawel Dragon, which dates back to medieval times.



According to legend, a fearsome dragon inhabited the caves beneath Wawel Hill, terrorising the city and its inhabitants. The dragon demanded a constant supply of livestock, and the desperate townspeople were running out of options.

Public domain

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In the story's climax, a clever cobbler named Skuba outwitted the dragon. He stuffed a lamb with sulphur, enticing the dragon to devour it.

The creature's insatiable appetite led to its demise, as the sulfur ignited a fire in the dragon's belly, ultimately leading to its death. The city rejoiced, and Skuba became a hero.



The iconic statue of the dragon, near the entrance of Wawel Castle, spews fire at regular intervals, captivating tourists and locals.

Sojka Libor/PAP/CTK

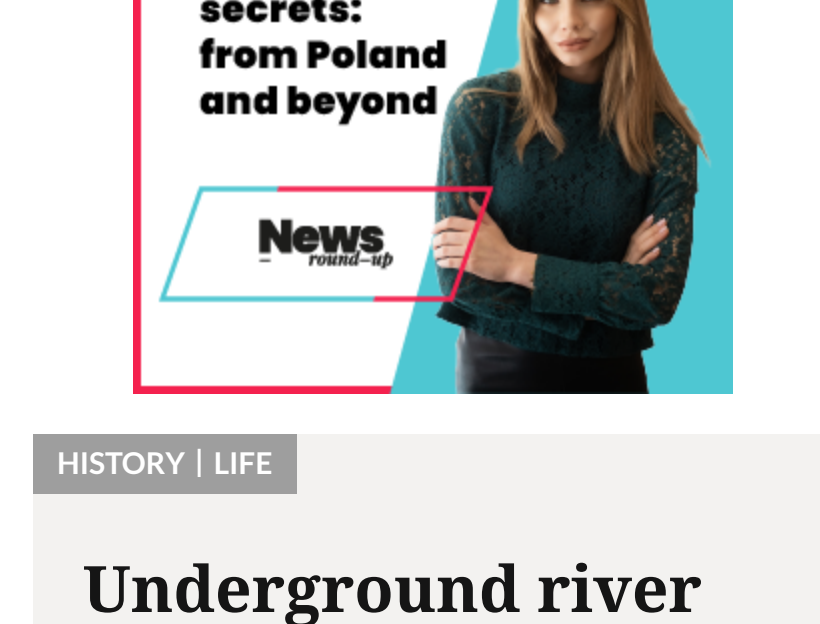
Today, the legend endures as an integral part of Kraków's cultural heritage.

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The tale has evolved into a symbol of Kraków's spirit, emphasizing the importance of cleverness and unity in the face of challenges.

TAGS: POLAND, KRAKÓW, WROCLAW, GNOMES, WAWEL, STATUE, WAWEL DRAGON

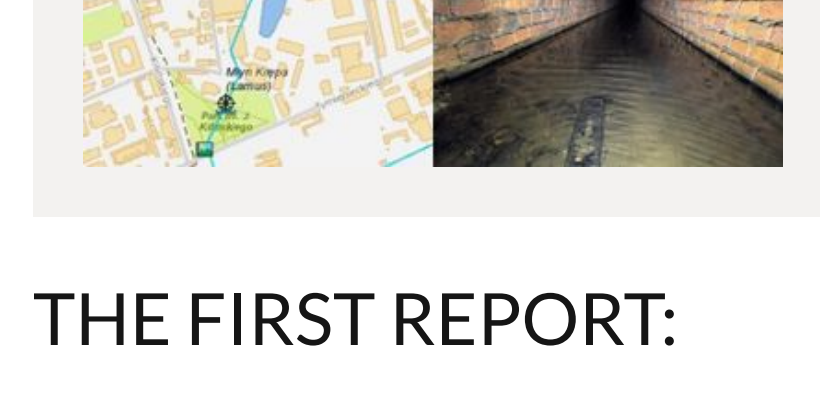
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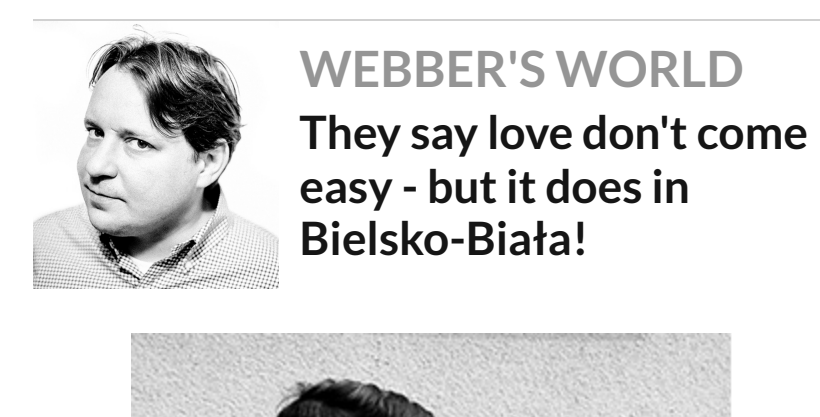
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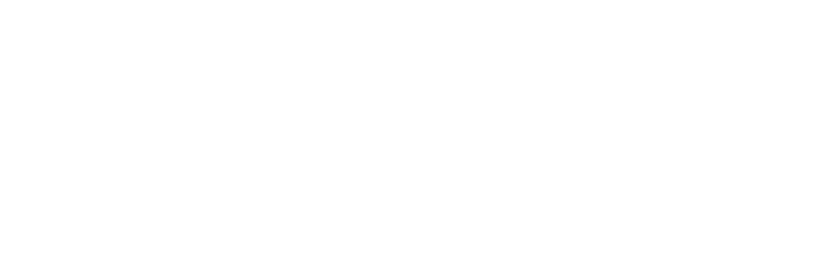


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