EU PRESIDENCY TRIO CONFERENCE

17./18. September 2020

Museums and Social Responsibility

Values Revisited

A Visual by ANJARIESE.COM

We must FOCUS on ...

INCLUSION

Inclusion is KEY

OPEN-MINDEDNESS

Political EDUCATION

VOTE

Diversity

Equality

VISIBILITY

INVOLVEMENT

Museums can CONTRIBUTE to the SOLUTIONS

Lifelong LEARNING

We can help redefine IDENTITIES

DEVELOPMENT

UNDERSTANDING the audience

EMPOWERING young people

RAISING POLITICAL AWARENESS

REPORT MUSEUMS in the FUTURE

COLLABORATING with

→ the MINISTRY of EDUCATION

→ ORGANISATIONS

→ Leadership NETWORKS

LOOKING beyond the INSTITUTION

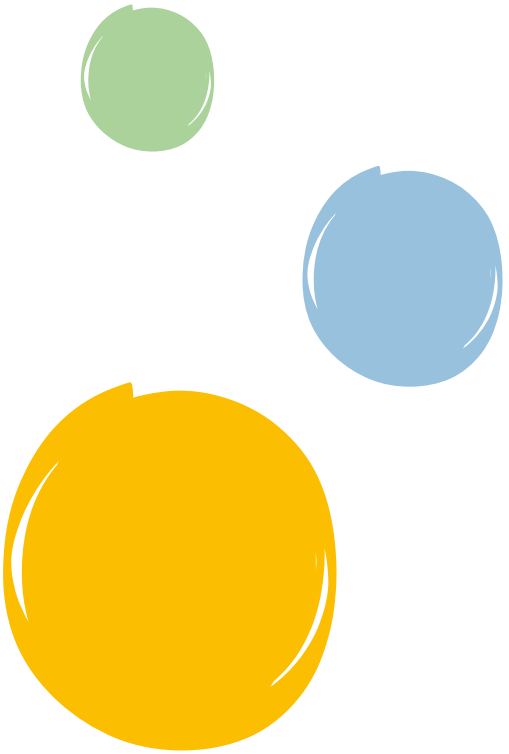
a more complex NOTION of COMMUNITY

a unified VOICE

DEMOCRACY

WE need a CHANGE of STRUCTURE in museums

We ask QUESTIONS



Deutscher Museumsbund

Network of European Museum Organisations

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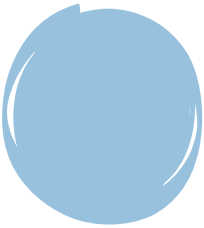
EU-Presidency Trio Conference:

Museums and Social Responsibility — Values Revisited

Funded by

Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and the Media


What obligations do museums have to society? What kinds of positive changes can they effect, and what roles can they play at this critical moment in modern history—and in the future?

Museums in peril, information bubbles, and a lack of face-to-face interaction

With the online conference "Museums and social responsibility—values revisited" on 17 and 18 September 2020, the Deutscher Museumsbund and the Network of European Museum Organisations (NEMO) marked the beginning of a series of three conferences hosted by the sitting president of the EU Council. The next conferences will be hosted by Portugal and Slovenia during their presidencies in 2021. The aim is to discuss and further develop the branding and opportunities for museums to act as bearers of social responsibility.

The topics

The 11 speakers at the conference discussed the following topics:

- Perspectives on the social function of museums
- The political dimensions of educational work in museums
- The social influence and power of museums

A central concern was to focus on the political and social impact of museums and to discuss how they can assume social responsibility. In her keynote speech, Karen Grøn called on museums to adopt an "Action of Change" plan and advocated equal rights for work with museum collections and social commitment. The latter would require new partnerships that would ensure that the museums' socio-political work could be based on sound scientific data.

Further presentations focused on the political education work of museums. Here the question arose to what extent it can be one of the tasks of museums to actively intervene in the democratic decision-making process and how this can be achieved.

Panel discussions dealt with the question of how museums could meet the demands of different social groups in the context of community involvement. The role of museums in the EU context was discussed by the Secretary General of NEMO, Julia Pagel, with the Chairperson of the Cultural Committee in the European Parliament, Sabine Verheyen.

Author: Dr. Claudia Schneider, Project Coordinator

Table of contents

Welcome message by Dr. Horst Claussen and David Vuillaume

The corona crisis and European cultural life — what could come next?

Cross-cultural collaborations have long been a key part of life in the European Union. And museums of all sizes—which attract visitors from across the continent and all over the world—play an important role. With borders closed, tourism at a standstill, and no clear end to the pandemic in sight, there are many tough challenges ahead.

Dr. Horst Claussen, a department head at the Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and the Media with extensive experience in the field of museums, believes that museums can still play a role in a corona-era Europe—and that culture could blossom, and even flourish, in the aftermath of the pandemic. Ultimately, museums could re-define communal, national, and international identities.

"Museums can make an important contribution to social cohesion in Europe—especially in these difficult days," said Claussen. But, he adds, "this potential requires a shift in perspectives, cultural awareness, and societal expectations," as well as an ongoing willingness to grapple with complex histories through discussion, debate, and constant re-evaluation.

Involving, involved, and constantly learning: what museums can do now to ensure their survival

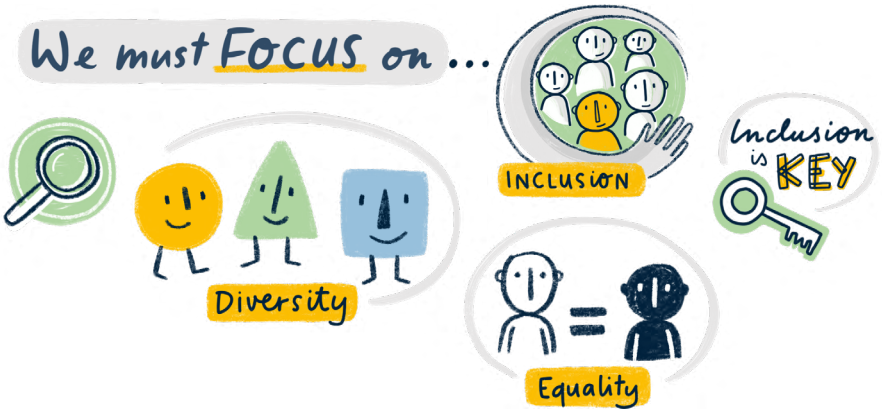
According to David Vuillaume, Chair of the Network of European Museum Organisations (NEMO) and Director of the German Museums Association, museums must focus on equality, diversity, and inclusion, and can best exploit their social potential when they are involved, open-minded, and willing to learn and evolve.

"Being 'involved' means staying in touch with the socio-political environment," explained Vuillaume, "whether it's political polarization, migration issues, rights for minorities, generational challenges, wealth and revenue gaps, or youth unemployment." While museums cannot solve all of these problems, "they can contribute to the solution."

Museums must "learn from other sectors, and know and understand their audiences," continued Vuillaume. Trust must be placed in the creativity and skills of the staff, who in turn should be provided with ample opportunities for training and further education. Administrative teams should be streamlined, and internal structures and processes must avoid any sort of fossilization in order to keep up with rapid changes in society.

Vuillaume also highlighted "openness," and stressed both meanings of the word "open" when it comes to museums: They should be open to new ideas, but also open to the public. "Museums shouldn't have been closed during the pandemic," asserted Vuillaume. "Our vision is that they should remain open and safe during every crisis—accessible to everyone, analogue and online."

In this way, Vuillaume stressed, "museums have the potential to strengthen the social fabric of society."



Author: Miranda Siegel, Berlin

Keynote speech Karen Grøn:

Tearing down the walls — Museums and Communities

Karen Grøn, director at the Trapholt Museum of Modern Art and Design, gave a presentation entitled 'The Social Impact of Museums' where she called for radical changes in museums, from implementing new ways of thinking and creating dynamic structural organisation to integrating the use of social media in order to ensure the success of museums in the future.

The Trapholt museum in lockdown

During three months of corona lock-down in spring 2020, 1000 people from all over Denmark and two artists created a 70-metre-long installation titled LIGHTHOPE. The project was possible both because Trapholt has a long tradition of creating large scale participatory art projects and its organization was able to adapt to the situation very quickly. As Grøn applauded, "The project created meaning and hope for the many participants and it became an outstanding work of art and monument at time when the world stood still."

Grøn's key note lecture introduced some of the thinking and practices that Trapholt has implemented over the years championing the social impact of museums in a world increasingly influenced by neo-liberal cultural policy.

To understand the museum in its new social context, Grøn talked about the historical role played by museums. Grøn explained, "Museums were originally founded in the 19th century to educate people. Where 'to educate' meant the visitors gained knowledge through different displays". Grøn believes this concept to be "old-fashioned," as she explained that education is not just about knowing but also understanding multiple perspectives all at once. "We don't just transmit knowledge. We work very hard to understand the multiple simultaneous perspectives there are to any issue. As we always say, we don't give answers, we ask questions."

The current challenges faced by communities

Grøn believes that by asking

questions and raising relevant themes, museums could start to tackle the issues faced by the societies in which they serve—especially in today's challenging climate. She added, "The corona crisis is a terrible event for the national economies. But if we look at it from a larger perspective, there are even bigger challenges facing our societies at the moment—namely, a collapse in confidence in the political system." Grøn goes on to identify symptoms of this collapse as fake news, loneliness, stress, depression, as well as angst around climate change, immigration, and inequality.
These are issues and challenges that cultural institutions should be aware of. "We must," stressed the director of the Trapholt Museum, "address these topics if we are to become a pivotal anchor within communities and societies."

Introducing a new economic bottom line

"As necessary as it is to identify social issues," Grøn continued, "it is also important to understand the economics of it all. Many museums now operate in a neo-liberal economy, where the focus is on a museum's ability to make money." For Grøn, neo-liberal economic thinking has usurped the discourse in museums where visitors are increasingly treated as consumers that generate income rather than as users whose needs should be served.
To illustrate her concerns, Grøn polemically introduced an economic framework based on the so-called Boston Matrix to offer new perspectives on how we understand the purpose of museums.

The Boston Matrix was originally designed to:

- help businesses with long-term strategic planning;
- help businesses consider growth opportunities by reviewing their product portfolios to find investment opportunities;
- develop new products or discontinue older ones.

In the Boston Matrix, business units are ranked according to their relative market share and growth rates. The Boston Matrix essentially operates with four categories.

This first is *Cash cow*, when a company has high market share in a slow-growing industry. As Grøn explained, the *Cash cow* for many museums is the building, the shop, and the cafe where visitors spend money.

Secondly, *Stars* are units/activities with a high market share within fast-growing industries. The *Stars* in museums are the special exhibitions: As Grøn puts it "We invest a lot in *Stars* in order to impart knowledge to our visitors in a classic didactic way. Our visitors are, from this perspective, our customers who buy tickets."

The third category is called *Question marks*. These are activities with a low market share in a high-growth market that have the potential to expand their market share and become Stars. Outreach projects in museums could be understood as 'low market share' features within the Boston Matrix.

To introduce the fourth category, Grøn highlighted the problems of using purely economic thinking when talking about visitors. Economic reasoning would appraise something like a school outreach programme only if the children returned to the museum with ticket-paying parents.
Economic thinking does not, she charges, consider the values inherent in the creative and social impact of the visit itself. Outreach projects such as these would be called *Dogs* in the Boston Matrix as they don't generate income. *Dogs* are products with low market share in a mature, slow-growing industry—in a healthy business *Dogs* should be liquidated. Grøn mentions collections and research as possible *Dogs within the system* as they receive much less attention from visitors and therefore no potential income.

Five bottom lines

To effectively future-proof museums, Grøn argued that "The economic bottom line need not be the only bottom line in a museum." Grøn introduced five alternative ways of understanding discrete bottom lines in museums. Apart from the obvious *economic bottom line*—ticket revenue as well as public and private funding—Grøn also discusses what she calls the '*visitor bottom line*.' This is connected to the economy of special exhibitions where revenue is generated by ticket sales. "We need blockbusters to get people to come in," exclaimed Grøn. "We also have what we call the *collection professional practice bottom line*, which is our research, collection care, and our collection development budget. The fourth we call the *civil/social professional practice bottom line*—this is about being democratic, engaging, empowering, collaborative, and research driven."
"Finally," Grøn concluded,

"museums should also consider working with a fifth bottom line, which I call the *organisational bottom line*. This covers how the organization works and includes topics such as whether there is any coherence between the democratic visions for the public and how the organization itself works."

The social bottom line analysed with the Boston Matrix

Grøn then suggested we use the Boston Matrix to also look at the *social bottom line* which would, she assured, change the dynamics of the elements within the Boston Matrix. From this bottom line, visitors to museums are not simply consumers but should instead be understood as users, whose needs are served by the museum.

As Grøn puts it:
"If we focus on the social impact of our output and activities, the outreach programmes and audience engagement become the *Stars* of the museums. These activities require a lot of effort but also create impressive results among the participants. School children learn about citizenship, creativity etc.—and this is of great benefit to society as a whole. The museum building is the *Cash cow* because the beautiful buildings create the arena for activities and lend it a sense of importance. The shop and the café, however, turn into *Dogs*, because income-generating activities and consumption are no longer the important foci for the *social bottom line*. Collection and research are the *Question marks*. Having a collection is important for a museum's long-term engagement with its users. Collections can be used in many different ways that always offer new perspectives. Imaginative work with permanent collections holds great potential."

Radicalising the role of museums

"The role of social impact is not a new thing," Grøn continued. She mentioned Arte Util, who proposed a radical rethinking of museums. She urges us to find uses for art within society and thinks we should harness artistic thinking to examine current issues that need to be addressed. In other words, they should be treated as users rather than spectators. The idea is that people should not go to museums to be entertained, but they should instead use the artistic way of thinking to become activists within our societies.
Grøn went on to give further examples of other forms radical

thinking, such as new materialism and the phenomenological turn with its focus on affect. She then detailed how Trapholt worked this thinking into exhibitions and projects including *Seeing Slowly* (2018). At this exhibition, audiences were asked to sit for a long time in front of paintings. These techniques have been used at Trapholt over the years to help people suffering from stress.

Reorganising to create a more dynamic structure

Due to neo-liberal cultural policy, Grøn pointed out, many museums need to make money in order to survive. She finds it problematic that museums receive low public funding for activities at the social bottom line—the very activities needed to overcome the challenges our societies are currently facing—while private sponsors tend to favour less polemic or more popular exhibitions. While she recognised that the economic and social bottom lines need to maintain a reciprocal relationship, she called for a non-hierarchical management structure in small and large museums to help them lead the way in the integration of civil or social agendas into their programmes—especially in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

„We really need the management and organisational structure in museums to change. We don't need the hierarchies between collection management, exhibitions, and civil/social work. We need these departments to come together in projects where they support rather than compete against each other. We also need our funding partners, the government, the municipality, and the private foundations to seek out organisations with sustainable working practices. Because all cultural institutions are lacking funds, we're all competing for the same money. We need to internalise civil and social thinking within our organisations. Civil and social thinking should not become a department in the institution. We need to change our organisations based on our experience of the current situation."

Implementing change

For her own part, Grøn has played an important role in tackling the issue of hierarchical structures in museums. Her occupational maxim has been to "tear down the walls inside the house." When appointed director at the Trapholt, she transformed the director's office into a space that promoted inclusivity, where all members of the team could sit

together regardless of job role or status. For a short period, she even removed the curator title from her organisation and created a team structure whereby everyone was part of a "curatorial team." The team members had different responsibilities within the one structure and nobody focused on their job titles.

Putting socially focused projects into practice

Grøn's dedication to new ways of conceptualising and addressing the social needs of the community led to a series of remarkable projects at the Trapholt Museum.

"In 2016, we launched a project by the artist Anja Franke where Syrians cooked and Danes supplied the plates. After everyone had eaten, the plates were painted with a blue doodle pattern by the Danes and Syrians—the pieces became part of the *Waste Time* art—installation. "From 2015 to 2016," continued Grøn, "we made *The Monument of Stitches,* where 650 participants from six towns knitted buildings that were first shown at the six town squares and were later joined together as one giant installation at Trapholt." Moving to 2020, Grøn discussed a recent piece by Rasmus Bækkel Fex where 311 woodturners created an installation together.

"All of these projects are core pieces in the Trapholt collection. For the celebration of the centenary of the reunification of Denmark, 800 people came together with the artist Iben Høj to embroider. The artist created the overall form and basic rules, materials, and colours for the embroidery.

The participants could determine their own stitch along with the type of cloth they wished to work with. I'm proud to tell you we received an email from the Danish Art Council yesterday telling us that the piece was named as an outstanding work. The fact that pieces such as this can win prizes lends weight to my calls for museums to reorganise. We need new kinds of management."

Harness the power of social media

As Grøn discussed at length above, visitor profiles at museums have changed a lot over the years. It is therefore the responsibility of museums to connect with them and increase their engagement. For Grøn and the Trapholt Museum, social media was the key tool in reaching a wider audience. She described how they've been using Facebook to create additional communities of participants for projects for a

few years now. Explaining how they used social media for the exhibitions mentioned above,

"The male woodturners weren't using Facebook as much as their female counterparts were. We had to email them as they wanted to meet in person. With the crocheting and embroidery, on the other hand, we had some really large communities at Facebook groups.
We didn't expect the response to be so strong. Facebook became a space where people could share their concerns and ideas about COVID-19.
We also asked them to deliver their crocheted light bulbs and to share their thoughts about what they learned from the lockdown. They engaged with this on Facebook, where they also posted tips on crocheting, needles, and the yarn they used. And they started to make lightbulb earrings and all kinds of new things within the community.
For bigger events, we used Zoom. This technology allowed us to bring 800 people together and I could place them in breakout rooms with 3—4 participants. This meant that someone from the Faroe Islands could crochet and chat about the project with three others in Denmark."

Recommendations

Grøn's presentation around the social and economic impact on museums clearly defines new responsibilities that museums will need to take on in order to future-proof their institutions.
Firstly, Grøn called for museums to think beyond the 'old-fashioned role' of being educators. Instead of working with consumers, we should instead treat our visitors as users whose needs we are there to serve. Museums must put the needs of the community ahead of their agendas if they wish to stay relevant.

In addition to considering their economic bottom lines, Grøn firmly believes museums need to identify their social bottom lines if they want to prioritise what is really important. As Grøn could demonstrate from her own experience, frank assessments are necessary in order to implement integrated social and economic strategies that synergise rather than divide museum departments.

One of her most radical suggestions was that museums need to fundamentally alter their organisational structure if they are to become more diverse and inclusive, even in the top positions in museums, where a greater

variety of backgrounds can bring welcome change into the sector. Grøn is essentially implying that museums cannot tackle the issues within their communities if they themselves are still bound by an archaic hierarchy.

Other important conclusions highlighted how important it is in the current climate to create projects that bring communities together. Using the examples of successful community-based art projects at the Trapholt Museum, Grøn urged museums to encourage audience participation and communicate stories using social media including Facebook, targeted emails, and zoom chats.

In conclusion, it is evident that if museums are to flourish in the future they will need to embark on a new journey. This journey will include incorporating radical structural changes and the adoption of new ways of thinking. Furthermore, the creation of integrated social and economic strategies and the increased use of social media will be the key elements helping to recentre the museum as a popular and relevant institution in the societies they have always served.

Author: Sarah Sian, London

Presentation Kimmo Levä:

Museums Must Promote Democracy — What!?

Finland, a country with a long tradition of progressive policies, has recently passed new legislation. The Museum Act 2020 makes it compulsory for museums to promote democracy, because it is a fundamental pillar of their national ethos. In his engaging presentation, Museums Must Promote Democracy—What!?, Kimmo Levä, Secretary General of the Finnish Museums Association, puts forth two questions for his EU counterparts:

- *Why should democracy be promoted?*
- *Is promoting democracy really a task for museums?*

Democracy defined

To begin with, it is important how we define democracy. Levä offers the notion that "democracy is the reconciling of interests and ideologies from the different directions through open debate, choices, and compromise." These interests uphold the key values of democracy, which are "equality, transparency, and justice."
This is democracy in theory. In Europe, since the end of the World War II, we have seen democracy in practice. This is "the foundation of social peace," which has led to the prosperity and the general increase in social welfare we have enjoyed for 75 years across the continent.

Why must we promote democracy?

Having grown up in democratic societies, surrounded by our republican neighbors, it is easy to take our system for granted. However, Levä warns that "democracy is in crisis." This is the sort of emergency that unfolds more slowly than a pandemic or an economic crash, but where the consequence may be the irreversible loss of the freedoms we enjoy today.

In evidence, Levä points to the decreasing participation in social issues across Europe. A mere 6% of Finns are aligned with current political parties. This is double the EU average of 3%. "Voting turnout,' he warns, "is decreasing

in every country." Perhaps more worryingly for the EU project, voting turnout is significantly lower for EU elections than national ballots.

Levä theorizes that "the means of implementing democracy have not kept pace with change." The systems that have been so successful in maintaining unity throughout the post-war period are having less success as we move deeper into the 21st century. Perhaps technology has altered democracy. Given the success of movements such as Me Too and Black Lives Matter, it is clear that the public are still engaged with political activism, but our political structures are not designed with social media in mind. It may be time to update stale thinking.

Technology alone, however, cannot explain the decline of democracy. "All over the world that the expansion of democratic system has stalled…less than 50% of people lives in democracy in the whole world, and unfortunately, that rate is not increasing." In Europe, we assume the attraction of democracy to be self-evident. The world, it seems, does not share our point of view. Democracy needs its advocates. Our museums can help.

The role of a museum

In Kyoto, 2019, The International Council of Museums (ICOM) rejected a proposal to re-define those institutions as "democratizing, polyphonic spaces" supporting "social justice, global equality and planetary well-being." This rejection is not surprising. As Levä notes, over 50% of the world lives outside democracy; why should museums be defined by democratic values? ICOM, instead, defines a museum as:

a non-profit, permanent institution in the service of society and its development, open to the public, which acquires, conserves, researches, communicates, and exhibits the tangible and intangible heritage of humanity and its environment for the purposes of education, study, and enjoyment.

The role of a museum depends on how we interpret ICOM's definition. The question is whether we see museums as passive, apolitical institutions that exist outside of the ebb and flow of history, or whether museums are capable, in their own way, of shaping history. As Levä explains, in Europe, we live in democracy, so to preserve history and heritage, "Museum[s] have to be active in fostering social impact."

Museums, in other words, owe as much to the future as they do to the past. Promoting democracy supports that continuity.

How to promote democracy

Citing Elina Kiiski-Kataja's "From the trials of democracy towards future participation," Levä points to four guidelines that can be used to promote democracy, and which are currently being implemented in Finnish museums:

1. Build trust and activate civil dialogue.
Upholding democratic values is not always easy. Levä retells a story that exposes the challenges in maintaining these guidelines. A 'racist' group asked for use of a museum conference space. The museum debated as to whether civil dialogue should include all voices, even those the museum did not agree with. Ultimately, they decided against hosting the group, as they deemed racism to be against democratic values. Nevertheless, Levä maintains that museums are spaces that should be used to build inclusion by including as many diverse groups as there are in society, as long as they believe in mutual respect.

2. Prevent inequality, both social and economic.
To prevent inequality, Finnish museums have started programs to attract a more diverse cross-section of Finnish society. This includes free admission for the economically disadvantaged. This leads to a more stratified visitor base.

3. Reform the ways to participate.
To increase participation, Finnish museums have opened as spaces for debate and also allowed a wider input in content creation. Using museums in non-traditional roles and including more contributors defines the museum as a more public space.

4. Raise the level of education - lifelong learning.
By appealing to people from all age groups and all social backgrounds to visit, Finnish museums are championing the concept of lifelong learning. This raises the standard of education, not just for the young, but for every age group and section of society.

These guidelines, Levä believes, can be easily replicated across Europe as they reflect universal tenets of tolerance, inclusion, and accessibility.

Conclusion

Museums do not exist outside of politics. There are numerous examples of museums within Europe that are defined by the politics that nurtured them. Finland's Museum of Freedom and Sweden's Democratic Museum are just two examples. Therefore, promoting democracy is a logical function of the museum—a way of protecting the environment in which it lives.

Levä believes the EU should consider creating its own version of the Museum Act—a European act which enshrines the values of equality, transparency, and justice and helps to reconcile interests and ideologies through debate, choice, and compromise.

For any policy to work, Levä is certain that "inclusion" is the key. Finland's Museum Act has been successfully adopted because of the broad range of voices that helped to create it. Promoting democracy, by its very nature, is a task that must be communal. Therefore, by encouraging participation, discussion, and dialogue, "democracy will follow."

Author: Bill Fingleton, PhD, Dublin

Presentation Dr. Leonard Schmieding: Museum Education — Political Awareness Youth Empowerment: Work in Progress at the Berlin State Museums

The project "Political Education in Museums" at the Berlin State Museums addresses the issue of social responsibility by exploring, creating, and implementing museum education programs with the intention of raising political awareness, empowering young people to make their own worlds, and formulating an agenda for firmly establishing political education in museum contexts.

Among the many important responsibilities museums are tasked with, social responsibility clearly stands out as the most pressing issue in our current times. It forces museums to think about their relevance for society and to act accordingly, reaching diverse audiences of ordinary people in their everyday lives, taking a firm stand in the culture wars waged by right-wing populism, and offering a space for discussion and debate. The proposed but unfortunately not adopted new ICOM definition of museums captures very well how social responsibility is an integral part of museum work: "Museums are democratising, inclusive, and polyphonic spaces for critical dialogue about the pasts and the futures. Acknowledging and addressing the conflicts and challenges of the present, they hold artefacts and specimens in trust for society, safeguard diverse memories for future generations, and guarantee equal rights and equal access to heritage for all people. [...] They are participatory and transparent, and work in active partnership with and for diverse communities to collect, preserve, research, interpret, exhibit, and enhance understandings of the world, aiming to contribute to human dignity and social justice, global equality, and planetary wellbeing." (ICOM) While its failure to be accepted as the new definition only points to how much work there is still to be done in coming to terms with the social responsibility of museums,

this proposal might still serve as a guideline for socially responsible museum education.

In the following, I would like to present a museum education project at the Berlin State Museums that takes seriously the museum's social responsibility and explores new ways of conceiving, creating, and implementing museum education programs. I will share some first insights from the project "Political Education in Museums" located at the newly-established Haus Bastian—Centre for Cultural Education of the Berlin State Museums. The program is intended to raise political awareness and empower young people, and to formulate an agenda for political education in museum contexts.

I argue that in order to practice socially responsible museum education, we need to, first, come up with a strong theoretical and empirical foundation that enables us to connect the human experience gathered in the objects of our collections with the everyday experiences of our diverse audience in a meaningful and relevant way. This means bringing together knowledge about museum objects and their biographies with expertise in education practices. Second, it is necessary to reach out to diverse societal actors and integrate them in the processes of conceptualizing and assessing our programs, including the (young) people whom we intend to benefit from museum education. This means collaborating in a transdisciplinary manner in order to build robust social knowledge. And finally, practicing museum education in a socially responsible way also means setting in motion a process of institutional change via reaching into the museum.
Regarding the empirical and theoretical foundation of our work, my colleagues and I have set three goals for these programs: One, that young people learn to see the museum as a political space where people negotiate and contest power, meaning, and representation; two, that young people connect their own questions, interests, expertise, problems, or needs with the human experience they see on display in the museums, and that they realize that they have agency to make their own world, just like the historical actors in different eras and cultural contexts; and three, that young people feel empowered to develop ideas for making their own world, for their contribution to building the society they want.

Consider this example as an illustration: The exhibition "Germanic Tribes: Archeological Perspectives" gives a state-of-the-art account of what archeology can tell us about the Germanic tribes, and it seeks to deconstruct the existing prevalent image. In a second, more self-reflective part, it puts on display how Berlin's Museum of Prehistory and Early History itself has dealt with the topic from the middle of the 19th century to the present. Since the history of modern Germany shows how the history and archeology of the Germanic tribes have been mystified and politically instrumentalized, most notably during National Socialism but also still today, we designed a workshop that counters such movements. Students learn how history is a construct that produces an image and how to analyze and deconstruct this image; they explore the reasons why the topic of the Germanic tribes lends itself well to political instrumentalization; and they analyze how the extreme and alt-right movements use this topic in their symbols and codes and their cultural politics today, and how they are using the site of the museum as a stage to showcase and broadcast their right-wing ideologies. Ultimately, the goal of our accompanying education program is to assist young people in developing an understanding of the power dynamics at play in this topic, and to help them take a stand against right-wing political instrumentalization of history and culture.

For this purpose—and this brings me to my second point, transdisciplinary collaboration—we reached out to institutions who could consult with us: experts in anti-fascist activism, education, and prevention. We recruited educators with experience in teaching how to deal with conspiracy theories, fake news, and neo-fascism. And, on the basis of our consultations with experts, we developed a plan to counter efforts of right-wing activists to disrupt the exhibition. All this was new to the museum, and going forward with it now, we will observe and learn for our future programs.

Transdisciplinary cooperation, however, transcends collaborating for one specific exhibit and its education programs. In a working group consisting of museum professionals, experts in education (History, Politics, Culture), and activists from civil society, we are currently formulating an agenda to establish political education in museum contexts. Its purpose is to

advise on theoretical, conceptual, and practical work—and if necessary, to bring in additional experts—and to communicate our findings and best practices not only to colleagues around the world, but also to politicians, policy-makers, and potential partners; the working group furthermore creates a safe space for the practice of self-reflection, which is important for developing new ideas.

Finally, in conjunction with museum programming that is aware of its social responsibility, transdisciplinary cooperation helps facilitate the process of reaching into museums and setting into motion the changes necessary to make political education an integral part of the museum. In our working group, we are thinking through the fact that the museum cannot be non-political and that we have to act accordingly—not least because we all carry a high social responsibility: curators, archivists, researchers, conservators, directors, and educators alike, and we have to listen to and process the ideas and requests of civil society if we want to become or remain relevant in and for it.

In conclusion, I would like to emphasize that the described goals can only be accomplished in a long-term process, which has only just begun. Everyone invested in making change in the museum happen—you are cordially invited to join the working group and its network. I encourage you to contact me with any questions, criticism, or comments: Your feedback is highly appreciated!

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The project „Political Education in Museums“ is funded by the Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and Media

Author: Dr. Leonard Schmieding, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin - Preußischer Kulturbesitz

Panel moderated by Dominika Szope with Dr. Steffen Bruendel and André Wilkens: The view from outside

From the discussions held with leading figures from the field, including Steffen Bruendel, head of the PwC Foundation and André Wilkens, director of the European Cultural Foundation, it is clear that COVID-19 has brought both challenges as well as exciting opportunities for museums.

Driving digitalisation, innovation, interaction, and transformation

Museums are an established part of the civil landscape and therefore have responsibilities towards the societies in which its institutions form an intrinsic part. "The current situation amplifies other challenges to museums like the digital challenge, the challenge of colonial heritage, the challenge of diversity, the challenge of over-commercialisation, over-tourism, and the challenge of sustainability and climate change," explained Wilkens. Challenging as these complex issues may be, they also open the way for opportunities. Wilkens is calling for "new thinking and change."

Even before the pandemic, museums were grappling with the challenges of digitalisation as visitors expected to see more interactive spaces. COVID-19 has merely accelerated the need for museums to focus on digital as part of its core strategy and deliver creative, interactive solutions that are educational and highly engaging. Dr Steffen Bruendel explains how digitalisation is at the very forefront of his foundation. In 2019, the PwC Foundation embarked on digital projects including the creation of a virtual gallery and a virtual concert hall for pupils that launched earlier this year.

Introducing gaming and popular culture

Some museums, however, are looking beyond virtual in order to engage and excite visitors of all ages. An example is the PwC Foundation collaboration with the Deutsches Museum in

Munich where they showcased a collection of musical robots that appealed to small children, older teens, and adults alike, "This gaming approach is really fun for kids, and doing something aesthetically creative, helps kids themselves to be creative. And this is what we love and want to promote," said Bruendel. Wilkens echoed the importance of gaming while also highlighting the need to bring more popular culture into museums.

Using the current climate to build bridges

With the rise of digital, museums can 'shift gear' and explore real issues that are prominent in society including race, gender, class, and the environment, making them more relevant than ever before. Bruendel recognises the complex divisions within society and urged museums to use the current climate to push in the direction of social responsibility by addressing the gap between young and old, those who are digitally savvy and those who are not keen on digital tools, rich and poor, and also by addressing cultural divisions and climate change.

Diversity & Equality matters

The subject of Black Lives Matter has dominated the news and like COVID-19 has affected our everyday lives. The whole debate on Black Lives Matters and decolonization is a huge issue. "It will not go away, it's here to stay," said Wilkens and encouraged colleagues to think about these challenges and view it as a "creative opportunity" for museums to find new ways and better ways than before to address such issues and create a small positive legacy for COVID-19.

Unleash the power of collaborations

To implement changes in museums, Bruendel understands they have a lot of work to do and highlights that it's not a question of what one institution can do but how both foundations and museums can come together and collaborate. Importantly, he explains that although foundations don't provide artwork or collections, they can assist in terms of funding. "In the ideal case, foundations have the money to help museums to get, for example, their virtual halls, to digitalize their pieces of art and so on, so that more people can 'visit' the museum—even if they are going virtually instead of physically," said Bruendel. Wilkens further explained that as well as helping

with funding, foundations can introduce museums to industry experts and networks who can provide best practices to assist with any change processes needed to elevate museum visibility.

Recommendations

The panel discussion raised some significant points in terms of where museums are and what their role will be going forward.

One of those ways is to focus on digital and building on audience development. Whether it's to create a full-on virtual experience or transforming physical museums into a space that embraces interaction, encourages participation, and increases engagement, getting digital and introducing gaming and pop culture. This creates a new sentiment that appeals to new visitors and makes way for some fascinating opportunities.

By implementing new technologies museums become more relevant, which in turn attracts new visitors and audiences. As the panel confirmed, museums could then become more socially responsible and can help to bridge the gap in society, navigate tensions, give perspective, avoid polarisation, and bring communities together at international, national, and local levels. Stories can be told in a variety of new ways and can be used to promote discussions and debates on issues that affect us all while bridging communities regardless of age, race, or gender.

For Wilkens, the complex issues brought to light by the Black Lives Matter movement are going to remain in our collective focus. Museums are an essential tool in education, so it is important for them to play a part in the conversation of diversity by finding creative and philanthropic solutions for the societies they serve.

In order to achieve relevance and be socially responsible, museums also need to look further afield and realise the importance of collaborations. For example, the European Cultural Foundation has already partnered with Nordmetall in Hamburg along with other foundations in Italy, the Netherlands, and Germany. "If there's a great idea, as a great project, whoever has a great idea, and wants to work with us on restarting a European public space through the museum landscape, we're very willing and open to work on that," concludes Wilkens. He is currently working with curators,

museum partners, and foundations to create a European Pavilion, a first-of-a-kind of model that is dedicated to helping kick-start and/or revive the European public sphere.

In conclusion, the current climate has accelerated the need for museums to adopt new ways of working and to continue pushing boundaries in order to stay relevant and to reclaim their place as an important tool for social cohesion going forward.

Author: Sarah Sian, London

Panel moderated by Margherita Sani with Sara Brighenti and Matjaž Gruden: The social impact of museums

Margherita Sani, Head of International Museum Projects at the Institute of Cultural Heritage of the Region Emilia Romagna and former member of the NEMO Executive Board was joined by two panellists, Sara Brighenti, deputy commissioner of the National Arts Plan (Portugal) and Matjaž Gruden, director of democratic participation at the Council of Europe, to discuss the social impact of museums and how they can empower the communities they serve.

Defining and identifying "community"

Museums were historically seen as an intrinsic part of civil societies where they preserve powerful, cultural stories and encourage education and learning. Museums possess the power to overcome adversity and evoke change within local communities and across European borders. The three panellists agreed that museums still have that role today. This role, however, has broadened to now include a more complex notion of "community." The speakers were implying that although museums still form an intrinsic part of civil infrastructure, their role has evolved and they now appeal to a much wider audience than before.

Margherita Sani explained this while discussing the different connotations of the word "community":

"In the current literature on museums, we read that there are source communities or communities of origin which are the ones where collections originate. We also have the user communities—the visitors to a site or a museum. We have the interpretive communities who actively contribute to the interpretation process. And then we have the communities of practice—those who share skills or ideas and know-how. Importantly, we also have the heritage community — defined by the Faro Convention as 'people who value specific aspects of cultural heritage

which they sustain and transmit to future generationss.' All of these communities merge within the virtual/online community where museums interact with visitors to elicit user-generated content and encourage digital participation."

From this, we gather that there is more than one community museums need to address. There are in fact multiple diverse and complex audiences who all have different needs and who come to museums through a variety of channels.

A call for change and driving diversity

The discussion then moved to the practical aspects of museum involvement in communities. Sara Brighenti pointed out that for museums to have more involvement within communities, they need to shift their focus in a number of ways: "For sure, the times we're living in is a call for change. I think the big change will be a focus on a people-centred perspective."

To make museums more diverse, Sara Brighenti argues that museums need to take a position and place human values and rights at the centre of their institutions. "They need to work more with education and imagination and with programming, calling up different voices in the museum. In doing this, they will go beyond words and they'll be able to manifest their mission in concrete actions that will impact people's lives."

Investing in people

In terms of tackling the complex issue of diversity and inclusion, the three panellists were convinced that museums need to look at the institutions themselves. Putting it succinctly, Sara Brighenti called for major investment in team building and recruiting with a focus on hiring people from diverse backgrounds and perspectives. "By adopting these new ways of working, museums will be led in the direction of a sustainable, multidisciplinary, and more focused approach to community engagement."

Forming responsive collaborations to bridge gaps

If museums are to serve their communities effectively, it was suggested, they will need to develop and implement new strategies that include working with organisations outside of their institutions, and collaborate with shared leadership networks and local mediators.

Sara Brighenti offered the example of the current pandemic to show how some museums were able to help their communities at a time of great public concern by using digital platforms to gain wider public attention. As she puts it:

This has been part of a great movement of change where museums have had to take risks and forget business as usual. In order to provide a concrete response at the right time, museums must establish priorities while maintaining availability and openness. In times of crisis, I believe that the relevant response to community involvement is the ability to focus locally, to listen, to trust, and finally, to act. And by pointing out where it is crucial to interview professionals and voluntary social cultural mediators, we'll be able to bridge the gap between museums, territories, and their communities.

Providing a wealth of knowledge and information

Margherita Sani advocated that museums are in a unique position to facilitate learning given their access to a rich tapestry of cultural and historical knowledge. "I think the role of museums as places with privileged access to history, culture, and heritage is extremely important," says Sani. "I'm not trying to say that museums should become some sort of ideological activists, but they form a very important part of our social immunity system—raising political awareness, encouraging dialogue, and promoting the values upon which we built Europe."

Community-based projects

The discussion then moved to examples of how political and cultural institutions have been following the museums' lead and are getting more involved with communities. The three experts discussed a Portuguese government study which looked at the future of museums in Portugal. Its aim was to identify factors that could have an impact on museums and monuments in Portugal by 2030. Sara Brighenti explained how the report focused on a dual perspective—analysis and strategy—and "incorporated different voices which complemented each other." In relation to community, the report recommended:

- Action plans to promote community engagement.
- Better opening hours in museums to adapt to changing lifestyles and demographics.

Significantly, the report also recommended that the Ministry of Education be more proactive in using the cultural sector as a partner in formal education, and integrate museums, heritage, and art into school curricula. Sara Brighenti summarised that the Portuguese government believed that investing in digital resources that convey content related to museum collections and cultural heritage to all educators and teachers would also serve museums' strategic planning in the future.

Another notable document discussed by the panellists was the 2005 Faro Convention which promotes broader understanding of heritage in relation to communities and society. The convention further promotes forms of democratized governance of cultural heritage by encouraging community participation. Matjaž Gruden informed the panel on the positive legacy of Faro:

We have evidence where cultural heritage, defined in the Faro Convention as whatever people consider to be their heritage, has led to important positive social and economic developments in areas where community-building opportunities were provided to people to interact and create benefits for their societies. So, it's clearly something that works very well for the communities, the social environment where it's happening, and for the governance of cultural heritage.

Recommendations

The panel discussion broadly looked at the social impact of museums and raised some significant points in terms of the effects this impact can have on the communities they serve.

To summarise the experts above, it is essential for museums to get to know exactly who their communities are and where they come from in order to get a better understanding of their needs. Once these needs are identified, the museums can promote diversity and social cohesion by adopting new ways of working. For example, they could recruit a more diverse workforce and begin creating new and more inclusive programmes for visitors.

Overall, the panellists agreed that, in the current climate, museums should strive to be more relevant. This requires looking beyond the institution themselves and collaborating with others, including community networks and local mediators who can provide proactive responses in times of crisis. Sara

Brighenti summed up the panel's recommendations when she proposed that museums should begin asking their communities, "How can we help?"

In conclusion, it is evident that communities don't stay static, they are constantly evolving. Museums must therefore begin taking a multidisciplinary, people-centric approach that puts human rights and values first when it comes to developing and implementing new strategies.

Author: Sarah Sian, London


UNDERSTANDING
the audience
COLLABORATING
with
the MINISTRY OF
EDUCATION
ORGANISATIONS
Leadership NETWORKS

Julia Pagel interviews Sabine Verheyen: The Future of Europe putting the museums into perspective

Within the EU commission, there exists a single portfolio for Innovation, Research, Education, Culture and Youth. Four of these titles are immediately synonymous with the future. And the fifth, culture? In an interview with Network of European Museum Organisations (NEMO)'s Julia Pagel, Sabine Verheyen of the Committee on Culture and Education (CULT) convincingly argues that culture is just as much a force for tomorrow.

The discussion began with an analytic look at how the COVID-19 pandemic has been affecting the museum landscape. As we are all too aware in 2020, the crowds that would have normally filled the museums, theatres, galleries, and other venues of Europe have, for their own protection, been asked to stay at home. The public's attention—the very lifeblood of culture as Verheyen reminded us—was understandably redirected to immediate medical and safety needs. For many people, the daily drama of COVID-19 was the only drama on offer through most of 2020.

The need for culture in a crisis

Acknowledging that culture as a coping mechanism became essential during the lockdowns, Pagel was keen to hear Verheyen's take on the big question of how culture works on the "European level." Her observations of culture's role during COVID-19 reflected the viral imagery and internet response to the initial European lockdowns—from balcony singing to online exhibitions and even to the design of official messaging, artists were "tapping into their creativity to relay health guidelines and share messages of hope."

Creators and curators, on the other hand, reacted to the crisis by innovating. Verheyen reminds us how musicians collaborated over Zoom and how museums, libraries, and galleries adapted to offer digital tours. If people could not meet to enjoy culture, then culture would come to them.

Culture proved to be more than just "nice to have," but a necessary part of our existence. As we move into future funding proposals, Verheyen is confident that an excellent case has been made for increased cultural funding to help people move beyond the pandemic and to reclaim their previous, pre-COVID lives. If anything, the crisis has shown us that culture is integral to a person's ability to handle trauma over a long period.

Culture and innovation

Innovation, of course, does not happen in a vacuum. Museums, galleries, and other institutions with fixed attractions were obliged to find new ways to reach their audiences. Essentially, these cultural institutions were trying to maintain interest in their collections, while the traditional means of public access had been closed off. But are people even interested in what museums have to offer? Pagel and Verheyen both agreed that if the past year had demonstrated anything, it had shown that there is still a huge appetite for culture.

Pagel spoke about a "digital wave," which she claimed crashed into "all our apartments." So, immersive and interactive content creation is possible and popular through a digital medium. While online tours allowed visitors to journey to the cultural sites of Europe, digital displays allowed museums, libraries and galleries to show material that would otherwise be archived. In some respects, this digital wave could offer more choice for their audience. Out-of-reach artworks were suddenly within reach for all.

The two authorities within the European cultural system both emphatically agreed that culture can never be taken for granted. Art and performance were obviously greatly missed by a public starved of so much of their pre-lockdown lives. If lockdowns help us to survive, then surely it is culture's role to help us to live? Verheyen mused that the lockdown showed many people that if they can't go to a concert, if they can't go to a theater or a football game, or to the events they normally go to, that these places would close down, "they were missing this" she confirmed.
Verheyen was reminding us that when the current storm has passed, people still expect all of this culture to be there waiting for us. This thought moved the conversation to economics and funding, more precisely, to the issue of how cultural creators will

be funded going forward.

The economics of culture

Although culture is a sector that doesn't naturally lean toward the language of economics, to be heard in the 21st century, Verheyen assured us that culture must learn to communicate through commerce. Which led Pagel to ask if we can expect to find "the metrics that show how much the cultural sector contributes to society." Verheyen proposed that cultural representatives need to express themselves with a unified voice: "To get real support and to be part of the recovery programs, we have to speak together." She urges that voice to address not only culture ministers, but also finance ministers and other policy makers.

Verheyen then reminded us that culture gives value beyond merely comfort. We shouldn't forget that "30 percent of our tourism is cultural tourism." This figure does not, of course, live in a vacuum. The knock-on effects on the airline, hotel and hospitality industries—to name just three—are equally sizeable. The culture sector in Europe employs approximately 8 million people, which means that culture is not only a major primary source of employment, but also contributes heavily to the employment levels of related and support industries.

Culture as a European brand

Referring to the macro-economic sphere, Verheyen explained that "4.2 percent of GDP in Europe comes from the cultural and creative sectors. We should therefore support this sector because the benefits are so clear." She continued to argue that the industry is inherently low-risk, and enjoys stable growth, power balance between suppliers and consumers, zero product substitution, and low R & D costs and is geographically free of competitors.

Taking a different angle, Pagel made it clear that culture is a unique selling point for the continent. We must, she stressed, continue to invest so that it remains attractive to tomorrow's consumers. We need "smart investment into museums now. So, it's not only about the immediate help from museums to reopen their doors, but it's also about investing in digital infrastructure and capacity building."

The Future of Culture: Conclusion

When questioned about how culture should be reflected in the EU Strategy 2030, Verheyen insisted that EU recovery and culture are interlinked. Online exhibitions help to create an appetite for the physical experience of museums, concerts, etc. Culture feeds tourism. Tourism feeds the economy. But culture offers so much more.

Verheyen remains convinced that culture is how we interpret and work through events. In other words, culture gives meaning, it heals, culture is education and social inclusion, culture calms us, energizes us, and unifies us. We should therefore support creative people and the institutions that house them.

Both speakers agreed that as we move toward the great agendas of the next decade, such as the green economy, migration toward Europe, and regional development, we will need culture to help us along the way. Culture can be used to shape our messaging for the future, to persuade and to integrate. When drawing the EU roadmap for the next decade, we should recognize that culture is not a side-effect, but rather, a core component of our European values.

If culture is indeed, as Verheyen concluded, "a horizontal issue that has its place in all policies we are making on the European level," then the degree of funding it receives should reflect the fundamental and beneficial contribution this sector brings to our society.

Author: Bill Fingleton, PhD, Dublin

What's next? Closing discussion with Dr. Aleksandra Berberih-Slana and Clara Camacho

As the discussions from the three-part "Museums and Social Responsibility" conference series' first instalment—held online from 17–18 September in Berlin under the title "Values Revisited"—drew to a close, panellists started looking toward the future.

Specifically, they speculated on the conference's second and third instalments, to be held in Lisbon, Portugal in March 2021 and Maribor, Slovenia in September 2021. Due to the uncertainty surrounding the coronavirus pandemic, it is not yet clear whether the conferences will take place live or digitally, though panellists remain optimistic that an in-person event is possible.

Workshops at Values Revisited addressed the impact analysis and orientation of museum work, the strengthening of social inclusion, and the integration of modern technology, among many other topics.

Configuring museums to heal the divide

With misinformation spreading like wildfire across social media platforms, and opinions and attitudes more polarized than ever, the topic of museums and social responsibility takes on a special urgency. The coronavirus pandemic both factors into and complicates this equation.

"This conference could not have come at a better time," said Aleksandra Berberih-Slana, a curator and museum director who is also the President of the Slovenian Museum Association. After all, "COVID-19 has opened up new questions and problems that we have to deal with."

Museums, as spaces where people from different backgrounds come together to discuss diverse perspectives, can help ameliorate these problems in the coming decade.

"We're all very hopeful about the role that culture and, of course, museums will play in the recovery plan for the next ten years," said Clara Camacho, coordinator of the Portuguese government's working group Museums in the Future. "One of our main challenges for

the conference in Lisbon would be how to raise awareness of the value of museums for our audiences."

Lisbon 2021: Experience, outreach, and education

The Lisbon conference, titled *Participation, Networking, and Partnerships,* will continue the conversation by presenting and addressing issues explored during *Values Revisited*. Panellists and guests will summarize and systematize the questions generated in Berlin, using them as a springboard for further discussion and debate—all while keeping the current state of the coronavirus pandemic in mind.

Education and outreach, which are key for museums looking to fulfil larger societal obligations and create meaningful and lasting change, will receive particular emphasis. Panellists will examine real-life examples from Portugal's specific experiences, especially in comparison to those of other countries in Europe.

The conference will also make heavy use of the research report "Museums in the Future," which is due for completion by the end of 2020. The report will cover networking and partnerships, audience development, digital transition, and management organization, opening up questions that will "form the bridge into the final conference in Maribor," explained Camacho.

Maribor 2021: An eye on the future

The final instalment of the series, to be held in Slovenia's second-largest city, is titled *What Comes Next?* The conference will serve as a capstone, bringing together the wealth of information from the first two conferences in order to create concrete plans.

According to Berberih-Slana "The conference in Portugal will raise questions"—questions such as "What awaits museums in the future? Are they going to have to change—and if so, how? Whom should we partner with during the process?" The panellists hope that these questions and others will be definitively answered in Maribor. Ultimately, conference panellists and participants will come away with plenty of straightforward, implementable ideas for change—meaning that the series will have been more about practice than theory, about accepting change as a reality and meeting the challenges it presents.

In conclusion, David Vuillaume, Chair of the Network of European Museum Organisations (NEMO) and Director of the German Museums Association stated that "Museums, by their very nature, are organizations that have a social responsibility—and they know that." He then reminded participants that this role also implies that museums constantly have to "rethink what that means."

Author: Miranda Siegel, Berlin

Biographies

Dr. Aleksandra Berberih-Slana graduated from the Faculty of Education at the University of Maribor in 1997 at the Department of History and Department of English Language with Literature. In 2000, she obtained her Master's degree and started working as a young researcher at the Department of History at the Faculty of Education, University of Maribor. In 2003, she successfully defended her doctoral thesis and was granted the title of Doctor of Historical Sciences. In 2003, she started working as researcher on a postdoctoral project. In October 2006, she was appointed Director of the National Liberation Museum Maribor, a special museum of modern history.
Aleksandra is the President of the Slovenian Museum Association since 2015. She is a member of the NEMO Executive Board and a Board Member of ICOM Slovenia.

Sara Brighenti is currently deputy commissioner of the National Arts Plan and member of the "Project Group Museums in the Future" commissioned by the Portuguese Government. She led the Museum of Money of the Bank of Portugal and the concept installation of this museum. Previously she worked as cultural and education programmer and as advisor for art museums, exhibitions centers, theaters, and public and private institutions, such as Museum Casa das Histórias Paula Rego, Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, the Ministries of Culture & Education, and UNESCO. She is a regular speaker at conferences and the author of publications in the museum field."

Dr. Steffen Bruendel has headed the PwC Foundation since 2019. The foundation promotes aesthetic cultural education and value-based economic education, and has its headquarters in Düsseldorf and offices in Frankfurt am Main. The historian, who holds a doctorate in history, began his professional career in 1999 at the Hertie Foundation in Frankfurt am Main: first as assistant to the management and later as project manager for European cultural and academic exchange. In 2006, he took over as head of the International Cultural and Academic Exchange Department at E.ON Ruhrgas AG in Essen and was also responsible for the operative work of the E.ON Scholarship Fund and the Alfred and Cläre Pott Foundation. From

2014 to 2019 he was Research Director of the Research Center for Historical Humanities at the Goethe University Frankfurt am Main. Parallel to his professional activities, Bruendel is also active in research, as a lecturer at Bielefeld University (2003–2006) and Ruhr-University Bochum (2010–2012) and as an author of studies on the history of ideas and culture (since 2003).

Clara Camacho holds a PhD in History and a Master in Museum Studies. She is currently the coordinator of the working group Museums in the Future, established by the Portuguese Government and works at the Directorate-General for Cultural Heritage (Ministry of Culture). She was the Director of the Municipal Museum of Vila Franca de Xira, Coordinator of the Portuguese Museums' Network, and Deputy Director of the Portuguese Institute of Museums. She is a guest lecturer at different Portuguese universities, author of articles and papers in Museum Studies, and the representative of the Directorate-General for Cultural Heritage in NEMO and Ibermuseos.

Karen Grøn has been museum director at the Trapholt Museum of Modern Art and Design since 2010. Previously she was curator of interpretation and audience development at Trapholt. In her view, museums can be attractions and take serious social responsibility at the same time.
When Denmark locked down because of the COVID-19 crisis in April 2020, the first question at Trapholt was "How can we support our society?" This became the collaborative art piece LIGHTHOPE, which was created by 1000 participants from all over Denmark during the lockdown under direction of the artists Rasmus Bækkel Fex and Hanne G. The art piece was ready for the audience when the museum reopened in June 2020.

Matjaž Gruden is Director of Democratic Participation at the Council of Europe, which includes Council of Europe activities and programmes in the area of education, including education for democratic citizenship, youth cooperation, culture and cultural heritage, landscape and biodiversity. The Directorate also includes the Platform for the Protection of Journalism and the Safety of Journalists, the Eurimages film fund, and the North-South Centre for Global Interdependence and Solidarity.

Kimmo Levä is the Secretary

General of the Finnish Museums Association. Alongside his duties at the Finnish Museums Association, he is the Managing Director of FMA Creations Ltd, whose main product is the Museum Card. Kimmo Levä holds an MBA from the University of Wales and a Master of Arts in history and political science from Tampere University. He has published several books and articles.
Kimmo is a member of the NEMO Executive Board.

Julia Pagel is secretary general of NEMO, the Network of European Museum Organisations. NEMO acts as European umbrella for all national museum organisations and thus speaks for over 30,000 museums in Europe.
Julia graduated with a master's degree in Art History and Latin American Studies from Freie Universität Berlin in 2004. After her graduation, she worked at the Universidad del Norte in Barranquilla, Colombia. Before she started to work for NEMO, Julia worked at the Film Market for the Berlinale Film Festival and the German Museums Association. From 2013—2017 Julia was a member and Vice President of the Executive Committee of Culture Action Europe. Since 2019, she has been a member of the EU Commission expert group on Cultural Heritage. Julia has initiated and led various EU funded cooperation projects and she has edited several museum related publications.

Margherita Sani works at the Institute of Cultural Heritage of the Region Emilia Romagna, where she is in charge of international projects in the museum field. In the last 20 years she has designed and managed several EU-funded projects, in particular on museum education, lifelong learning, and intercultural dialogue. She is an active member of many professional museum associations and networks, including NEMO, ICOM, and the European Museum Academy.
She served on the executive board of NEMO from 2010–2019, and has also been serving on the jury of the Children in Museums Award since 2014 and on the Steering Committee of Europeana Education since 2019.

Dr. Leonard Schmieding received his doctorate in History from the University of Leipzig in 2011. His areas of expertise include history, and museum education with a focus on German History and the politics of remembrance, history and memory across the Atlantic, and youth and popular

culture. He currently works for the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin – Preußischer Kulturbesitz in the pilot project "Political Education in Museums."

Dominika Szope studied esthetics, philosophy/media theory, and architecture at Karlsruhe University of Arts and Design (HfG). Following three years as a researcher at ZKM, from 2003 to 2006, she took up a teaching position in Media Studies/Media History at the University of Siegen in 2006. In 2010, she founded the communications agency relationales in Karlsruhe, with projects including leading the consultation in 2010 for the State of Lower Saxony for business models. Szope has managed the Communication and Marketing Department at ZKM | Center for Art and Media in Karlsruhe since 2011, being responsible for ZKM communication at a national and international level. Working through the think tank "smARTplaces" since 2014, she has explored in depth the challenges of digital transformation for cultural institutions in terms of both visitors and the structures of the institutions themselves.

Sabine Verheyen is a member of the CDU. From 1994 to 2009 she was a member of the Aachen City Council, and from 1999 to 2009 she was the mayor of her hometown. She has been a member of the European Parliament since 2009. At the beginning of the current legislative period (2019), she became Chairman of the Committee on Culture and Education (CULT).

David Vuillaume has been the director of the German Museums Association since 2017. Prior to this, he was head of the joint office of the Swiss Museums Association and ICOM Switzerland (International Council of Museums) for 11 years. Since 2014 he has been chairing the Network of European Museum Organisations (NEMO) and he has been a board member since 2012.
He studied art history, museology, and business administration, and gained extensive experience in network management at various museums and institutions. Additionally, David represents the museum sector in the German Cultural Council and is a board member of the Swiss National Centre for Cultural Heritage.

André Wilkens is the director of the European Cultural Foundation in Amsterdam.
He is also the Board Chair of Tactical Tech Cooperative, the co-founder of the Initiative Offene

Gesellschaft, and a founding member of the European Council on Foreign Relations.
In the past he worked as Director of the Mercator Centre Berlin, as Director of the Open Society Institute Brussels, and as Head of Strategic Communications of UNHCR in Geneva.

His positions prior to this were at the Ogilvy & Mather communications agency in Brussels, the European Training Foundation in Turin, and the European Commission and European Parliament in Brussels.
André is the author of two books on Europe and on digitalisation, and a regular media contributor.


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