

# *Museum*

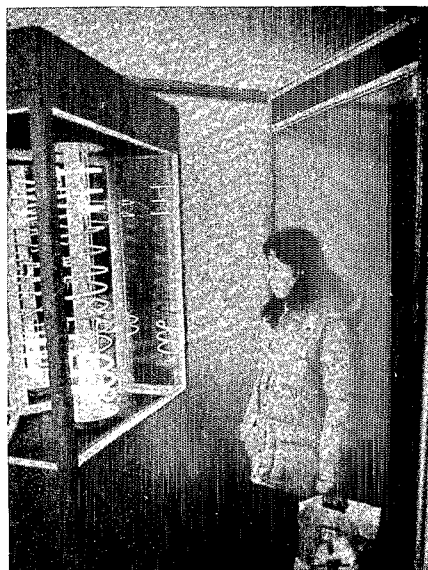
No 162 (Vol XLI, n° 2, 1989)

**Museums and the « real  
world »**

# ***museum***

*Museum*, a quarterly published by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization in Paris, is an international forum of information and reflection on museums of all kinds.

No. 162 (No. 2, 1989)



The world of the real. Curiosity meets knowledge: an encounter at Beijing's Museum of Science and Technology, March 1989.  
(Photo: A. Gillette)

## **Quotable quote**

*Sign seen by a friend of Museum during a recent visit to a prestigious European museum, one of whose wings was about to be re-inaugurated after a rehabilitation project: 'Closed for . . . opening'.*

## **JUST OUT!**

*Museum Index 1974-1983*: an exceptional offer for our readers.

Unesco has just published a cumulative *Index* referring to all articles that have appeared in English and French in *Museum* from 1974 to 1983 inclusive. The volume has the following sub-indexes for easy cross-referencing: subject, country, category of museum and authors. As an exceptional offer, this document is available *free of charge* on request (see inside front cover for our address).

We hope soon to publish a further, similar index for articles published in Spanish since the launching of our Spanish edition in 1980, and to update the English/French Index. Thereafter, our intention is to issue trilingual cumulative indexes.



Editor: Arthur Gillette  
Assistant editor: Marie-Josée Thiel  
Editorial assistant: Christine Wilkinson  
Design: George Ducret

### **ADVISORY BOARD**

Om Prakash Agrawal, India  
Azedine Bachaouch, Tunisia  
Craig C. Black, United States of America  
Fernanda de Camargo e Almeida-Moro, Brazil  
Patrick D. Cardon, Secretary-General of ICOM, *ex officio*  
Gaël de Guichen, ICCROM  
Alpha Oumar Konaré, Mali  
Jean-Pierre Mohen, France  
Luis Monreal, Spain  
Syeung-gil Paik, Republic of Korea  
Lise Skjøth, Denmark  
Vitali Souslov, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics  
Roberto di Stefano, ICOMOS

© Unesco 1989  
Typeset by Coupé, Sautron  
Printed by Vanmelle, Ghent  
*Printed in Belgium*

Authors are responsible for the choice and the presentation of the facts contained in their articles and for the opinions expressed therein, which are not necessarily those of Unesco and do not commit the Organization.

Articles are subject to copyright and may not be reproduced without the consent of Unesco. Extracts may be quoted if due acknowledgement is given.

### **CORRESPONDENCE**

*Questions concerning editorial matters:*

The Editor, *Museum*,  
Unesco, 7 place de Fontenoy,  
75700 Paris, France

*Subscriptions:*

The Unesco Press,  
Sales Division,  
7 place de Fontenoy,  
75700 Paris, France

Each issue: 48 F. Subscription rates  
(4 issues or corresponding  
double issues per year): 156 F

*Museum erred*

*In the second paragraph of page 156 of the English edition of No. 159 of Museum, a most unfortunate mistake was made when the European Museum of the Year Award was referred to as the 'Council of Europe's much-esteemed European Museum of the Year Award'. As is clear from the rest of this piece, the European Museum of the Year Award is not managed by the Council of Europe. Our sincere apologies to author Kenneth Hudson and to all others concerned.*

# *Museums and the 'real world'*

## Contents

## From the Editor

---

### THE MUSEUM AS EDUCATOR: NEW THINKING, INNOVATIVE ACTION

---

- Robin Etherington *Scholē: deschooling museum activities* 69
- Adèle Robert *Children don't like museums? Visit the Inventorium  
and find out* 72
- Julio César Javier Quero *'Tabasco, its Children and its Museums': From experimental  
project to ongoing programme* 76
- An exclusive *Museum* interview *The Tactual Museum of Athens: an educational resource  
for the blind* 78
- Andrea A. García i Sastre *Museums, educational innovation and international  
co-operation* 80
- 

### 'MUSECONOMICS'

---

- Ahmet Aykaç *Elements for an economic analysis of museums* 84
- Fernanda Fedí *Business sponsorship for museums: feeding a hungry robin* 88
- David C. Devenish *London remembers Sigmund Freud: creating a museum, jobs  
and human ties* 91
- 

### EXTERNAL BACKSTOPPING

---

- Lev Yakovlevich Nol *Computer literacy for museums in the USSR* 96
- Diane Saunier *The realm of images: a parable about communication* 101  
*Planning, an illustrated checklist* 103
- Alfredo Rodríguez Orgaz *How to expand the Prado in Madrid: an 'underground'  
proposal* 105
- 

## *Features*

### A CITY AND ITS MUSEUMS

*Monaco* 108

---

### RETURN AND RESTITUTION

*Return and restitution of cultural property: the role  
of museums* 112

*Art Institute of Chicago returns Khmer lintel to Thailand* 113

---

### FRANKLY SPEAKING

Kenneth Hudson *An unnecessary museum* 114

---

### WFFM CHRONICLE

*An encounter: young people and museums* 117

---

### *And what's more . . .*

Peter van Mensch *Museums in the Netherlands: an 'embarrassment of riches'* 120

Guy de Plaen *The Lubumbashi Museum: a museum in Zaire that  
is quite different* 124

*Authenticity, an uncertain concept* 127

---

## From the Editor

The Welsh poet Dylan Thomas (1914-53) once visited the museum of his home town. He 'looked at the stuffed birds stuffed up in their stuffy cases, and the faded labels on the decaying fossils. "This museum," he said, with distaste, "should be in a museum!"'<sup>1</sup>

The same, unfortunately, could have been said about many museums thirty, forty or more years ago and one of the most salient features of museological development since the Second World War has been the general effort, so to speak, 'to get museums out of the museum'.

There is almost unanimous agreement on the need to do so, but differences of principle and practice arise as to the direction and/or nature and/or pace of the effort required. Those differences are making museology a much more lively—and more controversial—profession than Dylan Thomas would have thought possible. This number of *Museum* reflects some of the liveliness, and controversy, of three vectors of current thinking and action aimed at enhancing the two-way relationship between museums and the 'real world'.

First comes 'The Museum as Educator', a section that leads off with a plea to 'deschool' museums' pedagogical work. Then case-studies focus on museum education programmes for children in Paris and the Mexican state of Tabasco as well as on Greece's only museum designed for blind visitors, an educational institution that has yielded some unexpected and thought-provoking results. The final piece in this section reviews ideas, orientations and exchanges that have emerged from Unesco's own attempts over the last decade and more to promote international co-operation for the development of museums' educational activities. (Readers interested in such activities might also want to look at this number's 'WFFM Chronicle', which summarizes recent developments in French museums' work with adolescents.)

Money—this is a second, important and often contentious vector of interaction between museums and the world around them. One reason for contention is that despite the sometimes astronomical sums spent on museums, we understand little if anything about their role in the economy or their relationships with other economic forces. Here an economist who has studied the field offers *Museum's* readers some prudent initial elements for an economic analysis of museums.

Of course, amounts allocated to museums are far from always astronomical, and in this time of general financial stringency non-state sponsorship is a subject of growing interest among museum people. It is a subject already of such complexity that in the United Kingdom (to cite but one country) a special international newsletter on it, *Stapleford's Business and the Arts*, is being launched in association with ICOM in the hope of clarifying the situation. *Museum*, for its part, reports here on two international symposia recently held in Italy on the situation of, and prospects for, museum sponsorship. Also with regard to what we have called 'museconomics' (Are apologies required for the neologism?), the account of an unusual project in London shows that temporary part-time jobs offered under the sort of scheme being used in several countries to

1. Brian Morris, 'The Demands Placed Upon Museums by Their Users', *ICOM 83—Museums for a Developing World*, p. 14, Paris, International Council of Museums, 1984.

cushion unemployment can contribute to museum work in human as well as economic terms.

'External backstopping'—permanent or temporary transfer to museums of techniques and technicians from the 'real world' as when outside teams mount temporary exhibits—is another means of getting museums out of the museum. In this section, the account of how the USSR computerized its museums, an illustrated reminder of some of the pitfalls facing the planning of social projects (to which exhibitions can be assimilated), and an article by a communications consultant, who has worked with several museums, exemplify this kind of interaction. A Spanish architect also makes an original proposal for enlarging Madrid's Prado Museum.

On the whole, these articles on the museum as educator, 'museconomics' and external backstopping demonstrate, we feel, how varied, inventive and illuminating efforts can be to open doors and windows into what is still sometimes considered a sombre institution. As Dylan Thomas himself wrote, in another, admittedly more lyrical, context: 'Light breaks where no sun shines...'

Museums are evolving as perhaps never before. *Museum*, too, must change.

Meeting at Unesco Headquarters in December 1988, the magazine's Advisory Board (see inside front cover) agreed wholeheartedly with a number of new policy proposals made by the editorial staff. We hope readers will be interested in learning about, and perhaps reacting to, some of these changes.

The structure of each number will focus both on a given theme of general interest (such as 'Museums and the "Real World"' in this issue) and on a series of regular features, while also making space for isolated articles of special interest.

There are four regular features in this number. The 'Chronicle' of the World Federation of Friends of Museums, mentioned above, is already known to readers. They have also previously seen occasional references to the 'Return and Restitution of Cultural Property' to its countries of origin, which we plan to make a more frequent and prominent feature, given the importance of this action in rectifying certain iniquities of colonial times, but also of more recent history through international co-operation. In this number, we recall museums' ethical responsibilities in the 'R and R' area, and report on the return of a valuable fragment of sculpture from a museum in the United States to its original temple in Thailand.

Systematizing and broadening the earlier occasional 'Opinion' columns, 'Frankly Speaking' is intended to become a regular forum in which controversial (but not needlessly conflictual) points of view may be forcefully stated by museum professionals and other culturally knowledgeable individuals (poets, painters, communicators, etc.) who have refreshing ideas about museums. Well known in and beyond international museum circles, Kenneth Hudson inaugurates 'Frankly Speaking' in this number with a bemused scrutiny of major museums he calls 'cathedrals without parish churches'.

'A City and Its Museums' moves away from the glitter and fanfare of prestigious world-renowned institutions and offers readers intelligently guided tours of museums in undeservedly lesser-known settings, such as provincial towns where museums have displayed particular ingenuity, have acquired special identity and have elicited what can only be called real affection among the local population. We begin in this number with Monaco.

In this issue of *Museum* there are two additional articles of special interest. One, on the museum scene in the Netherlands, is our way of marking the holding of the fifteenth General Conference of the International Council of Museums (ICOM) in The Hague in August/September 1989.

The other article recounts the development of the Lubumbashi Museum in Zaire, and pinpoints problems of applying non-African ethnographic criteria to definitions of such concepts as 'authenticity'.

The tone as well as the structure of *Museum* needs to change. Factual, linear description is certainly appropriate for certain topics within our purview, but by no means all. The complexity of some major issues currently facing museum professionals and their friends and allies (all potential readers, we feel) is such that unrelenting critical analysis is often required. In addition, a more journalistic approach—interviews, reportage, etc.—can be used on occasion without necessarily diluting or otherwise denaturing the substance of even serious issues. Other experiments in form may be attempted; already in this number one author felt she could best get her ideas across in a fable, and the 'WFFM Chronicle' is presented as a set of lecture notes. As for humour... Who will be the first reader to flush the Loch Ness Monster out of his hiding-place in this number of *Museum*?

'No periodical can exist without its readers.' A truism? No doubt. But anyone familiar with institutional journalism knows only too well that the bureaucratic world funds not a few lighthouses which continue to beam life-saving messages out over dark seas where ships have long since ceased to sail.

What do you, a regular, occasional or first-time reader of *Museum*, think of the magazine and of the changes we are making? Our address is on the inside front cover.

A.G.

# THE MUSEUM AS EDUCATOR: NEW THINKING, INNOVATIVE ACTION

## Scholē: *deschooling museum activities*

Robin Etherington

Has over fourteen years in professional museum work in Canada and Mexico: as curator of exhibitions, managing collections, programming and implementing educational activities, and administration.

By *scholē*, the Greeks meant 'leisure for the pursuit of insight'.<sup>1</sup> According to Marshall McLuhan, 'As the age of information demands the simultaneous use of all our facilities, we discover that we are most at leisure when we are most intensely involved.'<sup>2</sup> Museums, in their true educational capacity, can indeed involve people.

Our society is an information society, as opposed to industrial. Information is a critical resource socially and economically. Information flow is increasingly more rapid and far-reaching. Within the context of an information paradigm, museums will be centres of information, not mere repositories of artefacts. Museum users will request direct use of museum information and resources.

My thesis is that museums certainly could become places of *scholē* and exciting information centres. Museum professionals often think of their institutions as an educational medium, but they rarely perceive this medium's full potential. Present museums tend to be a non-participatory medium, such as print, instead of an involving medium, such as television, video, computer graphics and animation. This is understandable, since museums developed in the age of print literacy. That they continue as largely non-participatory institutions is the more unfortunate, from my point of view, since this trend prevents them from realizing their tremendous potential as places of *scholē*.

My own experience and reflection have led me to the conviction that museum professionals could benefit greatly by considering the works of social thinkers, such as Ivan Illich and Marshall McLuhan, about the roles of information and education in contemporary society. The purpose of this article is to suggest to the readers of *Museum* how some of these thinkers' ideas could be applied to the design and implementation of museums' educational programmes and other processes, and, equally important, to the ways they view themselves and their relationships with those who come to them.

Let us look first at Illich's critique of schooling. He questions the usefulness of compulsory schooling, which prescribes what is 'important' to know from outside the pupil's own concerns and needs. He calls into serious doubt this kind of learning, since real learning can be better served elsewhere: in the family and workplace, for example.

Illich underscores the need for the learner to exercise his or her initiative, 'to decide what he or she likes rather than learning what is useful for someone else'.<sup>3</sup> This devolution of initiative requires, in turn, a search for 'the means by which the individual might reclaim command of his own education: its conception, planning, conduct, evaluation and use'.<sup>4</sup> Illich's critique leads him to call for the 'deschooling' of society.<sup>5</sup>

1. Ivan Illich, *Deschooling Society*, p. 118, New York, Harper & Row, 1970.

2. Marshall McLuhan, *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man*, p. 301, New York, Signet Books, 1964.

3. Ivan Illich et al., *After Deschooling, What?*, p. 149, New York, Harper & Row, 1973.

4. *Ibid.*

5. Illich, *op. cit.*, p. 2.

Is it not time we also considered de-schooling museums' educational activities?

All those reading this article might not agree with that goal. Yet it cannot be denied, I feel, that where museums do have implicit and explicit educational functions, these are often thought of and carried out in a very school-like manner. At times, museum professionals seem to find it difficult to accept that learning on the part of an individual does not always require directive planning on the part of museums. Often planning of educational activities in museums is carried out in conjunction with, or following the model of, school curriculum development. Indeed, museum professionals tend not to give recognition to the idea that unpredicted outcomes of self-directed learning can be as valuable as pre-planned instruction conducted by certified teachers or educators.

#### *Visitors' interests and questions*

One of Illich's major premises is the ability of the individual to learn 'casually', that is, without professional programmed instruction. I have discovered that people are not only prepared to assume the responsibility of participatory learning in a museum context, as elsewhere, but that they are actually doing so.

Instead of continuing to focus on the school curriculum and/or methods, many museum education programmes could give greater attention to their relevance to societies and individuals, as well as to both the feasibility and the desirability of more spontaneous and self-motivated learning on the part of visitors. How can museum educators assess ways of better facilitating the public's involvement in a participatory learning process? Possibly, the future role of the professional museum educator will be to help visitors formulate and articulate their own interests and questions, thus enabling them to explore an issue or subject that interests them at the moment.

If there can be substantial agreement on the validity of the principle of de-schooling museums, the next question is how that principle is to be implemented.

Regarding this issue, McLuhan's work on modern information media opens up a number of interesting avenues that museum educators could explore more fully. One of these concerns the most effective format for information transfer.

In schools, McLuhan observes, the old

classification-of-data format is still adhered to. But in some countries at least, the increasingly electronic age is seeing integrated formats playing an ever greater role. In these countries a whole generation of schoolchildren and young people are now interacting on a daily basis with an increasingly sophisticated and varied array of hardware and software, such as micro-computers, video and optical disc players, and other telecommunication systems. For this generation, the classified and categorized approach to seeking, transferring and using information, coupled with the methodology of teaching unrelated subjects, is contradicted by children's experienced ability to assimilate and understand simultaneously the tremendous variety of data bombarding them from different sources. It is little wonder that for many young people school seems unreal.

Another point raised by McLuhan that could contribute to the de-schooling of museum education, concerns the potential of the media for involving learners. Some readers may have been surprised when at the beginning of this article I stated that, in contrast to the museum as a non-participatory medium, television and other still newer media forms are 'involving' media. Is there not a widespread impression that television and other electronic media require and cultivate passivity? The idea that in some settings children spend more time in front of the television screen than at school has even been advanced to explain the high rates of functional illiteracy among school-leavers.

Nevertheless, there is evidence to the contrary that the electronic media offer opportunities for more active and more varied involvement than a more traditional medium, such as print. Possibly, today's young people are facing an increasing struggle when they attempt to express themselves via the written word. They are, however, able to design sophisticated computer games and programs, as well as demonstrate literacy in visual communication. As long ago as 1964, McLuhan found that children and adults, when faced with a multiplicity of electronic sources of information, 'pore, they probe, they slow down and involve themselves in depth'.<sup>6</sup>

#### *Implications and predictions*

What implications and predictions can be derived for the museum world from the



foregoing? In the first place, it is likely that museum users will become more and more dissatisfied with the ways in which and the times at which, museums make information available. They will be requesting access to a wider array of information in forms and at times convenient for them, in much the same way that clients take advantage of automated twenty-four-hour personal banking services.<sup>7</sup>

Another probable development, I feel, will be increased public participation in the development and delivery of mechanisms providing access to museum information and resources. Thus it is critically important to question people from all walks of life about their needs and desires concerning access to museum resources, and to listen to their answers. People will become more actively involved in decision-making about museum programmes and activities.

Furthermore, computer and other information technologies offer the potential of joint ventures involving both museum professionals and visitors in fresh interpretation of material culture. There are enormous, but as yet little-used, possibilities for the exploration of the conceptual, cultural, temporal and environmental aspects of material culture. These include computer graphics and animation, 3-D simulation, and video-digitizing. All enable interactive exchanges between museum professionals and the public. For this, museums will have to develop and use appropriate user-sensitive software, taking into full account the cognitive and analytical skills of all information seekers, professionals and non-professionals alike.

Indeed, there is a possible challenge for museum professionals in the potential for more rapid and lively interaction between them and the public. The challenge is that the frontier between the user and the provider of information may blur. If museum professionals do become engaged with their audience in what Illich calls 'the most rigorous, open-ended thinking they can do',<sup>8</sup> then the probability is that new knowledge will be *jointly* created. Current information technologies, coupled with a sophisticated open-mindedness on the part of museum professionals, afford the opportunity for museums to be centres of self-directed learning for all museum users, professional and public together.

Finally, there is the great challenge and exciting prospect of networking. The volume of information, as well as the

development of knowledge, will be directly proportional to the number of museums, including their professionals and users, linked through different interactive databases in ways undreamed of before the information technology revolution of the last decade or two.<sup>9</sup>

It is ironic that our word 'school', with its implications of set norms and methods of knowledge transmission, derives from *scholē*, the ancient Greek concept of valued leisure during which insight could be pursued. For museums to become lively places of *scholē*, I am convinced that they must be de-schooled, and to do that we must make full use of the new information technologies now at our disposal. As Illich put it, 'If a person is to grow up, he needs, in the first place, access to things, places, processes, events and records. To guarantee such access is primarily a matter of unlocking the privileged storerooms to which they are presently consigned.'<sup>10</sup> ■

6. McLuhan, *op. cit.*, p. 269.

7. Stanley M. Davis, *Future Perfect*, pp. 17-18, 54, New York, Addison-Wesley, 1987.

8. Illich et al., *op. cit.*, p. 136.

9. See the article by Lev Y. Nol on page 96 of this issue of *Museum*.

10. Illich et al., *op. cit.*, p. 22.

## Children don't like museums?

Visit the Inventorium and find out



Cité des Sciences et de l'Industrie

Geometrical shapes occur with soap bubbles. Through this game the children also discover structures in nature and the world of technology.

### Adèle Robert

Born in 1941 in the United States, she holds a degree in Fine Arts from the University of California at Berkeley and in visual communications from the University of Cincinnati, Ohio. Between 1975 and 1981 she worked with the children's workshop at the Georges Pompidou Centre in Paris, and from 1981 to 1988 she participated in the design and organization of the Inventorium, which is the subject of this article. She is currently an independent consultant and a member of the Executive Board of the Committee for Education and Cultural Action of the International Council of Museums (ICOM). She wishes to thank Dr Alan Friedman and the team that worked with her at the Inventorium for their helpful advice.

Children frequently think of museums as lifeless closed places for specialists only. To them exhibitions are shrouded in mystery, inexplicable and lacking in relevance to their daily lives. Children do not often visit museums spontaneously; visits are usually organized by schools or by conscientious parents.

Why should this be? Has it something to do with the nature of museums, with the type of educational thinking behind them, or with the circumstances in which children visit them? How can we ensure that children, who are only chance visitors, actually enjoy museums and become interested in what they have to offer? In this article, we shall analyse the fundamental choices made in the design and organization of a place where children are introduced to science and technology: the Inventorium, a museum space in the Cité des Sciences et de l'Industrie at La Villette, Paris.

In designing this museum space, we

analysed the objectives of formal education (school) and those of non-formal education (other educative activities) in an attempt to discover how a museum space for children differs from school. Several questions arose:

#### *Who are the target visitors?*

- A museum space for children is intended for 6- to 12-year-olds, individually or in groups, often with adults 'in tow'.
- The school caters for standard-size groups of children, usually of the same age, for example, classes of twenty-five 10-year-olds.

#### *Who plans the learning programme?*

- In a children's museum space, the children themselves work out an informal programme on the spot, either as individuals or as members of a mixed group. The child can change the order and duration of the experience at any moment.

- At school it is the teacher who establishes and keeps to the syllabus. Order and duration are also determined by the teacher.

#### *What are the aims?*

- In a children's museum space: to arouse curiosity, surprise and imagination in response to science, technology or industry through observation, handling, construction activities, etc.
- At school: to acquire specific knowledge, skills and aptitudes considered as vital preliminaries to continuing a formal school career and entering into society. Wherever possible, their additional objectives are the same as the museum's.

#### *What subjects should be covered?*

- In a children's museum space, subjects are chosen according to their relevance and their ability to represent areas of science, technology and industry, if possible from a multidisciplinary point of view. Neither prior knowledge on entry nor a complete grasp of the subject on leaving is expected.
- At school, subjects are carefully selected to form part of a curriculum for the development of basic skills, spanning a number of years. The subjects may be chosen on the strength of pupils' previous knowledge and mastery of pre-set subject units is expected on their completion.

In designing the Inventorium we paid attention to the ways in which young children acquire knowledge. Among those who have taken an interest in the various aspects of education, Jean Piaget, the Swiss psychologist, highlighted the distinctive nature of young children's cognitive processes as early as 1919. He scientifically demonstrated how children reason differently from adults, and showed that their thinking follows a logical pattern. Children's behaviour is not disorganized or arbitrary. On the contrary, it follows precise rules, but rules that are different from those governing adult behaviour. Consequently, it is reasonable to devise and provide an original museum space for children which is different from a museum for adults.

#### *What kind of exhibitions? How best to design and evaluate them?*

The initial choice of a theme for an open-access display was made in view of the

The Inventorium proposes initial contact with science and technology through games and discovery. The child touches, observes, handles and is always actively involved in the activities.



Cité des Sciences et de l'Industrie

overall aims of the Cité des Sciences et de l'Industrie. An attempt was made to link up pure science, technology and industrial applications. It has not always been easy to introduce this approach, which was quite novel in France eight years ago. The novelty has been that specialists of every kind (biologists, physicists, etc.) have had to broaden their fields of knowledge in order to invent a new type of museum. One of the first steps taken at the time of the initial design was to encourage these various specialists to think in terms of interdisciplinarity. Themes were selected according to their capacity to represent science, technology and industry to a young public in an interactive way, dealing with more than one discipline at a time.

Not all scientific and technical subjects lend themselves to open-access exhibitions for children. Some are too dangerous and require the presence of an adult; others are too time-consuming and

complex—for instance, experiments in evaporation or certain experiments in astronomy. At the same time, children's displays should not involve lengthy explanations or very detailed descriptions, these being more appropriate for exhibitions for adults or for other media such as films or books. Rather than present a sequence of theoretical ideas or explain phenomena in an attempt to achieve understanding, we tried to create situations in which children can experiment. Several educational situations have thus been identified:

Conflict situations which involve a discrepancy between what the child thinks it knows and the real phenomenon, which will alter its understanding of a scientific phenomenon.

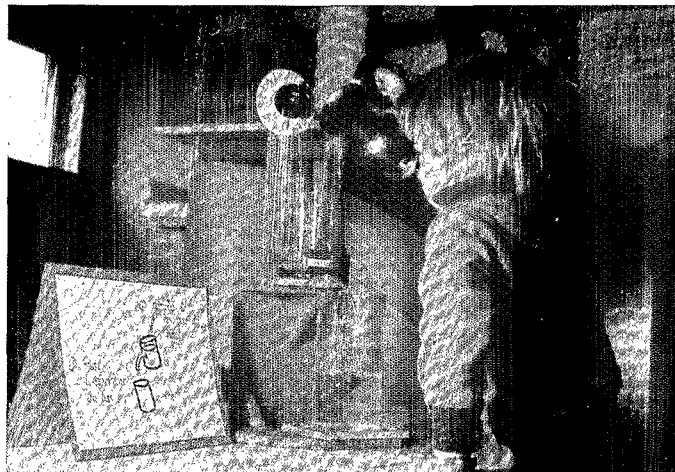
Trial-and-error situations in which the child seeks out the evidence that will prove to him or her that a given property is or is not present.

Problem situations that call for an analy-



Cité des Sciences et de l'Industrie

In *The Body in Movement* the young visitors are introduced to anatomy, physiology and the mechanisms that make their bodies work, through observation of their own bodies.



Jean-Marc Drouin

The working models built with inexpensive—often recycled—materials are tested with the children, who are free to move about as they wish. Some 50 per cent of the display components were evaluated during temporary exhibitions or in schools.

sis of the problem and experiments to test the stages leading to a solution. Several stages are needed to develop a museum presentation for children. As the majority of the proposed activities and exhibits are original, a substantial part of this work consists of formative evaluation, which means observing and questioning children during or after use of working models. The evaluation takes place at specific stages in the development of the displays, and makes it possible to adapt the final product to the scientific and technical objective sought. At the present stage of research, we can identify three main phases in the development of an open-access display for children.

#### *Exploratory workshop sessions*

These sessions operate for a fixed period of time (approximately an hour and a half) and deal with a subject selected in advance by the adult, activities organizer or team-leader.

#### *Construction of a working model*

These models are freely tested by children. Accompanied by simple written instructions, the models are positioned where they are freely available, in a place conducive to non-formal education such as another museum or a school play-

ground. Children are invited to explore the components receiving no prior information. These sessions are sometimes recorded on video-tape, thus enabling the designers and educators to observe the children's behaviour in detail (where they go, what they do, what they say, etc.). Written texts and instructions are also assessed during these sessions.

#### *The final version*

After any necessary modifications, the final display is organized. This task, carried out in close collaboration with the designer, who is aware of the importance of formative evaluation, must take account of cost and time limitations. In our experience, these three phases are the ideal format for the design and presentation of an interactive exhibition on scientific and technological themes. Children's observations in a non-formal learning situation led us to identify certain stages in a child's progress. In our experience, an exhibition must:

Arouse the child's interest.

Sustain interest long enough to encourage the child to undertake one or more of the following operations: (a) sensory and motor interaction (looking, touching, listening, etc.); (b) systematic experimental interaction (systematic experiment with analysis

of results, situations of exploration, situations that alter the pre-existing mental image, problem-solving situations etc.).

Convey an idea of a specific area of science, technology or industry selected for the exhibition.

Communicate scientific and technological concepts, a technological skill or a particular vocabulary.

Stimulate children's interest in seeing other exhibitions on the same subject.

These important criteria determined the final selection of the subjects exhibited in the Inventorium for the 6-to-12 age-group.

### *The Inventorium today and tomorrow*

Open to the public since March 1986, the Inventorium is ideal as a place for children and also holds interest for accompanying adults. Located near the main entrance of the Cité des Sciences et de l'Industrie, it occupies 1,850 m<sup>2</sup> split into two areas as follows: 650 m<sup>2</sup> for children aged between 3 and 5 and 1,200 m<sup>2</sup> for children aged between 6 and 12.

#### *An open-access area*

The open-access area, composed of twelve 'display blocks', is the heart of the Inventorium for the 6- to 12-year-olds. The exhibitions cover a wide variety of subjects, from the simplest of machines to technological items or the living world. For instance, in *Communication Techniques* the child is acquainted with very simple communication systems (a rubber tube) and the most advanced technologies (videophone). More than an exhibition, it is a place for communication. In *Discovering Light* the child discovers certain fundamental properties of light through games and active participation. Young visitors acquire some idea of anatomy in the presentation of *The Body in Movement* through observation of their own bodies. In *The Ant Megalopolis* children discover all the secrets of underground ant society. The other displays are as follows: *We Are All Different*, *Perceiving and Acting*, *Pond Life*, *Using a Computer*, *Time and Rhythm*, *Shapes and Structures*, *Water Pumps* and *Harnessing Water, Air and Fire*.

The open area presentations are always geared to non-formal education, and it is

the children themselves who determine their itinerary. The displays have certain things in common:

Advanced technologies: the use of audio-visual and data-processing techniques broadens the scope of sensory perception (cameras in the television studio, video recordings, computer programs, etc.).

Specific interest-arousing activities: the organizers can supply the children with a number of appliances and instruments (stethoscopes, telescopes, etc.) to enhance their appreciation of the open-access displays.

#### *Multi-purpose areas*

These areas (2 × 50 m<sup>2</sup>) can house activities that complement the museum display, such as workshops or experiments and evaluation of the models for future exhibitions.

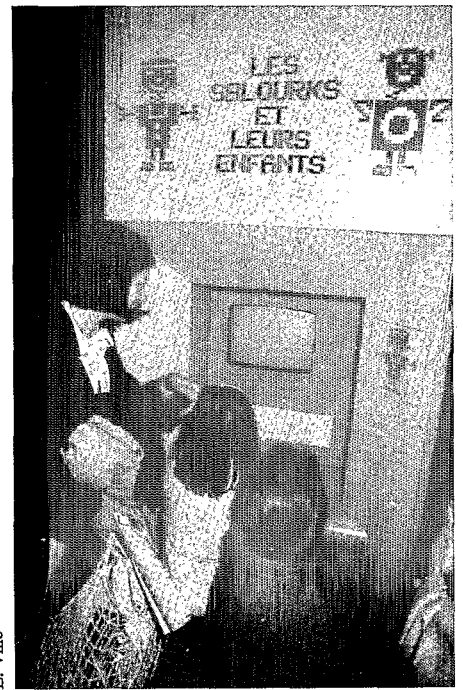
#### *Resource centres*

These small documentation areas provide children and adults with books, films and brochures which may be consulted on the spot or borrowed. There is a data bank in which visitors can find further information on the same themes in the Cité itself, or on other resource centres (science clubs, museums, associations, etc.) in France.

#### *The next steps*

Based on this principle, the area initially planned as a simple nursery for small children between the ages of 3 and 5 has also been converted into a museum for children. The design and fitting out of all the areas are now complete. They must remain flexible and be able to respond to new objectives which may emerge during use. Close observation of the children and constant evaluation of the way the area is used by the general public and by groups can suggest ways of improving on this initial idea, so that this museum facility may be constantly adjusted and adapted to new demands and to scientific, technological and educational innovations. ■

[Translated from French]



E. Ville

Computer games often accompany the display elements. Here, for instance, in the block entitled *We Are All Different*, is a program on heredity.

# 'Tabasco, its children and its museums': From experimental project to ongoing programme

Julio César Javier Quero

Director of the Cultural Institute, Villahermosa,  
Tabasco, Mexico.

*A country may have a good museum infrastructure which displays a wide range of its historical and archaeological treasures, but which is visited mainly by tourists—this is one of the paradoxes facing certain developing countries. How can this be overcome, and how can we ensure that children (as a target group in the local population) enjoy encountering and learning about their past and their ancestors, thanks to museums?*

*The action of the Cultural Institute of Tabasco, Mexico—initially an experimental project but now an ongoing programme—provides some clues. But how did it all begin?*

The first museum in the town of Villahermosa, in the state of Tabasco, was set up in 1948. It was small, but it had a large number of exhibits, a fact that induced the state, in 1952, to rehouse it in a larger building. This new museum of Tabasco became one of the largest museums in the country at the time. In 1958, the Museum Park of Venta was opened, occupying an area of seven hectares, in which the exhibits were arranged in a way that reflects in miniature the pattern of their discovery at the archaeological site of Venta, Huimanguillo, Tabasco. The director of both museums was the poet Carlos Pellicer Cámara.

During the 1970s, construction work started on a major archaeological museum to replace the one opened in 1952. As a result, by 1982 the town of Villahermosa had two of the leading museums of Latin America, housing archaeological remains dating from 1200 B.C. to A.D. 1521. These museums were visited mainly by tourists in the region. Surveys conducted in 1982 showed that only 10 per cent of Tabascans had an idea of what the museums contained, and a superficial idea at that.

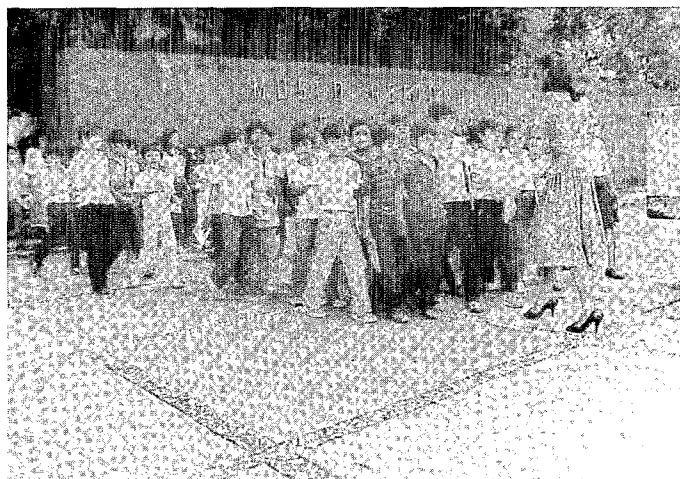
At that point, the Carlos Pellicer Cámara Regional Museum of Anthropology attempted to develop its educational potential by encouraging school visits, sending direct invitations to each school. The response fell short of expectations, partly because such visits could be made only by order of the state education authorities. Finally, in 1983, the education authorities requested the Carlos Pellicer Cámara Regional Museum of Anthropology to devise a plan for using museums as an educational resource to benefit all schools.

An experimental pilot project was accordingly prepared to enable the schools of the town of Villahermosa to visit the Carlos Pellicer Cámara Regional Museum of Anthropology. The aims of the project were to: (a) improve primary-school children's knowledge of the origins of culture; (b) use the cultural facilities of museums as a means of reinforcing education in the state; and (c) strengthen children's knowledge of the Olmec, Mayan and Meso-American cultures.

## *Stages, problems and solutions*

The experimental pilot stage of the project covering the 1983/84 academic year had the hoped-for success. The quantitative goals achieved were seventy-five schools covered, with 11,232 pupils in the fourth, fifth and the sixth years of basic education. The experience gained through this experimental project helped us to plan an ongoing programme for the following stages. During the second stage, which coincided with the 1984/85 and 1985/86 academic years, the programme became an established one, albeit open to improvements from year to year. Its aims were to: (a) use the facilities and cultural content of the museum to back up the educational and cultural work of teachers; (b) re-stake





our claim to our cultural background through Tabascan children; (c) bring the cultural holdings of museums to schools in the state; and (d) show children that museums are not static, unchanging places reserved for a minority, but dynamic centres, organized and administered in the interest of all.

During this second stage, average annual visiting figures were 354 schools and 16,840 pupils. During the third stage, that is, the 1986/87 and 1987/88 academic years, new museums joined the programme and the annual average of visitors rose to 412 schools and 20,080 pupils. Today, five museums, i.e. half of the museums in Tabasco, are co-operating with the educational programme, while the remaining half have similar programmes geared to the senior secondary schools.

It should be noted that at every stage we made adjustments to the programme, based on the views and suggestions of both teachers and pupils in response to on-the-spot surveys.

The main problem was that children's attention tended to be distracted while in the museum, partly because they were not always accompanied by their teachers. To help prevent such distraction, friendly competitions involving the guides and the pupils are being introduced as an incentive for them to continue paying attention for as long as possible so that they retain the information given to them. Another problem arising in the museums is that the guides change constantly. One of the reasons for this is that guides often leave the museum and find jobs in the private sector as tourist guides, in most cases because they have finished their higher education and are beginning their professional careers. The museums have had to make the best of this situation, realizing that it results from normal indi-

vidual aspirations, and new guides are therefore trained at least twice a year, while those already in service are given further training. During the training sessions, emphasis is placed on group dynamics, general anthropology, the pre-Columbian history of Mexico, and the history, ethnography and geography of Tabasco.

As new museums joined the programme, administrative and operational problems arose. It became necessary to reorganize schedules and the distribution of teaching kits and background documents. The need to extend museum services to the rest of the community, which became apparent from analysis and interchange between programme participants and community members was also examined. One of the most successful means of integrating the museums into the community was motivating and spreading awareness among cultural leaders through training courses, so that they might act as intermediaries in attaining that objective.

The most important condition for the programme to remain operational is probably the ongoing provision of backstopping by the supporting institutions. They, in turn, should be kept aware of the fact that making a cultural and educational investment in the child population is tantamount to developing it into a productive factor with multiplier effects on culture.

### Resources

The Cultural Institute of Tabasco provides part of the resources required. For instance, for the 1987/88 school year it allocated 12 million pesos (approximately \$5,250), which was used to purchase teaching materials (paper-board, colouring materials, pencils, chalk, modelling clay, crayons, water-colours, etc.),

Thanks to the ongoing *Tabasco, its Children and its Museums* programme, every year more than 20,000 primary-school pupils learn to feel at home in five of this Mexican state's museums.

office stationery and supplies (stencils, mimeograph ink, etc.), and stationery for the reproduction of teaching kits, teacher and pupil evaluations and programme monitoring forms. Twelve guides, each receiving an annual salary of 4 million pesos (hence a total cost of 48 million pesos (approximately \$21,000)), are involved in the programme.

The state education authorities also make a contribution. They provide four transport vehicles (each bus carrying forty-five passengers), and defray the corresponding expenses for maintenance, petrol, etc. They also provide the drivers and pay their wages.

In conclusion, we want museums to give people an opportunity to understand the origins of their way of life and customs. Our ongoing programme provides Tabascan children with such an opportunity. ■

[Translated from Spanish]

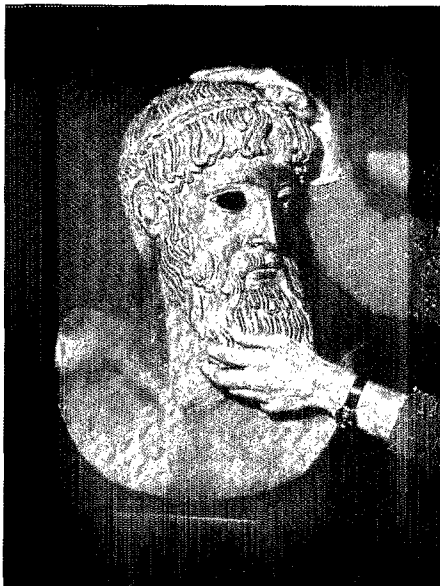
# The Tactual Museum of Athens: an educational resource for the blind

An exclusive *Museum* interview

*The Lighthouse for the Blind of Greece, founded by concerned citizens as a private initiative in 1947, has the goal of promoting both the vocational rehabilitation and the full social integration of the visually impaired. One of the most recent of many different activities undertaken by the Lighthouse was the creation, in 1984, of the Tactual Museum. The only one of its kind in Greece, this is a thought-provoking project liable to interest many museum professionals, and indeed all concerned with museums as an educational resource for the disabled.*

*At the European Conference on Museums and Disabled People held by the Fondation de France at Unesco Headquarters in November 1988, Museum met and interviewed Mrs Iphigenia Polydorou-Benaki, Assistant Director of both the Lighthouse for the Blind and the Tactual Museum. Holder of diplomas in history of art from the Ecole du Louvre in Paris, in social work from the School of Social Work in Athens and in political science from the University of Athens, Mrs Polydorou-Benaki brings to this innovative museum a broad range of social, psychological and cultural as well as educational insights.*

Thanks to copies of sculpture and architectural models, visitors discover their heritage.



*Museum:* How did the idea of a museum for the blind originate?

*Iphigenia Polydorou-Benaki:* The suggestion to create such a museum was first given public exposure by an article in the braille magazine put out by the Lighthouse; the readers' response was immediate—and positive. By the way, the Tactual Museum is by no means aimed exclusively at the blind; but I'll come back to that in a moment.

*Museum:* How were your permanent exhibitions assembled, and what do they contain?

*Polydorou-Benaki:* Putting together the exhibitions was a joint process involving both blind people who wanted access to museums and who gave us an idea of what they wanted in the museum, and archaeologists at the University of Athens, who expressed a more specialized point of view.

As a result, we now have basically four sections, which are on display in a medium-sized, two-storey modern building with about 500 square metres of exhibition space, fitted for safety's sake with rubber flooring material. (Let me say in passing that we are hoping to install a special entrance and a lift for visitors who can see but are confined to wheelchairs.)

The first section, on Greek antiquity, includes about 110 objects—statues, vases, bas-reliefs and the like—ranging from pre-history to Roman times. These objects were chosen as lending themselves particularly well to being understood by touching.

*Museum:* Are these original objects?

*Polydorou-Benaki:* No, they are copies, mostly made of plaster. Of course, we were very much of two minds on this issue. On the one hand, the ideal would have been to allow—in fact encourage—sight-impaired visitors to feel the true texture of the originals; but this would have raised another problem. I mean that while a general trend in Europe is towards a more relaxed curatorial attitude about public access to certain original objects, in Greece we seem to be moving the other way: more 'don't touch' and less 'hands-on'. And, of course, there can be a very real danger to fragile items in a hands-on approach. Three or four of our plaster replicas have been broken since the Tactual Museum opened, in fact.

*Museum:* How have you solved what sounds to be an inextricable dilemma?

*Polydorou-Benaki:* By something of a



compromise. We were able to obtain some rough, unsculpted but none the less ancient marble from the Acropolis. Delphi and elsewhere. Now, as a kind of 'appetizer' to exploring replicas of statues and bas-reliefs, sight-impaired visitors can at least get a feel of the authentic raw material.

### Models, board games and the Optacon

*Museum:* To return to the collections...

*Polydorou-Benaki:* Yes, well, the second section is made up of architectural maquettes which, for example, enable one to visit the Parthenon by hand, as it were. The section is not limited to antique structures, moreover. The blind people who helped us choose the subjects for this section expressed interest in their contemporary architectural environment—something of a mystery for them—and strongly requested the inclusion of models of such modern buildings as a block of flats and a hospital. Thus, the museum serves as a practical educational resource in contemporary as well as historical terms.

The third section is made up of paintings by visually-impaired children and, as such, is unfortunately not accessible to totally blind visitors. I should add, however, that it is a broadly international section since the paintings shown in it come from fourteen different countries.

The fourth and final part of the permanent exhibition is really a showroom, and sales room, of aids and devices for the visually impaired. There, we have braille typewriters from several countries, braille games of various kinds—including board games and even a surface-differentiated Rubik's cube—and an Optacon.

*Museum:* An Optacon?

*Polydorou-Benaki:* It's a revolutionary machine that is able to 'read' normal flat-page printed text and transform it into relief characters that can be read with the fingers, like braille. It is, unfortunately, still very expensive.

*Museum:* Yes, you mentioned that this section of the museum is a sales room as well as a showroom.

*Polydorou-Benaki:* Quite right: the items on display in the aids and devices section may be purchased at cost price; and, of course, the Rubik's cube is not nearly so expensive as the Optacon!

*Museum:* What about temporary exhibits?

*Polydorou-Benaki:* Ours are usually a

very popular attraction indeed. Recently, we had one on musical instruments, old but not ancient, mostly from the nineteenth century. There was a lyre, pan pipes, a guitar and a kind of small bouzouki, a favourite stringed instrument of the Greeks, called a *baglamas*. Our blind visitors enjoyed this exhibit very much, perhaps because they felt little if at all disadvantaged in understanding it compared with visitors who can see. This was very much a 'hands-on' and 'ears-open' show!

### Visitors and their reactions

*Museum:* Who are your visitors?

*Polydorou-Benaki:* We receive about a thousand visitors a year, with numbers varying according to the season, as is true for almost any museum. As I mentioned at the outset, they are far from all blind. Children from regular local schools come here, for instance, because the antiquities and architecture sections are simple synoptic introductions to the Greek history they are studying.

Of course, the main public of the Tactual Museum is made up of blind and sight-diminished people. Most come from Greece but news about the museum has crossed our borders and many who visit us are from abroad: Italy, Norway, Belgium the United Kingdom, the United States, the USSR and France, as well as other countries.

*Museum:* And what are visitors' reactions to the Museum?

*Polydorou-Benaki:* Ah! They have taught me a lot! We don't only say, 'Please touch'; we add, 'Please speak'. And they are not reticent at all. They make little exclamations and they call to each other and to us constantly using the verb 'look', paradoxical as that may sound.

Recently, I guided a man's hands over a sculpture of a horse that was missing one of its halves. 'Can you tell that half has been broken off?' I asked. 'Of course I can', he replied, continuing, 'and you, look and you will see, as I do, that the horse is also lacking an ear'. Do you know, I had never noticed before that the horse was missing an ear!

### Two pieces of advice

*Museum:* How is the Museum financed?

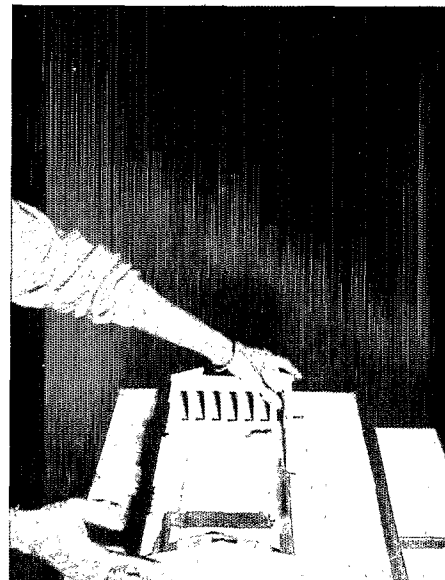
*Polydorou-Benaki:* There has been very minimal state funding for initial and running costs. Basically, as a private initiative, we draw our budget from donations

of various kinds. In Greece, donors are often people with blind relatives, and donations are encouraged by tax relief afforded to those who help programmes like ours. Our basic running costs are also offset by income from the interest on charitable funds set up by certain Greek-Americans.

*Museum:* Would you have any advice to offer other people and groups who might be considering establishing a museum like yours?

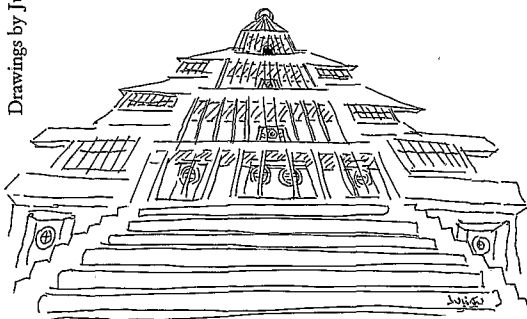
*Polydorou-Benaki:* Definitely; two pieces of advice, in fact. The first is: invite the blind for discussions *before* designing such a museum, and design it in co-operation with them. What do they want to have in the museum? How do they want the museum laid out? What kind of temporary exhibits would they prefer? Consultation and co-operation can help make it *their* museum as much as anyone else's.

The other piece of advice is: keep in mind that your aim should be to work yourself out of a job. The wish of our director, Mr Emmanuel Kefakis (who happens to be blind), and my own wish, is that the Tactual Museum should close down. When it does close, it will be because all museums in Greece have opened up sections for the blind and other handicapped people. Then, special museums will no longer be needed. ■



# Museums,

Drawings by Julián



The traditional museum.

## educational innovation and international co-operation

Throughout the world the development and consolidation of museum structures geared to education and cultural activities have proceeded along a variety of lines. This is reflected in the titles of the departments or services concerned, with their varied references to dissemination, education, teaching, extension work, popularization, etc. An examination of the way in which museums conceive and plan their educational function, and the various methods they employ, with their evaluation, would provide the key to an understanding of the progress, regression or stagnation to be found in the museum field. Such a study, on a worldwide scale, would be of great value not only for museum specialists but also for institutions responsible for museum policy and for bodies such as Unesco and ICOM concerned with the progress of education and museology.

A study as complex as this would require the involvement of a team of specialists and the support of the above-mentioned institutions. Pending a more thorough exploration of the topic, we set out below a number of ideas on the subject.

### *Mid-century inertia*

The most innovative schemes for developing museums' educational and cultural outreach have coincided with periods when democracy was in the ascendancy, and have been closely bound up with new educational trends in those periods. Conversely, in periods when the political scene is quite different, one hears comments such as: 'We have no such educational or scholarly aim in mind; what is vital for us is that the work of art should be made to achieve its full poten-

tial and should be exhibited in a setting that highlights its individuality and displays it to maximum aesthetic effect.'<sup>1</sup> Given this attitude (which is sufficiently revealing, and arguably typical of a number of countries), museum development was subject in many countries to a long period of inertia in the middle part of this century. Few changes were introduced from the educational standpoint, and an élitist approach was adopted to outreach activities.

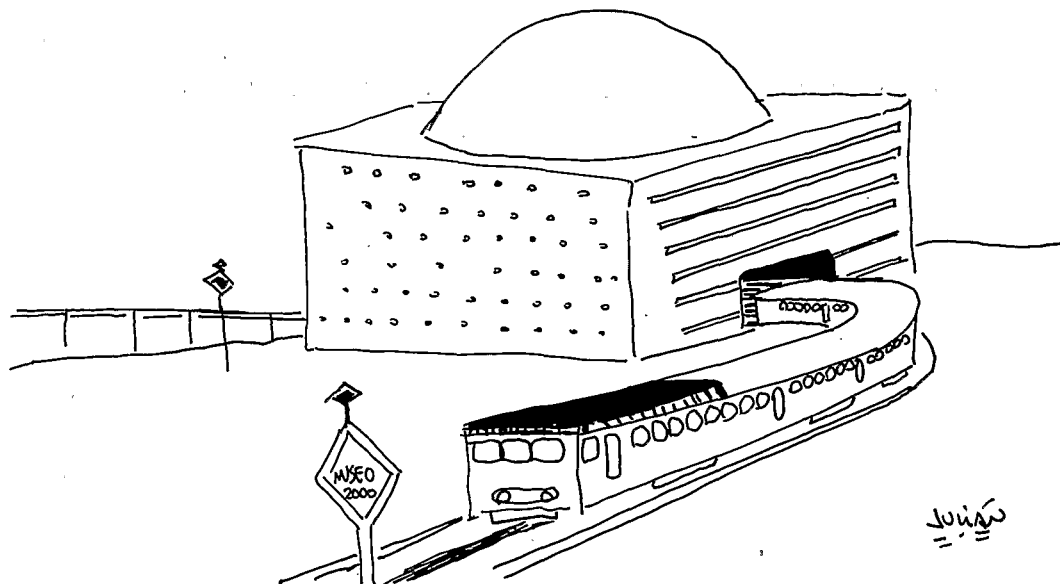
The current of reform in the late 1960s was not without its effect on museums. It gave rise to new ventures, provided a boost for existing educational experiments and aroused new expectations in those countries where little or nothing had been done to develop the educational and cultural function of museums.

These new educational schemes did not always have their origin in the museums themselves, but were in many cases the work of individuals relatively unconnected with the museum environment. These new professionals brought to bear new methods in accordance with the ideas and cultural traditions of the countries concerned and depending on the facilities and funding available. It is important here to emphasize the role of Unesco and ICOM in facilitating and, on occasion, promoting such developments through the encouragement and guidance they provided to new museum education staff.

The growing demand for educational and cultural activities by the museum-going public, and above all by teachers and cultural activity organizers, has not generally been matched by a greater provision of facilities by the public authorities responsible for administering most museums. Thus at present, far from

### Andrea A. García i Sastre

Holds a degree in fine arts from the University of Barcelona. In 1972 she launched a movement in Barcelona aimed at improving the cultural and educational outreach of museums, which subsequently became nationwide. From 1979 to 1986 she ran the Museum Cultural Activities Department of the Barcelona City Council. She currently heads the Department of Education and Cultural Activities of the Catalonia Art Museum and is also involved in training courses for new education staff. She has taken part in various meetings organized by ICOM and other international organizations.



the aim being to provide steady or increased funding for such activities, to seek to improve and expand them, or to integrate them in the museum's overall function, the trend is for the departments concerned to suffer increasingly from administrative neglect and to become more isolated within the parent institution. The low morale to be found in many of these departments has even affected some of their most senior staff. This is one of the topics that needs to be explored further. The situation that has arisen seems to have resulted in large measure from the conservative and/or hostile attitude adopted to educational and cultural services by many professional museum staff, who have seen the introduction of such services as a form of 'occupation' of territory previously considered their own preserve.<sup>2</sup> It may also reflect the reserved attitude of people in power to those who argue that 'the museum can be a valuable tool of popular education that can help to bring about social change'.<sup>3</sup>

#### *International co-operation: comfort for change*

Teamwork and exchanges of ideas and experience between professionals are clearly ways of furthering progress, consolidating what has already been done and fostering new ventures. Every opportunity to discuss professional issues should therefore be seized by museums and supported by national authorities, since it is of the greatest importance to analyse and discuss the present state of museology and its future prospects. In this connection, we should like to emphasize the work carried out by Unesco under its various programmes of

activity, mainly aimed at developing education within museums.

Among these activities, we would single out the interregional seminar on museums and education held at Guadalajara (Mexico) in March 1986, and the important step forward represented by the statement of principles which emerged in 1972 from the round table held in Chile on the development and role of museums in the world today, which influenced new approaches to museum science throughout Latin America as well as having an impact at the international level. The recommendations resulting from international meetings, while they may be accepted by a large number of professionals, cannot always be put into practice, since they would involve changes of outlook and working methods that not all museums are willing or able to accept. If, following each meeting, all the papers submitted could be published and widely circulated, their impact would be much greater, since discussion in different spheres and at different levels would gradually help to bring about a change of outlook.

#### *The Guadalajara seminar—an important stage*

We should like to summarize for the readers of *Museum* the main features of the seminar on 'Museums and Education', and to quote some of its most significant statements. The topics covered in the various submissions to the seminar were centred on the following discussion points:

Analysis of the educational function of museums in various types of societies and definition of strategies for devel-

The aseptic modern museum.

1. Marques de Lozoya, 'Prologue', *Anales y Boletín de los Museos de Arte de Barcelona*, Vol. I, No. 1, 1941.

2. Francisco Tarrats Bou, 'El Departamento de Educación y Acción Cultural dentro de la estructura del Museo [The Department of Education and Cultural Activities within the Museum Structure]', *VI Jornadas Nacionales DEAC Museos*, pp. 37-47, Valladolid, Ministry of Culture, Department of Fine Arts and Archives, 1988.

3. Miriam Arroyo de Kerriov, 'El Museo Comunitario como contribución a la Educación permanente y a la popular [The Community Museum as a Contribution to Lifelong and Popular Education]'. Seminario 'Museos y Educación', Guadalajara (Mexico), Unesco, 1986 (unpublished paper).

oping this function over the next decade.

Identification of the kind of research required to improve the educational function of museums.

Consideration of appropriate methods to highlight the national and world heritage by strengthening the cultural identity of each country.

Analysis of existing programmes for training museum educators and formulation of proposals for improving such training.

All the submissions included background material on the general level of culture of the population, the state of teaching and the main museological and museographical guidelines in each participating country. (The seminar was attended by thirty-one specialists representing twenty-two countries of America, Europe and Africa, together with observers from four countries.)

The countries with the longest tradition of museum education were also those that had the most comprehensive schooling structures, measured in terms of their capacity to cater for all sections of society and to make available resources for the training of teachers and pupils. In the developing countries, educational structures are weaker where the target population is very dense, whether concentrated in urban conglomerations or scattered over rural areas with poor communications. New educational techniques cannot be introduced for lack of resources, and this inevitably places restrictions on the training of teachers and students. Many school-age children are obliged to work to contribute to the family budget.

Another important point to be made is the urgent need for the people of these countries to strive to recover their own identity, since the long periods of foreign colonization to which they have been subjected have not only curbed the development of indigenous cultures but have also created, and continue to create, cultural confusion. This means that while in the industrialized countries both education and museums often serve to perpetuate an existing economic, social and cultural establishment, in the developing countries they could be means of raising awareness. The heritage is an inalienable educational and cultural resource that can help in the recovery and strengthening of identity and the forging of an independent future which will none the less be receptive to other cultures.

Setting aside the differences already

mentioned, the seminar's discussion of the topics of the museum and education, and their interrelationship, revealed common concerns affecting all professionals in this area. All the participants worked with groups associated with the formal education system (pupils and teachers) and with cultural and recreational organizations, including those concerned with the lifelong education of adults and young people.

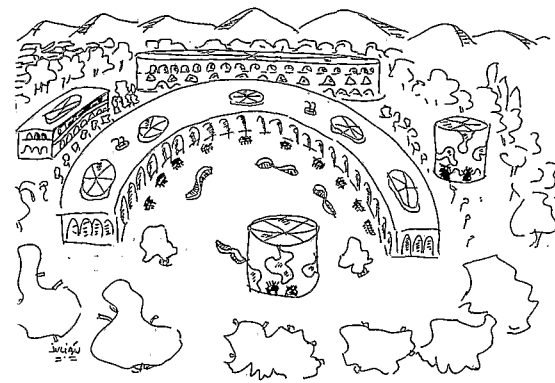
#### *Exhibit, public, communication*

There was felt to be a need to take a critical look at museological and museographical principles. In many museums, for example, there is a discrepancy between the kind of message transmitted by the museum and the practical means available to the non-specialist 'receiver' to decode it. It was observed that, in general, 'information about exhibits does not extend beyond the physical bounds of the museum, and fails to provide the explanatory links with the social and historical context in which the exhibits were created'.<sup>4</sup> There was acceptance of Tomislav Sola's idea that 'most museum exhibitions are still—despite major efforts with regard to artistic layout, large-scale lighting effects, etc.—akin to open warehouses or, as it were, depots for the storing of knowledge'.<sup>5</sup>

What emerges from all this is the need to research an exhibit from the educational standpoint—a topic dealt with at length in my paper on research<sup>6</sup> and in the submission by Yani Herreman, in which she says: 'The exhibit can be viewed, perceived, studied and understood employing various approaches and from different standpoints'.<sup>7</sup> A multidisciplinary interpretation of the exhibit and its original surroundings will certainly help us to find the best system of communicating information within museums. It will also enable us to develop the corresponding educational and explanatory materials. The focus of the museum educator's research should thus be the exhibit, the public and the means of communication available to museums.

In this connection, note was made of the very real difficulties involved in carrying out programmes of research in museum education, given that the governing bodies of museums do not always understand the need for such work, and block or refuse to fund the necessary projects, which usually require the participation of and/or co-ordination with other specialists and institutions.

The user-friendly museum.



Lack of co-ordination is a major problem affecting museums, perhaps one of those felt most severely by education and cultural activities services. There is little co-ordination between different departments in the same museum, and links with other institutions and specialists outside the museum tend to be rare. There are also problems of co-ordination between schools and museums, which generally arise from poor information exchange between these institutions. The lack of joint planning, and inadequate teacher-training in museum education, have an adverse effect on students, who, tired and bored, trail apathetically round the museum, put off by their surroundings.

To conclude my summary of the Guadalajara seminar, whose results were unfortunately never published before, I wish to touch on a topic dealt with in the various submissions and statements—the training of museum educators.

It is obvious that the current training of such staff is incomplete. The job they have to do is comprehensive and varied, and requires interdisciplinary training

with inputs from a variety of subjects—a training reflecting the special characteristics of a museum, knowledge of its complementary disciplines, and a basic knowledge of educational psychology, sociology, museology and mass communication techniques. Training along these lines seems to be scarce indeed, as, conversely, does training for school-teachers in the potential and methods of museum-based education.

### *Wanted: a change of outlook*

In my view, the prerequisite for educational innovation in museums is a change of outlook among those responsible for the various sectors directly involved—the political authorities, the various museum specialists, secondary- and primary-school teachers, and cultural activity organizers. International institutions such as Unesco and ICOM can play an important role in establishing this new outlook.

To conclude, then, I wish to underline the need to continue working together

through international, national and local seminars with a view to exploring the most urgent issues in greater depth and identifying new guidelines for museums. I believe joint endeavours will make it easier to find ways of bringing about changes in all the functions of a museum, thereby helping to achieve a better quality of life. ■

*[Translated from Spanish]*

4. Marta Arjona, 'Museos y Educación [Museums and Education]', Seminario 'Museos y Educación', Guadalajara (Mexico), Unesco, 1986 (unpublished paper).

5. Tomislav Sola, 'Museum Education. Museology and Identity', Seminario 'Museos y Educación', Guadalajara (Mexico), Unesco, 1986 (unpublished paper).

6. Andrea A. Garcia i Sastre, 'La Investigación Pedagógica y el Museo [Educational Research and the Museum]', Seminario 'Museos y Educación', Guadalajara (Mexico), Unesco, 1986 (unpublished paper).

7. Yani Herreman, 'Museos y Educación en América Latina y Caribe [Museums and Education in Latin America and the Caribbean]', Seminario 'Museos y Educación', Guadalajara (Mexico), Unesco, 1986 (unpublished paper).

An encounter across time.



## *Elements for an economic analysis of museums<sup>1</sup>*

Ahmet Aykaç

Born in Turkey; professor of Economics and Quantitative Methods at the International Management Institute in Geneva. Prior to joining the IMI faculty, he taught at Columbia University, New York, where he did graduate study. He is the author of several books, monographs and articles and has acted as consultant to many corporations and international organizations.

At a time when museums are becoming more and more important in the process of conserving our past and present creations in science, art, culture, technology, they face, whether public or private, problems inherent in the present economic crisis. Thus, the management of museums goes increasingly beyond basic administration by art historians, anthropologists and museologists, and calls for a working knowledge of economics.

In this article, an attempt is made to apply certain tools of economic analysis to museums in order both to understand them better in economic terms and, somewhat more ambitiously, to derive the beginnings of what might be called an 'economic theory of museums'.

### *What are the activities to be financed?*

Let us start from the definition of a museum adopted by ICOM in its eleventh General Assembly (Copenhagen, 1974), which constitutes the third article of its statutes:

A museum is a non-profit-making, permanent institution in the service of society and of its development, and open to the public, which acquires, conserves, researches, communicates, and exhibits, for purposes of study, education and enjoyment, material evidence of man and his environment.

There are several aspects of this definition which immediately stand out and which seem to be shared with other definitions of museums.

### *Non-profit-making*

The intent of this designation is usually quite clear, that is, that the institution will not aim at a pricing policy that purposefully generates a surplus of revenues over costs intended for distribution to the owners of the resources employed. Its implications and applications are not quite so obvious.

We have, thus, the belief that somehow a non-profit organization is fundamentally different. Since it is not driven by the profit motive, the purity of its intentions in pursuing the goal of social benefits is beyond question and by extension it cannot, and should not, be managed like a profit-seeking organization.

There seem to be two different levels of confusion in this reasoning. The first level of confusion involves 'costs' interpreted in a socially relevant sense and with regard to monetary accounting figures. By and large, monetary accounting figures are irrelevant for most social decisions. Those figures are the result of various conventions aimed at reporting historical costs (or benefits) measured by monetary prices. Accounting figures do not deal with opportunity costs, which are the relevant costs for decision-making in the museum world as elsewhere. In addition, it is only under fairly specific conditions that prices correspond to the opportunity costs. It is true that prices may be kept lower if accounting profits are constrained to be zero; but from a social point of view, it is not at all obvious that the net effect will be positive.

1. This article has been excerpted and adapted from professor Aykaç's study 'The Economics of Museums and their Financing: a Preliminary Analysis', prepared in 1988 as a Working Paper for the UNDP-Unesco Regional Project on Cultural Heritage and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean.

The second level of confusion seems to arise regarding the linkages between the different museum activities. What part of a museum's activities are non-profit-making? If there is a series of linkages, what are the so-called transfer prices between these activities? Can surpluses be generated in some activities so as to cover deficits in others, thus keeping the overall budget in balance?

#### *Service of society and its development*

The intent of this is fairly clear, but its implications for economic analysis are not. We would need a yardstick to evaluate the extent to which an activity attains its stated aims. Unfortunately, there is no agreed-upon measure of service to society and its development by museums except people's prior beliefs. If we are predisposed to believe that museums contribute to achieving these aims, we shall see that in the results. If we are inclined to believe that such activities are a waste of resources, that is what we shall see.

Economics has its own definitions of what constitutes service to society and development. They are entwined with the ideas of welfare and efficiency. It is not self-evident that these are the correct or overriding criteria in the museum context. Economic analysis refuses to make 'welfare' comparisons between individuals or groups, and rightly so; society routinely makes such choices through its political processes in the name of 'service to society'. Similarly, 'development' is a concept encompassing sociological, historical, cultural and political dimensions, as well as the more obvious one of income generation. There are, therefore, several ways an activity can contribute positively to development. The extent to which various social activities have been browbeaten by what I shall call 'economism', rather than clear analytic thinking, has probably gone beyond the point of usefulness.

#### *Activities*

Museums are defined as carrying out several types of activities: acquisition, conservation, research, communication, and exhibition for the purpose of study, education and enjoyment. Thus, there are multiple activities with multiple products and results emanating from the institution we call 'museum'. Yet it seems that these activities do not all carry the same weight. In my analysis below, I shall consider the totality of these activities and point out the effects of dealing

with just subsets of activities. The importance of looking separately at the different activities will become clearer as we go along.

The 'commodity' in which museums are dealing is 'material evidence of man and his environment'. They acquire, conserve, research, communicate, and exhibit this commodity. In doing so they produce 'outputs' which are used for 'study, education, and enjoyment', thus contributing to society and its development. From the point of view of economic analysis and financing, the process by which the material evidence of man and his environment is transformed into the final result of study, education or enjoyment is crucial. It is in analysing this transformation process and the 'markets' within which its various transactions take place that we shall see if, and where, these markets fail, and thus search for ways of correcting for such failures.

*Acquisition.* There are a large number of items that constitute material evidence of man and his environment. As such, there are a large number of potential markets from which these items can be procured. Despite the differences between various types of museums, in general these markets have the characteristics of being very thin and very supply-inelastic. From an economic point of view, markets with these characteristics will not lead to resource allocations that maximize welfare. The power of the price mechanism to signal society's evaluation of a good becomes subject to doubt when the market is very thin. Similarly, that supply cannot be increased as the price increases is indicative of the inability to reallocate resources so as to meet the desires of society. In economics, unfortunately, two wrongs do not make a right.

If exhibitions and other uses of the acquired items were priced competitively, then the maximum amount that would be paid for such items would be well defined. It would correspond to the present value of the excess profits due to the item in question. The minimum amount would have to be sufficient to compensate the previous owner for what he feels he is giving up. If, however, pricing at the consumers' end is not competitive, then any price for the item being acquired is as arbitrary as any other. The fact that there are auctions or other means for structuring the sales of such items does not eliminate the arbitrariness of the pricing. Sending an agent to an auction with \$9 million is just as

logical as offering \$8 million or \$10 million, and statements such as 'We paid too much' may only express envy rather than fact. Thus, there are several problems with the activity of acquisition from the point of view of economic analysis, even when considering outright purchase. The issue becomes more complex when we deal with finds from archaeological digs. Once an item is acquired, however, it has to be cared for, a subject to which I now turn.

*Conservation.* For most commodities, the maximum amount paid for conservation is fairly well defined: it corresponds to the annuity equivalent of the replacement cost over the expected increase in lifetime due to the conservation. If conservation were to cost more than that, it would be cheaper to replace the item. This is where, with very few exceptions, museum items differ, for the replacement cost of their artefacts is usually infinite. If an item is lost due to irretrievable decay, it cannot be replaced at any cost.

There follow several conclusions from this simple premise. First, unless an infinite discount rate is imposed, conservation activities will always turn out to be profitable by standard investment-evaluation techniques, since the opportunity cost is infinite. Secondly, despite its profitability, a market for such activities cannot be expected to come into existence by the free operation of market forces because of the risk of infinite costs. Thus there is need for a non-market force to intervene.

The nature of the intervention is not to decide whether to spend money on the conservation activity, for that is always profitable, but to decide where to *stop* spending money on conservation and to determine the order of priority of items to be conserved. Obviously, there are issues of conservation techniques to be utilized in carrying out the work since they have different cost implications. It would seem, indeed, that there is reason to be especially careful in evaluating the costs of alternative methods.

*Research.* This activity is fairly well defined for museum specialists, but it is not easily analysed in economic terms. In principle we would spend no more on this activity at the margin than what we would expect to gain from an eventual finding, again at the margin. Even this is subject to qualification when the nature of the uncertainty is taken into account.

In fact, it is not at all obvious what the economic benefit of research is in the museum area, or even whether it produces any economic benefit. I do not, of course, intend to belittle museum research, but rather to raise the question as to whether it does require an economic justification. Research is perhaps best considered as an intrinsically valuable contribution to humanity's stock of knowledge about itself.

This being said, there are aspects of museum research that may be analysed in economic terms. These can be grouped, under three main headings: (a) contributions to acquisitions; (b) contributions to communications; and (c) contributions to exhibitions. The first item refers to the fact that research such as digs contribute directly to the museums' building up their collections. As such, it would be subject to the same form of analysis as acquisitions. The second refers to activities of the research staff such as publishing research findings, photographing, answering technical inquiries, relations with visiting scholars, producing replicas and so forth. The last item refers to activities such as classifying, cataloguing, and interpreting collections as well as documenting travelling exhibits.

*Communication.* Much of what a museum does involves communicating with the public at large and/or students of a particular discipline treated by the museum. Here we shall be looking at communication in a slightly restricted sense, since exhibitions, which are the most obvious way that a museum communicates, will be treated separately. Analysing museum communication activity is relatively straightforward for most of it can be seen in the context of market transactions. There are costs involved in communicating and there are some expected benefits from doing so. The amount allocated to this activity should, therefore, be such that the costs, at the margin, of communicating equal the expected benefits, again at the margin. The costs of communicating are more or less obvious and will not be dwelt upon further here, but the benefits require some categorization. These benefits may accrue from students of museum-related disciplines, from benefactors, and from the general public.

The first two are overt market transactions in that the utility to the party receiving the communication will be reflected in the price he is willing to pay.



In the first instance, students of various disciplines will be willing to pay a price for the output of research alluded to previously because it is of value to them (and also they will probably have included such expenditure in their own research budgets). In the second instance, communication with donors is an investment that is expected to generate some returns and as such is not to be treated differently from any investment decision. Thus these two aspects may be left to the dictates of the market and there is no obvious need for intervention mechanisms.

Communication with the general public is not so clear cut. The aim in such communication is presumably to get the general public involved with the museum; not necessarily as serious students of some discipline or as donors but simply as visitors. If pricing at the exhibition end were competitive, then we could treat such communication as we would treat advertising for any commodity: we would push advertising to the point where the marginal amount spent generated just enough revenue to pay for itself. Since entry fees are in general kept low, the above logic, under very general conditions, would lead to too little being spent on such communication. Thus, there would seem to be reason for not relying on the operation of the market in this area. The nature of the required intervention would be to readjust the price signal so that a more efficient allocation of resources be made in this area.

*Exhibition.* This activity is, along with the existence of a permanent collection, the defining characteristic of a museum. As such, it requires special attention. From the point of view of those who visit an exhibition, there is clearly some subjective value attached to being able to do so. Here I am essentially thinking of voluntary visits, but the basic argument also holds true for 'obligatory' visits such as those organized by schools, since somebody attaches a value to the visit to the point of requiring it. The best indicator of individuals' valuation of a service is their willingness to pay for it. In a similar vein, the value to society of involuntary visits is the willingness of some social institution to pay. It would also seem fair to assume that the lower the price, the greater will be the number of people for whom their subjective valuation will exceed that price. It is important to note, however, that even if lower prices may increase visits, they

may not increase revenues. This would occur if, say, a 10 per cent reduction in prices led to a 5 per cent increase in visits. In any case, demand for exhibitions would seem to comply *a priori* with the welfare implications of prices from the demand side.

From the supply side, the situation is quite different. Once a museum exists, the marginal cost of another visitor coming to see an exhibition is zero. Within fairly broad limits, the number of people visiting a museum on any given day will not affect its costs. Thus, the marginal cost of 'servicing' another 'customer' is nil. Before a museum comes into existence, however, the analysis is quite different. At that point, before the resources are committed, there is an opportunity cost to society of putting them into a museum rather than something else. If there were market-determined prices at the exhibition end, these prices (which would reflect society's valuation of exhibition services) could be compared to the costs and a decision reached. Since prices do not reflect preferences in this instance, another mechanism has to be found for the evaluation of the benefits.

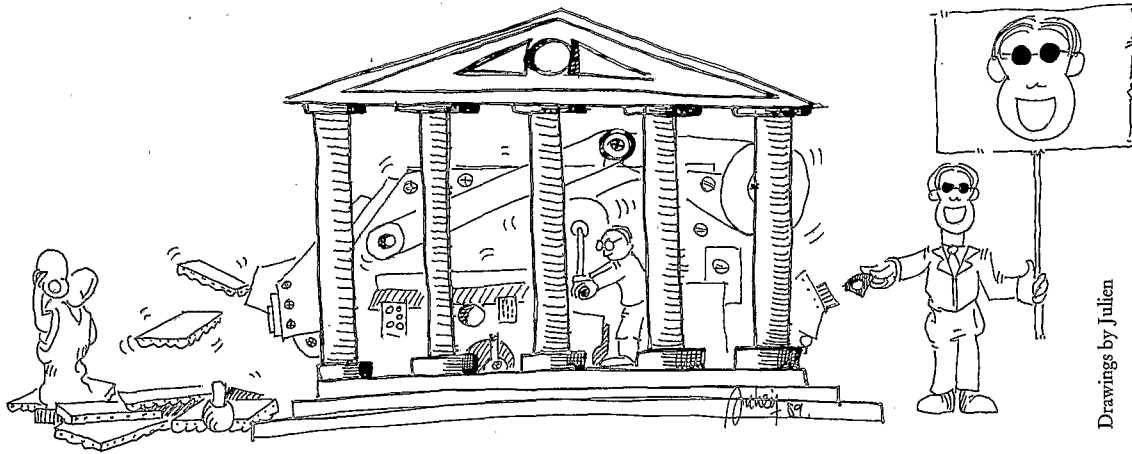
### *Where do we go from here?*

There is much to be done in terms both of concepts and empirical work before the economics of museums is properly understood. What direction should these efforts take? The conceptual effort, could, I believe, most usefully be directed towards specifying the 'production' process of museums and the interaction of the different components and inputs. The usual response of museologists to this statement is that these relations are already known to them, a conviction which may be true in a museological sense but not necessarily true in an economic sense. This type of reaction is similar to the engineer's view that he knows all about a certain production process; he may know the techniques of production but, more often than not, precious little about the economics underlying production. There is a need to develop this understanding more thoroughly. Another crucial, and related, avenue would be the application of systems theory to museums and the development of its implications.

A related development which could proceed *pari passu* with the conceptual understanding is 'the empirical issue of measurement and indicators. As I have

tried to point out, prices in the standard sense of the word are not the only or even the most important pieces of information we need to have. Although they may be used where available, they should always be used with caution. Since internal transfers take place, the shadow prices of such transfers will be critical values to determine. There is work in this area but further efforts are required in developing indicators of such shadow values.

Finally, it should be kept in mind that a museum is an organization and, in theory, a purposeful organization. The unique character of the service it provides should not lead to the erroneous conclusion that it requires a unique method of analysis. Standard methods and tools of analysis will suffice provided that proper caution is taken in their application. ■



Drawings by Julien

## *Business sponsorship for museums: Feeding a hungry robin*

Fernanda Fedi

A native of Caluso, Turin, she lives in Milan. She graduated with honours at the University of Bologna (Faculty of Literature and Philosophy), where she studied art, music and the performing arts. Did postgraduate work in museology and museography at the Faculty of Architecture (Polytechnic) of Milan. She is currently collaborating with the Commune of Milan in the Scuola al Museo project. Author of *Il teatro. L'edificio teatrale dalle origini ai giorni nostri* and *Museo Teatrale alla Scala—itinerari didattici*. Active in the visual arts, she has managed since 1971 a workshop providing courses in free artistic expression, together with lessons on the history of art, using an experimental methodology, for children.

For years now, there has been a great deal of discussion in Western Europe about sponsorship and its double role of financing cultural heritage and cultural activities, and of promoting social responsibility within businesses. This dual role has emerged from recent developments in Western society.

Sponsorship came particularly to the forefront of public attention during the post-1968 crisis. At that time, the mass of young people in Europe were less interested in politics than in cultural activities hitherto beyond their reach. The inability of sources traditionally responsible for satisfying the economic needs in the field of culture to meet this increased demand led to a resurgence of the private sector's role in this arena.

In Italy, for example, legislators had a felicitous intuition: they promulgated Law 512 of 1982 including tax-relief provisions favouring aid for cultural property of prime importance. This legislation spans a vast area but remains incomplete and imprecise.

One positive result, however, is that the law enables people to circumvent the bureaucracy by making a direct donation. In many cases, this system avoids unnecessary delays and long peripatations through the extremely slow machinery of the Ministry of Finance. An example of a project thus sponsored

is the rehabilitation and restoration of the church of Santo Satiro in Milan, carried out thanks to a donation from a bank. This donation gave, in turn, fiscal advantages to the bank in question, as well as a prestigious image.

### *Practice and legislation*

Over the past decade there have been numerous meetings, debates and round-table discussions on sponsorship. Not least among these gatherings was the symposium held in Bologna, in February 1988, on the theme *Sponsorizzazione: Prassi e Legislazione* (Sponsorship: Practice and Legislation). The purpose of the meeting was to encourage an exchange of ideas between museum directors and museologists from different countries on the subject of sponsorship and its effects on art and museum life. The choice of the commercial quarter of Bologna during the Arte Fiera (Art Fair) as a venue for the meeting was altogether appropriate because the Art Fair is a market and also a generator of culture—culture to study, culture to interpret.

Stimulating as it was, the symposium only partly succeeded in its initial intent due to the limited turn-out of participants from different countries. As a result, the framework of the themes was not as international as one might have

hoped. Despite its limitations, the symposium made a useful contribution to understanding sponsorship of art and museum activities in Europe today.

Eugenio Riccomini, Superintendent of Cultural Heritage for the provinces of Parma and Piacenza, co-ordinated the meeting. He stressed the fact that the concept of sponsorship, as practised in Italy, was imported from the United States. This is a recent occurrence as concerns the arts, he said, whereas publishing has been a beneficiary of sponsorship for many decades. He went on to warn that the Italian trend of seeking sponsors in the private sector is evidence of weakness on the part of the state.

On this point, Eugenio Riccomini underscored the difference between Italy and neighbouring France, where state policies have been more thoughtful and less bureaucratic. 'Obviously', he said, 'the situation in Italy is unique, and not entirely comparable to that in other countries. We have the unusual situation of finding ourselves saddled with a truly enormous concentration of cultural property'. This specialist did not refrain, however, from regretting the shortage of Italian state funding, a figure which for the arts is only 0.04 per cent of the national budget, a staggeringly low actual amount, 0.002 per cent, when the costs of salaries and administration are deducted.

Maurizio Modugno, a member of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, pinpointed the fact that Law 512 of 1982, mentioned above, has not yet been fleshed out. He suggested that a national commission be formed to examine and define this new form of legislative support in all its ramifications, from both a juridical and a practical point of view:

For example, one of the issues to resolve is the relationship between sponsors' investments, on the one hand, and the advantages accruing to their image, on the other. One step forward might be to establish sliding fiscal advantages. A benefit scale, for instance, could be drawn up that would afford fiscal advantages in converse proportion to the ensured prestige return reaped from a cultural or artistic programme a sponsor chooses to support.

Such a measure would favour the sponsorship of projects which do not necessarily have great inherent publicity feedback, but are quite promising in artistic or cultural terms, such as recuperating bibliographical archives and con-

serving and restoring obscure monuments.

Sponsorship, Maurizio Modugno suggested, can be a means to plug the endemic gaps in state support:

One cannot expect the state to restore *everything* and to intervene *everywhere*. Rather than augmenting the government budget for the arts, appropriate legislative measures should be taken to channel and encourage the very real potential of sponsorship.

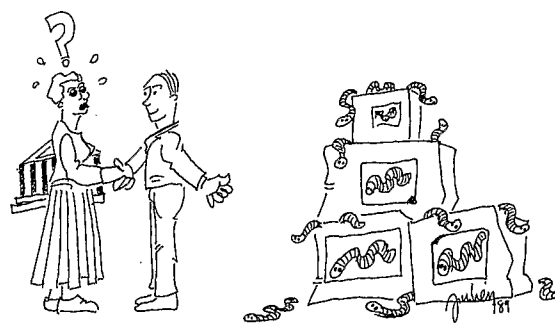
### *A threefold increase— but still a minor role*

Another speaker at the symposium in Bologna, Leonce Beckemans, who is a member of the European Institute for Public Administration (Maastricht, Netherlands), discussed private support in a few European countries only as, he felt, it is not possible to draw a parallel with the same form of action in the United States. In France, he explained, sponsorship has reached the equivalent of 1 per cent of total public arts spending, while in the Netherlands it has attained 4 per cent. After listing positive aspects of private sponsorship, Leonce Beckemans made certain criticisms. Private sponsorship more readily supports grandiose projects. It is also almost exclusively in the hands of a few multinationals, and for this reason its approach is not entirely reliable. It should, however, be observed, emphasized Leonce Beckemans, that the involvement of European business in sponsorship has of late more than tripled, even though private sponsoring still plays a lesser role than that of state funding.

'Culture is not a purely economic product, like many other consumer-oriented items', he maintained. 'Therefore, too sharp a distinction between public and private support should not be drawn. Art should be considered according to more pluralistic criteria.'

David Elliott, Director of the Modern Art Museum of Oxford, United Kingdom, gave a more polemic slant to the debate.

We in Britain have a small bird, with a red breast. It is called a robin and it is a bird which has to *eat twice its weight in worms every day just to keep alive*. Now, I am here... as the representative of the robin! What I deal with in my job is not worms, however, it is sponsorship... Power corrupts, absolute power corrupts absolutely. And that is true in this century as it was in the sixteenth or in the seventeenth century. Power is not only physical or military, it must have an economic base



and it is true, in one sense, that in market and prestige terms the richest museums become part of the power structure of developed cultures—can even be a 'welfare' expression of their power.

Yet, David Elliott made special mention of the important contribution over the last decade of the Association for Business Sponsorship of the Arts, adding that prizes are now being given in the United Kingdom to encourage sponsorship. He quoted precise figures describing the financial reality of the Oxford Museum. Of the £500,000 (\$870,000) of yearly expenses, 30 to 40 per cent was provided by the Arts Council, a government agency, 5 per cent by local authorities, and the remaining 55-65 per cent was underwritten by gifts from sponsors.

He then posed the question: Is just any means acceptable to obtain sponsorship?

We have tried, although it may seem ironic at times, to involve the help of royalty, particularly popular in American fund-raising. In fact, it is absolutely vital that one has some sort of royal personage present at a fund-raising event. I think that the only possible course is never to move away from the truth: the word sponsorship should never be a euphemism for censorship.

### *Two billion lire and 'social sponsorship'*

According to Umberto Baldini, former Director of the Central Restoration Institute of Rome, the most delicate problem is the choice of the project to be sponsored. Cultural property of major

importance requires the most expert attention. When property that belongs to the whole of humanity is to be restored, sponsorship is of primary importance. If, for example, the Italian State had been solely responsible for the financing, the restoration of the Cappella Brancacci in Florence would have taken an extremely long time. With additional funding secured from a large firm (2,000 million lire—\$1.5 million), the time was greatly shortened. The restoration of the chapel did not just include the better known Masaccio frescos, which it houses, but the structure as a whole. Private financing thus made possible the restoration not only of a famous art object (to which certain benefactors might have limited an investment-for-image), but also, and more intelligently (as well as more sensitively), the restoration of its apparently less prestigious setting.

Among the final speakers at the Bologna symposium was Vladimir Gorianov of the Union of Soviet Artists, who, *inter alia*, was a longtime Soviet Commissioner of the Venice Biennale. He pointed out:

The situation in the Soviet Union is of course quite different from others represented here in that there is no—nor can there be any—private sponsorship. True to say, we feel the need for some kind of sponsorship but, for the time being, not so much for economic reasons as for reasons of moral support. By moral support, I mean creating a socio-cultural situation which would attract the attention of the community. What we might call 'social sponsorship' could have great importance. It could have educational value as well as being a vehicle for the expression of public opinion which, in turn, could influence the cultural policy of the state.

Vladimir Gorianov described, as a pertinent example, a recent occurrence in Moscow, now a city of almost 10 million inhabitants. The municipal authorities had accepted a proposal to construct a new ring road around the city. Its design would have caused it to slice through the historic centre which contains some rather remarkable eighteenth-century town-houses. In response to widespread concern for these buildings, a group was formed which not only financed, but also provided manual labour to help restore the threatened buildings.

In fact, the initiative of these citizens was so energetic that the ring-road project was abandoned. This sort of action is an example of how 'social sponsorship' can contribute to changing

cultural policy. The Soviet representative continued:

For this reason, we do feel the need for social sponsorship and we have consequently formed a National Cultural Foundation embracing various purposes including the collection of funds for restoration, for exhibitions and the arts. The idea is not only to make money *per se*, but to gather all sorts of resources to support specific socio-cultural projects. The problem is not whether or not there is a sponsor, but that there is an *enlightened* sponsor.

Another contribution came from a new figure in the Bologna museum world, Pier Giovanni Castagnoli, Director of the city's Modern Art Museum. He admitted that there was little hope of seeing any change in the public arts financing policies in Italy. He noted serious problems, particularly in funding for local organizations, and suggested that perhaps a promising way to surmount the difficulties is to consider changing the actual structure of museum administration. He proposed forming administrations which would be financed by both public and private sources. Management would function much like a business, with a board of trustees drawn from among public and private 'investors', represented by a single director; budgets would be adopted by all concerned. Such a course would naturally be difficult, he noted, since there is no precedent for such an arrangement in Italy. He also stressed the importance of reworking Law 512 of 1982 to permit fiscal advantages in exchange for donations of works of art to museums, reinstating in particular a clause (removed when the Law was first discussed) allowing additional tax deductions for donations of contemporary works of art to small local museums—a quick way to enhance their collections.

#### *Tax relief, image and... culture*

Following the Bologna symposium, sponsorship was addressed at another international museums meeting held—in September 1988—at the Palazzo delle Stelline in Milan. Mercedes Garberi, Director of the Civic Collections of Milan, reported on an exhibition jointly mounted by that museum and a sponsor. The experience involved not just financial assistance but an ongoing participatory collaboration. The exhibition, entitled *Ritrovare Milano (Rediscovering Milan)*, was shown at the Sforza Castle and dis-

played material gathered so that the understanding of the history of Milan would be made into a learning process. The co-sponsor was a municipal rather than private company, but nevertheless adjusted its budget in order to participate in the show in the grandest of patronly traditions. Public enterprises as museum sponsors—this is a trend to monitor in Western, and other, countries.

Drawing a conclusion from this brief survey of museum sponsorship by enterprises, I would say that we can hope to see closer collaboration (particularly in countries whose socio-economic systems lend themselves to such an approach) between the state and private sectors for the public good. Perhaps the most essential aspect of sponsorship today is the evolution of its motives. Ideally, sponsors will increasingly widen their generosity so as not merely to donate money for tax relief, prestige or image, but also with the desire to contribute to the growth of our culture involving all forces in society. ■

[Translated from Italian]

## London remembers Sigmund Freud: Creating a museum, jobs and human ties

David C. Devenish

B.A. in Archaeology, University of Wales, 1959. Museum assistant, Kingston upon Thames, 1962-65. Keeper of Antiquities, Coventry Museum, 1965-67. Diploma of Museum Association, 1966. Curator of Gibraltar Museum, 1967-70. Keeper of Archaeology, Hampshire County Museum Service, 1971-73. Curator of Hastings Museum, 1973-82. Sometime Honorary Treasurer, Vice-President and President of the South-Eastern Federation of Museums and Art Galleries. Director of the Barbados Museum, 1982-85.

*Elsewhere in this number, Kenneth Hudson makes the tongue-in-cheek observation that no museum is useless since most (if not all) at least offer their staff employment. Here, David Devenish recounts what went right—and less right—in a project that simultaneously created a museum of interest in its own right and offered at least part-time temporary employment to thirty-three jobless people—including some with prior professional museum experience.*

*From his account, we can surmise that at least some museums may play unexpected roles regarding the economy—and human relationships—in industrialized countries with high unemployment rates.*

For the last ten years, the British Government has been funding large numbers of temporary posts to ease the problem of unemployment. The system and rules of this short-term employment are changed drastically almost every year; but a constant factor has been the great use made of these schemes by museums. Unfortunately, very little has been written on this practice either by curators or by participants.

The author is a 'recidivist', as one might say, since before coming to the Freud Museum project he employed such temporary staff while curator of the Hastings Museum, under such schemes as Work Experience on Employer's Premises (WEEP), the Special Temporary Employment Programme (STEP)<sup>1</sup> and the Community Enterprise Programme (CEP). In 1986 the current scheme was the Community Programme (CP). Under this the government paid a grant to the Manpower Services Commission (MSC) which, in turn, paid a grant to a managing agent that was responsible for managing a group of Community Programmes, under which temporary employment was provided.

Some such agents were local government authorities, others were companies set up for the purpose of contracting with the MSC. These grants covered: (a) the salaries of managers and supervisors; (b) a contribution towards running expenses, of up to £440 (\$731) for each participant; (c) the wages of participants at rates averaging £63 (\$104) per week; in fact the participants in the Freud Museum Community Programme received only £50-60 (\$93-112) per week, because wages were averaged out between all the participants under Task Undertakings, some of whom worked full-time.

### *The Museum*

In June 1938, Sigmund Freud arrived in London:

At the age of eighty-two, after living in Vienna for over seventy-five years, he left with his family to escape from the Nazi inferno that was engulfing Europe and destroying the European Jewish community. Freud found his last refuge at 20 Maresfield Gardens, Hampstead, London. He was able to bring his extensive library, correspondence, carpets, furniture and the large collection of Greek, Roman, Egyptian and Oriental antiquities.<sup>2</sup>

Freud continued seeing patients in his study almost up to his death in September of the following year. Research has shown the contents of his study in London to be almost identical with that in his study at Berggasse 19, Vienna, although arranged in a different order.<sup>3</sup> Berggasse 19 has been a Museum since 1971<sup>4</sup> but—if only for reasons of distance—these is no need for an organic connection with 20 Maresfield Gardens.

After Freud's death his widow Martha and his youngest daughter Anna continued to live in the London house. Anna purposely left her father's study as it had been in his lifetime. She was herself a pioneer child psychoanalyst and foun-

1. D.C. Devenish, 'The Special Temporary Employment Programme and Hastings Natural History Galleries', *Museums Journal*, June 1981.  
2. Freud Museum, *Brochure*, 1986.  
3. Edmund Engelman, *Berggasse 19*, New York, Basic Books, 1976.  
4. *Sigmund Freud-House Catalogue*, Vienna, Loecker & Woegenstein, 1975.

ded the Hampstead Clinic, now known as the Anna Freud Centre, which occupies premises near-by. In 1980, Miss Freud sold the house to an English charity on condition that she continue to live there until her death, after which it would become a museum in honour of her father. The New-Land Foundation provided funds to purchase the house from Anna Freud, leaving her with a life interest. On her death in 1982 the museum came into existence. The contents of the house were listed and packed away, while the building itself underwent renovation, redecoration and some alterations.

Unfortunately the local borough council, in giving planning permission for the museum, stipulated that the top floor and the north wing must be used as residences. In July 1985, a curator was appointed, David Newlands, formerly Director of Museum Studies, University of Toronto, who had recently returned at the end of his contract as Principal Curator of Malawi National Museums. Just before the end of the project described in this article, he left to take up another post. The only other permanent staff member has been Alex Bento, head of security and maintenance, who resides in the building's north wing. Steven Neufeld has been on contract as associate curator throughout the period of the Museum's Community Programme Project (referred to as 'the Project' in what follows). The author is indebted to him for assistance in preparing this article for *Museum*.

### The project

In November 1985 the curator placed an application for a Community Programme grant to obtain sufficient part-time temporary staff to set up the Freud Museum in time for the official opening planned for 28 July 1986. This request was approved in January 1986. Task Undertakings was appointed managing agent for the museum's Project, scheduled to start in April 1986. This project finished on 17 April 1987. The Manpower Services grant to the Museum was as follows:

Post	£
Salaries/wages/national insurance	104,304.96
Running costs	6,274.23
Capital expenses	4,247.44
Agent's fee (including value added tax)	2,990.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>117,816.63</b>

The Project allowed for twenty-six staff, originally classified as follows:

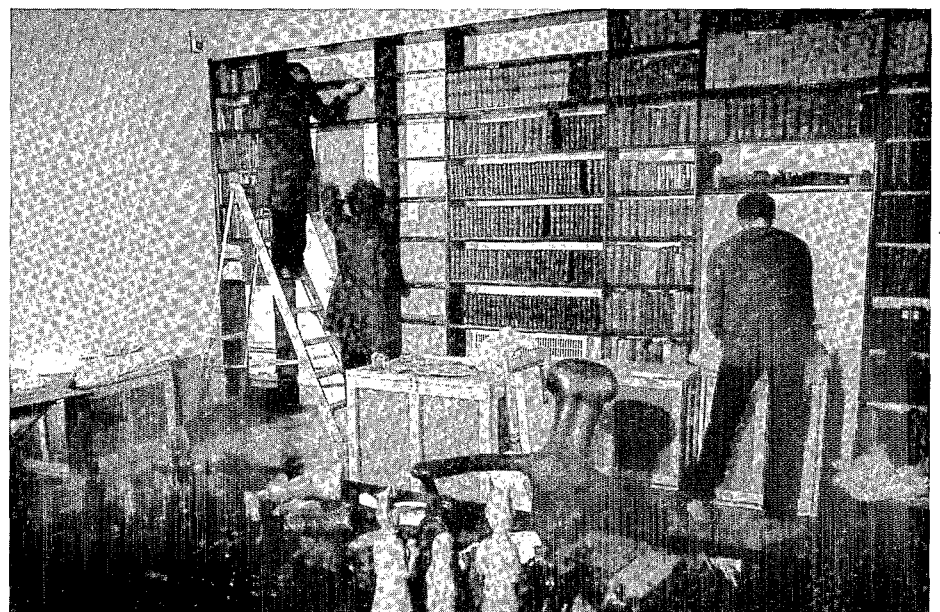
Full-time (thirty-five hours per week):

one senior supervisor; one supervisor.

Half-time (twenty hours per week): four community outreach workers; four cataloguers; two photographers; four graphic artists/illustrators; four exhibition assistants; two clerk/typists; two maintenance/gardeners; and two cleaners



A project participant—temporary part-time staff member—catalogues an item at the Freud Museum.



Project participants unpacking previously stored collections and setting out a display in Freud's study.

### The first step: recruitment

The senior supervisor and the supervisor were appointed to start on 7 April 1986. These were the author, formerly Director of the Barbados Museum,<sup>5</sup> and Ms Karen Booth, formerly of the Vancouver Maritime Museum, Canada. Duties were divided between them, the former taking on most of the management and administration of the programme, with some curatorial work, and the latter concentrating on public relations, publicity and educational activities.

Much of the first few weeks was taken up with advertising and interviewing candidates. Other museums considering application for funds from similar programmes to obtain temporary staff should note that, in general, the applicants for posts were highly qualified or had special skills, which could be matched to those required by the museum. Indeed, the acceptable candidates often exceeded the places offered. By contrast, the manual posts proved much harder to fill with satisfactory candidates. Partly for this reason the posts originally allocated to 'cleaners' and to 'maintenance gardeners' together with two of the 'community outreach workers' were subsequently reassigned to 'educators'.

The date set for the official opening, 28 July 1986, dictated what had to be done during the first three months of the Freud Museum's Community Programme job-creation project. It was most important to see that the rooms devoted to the museum display should be arranged in a presentable fashion. Meanwhile the supervisor and the community outreach workers worked both on public relations—publicity and allocation of tickets—and on the arrangements for the day itself. After the opening, and especially after tenants were found for the top flat, workspace became a problem and some staff had to 'migrate'. Extra space had to be hired from the Anna Freud Centre, across the road.

### Settling in

As time passed, the different temporary part-time project employees settled well into their tasks. A short description of these should help readers understand how the Project actually progressed and what it achieved.

Many museums employ community outreach workers, mainly to work within the local community. At the start of the Project, one community outreach

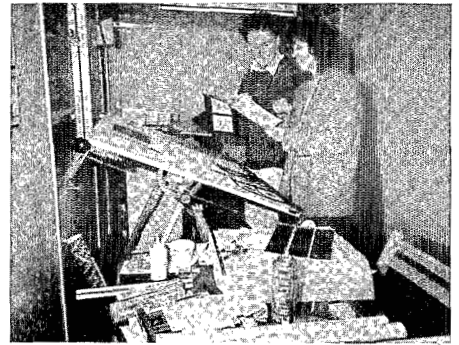
worker was appointed and assigned to assist the local residents' association, the Netherhall Neighbourhood Association; he was not replaced when he left. The others assisted the supervisor with publicity and public relations, especially in planning the official opening. As mentioned above, two of these positions (then vacant) were later converted into posts for educators. Of the two community outreach workers still employed, one became a *de facto* educator while the other was placed with the British Psychoanalytical Society, where he was engaged mostly in translating documents from German into English.

The main purpose of the educators has been to act as wardens in the galleries and speak to the public about Freud, the house and the exhibits, not parrot-fashion, but in an informed way. For this, it is necessary for them to have not only a knowledge of what is on display but also a good grounding in Freud's life and work. Between the official opening and the end of the Project there were over 9,000 visitors, of whom about three-quarters were foreign tourists, mainly from the Federal Republic of Germany, Latin America and North America. Many have been coming in organized groups for booked visits, for which an educator is provided. In addition, guided tours have been held every hour for those visitors who come individually and unannounced. The educators have also advised the other staff members on the wording of display material and guides, and on assessment of visitor interests and needs.

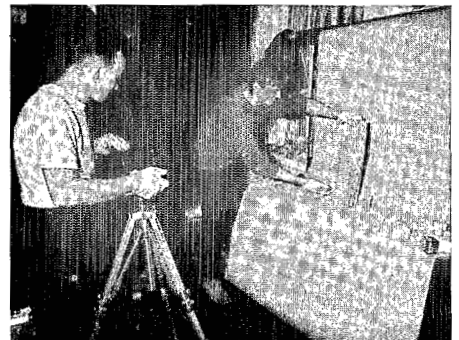
The photographers were primarily employed to assist in the cataloguing of the collections, although they undertook some work on display and publicity as well. The main collections to be considered are books, photographs and antiquities. (The other classes of exhibit include a small collection of pictures and the household furniture.) There are also some documents, carpets and other personal effects which will be tackled at a future date.

### The library

On payment of a substantial 'refugee tax' by his friends, Freud was permitted to have most of his belongings—and particularly most of his books—sent from Vienna to London. Our aim, then, was to reconstruct Freud's library as it was in 1938/39 and catalogue it, eventually for publication. At the time of Anna Freud's death there were over 2,000 books in



A freelance photographer discusses a contact sheet with an exhibition designer employed through the project.



Two project participants making photographic records of objects during cataloguing.

5. See David C. Devenish, 'The Barbados Museum', *Museum*, No. 149, 1986, p. 15.—Ed.

Freud's study plus about another 3,000 in the rest of the house. Unfortunately, it was not always safe to assume that books then in the study were originally Freud's; some of them, in fact, had been printed only after his death. It became clear that, in the meantime, many books had been acquired, disposed of or moved from one room to another. Nevertheless, by examining old photographs, by checking a list of books in Freud's study compiled by Gertrude Dann in the 1970s, and by noting which books have dedications to Freud or which bear his signature or annotation, it has been possible to reconstruct the library much as it would have been.

The books were unpacked from the boxes in which they had been stored. Many required first-aid conservation. Ideally, they should have been catalogued at this stage, but those books that were judged to have been in the study in Freud's time had to be replaced on the shelves ready for the opening. The books were listed in an inventory. Each was marked with the Freud Museum logo stamped in indelible Library of Congress ink, and inscribed with an accession number in pencil. After the opening, a full catalogue was prepared. In order to standardize the descriptions, two of the cataloguers spent three months at the Kensington and Chelsea Reference Library, where they ascertained the National Union Catalogue bibliographical description and code number of each book. It is intended to publish this catalogue shortly. Although Anna Freud's books have been partly sorted, they still need to be catalogued. Another project is to photograph and publish the annotations already noted in Freud's books.

#### *Photographs and antiques*

Approximately 3,800 photographs were found in the house. For convenience, these have been divided between those dating from before Freud's death (about 1,600) and those after (about 2,200). Nearly all are black-and-white prints; the numbers of negatives or slides are negligible, though we did find a few coloured prints. It was decided to concentrate on the first (black-and-white) group. Work was completed on this and is continuing with the second.

The photographs were sorted according to subject, and catalogued on to a computer. The original photographs were then stored in order, in inert polythene sleeves, acid-free boxes, and a fireproof safe. From the entries, three

catalogues in book form were prepared, each entry being illustrated with a small 6 × 4 cm reproduction photograph.

Freud was an avid collector of antiques. He did not excavate these himself, but purchased them from dealers or accepted them as gifts from grateful clients. He was particularly keen on figurines, and his desk was nearly half-covered with these. He kept most of his antiques in his study, either on open view or crowded together in glass cabinets, generally arranged with little regard to culture or date. The collection at 20 Maresfield Gardens is not quite complete, as Anna Freud gave a box of some sixty antiques, which had been in store, to the Freud Museum in Vienna, along with the furniture originally from the Berggasse 19 waiting room. Altogether the antiques at 20 Maresfield Gardens number about 1,800, of these perhaps 50 per cent are Ancient Egyptian, 40 per cent Classical (Italic, Roman or Greek) and 10 per cent Oriental (mostly Chinese).

In 1984 Dr Hans Loebner, curator of the Freud Museum, Vienna, was commissioned to inventory the collection while it was being packed into boxes. In 1986 the project staff, using this inventory, the insurer's lists and old photographs, were able to replace the antiques where they had been before. At the same time record photographs, 7 × 6 cm were made. To save time, all items were photographed with a scale to obviate the necessity of measuring each one of them. Accession numbers were assigned and painted on, and brief descriptions prepared to be stored in a computer.

#### *Graphic artists/illustrators and exhibition assistants*

Although, embarrassingly, on separate salary scales, no distinction in duties was made between the two titles. These duties were to plan and mount displays, to produce publicity material and to carry out associated research. The museum was fortunate in being able to obtain up-to-date equipment, such as an enlarging photocopier. A computer used for desk-top publishing was acquired towards the end of the Project. Brochures in English and German were published in time for the opening; the first issue of the Freud Museum *Newsletter* was published just as the Project ended.

At the start of the Project a decision was made to include displays on



psychoanalysis, that is the theory itself, not just the history of the subject. After thought and discussion two themes were chosen, *The Interpretation of Dreams*<sup>6</sup> and *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life*.<sup>7</sup> Considerable time and effort were spent on working out how meaningful displays on such abstract themes might be produced. Labels were written and edited and possible sets of diagrams and illustrations prepared. However, by the end of the Project no actual display had been mounted. It is likely that this project will eventually be completed by designers on short contracts.

### Training

All Manpower Services Commission (MSC) programmes must contain elements of training, and most of the participants in the Project broadened their horizons considerably, in particular by 'hands on' experience of computers, of which there are five at the museum. Weekly seminars on psychoanalysis were provided by the museum, where staff, mainly the educators, discussed issues and Freud's theory with a consultant-analyst. Many staff-members were able to take advantage of the opportunity to attend a number of courses and meetings. One of the designers was placed on a month's attachment with the British Museum (Natural History). Exchange visits were held with the Museum in Docklands programme.

Free courses are available for MSC Community Programme staff; but these were not at a level to appeal to the staff on the Project. The Manpower Services Commission Training Division will, however, pay for staff to attend courses for which there is a charge, under certain conditions. The author placed applications on behalf of a number of staff at the Freud Museum, since the managing agent did not, at that time, have an education officer. These courses have to be undertaken in the participant's own time and they must be of a type that will enhance his or her chances of obtaining employment. In practice, approval or otherwise appears to be rather arbitrary. One member of staff was offered a place on an MA course in arts administration by the City University; then his application for funding was turned down by the MSC. Even so, while he was being partly funded by the Freud Museum, he found there were other participants in courses at the University being funded by the MSC.

Under our scheme, Fields Anew was able to provide individual tuition to thirteen members of staff on a course entitled Microcomputers and Museums thanks to a grant of £2,000 (\$3,480). In addition, nine applications were granted, representing five participants and seven courses, mainly on printing and photography, for a total grant of £1,117.60 (\$1,945). Of these, three participants attended the Museums Association's own course on design, production, and print buying for exhibit handlists, and on guide books, brochures and publicity material.

### Completion of the project

In retrospect, the size of the Community Programme project at the Freud Museum may appear somewhat too large in relation to the size and needs of the museum. Rather than request a complete renewal, a submission was made for a much more modest scheme in 1987/88, for only fifteen staff, thirteen of whom would work fourteen hours per week. Just before the completion of the first project, news was received that the new project had been approved.

In all, thirty-three temporarily employed part-time people passed through the Project. Their subsequent history can be summarized as follows:

Obtained posts as designers	2
Obtained post as a secretary	1
Joined enterprise programme	1
Transferred to another Community Programme project	1
Resigned or left for personal reasons	6
Died	1
Left at end of 1986/87 Programme on 24 April 1987	12
Taken onto new, 1987/88 Programme	9
Total	33

Financially, the Freud Museum has been dependent on the goodwill of the New-Land Foundation. This charity has spent large sums, mainly on capital expenditure. There certainly could, however, have been no question of receiving a grant from there sufficient to undertake the amount of work achieved by MSC-funded temporary staff during the project. Eventually other sources of income must be found. The search will take time, but will no doubt now be facilitated by the fact that the Freud Museum is not only open, but is also an active institution. This is another positive, albeit

rather unexpected, result of our Community Programme project.

Some curators have been opposed to temporary job-creation schemes on the grounds that what is really needed is an increase in museum staff levels. This may be theoretically true, and some may view approaches like the Community Programme as stop-gap measures. Yet we must live in the real world and make use of resources actually available. In addition, temporary job-creation projects do give an opportunity for unemployed curatorial staff to remain in museums. There were several applicants for the supervisory posts with museum experience, while one of the graphic artists had been a designer in a museum.

At first sight, the success rate of only three participants (out of thirty-three) finding jobs after our project does seem disappointing. However, this was partly due to the fact that they liked their work at the Freud Museum and were in no hurry to move. It can be said that, with the exception of a handful who dropped out early in the project, they all greatly enjoyed their time at the museum. The skills learnt will enhance their employment prospects and their self-confidence. At least a few will be continuing as volunteers. What better proof could there be of the project's human—as well as professional (and economic)—success? ■

6. Sigmund Freud (translated, by J. Strachey), *The Interpretation of Dreams*, Harmondsworth, Pelican Books, 1985. (Pelican Freud Library, 4.)

7. Sigmund Freud (translated by A. Tyson), *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life*, Harmondsworth, Pelican Books, 1985 (Pelican Freud Library, 5).

## Computer literacy for museums in the USSR

Lev Yakovlevich Nol

Born in Moscow in 1934. A candidate in technical science, he graduated from the Sergo Ordzhonikidze Aviation Institution in Moscow, and since 1978 has studied computer applications in culture. He is now head of the information systems sector of the Giproteatr Institute of the USSR Ministry of Culture, leader of the programme of creation of the Computerized Informations Systems on Monuments of History and Culture of the USSR (CIS-Monument), and author of several works on computerization in museums.

In his philosophical essay *The Sum Total of Technology*, which was a bestseller in the 1960s, the well-known Polish science-fiction writer Stanislaw Lem warned mankind that a 'megabyte bomb' was hanging over it. The image is indeed awesome: flows of information—texts, sounds, pictures that are split into billions of bytes and bits—can be a real threat to humanity. Museums also now find themselves in the 'danger zone'.

In 1985 the number of objects stored in Soviet museums topped 50 million, and it still continues to grow rapidly. It is now obvious that museums cannot cope with the increasing flow of information with traditional methods and have to resort to informatics. Since the late 1970s some museums started to use computers to process data on their collections: the Hermitage where Jakob A. Sher headed the creation of a computerized mini-catalogue of antique bronzes,<sup>1</sup> the Russian Museum, the Tretyakov Gallery, the Central Museum of the Revolution, the History Museum and some others. But those were fragmentary efforts, and the experts did not have a uniform methodological approach to computerization in museums.

The situation changed in the second half of the 1980s. Today the latest achievements of informatics are extensively applied in all branches of the country's economy. This is also true of culture. The USSR Ministry of Culture has developed a long-term programme for the setting up of a Computerized Information System for Monuments of History and Culture of the USSR (CIS-Monument), and a Co-ordination Plan for 1986-90 was approved and is now being implemented.

### *The computerization programme*

The CIS-Monument Programme was designed to improve information services and, therefore, the effectiveness of recording, studying and using monuments and museum collections. The system consists of interlinked computerized data banks (CDBs) that contain information on immovable cultural property and museum collections. Three levels of CDB—for the whole country, for the republics and local—are created within the framework of the CIS-Monument to satisfy different groups of users, in accordance with the country's system of records of monuments.

The work on CDBs in museums is proceeding in two directions: first the establishment of subject-oriented complexes on the basis of the country's major museums which will function as centres of excellence in their chosen fields. Thus, the Tretyakov Gallery will have a CDB of Russian and Soviet fine arts, the Hermitage, one of foreign fine arts, and the Central Museum of the Revolution, one of collections that reflect the history of Soviet society. These computerized systems are powerful technical complexes equipped with mini-computers and micro-computers (PCs) of Soviet and foreign make. They strive to solve two problems: computerization of information flows in museums, and creation of a national data bank of different collections on the same subject.

Secondly, there is the creation of PC-based work-stations (CWSs). These CWSs are needed to solve the main problems related to the processing of data on museum collections: records of new items, monitoring of movement of objects inside and outside a museum,

1. J. A. Sher, 'The Use of Computers in Museums: Present Situation and Problems', *Museum*, No. 3/4, 1978, pp. 132-8.

data processing, expositions and exhibitions, creation of catalogues, and so on. CWSs should become the main tool of working with information.

The following two main problems have had to be solved during the implementation of the CIS-Monument Programme: (a) equipment of museums with necessary technology; and (b) training of museum personnel in the effective use of this technology.

Admittedly, we are somewhat behind the most advanced countries as regards extensive application of computers. A very limited number of CDBs were commissioned in early 1988, covering: (a) stationary monuments of history and culture at the USSR Ministry of Culture and monument conservation centres of the Russian Federation, Lithuania and Estonia; and (b) several collections of the Central Museum of the Revolution (painting, banners, decorative and applied art).

Information is being accumulated in the data banks of the Hermitage (foreign painting) and the Russian Museum (Russian and Soviet painting and graphic arts). Furthermore, there are plans to install computers before the year 1990 in the Tretyakov Gallery and the State Museums of the Moscow Kremlin, as well as setting up CWSs in ten to fifteen small museums.

The advantages of this approach are the possibility to test the main provisions of the CIS-Monument Programme and, on the basis of the experience gained, to proceed with the wide introduction of computers in museums.

We also attach great importance to the second problem, namely, the training of personnel. The most advanced technical means and the best technology will not produce a positive effect (they may even have negative consequences) if people are not ready and willing to use them, are unable to adapt to them psychologically, do not have the required skills or do not realize the necessity of introducing informatics in to museums. That is why we regard the earliest possible training of museum personnel as a major activity aimed at improving the work of museums.

***A key factor:  
training museum personnel  
in the use of informatics***

The country is carrying out a reform of the general, specialized-secondary and higher-education system. Informatics

will not be *terra incognita* for those who will graduate tomorrow, or even today, from educational establishments. But museums will continue to employ people who have never studied informatics and know nothing of its language. What can be done for these numerous staff members?

The All-Union Institute for Advanced Training of Workers of Culture holds courses for museum personnel that last about one month (144 hours). Each group consists of fifteen to twenty-five specialists from different towns and cities who occupy the same positions, as a rule, in museums dealing with the same subject (e.g. directors of art museums, chief curators of history and local lore museums, research officers of literary museums, etc.).

In 1985 experimental general lectures on informatics were first given to some groups of students. The experiment was a success, and since 1986 each group has attended a six-hour course on 'Computer Applications in Museums'. These lectures are delivered by highly qualified experts in the creation of computerized systems for museums. The experience accumulated over the past years has made it possible to develop methodologies, to flesh out the volume and structure of the material offered to students and, finally, to finalize the course programme. In the 1987/88 academic year the course lasted six to twenty hours, depending on the composition of the groups. About one-third of the time is devoted to lectures, the rest is actual work with computers and seminars.

Since it is essential for the students to realize the advantages of computerization in museums we draw their attention to the following factors:

They can obtain true and precise data on collections. This makes possible justified and timely decisions on records of their collections, the monitoring of their conservation, the content of expositions and exhibitions, and the study of individual objects.

Highly qualified specialists in museums will be relieved of intensive routine work (copying of voluminous records, manual retrieval of data from books, files, magazines; compilation of various references, registers, etc.). This will enable the specialists to concentrate creatively on scientific problems.

The computer will help to solve previously impossible problems such as attribution of objects of art with the

The author with his students at the All-Union Institute for Advanced Training of Workers of Culture.



All photos © V. Lusin

help of mathematical statistics, application of the theory of image recognition, etc.

There will be a possibility of reducing considerably the time needed for the preparation and production of catalogues and guides, of processing large amounts of information, and developing radically new analytical documents.

These and other factors that are not enumerated here will help derive economic as well as social benefits from the introduction of computers in museums.

### *Computer applications in museum programmes*

The introductory lecture in these courses is devoted to the causes of negative phenomena which are called 'information crises' and to informatics—a new science designed to eliminate such negative phenomena. Some relatively common problems are followed by a critical analysis of information technology adopted by most museums and based on traditional hard-copy documents. Its disadvantages are known to many museum workers: the great amount of work related to documentation, multiple duplication of data, and generally inefficient use of information. Museums encounter internal and external difficulties in compiling common catalogues, preparing exhibitions and conducting exchanges between themselves. Students become convinced that ad hoc gap-stopping cannot improve the work of their museums. They learn the need to reshape their activities on the basis of information technology and approaches, primarily the introduction of computers.

The second lecture deals with the CIS-

Monument Programme. This is followed by workshops. In these, the students work with actual data, such as those in the data bank of the collection of painting or banners of the Central Museum of the Revolution.

The data banks contain information about existing records of objects from museum collections. The user interacts with the computer in a dialogue, with the computer asking a series of questions (this is termed a 'menu') recorded in its programme. A student uses the keyboard, guided by cues supplied by the computer. The system offers a rather wide range of criterion parameters (registration number, name, author, material, technique, manner and time of acquisition, date and place of creation of work) to formulate an inquiry. The list of these parameters was drawn up when the system was created. The data can be obtained in different forms: a list of acquisitions; complete or summary catalogue information on them; and their specifications. The user can obtain on request a printout or an answer on the display hardware.

### *One example: searching a data base*

As an example of information retrieval on inquiry: a user may want to know what oil-paintings by Grekov, of the 1912-25 period, are stored in a museum collection.

The following message will appear on the screen (below is a somewhat simplified version) when the user switches on the system, correctly indicates his or her password and is connected to the paintings data base, to take but one:

---

Russian and Soviet paintings data base  
Select any of the criteria below or a combination of them to obtain information on museum exhibits:

01 Registration number	06 Author
02 Inventory number	07 Title
03 Catalogue number	08 date
04 Material	09 Date of transfer
05 Technique	10 Manner of transfer

Indicate number of (initial) criteria:

---

As the user enters numbers 5 (technique), 6 (author) and 8 (date) the following three messages appear on the screen, one after another:

---

Russian and Soviet paintings data base  
Technique Possible values: 1

01 Oil	03 Pastel
02 Distemper	04 Mixed

---

Below is what the user sees when he enters number 1 (oil)

---

Russian and Soviet paintings data base  
Indicate surname of painter: GREKOV

---

After entry of the painter's name, the following appears on the screen:

---

Russian and Soviet paintings data base  
Indicate date of exhibits: 1912-25

---

The inquiry having been formulated, the computer begins to search for information. Once the search is over, it invites the user to view the data on the screen or obtain a print-out in one of the suggested



Any problem?

forms (for example, a list of exhibits, catalogue descriptions, catalogue cards, and so on) in the shape of a 'list' and 'catalogue map'.

Experience shows that two or three hours are enough for the students to familiarize themselves with computers and to work with them in an interrogation mode.

*What's inside? (Once, we found the Loch Ness monster.)*

During their studies the students experience a natural desire to find out what makes computers tick. We try to satisfy their curiosity because we are certain that even superficial knowledge of the structure of the computer and design of computer systems is not only necessary

Perhaps it's a mistake?

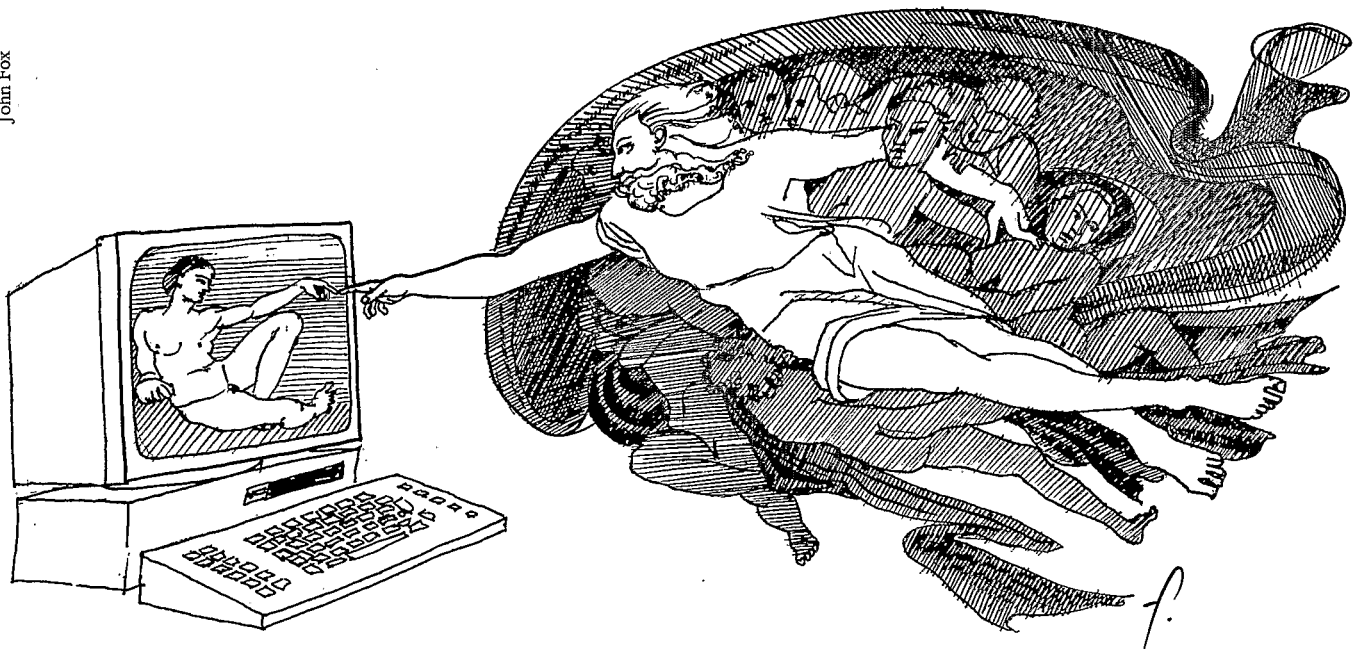


Let's think together!



High time I did it myself.

John Fox



for wider knowledge but will also play a role in the introduction of computers in museums. That is why in the next section of the programme (lectures) we inform students about the logic of the work of computers: the binary system, units of information (bits and bytes), methods of recording, storing and processing information in computers, the structure of processors, programming systems, and notions that may be needed for the development and improvement of computer programmes such as the structure of data, table or file, a record in a file, field of records, etc. Three years' work has shown that this material is successfully mastered when presented in a popularized form.

Particular attention is paid to familiarizing students with principles underlying information-retrieval systems. This enables them to assess critically model computer programs, and to formulate their requests to the information retrieval system that has to meet specific requirements of a specialist, and thus to supplement model programmes.

It is important that from the very beginning the students have a correct notion of what they have to do themselves, or with the help of a professional in informatics, before they start to work with a computer. First of all they have to determine what they want from a computer system, what problems they need to solve. They will be confronted with very complicated problems: classification of characteristics of objects, harmonization of terminology, formalization of the structure of data, and so on. But even if they do not have to create their own profiled program, they do have to solve the problem of preparing data for recording (checking and refining of information will require considerable efforts), and the problem of feeding in large amounts of data.

It is essential for the students to remember that a computer can produce only the information that is entered in to its memory. We have witnessed many absurd situations in our experience.

To give but one example: data on one of Estonia's best architectural monuments—the Niguliste church in Tallin—were entered in to the computer when a data base for stationary monuments was established. At that time the monument was in good condition, and the fact was duly recorded in the computer's memory. A few years later, lightning caused a fire in the church, its spire was destroyed and experts assessed the

damage as very serious. The computer centre was not informed. Had somebody inquired about the monument's condition the computer would have produced the false answer: 'Good'. (The church was later renovated and the answer is once more correct.) This example is one of many. It shows the importance of always entering correct and up-to-date information in to computers.

Another example: in the spring of 1987 a computer in our centre announced that a unique exhibit—a stuffed Loch Ness monster—was being transferred to the museum! The sensation nearly made headlines in the press. But then we realized that the date of the transfer was 1 April, when (as in many countries) practical jokes of all kinds are common.

Cases like this underscore the importance of the human factor in modern computer systems. We draw students' attention to this fact at the final course session, when we speak of development trends in information technology and of the tasks facing us.

Museum/information technology is little understood at the theoretical level. In our work we rely mostly on common sense and intuition. The time has come to provide a theoretical framework for the role and place of information technologies in museums. But this is beyond the means of one expert or even a team of researchers. Such a task world require a co-ordinated effort by professionals specializing in museum studies, information technology, linguistics, law, and so forth. An exchange of opinions is the only way of closing the gap between different views on the problem.

We are striving to solve a number of organizational problems. Those responsible for funds, personnel and material supplies must realize that all information activities in museums should be radically restructured and practical steps should be taken now; the effort should be carried out on an international scale, primarily within the ICOM framework, rather than be confined to individual nations. ■

*[Translated from Russian]*

# The realm of images: a parable about communication

*For museums, communications has become a twofold necessity. First of all, an image of the institution itself has to be projected and developed, often on an international scale, in order to give it an identity. Secondly, not only are exhibitions themselves sources of knowledge, but also it is increasingly common for them to be part of major communication campaigns, ranging from the use of traditional media to highly specific cultural events.*

*Much larger amounts of money than ever before are now being poured into museum communication. Yet professional museologists have not fully taken the measure of the communication choices and strategies open to them; nor indeed, have the consultants, who are legion, and who may have a disconcerting effect.*

*In what follows, a 'communicator' who has been a consultant to a large museum for several years provides readers of Museum with an inside view of the communicator's world.*

Long ago, when humanity was in its infancy, rival clans fought to gain possession of the land. Violent terrible times they were when life was touch and go, nasty, brutish and short, and looting and fighting were the order of the day. The landed warlords had the power of gods.

When plenty of land became available for everyone, people began fighting over money. Drawn by the lure of profit, men became merchants and went travelling all over the world in search of ever greater power. There were the rich and the not so rich; there were those who had nothing. And this is still true today, and will remain so for a long time to come.

Then a new breed of human beings appeared. On the geological time-scale, this tribe is still in its infancy. None the less, these people are already everywhere. They are the 'image-makers'.

These image-makers are true mutants, and therein lies their secret. Indeed they are 'com-mutants', For communication is, so to speak, their lifeblood.

If by some lucky chance we are able to record their main distinguishing features, we must rapidly enter them in a data bank, for it is their nature to be fleeting, transient, hard to pin down—all the better to fox the enemy.

Out of a sense of curiosity and fascination—for are we not all image-makers in some small degree?—I have sought to lift the veil on their essential nature, or rather, to use their terms, on the basic principles enshrined in their charter, the Com-mutants' Charter.

## *Article 1. New objects of the mind*

In former times, men had weapons, splendid, superb, deadly, made from stone, iron and precious alloys. Then gold and silver coins, paper banknotes and magnetic cards became the principal weapons.

The weapons of the image-makers are invisible. They are concepts, symbols, representations, real or potential images.

These invisible weapons are not used to attack the enemy, for there is no longer any enemy.

They are more insidious; they take possession of us and haunt our days.

The extent of the image-makers' victory is to be measured by the amount of space—a much as possible—that they occupy in people's imaginations.

## *Article 2. Volatility*

The image-makers are the greatest illusionists the world has ever known. For they produce an uninterrupted flow of images. The most powerful image drives out the less powerful. The most recent image is the one that prevails.

One of the ethnologists of this tribe of images has even spoken in their connection of the 'aesthetics of disappearance'.

More mundanely, I shall use the term 'scoop'.

The point being that one scoop supersedes another, or to put it more radically, a scoop ceases to exist as soon as it has been given expression.

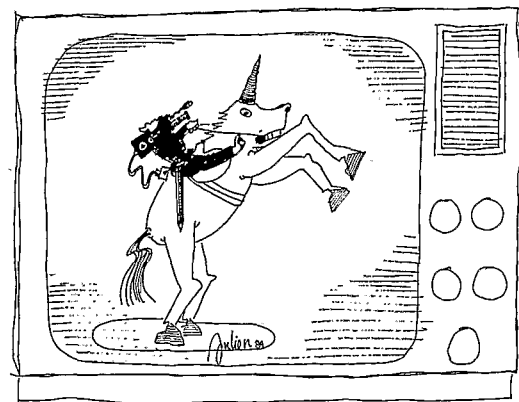
## *Article 3. The unbearable lightness*

Image-makers are wily. They overturn meaning and significance.

Insignificance, trivia and sensationalism are the new ingredients of the scoop.

The absence of depth, meaning, subject or context sets us afloat on a sea of appearances and happenings.

In the hands of the image-maker, a minor news item becomes a white unicorn.



Drawings by Julien

Diane Saunier

Born in Lyons (France) in 1948, she holds an M.A. in modern literature and a diploma from the European Business School and has studied psychology. After working as a communication consultant in industry, she was for four years an exhibition designer for the Cité des Sciences et de l'Industrie at La Villette, Paris. She organizes cultural events and works for the Centre de Création Industrielle at the Georges Pompidou Centre, Paris.

#### Article 4. Hybrid forms

Image-makers are never where they are expected to be.

They would have us live in a perpetual shadow play, of shapes melting and changing into other shapes.

They are the greatest weavers of the great many-coloured veil of Maya, the veil of illusion.

Like old-time warlords deploying their battalions, they make sport of lifestyles and typologies, subcultures (comic strips, graffiti and rock), urban archaeology and quotation.

They are not afraid to blend aesthetics with magic, emotion with mockery.

#### Article 5. Propagation

The image-makers have understood it all. They are well aware that people are more enamoured of the perfume of things than of things themselves.

So they set before each one of us something which resembles the fragrance of what is said, known and imagined, in science or the humanities.

At every moment, the image-makers are busy propagating all forms of knowledge through imperceptible networks and unlikely hair-line channels.

The outcome is that all the megalopolises throughout the world smell the same and share the same fads and fashions.

For they know no boundaries. They are constantly plugged into all the world's networks—walkman, viewdata system, cable network, satellite.

#### Article 6. Memory

The image-makers know what they are up to. Nothing escapes them. They deal in ephemerae, but they store everything in their memories. Their picture banks and data banks are full to overflowing with everything imaginable, the most insignificant events, reports from the back of beyond, the most fleeting quotations. They are the new bankers of time and space, and they can send us travelling at any moment via interactive videodisc; they can open up the sanctuary where the sound archives are held; they can pull out the juiciest film trailer.

These archivists of the unforgiving minute are the architects of history. They weave history out of the present moment.

#### Article 7. Keeping in touch

This is one of the areas where our image-makers excel.

After all, losing touch with us or with you is, for the image-makers, tantamount to ceasing to exist. So they never let go of us for a second, juggling with all the networks in an effort to stay in contact. Information technology, computer graphics and satellites are the amazing tools they use in order to be able at any moment to communicate 'live', 'in real time', with each and every one of us, anywhere in the world. And to ensure that really nothing escapes them, each useful contact is assessed, analysed, weighed up and examined under a microscope. Audience ratings, attendance figures and the like no longer hold any secrets for our Com-mutants.

It is one thing to look into the ways of the New Warriors of the Imagination. But everyone is wondering what they look like and how they can be recognized. Are they perhaps as much a fiction as their images?

They are not so very unlike them.

From one moment to the next, they are to be found among the tightrope walkers, the shamans, the punters or the conquistadores.

Their curiosity is turned outwards, towards the future; communication, dialogue and participation are their watchwords; they are extremely adaptable, very consensus-minded and very changeable, and they have no rules or structure; they have a highly developed sense of fun, are very attentive to matters of form, are very emotional, like over-

grown children, and, like children, they are always ready to play. They are forever inventing 'let's pretend' hypotheses and scenarios. They have a knack for speculating on what the future will bring. They live in a world of archetypes and symbols and—yes, you guessed it—they are 'turned on', 'tuned in', or extremely intuitive.

Some are like sorcerers, drawing their inspiration from premonitions, vibrations and mystifications.

They have a sixth sense, but they use it not so much to enlighten others as to veil them in secrets, allusions and mystery.

These image-makers are not altogether unlike the warriors of old. They resemble them in their language and behaviour. They aim at targets, devise strategies, launch meticulously prepared campaigns, crush and destroy the enemy.

It is time to bring this parable to a close. Haven't we got sidetracked from the subject of museums?

Not by any means.

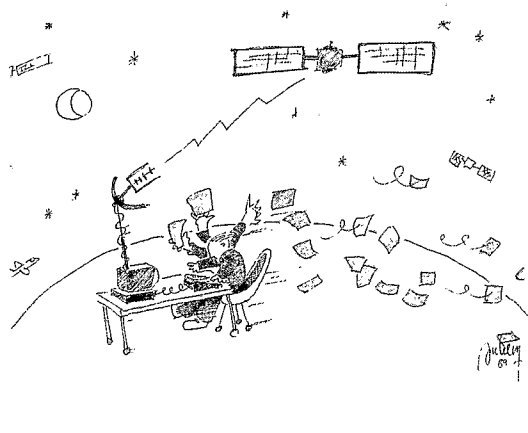
Here, we are at the heart of the great new vehicles of communication that museums have become. The Com-mutants treat them as new places for image-making, for the production and staging of scenic events. All sorts of images and sounds, all sorts of networks, all sorts of new electronic and computer technologies are in constant meta-communication everywhere in these mega-museums.

The unceasing flow of images, when the senses take the brain hostage, technoclips, videodiscs and software packages, special effects and zapping, make-believe and immediacy—these are the new facets of the mediasphere communicated to us by our 'architects of the invisible'.

And all of us who have visited these museums have been screened, sensitized and converted into figures with the objects of achieving better results.

In a parable, after all, image precedes meaning. ■

[Translated from French]





# Planning, an illustrated checklist

Most museum professionals probably consider themselves creators rather than administrators, scholars and/or designers, and/or educators, and/or cultural publicists—but not bureaucrats. And it is certainly all to the good that inspiration and even reverie, rather than paperwork and routine, remain the self-perceived hallmark of museums.

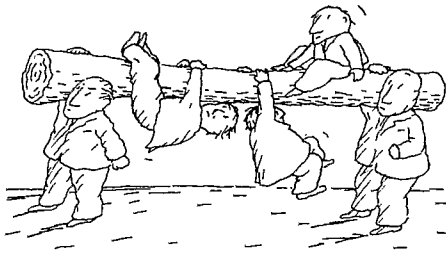
Yet museums are also institutions. Mighty or meek, highly complex undertakings or relatively simple community initiatives, there are few if any museums that do not have budgets to prepare, staff to pay and calendars to obey, that do not—in a word—have to manage themselves. Management can be said to be the art or science of setting and achieving goals within resource constraints and, in that context, of identifying and solving problems.

Planning is a main tool of management in this day and age. It cannot prevent mistakes or failure (in charting a new museum or—more simply—in scheduling a temporary exhibit); but without planning creativity's chances of success are seriously diminished.

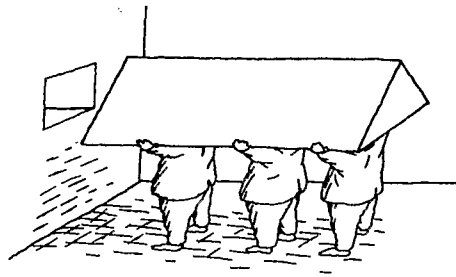
Museum felt it appropriate, therefore, to publish the following checklist summarizing some of the crucial stages of planning as illustrated by Giori Carmi, and excerpted and adapted from Bryan W. Barry's Strategic Planning Workbook for Nonprofit Organizations.<sup>1</sup>

Museum hopes the checklist will prove useful to museum professionals in refining planning procedures, in training activities or merely as a source of instructive amusement.

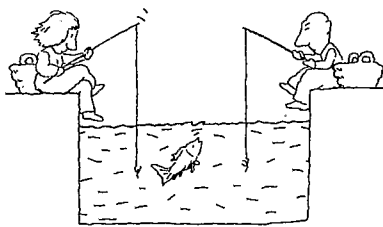
1. In the beginning, there are *problems* to be solved. Problems such as: disorganization



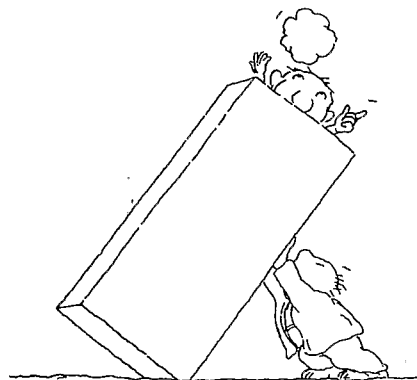
bad previous planning



and competition with other museums/institutions (for the same resources or the same audience).

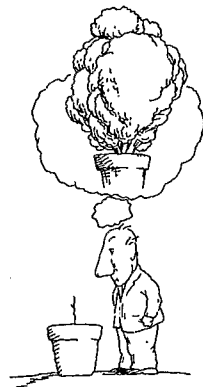


Some of these problems can threaten a museum's survival.



2. Once the problems are identified, but without being totally hemmed in by them, what is needed is a *vision* of the museum.

Part of the vision is substantive, frankly poetic

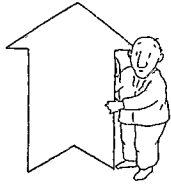


and part of the vision is organizational, even political.

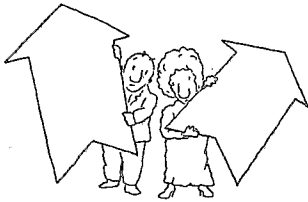


1. Drawings © Giori Carmi and the A.H. Wilder Foundation, from Bryan W. Barry, *Strategic Planning Workbook for Nonprofit Organizations*, St Paul, Minn., A. H. Wilder Foundation, 1986.

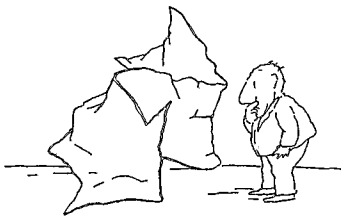
3. Once the vision has emerged, it is time to *get organized*, that is, to ask and answer such questions as: Who should be involved in planning (and how)? What period should a plan cover? By what process will the plan be prepared? Is external help required to prepare it?



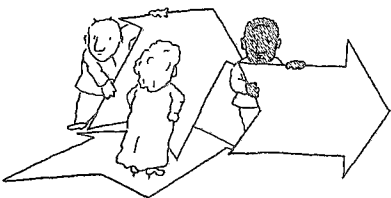
4. With a 'plan for the plan' in hand, and a planning team organized, the next step is to review, in as orderly a fashion as possible, the *situation* of your museum. Subthemes here include: its history and present state; its mission; the opportunities and threats of the context within which it operates; and its own strengths and weaknesses.



Nothing should be considered sacrosanct. Is, for example, the *original mission* of the museum still clear? still relevant (in terms of conservation, research, education, visitors, resources, the surrounding society and world)?



5. Now you can ask: what should our *strategy* be? That is doubtless an overworked word these days. Here, it means 'Which way should we go? Around what core should the content and resources of the plan be wound?'



Several strategies are possible. One strategy makes *goals* the central concern.



But other strategies are possible in addition to a goal-centred approach. One is to identify *critical issues* that will face the museum during the life-span of that plan: a law offering tax relief for contributions to the arts is about to be repealed, affluent citizens are leaving the area where the museum is located, new techniques and equipment for climate control are coming on the market, a new and competing museum is scheduled to be opened near by...

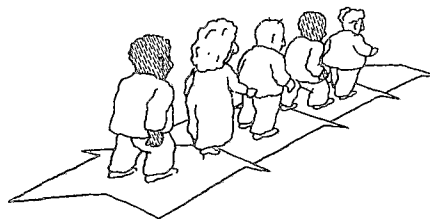
Another approach is to imagine several *possible scenarios*: 'What would be the implications for our museum if X, Y or Z happened?'

Once different possibilities have been identified and assessed, your strategy can be developed.

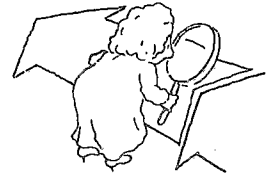
6. Once the issues outlined above have been resolved, it will be possible to proceed with *drafting the plan*: What format? For what readership and usership? How detailed? How binding? How costly? In what languages (in multi-cultural settings)? For approval by whom? What revision procedures?



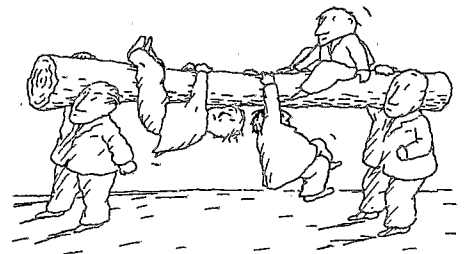
7. Then comes *implementation* of the plan. This involves executing on schedule the activities foreseen therein.



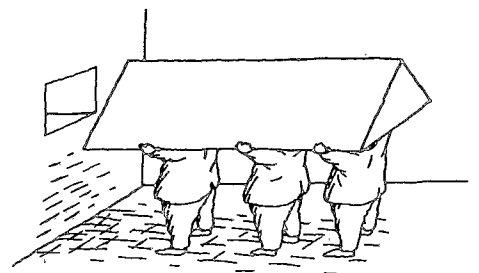
And *monitoring* of the plan (week-to-week, month-to-month, year-to-year), to determine what activities are not being executed, why schedules are not being followed, etc.



8. In addition to—and as distinct from—monitoring, *evaluation* should give deeper and broader information (half-way through the plan, towards the end of the plan) on how things are going. Evaluation can be complicated, cumbersome and costly: it has been compared to the Malaysian proverb that says, 'When you buy a monkey, be sure not to pay more for the leash than for the animal'. But good evaluation can also indicate what parts of the plan are more successful, and what parts are less successful such as



or



9. And so the planning cycle starts anew.



## How to expand the Prado in Madrid: an 'underground' proposal

Alfredo Rodríguez Orgaz

Graduated from the Higher School of Architecture of Madrid with the title of Doctor of Architecture. Did a Practicum in West Berlin, with the Walter Gropius Group. City Architect of Granada; worked on various projects (Bank of the Republic, façade of the cathedral, Colombian Academy) in Bogotá, Colombia, and in New York, Madrid and Paris, where he was entrusted with designing a new hall for Unesco Headquarters. Member of the European Academy of Sciences, Arts and Letters. Officer of the Légion d'honneur, France, and member of the International Council of Museums (ICOM).

Museums may be ranked among the most effective disseminators of culture in our time. In the course of their brief history, spanning no more than two centuries, they have moved far beyond the objectives for which they were established. Their role no longer consists solely in conserving and protecting works of art and mounting more or less passive exhibitions for the benefit of the general public. Under the pressure of social change and the influence of new ideas they have gradually modified the whole concept of art.

It was André Malraux, in his remarkable works of half a century ago, who gave us a lucid and accurate insight into the role played by museums in contemporary culture: the viewer is placed in a new relationship with the work of art, which has been relieved of the functions for which it was created. The museum detaches works of art from their original environment and brings them together for comparison and contrast. Modern museums no longer play a passive role. They still serve their original purpose of saving masterpieces from destruction,

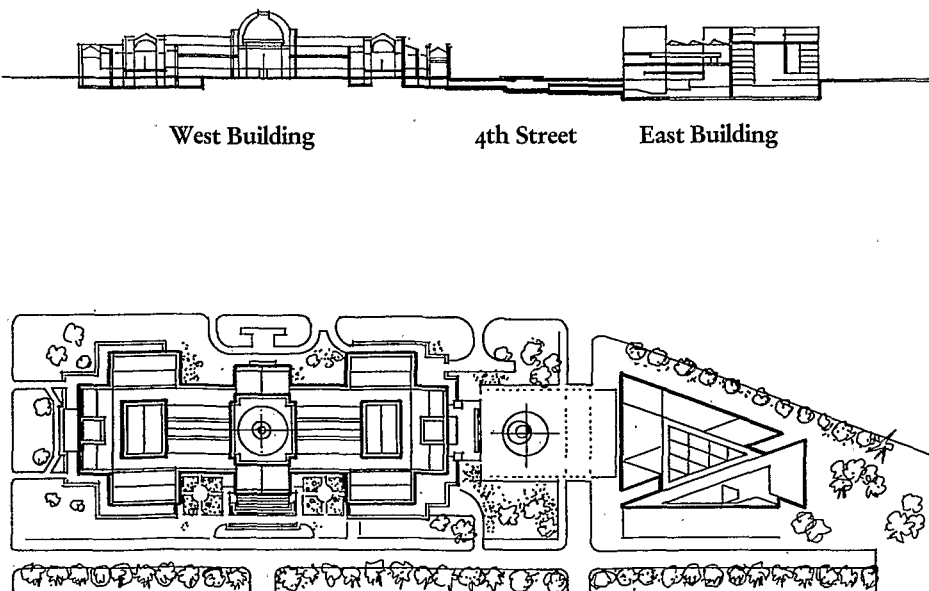
but change has conferred on them a new character, a new existence and a new dignity.

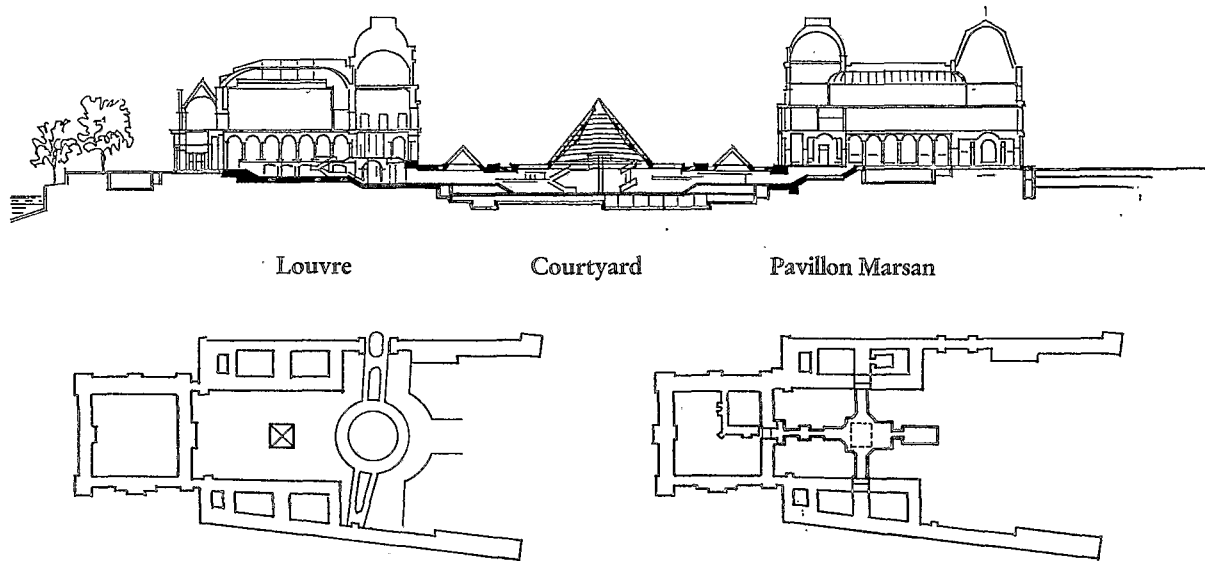
The works used to stock museums were originally intended for quite different settings—temples, palaces, etc. Nowadays they are destined to end up in a museum. This ultimate destiny is becoming their *raison d'être*, their passport to glory. Art-lovers cannot rely on being the exclusive owners of their collections or on bequeathing them to their heirs. The art market is against it: paintings, sculpture, furniture and other art objects have become so prohibitively expensive that their continued ownership by private individuals is unsustainable. Only museums are capable of conserving such property and enabling it to play its appropriate cultural role in modern society. Works of art are moving swiftly from private hands into the public domain.

This accounts for the inordinate increase in the collections of national museums. Although few can afford to buy works on the free art market they know that most of such works inevitably end up in a public collection. It seems clear that museums can look forward to unlimited expansion.

Other equally important factors are influencing the development of the major national museums, first and foremost the massive spread of culture. New social strata are gaining access to higher levels of education. This new audience sees a work of art as an object that is meant not for individual ownership but for contemplation by all art-lovers. A second factor is urbanization. National museums are located in ever-larger cities whose inhabitants are counted in their millions. This trend towards a mass society has broken all existing patterns (and is also the source of ills such as environmental pollution, which poses a serious threat to the conservation of art objects). The third factor is the tourist boom. Museums are now visited not just by the residents of the towns where they are located but also by

1  
Plan of the new East Building of the National Gallery of Art in Washington, designed by I. M. Pei. Opened in 1977, the East Wing was linked to the present museum by an underground passage beneath 4th Street, in which many of the museum's services were installed. (All drawings by courtesy of the author.)





2  
 The Louvre Museum, Paris.  
 In 1989 President François Mitterrand inaugurated the glass pyramid designed by I. M. Pei, which gives access to the museum. Underground premises link all the museum's departments to each other and to the Pavillon Marsan.

hundreds of thousands or even millions of outside visitors.

*Needs + obligations = space*

All these circumstances impose on museums needs and obligations that were difficult to foresee just a few decades ago. Curators and architects are faced with the difficult task of providing new services, new installations and, in general, considerably more space and accommodation. This is the most pressing requirement. Without *space* a museum can neither display its collection adequately nor undertake other activities. There is a whole range of new needs: ample access facilities for visitors; areas for the sale of books, photographs and reproductions, which can make an effective contribution to defraying costs; more storage space; restoration workshops; laboratories; archives and libraries; conference rooms; cafés and restaurants; administrative offices; security and fire services; air-conditioning installations; etc.

The most important and representative of the world's national museums, which are worst hit by these problems and set the pattern for other museums, are rising to this formidable challenge with skill and determination. The scope of this article is too limited to allow mention of all those museums. I shall therefore concentrate on the following: the National Gallery of Art and the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C., the Louvre in Paris and the Prado in Madrid.

The American museums have had the advantage of being housed in purpose-

built premises. European museums, on the other hand, are frequently housed in palaces or in monumental or very old and inevitably inconvenient buildings. I shall look at how the problems of renovation and expansion have been solved for each.

The National Gallery of Art in Washington has not had location problems. It was able to use an adjacent site for a second building, the East Wing designed by I. M. Pei. The one problem that did arise—of connecting the present two buildings—was solved by constructing an underground passage beneath 4th Street (Fig. 1). This quite spacious area was very skilfully used for ancillary services such as cafés, sales counters, etc. I mention this option of extending downwards under streets and public thoroughfares because it will prove necessary elsewhere. In the context of alterations, the National Gallery of Art was the first museum to solve its extension and renovation problems by going underground.

When the Smithsonian Institution recently found it necessary to construct the new Museum of African and Asian Art it, too, had to build below street-level because there was no adequate surface site in the vicinity of its other buildings. It is a very fine museum occupying several floors, and its inauguration a year ago demonstrated the viability of underground projects.

The Louvre is the museum whose needs are most vast and the one that has had the greatest difficulty in expanding. Many years ago the Pavillon de Marsan, one of the complex of monuments

comprising the Palais du Louvre, was placed at its disposal. But how was it to be integrated into the museum? The Louvre also opted for an underground solution, building spacious premises under the Cour Napoléon. A daring and original entrance has been built beneath a glass pyramid, also designed by I. M. Pei. The beauty of this solution is now appreciated (Fig. 2).

### The Prado

Lastly, we come to the Prado Museum, for which extension, reconstruction and renovation plans have been on the drawing board for twenty-five years. In 1974 I put forward what may then have been the brand new idea of building underground in view of the fact that there was no possibility either of extending the present building or of tampering with the monumental ensemble in that particular part of Madrid. Various additions had been made to the present building in the form of adjacent pavilions in the patios and recesses of the old building. All possibilities of this nature have now been exhausted.

There are fortunately other museums in the vicinity that have been made available as extensions to the Prado. They are the Museo del Ejército and the Museo del Casón del Buen Retiro, buildings that formed part of the former Alcázar Real, which was destroyed by fire in the seventeenth century. The three buildings together form a grandiose feature of the Spanish capital.

The availability of these buildings prompted me to suggest a series of constructions beneath the surrounding streets and squares between the Academia Española and the Convento de San Jerónimo el Real. This would make available a substantial additional area of 10,000 square metres, and the three museums would be linked without a break to the new premises (see Fig. 3).

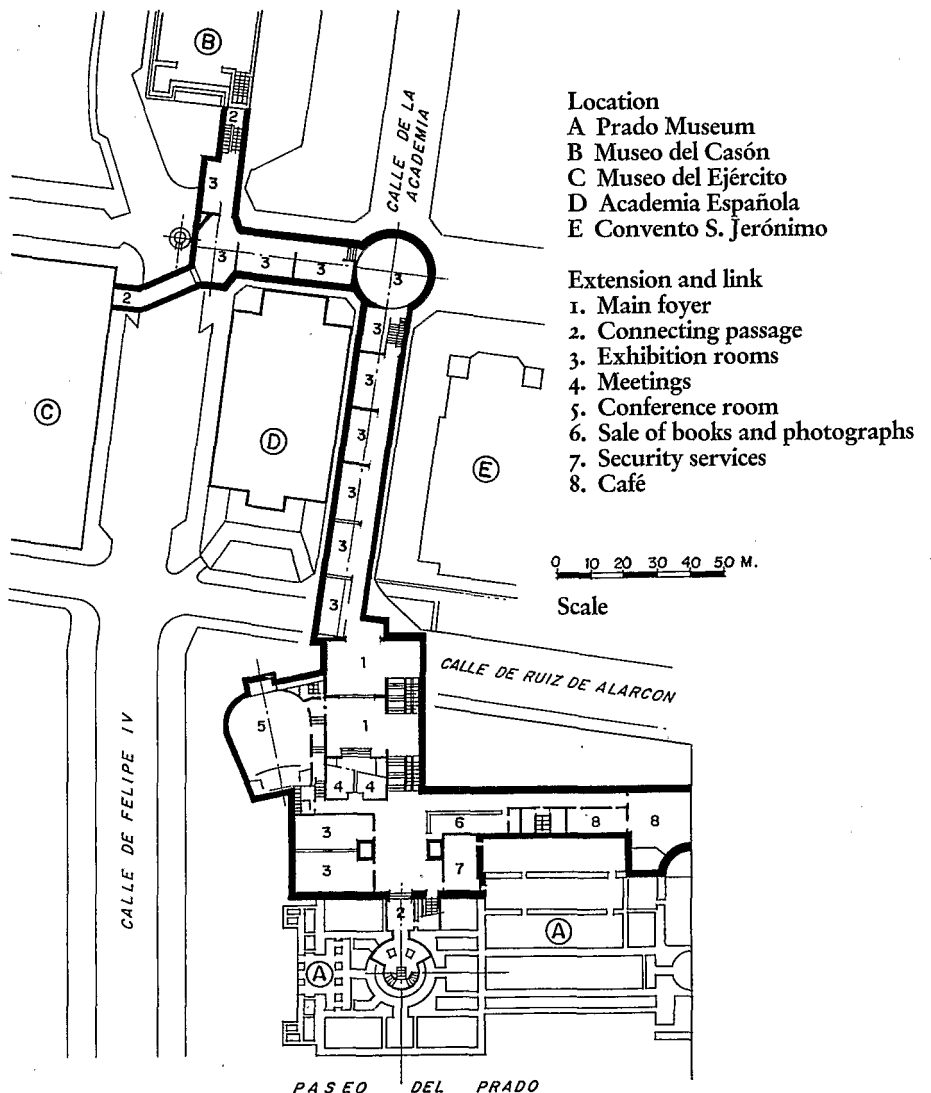
This project has not been implemented, although it was the first such solution proposed to a difficult problem. Similar proposals have been adopted, as we have seen, in three renowned museums—two in Washington and one in Paris.

Perhaps Madrid's cultural authorities thought it would be easier to incorporate the nearby Palacio de Villahermosa in the Prado Museum. But the recent conversion of that palace to house the Thyssen-Borne-Misza collection has put paid to this option. The idea of building an

underground extension has therefore acquired renewed topicality.

A large-scale Prado Museum composed of three such fine buildings as its present premises, the Museo del Casón and the Museo del Ejército would form a complex comparable even to that of the Louvre, which, by virtue of improvements that do credit to the French cultural authorities, will be the most extensive, richly endowed and monumental museum in the world. ■

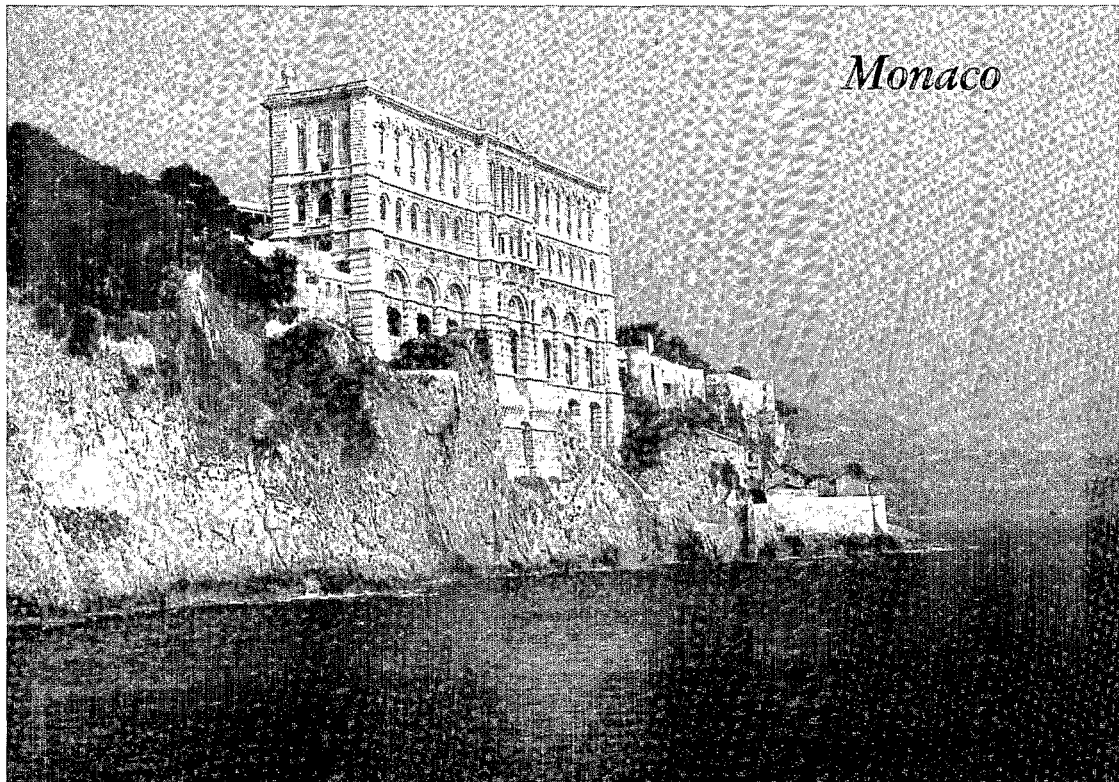
[Translated from Spanish]



3  
Plan of the Prado Museum, Madrid. In 1975, for the extension and reorganization of the Prado Museum, the author suggested the construction of premises beneath the surrounding streets which would connect the present museum building with the Museo del Casón and the Museo del Ejército.

## A CITY AND ITS MUSEUMS

# FEATURES



Musée Océanographique de Monaco

Oceanographic Museum.

A state's cultural dimensions are not always proportionate to its geographical dimensions, a fact which we would do well to remember in these materialistic times.

Although the Principality of Monaco is very restricted in area and boasts a mere 27,000 inhabitants, it is a Member State of Unesco, and its international influence is considerable, owing in no small measure to its tradition of patronage of the arts and artistic creativity. There must be few people today who have never heard of the Monte Carlo Opera, the Monte Carlo Orchestra or the Monte Carlo Ballet.

There is, however, another, probably lesser known, facet of the principality's cultural life that deserves attention: the fascination and the diversity of its museums. This article will enable the reader to appreciate the vast coverage of Monaco's museum collections, which are so skilfully and attractively displayed that their appeal to the general public is as great as their value for research work, whose findings have, incidentally, been internationally acclaimed.

As regards specifically cultural museums, we shall see that the essential

safeguarding of the heritage—whether concerned with the principality's history and traditions or (and here the accent must be placed on originality) with making visitors more familiar with the mechanical toys and dolls of a bygone age—is being ensured with an eye to the future. There are, for example, ambitious plans to establish a Museum of Fine Arts.

### *The Museum of the Prince's Palace*

The collection of Napoleonic memorabilia that Prince Louis II assembled with the dedication and skill of a knowledgeable amateur, and to which Prince Rainier III has continued to add with meticulous care, has been open to the public since June 1970. The latest display techniques were used when the museum was installed in a huge hall specially created to house it in the west wing of the palace. Napoleonic souvenirs are exhibited on the ground floor, and a spacious mezzanine contains reminders of the most outstanding periods and events in Monaco's history.

The unusual, picturesque and often moving relics of the Napoleonic epic are

extremely evocative. Presided over by Baron Gérard's magnificent portrait of the Emperor in his coronation robes, the display of over 1,000 objects and documents is one of the finest collections of souvenirs of France's First Empire.

It contains curious fragments of weapons, spurs, pommels, and ornamental scrolls from sabres picked up by Corporal Jean-Ours Agostini at the foot of the Pyramids on 21 July 1798 and authenticated in his own hand; it also shows the eagle from a flag of the Imperial Guard with two bullet holes, and the Emperor's personal pennant.

One showcase contains a hat that belonged to Napoleon: made of black felt and decorated with one stripe, in the shape that has become a legend. The frail and poignant figure of his son, the King of Rome, is evoked by his silk-embroidered white satin christening booties, a little robe and by the toys (miniature weapons) of his childhood spent at Schönbrunn.

*This article was written jointly by the heads of the museums concerned.*

But the most highly prized exhibit of all is the flag of the Grenadier Guards battalion of Elba, in red and white silk with the three golden bees, the sole remaining example of the standard under which the adventure of the Hundred Days—from Elba to Waterloo and thence to St Helena—began. Sad souvenirs of St Helena (leaves from the willow that grew near the Emperor's burial place, earth from the grave) lie side by side with the most glorious trophies of a historic era.

The upper floor of the museum is devoted to the history of the Principality. The most interesting documents among the thousands preserved in the Palace Archives are on display here, associating with the principality some of the most famous names of history. Near the Charter of Louis XII of France, recognizing Monaco's independence, we find a parchment signed by the Emperor Charles V, letters from Richelieu and Mazarin, and a letter from Louis XIV written entirely in the King's hand and addressed to his 'cousin', Prince Antoine I.

The numismatics enthusiast will be able to admire all the coins struck by the princes of Monaco since 1614; philatelists will admire all the stamps issued by the principality since the reign of Prince Charles III.

The Palace museum, with its souvenirs of one of the greatest moments of French history and of Monaco's glorious past, thus adds to the interest and distinction of the Grimaldis' splendid residence.

### *Local traditions at the 'Museum d'u Veyu Munegu'*

In setting up the National Museum of Monégasque Traditions—the 'Museum d'u Veyu Munegu'—the National Committee on Monégasque Traditions was fulfilling one of the objectives set when it was formed in 1923: to maintain the Principality's customs and language, revive old folkways, and collect material bearing witness to Monaco's past and to the country's art and history.

No sooner had the committee, with the Prince's help, acquired the Maison des Traditions, perched on the Rock of Monaco, than it set about bringing together and attractively displaying material connected with sacred art, books on historical events witnessed by earlier Monacans, written works in the local language and musical scores, in fact anything produced by Monégasques which

had enriched the national heritage; engravings and pictures of old landscapes, portraits of outstanding personalities who had played a part in the nation's history, medals, coins, officers' uniforms and those of the Prince's guard.

The committee is now responsible for maintaining the museum, established in 1972, which is both important to our compatriots and of interest to tourists, and for seeing that it preserves for future generations all the evidence of Monaco's past that will foster national spirit and continue to attract visitors.

### *The Oceanographic Museum of Monaco, 'temple of the blue planet'*

The Oceanographic Museum of Monaco attracts nearly a million visitors every year, which places it in the top league of European museums. The reasons for its popularity are, first, the interest of the collections themselves and, second, the fascination exerted for some twenty years now by anything connected with the sea.

The Oceanographic Museum introduces visitors to the 'blue planet', a name given to our own earth on account of the predominance of oceans on its surface. It was inaugurated in March 1910 on the initiative of Prince Albert I, a pioneer of modern oceanography. During his travels this explorer-prince had collected an impressive number of marine specimens and it was of the greatest importance for scientific research and the information of the public at large that they should be preserved for posterity. That is why Albert I had the Oceanographic Museum built.

Today it is visited mainly for its world-famous aquarium. The fauna of all the world's oceans are represented in it, but it is the tropical species that provide the most spectacular display of colour. Visitors can also see stuffed marine animals or skeletons and other products of the oceans (coral, mother of pearl, pearls, shells and sponges). The permanent exhibition *Discover the Ocean* gives simple but appealingly presented explanations of the main marine phenomena (currents, tides, waves, etc.), and many temporary exhibitions are organized on a vast range of other oceanographic topics.

It should perhaps be pointed out that the Oceanographic Museum is part of the Oceanographic Institute, a non-profit-making foundation. The revenue from entrance fees is used to finance scientific research at sea (the museum has a

research boat) and in the laboratory, here particularly in association with the Monaco Scientific Centre. The 'temple of the blue planet' also boasts one of the finest oceanographic libraries in Europe.

We must also mention plans to make special provision for school groups (from infant, junior and secondary schools) in 1989. Workshops are being set up in association with teachers to enable children and adolescents to make the most of their visit to the museum. Love and respect for one's heritage does not only grow with age.

### *From conservation to research: the Museum of Prehistoric Anthropology*

The Museum of Prehistoric Anthropology was founded in 1902 by Prince Albert I 'to preserve the evidence of primitive human life and activity excavated from the earth of the principality and neighbouring areas'. Simplicity and light are the hallmarks of the exhibition's design. Visitors can follow the chronology of prehistory from the most ancient to more recent times simply by walking around each of the two rooms in a clockwise direction to examine the exhibits offered for their perusal.

The Albert I Room—which contains objects relating to prehistory in general—offers a brief review of the milestones in the evolution of mankind, from Australoanthropus to Pithecanthropus and fossil *Homo sapiens* (Cro-Magnon and Grimaldi types), the precursor of today's human beings. These human remains are associated with animals which are now extinct or which emigrated during the various ice ages and inter-glacial periods. Opposite them, cylindrical display cases in which the oldest objects are placed at the bottom and the most recent at the top show products of the industries of the successive civilizations of the Palaeolithic in Europe (from 1,500,000 to 12,000 years ago), the Mesolithic, the Neolithic and the Bronze Age (from 12,000 to 700 years ago). Prince Albert I's hunting trophies provide an interesting illustration of Quaternary fauna.

The Rainier III Room contains regional collections of finds from excavations carried out on the initiative of Prince Albert I (in the Grimaldi caves in Italy and the Observatory cave in Monaco) between 1895 and 1922 and from digs organized by the museum since 1945. It is clear that already in the lower Palaeolithic—over 1 million years



Palais Princier Archives, Monaco

ago—the French Riviera was a much sought-after place of residence! In the entrance hall visitors are greeted by a chronological table of prehistoric industries based on Leroi-Gourhan's calculations. It shows the slowness of early technological progress, and the sudden spurt at the very end of the time-scale.

The museum organizes its own digs and publishes an annual bulletin of its research work. Its team of researchers are currently working on two of the most ancient sites in France and Italy: the cave of Aldène (Cesseras, Hérault) and the cave of the Prince (Grimaldi, Liguria). Sediment, wildlife remains and tools all indicate that humans set up camp near the gorges of the Cesse and the shores of the Maritime Alps some 500,000 years ago, hunting deer, horse and rhinoceros and dismembering their prey with the aid of primitively sharpened stones.

The museum's main research method has been to apply data analysis techniques to prehistory so as to extract the maximum amount of information from each object unearthed. This statistical approach has proved particularly useful in the quantitative study of tools, where it has made it possible to assess the relative importance of the roles of chance and design in the origins of technology.

### *The Exotic Garden*

The most often photographed of all the tourist attractions in the region, this

Eden of just over one hectare, is the largest rockery for succulent plants in the world. Many of them (bursting with sap, not 'fat' as is sometimes supposed) are well over 100 years old. Mexican and South American cacti have grown to the huge dimensions they attain in their countries of origin, thanks to an ideally suited microclimate.

This impressive site, with a slope of approximately forty-five degrees which allows heavy rain to drain off rapidly while providing maximum exposure to the sun in winter, was opened to the public on 13 February 1933. A far-sighted prince with an interest in nature (Albert I), a chief engineer with a gift for art (Louis Notari) and a gardener in love with his job (Augustin Gastaud) were together responsible for the creation of this tourist highspot which is visited by nearly 600,000 people every year and has so far been seen by over fifteen million.

Several thousand plants are cultivated in the nearby Botanical Centre whose 1,500 square metres contain five greenhouses and many specially constructed shelters. These remarkable specimens (Cactaceae, Mesembryanthemae, Graculaceae, Euphorbiaceae, Agavaceae, etc.) are studied by researchers in various disciplines (taxonomy, physiology, cytology and others). Every year students come to attend training courses in this very specialized field and they have a well-stocked library at their disposal.

The directors also organize annual

Part of the Napoleon Collection, Palais Princier.

A character from the Galéa Collection (1865).



Galéa Collection



trips to other parts of the world to bring back plants, photos and soil samples. The uniqueness and the scenic beauty of the environment in which these extraordinary plants—many of them living works of art—flourish have earned Monaco's Exotic Garden a place on Unesco's World Heritage List.

*Old mechanical toys and dolls:  
The National Museum's  
permanent collection*

This museum was opened in 1972 in a late nineteenth-century villa reminiscent of the style of Charles Garnier which provides an ideal setting for its collection of old dolls and mechanical toys. This world in miniature was assembled by Madeleine de Galéa (1874-1956) who devoted her life to this collection. After her death, her grandson donated it to the Principality of Monaco, which thus acquired one of the first—if not *the* first—museums of this kind to be opened to the public.

The collection comprises over 300 dolls, some of which date back to the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries; the great majority are the 'parisiennes' or 'fashion dolls' typical of the second half of the nineteenth century. The bodies are virtually all made of animal skin and the heads of bisque (occasionally porcelain), though a few are of papier-mâché.

This elegant little world—the term 'fashion doll' refers to the fact that they were delivered with a complete trousseau faithfully reflecting the latest fashions—dates from the time when dolls were first manufactured industrially. They are displayed against décors which have been made to scale to evoke various everyday occupations. The furniture has been made with so much attention to detail that it is often difficult to distinguish the high quality toy from the 'masterpieces' produced by craftsmen in former times to qualify for the much sought-after title of master. From the cast-iron stove to the mahogany writing desk or the inlaid chest of drawers, the dolls are surrounded by miniatures of everyday objects of that time: crockery, jewellery, books, embroidery kits and horse-drawn carriages, for example.

After years of collecting dolls, Madame de Galéa developed a passion for mechanical toys: expensive playthings for adults, which could be found in the opulent homes of the *grande bourgeoisie*. Circuses, black minstrels and monkeys

are the themes most widely represented alongside more whimsical scenes. The mechanical toys in the museum are regularly wound up for visitors to admire their amazingly complex machinery and the fascinating twists and twirls of the figures it operates. However, in order not to wear out some of the more complex mechanical toys perfect replicas have been made and those are used alternately with the originals alongside which they are displayed.

Lastly, an exquisite Neapolitan crèche with over 200 ornamental figures is another of the collection's major attractions.

The maintenance and proper conservation of the collections naturally involve special measures such as subdued lighting and air conditioning to preserve the old fabrics and the extremely fragile inlaid furniture. This original and fascinating collection attracts people from a wide range of backgrounds who visit the National Museum regularly.

*What of the future?*

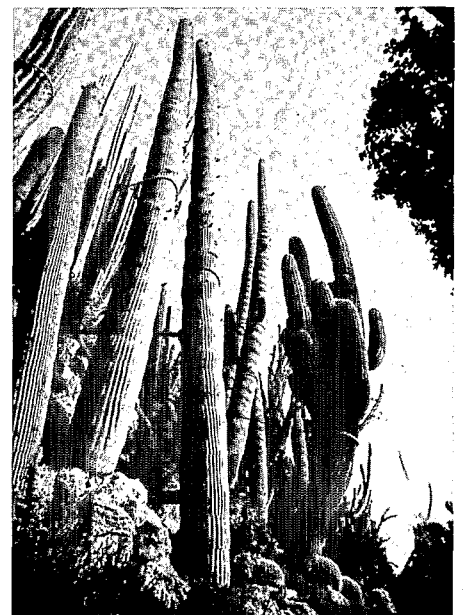
As part of its plan to develop further the increasingly important place accorded to the visual arts in Monaco's cultural life, the Principality intends to set up a Museum of Fine Arts over the next few years which will house outstanding international exhibitions and also selections from permanent collections (now being assembled), each focusing on a particular historical theme.

These collections will evoke an aspect of Mediterranean life—the gay, sophisticated, fun-loving nature of the principality so amply illustrated in many modern art movements, particularly in the period between 1860 and the Second World War, which was Monte Carlo's heyday.

There could be no fitter setting for a museum of this kind than the sumptuous *belle époque* villa, which already houses the Museum of Dolls and Mechanical Toys (like the one in Paris) situated near the Opera built by Charles Garnier. So as not to detract from the beauty of the site, the future museum will naturally be placed out of sight under the terraced gardens of the villa, and overhead lighting will be used in its exhibition rooms. This architecturally and artistically ambitious project is a measure of Monaco's cultural dynamism. ■

[Translated from French]

Cacti in Monaco? They can be found in the Exotic Garden.



# RETURN AND RESTITUTION

## *Return and restitution of cultural property: the role of museums*

The sixth session of the Intergovernmental Committee for Promoting the Return of Cultural Property to its Countries of Origin or its Restitution in Case of Illicit Appropriation took place in April 1989 at Unesco Headquarters. Museum professionals and friends of museums are not concerned by each and every minute aspect of the Committee's work or of Unesco's programme in the area known, in short, as 'return and restitution'. On the other hand, they do have an important role and responsibility in this regard.

The concern of the museum community regarding major aspects of the return and restitution of cultural property was, in fact, spelled out in the Code of Professional Ethics adopted unanimously by the fifteenth General Assembly of the International Council of Museums (ICOM) meeting at Buenos Aires, Argentina, on 4 November 1986.

*Museum* considers it useful to reproduce here excerpts of the relevant sections of that Code both to inform readers who may not know about it and to refresh the memories of those who have not looked at it recently. For both categories, there is food for thought here about museums' specific place in the process of return and restitution.



### *3. Acquisitions to museum collections*

#### *3.2. Acquisition of illicit material*

The illicit trade in objects destined for public and private collections encourages the destruction of historic sites, local ethnic cultures, theft at both national and international levels, places at risk, endangered species of flora and fauna, and

contravenes the spirit of national and international patrimony. Museums should recognize the relationship between the marketplace and the initial and often destructive taking of an object for the commercial market, and must recognize that it is highly unethical for a museum to support in any way, whether directly or indirectly, that illicit market.

A museum should not acquire, whether by purchase, gift, bequest or exchange, any object unless the governing body and responsible officer are satisfied that the museum can acquire a valid title to the specimen or object in question and that in particular it has not been acquired in, or exported from, its country of origin and/or any intermediate country in which it may have been legally owned (including the museum's own country), in violation of that country's laws.

So far as biological and geological material is concerned, a museum should not acquire by any direct or indirect means any specimen that has been collected, sold or otherwise transferred in contravention of any national or international wildlife protection or natural history conservation law or treaty of the museum's own country or any other country except with the express consent of an appropriate outside legal or governmental authority.

So far as excavated material is concerned, in addition to the safeguards set out above, the museum should not acquire by purchase objects in any case where the governing body or responsible officer has reasonable cause to believe that their recovery involved the recent unscientific or intentional destruction or damage of ancient monuments or archaeological sites, or involved a failure to disclose the finds to the owner or occu-

pier of the land, or to the proper legal or governmental authorities.

If appropriate and feasible, the same tests as are outlined in the above four paragraphs should be applied in determining whether or not to accept loans for exhibition or other purposes.

### *4. Disposal of collections*

#### *4.4. Return and restitution of cultural property*

If a museum should come into possession of an object that can be demonstrated to have been exported or otherwise transferred in violation of the principles of the *Unesco Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property (1970)* and the country of origin seeks its return and demonstrates that it is part of the country's cultural heritage, the museum should, if legally free to do so, take responsible steps to co-operate in the return of the object to the country of origin.

In the case of requests for the return of cultural property to the country of origin, museums should be prepared to initiate dialogues with an open-minded attitude on the basis of scientific and professional principles (in preference to action at a governmental or political level). The possibility of developing bilateral or multilateral co-operation schemes to assist museums in countries which are considered to have lost a significant part of their cultural heritage in the development of adequate museums and museum resources should be explored.

Museums should also respect fully the terms of the *Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of*

*Armed Conflict* (The Hague Convention, 1954), and in support of this Convention, should in particular abstain from purchasing or otherwise appropriating or acquiring cultural objects from any occupied country, as these will in most cases have been illegally exported or illicitly removed.

### 8. *Personal responsibility to colleagues and the profession*

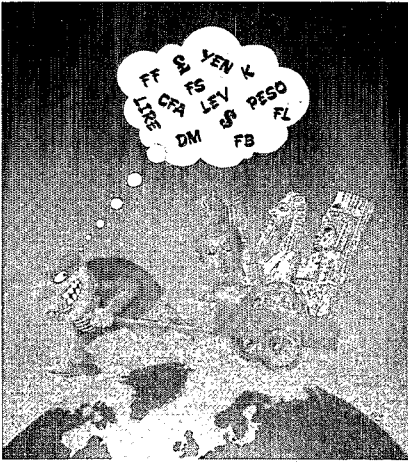
#### 8.5. *Authentication, valuation and illicit material*

Members of the museum profession are encouraged to share their professional knowledge and expertise with both professional colleagues and the general public.

However, written certificates of authenticity or valuation (appraisals) should not be given, and opinions on the monetary value of objects should only be given on official request from other museums or competent legal, governmental or other responsible public authorities.

Members of the museum profession should not identify or otherwise authenticate objects where they have reason to believe or suspect that these have been illegally or illicitly acquired, transferred, imported or exported.

They should recognize that it is highly unethical for museums or the museum profession to support either directly or indirectly the illicit trade in cultural or natural objects (see para. 3.2. above), and under no circumstances should they act in a way that could be regarded as benefiting such illicit trade in any way, directly or indirectly. Where there is reason to believe or suspect illicit or illegal transfer, import or export, the competent authorities should be notified. ■



## *Art Institute of Chicago returns Khmer lintel to Thailand*

On 10 November 1988, a Khmer Dynasty stone lintel with the title, 'Birth of Brahma with Reclining Vishnu', was returned by the Art Institute of Chicago, United States, to its native Thailand.

Originally part of the Phnom Rung temple built in northeastern Thailand in the eleventh and twelfth centuries A.D., the lintel disappeared in 1966 along with other masterpieces. It was later displayed at the Art Institute of Chicago.

After protracted negotiations and expression of considerable public concern in Thailand, the lintel was returned, and delivered to Prince Diskul Subhadradis, who had represented Thailand at a meeting with Art Institute officials about the lintel in July 1988. After being displayed at the National Museum in Bangkok, the lintel has been

re-installed in its original place over an entrance to the Phnom Rung temple.

By returning the lintel to Thailand, the Art Institute of Chicago acknowledged that it has relinquished all right and title to the sculpture. James N. Wood, Director of the Institute, said, 'We are pleased to be donating the lintel to Thailand so that the restoration of the Phnom Rung temple can be completed.'

The Cheney Foundation has committed funds to obtain a work of comparable artistic merit to be donated to the Art Institute, meeting the requirement for just compensation and thus enabling the lintel to be returned. ■

## An unnecessary museum

Kenneth Hudson

In addition to his well-known work for the European Museum of the Year Award, Kenneth Hudson has published several books on museum topics including: *A Social History of Museums*, Macmillan, 1975; *Museums for the 1980s*, Macmillan/Unesco, 1977; *The Good Museums Guide*, Macmillan, 1980; and *Museum of Influence*, Cambridge University Press, 1987, a study of thirty-seven museums worldwide, which have influenced museum thinking and practice over the past 200 years.

My first thought was to call this article 'A Museum that Nobody Needs', but after reflection I abandoned that, realizing that even the worst museum is needed as a source of income and employment by the people who work in it. Every museum, however bad, is needed by someone. Like a factory that makes useless goods or a shop that sells horrible objects, it provides work. That kind of need is real. We may regret it, but we cannot ignore or despise it. Stripped of its cultural clothes, a museum is basically a place of work and, since museums are labour intensive, and in this sense old-fashioned, institutions, they employ more people per hundred square metres of floor space than the average factory nowadays. The labour market makes no distinction between a good museum and a bad museum. Its quality is of no importance. What matters is its ability to pay wages and salaries.

So there is no such thing as a museum that nobody needs. An unnecessary museum, however, is quite another matter. It is sad to have to say that wherever museums exist they include among their number institutions which confer little or no cultural, intellectual or spiritual benefit on anyone, museums which would not leave a vacuum if they were to disappear tomorrow. The more one travels, the more one becomes aware of such places.

But, before we can attempt to paint the portrait of an unnecessary museum, we have to think of its opposite. What is a necessary museum? The answer is not a simple one and it cannot be purely utilitarian. An unnecessary railway is presumably one that has been deserted by its former passengers, an unnecessary school is one that no longer attracts pupils, an unnecessary factory is one that no longer makes goods that people want to buy. This is a market definition of 'unnecessary'. Can it be applied to

museums? If very few people visit a museum, is it an unnecessary institution? Conversely, if a great many people visit it, is it, automatically and without further question, a national or local necessity? Does 'few visitors' mean 'bad, undesirable'? Does 'many visitors' mean 'good, wanted, socially useful'? The answer to all these questions is 'no'. Numbers alone are not an adequate criterion, although they cannot be disregarded.

For me—and I am not a trade-union official, interested only in jobs, wages and working conditions—a good museum is one from which I come out feeling better than when I went in. This may be because I have discovered a temporary refuge from the pressures, ugliness and noise of the outside world, because my mind has been stimulated by contact with new ideas, because I understand something that I did not understand before. On the whole, I am more likely to experience these sensations in a small museum than in a large one. This may be a matter of temperament; it may be part of the process of growing older. With each year that passes, I find that I need small music (chamber music) more and large music (symphonies and operas) less; *tête-à-tête* meals with friends more, large dinners and lunches less. I find the presence of large numbers of other people inhibiting, a barrier to understanding and to emotional response. I detest large, aggressive, arrogant public architecture, La Défense, in Paris, the Barbican in London, the Rockefeller Centre in New York. I would run a mile from the Olympic Games, the Salon de l'Automobile, or any other mass occasion. For me, such events are both unpleasant and unnecessary, though I realize very well that for others, millions of others, they are an essential part of life, a vital component of the constant struggle against boredom.

*'I dare not be wrong'*

This division of humanity into two types, the lovers of the small and the worshippers of the big, has profound implications for museums. The big can flourish only if it is patronized by large numbers of people, who can be persuaded to attend by the assurance that they will find themselves in the company of thousands of other like-minded people. Viewed objectively, the show may be bad, even very bad, but what matters is not its quality, but that crowds are sharing in its badness, that it becomes good because of the number of those who have come to see it.

The situation involves what I call the I-dare-not-be-wrong factor. If something has been enormously publicized in advance, if it has been opened by the President or the Queen, if vast sums of money have been spent on creating it, if the critics, in their customary incestuous fashion, have shown themselves to be united in their praise of it, if we have made a long and arduous journey to attend, if we have paid out good money in order to enter, then it becomes very difficult to admit that we have made a mistake. If millions of people, perhaps over many generations, have visited it, if it is the mark of a good citizen to have seen it, then it has to be publicly good. To confess, in the face of so much adulation, of such enormous patronage, that we found it tedious and meaningless, would be to place ourselves outside society, an act of courage of which few of our fellow citizens are capable. The I-dare-not-be-wrong factor is one of the most powerful tools at the disposal of the entrepreneur and publicist. To attend the right events, the socially approved places, has much of the flavour of a religious ritual. What is by any reasonable standards unnecessary becomes, by the sheer number of its patrons, necessary.

The Louvre in Paris, which is, like the Metropolitan Museum in New York, in many ways a very bad museum, a giant storage depot, a mighty employment agency a black-market mini-university, a place of exhaustion rather than repose, a temple of greed and snobbery, has no difficulty in protecting itself against attacks on its prestige and privilege, simply because busload after busload of tourists can be relied on to turn up throughout the year to light metaphorical candles in front of the *Mona Lisa*. A museum with such a shrine cannot be a bad museum. The Louvre Museum, the

cathedral, is necessary, as a context for the *Mona Lisa*. One could also say, I suppose, that it is necessary as a part of the tourist industry, a Paris landmark which has to be visited, but that is not to make it necessary as a museum. Huge museums are, from a public point of view, long outdated. As vested interests and major power centres they will, like industrial conglomerates, undoubtedly put up a formidable struggle to escape their destiny, which is to be broken up into constituent parts which provide better service to their visitors and to the taxpayers who pay for them. But, at the moment, these visitors are brainwashed into believing that what is big is wonderful. The intrinsic weakness of huge institutions, whether within or outside the museum field, is that they produce remarkably few new ideas. Their size makes them essentially conservative. Real innovation is to be found in much more modest establishments.

We are faced with the paradox that people feel impelled to visit large museums, even though they obtain little or no personal benefit from doing so, except perhaps the comfort of knowing that they are in the fashion, one of the crowd, able to look their neighbours in the eye. There is the further irony that mass-society people, drugged by media conditioning, desperately need small institutions and small organizations in order to bring their sense of humanity alive and to get their imagination working, but choose instead the large-scale providers who prevent them from being themselves.

*A cathedral without parish churches*

Paris is the perfect laboratory in which to observe this unfortunate process at work. I remember, twenty years ago, talking to the then director of that admirable centre of scientific enthusiasm, the Palais de la Découverte, which, since its foundation in the 1930s, has probably done more to interest boys and girls in science than any other institution in France. Always short of money, but blessed with infectious enthusiasm, devoted volunteer helpers and an unmistakable sense of purpose, it fully deserves the title of a necessary museum. But Paris, as has so often been said, is not France, and what France needs, this same director, now retired, told me, is twelve Palais de la Découverte, dotted about France, one at Toulouse, one at Lyons, one at Rennes,

and so on. These, like the mother-Palais in Paris, would be places from which visitors would emerge feeling bigger and better, confident that they were beginning to get to grips with science.

'But,' he said, 'we shall not get these twelve small Palais de la Découverte. What we shall have instead,' he prophesied, 'is something we do not need at all, a single giant Science and Industry Centre in Paris, dedicated to the memory of the President or Prime Minister who pushed the idea through and found the money to set it up. It will be yet another product of that great curse laid on France by the *Roi Soleil* and Napoleon Bonaparte, the worship of the big'.

This is, of course, precisely what happened. The wrong way was chosen and the results are plain to see at La Villette, a site which once accommodated a monstrous plant for processing animals and which nowadays performs much the same function for human beings. The motto of the abattoir, 'No animal leaves here except as dead meat', could well serve for the gigantic museum which has replaced it. There are few sights more frightening and more depressing than that of the ant-sized people moving around this giant-sized building. If the Palais de la Découverte was and is a necessary creation, then La Villette is correspondingly unnecessary. It does nothing to humanize science, nothing to place it in its social context, nothing to make people confident of controlling the forces it lets loose, nothing to make the Chernobyl factor part of the understanding of science. It encourages the belief that processes and techniques are the masters and our main business, as inhabitants of this planet is to 'understand' such things and to develop their

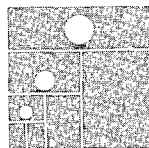
efficiency. To that extent, it is not only an unnecessary museum, but something much worse, a dangerous museum.

But, naturally, it can be defended by saying that it is helping to rehabilitate a part of Paris that was previously far from attractive, that it employs a lot of people and that it has large numbers of visitors, all of which is perfectly true. It can also claim that its sheer size and the huge investment that has been made in it force people to realize that science is important, which is much the same as saying that the size of the cathedrals of Chartres and Canterbury convince people that Christianity is important. La Villette is a cathedral to science and technology. It makes no sense and has no right to exist, except as the centre of a network of parish churches, which France does not possess and has refused to create. The fact that it has so many visitors is by no means irrelevant. They come because it is fashionable to come—the Louvre factor—and because parents want to do the best they can for their children. The children's section is, in fact, much the best part of the centre.

I should not like to be accused, for various reasons (brevity among them), of believing that La Villette is the most unnecessary or least necessary museum in the world. That would certainly not be true. But it is a symbol of museums which have gone badly wrong and which have been helped to do so by grossly irresponsible media hype and public adulation of a kind that makes objective criticism difficult. The same could, of course, be said of that other sacred cow of the French museum world, the Musée d'Orsay, on which it is necessary to lavish fulsome praise in order to continue to be received into polite society. ■

# WFFM CHRONICLE

World Federation of Friends of Museums  
 Postal address:  
 Palais du Louvre  
 34, quai du Louvre,  
 75041 Paris Cedex 01, France  
 (1) 48 04 99 05



## An encounter: young people and museums

### *Account of a meeting: outline for further consideration*

The Fédération Française des Sociétés d'Amis de Musées (French Federation of Friends of Museums) has 190 member associations with some 70,000 individual members. Its main task has been to support and be a sounding board for the associations of Friends of Museums, which, concerned about young people as a specific section of the public, have been trying to interest them in museums.

The value of the meeting described below lies in the coming together of different approaches. There were nine speakers, who included a psychologist, a training specialist and people who spoke about schools' experience of museums and museums' experience of schools. There were also Friends of Museums, non-professionals from outside the school context, who are helping to change a school-based institutional approach into an approach involving individual responsibility, in preparation for adulthood.

The meeting was held on 17 and 18 November 1988 on the initiative of the Ecole du Louvre—Ecole du Patrimoine, and similar meetings will be held in the future when necessary.

This account is not a completed report and is presented to the readers of *Museum* in a simple note form. Its aim is merely to put forward for consideration, as they were expressed during the meeting, some ideas and experiences concerning a relationship that is important and has a future, that of young people and museums.

### *Young people and the heritage: the Ministries of Education and Culture*

What relationship exists between the education system and culture? The schools are opening up to professionals on a contractual basis and pupils are playing an active role. This represents the opposite of an *ex-cathedra* attitude and involves a wide variety of approaches. It is an enormous undertaking which is constantly expanding.

What forms does it take? The Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Culture have devised various approaches.

1. The Ministry of Education has proposed Educational Action Projects (EAPs) to outside partners. Teachers analyse the needs of their classes and request EAPs. Funds and time are needed.

2. The Fund for Historical Monuments has established heritage classes. In 1983, there were five classes covering Fontevault, Meaux Cathedral, Chartres, several châteaux and Chantilly. Preparatory work by those involved is vital.

3. Workshops, starting with musical education, then computer graphics, the cinema, photography, architecture and the theatre. Three hours a week for students, who attend on a voluntary basis: 1,600 workshops around France.

4. A cultural activities officer working alongside the chief of each educational district helps those voluntary bodies wishing to participate to do so. There are two areas: the heritage and welcoming visitors to museums.

5. Museum educational services:  
 Teachers are released from their work

for several hours to attend museums; the museums then become teaching aids for them. Ten years ago there were forty teachers but today, 200 of them are involved in this type of work. They are required to work with the museums' scientific departments. The time needed (at least three hours per week) is allocated every year.

A programme of events is drawn up with the assistance of the museum staff on the basis of prepared visits (exploratory trips, workshops, handling objects, travelling exhibitions, educational kits, use of documents, museum bus); training is organized for the teachers.

A correspondent in every school would be a good idea, for example, the librarian. Make use of the press and education authority newsletters.

The discussion following this introduction gave an opportunity for some observations based on specific situations:

Problems of teachers with only two or three hours available per week.

*Metz.* One course adopted is to train the eyes by use of the hands. That is why we at the museum believe that it is important to supervise the teachers (three on a half-time basis). We also have our own organizers (part-time students) and cater for 35,000 pupils. We organize short courses at the museum. The teachers are assigned by the Inspector of Education. This year we are starting to work with nursery schools. There is a great demand for modern art.

*Marseilles.* We must have contact with teachers in order to know what they are teaching. It is our job to train the

people who educate and guide the public. Next year we will have to train teachers to act as go-betweens.

*Archaeological Museum of Val d'Oise.*

We organized courses lasting twenty-five days for the training of primary-school teachers. Then everything was stopped. It is hard to run long-term projects which are never completed. Parents find it difficult to understand that teachers can absent themselves for in-service courses.

It would be a good idea to organize summer courses.

There are still very few 'museum' classes.

In Bayonne, 11-year-old pupils came to the museum for a week and chose the things to study.

*Cultural activities of the  
Directorate of French Museums  
(DMF)*

This is a ticklish subject. There are two viewpoints: 'Society puts off (with other attractions) this particularly impressionable section of the public'; and 'This is the generation that is unfettered by everything that used to clutter culture'. Between the two lies the DMF's experience with a rather traditional public which nevertheless includes people who do not normally go to museums and have to be taken.

What are the *goals* of this work by the DMF?

To persuade. Museums do not appeal to young people. They have many other powerful attractions which are more fun. Persuasion is essential, therefore, starting with teachers. Are they going to 'waste two hours' on an exhibition? The persuasion must start during their training. And school heads need to be persuaded, too. It is essential to persuade the young people, who can influence their teachers. We have published posters with the slogan, 'Take Your Teachers Out'. We have advertised the campaign on 'The Art Rush' and made use of magazines for young people. It is also essential to persuade public opinion and those producing culture for young people, e.g. comic strips, television or radio, without distorting what the museum has to offer.

To try to please and make an impression; not to offer the same thing to all sections of the public. During a Fragonard exhibition (which we felt was remote from young people) we used taped commentaries by people who were not necessarily famous but had something to say, such as actors and aca-

demics. We asked them to explain what it was that affected them in the paintings. It was not a great success. We confused the teachers, and the young people were not at all captivated. They accept our culture but resent it being confused with their own. They feel instead that museums should provide them with knowledge (an expectation closely linked to the school model). But this freedom and independence and the right to disagree provided them with an opportunity to say something.

To lay a foundation; to provide something that will last even though it is ephemeral in appearance. To provide a basis for taste and judgement in the course of an hour. Do adults themselves have a good enough foundation? Young people take in absolutely everything and no one shows them a scale of values. The point is not to preach values but to demonstrate them.

To create the will to act, 'to be'. In museums we can make people want 'to be' and 'to act'. An experiment conducted at the Gustave Moreau Museum involved the preparation of a series of notes which brought out the creative aspect. The notes reassured the teachers and the experiment was also a way of communicating with the young people.

*Technical education*

There followed a report by an association working in technical education, which sometimes has to deal with very angry problem children.

Is it futile to bring young people into contact with museums at an age when they develop by reacting? ('Look at all the great works that you must measure yourselves against.')

Is it in any case enough to visit a museum in order to get the feeling that it belongs to all of us? At the end of a school visit to a museum, young people feel rather that it is remote.

*Encouraging pupils to express their ideas:  
the Turner competition*

Children from Belleville (a poor district of Paris), who did not know how to read at the age of 15 and had no vocational training certificate, were asked to take part in a competition, the Turner competition.<sup>1</sup> They won precisely because they were encouraged to express themselves in a field that was totally foreign to them. Existing workshops were more concerned with acting and music.

In connection with *Guernica* and the

Spanish Civil War they had already been helped to express themselves in history and geography. Attention had been focused on Spanish children whose parents could still remember the events. The pupils were not asked to reproduce *Guernica* but to create their own *Guernica*. They had already acquired some artistic experience in the music workshop and the coppersmith's workshop.

The object of the competition was to create, as a team, something having a connection with the works of Turner (painting, poetry, music) and to reply in English to questions on the life of Turner. The Belleville pupils were shy and nervous but not paralysed. 'I'd like to but I can't' were the words frequently heard. Their enthusiasm was not overwhelming but they realized that they had to set to work. They decided to construct the prow of a ship. A painter worked with them and they gained confidence by being taken seriously. They were helped with their English and several lessons were organized. They tied for first prize out of 150 projects.

The reasons for their success were varied but, in particular, the young people came to believe that they could develop and become the equals of others and that they could enjoy their self-esteem and also think highly of themselves. The competition entered frequently into their lessons and they used the museum's own facilities, working in the woodwork shop and creating a music group in the music workshop.

*The sequel to the competition*

At the time of the competition, when they received their prize from the ministers, they were considered to be slightly retarded.

An article in the press moved the violinist Yehudi Menuhin to send them fifteen tickets for a concert, which the pupils attended and found to their liking.

The following week, they put their work on show at the Georges Pompidou Centre as part of the exhibition entitled *The Children of Emigration*, one consequence of which was that the Centre was flooded with young people who had not taken part in the competition but had been brought along by their teachers.

*Conclusion on the competition*

Young people really do have something to say, whoever they are. Those who took part in the competition do not all visit museums but they all experienced a



change and the cultural heritage became accessible to them. They went through this experience with their own inner resources. Naturally the results are shaky and the exercise must be repeated regularly. Would it not be a good idea to look at their earlier experience, starting in nursery school, and prepare the ground?

#### *The Orsay Museum and young people*

There is not enough space here to describe all the resources the Orsay Museum has earmarked for young people, who are part of a potential public of 3.5 to 4 million people.

The museum does not need to advertise but, instead of being satisfied with regular museum-goers, it has decided to encourage all sections of the public to visit it.

These people must become regular museum visitors and must be approached on their own terms. The museum has been 'amplified' for this type of public by means of concerts, a cinema, photographs, literature, lectures and discussions. Some 4,000 square metres of space have been provided for the 5 to 15-year-olds. Young people from 13 to 15 years old have their own workshops which are not intended for creative work as such but for handling things in connection with the viewing of exhibits in the museum.

A service for teachers prepares them rapidly for unaccompanied museum visits. They are helped to conduct visits and to adapt them for their own pupils. Such visits are not intended to illustrate normal classes but may replace them. For example, a class on the French Third Republic may be replaced by a visit devoted to that Republic and its visual representation. Hence the need to consolidate teacher training, providing tailor-made notes and questionnaires which oblige people to look (rather than look away). An exhibit is presented together with a critique of the period. This is followed by an unaccompanied visit covering other exhibits on the same theme.

School forums are an idea which has been tried at the Orsay Museum in order to attract secondary-school pupils. The aim is to capture them as schoolchildren who may one day become individual museum-goers. These forums are held on the first Wednesday of the month, outside the school environment. An effort is made to suggest attractive subjects. A class is asked to prepare a certain subject and present it to a school forum. Part of

the class deals with this while the others, spread around the museum, preparing to reply at a later stage to the questions put by participants.

Who comes? Most often pupils who have the art 'bug' and sometimes those who have taken part in an Educational Action Project. Museums should be a source of delight but too often they are encased in 'a programme'.

#### *Setting up and organizing teams of young Friends of Museums*

The French Federation of Friends of Museums described three separate experiments which had been conducted in the provinces, far from Paris. We have selected one that was particularly illustrative, at Chambéry.

Here there are three museums, one quite small Friends' Association and a low level of activity. In 1983, someone who believed that more could be done decided to expand the museums' influence by organizing lectures.

Six years later, the programme for 1988/89 consists of: (a) eight lectures on the Louvre by the principal curators of that museum; (b) a day on 'A Cultural Revolution: Cubism'; (c) three lectures on the Celts, four on Flemish art; (d) a course of three lectures on ethnology; and (e) one day on 'The Art of the seventh Art' with the film *La règle du jeu* by Jean Renoir.

There are already 800 Friends. Lectures are held in the theatre as the museum cannot accommodate the large audience. What kind of an audience is it? A most instructive study was carried out. It emerged that there were some forty young people under the age of 25, which would make many organizers happy. There are many attractions at Chambéry, including skiing and the lake, but the Friends calculated that there were some 10,000 young people in the town and forty was therefore not an acceptable number.

A committee was formed and a well-conducted survey reached the conclusion that the potential public lacked information. One individual was made responsible for contacting the university, colleges, secretarial college, nursing college, secondary schools, etc., and was well received by the directors of those establishments. Teachers' contact-persons were designated. Each young person received a leaflet together with his or her school or university enrolment

papers at the start of the academic year, with a programme and an offer of a free card for the first year and a reduced rate for all lectures in subsequent years. Education material was prepared for teachers and pupils on the topics to be covered by the lectures and press files were compiled for all the newspapers.

After an enormous amount of work, the numbers at the beginning of the academic year were as follows: from university: five students, no teachers; no nurses; from secondary school: excellent attendance by teachers; 100 pupils already; for the day course on cubism: 290 pupils; one humanities teacher even altered his curriculum. ■

*[Translated from French]*

1. The Turner competition is organized by the Directorate of French Museums and the British Council.

# AND WHAT'S MORE . . .

## Museums in the Netherlands: an 'embarrassment of riches'<sup>1</sup>

Peter van Mensch

Born in 1947 at Gouda, the Netherlands. Graduated from the University of Amsterdam in zoology and archaeology. Worked since 1967 in different museums, among which the National Museum of Natural History, Leiden, as Head of the Department of Education and Exhibitions. He is currently lecturer of theoretical museology at the Reinwardt Academie, Leiden, and the University of Leiden. He is Vice-Chairman of the ICOM International Committee for Museology.

*The International Council of Museums (ICOM) is holding its fifteenth General Conference in The Hague, in August/September 1989. What better time, then, to offer readers of Museum a panorama of recent and current trends in the Netherlands museum world? There is, in this frank article, cause for people involved with museums everywhere to rejoice—and reason for them to worry. A 'museum feast' seems to be going on in the Netherlands, with (as at any feast) much satisfaction for those in attendance, but also symptoms of incipient indigestion.*

It is difficult to establish which country has the highest museum density. Much depends on the criteria applied. Yet the Netherlands certainly ranks among the top ten in the world. Like many other countries, the Netherlands is confronted with an explosive growth in the number of museums. This sudden and uncontrolled growth has given rise to much concern among established museums and the Dutch Museum Association. It is not only the growth of the number of museums that gives cause for worry. It is also the growth of the collections of individual museums and, last but not least, the excessive increase in the number of visitors. Until recently growth was described as proof of success. In the course of the 1980s, however, the Netherlands museum world discovered that it has to come to grips with the negative side of success. The rose has thorns. This article deals with the paradox of success in three fields: the increasing number of museums, the growth of museum collections, and the visitor boom.

*Too many diners ... (museum growth)*

Nobody knows how many museums exist in the Netherlands. Estimates run from 550 to more than 850, the range being due to different definitions used. The figures in this article are based on the annual surveys of the Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek, the government statistics office. This institution uses a rather restrictive definition of museums. On the basis of this definition (which excludes, for example, visitor centres, botanical gardens and zoos) the office listed 572 museums in 1986. Surprisingly, a true museometric analysis of the growth figures has yet to be made. The following rather impressionistic sketch of the growth phenomenon is, therefore, provisional. The figures are based on the foundation dates of present museums. Museums that closed have not been taken into consideration.

The largest group of single-theme, specialized museums is made up of (cultural) history museums. At present they form 55 per cent of the museum population. The second largest group includes the museums of science and industry (20 per cent). Growth can be found especially among these two categories (see Fig. 1). This growth reflects the phenomenon described, among others, by Neil Cossons and Geoffrey Lewis.<sup>2</sup> What has already been observed in the United Kingdom holds true for the Netherlands too.

Rapid changes in the landscape as the result of urban and industrial renewal and new farming techniques, increased wealth, leisure and mobility, and the impact of good-quality documentary television with outstanding

coverage of archaeology and natural history are just some of the factors that have combined to create an attitude of awareness and a sensitivity towards environment and place which had not previously existed at a popular level.<sup>3</sup>

The new awareness has also generated a strong desire for active participation in the processes of conservation or, more passively, by joining a conservation organization. The role of private initiative is clearly demonstrated in Fig. 2. During the last few years the increase in the number of museums (1986 saw thirty-four new museums) is due to private foundations only.

A recent study of the Reinwardt Academie student Hanna Visser<sup>4</sup> confirmed that almost all new museums are 'collection based'<sup>5</sup> and 'mission driven'.<sup>6</sup> It seems as though social relevance is something of the past. Despite all ICOM resolutions and other public exhortations, the average new museum has no social commitment in the sense of raising social awareness. It tends to start with an existing private collection being made public. As a consequence, the museum field in the Netherlands is overrun with a bizarre diversity of extremely specialized museums. Fans, ceramic pipes, skates, the Bible, typewriters, money-boxes, stamps, trams, wine, beer, chimes, fire-engines, toys, locks, carnivals and circuses, bicycles, sex, newspaper cuttings, tiles, flower bulbs, etc., are themes to which one, or sometimes several, specialized museums are devoted.

Many of the new museum 'directors' are enthusiastic and honest but naïve. Their museums are not notably successful in terms either of museological sophistication or of public appeal, but they remain devoted to their hobby-cum-profession. When a higher degree of sophistication can be detected, it seems that social relevance has been restricted compared with economic relevance. While ten years ago local government supported museums because of their educational role, now local authorities consider museums as important elements of infrastructure for tourists.

A substantial number of new museums are run by volunteers only. In this way, running costs can be kept to a minimum. Income is derived through a variety of channels, the main source being entrance fees. Very often, exhibit space is provided by local authorities (generally in restored monuments). For furniture, the museums often depend on (local) spon-

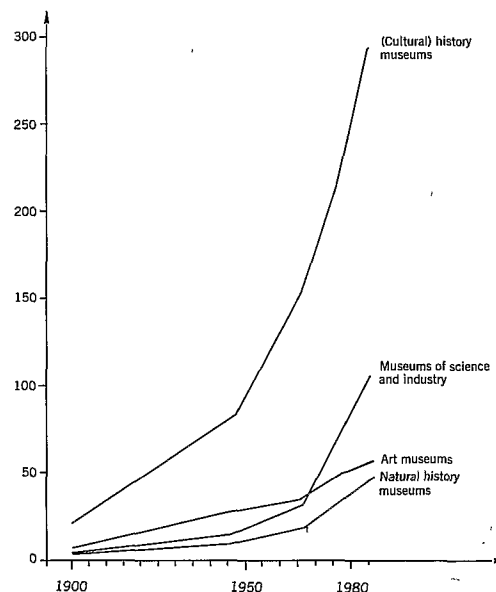
sorship. As to government support and corporate sponsorship, it is feared by existing museums that there will be increasing competition for decreasing funds. Too many diners may, it seems, be as threatening to the broth as too many cooks.

### *Approaching the critical mass (collection growth)*

The proliferation of small, specialized museums did not influence the growth of the collections of existing museums. Little is known about this growth, however. Figures concerning it are often based on estimates. Different studies<sup>7</sup> mention an average annual increase of 0.5 to 2 per cent. Further museometric analyses show a relation between the growth ratio and the stage of development of the museum. In 'young' museums growth percentages of around 30 per cent can be found. As the museum 'ages' and its collection increases the growth percentage appears to stabilize. But it is important to distinguish between relative and absolute growth. The Fries Museum (Leeuwarden) is a middle-sized museum; its average annual collection growth is 1.2 per cent. The National Museum of Natural History (Washington, D.C.) is one of the world's largest museums; its yearly collection growth is 1.87 per cent. But 1 per cent growth in Leeuwarden means 500 objects, while the same growth in Washington means a million objects!

Part of the excessive growth of museum collections in the Netherlands is due to what has been called 'the new collecting policy'. Key terms are 'daily life', 'context' and 'contemporary culture'. In historical museums, we see a shift from an art-historical and historiographical perspective to an anthropological and sociological approach. Objects with high aesthetic value and those associated with important persons and crucial moments in history are not the only ones considered relevant; objects that document daily life and the experiences of common people are also being collected. There is a tendency to preserve and/or exhibit objects in their natural contexts. *In situ* preservation has led to series of new museums (historic houses, mills, workshops, shops, etc.).

Most museums collect retrospectively. Since the collection and exhibition policies of history museums and museums of science and industry are not always free from nostalgia the *terminus ad quem* is often the Second World War. A few



1 Growth of the number of museums in the Netherlands according to thematic category. Based on the foundation dates of present museums. (All figures supplied by the author.)

1. Title borrowed from Simon Schama. *The Embarrassment of Riches: An Interpretation of Dutch Culture in the Golden Age*, New York, Knopf, 1987.

2. Neil Cossons, 'The New Museum Movement in the United Kingdom', *Museum*, Vol. XXXV, No. 2, 1983, p. 83; Geoffrey D. Lewis, 'Collections, Collectors and Museums: A Brief World Survey', in John M.A. Thompson (ed.), *Manual of Curatorship*, p. 17, London, 1984.

3. Cossons, op. cit.

4. Hanna Visser, 'Nieuwe musea' '75-85', Leiden, Reinwardt Academie, 1988 (unpublished thesis).

5. Peter van Mensch, 'Museology and Museums', *ICOM News*, No. 41 (3), 1988, p. 9.

6. Peter J. Ames, 'A Challenge to Modern Museum Management: Meshing Mission and Market', *The International Journal of Museum Management and Curatorship*, Vol. 7, No. 2, 1988, p. 152.

7. J. Meeter, *De staat van de musea in Zuid-Holland*, The Hague, Federatie van Musea in Zuid-Holland, 1981; J. Meeter, *De staat der limburgse musea*, Maastricht, Cultureel Raad, 1982.

years ago, the Netherlands Museums Association initiated a discussion about the practice of documenting contemporary culture by collecting objects. Although an increasing number of museums do collect 'today for tomorrow' there is still little coherence and co-operation in their efforts.

It seems as though the growth of museum holdings is subject to the 'law of logistic growth' (see Fig. 3). The use potential of a collection increases with the growth of that collection. By invariable technical means an increasing collection will gradually reach a size or critical mass at which the limits of its possibilities are reached. By continuing growth, the museum will no longer be able to apply the necessary standards for registration, conservation, storage, etc. As a consequence the use potential will decrease.

When a collection reaches its critical mass, decisions have to be made. The responsible board, director or curator can choose from a series of possible solutions. It is a remarkable feature of the last few years that there is a strong desire among the public and the media to participate in the discussion about the pros and cons of certain possible solutions. The traditional approach is to invest in advanced registration methods and new storage and conservation facilities. But the present financial constraints often make museums sensitive to other more radical solutions. De-accessioning ('weeding'), has recently become a hotly debated issue between museums in the Netherlands. Selective de-accessioning is slowly becoming an accepted instrument in sophisticated collections management. The discussion about the application of this difficult instrument has, however, been mixed up with a debate about 'commercial de-accessioning', that is, selling objects from museum collections for profit.

During 1987 the municipality of Hilversum caused much excitement in the media when it proposed to sell a painting by Mondrian (*Composition with Two Lines*). This painting had been donated to the municipality on the occasion of the building of its new town hall, but it was never appreciated. For many years the painting was on loan to the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam. It was almost forgotten when the alderman responsible for culture in Hilversum decided to sell the painting in order to obtain money to restore one of the principal historical buildings of the town.

The municipality was strongly criticized for this initiative and, though this painting was not part of a museum collection, the initiative was given as example of the danger of commercial de-accessioning. In the end the painting was sold to the Stedelijk Museum, but for an amount much below its commercial value.

### *More than wanted, less than needed (visitors)*

In 1987, 615 Dutch museums counted 19.8 million visits. How many visitors were responsible for this number of visits is not known. Shortly after the Second World War the number of registered museum visits was less than 2 million. The increase in the number of museum visits is breathtaking. Yet again, however, it has to be admitted that very few museometric analyses have been carried out. Very little is known about who is visiting which museums, how often, or why.

The general impression is that until 1981 the total number of museum visits increased steadily. This increase was more than would be expected in view of the population and museum growth rates. Although comparatively speaking more people with higher education visit museums, the increase in museum visits is due to people of all levels of education. In 1979 30 per cent of the population of 18 years and older visited one or more museums during the year. After 1981, something strange happened. The total number of museum visits decreased, only to increase again after two years. The year 1981 seems to have marked a qualitative shift in the population of museum visitors. The new growth is almost exclusively caused by visitors with more education. This phenomenon can be observed generally among cultural institutions. The spreading of culture—the main objective of cultural policy in the 1970s—came to an end. People with less education tended to become culturally less active. In 1979, 13 per cent of people with lower education levels visited at least one museum a year. In 1983, this percentage had increased to 16 per cent. But in the same period this percentage increased among those with higher education from 42 to 62 per cent.

The increase and decrease of the total number of museum visits is, however, a very complicated matter to interpret. The excessive growth of museum visits after the Second World War was particularly visible in the major museums (i.e.

museums with more than 100,000 visits a year). The stagnation of the growth during the period 1981-83 was also found chiefly in this category of museums. The total number of museum visits counted in small museums seemed to increase steadily during this period. The acceleration in the increase of the number of museum visits after 1983 can be related to a new phenomenon in the Netherlands museum world: the 'blockbuster'. In the Netherlands, a blockbuster can be defined as exhibition that attracts at least 200,000 visits. Since 1983, an impressive series of such blockbusters has been organized, especially by art museums. Blockbusters have become important media events.

The blockbuster era in Netherlands museum history cannot be seen apart from the general increase in interest in art among the public at large and the media. The increased popularity of museums focuses on art museums and especially museums of modern art. In terms of market analysis, museums have moved beyond the phase of 'early joiners' and have now positioned themselves in the group of consumers known as the 'early majority'.

The increasing number of museum visitors follows the same law of logistic growth mentioned above in relation to the growth of museum collections. The number of visitors confronts the museum with problems previously unknown. The capacity of premises is not designed for such numbers. The worst result is that the interior climate can no longer be controlled. During a very successful exhibition of Van Gogh paintings in the Rijksmuseum Kröller-Müller, the museum had to be closed on rainy days. Visitors carried so much moisture into the exhibition rooms that the relative humidity reached unacceptable levels.

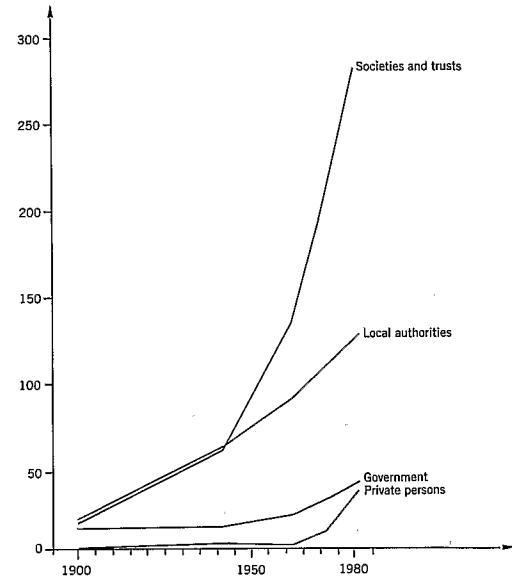
Despite the negative aspects of an over-abundance of visitors, museums continue to organize blockbusters, and in fact are increasing their efforts to attract still more visitors. It is a matter of survival. As the government has retreated from its role as main sponsor, museums have to seek other sources of income. The more visitors there are, the greater income will be, directly—through entrance fees—and indirectly, because these figures help to attract corporate sponsorship. Educational departments, very popular in the 1970s, are turning into marketing departments. Educators are being transformed into public relations officers.

*The critical point and beyond*

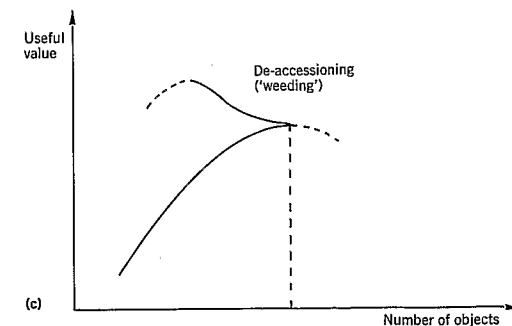
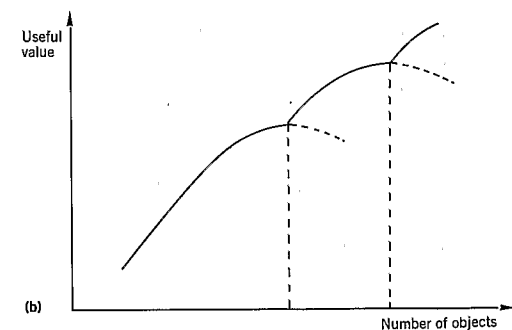
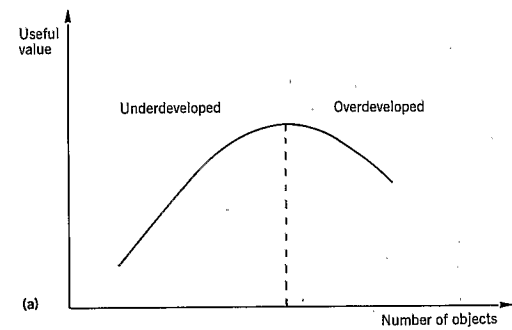
Mention has been made above of the law of logistic growth. This law can be applied to all three growth phenomena. In the coming years we, museologists in the Netherlands, will have to find out whereabouts on the curve we are situated. We seem to have approached the critical point. If growth does not abate in the coming years, we will be confronted with 1,000 museums in the year 2000 and an approximate total of 30 million annual museum visits! In the last few years, the total number of professional museum workers has not increased. The share of volunteers has however grown considerably. In 1985, of all people working in a museum 37 per cent had volunteered; in 1977 the figure was only 21 per cent. Financial constraints, the growing number of new, amateur museums and the increasing number of volunteers employed by museums require the application of professional standards. Museum ethics and accreditation may be new terms in the Netherlands museum world; but, nowadays, they can be heard quite often.

Netherlands museums have now to come to grips with their own success. In order to find solutions, they must look within. The museum world has to take the initiative itself. Uniting the forces of analysis and imagination, the museum world needs to gird itself for a new century. ■

2 Growth of the number of museums in the Netherlands according to owner category. Based on the foundation dates of present museums.



3 Relationship between size of a collection and its useful value: (a) with invariable means; (b) with investment in means at critical points; (c) with selective de-accessioning at critical point.



## *The Lubumbashi Museum: a museum in Zaire that is quite different*

Guy de Plaen

Guy de Plaen is the Curator of the Lubumbashi Museum and senior staff member of the Institute of the National Museums of Zaire.

The Lubumbashi Museum is at present the only museum in Zaire to be housed in functional buildings. This is the result of a long series of individual and collective efforts which could be of interest to readers of *Museum*. I shall therefore relate the background to the establishment of the museum, describe its activities and detail the solutions adopted in order to overcome the problems posed by setting up this museum, which is associated with an environment unlike any other.

In 1937, the anthropologist, Dr F. Cabu, opened an initial archaeological exhibition on Zaire at his home in Lubumbashi. Thanks to the numerous missions carried out by Dr Cabu the collections subsequently grew, but they had to be moved eleven times to different premises, ending finally, after a great many problems, in a building known as 'the old museum'.

The Société du Musée was granted legal status on 10 April 1943. This date marked a great step forward, since the efforts of one individual were thus officially crowned with success. On the basis of Dr Cabu's efforts, and thanks to the interest shown by the authorities of the period, the museum rapidly expanded and exhibitions on archaeology, ethnography, entomology, zoology and mineralogy were soon arranged.

In 1960, the new buildings, designed by the architect Strebelle, were ready to house the first anthropological, zoological and mineralogical collections, but war broke out and the museum was converted into a barracks. The curators at

that time and members of staff managed to save part of the collections by transferring them elsewhere. None the less, the war exacted a heavy toll from the museum. At its end, the building was in ruins, the zoological collections had been destroyed and the ethnographic and mineralogical collections had been partially pillaged. After 1963, various people tried to breathe new life into the institution, but its administrative framework was shaky. The provincial authorities responsible for youth, sports and cultural affairs, the Ministry of Tourism and the culture and arts department were interested, for a variety of reasons, in the museum.

The government of the young republic noted that there were serious shortcomings in the country's museum life. Kinshasa's Museum of Native Life had gradually disappeared, there was no trace of the Kolwezi museum, and only a few objects from Kananga were left after personal interests had had their way. The Lubumbashi Museum had managed to open two exhibition rooms thanks to the Society of Friends of the Museum set up in 1967.

The museums were revived as a result of the efforts made by the President of the Republic, Marshal Mobutu who, as early as 1959, had shown his interest in cultural matters by opening, in the Rue aux Laines in Brussels, the Congolia Club, aimed at promoting knowledge of Zairian cultures. In 1970, he also set up the Institute of National Museums by presidential decree, thus showing his concern and establishing a new and

efficient administrative framework for museums. With this governmental help and the assistance of the staff of the newly established National University of Zaire, which moved the departments of anthropology, history and African language and literature from Kinshasa to Lubumbashi, the museum was able to acquire a new lease of life.

The work to be done was colossal. The building had to be finished, reserves created and organized, a team of specialists trained and collections reassembled. For several years, missions were at work collecting artefacts and conducting archaeological research. In 1977, after these material and academic difficulties had been overcome, the Lubumbashi Museum was inaugurated by the State Commissioner.

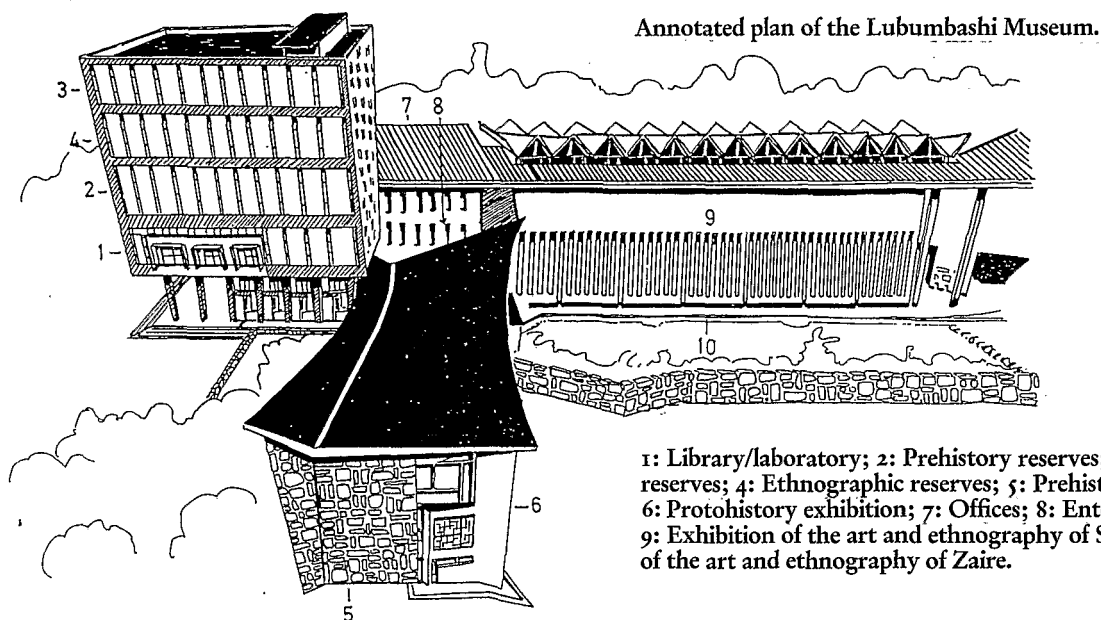
### *The museum and its activities*

The museum is more than just its building, and its activities include more than its exhibitions and reserves. Some of the museum's tasks have to be carried out outside its walls and involve the entire region. The external activities for which its staff is responsible are of three types: Responsibility for classified and unclassified objects, movable and immovable objects which for various reasons are not included in the museum's collections.

Research and study missions, as well as inspection missions.

The training of researchers in universities and in the field.

These responsibilities are summarized in



1: Library/laboratory; 2: Prehistory reserves; 3: Protohistory reserves; 4: Ethnographic reserves; 5: Prehistory exhibition; 6: Protohistory exhibition; 7: Offices; 8: Entomological laboratory; 9: Exhibition of the art and ethnography of Shaba; 10: Exhibition of the art and ethnography of Zaire.

Statutory Order No. 71/016 which sets out the rights and duties of museums. This is a model statute. It requires museums to give their opinions concerning the classification of immovable property that is significant from the point of view of the history of art or archaeology. The museums are responsible for carrying out inventories and evaluations of this property and for checking on the implications of registration.

The museum enjoys different prerogatives in regard to movable property. Such property can be registered if the museum so requests, and similar provision is made for conservation and compulsory purchase. The same order regulates the sale of antiques. The museum has a right of pre-emption when collectors make a purchase or request permission to export. It has to prevent foreign traders from exercising their activities in Zaire. Inspection and search missions are a corollary of the preceding provision, and necessitate visits to the registered property.

The search missions have greatly expanded. To begin with, the Institute of National Museums set itself the task of re-establishing its collections, with the result that its first activities were governed by a sense of urgency and by the pressure of the antiquities market. The present reserves contain representative collections (at least from the point of view of style) to which need to be added ethnographic and arts and crafts objects. What, at present, is of much greater concern to researchers than the objects themselves is the idea that they should be brought to life by precise knowledge of

the context in which they originated and were used (see page 127). This vital information is disappearing at an even faster rate and is even more in danger of decay than the objects themselves as it does not exist in a material form enabling it to resist change. The Lubumbashi Museum is working in three areas: (a) research on the masks and statuary of the Yaka; (b) studying the insignia of power of northern Shaba and Maniema; and (c) documenting ancient iron and copper-working in Shaba.

Although this work is generally concerned with objects having an aesthetic value, it also embraces objects which, though less appreciated by some people, are invested with great meaning and significance.

Training is one of the museum's activities which is not explicitly mentioned in the regulations concerning it but which stems naturally from the museum's existence. The close and historic links with the university have continued and have been strengthened. Classes and practical work in art, musicology and archaeology are organized in the museum's reserves and exhibition rooms, and theses and doctorates form part of the research work carried out by the scientific staff of the Institute of National Museums.

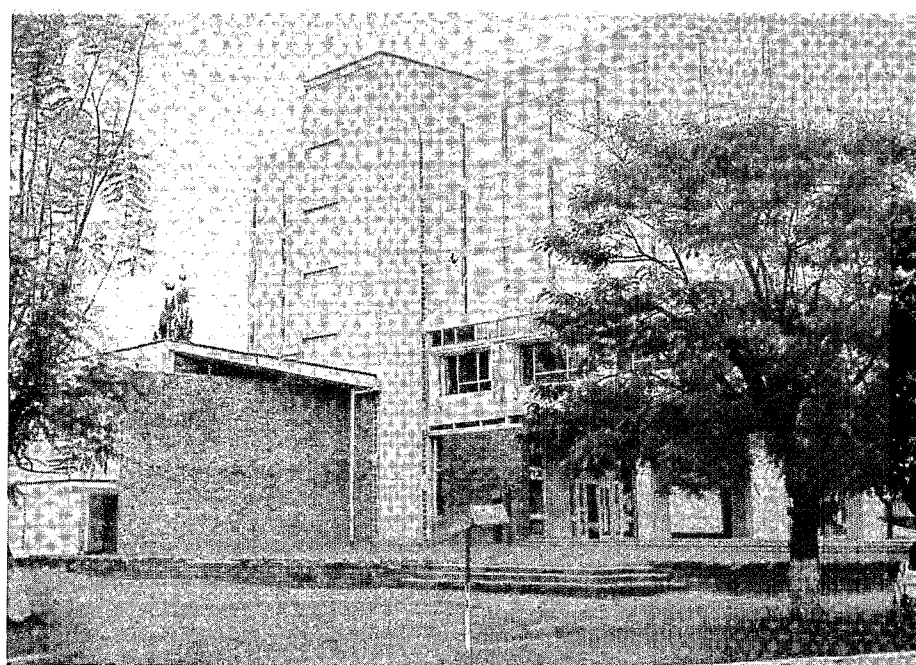
This is important, given that the museum's function is to spread knowledge of the cultural heritage to all sectors of the public, but the aim is much broader than that. It is not possible for a handful of researchers to complete, in a short space of time, the study of a great variety of cultures spread over an

immense territory. The staff of the museum therefore has to train auxiliaries capable of observing and describing, wherever they may be, objects of artistic, historic or archaeological interest. For example, second-year prehistory lectures for the first degree in anthropology were given on the Bianco plateau. The purpose of this was not to supply the museum with objects from the excavations carried out by the students but to train the students to locate sites and understand the work of prospecting and describing objects *in situ*. The aim is thus to establish a link between people interested in knowing about the past, suitable training, and the staff of the museum.

#### *A multipurpose building*

The Lubumbashi Museum building complex is functional in design as the architect had in mind the fact that it was to serve several purposes. A museum's primary purpose is that of conservation; the front building thus has three storeys for the reserve collections, by far the largest, which are not shown to the public. This is where objects are classified and kept in good repair. The first floor is for study, with a library and laboratory for art and archaeological work.

There are two problems regarding the reserves. The first is a problem of content, given that the reserves should make it possible to mount new exhibitions and supply materials for different kinds of studies. This means that they should be varied and that each object should normally be classified with the



View of the exhibition rooms and offices from the outside.

maximum of information concerning both manufacturing technique and use or mode of diffusion. The second problem is one of conservation. To meet this requirement, the reserves should provide protection against theft and against damage by natural agents such as ultraviolet rays, insects and variations in humidity. The reserves are therefore insulated and darkened and objects made of fibre or skin are treated with paradichlorobenzene and those of wood with xylamon. Some of them are stored in plastic bags. The left wing of the front building contains the offices of the curator and assistants as well as a drawing office on the upper floor. The ground floor is occupied by an entomological laboratory and a photographic studio.

The facilities just mentioned are used by researchers but the rest of the museum is designed for public visits. The exhibitions are organized around three themes. The first, *Humanity and its Conquests*, relates human beings' first discoveries (i.e. tools, agriculture and metals). The art room on the upper floor portrays *Man and his Environment* and explains how humans have used the elements of nature to meet the needs of day-to-day life. Worked by hand, wood was transformed into cups, masks and statues. Plants provided dyes and medicines, and ores were transformed into weapons and various kinds of tools. Another part lays emphasis on culture and illustrates the differences in the forms of art found in each group, the shapes of faces, the sacred character of objects associated with cults and beliefs, and the personalization of the most varied types of belongings. The ground floor extends this to the whole of Zaire.

The purpose of the exhibitions is to

show visitors a representative sample of the different cultures of Zaire. Two different objectives are pursued—that of displaying samples with great qualities of style and that of choosing objects representative of the different cultural activities. Where the two objectives are not compatible, the second objective is illustrated by photographs, drawings, or even short texts. The catalogue provides fuller details for those who want them.

#### *A flexible and active system*

The Lubumbashi Museum operates a system which is flexible and adaptable to visitors of different levels. The youngest visitors are drawn to objects and the illustrations which briefly show how they are used. The educational unit provides explanations for more informed visitors.

The flexibility of the museum's system of operation is evident in practice at several levels and in different fields, as shown by the few examples which follow:

A monthly exhibition shows the artefacts on which new research is being carried out. The exhibits in the glass case of this exhibition are changed every month, and visitors have thus been able to see how tobacco and fermented drinks are used and manufactured, the history and use of beads, baskets used in divination, the objects of the material culture of pastoral peoples, the mnemotechnical plates of the Mbu-dye, and leather objects.

In 1983, a modern art room was opened which now contains exhibits by painters, sculptors and ceramicists. This room creates a link between the art of former times and the art of today.

On the other hand, the entomological collections are for specialists only. These reference collections are added to on a regular basis by catches and by breeding. The laboratory concerned possesses reference herbaria for the study of the plants used by man as food and as building materials, for heating, weaving, sculpting or producing a patina.

All together, the technical laboratories contain a considerable amount of equipment, for example, equipment for photographic development, and a dehydrator used for entomology, botany and the first phase of the conservation of metals and bones. A paraffin wax tank makes it possible, using simple methods, to avoid any deterioration in bones.

The museum projects envisage the extension of research in co-operation with institutions of higher education. A one-year course of instruction has been established to train graduates and people in active life in the study of cultures or archaeology.

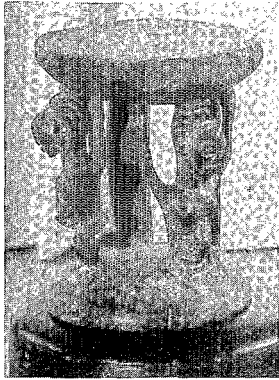
Closer links have been established with the mass media, especially television and radio, and the museum has already produced two videos, one on metallurgy and the other on its collections. A project to set up an ecomuseum on ancient copper-smelting sites is being considered.

The activities of the Lubumbashi Museum are thus directed at making its heritage as widely known as possible and at getting all social groups to play a part in its conservation and study. ■

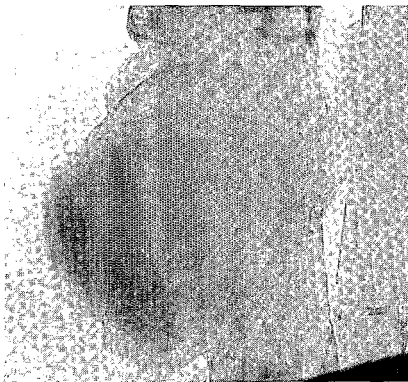
[Translated from French]



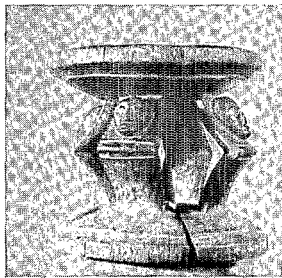
*Bogus authenticity: how it's done.*



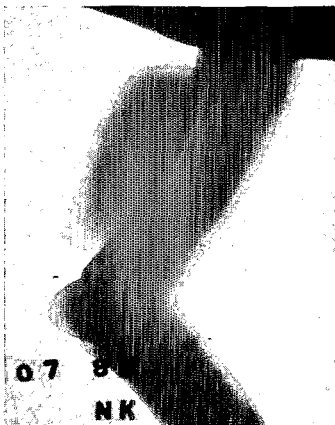
1  
Luba stool with two figures.



2  
X-ray photograph of the artefact in Figure 1 showing the addition of the face, and the difference in the texture and grain of the wood.



3  
Hembra stool with four legs decorated with faces.



4  
X-ray photograph of the artefact in Figure 3 showing the addition of a face.

## AUTHENTICITY, AN UNCERTAIN CONCEPT

*Guy de Plaen has been concerned with many different types of work, which have included consideration of the authenticity of a number of artefacts that have passed through his hands. In the note which follows, he raises the question of what cultural and scientific criteria could be applied to determine whether a given artefact is authentic.*

It is doubtful whether there can be absolute certainty as to the authenticity of a given artefact. The starting-point for a consideration of certain African objects must be that it is unsound to apply traditional definitions to them. Although copies can easily be eliminated from the outset for failing to meet traditional standards and although objects which have never been used in a ritual cannot be termed authentic, many problems still remain and many objects which do not deserve a place in any collection are retained while, for no valid reason, others are looked on with mistrust by connoisseurs.

The criterion linking the value of a given sculpture to its conformity with traditional style is certainly one of the most precise, but its limitations are brought out by an examination of a number of artefacts. A very large number of objects were indeed made for traditional use, but in styles that do not conform to classical traditions. One example: the objects associated with divination cults or the fight against witchcraft, which were sculpted in the style of a particular region and which, as a result of the vigour of the institutions using them, were subsequently exported to other regions where the cultures were sometimes very different.

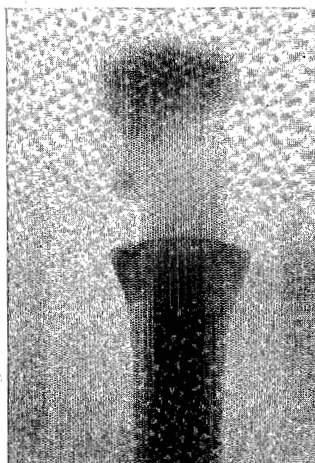
The expert often looks for signs of use. As helps in determining authenticity, great store is laid by wear as a result of handling and rubbing, and the marks left by ropes and hands. Nevertheless, several types of masks were not worn and the search for signs of use on them is therefore fruitless. For example, the white masks of the Luba could only be used once, after which they were disposed of far from the village. They thus showed little sign of use.

These various examples show us how important it is that this criterion of evaluation should go hand in hand with accurate ethnographic knowledge. In addition, the criterion of use is often associated with the existence of a patina. There are, in fact, two kinds of patina. One is produced by time and use, which darkens and wears the wood, polishes it and makes it incomparably smooth. The other is inherent in all the artefacts of certain regions. It is an aspect of the work of the individual sculptor, in the same way as style, and is therefore not connected with age or use.

### *The 'bogusly authentic' and X-ray photography*

We can infer from a large amount of material that an artefact without a patina cannot be authentic, and neither can one whose patina does not conform to the traditions of the group in this respect. There are authentic patinas and false ones such as those produced by graphite, soot and permanganate. By this, we mean patinas intended to falsify the chronology of an artefact by fictitious ageing.

Chronological cheating is not the only kind that exists. We are now witnessing the birth of a category of artefacts which could be called the 'bogusly authentic'. These are artefacts which are undeniably old and of good quality, to which a skilful sculptor other than the original creator made subsequent changes, either by adding a patina that the artefact should not have had, but without changing the general shape, or by resculpting a part of it. Adze handles, stool legs and the tips of horns have thus been decorated with heads or figures which were not there originally, and although they often conform to the style of the object, they were carved from the block at a spot where no carving was intended. There are also examples such as an old Kuba ivory horn becoming Songye because of a figure carved on it at a later date, and a Bangubangu stool redefined as Hembra because of the tattoos carved in the old wood.



5  
X-ray photograph of an adze handle showing the addition of a head. Traces of glue can be seen.



6  
Head of shuttle with the X-ray photograph showing that the face has been glued on. The wood of this face is softer.

Lastly, a patina which is sometimes authentic might also conceal other 'internal' falsifications. A number of very old artefacts have been transformed in recent times by the addition of extraneous items. Heads and figures—sometimes new but often old—were thus incorporated into the main body of another old artefact, thus giving it a composite nature. Modern glues and Landolphia resins are used for this purpose. The resins were used traditionally but their use was restricted to repairing calabashes and drums. The patina in this case may be authentic, but not the artefact.

The eye cannot always detect the fraud, but X-rays reveal that the item is not one single piece of wood and enable errors of judgement to be avoided. This technique helps to show up several kinds of situations:

The grain of the wood which, in the added-on part, does not fit in with that of the main item (Figs. 1 and 2).

The proof of an addition or a frame (Figs. 3, 4 and 5).

The presence of glue (Fig. 5).

The relative age of the different types of wood is revealed, with the old original wood being less compact and lighter in colour than the recent wood (Figs. 2 and 6).

The work of forgers which we have just described is all aimed at ensuring that these artefacts are more in line with the fashion of the day. The patina saves the external look of the artefact; the form remains faithful but not the content.

From all this, it should be concluded, first and foremost, that in determining the value of an artefact, the eye of the critic should be assisted by new methods which are able to correct the false impressions stemming from a lack of ethnographic knowledge—and from the 'progress' made by forgers.

A new approach to authenticity is now necessary. At this stage, we would define it as a sculpted artefact which is given a patina or painted by a sculptor who is recognized by the society using it, and which does not undergo any subsequent changes other than those resulting from the use for which the artefact in question was traditionally designed. ■

## COMING NEXT!

In number 163, *Museum* will invite its readers to join in wishing our magazine 'Happy Fortieth Birthday!' The festivities will focus on 'Then and now: great pioneer museums four decades later'—a series of frank articles about museums founded as trailblazers between 1950 and 1970, about what has happened to them since, *and* about what they have learned.

You will also (re)discover the best photos published in *Museum* since 1948, and a few features designed to make you wonder 'Now, why didn't I think of *that* before now?'

P.S. Number 164 of *Museum* will be largely devoted to museum architecture.

